



**EAGLE**

# Wildlife Law Enforcement Briefing

- ✓ *23 wildlife criminals arrested in 4 countries*
- ✓ *1.3 tons of ivory seized and 3 traffickers arrested in a crackdown on a West African criminal syndicate in Uganda, dealing in multi millions dollars illicit profits with connection to other major criminal syndicates in Africa and supplying rhino horns and ivory to the biggest wildlife criminal syndicates known worldwide*
- ✓ *One of the biggest ape traffickers in the continent arrested in Guinea. His empire developed over more than 30 years of trafficking as members of the family were spread across the continent creating a vast and effective criminal network.*



*5 trucks were needed to transport 1.3 tons of ivory seized during a crackdown on a West African criminal syndicate in Uganda.*



*3 traffickers arrested, dealing in multi millions dollars illicit profits with connection to other major criminal syndicates in Africa*

# Summary

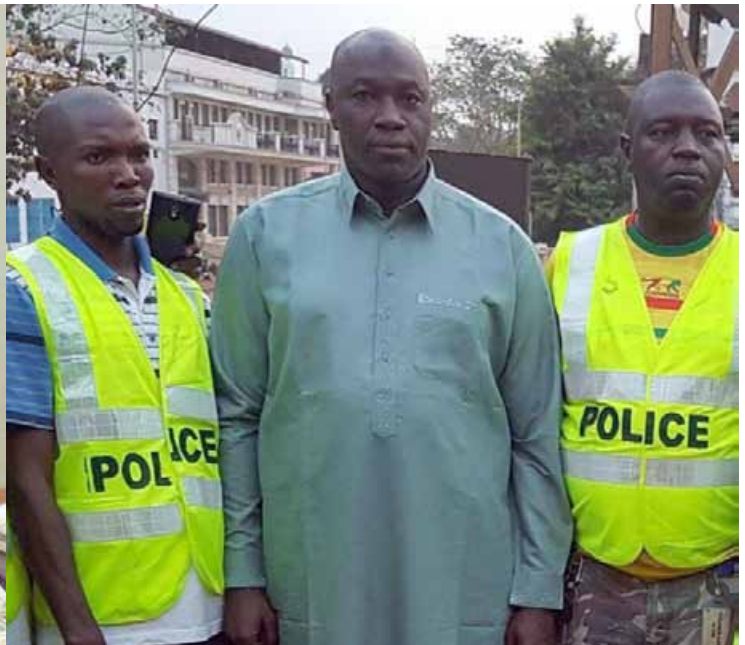
23 wildlife criminals were arrested in 4 countries, several of the biggest traffickers in the continent among them.

1.3 tons of ivory was seized and 3 traffickers arrested in a crackdown on a West African criminal syndicate. Kromah Moazu, the main trafficker arrested is at the center of a vast ring of organized wildlife criminals, dealing in multi millions dollars illicit profits. He is connected to at least 4 other major criminal syndicates in Africa. He is also in charge of supplying rhino horns and ivory to the biggest wildlife criminal syndicates known worldwide - in Laos, Thailand and Vietnam. He was arrested together with 2 Guinean nationals during a raid of the fortified house that was used to hide contraband stocks. An EAGLE Network long term investigation and cross-country collaboration with the GALF team exposed the criminal ring specializing in large scale trafficking of both ivory as well as rhino horns.

they finally tracked him down and got him arrested. His empire developed over more than 30 years of trafficking as members of the family were spread across the continent creating a vast and effective criminal network. Sidibe the father spent the last year hiding in several African, Arab, and Asian countries.

A Senior Presidential Adviser and two other traffickers were arrested with 183 kg of hippo teeth in a suburb of the capital city of Uganda. The contraband was concealed in the advisor's private car. A live Leopard Tortoise and several shells of tortoises were found in his home after the arrest. The presidency of Uganda sent a clear message after the arrest distancing itself from the illegal activity and condemning it.

