



**EAGLE**

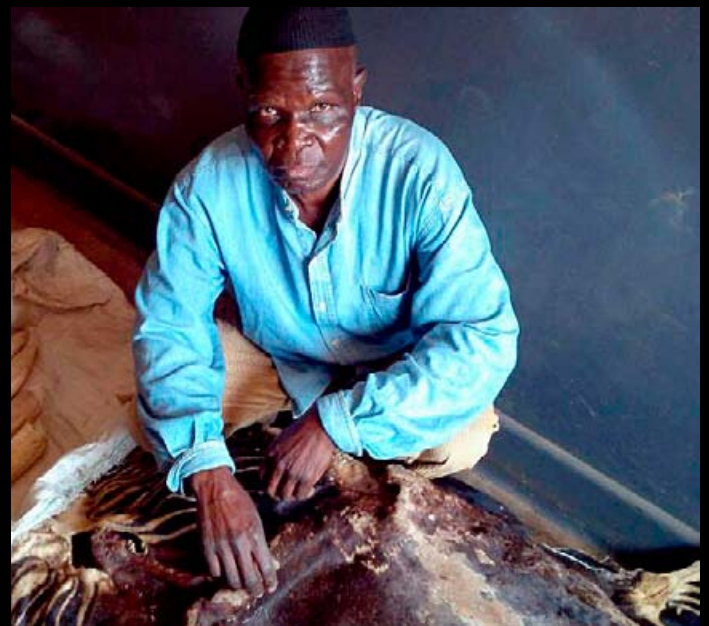
July 2017  
EAGLE Network

# Wildlife Law Enforcement Briefing

- ✓ *31 wildlife traffickers arrested in 5 countries*
- ✓ *8 traffickers arrested with 3 tons of pangolin scales and network dismantled in Ivory Coast*
- ✓ *8 ivory traffickers arrested in Uganda in 5 different operations*
- ✓ *6 ivory traffickers arrested in 3 different operations in Gabon*
- ✓ *5 ivory traffickers arrested with 4 tusks in Benin*
- ✓ *Corrupt police officer that released traffickers is slammed jail time in Guinea*
- ✓ *Okapi trafficker arrested in Uganda in first push against international trade in this endangered animal.*



*8 traffickers arrested with 3 tons of pangolin scales in a crackdown on an international trafficking network in Ivory Coast.*



*A major trafficker arrested with okapi skin and 2 ivory tusks in Uganda.*

# Summary

31 wildlife traffickers were arrested in 5 countries.

8 traffickers arrested with 3 tons of pangolin scales in a crackdown on an international trafficking network in Ivory Coast. The young team showed high level of performance giving more hope for the fast development of our latest replication. Investigation continues on international links with at least 6 other countries including China. Some of the contraband was concealed in a primary school with the logic that such an innocent location would never be searched. Thousands of pangolins had to be killed for this shipment alone, and this criminal network was regularly carrying such a magnitude of pangolins' slaughter.



*8 traffickers arrested with 3 tons of pangolin scales in Ivory Coast*

8 ivory traffickers were arrested in Uganda in 5 different operations. An ivory trafficker was arrested with 54 kg ivory in west of the country. He is a shopkeeper, dealing in coffee and running a bar, using his business as a cover for his criminal activity. 4 traffickers were arrested with one large and 8 small tusks, weighing 58 kg, in the West of the country. One of them is a pastor, another one, a repeat offender, was already arrested in EAGLE operation in August last year but sentenced to pay a fine and released. His re-arrest highlights the need for stronger punishments in Uganda. An ivory trafficker was arrested with over 33 kg ivory in West of the country. After several Christian priests arrested, the team got a member of the Illuminate cult. He was regularly trafficking ivory, supplied to him by a corrupt official of UWA. He was already arrested twice for trafficking in wildlife. An ivory trafficker was arrested with 26kg of ivory in the west of the country. She had been involved in trafficking together with her husband for years, using their restaurant as a safe place for their illegal business.

