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3

# TRAFFIC

BULLETIN

TRADE IN WILD MEAT  
IN CENTRAL AFRICA

WEST AFRICA'S  
MARKET FOR  
FROG MEAT

IVORY IN  
ETHIOPIA

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The journal of the TRAFFIC network disseminates information  
on the trade in wild animal and plant resources





THE TRAFFIC BULLETIN SEIZURES AND PROSECUTIONS SECTION  
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The cases reported below represent a selection of recent seizures and prosecutions that have taken place around the world. The sources of this information are cited at the end of each country section. The CITES Appendix-listing for each species is placed in parentheses, where appropriate.

## EUROPE

### FRANCE

On 18 August 2009, Bordeaux Customs seized 20 live Spur-thighed Tortoises *Testudo graeca graeca* (CITES II) from a van. The van owner said he wanted to offer them to family members living in France. The tortoises, which were covered in oil (reason unknown, although it has been suggested that this may have been carried out to deter detection by sniffer dogs), came from Morocco and were not accompanied by CITES paperwork. They were sent to a veterinarian for treatment and were to be released either in the wild or in a sanctuary.

On 10 September 2009, Customs officers at Roissy Airport, Paris, inspected nine boxes arriving from Niamey, Niger, on route to Miami; two were labelled as Sahara Mastigures *Uromastyx geyri* (CITES II) and contained 193 live lizards (155 kg, five of which were dead). The CITES documentation presented with the shipment was not accepted because it is illegal in Niger to export wild specimens of this species; the specimens were seized. The shipment owner had correct documentation for the other seven boxes (unspecified reptiles).

The seized reptiles were placed in a farm in Paris in order to acclimatize them for eventual release in their natural habitat or an animal reserve.

[www.douane.gouv.fr/page.asp?id=3809](http://www.douane.gouv.fr/page.asp?id=3809), 24 August 2009; [TRAFFIC Europe](http://TRAFFIC.Europe); [www.douane.gouv.fr/page.asp?id=3815](http://www.douane.gouv.fr/page.asp?id=3815), 17 September 2009

### NORWAY

On 25 October 2009, authorities in Kristiansand arrested a Norwegian national when he was stopped for a spot check after leaving a passenger ferry arriving from Denmark. Suspicions were aroused when a tarantula was found loose in his bag. A body search revealed that the man was carrying 14 non-venomous young Royal Pythons *Python regius* (CITES II) that had been rolled up and placed in several layers of socks taped to his chest and legs. Ten cans taped to his legs each contained an albino Leopard Gecko *Eublepharis macularius*.

The man was fined NOK12 500 (USD2220). While the fate of the reptiles was being decided by the authorities, the animals were handed into the care of a security firm.

[www.dailymail.co.uk/news/worldnews/article-12231221](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/worldnews/article-12231221) Snakes-smuggled-plane-Man-arrested-illegally-importing-snakes-lizards-Norway—taping-reptiles-body.html#ixzz0V85ZbKTV

### 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 vehicle 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.

### POLAND

On 31 August 2009, a shipment of 25 t of eels declared as *Anguilla japonica* specimens arrived at the port of Szczecin, via Hamburg, from China. Polish Customs carried out DNA tests on the specimens and confirmed that they included European Eels *Anguilla anguilla* (CITES II) as well as *Anguilla japonica* specimens. The importer claims he was not aware of this fact. The consignment was seized and the case is under investigation. The listing of the European Eel in CITES Appendix II came into effect in March 2009.

A Polish company has been found guilty of illegally importing 14 t of *Ginjal*, a drug which contains powdered seahorse *Hippocampus* (CITES II). Although this transaction was in violation of the *Nature Conservation Act*, the court ruled the stock should be returned to the company.

"The illegal tablets should have been confiscated so they can never reach the marketplace," commented Magdalena Romanowicz, Head of WWF Poland's Reducing Illegal Wildlife Trade initiative.

*Ginjal* is made in Indonesia exclusively for the Polish market and is used to treat urinary infections. One of its principal ingredients is powdered seahorses, which require CITES permits to be internationally traded.

According to Polish Customs, the company in question had imported around 135 million *Ginjal* tablets since 2004 without the necessary documentation. Although Polish police and Customs had on several occasions raised concerns over the legality of such imports, no action was taken because the drug had been registered by the Ministry of Health.

"This clearly indicates a need for greater communication between the Polish authorities: drugs entering the market should be checked not only for health safety but also for adherence to environmental regulations to ensure endangered species are not further threatened", said Romanowicz.

"The history of use of *Ginjal* in Poland clearly shows how a lack of effective action by governmental agencies has allowed a market to exist for a product that should never have made it to our stores", she added.

On 25 October 2009, at Warsaw's international airport, Customs officials seized bushmeat from the luggage of a woman travelling from Cameroon, via Frankfurt, and entering the country via the green "nothing to declare" channel. Her luggage was selected for checking and found to contain carcasses of unidentified, small (circa 40 cm-long) apes/monkeys that had been smoked. The items were confiscated and the police informed.

CITES Management Authority, Poland; [www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jFg9HENos0-Lxatmxwbal5W2RFfw](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jFg9HENos0-Lxatmxwbal5W2RFfw), 7 September 2009; WWF Poland; [www.traffic.org](http://www.traffic.org)

### RUSSIA

It was reported on 2 December 2009 that police officers at Petropavlovsk Airport, Kamchatka, seized nine Gyrfalcons *Falco rusticolus* (CITES I) from the baggage of a Russian national bound for Vladivostok. According to the Kamchatka Krai Wildlife Protection Agency, the rare birds had been wrapped in cloth and hidden in bags equipped with a cooling agent to protect them from overheating on route.



SMOKED CARCASSES OF UNIDENTIFIED APES/MONKEYS FROM CAMEROON, SEIZED IN POLAND.

WARSAW CUSTOMS OFFICE

An administrative offence case was instituted against the Russian national on charges of the illegal smuggling of birds listed in the *Russian Red Book*. Veterinarians had already examined the birds, which were due to be released into the wild on 2 December.

The Gyr Falcon is very popular in Arab countries where it is used for hunting. In the last few years, Kamchatka has experienced a massive surge in the poaching of this species. A woman was detained in Petropavlovsk Airport earlier in 2009 on allegations of smuggling Gyr Falcons from Kamchatka (see also *TRAFFIC Bulletin* 22(2):73).

[www.vostokmedia.com/n60943.html](http://www.vostokmedia.com/n60943.html), 2 December 2009

## UK

In July 2009, UK Border Agency (UKBA) CITES Team officers at Heathrow Airport examined two shipments of cosmetics being imported from the USA. In total some 136 products were seized as they were found to contain Candelilla *Euphorbia antisiphilitica* (CITES II). The shipments were accompanied by valid US CITES export permits but neither had UK CITES import permits, which are required for CITES Appendix II imports to the EU.

The resin-free wax of the plant is used in emollients to protect the skin against water loss and in lipsticks, for example, as well as in the production of food additives and confectionery.

On 5 November 2009, UKBA officers at Heathrow seized a number of African Elephant *Loxodonta africana* (CITES I) ivory items: 219 ivory beads (1.6 kg) were found sewn into items of clothing in transit from Nigeria to China, and an ivory carving concealed inside a wooden statue in transit from Kenya to France. Both had been concealed in express courier parcels. In addition, on 31 August 2009, UKBA officers found eight ivory carvings from Cameroon concealed inside a vessel at Liverpool docks.

On 21 July 2009, the UK National Wildlife Crime Unit, UKBA, Animal Health Agency Inspectors and Greater Manchester Police executed a search warrant at a Chinese medicine centre in Manchester city centre and seized a large quantity of raw and prepared medicines. The raw ingredients included: Costus root *Saussurea costus* (CITES I); tortoises (I/II); Seahorses *Hippocampus* spp. (II); *Cibotium barometz* Dicksoniaceae; American Ginseng *Panax quinquefolius* (II); Desert-living Cistanche *Cistanche deserticola* (II); *Flickingeria* spp. Orchidaceae (II); *Dendrobium* spp. Orchidaceae (II); and *Gastrodia elata* Orchidaceae (II).

Between September and November 2009 at the port of Felixstowe, UKBA officers seized 13 large drums of oil of Guaiacwood or Palo santo *Bulnesia sarmientoi* (CITES III) in three separate seizures (2375 kg). The oil was being imported from Paraguay without the requisite CITES documentation and certificate of origin. Paraguay had a moratorium on exports at the time of export.

In September 2009, at the port of Felixstowe, UKBA officers detected 20 000 kg of frozen European Eel *Anguilla anguilla* (II) being imported from China. The shipment was accompanied by a valid CITES re-export permit but no UK CITES import permit; all the eels were seized.

In December 2009, UKBA officers at the port of Dover intercepted a lorry travelling from Morocco to the UK. Following a thorough inspection of the vehicle, a small box containing four Spur-thighed Tortoises *Testudo graeca* (II) was found. The driver of the vehicle had no CITES import documentation for the specimens, which were all seized.

On 20 August 2009, the Metropolitan Police's Wildlife Crime Unit raided a shop in London's Chinatown and seized over 200 medicinal products claiming to contain the following ingredients: Leopards *Panthera pardus* and Tigers *P. tigris* (both CITES I), musk deer *Moschus* (I/II), and Costus root *Saussurea costus* (I). Officers carried out the raid as part of Operation Charm, a continuing partnership initiative taking action against the illegal trade in endangered species in London. The searches coincided with the coming into effect of an amendment that closes a loophole in the law. These regulations relate to species that are "split-listed" (i.e. different populations or subspecies that are placed in different CITES Appendices, or a population or subspecies listed where another may not be) (see page 95). Previously, investigators were unable to determine the provenance of a specimen listed in the ingredients of manufactured products and therefore which part of the regulations applied. The amendment to the regulation now means that the higher level of protection applies unless there is evidence to the contrary. The shop manager was questioned and enquiries are continuing.

On 5 October 2009, at Luton Crown Court, Nicholas Noonan of Bedfordshire pleaded guilty to charges relating to the illegal trade in CITES I-listed African Elephant *Loxodonta africana* tusks and Sperm Whale *Physeter catodon* teeth, as well as ivory artefacts. He was gaoled for 10 months.

The investigation was launched in 2006 when covert agents from the US Fish and Wildlife Service received an unsolicited e-mail, via eBay, asking them to look at a number of tusks that were listed for sale by Noonan. Over the following months, Noonan traded various tusks, teeth and artefacts with the undercover agents; evidence was then passed on to HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) officers. Noonan's home was subsequently raided by HMRC officers who found various items which, following examination by experts at the Natural History Museum, were confirmed to be elephants' tusks and whales' teeth; some of these had been fashioned into corkscrews or carved with decorative images. In an attempt to continue trading on eBay, Noonan had illegally obtained a certificate of exemption which he then altered and used.

On 23 November 2009, at Manchester Magistrates' Court, Ching Kun Liu was charged with offering for sale plasters said to contain Leopard *Panthera pardus* (CITES I) products. He was fined GBP1000 (USD662) and GBP100 costs.

In December 2009, at Gloucester Crown Court, Christopher Surfleet was sentenced to 27 weeks' imprisonment suspended for 18 months, and ordered to do 150 hours community service. Surfleet, an auctioneer, sold a client's rhinoceros horn to dealers in the Far East without the client's knowledge. He was also ordered to pay UKP2500 (USD1650) compensation to the client and UKP250 costs.

The horn was part of an assortment of property which the client had brought to the company in which Surfleet worked in November 2007, to be auctioned on her behalf.

On 17 February 2010, Natalija Grinova appeared at Liverpool City Magistrates' Court charged with three offences under COTES relating to the prohibited sale of 34 x 50 g jars of caviar and keeping a further 22 jars of caviar for sale. She pleaded guilty and was fined £350 (USD548) plus £80 costs and a £15 victim surcharge. The 22 caviar jars were also forfeited. The caviar had been imported from Ukraine.

National Wildlife Crime Unit; UK Border Agency (UKBA); *TRAFFIC Bulletin* 20(1):6-7; [www.operationcharm.org/news/20090820.jsp](http://www.operationcharm.org/news/20090820.jsp), 20 August 2009; HM Revenue & Customs Press Office, 16 October 2009; [www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/crime/16790269/PLEASE-PIC-Auctioneer-sold-rhino-horn-for-Chinese-aphrodisiac-market.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/crime/16790269/PLEASE-PIC-Auctioneer-sold-rhino-horn-for-Chinese-aphrodisiac-market.html), 12 December 2009

## AFRICA

More than two tonnes of illegal ivory have been seized and more than 100 people arrested in recent months in the largest-ever transnational operation co-ordinated by INTERPOL targeting wildlife crime across Africa. Codenamed Operation Costa, the series of actions involved officers from police, national wildlife, Customs and national intelligence agencies across six countries—Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda (see also page 146).

Officers in all six countries carried out inspections on shops and markets and checks



ELEPHANT TUSKS AND ITEMS MADE FROM WHALE TEETH WERE OFFERED FOR SALE ILLEGALLY ON EBAY; SOME PIECES HAD BEEN FASHIONED INTO CORKSCREWS OR CARVED WITH DECORATIVE IMAGES.

HMRC

on suspect vehicles at border crossing points. Other wildlife products, in addition to weapons, ammunition and vehicles, were also seized.

"The success of Operation Costa is notable not only for the sheer volume of illegal ivory that has been recovered, which is among the biggest-ever haul recorded, but because it also clearly shows the ability and will of law enforcement to tackle wildlife crime effectively", said Peter Younger, manager of INTERPOL's OASIS Africa (Operational Assistance, Services and Infrastructure Support to African Police Forces) wildlife crime programme.

Supported by INTERPOL's National Central Bureaus and INTERPOL's Regional Bureau in Nairobi, Operation Costa is the second such initiative targeting wildlife crime in Africa co-ordinated by INTERPOL. The first, Operation Baba, was conducted in November 2008 and resulted in the arrests of nearly 60 people and the seizure of one tonne of elephant ivory, following co-ordinated actions in Congo, Ghana, Kenya, Uganda and Zambia (see *TRAFFIC Bulletin* 22(2):75).

INTERPOL media release, 30 November 2009: [www.interpol.int/Public/ICPO/PressReleases/PR2009/PR2009113.asp](http://www.interpol.int/Public/ICPO/PressReleases/PR2009/PR2009113.asp)

## CAMEROON

On 21 July 2009, two wildlife traffickers were found in illegal possession of two fresh skins of Leopard *Panthera pardus* (CITES I and totally protected in Cameroon). A case file has been established against the dealers in the court in Bafoussam. This action follows an intensification by the West Regional Delegation of Forestry and Wildlife of operations to crack down on wildlife crimes in the region. The West Regional Forces of Law and Order and The Last Great Ape Organization (LAGA) assisted in the operation.

