

ROBIN DES BOIS

# ON<sub>the</sub> TRAIL

The defaunation bulletin  
Quarterly information and analysis report on animal poaching and smuggling  
n°23. Events from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018 to the 31 of January 2019  
Published on August 5, 2019

Original version in French





“On the Trail”, the defaunation magazine, aims to get out of the drip of daily news to draw up every three months an organized and analyzed survey of poaching, smuggling and worldwide market of animal species protected by national laws and international conventions.

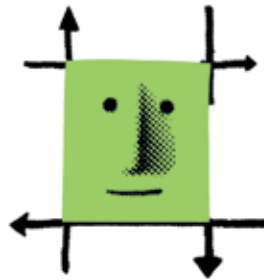
“On the Trail” highlights the new weapons of plunderers, the new modus operandi of smugglers, rumours intended to attract humans consumers of animals and their by-products. “On the Trail” gathers and disseminates feedback from institutions, individuals and NGOs that fight against poaching and smuggling. End to end, the “On the Trail” are the biological, social, ethnological, police, customs, legal and financial chronicle of poaching and other conflicts between humanity and animality.

**Previous issues in English**

<http://www.robindesbois.org/en/a-la-trace-bulletin-dinformation-et-danalyses-sur-le-braconnage-et-la-contrebande/>

**Previous issues in French**

<http://www.robindesbois.org/a-la-trace-bulletin-dinformation-et-danalyses-sur-le-braconnage-et-la-contrebande/>



ROBIN DES BOIS

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# Giraffes

Table with giraffe's legs of unknown origin for sale from Germany 1900 € on Amazon.



**AFRICA**

**KENYA**

**Mid-December 2018  
Kenya**

Rescue of a reticulated giraffe (*Giraffa reticulata*) caught in a metal trap. Favorable prognosis.<sup>1</sup>



© DSWT

**January 21, 2019  
Galana Wildlife Conservancy, Kilifi County, Kenya**

Rescue of a male giraffe, neck caught in a trap. Favorable prognosis.<sup>2</sup>



© DSWT

**MOZAMBIQUE**

**End of December 2018  
Maputo Special Reserve, Maputo Province, Mozambique**

Rescue of 2 giraffes (genus *Giraffa*) wounded by throwing weapons. Difficult operation. Captured after 2 days, anesthetized. Difficult to control the fall to avoid neck fracture. Wound disinfection. Administration of anti-inflammatory drugs. One of the giraffes was pregnant and accompanied by a one-and-a-half-year-old offspring.<sup>3</sup>

# 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 Eswatini 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°23  
The value of horn on the black market, according to media or official sources**

Continent	Country	US\$	Ref.
Africa	Zimbabwe	44,750	11
	South Africa	13,800	42
Asia	China	25,930	50
	Thailand	28,570	67
	Turkey	64,705	68

**EASTERN AFRICA**

**KENYA**

**December 2018  
Amboseli Ecosystem, Kenya**

Emergency care for a rhino whose left front leg was seriously injured by a metal trap. Joint operation of the KWS (Kenya Wildlife Service) and DSWT (David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust). Optimistic prognosis.<sup>1</sup>



© DSWT

**January 8, 2019  
Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, Meru County, Kenya**  
Emergency care for a female rhino victim of several leg injuries of unknown origin. Prognosis guarded.<sup>2</sup>

## MALAWI

**October 19, 2018**

**Liwonde, Southern Region, Malawi**

Sentencing of the poacher of a female black rhino to 18 years in prison and of his 2 accomplices to 8 and 10 years in prison with hard labour and without the possibility of avoiding imprisonment by an alternative fine. In the grounds to the judgment, the senior judge Mr. Masoamphambe described the poachers as “enemies of the Nation”. The Director of National Parks, Mr. Kumchedwa, welcomed the increased sanctions. 97% of poaching and trafficking trials now result in prison sentences, while in previous years, 60% of cases resulted in an average fine of 40 US\$.<sup>3</sup>



## MOZAMBIQUE

**October 7, 2018**

**Maputo International Airport, Maputo Province, Mozambique**

Seizure of 9 horns wrapped in aluminum foil amid food products in the luggage of a Chinese national on his way to Viet Nam. This is the fifth seizure of this category at the airport since the beginning of the year. The suspects have always been of Asian origin and the main destination is Viet Nam.<sup>4</sup>



**October 17, 2018**

**Beira Airport, Sofala Province, Mozambique**

Seizure of horn fragments in the suitcase of a passenger flying to China via South Africa.<sup>5</sup>

**November 7, 2018**

**Maputo International Airport, Maputo Province, Mozambique**

Seizure of 9 kg rhinoceros horns in the belongings of F. Zheg, 49 years old, Chinese passport. He was getting ready to board a Qatar Airways flight.<sup>6</sup>

**December 4, 2018**

**Mozambique**

Poaching of a female black rhino. There are less than 2,500 in southern Africa, their only wild habitat, and a few in zoos in Europe, Japan and the United States.<sup>7</sup>

## ZAMBIA

**October 4 - November 26, 2018**

**Livingstone, Southern Province, Zambia**

- Arrest of 2 magistrates of the local court and 3 other persons presented as businessmen and real estate agents in possession of 2 horns with a total weight of 7.125 kg. Bail release of 100,000 kwachas (8,430 US\$) each.

- Sentencing of the 2 magistrates, Active Tambo and Elvis Siakachoma, and their accomplices to 7 years in prison.<sup>8</sup>

## ZIMBABWE

**October 18, 2018**

**Bubye Valley Conservancy, Southern Matabeleland Province, Zimbabwe**

Discovery of a freshly killed and dehorned black male rhino. Alive, he is said having an economic value of 120,000 US\$. This is the fourth time since the beginning of the year that poachers have fired on the rhinos in the area.<sup>9</sup>

**Mid-December 2018**

**Beitbridge, Matabeleland South Province, Zimbabwe**

Celestino Shate and Faso Moyo were sentenced to 10 years in prison for poaching. Their footprints were identified by rangers who tracked them for 3 hours. After the patrol fired 3 warning shots, they fled instead of surrendering. Makechemu, their accomplice, involved in a previous case of poaching, was acquitted due to a lack of sufficient proof.<sup>10</sup>



**December 23, 2018**

**Victoria Falls, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe**

Seizure of 20.98 kg of horns valued at 938,700 US\$ (44,750 US\$ /kg) from 7 Chinese nationals aged 25 to 35 years. Police raided their homes under a warrant from the prosecutor after receiving from their cleaning lady detailed information about suspicious plastic bags. All 7 men were arrested. Their lawyer says they are ready to appear and prove their innocence.<sup>11</sup>



**SOUTH AFRICA**

**Early October 2018  
Skukuza Section, Kruger National Park,  
Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**

Complaint of SANParks to the Order of Magistrates against Simon Fankomo, a judge of the Skukuza court specializing in poaching offences. SANParks accuses Fankomo, who was appointed to the Skukuza court 3 months ago, of consistently showing poachers an indulgence that is not in accordance with the criminal code. For example, a man who entered Kruger Park with an unregistered high-caliber weapon was fined 3000 rand (205 US\$) when he was facing 5 to 15 years in prison. Repeat poaching offenders are granted bail and Fankomo is also accused of transferring poaching files to the Bushbuckridge court without any legal reason. The Skukuza court, which began operating at the beginning of 2017, is renowned for the quality of its investigation files.<sup>12</sup>

**October 2018  
KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**

Eric Nzimande, President of the regional court, has been relieved of his duties until further notice. He is suspected of having asked for and received money in exchange for the appointment of lawyers to the rank of acting magistrate. One of the beneficiaries would be a regular defender of rhino poachers. These arrangements would have resulted in light sentences or too many releases on bail for poachers.<sup>13</sup>

**October 2, 2018  
Great Fish River Nature Reserve, South Africa**

Arrest of 3 alleged poachers a few hours after the discovery of 2 black rhinos shot to death in the reserve.<sup>14</sup>

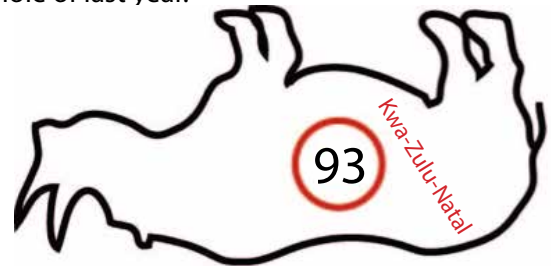
**Early October 2018  
South Africa**

Attempt to rescue a young male whose nasal horn was cut at the bottom by poachers. The bandage is made of fiberglass.<sup>15</sup>



**Early October 2018  
Pongola, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa.  
Border with Eswatini.**

Arrest of 6 alleged poachers in a guest house. Seizure of 2 knives, 7 ammunition from a CZ550 magnum with an erased number. Vincent Mathothe, Hloniphani Khumalo, Mhlekiwa Dlamini, Florence Lubisis, Mogala Ragolane and Frans Tshabangu, aged 34 to 48, are in pre-trial detention and are seeking bail. Less poaching in KwaZulu-Natal in 2018 than in 2017 according to the KwaZulu-Natal police spokesman. To date, 93 against 192 for the whole of last year.



Mr. Engelbrecht, manager of the Vryheid Game Reserve, is in favour of the free sale (under conditions) of rhino horns.

"When I started up, every farm had up to 8 rhinos on the property. Now, there are only 3 farms in the area that still have rhinos." "A living rhino is no longer worth much". He advances the price of 180,000 rand (12,760 US\$) for a 10-year-old adult female - because of the risks of poaching, security costs and permanent anxiety. The arguments of supporters of the free sale of horns are based on the following figures. A kilo of horn sells for 350,000 rand (25,000 US\$) in the Far East. Poachers receive 100,000 rand (7,090 US\$) per kilo. A rhino would produce 1 kg of horn per year, the annual income for a single specimen then would be around 200,000 rand (14,180 US\$) per year and a rhino living 40 years then would be worth several million rand.<sup>16</sup>



**October 10, 2018  
KwaMsane, KwaZulu-Natal Province,  
South Africa**

Three arrests aged 20 to 28.<sup>17</sup>



**October 11, 2018**

**Hluhluwe-Umfolozi Game Reserve, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**

New involvement of a SAPS (South African Police Service) agent in horn trafficking. Sizwe Buthelezi was caught in the act of transporting 2 freshly cut horns from the reserve, Makhamisa section, and carrying a .458 caliber rifle which number was erased and which came from a vault where weapons seized on poachers are stored as evidence pending trial. Buthelezi tried to escape but his car crashed into a wall. An accomplice managed to escape. It was only on Sunday, October 21, that the case was made public thanks to an investigation by the media News24, which had received confidential information. The next day, Monday, October 22, Buthelezi's application for interim release was heard by the Ngwelezane court. It was granted to him under a bail of 2000 rand (130 US\$).<sup>18</sup>

**October 22, 2018**

**Kruger Park, Limpopo or Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**

Arrest of 8 suspected poachers in 3 different sections of the park thanks to the joint efforts of the rangers and the canine brigade, with the help of helicopters. Seizure of large calibers, ammunition and the usual poaching kits for rhinos (or elephants).<sup>19</sup>

**October 24, 2018**

**Near Kampersrus, Limpopo Province, South Africa**

Three presumed poachers were arrested in possession of unregistered fire arms, munitions, a knife and an axe. Two of them, Maseko and Themba were released on bail for 500 rand (35 US\$) each until the trial. The third was acquitted.<sup>20</sup>



**October 26, 2018**

**Near Lephalale, Limpopo Province, South Africa**

Interception around 9:45 p.m. of a vehicle reported on Route 33. Seizure of a firearm, large calibers, 6 ammunitions, an axe, and 3 knives. Three arrests. Suspicion of imminent poaching.<sup>21</sup>



**October 27, 2018**

**Near Kuruman, Northern Cape Province, South Africa**



Violent arrest of 5 alleged poachers and seizure of an assault rifle. They are suspected of having poached several rhinos in the area in August 2018.<sup>22</sup>



**October 27, 2018**

**KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**

A guard who was inspecting the fence in a hunting reserve was hit by several shots of unknown origin. He's in the hospital in a state of absolute emergency.<sup>23</sup>

**October 28, 2018**

**Near Komatipoort, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa. Border with Mozambique.**

Seizure of 5 horns in a stolen vehicle. Three suspects were arrested immediately, and an accomplice who managed to flee was arrested subsequently. He was in possession of 2 rifles. The 4 men asked to be released on bail.<sup>24</sup>



**October 2018**

**Pongola, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**

They were getting stronger in a guest house before poaching. Seizure of one rifle, ammunition, knives, and an axe. Interview of Mathothe, Khumalo, Dlamini, Lubisi, Ragolane, and Tshabangu, alleged poachers. aged 34 to 53 years.<sup>25</sup>



**November 2, 2018**

**White River, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**

After their spectacular arrest (see "On the Trail" n°22 p. 81), their release on bail is a joy for fans and newspaper headlines : Petros Sidney Mabuza aka Mister Big released on a bail of 6,200 US\$ (cf. "On the Trail" n°22 p. 79), Claude Lubisi 690 US\$, Clyde Mnisi 3,400 US\$, Joseph Nyalunga alias Big Joe (cf. "On the Trail" n°12 p. 69) 8,200 US\$, Aretha Mhlanga 690 US\$ and Rachel Qwebana 690 US\$. None of the band members have the right to enter and leave Kruger Park without informing the police. Their accomplice Phineas Lubisi, a senior SAPS officer stationed in Skukuza at the time of his arrest, had been released on bail of 690 US\$ a month earlier. The police officers in charge of the investigation received physical threats. They fear for their safety and that of their families. The prosecutor's cars and a Hawks vehicle were vandalized during the hearing.<sup>26</sup>

**November 9, 2018**

**Skukuza, Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**

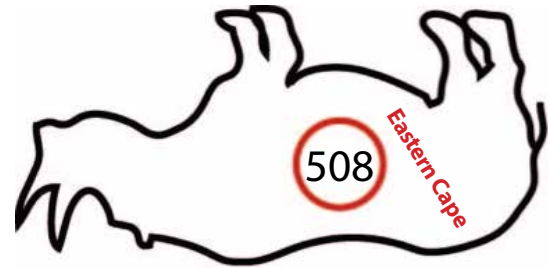
Patrick Nkuna was sentenced to 40 years in prison with a minimum mandatory term of 33 years and 3 months. In November 2015, Nkuna and 2 accomplices were caught in the act of poaching within Kruger Park, in the Pretoriuskop sector. Pursued by a low-flying SanParks helicopter, Nkuna finally shot at the helicopter. The pilot, who had 18 years of experience, managed to dodge the shot. Nkuna ran into the bushes, throwing his weapon aside so he could run faster. The pilot caught up with him a few hundred meters away and, on the open savanna, managed to trip him with one of the helicopter skids. A ranger jumped out of the helicopter as it landed and, after a brief struggle, immobilized Nkuna. The helicopter was on a special mission. It was transporting General Johan Jooste for a general inspection of the southern part of the park. Since that epic incident, the SanParks helicopters and fixed-wing planes have been the targets of poachers' bullets 4 times. Up until now, none of them have crashed, contrary to the case of the tragic death of Roger Gower in Tanzania. (See "On the Trail" n°12 p. 80).<sup>27</sup>



