



**EAGLE**

October 2018  
EAGLE Network

# Wildlife Law Enforcement Briefing

- ✓ *14 wildlife traffickers arrested in 5 countries*
- ✓ *Mamadou Dia, the Head of Wildlife Division in the Guinean Ministry in charge of wildlife is now in prison. Dia has created a fraudulent hunting reserve for the Spanish safari hunter arrested last month and took bribes from him. This high-level corruption facilitated the slaughter of protected species by hunters from all over the globe under the pretence of Safari hunting.*
- ✓ *2 ivory traffickers arrested in Congo with almost 400 pieces of ivory*
- ✓ *3 traffickers arrested including a head of a large trafficking ring in Benin with 252 kg of ivory*
- ✓ *A trafficker arrested with more than 150 kg of pangolin scales in Côte d'Ivoire*
- ✓ *3 ivory traffickers, including a retired police officer, arrested in Gabon*



*Mamadou Dia, the Head of Wildlife Division in the Guinean Ministry in charge of wildlife is now in prison.*



*2 ivory traffickers arrested in Congo with almost 400 pieces of ivory*

# Summary

14 wildlife traffickers were arrested in 5 countries.

Mamadou Dia, the Head of Wildlife Division in the Guinean Ministry in charge of wildlife is now in prison. Dia has created a fraudulent hunting reserve for the Spanish safari hunter arrested last month and took bribes from him. This high-level corruption facilitated the slaughter of protected species by hunters from all over the globe under the pretence of Safari hunting. The reserve was well hidden from high authorities, including the Minister of Environment. The tariff of Carlos the Spanish jailed hunting operator and Dia his high official crony: 5,000 USD - killing an elephant; 3,000 USD - killing a leopard; 1,800 USD - killing a hippo.

2 ivory traffickers were arrested in Congo with almost 400 pieces of ivory. They crossed the Congo river from DRC only to be caught in the act, when selling 7 big ivory statues, 2 raw ivory pieces, 260 chopsticks, 4 necklaces and more 111 other curved ivory items. On top of that they attempted to sell 3 leopard skins. They both are notorious traffickers with long connections between DRC and the Republic of Congo, but also with Angola, and China. This large seizure and arrest also show the rampant unchecked illegal trade in Kinshasa.

3 traffickers were arrested in Benin including a head of a large trafficking ring with 252 kg of ivory. The traffickers were arrested with 167 kg ivory in an arrest operation, supported by AALF-B team. They carried all 167 kg of the ivory in three bags into a hotel room where they were taken by surprise by the operation team in the middle of the transaction. The head of this criminal activity, Salvador Hounye, is a real estate

agent using it as a cover for his criminal activities. Another 85 kg of ivory was found during a search in his office, so the total amount is 252 kg, cut in 79 pieces. Hounye has links to criminal gangs, trafficking ivory in Benin, but also in other African countries, including Côte d'Ivoire and Togo. He was arrested in the possession of financial documents, with copies of checks showing amounts up to 1,000,000 EUR, and 9 cheque books in his bags. His financial activities concerned his real estate company, but also an NGO, which he supposedly set up.



*2 ivory traffickers were arrested in Congo with almost 400 pieces of ivory.*

A trafficker was arrested with more than 150 kg of pangolin scales in Côte d'Ivoire. He's a well-known supplier in the illegal trade, who has been activating poachers and supplying the Asian market for years. He supplied 600 kg scales to the ring of traffickers, arrested in July 2017 in Abidjan with 3 tons of pangolin scales. His link to Chinese traffickers is being investigated.

3 ivory traffickers, one of them retired police officer, were arrested with 2 tusks in Gabon. They brought the ivory to the place of transaction in a car concealed between the front and rear seats in a rice bag. Two of them have been trafficking ivory for 10 years.



*3 traffickers were arrested in Benin including a head of a large trafficking ring with 252 kg of ivory.*

## Cameroon – LAGA

- The Deputy Director accompanied by heads of the investigation and legal departments held a meeting with Customs to finalize the MoU to be signed between the two parties. The memorandum is expected to create a formal framework for effective partnership.
- The Deputy Director participated at the German National Day alongside several other invitees. He

gave an interview to Chinese television network CCTV.

- The Media Officer left for Netherlands for a three weeks training on media campaigning for development and social change.