4 significant ivory traffickers were arrested with 6 tusks, one pair from a very young elephant. For years the well-established ring has been trafficking ivory between Congo and other countries like Cameroon, and



*In the “before” picture one of Africa’s biggest birds and mammals trafficker counts USD proceeds of crime, in the “after” photo he is arrested and on his way to prison with Interpol agents.*

One of the biggest ape traffickers in the African continent was arrested in Guinea. Abdourahamane Sidibe is responsible for sending more than 130 chimps as well as gorillas, mandrills and even manatees to China and other countries. The head of a crime family, he was convicted in absentia for 5 years in jail together with the case of the former CITES head Doumbouya. The GALF team spent years investigating these criminal networks. Now, a year after the sentence was handed,

also the Middle East. It was crushed after the arrest of 2 traffickers, the head of the ring and his deputy, who was organizing poachers and providing them with ammunition. They were arrested in the act with the ivory concealed in a bag. They confirmed that 2 other traffickers, who were already monitored by police, were also important members of the ring, so these were arrested as well. All 4 of them were involved in trafficking ivory for years, gaining significant illicit revenue.



## Cameroon – LAGA

- This month no operations took place, new strategies are formulated to ensure more arrests next month.
- Cecile Bloch, the Coordination Assistant of SALF joined the Cameroon team for training as a part of her preparation for being appointed the coordinator of SALF.
- Recruitment process in the investigations department



*three tons of pangolin scales seized during wildlife law enforcement operations in the country were burned*

ment continued with interviews conducted and advert for the position of internet investigator done.

- The Deputy Director attended an occasion that was organized by the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife to burn three tons of pangolin scales seized during wildlife law enforcement operations in the country. Prior to the event, he held a brief meeting with the Director of Wildlife and Protected Areas to discuss pangolin matters and the scales destruction. He was accompanied to the scales destruction ceremony by the Head of Investigations Department.
- The Deputy Director attended a meeting of technical partners of the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife who work under the group called CCPM. Discussions focused on various conservation issues including wildlife law enforcement and LAGA was present for the first time after several months of absence.

## Congo – PALF

- 4 significant ivory traffickers arrested with 6 tusks, one pair from a very young elephant. The well-established ring has been trafficking ivory between Congo and other countries like Cameroon, but also Middle East, for years. It was crushed after the arrest of 2 traffickers, the head of the ring and his deputy, who was organizing poachers and providing them with ammunition. They were arrested in the act with the ivory concealed in a bag. They confirmed that 2 other traffickers, who were already monitored by police, were also important members of the ring, therefore they were arrested as well. All 4 of them were involved in trafficking ivory for years, gaining significant illicit revenue. The 3 elephants were massacred in Sangha – the region with the largest forest elephant population in Congo. An automatic assault rifle was also seized during the arrest. All 4 are behind bars awaiting trial.

*4 significant ivory traffickers arrested with 6 tusks in Congo*



- The coordinator met with the state counsels and their teams in the courts of Ouessou and Pointe-Noire to discuss procedural issues in pending wildlife cases.. She also met with the Departmental Director of Ouessou to discuss the operation and legal follow-up of cases in the region.

- The Coordinator held several meetings with the officials of the Ministry of environment, the Legal Advisor, the Wildlife Advisor and the Director of Forest and Protected Areas to continue preparation of the Memorandum of Understanding, which should be ready for signature next month.

## Gabon – AALF

- A Malian ivory trafficker arrested with 6 tusks weighting 10 kg. It shows that the trafficking generates also the killing of very young elephants. He was already monitored by police and the Conservation Justice Team when he transferred the contraband from his hiding. After he entered in a hotel and unpacked the contraband from his backpack, spreading it on the bed, he was arrested in the act.
- An ivory trafficker was arrested after being a fugitive for 5 years. The Cameroonian trafficker was arrested in 2012 in the act of ivory trafficking but during the operation he shot the legal adviser of AALF in the leg and escaped. An arrest warrant was issued against him, but he escaped to Camer-

oon and disappeared. A complaint was therefore lodged against him for attempted manslaughter. Six months ago he again appeared in his village in Gabon and was followed by AALF team. The police arrested him in his house.

- 3 traffickers arrested with 4 tusks and a leopard skin. The first of them was arrested in the act, when he attempted to sell the tusks. He revealed 2 more traffickers, who were arrested in their house, the leopard skin was seized from them.
- A meeting was held with the Anti-Poaching Director to plan training for wildlife officers in criminal procedures and fight against wildlife crime.