**November 10-11, 2018**

**Lombardini Game Farm, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa**

Fatal poaching of a female about to give birth. A watchman heard 4 shots in the night. He immediately called the police and the reserve personnel. All the reinforcements scared off the poachers. The victim died around 11 a.m., several kilometers from the site of the ambush. "Usually, poaching occurs during the full moon. This time, it was dark, visibility was bad," commented the reserve director. The poachers may have had night vision equipment. This was the sixth case of poaching in the reserve. According to Stop Rhino Poaching, the poaching toll for 2018 was 508, as of September 21. The Lombardini Game Farm covers 1200 ha.<sup>28</sup>



**November 13, 2018**

**Mokopane (Potgietersrus), Limpopo Province, South Africa**

It was the last of the rhino syndicate led by Dawie Groenenwald, who stays in prison while waiting for the endlessly reported trial. Nardus Rossouw was just released on a bail of 30,000 rand, which is 2,100 US\$. He is assigned to his sister's residence and should not leave Gauteng province without authorization. Rossouw, during his first release on bail, had already mixed with a dark traffic. He had been arrested for the possession of 11 horns belonging to an elderly, financially needy breeder to whom "he would have wanted to help out." His compassion costed him a 100,000 rand fine (6,800 US\$) and the revocation of his first release on bail.<sup>28 bis</sup>

**November 15, 2018**

**Balule Nature Reserve (Kruger National Park), Limpopo Province, South Africa**

After a 42-km pursuit, 3 poachers were arrested thanks to the coordinated work of the canine brigade, led by Annie, a 4-year-old Belgian sheepdog, and the Wildlife College's Flying for Rhinos team. The suspects were charged with illegal entrance and illegal possession of weapons and munitions.<sup>29</sup>

**November 15, 2018**

**South Africa**

Discovered by a team of Rhino 911, 3 dead poached females and an orphan, shot but not killed. Emergency care was provided on-site. Small enough to be taken onboard in the back of the off-road vehicle, he was then taken to the orphanage.<sup>30</sup>

## REPEATED OFFENSE

November 28, 2018

Zeerust, North West Province, South Africa

- Sentencing of Malema alias Jet to 10 years in prison, including 4 years suspended for poaching endangered species, 4 years in prison for possession of prohibited weapons, and 2 years in prison for carrying prohibited ammunition. The sentences are concurrent. It's a repeated offense.

- Sentencing of Thutlwa and Tsiepe, respectively tracker in a lodge and village chief, to 4 years' jail and a fine of 200,000 rand or 14,400 US\$ suspended, provided they do not commit similar offences within 5 years. They had, in an organized gang, participated in a poaching attempt. They are also sentenced to a fixed fine of 5000 rand, or 360 US\$, which they have undertaken to pay in 10 monthly installments from December 2018.

- Sentencing of Balate for poaching endangered species to 8 years in prison, 6 of which were suspended. A Mozambican national, he was also sentenced to 18 months in prison for illegal immigration. The sentences are concurrent.<sup>31</sup>

See "On the Trail" n°17 p. 80.



## End of November 2018

South Africa

Poaching of a male. Found alive by a patrol. An on-site x-ray diagnoses a fracture at the level of the elbow joint. Shortly after the treatment and after much effort to stand up, he died of exhaustion.<sup>32</sup>

## End of November 2018

Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa



Little orphaned rhino after her mother's deadly poaching. Found wandering in the bush. Taken care of by the vets. Transferred to the Care for Wild shelter.<sup>33</sup>

## November 2018

Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

Permanent seizure of a Toyota Hilux double cab, 2 Ford Rangers 4WD, a BMW 3 Series, a Mercedes Benz CDI, night vision glasses, 68,400 rand (4,700 US\$) in cash belonging to Mr. Bhamani, Mr. Nyathi, Mr. Dube, nationals of Zimbabwe and Mr. Maqanda, South African citizen. Bhamani and Dube had purchased their luxury vehicles 2 days after the poaching of 2 rhinos in Sterkstroom, Eastern Cape Province, in September 2017. "Although the suspects reported themselves as self-employed, I have established they are in truth unemployed and rely on proceeds of rhino poaching for livelihood and acquisition of assets," testified the investigator before the Grahamstown Supreme Court.<sup>34</sup>



## FAMILY AFFAIRS

December 7, 2018

Pretoria, Gauteng Province, South Africa

Another deferment of the trial of Hugo Ras (see "On the Trail" n°6 p. 67, n°7 p. 71, n°10 p. 47, n°13 p. 77, n°14 p. 64, n°15 p. 82, n°20 p. 81), his wife, his brother-in-law Arno Smith, the former Hawks agent Willie Oosthuizen, a former lawyer listed with the Pretoria bar, a helicopter pilot and other accomplices. The bail release conditions for 4 of the accused were lightened. The trial is now scheduled for November 2019. The investigation was opened in 2014.<sup>35</sup>

## December 9, 2018

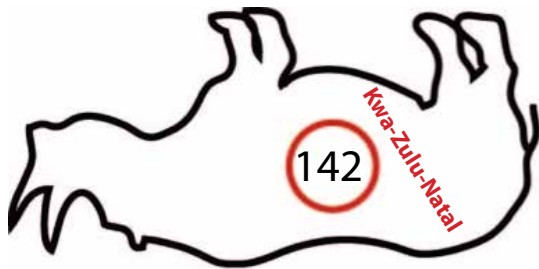
Lombardini Game Farm, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

A female white rhinoceros was poached. Two horns were amputated. This was the fourth case of poaching in less than a month in the Lombardini Game Farm.<sup>36</sup>



**Mid-December 2019  
Hluhluwe-Umfolozi Reserve, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**

Poaching of a female and amputation of the horn while she was still alive. Vain attempt by the veterinarians to save her. She had to be finished off. To date, since the beginning of the year, 142 rhino have been poached in KwaZulu-Natal.<sup>37</sup>



**December 19, 2018  
KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**

A new arrival at the orphanage: a baby male rhino, approximately 4 months old, whose mother was poached. He was following another female, but was in mortal danger because his adoptive mother was not in lactation.<sup>38</sup>



**December 30, 2018  
Ventersburg, Free State Province, South Africa**

A 23-year-old male black rhinoceros was poached in the Great Fish River Nature Reserve. The 2 horns that were taken are estimated to be worth 1.5 million rand (110,000 US\$). A medicine man and an ambulance driver, along with 4 accomplices apparently from Mozambique, were arrested the next day at a road block. In their 2 cars, the 2 horns and a .375 caliber were seized.<sup>39</sup>

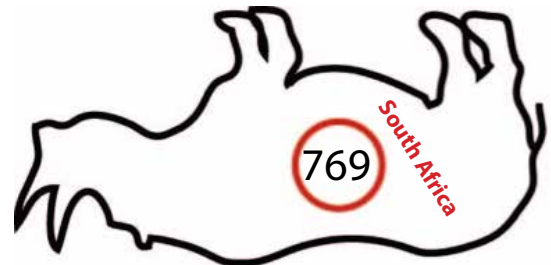
**December 31, 2018  
South Africa**

Surprise arrival in the orphanage of a three-month-old female child. Poached mother. Not at all convenient, she let herself be tamed by milk bottles, showing on this occasion her intact nasal horn.<sup>40</sup>



**January 1, 2019  
South Africa**

For the past 3 years, rhino poaching has been declining in South Africa, according to official statistics. In 2018, 769 rhinos were poached, 259 fewer than in 2017. Of these 769, 421 were killed in Kruger Park. This is the first time in 5 years that the death toll from poaching has fallen below 1000. Fewer rhinos, fewer targets for poachers.<sup>41</sup>



**January 10, 2019  
Johannesburg OR Tambo International Airport, Gauteng Province, South Africa**

Seizure of 116 kg of horns worth 23.2 million rand (about 13,800 US\$/kg) thanks to the flair of the canine brigade on patrol in the airport's freight zone warehouses. The 30 horns were hidden in a container full of mats and plywood plates on their way to Dubai.<sup>42</sup>



**January 15, 2019  
Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**

Mr. Lucky Mkansi and Nzima Joe Sihlangu, Kruger Park rangers suspected of being involved in rhino poaching, were arrested and released on a 10,000 rand (720 US\$) bail. Bail is subject to strict conditions: no travel without prior authorization, no direct or electronic contact with other rangers. A third ranger will be summoned at a later date. He is in pre-trial detention.<sup>43</sup>

**January 23, 2019  
Pilanesberg National Park, North West Province, South Africa**

Loss of a male rhino in the middle of the night. The park management is appalled. In addition to rumors about the so-called virtues of horns, they blame the "Ferrari factor". Owning a horn would show that you are very high up in the society.<sup>44</sup>



**January 28, 2019**

**Johannesburg OR Tambo International Airport, Gauteng Province, South Africa**

Seizure of 10 horns or horn sections. Arrest of the 2 traffickers about to fly to Viet Nam. Wildlife Alert: 08.60.01.01.01.11. Calls can remain anonymous.<sup>45</sup>

**BOTSWANA**

**November 23, 2018**

**Okavango Delta, North-West District, Botswana**

Carcass of a white rhinoceros found. Horns cut off. The crime allegedly occurred one week ago.<sup>46</sup>

**14-15 January 2019**

**Moremi Game Reserve, North West District, Botswana**

Discovery of 2 carcasses on Mombo Island in the Okavango Delta. The rate of poaching is increasing, one per month according to official information. Some observers say that the outbreak of poaching coincide with the government's decision to stop arming surveillance patrols with automatic weapons. National poachers or those from neighboring countries are reported to move through the delta with an increased sense of security and even superiority.<sup>47</sup>

**NAMIBIA**

**November 10, 2018**

**Hardap Region, Namibia**

A dehorned rhinoceros carcass was found. Nearby, a seriously injured rhinoceros received veterinary care. The exact location of the poaching was not released, for security reasons.<sup>48</sup>

**CENTRAL AFRICA**

**TCHAD**

**October 15, 2018**

**Zakouma National Park, Guerat and Salamat Regions, Chad**

Another failure in the relocation of rhinoceroses (see "On the Trail" n°2 p. 44, n°8 p. 59, n°9 p. 61, n°17 p. 106, n°22 p. 76). Two of the 6 specimens died 6 months after being transported from South Africa, 4800 km away (see "On the Trail" n°21 p. 78). All assumptions are open in the search for an explanation for the deaths, which are not due to poaching but cannot be considered "natural."<sup>49</sup>

**ASIA**

**CHINA**

**October 6, 2018**

**Hong Kong International Airport, China.**

Seizure of 2.9 kg of presumed horns worth an estimated 590,000 HK\$ (75,200 US\$), or 25,930 US\$/kg, according to the local customs authorities. The case involved a young man, 27 years old, coming off a plane from Johannesburg. He risks a sentence of up to 10 years in prison and 10 million HK\$ (1.28 million US\$) in fines.<sup>50</sup>

**October 24, 2018**

**Hong Kong, China**

Sentencing of Wei Bin, 21 years old, a carpenter by profession, to 8 months' imprisonment for trying to smuggle 3.1 kg of horns cut into pieces (see "On the Trail" n°21 p. 79). Wei Bin explained that he had agreed to his boss's request to transport "the goods" to mainland China in exchange for some benefits such as the payment of air tickets and other travel expenses.<sup>51</sup>





**November 23, 24, and 27, 2018  
Hong Kong, China**

- Antiques, in particular some ceremonial cups, presumably made of rhinoceros horn, were taken off the market by the British auction house Bonhams. "Bonhams stands behind the professionalism and expertise of its specialists. We do, however, recognize there are widely held concerns about this issue and have decided that the sale of the rhinoceros carvings will not take place. In the future, Bonhams will not offer artefacts made entirely or partly from rhinoceros horn in its salerooms," Bonhams chief executive Matthew Girling said in a statement.
- Removal from auction of 3 horns and an announcement from Sotheby's that they will no longer sell horns or objects made of horn. According to the initial interpretation, the decision is applicable in all of the company's auction houses.
- China Guardian, a Chinese art auction house, announced that it, too, would stop selling horns and objects made of horns.<sup>52</sup>

**January 2019**

**Dalian Zhoushuizi International Airport,  
Liaoning Province, China**

Seizure of 4 rhino horns, for a total weigh of 2.7 kg, hidden in cake and chocolate packages.<sup>53</sup>



**INDIA**

**October 5, 2018  
Jorhat, State of Assam, India**

Traffickers, forger or story-teller? Ranjit Kalita (34 years old) and Habib Barik were arrested by the police in possession of a "rhino horn" they wanted to sell for 8 million rupees (110,000 US\$). But they claim to have carved it out of bamboo... The object was to be examined in the State forensic laboratory.<sup>54</sup>

**October 7, 2018  
Rowmari, Darrang District, State of Assam, India**  
Police got their hands on 2 rhino poachers deemed "notorious": Sailendra Kemprai (40 years old) and Khairul Jaman (32 years old). Arrested near the Rowmari bazaar, they were carrying a .303 caliber rifle, a magazine, 5 rounds of ammunition, a silencer, a bottle containing a dark liquid suspected to be tranquilizer and 4 syringes.<sup>55</sup>

**October 9, 2018  
Sitalmari, Darrang District, State  
of Assam, India**



The special task force of State police had heard of a poachers' camp site near the Orang Wildlife Sanctuary. When they were uncovered at around 1:20 a.m. gunfire broke out. Some of the poachers disappeared into the night but 2 of them were shot. A search of the camp's surroundings led to the discovery of a .303 caliber rifle, a silencer, a swimming tube and a bag. The Deputy Superintendent of Police Birinchi Bora and a magistrate went to the Sitalmari police station and carried out filmed interrogations in presence of local witnesses. The bodies of the 2 poachers were sent for autopsies.<sup>56</sup>

**REPEATED OFFENSE  
October 20, 2018**

**Biswanath District, State of Assam, India**

Soibur Rahman had been wanted since June 11, the day he poached a rhino in the Kaziranga National Park. A tip-off enabled the police and forest guards to arrest him this Saturday on a road around Sootea. Soibur Rahman had already been involved in rhino poaching in 2016.<sup>57</sup>

**November 15, 2018  
Biswanath District, State of Assam, India**

Dilwar Hussain, involved in a case of poaching in the Kaziranga Park, was elected to the head of the local government in Suwaguri, in the Biswanath district. The district president tried in vain to invalidate the nomination. "We cannot do anything about it, the people voted for him." Hussain refuses to comment. His supporters say that he has repented.<sup>58</sup>

**December 22, 2018  
Rupohihat, Nagaon District, State of Assam,  
India**

A rhino shot dead and amputated. "The poachers disguised themselves as tourists."<sup>59</sup>

