



THE TRAFFIC BULLETIN SEIZURES AND PROSECUTIONS SECTION IS SPONSORED BY THE FORESTRY BUREAU, COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURE, TAIWAN: COMMITTED TO SUPPORTING CITES ENFORCEMENT

The following section features a selection of seizures and prosecutions reported between April and October 2016. Sources are cited at the end of each country section. Readers are referred to the TRAFFIC website (www.traffic.org/media-reports/) for regular updates on cases reported from around the world.

Note that all cases reported here took place prior to the seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES and/or before any resulting listing amendments/adoptions take effect.

ELEPHANTS

The African Elephant *Loxodonta africana* is listed in CITES Appendix I (except the populations of Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe, which are included in Appendix II); the Asian Elephant *Elephas maximus* is listed in Appendix I.

CAMBODIA: On 5 August 2016, Customs officers seized more than 600 kg of ivory from a container packed with corn that had languished unclaimed at Sihanoukville port for two years after being shipped by sea from Africa (country unknown). The ivory was destined for a third, undisclosed, destination.

Dunya News: <http://bit.ly/2dKusLL>, 5 August 2016

CHINA: Reports of a recent seizure of 421 kg of elephant hide in south-west China.

Mailonline (UK): <http://dailymail.com/news/24September2016>, 24 September 2016

FRANCE: On 25 May 2016, investigations ensuing from the discovery by Customs agents of four elephant tusks in a car led authorities to a French-Vietnamese businessman in Paris who was found to have 212 kg of tusks hidden in wooden pallets in his office. The suspect's company dealt in cosmetics and antiques which he reportedly used to organize the trafficking of ivory.

On 1 June 2016, Customs officials at Charles de Gaulle Airport, Paris, intercepted a man on his way from Angola to Viet Nam with 26 elephant tusks (142 kg) in his luggage. He was sentenced to 18 months in gaol and fined EUR140 000 (USD160 000).

<http://bit.ly/1XdlwPU>, 8 June 2016

GERMANY: On 20 May 2016, 625 kg of African Elephant *Loxodonta africana* ivory was detected at Berlin Schönefeld Airport packed in 11 cases. A company from Berlin trying to ship

CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) establishes international controls over trade in wild plants and animals, or related products, of species that have been, or may be, threatened due to excessive commercial exploitation. Parties have their own legislative instrument by which to meet their obligations under CITES. The species covered by CITES are listed in three Appendices, according to the degree of protection they need:

APPENDIX I includes species threatened with extinction which are or may be threatened by trade. Trade in specimens of these species is permitted only in exceptional circumstances. An export permit from the country of origin (or a re-export certificate from other exporting countries) and an import permit from the country of importation are required.

APPENDIX II includes species not necessarily yet threatened, but which could become so if trade is not strictly controlled. Species are also included in Appendix II if they are difficult to distinguish from other species in Appendix II, in order to make it more difficult for illegal trade to take place through misidentification or mislabelling. An export permit from the country of origin (or a re-export certificate from other exporting countries) is required, but not an import permit.

APPENDIX III includes species that any Party identifies as being subject to regulation within its jurisdiction for the purpose of preventing or restricting exploitation and as needing the co-operation of other Parties in the control of trade. Imports require a certificate of origin and, if the importation is from the State that has included the species in Appendix III, an export permit is required.

All imports into the European Union of CITES Appendix II-listed species require both an export permit/re-export certificate and an import permit.

the boxes to Hanoi, Viet Nam, declared as wall clocks, is now under investigation. This case led authorities, on 25 August 2016, to an industrial building near Koblenz, Rheinland-Pfalz, where a further 570 kg of whole and cut tusks and processed ivory was uncovered. Grinders, milling machines, lathes and drills were also seized. Two Vietnamese nationals were apprehended at the site during the course of processing the ivory into pearls and figurines. The provenance of the ivory is being investigated.

ZOLL: <http://bit.ly/2dR8gQA>, 30 May 2016;
Staatsanwaltschaft Cottbus Press release: <http://bit.ly/2e5jZOH>, 6 September 2016

INDONESIA: On 21 May 2016, Customs officers at Soekarno-Hatta Airport seized 377 pieces (weight not reported) of raw elephant ivory from two Chinese nationals travelling from Lagos, Nigeria, via Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, to Tangerang, Banten.

Tangerang online: <http://bit.ly/2dvK9oi>, 26 May 2016

KENYA: On 22 July 2016, Feisal Mohamed Ali was sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment and fined KES20 million (USD197 000); other suspects were acquitted for lack of evidence. The case relates to the seizure from a warehouse in Mombasa in June 2014 of over 2000 kg of ivory (228 elephant tusks and 74 ivory pieces).

Daily Nation (Kenya): <http://bit.ly/2aBdEVh>, 22 July 2016

MALAYSIA: On 21 July 2016, at Kuala Lumpur International Airport, Customs officials foiled an attempt to smuggle 1001 kg of raw ivory arriving from N'djili International Airport, Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, via Ataturk Airport, Turkey, believed to be bound for China, Thailand and Viet Nam. The 23

packages, declared as baked clay and wooden samples, were addressed to two recipients whose addresses in Selangor and Johor were found to be fictitious.

