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COUNTERING WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING THROUGH
KENYA'S SEAPORTS
A RAPID SEIZURE ANALYSIS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper formed the basis of discussions at the Mombasa Port Stakeholders Workshop in Kenya to Combat Wildlife Trafficking on 23rd–25th October 2019.

A total of 73 individuals representing a wide range of stakeholders operating at the Port of Mombasa, as well as from other countries, participated in the workshop including the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife of The Republic of Kenya, Kenya Port Authority (KPA), Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA), Kenya Wildlife Services (KWS), Customs representatives from Uganda, Tanzania, Nigeria, and Viet Nam, shipping companies and transport sector associations, UN organisations, USAID, and NGOs, along with national and international experts on wildlife trade and maritime issues. This paper provides essential information on wildlife trafficking via Kenya's seaports, mainly the Port of Mombasa and the evidence of its role in wildlife trafficking. Whilst there have been no reported seizures linked to the Port of Mombasa since 2017, this does not mean there has been no illegal wildlife trade moving through the port—only that no seizures have been made, or that any seizures that have been made have not been reported on. The analysis within this paper also provides key information on trafficking routes and concealment methods that have been used to move illicit wildlife products from and via Kenya to consumer countries.

INTRODUCTION

This paper was originally written to inform discussions at a Port Stakeholders Workshop to Combat Wildlife Trafficking held at Mombasa Port on the 23rd–25th October 2019 and attended by a wide range of stakeholders, including those operating at the Port of Mombasa and from other countries.

To help the workshop participants understand the context of the illegal wildlife trade in Kenya, this paper focuses on Kenya's seaports through which large-scale shipments of illegal wildlife products are known to have passed through (specifically the Port of Mombasa) or attempted to pass through in recent decades.

WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

1. **Deepen understanding of the detrimental impacts** brought to the country, port and maritime industry through wildlife trafficking;

2. **Assess current efforts and identify key gaps and opportunities** in the port management systems and stakeholder practices to prevent, detect and intercept wildlife trafficking as well as other illicit trade;

3. **Introduce the UNDP-GEF (Global Environment Facility) Project "Reducing Maritime Trafficking of Wildlife between Africa and Asia"**, the USAID funded Wildlife Trafficking, Response, Assessment and Priority Setting (Wildlife TRAPS) Project implemented by TRAFFIC and IUCN, the UNODC-WCO Container Control Programme, and private sector-led initiatives through members of the United for Wildlife Transport Taskforce, along with showcasing best practices and technology from other sectors; and

4. **Generate practical solutions and supporting mechanisms** to tackle wildlife trafficking effectively through Kenya's seaports.

797

IVORY SEIZURES
were reported to ETIS by
Kenya between 2007-2017

A TRANSIT COUNTRY
for illegal wildlife products on
their way to other countries

FRAMING THE ISSUE

Wildlife trafficking is the illegal cross-border trade of fauna and flora and is considered to rank alongside drugs, humans and arms trafficking as one of the largest transnational organised criminal activities (UNODC, 2019). Wildlife traffickers have been able to exploit the international financial system and the global transportation network; however they have also become dependent on them (C4ADS, 2018).

KENYA'S WILDLIFE

Kenya borders the Indian Ocean and five other countries: Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Uganda. Kenya is known for iconic wildlife, such as the African Elephant *Loxodonta africana* and the Critically Endangered Black Rhinoceros *Diceros bicornis*, and many species are under pressure from human factors, including population growth and large-scale developments for agricultural, residential and industrial use, as well as illegal wildlife trade.

Kenya's wildlife has faced many years of poaching and trafficking, via airports and seaports. For example, between 2007 and 2017 Kenya had reported 797 ivory seizures to the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS): more than any other African country and third only to China (3,984) and the USA (1,531) (TRAFFIC, 2018). Kenya has been recognised as a country that regularly makes and diligently reports seizures to ETIS (Milliken *et al.*, 2018), so this high seizure rate is likely both a reflection of Kenya's reporting and seizure effort as well as the volume of ivory moving through the country. A TRAFFIC assessment identified that Kenya is also a transit country for illegal wildlife products from other countries, including Tanzania (mainly ivory), Mozambique (ivory and rhino horn), Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) (mainly ivory), Uganda (ivory, pangolin scales, timber), Zambia (ivory) and South Sudan (ivory) (Weru, 2016). Kenya's relatively well-developed infrastructure and international nodes, such as the Port of Mombasa and Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) in Nairobi have been major exit points for illegal wildlife products in the past two decades, sourced from Kenya and the wider region.

Poaching and the illegal wildlife trade have thrived because of loopholes in law enforcement all along the trade chain, corruption, weak capacity, and high demand in Asian markets (Weru, 2016). Recognising these threats, the Kenyan Government outlined in the Kenya National Wildlife Strategy 2030 that one of the strategies to enhance species protection and management (goal two) was by reducing poaching, over-utilisation and illegal wildlife trade. Priority activities to realise these aims include increasing capacity of law enforcement agencies addressing poaching and illegal wildlife trade and modernising wildlife security units for co-ordination and effectiveness (Kenya National Wildlife Strategy 2030, 2018).

WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING AND THE TRANSPORT SECTOR

Wildlife traffickers are largely reliant on either the air or maritime transport sectors for international trade, although ground transport is key for the initial and final stages. The air sector provides a time-efficient option, as there are plentiful flight routes and relatively low risk of interdiction. Maritime shipments are often cost-effective and subject to fewer restrictions and customs screenings, providing traffickers with opportunities to smuggle large shipments of illicit wildlife products such as ivory (C4ADS, 2018). Traffickers are known to take advantage where technology is lagging and/or rampant or latent corruption is present, and they can be particularly creative and adapt quickly: using multiple smuggling routes and concealment methods to move wildlife products to evade detection along the route (C4ADS, 2018).

