

ROBIN DES BOIS

ON the TRAIL

Information and analysis bulletin on animal poaching and smuggling

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Rhinoceroses

The white rhinoceros *Ceratotherium simum* and black rhinoceros *Diceros bicornis* ranging in Africa are listed in Appendix I, except for the white rhinoceros populations of Swaziland and South Africa which are listed in Appendix II for trade of live animals and hunting trophies.

The 3 Asian rhinoceros species are in Appendix I: *Rhinoceros unicornis*, *Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*, *Rhinoceros sondaicus*.

“On the Trail” n°11

The value of horn on the black market, according to media or customs sources

Continent	Country	US\$	Ref.
Africa	Tanzania	7840	16
America	Canada	34,240	39

EASTERN AFRICA

KENYA

October 10, 2015
Ruma National Park, County Homa Bay, Kenya

Rescue of Baraka, 39, who had already been the subject of 2 translocations away from risky areas. When he was rescued by KWS (Kenya Wildlife Service) and DSWT (David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust) he was on the verge of exhaustion, strangled by a wire collar and dragging a tree trunk. He had just somehow escaped a trap.¹



November 24, 2015
Oi Pejeta Conservancy, Laikipia County, Kenya

Poachers set aside the noisy guns and turn to silent poisoned arrows. Two hoodlums sneaked into the mountain sanctuary vital to the future of rhinos. There is where live the 3 last northern white rhinos and where about a hundred black rhinos were regrouped. Rangers noticed the trespassing. The invaders fled by boda boda. A happy ending there where on September 30, a black rhino had been killed.²

December 27, 2015
Mombasa, Mombasa County, Kenya

Seizure of horns (1.4 kg). Two police custody for 7 days despite a request for immediate release.³

OPERATION WORTHY II
November 6 and December 16, 2015
Kasumu Border station with Malawi, Region of Mbeya, Tanzania



Seizure of 11 rhino horns (53.3 kg) estimated worth \$ 418,000 US i.e. \$ 7840 US/kg. Arrest and conviction of 4 Chinese citizens who received a 20-year prison sentence and an \$ 800 US fine each. In the back of the Toyota Hilux that they had rented for their 3 weeks trip to Malawi, a mechanic called on by border police to inspect the vehicle found a fake gas tank. The horns wrapped in plastic were hidden inside. While the driver was taking care of formalities with the immigration desk, the 3 passengers had attempted to run away.¹⁶ See also p. 64.



ZIMBABWE

December 2015 Lowveld, Zimbabwe

Four rhinos poached, 5 failed attempts in a month. One poacher shot dead, another seriously wounded, 3 people arrested, 5 weapons confiscated and one ranger injured.³¹



-50 including 42 black in 2015

December 31, 2015 Masvingo, Province of Masvingo, Zimbabwe

Sentencing to 35 years in prison of Tawengwa Machona for poaching 4 rhinos in February 2014 in the Sango Savé Valley private reserve near Chiredzi in the Masvingo Province. His sentence will be brought down to 20 years if he manages over the next 5 years to pay back the financial value of the 2 rhinos that amounts to \$ 480,000 US. An agent from the Zimbabwe Secret Services, Munashe Mudenge Mugwira, played a capital role in the organization by providing an official vehicle and rifles. He has been arrested on December 20 in Bulawayo.^{31bis}



SOUTHERN AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

November 2015 Pretoria, Province of Gauteng, South Africa

In September 2015, John Hume, big rhino breeder -he has more than 1000- and owner of a 4 tons stock of horns filed a lawsuit before the High Court in Pretoria against the decision taken in December 2009 by the former Minister of the Environment Martinus van Schalkwyk to ban national trade in horns. Hume's judicial step may be interpreted as the prelude to the end of the ban on international trade and rise of the horn cartel dreamed of by the capitalists in this field. End of November, judges decided in favor of the plaintiff stating there was a direct connection between the entering into force of the embargo and booming of poaching.

The decision against which the Ministry of the Environment has formed an appeal is like a swarm of flies on an open wound. It will enable speculators to sell horns and transport them within the country with all the mishmash of paperwork and formalities and pseudo buyers to illegally send them to Asia in raw form or crushed. To be continued.⁴

FAMILY AFFAIRS

Beginning of October 2015

Louis Trichardt District, Province of Limpopo, South Africa

Court hearing for 6 men after which they were released on bail for poaching in July 2014 of a rhino in the Mapungubwe National Park (see "On the Trail" n°6 p. 62). The horn would have been sold to a Vietnamese buyer. One of the accused, Job Basi Tlou is part of the "horn business". He was arrested after buying 2 horns from an officer on duty member of the Green Scorpions, the specialized unit of the South African parks administration. 3 others of the accused, Podile, Lebala and Masolo Sematla are members of the same family as Michael Simon Sematla, ex-employee of the South African National Parks, convicted in August for having organized underground hunting sessions at the edge of Mapungubwe Park (see "On the Trail" n° 10 p. 76).⁵

October 4, 2015

Mahathunzi, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa⁶

October 2015

Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

1 - 4 October. Mahathunzi. Discovery of one carcass.



2- 25 October. Hluhluwe-Umfolozi Reserve. Another discovery of a carcass. The horns are untouched.



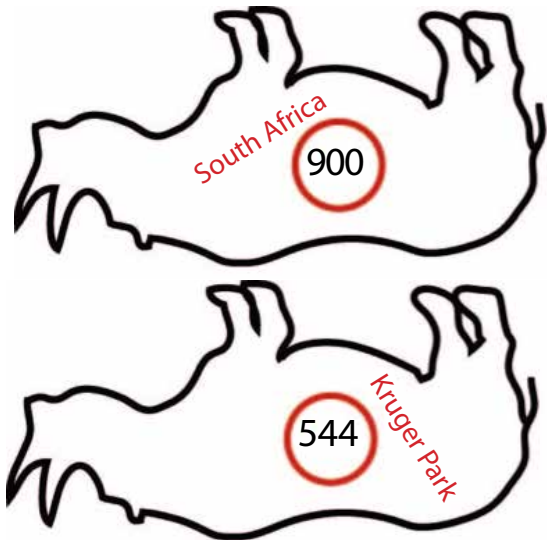
Criticism is pouring down on Ezemvolvo. The organization in charge of wildlife protection in KwaZulu-Natal is sucked in red tape and lack of financial transparency. The Zap Wing (Zululand Anti-Poaching Wing) in Hluhluwe suffers the

consequences of such paralysis at a time when rhinos need reactivity day and night. There is the money to buy 2 new helicopters. Donators kept their promises but the Ezemvelo administrators are unable to agree on the company to buy from. In the meantime, ZAP Wing that regroups 17 private reserves in Zululand call turns to the Bateleurs, a private pilots NGO specialized in environmental protection and urgent transport of wounded animals. See "On the Trail" n° 7 p. 32.⁷

October 13, 2015
Thandeka Game Farm, North Western Province, South Africa

Seizure of a shotgun, ammunition, an ax, a saw and 4 arrests.⁸

2015 toll on October 15th:



October 22, 2015
Kruger National Park, South Africa

2 suspects arrested from Mozambique with a forged gun and ammunition. 156 people were arrested in the Park in the last 12 months. South Africa now regularly communicates on the toll of arrests and rarely on the toll of poaching.⁹

October 24, 2015
Zululand Rhino Reserve, Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

An armed suspect arrested. He was wounded during the arrest.¹⁰

October 27, 2015
Nelspruit, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

Conviction of 2 young men aged 20 years to 14 years in prison each. They killed 2 white rhinos and dehorned one of them in Kruger National Park in January 2013. They had been caught by the tracking of Killer, the Malinois shepherd (see "On the Trail" n°10 p. 49). "Most of the poachers are from Magude and Massingir villages in Mozambique, where syndicate bosses promise youngsters money if they return with a rhino horn," states judge advocate general Isbet Erwee.¹¹



