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1

TRAFFIC

B U L L E T I N



SUMATRA'S CAGE BIRD TRADE

CHINA'S GREEN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

SHARKS AND RAYS IN BANGLADESH

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

APRIL 2018

The *TRAFFIC Bulletin* is a publication of TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring specialist and a leading non-governmental organization working globally on trade in wild animals and plants in the context of both biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.

The *TRAFFIC Bulletin* publishes information and original papers on the subject of trade in wild animals and plants, and strives to be a source of accurate and objective information.

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White-rumped Shama
Copsychus malabaricus tricolor
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Shark processing centre, Bangladesh
(© Alifa Bintha Haque);
Birds on sale at Pekanbaru market, Sumatra
(© Marison Guciano);
Seizure in Hong Kong of suspected rhino horn pieces
painted red (© Hong Kong Customs)

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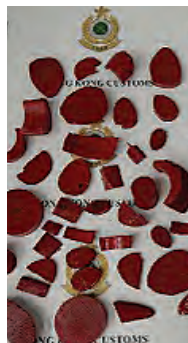
BULLETIN

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NIGERIA: In March 2018, Customs officials impounded 329 sacks of pangolin scales (weight not reported) at Ikeja, Lagos, and arrested a Chinese national (see also other/multi-seizures).

New Telegraph: <https://bit.ly/2qWYpzn>, 8 March 2018

SRI LANKA: On 12 November 2017, police seized 130 kg scales of Indian Pangolins *Manis crassicaudata* from a house at Tiladiya in Kalpitiya, reportedly bound for China via India. Three arrests.

Daily News: <https://bit.ly/2qZzB9f>, 13 November 2017

TAIWAN: On 30 January 2018, in reportedly the largest-ever pangolin smuggling case at Kaohsiung port, authorities inspecting a container discovered some 4,000 pangolin carcasses, their scales removed, concealed beneath frozen sardines. The shipment had arrived from Malaysia a month earlier and had not been collected by the domestic consignee.

Liberty Times Net: <https://bit.ly/2FAd0W8>, 1 February 2018

THAILAND: On 21 November 2017, two Thai men were arrested at Chong Sam Mor checkpoint, Chaiyaphum province, after police found 105 live pangolins concealed in vehicles heading for the border with Lao PDR in Nong Khai. The specimens were reportedly purchased in Lad Lum Kaew District.

On 24 November 2017, officials at a cargo terminal in the border town of Mae Sot, Tak province, seized 84 pangolins believed to have been smuggled from Myanmar. This is reportedly the first time a shipment of pangolin scales from Myanmar has been seized in the country; the suspects fled.

The Nation: <https://bit.ly/2mRYuEH>, 21 November 2017; *Komchadluek.net:* <https://bit.ly/2HrH5bV>, 21 November 2017; *Thai PBS:* <https://bit.ly/2r2SGHE>, 24 November 2017

REPTILES

MADAGASCAR: On 10 January 2018, 460 Radiated Turtles *Astrochelys radiata* (CITES I) were seized from a boat stranded on a beach in Morondava. A strong odour emanating from the vessel caused nearby residents to alert the authorities. Only 217 specimens could be saved and were expected to be repatriated and released in the wild.

On 10 April 2018 at Betsinjaka, Toliara II, more than 5,000 Radiated Tortoises were seized from two houses. Requisite documentation was not produced; two arrests. The reptiles were to be released in the wild following a period in quarantine. A further 26 specimens were seized at Ivato Airport on 3 April.

Midi Madagasikara: <https://bit.ly/213whC9>, 20 January 2018; *L'Express de Madagascar:* <https://bit.ly/2HveRgj>, 11 April 2018; *Newsmada:* <https://bit.ly/2vJOG4j>, 5 April 2018

MEXICO: On 3 December 2017, authorities in Guerrero seized 1,823 eggs of Olive Ridley Turtles *Lepidochelys olivacea* (CITES I); the eggs were no longer viable and were destroyed.

On 11 December, a further 3,172 Olive Ridley Turtle eggs were seized in two incidents; two arrests in Jalisco.

Gob mx: <https://bit.ly/2HRWLZH>, 3 December 2017; <https://bit.ly/2HsGATf>, 11 December 2017

RHINOCEROSES

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

CHINA: On 29 October 2017, a Chinese national in transit from Maputo, Mozambique, was detained at Guangzhou International Airport in possession of a suitcase containing 11 rhino horns (30 kg).

@Verdade: <https://bit.ly/2HM7h13> (in Portuguese), 2 November 2017

LAO PDR: On 23 October 2017, two Chinese nationals were arrested at Wattay International Airport, Vientiane, after arriving on a flight from Singapore with five pieces of rhino horn (11 kg).