A person was arrested in Bissombo, Bengbis, in the South Region, in possession of a live Chimpanzee *Pan troglodytes* (CITES I), as well as elephant parts and Chimpanzee skulls, some of which were fresh. The animals are suspected to have been captured or killed within the Dja Reserve. The trafficker was gaoled and the live Chimpanzee was taken to Mefou National Park by the Cameroon Wildlife Aid Fund (CWAFF) where it is receiving care.

Before this, a trafficker with a long history of illegal killing of elephants was arrested in possession of elephant parts in the Dja Reserve area in Somalomo, Messamena, in the Upper Nyong Division of the East Region.

The operations that led to these arrests were carried out by the East and South Regional Delegations of Forestry and Wildlife in collaboration with the Forces of Law and Order, the Upper Nyong Divisional Delegation of Forestry and Wildlife and the judiciary, and were in consonance with the nationwide programme on wildlife law enforcement launched by the government in 2003, with technical assistance from local NGO LAGA.

On 16 October 2009, a team of law enforcement officers, including the anti-poaching brigade of the Ministry of Forests and Wildlife (MINFOF), staff from the Direction Générale à la Recherche Extérieure (DGRE) and others, swooped on markets throughout Yaoundé to seize bushmeat illegally on sale.

Codenamed "Coup de poing" (Operation Punch), the team confiscated 45 live animals, 228 carcasses plus 42 assorted animal parts following raids at Nkolndongo and Nkolndongo Texaco markets and the railway station. Three shop owners were arrested. The confiscated animals ranged from parts of gorillas and pythons to monkeys, pangolins, turtles, crocodiles, snakes, antelopes, monitor lizards, hornbills and rodents. The live animals were transferred to Mvog Betsi Zoo, while the confiscated meat was later auctioned off.

According to Celestine Ndonga of DGRE, the area had been identified as important for illegal trade in wildlife products and had been under surveillance for several months leading up to the operation.

TRAFFIC is helping to build the capacity of the Cameroon Government's wildlife monitoring patrols through a project funded by WWF Poland. Elvis Ngolle Ngolle, Minister of Forests and Wildlife, said: "We are pleased with our co-operation with partners TRAFFIC Central Africa and [local NGO] LAGA." "Although sale of some of these species is not prohibited, this activity must be conducted in compliance with existing regulations to control the trade and ensure State revenues, the welfare of communities and the conservation of biodiversity."

On 1 February 2010, police seized more than 1000 Grey Parrots *Psittacus erithacus* (CITES II) at Douala Airport as they were about to be smuggled out of the country to Kuwait and Bahrain. No CITES documentation accompanied the shipment. Many of the parrots were dead; the surviving specimens were delivered to the Limbe Wildlife Center. It is the third major seizure of Grey Parrots in Cameroon in the past two years.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200908101311.html>, 10 August 2009; *Cameroon Tribune*, 10 August 2009: [www.cameroon-tribune.net/article.php?lang=Fr&oled=j31082009&idart=56122&olarch=j10082009](http://www.cameroon-tribune.net/article.php?lang=Fr&oled=j31082009&idart=56122&olarch=j10082009), 10 August 2009; <http://allafrica.com/stories/200910010512.html>, 1 October 2009; [www.traffic.org/home/2009/10/21/operation-punch-delivers-knockout-blow-to-illegal-bushmeat.html](http://www.traffic.org/home/2009/10/21/operation-punch-delivers-knockout-blow-to-illegal-bushmeat.html), 21 October 2009; *Pan African Sanctuary Alliance*, 2 February 2010

## REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

On 18 January 2010, four Chinese nationals were arrested for illegally dealing in ivory—the first arrests of Chinese nationals in the country in connection with the trade, according to police sources.

The arrests were made after a raid on premises in central Brazzaville produced a haul of ivory bracelets, statues and other goods.

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJOE60H0FT200118>, 18 January 2010

## ETHIOPIA

On 27 September 2009, a consignment of 637 kg of ivory was intercepted by Ethiopian authorities in Addis Ababa. The consignment had originated from Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, Nairobi, Kenya, destined for Bangkok, Thailand, via Addis Ababa, by the same consignee involved in a seizure of ivory in Kenya on 29 September (see Kenya).

[www.kws.org/info/news/2009/01/oct09.html](http://www.kws.org/info/news/2009/01/oct09.html), 1 October 2009; <http://www.interpol.int/Public/EnvironmentalCrime/Wildlife/WorkingGroup/Newsletter60.pdf>

## KENYA

On 14 July 2009, wildlife officials seized more than 300 kg of illegal ivory and two Black Rhinoceros *Diceros bicornis* (CITES I) horns from a cargo plane in transit from Mozambique, bound for Lao PDR via Thailand.

Blood on some of the 16 elephant tusks and the rhinoceros horns suggested the animals had been recently killed. The contraband, whose provenance was unclear, was concealed in coffin-shaped wooden boxes.

On 29 September 2009, at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, Nairobi, Kenya Wildlife Service law enforcement officers, in liaison with Kenya Airways, Ethiopian Airlines, Lusaka Task Force and airport police, impounded 61 whole tusks of raw ivory (CITES I) (532 kg). The trophies were discovered in the Kenya Airways warehouse and were to be air freighted to Bangkok, Thailand, via Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. (see Ethiopia).

Wildlife rangers arrested 12 men involved in an illicit game trade syndicate suspected of killing a female White Rhinoceros *Ceratotherium simum* (CITES I) at a private ranch on 28 December 2009, and removing its horns. The horns were recovered. The suspects were to be arraigned before a court in Nairobi's Kibera district.

[http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20090714/ap\\_on\\_re\\_af/af\\_kenya\\_illegal\\_ivory](http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20090714/ap_on_re_af/af_kenya_illegal_ivory), 14 July 2009; [www.timeslive.co.za/news/africa/article248538.ece?service=print](http://www.timeslive.co.za/news/africa/article248538.ece?service=print); [www.kws.org/info/news/2009/01/oct09.html](http://www.kws.org/info/news/2009/01/oct09.html), 1 October 2009; [www.interpol.int/Public/EnvironmentalCrime/Wildlife/WorkingGroup/Newsletter60.pdf](http://www.interpol.int/Public/EnvironmentalCrime/Wildlife/WorkingGroup/Newsletter60.pdf)

## SOUTH AFRICA

In July 2009, at Grahamstown Magistrates' Court, Mbulelo Mgxoteni and Thembele Msila, both of Port Elizabeth, pleaded guilty and were charged in connection with the theft of elephant tusks from Kwandwe Game Reserve. They were each gaoled for a year, suspended for three years, and sentenced to a fine of R9000 (USD1200) or 18 months in prison. Two thirds of the fine was suspended.

Msila, a former employee at the reserve, and his uncle Mgxoteni, tried to get information on elephant tusks from a reserve worker who subsequently tipped off management who, in turn, alerted the police. A trap was set: two elephant tusks were left in an office on the reserve to which Msila and Mgxoteni had obtained a key. After breaking in and stealing the tusks, the pair was stopped at the gates of the reserve as they were leaving.

The apparent light sentence was attributed to various factors, including the fact that the pair were first time offenders and that no animals had been killed.

On 24 July 2009, Vaughan Corlett was found guilty of being in possession of specially protected plants without permits following the seizure of 268 cycad plants at his property. He was sentenced on 7 August 2009, at Randburg Magistrates' Court, Gauteng, to a fine of





GDACE

### STEMS OF CYCAD *ENCEPHALARTOS LAEVIFOLIUS* (CITES I) FOUND ON A PROPERTY IN GAUTENG PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA.

R500 000 (USD68 000) or imprisonment for four years, plus two years' imprisonment, suspended for five years. This is believed to be the first sentence of its kind in South Africa for the illegal trade in cycads.

The investigation began in late February 2007 when the Organized Crime Unit of the South African Police Service (SAPS) in Johannesburg was asked to assist with an investigation regarding the possible possession of indigenous cycads *Encephalartos* at a smallholding owned by the defendant in Honeydew. The property was visited on 1 March 2007 where a large number of indigenous cycad plants were found planted in the ground and in pots or plastic bags. Fourteen cycad *Encephalartos laevifolius* stems were found. Suspicions were aroused as the species originates from a nature reserve in Mpumalanga and the stems of these specimens had no leaves and their roots were badly damaged and cut off from the stem; furthermore, their stems were covered with old burn marks caused by veld fires that are common to plants from the wild.

With the assistance of the forensic laboratory of SAPS and officers from Mpumalanga Parks Agencies based in Nelspruit, the 268 plants were found to include 18 plants (four of which were microchipped) that were positively identified as stolen from nature reserves in Mpumalanga. The 14 *E. laevifolius* specimens were linked to their natural habitat with soil and rock samples collected by the SAPS forensic laboratory. One of the stolen microchipped plants found in the possession of Mr Corlett was identified as *Encephalartos heenanii*, which was one metre in length.

Microchips are implanted into rare cycad plants in their natural habitat to make it possible to track them down should they be found in private possession.

The suspect was charged with possession of stolen goods, possession of specially protected plants without permits, and receipt, possession, acquisition or handling of protected plants in accordance with the *Gauteng Nature Conservation Ordinance 12 of 1983*.

All of the cycad plants were forfeited to the State. Plants taken from Mpumalanga were to be returned and the remainder handed over to Walter Sisulu National Botanical Garden.

On 31 July 2009, at Bellville Specialized Commercial Crime Court, Kiyaam Rinqest was gaoled for 32 years. Rinqest had been found guilty of receiving drugs worth millions of rands as payment for illegal abalone *Haliotis* exports to the Far East.

He was found guilty on 10 of the 23 charges—two of dealing in drugs, two of possession of abalone, two involving the possession of abalone-processing equipment, one concerning the illegal use of the proceeds of crime and three of car theft.

By poaching undersized abalone, in addition to removing abalone without a permit, Rinqest had "aggravated an already desperate situation", the judge said. He said there was also a connection between abalone poaching and the trade in drugs, which were used as payment for illegally collected abalones.

On 7 August 2009, Eastern Cape police seized two tonnes of abalones *Haliotis* and arrested a Port Elizabeth man after seeing abalone in his pick-up truck. After following the vehicle to the suburb of Collenglen, police uncovered the goods from the vehicle and the man's property.

The previous day, another person from Port Elizabeth was arrested when police, acting on information, found three tonnes of abalones at his house in Greenbushes.

On 20 August 2009, two men were arrested for allegedly poaching rhinoceroses at a game reserve between Ulundi and Melmoth, managed by Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife. The arrests follow a reported spate of rhinoceros poaching incidents in the reserve. Weapons and ammunition were confiscated.

On 23 October 2009, two men were arrested by police following a search of a property in Louterwater, Uitenhage, Eastern Cape, which uncovered 121 kg of abalones *Haliotis* (and

drugs and firearms). The pair was to appear in court at a later date.

*The Herald (South Africa)*, 14 December 2009; *Gauteng Nature Conservation: Projects Resource Protection*; [www.the-times.co.za/News/Article.aspx?id=1042801](http://www.the-times.co.za/News/Article.aspx?id=1042801), 31 July 2009 [www.int.iol.co.za/index.php?set\\_id=1&click\\_id=15&art\\_id=nw20090807170312621C266509](http://www.int.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=15&art_id=nw20090807170312621C266509), 7 August 2009; [www.iol.co.za/index.php?set\\_id=1&click\\_id=15&art\\_id=nw20090824182106241C675711](http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=15&art_id=nw20090824182106241C675711), August 24 2009; [www.weekendpost.co.za/article.aspx?id=489114](http://www.weekendpost.co.za/article.aspx?id=489114)

### TANZANIA

On 21 July 2009, at Dar es Salaam's Magistrates' Court, six Tanzanian businessmen were charged with smuggling 11 t of elephant ivory to the Philippines and Viet Nam between October 2008 and March 2009. They were also charged with 11 counts of conspiracy, unlawful hunting, exporting concealed and undeclared items, as well as making false documents. The men, who denied the charges and were remanded in custody until 28 July pending bail application, run several export and cargo clearing firms in Dar es Salaam. The tusks were impounded by authorities in the Philippines and Viet Nam through co-operation with INTERPOL (see also Viet Nam).

An anti-poaching operation involving police officers and wildlife rangers has resulted in the arrest of poachers and the seizure of more than 100 kg of ivory (and weapons). The operation, codenamed Operation Kipepeo—or Operation Butterfly—owing to the use of helicopters with infantry support to scan poachers in the Selous Game Reserve, resulted in the arrest of 70 poachers in the first week of operation. The government subsequently announced an award of USD1 000 for information leading to the arrest of poachers. Eight cases have been filed in connection with the operation: at least four are at the hearing stage and involve individuals in possession of over 800 kg of ivory.

[www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gQykXh;pfORKfQj66ccc3e2vSiv](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gQykXh;pfORKfQj66ccc3e2vSiv), 21 July 2009; *TRAFFIC East/Southern Africa*

### ZIMBABWE

On 11 January 2010, at Masvingo Magistrates' Court, Victoria Tendai Mutyairi of Masvingo was sentenced to 17 years' imprisonment for poaching a rhinoceros at Matendere Range. The sentence was suspended for 10 years on condition that USD120 000 in restitution was paid to the State.

Mutyairi and two cousins went to Matendere Range with the intention of poaching rhinoceroses. The trio killed one rhinoceros and wounded another, which managed to escape. The horn of the dead rhinoceros had been removed.

The suspects were intercepted by a team from the police and the Parks and Wildlife Management Authority. Mutyairi was shot in the abdomen after an exchange of gunfire with the police. The other two escaped.

"This sentence is a welcome move that will work as a deterrent to would-be offenders. In the past, most poachers were getting away with lighter sentences such as fines and community services," said Parks and Wildlife Management Authority public relations manager Caroline

Washaya-Moyo. She added that the sentencing was a culmination of efforts made by the Authority to curb poaching across the country.

On 6 December 2009, two South Africans and a Mozambican were arrested in Springs for the possession of illegal ivory. The men were travelling in a vehicle when they were stopped by police. The three were to appear in Springs Magistrates' Court on 8 December. No update was available.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201001150219.html>,  
15 January 2010; [www.iol.co.za](http://www.iol.co.za), 7 December 2009

## MIDDLE EAST

### UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

The Dubai Municipality has seized animal skins during an inspection of various veterinary establishments and antique shops, including those of four Pythons *Pythonidae* (CITES I/II) and two Nile Crocodiles *Crocodylus niloticus* (I/II). The skins were up to nine metres in length.

