



**EAGLE**

December 2020  
EAGLE Network

# Wildlife Law Enforcement Briefing

- ✓ *20 wildlife traffickers arrested in 5 countries*
- ✓ *6 ivory traffickers arrested and a criminal gang of ivory traffickers crushed in Cameroon*
- ✓ *A major live-animal trafficker arrested as well as her international supplier and a live baby chimp rescued in Côte d'Ivoire*
- ✓ *3 traffickers including an ex-military man arrested with 70 kg of pangolin scales in Cameroon*
- ✓ *A live animal trafficker arrested and young mandrill rescued in Cameroon*
- ✓ *2 ivory traffickers arrested with one tusk in Congo*
- ✓ *3 ivory traffickers arrested in Gabon with 8 tusks*
- ✓ *2 ivory traffickers arrested in Gabon with 2 tusks*
- ✓ *2 ivory traffickers arrested with 2 tusks in Benin*



*A major live-animal trafficker arrested and a live baby chimp rescued in Côte d'Ivoire*



*6 ivory traffickers were arrested and a criminal gang of ivory traffickers crushed in Cameroon.*

# Summary

20 wildlife traffickers were arrested in 5 countries.

6 ivory traffickers were arrested and a criminal gang of ivory traffickers crushed in Cameroon. The first 2 traffickers were arrested in the act with 4 tusks in the east of the country. 4 more traffickers were arrested in another town one day later during a follow up operation dismantling a hard and cautious network involved in trafficking of ivory from the east of the country to Nigeria. Among them is a Nigerian national, and a repeat offender who had already been arrested and served jail term for ivory trafficking.

A major live-animals trafficker was arrested as well as her international supplier, after a long-term high-level investigation in Côte d'Ivoire. Selling protected species for years and connected to several criminal syndicates in the West-African region, the trafficker has been arrested in her house while trading a baby chimp that was rescued. Her phone revealed the supplier that we hunted for 4 years, a part of a major trafficking crime family that has been elusive to us for long. Following surveillance, Rens and the team finally had the chance to arrest the first member of this Guinean family. With all the proof this time for chimpanzee trafficking, the team quickly moved with the UCT special unit against transnational organized crime to swiftly bust him next to his wildlife store. This important arrest operation marks a crackdown on the organized illegal trade in apes, lion cubs and other endangered species in a great cross-EAGLE effort.



3 traffickers were arrested with 70 kg of pangolin scales in Cameroon

3 traffickers were arrested with 70 kg of pangolin scales in Cameroon. An ex-military man was among them; he used his position to protect the trafficking ring that was organized around one experienced pangolin scales trafficker. This seizure, a snapshot of the ongoing trade of these criminals, represents probably more than 200 slaughtered pangolins



3 ivory traffickers were arrested in Gabon with 8 tusks

A live animal trafficker was arrested and young mandrill rescued in Cameroon. The young and hungry animal was immediately provided first aid and food as it thirstily clung to a water bottle. As the case often is, the young animal lived in a filthy small cage.

2 ivory traffickers arrested with one tusk in Congo. They were arrested in the act with the tusk well concealed in a bag. One of them is a notorious trafficker well connected to a trafficking ring.

3 ivory traffickers were arrested in Gabon with 8 tusks, weighing 61 kg. Two of them were arrested with the contraband concealed in two flour bags after they arrived by a public transport to the place of transaction. They denounced third trafficker, the owner of the ivory, who was arrested two days later.

2 ivory traffickers were arrested in Gabon with 2 tusks. The first one, of Burkina Faso nationality, was arrested in the attempt to sell the ivory after he unloaded the bag with concealed contraband off a car. He soon denounced the second trafficker, Guinean, who was arrested the same day.

2 ivory traffickers were arrested with 2 tusks in Benin. They were arrested in the act after they arrived with the contraband concealed in a bag to the place of transaction. They remain in the jail awaiting trial.



# Cameroon – LAGA

- 6 ivory traffickers arrested and a criminal gang of ivory traffickers crushed. The first 2 traffickers were arrested in the act with 4 tusks in the east of the country. 4 more traffickers were arrested in



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another town one day later during a follow up operation dismantling a hard and cautious network involved in trafficking of ivory from the east of the country to Nigeria. Among them is a Nigerian national, and a repeat offender who had already been arrested and served jail term for ivory trafficking.

- 3 traffickers arrested with 70 kg of pangolin scales. An ex-military man was among them; he







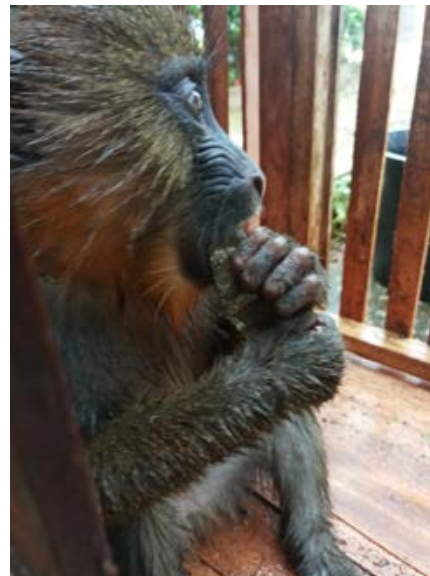
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and hungry animal was immediately provided first aid and food as it thirstily clung to a water bottle. As the case often is, the young animal lived in a filthy small cage. Earlier, another mandrill the animal trafficker tried to sell died in her possession.