World News: <https://bit.ly/2v1cMfA>, 25 October 2017

NEPAL: On 28 February 2018, at Patan High Court, Kathmandu, Ram Sharan BK and Santa Bahadur Chepang were sentenced to gaol for 15 and 14 years, respectively, after being convicted of poaching a Greater One-horned Rhinoceros *Rhinoceros unicornis* in Chitwan National Park in 2011. Seven others received gaol terms of between five and eight years.

The previous day the court gaoled Ramesh Tamang for 14 years for a separate rhino poaching incident.

Kathmandu Post: <https://bit.ly/2qZ9fnv>, 1 March 2018

NETHERLANDS: On 6 April 2018, a court in Amsterdam sentenced a Chinese man to one year in gaol and fined him USD613,000 for smuggling five rhino horns and four other horn objects in his luggage (and for falsifying a visa). The suspect, arrested in December 2017 at Schiphol Airport, was in transit from South Africa, bound for Shanghai, China.

South China Morning Post: <https://bit.ly/2G1w4Xm>, 7 April 2018

SINGAPORE: On 26 February 2018, Nguyen Vinh Hai, a Vietnamese national was sentenced to 15 months in gaol after he was detained at Changi Airport in transit from Angola to

Luang Prabang, Lao PDR, on 31 August 2017 in possession of eight pieces of cut rhino horns (3 kg) and a packet of unidentified powder, all wrapped in foil. The cut horns were reportedly derived from three horns, at least two of which were from two Black Rhinoceroses *Diceros bicornis* (CITES I).

The Straits Times: <https://bit.ly/2EX8hOI>, 26 February 2018

SOUTH AFRICA: On 12 October 2017, at Kempton Park Magistrates' Court, The Shuangshuang Xue, a Chinese national, was sentenced to four years in gaol after being arrested in July at O.R. Tambo International Airport after arriving from Lusaka, Zambia, bound for Hong Kong, with 14 pieces of rhino horn (16 kg). Genetic profiling of the horn identified it as being from the southern White Rhinoceros *Ceratotherium simum simum* (four males and one female). None of the pieces could be linked to any poaching incidents or registered stockpile.

In January 2018, at Empangeni Magistrates' Court, KwaZulu-Natal, four people were found guilty of rhino poaching and possession of firearms: Mduduzi Magwaza, Emmanuel Xulu, Bonginhlanhla Khumalo and Vela Madela were sentenced to gaol for 9, 12, 6 and 3 years.

On 25 January 2018, at Middelburg Regional Court, four of five syndicate members arrested for illegal possession and trade in rhino horn were found guilty and fined. Yansen Fenc, a Chinese national, was sentenced to pay ZAR60,000 (USD5,000) or gaoled for six months and a further 18 months suspended for five years. He was also ordered to pay R1 million compensation to the Stop Rhino Poaching Project. South Africans Jozeph Albertus Du Plessis and his wife Johanna Du Plessis were each fined ZAR20 000 or sentenced to two years in gaol for dealing in rhino horns. The case against a South African game farmer is pending.

In March 2018, at Lephalale Regional Court, Kenny Mthethi and Sam None were each sentenced to 58 years in gaol after being apprehended on 10 February 2014 on a farm outside Lephalale in possession of two rhino horns, a hunting rifle and ammunition.

South African Environment Affairs media releases: <https://bit.ly/2HpYwvx>, 26 July 2018; <https://bit.ly/21ctL4K>, 18 October 2018; *East Coast Radio:* <https://bit.ly/2qWZvet>, 30 January 2018; *South African Police Service media statements:* <https://bit.ly/2JnN8Po>, 26 January 2018; <https://bit.ly/2HrTEbe>, 24 March 2018

SWAZILAND: On 9 November 2017, at the High Court of Swaziland, Hsiao Chen Hao and Chen Bei-Hsun of Taiwan were each sentenced to 11 years in gaol for killing four rhinos; nine years and 11 years for trafficking the horn pieces and nine years for exporting the trophies. The judge ordered that these

sentences should run concurrently, which means each will serve a gaol term of 11 years. The duo was also ordered to pay USD13,300 in compensation to the rhino owners which, if they failed to do so, will result in an additional sentence of four years each.

Three of the rhinos were poached in South Africa, while the fourth was dehorned in Swaziland. The defendants were arrested in February 2017 at King Mswati III International Airport, bound for Taiwan, in possession of 24 pieces of rhino horn.

APA News: <https://bit.ly/2Jot3s8>, 10 November 2017

THAILAND: On 10 October 2017, authorities at Suvarnabhumi Airport seized eight rhino horns (6.3 kg). Two Chinese nationals were arrested, in transit from Zambia to Cambodia.

On 12 December 2017, officials at the airport seized 14 (11 kg) African rhino horns. A plant quarantine official is accused of picking up a case containing the horns and bypassing a Customs check before passing it on to a Vietnamese courier; both were arrested along with a Chinese national.