Eng. Hashim Al Awadhi, Head of the Veterinary Services Section, said the Section plays an important role in implementing the terms of CITES in regulating the international trade of flora and fauna that are at risk of extinction. He said that the Veterinary Services Section takes extra efforts to educate the public and those who work in pet shops and shops that sell souvenirs on the provisions of CITES, endangered animals, the purpose of protecting these animals and organizing their trade through the provision of CITES certificates.

*Emirates News Agency, 28 September 2009*

## ASIA

### EAST ASIA CHINA

On 8 June 2009, the Yunnan Honghe forest police seized two Common Water Monitors *Varanus salvator* (CITES II) and one Burmese Python *Python molurus* (II) from a minibus travelling from Honghe to Kaiyuan, Yunnan Province. The following day, the police discovered 88 skins of Leopard Cats *Prionailurus bengalensis* (II) and some cobras on the premises of two people, who were detained. The case is under investigation.

On 7 July 2009, Shantou Customs reported that a gang leader had been sentenced to life imprisonment by the Middle People's Court of Shanwei, Guangdong Province, following a charge of involvement in the smuggling of 2023 frozen pangolins *Manis* (CITES II), 153 kg of frozen pangolin viscera, 800 kg of pangolin scales, 732 live Monocellate Cobras *Naja kaouthia* (II), 3904 live rat snakes, 363 frozen civet cats and 32 292 dried Chinese Rat Snakes *Ptyas korros*. The man's personal property was also confiscated. Six others involved received suspended gaol terms of between three and 15 years.

On 9 July 2009, traffic police at the Guang-Jing highway of Taizhou, Jiangsu Province, discovered 24 paws of Asiatic Black Bears *Ursus thibetanus* (CITES I), 11 Common Monitors *Varanus bengalensis* (I), seven Chinese Giant Salamanders *Andrias davidianus* (I), six Monocellate Cobras *Naja kaouthia* (II) and two Hundred-pace Snakes *Deinagkistrodon acutus* in a vehicle travelling from Wenzhou, Zhejiang Province, to Jinan, Shandong Province. All the live lizards and snakes were sent to Nanjing Hongshan Forest Zoo. The driver was detained and the case is under investigation.

On 15 July 2009, Guangzhou Customs officials seized 1 194 kg of frozen pangolins *Manis* (CITES II) and 602 kg of dried rat snake skins at a gravel dock of the Pearl River Estuary.

On 25 July 2009, Fangchenggang traffic police in Guangxi Province seized 39 live pangolins *Manis* (CITES II) from a car; the passengers fled. All the animals were transferred to the local wildlife conservation department.

On 6 August 2009, Customs officials in Gongbei, Zhuhai City, Guangdong Province, seized a total of 47 kg of Agarwood *Aquilaria sinensis* (CITES II/National Grade 2 Specially Protected) from two mainland travellers who tried to clear Customs in possession of the undeclared fragrant wood.

On 18 August 2009, police in Fangchenggang city, Guangxi Province, arrested two people and confiscated 39 live pangolins *Manis* (CITES II) from a local garage. All the animals were transferred to the forestry department. The case is under investigation.

On 7 September 2009, policemen from the Nantou checkpoint of Shenzhen city found 12 Slow Lorises *Nycticebus coucang* (a species listed under national first-class protection/CITES I) in a coach travelling from Nanning, Guangxi Province. In addition, 18 live pangolins *Manis* (II) were seized from a car. Two suspects were detained and all animals were sent to the local safari park.

On 12 September 2009, Lincang traffic police, Yunnan Province, found an employee of a local construction company illegally transporting two Asiatic Black Bear *Ursus thibetanus* (CITES I) paws. The suspect claimed he had planned to give the animal parts as a gift. He was detained and the vehicle was impounded.

On 19 October 2009, Gengma forest police of Linchang, Yunnan Province, seized from two apartments eight bear paws, one bear penis, one bear gall bladder, the skin of one Leopard *Panthera pardus* (CITES I), three Serow *Naemorhedus sumatraensis* (I) horns, and other animal products. The suspects claimed that the items had been smuggled from Myanmar via Yonghe port of Cangyuan county.

On 19 October 2009, after five months of careful investigation, Hengyang Forest police, Hunan Province, seized 24 live pangolins *Manis* (CITES II), and arrested three suspects. The animals had been transported from south-west China and were thought to be bound for Guangdong Province. The animals were sent to

the local wildlife rescue centre and the suspects were detained.

On 13 November 2009, Yongping forest police of Dali, Yunnan Province, seized 23 paws of Asiatic Black Bear *Ursus thibetanus* (CITES I) (147.5 kg) from a vehicle on the 320 State road. The suspect was detained and the seizure was to be investigated.

On 23 November 2009, in a Beijing coach station, two bear paws and three frozen pangolins *Manis* (CITES II) were found in a coach arriving from Shanghai. The delivery man, a native of Guangdong Province, claimed that he had purchased the items via the internet.

In December 2009, a court in Xishuangbanna, Yunnan Province, sentenced Kang Wannian to 12 years in gaol for killing an Indochinese Tiger *Panthera tigris corbetti* (CITES I) in southwestern China. He was also ordered to pay a fine of CNY100 000 (USD14 600), plus CNY480 000 for State economic losses.

Kang said he shot the animal after dark and did not know it was an endangered Indochinese Tiger. The incident took place in February 2009, and Kang surrendered to police in June.

Fewer than 10 specimens of this subspecies are distributed in the south of Yunnan Province, which borders Myanmar.

On 21 December 2009, Luohu Customs officials at Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, detected 17 pieces of animal bones on the x-ray of a carton in the possession of a Chinese national. The items were identified by the South China Endangered Animal Institute as Tiger bone. The suspect claimed that the bones had been purchased in Malaysia and were to be used to treat his rheumatism. The case has been transferred to the local anti-smuggling department for further investigation.

In an earlier incident, in June 2009, Luohu Customs officials seized 70 Tiger bones (2.2 kg). It is reported that some 20 kg of ivory and two kilogrammes of Saiga Antelope *Saiga tatarica* (CITES II) were among wildlife items seized by Luohu Customs during 2009.

On 13 January 2010, the Tengchong branch of Kunming Customs seized 946 g of rhinoceros horn from a vehicle. Two suspects claimed that they had purchased the horn in Myanmar and had smuggled it through the border. The case is under investigation.



AGARWOOD *AQUILARIA SINENSIS* SEIZED BY CUSTOMS OFFICIALS IN GONGBEI, ZHUHAI CITY, GUANGDONG PROVINCE, CHINA.

LIU CONGXIN

[www.greentimes.com/green/news/ylyffzxwl/content/2009-07116/content\\_55046.htm](http://www.greentimes.com/green/news/ylyffzxwl/content/2009-07116/content_55046.htm), 16 July 2009; [http://lgzdaily.dayoo.com/html/2009-07107/content\\_625398.htm](http://lgzdaily.dayoo.com/html/2009-07107/content_625398.htm), 7 July 2009; [http://epaper.yangtse.com/yzwb/2009-07116/content\\_13142487.htm](http://epaper.yangtse.com/yzwb/2009-07116/content_13142487.htm), 16 July 2009; TRAFFIC East Asia; Chinese Anti-smuggling Website, 22 July 2009; [www.jisi.gov.cn/%e7%a5%9e%e5%b7%9e%e6%89%ab%e6%8f%8fta%e6%8f%8ftabid/66/ctl/Detail/mid/437/ld/2368/Default.aspx](http://www.jisi.gov.cn/%e7%a5%9e%e5%b7%9e%e6%89%ab%e6%8f%8fta%e6%8f%8ftabid/66/ctl/Detail/mid/437/ld/2368/Default.aspx); [www.gxfzw.com.cn/news/news\\_show.asp?id=84840](http://www.gxfzw.com.cn/news/news_show.asp?id=84840), 30 July 2009; [www.jisi.gov.cn/%e7%a5%9e%e5%b7%9e%e6%89%ab%e6%8f%8ftabid/66/ctl/Detail/mid/437/ld/2497/Default.aspx](http://www.jisi.gov.cn/%e7%a5%9e%e5%b7%9e%e6%89%ab%e6%8f%8ftabid/66/ctl/Detail/mid/437/ld/2497/Default.aspx) Fangchenggang Daily, [www.jisi.gov.cn/%e7%a5%9e%e5%b7%9e%e6%89%ab%e6%8f%8ftabid/66/ctl/Detail/mid/437/ld/2579/Default.aspx](http://www.jisi.gov.cn/%e7%a5%9e%e5%b7%9e%e6%89%ab%e6%8f%8ftabid/66/ctl/Detail/mid/437/ld/2579/Default.aspx), 25 August 2009; South City News, <http://news.gd.sina.com.cn/news/2009/09/08/651891.html>, 8 September 2009; [http://society.yunnan.cn/html/2009-10/28/content\\_957800.htm](http://society.yunnan.cn/html/2009-10/28/content_957800.htm); [http://society.yunnan.cn/html/2009-10/28/content\\_957800.htm](http://society.yunnan.cn/html/2009-10/28/content_957800.htm); [www.cwca.org.cn/Article/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=17480](http://www.cwca.org.cn/Article/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=17480); [www.dalidaily.com/shehui/120091116/1100627.html](http://www.dalidaily.com/shehui/120091116/1100627.html); [www.cwca.org.cn/Article/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=17818](http://www.cwca.org.cn/Article/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=17818); [www.google.com/hostednews/ap/Article/ALeqM5gNj-2pilY10wtXW0SC3nNQIU80UwD9CO3U800](http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/Article/ALeqM5gNj-2pilY10wtXW0SC3nNQIU80UwD9CO3U800), 21 December 2009; TRAFFIC East Asia; [http://news.ifeng.com/mainland/2010/10/11/\\_17\\_1506171.shtml](http://news.ifeng.com/mainland/2010/10/11/_17_1506171.shtml); [www.jisi.gov.cn/%e7%a5%9e%e5%b7%9e%e6%89%ab%e6%8f%8ftabid/66/ctl/Detail/mid/437/ld/3407/Default.aspx](http://www.jisi.gov.cn/%e7%a5%9e%e5%b7%9e%e6%89%ab%e6%8f%8ftabid/66/ctl/Detail/mid/437/ld/3407/Default.aspx)

### Seizures in China involving ivory:

On 9 May 2009, Chengdu Middle Court sentenced a man to three years' probation and a fine of CNY500 000 (USD73 000). He had auctioned eight ivory carvings that he had purchased by phone from a US auctioneer in December 2007. He posted four of these items to an individual in Guangzhou which were discovered by Chengdu Airport Customs officials. When sentencing, the court took into consideration the fact that the individual had purchased the ivory legitimately and there was no evidence to show that his purpose was to make a profit. He was found guilty of violating the Customs laws and wildlife protection laws on importing endangered species products without relevant CITES import certification.

The carvings were estimated to have come from four whole elephant tusks.

On 11 May 2009, Wuhan Customs in Hubei Province seized a case of smuggled ivory at Tianhe Airport, on arrival from Hong Kong. A total of 125 ivory items (7.8 kg) were discovered following an x-ray check. The suspect claimed that he had purchased the items in the Democratic Republic of Congo and did not know it was illegal to carry them back to China. The case is under investigation.

In July 2009, Customs officials at Hefei, Anhui Province, seized 25 kg of ivory pieces from 38 parcels which had been posted from Zimbabwe. They included three 50 cm-long tusks and over 1000 small items, such as necklaces, bracelets and chopsticks. They had been sent by Chinese workers in Zimbabwe who claimed that they were not familiar with international regulations relating to the transportation of ivory.

In August 2009, the Guandu People's Court in Kunming City, Yunnan Province, sentenced two people to 12 years' imprisonment for attempting to transport 33 elephant (CITES I) tusks (36 kg) out of Kunming on 6 January 2009. They were also fined CNY12 000 (USD1756).

In August 2009, Customs officials at Baiyun Airport, Guangzhou, seized ivory products (4.08 kg and 3.95 kg) from two passengers arriving from Ethiopia, bringing to 140 the number of ivory smuggling cases at Guangzhou Customs since the beginning of 2009. The cases involved items amounting to a total of circa 190 kg, all from African countries.

On 18 November 2009, the Guangzhou Baiyun Airport Security found one passenger with ivory bangles bound by elastic to the upper part of his body. Further ivory products, rhinoceros horns and some animal furs were found in his luggage. The passenger had planned to fly to Qingdao City, Shandong Province.

On 24 November 2009, Shanghai Customs announced that they had found an African Elephant *Loxodonta africana* (CITES I) tusk (1.4 m long and 21.5 kg) in a parcel that had arrived from Japan on 26 October 2009.

On 22 December 2009, at Jiaojiang Court, in Taizhou City, Zhejiang Province, three people were convicted of illegally trading endangered animal products: Dong Wenming was sentenced to 10 years' in gaol and fined CNY120 000 (USD17 500); Zhang Zhangman was gaol for eight years and fined CNY120 000; Ren Changzhi was sentenced to two years' imprisonment, suspended for three years, and fined CNY50 000.

In October 2008, Jiaojiang police officers conducted an undercover investigation into this case after they were informed that Zhang Zhangman, the manager of an antiques outlet in Jiaojiang illegally purchased endangered animal products. On 24 March 2009, a search of Zhang's apartments uncovered 377 ivory pieces (134.07 kg) and 1.68 kg of rhinoceros horn products. Further investigation indicated that, since 2004, Dong Wenming had purchased ivory and rhinoceros horn products in Hangzhou, Shanghai and Beijing on many occasions, and sold the items to Zhang Zhangman and others.

On 22 December 2009, at Zhengzhou Intermediate Court, Wang Fukang, Wang Yueyi and Zhang Juanjuan were convicted of smuggling ivory: Wang Fukang was sentenced to life imprisonment, deprived of political rights for life and his personal property was confiscated; Wang Yueyi was gaol for 15 years and fined CNY300 000 (USD44 000); and Zhang Juanjuan was sentenced to 13 years in prison and fined CNY200 000 (USD29 400).

In addition, the court convicted Chen Weiren, Zheng Zhiyong and Wu Guodong of illegally purchasing ivory; they were each sentenced to between six and 10 years in prison and fined CNY100 000–200 000 (USD14 700–29 400).

On 29 December 2009, joint enforcement action involving the Guangdong forest police bureau and other related agencies, resulted in the seizure of 73 ivory items (7.3 kg) and the arrest of three traders at Hualin International Market, Guangzhou City. Two hundred copies of public awareness materials relating to the illegal ivory trade were distributed to all traders at this market.

