



EAGLE

# Wildlife Law

# Enforcement Briefing

- ✓ **16 traffickers arrested in 6 countries**
- ✓ **5 traffickers arrested in Benin in 2 operations, almost 200 skins of protected animals seized**
- ✓ **An ivory trafficker arrested in Togo with 2 elephant tusks**
- ✓ **A police officer arrested in Congo for trafficking leopard skin**
- ✓ **2 ape traffickers arrested in Cameroon with 4 chimpanzee skulls**
- ✓ **A case of 1 tonne of ivory seized in Uganda followed by EAGLE Uganda**
- ✓ **Saidou Mamadou Barry, the coordinator of GALF, has been awarded the Ian Redmond Conservation Award**

## Summary

16 wildlife criminals were arrested during operations held in 6 countries this month. The number is below the target of the EAGLE Network, which is one significant trafficker arrested per week in each country. Investigation efforts are intensified across the Network in order to improve output for the next months.

AALF-B team in Benin significantly improved its results by getting 5 traffickers arrested in 2 operations. In both cases large amounts of skins and other trophies of totally and partly protected species were seized. TALF team in Togo succeeded in bringing about the arrest of an ivory trafficker with 2 elephant tusks. 2 ape skull traffickers were arrested in Cameroon, and another 3 ivory traffickers were targeted, but in the end arrested only with 2 Kg of illicit gold, demonstrating the link between the two illegal trades. In Congo a police officer was arrested for trafficking a leopard skin, in Gabon a trafficker with 3 leopard skins was arrested.

A case of 1 tonne of ivory seized at Entebbe international airport is followed by the legal team of EAGLE Uganda.

Saidou Mamadou Barry, the GALF coordinator, was awarded Ian Redmond Conservation Award by GRASP (Great Apes Survival Partnership of UNEP), in appreciation of his contribution to protection of great apes.



*3 wildlife traffickers were arrested with 4 elephant feet, 2 leopard skins and scales of 2 pangolins in Benin.*

## Cameroon – LAGA

- 2 ape skull traffickers arrested trying to sell 4 chimpanzee skulls. Curiously enough, after an arrest of the traffickers who were found red-handed, illegally trafficking in the ape skulls, the Regional Delegate decided to release the traffickers after the writing of the complaint report and refused to prosecute them on grounds that the skulls were very old. This is clear breach of procedures and the Minister was informed about the situation and requested to bring the procedure back on the rails as demanded by the law.
- 3 traffickers arrested targeted for ivory trafficking. During their arrest 2 kg of illicit gold was found in their possession. While they will not be prosecuted for ivory trafficking, they will be prosecuted for gold trafficking. This is an important case linking wildlife trafficking with illicit gold trafficking.

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*2 kg of illicit gold seized in place of ivory from suspects who were investigated for their connection to an ivory ring. While the traffickers will not be prosecuted for ivory trafficking, they will be prosecuted for gold trafficking. This is an important case linking the wildlife trafficking with gold trafficking.*



## Congo – PALF

- A trafficker arrested in Congo with leopard skin and illegally held gun in an operation, carried out by police together with PALF activists and their sniffer dogs. When Cama and Rick entered a bus

they immediately found the suitcase of the police officer with the leopard skin and gun inside. The drunk criminal threatened the activists, and tried to scare them by calling a colonel, just before

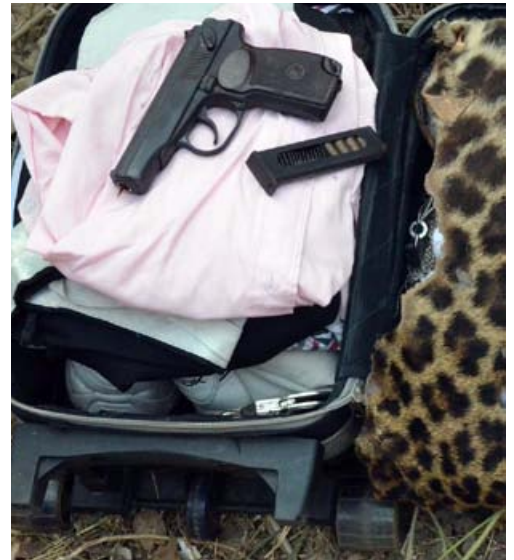


vomiting and getting arrested. Despite all corruption and traffic in influence attempts, the trafficker remains behind bars, awaiting trial.

- PALF Legal team followed up a case of parrot trafficking in north Congo. PALF had been investigating this network of traffickers for several weeks. 3 arrested traffickers were transferred to Ouesso

Prison after being held in custody in Kabo.

- PALF continues to push the Court in Brazzaville, as there is a suspicion about stealing ivory, which should had been stored there. According to a CITES decision from March 2013, all government held stockpiles of ivory should be inventoried.



A trafficker arrested in Congo with leopard skin and illegally held gun in Congo. When the sniffer dogs identified the suitcase, the owner, drunk police officer tried to scare the activists, just before vomiting and getting arrested.