5 ivory traffickers arrested in Gabon in 3 different operations, one of them after being on the run for 5 years



A Malian ivory trafficker arrested with 6 tusks weighting 10 kg.

## Republic of Guinea – GALF

- One of the biggest ape traffickers in the African continent arrested. Abdourahamane Sidibe is responsible for sending more than 130 chimps as well as gorillas, mandrills and even manatees to China and other countries. The head of a crime family, he was convicted in absentia for 5 years

in jail together with the case of the former CITES head Doumbouya. The GALF team spent years investigating these criminal networks. Now, a year after the sentence was handed, they finally tracked him down and got him arrested. His empire developed over more than 30 years of traffick-

ing as members of the family were spread across the continent creating a vast and effective criminal network. Sidibe the father spent the last year hiding in several African, Arab, and Asian countries.

- The GALF team closely cooperated with the EAGLE - Uganda team in an unprecedented arrest operation, leading to a crackdown on a West African criminal syndicate, trafficking ivory and rhino horns.
- A series of meetings were held with several officials to support the fight against wildlife crime including the CITES Focal Point, the Wildlife Crime Focal Point of the Ministry of Environment, Water and Forestry, the Focal Point of Wildlife Crime of the Ministry of Justice, prosecutors, the INTERPOL focal point on wildlife crime, the Political Advisor of the US Embassy in Guinea, the Political Advisor of the EU Embassy and others.



*Abdourahamane Sidibe is responsible for sending more than 130 chimps as well as gorillas, mandrills and even manatees to China and other countries.*



**Abdourahamane Sidibe, a major wildlife trafficker of Guinean nationality, was arrested on Friday 18th February in Conakry in a special operation by Interpol NCB and the NGO WARA via its EAGLE-Guinea project.**

One of the biggest ape traffickers in the African continent, Abdourahamane Sidibe was heading a crime family operating for over 30 years.

Abdourahamane Sidibé was condemned in absentia to 5 years in prison at the same time as Ansoumane Doumbouya, the former corrupt CITES chief of Guinea arrested in August 2015 following a WARA – EAGLE investigation. For years Ansoumane Doumbouya has fraudulently issued CITES permits to Abdourahamane Sidibé, facilitating the illegal export of many endangered species including 130 chimpanzees and 10 gorillas that have been illegally exported to China through this corrupt system of the CITES UN Convention permits.

The WARA investigation continued tracking the Sidibe family for five years as it was spread across the continent creating a vast and effective criminal network. Finally, the team managed to net the father and head of the criminal network. Sidibe, the father, spent the last year hiding in several African, Arab, and Asian countries.

The arrest of Abdourahamane Sidibe, one of the most important traffickers of wildlife and great apes in the African continent, is a landmark in the fight against ape trafficking and as more arrests are carried cracking down on this illegal business.

“For a long time, Guinea has been a central junction in the organized illegal trade in apes”, says Charlotte Houpline, the head of WARA and EAGLE - Guinea, the group behind the arrest, “for six years now we worked hard with the Guinean authorities to put behind bars the biggest of these traffickers and the highest corrupt officials that help them, cracked down on trafficking criminal families and created deterrent. Still there is much more to be done.”



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## Togo – EAGLE Togo

- EAGLE – Togo focused on training and testing new team members, strengthening external relations, legal registration of EAGLE – Togo, moving into the new office and getting the structural foundation of the project further in place.
- Ofir Drori, the Founding Director of EAGLE, conducted another mission to support the development of the new project. Rens Ilgen continues his long term mission as the Replication Assistant Officer.
- Effort on investigations strengthened in order to get first operations soon. 2 investigators on test and 1 online investigator continued their test period.
- A meeting was held with the Director of Cabinet of the General Director of the Gendarmerie, where Ofir Drori, the Replication Assistant and the Coordination Assistant presented the new phase of the project and discussed the prospects for collaboration.
- Ofir Drori, the Coordination Assistant and Replication Assistant met with the US Ambassador to update him on the new phases of the project and to discuss support in the fight against wildlife crime.
- Ofir Drori and the Coordination Assistant met with the Highest Authority of the Fight Against Corruption and the Assimilated Infractions (HALCIA) to discuss the development of the project and the collaboration.
- More meetings with authorities were held, for example with the President of the Supreme Council of Magistrates to update them on the development of the project.
- The intense recruitment process continued to select a media officer and more investigators and legal advisors.