On 31 December 2009, the Shantou Intermediate Court convicted six suspects of smuggling 770 pieces of tusks (2167 kg). One suspect was sentenced to death, suspended for two years, the other was sentenced to life imprisonment, and the remaining four were each sentenced to between three and five years in gaol.

In December 2008, Ke Chengcai and Ke Jiayou hired the services (and fishing vessel) of Xu Jiewen and Liu Hanyan of Raoping county, Guangdong Province, to travel to the Philippines to purchase ivory. On 20 January 2009, Xu Jiewen and others arrived in Subic Bay, the Philippines, and loaded five wooden boxes filled with tusks and stones. On their return to Guangdong, a coastguard vessel of Shantou Customs seized the boat in the south sea of Nan'ao Changshanwei, Guangdong Province, and confiscated 770 pieces of tusks, including 569 whole tusks (1615 kg) and 201 tusk sections (551 kg).

[www.scol.com.cn/Insichuan/sczh/20090422/200942275910.htm](http://www.scol.com.cn/Insichuan/sczh/20090422/200942275910.htm); [www.cwca.org.cn/Article/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=15672](http://www.cwca.org.cn/Article/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=15672); [www.jisi.gov.cn/%e7%a5%9e%e5%b7%9e%e6%89%ab%e6%8f%8ftabid/66/ctl/Detail/mid/437/ld/1980/Default.aspx](http://www.jisi.gov.cn/%e7%a5%9e%e5%b7%9e%e6%89%ab%e6%8f%8ftabid/66/ctl/Detail/mid/437/ld/1980/Default.aspx) 13 May 2009; China Customs Suppressing Smuggling Net, 17 July 2009; [www.jisi.gov.cn/%e7%a5%9e%e5%b7%9e%e6%89%ab%e6%8f%8ftabid/66/ctl/Detail/mid/437/ld/2350/Default.aspx](http://www.jisi.gov.cn/%e7%a5%9e%e5%b7%9e%e6%89%ab%e6%8f%8ftabid/66/ctl/Detail/mid/437/ld/2350/Default.aspx); [http://lyn.yunnan.cn/html/2009-01/08/content\\_189454.htm](http://lyn.yunnan.cn/html/2009-01/08/content_189454.htm); Kunming Daily, 20 August 2009; [www.cwca.org.cn/Article/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=16947](http://www.cwca.org.cn/Article/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=16947); Guangzhou Daily, 12 August 2009; <http://news.sina.com.cn/c/2009-11-18/1040616624528s.shtml>; <http://society.people.com.cn/GB/42733110448552.html>; China Xinhua News; [www.zj.xinhuanet.com/newscenter/2009-12/24/content\\_18585244.htm](http://www.zj.xinhuanet.com/newscenter/2009-12/24/content_18585244.htm); [www.dsb.gd.gov.cn/ruizheng/Article/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=11825](http://www.dsb.gd.gov.cn/ruizheng/Article/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=11825); <http://news.cnr.cn/gnxw/200912/2009122009129.htm>, 29 December 2009; Yangcheng Evening News, 4 January 2010; [www.dsb.gd.gov.cn/ruizheng/Article/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=1188](http://www.dsb.gd.gov.cn/ruizheng/Article/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=1188)

### JAPAN

On 9 October 2009, at Tokyo District Court, a man who illegally imported and sold rare butterfly species was sentenced to one year and six months' imprisonment, suspended for three years, and fined one million yen (USD10 750).

On 24 July 2009, Tokyo Customs charged the man with illegally importing 145 butterflies from France. Among the specimens were three Queen Alexandra's Birdwings *Ornithoptera alexandrae* (CITES I) and one Apollo Butterfly *Parnassius apollo* (CITES II) which the defendant stated he had obtained at an insect exhibition in Italy. The man, who owns a company in Saitama prefecture that trades in butterflies, had earlier been arrested, on 8 July 2009, on charges of smuggling and illegally selling rare butterflies, in violation of the *Law for the Conservation of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora* and the *Foreign Exchange and Foreign Trade* laws. The suspect allegedly had sold four CITES I butterflies, including a male Queen Alexandra's Birdwing, two Homerus Swallowtails *Papilio homerus*, and a Luzon Peacock Swallowtail *Papilio chikae* to four collectors between August 2006 and November 2008.

According to Tokyo Metropolitan Police, two persons who are acquaintances of the owner were also arrested and a file on five customers was given to prosecutors.



In a separate incident, on 8 July 2009, a resident in Gifu was arrested for illegally selling seven Luzon Peacock Swallowtails between February 2008 and March 2009.

On 14 October 2009, the Consumer and Environmental Protection Division of Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department, Ikebukuro Police Station and Ikegami Police Station arrested a man for illegally importing Luzon Peacock Swallowtails *Papilio chikae* (CITES I) in violation of *Foreign Exchange* and *Foreign Trade* laws.

On 23 October, the file on a further four men was sent to the Tokyo District Public Prosecutors' Office.

The five men took part in a tour to collect *Papilio chikae* in Luzon, Philippines. They left the Philippines on 28 March with a total of 40 butterflies in their possession.

The suspect who had planned the tour is a collector and had allegedly run similar collection tours in August 2008 and August 2009.

*Asahi Shimbun*, 8/25 July 2009; *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 8/9 July, 24 October 2009; *Mainichi Shimbun*, 8/9 July, 23 October 2009; *Hokkaido Shimbun*, 8 July 2009; *Chunichi Shimbun*, 8 July 2009; *Sankei Shimbun*, 9/24 July 2009; *Kyodo Press*, 8 July 2009; *NHK News*, 8 July 2009; *Sankei News*, 23 October, *TRAFFIC East Asia-Japan*

## TAIWAN

On 9 July 2009, at Kaohsiung Airport, authorities seized a Ploughshare Tortoise *Astrochelys yniphora* (CITES I) that was found concealed in the luggage of a businessman returning from China. The case is under investigation.

On 18 July 2009, Customs officials seized 231 Chinese Box Turtles *Cuora flavomarginata* (CITES II) from the freezer of a vessel flying a Hong Kong flag. The suspect, an Indonesian national crew member, said that he planned to sell the reptiles in Hong Kong.

On 29 August 2009, Kaohsiung Customs officials detected 1255 Chinese Box Turtles concealed in export cargo declared as Chinese Striped-necked Turtles *Ocadia* [*Mauremys*] *sinensis*, destined for Hong Kong.

On 22 July 2009, Customs officials at Kaohsiung Airport found two Ploughshare Tortoises *Astrochelys yniphora*, 12 Radiated Tortoises *Astrochelys radiata* and seven Black Pond Turtles *Geoclemys hamiltonii* (all CITES I species) hidden inside a pile of boxes arriving on a cargo flight from Hong Kong. The reptiles were to be sent to a rescue centre in Taipei Zoo. The case is under investigation for violation of the *Wildlife Conservation Act*.

On 23 September 2009, Keelung Customs Office (KCO) discovered 16 undeclared ivory (CITES I) carvings in unaccompanied baggage shipped from the Netherlands.

On 2 October 2009, a man from Shenzhen, China, was detained at Kaohsiung Airport after being found with six live Chinese Hwameis *Garrulax canorus* (CITES II) concealed in wooden boxes in luggage. The birds were first detected by a newly trained sniffer dog. The suspect may be charged with violation of quarantine regulations and the *Wildlife Conservation Act*.

On 11 November 2009, at Taipei Airport, Customs officials seized 27 Radiated Tortoises *Astrochelys radiata* (CITES I) and 30 Leopard Tortoises *Stigmochelys pardalis* (II) that had been concealed in personal luggage arriving on a flight from Macau. Importation of Leopard Tortoises to Taiwan is prohibited as the species is a carrier of heartwater disease. The tortoises were confiscated and the suspect was to be charged with violation of the *Wildlife Conservation Act*.

On 20 November 2009, a man arriving on a flight from Macau was caught at Taipei Airport with eight Radiated Tortoises *Astrochelys radiata* (CITES I), 22 Leopard Tortoises *Stigmochelys pardalis* (II) and 116 songbirds of 13 species. He claimed that these animals were bought in Zhuhai, Guangdong Province, China.

On 19 December 2009, a man arriving from Myanmar was caught at Taipei Airport with one rhino (CITES I) horn (one kilogramme) concealed in his luggage.

[www.gov.tw/\(A\(6Pe0RhE4ygEkAAAAMzVjZWU3ZWltODkzYy00N2QwLWFjNjltYzYwYTY3M2YwYzE00\)\)/NewsCenter/Pages/detail.aspx?page=5d3e678c-43cd-440b-b85d-078293f3e07c.aspx&AreaName=21488\\_21271\\_&SpXAutoDetectCookieSupport=1](http://www.gov.tw/(A(6Pe0RhE4ygEkAAAAMzVjZWU3ZWltODkzYy00N2QwLWFjNjltYzYwYTY3M2YwYzE00))/NewsCenter/Pages/detail.aspx?page=5d3e678c-43cd-440b-b85d-078293f3e07c.aspx&AreaName=21488_21271_&SpXAutoDetectCookieSupport=1); <http://udn.com/NEWS/SOCIETY/BREAKINGNEWS2/5028950.shtml>; <http://www.nownews.com/2009/08/31/320-2499503.htm>; <http://udn.com/NEWS/SOCIETY/SOC4/5110075.shtml>; [www.cdnews.com.tw/cdnews\\_site/docDetail.jsp?coluid=112&docid=100844101](http://www.cdnews.com.tw/cdnews_site/docDetail.jsp?coluid=112&docid=100844101); *The China Post*, 24 September 2009; [www.chinapost.com.tw/taiwan/local/taipei/2009/09/24/225936/KCO-seizes.htm](http://www.chinapost.com.tw/taiwan/local/taipei/2009/09/24/225936/KCO-seizes.htm); <http://udn.com/news/society/breakingnews2/5177203.shtml>; <http://taipei.customs.gov.tw/ct.asp?xitem=43988&ctNode=7306>; <http://news.chinatimes.com/2007/Cti/2007/Cti-News/2007/Cti-News-Content/0,4521,11050303+132009112100542,00.html>; [www.udn.com/2009/11/22/news/society/breakingnews2/5323549.shtml](http://www.udn.com/2009/11/22/news/society/breakingnews2/5323549.shtml)

## SOUTH ASIA INDIA

On 18 June 2009, at Katni courts, Madhya Pradesh, a Tiger poacher well known to the authorities was sentenced to three years' rigorous imprisonment and fined Rs.10 000



APOLLO BUTTERFLY *PARNASSIUS APOLLO* (TOP) AND HOMERUS SWALLOWTAIL *PAPILIO HOMERUS* (BELOW).



SPECIMENS OF BOTH SPECIES WERE ILLEGALLY IMPORTED INTO JAPAN.

(USD214). The person, called Dariya (and not to be confused with another Tiger poacher with this name who was arrested in April 2008), had been arrested by the Katni Forest Division. In his possession were spring traps to catch Tigers *Panthera tigris* (CITES I) and Leopards *P. pardus* (I), skin and antlers of a Chital *Axis axis*, a spear and other poaching equipment. Leopard hairs had been identified on one of the traps by forensic experts. This is a unique judgement where conviction has been granted on the seizure of spring traps.

The defendant had previously been booked in four separate cases involving the poaching of Tigers and Leopards in Uttar Pradesh (UP) and Bihar. In July 2000, two Leopard skins were seized from his residence by police in Pinjore, Haryana. In November 2005, he was arrested again at Katerniaghat, Dudhwa Tiger Reserve, with poaching equipment and served a five-and-a-half-month gaol term in Bahraich, UP. After being released, he was an accused in a case involving the seizure of a fresh Tiger skin in December 2006 on the Indo-Nepal border. On this occasion, he absconded and it is expected that he will now be taken to Bihar to stand trial.

On 24 July 2009, a team comprising staff of Ranthambore Tiger Reserve, Sawai Madhopur District of Rajasthan State, and a representative of an NGO—the Wildlife Protection Society of India (WPSI)—arrested three poachers at Dumariya village in Bharatpur District. All belong to the Mogiya community.

One of those detained is a well-known Tiger poacher who has been operating in Ranthambore and Sariska Tiger Reserves for several years. He is believed to have been an accomplice in two Tiger poaching incidents in Ranthambore, in 1992 and 2001, and a further two in 2002. He absconded in all cases.

On 26 July 2009, three Leopard *Panthera pardus* (CITES I) skins were seized by the Uttarakhand Forest Department from a hotel at Birhi, near Chamoli. One person was arrested and three people absconded. The Leopards are believed to have been killed in the Nizmulah valley.

The previous day, the remains of an Asiatic Black Bear *Ursus thibetanus* (CITES I) were found in the Bhadrinath Forest Division; the animal's gall bladder and fat had been removed.

In the first six months of 2009, it is reported that at least 16 Leopard skins were seized in the State of Uttarakhand.

On 31 July 2009, a Nepali citizen was arrested by Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) paramilitary officials at Dandahead in Sonauli, along the border with Nepal, in possession of one Tiger *Panthera tigris* (CITES I) skin, five Tiger nails and some Tiger bones.

On 2 August 2009, SSB officials acting on information arrested a further two Nepali citizens in Sonauli in possession of Tiger meat and a Tiger nail. The pair was travelling on a Nepali tourist bus coming from Delhi. The case is under investigation.

On 3 September 2009, police in Bhavnagar, Gujarat, arrested a man in possession of 98 kg of ivory at Randhanpuri market (items included tusks weighing around three kilogrammes, ivory ornaments, bangles and 87 kg of raw ivory).



The suspect's forefathers were craftsmen who made ivory ornaments under licence from the government. They had a shop in the Randhanpuri market in the city. Following the ivory trade ban, their licences were cancelled, but the family had allegedly continued to make and sell ornaments illegally.

On 16 September 2009, Assam Rifles personnel seized 25 kg of horns of the Great Indian Rhinoceros *Rhinoceros unicornis* (CITES I), 5.5 kg of rhinoceros skins and bones; 10 gall bladders of the Asiatic Black Bear *Ursus thibetanus* (I) and 482 kg of pangolin *Manis* (II) scales from two persons at Tengnoupal near Manipur's Moreh town in Chandel district bordering Myanmar.

Poachers generally take away the horn and leave behind the carcass after killing a rhinoceros. But the present haul hints at a departure, said a wildlife crime expert. "If rhino bones and skin are being smuggled, then it gives a completely new dimension to the illegal wildlife trade in the north-eastern region," he added. Assam holds two-thirds of the world's Great Indian Rhinoceros population and the animals are frequently poached for their horns, which are smuggled mostly through the Myanmar border into China and South-east Asia for use in traditional Chinese medicine.