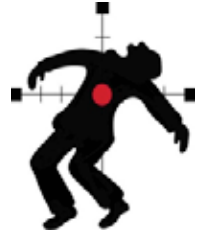
October 28, 2015
Louis Trichardt, Province of Limpopo, South Africa

Sentencing of a man arrested in May 2014 to 11 years in prison. He and his accomplice were spotted and arrested before slaughtering the rhino. They were carrying a rifle and an ax when they were brought in. Attempted killing of a rhino is a crime punished as severely as actually succeeding in committing it.¹²



October 29, 2015
Hluhluwe-Umfolozzi Reserve, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa

Death of 2 poachers and 3 rhinoceros. Two horns on the battle scene.¹³



October 29, 2015
Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

Arrest of 2 suspects of 39 and 23 in possession of firearms and ammunition by the Kruger National Park Rhino Task Team, a new task force combining the national police and SAN Parks, allegedly incorruptible.¹⁴

November 3, 2015
Private Phinda Resource Reserve, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa

One bullet in the left hind paw crosses the chest and reaches vital organs before exiting through the right side. Very large caliber.¹⁵



**November 6, 2015
Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province,
South Africa**

Arrest of 4 poachers aged 22, 23 and 25 just before they finish off their victim.¹⁷

**Night of November 11, 2015
Hluhluwe-Imfolozi Park and Phinda Private
Reserve, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**
Poaching of 2 rhinos.¹⁸



**November 12, 2015
Klerksdorp, North West
Province, South Africa**

Conviction of a Mozambican citizen, 33, to 8 years in prison for illegal possession of a firearm. Arrested in July 2013 in Klerksdorp with 5 other suspects. In the car there was a gun with a silencer, an axe and bloody clothing. Three suspects released on bail did not respond to court summons. They are under an arrest warrant. After serving two thirds of his sentence, the convict may be paroled.¹⁹



**November 17, 2015
Nelspruit, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**
Release on bail of R 5000 (\$ 350 US) of André Mabunda for health reasons. He is a guide in the South African National Park Service. Mabunda wore part of his uniform when he was arrested. He was shirtless, he had just cut off the horn. His shirt and 3 cellular phones were found near the rhinoceros body. Waiting for the trial, he is banned from the Park. See "On the Trail" n°6 p. 77 and n°7 p. 65.²⁰

**November 19, 2015
Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province,
South Africa**

Arrest of a man and 2 women 20 to 25 years old. A phone call warned the Hawks in Mpumalanga area. All access doors to the Park were put under reinforced surveillance. A suspicious vehicle was stopped. Under the motor there was an A375 rifle. The silencer and ammunition were in the trunk. A fourth person has fled.²¹

**Weekend of November 21,
2015
Hoedspruit, Limpopo
Province, South Africa**
Poaching of 2 rhinoceros at full
moon.²²

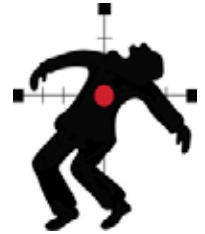


**OPERATION RINGLEADER
November 24 and 25 and December 2, 2015
Provinces of Gauteng and of the North-West,
South Africa**

Seizure of 4 entire horns and horn sections for a total value of R 1.2 million (\$ 83,807 US), 8 luxury cars, an electrical saw, 3 ladders, 13 fire arms and various poaching gears and arrest of 14 suspects among which 3 police officers and a Chinese citizen. Total value of the goods seized is estimated at R 6 millions (\$ 419,037 US). The 3 police officers and Chinese citizen were released on bail for R 500 (\$ 35 US) and R 20,000 (\$ 1400 US). Investigations began in 2013.²³

**End of November 2015
Kruger National Park, Crocodile
Bridge section, Mpumalanga
Province, South Africa**

Seizure of a rifle with a silencer, ammunition, an axe, 3 cellphones and backpacks. Death of a poacher and arrest of a second.²⁴



**Beginning of December 2015
Province of Gauteng, South Africa**



A bullet in his right side. Preventively de-horned. Medical care dispensed by Saving the Survivors.²⁵

**Beginning of December 2015
Nelspruit, Province of Mpumalanga, South
Africa**

Release of the 3 policemen and ex ranger accused of poaching. They had been arrested in May 2014 (see "On the Trail" n° 5 p. 74). The SAPS (South African Police Service) is in charge of countering corruption. The special unit did not finish their investigations regarding the implication of their 3 members within legal delay. The Nelspruit regional Court has stricken the case out of its list. The 3 presumed "corrupt" had filed 5 requests for bail. They had all been rejected. Now they are free without bail.²⁶

December 3, 2015
iSimangaliso Wetland Park, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa

Poaching of a female and her 2 young. Rightly, she was called Ms. Longhorn.²⁷



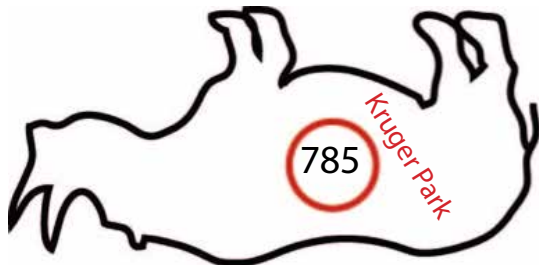
Miss long horn



December 9, 2015
Hoedspruit, Limpopo Province, South Africa

Arrest of 2 Mozambican nationals. Seizure of a rifle with a silencer.²⁸

December 10, 2015
Kruger National Park, South Africa



December 11, 2015
South Africa

A North Korean diplomat was kicked out for being involved in rhino horn trafficking in Mozambique (see "On the Trail" n° 9 p. 60). Arrested on 3 May 2015 in Maputo with 4.5 kg of horn and \$ 99,300 US in cash on him. The South African government gave M. Park Chol-Jun 30 days to leave the country. He and another compatriot had been released on bail for \$ 30,000 US by the Maputo police.²⁹

December 15, 2015
About Hoedspruit, Limpopo Province, South Africa

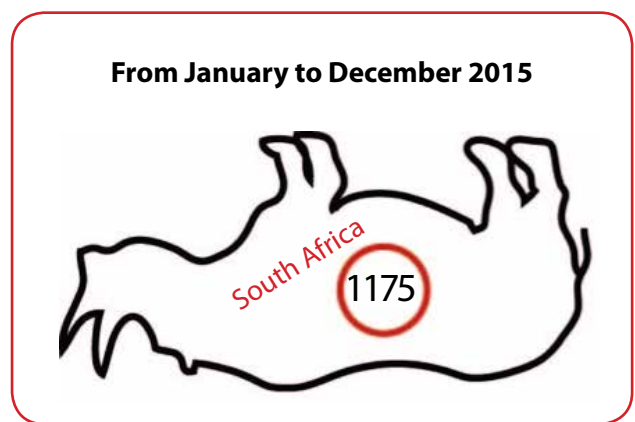
Late discovery of the dehorned carcass. He was 6 years old. He was a black rhino.³⁰

December 20, 2015
Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

Seizure of 2 horns, a hunting rifle caliber 375 with erased number, ammunition, an ax and 2 arrests. The 3 killers coming from the East were chased in the bush for 30 km. One of them managed to escape and reach Mozambique.³²

December 22, 2015
Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg, Gauteng, South Africa

Seizure of 2 horns estimated at R 3 millions (\$ 194,128 US), unknown owner and destination.³³



BOTSWANA

October 13, 2015
Maun, North West District, Botswana

Appearance for the theft of 3 horns estimated to 3 millions pula (\$ 282,650 US) of Gilbert Monnaalesole, 44, a senior wildlife warden. He is accused of having forced the door of the vault where the horns were stored. He agrees to be remanded in custody while telling his truth: "I am the keeper of the keys to the storeroom so why would I break into it, that would be surprising indeed". Two presumed accomplices were also arrested. Their lawyer was robbed of his mobile phone during a break in the hearing. According to him, only members of the judiciary have been able to achieve this crime. "It is a cheap phone and I believe that whoever took it is after the information inside rather than the phone."³⁴

NAMIBIA

See page 64 and following.

