

MARINE

AUSTRALIA: In April 2013, Van Thanh Le from Darch, Perth, was convicted of taking abalones out of season and exceeding the possession limit with 60 undersized abalones *Haliotis*. He was the second target of Operation Ratchet, a Department of Fisheries sting on people illegally taking or distributing the shellfish in the metropolitan area. He was fined AUD15 341 (USD14 400).

In May 2013, at Holden Hill Magistrates' Court, Adelaide, Dang Duong of Pooraka was found guilty of possessing 70 abalones and ordered to pay AUD9452 (USD8800), bringing to a conclusion the largest case involving the illegal trade in abalones in the State's history. The investigation, which began in 2010, has resulted in the conviction of six others involved in the trade of some 480 kg of abalones. Three were given suspended gaol sentences, and fines imposed amounted to a total of AUD28 952 and 360 hours' community service.

www.watoday.com.au/wa-news/15000-fine-for-illegal-wa-abalone-catch-20130409-2hiuk.html, 9 April 2013; www.thefishsite.com/fishnews/20552/abalone-trafficking-ring-dismantled, 20 June 2013

CAYMAN ISLANDS: During July 2013, four poachers were arrested in connection with two separate incidents involving the illegal collection of 156 and 119 Queen Conch *Tridacna gigas* (CITES II), respectively. Harvesting conch between May and the end of October is illegal; during open season, which runs from 1 November to 30 April, the daily limit is five. These restrictions are in place because the Cayman Islands' conch population, while sufficient for limited personal consumption within the law, cannot support a commercial fishery.

www.caymannewsservice.com/science-and-nature/2013/07/29/1275-poached-conch-recovered-doe, 29 July 2013

CHINA: On 24 May 2013, Shekou Customs of Shenzhen seized 12 kg of dried seahorses *Hippocampus* concealed in luggage being carried by an African passenger. In the same month, suspect Zhang was sentenced to 10 months in gaol for illegally carrying 19 kg of dried seahorses from the Philippines to Jinjiang City, Fujian province, in October 2012. In July 2013, the post office branch of Jinling Customs of Nanjing, Jiangsu province, detected over 6000 dried seahorses (10 kg) in a parcel from South Asia.

www.customs.gov.cn/publish/portal0/tab39267/info431465.htm, 31 May 2013; http://qz.fjnews.com/2013-05/10/content_11356901.htm, 10 May 2013; <http://news.xinmin.cn/domestic/2013/07/18/21111645.html>, 18 July 2013

SOUTH AFRICA: On 25 July 2013, three men were arrested on a farm near Alexandria, Eastern Cape, after being found in possession of 1630 kg of abalone *Haliotis midae*. Two of the men were Chinese nationals while the third was the farm's owner.

www.enca.com/south-africa/eastern-cape-men-stash-worth-millions; <http://ewn.co.za/2013/08/27/Abalone-possession-case-postponed>

SPAIN: On 4 June 2013, authorities in Madrid investigated 13 facilities and seized some 500 000 pieces of coral, including *Acropora*, *Leptoria*, *Pocillopora*, *Fungia*, *Antipathes*, *Heliopora* (all CITES II). Two people were arrested and a further six charged.

www.interior.gob.es/press/intervenidas-mas-de-512-000-piezas-de-coral-que-eran-vendidas-vulnerando-el-convenio-internacional-sobre-especies-amenazadas-15270?set_locale=ca

UK: On 22 May 2013, at Crown Square Crown Court, Manchester, Alex Montgomery of Manchester was sentenced to six months in gaol after pleading guilty to charges of attempting to smuggle 750 kg of live hard corals through Manchester airport from Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam, in May 2012, in boxes labelled "Marine fish and Soft Corals". More specimens were seized from Montgomery's business premises, along with his computer, which had information regarding his business dealings with foreign suppliers.

www.gov.uk/government/news/man-jailed-for-smuggling-coral-and-clams, 22 May 2013; www.traffic.org/home/2013/5/23/uk-hands-down-custodial-sentence-for-coral-smuggling.html

VIET NAM: On 9 June 2013, Con Dao Forest Rangers arrested two local men collecting a total of 498 Green Turtle *Chelonia mydas* (CITES I) eggs from nests on a protected beach. Each person has been fined VND23 million (USD1090).