Wildlife trafficking networks have exploited vulnerabilities in the maritime sector, particularly the container shipping industry and customs capabilities at seaports, to move illegal wildlife products to consumer countries (TRAFFIC, 2019). International seaports and their associated infrastructure (i.e. inland container depots) are key consolidation and exit points to screen and intercept shipments containing illegal products. However, this is not an easy task due to the sheer scale of the maritime industry that transports 90% of the world's trade (ICS, 2019).

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

The country is amid a transformation under the Kenya Vision 2030 that was launched by former President, Mwai Kibaki in 2008, which aims to transform Kenya into an industrialising, middle-income country with a high quality of life for all its citizens in a clean and secure environment by 2030 (Anon 2019a). Since the inception of the Vision, the country has undergone significant political, social and technological changes, as well as developed its national infrastructure and services. Central to the latter has been the aim to develop the Port of Mombasa into a maritime hub by improving port capacity and efficiency, construction of a second container terminal, upgrading the inland container depot and facilitating trans-shipment of cargo (Anon 2019b). The Port of Mombasa is already a critical transport hub for the region: serving a wide agricultural and natural resource-rich region consisting of Uganda, Rwanda, eastern DRC, north-eastern Tanzania, Burundi, South Sudan and Ethiopia (KPA, 2015).

One of the aims of Kenya Vision 2030 is to upgrade the railway that connects the Port of Mombasa from narrow gauge to a high-speed standard gauge to improve its cargo handling capacity and ensure connectivity with other Kenyan cities and neighbouring countries, particularly Uganda and Rwanda (Anon., 2019b). However, conservationists have raised concerns about upgrading the railway line as it runs directly between two national parks (Tsavo East and Tsavo West National Parks) as well as through Nairobi National Park, and could block wildlife migration routes and threaten wildlife populations (National Geographic, 2016).

SEAPORTS

Kenya's coastline has one major seaport, Mombasa, and several smaller coastal seaports including Lamu, Malindi, Kilifi, Mtwapa, Kiunga, Shimoni, Funzi, and Vanga (Figure 1) (KPA, 2019a). Mombasa actually has two ports, Mombasa Old Port (used by dhows and small craft) and Kilindini, a modern deepwater port (now referred to by many simply as the Port of Mombasa) (AfricaPorts, 2019).

The Kenya Ports Authority (KPA) maintains and operates the ports, as well as inland waterways and the Inland Container Depots (ICDs) at Nairobi, Eldoret and Kisumu (KPA, 2019b; KPA, 2019c). All of the seaports, particularly the Port of Mombasa have undergone significant development in recent years to increase capacity and improve performance, which has been implemented by Kenya's Vision 2030. For example, a new transport corridor is being developed to link the Port of Lamu with Garissa, Isiolo, Maralal, Lodwar, and Lokichogio and branching at Isiolo to Moyale at the border with Ethiopia and proceeding to the border with South Sudan, and once developed will attract larger cargo ships (KPA, 2019d). The Port of Mombasa is expecting to benefit from a €1.4 billion investment by the European Investment Bank (Anon 2018b). Given these ambitious development plans, the significance of the port for illegal wildlife trafficking may increase too.

FIGURE 1

Current and planned ports in Kenya. *(Adapted from KPA, 2019a)*

PORT OF MOMBASA

The Port of Mombasa has a long tradition of being a busy trading post for the East Africa region due to its strategic location and trading routes, and provides direct connectivity to numerous ports worldwide (KPA, 2019a). The Port of Mombasa is one of the largest ports in Africa and a vital gateway for imports and exports to and from Kenya and its neighbouring countries (World Bank, 2010). The imports and exports that pass through the Port of Mombasa are critical to Kenya's economic growth, and to the economic well-being of its neighbours (World Bank 2010). The Port of Mombasa has two container terminals (KPA, 2019):

MOMBASA CONTAINER TERMINAL
1.1 MILLION TEUs
4 BERTHS

Mombasa Container Terminal includes four berths and an annual capacity of 1.1 million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs)

KIPEVU CONTAINER TERMINAL
1.2 MILLION TEUs
2 BERTHS

Kipevu Container Terminal is newly developed and operational, this terminal currently has two berths but when completed (estimated 2023) it will create additional capacity of 1.2 million TEUs annually.

The Port of Mombasa is also supported by the three Inland Container Deposits (ICDs) in Nairobi, Kisumu and Eldoret that are linked by rail. The ICDs bring port services closer to customers in the region including handling and storage of cargo as well as emptying, filling and weighing of containers (KPA, 2019c). However, there are concerns regarding the potential for corruption and organised crime at ICDs (ISS, 2019c).

UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF SEAPORTS IN THE
ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE

Wildlife seizures at seaports are a clear indicator that criminal networks exploit the maritime industry, particularly container shipping services and ports, to smuggle illegal wildlife products via regional and international routes to reach consumer markets. Wildlife seizure data reveal a great deal about the routes and concealment methods used by criminals.

METHOD

Detailed seizures data related to the Port of Mombasa were obtained from TRAFFIC's wildlife trade information system (WiTIS) for all species, and a summary of the number of seizures involving elephant ivory and the total aggregated weight per year was obtained from the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS).

