



EAGLE

# Wildlife Law

# Enforcement Briefing

- ✓ **24 wildlife traffickers arrested in 6 countries**
- ✓ **8 ivory traffickers arrested in Uganda in 4 operations**
- ✓ **2 more ivory traffickers arrested in 2 different operations in Cameroon and Gabon**
- ✓ **2 traffickers arrested with 128 kg of pangolin scales in Cameroon**
- ✓ **2 traffickers arrested with 25 kg of pangolin scales in Uganda**
- ✓ **4 traffickers arrested with 2 leopard skins and a chimp skull in Gabon**
- ✓ **4 ivory traffickers sentenced to 1 and 1.5 years in prison in Togo**
- ✓ **An ivory trafficker sentenced to 1.5 years imprisonment in Uganda**

## Summary

24 wildlife traffickers were arrested this month in 6 countries.

7 ivory traffickers were arrested with 57 kg of ivory in Western Uganda near the Congolese border, where the illegal trafficking of ivory is intense. Another ivory trafficker was arrested in the capital of Uganda with 20.5 kg of ivory. He was swiftly prosecuted 3 weeks later and sentenced to 1.5 years of imprisonment.

2 ivory traffickers were arrested in Cameroon and Gabon, both of them owners of jewellery shops. The one arrested in Cameroon with 29 carved pieces of ivory runs an arts shop in which he sells bronze and wood artefacts also. He is part of a notorious network in Yaounde that deals in artefacts including ivory objects. He doubles as a sculptor. The Senegalese ivory trafficker arrested in Gabon in his jewellery shop had been running his small shop, famous for products derived from protected animals. The house search revealed 2 tusks, 24 leopard teeth, 50 elephant hair bracelets and 3 elephant tails.

2 traffickers were arrested with 128 kg of Giant Pangolin scales in Cameroon. One of them is a repeat offender – a receipt for a mere payment of a fine for wildlife trafficking was found on him.



*An ivory trafficker was arrested in the capital of Uganda with 20.5 kg of ivory.*

2 pangolin scale traffickers were arrested with 25 kg of giant pangolin scales in Uganda. The man and woman – a couple was arrested in their home. They admitted to trafficking pangolin scales daily, they are connected to a large network of poachers and traffickers.

4 traffickers were arrested with 2 leopard skins and a chimp skull in Gabon. 3 of them arrived to a town

to sell the skins and the skull. After being arrested, they revealed the 4th member of the gang, who was arrested later in his village.

4 ivory traffickers, arrested in June 2016 with 30 tusks weighting 40 kg were sentenced. Two of them were handed a 1 year in prison, and the two others a 1.5 years in prison.

## Cameroon – LAGA

■ An ivory trafficker arrested with 29 carved pieces of ivory. He runs an arts shop in which he sells bronze and wood artefacts also. He is part of a notorious network in Yaounde that deals in artefacts including ivory objects. The network has put in place several codes and mechanisms to protect their illegal ivory trade like the use of coded language understood only by those belonging to the network, support mechanism for those arrested and jailed to enable their business to thrive even when in prison. They get ivory supplies principally from the East Region, although when supplies are not flowing adequately, members of the network travel to the region to get raw ivory for carving. The trafficker doubles as a sculptor. Chinese clients are his main buyers and he has a very strong tie with some of them.

■ 2 traffickers arrested with 128 kg of Giant Pangolin scales. One of them is a repeat offender – a receipt for a mere payment of a fine for wildlife trafficking was found with him. Several parts of other wildlife species including totally protected species were found at the home of one of his concubines. The trafficking in pangolin scales is intense in the region close to Mbam and Djerem National Park. The traffickers operate in a close network that supplies wildlife products to far off commercial centres such as Yaounde and Bertoua and receive ammunition from some urban-based traffickers.

■ The Deputy Director held a meeting with Tarla Francis of the Pangolin Mentor Programme and with some fellows of the programme.

■ He also held a meeting in Limbe, South West, with an NGO official from AADA, an organisation that works on illegal logging going on in South West Region. Timber is illegally exploited and transported to Nigeria from the South West Region. Discussions focused on possibilities of engaging

authorities to fight the illegal cross boundary logging.

■ The recruitment and selection process for a new accountant continued and dozens of application files were recorded.

■ The Head of Investigations of EAGLE Uganda participated in the EAGLE Network exchange program in Cameroon.

