



EAGLE

The EAGLE Network 1st Semester 2020 Report



- ✓ *Despite the COVID-19 pandemic and its many related difficulties, the EAGLE teams pulled through and forward. 50 significant wildlife traffickers and other criminals arrested in 4 countries*
- ✓ *At least in 7 of the operation, corruption was so flagrant that it was exposed on the day of operation or shortly after.*
- ✓ *22 ivory traffickers arrested with over 200 kg of ivory, which includes 33 tusks*
- ✓ *9 big cats traffickers arrested, and 11 leopard skins seized*
- ✓ *4 pangolin scales traffickers arrested in two operations in Cameroon, more than 430 kg of scales were seized.*
- ✓ *3 primate traffickers arrested in Cameroon and two live mandrills rescued*
- ✓ *5 human bones traffickers arrested in Cameroon in two crackdown operations*
- ✓ *75% of the arrested traffickers remained behind bars*
- ✓ *1,124 media pieces published in national media, at least 144 media pieces were published in the countries as a result of the effort of the media officers spreading the message about the link between the illegal wildlife trade and the Covid-1 pandemic. At least 14 international media pieces published*

1. Summary

Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, the EAGLE teams pulled through and forward. 50 significant wildlife traffickers and other criminals were arrested in 4 countries. It is a good example of how team spirit and inner motivation plays a strong role in getting results and finding way through the obstacles created by the Covid-19 regulations - and still comply with all of them. EAGLE Network also adopted strict internal measures to prevent spreading the infection within teams

Although the travel restrictions in the countries limited the movement of teams, the number of investigation missions increased significantly compared with the same period last year. It creates a good basis for increasing the number of arrests after the pandemic is over. Also, online investigations were pushed forward to produce more targets where field investigators could not find targets easily.

In several countries the public services including courts were interrupted, it limited the number of prosecutions, which are postponed. In some of the countries the state counsels ordered release of the arrested traffickers due to high risk of infections in prisons. Ban on international travel disabled any missions of CCU members to the countries or team members between the countries. CCU and Steering group extensively used videoconferencing instead of travelling, to keep the quality of the work of all teams high.

849 investigation missions were carried out to identify the criminals. 75% of the arrested traffickers remained in prison at least in the beginning of their trial. During the semester 43 traffickers were prosecuted and convinced, 26 of them to imprisonment sentences of various time, while others remain behind the bars awaiting trial.

Traffickers in ivory and other elephant parts represent the vast majority of arrests, while traffickers of big cat skins take second place and pangolin scales traffickers the third.

Corruption is prevalent in all levels of the enforcement and judicial process. At least in 7 of the operation, corruption was so flagrant that it was exposed on the day of operation. Three military men were arrested, one of them a member of the Presidential Guard in Cameroon. Bribe attempts from family members and a traffic of influence were documented and combated in several arrest operations in Cameroon.

4 pangolin scales traffickers were arrested in two operations in Cameroon. More than 430 kg of scales were seized. Pangolins are rapidly driven to extinction. Their trafficking became even more in the focus as there is a possible link between their consumption and the Covid-19 pandemic.

3 pangolin scales traffickers were arrested in Cameroon in June. 2 corrupt military men were arrested with 380 kg of pangolin scales as they moved to sell the contraband transported in a pickup car. One of them was a member of the Presidential Guard, he was swiftly removed by his hierarchy following the arrest to serve as a strong message the corps' uniform will not be used to cover illegal activities, and any knowledge of an illegal activity will result in swift action. Third member of the ring, a woman who had sent her son (one of the arrested military men) to carry out the transaction on her behalf, was arrested a couple of hours later. She

and one of the military men had been tracked for several years as she carried out illegal pangolin trade. They all explained explicitly how they used their military status to run criminal activities, to avoid arrest. Despite the link between pangolins' consumption and the Covid-19 pandemic, the illegal trade still goes on.

Trafficking Ivory and other elephant products represents most of the focus during this period resulting in the largest number of arrested traffickers. 22 ivory traffickers were arrested in 10 operations in 3 countries with over 200 kg of ivory, which includes 33 tusks.

12 ivory traffickers were arrested on Gabon in 6 operations. 21 tusks, weighing 136 kg were seized during these operations. One of the arrested traffickers was a corrupt military man.

3 primate traffickers were arrested in Cameroon and two live mandrills rescued. A trafficker arrested in Cameroon in April in the heart of the capital city with a young mandrill he had been keeping with him for some time. He brought the animal from the South of the country. 2 primate traffickers arrested in the south of the country the same month with another young and wounded mandrill. They had been collaborating in wildlife trafficking for a long time, one of them specializing in the buying and searching for new clients.

During investigations into wildlife trafficking in Cameroon, leads were found into human bones trafficking, which resulted in the arrest of 5 traffickers. 2 independent rings were crashed within two months. Often investigations of wildlife traffickers lead to other connected crimes and when it does, we have to act. 3 human bones traffickers were arrested in Cameroon in May with an almost complete human skeleton that still had dried up flesh on the bones and a human skull with hair on it in a sack that they attempted to sell. The three belong to a larger network that specializing in trafficking human bones. They had connections to other countries of the sub region and seemed to be able to supply dozens of human bodies. Some would dig out the corpses from their graves while others tackle the trafficking side of their illegal business. One of the traffickers in the network was a wildlife trafficker who now deals in human bones trafficking. Human body parts and some wildlife species are in high demand in Central Africa sub region to be used by occultists who believe they have supernatural powers. 2 human bones traffickers were arrested in Cameroon in June. Investigations on wildlife trafficking led to the discovery of a network of human bones traffickers and arresting 2 members of the ring with almost two full human skeletons packed inside two suitcases. This was the second crackdown on a separated ring of human bones traffickers two months in the same town. The two belong to a network that uses internet to advertise their products under code names and search for clients who they claim included clients from abroad. One of the traffickers travelled from Ambam near the South border to the West to carry out the transaction. The three top TV channels in Cameroon covered the case and broadcasted it in the prime-time evening news in French and English.

In order to provide a deterrent effect, 1,124 media pieces were published in national media, at least 144 media pieces were published in the countries as a result of the effort of the media officers spreading the message about the link between the illegal wildlife trade and the Covid-1 pandemic. The distribution of the media pieces on national media were 30% in print media, 40% on internet, 27% in radio and 3% on TV.

More than 14 international media pieces were published.

Content:

This report refers to activities from January till June 2020. This report includes: the activities in each area of our fight - Investigations, Operations, Legal, Media and External Relations; progress in developing the Network and strategic overview of our operations and their impact on wildlife crime.