October 2015

The notorious and infamous Corey Knowlton who in the name of the Dallas Safari Club, and with the help of several guides, assassinated a black rhino in May 2015, is suing Delta Air Lines (see "On the Trail" n°9 p. 63). The American airlines company has been refusing since the month of August to transport hunting trophies. "The Delta embargo is a threat to the worldwide industry of hunting safaris which composes the fundamental grounds of conservation of endangered species."³⁵



OPERATION CRASH

October 20, 2015

Cedar Rapids, State of Iowa, United States of America



Sentencing of James Hess, taxidermist, to a 27-month prison term and 3 years parole for buying and re-selling horns (see "On the Trail" n° 9 p. 66). In August 2011 he had bought \$ 16,000 US worth of horns in Oregon so as, according to his declarations, sell them again in Oregon. Failing to find a buyer in that State, he got together with a certain Wade Steffen, ex rodeo star in Texas who was in relation with Felix Kha, who in turn had connections in China. Kha father and son were convicted in 2013. They ran an import- export company. See "On the Trail" n° 1 p. 23.³⁶

October 25, 2015

Johannesburg, South Africa - Miami, United States of America

Two white rhinoceros and 2 lion cubs, coming from the Bester Birds Animal Zoo Park in Pretoria, having travelled through London in an A380 are now in the Centre for Conservation of Tropical Ungulates (CCTU) in Miami.

Mike Bester is a member of the Private Rhino Owners Association (PROA). This translocation is part of an ambiguous and ambitious program that aims to rescue and raise wild species that are threatened and are protected by the CITES. The reality is more prosaic. In fact, the 2 institutions are a zoo and a pet shop. Mike Bester has long been sending felines and wild dogs to Asia to rich collectors (see "On the Trail" n° 8 p. 59). The exile of wild animals is often surrounded with a rowdy publicity that highlights veterinaries, official documents and planes. Therefore, the IAG Cargo Company took advantage of the opportunity to promote its competences in the " the movement of animals of all types, shapes and sizes ". The A380 allows us to control



the hold temperature to within one degree of accuracy to keep the temperature as comfortable as possible for these magnificent creatures". IAG Cargo (International Airlines Group) results from the fusion of British Airways World Cargo and of Iberia Cargo.³⁷

OPERATION CRASH

November 12, 2015

New York, State of New York, United States of America



Sentencing for illegal export of 16 libation cups of Linxun Liao to a 2-year prison term followed by 2 years on parole, and repay one million dollars. Seizure of 304 carved ivory pieces. Liao, a Chinese citizen living in Canada and with a family home address in New Jersey had bought from auction houses mainly in Manhattan between March 2012 and May 2013 16 libation cups originated in Asia and Africa. Experts estimate the total value at over one million dollars. Liao would then use his fictitious address in New Jersey to group the cups and prepare for their expedition under false designation with the complicity of an antique dealer set up in China. With the same method, he also was trafficking in ivory.³⁸

November 21, 2015

Vancouver, Province of British-Columbia, Canada

Sale of a horn from the 19th century for 228,000 \$ Canadian (\$ 170,826 US). 4989 grams. That is \$ 34,240 US/kg. Bidding of 4 Asian buyers made the price flare up. Mellissa Carr from Vancouver, who graduated in traditional Chinese medicine says "there's a folklore that a rhino horn is an aphrodisiac because of its shape."³⁹



OPERATION CRASH

December 16, 2015

Las Vegas, State of Nevada, United States of America



Lumsden W. Quan, 47 years old, is an art dealer. He was sentenced to 10,000 \$ in fine for illegal sale of 2 black rhino horns and to 1 year and 2 days in prison followed by 3 years on parole and is forbidden to work in the art and antiques trade (see "On the Trail" n°5 p. 76). The trial of his associate, Edward N. Levine, is scheduled for 7 March 2016. The word "CRASH" means a herd of rhinos. To this day, Operation Crash has enabled the arrest and conviction of 22 traffickers and accomplices and return to the public finances of 5.5 millions dollars.⁴⁰

INDIA

October 3, 2015

Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India

Poaching without retrieving the horn. A sniper rifle with night sight was found at the scene of the crime.⁴¹

October 27, 2015

Island of Majuli, Jorhat District, State of Assam, India

Mid-October, 2 rhinos left the Kaziranga Park and got lost. They caused certain turmoil in some villages of the Island Majuli along the Brahmapoutre. The carcass of one of these rhinos was found on a sand bank. He was shot dead. His horn was taken. The other vagabond apparently reached on his own the Park 100 km away.⁴²



End of October 2015

Pobitora Reserve, State of Assam, India

Esob Ali, former poacher who became an informant for the forest guards, was assassinated during the month of August (see "On the Trail" n° 10 p. 50). This time it is his ex accomplice's turn, known to be an anti-poaching expert, to receive death threats. Before dying Esob found the time and strength to identify the killers. Only one has been arrested, Mohidul Islam. Those who are now threatening Nurul Islam are the same ones who killed Esob. The forest service is worried. "If you do not safeguard them, you cannot expect others like Esob and Nurul to help the department".⁴³

November 8, 2015

Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary, Adalpur, State of West Bengal, India

The male's carcass is going to be incinerated. It was found in the forest by a routine patrol. Mahananda is not an usual habitat for rhinos. The victim, according to connoisseurs of the area, apparently found home there in solitary since 6 or 7 years after coming from the Gorumara National Park 40 km away.⁴⁴

November 2015

Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India

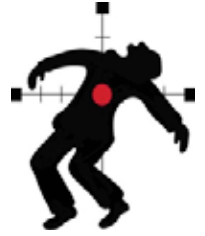
1 - November 8. One rhino poached. The forest guards' intervention prevented the poachers from taking the horn.

2 - November 16. A poacher was severely injured; he died on the way to the hospital.

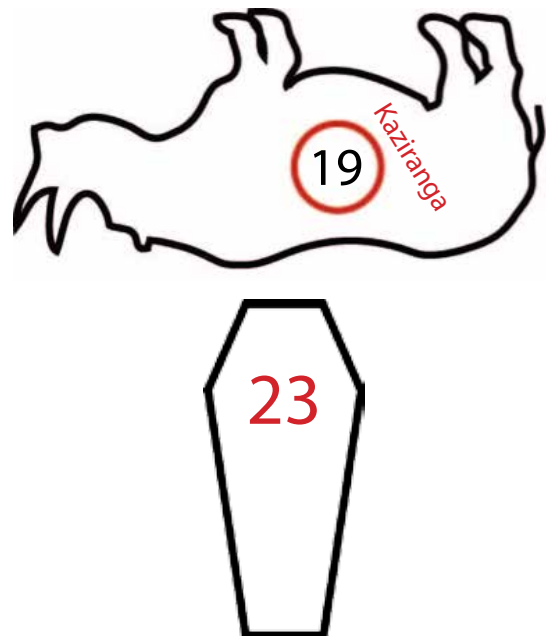
3 - November 20. A group of 5 individuals was signaled inside the Park before dawn. Two of them died in crossfire with the authorities.

4 - November 22. One rhino poached. Near 1 o'clock in the morning the poachers shot about 30 bullets at rangers before escaping with the horn.