6 ivory traffickers were arrested in 3 different operations in Gabon. 2 ivory traffickers arrested with 4 elephant tusks, one of them was an operator of a

logging company, the other one, a Cameroonian, arranged the transaction. They were swiftly prosecuted and sentenced to 6 months in jail and to pay over 7,000 USD in fines and damages. 3 ivory traffickers arrested with 2 tusks. An ivory trafficker arrested with 17 elephant tusks and a leopard skin in the north of the country. The Burkina Faso national was arrested in a private house during an attempt to sell the ivory destined to Cameroon.

5 ivory traffickers arrested with 4 tusks in Benin. 3 members of a well-organized criminal ring were arrested in the act. They had been trafficking in ivory for many years, collaborating with poachers in the nearby W National Park. Bribing attempts to the gendarmerie were observed and combated. An arrest warrant was issued against two more ring members, who remained on the run for more than two weeks before getting arrested and jailed as well.

A corrupt police officer, responsible for releasing a trafficker arrested last month has been prosecuted and sentenced to 2 months in jail for complicity in the escape of the trafficker in Guinea.

A major trafficker arrested with okapi skin and 2 ivory tusks in Uganda. Having connection to criminal rings in Central and West Africa, he had traded okapi skins in the past highlighting the illegal trade in such an endangered animal. The Okapi, often called "forest giraffe" is an endangered relative of the giraffe that can be found only in Ituri forest in DRC.



*4 traffickers were arrested with one large and 8 small tusks in Uganda*

## Cameroon – LAGA

- A trafficker arrested with 2 ivory tusks, weighing 18 kg in an area infamous for corruption and complicity between wildlife criminals and local authorities. Last year the trafficker narrowly escaped arrest in the same town following an information leak orchestrated by local officials involved in the operation. The area, infested with numerous traffickers, is notoriously challenging for wildlife law enforcement operations, therefore this time the operation team had to come all the way from the regional office to avoid any leaks. A corrupt attempt was even made by some local gendarmes to stop the car ferrying the team and the trafficker out of the town.
- The Deputy Director participated as one of the moderators at the closing ceremony of the Mentor PoP fellowship programme sponsored by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. LAGA was one of the mentors of the programme that lasted two and a half years.
- The Interim Director returned to Cameroon after a two-week coordination assistance mission to the young Ivory Coast replication project.
- The head of legal department of LAGA arrived to Senegal to help with building the new team.



*A trafficker arrested with 2 ivory tusks, weighing 18 kg in an area infamous for corruption and complicity between wildlife criminals and local authorities.*