## Congo – PALF

- 2 ivory traffickers arrested in Brazzaville with almost 400 pieces of ivory. They crossed the Congo river from DRC only to be caught in the act, when selling 7 big ivory statues, 2 raw ivory pieces, 260 chopsticks, 4 necklaces and more 111 other curved ivory items. On top of that they attempted to sell 3 leopard skins. They both are notorious traffickers with long connections between DRC and the Republic of Congo, but also with Angola, and China. This large seizure and arrest also show the rampant unchecked illegal trade in Kinshasa.
- 2 traffickers arrested with 2 large tusks. They trafficked the tusks from the Northern part of the country and transported it to the capital city by public transport, concealed in a bag covered with fish for part of the journey, and in an empty cassava flour bag for the rest. They are were operating for many years the trafficking line between DRC and Republic of Congo and connected to a large ring of traffickers, crushed last year when two traffickers, one of them a pastor, were arrested with 30 kg of ivory and prosecuted.
- The Coordinator held a series of meetings with several high authorities including the Administrative and Legal Advisor and the Wildlife Advisor of the MEF, the General Director of Waters and Forests, the Legal Advisor of the Ministry of Forest Economy, the Head of the EU Delegation and the Officers in charge of cooperation and forest, the Head of the US Consulate, several Departmental Directors of Waters and Forests, State Councils and others.
- Antoinette MacKenzie, the Organization Develop-



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ment Officer, conducted mission to Congo to support the project management and to strengthen PALF team by support given to Coordinator in ensuring team health, respect and cooperation, understanding and using emotional intelligence, handling and dealing with stress, conflict management, lack of respect, establishing authority and others.



*2 traffickers arrested with 2 large tusks.*

## Gabon – AALF

- 3 ivory traffickers, one of them retired police officer, arrested with 2 tusks in Libreville. They brought the ivory to the place of transaction in a car concealed between the front and rear seats in a rice bag. Two of them have been trafficking ivory for 10 years.
- The Coordinator held a series of meetings with Gabonese authorities including the General Director of Forests, the Head of Judicial Police, the Head of EU Delegation, the Head of EU Cooperation and EU Officers for Environment, the UNODC officer, Interior Security Attaché of the French Embassy and others.
- Luc Mathot, the Coordinator, travelled to Congo for the Forum Governance, organized by Center for International Development and Training - CIDT (Wolverhampton University). CIDT has become a CJ and EAGLE partner through their project Citizen Voices for Change (CV4C) - Strengthening Forest and Wildlife Monitoring and Law Enforcement in the Congo Basin. He made a presentation on Conservation Justice activities in Gabon and the opportunity to increase collaboration with CIDT and the Independent Forests Monitoring in



Central Africa. He held a series of meetings in Congo, including with CIDT – CV4C Team leader, Independent Forest Monitoring projects, the EU officer for Environment, DFID – Forest Governance, Markets & Climate Programme Team Leader and others.



*3 ivory traffickers, one of them retired police officer, arrested with 2 tusks in Libreville.*

- Luc Mathot also travelled to Burkina Faso, where he held a series of meetings to support the opening of EAGLE Burkina Faso, including the General Director of the National Office of Protected Areas, high officers of Gendarmerie, Security and Environment Officers of EU Embassy, Cooperation and Security Officers of Belgian Embassy and others.
- The legal team held a series of meetings with State Counsels, Departmental Directors and other authorities of several departments.

## Guinea – GALF

- Mamadou Dia, the Head of Wildlife Division in the Ministry in charge of wildlife is now in prison. Dia has created a fraudulent hunting reserve for the Spanish safari hunter arrested last month and took bribes from him. This high-level corruption facilitated the slaughter of protected species by hunters from all over the globe under the pretence of Safari hunting. The reserve was well hidden from high authorities, including the Minister of Environment. The tariff of Carlos the Spanish jailed

hunting operator and Dia his high official crony: 5,000 USD - killing an elephant; 3,000 USD - killing a leopard; 1,800 USD - killing a hippo

- The Media Officer participated at a workshop launching the Ziamah-Wonegizi-Wologizi (ZWW) project in Nzérékoré on the border with Liberia under the invitation of the Minister of Environment. The workshop brought together environmental professionals from both countries in order to join efforts for elephant conservation in the forest landscape in the border area.
- The Coordinator and the WARA Director held a series of meetings with various authorities and diplomats to inform them about the arrest operation, including the UK Ambassador in Guinea, the UNDP Environment Officer, the Environment Officer of AFD, The Environmental Affairs Officer of the US Embassy in Guinea, the UNOPS Coordinator, The National Director of Water and Forests, the CITES Focal Point, the Focal Point for Wildlife Crime in the Ministry of the Environment, the Focal Point of the Ministry of Security, he General Substitutes of the Court of Appeal of Conakry and others.