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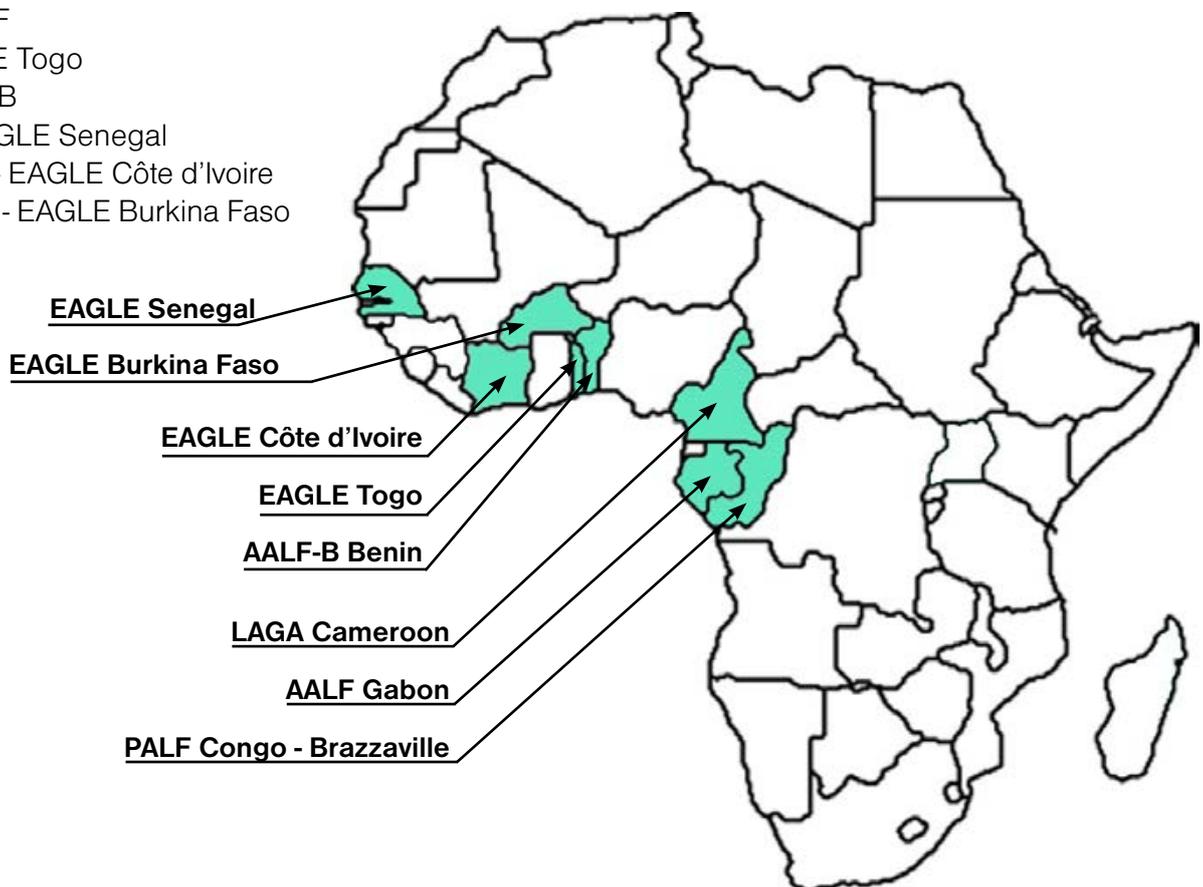
2. Structure of the Network

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, 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.

The Central Coordination Unit is located in Nairobi.

The EAGLE Network operates in these countries:

1. Cameroon - LAGA
2. The Republic of Congo - PALF
3. Gabon - AALF
4. Togo - EAGLE Togo
5. Benin - AALF-B
6. Senegal - EAGLE Senegal
7. Côte d'Ivoire - EAGLE Côte d'Ivoire
8. Burkina Faso - EAGLE Burkina Faso



3. Investigations

849 different investigation missions were carried out in all 9 countries, leading to the arrest of 50 traffickers in the first semester of 2020.

The investigations focused mainly on ivory trafficking but also on primate trafficking, illegal trade with big cat skins and pangolin scales and organized illegal trade in reptiles and birds.

**Numbers of investigations
in January - June 2020**

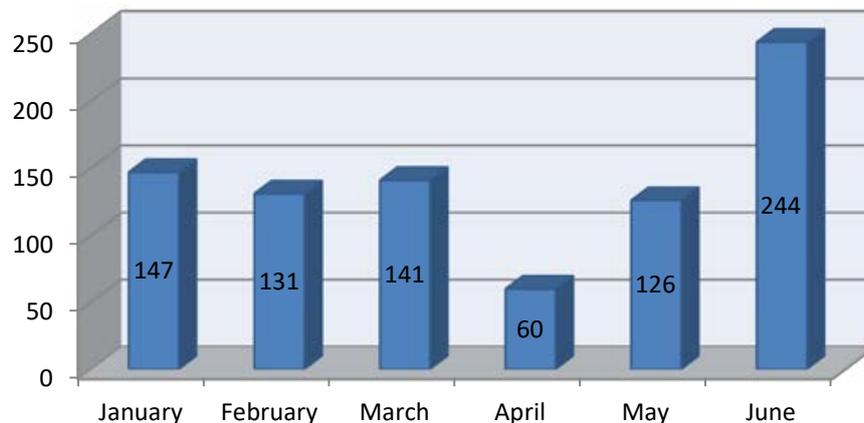


Fig. 1: Numbers of investigations in January – June 2020

Despite the Covid-19 pandemic and strict government measures which presented an obstacle in investigations, we succeeded to keep the number of investigation missions higher than the previous year. It creates a good basis for increasing the number of arrests after the pandemic is over. The growing number of investigations is also a result of intense recruitment process, leading to strengthening the teams and investigation departments. In all countries new investigators were tested and some joined the teams. The recruitment processes continue in all the countries to find more good investigators.

4. Arrest Operations

50 significant wildlife traffickers and other criminals were arrested. EAGLE Network members carried out 22 operations in 4 countries of Central and West Africa.

**Number of Arrested Traffickers
in January - June 2020**

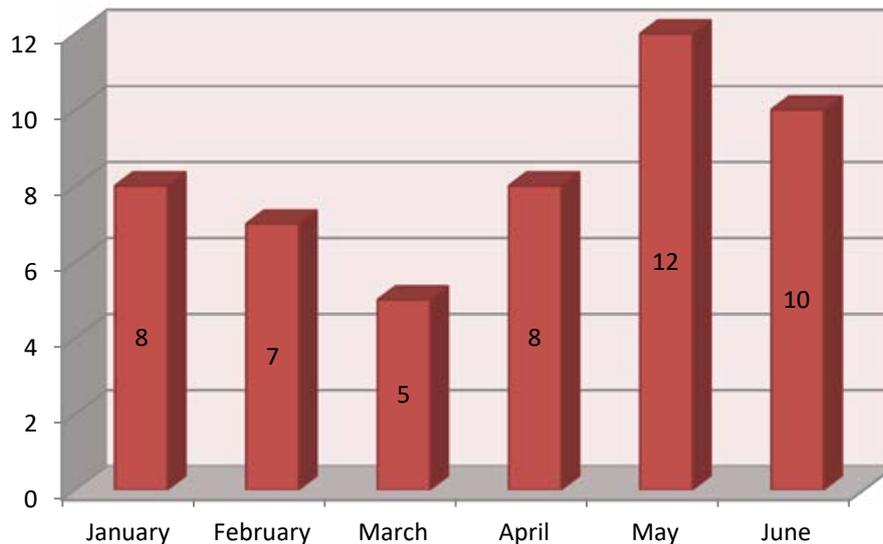


Fig. 2: Number of arrested traffickers in January - June 2020

Vast majority of the arrested traffickers - 44% were traffickers of ivory and other elephant parts. Second largest number concerns traffickers in big cat skins and other body parts - 18%. Third in focus of arrests were pangolin scales traffickers with 8 % of all the arrests. Large portion of the arrested traffickers represented human bones traffickers – 12% of all arrested traffickers.