## Congo – PALF

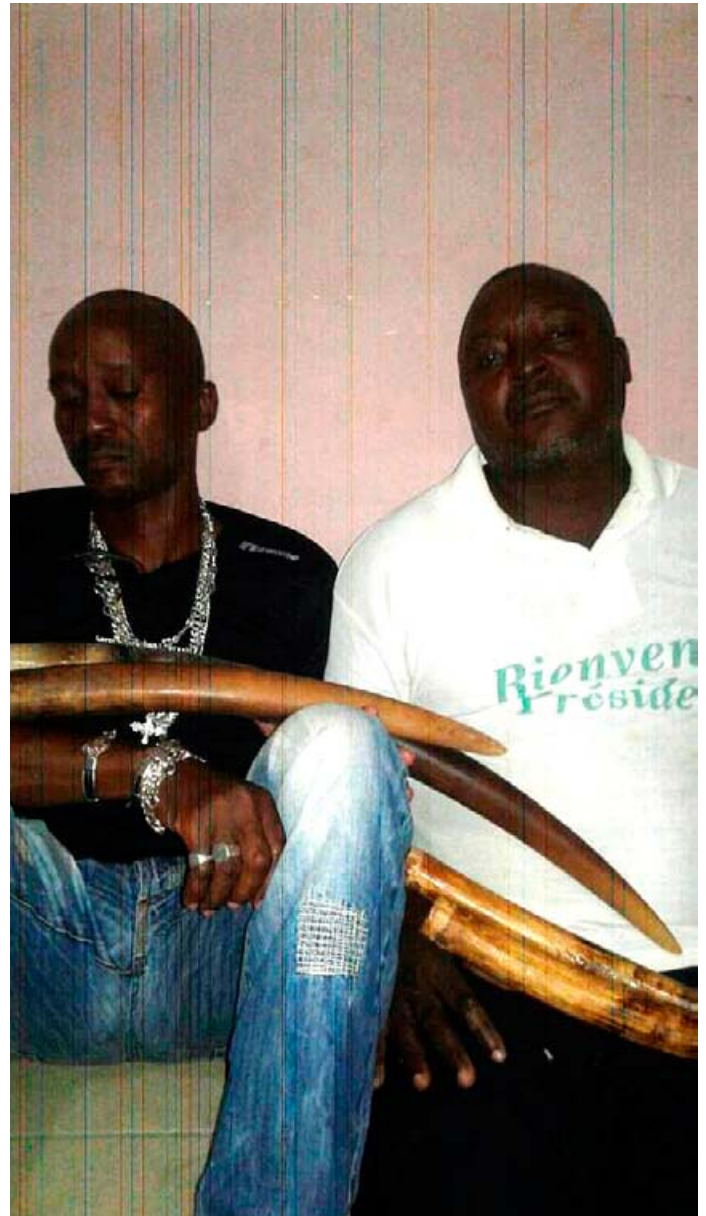
- The coordinator and the legal team met several times with representatives of WCS and The Aspinall Foundation, WWF, African Parks, to discuss mutual collaboration and actions.
- She had a meeting with the State Counsel's Office, the Judges of the Court of Ouessou and the Departmental Director of the Forest Economy to discuss the case of the organized escape of the ivory trafficker sentenced to 2 years imprisonment.
- She held several meetings with regional authorities, including several State Counsels, the Departmental Commander of Gendarmerie, the Departmental Directors of Ministry of Environment and the Prefects of the Departments.
- The coordinator was on medical leave that slowed down some of the activities.

# Gabon – AALF

- 2 ivory traffickers arrested with 4 elephant tusks in Central Gabon. One of them, an operator of a logging company, owned the contraband, while the other one, a Cameroonian, arranged the transaction. They had been trafficking ivory in the region, still rich in elephant population, for a long time. They were surprised and arrested in the act when trying to sell the ivory in their house in a centre of a small town. They were swiftly prosecuted and sentenced to 6 months in jail and to pay over 7,000 USD in fines and damages.
- 3 ivory traffickers arrested with 2 tusks. They were arrested in their car as they were transporting the ivory.
- An ivory trafficker arrested with 17 elephant tusks and a leopard skin in the north of the country. The Burkina Faso national was arrested in a private house during an attempt to sell the ivory destined to Cameroon.
- 3 traffickers, arrested in May with 2 leopard skins and other body parts, were sentenced to 6 months in jail and to pay 3,500 USD in fines and damages.
- Series of meetings were held by the coordinator and legal team with the Gabonese authorities, including the General Secretary of the Ministry of Water and Forests, the General Directorate of In-



An ivory trafficker arrested with 17 elephant tusks and a leopard skin



2 ivory traffickers arrested with 4 elephant tusks in Central Gabon.

vestigations and Judicial Police, the State Counsels in Franceville, Libreville and Lambaréne, the Provincial Directors of Water and Forests, the Pro-

vincial Heads of the Joint Post of Interior Intelligence and Military security.

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## Republic of Guinea – GALF

- A corrupt police officer, responsible for releasing a trafficker arrested last month has been prosecuted and sentenced to 2 months in jail for complicity in the escape of the trafficker.
- The coordinator held a series of meetings with Guinea authorities including the Focal point of the

Wildlife Crime of the Ministry of Environment, the Focal Point for CITES, the head of INTERPOL, the general Advocate of the appeal court in Conakry, the State Counsels and Judges of several courts of the first instances and others.