Malay Mail online: <http://bit.ly/2aGoc8w>, 1 August 2016

SOUTH SUDAN: In June 2016, at Juba International Airport, authorities recovered 1200 kg of ivory being smuggled from Entebbe, Uganda, from 25 boxes declared as food items, believed to be bound for Egypt and later Malaysia. Four suspects were arrested, including a South Sudanese national and a person from Uganda.

Radio Tamazuj: <http://bit.ly/1tujqQj>, 17 June 2016

SPAIN: In May 2016 it was reported that the Nature Protection Service (SEPRONA) of the Spanish Civil Guard, following an investigation in collaboration with Mozambique, had seized 74 elephant tusks (744 kg) from a man in Colmenar de Oreja, south-west of Madrid, who was allegedly trying to sell the pieces using a doctored hunting licence issued in 1970 in Mozambique. The hunting licence allowed for one elephant to be killed, not 37 as the amended version of the document claimed.

NEWS 24: <http://bit.ly/1XWqqRQ>, 26 May 2016;
The Local (Spain): <http://bit.ly/2d79jOF>, 26 May 2016

TANZANIA: On 3 June 2016, at Manyoni District Court, Juma Kitwanga and Nsalamba Katuku Nsalambae were each sentenced to 40 years in gaol and both fined TZS166 500 000 (USD76 000) after being convicted of two counts of unlawful dealing in government trophies (two elephant tusks and nine elephant tails). Ramadhani Shaban and Yusto Paul were gaoled for 20 years each, plus four years in gaol or a fine of TZS1 million, after being convicted of two offences of unlawful possession of

firearms; Hamidu Nsolezi received a one year suspended gaol sentence. The offences took place between 1–4 April 2016.

Between 26 and 30 June 2016, police seized more than 666 (1200 kg) elephant tusks and arrested nine suspects during a countrywide operation to eradicate crime. The operation was conducted with the collaboration of INTERPOL in Zimbabwe and Kenya and government officials, which led to hundreds of arrests for various offences.

On 8 August 2016, at Kigoma Resident Magistrates' Court, Edward Ibrahim of Kasulu District, Kigoma Region, was sentenced to 20 years in gaol after being convicted of illegal possession of six pieces of elephant tusks. The judge said that the court had delivered the severe punishment as a lesson to the public. Acting on information, wildlife officers pretended to be ivory buyers and arrested Ibrahim after he turned up with six pieces of elephant tusks that he had agreed to deliver to them.

Daily News (Tanzania): <http://bit.ly/2e71hRe>, 6 June 2016; <http://bit.ly/2d78ULo>, 6 June 2016
<http://dailynews.co.tz/index.php/home-news/51575-9-arrested-4-6-billion-trophies-seized-in-police-interpol-operation>, 12 July 2016; <http://allafrica.com/stories/201607120116.html>, 12 July 2016
<http://bit.ly/2dVXVII>, 9 August 2016

VIET NAM: On 21 May 2016, police in Bac Giang province arrested a lorry driver transporting 553 kg of elephant tusks from Hanoi to Lang Son Province after he failed to present documents verifying their origin. Police officers also accused the driver of offering to pay them a bribe of VND500 million (USD22 400) to evade arrest.

On 1 October 2016, Customs officials at Noi Bai International Airport, Hanoi, seized 309 kg of ivory originating from Nigeria, falsely declared as glass.

On 6 October 2016, Customs officials at Cat Lai Port, Ho Chi Minh City, inspected a shipment arriving from Mozambique declared as "Sapele wood". Upon investigation they found 569 pieces of ivory (2052 kg) concealed inside 12 hollowed-out blocks of wood. Tests on the ivory by the Ecology and Biodiversity Resources indicated that it derived from African Elephants *Loxodonta africana* from various countries, including Mozambique and Angola. The Customs declaration form indicated that the owner of the cargo was a company in Tan Binh, Ho Chi Minh City. The case is under investigation.

Thanhniennews: <http://bit.ly/2dLFUKR>, 22 May 2016; <http://bit.ly/2d8Ynv8>, 2 October 2016; <http://bit.ly/2dZEkmU>, 9 October 2016; <http://customsnews.vn/prosecute-the-smuggling-case-of-more-than-2-tons-of-ivory-through-cat-lai-1376.html>, 20 October 2016

ZAMBIA: On 14 July 2016, at Nakonde Magistrates' Court, Kizito Sikazwe and Andrew Nelson Simunde were each sentenced to five years' imprisonment after being found guilty of the illegal possession of two pieces of ivory (17 kg).

Mwebantu: <http://bit.ly/2efLpkj>, 20 July 2016

MARINE

AUSTRALIA: On 12 April 2016, Van Nguyen of Cairnlea, Victoria, was gaol for two years and eight months for his lead role in an illegal abalone poaching network. He must serve 16 months before he is eligible for parole. He was described in court as the top of one of two co-existing pyramids of abalone poachers, who would dive with associates near Warrnambool, buy his colleagues' catches and then sell his yield in Melbourne's western suburbs. Thirteen people involved in the two syndicates have been prosecuted in Victorian courts this year; the other group's head, Phong Hoai Thuy Nguyen [no relation], was gaol for two years earlier in the year.