✓ **ETIS includes seizures data involving elephant products that mostly derive from CITES Parties who are mandated to provide information to ETIS within 90 days of a seizure's occurrence.** This official information is supplemented with open source data that is verified as accurate information. ETIS is managed by TRAFFIC on behalf of CITES Parties. As detailed data on individual seizures are owned by the data providers (normally a CITES Party) and are not made publicly available, only a summary of the number of seizures and annual aggregated weight is used in this analysis.

✓ **TRAFFIC's WiTIS includes seizure data for all species from a wide range of sources** such as open source media reports, datasets from other NGOs, information from law enforcement agencies and government reports.

For ivory seizures, data from ETIS were used in the first instance under the assumption that these data will be more reliable as it is reported predominantly by Parties rather than collected from open sources. However, as the ETIS data provided contained only aggregated weights and numbers of seizures, data from TRAFFIC's WiTIS was used to illuminate concealment methods and trade routes of ivory seizures (noting that WiTIS held information on a slightly smaller number of ivory seizures).

ETIS and TRAFFIC's WITIS currently hold 31 seizures for all species where Kenya's container depots or seaports were identified (or inferred[1]) as the origin, discovery or transit location for these products. Incidents were dated between 2002 and 2017. No incidents have been recorded for 2018 and 2019, but it is possible some occurred that were not reported in the media or to ETIS by CITES Parties and subsequently not detected by TRAFFIC.

SEIZURE DATA DISCLAIMER

Although TRAFFIC endeavours only to use information it believes to be reliable, reported seizures may not be a true or complete representation of all seizures or illegal trade.

Data in WiTIS are subject to bias whereby greater effort is spent collecting seizures data on key species/countries of interest: fewer seizures of species X compared with species Y in WiTIS may reflect greater collection effort of species Y rather than there genuinely being fewer seizures of species X.

Seizures are likely to depend on the ability and willingness of a country to make seizures and to report seizures (either to an open source or to ETIS for ivory seizures). Effort to make and report seizures is not constant over time or between countries and will vary due to a variety of factors. For this reason, it is not possible to infer trends from the data without a means of bias adjustment to account for different rates in making and reporting seizures over time. For open source media reports, it is often difficult to make an informed decision as to the reliability of the source and TRAFFIC is unable to cross-reference or corroborate information for all reports. Although reported seizures are an imperfect indicator of the volume of illegal wildlife trade, they do provide useful insight into species being traded illegally and the modus operandi of the trade.

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[1] Seizures were included in the analysis if the data explicitly specified the Port of Mombasa as being involved, or in cases where Mombasa was not mentioned, were shipped or intended to be shipped from Kenya in a container (Mombasa being the only Kenyan port currently able to handle sea containers).

AN ANALYSIS OF WILDLIFE
TRAFFICKING DATA

The 31 seizures involving or inferred to involve the Port of Mombasa provide some useful insights into species being trafficked, destination locations, maritime smuggling routes as well as a range of concealment methods. The combined reported weight of these 31 incidents was 699 tonnes (640 tonnes was from one seizure of rosewood timber in 2014, and a further 55 tonnes was of elephant ivory/tusks).

In 2009, it was reported that more ivory exited through the Port of Mombasa than any other trade route out of Africa, primarily destined for China and Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) with transit points in Malaysia, Viet Nam, Thailand, and Singapore (Milliken, 2014). According to seizures data held by TRAFFIC, more seizures involving the Port of Mombasa occurred outside Kenya compared to within Kenya, in particular Hong Kong SAR, southeast Asia and United Arab Emirates (Figure 2). This is supported by data from ETIS regarding seizures of ivory specifically (Figure 3a and 3b).
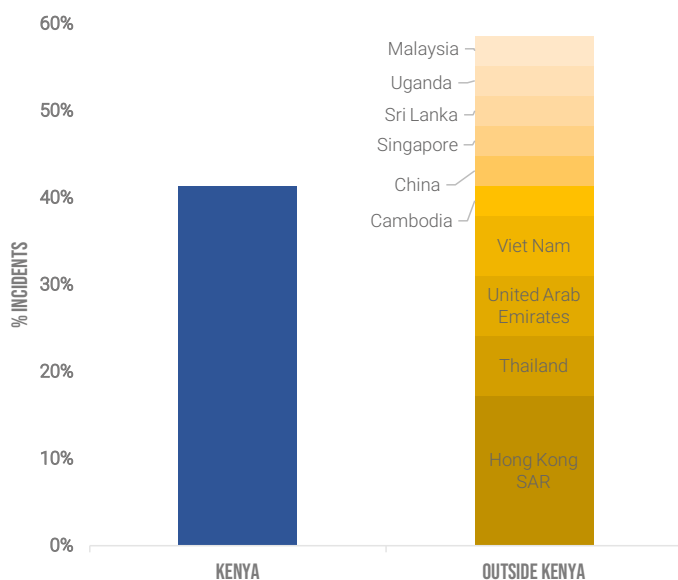
FIGURE 2