Distribution of the Arrested Traffickers According to Species

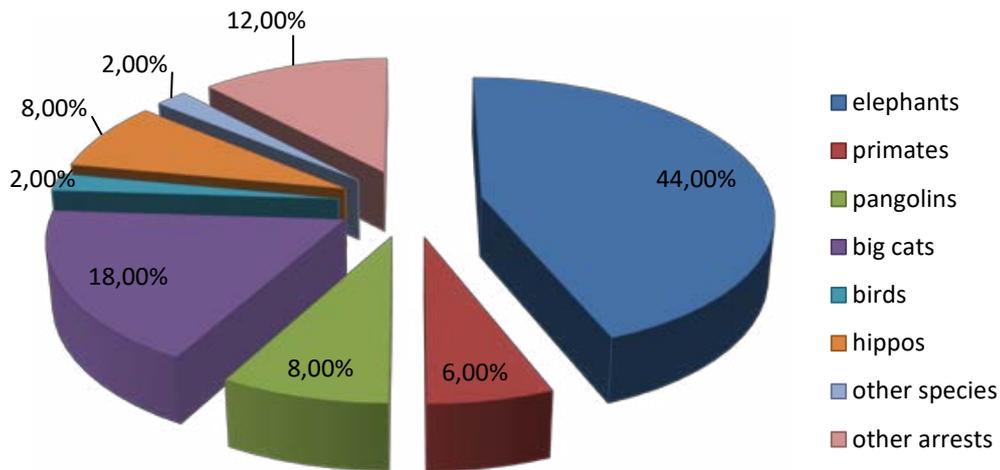


Fig. 3: Distribution of Arrested Traffickers According to Species

Corruption

Corruption is prevalent in all levels of the enforcement and judicial process. At least in 7 of the operation, corruption was so flagrant that it was exposed on the day of operation. Three military men were arrested, one of them a member of the Presidential Guard in Cameroon. Bribe attempts from family members and a traffic of influence were documented and combated in several arrest operations in Cameroon. The examples are presented here:

- 3 pangolin scales traffickers arrested in Cameroon in June. 2 corrupt military men were arrested with 380 kg of pangolin scales as they moved to sell the contraband transported in a pickup car. Third member of the ring, a woman who had sent her son (one of the arrested military men) to carry out the transaction on her behalf, was arrested a couple of hours later. She and one of the military men had been tracked for several years as she carried out illegal pangolin trade. They all explained explicitly how they used their military status to run criminal activities, to avoid arrest. One of them, a member of the Presidential Guard, was swiftly removed by his hierarchy following the arrest to serve as a strong message the corps' uniform will not be used to cover illegal activities, and any knowledge of an illegal activity will result in swift action. Despite the link between pangolins' consumption and the Covid-19 pandemic, the illegal trade still goes on.

- Two ivory traffickers, one of them corrupt military man, arrested with two tusks in Gabon in January. One of them brought the tusks from South of the country to sell them and the military man accompanied him to protect him for arrest during the transaction. They are both behind bars facing a sentence of 10 years in jail thanks to the new legislation adopted by Gabonese Parliament last year.
- A pangolin scale trafficker arrested with 50 kg of pangolin scales in Cameroon in April. This woman was arrested in the East of the country with 50 kg of pangolin scales. She had been arrested several times by the gendarmerie and released without any charges brought against her. She activated a gang of several poachers who supplied her with the scales, which she sold in the capital city. She violently resisted arrest during the operation hoping her corrupt contacts at the gendarmerie that constantly release her following each arrest would come to her rescue.
- A trafficker arrested in Cameroon in April in the heart of the capital city with a young mandrill he had been keeping with him for some time. He brought the animal from the South of the country. His mother arrived to the offices of the gendarmerie to find a way to stop the matter at the level of the gendarmerie but the wildlife officials and gendarmes handling the matter again stood their ground. She would attempt the same approach with the LAGA team on the ground for the same results.
- 2 primate traffickers arrested in the south of the country the same month with another young and wounded mandrill. They had travelled overnight to avoid detection. They had been collaborating in wildlife trafficking for a long time, one of them specializing in the buying and searching for new clients. Family members of the traffickers came to the brigade to propose a bribe to the brigade commander to end the procedure there but he refused.
- 3 traffickers arrested with two ivory tusks weighing 26kg in Cameroon in May. The two men transported the ivory in the trunk of a car and were arrested during an attempt to sell the tusks. They had carefully and skilfully concealed the tusks inside a bag. The car belongs to a customer at the automobile repair workshop where one of the traffickers worked. The third trafficker, a woman, was arrested a couple of hours later on her way to church. She gave the ivory tusks to one of the arrested traffickers to sell. One of the traffickers belongs to a larger network dealing in illicit trade in wildlife, mining products including ivory and gold. They used common tactics to try to influence officers doing offense reports and later tried the same tactics with the state counsel.
- 2 traffickers arrested in Cameroon in June with 2 ivory tusks. One of them had been able to glide through law enforcement for several years as his involvement in ivory trafficking was well know and has been a target for investigations for a long time. He admitted to gold trafficking. They are a part of a network stretching to CAR and connected to Congo. One of the traffickers' brother proposed a huge amount of money as bribe to the MINFOF official, who was in charge of the matter but he refused to take the money. They also approached the LAGA team but obviously failed to get any results.

Elephants

Trafficking ivory and other elephant products represents most of the focus during this period resulting in the largest number of arrested traffickers. 22 ivory traffickers were arrested in 10 operations in 3 countries with over 200 kg of ivory, which includes 33 tusks. Some examples are presented here:

- Two ivory traffickers, one of them corrupt military man, arrested with two tusks in Gabon in January. One of them brought the tusks from South of the country to sell them and the military man accompanied him to protect him for arrest during the transaction. They are both behind bars facing a sentence of 10 years in jail thanks to the new legislation adopted by Gabonese Parliament last year.
- 3 ivory traffickers arrested with 7 tusks in Gabon in January. Two of them were arrested in the attempt to sell the tusks cut in several pieces. After the arrest they denounced the head of the gang, who is a teacher in nearby town. He was swiftly arrested the same day and a hunting gun was found in his house.
- 3 ivory traffickers including a repeat offender arrested with 2 tusks in Gabon in January. The repeat offender was arrested in August 2013 with support of Conservation Justice with ten tusks. He was sentenced to 6 months in absentia as he was released on bail before the court hearing. Although an arrest warrant was issued, he never got back to jail.
- 2 ivory traffickers arrested with 2 tusks cut in ten pieces in Gabon in February. First of them, a former teacher, currently working as an ambulance driver, was arrested in the act. The ivory was concealed in a bucket and hidden near the place of transaction. He denounced the second trafficker, who was arrested a day later. They have connections to an ivory trafficking ring crushed in last October, operating in Gabon and Congo.
- An ivory trafficker arrested in Gabon in February with two tusks. He is Beninese, living in Gabon, he has been in the spot of authorities since 2015. He remains behind bars in the capital city awaiting trial.
- An ivory trafficker arrested with 6 tusks in Gabon in March. The Cameroonian national was arrested in the act during an attempt to sell the ivory. Due to limited transport possibilities during the Covid-19 pandemic, he was not sent to the court at capital city but was kept in jail in Franceville court of first instance.
- 3 traffickers arrested with two ivory tusks weighing 26kg in Cameroon in May. The two men transported the ivory in the trunk of a car and were arrested during an attempt to sell the tusks. They had carefully and skillfully concealed the tusks inside a bag. The car belongs to a customer at the automobile repair workshop where one of the traffickers worked. The third trafficker, a woman, was arrested a couple of hours later on her way to church. She gave the ivory tusks to one of the arrested traffickers to sell. One of the traffickers belongs to a larger network dealing in illicit trade in wildlife, mining products including ivory and gold.
- 4 ivory traffickers arrested in Benin in May with one large tusk, weighing 16 kg. One of them is a retired military man. They arrived to the place of transaction with the tusk concealed in a jute bag and were arrested in the act.

- 2 traffickers arrested in Cameroon in June with 2 ivory tusks. One of them had been able to glide through law enforcement for several years as his involvement in ivory trafficking was well known and has been a target for investigations for a long time. He admitted to gold trafficking. They are a part of a network stretching to CAR and connected to Congo.
- An ivory trafficker arrested with 7 tusks, weighing almost 20 kg, in Benin, in June. The trafficker of Burkina Faso nationality was arrested in the act when he tried to sell the tusks, which he brought to the place of transaction on a motorbike concealed in a jute bag.

Primates

3 primate traffickers were arrested in Cameroon and two live mandrills rescued. The examples are presented here:

- A trafficker arrested in Cameroon in April in the heart of the capital city with a young mandrill he had been keeping with him for some time. He brought the animal from the South of the country.
- 2 primate traffickers arrested in the south of the country the same month with another young and wounded mandrill. They had travelled overnight to avoid detection. They had been collaborating in wildlife trafficking for a long time, one of them specializing in the buying and searching for new clients.