The Park continues to be stained by the deaths of men and rhinos. Three poachers killed in 4 days, 21 since the beginning of the year as well as 15 or 16 rhinos according to sources.⁴⁵



2015 toll:



December 10, 2015

Belguri, State of Assam, India

Four of them on only one horn. They were selling it, others had poached it.⁴⁶

December 2015

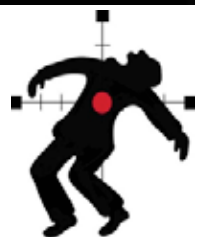
Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India

1 - December 13. Alerted by an informant, security forces intercepted by night a group of 4 or 5 poachers. Two are killed during the fight. A .303 caliber rifle, a silencer, 3 mobile phones, food and ammunition were found on site.



2 - December 23. Poaching of an adult male.

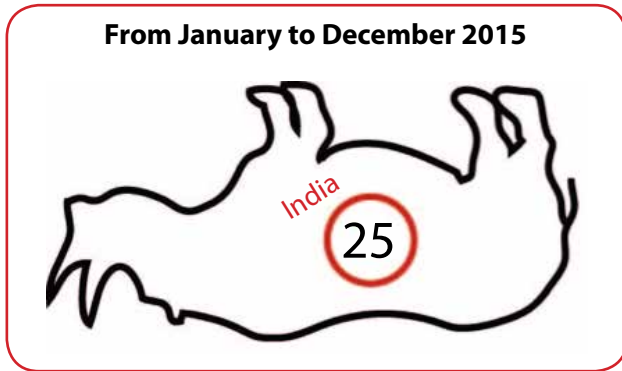
3 - December 26. Poaching of an adult male.⁴⁷



December 29, 2015

Guwahati, State of Assam, India

Seizure of a 900 g fake horn. 4 arrests.⁴⁸



MALAYSIA

October 19, December 25 and 28, 2015

Johor Bahru, State of Johor, Malaysia

Arrest and release on bail for RM 5000 (\$ 1191 US) of the wildlife director for the State National Parks for having stolen century old horns exhibited in the Abu Bakar royal museum in the middle of the afternoon. His chauffeur had returned them 2 days later, apparently in good shape. Yusouf Shariff, 46 years old, was at this job since the month of August.

EUROPE

Report of Czech CITES enforcement authorities on the trade in rhino horns 52

Extracts n°1, to be followed in the 12th "On the Trail" issue

Thefts of rhino horns

In the Czech Republic, 7 cases of thefts in museums and chateaus have been documented between 2010 and 2012 with the biggest theft in the EU-at the chateau of Usov where 7 rhino horns were stolen. The investigation revealed that the same group of 3 Czech citizens was behind the thefts in the Czech Republic. It was impossible to prove their links with the Irish criminal syndicate Rathkeale Rovers, or find the stolen horns. Two perpetrators were sentenced to 3 years of imprisonment.

Operation Rhino - pseudo-hunting

From 2010, several Vietnamese traders along with a Czech mediator hired Czech citizens and paid for their trip to South Africa, stay, and licenses to hunt rhinos. This activity lasted at least 2 to 3 years. The hired persons had no hunting experience. The pseudo-hunters were usually in groups of 3 to 4 trucked to South Africa, most of them to the farm in Limpopo Province owned by South African citizen who has been under investigation in South Africa for several years in relation to the Messina gang*. In the farms the hunters were informed that they would hunt rhinos. They were not allowed to film or take pictures during hunting. If the hunters refused to hunt rhinos they were forced to hunt indiscriminately, or the rhino was shot dead by one of the locals. The hunters, subsequently, during interrogations testified that the rhino hunt was witnessed by 2 men in uniforms with Police Limpopo badges (uniforms were different from a state police). After the hunt the pseudo-hunters signed documents in the farm that they surrender the rhinos as trophies and travelled back to the Czech Republic. From the organizers they received a cash prize (about EUR 600) for their involvement. Between 2010 and 2011, the rhino horns from South Africa were illegally sent directly to Vietnam (they did not go though the Czech Republic) with a non-existent Vietnamese company as their addressee in Vietnam. In May 2011, however, South African authorities detected two such consignments at the airport and 4 rhino horns were confiscated. Therefore, the group has changed its strategy and as of the autumn of 2011 started sending horns first to the Czech Republic. In the Czech Republic, the horns were handed over to Vietnamese organizers, who cut them by a special saw into smaller pieces (water cut to avoid burning of the horn) and then sold or sent them to Vietnam. The exports to Vietnam have been carried out in various ways, among others, through other international airports in the EU, for example, Frankfurt in Germany. The finances for the purposes of the trade have been also provided by affluent Vietnamese citizens living abroad, for example in Switzerland. The customs authorities seized in March 2012 at the Vaclav Havel airport in Prague 10 rhino horns and in July, another 8 rhino horns were similarly seized at the airport in Bratislava. During the investigation the hired pseudo-hunters were seriously threatened (including death among others), if they fail to cooperate with the Vietnamese organizers and will testify. Then the Vietnamese organizers tried to change the tactics and for further hunting they hired a real Czech professional hunter. He hunted rhinos in other farm in Northern Cape Province. The hunter received a cash prize of about EUR 2,800. These horns have never been found; according to information from the investigation they were sent to Vietnam hidden in a shipment with speakers. The case is still in the phase of criminal proceedings in the Czech Republic. In 2013, the Czech Republic arrested 16 people (already released from custody and prosecuted in freedom) –these were the organizers and 11 pseudo-hunters. The case has now been returned to the court for further investigation –international cooperation is required as well as hearing of people involved in South Africa and Switzerland.

*One of the Messina gang's leaders is Dawie Gronenwald. See "On the Trail" n°6 p. 62, n°7 p. 71-72, 75, n°8 p.65 and n°9 p. 64.

He turned himself in voluntarily to the police. He is now on parole. His passport is confiscated. He is pleading not guilty.⁴⁹

NEPAL

October 23, 2015

Hetauda, Central Development Region, Nepal

Arrest of a man on the run, Rabi Shrestha, 53, sentenced in absentia in August 2010 for poaching and trafficking in horns in the Chitwan National Park.⁵⁰

October 2015

Transfer to the Island of Sumatra of a black rhino born in Cincinnati. Since 1989, thanks to what Thane Maynard, director of the Cincinnati zoo and botanical garden calls the "never give up attitude", Sumatra rhinos have blossomed in the Midwest. Three babies have been born. The first one, a male, was sent back to the Island of his origins in 2001 and his mating enables the birth of first offspring in 2012. The 3rd black rhino from Cincinnati has just reached a protected sanctuary. This cooperation between the United States of America and Indonesia owes much to the Tropical Forest Conservation Act enacted in 1998.⁵¹

Rhinos and Elephants

EASTERN AFRICA - SOUTHERN AFRICA

OPERATION WORTHY II

January to October, 2015

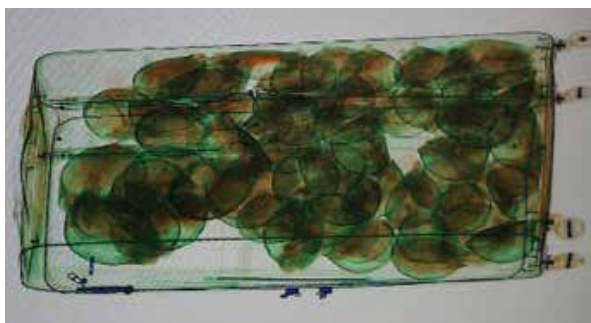
South Africa, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Uganda, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania and Zambia

4.5 tons of tusks and horns were seized by Interpol and by 11 African countries (see also p. 58).

25 criminal groups, extended to Asia including Singapore and Thailand are investigated.

376 people were arrested.