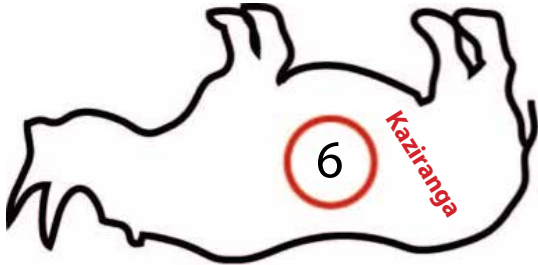
**December 25, 2018  
Gorumara National Park, Jalpaiguri District,  
State of West Bengal, India**

It had been almost 2 years since the last rhino poaching in the National Park. The truce ended with the find of the body of a male adult whose horn had been sawn off. A bullet wound was visible but vets do not rule out that he may have been first anesthetized or poisoned. Investigations ended with the arrest of 3 suspects.<sup>60</sup>

**January 2, 2019**

**Golaghat District, Kaziranga National Park, Assam State, India**

Night-time arrest of 3 men armed for rhino poaching (.303 rifle with silencer and night vision glasses, ammunition, axe, dagger and food). They were about to enter the Agaratoli sector of the park. Six rhinos were poached in the park in 2018 compared to 18 in 2017.<sup>61</sup>



**January 23, 2019**

**Amoni, Nagaon District, Assam State, India**

Arrest of 3 alleged poachers. Seizure of their vehicle and several documents considered incriminating.<sup>62</sup>

**INDONESIA**

**November 28, 2018**

**Bandar Lampung, Lampung Province, Indonesia**

The Sumatran rhinoceros horn weighs approximately 200 g. The 2 suspects, Din Martin Salim and Abdul Kodir, were arrested at a hotel. The former claims to be the driver, and the latter to be the seller. The owner, a certain Manat, lives in the village Kaur Selatan and is sought after by the police.<sup>63</sup>

**NEPAL**

**GANG / REPEATED OFFENSE**

**October 3, 2018**

**Chitwan District, Region n°3, Nepal**

Ishwori Prasad Mahato had been on the run since his conviction to 5 years in prison and a 50,000-rupees (428 US\$) fine on June 24, 2014 for having poached a rhino with 6 accomplices in the Chitwan National Park buffer zone. He was hiding in India, in a village near the border. Meanwhile, 2 gang members, Mukti Prasad Guraun and Hiralal Mardaniya, had been caught. Mahato made the mistake of coming back to Nepal. He had been followed for a month and a half. He admitted that his gang was guilty of the poaching of 2 rhinos which horns were sold for 200,000 rupees (1712 US\$) and 100,000 rupees (856 US\$). 70 rhino poachers are still on the wanted list in Nepal.<sup>64</sup>

**November 27, 2018**

**Chitwan District, Province No. 3, Nepal**



Conviction of a 40-year-old Indian national from Bihar State for poaching a rhino in Chitwan National Park and a fine of 500,000 rupees (4,400 US\$) against Rama Mahato, his alleged accomplice who formally denies his participation in the crime. He lives in the village of Madi, where a demonstration was held 2 days after the trial to protest against wildlife intrusions. On November 28, 2 women were reportedly trampled to death by an elephant. The villagers demand financial compensation for the bereaved families superior to the one million rupees (8,800 US\$) paid to each of them by the park management.<sup>65</sup>

**January 1, 2019**

**Dhangadhi, Sudurpashchim Pradesh Province, Nepal. Border with India.**

Seizure of a 1.29 kg horn smuggled in from Uttar Pradesh, India. The province is on the smugglers' roadmap to Tibet via the Taklakot border post in Darchula district. Arrest of Chakra Bhandari, 51 years old.<sup>66</sup>



**THAILAND**

**November 20, 2018**

**Samut Prakan, Samut Prakan Province, Thailand**

A deputy-prosecutor and 2 women were sentenced to 4 years in prison. The deputy-prosecutor had tried to use his authority and corruption to facilitate the entry of the 2 women who were coming from Africa with bags containing 49 kg of horn, estimated by local customs to be worth 1.4 million US\$, or 28,570 US\$/kg.<sup>67</sup>



## TURKEY

**December 8, 2018**

### **Istanbul Atatürk International Airport, Marmara Region, Turkey**

Seizure of 34 kg of horns valued at 2.2 million US\$ (64,705/kg US\$) from the belongings of a Vietnamese passenger travelling from Mozambique to Ho Chi Minh City. The trafficker's numerous trips between Africa and Viet Nam had put customs officials on alert. They were resolutely waiting for him.<sup>68</sup>



## VIET NAM

**October 12, 2018**

### **Noi Bai International Airport, Hanoi, Viet Nam**

Arriving on October 4 on a Qatar Airways flight coming from South Africa via Doha, the cardboard box was still in the freight zone of the airport when customs inspected it. The sender listed on the bill of lading was the Exquisite Global Shipping & Logistics company, addressed to Suite 101, Kempton Park, Johannesburg and the receiver a certain Truong Van Nam in the rural District of Soc Son, province of Hanoi. Customs opened the parcel in the presence of the handler's and Qatar Airways' representatives. Lucky guess: it contained 13 rhino horns of all sizes and small cups made of horn for a total weight of 34 kg. Samples have been taken to determine precisely which species were massacred.<sup>69</sup>



## EUROPE

## FRANCE

**October 2018**

### **Hérault Department, France**

Seizure by the ONCFS (French national hunting and wildlife service) of a 75-cm-long horn for sale on the Internet. The seller did not provide any explanation on the origin, and had used a foreign website to post his advertisement. His home was searched after a year-long investigation.<sup>70</sup>

**October 19, 2018**

### **Doué-la-Fontaine, Maine-et-Loire department, France**



Death of a 28-year-old male black rhino following a sperm collection operation to artificially inseminate a 20-year-old female. Three years ago, the birth of a baby was announced. It followed a natural childbirth. But the baby had died a few hours after his birth.<sup>71</sup>

The zoo management has informed Robin des Bois that the rhino will be naturalised and exhibited with a reproduction of its horns at the Museum of Natural History in Bordeaux. His authentic horns will also be presented separately and with a secure layout to avoid theft.

## CZECH REPUBLIC

**Mid-December 2018**

### **Prague, Region of Bohemia, Czech Republic**

Three individuals were arrested for attempting to fraudulently export a white rhinoceros horn worth approximately 100,000 US\$, with the help of an "Asian" accomplice.<sup>72</sup>

## ROYAUME UNI

**October 8, 2018**

### **United Kingdom**

The Save the Rhino International report reveals that, of the 300 alleged antiquities for sale on the Internet and in auction rooms in the United Kingdom in 2017 – libatory cups, engraved or carved horns, cups, and other table or decorative objects – 288 or 89% were not accompanied by certificates of origin proving that they had been made before 1947. Only antiquities prior to this date may be marketed in accordance with European regulations. This lack of documentation opens the door to the laundering of recently poached rhino horns. According to the NGO, during the first 7 months of 2018, offers to sell concerned 338 objects made of rhino horn compared to 91 in 2017, an increase of more than 370%.<sup>73</sup>

# Rhinos and Elephants

## AFRICA

### SOUTH AFRICA

**December 21, 2018**

#### **Roodepoort, Gauteng Province, South Africa**

Two Chinese nationals were arrested and charged with drug trafficking and possession of ivory and rhinoceros horn.<sup>1</sup>

**January 26, 2019**

#### **Germiston, Gauteng Province, South Africa**

Raid of an anti-drug squad on a local shop and seizure of a rhino horn, a halved tusk, a fragment of elephant skin and a small kilo of dagga. Two arrests.<sup>2</sup>



## NAMIBIA

**January 1, 2019**

#### **Namibia**

In 2018, 57 rhinos and 26 elephants were poached in Namibia. Arrests of 120 poachers, according to official statistics.<sup>4</sup>



## AMERICA

### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**December 12, 2018**

#### **Oakdale, State of California, United States of America**

Seizure at the home of Chang Xiong and his wife Ma Chang of numerous items in rhinoceros horn and elephant ivory, such as a snuff box, cane knobs and a carved tusk. Rhinoceros feet, toenails and a horn were also seized among the items. The investigation had begun in May 2016, when Xiong tried to purchase rhinoceros feet from a US Fish and Wildlife agent posing as a seller.<sup>5</sup>

## SOUTH AFRICA / MOZAMBIQUE

### **Mozambique - South Africa**

#### **The mystery of the .375 and .416 Safari classic.**

Rangers, private anti-poaching militias and reserve managers have noticed for the past 10 years that the large guns abandoned on the ground by poachers are mostly Safari Classic manufactured by CZ, a Czech Republic weapons manufacturer based in Uherský Brod. Some of them bear the stamp "CZ-USA, Kansas City".

The "CZ-USA, Kansas City" continue to be recovered from wildlife battlefields in Southern and Eastern Africa although the parent company in the Czech Republic has been informed since 2015. At least 100 Safari Classic presumed to be "made in USA" are currently being used as evidence in ongoing trials.

The Czech manufacturer's explanations are unclear. In an e-mail sent to the New York Times, the company's spokesman stated that all weapons are manufactured in the Czech Republic and that for the American market the stamp "CZ USA" is added. It also stated that the American subsidiary did not sell everything on the American market and the surplus was sold abroad, including in Mozambique.

According to Protrack (see "On the Trail" n°15, p. 40, n°13 p. 71, n°6 p. 63, n°6 p. 104), CZ "made in USA" were found on poaching scenes or in poachers' homes from 2011.

CZ declines any responsibility for the use of its weapons after they have been sold. The United States Commerce Department and The Department of Homeland Security are investigating. The United States has so far spent 150 million US\$ a year to combat poaching, with US Fish and Wildlife agents stationed in southern Africa to help governments and their services curb the scourge.

On the French website of the Gamefair exhibition, a weapons and hunting equipment exhibition scheduled from 14 to 16 June 2019 in Lamotte-Beuvron in the Loir-et-Cher Department, there is the following quote: "The Czech CZ is launching a second version of its 550 Safari Classic rifle for hunting dangerous animals from the Black Continent." The same website says that the butt of the weapon is made of Turkish walnut with an ebony front.<sup>3</sup>





ASIA

CHINA

Early October 2018

Jilin, Hebei and Heilongjiang Provinces, Municipality of Beijing, China

Seizure of 26 rhinoceros horns and 110 worked ivories, worth a total of nearly 3 million US\$. 18 people were arrested. The horns were sold for between 10,000 US\$ (1<sup>st</sup> middleman) and 40,000 US\$ (final purchaser).<sup>6</sup>

January 15, 2019

Jinghong, Yunnan Province, China

One arrest for possession of worked ivories and rhino horn objects. Since 2017, Chen had been selling these items on WeChat. Two accomplices were then arrested.<sup>7</sup>



January 29 and 30, 2019

Dongxing Port, Guangxi Province, China. Border with Viet Nam.

Seizure in the hand luggage of a female passenger of 32 worked ivories and 2 fragments of suspected rhino horn.<sup>8</sup>



INDIA

January 5, 2019

Jalpaiguri district, State of West Bengal, India

Arrest of 3 Bhutanese citizens for illegally detaining a 500g ivory tusk and a 1kg rhino horn. Both were to be sold in Nepal for 40,000 US\$.<sup>9</sup>

Elephants



The African elephant, *Loxodonta africana*, is listed in CITES Appendix I, except populations from South Africa, Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe which are in Appendix II. The Asian elephant, *Elephas maximus*, is listed in Appendix I.

"On the Trail" n°23  
Black market raw ivory quotation  
from media or official sources

Continent	Country	US\$/kg	Ref.
Africa	Uganda	713	4*
	Kenya	1,000	6
		1,960	13
		1,000	33
	Malawi	1,370	40
	Zimbabwe	170	59
Asia	South Africa	410	71
	China	120/900	7*
	India	2,715	5**

\* Cf. chapter "Pangolins, Rhinoceroses and Elephants"

\*\* Cf. chapter "Felines and Elephants"

EASTERN AFRICA

KENYA

Early October 2018

Tsavo West National Park, Kenya

Rescue of a female with a dagger inserted in her skull. Anesthesia. Extraction of the long blade, nearly twice the size of a hand. No apparent fracture. Relatively favourable prognosis.<sup>1</sup>



**Early October 2018  
Kenya**

21 kg of raw ivory were seized and thereby taken off the black market on the very day that a CITES restricted committee decided to exempt Kenya from the NIAP (National Ivory Action Plan), which requires an annual report on actions undertaken to reduce and sanction poaching and transnational ivory trading. NGOs believe that exempting Kenya from the NIAP is premature and careless. Mombasa is the main wildlife smuggling port in East Africa and Central Africa. Chinese traffickers, under the pretext of various professions related to commerce, restaurants or public works, have set up shops in the country and in neighboring countries. The prison sentences for ivory trafficking have been reduced by the highest courts. The trials of public figures involved in trafficking are postponed for so long that public opinion tends to forget about them.<sup>2</sup>

**Beginning October 2018  
County of Tharaka-Nithi, Kenya**

Sentencing of Lawrence Mugambi Irungu and Erastus Mugambi to 6 years prison and 2 million shillings (20,000 US\$) in fine for having on 26 February 2017 unlawfully held 5 tusk sections (15kg). They are in preventive detention. They have pleaded for the court indulgence putting forward they are the only ones that can provide for their families.<sup>3</sup>



**October 11, 2018  
Olarro Conservancy, County of Narok, Kenya**

Hofmeyr was patrolling. He spots a man taking a nap under a tree. He goes to warn him of the danger. "There are wild animals here, they could attack you." "A lion could eat you." "There is heavy poaching here." Just at that moment, Hofmeyr is hit with an arrow in his right cheek from an unseen shooter in the bushes. The duo was on the lookout. They were waiting for a prey to wander by.<sup>4</sup>



**October 17, 2018  
Olarro Conservancy, County of Narok, Kenya**

A mother and 2 children she still was caring for was heavily disabled by the inflicted wound from an arrow. Successful intervention of the veterinarian Task Force of the DSWT/KWS.<sup>5</sup>



**October 17, 2018  
Kapenguria, County of West Pokot, Kenya**

Seizure of 6 tusks (64 kg). Value: 1000 US\$/kg. Three arrests.<sup>6</sup>

**October 21, 2018  
Diani Beach, County of Kwale, Kenya**

Seizure of raw ivory on Pango (29 years old) and Mwamadi (33 years old). Told value: 1.9 million shillings (19,000 US\$).<sup>7</sup>

**October 25, 2018  
Angata Rongai, County of Samburu, Kenya**

23 kg. Eight tusk sections. Two million Shilling (19,700 US\$, i.e. 860 US\$/kg). Arrest of Don Mawiri Mbaabu and Cyrus Kipng'etich Koech. Release is possible on bail for 5 million Shilling (50,000 US\$).<sup>8</sup>

**October 28, 2018  
Olarro Conservancy and Mara North Conservancy, County of Narok, Kenya**

Rescue by the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust and KWS of 4 elephants among which a female hit by 20 arrows shot by farmers.<sup>9</sup>





**October to November 2018  
Masai Mara National Reserve,  
Narok County, Kenya**

According to MEP (Mara Elephant Project), 11 elephant deaths between beginning of September 2018 and end of November could be attributed to intentional poisoning by pesticides. The autopsy results are not convincing. Nevertheless, they exclude the possibility of an epizootic disease. Conflicts between shepherds and elephants have been plenty over the last quarter of 2018. A ranger on patrol was killed by an elephant in the Rumuruti forest. Farmers abandoned their crops by the side of the Ngare Narok after damages made by elephants.