Environmental News Vietnam Newsletter, August 2013

PANGOLINS

CHINA: In April 2013, Luohu District People's Court, Guangdong province, sentenced defendant Zhu to 10.5 years in gaol (and a fine of CNY10 000 (USD1587)); defendant Wu to four years in gaol (fined CNY10 000); and defendant Zhuo to four years in gaol (fined CNY10 000). The three had been arrested in September 2012 for illegally trading a total of 122 pangolins *Manis* (CITES II) and other wildlife items.

http://sztqb.sznews.com/html/2013-04/13/content_2441852.htm

FRANCE: On 30 April 2013, Customs authorities at Charles de Gaulle Airport, Paris, announced the seizure of 50 kg of pangolin *Manis* (CITES II) scales from Cameroon bound for Viet Nam, the third pangolin seizure in April, amounting to a total of nearly 100 kg and representing between 300–400 pangolins.

www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/130430/french-customs-seize-pangolin-scales-headed-vietnam, 30 April 2013

INDIA: On 19 July 2013, Customs officers in Guwahati seized 85 kg of pangolin *Manis* (CITES II) scales in a consignment of drugs (pseudoephedrine tablets) at a house in the Beltola area.

On 31 July 2013, 70 kg of pangolin scales, reportedly from some 300 pangolins, were seized and seven people arrested in Siliguri, West Bengal. The scales had been brought from Kalka in Haryana and were to be handed over to smugglers based in Nepal, Nagaland and Manipur.

Business Standard 19 July 2013; www.business-standard.com/article/news-anil/customs-department-seizes-drugs-worth-millions-in-guwahati-113071900684_1.html; www.business-standard.com/article/pt-stories/70-kg-pangolin-scales-seized-113073101243_1.html, 31 July 2013

MALAYSIA: On 26 June 2013, at the Sessions Court, six people were each gaoled for one year and fined RM330 000 (USD103 000) for attempting to smuggle 150 pangolins *Manis* (CITES II) into Thailand in 2012. The defendants were granted bail pending an appeal.

www.nst.com.my/nation/general/six-jailed-over-pangolins-in-car-1.308395, 27 June 2013; www.traffic.org/home/2013/7/15/world-experts-all-pangolin-species-at-risk-from-illegal-trad.html

THAILAND: On 16 September 2013, 200 live pangolins *Manis* (CITES II) were retrieved by police from two vehicles in Udonthani; the drivers fled. The pangolins were believed to have been destined for China or Viet Nam, via Lao PDR.

www.bangkokpost.com/breakingnews/370180/pangolins-seized-in-udon-thani, 17 September 2013

VIET NAM: In August 2013, Customs officials at Hai Phong port found more than six tonnes of live pangolins *Manis* (CITES II) inside a container purportedly containing frozen fish. The cargo, from Indonesia, was due for onward shipment to an undisclosed destination. This year to date, more than 10 t of pangolins—both live and frozen—and 1.2 t of pangolin scales, have reportedly been confiscated at Hai Phong port.

www.nst.com.my/latest/over-six-tonnes-of-rare-live-pangolins-found-in-vietnam-1.337605, 14 August 2013

RHINOCEROSES

CHINA: On 18 June 2013, at Shanghai No. 1 Intermediate People's Court, Dong Fengrong was sentenced to seven years in gaol and fined CNY150 000 (USD24 000) after attempting to smuggle into the country from France seven rhinoceros (CITES I) horns and products (8 kg) (and 14 ivory items) at Pudong International Airport on 23 January.

<http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90882/8289766.html>, 19 June 2013

CZECH REPUBLIC: On 23 July 2013, authorities seized 24 White Rhinoceros *Ceratotherium simum* (CITES I) horns and arrested members of an international gang that had hired Czech nationals to hunt rhinoceroses in South Africa to obtain their horns. Sixteen people have been charged in connection with the case, initiated after the Czech Environmental Inspectorate became suspicious that people applying for import permits for rhinoceros horns were not importing them from South Africa as personal hunting trophies, which may be allowed with a CITES permit.

www.radio.cz/en/section/curraffris/czech-authorities-seize-record-amount-of-rhino-horns, 23 July 2013

KENYA: On 17 September 2013, at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, a Vietnamese national in transit from Maputo, Mozambique, en route to Hong Kong via Doha, Qatar, was arrested with five rhinoceros (CITES I) horns.

www.capitalfm.co.ke/news/2013/09/vietnamese-arrested-rhino-horns-kiial, 17 September 2013

NEPAL: On 19 June 2013, 12 rhinoceros poachers from Nawalparasi district were given gaol sentences ranging from 10–15 years and fines of between USD550–1100 each. The poaching of rhinoceroses (CITES I) in Nepal is reported to have significantly reduced over the last decade owing in large part to increased security and the involvement of government personnel in wildlife management.