Both persons, along with the seized items, were handed over to the Manipur forest office at Pallel. Forensic tests would be carried out to confirm the source of the horns.

The porous India-Myanmar international border near Moreh is said to be one of the major conduits for smuggling wildlife parts.

On 16 September 2009, a crime branch squad arrested two people in Chhattisgarh's Kanker district while they were allegedly waiting to sell the 1.5 m skin of a Leopard *Panthera pardus* (CITES I) to a customer. The skin bore bullet marks. Police have been interrogating the men in a bid to unravel an interstate animal poachers' gang which they believe has been in operation for several years.

On 19 September 2009, a group of three poachers shot and killed a Great Indian Rhinoceros *Rhinoceros unicornis* (CITES I) in the Burapahar Range of Kaziranga National Park (KNP), Assam, and removed its horn. The poachers were arrested on 24 September by foresters and handed over to the police. The horn was misplaced by the poachers during an exchange of gunfire with forest guards, and a search was under way to retrieve it.

On 22 December 2009, it was reported that two Great Indian Rhinoceroses were killed in separate incidents by poachers at the park; the horns had been removed.

On 19 September, a Royal Bengal Tiger in the park also died of suspected poisoning, reportedly a new method adopted by poachers, and a male elephant migrating out of the park was shot by poachers on 17 September.

Forest rangers complain about poor infrastructure and obsolete weapons compared to the sophisticated assault rifles used by poachers.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) arrested two persons accused of being responsible for the majority of Tiger poaching

at Sariska Tiger Reserve, Rajasthan, and on whose trail the authorities have been for the past five years. They were apprehended in Bathinda, Punjab.

In early October 2009, the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) and State forest department officials seized wildlife items from various locations: on 10 October, an operation, jointly conducted by the WCCB and the Uttarakhand Special Task Force, led to the arrest of two people in Vikasnagar near Dehrudun. The skins of two Leopards *Panthera pardus* (CITES I) and the gall bladder of a Sloth Bear *Melursus ursinus* (I) were recovered. Three poachers were arrested in Panna Tiger Reserve, Madhya Pradesh, in possession of iron traps.

In Matheran, the WCCB seized 72 monitor lizard skins, four purses made of cobra skins and 29 wallets, suspected to be made of skins of protected reptiles, all being offered as tourist curios.

On 31 October 2009, forest guards in Orang National Park, Assam, killed two poachers who had killed a female Great Indian Rhinoceros *Rhinoceros unicornis* (CITES I) and removed its horn. Two others escaped. One of the deceased, identified as Hormuz Ali, had carried a price on his head. He had earlier been caught but released after serving three months in gaol.

The poachers, officials said, had struck during Diwali festivities hoping that the sound of gun shots would be masked by the din of crackers.

The rhinoceros horn was recovered, together with an axe and cartridges.

Two Tibetans arrested at a refugee camp at Manju Ka Tilla in Delhi are believed to have played a pivotal role in what has been identified as an international smuggling syndicate believed to be routing wildlife products through China to Tibet. Items uncovered during raids in Nagpur and Delhi included skins of two Tigers *Panthera tigris* (CITES I) and two Leopards *P. pardus* (I), more than 50 kg of bones, as well as Red Sandalwood *Pterocarpus santalinus* (II). A number of others have been taken into custody and more arrests are expected.

On 22 November 2009, troops of the 42 Assam Rifles apprehended three persons and confiscated 365 pangolin *Manis* (CITES II) scales, as well as banned drugs and arms and ammunition from the vehicle in which they were travelling in Lamkhang, Chandel district.

On 22/23 November 2009, police officers in the Leh district of eastern Ladakh seized 75 kg of *Cardyrops sinenses*, a fungus which parasitizes the larvae of a moth of the genus *Thitarodes*. Five persons were arrested as they tried to cross the Mahey bridge, 80 km from the Sino-Indian border. The items had been brought to Leh from Delhi by cargo courier, labelled as noodles and blankets. The kingpin of the operation is being sought.

The fungus is commonly known as "caterpillar mushroom" and is widely used in Chinese medicine for curing hypertension, cancer and impotency. It is considered a unique example of the symbiotic relationship between

flora and fauna: the fungus kills the insect and occupies the body's cavity. In spring, the fungus sends out a stalk from its dead host to release spores which go on to infect other caterpillars.

On 26 November 2009, at Bansbari, Assam, six poachers surrendered during a ceremony organized by TRAFFIC India.

The poachers turned themselves in to Bodo Territorial Council (BTC) with three deer antlers and two deer skins along with firearms, traps and nets in their possession. The poachers operated in and around Manas National Park and most were known to be active in the region. Between them they are said to have killed two Tigers *Panthera tigris* (CITES I), a Great Indian Rhinoceros *Rhinoceros unicornis* (I) and three Asian Elephants *Elephas maximus* (I) in recent years.

Their surrender is a boost to conservation efforts in the region, where poaching is commonplace. In October 2009, three poachers were arrested, based on information provided to the Forest Department through an intelligence network established by TRAFFIC India. Two poachers were shot dead in Orang the same month.

Earlier, the apprehended individuals had indicated that poachers active in Kaziranga, Orang, Pobitaro and Manas were interested in changing their ways and surrendering if support for an alternative source of livelihood could be provided. This led to co-operation between TRAFFIC India and BTC to identify the relevant individuals, resulting in the recent surrender.

Sh. Khampha Bargayari, Deputy Chief of BTC said at the surrender ceremony "In the coming year, BTC plans to budget a rehabilitation programme for the surrendered poachers where they will be provided with employment at dairy farms and co-operative stores set up by BTC."

Mr Samir Sinha, Head of TRAFFIC India said, "We are hopeful that the surrender of these poachers will set a positive example for all others operating in the area. This is surely a step ahead in our mission to curb illegal wildlife trade. TRAFFIC India and WWF-India have been working with the Assam Forest Department on various conservation issues in the past and we hope our association with the department will help make significant contributions towards conservation of species in the wild."

On 1 December 2009, police acting on information arrested four persons in Kochi for attempting to sell two pieces of ivory weighing nearly 25 kg. The suspects were approached by police officials acting as prospective buyers. A deal was struck before the accused were arrested. Another individual is being sought.

On 1 January 2010, three men were arrested by forestry personnel in Venamani, Kozhikode, in possession of a Tiger *Panthera tigris* (CITES I) skin bearing a bullet mark.

On 11 January 2010, a court in Delhi convicted a man accused of trading in shahtoosh shawls. Mohammed Ishaq Baig was found to be in possession of the shawls following a raid at his house in March 1999. Of the 159 items

recovered from his possession, 10 were confirmed to be made of shahtoosh, the wool of Tibetan Antelope *Pantholops hodgsonii* (CITES I). Baig was sentenced to one year's imprisonment and fined INR5000 (USD108).

On 12 January 2010, and based on specific information provided by TRAFFIC India, army personnel and forest guards sealed a 15 km stretch along the Rajiv Gandhi Orang National Park to apprehend a group of poachers who had shot dead a Great Indian Rhinoceros *Rhinoceros unicornis* (CITES I) near Amulya anti-poaching camp, and removed the horn. Four alleged poachers who were armed with weapons and ammunition, were apprehended. Sources said the group of poachers had entered the park from the Lahori or the Horujan *chapories* in the Brahmaputra.

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### Seizures in India including Red Sandalwood:

*Red Sandalwood Pterocarpus santalinus* is a CITES Appendix-II species, and in India is also protected under *Red Sanders and Sandalwood Transit Rules of the Andhra Pradesh Forest Act, 1967*. According to *The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species*, *Red Sandalwood* is *Endangered* and is restricted to the southern parts of the *Eastern Ghats* (IUCN, 2009).

On 22 June 2009, Assam Rifle troops seized 20 t of Red Sandalwood and a number of vehicles at Bonyang checkpost, as well as other

wildlife products including 580 pangolin *Manis* (CITES II) shells, from a vehicle travelling along the Imphal-Moreh road. All items were handed over to the Forest Department.

Investigating agencies in India have tracked a major international racket reportedly involved in the smuggling of Red Sandalwood from Andhra Pradesh to China through the Moreh border.

The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence near Aizawl intercepted a consignment of around 2000 logs in October 2009. At the same time, six Chinese nationals were apprehended from a retired police officer's residence in Aizawl, where the consignment had been hidden. Three of the individuals did not have a visa or papers; the others did not have a permit to enter Mizoram. They were, however, released without any action being taken.

Since August 2009, at least 100 t of Red Sandalwood has been seized in Manipur and Mizoram. Six hundred tonnes of wood were in transit in Dhubri and Burdawan, where it was seized by the forest department.

B.B. Dhar, Chief Conservator of Forests (Vigilance), Assam, states that the wood is smuggled out of India mainly through Manipur and Mizoram and that a smuggling racket is operating. It is reported that the wood has no known use in India but is used internationally in the making of Japanese musical instruments and Chinese medicine.

It is reportedly the first time that the Aizawl-Chemphai route has been used to smuggle Red Sandalwood, possibly owing to greater vigilance on the Moreh route.

On 10 November 2009, officials of the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) claimed to have detected a major smuggling racket in the city, following the seizure of 32 t of Red Sandalwood from the container terminal at Chennai port. Two licensed clearing agents, alleged to be behind the scheme, were arrested.

On 22 December 2009, Directorate of Revenue Officials reported what is probably north India's biggest seizure of Red Sandalwood. A total of over 36 t (10.72 t from Ludhiana and 25.8 t from Delhi), was seized, together with nearly five tonnes of Organ-pipe Corals *Tubipora musica* (CITES II) from import and export containers. Five men were arrested.

The export container held 10.72 t of Red Sandalwood that had been concealed in pebbles which had been declared on accompanying documentation. The import consignment was found to contain undeclared Organ-pipe Coral weighing circa 4.8 t, imported under the guise of declared "Cypraea annulus (sea shells)" [cowrie shells], a species free from trade restrictions. During the follow-up action, a further 25.8 t of Red Sandalwood, destined for export to Dubai, were recovered in Delhi. Investigations are in progress.

On 23 December 2009, it was reported that police in the State of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) had seized more than 50 t of Red Sandalwood from Shey village in Leh where it had been transported from Andhra Pradesh and was reportedly bound for China. One man was arrested.

On 13 February 2010, regional unit officials of the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) in Sanathnagar, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh, seized 10 570 kg of Red Sandalwood logs at an inland container depot. The shipment was allegedly being smuggled to Dubai. Two people were arrested.

[www.e-pao.net/GP.asp?src=12.240609,jun09](http://www.e-pao.net/GP.asp?src=12.240609,jun09); [www.ndtv.com/news/india/rare\\_indian\\_wood\\_smuggled\\_into\\_china.php](http://www.ndtv.com/news/india/rare_indian_wood_smuggled_into_china.php); *TRAFFIC India*; *IUCN 2009. IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Version 2009.2.* [www.iucnredlist.org](http://www.iucnredlist.org). Downloaded on 21 January 2010; <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/DRI-seizes-Rs-26-crore-worth-red-sanders/articleshow/5217283.cms>, 11 November 2009; <http://news.webindia123.com/news/articles/India/20091222/1410845.html>, 22 December 2009; *TRAFFIC India*; [www.indianexpress.com/news/50-tonnes-of-rare-andhra-wood-headed-for-china-seized-in-leh/557920/](http://www.indianexpress.com/news/50-tonnes-of-rare-andhra-wood-headed-for-china-seized-in-leh/557920/), 23 December 2009; [www.ptinews.com/news/523137\\_Red-sanders-logs-being-smuggled-to-Dubai-seized-DRI](http://www.ptinews.com/news/523137_Red-sanders-logs-being-smuggled-to-Dubai-seized-DRI), 17 February 2010.

### SOUTH-EAST ASIA INDONESIA

On 16 July 2009, a raid in Sumatra recovered 33 Tiger *Panthera tigris* (CITES I) skin pieces, ranging in size from a few centimetres to larger pieces; one person was arrested.

On 7 August 2009, authorities in Jakarta carried out a second raid that resulted in the arrests of four suspects for attempting to sell two complete Sumatran Tiger skins, in addition to specimens of other protected wildlife species.

Both raids were conducted by the police, the Indonesian Department of Forestry, Directorate-General for Forest Protection and Nature Conservation (PHKA), working in conjunction with the Wildlife Conservation Society's Wildlife Crime Unit and local partners.

These raids, part of recent stepped-up efforts by Indonesian authorities to control the illegal wildlife trade, bring to 20 the number of arrests made over the previous 18 months for the trade in Tiger parts. Seven of these cases have already resulted in prison sentences and fines, and the rest await trial.

[www.wcs.org/press/press-releases/tiger-skins.aspx](http://www.wcs.org/press/press-releases/tiger-skins.aspx), 13 August 2009

### MALAYSIA

On 16 August 2009, police arrested a Thai poacher from Chiang Rai, Thailand, and recovered scales of a pangolin *Manis* (CITES II) and six sacks of Agarwood *Aquilaria* (II). The arrest was made in a forested area just off the Gerik-Jeli Highway in the Belum-Temengor Forest Complex in the northern State of Perak, which shares a border with Thailand. Police were acting on information provided by WWF's Wildlife Protection Unit (WPU), which regularly patrols the area with other enforcement agencies.

The poacher was among a party of five poachers ambushed by police. Four others escaped, leaving behind a camp stocked with 30 kg of rice and other essentials, indicating they were planning long-term operations. The suspect now faces charges under Section 6 of the *Immigration Act*, for illegally entering the country as well as charges under Section 64 (2) (a) of the *Protection of Wildlife Act* for possession of the pangolin scales and Section 15 of the *Forestry Act*, for collecting Agarwood without a licence.



On 26 August 2009, staff of the Wildlife Crime Unit of the Wildlife and National Parks Department confiscated 98 live animals from a house in Alor Setar in the northern State of Kedah, following three weeks of surveillance and investigations. The animals were hidden in a store room. A man was arrested and released on bail. He faces five separate charges under the *Protection of Wildlife Act 1972* including a charge of cruelty to wildlife.

The seizure included 58 adult male pangolins, 38 adult females, two juveniles and 3.2 kg of pangolin scales. The pangolins were later released into a protected area. They are believed to have been destined for export.

On 7 September 2009, 93 live pangolins *Manis*, each weighing 12 kg, were seized by staff of the State Wildlife Department in Kampung Cherang, Bachok. The animals, which had been destined for sale to restaurants, were packed in individual plastic boxes and were being loaded into a car; a man evaded capture.

The specimens were to be released in a national park.