Pangolins

4 pangolin scales traffickers arrested in two operations in Cameroon, more than 430 kg of scales were seized. They are currently the most trafficked animal in the world. Despite the link of pangolins with the Covid-19 pandemic, pangolin scales traffickers still carry out their illegal trade. The examples are presented here:

- A pangolin scale trafficker arrested with 50 kg of pangolin scales in Cameroon in April. This woman was arrested in the East of the country with 50 kg of pangolin scales. She had been arrested several times by the gendarmerie and released without any charges brought against her. She activated a gang of several poachers who supplied her with the scales, which she sold in the capital city. She violently resisted arrest during the operation hoping her corrupt contacts at the gendarmerie that constantly release her following each arrest would come to her rescue.
- 3 pangolin scales traffickers arrested in Cameroon in June. 2 corrupt military men were arrested with 380 kg of pangolin scales as they moved to sell the contraband transported in a pickup car. Third member of the ring, a woman who had sent her son (one of the arrested military men) to carry out the transaction on her behalf, was arrested a couple of hours later. She and one of the military men had been tracked for several years as she carried out illegal pangolin trade. They all explained explicitly how they used their military status to run criminal activities, to avoid arrest. One of them, a member of the Presidential Guard,

was swiftly removed by his hierarchy following the arrest to serve as a strong message the corps' uniform will not be used to cover illegal activities, and any knowledge of an illegal activity will result in swift action. Despite the link between pangolins' consumption and the Covid-19 pandemic, the illegal trade still goes on.

Big Cats

9 big cat traffickers were arrested in 4 operations in 4 countries. 11 leopard skins were seized. Some examples are presented here:

- A trafficker arrested with 5 large leopard skins in Cameroon in January. When arrested, he was wearing an ivory bracelet on his wrist, showing audacity in caring the illegal activities with a sense of impunity. He is a part of a network of leopard skins traffickers operating in the West Region of the country, he often travels around to collect the contraband. He owns a shop at one of the main markets in Bafoussam, the capital of the West Region.
- 2 leopard skin traffickers arrested with a leopard skin in Benin in February. They travelled to the place of transaction on a motorbike with the skin carefully concealed in a jute bag. They were swiftly arrested, and they remain behind bars awaiting trial.
- In Cameroon in April 4 traffickers belonging to a trafficking ring close to the Gabon border arrested with a leopard skin. They operate along the border areas between three countries, Cameroon, Gabon and Equatorial Guinea, ensuring smooth illegal trade in parts of protected species including leopard skins and ivory. Two of them negotiated the deals; two others are professional drivers ensuring the trans-boundary trafficking was expertly carried in the area.
- 2 traffickers arrested with 4 leopard and two crocodile skins in Senegal in June. The long-term traffickers were arrested in the act when trying to sell the skins. One of them is a trained guide and tracker who accompanied the officials of Niokolo Koba National Park on several missions, but he didn't stop his criminal activities. While some of the skins originate from the nearby National Park, other ones were trafficked from Mali. Both traffickers remain behind bars, awaiting the trial.

Birds

- An Algerian parrot trafficker arrested in Senegal in February at the airport in Dakar with 131 Senegal parrots and Rose-ringed parakeets. He was arrested on the board of a plane to Algeria at the last moment before taking off. The birds were concealed in two small suitcases, suffering by dehydration, malnutrition and injuries. They were quickly transported to a veterinarian to receive adequate care. After five days of recovery most of them could be released back to the wild.

Hippos and other species

- 4 traffickers arrested with 20 kg of hippo teeth and skulls and 20 packages of ammunition in Senegal near Gambia border in March. One of them was already wanted for 18 different crimes. First two traffickers were arrested in the act when trying to sell the hippo ivory, concealed in a rice bag. They were also carrying 5 packs of ammunition of calibre 12. A house search in their village was carried out in an area with high security risk. It was supported by two army units. It led to an arrest of two more traffickers, one of them, a Gambian national, already wanted for his involvement in drugs trafficking and other crimes.
- An antelope skin trafficker arrested in Benin in May with 15 skins and two horns of bushbuck in the centre of the country.

Other arrests

During investigations into wildlife trafficking in Cameroon, leads were found into human bones trafficking, which resulted in the arrest of 5 traffickers. 2 independent rings were crushed within two months.

- 3 human bones traffickers arrested in Cameroon in May with a with an almost complete human skeleton that still had dried up flesh on the bones and a human skull with hair on it in a sack that they attempted to sell. The three belong to a larger network that specializing in trafficking human bones. They had connections to other countries of the sub region and seemed to be able to supply dozens of human bodies. Some would dig out the corpses from their graves while others tackle the trafficking side of their illegal business. One of the traffickers in the network was a wildlife trafficker who now deals in human bones trafficking. Often investigations of wildlife traffickers lead to other connected crimes and when it does we have to act. Human body parts and some wildlife species are in high demand in Central Africa sub region to be used by occultists who believe they have supernatural powers.
- 2 human bones traffickers arrested in Cameroon in June. Investigations on wildlife trafficking led to the discovery of a network of human bones traffickers and arresting 2 members of the ring with almost two full human skeletons packed inside two suitcases. This is the second crackdown on a separated ring of human bones traffickers two months in the same town. The two belong to a network that uses internet to advertise their products under code names and search for clients who they claim included clients from abroad. One of the traffickers travelled from Ambam near the South border to the West to carry out the transaction. The three top TV channels in Cameroon covered the case and broadcasted it in the prime-time evening news in French and English.

5. Legal Follow up

The EAGLE Network legal teams in the 8 countries followed up the court cases of the 50 arrested traffickers. All the court cases were followed fighting corruption and ensuring imprisonment terms handed. 75 % of the arrested traffickers remained behind bars while on trial, at least for its beginning.

During the semester 43 traffickers were prosecuted and convinced, 26 of them to imprisonment sentences of various time, while others remain behind the bars awaiting trial. In most of the countries the work of the courts was interrupted due to the pandemic, therefore the number of processed cases was lower.

- 3 ivory traffickers were sentenced to 3 years in jail in Gabon in January. They were arrested in November 2019 with 27 tusks.
- A Cameroonian ivory trafficker was sentenced to 3 years in jail in Gabon in February. He was arrested in October 2019 with 6 tusks.
- 2 ivory traffickers, one of them a military man, were sentenced to two years in jail in Gabon in February. They were arrested in January in the capital city with two tusks.
- Two ivory traffickers were sentenced to jail in Benin in February, one to one year, the other one to 6 months. They were arrested in September last year with 4 elephant tusks.
- The three human bones traffickers arrested in Cameroon May were condemned and sentenced to 5 years imprisonment each in June.
- The PALF Legal team provided legal assistance to a case of two ivory traffickers, one of them a military from republican guard, arrested by Congolese Police with two tusks in June.
- 5 court decisions were delivered in Gabon in June, and 9 ivory traffickers sentenced to jail for various sentences from 2 years to 8 months. They were arrested between August 2019 and March 2020.

6. Media

Using the media to inform the public that the law is being actively enforced maximizes the deterrent value of our actions and the rising risks for potential traffickers to get to jail.

In order to provide a deterrent effect, 1,124 media pieces were published in national media.

At least 144 media pieces were published in the countries as a result of the effort of the media officers spreading the message about the link between the illegal wildlife trade and the Covid-19 pandemic.

The distribution of the media pieces on national media were 30% in print media, 40% on internet, 27% in radio and 3% on TV.

More than 14 international media pieces published.