The Age (Australia): <http://bit.ly/1V49FE2>, 12 April 2016

CHINA: On 9 April 2016, about 100 juvenile Scalloped Hammerhead Sharks *Sphyrna lewini* (CITES II) were on sale in Sanya fish market, Hainan province. A Sanya Ocean and Fisheries Bureau (SOFB) representative confiscated a total of about 600 kg of hammerhead shark meat on sale in the market that was alleged to be bycatch. The incident is under investigation.

<http://on.china.cn/2es1Bye>; 12 April 2016;
<http://bit.ly/2e1xtWZ>, 12 April 2016

HONG KONG SPECIAL

ADMINISTRATIVE REGION: On 4 July 2016, at Kwai Chung Customshouse, authorities seized a shipment of dried shark fins (880 kg) of suspected Scalloped Hammerhead Sharks *Sphyrna lewini* (CITES II) arriving from Panama without permits.

News.gov.hk: <http://bit.ly/29ncufG>, 5 July 2016

PERU: On 7 June 2016, authorities at the Port of Callao seized some eight million dried seahorses *Hippocampus* (CITES II) from the hold of a Chinese-flagged ship bound for Asia. The Chinese captain of the ship was arrested.

Channel News Asia: www.channelnewsasia.com/news/world/peru-seizes-8-million/2892524.html, 21 June 2016

SOUTH AFRICA: On 28 April 2016, Western Cape police near Caledon arrested a man driving a heavily loaded vehicle which was found to be loaded with 14 432 of Abalones, or Perlemoen, *Haliotis midae*.

On 12 May 2016, police acting on information seized bags containing 2858 Abalones *Haliotis midae* and diving equipment from a vessel

entering Hout Bay harbour. The crew and divers on board the vessel evaded arrest by jumping onto the quayside and disappearing.

On 30 May 2016, at Khayelitsha Regional Court, Chinese nationals Jiam Liang Hong and Guohui-Li were gaol for a year after being found guilty of contravening the *Marine Living Resource Act* in connection with the poaching and illegal processing of Abalone *Haliotis midae*. They were arrested on 9 May in Genadendal, Caledon, in Overberg District, Western Cape. They admitted operating an illegal fish processing establishment and possession of Abalones without the necessary permit. Some 25 679 dried Abalones were seized from a property.

www.iol.co.za/news/crime-courts/caledon-cops-bust-man-with-abalone-worth-r2m-2015960, 29 April 2016; *Times Live:* <http://bit.ly/2dWvOml>, 13 May 2016; *Network 24:* <http://bit.ly/2dLODLb>, 6 June 2016; *Times Live:* <http://bit.ly/1POu8T5>, 31 May 2016

PANGOLINS

All cases reported here took place prior to the adoption of proposals to transfer all pangolin species from Appendix II to I at the seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES.

CAMEROON: On 30 August 2016, two people were arrested for illegal possession of 128 kg of Giant Pangolin *Manis gigantea* scales which had reportedly been transported from Tibati to Ngaoundal, where they were to be sold. A receipt recovered from one of the suspects indicated a payment for a previous wildlife trafficking offence, with subsequent investigations revealing his part in a network of pangolin traffickers.

AllAfrica: <http://bit.ly/2eSfypC>, 8 September 2016

CHINA: On 10 April 2016, authorities in waters off Zhongshan city, Guangdong province, seized 1600 kg of pangolin *Manis* scales from a speedboat. One arrest.

<http://bit.ly/1VzzRan>, 16 April 2016

HONG KONG SPECIAL

ADMINISTRATIVE REGION: On 12 May 2016, 130 kg of pangolin scales and 310 kg of animal furs [species not reported] were seized from a speedboat in Lau Fau Shan after Customs officers detected suspects loading goods onto the vessel.

On 23 June 2016, Hong Kong Customs at the Kwai Chung Customhouse Cargo Examination Compound undertaking a risk assessment seized 201 bags containing 4000 kg of suspected pangolin scales after selecting for inspection a shipment arriving from Cameroon declared as 1260 bags of sliced plastics.

On 19 July 2016, Customs officers, again undertaking a risk assessment procedure at the Compound, selected for inspection a shipment arriving from Nigeria declared as recycled plastic particles. They found 259 bags containing 7300 kg of suspected pangolin scales. As they had not been declared on the manifest, the scales were seized by Customs officers for further investigation.

The Standard: <http://bit.ly/2e9yjBK>, 12 May 2016; *Hong Kong Customs press release*: <http://bit.ly/28Ylvej>, 23 June 2016; *The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region press release*: <http://bit.ly/29RMzcr>, 19 July 2016

INDONESIA: On 15 August 2016, authorities in East Java raided a house in Jombang district and seized 657 Sunda Pangolins *Manis javanica* from freezers; one person was arrested.

The Guardian (UK): <http://bit.ly/2dXy3Yx>, 26 August 2016

KENYA: On 8 June 2016, authorities at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) seized 500 kg of pangolin *Manis* scales from an unaccompanied consignment bearing fake documents that had originated in Conakry, Guinea, destined for Lao PDR.

Kenya Wildlife Service: <http://bit.ly/2dczGgA>, 10 June 2016

VIET NAM: On 6 June 2016, at a court in Ho Chi Minh City, Vo Ta Dung was sentenced to one and half years in gaol after being caught in December 2015 transporting three Sunda Pangolins *Manis javanica*; two accomplices received gaol sentences of five months and 11 days, a period they had already spent in detention and they were released after the trial. Another person received a suspended sentence of one year. Dung had reportedly hired the three to transport pangolins bought from hunters in Ho Chi Minh City to a storage facility in neighbouring Binh Duong Province from where they had delivered at least 12 pangolins to buyers in northern Viet Nam.