Percentage of reported seizures of all reported species that took place in various locations where the Port of Mombasa was involved or inferred to be involved (2002–2017). Based only on data held in TRAFFIC's WiTIS (not ETIS).
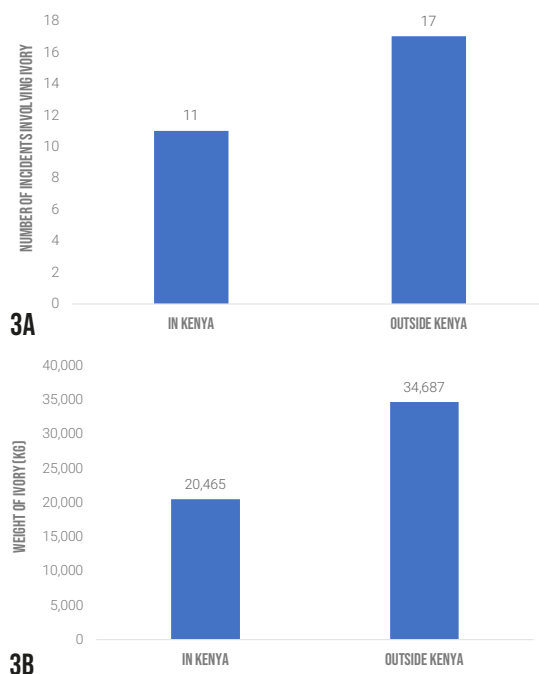
FIGURE 3A AND 3B

Number and weight of reported seizures of ivory that took place inside and outside Kenya where the Port of Mombasa was involved or inferred to be involved (2002–2017). Based only on ETIS summary and aggregate data.

Criminal networks are responsive to increased enforcement or opportunities to use cheaper/safer routes to smuggle wildlife, and therefore are liable to adapt rapidly. Figure 4 demonstrates the trade routes based on known seizures that occurred between 2002 and 2017. Figure 5 notes that only two seizures are known to have taken place in 2017: both concerned containers containing shark fins seized in Hong Kong SAR having been exported from Kenya. This is supported by a recent analysis of ivory smuggling routes (2015–2019) that noted despite the Port of Mombasa once being the "most commonly utilised port for ivory trafficking out of Africa", no ivory seizures involving the Port of Mombasa are known to have taken place since December 2016 (Wildlife Justice Commission, 2019). An analysis of the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) database for CITES CoP18 (2019) noted that collectively Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, whose illicit ivory trades have been interlinked for the past decade, exhibit the fourth greatest value for ivory weight (Milliken *et al.*, 2018). Compared to the CoP17 analysis of the ETIS database (2016) there has actually been a major decline in the illicit trade from these countries (Milliken *et al.*, 2018). However, about 60% of the trade by weight for the three countries combined still reflects large-scale ivory movements, which are the hallmark of transnational organised crime and corruption could be a dogged factor.

Although Kenya makes and reports many ivory seizures to ETIS (TRAFFIC, 2018), it is likely that some illegal wildlife is still moving through the Port of Mombasa and is either not being intercepted, or is being seized but these seizures are not being reported to ETIS or publicised in the media. The large bias towards seizures of ivory (Figure 6) is caused by countries annually reporting elephant product seizures to ETIS as a CITES requirement which has resulted in a large long-term dataset from 1989 to the present: such a dataset does not exist for any other species. Countries may also be more likely to make seizures of ivory than other wildlife products. These complexities make it difficult to know the true composition of species passing through the Port of Mombasa.
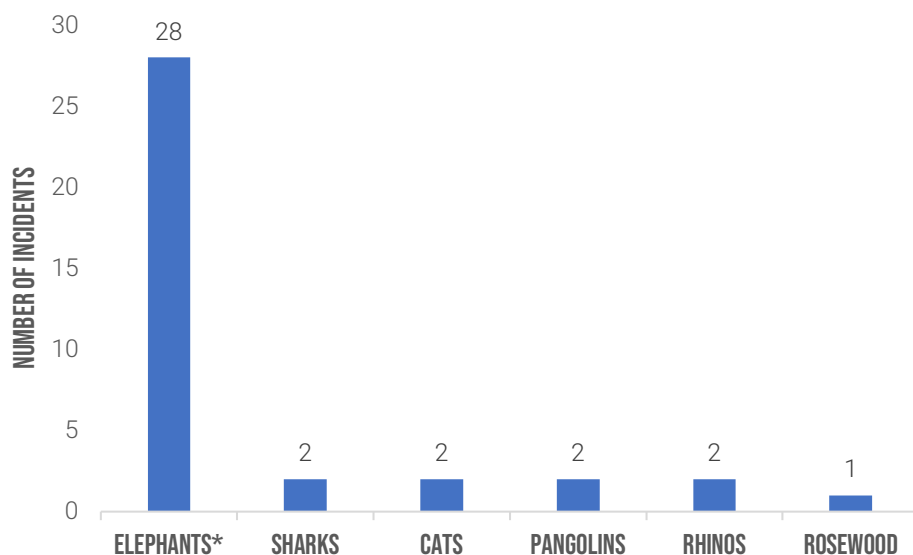

FIGURE 4
Known trade routes of reported seizures of all species where the Port of Mombasa was involved or inferred to be involved (2002–2017). Based only on data held in TRAFFIC's WiTIS (not ETIS).
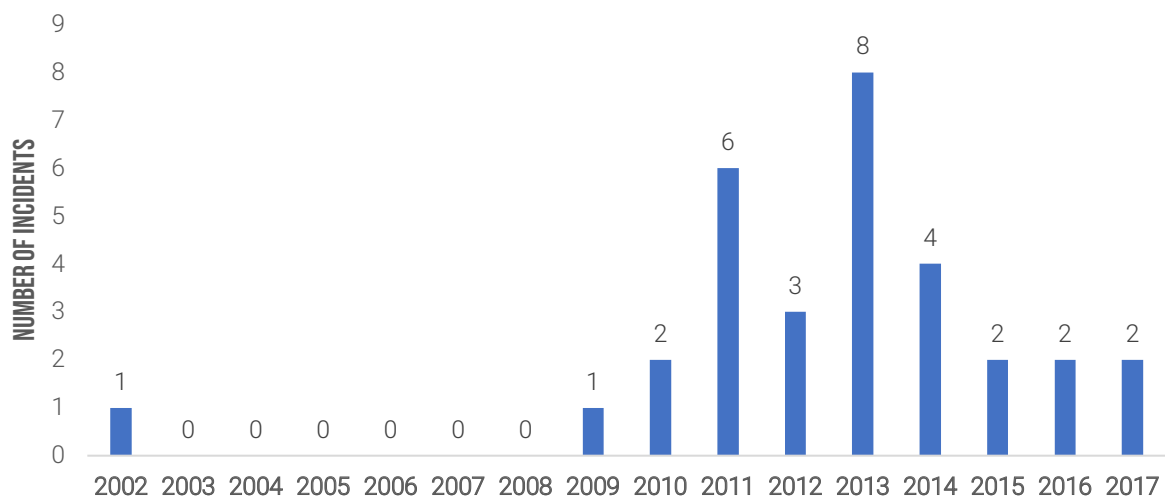
FIGURE 5