A cabbage planting covering 0.8 ha worth 500,000 shillings (4,930 US\$) was ravaged by elephants just as was a tomato planting over 1.2 ha worth 600,000 shillings (5,900 US\$).

Man/elephant coexistence inside the national wildlife reserve heated tensions on both sides. The elephants whose habitat is fragmented and colonized by fences and other deterrent means are deemed the aggressors. Retaliation falls upon them, traps, spears, bullets, pesticides. The tusks are ripped off post-mortem and join the dark field of speculation.



The Governor of the County of Narok, for his part, denies any elephant poisoning campaign, says that poaching in the county is quite the exception, that the causes of death of the elephants are "natural" and reminds that according to officials, there were 1400 elephants in Masai Mara in 1983 and 3,500 now.<sup>10</sup>

**TEA LEAF NETWORK  
FAMILY AFFAIRS  
November 2018**

**Mombasa, Mombasa County, Kenya**

The 2015 case of smuggling from Mombasa to Thailand in of 511 tusks in a container declared to contain tea leaves is not settled (see "On the Trail" n°9 p. 77, n°10 p. 57, and n°13 p. 95). Kenya intends to summon 5 Thai witnesses, including officials who intercepted the tusks, to complete the case against Abdulrahman Mahmoud, his sons Sheikh and Abdulrahman and Lucy Muthoni, Musa Lithare, Samuel Mundia, Salim Mohammed, Abbasi Rashid and Kenneth Njuguna. The brothers Nicholas and Samuel Jefwa are also targeted by this procedure (see "On the Trail" n°9 p. 77, n°13 p. 95 and n°15 p. 88).<sup>11</sup>

**Beginning November 2018  
Mwarak, Laikipia County, Kenya**

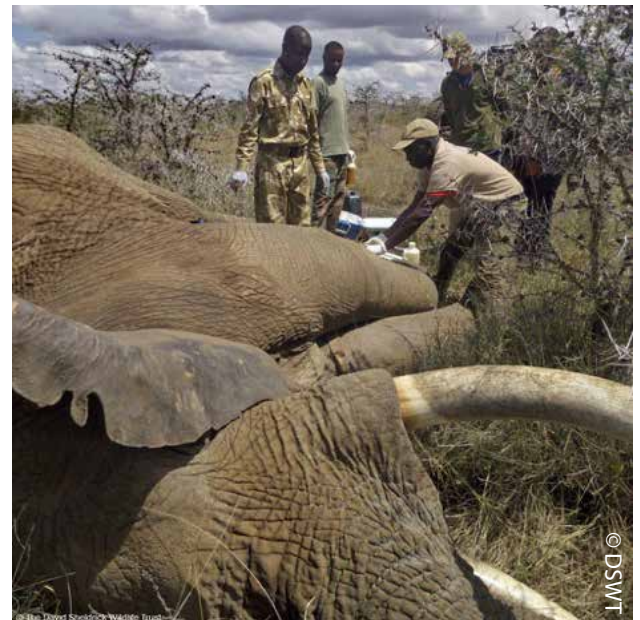
21 tusk sections. 547 kg. Five arrests. Their final destination was Nairobi, 250 km away.<sup>12</sup>

**November 6, 2018  
Nakuru, Nakuru County, Kenya**

Seizure of 13 kg of raw ivory. Value: 2.6 million US\$ i.e. 25,500 US\$ (1,960 US\$/kg). Arrest of Samuel Wahome and Hillary Kiplangat.<sup>13</sup>

**November 13, 2018  
Near Rumuruti, Laikipia County, Kenya**

Medical treatment for a large male elephant. A witness observed him limping and bleeding from fis from left leg. The bullet wound was cleaned, oxygenated water, iodine, clay. Prognosis is optimistic.<sup>14</sup>



**November 21, 2018**  
**Near the Masai Mara National Reserve, Narok County, Kenya**

There was no other solution but to finish off this female elephant in the river bed, there where she was lying down after being hit by 2 or 3 poisoned arrows. She was half paralysed and despite the efforts of the vets from Elephant Aware and KWS, the final solution painfully imposed itself.<sup>15</sup>



**November 23, 2018**  
**Mathira, Nyeri County, Kenya**

Nocturnal arrest of Solomon Macharia and Robinson Kamau. They were in possession of 2 tusks worth 20,000 US\$.<sup>16</sup>

**November 29, 2018**  
**Meru County, Kenya**

Sentencing of Joseph Muriithi to 20 million shillings (200,000 US\$) in fine or if he fails to pay to a lifetime prison sentence for possession of 2 tusks worth 900,000 shillings (8,700 US\$). Muriithi has 14 days to form an appeal.<sup>17</sup>



**December 4, 2018**  
**Tsangatsini, Kilifi County, Kenya**

Arrest of Changawa Koi Kaisha, 55, in a forest where he had planned a meeting with potential buyers to negotiate the sale of 55 kg of raw ivory making up 11 tusk sections. The buyers were KWS agents. Is the seller's bracelet also ivory?<sup>18</sup>



**December 13, 2018**  
**Kibwezi, Makueni County, Kenya**

Two wrapped presents. Two million shilling (19,760 US\$, i.e. 1,976 US\$/kg). Two immediate summary trials.<sup>19</sup>



**December 2018**  
**Masai Mara National Reserve, Kenya**

Rescue of an elephant-female, about 20 years old, wounded by a projectile weapon. Surgical operation fulfilled by Elephant Aware, KWS and the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust.<sup>20</sup>





## The Daily Lives of Tsavo Vets

### - November 12, 2018.

Aerial field reconnaissance by the DSWT. The mobile veterinarian team arrived on site by helicopter. A syringe with 18 mg of M99 was shot from the air. The elephant collapsed after 9 minutes in a position that made it possible to help breathing and to spray him with water. A poisoned arrowhead was extracted by forceps.



The wound was cleaned and disinfected. Sprayed with oxytetracycline. Covered with green clay. Waking by 3 intravenous injections of dexamethasone. The elephant stood up on his own and slowly walked away. Prognosis is favorable.<sup>21</sup>

- **November 16, 2018.** A photo safari guide reported an adult male elephant with an abdominal wound, crossing a path with difficulty. The mobile veterinary team arrived on the scene very quickly. The elephant was soon identified in the shade of a tree. A syringe with 18 mg of M99 was shot from an off-road vehicle. The team slowly directed the elephant toward a clearing. After 10 minutes, he fell unconscious in a favorable position. The wound, caused by an arrow, was cleaned and disinfected. Treatment administered directly to the injury. In the absence of any risk of generalized infection, no antibiotics were injected. Waking by 3 injections of 18 mg of M5050.<sup>22</sup>



- **November 17, 2018.** Reporting by the manager of a lodge. Surgical operation on 2 injured male lions. They were apparently wounded by a buffalo attack. When the veterinary unit arrived on site, they found the pride in the shade of a tree, along with the 2 injured lions. They were shot with syringes of 200 mg of ketamine and 2 mg of medetomidine. Total immobilization after 5 minutes. Local administration of antibiotics. Stitches. Waking by atipamezole. Lions under surveillance. Prognosis is favorable.<sup>23</sup>



- **November 18, 2018.** A DSWT team reported an adult male elephant with an abdominal injury. A mobile veterinary unit arrived on site. The elephant was identified in the shade of a tree. He was directed toward a clearing. A syringe with 18 mg of M99 was shot from the helicopter. The elephant fell in a position that made it possible to help him breathe and to cool him down by spraying his ears with water. An old arrow was found in his abdomen. The scar tissue had formed a tumor. Surgical excision impossible. Local treatment with hydrogen peroxide, iodine solution and oxytetracycline. Consciousness regained through 3 injections of 18 mg of M5050. Prognosis uncertain.<sup>24</sup>

- **November 19, 2018.** A DSWT aerial patrol spotted a wounded elephant among a group of 5. Male adult. Immobilized by M99 anesthesia. He was kept in an open area until he fell asleep. Position was good for helping him breathe and keeping him cool by spraying his ears with water. Abscess and tumors found on the abdomen. Local treatment with hydrogen peroxide, iodine solution and oxytetracycline. Antidote given to revive the animal. The elephant stood back up and walked away calmly. Prognosis uncertain. Causes of pathologies undetermined.<sup>25</sup>



- **November 23, 2018.** Reported by park authorities. Carcass found through aerial field reconnaissance. Adult male. The mobile veterinary unit arrived on site in a four-wheel drive vehicle. The tusks had been cut off. The perineal zone was partially eaten by scavengers. Deep wound in the rib cage. Four ribs broken. Internal hemorrhaging. Probable cause of death: projectile weapon shot from a high platform. Indisputably poaching.<sup>26</sup>



- **November 23, 2018.** In the Watamu Marine Park, search for a turtle with cancerous tumors on the neck, head and fins. Reported by divers. Sighting confirmed by the KWS. Impossible to dive due to bad weather. Local inhabitants say that landfill are overflowing in Mombasa and that waste scatters at sea and partly drifts northward to the Watamu Park.<sup>27</sup>

- **November 24, 2018.** Rescue of an adult male elephant. Anesthesia, disinfection and green clay protection of an old wound caused by an arrow in the right side. Prognosis is favorable.<sup>28</sup>



- **November 28, 2018.** Emergency intervention at dusk on an adult elephant. KWS helicopter used to reach the-site. Assistance from personnel of a nearby lodge. Anesthesia. A spear piercing the skull 30 cm deep was extracted. No lesions on vital organs or arteries. Prognosis is favorable.<sup>29</sup>

- **November 30, 2018.** Reported by the park authorities. Carcass spotted by aerial reconnaissance. The mobile veterinary unit arrived on site in a 4x4. Adult male. The carcass was lying on the right side. The head was severed. The tusks were missing. Death had occurred more than 7 days earlier. Given the advanced state of decay and the intensity of scavengers' activity, it is impossible to determine the cause of death. Carcass covered with branches.<sup>30</sup>



- **December 3, 2018. Amboseli National Park.** An adult male known as Tim got stuck in a swamp. Reported by villagers. A mobile veterinary unit drove 200 km to the site. Initial attempts to pull the elephant out using 200-meter ropes and a tractor were unsuccessful. Assistance from the NGO Big Life. After struggling for 4 hours, Tim was taken out of the mud using a 300-meter rope pulled by a tractor together with the vets' Land Cruisers. Crowding villagers were difficult to control and disturbed the rescue mission.<sup>31</sup>

**January 6, 2019**  
**Between Lamu County and Tsavo West National Park, Kenya**  
 Joint operation by KWS, Air Wing and DSWT to treat a male elephant hit by a poisoned arrow. Favorable prognosis.<sup>32</sup>



**January 8, 2019**

**Kajiado, Kajiado County, Kenya**

Simon Kangethe Mukiri, Boniface Waigwa Wanjiru and Juma Lekupe do not know how 50 kg of raw ivory in the form of 4 tusks worth an estimated 5 million shillings (50,000 US\$) arrived in the trunk of their car. They say they discovered it when the roadblock intercepted them in Kitengela. The court is demanding the payment of a 50,000 US\$ bail for their release pending trial.<sup>33</sup>

**Late January 2019**

**Nakuru County, Kenya**

Andrew Yegon and Joseph Karani were sentenced to 5 years in prison or 9,900 US\$ in fine for illegally detaining 2 baby elephant tusks. Their total weight is 2kg and they are estimated at 4,940 US\$ or 2,470 US\$ per kilo.<sup>34</sup>



**January 30, 2019**

**Nairobi, Nairobi County, Kenya**

Arrest of Atanas Nzioka for illegal detention of 6 elephant tusks weighing a total of 11kg.<sup>35</sup>

**January 2019**

**Olarro Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya**

Since its first publication in 2013, "On the Trail" has noted that Narok County is a hell for elephants.

- January 8<sup>th</sup>. A carcass.
  - January 9<sup>th</sup>. A carcass spotted by a rangers' patrol. A young male. The tusks are in place. No apparent signs of injuries. The vultures are here. No secondary mortality proving carcass toxicity.
  - January 15<sup>th</sup>. A carcass spotted by park management. A young male. Same findings as on January 9.
  - January 16. A carcass spotted by a rangers' patrol. An adult male. Same findings as on 9 and 15 January.
  - January 21 in the morning. A carcass spotted by a patrol of rangers. An adult female. Same findings as on 9, 15 and 16 January.
  - January 21 (again). A carcass spotted by villagers. An adult female. Same observations as on the morning of 21 and on the 9, 15 and 16 January
- The tusks were recovered by the KWS according to the protocol in force. Autopsies are not always possible because of the sometimes advanced decomposition of the bodies. At the top of the KWS hierarchy, in the veterinary profession, among protected area managers and NGOs, pesticides are pointed out. In all forms - in bags, cans, after spreading, after spraying - they dominate ecosystems because of the uncontrolled development of vegetable and cereal crops. Elephants can be poisoned by drinking contaminated water, eating poisoned seeds, succumbing to toxic ambushes.