ThanhNien News: <http://bit.ly/2dWk4Wk>, 6 June 2016

ZAMBIA: On 2 July 2016, Cephas Zulu and Mayungano Musheke were sentenced to five years' imprisonment with hard labour for unlawful possession of a pangolin *Manis*. Three others were acquitted. The duo was arrested by police in Monze in November in 2015 in possession of a live pangolin without the necessary documentation.

ZNBC: www.znbc.co.zm/?p=40938, 8 July 2016

ZIMBABWE: Zimbabwe imposes a nine-year minimum mandatory gaol sentence for pangolin trade offences.

On 20 April 2016, at a court in Harare, Henry Makunde of Mbare was sentenced to nine years' imprisonment after a dead pangolin *Manis* was seized from a refrigerator at his home. Makunde's nephew, Desire Murire had reportedly found the live animal in the wild and,

with the assistance of his uncle, transported the pangolin to the latter's home. The nephew, aged 19, was considered a special circumstance on account of his age and was given a lesser sentence of two years.

New Zimbabwe: <http://bit.ly/2e7MhT4>, 20 April 2016

REPTILES

BANGLADESH: On 6 September 2016, authorities in Chittagong seized 4000 kg of shells of *Batagur* turtles (II), *Elongated Tortoises* *Indotestudo elongata* (CITES II) and Trionychidae spp. stored in sacks in a building in Khulshi. No arrests. The shipment, which had been declared as dry fish, had been destined for Hong Kong.

The Daily Star (Bangladesh): <http://bit.ly/2e1zP8q>, 8 September 2016

CHINA: On 26 July 2016, at Guangzhou Intermediate People's Court, a gang found guilty of attempting to smuggle tortoises into the country from Madagascar was gaoled for between one and 11 years. Tortoises seized at Guangzhou Baiyun Airport and at various residences included 91 Leopard Tortoises *Stigmochelys pardalis* (CITES II) and 39 Radiated Tortoises *Astrochelys radiata* (CITES I). The defendants had bought off an airport staff member (Chen Junyi) so that they were able to make use of his pass to evade Customs. The gang was arrested in April/May 2015: Chen Junyi was sentenced to five years in gaol and fined CNY50 000 (USD7500); Huang Weizhe (11-years in gaol and CNY50 000 worth of property forfeited); five others were gaoled for between one year and nine months, and seven years. The tortoises had been packed in tinfoil and placed in canvas sacks in Madagascar; Chen Junyi was arrested at the airport during a routine inspection; he was carrying two backpacks containing 316 tortoises; later that day Huang Weizhe was arrested as he arrived at the airport to collect the consignment.

<http://bit.ly/2e5VDEJ>, 28 July 2016

INDONESIA: On 6 April 2016, 40 Green Turtles *Chelonia mydas* (CITES I) were confiscated in Karangasem, Bali, during a routine patrol. The turtles had their flippers tied; one perished but the others were being observed at Serangan Center with a view to being released. Three fishermen from Madura were taken into custody.

On 16 April 2016, 70 Green Turtles *Chelonia mydas* (CITES I) (one perished) were recovered from a boat in Padei Village, Menui Island, central Sulawesi, destined for Bali, reportedly to be sold as meat.

On 30 August 2016, authorities in West Java foiled an attempt to smuggle 2000 python (CITES I/II) skins from Palembang, South Sumatra to Surabaya, East Java, by courier. Officers stopped the lorry holding the skins in

Cikupa toll road, Tangerang, Banten. Some 800 skins of monitor lizards *Varanus* (CITES I/II) (and dozens of live bonytongue fish) were also seized. No permit accompanied the shipment.

www.facebook.com/176585509072713/videos/1163501477047773/, 7 April 2016; *Metroballi*: <http://bit.ly/2dJGCFZ>, 7 April 2016; *Kontan.co.id*: <http://bit.ly/2dL7d48>, 18 April 2016; <http://bit.ly/2e9Br08>, 29 August 2016; <http://bit.ly/2dRVOA9>, 30 August 2016

MALAYSIA: On 12 May 2016, at Kuala Lumpur International Airport, two Customs officers were detained by officials after 55 Black Pond Turtles *Geoclemys hamiltonii* (CITES I) wrapped in tape were found in bags arriving on a flight from Dhaka, Bangladesh.

On 2 June 2016, Royal Malaysian Customs officers at Port Klang seized a shipment of 508 Black Pond Turtles *Geoclemys hamiltonii* (CITES I) that had been placed in 76 sacks with a cargo of potatoes. The consignment had come from Karachi, Pakistan, via Myanmar, and was reportedly destined for the restaurant trade.

On 1 August 2016, in Kuala Lumpur, Indian nationals Nagoor Kani Kamal Basha and Nizamudeen Shamsudeen were each gaoled for 24 months on three counts of keeping 36 Black Pond Turtles *Geoclemys hamiltonii* (CITES I) without a permit and causing pain to the reptiles.

