

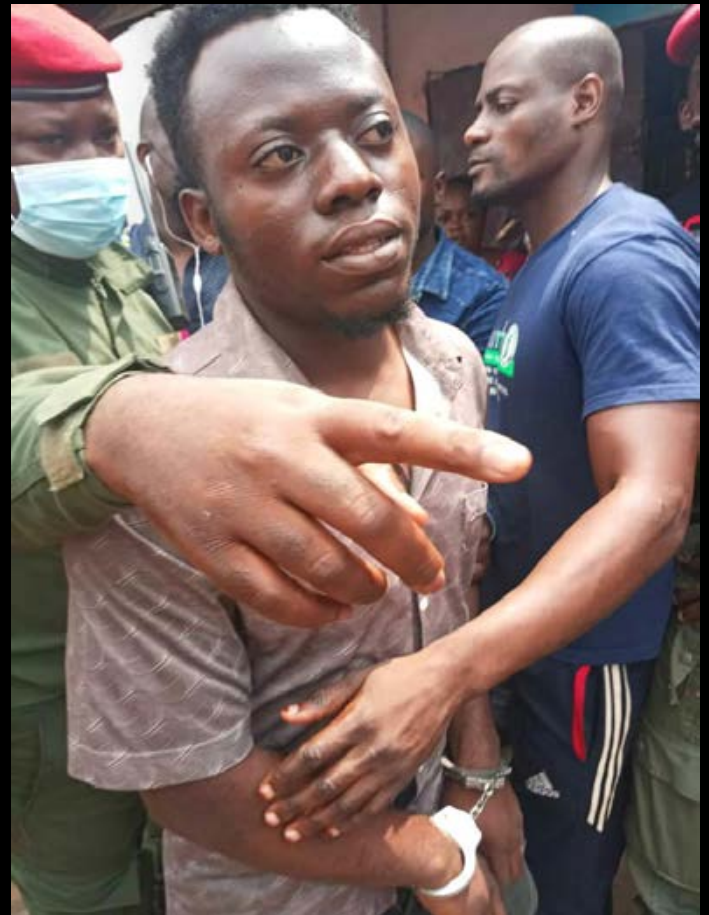


EAGLE

July 2021
EAGLE Network

Wildlife Law Enforcement Briefing

- ✓ *7 wildlife traffickers arrested in 3 countries*
- ✓ *A pangolin scales trafficker arrested in Cameroon with 3 leopard skins and 331 kg of pangolin scales during a crackdown on a regional criminal group*
- ✓ *A trafficker arrested and a mandrill rescued in Cameroon*
- ✓ *A trafficker arrested and another mandrill rescued in Cameroon, this is the fourth mandrill rescued this year.*
- ✓ *3 traffickers arrested with 2 tusks in Côte d'Ivoire*
- ✓ *A convicted trafficker who was on the run, arrested in Congo*



Summary

A pangolin scales trafficker arrested in Cameroon with 3 leopard skins and 331 kg of pangolin scales. The pangolin scales were packed in 32 sacks and found in several storerooms during the crackdown on a regional criminal group. He was arrested in a dangerous neighbourhood known to be hiding several wildlife traffickers in Cameroon's capital city. The arrest is part of an intricate investigations into this major criminal group that has tentacles in the Central African sub region and in Nigeria.

A trafficker arrested and a mandrill rescued in Cameroon. He is a city council worker with connections to high officials in a popular seaside resort town in Cameroon. The female was found chained to a very inhospitable cage and placed in open space at the residence of the trafficker. She was immediately released and moved to the Yaounde zoo for further care.

A trafficker arrested and another mandrill rescued in Cameroon. The animal was weak, fragile and mal-

nourished. A cord that was tied around the waist of the little female inflicted injuries on her and left a gaping wound. Immediately, the rescue team released the animal of the unbearable chain and instant first aid measures applied. This is the fourth baby mandrill the Team has rescued this year.

A convicted trafficker who was on the run, arrested in Congo. The fugitive was sentenced to a 2-year prison sentence earlier this year. He was one of two traffickers arrested in October 2019 with a leopard skin. Both were unfortunately released on bail in November 2019 and they never returned to face trial. One is still on the run.

3 traffickers arrested in Côte d'Ivoire with 2 tusks. The traffickers were arrested in their car on a small discreet street where they were about to carry the transaction. They arrived with the tusks concealed in a bag inside the trunk of the car. They confessed trying to sell the tusks weighing 23 kg to another trafficker who is on the run.