Year of reported seizures of all species that took place in various locations where the Port of Mombasa was involved or inferred to be involved (2002–2017). Based on data held in TRAFFIC's WiTIS and ETIS summary and aggregate data

FIGURE 6

Taxa involved in reported seizures that took place in various locations where the Port of Mombasa was involved or inferred to be involved (2002–2017). Note more than one species can be seized in the same incident. Based on data held in TRAFFIC's WiTIS (excluding elephants) and *ETIS summary and aggregate data (elephants only).

According to Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) sources, other leading entry and exit points commonly used for smuggling wildlife specimens are the Busia and Malaba border crossings between Uganda and Kenya (Weru, 2016) (Figure 7). Both are on record for having been used to smuggle ivory into Kenya from the DRC, South Sudan and Uganda for onward transit to the Far East through the Port of Mombasa, particularly between 2013 and 2015. KWS has also noted increased use of other lower tier entry/exit points along the borders with Tanzania, Somalia, and Ethiopia, and arrests have been recorded along Kenya's borders with Tanzania and Ethiopia (Isebania, Namanga, Tarakea (Oloitokitok), Taveta, Lunga Lunga, and Moyale (Figure 7)) (Weru, 2016).

KENYA AND THE NATIONAL IVORY ACTION PLAN

In 2013, Kenya was identified at the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (CoP16) as being among the countries most heavily implicated in the international ivory trade.

As a result, Kenya was required to participate in a National Ivory Action Plan (NIAP) process to enhance trade controls and curb illegal ivory trade.

Through an array of measures, from deploying new rangers as well as sniffer and tracker dogs, to stepping up capacity building, such as training special wildlife prosecutors, and strengthening legislation and management of wildlife crime scenes, Kenya's efforts to control its illegal trade in ivory were strengthened and considered sufficient to exit the NIAP process in 2018 (CITES, 2018).

CONCEALMENT METHODS

According to the data, a common method used to smuggle wildlife was to mis-declare the true contents of a shipment to avoid attracting attention, often by hiding wildlife contraband among legitimate goods. Based on data in TRAFFIC's WiTIS, the most common declaration was of plastic goods (waste, chips, bottles) which were being used to smuggle wildlife (Figure 8). Examples are provided.
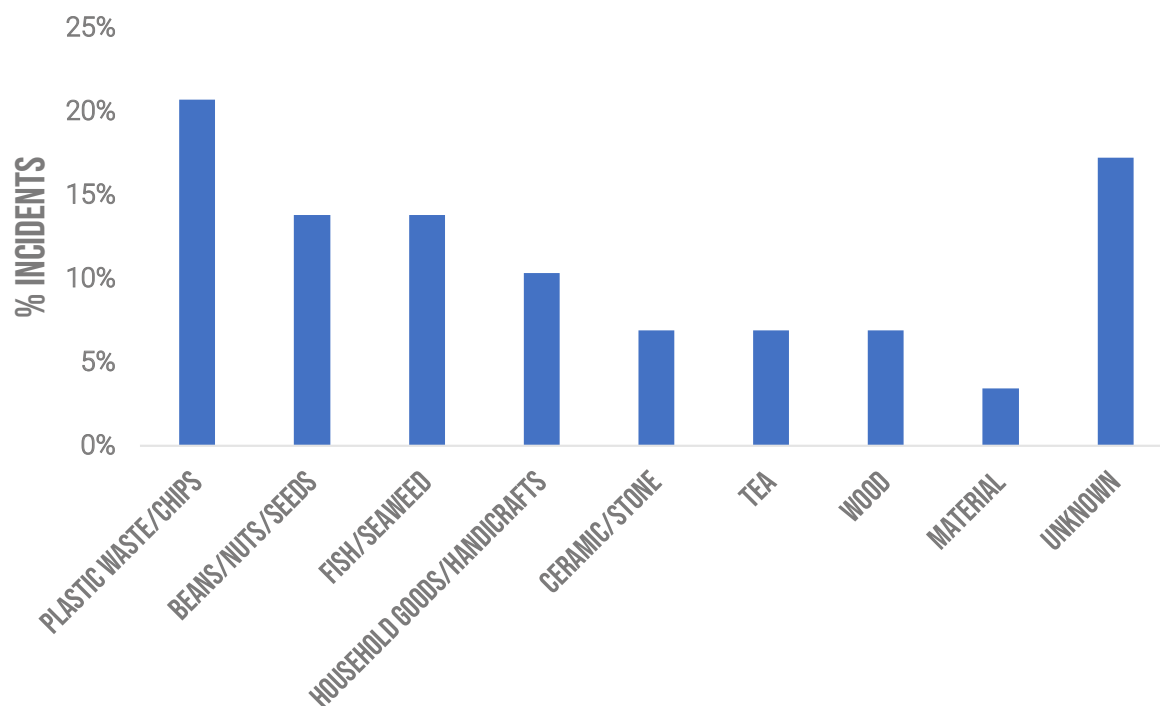
FIGURE 8
Percentage of declared contents options used in reported seizures of all species where the Port of Mombasa was involved or inferred to be involved (2002–2017). Based only on data held in TRAFFIC's WiTIS (not ETIS).