Park management reminds people that in addition to this unfortunate series of January 2019, 25 elephants have been treated by veterinary teams since June 2018 after being targeted by rifle bullets, poisoned arrows and spears. It calls on common sense and testimony to understand all the causes of the crisis and to fix it.<sup>36</sup>

**MALAWI**

**Beginning November 2018**

**Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve, Northern Region, Malawi. Border to Zambia.**

Discovery of a dead elephant with his tusks cut off. Kathryn Kachimanga speaking in the name of the Lilongwe Wildlife Trust is worried for the constant rise in poaching. "Just 30 years ago 2000 elephants could be found there, but today only 48 remain." Poachers targeting elephants or other protected animals are now liable for up to 30 years prison and fines as high as 15 million kwachas (20,600 US\$).<sup>37</sup>

**November 29, 2018**

**Mchinji District, Malawi. Border to Zambia and Mozambique.**

8,4 kg of raw ivory. Arrest of Henry Anthony given in to police by well-intentioned and well-informed citizens.<sup>38</sup>

**December 7, 2018**

**Lilongwe, Central Region, Malawi**

Arrest of Allan Nyirenda and Robins Kayira for possession and trade of 2 raw ivories (910 g). They were attempting to sell them for 1,030 US\$.<sup>39</sup>

**Early January 2019**

**Chikwawa, South Region, Malawi**

Arrest of 3 traffickers carrying 12 kg of raw ivory. Value of 12 million kwachas or 16,500 US\$ and 1,370 US\$/kg.<sup>40</sup>

**Late January 2019**

**Nkhotakota, Central Region, Malawi**

Arrest of Master Banda (47 years old) and Philemon Banda (22 years old) for illegally detaining 26.5 kg of elephant tusks. They ded to sell them back.<sup>41</sup>

**MOZAMBIQUE**

**End of October 2018**

**Province of Niassa, Mozambique**

Arrest of Pedro Vicente, ex head of the province's wildlife management. He his suspected of having stolen 85 ivory tusks from government stocks in 2017. According to national park data, the country lost 10,000 elephants since 2009.<sup>42</sup>



**End of November 2018  
Niassa National Reserve,  
Province of Niassa, Mozambique.  
Border to Tanzania.**

A massacre with traps. Left hind leg has been grinded for one, 2 or maybe even 3 months. Treatment dispensed by the vet from Saving the Survivors. The prognosis is uncertain for this lonely adult female.<sup>43</sup>



**End of November 2018  
Moamba District, Province of Maputo,  
Mozambique**

Arrest of 2 individuals suspected of poaching and shooting to death of a ranger in Kruger Park in July (cf. "On the Trail" n°22 p. 79) after they had broken into the Park carrying an AK47. Crossfire broke out with a patrol. One of the suspects claims to belong to the regular army.<sup>44</sup>

**Early January 2019  
Nampula, Nampula Province, Mozambique**

Arrest of 3 members of a gang of traffickers. Seven tusks were seized, as well as 40 kg of precious stones and counterfeit notes.<sup>45</sup>

**UGANDA**

**October 21, 2018  
Kidepo Valley National Park,  
Northern Region, Uganda.  
Border to South Sudan.**

A member of the LDU (Local Defence Unit) would have been killed in an elephant charge during a poaching campaign in company of 2 colleagues. His body was found next to an AK47 and ammunition.<sup>46</sup>



**November 2018  
Uganda**

Uganda faced with man-elephant conflict. According to the UWA press, an electric fence will be installed by 2020 all around Murchison Falls national park. Cost of the project is evaluated at 13 million US\$. The UWA received a first donation of 15,000 US\$ from the NGO Space for Giants. Rural communities are recruited to dig ditches 2m wide and 2m deep. Rangers say that the smell of corn, sugar cane, sorgho, mil, bananas, mangos, jackfruit and watermelon attract the elephants and other animals outside the park's boundaries. Bus accidents because of collisions with elephants have left many wounded. 20% of income from the park's entry are allocated to compensation for neighboring communities victims of animals intrusions. The UWA has allocated 211 million shillings (2 million US\$) to the Kiryandongo district for the fiscal year 2017-2018.

In the rock and swamp areas where raising a fence is impossible, local inhabitants are encouraged to breed bees and plant red pepper. Open air burning of cow dung and red pepper are deemed to ward off elephants. According to the coordinator of the bee project implemented since 2010, 638 swarms from Kenya and 1500 local swarms are spread out around the park's edges. 67 villages gain profit from selling the honey.<sup>47</sup>

**RWANDA**

**October 2018  
Kigali, Rwanda**

Dismissal by the Kigali Court of Appeal of the annulment appeal of Révérien Nshimiyimana's sentence of 10 years in prison for ivory trafficking. Nshimiyimana, a taxi driver, says he was a regular police informant. His involvement in trafficking and the discovery of tusks in the home of someone he knows would be part of his mission as a double agent. The Court of Appeal dismissed this argument, expressing particular surprise that it had not been developed at first instance.

The 6 men were arrested in 2015 in the Eastern Province. They said they had collected elephant tusks and intended to "sell them to Rome through Catholic priests". Two were acquitted. Two of his accomplices sentenced to 4 years in prison were pardoned by the President of the Republic. One was sentenced to 4 years in prison and did not appeal. For the time being, Révérien remains in prison.<sup>48</sup>



## TANZANIA

### **GANG/FAMILY AFFAIRS**

**October 10, 2018**

**Dodoma, Dodoma Region, Tanzania**

Judicial proceedings of 2 brothers, Boniface Mathew Malyango and Luca Mathew Malyango.



Arrested on October 29, 2015 in the suburbs of Dar es Salam after being tracked for over a year. They are suspected of attempting to smuggle 118 tusks. Boniface, 47 years old, is considered to be the main organizer of a network that is active in Tanzania, in Zambia, in Mozambique and in Kenya. He was apparently in contact with the "Queen of Ivory," Yang Feng Glan, who was arrested in November 2015 in Tanzania (see "On the Trail" n°11 p. 71, n°13 p. 80, n°15 p. 90, n°17 p. 92). He has been nicknamed "the Merciless Devil" by the Dodoma court (see "On the Trail" n°11 p. 71, n°16 p. 77, n°18 p. 87).

The 2 brothers were sentenced on March 3, 2017 to 12 years in prison for organized trafficking of protected wildlife.

On July 26, 2017, the court of appeal considered that the proof of the involvement of the 2 brothers was insufficiently backed.

On October 10, the first ruling was confirmed by the Supreme Court.<sup>49</sup>

**October 29, 2018**

**Mbomipa Wildlife Management Area, Iringa Rural District, Tanzania**

Indictment for economic sabotage of 9 poachers accused of having killed 6 elephants next to the Ruaha national park between the months of May and June 2018.<sup>50</sup>

**October 30, 2018**

**Dar es Salaam, Dar es Salaam Region, Tanzania**

Appearance of Akram Abdul Rasool. He is indicted for money laundering and illegal possession of 6 tusks (value 103 million Tanzanian shillings, 45,000 US\$), 70 fire arms and 65 kg of buffalo meat. He is presented as a businessman well known to the region.<sup>51</sup>

### **GANG**

**November 2018**

**Ilala District, Dar es Salam Region, Tanzania**

Sentencing of 3 businessmen, Kigahhey aka Ustadhi, Rashid and Mkunde, to 20 years prison for organized crime and possession of 5 tusks. Announced value: 65 million Tanzanian shillings (28,500 US\$).<sup>52</sup>



**December 9, 2018**

**Dar es Salam, Dar es Salam Region, Tanzania**

Seizure of 20 tusks. Value: 87 million Tanzanian shillings (38,300 US\$). Three arrests including one woman.<sup>53</sup>

## ZAMBIA

**End of December 2018**

**Chipata, Eastern Province, Zambia**

Sentencing to 7 years prison with hard labor of a 38-year-old man caught red handed transporting 8 kg of ivory.<sup>54</sup>



**End of December 2018**

**Chipata, Eastern Province, Zambia-12**

Sentencing of Morgan Ngulube to 6 years prison and hard labor for unlawful possession of 2 kg of ivory.<sup>55</sup>



## ZIMBABWE

**September-December 2018**

**From the Sango Wildlife Conservancy to the Rifa Safari Conservancy (725 km), Zimbabwe**

The Sango Wildlife Conservancy covers 598 km<sup>2</sup>. Landlocked inside the Save Valley Conservancy, it belongs to Wilfried Pabst, a German businessman (see "On the Trail" n°17 p. 107). He believes his management for 25 years to be a success. "We are deforested through elephants". "They are destroying their own food base, as well as for many other animals- leaf eaters, in particular". "It was necessary to transfer about one hundred or we would have been forced to kill them"

The Rifa Safari Conservancy is in Norther Zimbabwe near the border to Zambia. It covers 287 km<sup>2</sup>. The operation could be completed within the coming years with rhino transfers. Poaching would be under control there since Emmerson Mnangagwa, the successor of Mugabe, came to power and the implementation by courts of a dissuasive minimal 9-year sentence in cases related to elephant poaching and ivory trafficking.<sup>56</sup>

**October 6, 2018**

**Mana Pools National Park, Province of Western Mashonaland, Zimbabwe**

Human/elephant conflict. During the picnics in the park, elephants have gotten into the habit of picking fruit from the passengers' food baskets. One of the apple thieves was reported to authorities. He was treated as a "problem elephant". Guards shot at him. Two days later, on Sunday, his meat was shared among the park's personel. What happened to the ivory?<sup>57</sup>

**Mid-October 2018**

**Chipinge, Manicaland Province, Zimbabwe. Border to Mozambique.**

Seizure of 2 tusks in the hands of a 28-year-old man returning from poaching in Sango Ranch.<sup>58</sup>

**October 23, 2018**

**Harare, Harare Province, Zimbabwe**

Seizure of 2 elephant tusks, total weight 55 kg, estimated worth 9,350 US\$ i.e. 170 US\$/kg. Arrest of Isaiah Nhovo and Bishem Nyamukondiwa.<sup>59</sup>

**October 24, 2018**

**Harare, Harare Province, Zimbabwe**

Seizure of 3 tusks. Arrest of 5 men aged 20 to 42 years old.<sup>60</sup>

#### **FAMILY AFFAIRS**

**October 29, 2018**

**Chipinge, Province of Manicaland, Zimbabwe**

Arrest of Lovemore and Clemence Sithole. Seizure of 2 tusks. The 2 brothers along with 3 more buddies who were not indicted were preparing to negotiate the sale with 2 undercover agents of the administration. The meeting took place in the Charuma primary school.<sup>61</sup>



**October 2018  
Zimbabwe**

Madzinga and her driver, Pamire, have been in custody since mid-February when they fell into a trap set by photographer, Adrian Steirn and the police (see " On the Trail " n°21 p. 87). They had offered for sale 6 tusks hidden in the trunk of a car in Harare. Their trial has been postponed several times for futile reasons. The most recent is the impossibility of producing evidence due to the unavailability of the court registry guard, the only one holding the keys to the vault. Madzinga and Pamire are demanding their release through their lawyers. They consider that the statutory time limits for the conduct of the trial have expired. According to information that has not yet been consolidated, the traffickers have connections with former First Lady Grace Mugabe and the daughter of the new President Emmerson Mnangagwa.<sup>62</sup>

**November 27, 2018**

**Guruve District, Mashonaland Central Province, Zimbabwe**

Dzingai Nyamhungu fell into a trap on April 21. Contacted on his cell phone by 2 rangers interested in purchasing 2 tusks, he gave them a first meeting in a school in Angwa and asked to see the money before showing the tusks. After settling some points of detail about the transaction, the final meeting was set by the side of a road near Angwa and the trap came down on Nyamhungu. He is pleading not guilty. He faces up to 9 years in prison.<sup>63</sup>

**December 2, 2018**

**Harare, Province of Harare, Zimbabwe**

Police custody for 11 people including 9 employees of a Chinese company for possession and attempted trade of 6 tusks, for a total weight of 200 kg carrying the official stamp of the national parks management services.<sup>64</sup>

**Beginning of December 2018**

**Matetsi private game reserve, Matabeleland North Province.**

**Border to Zambia.**

A male elephant is caught in a trap. His front leg holds a very severe wound. Anesthesia. The unconscious animal is rolled over. Disinfection. Reawakening with an antidote. Good work by the Victoria Falls Wildlife Trust.<sup>65</sup>



**January 13, 2019**

**Harare, Harare Province, Zimbabwe**

Arrest in the suburbs of Harare of 3 men in possession of 2 elephant tusks weighing 18.6 kg.<sup>66</sup>





## SOUTHERN AFRICA

### SOUTH AFRICA

**October 12, 2018**

#### **Johannesburg, Gauteng Province, South Africa**

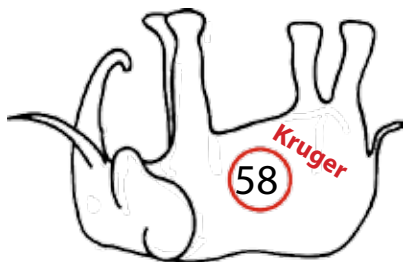
In a second-hand shop in the north of the city, seizure of ivory, a Rolex, raw diamonds, luxury jewelry, cell phones and copies of the identification documents of the sellers and the clients.

As the holidays approach, the police warn the public to be extremely careful when they purchase objects in second-hand shops. "Possession of stolen property is a criminal offense."<sup>67</sup>

**Mid-October 2018**

#### **Kruger National Park, Limpopo and Mpumalanga Provinces, South Africa**

58 elephants poached in the park since the beginning of 2018.<sup>68</sup>



**Mid-October 2018**

#### **Kruger National Park, Limpopo Province, South Africa. Border with Mozambique.**

Major poaching wave in the north of Kruger Park, near the border with Mozambique. WAR shared their observations and Trevor Joste's photo. "We could smell something arriving at the bush camp on day 3 of the trip, and the next morning on the trail we managed to find the poached elephant. The hyenas had already eaten off the trunk. Not a very nice sight for any of us including the ranger." "The carcass was already two days old."<sup>69</sup>

**October 25, 2018**

#### **Xigalo, Limpopo Province, South Africa**



Was it news or propaganda in the Daily Sun, a South African tabloid? Joyful villagers take a break, holding the meatless femur of a freshly slaughtered elephant. The victim was killed by agents from SA Wildlife Trade and Regulations as he crossed the border with Zimbabwe, along with another elephant. The pair was supposedly threatening villagers. Boyza Munyuku, 27 years old, a village resident was enthusiastic. "I'm going to take a break after two months of eating vegetables. It's going to be my fresh meat!"<sup>70</sup>

**On the Trail #23. Robin des Bois**

**November 7, 2018**

#### **Matlosana (Klerksdorp), North West Province, South Africa**

A Toyota bakkie was intercepted. In the back were 6 tusks, 112.7 kg, hidden under bags of corn. Declared value: 46,200 US\$ (410 US\$/kg). Two arrests, Douglas Matambandini and Mmoloki Moseki.<sup>71</sup>



**November 20, 2018**

#### **Sabi Sand Wildtuin, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**

Major operation at the Sabi Sand Game Park. A large adult male walking with difficulty, a snare wrapped around his trunk, cutting his flesh. WildlifeVets intervened. Anesthesia. Extraction. Disinfection. Application of clay. Prognosis is optimistic.<sup>72</sup>





**November 21, 2018**

**Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa**

Seizure of several dozen objects made of carved or semi-raw ivory, in the home of a Chinese national, whose accomplice was trafficking alabones 2 streets away.<sup>73</sup>



Valued at 2.5 million rand (171,000 US\$).