■ A programme to train LAGA members on first aid by the Cameroon Red Cross continued, the second trainee completing his course in August.



2 traffickers arrested with 128 kg of Giant Pangolin scales.

## Congo – PALF

- The Head of Legal Department of AALF Gabon arrived to Congo to support the development of the PALF team and to train the legal advisors on procedures of EAGLE Network.
- The legal department monitored the transport of the 2 traffickers, sentenced for 3 years in prison last month, from the prison in Owando to the capital. The reason for the transfer was high risk of escape and corruption in the Owando prison and better security in Brazzaville.
- Meeting was held with the General Director of the Ministry of Forest Economy on the evaluation of PALF project by Comité Technique de Suivi (CTS) and renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding.
- Recruitment process continued focusing on investigators and an accountant. 2 legal advisors and a media officer are on test.

## Gabon – AALF

- 4 traffickers were arrested with 2 leopard skins and a chimp skull. 3 of them arrived to Lambarene to sell the skins and the skull in the town. They intended to carry the transaction out in a hidden area near the port, but were swiftly arrested. After arriving at the police station, they revealed the 4th member of the gang, a poacher. The prosecutor immediately issued an arrest warrant and the Police team together with AALF legal adviser went to his village and arrested him too. A gun was found in his house.

- An ivory trafficker arrested in his jewellery shop. The house search revealed 2 tusks, 24 leopard teeth, 50 elephant hair bracelets and 3 elephant tails. For many years, this Senegalese trafficker had been running a

small shop with jewellery, famous for products derived from protected animals. In addition to gold, silver, diamond and bronze, he was trading ivory, leopard teeth and other parts of protected animals to produce necklaces, bracelets and other jewel-



*An ivory trafficker arrested in his jewellery shop. The house search revealed 2 tusks, 24 leopard teeth, 50 elephant hair bracelets and 3 elephant tails.*

lery. These contrabands were particularly sought after by Asian customers.

- An ivory trafficker, arrested in July in his jewellery shop, was sentenced in August to 6 months imprisonment and a fine about 1,700 USD. He was arrested in July 2016 in possession of 18.5 kg of ivory and four elephant tails.
- The coordinator of AALF made several visits to Madagascar, Congo and Benin to support the partner projects of EAGLE network.



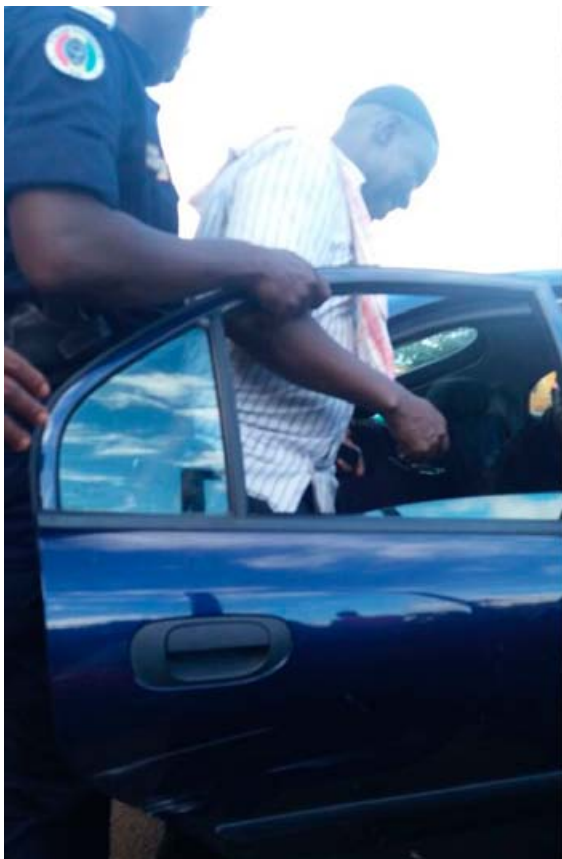
4 traffickers were arrested with 2 leopard skins and a chimp skull.

## Guinea – Conakry – GALF

- A reptile trafficker arrested in the act with 31 freshwater turtles and one tortoise near a market, where he intended to sell them. He was offering his services as a window dresser of clothes, perfumes and cosmetics, but he only used this activity to cover his criminal activity and to find potential buyers. He had worked with an extensive network of traffickers providing him with a supply

of protected animals, which he was selling mostly to Chinese, who consider turtles to be a delicacy. He had been trafficking turtles for many years.