ARCHITECTURAL STONE : IVORY

Custom officials in Hong Kong SAR uncovered a consignment from Kenya of 779 elephant tusks (1.3 tonnes) during an X-ray examination of wooden boxes declared as containing architectural stones in 2013 (Anon, 2013a).

Photo credit: Hong Kong SAR Customs

TEA : IVORY

Over three tonnes of ivory was seized in Thailand in 2015 en route to Lao PDR in a container marked as tea leaves transported from the Port of Mombasa. The container had passed through ports in Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Singapore (Anon, 2015c).

PLASTIC WASTE – PANGOLIN SCALES

In 2014, Hong Kong SAR Customs detected a container which had reportedly originated in Uganda and transited through Kenya and Malaysia before arriving in Hong Kong SAR. The container was declared as carrying plastic waste but held some 40 bags totaling one tonne of pangolin scales (Anon, 2014). It is not clear if the container actually contained any plastic waste.

SEEDS - IVORY

More than two tonnes of ivory hidden in between bags of sesame seeds in a consignment bound for Turkey were seized in the Port of Mombasa in 2013, having entered Kenya from Uganda (Anon, 2013b).

SUMMARY OF TRADE ROUTES AND SPECIES

✓ The data indicated that wildlife illegally moving through the Port of Mombasa was predominantly exported to Asia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE): 95% of known seizures which occurred outside of Kenya took place in those regions. Hong Kong SAR, UAE, Thailand, and Viet Nam were reported as making the largest number of seizures outside of Kenya that involved or were inferred to involve the Port of Mombasa.

✓ Seizures involving or inferred to involve the Port of Mombasa appear to have decreased in recent years, and no reported seizures were found for 2018 or 2019. However, it is likely that some illegal wildlife is still moving through the Port and is either not being intercepted, or is being seized but these seizures are not being reported to ETIS or publicised in the media.

✓ While elephant ivory appears to be the most commonly seized wildlife commodity there is a large bias towards elephants in the dataset due to the use of ETIS as a data source, the potentially higher capacity for law enforcement to make seizures of ivory compared with other species, and the unwillingness of media to report seizures of less charismatic species or those seizures that involved smaller quantities. Therefore, illegal trade in these other species is likely underestimated in this analysis.

✓ A common method used to smuggle wildlife was to mis-declare the true contents of a shipment, often by hiding wildlife contraband among legitimate goods such a plastic (waste, chips, bottles), agricultural products (beans, seeds, nuts), stone, fish, tea and wood.

ORGANISED CRIME AND
CORRUPTION

Organised crime continually seeks to profit from the environment and its natural resources (INTERPOL, 2019). Criminal networks exploit these resources by planning, collecting and smuggling large quantities of illegal timber and wildlife products, particularly from the African continent to meet the high demands of Asian markets. The international transportation network and companies within these supply chains are enabling the movement of these illegal products, which may be facilitated by corruption. Organised crime groups (OCGs) exploit national and international business norms to hide their identities and involvement in wildlife trafficking and their methods include but are not limited to:

✓ **Creation of front companies** with limited business, legal and financial information to book shipments

✓ **Bribery to corrupt individuals and businesses**, particularly those associated with bulk products, to facilitate their activities

✓ **Last-minute alteration of a Bill of Lading** to obscure true origin/route/destination of a shipment

✓ **Documentation fraud** which involves inadequate or incomplete information on the Bill of Lading about the consignor, consignee, ownership and business activities (including financial feasibility and transactions) related to the shipment (TRAFFIC, 2019)

Legitimate maritime companies particularly container shipping companies, freight forwarders and vessel owners, knowingly or unknowingly, may enable wildlife trafficking as OCGs make use of the methods listed above. The transnational nature of organised crimes such as wildlife trafficking adds a layer of complexity to law enforcement investigations as information about companies involved in the trade chain may involve multiple jurisdictions. When a seizure is made, it is uncommon for all locations and companies involved in the trade chain to be known and named on the accompanying paperwork. Any investigation to determine all those involved in the smuggling attempt would require significant effort and collaboration by the law enforcement that seized the goods with other countries and the companies involved, and may be hampered by the use of falsified, incomplete or inaccurate shipping documents. Indeed, in discussions with prosecutors based around Kenya's ports and borders, this issue repeatedly emerged as posing a particular challenge, as many investigations stall because it is very hard to identify the source of seized consignments of illegal wildlife or forestry products, or to track precisely where they were destined (Space for Giants and Office of Director for Public Prosecution, Presentation of KYC project in Kenya at Mombasa Port Stakeholder Workshop, 2019).
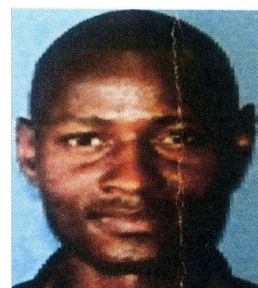
NICHOLAS MWERI JEFWA AND SAMUEL BAKARI JEFWA

Brothers, Nicholas Mweri Jefwa and Samuel Bakari Jefwa are wanted by Kenya for organised criminal activity and dealing in wildlife trophies without a licence (INTERPOL, 2015).