## High Guinean Government Official in Jail

Mamadou Dia, the Head of Wildlife Division in the Ministry in charge of wildlife of Guinea is now in prison. He has created a fraudulent hunting reserve for the Spanish safari hunter arrested recently and took bribes from him. This high-level corruption facilitated the slaughter of elephants, leopards, hippos, bongos and other protected species by hunters from all over the globe under the pretence of safari hunting. The reserve was well hidden from high authorities, including the Minister of Environment.

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Dia was arrested on 22 October by DPJ and INTERPOL with the support of the GALF-WARA project. The arrest warrant against him was issued after the investigation revealed his involvement in this flagrant case of wildlife crime.

The whole story started by arrest of Mohamed Camara in September 2018. He was arrested in the fraudulent hunting reserve in Sabouya with illegal trophies of protected animals and professional hunting rifles without license. He denounced the activities of the Spanish hunting operator, Carlos Corces Bustamante, his employer and the owner of the reserve. Based on this evidence, an arrest warrant was issued against Corces, who was arrested in his house two days later. Both were put in custody, and the investigation of this criminal activity, obviously involving some high state officials, continued.

The role of Mamadou Dia, the Head of the Wildlife Division at the National Directorate of Water and Forest, was revealed. He had signed the lease of the reserve giving the authorization to Corces to organize hunting safaris for trophy hunters from USA, Russia, Europe and other countries all around the globe, who were coming for years to kill endangered animals. Corces used to pay Dia installments on a quarterly basis for years for the fraudulent lease contract. In the meantime, Dia has been placed under a detention in the same prison.

The area of 25,000 hectares in a remote part of the country, still abundant in wildlife, was leased to Corces in 2016 as a hunting reserve, but his hunting activities in the region go as back as to 2005. He publicly advertised on American trophy hunting websites, like "Book your Hunt", the elephant hunts in the reserve, offering elephant hunt for a price of 5,000 USD, leopard for 3,000 USD, bongo for 5,000 USD, hippo for 1,800 USD. All these species are fully protected by Guinean law and their hunting is forbidden. On top of that he illegally charged the customers an additional fee of 2,500 USD for a false license. He also advertised hunts in a multitude of other partially protected species. Corces himself has exported many trophies from Guinea worldwide, the same did his clients with the trophies of animals killed by them, including elephant ivory. He has been charged with illegal possession of firearms, killing of protected animal species, and possession and trafficking of trophies of fully protected species.

This is the second time in history that a senior environmental official has been arrested for wildlife crime in Guinea. The country is still known as a hub for international wildlife trafficking and it is still under sanction by the International Convention on Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). The former head of CITES in Guinea, Ansoumane Doumbouya, was arrested in 2015 by the Interpol NCB, following an investigation against a criminal ring involved in large scale wildlife trafficking and corruption. He was sentenced to 18 months in prison for his complicity with international networks of traffickers to whom he used to issue fake export CITES permits for years. He has been responsible for illegal export of more than 130 great apes, chimpanzees, gorillas and bonobos, and thousands of other animals.

## Togo – EAGLE Togo

- Jean-Claude Vignoli continued his mission in Togo to support the management of the team.
- He met with representatives of the EU and German Embassies in Lomé.
- The recruitment process continued and one investigator will start his test period in November.

## Senegal – SALF

- No field activities were held this month.
- The transition of the project from WARA to EAGLE – Senegal continued, and the Coordinator held several meetings concerning this topic.
- She held meetings with the representatives of the Ministry of the Interior, the Prefecture of Dakar, the Director General of Territorial Affairs (DGAT), Director General of NGOs and the Director General of OCRTIS to facilitate fast processing of the application for registration of EAGLE Senegal.
- The Coordinator had an exchange with the representatives of the UK Embassy following the Illegal Wildlife Trade Conference held in October in the United Kingdom to discuss the implementation of the conclusions of the conference.