**November 2018**

**Somerset West, Western Cape Province, South Africa**

Seized by the Hawks and the SANEB (South African Narcotics Enforcement Bureau), psychotropic drugs (Mandrax and Tik) worth 8.6 million rand (590,000 US\$) and 2 tusks in a car and at the home of the 2 suspects, aged 27 and 60.<sup>74</sup>



**November 2018**

**Balule Nature Reserve, Limpopo Province, South Africa**

Human beasts against the wild beasts. Trains cross the reserve (250 km<sup>2</sup>) several times a day to export iron and manganese ore from Limpopo to the rest of the country. The railway predates the creation of the reserve. Ten elephants are reportedly killed every year by train convoys. A total of 90 lions are also said to have been killed in the past 10 years. Leopards and hippopotamuses are fatally wounded. Carcasses on the rails are attacked by hyenas and vultures, some of which are also run over or hurt by passing trains. The elephant tusks must be removed by reserve personnel or they could be taken by gangs, but the operation exposes the rangers to physical danger since the trains are not instructed to stop. The reserve rangers focus their attention on watching vultures circling over the railroad tracks, and can miss vultures circling in other sectors above rhinoceros carcasses. Certain immediate solutions could be implemented, such as systematic reporting of collisions. Reporting would spotlight the problem and enable the rangers to launch clean-up operations immediately at the site of the accident. Reducing train speed has also been suggested, but up until now, the Transnet Freight Rail and loaders have not been in favor of that suggestion. Putting up electric fences on either side of the line would have the double inconvenience of being costly to install and maintain, and it would block the movements of mammals within the reserve. Meetings have been scheduled in the first part of this year to try to solve the problem and reduce the frequency of this mechanical poaching. Craig Spencer, who founded the Black Mambas, a female anti-poaching brigade (see "On the Trail" n°10 p. 56, n°12 p. 84, n°14 p. 65, n°18 p. 108) stated, "We try to develop love for wildlife and to protect the animals, and at the same time, the animals are killed by trains." Spencer is full of ideas to reduce the massacre: improve use of the line parallel to Route 40; cut the vegetation in the ditch on either side of the line regularly because in the winter especially, animals come to graze there; reduce the slope on either side of the line to make it easier for the animals to flee. Collisions between trains and elephants are not specific to the Balule Reserve. It is a nationwide problem, and India is confronted with the same.<sup>75</sup>

**December 3, 2018  
Lenyenye, Limpopo Province,  
South Africa**

Frikkie Kotze, 36 years old, ranger at the Balule Reserve, was sentenced to 50,000 rand (3700 US\$) in fines, or if he fails to pay, 5 years in prison, for having poached an elephant within that same reserve. The 2 sanctions are suspended and accompanied by 5 years of probation. In addition, Kotze will pay 35,000 rand (2600 US\$) to the NGO Elephants Alive.<sup>76</sup>



**December 5, 2018  
South Africa**

A young male was spotted by helicopter. He had collapsed on the savanna. Anesthesia. The wound was nursed. His foot was cut in a trap. Rescue apparently successful.<sup>77</sup>



**Mid-December 2018  
Limpopo Province, South Africa**

Four elephants dead. The LEDET (Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism) has been accused.

The conflict between 4 male elephants and some farmers in the Gravelotte region lasted for a week. The best solution the LEDET had to offer was to shoot them. The NGO Elephants, Rhinos and People (ERP), notified by good-willed local residents, tried to find alternative solutions. When they realized that the so called "rogue elephants" were adult males and that the open cases that they usually use to displace animals were too small, they requested additional time from the LEDET and the farmers, who were unyielding.

Jane Meyer of the NGO Hope for Wildlife Helicopter Services said: "There was enormous pressure. Local farmers were turning up saying 'You better move them, we're going to shoot them,' and if not, they were going to be shot by LEDET." It was extremely hot and everyone knows how risky anesthesia is in such conditions. It was a case of "get hot or get shot," added Jane.

Saturday morning at dawn, the 4 pillagers were spotted by helicopter just as the flat-bedded trucks were arriving.

The immobilization procedure began immediately, but by the time the anesthesia was applied, the temperature was already over 40°C. Two of the elephants died when they were awakened by the antidote. Another died on the road to Balule (56 km from Gravelotte) and the last one died on arrival.

"They were just too weak to stand and unable to regulate their own body temperatures effectively while under the anesthetic," noted Jane with regret. Dereck Milburn, ERP manager, is "devastated" by the failure. "We have relocated over 200 elephants and only ever lost 2 before! It was either this or bullets." The LEDET spokesperson was contacted by The Citizen, a local newspaper, but at the time of printing, no response had been received.<sup>78</sup>

**January 9, 2019  
Krugersdorp, Gauteng Province, South Africa**

Seizure at the home of a woman, whose vehicle was considered suspicious and had been followed by a police patrol, of 4 tusks and suspected narcotics.<sup>79</sup>



**January 28, 2019  
Kruger National Park, Provinces of Limpopo or  
Mpumalanga, South Africa**

The number of poached elephants reached a sad record in 2018, with 71 elephants killed. Transferring rhino poaching to elephant poaching.<sup>80</sup>



**BOTSWANA**

**Mid-December 2018  
Botswana**

Following its major call in Johannesburg in 2016 for all elephants to be included in Appendix I, Botswana is changing course. The elephant has descended from its pedestal. He was designated as the emblematic pillar of tourism and was expected to become a major resource for Botswana. Two years later, he was under pressure of village vindictiveness and pressure from parliamentarians in the north, and then lowered to the rank of a pain in the ass and a killer of old ladies. To the Minister of Presidential Affairs and Public Administration who wants to drill and maintain water points to water and "fix" elephants, people in the north through elected opposition officials say that elephants must be fenced off, or killed, at least those who are "in excess." "These elephants just come from Zimbabwe, cross the border and kill our people and destroy our future crops."<sup>81</sup>



**January 14, 2019**

**Francistown, North East District, Botswana**

Appearance of 5 men: Messrs Ramasauna, Machamce, Mokgathi, Chalashika and Moshati for having transported 4 elephant tusks in an organized gang on 13 November 2018.<sup>82</sup>

**NAMIBIA**

**Mid-October 2018**

**Namibia**

A shocking video was posted on the News24 website, in South Africa. It shows 2 hunters at work in the Nakabolelwa Conservancy in Namibia, in the Zambezi region. They fired without warning at a herd of elephants. The professional hunter tells his client to "shoot straight between the eyes." An elephant collapses. Another elephant charges the hunters. The director of Namibian national parks, Colgar Sikopo, says that the professional hunter in charge of the operation could have his license revoked. He has been identified. "Sport hunting is part of sustainable wildlife management," according to the Ministry of the Environment and Tourism. But the MET described the scene as "barbaric." The official doctrine in sport hunting is that the target should be chosen and tracked, and "excess animals" should be the priority, preferably males.<sup>83</sup>

**December 2, 2018**

**Shinyungwe, Kavango East Region, Namibia. Border with Angola.**

Elizabeth Mate Linyando was arraigned and released on bail as she awaits trial after being caught red-handed transporting 58 raw diamonds and 2 elephant tusks.<sup>84</sup>

**December 3, 2018**

**Kasheshe, Zambezi Region, Namibia**

Seizure of 6 tusks in a villager storeroom, following information provided by the community. The man was about to cut them up with a saw to facilitate transportation. Their origin and scheduled destination are unknown.<sup>85</sup>



**January 11, 2019**

**Zambezi Region, Namibia**

Bail denied for Paulus Johnson Renin and Usupe Sema Dusken, Angolan and Namibian nationals caught attempting to market 4 elephant tusks of unknown origin.<sup>86</sup>

**January 28, 2019**

**Windhoek, Khomas region, Namibia**

Thomas John Brown van Wyk (44 years old) is released on bail of 3,600 US\$. He had to hand over his passport to the police and must report to the police station from Monday to Friday between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. He is not allowed to leave Windhoek without police permission. This oncologist is accused of illegally detaining 3 elephant tusks.<sup>87</sup>

**WESTERN AFRICA**

**BENIN**

**October 10, 2018**

**Cotonou, Littoral Department, Benin**

Seizure through 2 operations of 252 kg of raw ivory: the first batch (183 kg) in a hotel room; the second in the office of Salvador Hounye, a real estate agency manager leading a double life. In his life as an ivory dealer, he worked in connection with accomplices in Togo and in Cote d'Ivoire. The Minister for Quality of Life and Sustainable Development, José Tonato, stated that "the cargo was meant to leave Cotonou by sea or by air, destined for consumer countries."<sup>88</sup>



**November 26, 2018**

**Cotonou, Littoral Department, Benin**

Three convictions of 3 months' imprisonment plus a fine of 170 US\$ and damages equivalent to 1,700 US\$. The case dates back to September 28, 2018 when 14 kg of raw ivory was seized from the first convict (see "On the Trail" n°22, p. 94). Immediately afterwards, 2 accomplices were arrested. The second accomplice was arrested in Porto-Novo with 1.69 kg of raw ivory at his home.<sup>89</sup>





**November 29, 2018  
Kandi, Alibori Department,  
Benin**

Three suspended sentences of 5 years in prison and a fine of 520 US\$ which, according to the local press, “disenchants the people involved in the fight against the destruction of wildlife in the Republic of Benin.” In 2018, the 3 men tried to sell the tusks of 8 elephants poached in W Park (see “On the Trail” n°22 p. 94). W national park is part of the W Transborder Biosphere Reserve, which extends across over one million hectares of territory in Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger. For a similar crime in 2017, a man was sentenced by the same court to 5 years in prison and a fine equivalent to 1,390 US\$.<sup>90</sup>



**CENTRAL AFRICA**

**CAMEROON**

**November 30, 2018  
Port Of Douala, Littoral Region, Cameroon**

Seizure in the fishing harbor of 125 tusks or tusk sections, and several dozen carved ivories, hidden among bales of second-hand clothes. The 2 Cameroonians and the Nigerian who were also taken in were about to embark for Nigeria. The Cameroon-Nigeria smuggling business is hyperactive by road, as well as by sea (see “On the Trail” n°1 p. 11, n°10 p. 31, p. 58, n°11 p. 19, n°13 p. 42, n°18 p.94, n°19 p. 54, n°22 p. 50).<sup>91</sup>

**GABON**

**October 22-November 26, 2018  
Libreville, Estuaire Province,  
Gabon**

Ngaba Maxime, Kassa Ali and Aba Baba, 3 formidable wildlife delinquents, are no more harmful for a while. Seizure of 2 tusks. However, they were not incapacitated for long. Ngaba received a 3-month suspended sentence. His 2 associates were sentenced to a 3-month term to be executed. Ngaba may have benefited from his status as a retired cop. They have been also fined to 430 US\$ and 350 US\$, and the 3 are required to jointly pay damages equivalent to 7,000 US\$ to the Water and Forestry Department.<sup>92</sup>



**November 2, 2018  
Libreville, Estuaire  
Province, Gabon**

Kanté Diango, a Malian national, was arrested in possession of 2 pairs of tusks, including those of an elephant calf – total weight 5.5 kg – and an elephant tail. He was caught red-handed in possession of ivory tips which he was in the process of selling. The ivory was hidden in a rice bag and he was about to carry out the transaction in a jewelry shop.<sup>93</sup>



**November 5, 2018  
Mouila, Ngounié  
Province, Gabon**

Abou Amadou, a Cameroonian national, with his 4 elephant calf tusks (7.3 kg) on his lap. Police, with the help of Conservation Justice, took him by surprise in a hotel room.<sup>94</sup>



**November 2018  
Mouila, Ngounié Province,  
Gabon**

- Convictions of Eyamane J. Perfect and Moukakou Didier and Gao Jingzhu, workers of the Talibois logging company, sentenced to 6 months in prison and 2 million CFA francs, or 3,500 US\$ each for felling hundreds of trees without a permit.

- Sentences of Beyeme Agilys, Mihindou Désiré and Ndogou Chérubén to 6 months’ imprisonment, 4 of which were suspended, and 700,000 CFA francs, or 1,250 US\$ in fines and damages for ivory trafficking (see “On the Trail” n°22 p. 96).

- Conviction of Alassane Sow, a Senegalese subject living in Gabon caught in the act of holding 6 tusks (see “On the Trail” n°22 p. 96). He reportedly bought them 75,000 CFA francs per kilo (130 US\$/kg) from a poacher who was also arrested at Gamba.<sup>95</sup>



**November 28, 2018  
Franceville, Haut-Ogooué Pro-  
vince, Gabon**

Meixant Leboussi and Serge Ndjani were sentenced to 173 US\$ in fines and 8,670 US\$ in damages. See “On the Trail” n°22 p. 96.<sup>96</sup>



## November 2018

### Makokou, Ogooué-Ivindo Province, Gabon

Warrant of detention for Juste Ikoyizock, an employee at the National Agency for National Parks (ANPN) for having tried to sell an elephant trunk and 2 tusks. Juste, 33 years old, claims that he went into the forest to find bushmeat for the funeral he was organizing for his father, when he found himself faced with 3 elephants. He killed one of them and cut off the trunk immediately. He went back 2 days later to take the tusks.<sup>97</sup>

## December 2018

### Woleu-Ntem Province, Gabon

Four tusks. Arrest made in a hotel. Cooperation between the police and Conservation Justice.<sup>98</sup>

## 15-17 January 2019

### Mandji, Ngounié Province, Gabon

"Despite the speed of the assault, 3 thugs, probably knowing the spot, were able to escape through a window overlooking a dark area. In the room, the criminals abandoned a large loot of 4 ivory tips. The total mass of the products is estimated at 33kg," said one agent who requested anonymity. The traffickers seemed to be at home in this hotel. In the rush, they abandoned the 4 tusks on the spot. Two days later, 2 of the fugitives, Arthur Mevime Nze and Arnaud Makalouba, were arrested.<sup>99</sup>



## 17 and 18 January 2019

### Booué, Ogooué-Ivindo Province, Gabon

Seizure of 2 tusks cut in 4, arrest in 2 stages of Waghe Mamadou and Djime Djouwara, of Malian nationality, then of Koungoué Nicaise, of Gabonese nationality. The last one is the ringleader of the operation.<sup>100</sup>

## CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

## November 1-28, 2018

### Dzanga-Sangha National Park, Sangha-Mbaéré Prefecture, Central African Republic

Brutal revival of poaching activities 500 km from Bangui. At least 6 elephants within a month in the park, which covers 4000 km<sup>2</sup> and is listed as a UNESCO heritage site.<sup>101</sup>

## REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

## FAMILY AFFAIRS

## October 31, 2018

### Brazzaville, Republic of the Congo

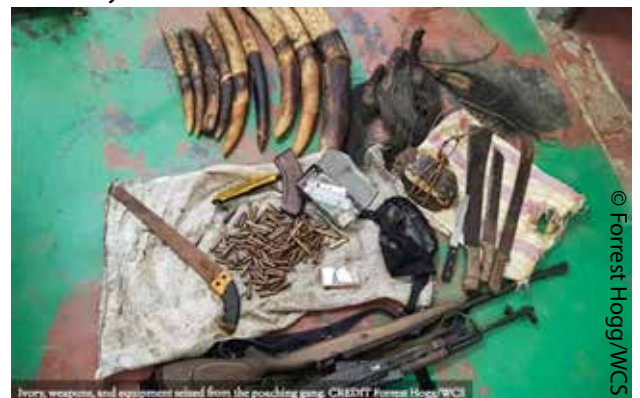
Two ivory dealers were arrested red-handed in possession of and transporting 2 ivory tips, cut into 4 pieces and weighing a total of approximately 20 kg.<sup>102</sup>

## REPEATED OFFENSE

## November 22, 2018

### Sangha Department, Republic of the Congo

Leonard Beckou, head of the gang, and his 3 confederates, one of whom is from the Democratic Republic of Congo, were sentenced to 5 years in prison. Park rangers encircled their base camp at full moon in the Nodoki Forest. Two large caliber guns were hung up on a tree, and 8 elephant calf tusks were seized. Beckou is a repeat offender. For his new poaching campaign, he had brought in 3 young men who were unemployed and attracted by adventure and most importantly by the tremendous profit that they hoped to make selling the ivory.<sup>103</sup>