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## Senegal - SALF

- Cecile Bloch, the Coordination Assistant, traveled to Cameroon for training with the LAGA team as a part of her preparation for being appointed the Coordinator of SALF.
- The Coordination Assistant met with the President of the Environment Unit of the National Assembly and a forged a partnership with it. They agreed on a training course next month for 12 MPs and 12 locally elected representatives, focusing on wildlife crime and corruption and getting stronger penalties handed by the judiciary for wildlife cases.
- A meeting was held with the Internal Security Service of the French Embassy to establish the 2017 training program for the defense and security forces and to continue wildlife enforcement operations with the CAAT at Dakar International Airport.
- A meeting with the Customs Department of the French Embassy was held to continue the effective collaboration between French Customs and SALF and to assess the needs for training for Customs in Senegal in 2017.
- Recruitment process started to strengthen the legal and investigation departments of SALF.

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## Benin – AALF-B

- The legal team followed the case of 2 traffickers arrested in January with 16 sea-turtle shells in the capital city. The main trafficker was condemned and sentenced to 3 months in prison and to pay about 2,000 USD on fines and damages.

- The US Ambassador and three of her collaborators visited the office of Nature Tropical and discussed with the AALF-B team the possibilities of cooperation and support to the fight against wildlife crime.
- The Coordinator and the Coordination Assistant held a series of meetings with authorities to dis-

cuss ongoing cases of wildlife crime including the State Counsel of Cotonou and his Substitute concerning the case of ivory seized in a home by the police station of Aidjédo, one police commissioner, 3 Gendarmerie commanders, wildlife officers and others.

## Uganda - EAGLE Uganda

- 1.3 tons of ivory seized and 3 traffickers arrested in a crackdown on a West African criminal syndicate. Kromah Moazu, the main trafficker arrested is at the center of a vast ring of organized wildlife criminals, dealing in multi millions dollars illicit profits. He is connected to, at least, 4 other major criminal syndicates in Africa. He is also in charge of supplying rhino horns and ivory to the biggest wildlife criminal syndicates known worldwide - in Laos, Thailand and Vietnam. He was arrested together with 2 Guinean nationals during a raid of the fortified house that was used to hide contraband stocks. An EAGLE Network long term investigation and cross-country collaboration with GALF team exposed the criminal ring specializing in large scale trafficking of both ivory as well as rhino horns.
- A Senior Presidential Adviser and two other traffickers were arrested with 183 kg of hippo teeth in a suburb of the capital city. The contraband was concealed in the advisor's private car. A live Leopard Tortoise and several shells of tortoises were found in his home after the arrest. The presi-

dency of Uganda sent a clear message after the arrest distancing itself from the illegal activity and condemning it. This has been a victory in the fight against corruption and complicity.

- An ivory trafficker arrested with 63 kg of ivory and a bribe attempt was combated. This woman trafficker was followed by EAGLE Uganda team for several months, as she was involved in more trafficking cases. She brought the contraband to a hotel in a northern part of the country on a motorbike with her companion, and was arrested during an attempt to sell it. She has been trafficking ivory for more than 3 years. Her accomplice escaped during the night before the arrest and arrest war-



*A Senior Presidential Adviser and two other traffickers were arrested with 183 kg of hippo teeth*



*An ivory trafficker arrested with 63 kg of ivory and a bribe attempt was combated.*



3 traffickers arrested in the North-East part of the country with live Giant pangolin and 10 kg of pangolin scales.



2 traffickers arrested in Kampala with 4.5 kg of pangolin scales and a skin of an aardvark.

rant was issued against him. 2 relatives of the trafficker, both police officers, tried to bribe the police to get her freed.