## Benin – AALF-B

- 3 traffickers arrested including a head of a large trafficking ring with 252 kg of ivory. The traffickers were arrested with 167 kg ivory in an arrest operation, supported by AALF-B team. They carried all 167 kg of the ivory in three bags into a hotel room where they were taken by surprise by the operation team in the middle of the transaction. The head of this criminal activity, Salvador Hounye, is a real estate agent using it as a cover for his criminal activities. Another 85 kg of ivory was found during a search in his office, so the total amount is 252 kg, cut in 79 pieces. Hounye has links to criminal gangs, trafficking ivory in Benin, but also in other African countries, including Côte d'Ivoire and Togo. He was arrested in the possession of financial documents, with copies of checks showing amounts up to 1,000,000 EUR, and 9 cheque books in his bags. His financial activities concerned his real estate company, but also an NGO, which he supposedly set up.
- An ivory trafficker arrested during follow up of the arrest operation at the end of the last month with 1 tusk.
- The coordinator trained 8 officers of the central



Commissariat of the Republican Police in Allada on the methods of combating wildlife crime.

- The Coordinator held a meeting with the Head of the Political and Economic Section and other representatives of the US Embassy in Benin, to solicit their involvement in the case of Salvador Houne and to discuss the support of the Embassy in meeting the Minister of Justice.
- The Director held a series of meetings with government, including the Director of the Judicial Police and the State Counsel at the First Instance Court of Cotonou on the case of 252 kg of ivory; the Central Commissioner of the Allada Central Police Station; the Departmental Director of the Republican Police of the Coastal Department to strengthen collaboration and plan training for the police stations in his charge; the officers of the General Directorate of Waters, Forests and Hunting to strengthen the collaboration



with the legal department of AALF – Benin and others.

- Danielle Mbui, the Financial Officer, conducted missions to Benin to follow up the results of the 2017 financial audit final report and to revise administrative and financial aspects of the project

## Côte d'Ivoire – EAGLE Côte d'Ivoire

- Two traffickers arrested with more than 150 kg of pangolin scales. One of them is a well-known supplier in the illegal trade, who has been activating poachers and supplying the Asian market for years. He supplied 600 kg scales to the ring of traffickers, arrested in July 2017 in Abidjan with 3 tons of pangolin scales. His link to Chinese traffickers is being investigated.
- The investigation of the case of ivory traffickers arrested in January continued, focusing on money





laundering investigations and the procedures for money laundering charges in Côte d'Ivoire.