On 20 January 2018, at Nakhon Phanom Airport, an alleged kingpin of illegal wildlife trade over a 10-year period—including the illegal trade in 14 rhino horns—was arrested. Together with family members, he allegedly ran a large trafficking network on the Thai-Lao PDR border that spread into Viet Nam and involved the smuggling of CITES I-listed specimens and products, including ivory, Tigers *Panthera tigris* (CITES I) and Lions *P. leo* (CITES II).

Travelwire News: travelwirenews.com/two-chinese-men-arrested-with-eight-rhino-horns-466919/, 11 October 2017; Bangkok Post: <https://bit.ly/2Kg5zXg>, 14 December 2017; <https://bit.ly/2JrZar5>, 12 December 2017; Bossip: <https://bit.ly/2JrZXs3>, 21 January 2018

USA: In November 2017, at a federal court in Miami, Michael Hegarty of Ireland was sentenced to 18 months in gaol followed by three years of supervised release. Hegarty was part of an international criminal gang known as the Rathkeale Rovers (other members have already been sentenced, see 28(1):33).

Together with another man, Richard Sheridan, and a third man from Florida, they purchased a libation cup in North Carolina made from rhino horn and transported it to Florida, where they falsified papers to smuggle it out of the USA.

Raidió Teilifís Éireann: <https://bit.ly/2AHKEHc>, 15 November 2017

ZIMBABWE: A poacher who left his phone at the crime scene leading to his arrest, has been gaol for 10 years for killing two Black Rhinoceroses *Diceros bicornis* (CITES I).

NewsdzeZimbabwe: <https://bit.ly/2qX1AXJ>, 17 January 2018

OTHER / MULTI-SEIZURES

AUSTRALIA: On 8 February 2018, at ACT Magistrates' Court, Brent Philip Counsell was fined AUD5,500 (USD4,265) and placed on a two-year good behaviour bond after he pleaded guilty to 14 charges relating to importing CITES-listed animal remains without a permit, including skulls of Asian wild cats, bears, a gibbon, monkeys, a water monitor, owls, and hornbill skulls. Some 100 specimens seized from Counsell's home in June 2016 were intended for sale at markets and via his online business.

Australian Government Department of Environment and Energy: <https://bit.ly/2qZD7QZ>, 8 February 2018

CAMEROON: On 10 November 2017, authorities in Douala seized 158 raw ivory pieces (250 kg); pangolin scales (1,050 kg); 124 dried Grey Parrots *Psittacus erithacus* (CITES I) and 1,394 Grey Parrot feathers. The items, concealed under bags of foodstuffs, had reportedly been despatched from Ebolowa in Yakadouma, to Douala, destined for Nigeria. Three arrests.

Business in Cameroon: <https://bit.ly/2qUp004>, 14 November 2017; Journal du Cameroun.com: <https://bit.ly/2HpFdEw>

GUINEA: In December 2017, two people arrested in possession of two dead Chimpanzees *Pan troglodytes* (CITES I) and a live baby chimp, were each sentenced to the maximum one year gaol sentence and ordered to pay a fine of over USD55,000.

The Eagle Network, January 2018

INDIA: On 22 October 2017, officials in Harmuty, Lakhimpur district, recovered 42 gall bladders of Black Bear *Ursus thibetanus* (CITES I), 12 bear skins and Tiger *Panthera tigris* (CITES I) nails. Two people arrested said they had been involved in the trade for two years and had purchased the organs from villagers in Arunachal Pradesh to sell in Shillong.

Arunachal Times: <https://bit.ly/2FgeDrB>, 23 October 2017

NIGERIA: On 15 February 2018, authorities in Ikeja seized sacks containing 218 pieces (343 kg) of elephant tusks and 2 t of pangolin scales from an apartment; a Chinese national was arrested.

Punchng: <https://bit.ly/2KfzGhS>, 16 February 2018

RUSSIA: On 27/28 January 2018, a group of Russian and Chinese nationals were arrested as they prepared to cross a frozen Lake Khanka into China with vehicles found to be carrying 870 bear (CITES I) paws, the remains of at least four Siberian Tigers *Panthera tigris* (CITES I), bear teeth, and other wildlife.

Phys.org: <https://bit.ly/2HKjbvN>, 31 January 2018

TANZANIA: In January 2018, the Court of Appeal dismissed an appeal lodged by a poacher, Mandela Masikini, alias Kasalama, who was challenging both a conviction and a 20 years' gaol sentence (or fine of TZS78.4 m (USD34,350)) imposed on him for the illegal possession of the skin of a Lion *Panthera leo* (CITES II), which was a government trophy.

Daily News: <https://bit.ly/2Kfv1MN>, 2 January 2018



THE MINISTRY OF FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE – CAMEROON

Nearly 1,400 tail feathers of Grey Parrots *Psittacus erithacus* (CITES I) were seized in Cameroon in November 2017 by the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife from a shipment of ivory and pangolin scales reportedly destined for Nigeria.