## November 23, 2018

### Dolisie, Niari Department, Republic of the Congo

Georges Siombo and Mesmin N'dinga Bounda sentenced to 18 months in prison and 100,000 FCFA in fines (170 US\$) plus one million FCFA in damages (1,700 US\$). Siombo pays the poachers. Bounda is the salesman. See n°19 p. 103.<sup>104</sup>



## November 27, 2018 and January 2019

### Owando, Cuvette Department, Republic of the Congo

Seizure of 2 pieces of raw ivory in the hands of a member of the Para Commando Group of the Congolese Armed Forces. The ivory came from the Likouala department, where the suspect was assigned on a border control mission at the Central African Republic border. For smuggling activities, he is apparently well-established in the cities of Impfondo, Ouessou and Owando. Mboumba, 39 years old, was sentenced, at the beginning of 2019, to 3 years in prison, 5 million FCFA in fines (8730 US\$) and the same amount in damages.<sup>105</sup>





**January 12, 2019**

**Ouesso, Sangha Department, Republic of Congo. Border with Cameroon.**

Seizure of 9 elephant tusks. Total weight of 10 kg. Three arrests, including one uniformed soldier of the FAC (Congoese Armed Forces), who is of the same family as the director of the prison where he will be detained.<sup>106</sup>

**January 12, 2019**

**Ouesso, Sangha Department, Republic of Congo. Border with Cameroon.**

Sentenced to 3 years in prison. The man was caught illegally possessing 2 tusks in November 2018.<sup>107</sup>



**DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO**

**GANG**

**December 20, 2018**

**Kinshasa, Kinshasa Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo**

Seizure of 60 kg of ivory by agents of the ICCN (Congoese Institute for the Conservation of Nature), with help from Conserv Congo. A preliminary investigation was carried out conjointly by the Congo-Brazzaville and the Congo-Kinshasa.<sup>108</sup>

**AMERICA**

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**January 2019**

**State of Georgia, United States of America**

Mike Jines, wildlife hunter, receives threats after posting a picture of himself behind a dead little elephant shot between the eyes. The dead mother is in the background. Jines claims to have fired in self-defense.<sup>109</sup>



**ASIA**

**CAMBODIA**

**December 13, 2018**

**Phnom Penh Autonomous Port, Cambodia**

Record seizure for the General Department of Customs and Excise today at the river port: 1026 tusks and sections hidden amid a shipment of marble in a container coming from Malaca in Mozambique. Depending on the sources, the total quantity varies from "over 3.2 t" to "nearly 3.5 t." In any case, it is the largest amount ever taken in the country. The Cambodian administration was informed by the United States Embassy, following a US Fish and Wildlife Service investigation. The container had arrived last July, but no one had come to pick it up. To get to Phnom Penh, the cargo came up the Mekong from Viet Nam. The ivory's final destination was undoubtedly China or Thailand.<sup>110</sup>

**CHINA**

**GANG**

**Mid-November 2018**

**Guangdong Province and Hong Kong, China**

Seizure of 10 tusks. Total weight: 323.7 kg. Seventeen arrests, including 6 in Hong Kong. A gang specialized in ivory trafficking between Hong Kong and continental China has been dismantled.<sup>111</sup>



**November 26, 2018**

**Beijing, Municipality of Beijing, China**



Conviction upheld on appeal: 9 years and 6 months in prison for fraudulently purchasing carved ivories worth a total of 900,000 yuan (130,000 US\$), via WeChat during 2017.<sup>112</sup>

**Late November 2018**

**Qingdao, Shandong Province, China**

Seizure of 6 necklaces and a pair of earrings in a parcel posted from Japan.<sup>113</sup>

7-15 January 2019

**Canton Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China**

Five seizures in 9 days in passenger's luggage from Addis Ababa. Overall seizure of 82 worked ivories (2,064 g), some hidden in candy boxes.<sup>114</sup>



The small carriers are making the big traffics.

January 17 and 25, 2019

**Hangzhou Xiaoshan International Airport, Zhejiang Province, China**

- Seizure of 9 pendants and necklaces on a passenger coming from Amsterdam. Total weight: 219 g.

- Seizure of 3 bracelets on a passenger coming from Qatar. Total weight 58 g.<sup>115</sup>



January 27, 2019

**Xiamen International Airport, Fujian Province, China**

Two seizures on the same day:

- Worked ivories (292 g) on a passenger on a Macau Airlines flight.

- Worked ivories (271 g).

The 2 traffickers are Chinese workers on mission in Cambodia. They bought the items for 350 and 500 US\$ in temples. At their small level, they are participating in a massive import into China. This is the daily routine of small carriers.<sup>116</sup>

**INDIA**

October 10, 2018

**Dejuan, Bargarh District, State of Odisha, India**

Villagers discovered an elephant body and informed the authorities. The Department of Forests noted that the animal had been dead for a few days and that the tusks had been extracted. The carcass was taken in for an autopsy; an investigation has been launched to identify the culprits.<sup>117</sup>

October 17, 2018

**Chandragiri Forest Reserve, Narsinghpur District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India**

The inhabitants of Mahulmada discovered a heartbreaking scene last Wednesday. A tusker lying in the middle of a path, writhing in pain. When the forest rangers were notified, they came with veterinarians who initiated medical care. But the animal had lost a lot of blood. He died 3 days later. He was buried in the forest, after his tusks, measuring 75 and 80 cm, had been extracted and handed over to the Athgarh forestry office. It is unclear what caused his wounds. According to the villagers, he was shot by a poacher, but the forest rangers says that he died following a fight between 2 herds of elephants. Whatever the reason, the villagers accuse the forest rangers of no longer patrolling the forest reserve since the tigress Sundari, accused of killing 2 people, was reported. Apparently, they no longer come when elephants invade the farmers' fields.<sup>118</sup>



October 24, 2018

**Jaipur, State of Rajasthan, India**

The town police are very proud of their latest seizure: 6 kg of ivory. They received a tip according to which 3 individuals were about to sell some tusks in a park. They laid a trap and arrested Amit Sharma (23 years old), Vishnu Prasad Sharma (23 years old) and Kamlesh Sharma (35 years old), caught red-handed.<sup>119</sup>

**REPEATED OFFENSE**

October 25, 2018

**Mysuru, State of Karnataka, India**

Shanoj Kumar (39 years old) was nabbed again.

He was trying to sell a tusk in the Subash Nagar neighborhood, accompanied by another man. Agents from the mobile forest brigade were informed and went to the site where they snagged Kumar, although his accomplice managed to flee. The ivory tip and a scooter were seized. This is not Shanoj Kumar's first offence: he was already indicted of illegally transporting a leopard skin.<sup>120</sup>





**November 2018**

**Nilackal, Periyar Tiger Reserve, Kerala State, India**

In November, molasses waste scattered in the open air in the forest near Nilackal, Pathanamthitta District, attracted elephants. This waste comes from a warehouse damaged by the August 2018 floods and owned by Travancore Devaswom Board (TDB), an autonomous entity responsible for the administration of 1248 temples in the State. Under the effect of rain and over time, molasses began to ferment. Elephants come to drink there and are quickly becoming intoxicated. The landfill is located near a pilgrim camp on the way to the Sabarimala hill shrine. The obstinate presence of elephants, who refuse to leave despite firecrackers and other deterrents put in place by forest agents, is causing pilgrims concern.<sup>121</sup>

**November 4, 2018**

**Bangalore, State of Karnataka, India**

Seizure of 2 tusks, weighing a total of 15 kg. Three arrests near Lake Hebbal. The 3 ruff-raff claim to have found the tusks on an elephant that died in the Sakleshpur forest.<sup>122</sup>

**November 7, 2018**

**Haridwar District, State of Uttarakhand, India**

Contrary to the initial statement according to which the male elephant, aged approximately 20 years, died of an illness, the autopsy revealed that he was killed by a bullet in the heart during the Diwali Night. And yet, loud and clear, the forest service had claimed they would be 100% mobilized for the occasion, to stop any intrusions in the forest. A ranger, speaking anonymously, said that the poachers undoubtedly planned to come back the following night to saw off the tusks.<sup>123</sup>

**November 14, 2018**

**Near Athmallik, State of Odisha, India**

**November 9, 14 and 23, 2018  
Angul District Odisha State, India**

- Night poaching of a 35-year-old male. Amputated tusks.

- A 35-year-old super tusker was electrocuted by a cable lying on the ground, supposedly set out to trap boars. The forest rangers were informed by an anonymous call. When they arrived on the scene, the tusks were still in place. Five arrests.

- Death of an 8-year-old male elephant. First attributed to a disease by the forestry services. The tusks are in place.

In the district, NGOs and other wildlife advocates are calling for the eradication of electric fences that kill hundreds of deer, wild boars, tigers and elephants.<sup>124</sup>



**November 15 and 16, 2018  
Hemamura, State of Odisha, India**

Three overcharged poachers were arrested. Poachers are deliberately taking up electrocution. Often claimed to be a defensive weapon used to keep animals out of cultivated fields, electrocution is revealing itself more and more for what it is: an offensive weapon in the hands of poachers. An 11-kV line strung across a rice field will do the job. The elephant receives a fatal electric shock.<sup>125</sup>



**November 16, 2018**

**Demow, Sivasagar District, State of Assam, India**

Death for no apparent reason. The body was taken to the veterinary hospital for an autopsy.<sup>126</sup>



**November 23, 2018**

**Near Kermalam, Erode District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**

Another case of elephant electrocution. His trunk touched an electric fence around a corn field, hooked up from dusk to dawn to a clandestine connection to the public grid. The farmer, K Rangaraj, 42 years old, is being prosecuted. The elephant carcass was buried on-site.<sup>127</sup>



**December 11, 2018**

**Theni District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**

A dead elephant was found (approximately 23 years old).

Eight elephants have died in 6 months in the district. Five were males. Their tusks were sawed off by unidentified individuals. The NGOs accuse the Tamil Nadu forestry service of negligence. The neighboring Kerala service is credited with arresting 2 suspects and seizing 2 tusks (see next event). Poachers are not the only killers in the Theni forests. NGOs also point their fingers at the high voltage lines going across the supposed sanctuary of Magalamai.<sup>128</sup>

**December 11, 2018**  
**Kumily, Idukki District, State of Kerala, and Cumbum, Theni District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**



R. Ganga (37 years old) and A. Prabhhu (34 years old) were transporting 2 tusks weighing a total of 9.215 kg, cut up into 4 pieces. They were intercepted by forest rangers on the outskirts of the city of Kumily. They said they had extracted the tusks from the cadaver of an elephant that they had found in the Venniyar Forest Reserve in the neighboring State of Tamil Nadu. While they were held in custody, the forest rangers went to look for the remains. They found them the next day, east of Cumbum, next to an electric line, a few hundred meters from a station belonging to Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation (Tangedco). The 15- to 17-year-old elephant was electrocuted one week ago. This is the sixth elephant to die in 3 months in the forest reserve because of Tangedco's electric lines that hang too low.<sup>129</sup>



**December 14, 2018**  
**Moolanpalayam, Erode District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**

The village inhabitants notified the Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve administration that they had found a dead elephant. When the forest rangers arrived, the tusks had disappeared. The autopsy revealed that the 20-year-old male elephant had died of complications from gastric problems due to an ulcer. He could no longer eat. A sniffer dog was brought in to track the tusk thieves, and the villagers were interrogated. Mookanpalayam is located at the border between the States of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.<sup>130</sup>

**December 14, 2018**  
**Siliguri, Darjeeling District, State of West Bengal, India**

Seizure of 2 tusks cut into 5 sections. One arrest.<sup>131</sup>



**December 16, 2018**  
**Maloni, Bharatpur District, State of Rajasthan, India**



A second arrest following the death of a 35-year-old elephant last August. Given the injuries to the animal's neck and abdomen, the Forestry Department initially suspected a case of poaching, but the autopsy showed that death was caused by electrocution. Balkaar Singh has been accused of installing an electric line around the field that he cultivates with Sarjeet Singh, who was arrested 2 weeks ago.<sup>132</sup>

**December 18, 2018**  
**Ennore, Chennai Municipality, State of Tamil Nadu, India**

The arrest of 2 crooks involved in several cases of breaking and entering, as well as extortion, led investigators to an ivory trafficker. When they examined the cell phones of Vasanth (28 years old) and Rajkumar (25 years old), who were stopped by a patrol the previous night, the police found photos of 2 tusks. In the course of their investigation, the inspectors searched Chinraj's home and seized the tusks that he had installed in his Pooja – a room dedicated to meditation and prayer – as he waited to make his fortune. He was hoping to sell them at a good price. For the moment, the lead ends there. Chinraj has not given his supplier's name.<sup>133</sup>

**December 21, 2018**  
**Coimbatore District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**

The search is ongoing for an elephant with only one tusk and suffering from a wound to the leg, undoubtedly caused by a poacher's bullet. The elephant is limping aimlessly somewhere in the Madhukkarai forest.<sup>134</sup>

**December 22, 2018**  
**Srivilliputhur, Virudhunagar District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**

Two tusks were discovered in a hardware store. Ashok was arrested, along with 4 accomplices: a snack vendor, an autorickshaw driver, a retired BSNL (Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited) employee and an electrician.<sup>135</sup>





**January 2, 2019  
Ghoshpukur, Hooghly District, West Bengal State, India**

Seizure inside a container on the trailer of a truck of 2 severed tusks weighing 17 kg. The raw ivory was hidden under a shipment of black tea. Arrest of the driver Mr. Subodh Das, 43 years old. According to his own statements, he had picked up the tusks in Kamrup district. He was heading for Calcutta and the cargo was then to reach a country on the Indochinese peninsula or China via Bangladesh.<sup>136</sup>



**January 4, 2019  
Dudurkote, Dhenkanal district, State of Odisha, India**

Arrest of a poacher. His weapon is electricity. His defense is to say that the elephant is an unintentional catch. His targets are the boars.<sup>137</sup>



**January 6, 2019  
Tangla Railway Station, Udalguri District, Assam State, India**

The ambush by customs and the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) over confidential information was well set up. When the 2 motorcycles arrived at 2p.m. near Tangla station on the Tamulpur road, they were intercepted but the traffickers vanished into thin air leaving 2 bags full of rice on the spot. In the rice, there were 3 pairs of tusks, one of which was from a very young calf. Total weight of 13 kg.<sup>138</sup>

**January 9, 2019  
Krishnagiri, Krishnagiri District, Tamil Nadu State, India**

Discovery by a patrol of forestry officers of a gutted male elephant carcass, aged about 13 years. He is believed to have died after a battle with another male. The agents went to get backup. When they returned to the scene, one of the tusks had been cut and stolen.<sup>139</sup>