- The media officer and a legal adviser of GALF were interviewed by the Radio Bonheur FM on the case of Ansoumane Doumbouya, former head of the CITES in Guinea, convicted for abuse of function, forgery, falsification of documents and illegal trafficking of protected species, and on other issues of wildlife crime.



- A series of meetings were held to maintain relationship with different authorities and to discuss concrete cases, namely with prosecutors and presidents of the courts of first instance, the focal point for wildlife crime of the Ministry of Security, the Head of the Intelligence Division of the general Directorate of Customs and the Secretary of the National Headquarters of the Civil Aviation.
- The recruitment effort continued to strengthen the investigation department, 2 new investigators started their test period in August.

A reptile trafficker arrested

## Togo – TALFF



2 ivory traffickers arrested with one tusk

- 2 ivory traffickers were arrested in a first joint operation of TALFF and Police of Sokode. They arrived to the town, carrying one tusk, with the intention to sell it in a hotel. They were arrested in the act and wait behind bar for the court decision.
- 4 ivory traffickers, arrested in June 2016 with 30 tusks weighting 40 kg were sentenced. Two of them were handed a 1 year in prison, and the two others a 1.5 years in prison. Additionally, each of them has to pay 2,500 USD in damages and penalties.
- A series of meetings were held with the Director of Judicial Police in Lomé, the Head of INTERPOL in Lomé, the US Embassy and the Procurers and Judges in several provinces to discuss cases of wildlife trafficking.

## SENEGAL - SALF



- 3 reptile traffickers arrested with 128 helmet freshwater turtles. They are members of a family, which is a part of a large ring of turtle traffickers and have been trafficking turtles for more than 20 years. African Helmet Turtles are relatively small omnivorous sweet water turtles that live in fresh and stagnant water bodies throughout Sub-Saharan Africa. They feed on insects, small crustaceans, fish, tadpoles, earthworms, snails and vegetation, sometimes also on corps. Groups of these turtles have been observed capturing and drowning larger prey such as doves when they come to drink; the commotion caused by these group attacks are often mistaken for crocodiles. During the dry season they hibernate, and after it ends, they



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become intensively trafficked. They are often sold to Chinese as a delicacy, but they are also exported to Europe and USA where they are kept as popular pets. All the sweet water turtles are fully protected in Senegal. The seized turtles were sent to a rehabilitation centre and later will be released in the Niokolo-Koba National Park.

- The SALF team took its annual vacation in August.
- The coordinator travelled to Ghana to present the activities of the EAGLE Network and to provide training in law enforcement.

## Benin – AALF-B

- The Organizational Development Office conducted a mission to Benin with a goal to strengthen AALF-B team by support given in recruiting, testing and evaluation of personnel, strengthening the management techniques of the coordinator, training and fostering activism.
- The intensified effort in recruiting led to 3 new investigators and a legal adviser starting their test period.
- Luc Mathot, the member of Steering Group, arrived to Benin to support external relations efforts and development of the team.
- The coordinator and Luc Mathot met with the Minister of Environment to discuss wildlife law enforcement, to introduce the project and to discuss signing the Memorandum of Understanding between the ministry and AALF-B. They also held meetings with various high officials of the Ministry, namely with the General Director of Forest and Hunting, the General Director of CENAGREF and the General Director of Environment.
- The coordinator and Luc Mathot held a meeting with the Minister of Security, to discuss the wildlife law enforcement and to prepare a meeting with the President of Benin, who is personally interested in the issue of wildlife crime.
- They also met with the new focal point of INTERPOL in Lomé, and with the General Director of the National TV in Benin, who is planning to sign an agreement and start a new talk show on environment with the coordinator of AALF-B.

## Uganda - EAGLE Uganda

- An ivory trafficker arrested with 8 tusks, weighing 20.5 kg. A businessman based in Kampala, attempted to sell the ivory in the centre of the capital, but he was arrested in the act. After the arrest he revealed that the ivory was brought from Kenya. He is a member of a ring of traffickers, involved in both ivory trade as well as arms trafficking between Uganda, Kenya and South Sudan.
- The trafficker was swiftly prosecuted 3 weeks later and sentenced to 1.5 years imprisonment.
- 2 ivory traffickers arrested with 4 tusks, weighing 10.5 kg. The two businessmen were trying to sell the ivory in Western part of the country. They remain behind bars waiting for prosecution.