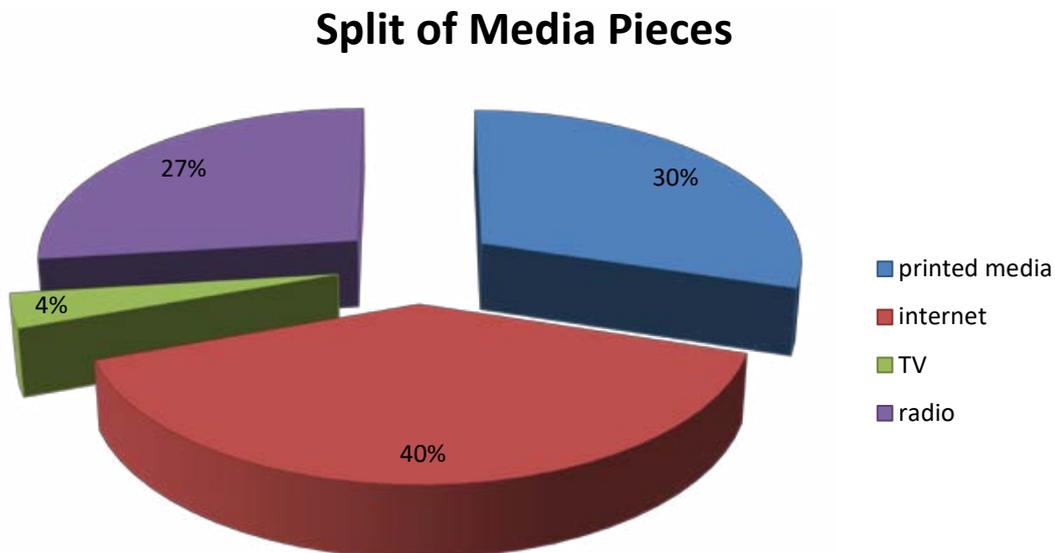


Fig. 4: Split of Media Pieces

Numbers of media pieces published in January - June 2020

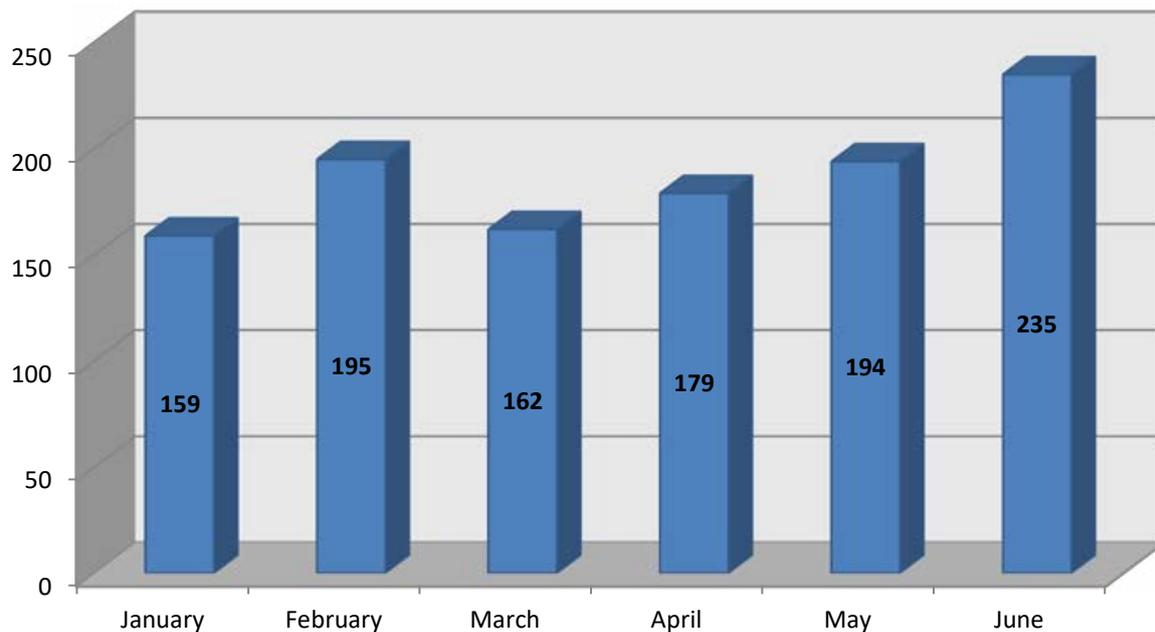


Fig. 5: Number of Media pieces published nationally in January – June 2020

International media

- A short movie was published by a film crew preparing a documentary on the illegal trade with pangolins, showing an interview with Eric Tah, the LAGA Deputy Director.

[Link to the video](#)

- EAGLE Côte d'Ivoire was mentioned and the coordinator Rens Ilgen was quoted by several international media at the opportunity of burning the 3 tons of pangolin scales in Côte d'Ivoire:

[Link to 20 minutes](#)

[Link to La Libre Afrique](#)

[Link to RTBF](#)

[Link to Franceinfo](#)

- La Croix quotes Ofir Drori in an article on pangolin trafficking:

[Link to La Croix](#)

- Reporterre writes about the link between Covid-19 and pangolin trafficking, with a quote from Ofir Drori:

[Link to Reporterre](#)

- Le Monde interviewed Ofir Drori for an article Coronavirus: on the trail of the “pangolin connection”:

[Link to Le Monde](#)

[Link to the full article](#)

- Luc Mathot was quoted in le Monde, “Pangolin sales in Gabon falter with Covid-19”:

[Link to Le Monde](#)

- LAGA was mentioned in Camer.be in an article “COVID-19 and wildlife trade: CAMEROON”:

[Link to Camer.be](#)

- Several articles in Guinea, Burkina Faso and other media were published as a result of push of EAGLE Togo Media Officer, explaining the link between pangolin trafficking and trade in pangolins:

[Link to All Africa](#)

[Link to Afrique News](#)

- Ofir was interviewed by Israeli TV i24news on the illegal trade in pangolins and pangolin scales (in French):

[Link to the interview](#)

- Save Pangolins published an article on LAGA Deputy Director Eric Kaba Tah, who has been nominated for the prestigious Indianapolis Prize in 2020

[Link to Save Pangolins](#)

- French TV channel France 2 during its prime time programme “Sur le front des animaux menacés” showed the pangolin trafficking theme with LAGA and covered the recent crackdown arrest of two military men with 400kg of pangolin scales, as well as a follow-up on a previous arrest of a woman trafficker.

[Link to France 2](#)



7. External Relations

Building a relationship of equals with government that is an exception from normal NGO-Government relationships and centering on the fight against corruption, ensuring effective enforcement and consequences for lack of law application is one of the main objectives of the EAGLE Network. This is realized through fostering government relations and engaging the international community to ensure good governance and law application, while pushing the EAGLE Network international messages of larger change. Fostering EAGLE Network's relations with Embassies and other members of the international community is therefore of high importance in the sensitive domain of law enforcement. During this semester, the EAGLE activists held many meetings with international authorities, government officials within and outside of their countries, they cooperated with local and international NGOs, participated in conferences and conducted several trainings.

Cameroon

- The Deputy Director held a meeting with the Law Enforcement Advisor of the Zoological Society of London who was visiting the country in January. He discussed with him wildlife law enforcement strategies, techniques and conservation in general. They also explored possible areas of cooperation and assistance. He also took part in a meeting organized by the Cameroon Pangolin Working Group that was focused on preparations for the World Pangolin Day planned for the 15th of February.
- In February the Deputy Director had a presentation on LAGA's activities and its collaboration with Interpol at a three-day Interpol meeting that brought together Interpol, Wildlife and Customs officials, focusing on defining state-level priorities and needs for an upcoming Interpol operation against wildlife trafficking which will be carried out in the various member countries within the West and Central African sub regions.
- On the invitation of the Belgian Ambassador, the Deputy Director participated at a meeting at the Secretariat of Defence in Charge of the Gendarmerie that brought together 5 top gendarmerie officials including the Central Deputy Director of Coordination and a technical adviser. The meeting was focused on discussing some wildlife cases at the courts with links to the gendarmerie.
- The Deputy Director held a meeting in March with the President of Global Earth Keeper and a consultant working for the organisation. They discussed issues related to conservation in the northern regions of the country that are facing several challenges including human animal conflicts, transhumant pastoralism etc.