On 16 September 2013, Sita Bahadur Dhenga Magar, of Nawalparasi district, was sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment, five years after being convicted. He had absconded following his conviction in June 2008 for killing a rhinoceros in 2005 and selling the horn; he was arrested in Chitwan National Park on 2 September.

www.shanghaidaily.com/article/article_xinhua.asp?id=148371, 19 June 2013; www.myrepublica.com/portall/index.php?action=news_details&news_id=61549, 16 September 2013

SOUTH AFRICA: In April 2013, at Phalaborwa Magistrates' Court, Inaso Makhubela of Mozambique and Jorudo Ngobeni of South Africa, were sentenced to 15 years in gaol for shooting dead and dehorning a rhinoceros (CITES I) in Limpopo in 2011.

On 10 July 2013, at Makhado Regional Court, Limpopo, three Mozambican nationals were each gaoled for five years for rhinoceros poaching in Nwandeni Resort. Augustus Nkuna, Foster Nyoni and Manyanga Shiringa were also given a 12-month suspended sentence. The trio was arrested in May 2012.

On 29 July 2013, at Makhado Magistrates' Court, Limpopo, Enock Mutungi, and Mozambican national Daniel Dumusani, were each sentenced to six years' imprisonment after being found guilty of rhinoceros poaching in Masisi, Kruger National Park (KNP).

On 15 August 2013, in Nelspruit Regional Court, Leonard Mhlongo from Mozambique was sentenced to 14 years' imprisonment for killing and dehorning a Black Rhinoceros *Diceros bicornis* (CITES I) and her calf in KNP. His sentence consisted of four years in gaol for entering the KNP illegally, 10 years for killing the rhinoceros cow, and eight years for killing the calf. The eight years would run concurrently with the 10 years.

On 30 August 2013, at Nelspruit Regional Court, Mozambican nationals Julius Ngwenya, Daniel Jadere and Antonio Malunga, were each gaoled for 16 years for killing and dehorning a White Rhinoceros *Ceratotherium simum* and her calf in KNP in May. During their arrest, a fourth suspect was shot dead.

www.thenewage.co.za/90163-1007-53-15_years_behind_bars_for_rhino_poachers, 3 April 2013; www.timeslive.co.za/scitech/2013/07/11/three-rhino-poachers-sentenced-five-years-in-limpopo, 11 July 2013; www.iol.co.za/news/crime-courts/jail-terms-for-limpopo-rhino-poachers-1.1554429#UfeAb23DJul, 29 July 2013; www.iol.co.za/news/crime-courts/mpuma-rhino-poacher-jailed-1.1563117, 15 August 2013; www.timeslive.co.za/scitech/2013/08/30/three-poachers-get-16-years-each-for-killing-rhino-and-calf, 30 August 2013

VIET NAM: On 20 May 2013, Customs officers at Ho Chi Minh City's Tan Son Nhat airport arrested a man arriving from Europe with six pieces of rhinoceros (CITES I) horn (5 kg).

www.thanhniennews.com/index/pages/20130521-vietnam-passenger-caught-with-5kg-of-rhino-horns.aspx, 21 May 2013

OTHER CASES

CANADA: On 5 April 2013, at a court in Winnipeg, four Mexican hunters were fined CAD10 000–30 000 (USD9700–29 137) for attempting to return from Nunavut to Mexico in a private jet with the skins of three Polar Bears *Ursus maritimus* (CITES I) and three Narwhal *Monodon monoceros* (II) tusks following a hunting trip; while their sport hunting trophies were in order, they had not applied for the requisite CITES permits to take the items back to Canada, nor does Mexico permit the importation of marine mammals. The fine will go to a federal programme, the Environmental Defence Fund, which distributes money to environmental groups.

www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674illegal_trophy_export_attempt_of_arctic_trophies_costs_mexican_hunters/, 8 April 2013

CHINA: On 22 May 2013, Customs officers at Manzhouli border crossing with Russia in the Inner Mongolia region seized 213 bear paws from a van being driven into China. Two Russian nationals were arrested. The paws had been concealed inside five tyres and derived from at least 54 bears [species not reported]: the largest paw weighed two kilogrammes and the smallest 200 g. On 20 August 2013, 169 bear paws (138 from Brown Bears *Ursus arctos* (CITES II) and the remainder from Asiatic Black Bears *Ursus thibetanus* (CITES I)), smuggled from Russia, were seized by Harbin Customs officials, Heilongjiang province. Five suspects from a wildlife smuggling ring, which was busted on 12 July, have been arrested.

On 29 April 2013, border police in Duoma, Nagqu Prefecture, seized 102 Tibetan Antelope *Pantholops hodgsonii* (CITES I) skins and three skulls.