On 13 September 2009, Malaysian marine police officials caught two Malaysian nationals loading wildlife into a boat in eastern Terengganu State and seized 264 dead owls, 33 Sun Bear *Helarctos malayanus* (I) parts and 4800 live monitor lizards; the men were arrested on suspicion of trying to smuggle them abroad. The lizards were to be released into the wild.

On 27 September 2009, police from the sixth General Operation Force (GOF) battalion in Bakri seized about 40 live pangolins following a car chase along Sungai Sarang Buaya. One man was arrested.

The unit spent four days staking out the river estuary before spotting two boats approaching the coast. One vessel returned to sea after the other landed near the estuary. Two men then began loading sacks of live pangolins into a car before realising they were being watched and sped away. One man was captured and the animals were handed over to the State's Wildlife and National Parks Department.

On 8 October 2008, marine police seized 27 plastic crates filled with some 4000 live frogs from a boat arriving from Indonesia, off Tanjung Harapan. The amphibians were believed to have been destined for local restaurants. The skipper was detained but 14 crew members were released after questioning.

On 5 November 2009, the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency seized 55 live pangolins *Manis* (CITES II) from a boat coasting near the mangrove forest. The animals, which had been destined to be used as food, were handed over to the Department of Wildlife and National Parks.

On 15 December 2009, marine police in Muar seized 62 pangolins *Manis* (CITES II): 31 live specimens were found inside cars and a house in Taman Tasik Ria in Tangkak, while another 31 frozen pangolins were found in a freezer. The seizures follow surveillance by the police over two weeks of the activities of a group of people who evaded capture during the incident. All the pangolins were taken to the Muar marine police jetty before being surrendered to the Wildlife Department.

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## THAILAND

In June 2009, one of the country's most prolific wildlife traffickers was sentenced to two years' imprisonment. He was found guilty of attempting to smuggle 245 live Malayan

Pangolins *Manis javanica* (CITES II) and 63 Black Marsh Turtles *Siebenrockiella crassicollis* (II), into Bangkok via Don Mueang Airport in June 2006. The animals, contained in wooden boxes and accompanied by false papers, had arrived from Kuala Lumpur International Airport and had been destined for China. The police investigation into the role of other gang members involved in this case is under way.

"The success of this legal procedure against wildlife traffickers shows that South-east Asian authorities recognize the value of law enforcement as the major tool in combating wildlife trafficking," said Chumphon Sukkaseam, senior officer of the ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network (ASEAN-WEN) in Bangkok.

On 21 August 2009, according to information provided by the Thailand CITES Management Authority, Customs officials at Suvarnabhumi Airport, Bangkok, seized 316 pieces of raw ivory weighing 812.5 kg. The ivory originated from Uganda and Kenya and was illegally imported into Thailand from Qatar. One tonne of ivory was impounded by Customs officials in Bangkok, Thailand, and traced back to Uganda's Entebbe International Airport early this year.

On 27 October 2009, 46 rare Malagasy turtles were seized, following a request to Thailand by the Japanese Government to follow up and arrest a gang of smugglers. Among the turtles seized were Ploughshare Tortoises *Astrochelys yniphora* (CITES I), a species which only occurs in Madagascar and is classified by IUCN as Critically Endangered.

On 20 January 2010, following a 17-month investigation involving the first collaboration between US and Thai law enforcement authorities, a Thai national was charged with trafficking ivory. Earlier in the week, Thailand's nature crime police also raided ivory shops, seized tusks and arrested two other dealers.

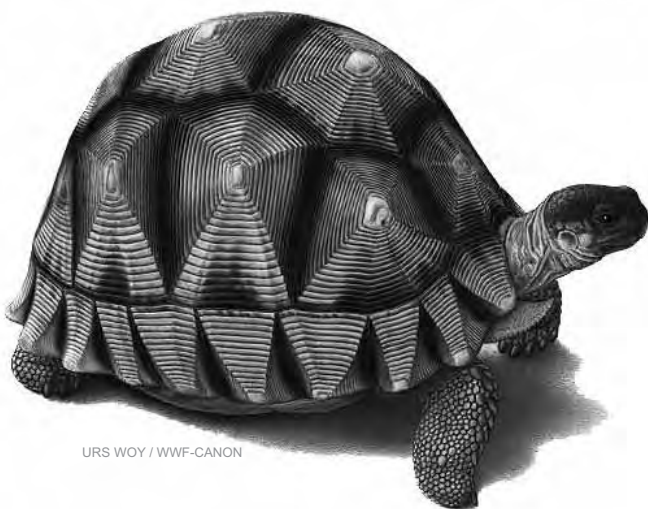
Undercover Customs investigators tracked the suspects by following the source of ivory products sold in the USA back to Asia with support from regional and independent conservation groups.

The individual was arrested in November 2009 in Bangkok. He could now be prosecuted in both Thailand and the USA. The two other dealers who were arrested had been caught with six tusks (weighing a total of 32 kg). Sources close to the operation said this was likely to be a fraction of the overall trade and the kingpins were still to be found.

The first fruits of collaboration were hailed as an important step forward in international efforts to co-ordinate a crackdown on the trade. The next step was to target the leaders of the smuggling chain.

On 24 February 2010, Customs officials at Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi Airport, acting on information, seized 239 African Elephant *Loxodonta africana* (CITES I) tusks hidden in two pallets labelled as mobile phone parts. It is the country's largest ivory seizure to date.

The consignment is reported to have originated in Kenya, on a flight routed via Dubai, and was declared as destined for Lao PDR.



URS WOY / WWF-CANON

## PLOUGHSHARE TORTOISE

Ploughshare Tortoises *Astrochelys yniphora* (CITES I) have been seized recently in Taiwan and Thailand. The species has a very small distribution in Madagascar and the population has declined sharply in recent years as a result of poaching for the illegal pet trade. The current population estimate is somewhere near 200 mature animals (IUCN, 2009, [www.iucnredlist.org](http://www.iucnredlist.org)).

A Thai national attempted to pick up the cargo and was detained.

Asia-Pacific News, 30 June, 2009: [www.phnompenhpost.com/index.php/2009063026799/National-news/Animal-traffic-hurt-in-alleged-revenge-hit-after-pangolin-escape.html](http://www.phnompenhpost.com/index.php/2009063026799/National-news/Animal-traffic-hurt-in-alleged-revenge-hit-after-pangolin-escape.html); [www.asean-wen.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=100:major-wildlife-traffic-sentenced-to-thai-prison&catid=45:press-releases&Itemid=89](http://www.asean-wen.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=100:major-wildlife-traffic-sentenced-to-thai-prison&catid=45:press-releases&Itemid=89); CITES Management Authority, Thailand; *The New Vision*, 29 June 2009: [www.newvision.co.uk/D/8/1/3/686334](http://www.newvision.co.uk/D/8/1/3/686334); [www.asiantribune.com/news/2009/10/28/malagasy-turtles-seized](http://www.asiantribune.com/news/2009/10/28/malagasy-turtles-seized), 28 October 2009; IUCN, 2009. IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Version 2009.1. [www.iucnredlist.org](http://www.iucnredlist.org). Viewed on 30 October 2009; [www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2010/jan/20/ivory-smuggling-ring-thailand](http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2010/jan/20/ivory-smuggling-ring-thailand); [www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/02/12/AR2010022500297\\_pf.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/02/12/AR2010022500297_pf.html); TRAFFIC International

## VIET NAM

In January 2009, two men were apprehended after killing two Black-shanked Douc Langurs *Pygathrix nigripes* (CITES I) in Khanh Hoa Province's Hon Heo peninsula.

On 10 March 2009, police detained three men who had allegedly killed five Black-shanked Douc Langurs in Cam Lam district. A patrol unit from the Hon Ba Natural Reserve spotted the three men with the dead animals, and two guns.

On 11 May 2009, forest wardens in Khanh Hoa Province, Ninh Hoa district, found five disembowelled animals inside a bag, each weighing between six and 10.5 kg, after they gave chase to a person on a motorbike on the National Highway 1A. The person fled leaving the bike and bag behind. The dead animals were identified by the Institute of Tropical Biology under the Vietnam Academy of Science and Technology as Black-shanked Douc Langurs. The Khanh Hoa provincial police said they would launch criminal proceedings to track down the suspect.

All the detained men are facing charges of violating regulations on protecting endangered species.

On 16 July 2009, Ha Noi's Environmental Police at Hoang Cau Stadium in Dong Da District seized a frozen Tiger and more than 11 kg of Tiger bones that had been transported from Thanh Hoa Province to Ha Noi via taxi. Three individuals were in the taxi, including the man who claimed ownership of the Tiger.

The bones were identified by the Institute of Ecology and Biological Resources (IEBR), Viet Nam's CITES Scientific Authority, which speculated that the animal, which weighed 57 kg, was probably a young individual that had been recently killed and that the bones had come from at least two adult Tigers.

The Environmental Police believe the Tiger was transported from Central Viet Nam, but it is unknown whether the animal originated in Viet Nam or whether it was a wild or captive-bred specimen.

"To complete the police investigation, we call upon the authorities to carry out DNA testing to help determine where these Tigers came from," said Nguyen Dao Ngoc Van, of TRAFFIC's Ha Noi-based office. "While the continuing trade in Tigers and Tiger parts is of great concern, the work of the Environmental Police towards stopping the trade is encourag-

ing and impressive," added Van. "Although only recently formed, the Environmental Police are quickly improving Viet Nam's capacity to enforce its existing wildlife trade legislation," she said.

On 24 August 2009, Customs officers in the northern port city of Hai Phong seized a consignment from Indonesia of around four kilogrammes of pangolin *Manis* (CITES II) scales concealed in bags of dried seaweed, and 51 sacks containing two tonnes of tortoise shells. The items were found in a container whose waybill declared the contents as dried tuna stomach. The goods were destined for the same company in Ha Noi as an ivory shipment seized in the port on 21 August (see below). The case is being investigated.

In October 2009, the Thanh Hoa Provincial People's Committee fined a man almost VND300 million (USD16 200) for illegally transporting 226.6 kg of pangolins *Manis* (CITES II) through the province.

On 2 October 2009, Viet Nam's Environmental Police and the local Ha Long Police caught employees of the Dai Yen farm extracting and selling bear bile to Korean tourists. The police had staked out the bear farm for days before raiding the facility, located on the outskirts of the town. Police seized more than 200 bottles of gall bile as well as equipment used to tap the bears' gall bladders. The farm owners could not produce valid documentation for 24 of the 81 Asiatic Black Bears *Ursus thibetanus* (CITES I) found in captivity there. Five workers and two South Koreans, who had been visiting the farm on an organized tour, were temporarily taken into custody for questioning.

Bear farming for bile is illegal in Viet Nam, but farmers are allowed to keep bears to display to tourists. In an attempt to protect the few bears remaining in the wild, the authorities microchipped the 4000 bears on farms. The 24 bears involved in this raid had no microchips, which means they were likely illegally caught in the wild.

On 4 November 2009, the People's Committee in Bo Trach district of Quang Binh Province sentenced seven subjects to a total imprisonment of 43 months. The subjects had mobilized hundreds of local people in helping them to blockade local forest rangers in order to snatch timber that had been seized in an illegal logging case.

On 7 December 2009, police in Ha Tinh Province recovered 54 pangolins *Manis* (CITES II) (300 kg) from a car during a patrol conducted by the province's Environment Police, in cooperation with Huong Son District's forest rangers on National Highway 8A. The driver escaped. The specimens, which were being transported from the border with Lao PDR, were handed over to the forest rangers for release into the wild. The case is under investigation.

<http://thanhniennews.com/features/?catid=10>, 25 May 2009; <http://thanhniennews.com/features/?catid=10&newsid=49125> & [newsid=49125](http://thanhniennews.com/features/?catid=10&newsid=49125), 24 May 2009; [www.traffic.org/home/2009/7/17/ha-nois-environmental-police-seize-frozen-tiger-and-tiger-bo.html](http://www.traffic.org/home/2009/7/17/ha-nois-environmental-police-seize-frozen-tiger-and-tiger-bo.html), 17 July 2009; Thanh Nien News, 25 August 2009: [www.thanhniennews.com/society/?catid=3&newsid=52052](http://www.thanhniennews.com/society/?catid=3&newsid=52052); [http://envietnam.org/E\\_News/E\\_339/Buon\\_lau\\_te\\_te\\_bi\\_phat\\_gan\\_300\\_trieu\\_dong.html](http://envietnam.org/E_News/E_339/Buon_lau_te_te_bi_phat_gan_300_trieu_dong.html); [www.lookatvietnam.com/2009/11/freedom-sought-for-bile-farm-bears.html](http://www.lookatvietnam.com/2009/11/freedom-sought-for-bile-farm-bears.html), 18 November 2009; [http://envietnam.org/E\\_News/E\\_339/Doi\\_tuong\\_bao\\_vay\\_kiem\\_lam\\_lanh\\_an\\_tu.html](http://envietnam.org/E_News/E_339/Doi_tuong_bao_vay_kiem_lam_lanh_an_tu.html); Thanh Nien News, [www.thanhniennews.com/society/?catid=3&newsid=54125](http://www.thanhniennews.com/society/?catid=3&newsid=54125), 11 December 2009

[www.thanhniennews.com/society/?catid=3&newsid=52052](http://www.thanhniennews.com/society/?catid=3&newsid=52052); [http://envietnam.org/E\\_News/E\\_339/Buon\\_lau\\_te\\_te\\_bi\\_phat\\_gan\\_300\\_trieu\\_dong.html](http://envietnam.org/E_News/E_339/Buon_lau_te_te_bi_phat_gan_300_trieu_dong.html); [www.lookatvietnam.com/2009/11/freedom-sought-for-bile-farm-bears.html](http://www.lookatvietnam.com/2009/11/freedom-sought-for-bile-farm-bears.html), 18 November 2009; [http://envietnam.org/E\\_News/E\\_339/Doi\\_tuong\\_bao\\_vay\\_kiem\\_lam\\_lanh\\_an\\_tu.html](http://envietnam.org/E_News/E_339/Doi_tuong_bao_vay_kiem_lam_lanh_an_tu.html); Thanh Nien News, [www.thanhniennews.com/society/?catid=3&newsid=54125](http://www.thanhniennews.com/society/?catid=3&newsid=54125), 11 December 2009

## Ivory seizures in Viet Nam:

It was reported on 29 July 2009 that Customs officials had uncovered 200 kg of elephant ivory tusks illegally imported from Kenya. The items were found hidden in timber inside a container at Hai Phong port. The authorities are seeking the owner of the container, who did not turn up to receive the goods when they arrived in April.

The week prior, in Tanzania, six businessmen were charged with smuggling 11 t of elephant ivory to the Philippines and Viet Nam over the previous six months (see Tanzania).