Republic of the Congo

- The Coordinator participated at the conference “Action for Chimpanzee” which took place in Conakry in January, attended by governments and NGOs from Liberia, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal, Guinea Conakry, Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast. She actively contributed to drafting the Conakry Declaration on the fight against the illegal trade in chimpanzees from West Africa, adopted at the conference.
- The Coordinator held a series of meetings with high authorities including the Deputy US Ambassador, several State Counsels and Department Directors of Forest Economy and others.

Gabon

- The Coordinator travelled to the Republic of Congo in January to participate at a meeting with EU representatives to discuss EU financial support to several EAGLE projects and regional strategy.
- Two Legal Advisors supported by the Activities Coordinator trained Judicial Police Officers in Tchibanga (Nyanga Province) on the regulations of wildlife conservation and methods of combating wildlife crime in January.
- The Executive Director and the Activities Coordinator met with the General Director of the School of Gendarmerie to prepare the training program on wildlife law enforcement in February.
- The Legal Advisors met with the Director of Cabinet and the Legal Advisor of the Minister of Water and Forests and the General Director of Wildlife and Protected Areas in March.
- The Activities Coordinator held a meeting in June with the Executive Secretary of the National Agency for National Parks, the Advisor to the Minister in charge of the Ecosystem Service and Sustainable Development Goals, the Directors General of the Forest Sector Executing Agency and the Director in charge of Wildlife and Hunting Management.
- During the semester the Legal Team and the Coordinator held a series of meetings with the administrative and judicial authorities of the country both for the follow-up of cases and for the strengthening of collaboration, including the Director of Economic and Financial Affairs of the National Police, the Director of Wildlife and Protected Areas, several governors, state counsels, the heads of judicial police units in several provinces and others.

Togo

- The Head of the Legal Department held several meetings with the new Head of Forest Resources Division at the Forest Resources Department of the Ministry of Environment to introduce him to the EAGLE project and its activities in the fight against wildlife crime. He also informed him about the collaboration that

already exists between EAGLE and the technical services of the Ministry. The Head of the Department expressed his support to the process of bringing the Memorandum of Understanding between EAGLE and the Ministry of Environment to the signature.

- The Coordinator and the Head of Legal Department held a meeting in February with the Director of Interpol-DCPJ and the Head Commissioner in charge of fight against narcotic crime. They discussed cooperation during arrest operations.
- The Coordinator and the Head of the Legal Department met the Assistant to the Director of OCRTIDB to discuss strengthening of collaboration and better monitoring of containers at the autonomous port of Lomé.
- The Head of the Legal Department held a meeting in March with the Customs' Operational Technical Inspector concerning CITES related cases at the airport to strengthen the collaboration, to discuss sharing information about the future seizures of the wildlife products, and EAGLE Togo legal and investigation support. He supported the cooperation with EAGLE Togo in combating wildlife crime.
- The Head of the Legal Department held several meetings with the Association Declaration Officer at the Ministry of Territorial Administration to follow up on the EAGLE Togo registration file.
- In April the Head of Legal Department held a meeting with the Secretary General of the Ministry of the Environment, Sustainable Development and Nature Protection to follow up on the Memorandum of Understanding, which is in the process of evaluation within the Ministry.
- The Head of Legal Department and the Media Officer held two meetings with the OCRTIDB and Interpol to strengthen the collaboration in the fight against environmental crime and wildlife trafficking. EAGLE-Togo supported the two law enforcement and security units by providing protective equipment against the corona virus, including 100 surgical masks and 30 bottles of disinfection gel.

Senegal

- In January the Coordinator held a meeting with the Director of Cabinet of the Minister of the Environment and Sustainable Development and the Director of National Parks of Senegal to discuss the renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry and EAGLE Senegal as well as the obstacles encountered in the implementation of this agreement.
- She held a meeting with the Director of Operations of the Senegalese Customs to discuss a collaboration between the customs services and EAGLE Senegal in the context of the fight against trafficking in products of protected wildlife species.
- The Coordinator held a meeting with the Head of the Internal Security Service of the French Embassy in Senegal to follow up and to discuss support for finishing the MoU between EAGLE Senegal and the Ministry of the Environment. They also established a schedule of wildlife crime training to be provided.
- She held a meeting with the Lieutenant-Colonel of Gendarmerie to discuss organization of a training in wildlife crime for the cadets of the Gendarmerie national.

- The Coordinator held a meeting with the Minister of the Environment and Sustainable Development and the diplomatic representation from the Embassy of the United States of America in Dakar in February. They discussed the signature of the Memorandum of Understanding between EAGLE Senegal and the Ministry.
- The same month the Coordinator in cooperation with the Internal Security Service of the French Embassy trained officers of the Airport Anti-Traffic Unit in combating wildlife crime. Only one week later this training brought fruit in the arrest of the Algerian bird trafficker.
- The Coordinator in cooperation with the Internal Security Service of the French Embassy trained 38 Gendarmerie Officers from different units at the Application Center for Gendarmerie Officers. The training focused on different methods of combating wildlife crime.
- The Coordinator held a series of meetings with high authorities, including the Colonel in charge of cooperation in the Gendarmerie Officers' Application Course with the heads of the National Gendarmerie Environmental Unit, the Director of the Judicial Police within the framework of collaboration on future operations and for the follow-up of the Partnership agreement with the General Direction of the National Police, the Director of the Central Office for the Suppression of Illicit Drug Trafficking (OCRTIS) as part of the follow-up to the Partnership Agreement with the General Directorate of the National Police, the focal point of the CITES Convention in Senegal and Director of Wildlife within the framework of the collaboration on the seizure of 131 parrots, and others.
- In March the Coordinator held a meeting with the Director of the Central Office for the Suppression of Illicit Drug Trafficking as part of the preparation for the successful operation and to resolve difficulties related to the border aspect of the intervention area.
- The Assistant Coordinator trained 46 Gendarmerie officers of 16 different African nationalities on the fight against trafficking in protected animal species in June. The training was organized by EAGLE Senegal, in collaboration with the Internal Security Service of the French Embassy in Senegal and the CITES Management Authority in Senegal at the Application Center for Gendarmerie Officers.

Benin

- The Coordinator trained twenty police officers of the Commissariat of the Republican Police in Agoué on methods of combating wildlife crime in January.
- During the semester the Coordinator and the Legal Team held a series of meetings with high officials, including several State Counsels of different courts, Commissioners and Departmental Police Directors, the Commander of Water and Forests and Representative of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and others.
- In March the Coordinator trained 10 police officers in Azove on methods of combating wildlife crime.

Côte d'Ivoire

- The EAGLE Côte d'Ivoire team assisted to a movie projection organized by WCF about the Cavally forest, a classified forest of the west under huge human pressure and illegal occupation of lands, in January.
- In February the team met the Senior Economist of the US Embassy to discuss the challenges of fighting wildlife traffickers in Côte d'Ivoire. He confirmed the support of the US Embassy for the team's activities and external relations.
- In March EAGLE Côte d'Ivoire team assisted to the burning of the 3 tons of pangolin scales seized in 2017 after an arrest operation done by the UCT with the technical support of EAGLE Côte d'Ivoire. The 4 fires were lit by the Minister of Water and Forest, the Public prosecutor, the UK and the US ambassadors.
- A Legal Adviser participated at a series of working sessions organized by the World Bank to assess the risks of wildlife crime in Côte d'Ivoire in March, April and May. The workshop is the follow up of the workshop organized in October and December last year.
- The Coordinator participated via videoconference at a workshop with the Ministry of Waters and Forests and the UCT (Unité de Lutte Contre le Criminalité Transnationale) to establish a proper registration and statistic system concerning the wildlife seizures in order to give more precise and complete figures to the CITES.
- In June the Legal Advisors participated at two on-line meetings organized by the Ministry of Water and Forests for the validation of the national protection policy of reconstitution and recovery of wildlife, alongside with other NGOs. Validation of the policy will be done in July.