A pangolin scales trafficker arrested in Cameroon with 3 leopard skins and 331 kg of pangolin scales



3 traffickers arrested in Côte d'Ivoire with 2 tusks

Cameroon – LAGA

■ A pangolin scales trafficker arrested with 3 leopard skins and 331 kg of pangolin scales. The pangolin scales were packed in 32 sacks and found in several storerooms during the crackdown on a regional criminal group. He was arrested in a dangerous neighbourhood known to be hiding several wildlife traffickers in Cameroon's capital city. The arrest is part of an intricate investigations

into this major criminal group that has tentacles in the Central African sub region and in Nigeria. It could provide a trove of valuable information into the ring that involves several traffickers including some closely related family members. The trafficking ring had regularly been sending huge quantities of pangolin scales to Nigeria. Some of its members are based near the Cameroon, Gabon,



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and Equatorial Guinea borders raising possibility that some of the contraband is coming in from these countries. This seizure alone represents up to 1 600 killed pangolins (depending on the species).

- A trafficker arrested and a mandrill rescued. He is a city council worker with connections to high officials in a popular seaside resort town in Cameroon. The female was found chained to a very inhospitable cage and placed in open space at the residence of the trafficker. She was immediately released and moved to the zoo for further care. The trafficker bought the animal in a village some 78 km from the seaside resort town.
- A trafficker arrested and another mandrill rescued. The animal was weak, fragile and malnourished. A cord that was tied around the waist of the little female inflicted injuries on her and left a gaping wound. Immediately, the rescue team released the animal of the unbearable chain and instant first aid measures applied. A veterinarian was brought to apply treatment to the animal before she was moved to the Yaounde zoo for special care and comfort. This is the fourth baby mandrill the Team has rescued this year.
- The Deputy Director held a zoom meeting with Lucie Bird of Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime to discuss wildlife trafficking hotspots and routes in the country.
- The Deputy Director joined a one-month long US



The LAGA Deputy Director (left) during prime time news on the seizure of 331 pangolin scales in Cameroon

State Department's International Visitor Leadership Programme. The theme of this session is Combatting Wildlife Trafficking; it is being done virtually because of the Covid 19 pandemic.

- The Head of the Legal Department and some legal advisers held several meetings with State Counsels on cases pending at the various jurisdictions.

- The Deputy Director was a guest on prime-time news on the channel CRTV News. The national TV channel broadcast the arrest of a pangolin trafficker with 331kg of pangolin scales.

Congo – PALF

- A convicted trafficker who was on the run, arrested. The fugitive was sentenced to a 2-year prison sentence earlier this year. He was one of two traffickers arrested in October 2019 with a leopard skin. Both were unfortunately released on bail in November 2019 and they never returned to face trial. One is still on the run.
- Upon the request of the Jane Goodall Institute, the Legal Team provided technical assistance in the prosecution of 3 traffickers following the killing of a chimpanzee at the Tchimpounga Reserve.
- The Legal Team provided technical assistance in the prosecution of 2 traffickers following their arrest by wildlife officials and the police for the killing of 2 chimpanzees and an elephant with a Kalachnikov. They are behind bars awaiting trial.
- Luc Mathot, the Founding Director of the EAGLE Network arrived in Brazzaville to support the Coordinator on management and external relations. Accompanied by the Aspinall Foundation Representative to Congo, they held a meeting with officials of the Ministry of Forestry Economy and Sustainable Development to finalise the MoU with PALF.
- Luc Mathot and the Coordinator, accompanied by the Aspinall Foundation Representative, held meetings with the Director of Cabinet of the Ministry of Justice, officials of the US Embassy, German Embassy, the EU Delegation, WCS, and African Parks. Discussions focused on wildlife law enforcement.



Gabon – AALF

- The Activities Coordinator held meetings with officials of the National Gendarmerie School, the Conservator of the Mayumba National Park, the Director in Charge of Wildlife Management and Hunting at the Ministry of Water and Forests and the Interim Head of the Special Criminal Tribunal, on the fight against wildlife trafficking.
- The Legal Team held meetings with some administrative and judicial officials including the Director of Anti-Poaching, the Estuaire Provincial Director of Water and Forests, the Chief Secretary at the Legal Department, State Counsels, and lawyers to strengthen collaboration and follow up cases.
- An ivory trafficker was sentenced to one year in prison. He was arrested in April 2021.
- An ivory trafficker was sentenced to one year of imprisonment. He was arrested in May 2021.
- 2 traffickers in ivory were sentenced to one year in prison. They were arrested in June 2021.