**January 23, 2019  
Garu, Latehar District, Jharkhand State, India**  
Seizure of a pair of tusks and 200,000 rupees (2,800 US\$) in cash. Eight days earlier, very close to the village, an elephant's body had been found near a railway crossing. The tusks were missing.<sup>140</sup>

**January 29, 2019  
Coimbatore, Coimbatore District, Tamil Nadu State, India**

A farmer was sentenced to 2 years in prison for electrocution of an elephant in 2009. The victim had died of cardiac arrest. His trunk was burned. A WLOR (Wildlife Offence Report) had been drafted. It has been proven that Mr. Gowder fed the fence by diverting a line from Tamil Tangedco (Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation Limited) grid. In the same district, 2 farmers have already been sentenced to 6 years in prison and 3 years for the same offences. On appeal, this last sentence was reduced to 2 years. Forest officials point out that most farmers have fences powered by solar panels. In this configuration, no animals are killed.<sup>141</sup>



**INDONESIA**

**Mid-November 2018  
Blang Awe, East Aceh Regency, Aceh Province, Indonesia**

A body in decay has been found. The tusks were cut off. Traces of blood were taken from the scene of the crime. Analysis is underway to determine the causes of death. The hypothesis of poisoning has not been excluded.<sup>142</sup>

**Late 2018  
Aceh Province, Indonesia**

Year-end results for 2018: 11 Sumatran elephants, compared to 13 in 2017. The population in the province is estimated at fewer than 500. "Of the 11 deaths, 3 were caused by elephant conflicts with humans, 3 by poaching activities and 5 by natural causes," says Sapto Aji Prabowo, director of the province BKSDA.<sup>143</sup>

## ISRAEL

**October 18, 2018**  
**Allenby Bridge or King Hussein Bridge, West Bank Territory, occupied by Israel. Border with Jordan.**

Seizure of 2 tusks in the belongings of a Palestinian national. He said he was coming back from Africa. The tusks seem to be disguised as buffalo horns. See "On the Trail" n°8 p.85.<sup>144</sup>



## MYANMAR

**GANG**  
**October 16, 2018**  
**Taikkyi, Yangon Region, Myanmar**

Conviction of a gang of poachers who killed 2 elephants, one of which was killed on November 7, 2016 near the village of Chaung Sauk. Ye Lin Aung (27 years old), Gyt Tu (25 years old), Thura (24 years old), Nay Lin (24 years old), Bo Bo, (24 years old), Zaw Lin (43 years old), Tin Htway (36 years old) and Pho Lone (60 years old) each got 3 years in prison. As for U Than Lin (50 years old), former village administrator, he was sentenced to 4 and a half years in prison. Eight other members of the gang are still being tracked down.<sup>145</sup>



**October 17, 2018**  
**Pathein District, Ayeyarwady Region, Myanmar**

The Emergency Elephant Rescue Unit (EERU) intervened recently in the district to drive a group of approximately 20 elephants away from villages. The specialists suspected that the herd could attract poachers. Today, they were patrolling, in a joint operation with the police and agents from the Forest Department. Around noon, 2 suspects were spotted on Chaungtha-Ngwe Hsaung Road. When they saw the patrol, one of the 2 men fled, but Saw Htoo Nyaw (32 years old) was caught. He was carrying 2 knives and 3 bottles of poison. During his interrogation, he gave the names of Naing Htet Kyaw (18 years old) and U Kyaw Ta Thein (56 years old). Those 2 were arrested in the Thalek Kwar Forest Reserve, with a rifle, bullets, poison and other poaching equipment. The investigation revealed that Naing Htet Kyaw and the one who got away – Maung Aye – were the poachers, while the other 2 were villagers hired as guides. The poachers can get between 6 and 10 million kyats (3,795 to 6,325 US\$) for killing an elephant. Their stooges are paid 500,000 kyats (315 US\$), at best.<sup>146</sup>



## SRI LANKA

**October 1, 2018**  
**Hambantota, Southern Province, Sri Lanka**

An elephant that was wounded by a bullet in his back-left leg received treatment.<sup>147</sup>

**October 1, 2018**  
**Habarana, North Central Province, Sri Lanka**

**The plague of electric fences**

Another female elephant succumbs to a power line protecting a farming plot on the outskirts of the Hurulu eco-park, a UNESCO biosphere reserve since 1977. The electric fence with a voltage powerful enough to kill an elephant here or a tiger there, is a monstrosity, a kind of punitive technological attack, most often coming from an unauthorized connection on a public line distributing medium voltage. These are not deterrent discharges that make someone turn around after contact, they are deadly discharges that unfailingly trigger burns and cardiac arrest. In India, this practice is also reported to be the cause of human mortality, which is not taken into account in official statistics.

According to the study by veterinary surgeon and Professor Luke Arnot of the University of Pretoria, more than 20,000 reptiles are killed each year in South Africa by electric fences defending agricultural plots. "With tortoises, we tend to think of poaching and bush fires, but electric fences are as big, if not a bigger problem."

Although Dr. Arnot has published in professional magazines good practices such as laying power cables above the ground and using electricity only at night, fences, even low voltage fences, designed to harass lions and reflexively force them to turn back are deadly for turtles that instantly take refuge under their shells and stay in contact, and for pangolins that put themselves in their defensive position and end up, like turtles, dying from heart failure.<sup>148</sup>



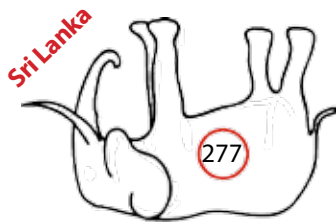
**November 30, 2018**  
**Udawalawe National Park, Sabaragamuwa Province, Sri Lanka**

Death of an adult elephant in Udawalawe Elephant Transit Home. Both tusks were intact. Unsuccessful attempt to poach and steal ivory? The center was established in 1995 by the Department of Wildlife Conservation. Its goal is to welcome and care for orphaned elephants before their release. The center is open to the public at bottle time.<sup>149</sup>



**Early December 2018**  
**Udawalawe National Park, Sabaragamuwa and Uva Provinces, Sri Lanka**

An 11-year-old male was shot 160 km from Colombo. In 2018, the “national treasure” lost 277 jewels. They died by electrocution, hit by trains, in metal and explosives traps, and by farmers’ dissuasive bullets. Non-regulated waste dumps attract elephants who are being driven from their fragmented forest habitats and losing their sources of drinking water. They eat plastic and spoiled food, and are intoxicated. The government does not seem to be aware of the urgency involved in curbing the catastrophe. “We are trying to increase awareness among people through schools in areas near the different national parks,” says the spokesperson of the State services for the protection of wildlife.<sup>150</sup>



**Early December 2018**  
**Kandy, Central Province, Sri Lanka**

Seizure of 11 presumed Gaja Muthu, the pearls that sometimes form at the base of elephants’ tusks (see “On the Trail” n°15 p. 101, n°19 p. 112, n°22 p. 100). Estimated value: 40 million rupees, 221,500 US\$, or 20,136 US\$ each. Seven arrests.<sup>151</sup>



**THAILAND**

**November 14, 2018**  
**Buntharik-Yod Mon Wildlife Sanctuary, Ubon Ratchathani Province, Thailand. Border with Laos.**

An AK-47 bullet fired at close range. Entry through the mouth, exit through the left hind leg. He was 20 to 25 years old and weighed 3 to 4 tons. He was buried on site after being sprinkled with quicklime. The dirty trick was allegedly perpetrated by illegal fauna and rosewood poachers from Laos, or by a soldier dressed in “the uniform of a neighbouring country” caught by trap camera with an AK-47 and GPS in hand near the scene of the massacre.<sup>152</sup>

**December 16, 2018**  
**Border Crossing Point, Thai-Lao Friendship Bridge, Nakhon Phanom Province, Thailand**

Than Nguen Kee Thanh (43 years old), a Vietnamese national, arrived by bus from Thakhek, Laos, the capital of the border province of Khammouane. She was carrying 930 pieces of ivory jewelry and sections of tusks, probably of African origin. The load weighed 22 kg and was worth an estimated

one million bahts (30,300 US\$). Originally from the province of Ha Tinh in Viet Nam, she claimed to simply be the courier, paid 2,000 bahts (60 US\$) for the trip. She was supposed to hand the load over to a contact at the bus terminal in the city of Nakhon Phanom. The customs agents suspect that she is a member of a gang. Traffickers now prefer road transportation to air transport.<sup>153</sup>

**January 21, 2019**  
**Nakhon Pathom, Nakhon Pathom Province, Thailand**

Premchai Karnasuta, the public works magnate, was arrested in February 2018 for poaching in a national park with guides and a cook. Two tusks were subsequently seized at his home (see “On the Trail” n°20 p.126-127). Premchai and his wife Khanitta claim that they come from a Thai elephant. A year later, the Criminal Court orders a DNA analysis to determine its true origin.<sup>154</sup>

**VIET NAM**

**January 13, 2019**  
**Vinh Phuc Province, Viet Nam**

Seizure of nearly 10kg of worked ivories following an arrest in the act of illegal sale. A search of the suspect’s home resulted in the seizure of many objects, including combs, bracelets and statuettes.<sup>155</sup>



**EUROPE**

**GERMANY**

**November 16, 2018**  
**Frankfurt am Main International Airport, Land Hessen, Germany**

Seizure in the luggage of a passenger bound for Viet Nam of 4 carved tusks.<sup>156</sup>



**BELGIUM**

**Late December 2018**  
**Brussels, Antwerp and Ghent, Belgium**

Since the beginning of the year, inspections have been carried out in 34 antique shops and 3 auction houses in Brussels, Antwerp and Ghent. Result:

- 152 ivory pieces seized or voluntarily handed over to the authorities.
- 23 reports of violations.
- 12 official warnings.

Reason: no information available on the origin and manufacturing dates of the items.<sup>157</sup>

## FRANCE

**November 27, 2018**

**Grasse, Alpes-Maritimes  
Department, France**

Conviction of 2 second-hand goods dealers and a restorer specialized in ivory objects. All 3 received one year prison sentences and fines of 30,000 €. An accomplice received one year in prison and a fine of 10,000 €. They were charged with attempting to sell 2 tusks through an auction house in Cannes. The tusks weighed a total of 110 kg and were estimated at between 150,000 € and 300,000 €. They were accompanied by phony certificates of historic origin from the Belgian Congo. Search warrants led to the seizure of carved ivories and 3 other tusks (see "On the Trail" n°4 p.89). The instigator of the sham is 78 years old. He is a member of a community of travelers.<sup>158</sup>



## ITALY

**November 2018**

**Catania, Sicily Region, Italy**

Seizure in an antique shop of 14 ivory figurines measuring between 13 and 30 cm representing unicorns, animals and deities, all of unknown origin and manufacturing dates.<sup>159</sup>

## UNITED KINGDOM

**Late October 2018**

**Chatteris, Cambridgeshire County, England,  
United Kingdom**

Three tusks weighing 17 kg each were discovered in an attic as part of an inheritance. Estimated commercial value: 150,000 £, or 9900 €/kg. The inheritor took them to a local museum in the back of her Mini Austin. The museum curator contacted IFAW for destruction of the tusks, as the best way of ensuring that they do not end up on the black market.<sup>160</sup>

**24 January 2019**

**World**

Satisfaction at eBay and IFAW after 10 years of collaboration to reduce raw and worked ivories sales ads on platforms. However, IFAW notes a resurgence of ivory on the German platform.<sup>162</sup>



**Mid-December 2018**

**United Kingdom**

In the midst of the Brexit storm, the United Kingdom Parliament took a break and passed a law on Tuesday December 18<sup>th</sup> in tribute to elephants, removing any commercial value from most colonial ivories from the Indian sub-continent or East Africa. Heirs and other acquirers of ivory now hold a single sentimental or cultural value or waste that they dispose of through IFAW. The ban on the sale of ivory on the domestic market in the United Kingdom and for export is announced as more restrictive than in the United States. Within the Antique Dealers' Corporation, there are rumblings that there is no connection between the sale of Japanese netsukes and the poaching of the "magnificent wild animals" that are elephants. They fail to point out to the specialized press or the general public that antiquities dating back to more than a century formally authenticated by documentary and scientific evidence may continue to be marketed and that objects manufactured before 1947 containing less than 10% ivory may also be placed on the market. The famous Victorian era teapots with their ivory lid knobs, as vital to English civilization as street demonstrations for French civilization, will not be forced into a shameful attic trade. Musical instruments prior to 1975 will also be exempted. The Queen approved the law on December 20 and it is expected to come into force no later than mid-2019.<sup>161</sup>

## Elephants and Mammoths

### RUSSIA

**Mid-November 2018**

**Bryansk, Bryansk Oblast, Russia**

255 illegal objects were discovered in the baggage of a Russian passenger leaving Moscow for the Ukraine. They included mammoth tusk sections, ivory figurines and sharks' teeth. The total value is estimated at 4,500 US\$.<sup>1</sup>

### UNITED KINGDOM

**January 4, 2019**

**Edinburgh, Scotland, United Kingdom**

Genetic analyses carried out by scientists on behalf of Edinburgh Zoo (Scotland) have shown that worked ivories advertised as elephant ivory sold in Cambodia were actually made of mammoth ivory. Scottish scientists are working with their colleagues in Phnom Penh to ensure that the genetic research on the origin of ivory is consolidated.<sup>2</sup>



Israel and Kenya propose the listing of the woolly mammoth (*Mammuthus primigenius*) under CITES Appendix II. The European Union mocks this proposal. However, consumers do not have the necessary training to examine Schreger's lines on statuettes or bracelets to ensure that the mammoth ivory appellation does not hide illegal elephant ivory. The sellers of real mammoth ivory are not mistaken; they are already asking for CITES certificates to display them in the store window, as Robin des Bois observed in Hong Kong on March 10, 2019.

中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府  
The Government of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, People's Republic of China

**CITES** CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA AP 5 (32)  
濒危野生動植物種國際貿易公約

**RE-EXPORT CERTIFICATE**  
再出口證明書

1. Certificate No. 證明書編號  
APCIRC 82307

2. Valid until (Expire Month/Year)  
有效期至 (月/年)

3. Exporter 出口人

4. Consigner 收貨人

5. Conditions / Other remarks 條件/其他說明

6. Management Authority 管理當局  
Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department  
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region  
SF, Cheung Sha Wan Government Offices  
303 Cheung Sha Wan Road, Kowloon  
HONG KONG  
香港特別行政區  
漁農自然護理署  
地址：九龍新沙灣道303號  
在沙灣政府合署五樓

No. 序號	Species (Scientific) & Common Name 物名 (學名) 及俗稱	Appendix & Source 附錄及來源	Country/region of Origin 原產國/地區	Description 描述	Quantity & Unit 數量及單位
1	MAMMUTHUS PRIMIGENIUS	NON-CITES	RUSSIAN FEDERATION	TUSK CARVING	**30.34 KG □ PCI**
***** LAST ITEM(S) *****					

7. This re-export certificate is issued by 管理當局

08 March 2007  
Date 日期

HENRY P.L. HO  
Name 姓名

Official Stamp 官印

Official Stamp 官印

R 020408

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