- 3 traffickers arrested in the North-East part of the country with live Giant pangolin and 10 kg of pangolin scales. All of them have been trafficking for years. They resisted the arrest violently and they remain behind bars awaiting trial. The pangolin was handed to UWA officers for treatment and care.
- 2 traffickers arrested in Kampala with 4.5 kg of pangolin scales and a skin of an aardvark. It's

the first time that we saw this animal in the illegal trade, even the traffickers were not sure what kind of skin it was, but it did not prevent them from illegal trafficking it. They arrived to the capital city with the contraband concealed in a cement bag and tried to sell it at a gas station, but they were arrested in the act. They have been trafficking pangolin scales for many years.

- 4 team members participated in a training organized by Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) on illicit money flows and financial crimes.

## Madagascar - ALARM

- 3 reptile traffickers, arrested in November 2016 with 9 Radiated Tortoises were condemned and sentenced to 10 months in prison and to pay over 3,000 USD as fine each.
- The coordinator met with the Minister of Public Security. During the joint meeting with the Executive Director of Transparency International – Madagascar Initiative and General Director of BIANCO they discussed the joint initiative by BIANCO, TIIM and AVG/ALARM requesting the four ministers concerned (Environment, Justice, Gendarmerie and Police) to launch similar action plans to fight against forest resources trafficking. As a result, the agreement between the four ministers was signed.
- The coordinator met with the General Director of Customs to discuss the possibility of training for

custom officers on identification of contraband and other cooperation with ALARM.

- The coordinator met with the Secretary General of the Ministry of Environment, Ecology and Forestry. She committed to strengthen collaboration with ALARM in all of the 22 regions of Madagascar and to the fight against all forms of trafficking of protected species throughout the national territory.
- Nicolas Charron, the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer conducted a mission to Madagascar to support a recruitment of new team members, to select a new Coordination Assistant and test the new selected team members.
- Intensive recruitment process continued and a new candidate for the Coordination Assistant was taken for test period.





## 1.3 ton of ivory seized and 3 traffickers arrested in a crackdown on a West African criminal syndicate.

The 2 Guinean nationals and one Liberian were arrested during a raid of the fortified house that was used to hide contraband stocks.

Kromah Moazu, the main trafficker arrested is at the center of a vast ring of organized wildlife criminals, dealing in multi millions dollars illicit

profits. He is connected to at least 4 other major criminal syndicates in Africa. He is also in charge of supplying rhino horns and ivory to the biggest wildlife criminal syndicates known worldwide - in Laos, Thailand and Vietnam. He was arrested together with 2 Guinean nationals during a raid of the fortified house that was used to hide contraband stocks.

An EAGLE Network long term investigation and cross-country collaboration with GALF team exposed the criminal ring specializing in large scale trafficking of both ivory as well as rhino horns. Their activities connected a dozen more countries, the most prominent of them is Vietnam – the chief player in the illegal trade in rhino horn.

One of the three was already arrested in Uganda and escaped, allegedly using corruption and complicity to evade justice. He was subject to an arrest warrant in Uganda and was tracked by EAGLE Network investigation in his hiding in Guinea and followed back to Uganda.

The ring was recorded negotiating a bribe of 50,000 USD to law enforcement officials. Corruption has been central in their modus operandi.

The traffickers are also connected to other seizures including 790 kg of ivory seized in Uganda's airport last March destined to Singapore and concealed in barrels of Shea Butter - an extract of the nut of the African shea tree, is an ivory-colored fat often used in cosmetics.

## Headquarters

- Nicolas Charron, the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer conducted a mission to Madagascar to support a recruitment of new team members, to select a new Coordination Assistant and test the new selected team members.
- Ofir Drori, the Founding Director, conducted a mission to Togo to support the development of the new team and to help with external relations.
- Ofir Drori trained 38 magistrates from Gabon, Congo, Ghana, Nigeria, Togo, Benin and Ivory Coast on fighting against corruption at a workshop organized by the US Department of Justice and WA-BICC in Togo.