- 2 more ivory traffickers arrested at the Congolese border with 6 tusks. They have been trafficking ivory for years, and are waiting behind bars to be charged for illegal possession of wildlife trophies in the court.
- 3 ivory traffickers arrested with 36 kg of ivory near Congolese border. The three tried to sell 5 tusks of different sizes. They had been trafficking ivory between DRC and Uganda for years. Now they remain behind bars waiting for prosecution.
- 2 pangolin scale traffickers arrested with 25 kg of giant pangolin scales. The man and woman – a couple was arrested in their home. They admitted that they have been trafficking pangolin scales daily, they are connected to a large network of poachers and traffickers. They both remain behind bars waiting for trial.



3 ivory traffickers arrested with 36 kg of ivory near Congolese border.

2 ivory traffickers arrested with 4 tusks, weighting 10.5 kg.



3 ivory traffickers arrested with 36 kg of ivory near Congolese border.



to Uganda recognized the results of the EAGLE Uganda team in the fight against wildlife crime.

- hind bars waiting for trial.
- EAGLE Uganda hosted the USFWS officer Ms Nancy Gelman. The team travelled with her to Lake Mburo National Park.
- The Coordinator together with Ms Nancy Gelman met with the US Ambassador to Uganda to discuss the support and cooperation in fighting wildlife crime. The Ambassador agreed to support our work and assigned two of her officers to as focal points for cooperation with EAGLE Uganda.
- The Coordinator held a meeting with the officers of Belgium Embassy and started planning a meeting of the Belgian Ambassador once he is back from leave.
- The Coordinator also met TRAFFIC East African team who was in Uganda for a three days workshop. EAGLE Uganda was invited to give a presentation on fighting wildlife crime in Uganda. At the opening of the workshop the US Ambassador

- The Coordinator met with USFWS attaché based in Tanzania, who visited Kampala to strengthen the cooperation with EAGLE Uganda.

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# Madagascar - ALARM

- August was the kick-off for ALARM, focusing on external relation and building the team.
- The legal team in the South of the country is following a court case on a trafficker, arrested with hundreds of tortoises.
- Rens Ilgen, a supervolunteer, arrived to Madagascar to support the development of the team within the EAGLE Network Supervolunteer program.
- Luc Mathot arrived to Madagascar to continue supporting the development of the new replication.
- A meeting was held with the Minister of Environment to introduce him to the project and discuss cooperation in fighting against wildlife law.
- A meeting was held also with the Minister of Justice to introduce him the project and talk about perspective on collaboration, to inform him that AVG will be the civil party for the case in the south, and to get his support in pushing the case.
- More meetings were held with the General Director of Judiciary Affairs, Director of Cabinet of Environment, Prosecutor of the Republic, Chief of Central Service of Economic Investigations and Finances and General Delegate of Aviation Civil to Madagascar to introduce the project, discuss the perspective on collaboration and establish the necessary contacts.
- Meeting was held with the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust and WCS to discuss the perspective on collaboration in terms of information.
- A second round of recruitment is currently conducted to retrieve new candidates, both investigators and legal advisers.
- The monitoring and Evaluation Officer travelled to Madagascar to strengthen the ALARM project by support in recruiting, testing the new recruited investigators, legal advisors and media officer, support the management, monitor the process and assist the project in logistics.

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## Headquarters

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- The monitoring and Evaluation Officer travelled to Madagascar to strengthen the ALARM project by support in recruiting, testing the new recruited investigators, legal advisors and media officer, support the management, monitor the process and assist the project in logistics.
- Luc Mathot, the member of Steering Group, arrived at Benin to support the external relations and development of the team.

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## International Media Coverage

- “EAGLE Spreads Its Wings with Bravery and Commitment across Africa” An article on the website of US Fish and Wildlife Service on the activities of EAGLE Network.

[Link to the article](#)

- “Mentor GRAD Fights for Wildlife” An article on the website of US Fish and Wildlife Service about Vincent Opyene, the Coordinator of EAGLE Uganda.