On 20 August 2009, police officers in Thanh Hoa Province seized 16 elephant tusks (94 kg) concealed in a car headed for Ha Noi after it was stopped for driving in the wrong lane. Police arrested the driver on suspicion of smuggling and seized the car and the tusks as evidence; they were reportedly bound for Ha Noi to be sold.

On 21 August 2009, Customs officers in the northern port city of Hai Phong found more than two tonnes (326 pieces) of elephant tusks in a container from Tanzania claimed to be carrying snail shells. The consignment was destined for a company in Ha Noi. The case is being investigated.

[www.straitstimes.com/Breaking+News/SE+Asia/Story/ST/Story\\_409631.html](http://www.straitstimes.com/Breaking+News/SE+Asia/Story/ST/Story_409631.html), 29 July 2009; [www.topnews.in/vietnam-police-seize-elephant-tusks-2204473](http://www.topnews.in/vietnam-police-seize-elephant-tusks-2204473), 21 August 2009; Thanh Nien News, 25 August 2009: [www.thanhniennews.com/society/?catid=3&newsid=52052](http://www.thanhniennews.com/society/?catid=3&newsid=52052)

## OCEANIA

### AUSTRALIA

On 6 September 2009, at Perth International Airport, Customs and Border Protection officers arrested an Australian national on arrival from Bali after 39 parrot eggs were found concealed in a specially made vest he was wearing under clothing. He was charged with attempting to smuggle wildlife into Australia.

The eggs were secured by the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service and have been sterilized owing to the high biosecurity risk.

Australian Customs Service Media release, 9 September 2009: [www.customs.gov.au](http://www.customs.gov.au)



## NEW ZEALAND

The director of a company selling medicinal herbs has pleaded guilty to the illegal trade of products derived from CITES-listed animal and plant species. Her company also pleaded guilty.

The case began in August 2007 after an import entry form accompanying a shipment, and lodged with the New Zealand Customs Service (NZCS) on behalf of the company, was found not to include a large number of additional items that were subsequently discovered in the shipment. These included: Ginseng *Panax ginseng* (CITES II), deer horn glue, shaved animal horn, curcuma (turmeric) and plant material believed to be *Dendrobium* Orchidaceae (I/II). All the undeclared items were concealed inside cartons containing other goods which were found to be derived from Siberian Musk Deer *Moschus moschiferus* (I), Saiga Antelope *Saiga tatarica* (II) and *Dendrobium*. No appropriate permit accompanied the shipment.

On 17 October 2007, search warrants were executed at the company's premises where items found included products derived from Hawksbill Turtle *Eretmochelys imbricata* (CITES I), Saiga Antelope, *Bletillae* (*Bletilla* spp. (I) [Orchidaceae]); *Rhizoma cibotii* *Cibotium barometz*; *Aucklandia lappa* [= *Costus Saussurea costus* (I)]; and Agarwood *Aquilaria*. A further inspection in December uncovered products relating to: pangolin *Manis*, Saiga Antelope, Indian Roofed Turtle *Kachuga tecta* (I), *Ephemerantha fimbriata* [= *Flickingeria* Orchidaceae (II)], and Hawksbill Turtle.

The defendants have subsequently pleaded guilty to the illegal trade of herbal products and sentencing was set for 4 March 2010.

On 7 December 2009, at Christchurch District Court, Hans Kurt Kubus, a German national, pleaded guilty to seven charges pursuant to both the *Wildlife Act* (x2) and CITES (x5). He was convicted on all charges and, on 25 January 2010, was sentenced to NZD5000 (USD3500) (NZD1000 per CITES violation) and a total of 14 weeks' imprisonment for the two *Wildlife Act* violations.

Kubus had been apprehended as he was about to depart Christchurch Airport for Frankfurt, in possession of 24 Sticky-toed geckos *Hoplodactylus* sp. and 20 skinks *Oligosoma* sp. that he had illegally collected from the wild. One

gecko was found during a baggage search; the other 43 reptiles were found in a purpose-built body pack concealed in Kubus's underwear.

All endemic New Zealand geckos and skinks are absolutely protected pursuant to the *Wildlife Act* and all endemic geckos are listed in CITES Appendix III.

New Zealand Wildlife Enforcement Group (WEG),  
Department of Conservation

## AMERICAS

## CANADA

The Conservation and Protection Intelligence and Investigation Services Unit from Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) successfully concluded a three-year multi-country, multi-agency operation involving the illegal sale and possession of Northern Abalone *Haliotis kamtschatkana*, listed as a threatened species under the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) and as Endangered by IUCN.

The investigation was triggered in 2007 and a team of DFO fishery officers spent months unravelling a complex trail of illegally harvested and traded abalone. In August 2008, a woman was fined CAD25 000 (USD23 500) in Richmond Provincial Court, British Columbia, for the illegal possession of Northern Abalone and, in a connected case, on 2 June 2009, a representative of Momoji Seafood Packaging and Exporting Ltd appeared in Richmond Provincial Court after being found in possession of approximately 54 kg of Northern Abalones. A guilty plea was accepted and a fine of CAD35 500 imposed. CAD34 500 of that amount was to be directed to DFO to promote conservation and protection of Northern Abalone through scientific research. The company was also prohibited from possessing any species of abalone for the next two years.

In addition to the above prosecutions and abalone seizures, the investigation led to the discovery of around 340 kg of Northern Abalones in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia, which were subsequently forfeited under court order. Molecular Genetics Research Scientists from DFO's Pacific Biological Station in Nanaimo provided conclusive forensic DNA evidence for the Court that aided in successful prosecutions or guilty pleas. Members of DFO's Conservation and Protection Intelligence and Investigation Services Unit travelled to the USA and Mexico as part of the investigation, which also uncovered a related abalone smuggling operation at the US-Mexico border near Tijuana (see USA).

The Northern Abalone fisheries have been closed since 1990 to halt the decline of the existing wild population and reduce the risk of this species becoming extinct in British Columbia. In 2009, the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC), an independent scientific group, recommended a change in SARA status of Northern Abalone to "endangered". Illegal harvesting of the mollusc is considered the

biggest factor affecting recovery of the species, and poaching and trafficking abalone is a serious offence under the *Fisheries Act*.

[www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/media/npres-communique/2009/pr23-eng.htm](http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/media/npres-communique/2009/pr23-eng.htm), 30 October 2009; [www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/media/back-fiche/2009/pr14-eng.htm](http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/media/back-fiche/2009/pr14-eng.htm); IUCN 2009. IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Version 2009.2. [www.iucnredlist.org](http://www.iucnredlist.org). Viewed on 5 January 2010

## USA

On 18 July 2009, at Atlanta Hartsfield International Airport, Charlotte, Customs inspectors found two Asian Bonytongues *Sclerophages formosus* (CITES I) packed inside a cooler bag containing plastic bottles of fish sauce belonging to a Charlotte woman arriving from Viet Nam. US Fish and Wildlife Service Inspectors found two black plastic bags inside the bottles, inside each of which was a live fish.

The defendant was charged with violating the *Endangered Species Act* by attempting to import two Asian Bonytongue fish without a permit. She told an inspector that her mother-in-law had given her the boxes of food as a surprise gift at the airport in Viet Nam and that she did not know the live fish were inside her luggage.

The suspect was released on a USD25 000 bond and ordered to appear in court in Atlanta where the charges are pending.

In September 2009, Henry Chan and the company Zenith Trading pleaded guilty to misdemeanor counts under the *Lacey Act* for the illegal possession of White Abalone *Haliotis sorenseni* under the US *Endangered Species Act*. Chan was fined USD50 000, USD10 000 of which is earmarked for abalone research and education in the USA.

The prosecution follows a three-year investigation into the illegal possession and sale of Northern Abalone *Haliotis kamtschatkana* undertaken by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in San Diego, with the assistance of The Conservation and Protection Intelligence and Investigation Services Unit from Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) Intelligence and Investigation unit (see Canada).

On 28 January 2010, at the US District Court, Boston, a Nantucket scrimshaw artist was convicted of one count of conspiracy to smuggle wildlife, six counts of smuggling wildlife and two counts of lying to investigators. The suspect was charged with smuggling teeth of Sperm Whale *Physeter catodon* (CITES I) and elephant ivory (I) into the country in violation of CITES and federal endangered species protection laws. He etched pictures onto ivory and whale teeth for sale and had conspired with a Ukrainian man to import the pieces. Sentencing was set for 6 May 2010.

[www.charlotteobserver.com/local/v-print/story/965412.html](http://www.charlotteobserver.com/local/v-print/story/965412.html), 23 September 2009; Fisheries and Oceans Canada press release, 30 October 2009; IUCN 2009. IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Version 2009.2. [www.iucnredlist.org](http://www.iucnredlist.org). Downloaded on 3 November 2009. [www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/media/npres-communique/2009/pr23-eng.htm](http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/media/npres-communique/2009/pr23-eng.htm); [www.bostonherald.com/news/regional/view.bg?articleid=1229132](http://www.bostonherald.com/news/regional/view.bg?articleid=1229132), 29 January 2010



SAIGA ANTELOPE PRODUCTS AMONG ITEMS CONCEALED IN A CONSIGNMENT SEIZED IN NEW ZEALAND.

NEW ZEALAND WILDLIFE ENFORCEMENT GROUP

# The Status of the Retail Ivory Trade in Addis Ababa in 2009

E. Martin and L. Vigne

Addis Ababa, capital of Ethiopia, has been identified by TRAFFIC and other wildlife conservation organizations as having one of the largest illegal ivory markets in Africa in recent years (Martin and Stiles, 2000; Milliken et al., 2004; Milledge and Abdi, 2005). Following a major government raid on shops, the number of ivory items seen for sale declined significantly in 2005 compared with previous surveys, but a recent study in July 2009 showed that, while some smaller shops have stopped selling ivory, numerous ivory objects were again being offered for sale. Furthermore, some new outlets selling recently carved ivory have been established since the last survey was carried out in 2008. At that time, some 2000 ivory pieces were recorded on display in souvenir shops. During the recent TRAFFIC survey, the findings of which are presented below, some 1340 ivory products were documented. The vendors indicate that the tusks originated from elephants in Ethiopia, Kenya and Sudan. While the number of ivory items for sale in Addis Ababa has declined over the past decade, European visitors and a growing number of Chinese workers in the country continue to buy ivory items that are openly displayed, stimulating the market for ivory.

## INTRODUCTION

Data collected since 2002 by MIKE<sup>1</sup> (Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants) on elephant poaching in Africa show that poaching mortality declined slightly until 2006 and then started to increase sharply (Anon., 2009). A main reason for this increase is the availability of illegal ivory items on sale in retail outlets in much of Africa, making it easy for customers to purchase and, in doing so, to fuel the continuing demand for ivory. Since 2002, the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) analyses have consistently demonstrated that unregulated domestic ivory markets in Africa and Asia are key drivers of illegal trade in ivory (Milliken et al., 2009). TRAFFIC has been trying to help governments, including Ethiopia, implement CITES *Resolution Conf. 10.10 (Rev. CoP 14)*, which urges governments to “prohibit the unregulated domestic sale of ivory (raw, semi-worked or worked)”.

In January 2005, 262 Ethiopian Government officers, including enforcement guards, policemen, security personnel and wildlife inspectors, carried out a synchronized raid on 66 retail outlets selling ivory illegally in Addis Ababa. A total of 1374 ivory items and

three raw tusks (weighing a total of about 500 kg) and other wildlife products were seized. Indeed, a market survey undertaken two months later recorded the presence of only 78 ivory items (Milledge and Abdi, 2005). Wildlife conservationists believed that this raid would greatly reduce the trade, which it certainly did for a while. No further law enforcement actions took place, however, so ivory items started to reappear on the local market once again. This report presents the results from a follow-up survey carried out in July 2009.

## METHODS

Ivory is typically displayed in souvenir shops as foreigners are the prime buyers, and is usually not available in other types of outlets. A detailed survey of ivory items in Addis Ababa's souvenir shops was undertaken between 21 and 26 July 2009. Data were collected on the number and types of objects, their size, age, and price. Photographs of items were taken wherever possible to supplement documentation. Information was also collected from shopkeepers regarding prices and origin of tusks, ivory craftsmen, nationalities of customers, and vendors' views on the present and future trade. Daniel Pawlos, in charge of monitoring wildlife products for the newly-established Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA), was interviewed regarding ivory seizures and the work of that Authority.

Data collected in this survey were compared with earlier surveys to show indicative trends. “Old” items consist of antiques or objects carved before the CITES ban on international trade in elephant ivory came into effect in 1990. “Recent” items refer to pieces that were made after 1990, and include brand new items. Ivory items observed on display, as well as additional stock the authors found that had been put aside in bags, were counted and recorded by product type.

The official exchange rate was Ethiopian birr ETB12.40 to USD1.00 and was very close to the black market rate. There has been a significant devaluation of the birr since January 2008 when it was officially valued at ETB9.08 to USD1.00.

## DISTRIBUTION AND STATUS

According to estimates made by T. Allen-Rowlandson, there were 1750 elephants in Ethiopia in 1990, excluding Mago and Omo national parks, where R. Lamprey later counted 657 elephants in 1994 (Said et al., 1995). Thus, there may have been over 2000 elephants in Ethiopia in 1990. By 2006, there were 634 “definitely known” elephants in the country, with possibly another 920 (Blanc et al., 2007). Unfortunately, elephants are still being illegally killed in Ethiopia. For example, one elephant was poached in July 2009 in the Babille Elephant Sanctuary (D. Pawlos pers. comm., July 2009). Poachers are also killing elephants in Sudan and Kenya and, according to ivory sellers in Addis Ababa, some of the tusks are supplied to craftsmen in Ethiopia.

<sup>1</sup>MIKE: The overall goal of MIKE is to provide information needed for elephant range States to make appropriate management and enforcement decisions, and to build institutional capacity within the range States for the long-term management of their elephant populations.



## LEGISLATION

Ethiopian legislation on trade in wildlife and their products is well described by Milledge and Abdi (2005). It is sufficient to note that a proclamation in 2005 stated that it is illegal to own, sell, transfer, export or import any wildlife product without obtaining a permit from the Ministry of Agricultural and Rural Development or from a "regional organ". In 2007, a new proclamation, number 541/2007, which came into effect on 21 August of that year, also stated that "the following are prohibited unless a permit is obtained from the Ministry or the concerned regional organs as appropriate: any activities of trade in wildlife and their products" (Anon., 2007). These proclamations include all ivory, old as well as new. Nobody has a permit today to sell ivory and the government does not plan to issue any (D. Pawlos, pers. comm., July 2009). Penalties for breaking the law include fines of ETB5000–30 000 (USD403–2419) and/or between one and five years in gaol.