The brothers have been on the run since 2015 and INTEROL has issued two alerts, one in 2016 and another in 2019, to the public asking for their help to locate these fugitives who are alleged to have been involved in trafficking three tonnes of ivory through the Port of Mombasa. Other suspects in the case include Abdulrahman Sheikh, Musa Jacob Lithare and Samuel Mundia. (INTERPOL, 2019; Anon, 2016).
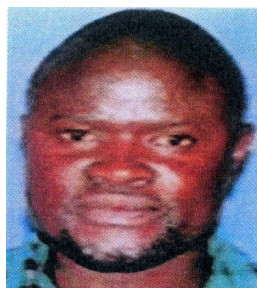
Nicholas Mweri Jefwa
44 years old
Male
Kenyan

Samuel Bakari Jefwa
29 years old
Male
Kenyan

NICHOLAS MWERI JEFWA AND SAMUEL BAKARI JEFWA

On 13th June, 2019 Moazu Kromah (known by several aliases including; "Croma," "Kromah Moazu," "Ayuba," and "Kampala Man") was charged in New York after being arrested in Uganda in a joint operations investigation between U.S. Fish and Wildlife, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, the Uganda Wildlife Authority and a Ugandan NGO. Kromah (Liberian citizen), Amara Cherif (Guinean citizen), and two Kenyan citizens, Mansur Mohamed Surur and Abdi Hussein Ahmed, were charged in an indictment for wildlife trafficking, drug trafficking and money laundering. Amara Cherif had been arrested five days prior in Senegal but Surur and Hussein Ahmed had not been caught and were listed as fugitives (Anon 2019c; Department of Justice, 2019).

Kromah and his network are alleged to have conspired to transport, distribute, sell and smuggle at least 190 kilogrammes of rhino horn and 10 tonnes of elephant ivory since at least December 2012. This allegedly involved various countries in East Africa, including Uganda, the DRC, Guinea, Kenya, Mozambique, Senegal, and Tanzania (Department of Justice, 2019).

Kromah has been arrested before in February 2017, along with Guinean nationals, Kourouma Bangaly, and Mohamed Kourouma, and found with 437 pieces of ivory weighing 1.3 tonnes. Documentary evidence found at that time indicated financial transactions between Kromah and Vixay Keosavang (Anon, 2019c). Keosavang, a Lao PDR national, is believed to be the leader of the Xaysavang Network: an international wildlife trafficking syndicate, involved in the trafficking of ivory, rhino horn, pangolins, and other species (U.S. Department of State, 2019). The U.S. Department of State is currently offering a reward of up to USD1 million for information leading to the dismantling of the Xaysavang Network

FOCUS: ILLEGAL TRADE IN
IVORY AND SHARK FINS

ELEPHANTS

The majority of known seizures involved elephants (Figure 7). One of the most publicised seizures linked to Kenya concerned a container declared as tea leaves discovered in May 2015 in Singapore en route to Viet Nam, containing 4.6 tonnes of ivory (1,783 of raw tusks), four rhino horns and 22 teeth from African big cats (Anon, 2015a; CITES, 2016). A similar shipment of three tonnes of ivory marked as tea leaves was intercepted in April 2015 in a Thai port having left the Port of Mombasa, transited through Sri Lanka, Malaysia, and Singapore, and was apparently destined for Lao PDR (Anon, 2015b; Anon, 2015c).

The containers were reportedly loaded in Kenya at Siginon Container Freight Station, located less than 10 km away from the Port of Mombasa in March 2015 and shipped in April 2015. A space had been cut into the bottoms of the containers and the ivory inserted. Employees of Siginon Freight Company and Kenya Revenue Authority were arrested (Anon, 2015b).

SHARK FINS

During a joint operation in early 2017 between the Customs and Excise Department and the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department in Hong Kong SAR, 1,280 kg dried shark fins being transported in four containers from Kenya, India, Egypt, and Peru without the relevant permits were seized (Anon, 2017).

At least two species of shark were identified in the seizure: Oceanic Whitetip Shark and Hammerhead Shark. The Oceanic Whitetip Shark and three species of Hammerhead

Sharks were listed in Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in 2013 (entered into effect September 2014). Further shark species were listed in Appendix II at CoP17 (2016) and CoP18 (2019). To export CITES-listed sharks legally, a permit must be issued by the exporting country's CITES Management Authority to confirm the shipment was obtained legally and was not detrimental to the survival of the species.

RECOMMENDED READING

WILDLIFE PROTECTION AND TRAFFICKING ASSESSMENT IN KENYA

Drivers and trends of transnational wildlife crime in Kenya and its role as a transit point for trafficked species in East Africa (2016).

This assessment was carried out under the auspices of the USAID-funded Wildlife Trafficking Response, Assessment, and Priority Setting (Wildlife TRAPS) Project, implemented by TRAFFIC and IUCN.