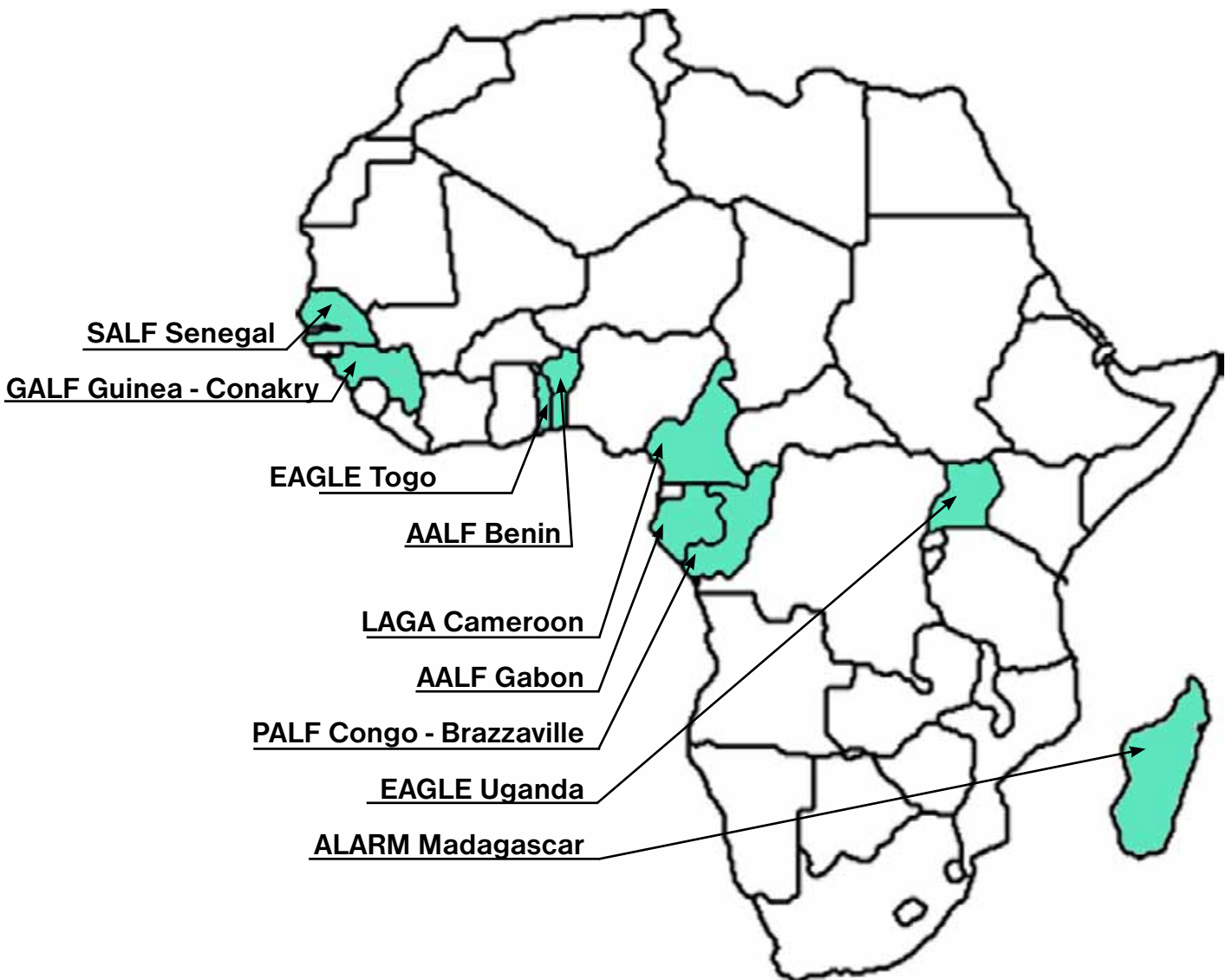
## International Media Coverage

- An article in le Point about the two arrests in Guinea and Uganda – the biggest ape trafficker and the crackdown on a West African ivory trafficking criminal syndicate, dealing in multi millions dollars illicit profits with connection to other major criminal syndicates in Africa and supplying rhino horns and ivory to the biggest wildlife criminal syndicates known worldwide (in French):

[Link to the article](#)

The **EAGLE NETWORK** – LAGA, PALF, AALF, GALF, EAGLE Togo, SALF, AALF-B, EAGLE Uganda, ALARM Cameroon, Congo, Gabon, Guinea, Togo, Senegal, Benin, Uganda, Madagascar

# 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 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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