On 12 May 2013, Customs officials at Alashankou (on the border with Kazakhstan), detected 719 horns of Saiga Antelope *Saiga tatarica* (CITES II) on a train arriving from Kazakhstan. Four suspects were detained.

Defendant Yu was recently sentenced to five years in gaol (and fined CNY20 000 (USD3174) after being arrested in January by Gongbei Customs, Zhuhai, for smuggling 76 hornbill skulls (7.7 kg).

www.china.org.cn/video/2013-06/20/content_29175449.htm, 20 June 2013; www.globaltimes.cn/content/805314.shtml#Uhs6tj-yQ0l, 21 August 2013; http://news.2500sz.com/news/gn/2013-5/10_1987960.shtml, 10 May 2013; <http://illegal.people.com.cn/nl/2013/05/21/c203936-21559782.html>, 21 May 2013; www.chinadaily.com.cn/hqgj/jryw/2013-07-11/content_9550529.html, 11 July 2013

COLOMBIA: On 22 August 2013, it was reported that Janer de Jesús Sarmiento, of Santa Ana (Magdalena), had been sentenced at the Juez Treinta Criminal Circuit Court, Bogotá, to 56 months in gaol and fined for transporting 2.9 kg of meat and body parts of some 150 Colombian Sliders *Trachemys callirostris*. Sarmiento had been detained by the authorities in April 2012 at Salitre Transport Terminal in Bogotá.

www.elespectador.com/noticias/bogota/hombre-debera-pagar-cuatro-anos-de-carcel-traficar-carn-articulo-441712, 22 August 2013

REPUBLIC OF GUINEA: In August 2013, a man was sentenced to a fine and one year in gaol for the illegal trade of Chimpanzees *Pan troglodytes* (CITES I), Lions *Panthera leo* (I), Leopards *P. pardus* (I), hyaenas and tropical birds over the past decade. Two accomplices also received gaol sentences. During the 10-month operation to apprehend the group, some 150 seized birds were released in the wild.

http://www.panda.org/wwf_news/?210073/Kingpin-behind-bars-for-poaching-chimps, 26 August 2013

INDIA: On 1 September 2013, at Tentulberia area, West Bengal, border troops seized 952 Indian Star Tortoises *Geochelone elegans* (CITES II) from two people crossing the border into Bangladesh; the duo fled.

www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/big-seizure-of-952-star-tortoises-on-into-bangla-border-113090200864_1.html

ITALY: On 14 June 2013, three Maltese nationals returning to Malta were detained in transit at Linate airport, Milan, on a flight from Argentina, after their luggage was found to contain 180 dead birds, including Wattled Jacana *Jacana jacana*, Silver Teal *Anas versicolor*, Nacunda Nighthawk *Chordeiles nacunda* and Whistling Heron *Syrigma sibilatrix*.

www.maltatoday.com.mt/en/newsdetails/news/courtandpolice/Maltese-nationals-stopped-at-Milan-airport-carrying-180-dead-birds-20130626, 26 June 2013

NEPAL: On 1 June 2013, police in Darchula seized skins and bones of Tiger *Panthera tigris* (CITES I) and Leopard *P. pardus* (I), ivory (I), pangolin (II) scales, and musk (III) that had been concealed in a cave. One man and two porters were arrested; seven others fled. During an exchange of fire, one of the suspected smugglers sustained bullet injuries. The porters were being paid to transport the contraband to Taklakot in Tibet Autonomous Region, China, about three days walk from Darchula.

www.nzweek.com/world/smuggler-arrested-in-nepal-with-large-cache-of-banned-animal-parts-647101, 3 June 2013

SRI LANKA: On 5 September 2013, 450 kg of sea cucumbers were seized from a van at a coastal area near Mandapam refugee camp.

www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/450-kg-of-sea-cucumber-seized-113090500859_1.html, 5 September 2013

TAIWAN: On 24 August 2013, in what has been described as the biggest smuggling case of its kind in Taiwan, coastguards seized 1180 Yellow Pond Turtles *Mauremys mutica* and 1446 Yellow-margined Box Turtles *Cuora flavomarginata* (both CITES II) from a vessel in the port of Kaohsiung.

www.abc.net.au/news/2013-08-25/taiwan-seizes-2500-rare-turtles-bound-for-dinner-plate/4911168, 25 August 2013

USA: On 23 August 2013, Olivia Terrance of Hogsburg, New York, was sentenced to 18 months in gaol after pleading guilty to smuggling turtles and other reptiles into Canada from the USA in 2009/2010, for sale. Her sentence includes three years' supervision after her release.

www.therepublic.com/view/story/2bba110379fb4665a5cd8019cfc9315/NY-Wildlife-Smuggling, 24 August 2013