<http://bit.ly/2dcD3nN>, 12 May 2016; *www.bharian.com.my/node/160497*, 3 June 2016; *Royal Malaysian Customs pers comm. to TRAFFIC*, 13 June 2016; *The Star*: <http://bit.ly/2dXAyKl>, 1 August 2016

PAKISTAN: On 9 September 2016, 780 live Spotted Turtles *Clemmys guttata* (CITES II) were seized during a raid on a house in Karachi. Six Pakistani suspects were granted bail on the surety of Rs50 000 (USD750) each on condition that they deposit the amount the same day; three Chinese nationals and three Pakistanis were also taken into custody during the raid for allegedly illegally trapping and trading the wild animals. The Sindh Wildlife Department has been ordered by a court to release the turtles at specified locations in the Indus River.

The Express Tribune: <http://bit.ly/2egaQIL>, 10 September 2016

UGANDA: On 16 May 2016, the Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) impounded 152 Leopard Tortoises *Stigmochelys pardalis* (CITES II) from a vehicle in the Eastern Uganda district of Mbale; the specimens were handed over to the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) with the aim of returning them to Nakapiririt where the smugglers were alleged to have sourced the reptiles.

AllAfrica: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201605180222.html>, 17 May 2016; *The Insider*: www.theinsider.ug/two-arrested-for-smuggling-152-tortoises, 17 May 2016

USA: On 13 April 2016, at the US District Court for Eastern District of Michigan, Kai Xu, a Canadian citizen of Chinese origin, was sentenced to almost five years in gaol for smuggling turtles to China, including Eastern Box Turtles *Terrapene carolina*, Diamondback Terrapins *Malaclemys terrapin* and Spotted Turtles *Clemmys guttata* (all CITES II), as well as Red-eared Sliders *Trachemys scripta elegans*, one of the world's most invasive species. Xu had smuggled the turtles out of the country using three methods: repackaged and shipped directly to China, concealed in snow boots; on one occasion with 51 live turtles taped to his legs and groin; and, on the day of his arrest in September 2014 at Detroit Metropolitan Airport, 1000 turtles had been packed in boots and cereal boxes inside suitcases that he sent with a runner he had hired to fly directly from Detroit to Shanghai. As part of his sentence, he was ordered to pay USD17 000 in restitution for the care of the turtles, which were placed with Detroit Zoo.

On 6 May 2016, Olga Jimenez and her husband Luis Jimenez of southern California were each sentenced to six months' imprisonment for smuggling more than 900 eggs of Olive Ridley Turtles *Lepidochelys olivacea* and Kemp's Ridley Turtles *L. kempii* (both CITES I) across the border from Nayarit, Mexico, in November 2014. The couple intended to sell the eggs on the black market for use in Asian delicacies. They were also ordered to pay USD9000 in restitution to the Mexican government for stealing its natural resources and were placed on probation for three years.

US Department of Justice media release: <http://bit.ly/2e7Mfe5>, 13 April 2016; *Detroit News:* <http://detne.ws/2dL5Cvn>; 26 September 2014; <http://bit.ly/1oBcSNW>, 20 February 2016; *Courthouse News Service:* <http://bit.ly/2dkMTYb>, 6 May 2016

RHINOCEROSES

All species of Rhinocerotidae are listed in CITES Appendix I except the South African and Swaziland populations of *Ceratotherium simum simum*, which are listed in Appendix II.

CAMBODIA: On 17 August 2016, at Phnom Penh International Airport, the luggage of a Chinese man travelling from Namibia via Doha,

Qatar, was found to contain eight pieces of rhinoceros horns (4.38 kg).

The Cambodia Daily: <http://bit.ly/2dL8ZT4>, 17 August 2016

HONG KONG SPECIAL

ADMINISTRATIVE REGION: On 14 May 2016, at Hong Kong International Airport, Customs officials seized five pieces of suspected rhinoceros horn (10 kg) from an express air parcel that had been declared as "resin crafts" originating from South Africa. Suspicious images of the cargo were found during X-ray inspection. One person was arrested and released on bail pending further investigation.

Hong Kong information service press release: <http://bit.ly/2e7MKF4>, 17 May 2016

MOZAMBIQUE: On 2 May 2016, at Maputo International Airport, authorities arrested a Vietnamese citizen, bound for Nairobi, who was found to have in his luggage 11 White Rhinoceros *Ceratotherium simum* horns (total of 22 kg) and rhinoceros horn pieces disguised as cylinders.

<http://bit.ly/2dcCWJ3>, 8 May 2016

SOUTH AFRICA: In May 2016, at Bushbuckridge Magistrates' Court, Mpumalanga, two Mozambican nationals were sentenced to 21 years in gaol for a range of crimes, including trespassing in Kruger National Park (KNP), possession of an unlicensed firearm, possession of ammunition and conspiring to poach. They had been arrested in April in Mkhuhlu, near KNP. The police were acting on information that the suspects were planning to poach rhinoceroses.

SABC: <http://bit.ly/2dwqnJE>, 7 May 2016

FLORA

BRAZIL: On 30 June 2016 authorities reportedly dismantled the country's largest illegal logging and land-grabbing organization. Twenty-four arrest warrants were issued as part of a three-year investigation into the country's largest illegal logging ring, which authorities believe is responsible for the deforestation of around 10 000 hectares of Amazon forest over a two-year period. The

syndicate allegedly operated as a business through the use of sophisticated technology and companies to launder the money generated from the illegal logging operation. The person accused of leading the operation's financial division is being sought.