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## Togo – EAGLE Togo

- The coordinator and the deputy coordinator held a series of meetings with Togolese authorities. They met with the Head of the Mixed Unit of Container Control to discuss cooperation during future operations, the head of Interpol has been met to strengthen collaboration and solve previous issues.
- They held meetings with the Regional Director of the Police of Kara and Cinkassé to discuss future operations, as well as an agent of the Regional Of-

vice of the Ministry of Environment and the deputy of State Counsel in Kara.

- The coordinator also met two legal advisers of the Ministry of Environment to accelerate the process of signing the Memorandum of Understanding between EAGLE-Togo and the Ministry.
- Intense recruitment process continued and more investigators started their test.

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## Senegal - SALF

- New legal advisors and investigators started their test period. More investigations were carried on to bring first results in August.
- The head of legal department of LAGA arrived to Senegal to help with building the new team.
- The coordinator held a meeting with the Legal Adviser and the Technical Adviser of the Minister of the Environment to discuss the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and to discuss the management of the contraband seized during the arrest operations on the Senegalese territory. A letter was sent to the Minister to obtain his agreement with establishing a safe storage

place for contraband in collaboration with SALF.

- The coordinator and the legal team met with the head of the Multi-purpose Intervention Brigade and the Department of Internal Security of the French Embassy to talk about handling the positional violence during arrest operations.
- The coordinator met with the representative of the Ministry of Environment to discuss an establishment of a special wildlife crime brigade within the Ministry of the Environment, which goal would be to strengthen and facilitate presence of SALF teams in ports, airports and railway stations.

## Benin – AALF-B

- 5 ivory traffickers arrested with 4 tusks in northern part of the country. 3 members of a well-organized criminal ring were arrested in the act. They had been trafficking in ivory for many years, collaborating with poachers in the nearby W National Park. Bribing attempts to the gendarmerie were observed and combated. An arrest warrant was issued against two more ring members, who remained on the run for more than two weeks before getting arrested and jailed as well.
- 3 legal advisors and 3 investigators continued their test period.
- The coordinator held a series of meetings with Be-

nin authorities including the State Counsels and Judges of several courts of the first instances, the General Director of W National Park and African Parks Network (APN), the General Director of DG-FEC and others.



5 ivory traffickers arrested with 4 tusks in northern part of the country.

## Uganda - EAGLE Uganda

- A major trafficker arrested with okapi skin and 2 ivory tusks. Having connection to criminal rings in Central and West Africa, he had traded okapi skins in the past highlighting the illegal trade in such an endangered animal. The Okapi, often called “forest giraffe” is an endangered relative of the giraffe that can be found only in Ituri forest in DRC. This giant animal is one of the oldest surviving mammals on earth. The stripes it has on its behind helps in camouflage as it looks like streaks of sunlight filtering through the trees. These stripes are unique to each individual and used for identification so you can say his ID is on his butt.
- 2 traffickers arrested in the West of the country with 140 hippo teeth weighing 56 kg. They have been trafficking ivory and hippo ivory for years, bringing it across the border from Congo. They were arrested in the act when they attempted to sell the hippo ivory in a hotel.
- An ivory trafficker arrested with 54 kg ivory in west of the country. He is a shopkeeper, dealing in coffee and running a bar, using his business as a cover for his criminal activity. He was regu-



2 traffickers arrested in the West of the country with 140 hippo teeth



A major trafficker arrested with okapi skin and 2 ivory tusks.

cult. He was regularly trafficking ivory, supplied to him by a corrupt official of UWA. He was already arrested twice for trafficking in wildlife. In 2015 he was arrested and convicted for ivory trafficking, and the same year for providing a hyena liver which was intended to reportedly poison some high ranking government officials.