The basis of the report was the input by participants at a Kenya Wildlife Poaching and Trafficking Stakeholder Workshop held in Nairobi on 14–15th April 2015. Many others also contributed to the compilation of the information including individuals from group ranches around the Tsavo-Amboseli ecosystem; conservancy leaders; various conservation experts; the Kenya Wildlife Service; National Museums of Kenya; the Ministry of Water, Environment and Natural Resources; Isiolo County Government and the Environment Office, USAID Kenya and East Africa.
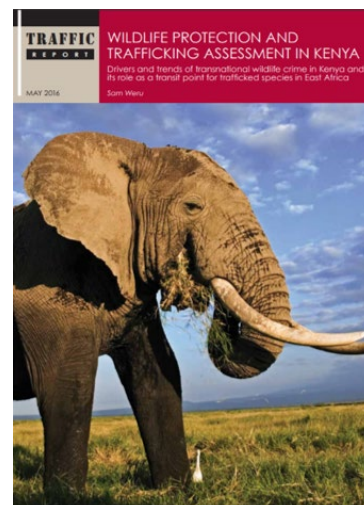
UGANDA WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING ASSESSMENT (2018)

Rossi, A. (TRAFFIC).

This report is an assessment of the legal and illegal wildlife trade and poaching trends in Uganda, and of the country's role as a transit point for international wildlife trafficking. The assessment was developed under the auspices of the USAID-funded Wildlife Trafficking Response, Assessment, and Priority Setting (Wildlife TRAPS) Project implemented by TRAFFIC and IUCN.

The key findings of this assessment were that Uganda was a trafficking hub, although the majority of Uganda's wildlife does not face major threats from organised poaching inside the country's borders. However, terrestrial smuggling routes exist between Uganda and neighbours Tanzania, Kenya, South Sudan, and the DRC and extend to at least the Central African Republic. The main international destinations for wildlife products being smuggled from Uganda are China and Viet Nam.
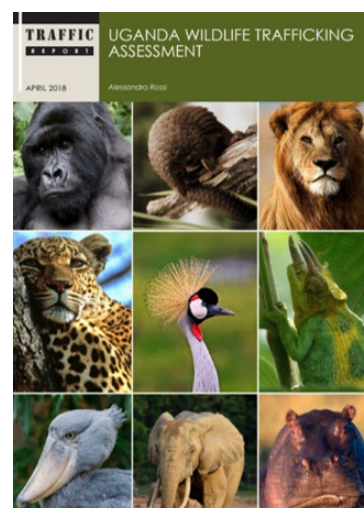
COUNTERING WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING THROUGH TANZANIA'S SEAPORTS (2019)

Little, L. (TRAFFIC)

This report was prepared in advance of a three-day workshop organised in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania by TRAFFIC, UNDP and UNODC, which brought together key port stakeholder groups to discuss ways to counter wildlife trafficking through Tanzania's seaports.

The analysis within this paper provides crucial information on key trafficking routes and concealment methods that have been used to move illicit wildlife products from and via Tanzania to consumer countries.
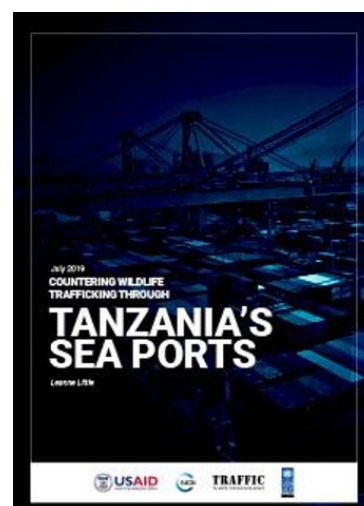
SNAPSHOT ANALYSIS IVORY SMUGGLING

2015–2019 Concealment, routes and transportation methods (2019)
Wildlife Justice Commission

This study uses data from 2015 up to July 2019 on the volumes, routes, concealment and transportation methods used to smuggle ivory from African ports to Asian entry points to show changes in the criminal dynamics of transnational ivory trafficking.
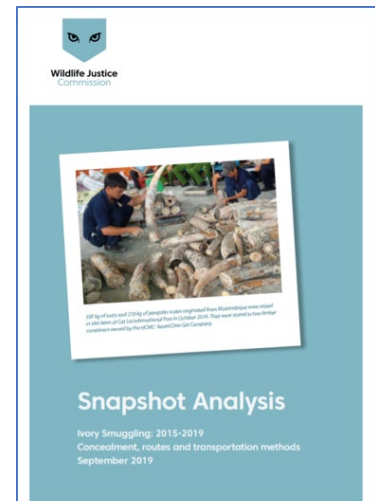
SCALING UP

The Rapid Growth in the Industrial Scale Trafficking of Pangolin Scales (2019)
Wildlife Justice Commission

This report combines an analysis of reported seizure data between 2016 to 2019 with additional information to build a comprehensive understanding of the criminal dynamics and trends on the transnational trafficking of pangolin scales.

The report finds a shift in the smuggling routes, from eastern to western countries, specifically from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda to Cote D'Ivoire but most notably to DRC. While both Nigeria and Cameroon were consistently present in smuggling routes throughout the period, Nigeria was linked to the highest volume of scales seized worldwide.
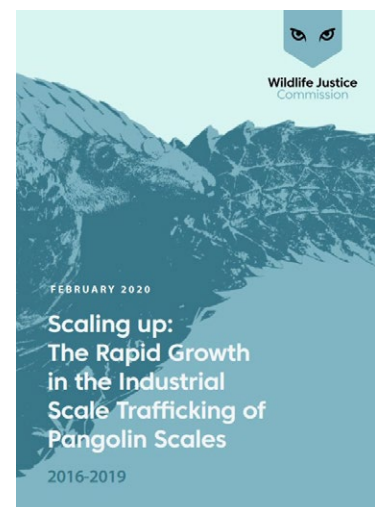
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IMAGE CREDITS

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TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network, is a leading non-governmental organisation working globally on trade in wild animals and plants in the context of both biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.

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