Additional seizures included 2029 pangolin scales, 173 live turtles, 55 kg of sea cucumbers, warthog teeth, big cats and python skins, 532 cartridges and 7 firearms.¹



Turtles suitcase

SOUTHERN AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

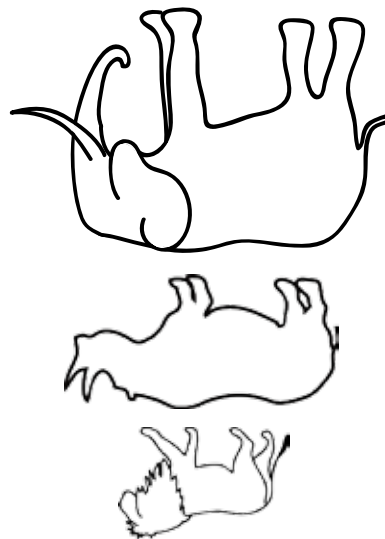
November 12, 2015

KwaDukuza, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa

Seizure of 2 horns and ivory pieces close to a commercial center. The suspect appeared in court.²

NAMIBIA

NAMIBIA: THE BIG THREE ARE IN DANGER



Pohamba Shifeta, the minister of environment and tourism, staggers between traps that were set up for elephants, rhinoceros and lions. The strings of the traffic are pulled in the higher spheres.

Mid-december.

The director of Namrights (National Society for Human Rights of Namibia) sends a report to the general police inspector accusing several political figures of having been involved in the poaching of rhinoceros and elephants. The general inspector claims that they had not received the report. The minister requires further information from Namrights.

December 18.

The guards resist. They don't want to move. They call in trade unions and advance family and health-related problems. The official mail addressed to them washes away all suspicions of poaching or corruption. It also justifies their transfer in the name of the superior interest of public service, and indicates that several civil servants of the Ministry have also been appointed to other working places. However, the revolt does not stop here. At the beginning of the year, the Ministry disclosed its project of restricting the slaughtering of rhinos by relocating elsewhere the guards that had been working in the Etosha Park for a long time (see "On the Trail" n° 9 p. 58 and n° 10 p. 46). Sometimes the cases of Mauser 9 mm guns lie on the ground, next to the rhinoceros carcasses found in the Park or near it. The guards have been using the Mauser in the Etosha Park since the 70s.^{2bis}

October 9, 2015

Rundu, Okavango Region, Namibia

An Angolan national, Eduardo Augusto, was arrested for the illegal possession of 2 elephant tusks. He requested in vain to be released on bail.³

October 21, 2015

Puros, Kunene Region, Namibia

Discovery of a black rhino carcass, dehorned and shot with 5 bullets. The Ministry of Environment and Tourism promises a reward of \$ 60,000 (\$4440 US) for any decisive information.⁴

Namibia:

-1 in 2009

-1 in 2010

-1 in 2011

-2 in 2012

-4 in 2013

-25 in 2014

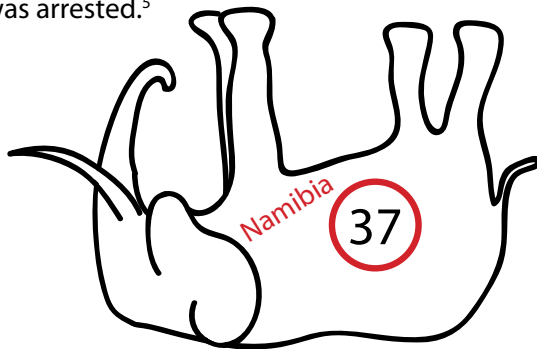
-Between January 1 and October 21, 2015:



November 11, 2015

Rundu Kavango Region, Namibia

Seizure of 2 elephant tusks. A Namibian national was arrested.⁵



November 16 and 17, 2015

Etosha National Park, Kunene Region, Namibia

Two dead black rhinoceros were discovered, including one female who was previously dehorned on a precautionary basis. The poachers worked hard at tearing the roots of the horn. The baby rhinoceros that was with the mother and depended on her disappeared.⁶

December 4, 2015

Windhoek, Namibia

The lawsuit against 4 Chinese expatriates who were involved in an attempt to smuggle 14 rhinoceros horns and a leopard skin back in March 2014 is bogged down (see "On the Trail" n° 10 p. 47). The court considers that the proof of involvement of the first 3 men is not valid, and therefore, it cannot be held against them. Li Xia Olang, Li Zhi Bing and Pu Xuexin were not formally warned that everything they said during the examination of their request of release on bail would be held against them during the trial. Their constitutional rights were not respected.⁷

December 21, 2015

Opuwo, Kunene Region, Namibia



Conviction of a Chinese shopkeeper to 10 years in prison and \$ 100,000 N (\$ 6470 US) fine for the purchase of 2 horns. He claims he bought them around Sesfontein for the modest sum of \$ 2500 N (\$ 161 US) to locals. He operates 2 clothing stores in Oshakati.⁸

The unofficial investigation of Oxpeckers clearly shows that the Chinese citizens who come to the country to establish transportation companies or export-import companies, or those who open clothing stores or grocery stores, often contribute to the increase of poaching and the increased involvement of locals in the spiral of rhinoceros and elephants poaching. When the raw tusks are not exported, rural families, or people living in the outskirts of cities transform them into bracelets, necklaces or pearls, which are then sold in the Chinese neighborhoods of Windhoek and Rundu.

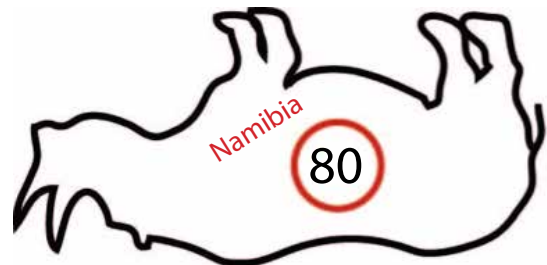
At the beginning of October a former policeman who had become a poacher and a supplier of lion skin and claws to Chinese traffickers, illustrates well that every social group is involved in this process.

A Chinese citizen who had been living in Namibia for a long time highlights that poaching is not worth anything if it is not followed by a subsequent smuggling: "Tusks are worthless here if you can't ship them back to China". Two years ago the most important exit route was the international airport of Windhoek. Since controls have been strengthened, the by-products of poaching in Namibia are smuggled in Botswana and, especially, Zambia before making their big jump to Asia.

End of December 2015

Grootberg, Kunene Region, Namibia

Three adult rhinos poached and death of a baby rhino. Three nationals arrested.⁹



December 2015

Etosha National Park, Region of Kunene, Namibia

One rhino poached

Perseverance of the Anti-poaching Unit of the Park and the skill of the agents operating on land and by air could be fruitful. One single case of rhino poaching has been recorded in December 2015, compared to about twenty cases in December 2014.¹⁰

EASTERN AFRICA

MOZAMBIQUE

December 28, 2015

Maputo, Mozambique

106.3 kg of ivory, 16.2 kg of rhinoceros horns, 2.6 kg of lion claws and 4.9 kg of cannabis were confiscated at the airport and harbor of Maputo between August and December of 2015 and were destroyed by incineration under reinforced police protection. This is the second destruction of the year. See "On the Trail" n° 10 p. 52.¹¹

UGANDA

November 30 and December 3, 2015

Entebbe and Kampala International Airports, Uganda

1- 36 kg of ivory and 3 kg of rhinoceros horns were confiscated during an attempt to export them to Vietnam, through the DAS Handling Ltd. The illicit shipment estimated to be worth 637,560,000 shillings or \$ 186,000 US was hidden in a wooden case, officially transporting timber samples. Two Vietnamese citizens were arrested.



2- Seizure of 9 kg of raw and worked ivory in the house of 3 Vietnamese partners in crime living in Bunga in the southern outskirts of Kampala. Estimated value: 356,640,000 Sh (\$ 103,133 US).¹²

SOUTH SUDAN

October, 2015

Aweil and Warawar, Northern Bahr el Ghazal, South Sudan

1- A South Sudanese national was arrested for the possession of false documents authorizing him to trade ivory. He was going to sell 2 tusks to a trafficker that was not found.