■ A live animal trafficker arrested and young mandrill rescued in the South of the country. The young

■ The Deputy Director participated at the workshop organized by TRAFFIC and did a presentation on the legal procedure relating to the prosecution of wildlife law offenders.



■ A super volunteer finished her 3 months long training working with the various departments of the organization.

A live animal trafficker arrested and young mandrill rescued



## Congo – PALF

- 2 ivory traffickers arrested with one tusk in the West of the country. They were arrested in the act with the tusk well concealed in a bag. One of them is a notorious trafficker well connected to a trafficking ring.
- The Legal Team held a series of meetings with high authorities including several Departmental directors of Water and Forest, several State Councils and others.



## Gabon – AALF

- 3 ivory traffickers arrested in the South of the country with 8 tusks, weighing 61 kg. Two of them were arrested with the contraband concealed in two flour bags after they arrived by a public transport to the place of transaction. They denounced third trafficker, the owner of the ivory, who was arrested two days later.
- 2 ivory traffickers arrested in the South of the country with 2 tusks. The first one, of Burkina

Faso nationality, was arrested in the attempt to sell the ivory after he unloaded the bag with concealed contraband off a car. He soon denounced the second trafficker, Guinean, who was arrested the same day.

- 5 ivory traffickers were sentenced to jail, one for one year, four for 2 years. They were arrested in September 2020.



3 ivory traffickers arrested in the South of the country with 8 tusks



2 ivory traffickers arrested in the South of the country with 2 tusks



- Two ivory traffickers were sentenced to one year, one to 6 months in jail. They were arrested in October 2020.
- Two Legal Advisors supported by the Activities Coordinator and the National Agency of National Parks trained Judicial Police Officers in wildlife regulations.
- The Activities Coordinator participated at the opening ceremony of the training and capacity building workshop for magistrates organized by UNODC.
- The Legal Team held series of meetings with high authorities including the State Counsel and Judges of the special chamber in charge of certain wildlife and forest offenses, the Head of the Judicial Police, the Director General of Wildlife and Protected Areas, the Anti-poaching Director, and many others.
- The Activities Coordinator held a meeting with the Secretary General of the province of Ngounié and the Mayor of the town of Mouila.
- He also met with the State Counsel of the court of first instance of Oyem to plan the organization of the training workshop for Judicial Police Officers of the province of Woleu- Ntem.
- The Director held a meeting with CEEAC (ECCAS - Economic Community of Central African States) « Commissaire à l'Environnement, Ressources Naturelles, Agriculture et Développement Rural ».

## Togo – EAGLE Togo

- 4 ivory traffickers were sentenced to 4 months in jail. They were arrested in July 2020.
- The Assistant Coordinator held a meeting with the Head of Litigation Division at the Forest Resources Inspection Directorate, the deputy of the State Counsel at the Lomé court and the court judge to discuss the case of Gagnon Kodjo et al.

## Senegal – EAGLE Senegal

- The Coordinator participated at a meeting to the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Paris agreement on climate change that brought together the Minister of the Environment and Sustainable Development, the ambassadors of France, the United Kingdom and the European Union.
- The intense recruitment of investigators, legal advisors and a media officer continued in December. A legal advisor and two investigators started their test period.

## Benin – AALF-B

- 2 ivory traffickers arrested with 2 tusks in the North of the country. They were arrested in the act after they arrived with the contraband concealed in a bag to the place of transaction. They remain in the jail awaiting trial.
- The Legal Team held a series of meetings with high authorities, including several State Counsels and their secretaries, the Presidents of courts the Head of the Parakou Criminal Brigade, the Republican Police Commissioner of N'dali, the Legal Officer of the Forest Inspectorate of Borgou, the Head of Litigation of the General Directorate of Water, Forests and Hunting and others.



# Côte d'Ivoire – EAGLE Côte d'Ivoire

■ A major live-animals trafficker arrested as well as her international supplier, after a long-term high-level investigation by Rens, Gaspard and their team. Selling protected species for years and connected to several criminal syndicates in the West-African region, the trafficker has been arrested in her house while trading a baby chimp that was rescued. Her phone revealed the supplier that we hunted for 4 years, a part of a major trafficking crime family that has been elusive to us for long. Following surveillance, Rens and the team finally had the chance to arrest the first member of this Guinean family. With all the proof this time for chimpanzee trafficking, the team quickly



moved with the UCT special unit against transnational organized crime to swiftly bust him next to his wildlife store. This important arrest operation marks a crackdown on the organized illegal trade in apes, lion cubs and other endangered species in a great cross-EAGLE effort.

- The baby chimp, less than two years old, was handled to a newly opened orphanage Akatia, which received the government approval only one day before the arrest. He was traumatized and needed deworming, but his condition has been improving.
- Intense recruitment continued and one legal advisor started her test period.
- The Coordinator and his deputy met again the OIPR, the Ivorian administration in charge of the management of the parks and reserves, in order to assess the need of their administration in protecting wildlife on national parks. The next step should be in the beginning of the year 2021 with formations given by EAGLE Côte d'Ivoire to the elements of the OIPR.

# Burkina Faso - EAGLE

## Burkina Faso

- The Coordinator met with the State Counsel at the Tribunal de Grande Instance of Sissili, and presented him the activities carried out by Conservation Justice / EAGLE.
- The Coordinator had a discussion with the officials from the Ministry of the Environment, including the Provincial Director of Water and Forests of the Province of Sissili.



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## 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 nine 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: investigations, 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.*

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