Burkina Faso

- In January the Coordinator together with the Technical Director of Conservation Justice met with a representative of NITIDAE, and environmental NGO. They discussed a cooperation within PONASI project, focused on support the enhancement of the natural capital of the landscape and increase the resilience of riparian communities. EAGLE Burkina Faso will provide legal support to the court cases resulting from the project.
- The Coordinator together with the Technical Director of Conservation Justice and a Legal Advisor held a meeting with the Technical Advisor of the Ministry of the Environment, Green Economy and Climate Change to discuss EAGLE activities in Burkina Faso. They also discussed the partners who supported EAGLE in carrying out its missions as well as the officials who were creating obstacles.
- The Coordinator held several meetings with senior officials from the Ministry of Environment, the Technical Advisor and the Director of the National Office of Protected Areas in April.
- The Coordinator held a meeting in May with the Coordinator of the PAB-Bio project, the expert for the fight

against wildlife crime and the person in charge of monitoring and evaluation of the governance project. They presented the missions of the PAB-Bio project and requested the presence of Conservation Justice in the sub-regional information sharing network as it is identified as a major player in the information sharing system.

- The coordinator held a meeting in June with the Coordinator of the NGO NITIDAE who can facilitate an interview between the EAGLE Burkina Faso Coordinator and the Director General of Waters and Forests. They also discussed training that Conservation Justice could provide for the eco-guards of the PONASI ecological complex.
- He also met with the new Director of Operations of the Ministry of Water and Forests.

8. Headquarters and Development of the EAGLE Network

The travel restrictions due to COVID-19 pandemic limited possibilities of missions to other countries. The Central Coordinating Unit of EAGLE Network continued the support to the network members mostly via internet. Personal missions were replaced by videoconferencing, to continue support newly started replications, to ensure better quality control and adequate support to the countries.

The CCU and Steering Group members conducted 2 missions to the countries to support management of the countries.

The preparation of new EAGLE Uganda project continued, the first team members were recruited and several investigators were tested.

Several investigators supported activities carried in other countries which helped to achieve more results.

January

- Luc Mathot, the Founding Director, travelled to the Republic of Congo to participate at a meeting with EU representatives to discuss EU financial support to several EAGLE projects and regional strategy.

February

- Perrine Odier, the PALF Coordinator, travelled to Côte d'Ivoire to support the team in recruitment, finances and procedures and to share her experience.
- Danielle Mbui, the Financial Officer, conducted a mission to Burkina Faso to support the recruitment process of a new accountant and train the selected one.
- Luc Mathot, the Founding Director travelled to Belgium and Great Britain to meet with donors and to discuss future cooperation.

March

- An investigator from Gabon arrived to Cameroon for a three-week training and experience sharing mission.
- Tiffany Gobert, a supervolunteer, arrived to Côte d'Ivoire for training and to support the team

9. Photos of the selected cases

8 ivory traffickers arrested in Gabon in one month

Two ivory traffickers, one of them corrupt military man, were arrested with two tusks in the capital city in January. One of them brought the tusks from South of the country to sell them and the military man accompanied him to protect him for arrest during the transaction. They are both behind bars facing a sentence of 10 years in jail thanks to the new legislation adopted by Gabonese Parliament last year.

3 ivory traffickers were arrested with 7 tusks in the central part of the country. Two of them were arrested in the attempt to sell the tusks cut in several pieces. After the arrest they denounced the head of the gang, who is a teacher in nearby town. He was swiftly arrested the same day and a hunting gun was found in his house.

3 ivory traffickers including a repeat offender were arrested with 2 tusks in the North of the country. The

repeat offender was arrested in August 2013 with support of Conservation Justice with ten tusks. He was sentenced to 6 months in absentia as he was released on bail before the court hearing. Although an arrest warrant was issued, he never got back to jail.



3 ivory traffickers were arrested with 7 tusks



Two ivory traffickers arrested with two tusks



3 ivory traffickers including a repeat offender were arrested with 2 tusks

Leopard skin trafficker arrested in Cameroon

A trafficker was arrested with 5 large leopard skins in Cameroon in February. When arrested, he was wearing an ivory bracelet on his wrist, showing audacity in caring the illegal activities with a sense of impunity. He is a part of a network of leopard skins traffickers operating in the West Region of the country, he often travels around to collect the contraband. He owns a shop at one of the main markets in Ba-foussam, the capital of the West Region.



A parrot trafficker arrested in Senegal

An Algerian parrot trafficker was arrested at the airport in Dakar with 131 Senegal parrots and Rose-ringed parakeets in February. He was arrested on the board of a plane to Algeria at the last moment before taking off. The birds were concealed in two small

suitcases, suffering by dehydration, malnutrition and injuries. They were quickly transported to a veterinarian to receive adequate care. After five days of recovery most of them could be released back to the wild.



Hippo teeth traffickers arrested in Senegal

4 traffickers were arrested with 20 kg of hippo teeth and skulls and 20 packages of ammunition in Senegal. One of them was already wanted for 18 different crimes. First two traffickers were arrested in the act when trying to sell the hippo ivory, concealed in a rice bag. They were also carrying 5 packs of ammunition of caliber 12. A house search in their village was carried out in an area with high security risk. It was supported by two army units. It led to an arrest of two more traffickers, one of them, a Gambian national, already wanted for his involvement in drugs trafficking and other crimes.

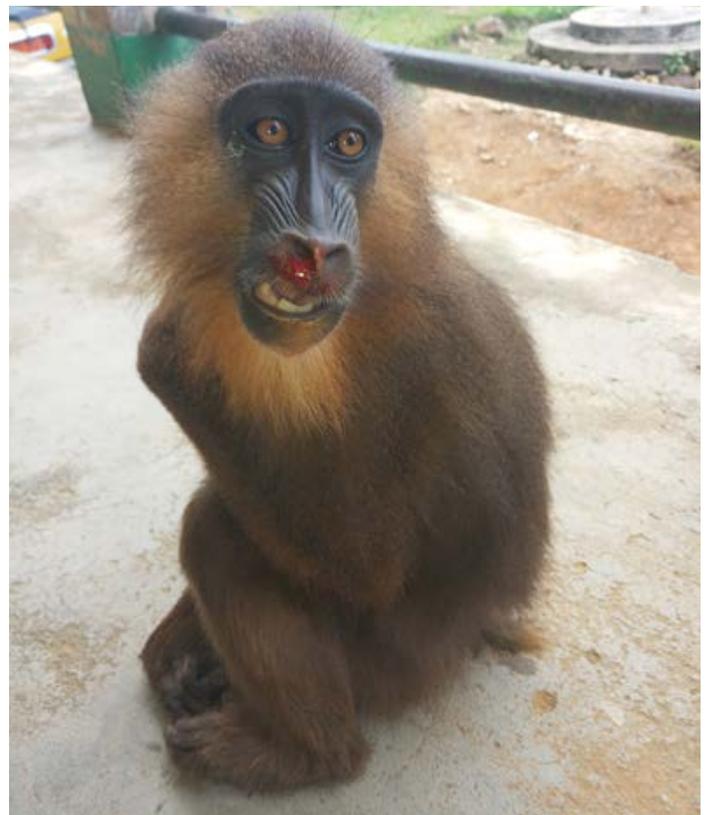


3 traffickers arrested and two mandrills rescued in Cameroon in April

A trafficker arrested in the heart of the capital city of Cameroon with a young mandrill he had been keeping with him for some time. He brought the animal from the South of the country.