2- A piece of rhinoceros horn was found at a Sudanese citizen. He was not arrested in order to take care of the relationships with the Sudanese tribes. "We released him to maintain the peace".¹³

MIDDLE AFRICA

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

October 18, 2015

N'djili International Airport, Kinshasa Province, Democratic Republic of Congo

Seizure of 4 bags weighing 113 kg, containing 60 tips of tusks and 2 white rhinoceros horns to Hanoi, Vietnam on an Air France flight. They could have been stolen from animals in the National Park of Garamba according to the ICCN (Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation). The 2 Vietnamese men who carried the bags have vanished. Before being detected thanks to the newly installed scanners, the 4 bags would have been registered and checked in the Kinshasa Air France office inside the Memling hotel.¹⁴



ASIA

CHINA

October 12, 2015

Hong Kong, Guangdong Province, Shandong Province and Beijing, China

Seizure of 804.4 kg of ivory, 11.3 kg of rhinoceros horns and 35 bear paws, worth 24 millions yuans (\$ 4 millions US) according to authorities. The May 21 network - code name that was assigned to him by the police - had specialized vehicles for transportation, warehouses and a processing plant. This is the biggest wildlife trafficking network ever discovered in the country. The investigation lasted 3 months. The ivory came mainly from Japan and entered in mainland China through Hong Kong. EIA (Environmental Investigation Agency) has just published a report denouncing the shortcomings of the control on ivory sales in the Land of the Rising Sun where every year 1000 dubious origin tusks are marketed through the Internet and traders versed in all the tricks of the sad trade of illegal ivory. For the pre-registration certificate for marketing, the perfect trick is to solemnly affirm that the ivory comes from an inheritance. The written testimony of a neighbor or a relative can do the trick. Photos, records, invoices or other documents proving the age of the ivory are not necessary. The tusks will then be debited in Hankos - personal seals - or sent to China...

INDIA

November 10, 2015

Jalpaiguri, West Bengal, India

5 tusks of a total weight of 5 kg and a piece of rhinoceros horn weighting 150 g, bound for China via Nepal were seized. 5 people were arrested.¹⁶

SECRETES DEFENSES



The CSCL Indian Ocean, 19,100 container capacity, stranded in the Elbe river from the 3rd to the 9th of February 2016, downstream of Hamburg, Germany.

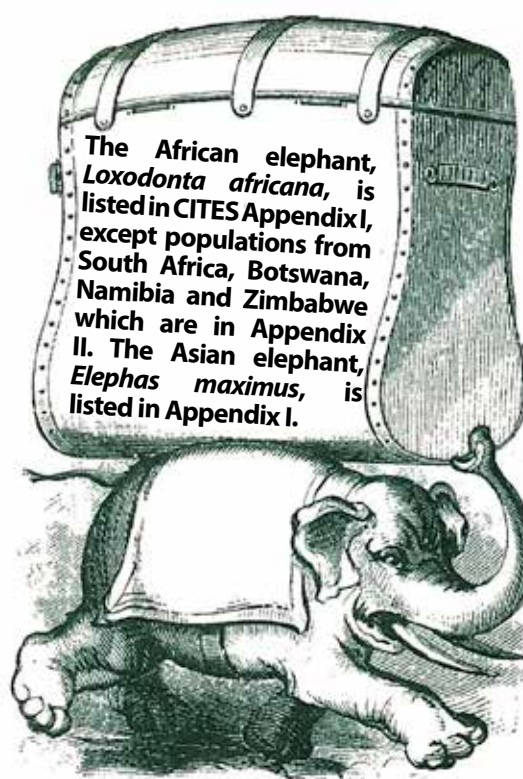
Overseen by the United for Wildlife International, an NGO led by the Duke of Cambridge, international airline and maritime companies signed a partnership agreement in December 2015 to fight against illegal traffic in wildlife, mainly focusing on species that are listed under CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) Appendix I.

However, in their statement of good intent, the signatories failed to engage in filing a complaint against the loaders, airport and port officers, crew, and the passengers who –either due to negligence, a lack of diligence or deliberate intention- facilitate smuggling or become accomplices. The declaration highlights several times that since the containers are sealed before the loading, the capacity to detect any illegal traffic is limited. On the same subject, see “On the Trail” no.9, p. 78: “Dangerous Liaisons”.

Elephants

“On the Trail” n°11 Black market raw ivory quotation from media or customs sources

Continent	Country	US\$/kg	Ref.
Africa	Uganda	300	75
	Tanzania	602	25
		3231	26
	Zimbabwe	253	30
		250	34
38			
43			
Asia	Hong Kong/ China	1290	74
			73
			77
	China	10,776	75



NORTHERN AFRICA

ALGERIA

December 1, 2015

Boudouanou and Dar el Beida, Boumerdès Province, Basse Kabylie Region, Algeria

Seizure of 2 carved tusks, a hundred of worked ivories of a total weight of 20 kg, 12,000 bottles of alcohol, 600 cartons of cigarette, walkie-talkies, 10 mobile phones, and significant amounts of money in Algerian, Chinese and American currencies. Three Chinese and an Algerian national were arrested.

"These objects containing this precious loot were stolen in several African countries before being exported to the eastern suburbs of Algeria, waiting for their final delivery to China."¹



EASTERN AFRICA

ETHIOPIA

Mid November, 2015

Gambela, Ethiopia

Seizure of 2 tusks heading for Addis-Abeba (500 km).²

End of December, 2015 Bole International Airport, Addis-Abeba, Oromia Region, Ethiopia

Seizure of tusks and ivory bracelets. A Chinese passenger was arrested.³



KENYA

October 1, 2015

Kibera, Nairobi Region, Kenya

An Australian national of South Sudanese origin was ordered to a fine of one million shillings (\$9535 US) for the possession of 5 ivory bracelets, estimated to be worth Sh 200,000 (\$ 1907 US). If she fails to pay she will have to carry out a sentence of 5 years in prison. She was stopped on the 25th of September at the Nairobi Airport as she was about to fly to China.⁴



© Public Prosecutions Kenya

Beginning of October, 2015 Makindu, Makueni County, Kenya



Life-long sentence or a fine of 30 millions shillings (\$ 286,057 US) for the illegal possession of 2 tusks. The man claims that he was the victim of manipulation. The Kenya Wildlife Service (KSW) discovered the tusks close to his hiding place. The Court considered that there is no doubt regarding his guiltiness.⁵

PURPLE NOTICE

October 13, 2015

Kenya

Interpol released a notice following a Kenyan request against of the Guinean Morlaye Cherif, alias Musa Cherif. A load of 95 kg of ivory was confiscated from him on the 1st of July in 2014 in Gilgil, in the Nakuru County (see "On the Trail" n° 6 p. 76). Interpol describes the modus operandi, indicating that the "painting of ivory in brown paint, concealed through dagaa fish packaging with view of avoiding detection by canine unit (sniffer dogs)". "On the Trail" has highlighted some similar tricks in the past, especially regarding the mixing of ivory with snails stuffed with garlic (see n° 1 p. 28, n° 2 p. 53 and 56, n° 3 p. 60 and 66, n° 5 p. 95 and n° 9 p. 75).⁶



© Interpol

November 1, 2015

Kenya

The elephant has been treated for over a year due to cancerous tumors on his genitalia. Today he was speared due to a territory-related conflict with the nomad herders. Upon waking up, he spontaneously moved farther away from the hazardous area.⁷



© Big Life Foundation

November 6, 2015
Taita Taveta County, Kenya

Seizure of 3 pieces of ivory (2.5 kg) in the possession of Eliud mbogho Majani, an important public figure of the county.⁸

November 9, 2015
Oi Maisor Ranch, Laikipia County, Kenya

Urgent treatment of an elephant that has been wounded by gunshots on the front right leg and the back left leg. He was found in the savanna limping and suffering 11 days after. He had to be put to death.⁹



November, 2015
Amboseli National Park, Kajiado County, Kenya

Wounded in the back by a spear, the 16-year-old elephant was anesthetized and treated.