## Gabon – AALF

- A trafficker arrested in Gabon with 3 leopard skins, a head and 7 teeth in a crackdown operation led by the AALF team and carried out by the forces of law and order (B2) and officials of Water and Forests in South of Gabon. He arrived to the town in the morning with his contraband hidden in a bag of rice. This case is yet another example to confirm the extent of organized illegal wildlife trafficking in the country. He has been sentenced 3 months and fine of 1,170 USD.
- 2 judgments were obtained and 2 criminals sentenced, one to a one-month imprisonment term and the other one for 3 months. Several others are awaiting trial.
- Military officer not prosecuted in a sig-



Huge elephant tusks as the ones seized (each weighed about 25 kg) are high value tusks compared to smaller ones and difficult to find them seized.



nificant case involving seizure of 150 kg of ivory in June this year. 2 traffickers also involved remain behind bars while awaiting trial but military officer with rank of major is not facing prosecution even though interrogated by the Police, Water and Forest officials and then the military. Military investigators pressured the other traffickers into changing their statements, this attempt to thwart investigation was exposed to media, US Embassy and other partners, and will become a topic of several more meetings with Ministers of Defence, Justice and the B2 chief.

- AALF coordinator travelled to Benin in order to make an assessment mission of the AALF-B project.
- Under the EAGLE Exchange Program, AALF assistant coordinator completed mission to Benin where training of one legal adviser commenced and two more from GALF Guinea trained.



*A trafficker arrested in Gabon with 3 leopard skins, a head and 7 teeth*

## Guinea – Conakry – GALF

- The battle against the illegal release of Yusuf Donzon and his accomplices arrested in March for wildlife trafficking continued. During an operation carried out in collaboration with Interpol NCB and the GALF team, they were found in possession of 6 crocodiles, a giant tortoise, 3 vultures and a Patas Monkey. GALF succeeded in ensuring the case was transferred to the Appeal Court in Conakry and referred to the General Counsel. Trial scheduled for beginning of August.
- GALF team met with several authorities to re-launch cooperation with Customs and Guinean diplomatic partners. Meetings were held with the US Embassy and the delegate of the European Union in Guinea, as well as with officials from the Minister of Justice.
- Under the framework of the EAGLE Exchange Programme, two legal advisers travelled to Benin to participate in a training led by the assistant coordinator and legal advisor from AALF – Gabon.
- GALF coordinator, Saidou Mamadou Barry, was awarded Ian Redmond Conservation Award by GRASP (Great Apes Survival Partnership of UNEP), in appreciation of his contribution to protection of great apes.



**Mamadou Saidou Barry**, the coordinator of GALF project, was awarded the Ian Redmond Conservation Award in July 2015. Guinea is a major hub for international wildlife trafficking. Among other wildlife contraband, great apes are illegally exported by organized criminal networks. To target this problem, the GALF Project (Guinée-Application de la Loi Faunique) was launched in February 2012 by WARA, within the EAGLE Network. Mamadou Saidou Barry served as assistant coordinator with Charlotte Houpline, the coordinator of GALF and director of WARA since then. In early 2015 he was appointed the Coordinator. "For several years I have had the chance to travel through the protected areas of Guinea while working on a pan-African inventory of apes." Saidou says about himself. "The conclusion is very bitter: wildlife is disappearing everywhere. I realized that it was the poaching and habitat destruction, going hand in hand with the lack of attention of the authorities. In fact, trafficking has considerable weight, it is a complex phenomenon and it is organized at national and international level, supported by corruption at all levels. All that undermines conservation efforts of various NGOs, who fail to stop the extinction of endangered victims of trafficking, as the most important effort has to be focused on the wildlife law enforcement. The battle I have been leading since mid-2012 with GALF is a personal conviction, motivated by a desire to make a change in my country that beats records of instability, impunity and corruption."

## Togo – TALFF

- An ivory trafficker arrested with 2 elephant tusks, weighing 4,4 kg. The trafficker is behind bars, waiting for the trial in Lomé.
- TALFF legal team followed 7 cases and provided legal support to the judge, who is in charge of the case of seizure of 2,215 kg of ivory in the port of Lomé. Three traffickers, one of them Vietnamese nationality, were arrested in January 2014, trying to traffic the ivory to Vietnam. This case will be ready for prosecution on August 5, 2015.
- A member of the team participated to a meeting on biodiversity and climate change in Lomé.



*An ivory trafficker arrested with 2 elephant tusks, weighting 4,4 kg.*





## C.A.R – RALF

- RALF project is frozen due to security problems in the country, no real activity was undertaken. This situation may continue for the next few months.

## SENEGAL - SALF

- The very successful operation against a gang of international elephant parts traffickers met a hurdle as the traffickers were released highlighting impunity in wildlife crime and the necessity to step up pressure on governments to effectively apply the law. SALF seized the occasion to strengthen relationships with viable local partners and wrote a letter to the French Ambassador reminding him of the importance of the case
- SALF insists on a post-assessment of this case in cooperation with the management of Water and Forests authority of Senegal, the CITES focal point, wildlife authority in charge and the CID (Criminal Investigation Division).
- The 2 legal advisors, who are on test period since June 2015, focused on becoming familiar with the code on wildlife and hunting, studied carefully the history of the closed cases and SALF operations realized in 2014/2015.
- The investigator, hired at the end of June went for training within EAGLE Network Exchange program to LAGA, Cameroon.