Meanwhile, law enforcement officials discovered new methods of deforestation that logged the forest from beneath the tree canopy and left a vegetation cover that eluded satellite surveillance. It is reported that among the gang members were experts with satellite monitoring knowledge who would review data to plan their logging activities.

Telesur: <http://bit.ly/29hb2x3>, 2 July 2016

CAMBODIA: On 19 July 2016, forestry officials in Preah Vihear province confiscated more than 1100 kg of rosewood *Dalbergia* (CITES I/II/III/NC) from two cars which had failed to stop when forestry officials attempted to pull the drivers over in Choam Ksan district.

The Cambodia Daily: <http://bit.ly/2dcDvma/>, 20 July 2016

INDIA: On 14 April 2016, police acting on information seized nearly 1500 kg of smuggled Red Sanders *Pterocarpus santalinus* (CITES II) at Katigundenahalli in Hosakote taluk where it had been stored in the garden of three houses. The offenders, who were known to police but had fled, were reportedly using the village as a transit point.

On 16 April 2016, Kadapa police arrested four forest officials and 12 others and seized 2500 kg of logs in two incidents in the district. The officials were charged with having links with inter-State Red Sanders smugglers in Karnataka, receiving bribes and facilitating smuggling of nearly 300 000 kg of Red Sanders logs in the last four to five years by guiding woodcutters of Tamil Nadu, piloting their vehicles, providing police clearance and extending logistic support.

On 20 April 2016, Customs officials at Mundra port, Ahmedabad, recovered 17 500 kg of Red Sanders logs concealed in bags of maize from a vessel that had already started on its journey to Sharjah. The container had been loaded in Delhi under Central Excise supervision and transported to Mundra by rail. As it had already been cleared in Delhi, it was loaded directly onto the vessel.



Five pieces declared as "resin crafts" arriving at Hong Kong International Airport by air from South Africa were found to be suspected rhinoceros horn.

On 29 April 2016, 5000 kg of Red Sanders logs were seized in the Mamanduru forest in Seshachalam hills. After questioning, one led forest personnel to the 100 logs. Another person escaped.

On 30 May 2016, police on night patrol in Kancheepuram district, Chennai, seized 1000 kg of Red Sanders logs from an abandoned lorry.

On 29 June 2016, four inter-State smugglers and 24 local operatives were arrested in two incidents in Vurlagaddapodu of Railway Kodur mandal and Gadela ST Colony of Obulavaripalle mandal in Kadapa district. A total of 58 Red Sanders logs weighing 1516 kg was seized.

On 30 June 2016, police in Chennai seized 237 Red Sanders logs (7000 kg), plus weighing machines and woodcutting instruments. This action follows the arrest of a smuggler in May and to the arrest of a further two alleged smugglers in Chennai who had purchased the logs from smugglers. Another person was arrested on 14 June.

In early July 2016, at Chennai port, authorities seized a container holding 36 000 kg of Red Sanders (652 logs) being loaded onto a ship bound for United Arab Emirates (UAE). Further information led them to more logs (amount unreported) being stored at Vanagaram. A number of arrests.

On 11 August 2016, Red Sanders Anti-Smuggling Task Force (RSASTF) personnel recovered 58 Red Sanders logs (2000 kg) in forest 25 km from Tirupati. Three persons were arrested in Mamanduru forest area.

On 31 August 2016, Tirupati police seized 9586 kg of Red Sanders logs in Ponduru village in Kanchipuram district, Tamil Nadu, plus a lorry, weighing and woodcutting machines, following interrogation of suspects arrested on 19 August.

The Hindu: <http://bit.ly/2dkTaDm>, 15 April 2016; *The Hindu*: <http://bit.ly/2dJMzSY>, 17 April 2016; *The Times of India*: <http://bit.ly/2dkUrtX>, 21 April 2016; *Business Standard*: <http://bit.ly/2dJOLdJ>, 30 April 2016; *Times of India*: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/1-tonne-red-sanders-seized-on-GST-Road/arclshow/52530080.cms>, 1 June 2016; *The Hindu*: <http://bit.ly/2e9Id65>, 30 June 2016; *The Hans India*: <http://bit.ly/2dkUi9U>, 2 July 2016; *New Indian Express*: <http://bit.ly/2dJOoJg>, 10 July 2016; *The Hans India*: <http://bit.ly/2dXLEz2>, 11 August 2016; *The Hans, India*: <http://bit.ly/2esiGlz>, 1 September 2016

INDONESIA: On 8 August 2016, at Supadio Airport, Pontianak, West Kalimantan, authorities seized 712 nationally protected *Nepenthes* (CITES I/II) plant parts, arriving from Singkawang, West Kalimantan, reportedly en route to Jakarta.

www.pontianakpost.com/bksda-kalbar-gagalkan-penyelundupan-712-kantong-semar, 9 August 2016

PERU: On 22 April 2016, 19 members of an illegal logging gang were arrested in Ucuyali, in the Amazon rainforest, including two police officers and two regional forestry officials. The gang was characterized as the "mafia of illegal logging." Two lorries and a trailer loaded with timber and money were seized. The principal destination for the logs had been China, Mexico and the USA. Prosecutors estimated that the illegal logging ring was exporting about 300 cubic metres of illegal timber per month for the past six years. The gang's main target was *Dipteryx micrantha*.