"How is her breathing?"

"Six deep breaths on the minute,"

"If it goes below five breaths a minute we're in trouble,"

She woke up and walked away.¹⁰



Mid-November, 2015
Masai Mara National Reserve, South-West of Kenya

The 2 beautiful tusks of the adult female elephant were found in the shrubs.¹¹



The weekend of November 21, 2015
Namunyak Community Conservancy, Samburu County, Kenya

Seizure of 8 tusks and one man arrested. The 3 suspects drove away with the loot in their hands. Two of them managed to escape. The other one may be sentenced to prison for life, or may be ordered to a fine of \$ 195,000 US.¹²



December 14, 2015
Narok County, Kenya

Seizure of 2 tusks. Four people were arrested and released on bail of one million shillings (\$ 9748 US) each. The carcass is said to have been transported by the rise in the water level of the Mogor river, and deposited on a sandy bank. At birth, the calves have 5 cm long incisor baby teeth, which fall out after their first year. The tusks begin to grow at the age of 2.¹³



The trunk is also used to scratch the eyes

December 30, 2015

Mombasa, Mombasa County, Kenya

Mohammed Hussein Warsame was arrested for the possession of 54 munitions. He claims that he has been involved in poaching activities ever since he was fired from the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) in 2008 and that he still has not received his laying-off benefit. He also claims that his life is in danger: "I fear that KWS officers might gain entry into the cells and kill me. I know how they treat poachers, I have worked with them."¹⁴

MALAWI

FAMILY AFFAIRS

REPEATED OFFENSE

Mid-October, 2015

Rumphi District, Malawi

The father and the son are under 6 charges: illegal possession of arms and munitions, poaching of protected species, possession of a state trophy, illegal loitering, and a watch-firing in a protected area. This is the third time that the father, Justin Fungwe, is arrested for similar charges. "The wind" or in other words gossips, let the police know that some sleazy things were going on in the Fungwe home. When the police has dropped in, they found the meat, the skin and 2 tusks.¹⁵

Mid-October, 2015

Liwonde National Park, Malawi

Rescue of an elephant trapped by its front left leg. Unfortunately, traps are present in all the national parks and other protected areas. Although, they are designed for small or medium sized mammals, the traps ensnared sometimes the big ones. A limping and suffering elephant was signaled. The vets rushed at the scene. They extracted the metal that gashed his leg deeply. Two days later, he was seen close to a water hole in the middle of a family. He will continue to be monitored.¹⁶



© Amanda Harwood/Lilongwe Wildlife Trust



© Frank Weitzer/Cluny Wildlife Trust

MOZAMBIQUE

October 3, 2015

Nampula Airport, Nampula Province, Mozambique

Seizure of 104 kg of ivory departing to Doha, Qatar. Two Chinese nationals were arrested. In the past few years, Qatar has become an important transit point for ivory and for the trade in wild animals between East Africa and Asia. Qatar Airways announced in August its intention to stop the carriage of all animals or their parts that are listed under CITES.¹⁷

Beginning of October, 2015

Niassa National Reserve, Mozambique

Those who seek gold and ivory are scouring the Reserve and are decapitating the elephants.¹⁸



© Niassa Lion Project

October 16, 2015

Pemba, Cabo Delgado Province, Mozambique

Seizure of 9 tusks. Two men were arrested. They are certainly coming from elephants of the Niassa National Reserve and were bought for 160,000 meticaís (\$ 4000 US) in the Marrupa district. Two local traffickers planned to sell them in the Pemba neighborhood, the harbor at the Indian Ocean, from where ivory and illegal timber are usually smuggled (see "On the Trail" n° 2 p. 64, n° 6 p. 84, n° 7 p. 83, n° 8 p. 63 and n°10 p. 51).¹⁹

November 8, 2015

Montepuez District, Cabo Delgado Province, Mozambique

The readers of "On the Trail" have been following the hide and seek between the 2 kingpins: poachers and the wildlife police force of Mozambique (see "On the Trail" n° 6 p 104 and n° 7 p. 86). In the latest episode, Bernardo and Nyenje were caught during the night and were put in jail. We will be back with the next episode...²⁰

End of November, 2015

Niassa National Reserve, Mozambique

15 elephants were killed. All but one of them had their tusks taken. The great reserve is full of thieves. The government, the National Parks Agency and the NGOs want to put a tag on the female elephants that bring their whole family with them. Knowing where the herds of elephants are is one way to protect them, as it allows a fast arrival to the field in case there are any problems. However, it would be catastrophic if these valuable information come to fall into the hands of poachers.²¹

UGANDA

November 25, 2015

Uganda

Seizure of an elephant trunk. Two people were arrested.

It remains a mystery how the elephant's head was split. "You get the tusks, you get the ears and I will just take the trunk?"²²

TANZANIA

October 8, 2015

Tanzania

Two Tanzanian nationals, Manase Philemon and Silvanus Matembo, and the 66 year-old Yang Feng Glan (called "The Queen of Ivory") were arrested. She is accused of being in charge for the traffic of at least 700 elephant tusks (1800 kg) with the destination of Asia. She has been living in Tanzania for 35 years. She worked as a translator for a Chinese public works company. She is really well integrated in East Africa thanks to her excellent knowledge of Swahili and her job as a Secretary General to the Chinese-African Chamber of Commerce in Dar es Salaam, where she also runs a well-known Chinese restaurant. She was trailed for a year now. She felt the trouble ahead of her, so she moved to Uganda. It was only during her visit to her grand daughter in Tanzania that she was arrested. Her first request to be bailed was refused on the 12th of October. Her lawyer affirms that she will plead not guilty.²³



End of October, 2015

Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania

Boniface Matthew Mariango, called "the evil" was arrested. He was supposedly in contact with the "Queen of Ivory". He is suspected to have been managing 15 gangs of poachers in Tanzania, Zambia, Burundi, Mozambique, and in Kenya by supplying them with munitions, firearms and cars.²⁴



December 18, 2015

Mpanda, Katavi Region, Tanzania



Two villagers aged 35 and 50 were sentenced to 42 years in prison for transporting 4 tusks (47.6 kg) estimated to be worth Sh 60 millions (\$ 28,687 US). They had been arrested 2 months before, as they were carrying the ivory on a motorcycle.²⁵

December 18, 2015

Dar-es-Salaam, Dar-es-Salaam Region, Tanzania

Seizure of 156 pieces of ivory (211,6 kg) uprooted from 45 elephants, estimated to be worth 1.43 milliard shillings (\$ 683,708 US) or \$ 3231 US/kg. Two people arrested.²⁶

End of December, 2015

Mpanda District, Katavi Region, Tanzania



Two 20 year-old Burundian refugees were sentenced to 20 years in prison for concealing of 3 pieces of tusks (see "On the Trail" n°9 p. 76). They were contracted to transport ivory from western Tanzania to Dar-es-Salaam, 1100 km away.²⁷

ZAMBIA

REPEATED OFFENSE

Beginning of December, 2015

Livingstone, Southern Province, Zambia



Three men (aged 25, 30 and 37) were sentenced to 5 years in prison for the illegal possession of ivory. They were also sentenced for 5 years for the illegal possession of firearms and 5 years for the illegal possession of munitions. The sentences run concurrently. The trio had been found with 9 kg of raw ivory, with elephant meat and a tail amounting to a total of 180 kg in December 2014. They have already been sentenced in the past for the same charges.²⁸



EASTERN AFRICA

NAMIBIA

See page 64 and following.