## Benin – AALF-B

- 3 wildlife traffickers were arrested with 4 elephant feet, 2 leopard skins and scales of 2 pangolins. The contraband of mainly totally and partially protected wildlife species included 50 chameleons, heads and skins of crocodile, skins of antelopes and civets and baboon heads. The three traffickers arrested during the operation now await prosecution while in prison. They face up to 5 years imprisonment according to the Beninese law. Illegal trafficking of this scale affects the species populations and the biodiversity of whole ecosystems.
- 2 traffickers arrested with 15 chameleons, 10 genet skins, 2 python skins and more than 50 antelopes skins during attempts at selling the contraband. A house search that followed the next day uncovered more contraband including totally and partially protected wildlife species bring the number of seized contraband



*3 wildlife traffickers were arrested with 4 elephant feet, 2 leopard skins and scales of 2 pangolins.*

- to 175. The traffickers are held in custody while awaiting their prosecution after the operation.
- During the first week of July and under the frame-





*3 wildlife traffickers were arrested with contraband of mainly totally and partially protected wildlife species including baboon heads.*

work of the EAGLE Exchange Program, a Gabonese legal adviser trained legal advisers in Benin and two from Guinea. The two Guinean legal advisers were in the country under the auspices of the same programme. The legal department was trained by legal advisor from Gabon together with two legal advisers from Guinea during the first week of July within the EAGLE Network exchange program.

officers to strengthen cooperation on the above mentioned cases.

- Exchanges have also been made with the Head of Forestry Inspection at Ouémé / Plateau about the wildlife trafficking in the region.
- The legal advisers of AALF-B participated at the three days of open doors, presenting the outcomes of the program of Ecosystems Alliance of Benin. The goal of their participation was questioning the thesis “Law enforcement exacerbates poverty in Benin”.



*2 traffickers arrested with 15 chameleons, 10 genets skins, 2 python skins and more than 50 antelopes skins, all together more than 175 pieces.*



# Uganda - EAGLE Uganda

- The legal department of EAGLE Uganda followed a case of seizure of almost one tonne of ivory at the Entebbe international airport. The consignment of 48 boxes was impounded by UWA, the aviation police and ENHAS (Entebbe Handling services) because the boxes did not have accompanying documents and the security stickers. UWA and NRCN activists participated at the inspection of the boxes, which revealed 412 pieces of ivory of the total weight 912 kg. The driver with Entebbe Cargo Handling Services who was driving the consignment within the airport was arrested.. The case is now jointly investigated by EAGLE Uganda, Uganda Revenue Authority and Aviation Police from Entebbe International Airport.



Approximately one tonne of ivory seized at the Entebbe International airport.



- 2 traffickers were arrested in an operation carried out by EAGLE Uganda, UWA and police during an attempt to sell seven pieces of python skin and three skins of monitor lizard. After the arrest the mayor of the district and some of the councilors flocked the police station, requesting on releasing the criminals in exchange for payment. Our team insisted in keeping them behind bars and they gave up on their bribing attempts to stop the court settlement.
- A trafficker arrested while selling three pairs of antelope horns and three antelope skins, which is illegal according to the Uganda Wildlife Protection Act. He is a dealer in crafts at a market in Kampala. After arresting, the court decided to release him at granted bail. He will face a trial in August.
- Ugandan court hands trafficker 15 months imprisonment sentence. The sentence is considered to be one of the most deterrent sentences ever handed by a court to a convicted wildlife trafficker in the country. EAGLE Uganda followed the court case after the arrest of the trafficker in Kampala with 31 live tortoises. He was charged at City Hall court with illegal possession of tortoises 7 more court cases were followed by EAGLE Uganda legal department, all of them still opened. 11 of the accused criminals remain behind bars, while 4 were granted a bail.

2 traffickers arrested during an attempt to sell seven pieces of python skin and three skins of monitor lizard.





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# Headquarters

- CCU assumes more responsibility and independence, as training phase ends.

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# International Media Coverage

- 2 traffickers were arrested in possession of 12 pieces of sawn ivory equal to 6 tusks totaling nearly 150 kg of ivory in Gabon last month. This case appeared in the centre of many international media.

[Link to Les Voix du Monde \(in French\)](#)

[Link to BMF TV \(in French\)](#)

[Link to Le Matin \(in French\)](#)

[Link to AfricaTime.com \(in French\)](#)

- Low deterrent sentences deal with crimes against surround in Gabon – coverage at Kanal7, a Gabonese Channel but broadcast also on Canalsat, available in all Africa. In Gabon, killing an elephant, ivory or leopard skins trafficking, as well as any other wildlife crime, leads only to low sentences. The prison sentences are 22 days on average, the maximum possible penalty is six months. AALF denounce this form of impunity that is likely to encourage any kind of trafficking.

[Link to record of coverage at Kanal7](#)

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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 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: 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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