The Peruvian Government's Independent Forest Sector Oversight Agency (OSINFOR) is reported to have found evidence of illegal practices in 93.75% of logging operations it audited.

<http://bit.ly/1pWjZ3p>, 27 April 2016

THAILAND: In April 2016, authorities seized 3153 logs in separate raids in several provinces; at one timber processing plant in Nakhon Pathom province they seized Siam Rosewood *Dalbergia cochinchinensis* (CITES II) and *D. olivieri*; the plant's two owners were taken into custody. Their company has allegedly been exporting processed wood to foreign markets such as China. Subsequent raids seized wood in Samut Prakan, Chanthaburi and Pathum Thani, all with links to the timber seized in Nakhon Pathom. Nine people were arrested. The combined task force seized a total of 188 pieces of Siam Rosewood, 2950 pieces of *Dalbergia olivieri* wood and 15 pieces of teak *Tectona grandis*.

Environmental Investigation Agency: www.facebook.com/environmentalinvestigationagency/19330647110156729695385648/?type=3

OTHER / MULTI-SEIZURES

CAMEROON: On 9 June 2016, two people were arrested by the Upper Nyong Divisional Delegation of Forestry and Wildlife and police in Abong Mbang in possession of 9 Chimpanzee *Pan troglodytes* (CITES I) skulls. The couple had travelled from Somalomo, near Dja Faunal Reserve. It was discovered that the group (which included one other who evaded capture on this occasion), regularly ferried Chimpanzee meat from Somalomo to Abong Mbang and Yaoundé for sale.

Camer.be: <http://bit.ly/2d7KHVh>

CHINA: On 5 May 2016, a liquor manufacturer in Zengcheng District of Guangzhou, Guangdong Province (surnamed Liang) was sentenced to 10 years and six months in gaol/ fined CNY50 000 (USD7690) for making alcoholic drinks containing derivatives from animals such as Water Monitor *Varanus salvator* (CITES II), Tokay Gecko *Gekko gekko* and Greater Coucal *Centropus sinensis*, all species under State protection. Police seized 24 bottles of the illegal liquor during an investigation into

the company in January 2015. Liang surrendered to police months later.

On 23 May 2016, Yang Xiaoxiao was sentenced to 10 years in prison and fined CNY10 000 (USD1500). This prosecution relates to a case from July 2014, when police in Putian City, Fujian Province discovered a group selling wildlife products to buyers in China via social media, including rhinoceros horn carved cups, ivory carvings, and casques of Helmeted Hornbills *Rhinoplax vigil* (all from CITES I species). Sichuan forest police arrested 11 people and seized 1200 pieces of wild animal products in what is reported to be the largest haul of illegal wildlife seized in the province in recent years.

On 7 June 2016, at Yongjia County People's Court, Zhejiang Province, 32 people from 10 provinces and cities were gaolled for illegal trade in wildlife, including pangolins *Manis*, bear claws and salamanders. One person, surnamed Kan, was gaolled for 13 years and fined CNY130 000 (USD19 500). Four were sentenced to over 10 years in prison and Kan's wife to six years. Others received suspended gaol terms of between four months and three years. More than 10 of the defendants are owners of restaurants and clubs who bought the animal parts and processed them as food.

ECNS Wire: www.ecns.cn/cns-wire/2016/05-05/209392.shtml, 5 May 2016; *China Wildlife Conservation Association*: <http://bit.ly/2eglyPM>, 16 January 2016; <http://bit.ly/2esjEEy>, 27 May 2016; *China.org.cn*: www.china.org.cn/environment/2016-06/08/content_38625076.htm, 8 June 2016

HONG KONG SPECIAL

ADMINISTRATIVE REGION: On 22 June 2016, at Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts, a man was sentenced to two months in gaol and fined HKD5000 (USD645) for smuggling 99 kg of ivory (CITES I), seven kg of casques of Helmeted Hornbills *Rhinoplax vigil* (CITES I) and two kg of agarwood *Aquilaria* (CITES II) in his luggage. He was arrested in his car on 19 May at Shenzhen Bay Control Point, en route to mainland China.

<http://hongkong.coconuts.co/2016/06/24/man-jailed-2-months-fined-hkd5000-smuggling-hkd-1-million-worth-ivory-hornbill-and>, 24 June 2016

KUWAIT: In early September 2016, coastguards inspecting foreign ships that were heading to Doha Port, Qatar, intercepted an Iranian-registered vessel that was found to be transporting a consignment of 100 Asian Houbara *Chlamydotis macqueenii* (CITES I and IUCN: Vulnerable). The species is in demand in the region for use as live prey in falconry training. Also seized were 16 falcons of various species, mostly Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* (CITES I). Kuwait Environment Protection Society investigated the case and confirmed that all the birds on board had been poached from the wild and transported without legal documents. The offenders were taken into custody.