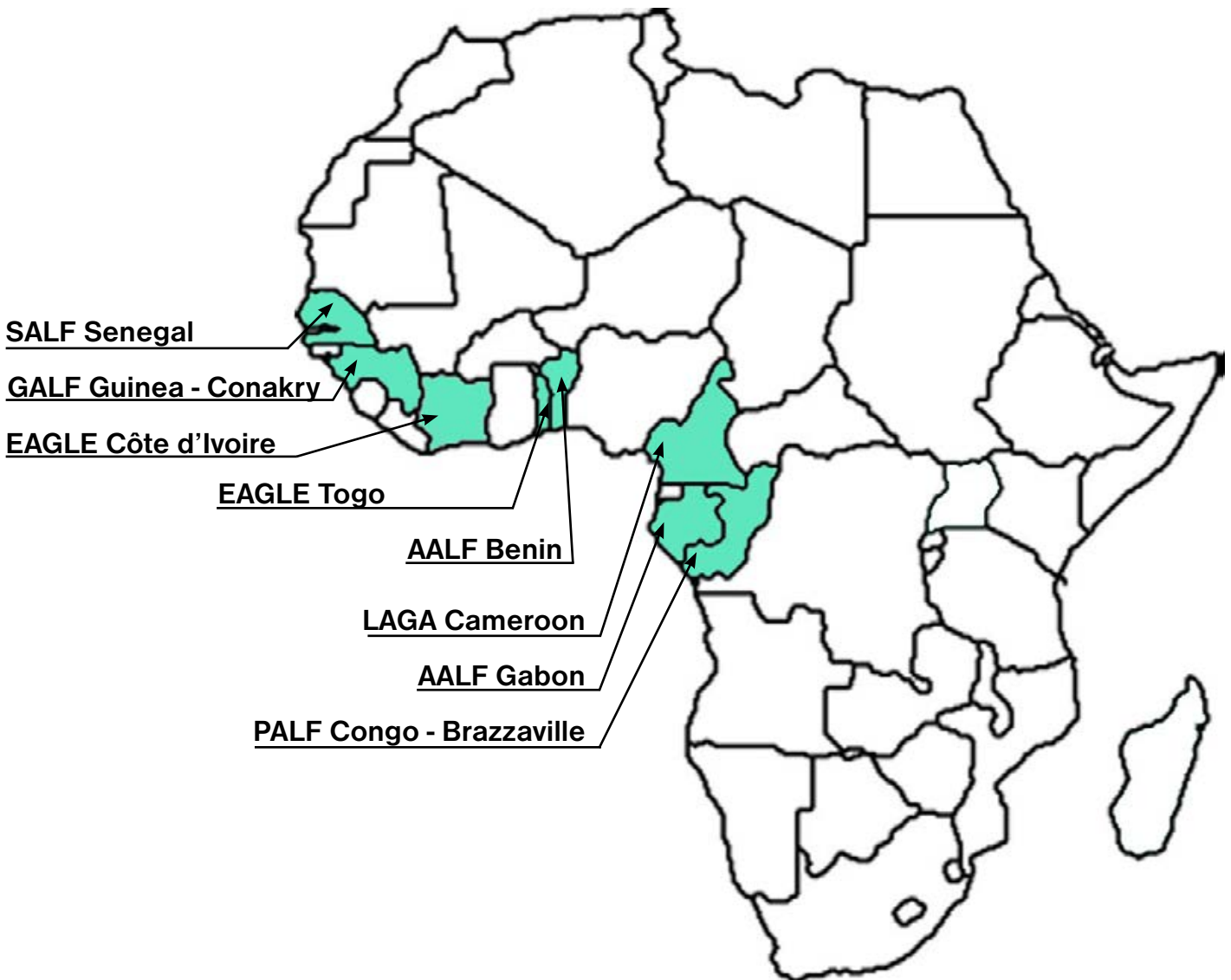
- The Coordinator held several meetings with the UCT to prepare the operation, and to support the investigation of the January case. He also held several meetings with the bankers' association.
- The Coordinator met with CAAT and customs authority to facilitate an export of ivory samples for DNA testing and discuss a training for officials.
- The recruitment process continued, and one investigator started his test period this month.



## Headquarters

- Ofir Drori, the Founding Director participated at the Illegal Wildlife Trade Conference in London, where he presented as a panel speaker on money laundering. He presented EAGLE Network's work in front of 400 people and described the obstacle for money laundering investigations using examples from the EAGLE operations. He explained the main obstacles of priority, of potential, of difficulties of some governmental officers to understand the importance of money laundering investigations; and of the obstacle of corruption giving more examples. He got very good response to his talk and several money laundering contacts offered help. He also participated at the meeting of the Interpol Wildlife Working Group in London. He met and discussed with many of the participants of both meetings, some of them of high importance, he negotiated possible cooperation or improvement of already existing cooperation with many partners. He also met with many potential donors and negotiated future financial support of EAGLE Network.
- Ofir Drori presented at Remembering Great Apes event in London, where he addressed 600 people. He introduced EAGLE Network activities and he held again many meetings with supporters.
- Luc Mathot, the founding director, travelled to Congo for the Forum Governance, organized by Center for International Development and Training - CIDT (Wolverhampton University). CIDT has become a CJ and EAGLE partner through their project Citizen Voices for Change (CV4C) - Strengthening Forest and Wildlife Monitoring and Law Enforcement in the Congo Basin. He made a presentation on Conservation Justice activities in Gabon and the opportunity to increase collaboration with CIDT and the Independent Forests Monitoring in Central Africa. He held a series of meetings in Congo, including with CIDT – CV4C Team leader, Independent Forest Monitoring projects, the EU officer for Environment, DFID – Forest Governance, Markets & Climate Programme Team leader and others.
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- Antoinette MacKenzie, the Organization Development Officer, conducted mission to Congo to support the project management and to strengthen PALF team by support given to Coordinator in ensuring team health, respect and cooperation, understanding and using emotional intelligence, handling and dealing with stress, conflict management, lack of respect, establishing authority and others.
- Danielle Mbui, the Financial Officer, conducted missions to Burkina Faso to support the financial management of the newly established project and to Benin to follow up the results of the 2017 financial audit final report and to revise administrative and financial aspects of the project.

# 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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