■ An ivory trafficker arrested with 26kg of ivory in the west of the country.

larily trading ivory in his house, adjacent to his bar. Here he was arrested in the act trying to sell the 6 tusks.

■ 4 traffickers arrested with one large and 8 small tusks, weighing 58 kg, in the West of the country. One of them is a pastor, another one, a repeat offender, was already arrested in EAGLE operation in August last year but sentenced to pay a fine and released. His re-arrest highlights the need for stronger punishments in Uganda. The gang had been trafficking ivory across the border from DRC for years. The large tusk of 43 kg had a projectile lodged in.

■ A trafficker arrested with 38 hippo teeth in Kampala. A businessman, dealing in art and craft was arrested in the act during an attempt to sell the hippo teeth concealed in a box. He has trafficked them from Queen Elisabeth National Park, where hippos are still massacred for the teeth, which are used as a substitute for elephant ivory.

■ An ivory trafficker arrested with over 33 kg ivory in West of the country. After several Christian priests arrested, the team got a member of the Illuminate



An ivory trafficker arrested with 54 kg ivory in west of the country

She had been involved in trafficking together with her husband for years, using their restaurant as a safe place for their illegal business. She was arrested in the act when she attempted to sell the ivory.

- An ivory trafficker, arrested in March 2017, was convicted and sentenced to 8 months in jail. He was granted bail during the process and ran away, but an arrest warrant has been issued against him and he was swiftly re-arrested and kept in jail until the final decision.
- Some of the team members participated in a one-week training on personal security to increase the team members' capacity of caring for their security at work and in home.
- A process of creating a Wildlife Crime Joint Task Force comprising of Uganda Police, the Wildlife Authority Directorate of Public Prosecutions Office and NRCN has started.



*A trafficker arrested with 38 hippo teeth in Kampala.*

## Madagascar - ALARM

- The ALARM project has been temporarily suspended for organizational reasons.

## Ivory Coast - EAGLE Ivory Coast

- 8 traffickers arrested and 3 tons of pangolin scales seized in a crackdown on an international trafficking network. The team, lead by the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, collaborated with the Ivorian forces on this action, carried out together



er with several other EAGLE teams from other countries. The young team showed high level of performance giving more hope for the fast development of our latest replication. Investigation continues on international links with at least 6 other countries including China. Some of the contraband was concealed in a primary school with the logic that such an innocent location would never be searched. Thousands of pangolins had to be killed for this shipment alone, and this criminal network was regularly carrying such a magnitude of pangolins' slaughter.

- The interim director of LAGA arrived to Ivory Coast to coordinate the activities of the EAGLE - Ivory



Coast project. He continued the recruitment process.

- After his mission the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer arrived to Ivory Coast to coordinate the project and test the newly selected activists.
- 4 new investigators started their test period during this month.
- The Monitoring and Evaluation Officer held several meetings with local authorities including the Director of UCT.



*8 traffickers arrested and 3 tons of pangolin scales seized in a crackdown on an international trafficking network. Some of the contraband was concealed in a primary school with the logic that such an innocent location would never be searched.*

## Headquarters

- Nicolas Charron, the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer arrived to Ivory Coast to coordinate the project, lead an operation and continue the recruitment process.
- Ofir Drori, the founding Director, travelled to Mozambique to strengthen cooperation with local actors as it is a trade hotspot with no enforcement. He had series of meetings and participated in a meeting for a strategy in setting a wildlife crime unit in Mozambique.
- Ofir Drori trained at the International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA) in Botswana wildlife officers and police.. There were 36 wildlife officers and police officers from 6 countries - Botswana, South Africa, Namibia, Zambia, Malawi and Kenya. ILEA is a US Government prestigious training program for enforcers from all over Africa. EAGLE has been asked to develop training on ethics and anti-corruption for ILEA's Wildlife Crime Course, which is being conducted for 7 years now.

## 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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