## RESULTS

### Origins and prices of elephant tusks

Most new tusks used by Ethiopian craftsmen came from Ethiopia, Sudan and Kenya, according to two important ivory vendors in Addis Ababa. Recent elephant poaching incidents in Ethiopia have occurred in Mago National Park (Milledge, 2008), Gambella National Park (Blanc *et al.*, 2007) and Babelle Elephant Sanctuary (D. Pawlos, pers. comm., July 2009). In Kenya, in 2007 and 2008, at least 146 elephants were poached, and another 150 were lost in the first eight months of 2009, with some tusks going to Ethiopia (Elephant Programme, Kenya Wildlife Service, pers. comm., October 2009). In early 2007, traders from Isiolo in northern Kenya bought tusks from Samburu poachers for USD22/kg. By October 2008 this price had risen to USD33, according to informers in northern Kenya in March 2009. Traders took some of the tusks by lorry to Mandera and Moyale on the Ethiopian border, from where they were taken north to the capital (Vigne and Martin, 2008a, 2008b).

In Addis Ababa, tusk prices have been increasing (in both US dollar and Ethiopian birr terms) at least since 1993. Ivory workshops in that year were able to obtain a two-to-five kilogrammes tusk for ETB250 per kg (USD50 at the official exchange rate and USD30 at the unofficial rate) (Vigne and Martin, 1993). By January 2008, the price for a tusk weighing two kilogrammes had risen sharply to ETB1000 (USD110) per kg (Vigne and Martin 2008a). In July 2009, the price for tusks weighing up to two kilogrammes was ETB1000 per kg but, due to devaluation, the equivalent US dollar price was USD81.

### Ivory craftsmen in and around Addis Ababa

The number of craftsmen working ivory in and around Addis Ababa has declined in recent years. In 1993, one large workshop on the outskirts of the city had 20 ivory carvers (Vigne and Martin, 1993). By 2009 the two main ivory retail sellers in the city said they had up to six and three ivory craftsmen, respectively, in their workshops in Addis Ababa, often working on a part-time basis. The first vendor said his craftsmen earned about ETB2000 (USD161) a month, while the second explained that his craftsmen carved both ivory and wood depending on the raw material available and were paid according to what they made. It is possible there are a few more craftsmen, probably working on a part-time basis, in particular making ivory jewellery as such pieces were the most frequently seen ivory items in the shops (17 outlets had necklaces and 11 had bangles and rings that had been



#### PHOTOS, FROM TOP:

A. FIGURINES, BUSTS, COMBS, PIPES AND RINGS ARE COMMON IVORY ITEMS ON DISPLAY IN ADDIS ABABA'S SOUVENIR SHOPS.

B. NEW NECKLACES AND BANGLES ARE THE MOST FREQUENTLY SEEN IVORY ITEMS IN ADDIS ABABA'S SOUVENIR SHOPS, ESPECIALLY IN THE NEW OUTLETS.

C. MOST SOUVENIR OUTLETS IN CENTRAL ADDIS ABABA ARE SMALL SHOPS SUCH AS THESE, SOME OF WHICH STILL SELL IVORY.

	Old, displayed	Old, kept in bags	New, displayed	New, kept in bags	Total
<b>JEWELLERY</b>					
Ring	147		155	50	352
Bangle	154	42	39	13	248
Necklace	11		52	25	88
Earrings (pair)	3		38		41
Pendant	2		107		109
<b>FIGURES</b>					
Animal	7		62	1	70
Human	29		96	2	127
Bust	1		14	36	51
<b>TUSKS</b>					
Polished				2	2
Bridge				2	2
Carved long	1			1	2
Carved tip			2		2
<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>					
Chopsticks (pair)			24	9	33
Cigarette holder			16	18	34
Comb			18		18
Hand cross	1		3		4
Mask			5		5
Name seal			8	53	61
Paper knife			3		3
Pipe	3		8	1	12
Vase	2		6		8
Misc. items	33		18	17	68
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>674</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>1340</b>

**Table 1.** Ivory items seen for retail sale in Addis Ababa, July 2009. *Note: The items kept in bags represent additional stock.*

recently made). There apparently are no craftsmen working ivory in the main market, the Mercato, at the present time.

#### **Numbers of retail outlets selling ivory and the number of ivory items seen**

In July 2007, 37 retail outlets in Addis Ababa were selling between one and 249 ivory items, averaging 36. Most outlets were located on Churchill Avenue, Colson Street, around Tewodros Square, Saint Teklehamanot area and Nigeria Street near the post office, and there were several in two locations of the Mercato. Souvenir shops selling ivory were also found in a number of hotels, including some new hotels in the city that attract transit passengers. Two shops at Bole International Airport displayed new ivory beaded necklaces.

A total of 1340 ivory items were recorded during the survey (see Table 1). Of these, 1068 were openly displayed (394 older items and 674 recently made objects), while 262 other items were stored out of sight in large plastic or paper bags or sacks, mainly because some vendors opted to display only a few objects at a time, keeping additional stock in bags. In two outlets, 42 of the items contained in bags were old bangles and, in one outlet, 230 were brand new items which had arrived very

recently from craftsmen and consisted mainly of name seals, rings, busts and necklaces, in that order. About one-third (436) were old items and two-thirds (904) appeared to have been recently produced, the most numerous items being rings, pendants and human figurines. The most common old items were antique bangles. These originally came from tribes in Sudan and southern Ethiopia and were very thick, heavy and darker in colour due to age, often tied together in sets of two or three. These were found primarily in souvenir shops selling old tribal items. Other common older items were rings and human figurines. Almost all the ivory products observed for sale, both old and new, were made in Ethiopia except for the old Sudanese bangles.

#### **Prices for ivory objects**

Retail prices varied greatly. A souvenir shop in an expensive hotel with high overheads charged a lot more for ivory items than a stall in the Mercato. During this survey, the weakened world economy and the local rainy season meant there were fewer foreign visitors. Frequent power cuts and rain kept customers away so that some vendors were desperate to sell items and accepted lower prices. The age of an item, its condition, size and quality were all important factors in determining prices.



Item	Size (cm)	Average price (USD)
Ring	thin	3
Pendant cross	15	8
Necklace, beads	medium	16
Bangle	thin	29
	medium	53
Bangle, old	thick	34
Name seal	8–10	30
Chopsticks (pair)	20	35
Cigarette holder	6	35
Comb	10	36
Human figurine	7	43
	20	268
Animal figurine	5	45
	10	76
Mask	15	137
Bust	8–13	202
Vase	15	221

**Table 2. Retail prices for certain ivory items seen in Addis Ababa, July 2009.**

Vendors sometimes offered 20% discounts after bargaining or for the purchase of several items. Some outlets had items labelled with fixed prices, usually in birr but also in US dollars. The most expensive ivory items seen were a large old beaded necklace from a five-star hotel for USD806, and a new five-kilogrammes polished tusk in a large souvenir outlet near Tewodros Square for the same price. The least expensive were tiny new rings for USD3 each (Table 2). There were no carvings of outstanding quality made by master carvers comparable to what is found in eastern Asia, but some of the items were well carved. Those of similar quality, age and size as items available in eastern Asia were much less expensive. This is because the raw material is cheaper than in Asia and overheads are less.

### Customers for ivory items and vendors' views on the trade

Ethiopians rarely buy ivory items except very occasionally as gifts for foreigners. The main buyers are foreign tourists, diplomats, businessmen, UN and African Union officials, NGO staff, and those who have come to the country to attend conferences. The most common nationalities purchasing ivory were said to be Europeans and Chinese, and sometimes Americans. In the last decade, the Chinese have become important buyers of ivory items. The number of Chinese residents has increased considerably, from around 100 in 2001 to 3500 in 2006 (Sautman and Hairong, 2007). There are also growing numbers of Chinese workers in other African countries who frequently pass through Addis Ababa's new large airport in transit to China, sometimes staying in the larger hotels. They purchase a variety of items and are also the main buyers of chopsticks and name seals. A survey conducted in January 2008 found that chopsticks and name seals made up 15% of the new ivory items for sale compared with 11% in the current study, but more could be ordered and supplied quickly. Some tourists and vendors confuse elephant ivory for Hippopotamus *Hippopotamus amphibius* or wild pig teeth from various

African species, mostly Warthog *Phacochoerus africanus*. These are carved into smaller items, and pieces that were the same size and quality as elephant ivory were also sometimes the same price as elephant ivory.

The vendors' views on the ivory trade were mixed. Certain traders with larger businesses regretted that their ivory had been confiscated and that they had received no compensation, or have sold nearly all their remaining items in the last year and are not replacing them. Several larger dealers continue the trade, confidently selling new items, unhindered. Some smaller outlets have phased out their ivory in the last year owing to the expense and risk involved, while others still have old stock. Some vendors were confident, wishing to sell ivory items in bulk, others were suspicious, removing their displayed ivory or pretending items were sold. New vendors said ivory sells in similar amounts as their other souvenirs; these vendors had not experienced the 2005 raid and seemed unaware of the strict penalties for dealing in ivory.

### Indicative trends in the retail ivory trade in Addis Ababa

Quantitative data on retail ivory sales has only been collected since 1999. There has been a considerable decline in the number of ivory items seen in Addis Ababa over the last decade—from 9996 seen in 54 outlets in 1999, to 1340 in 37 outlets in 2009. The indicative trend has been consistently downward, with a large decline in March 2005 due to the aforementioned raid two months earlier (see Table 3).

There has been an increase in the number of souvenir shops in the city, with several curio outlets in new hotels. The number of retail outlets selling ivory objects has declined, however, but not at the same scale as the number of ivory items. Many vendors have become nervous about selling ivory and display none or fewer items. Some souvenir shops, especially smaller ones in the Mercato and around the post office area, now sell mainly new and cheap souvenirs instead of the traditional, old Ethiopian handicrafts, and these outlets had far fewer ivory items compared with 2008. Some souvenir shops that still specialize in old tribal goods and handicrafts, such as shields, wooden stools, rugs, silver jewellery and beads, sell a few old ivory items, along with other wildlife products such as colobus monkey *Colobus* skins, carved Hippopotamus or Warthog teeth, and Ostrich *Struthio camelus* eggs. There were also skins of various cats, including four new Cheetah *Acinonyx jubatus* (CITES Appendix I) skins on sale in one outlet for USD200 each.

In 1999, large ivory figurines and masks were common. Small ivory items, especially jewellery, now dominate sales probably because they are easier to smuggle out of the country. Small human figurines, usually of Ethiopian people in traditional dress and sometimes religious or historic Ethiopian figures, such as King Menelik, are popular. These are preferred by Europeans. No Chinese-style figurines were seen for sale.

Generally, the US dollar price has increased four-fold for most ivory items over the decade, using the official exchange rate and excluding inflation. In Ethiopian birr,

prices have risen ten-fold due to devaluation. The exceptions are the prices for masks, which increased by one-third in US dollars, and old bangles, which have stayed the same price. This is due to a fall in demand as they are bulky to smuggle and presumably less fashionable. The Chinese prefer new items.

### New efforts in law enforcement

Up until 2008, wildlife conservation activities were run by the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Department, a small unit under the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. It then became part of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and was renamed the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA). It now has more staff: a lawyer, an anti-poaching expert and additional game scouts in the national parks and sanctuaries (Pawlos, 2009). In December 2008, the new Authority re-opened the main government storeroom for wildlife products, which had been closed since the arrest and prosecution of the former storekeeper in 2004, following the theft of about 1700 kg of ivory from the store the year before (Milledge and Abdi, 2005). Most of the ivory stockpile is over 20 years old, all of which is now part of a newly audited list with each ivory piece marked and weighed (D. Pawlos, pers. comm., July 2009). The Authority held a workshop on law enforcement in October 2008, in collaboration with TRAFFIC, and published a booklet *The Ethiopian Wildlife Laws* in Amharic, targeted at Customs and other law enforcement officers, and which includes photographs of endangered wildlife and ivory products.

The Ethiopian Government has recently confiscated ivory items at various airports. In late 2008, three carved ivory items were seized at an airport north of Gambella. Also in late 2008, a man from Côte d'Ivoire, in transit to South Africa, was arrested at Bole International Airport with 56 kg of carved ivory (D. Pawlos, pers. comm., July 2009). The Authority plans to produce a billboard for display at the airport, instructing people not to buy ivory, and to promote public awareness via television, especially on penalties that many people may be unaware of. It intends to follow this up as soon as possible with police training and another large-scale raid of the souvenir shops (D. Pawlos, pers. comm., July 2009).

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Although the number of ivory items for retail sale in Addis Ababa has declined over the last ten years, demand for ivory items in the country's capital continues to threaten elephant populations in Ethiopia, and neighbouring Sudan and Kenya. Many items are on display in souvenir shops—mostly jewellery, small figurines, busts, and small utilitarian objects—in flagrant violation of the country's laws. There are, however, fewer outlets selling ivory due to reduced customer demand since the CITES ban and the reluctance of vendors to stock ivory following the 2005 raid. The number of souvenir shops has increased, however, with more foreigners visiting the country. The new airport has attracted more transit passengers to the city, and hotels have recently been constructed with souvenir outlets, some of which sell ivory. European visitors and the growing number of Chinese workers coming to Addis Ababa—who particularly like to buy new ivory items which are much cheaper than similar items in China—are creating a continuing demand for ivory which encourages elephant poaching.



NEW IVORY CARVING, ADDIS ABABA, JULY 2009; LUCY VIGNE

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Ethiopian Government has the capacity to enforce its ban on worked ivory in retail outlets, as was proved by the successful raid carried out in 2005 in conjunction with TRAFFIC. There need to be regular law enforcement operations to seize ivory items and other illegal wildlife products for sale in retail markets. Removing items from public view will decrease demand.
- Foreign visitors and passengers transiting Bole International Airport should be informed that it is illegal in Ethiopia to buy and possess ivory of any age and in any form. Leaflets and public awareness announcements stating the penalties are needed. This could be arranged by the EWCA in collaboration with an NGO.

YEAR	NUMBER OF RETAIL OUTLETS			NUMBER OF IVORY ITEMS	
	Total visited	Selling ivory	% selling ivory	Items counted	Average no. of items per outlet with ivory
Jun 1999*		54		9996	
Apr 2004**	101	51	50	3557	70
Mar 2005**	82	5	6	78	16
Jan 2008*		44		2152	49
Jun 2008**	171	43	25	1977	46
Jul 2009*	199	37	19	1340	36

Table 3. Summary comparison of ivory surveys in Addis Ababa, various years. \*Survey by E. Martin and L. Vigne; \*\*Survey by S. Milledge