ZIMBABWE

October, November, December 2015
National Park of Hwange, Northern Matabeleland, Zimbabwe

Special deal: 1 kg of cyanide for \$ 10 US! The poison is common in Zimbabwe. The gold mines are full of it, and it gets out of them in full bags. Poisoning animals with cyanide has become more prevalent in the Park since the dreadful episode of the summer of 2013. In Sinamatella, in the heart of the Park, a waterhole has been revisited by a herd of elephants despite the reinforced surveillance of Park rangers. The rangers are paid with a delay of several months. Some of them succumb to the temptation of the easy money of illegal traffic, while others continue to disturb the "work" of poachers who are locals or foreigners coming from Zambia or Mozambique. Several elephants were found dead and complete, the villains did not have enough time to take the white gold.



- October 7. 14 carcasses
- October 13. 26 carcasses
- October 26. 22 carcasses
- October 23. Three elephants were shot in the area of Jambezi, at the edge of the Park. A man who was in the process of cutting up an animal was arrested, while 3 of his partners in crime escaped.

Harare, November 2 and November 4: The press is handcuffed. The chief editor, the responsible of investigations, and a journalist of the Sunday Mail are arrested and released on bail. They are waiting for the trial to be scheduled. They are charged with spreading false information and harming Zimbabwe's reputation. They had just highlighted the responsibility of a police officer, a guard and some Asian expatriates in the mass poisonings.

November 27. In fact, there is much truth in the Sunday Mail's article. A ranger in the Hwange Park's headquarters was arrested. He admits having come down in March 2015 when he killed an adult elephant who carried 36 kg of ivory, and confessed having been afterwards involved in the cyanide poisoning. He questioned 6 of his colleagues who have been dismissed up to the end of the inquiry. One of the managers of the Park was immediately ordered to take up other duties. Part of the poached ivory was laundered and easy to circulate through the country thanks to stamps stolen from the legal ivory stock from elephants that died of natural causes. Apparently, it still happens !

By the end of December the number of poisoned elephants is estimated to be 62. According to the well-informed NGO Zimbabwe Conservation Task Force, at least 103 elephants have been poisoned to death in all the National Parks of the country together with number of vultures, wild-dogs, turtles, antelopes, giraffes and buffalos.²⁹

October 5, 2015

Border checkpoint of the Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

Seizure of 25 kg of 150 pieces of ivory (of a value of \$ 6320 US or \$ 253 US per kilogram), and a 3 m long python skin. The Zambian trafficker was arrested at the border. His final destination was going to be South Africa.³⁰

October 6, 2015

Harare International Airport, Zimbabwe

Seizure of 8 tusks, as they were departing on a flight of Air Zimbabwe. The destination was not disclosed. The following day Edwin Makuwe, a biologist associated of Zimbabwe's National Parks' management, was arrested along with 2 rangers. The identification number of the tusks reveals an ambiguous origin. They may have been stolen from the vault of the Hwange National Park's headquarters.³¹



Beginning of October, 2015

Mana Pools National Park, Western Mashonaland, Zimbabwe

Seizure of 14 tusks. A set of 12 poachers were identified but have not yet been intercepted. Soon after, an anti-poacher group arrested one of them, a Zimbabwean national, nicknamed Orbit, on a small island of Zambezi, 100m away from the border. He was in a state of complete exhaustion. He was one of the carriers of the gang. He claims that 7 male elephants were killed in 5 days. The mess was supposed to last for 14 days, but he decided with another 2 carriers to cut it short and go home earlier.³²

October 19, 2015

Mangwe, Southern Matabeleland, Zimbabwe

Discovery of a carcass whose tusks have been removed. The elephants coming from Botswana might have been looking for waterholes.³³

October 24, 2015

Harare International Airport, Zimbabwe

Seizure of 173 kg of ivory estimated to be worth \$ 43,250 US or \$ 250 US/kg. Three Zimbabwean and a Malian national were arrested and appeared in court. The destination was to be Singapore. The investigators have not yet confirmed whether this ivory comes from the mass poisonings in the Hwange Park.³⁴

REPEATED OFFENSE

Mid-November, 2015

Kwekwe, Midlands Province, Zimbabwe

Seizure of 37 kg of ivory. Four poachers and traffickers were arrested and appeared in court. Two of them were involved in the cyanide poisoning of 2013 and in a failed attempt to steal ivory from the park's vault.³⁵



At least 4 tusks

November 21, 2015

Zimbabwe



Condemned to 9 years in prison.³⁶

REPEATED OFFENSE

November 23, 2015

Kariba, Western Mashonaland, Zimbabwe

Conviction of 4 poachers who were arrested with 7 freshly torn out tusks. One of them was sentenced to 9 years with hard labor for poaching and to 4 years suspended sentence for illegal possession of arms. Another one was sentenced to 9 years in prison with hard labor for poaching. They have also to pay compensation equal to \$ 100,000 US.

The third one was sentenced to 4 years in prison, of which one suspended, for illegal possession of arms. The fourth one, a woman who was accomplice, was given a suspended sentence for 15 months.³⁷



November 23, 2015

Harare, Harare Province, Zimbabwe

Seizure of 10 pieces of ivory (15.2 kg) estimated to be worth \$ 3800 US or \$ 250 US/kg. One person was arrested.³⁸

FAMILY AFFAIRS

End of November, 2015

Kariba, Western Mashonaland, Zimbabwe



Conviction of 2 brothers to 13 years in prison for ivory trafficking and for carrying a weapon without a license. Their sister-in-law was convicted to a suspended sentence for 2 years for receiving stolen goods. In her defense, she claims that she was not capable of informing the police because the closest office is 20 km away and she had just given birth.³⁹

November 26 and December 2, 2015

Between Karoi et Chinhoyi, Western Mashonaland, Zimbabwe



Seizure of 6 tusks. Arrest and sentence to 9 years in prison.⁴⁰

December 10, 2015

Zimbabwe

Seizure of 2 tusks (18 kg). Two people were arrested.⁴¹



REPEATED OFFENSE

December 12, 2015

Zimbabwe

Seizure of ivory, estimated to be worth \$ 3000 US. Patrick Mapfumu fled after his release on bail 2 years ago, but was arrested again.⁴²



December 12, 2015

Harare, Harare Province, Zimbabwe

Two women were arrested, 33 and 36 years old, in a car, due to the illegal possession of 25.9 kg of ivory, estimated to be worth \$ 250 US/kg.⁴³

December 20, 2015

Bulawayo, Bulawayo Province, Zimbabwe

Discovery and seizure of 19 kg of raw ivory in a train coming from Victoria Falls. It is possible that the tusks came from elephants in the Hwange National Park.⁴⁴



End of December, 2015

Guruve, Central Mashonaland, Zimbabwe

Seizure of 2 tusks (5.53 kg) estimated to be worth \$1382 US or \$250 US/kg. The 37-year-old Henry Zvitete was arrested for attempting to sell the tusks to his clients who were policemen.⁴⁵

EASTERN AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

October 22, 2015

North of the Kruger National Park, Limpopo and Mpumalanga Provinces, South Africa

The Kruger Park is no longer an elephant sanctuary. 19 elephants have been poached since the beginning of the year. To achieve their goals, the poachers use latest fashion automated pistols, or they resort to poisoning. One elephant was cut up in place, and its tusks were amputated. The spinal cord and the trunk were sprayed with pure Temik. It is a dangerous insecticide even in small doses that should not be left close to children neither close to vultures or lions. 47 carrion eaters birds and 4 big cats died. The gang kept watch for a long time and have taken hold of the dorsal fur of the lions, their paws and their heads, which suggests sorcerer muthi (see "On the Trail" n°4 p. 51 and n°8 p. 61) were familiar with the killing. It took 5 days for the guards to cleanse the place and burn the carcasses.⁴⁶



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