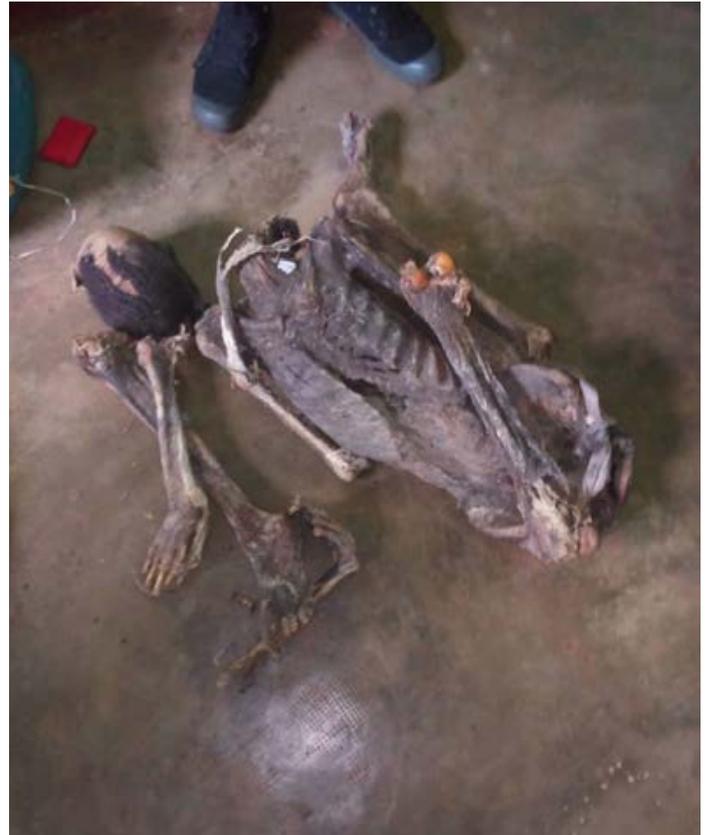
2 primate traffickers arrested in the south of Cameroon with another young and wounded mandrill. They had travelled overnight to avoid detection. They had been collaborating in wildlife trafficking for a long time, one of them specializing in the buying and searching for new clients.

Additional protective measures were taken for the entire teams carrying out the operations; special measures relating to the handling of primates were taken for the rescued mandrills, because of the Covid-19 situation.



4 human bones traffickers arrested in May

4 human bones traffickers were arrested in Cameroon with a human body in a sack that they attempted to sell. During investigations into wildlife trafficking in the West of the country, leads were found into human bones trafficking, which resulted in the arrest of 3 traffickers with an almost complete human skeleton that still had dried up flesh on the bones and a human skull with hair on it. The fourth trafficker was arrested shortly after. They belong to a larger network specializing in trafficking human bones. They had connections to other countries of the sub region and seemed to be able to supply dozens of human bodies. Some would dig out the corpses from their graves while others tackle the trafficking side of their illegal business. One of the traffickers in the network was a wildlife trafficker who now deals in human bones trafficking. Often investigations of wildlife traffickers lead to other connected crimes and when it does we have to act. Human body parts and some wildlife species are in high demand in Central Africa sub region to be used by occultists who believe they have supernatural powers.



A member of the Presidential Guard arrested in Cameroon in June

3 pangolin scales traffickers were arrested in Cameroon. 2 corrupt military men were arrested with 380 kg of pangolin scales as they moved to sell the contraband transported in a pickup car. Third member of the ring, a woman who had sent her son (one of the arrested military men) to carry out the transaction on her behalf, was arrested a couple of hours later. She and one of the military men had been tracked for several years as she carried out illegal pangolin trade. They all explained explicitly how they used their military status to run criminal activities, to avoid arrest. One of them, a member of the Presidential Guard, was swiftly removed by his hierarchy following the arrest to serve as a strong message the corps' uniform will not be used to cover illegal activities, and any knowledge of an illegal activity will result in swift action. Despite the link between pangolins' consumption and the Covid-19 pandemic, the illegal trade still goes on.



Human bones traffickers arrested in Cameroon in June

2 human bones traffickers were arrested in Cameroon. Investigations on wildlife trafficking led to the discovery of a network of human bones traffickers and arresting 2 members of the ring with almost two full human skeletons packed inside two suitcases. This is the second crackdown on a separated ring of human bones traffickers two months in the same town. The two belong to a network that uses internet to advertise their products under code names and search for clients who they claim included clients from abroad. One of the traffickers travelled from Ambam near the South border to the West to carry out the transaction. The three top TV channels in Cameroon covered the case and broadcasted it in the prime time evening news in French and English.



Leopard skins traffickers arrested in Senegal

2 traffickers were arrested with 4 leopard and two crocodile skins in Senegal. The long term traffickers were arrested in the act when trying to sell the skins. One of them is a tourist guide, who was trained in conservation and accompanied the officers of Niokolo Koba National Park on several missions, but he didn't stop his criminal activities. While some of the skins originate from the nearby National Park, other ones were trafficked from Mali. Both traffickers remain behind bars, awaiting the trial.



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: perrine@eagle-enforcement.org
3. Gabon – AALF: luc@eagle-enforcement.org
4. Togo – EAGLE-Togo: rens@eagle-enforcement.org
5. Senegal – SALF: cebloch@eagle-enforcement.org
6. Benin - AALF-B: jules@eagle-enforcement.org
7. Côte d'Ivoire - EAGLE Côte d'Ivoire: rens@eagle-enforcement.org
8. Burkina Faso - EAGLE BURkina Faso: josias@eagle-enforcement.org

Annex - Summary of the Results

Number of investigations per month per country

	January	February	March	April	May	June	total per country
Cameroon	1	16	12	9	16	16	70
Congo	4	2	3	0	1	10	20
Gabon	12	11	7	4	27	29	90
Togo	8	15	13	18	16	17	87
Senegal	26	21	13	5	13	19	97
Benin	14	18	11	17	24	11	95
Uganda	82	45	79	0	4	86	296
Côte d'Ivoire	0	3	3	7	25	44	82
Burkina Faso	0	0	0	0	0	12	12
total per month	147	131	141	60	126	244	849

Number of arrests per month per country

	January	February	March	April	May	June	total per country
Cameroon	0	1	0	8	7	7	23
Congo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gabon	8	3	1	0	0	0	12
Togo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Senegal	0	1	4	0	0	2	7
Benin	0	2	0	0	5	1	8
Côte d'Ivoire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Burkina Faso	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
total per month	8	7	5	8	12	10	50

Number of media pieces by month by country

	<i>January</i>	<i>February</i>	<i>March</i>	<i>April</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>June</i>	<i>total by country</i>
Cameroon	0	19	31	53	43	43	189
Congo	15	28	0	8	13	27	91
Gabon	32	23	10	14	9	2	90
Togo	46	36	35	42	43	50	252
Senegal	0	31	23	5	0	32	91
Benin	30	32	33	28	55	52	230
Côte d'Ivoire	8	26	30	29	31	29	153
Burkina Faso	28	0	0	0	0	0	28
total by month	184	195	265	222	235	217	1124

Number of prosecutions by month by country

	<i>January</i>	<i>February</i>	<i>March</i>	<i>April</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>June</i>	<i>total</i>
Cameroon	0	9	0	0	4	3	16
<i>sentenced to jail</i>	0	0	0	0	4	0	4
Congo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>sentenced to jail</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gabon	6	6	0	0	0	9	21
<i>sentenced to jail</i>	6	6	0	0	0	9	21
Togo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>sentenced to jail</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Senegal	1	0	3	0	0	0	4
<i>sentenced to jail</i>	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Benin	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
<i>sentenced to jail</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Côte d'Ivoire	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>sentenced to jail</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Burkina Faso	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>sentenced to jail</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
total	7	15	5	0	4	12	43
<i>sentenced to jail</i>	7	6	0	0	4	9	26