Togo – EAGLE Togo

- The Coordinator and the Assistant Coordinator held a meeting with the Director of the Central Office for the Repression of Illicit Drug Traffic and Money Laundering (OCRTIDB) to strengthen collaboration in fighting wildlife crime.
- The Coordinator held a meeting with the Board Chair of OFFAP and they discussed issues related to the strengthening of collaboration between the association and EAGLE – Togo.
- The Assistant Coordinator held a meeting with the new Head of Division of Civil Society Organisations and Associations on the registration of EAGLE Togo at the Ministry of Territorial Administration.
- The Coordinator who arrived from Cote d'Ivoire carried out a two-week training with the entire team during several work sessions.
- Recruitment of investigators intensified and interviews were carried out

Senegal – EAGLE Senegal

- The Coordinator held a meeting with the UK Ambassador to Senegal to strengthen collaboration in the fight against wildlife trafficking
- The Legal Team followed up the various pending issues with MoUs with the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, the General Directorate of Customs and the General Directorate of the National Police where meetings were held.
- Working in collaboration with Oceanimum of Dakar, the Directorate of Air and Border Police, the Directorate of Water and Forests, the organization assisted a massive control of 9 trucks transporting a total volume of 4000 cubic metre of timber also known as 'rosewood'. The trucks were transporting unprocessed protected wood from Mali with non-complaint CITES permits to the Dakar port for export to Asia. The trucks were immobilized for up to 9 days at the border.
- An investigator travelled to Togo for a three-week experience sharing and assistance mission.

Benin – AALF-B

- The Director and the Legal Team held a discussion with the Minister of the Living Environment and Sustainable Development and the Maritime Prefect to strengthen collaboration.
- The Director and the Legal Team held meetings with some park, international and national NGO officials to strengthen collaboration.
- The Coordinator and the Legal Team held a series of meetings with other officials including, administrative, judicial, wildlife, forestry and CITES officials to strengthen collaboration in the fight against wildlife crime.

Côte d'Ivoire – EAGLE Côte d'Ivoire

- 3 traffickers arrested with 2 tusks. The traffickers were arrested in their car on a small discreet street where they were about to carry the transaction. They arrived with the tusks concealed in a bag inside the trunk of the car. They confessed trying to sell the tusks that weighed 23kg to another trafficker. The trafficker who sold the ivory to them is on the run. One of the arrested traffickers tried to erase the pictures in his phone but was quickly stopped by the law enforcement officers. At least one of them seemed to be connected to gold trafficking. The remaining wild elephant population in the country is only a few hundreds.
- The Coordinator held a meeting with officials of OIPR (the Ivorian administration in charge of the national parks) to continue the collaboration between the two structures.
- The Team in collaboration with the UCT and the MINEF, got samples from the 114 kg of ivory seized in February 2021 and shipped them to the University of Washington for DNA analysis. This could give great insight into ivory trafficking in the West African region.



- An ivory trafficker was sentenced to 8 months in prison. He was arrested in October 2020.
- Recruitment of investigators is ongoing.

Burkina Faso - EAGLE Burkina Faso

- The Coordinator and a legal adviser held a meeting with the Head of the Interpol National Bureau to present the organization and strengthen collaboration.
- The Coordinator held a meeting with the President and the Vice President and the Secretary General of the Fauna and Flora Association of Burkina Faso (APFFB) to strengthen collaboration.
- The Coordinator did one-day training on security management of humanitarian workers carried out by the International NGO Safety Organisation (INSO).

Uganda - EAGLE Uganda

- The two traffickers arrested in June with 25 kg of ivory were granted bail as a measure to decongest the prison during the lockdown declared after an upsurge in Covid 19 in the country.
- One of the traffickers convicted in March 2021 continues to serve his sentence at the Kitalya Maximum Prison.
- All project activities were suspended due to Covid 19 lockdown which ended on the 30th of July 2021.

Headquarters

- Luc Mathot, the Founding Director of the EAGLE Network travelled to Congo to support the Coordinator on management and external relations.
- The Financial Officer of the CCU travelled to Congo to assist the Team in the training of the new accountant and to update and supervise the financial department.

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.

Contacts:

1. Cameroon – LAGA - ofir@eagle-enforcement.org
2. Congo – PALF - tiffany@eagle-enforcement.org
3. Gabon – AALF - luc@eagle-enforcement.org
4. Togo – EAGLE-Togo – rens@eagle-enforcement.org
5. Senegal – EAGLE Senegal - cebloch@eagle-enforcement.org
6. Benin - AALF-B - jules@eagle-enforcement.org
7. Côte d'Ivoire - gaspard@eagle-enforcement.org
8. Burkina Faso - josias@eagle-enforcement.org
9. Uganda – EAGLE Uganda - ofir@eagle-enforcement.org