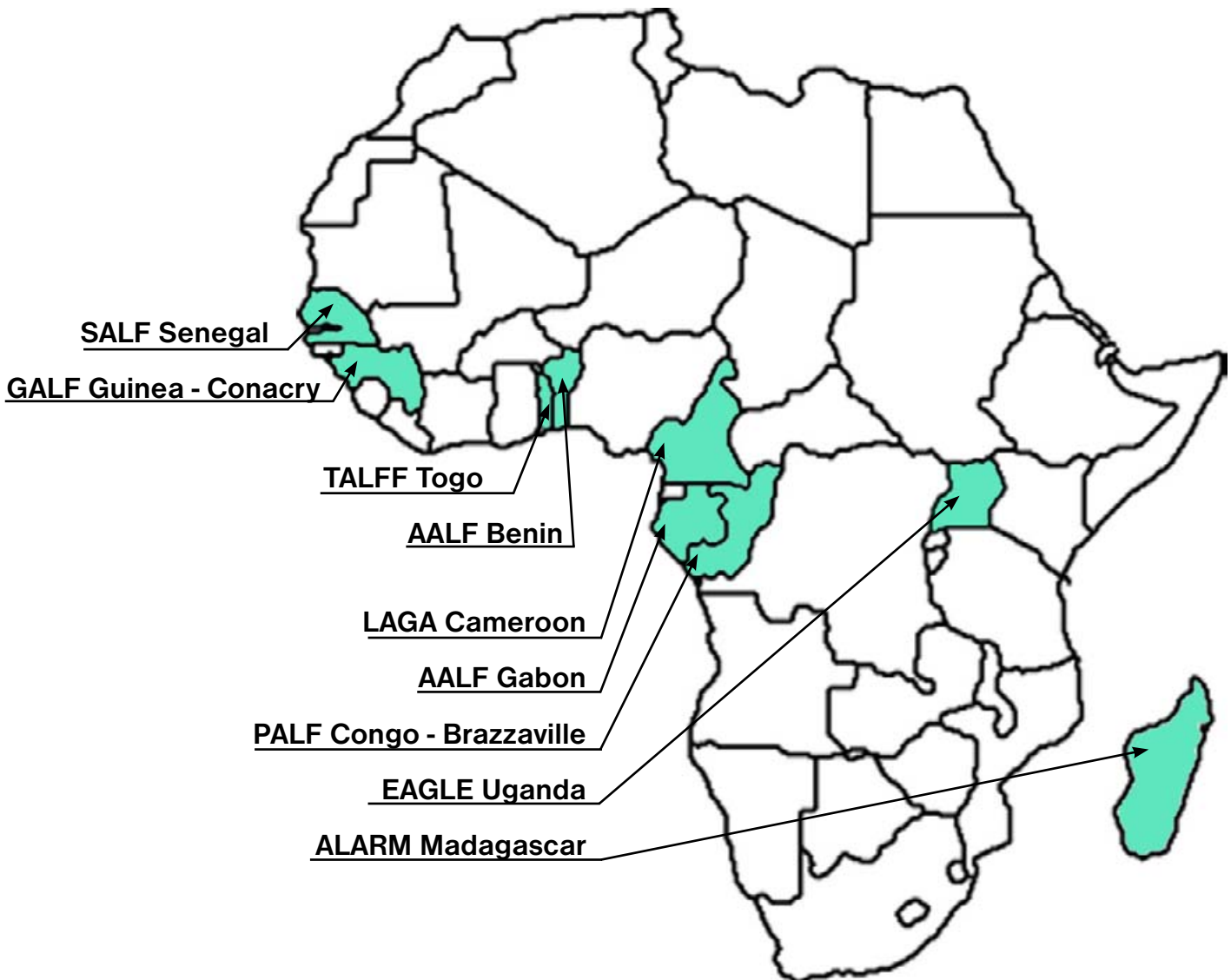
[Link to the article](#)

- “Meet the man who’s fighting Africa’s worst wildlife traffickers” – An article in From the Grapevine about Ofir Drori, the founder of EAGLE Network.

[Link to the article](#)



# Structure of the EAGLE Network



## THE EAGLE Network

EAGLE: Eco Activists for Governance and Law Enforcement, is a network of members across Africa, who are replicating effectively a program and operational model to undertake wildlife law enforcement, which is based on the LAGA-Cameroon model, trailed, practiced and tested since 2003. The EAGLE Network currently operates in eight African countries and keeps expanding.

The over-arching objective of the EAGLE Network is: *Developing civic activism and collaborating with governments and civil society to improve the application of national and international environmental legislation, through a program of activities: investi-*

*gations, arrests, prosecutions and publicity. Through this, EAGLE aims to generate a strong deterrent against the illegal trade in wildlife, timber and related criminal activities, including corruption.*

### Contacts:

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