BirdLife International: <http://bit.ly/2e9MLtr>, 8 September 2016



TRAFFIC

IN FIVE SEPARATE OPERATIONS OVER A FIVE-DAY PERIOD IN AUGUST, AUTHORITIES IN PENINSULAR MALAYSIA SEIZED HUNDREDS OF PIECES OF ELEPHANT IVORY, PANGOLIN SCALES, TWO TIGER SKINS, BONES OF A BIG CAT, BEAR AND TIGER TEETH AND CLAWS, GALLBLADDERS AND AT LEAST 45 TIPS OF HORNBILL BEAKS (ILLUSTRATED).

MALAYSIA: During a five-day period in August 2016, Peninsular Malaysia's Department of Wildlife and National Parks (Perhilitan) seized animal parts including elephant ivory (CITES I), pangolin *Manis* (CITES II) scales, two Tiger *Panthera tigris* (CITES I) skins, bones of a big cat, bear and Tiger teeth and claws, gallbladders, the casque of a Helmeted Hornbill *Rhinoplax vigil* (CITES I) and at least 45 tips of hornbill beaks. Two Malaysians, two Chinese and eight Vietnamese nationals were arrested at five locations near Kuala Lumpur. The provenance of the seized items is not known. Perhilitan's forensics lab were to conduct DNA tests on the items.

TRAFFIC: <http://bit.ly/2bW5w0O>, 2 September 2016

NETHERLANDS: On 17 August 2016, authorities seized over 2000 kg of coral and animals parts from an office building and five warehouses in Brabant. The find was made during an investigation launched after 345 kg of coral was recovered from a shipping container arriving from China at the Port of Rotterdam without an accompanying permit. According to an environmental police spokesperson, the coral alone represents a complete coral reef, with some pieces over 100 years old. It took the authorities three days to search through the haul, which also included snake and lizard skins, skulls of turtles and monkeys, swordfish horns, mounted crocodiles, bones of several different animals and ivory (CITES I/II) jewellery.

DutchNews.nl: <http://bit.ly/2esmxoI>, 29 August 2016; <http://bit.ly/2dMsZC5>, 29 August 2016

NIGERIA: On 10 June 2016, at Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Lagos, Customs officials arrested two Chinese nationals for attempting to smuggle out of the country 678 pieces of raw and processed elephant tusks (CITES I) and 381 kg of pangolin *Manis* (CITES II) scales.

The Guardian: <http://bit.ly/2dkX0w6>, 11 June 2016

RUSSIA: On 27 July 2016, some 525 bear paws were seized by authorities from a local resident in the Khabarovsk Region. The body parts—later confirmed as coming from both Brown Bear *Ursus arctos* (CITES I/II) and Himalayan Black Bear *U. thibetanus* (CITES I)—were due to be shipped to Tongjiang city in the Heilongjiang province of China (also seized were 3978 mustelid skins).

The Siberian Times: <http://bit.ly/2ahqeNM>, 27 July 2016

THAILAND: On 1 June 2016, at least 40 dead Tiger *Panthera tigris* (CITES I) cubs were discovered in a freezer inside a temple in Kanchanaburi province west of Bangkok on the third day of an operation by wildlife authorities to remove 147 Tigers from the temple. The management of the temple had repeatedly resisted efforts by the Department of National Parks to remove the Tigers and only relented when officials issued a court order. The temple promoted itself as a wildlife sanctuary, but in recent years had been investigated for suspected links to wildlife trafficking and animal abuse. Wildlife activists have accused the temple's monks of illegally breeding tigers, while some visitors have said the animals appeared to be sedated. The temple denies the accusations. It was reported that the animals would be sent to State-owned sanctuaries.

<http://bit.ly/2e80yPZ/>, 1 June 2016

USA: On 24 June 2016, Joseph Chait was sentenced in Manhattan to one year and one day in gaol, three years of supervised release, and fined USD10 000 after pleading guilty to conspiring to smuggle wildlife products that included rhinoceros horn, elephant ivory, hornbill products and coral between 2008 and 2013.

United States District Court Southern District of New York: <http://bit.ly/2d7LmWJ>; Reuters: <http://reut.rs/28NsAxQ>, 22 June 2016; iThink: <http://bit.ly/2e9NOcG>, 24 June 2016

VIET NAM: On 10 May 2016, 680 suspected Tiger *Panthera tigris* (CITES I) claws were seized from a house in Dien Chau district, Nghe An province. The owner stated that he had purchased the claws in Lao PDR, and transported them across the border to Viet Nam; they were intended to be carved into trinkets.

A forensic analysis of the claws was to be carried out, but it is reported that the authorities suspect they are from Tigers and that they derive from an estimated 34 animals.

On 8 June 2016, police in Mong Cai town seized 32 bear (CITES I/II) paws (58 kg) from a sack being carried by a man on a motorbike. The suspect confessed that he had been hired by a Chinese national to transport the cargo to a location near the Chinese border.

The paws were to be sent for scientific testing.

On 26 July 2016, a bag containing 18 legs of Sun Bear *Helarctos malayanus* (CITES I) (38 kg) was seized in Thanh Hoa province from a bus travelling from Lao PDR. The destination of the cargo was unknown.

VN Express: <http://bit.ly/2dLgQ36>, 11 May 2016; <http://bit.ly/2dMxJxW>, 10 May 2016; The Nation: <http://bit.ly/2dwxwtu>, 9 June 2016; Nature World News: <http://www.natureworldnews.com/articles/26136/20160802/sun-bear-legs-found-bus-vietnam.htm>, 2 August 2016