

ROBIN DES BOIS

ON_{the} TRAIL

The defaunation bulletin
Quarterly information and analysis report on animal poaching and smuggling
n°26. Events from the 1st July to the 30th September, 2019
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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.

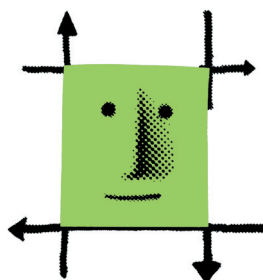
“On the Trail” highlights the new weapons of plunderers, the new modus operandi of smugglers, rumours intended to attract humans consumers of animals and their by-products. “On the Trail” gathers and disseminates feedback from institutions, individuals and NGOs that fight against poaching and smuggling. 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/>



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Judgment and sanction

Condemnation, acquittal, fine...



Human death

Guard, ranger, policeman, poacher... by firearm or other means.



Poisoning

By chemicals, pesticides and medicines: cyanide, Carbofuran, Diclofenac, M99 ...



Trapping

Poaching by jaw trap, snare ...



Full moon

Moonlight poaching

CITES Appendices

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. 182 Member States.

Appendix I : species threatened with extinction. Trade in specimens of these species is permitted only in exceptional circumstances and under import and export permits.

Appendix II : export permit required in order to avoid utilization incompatible with the species survival. Import permit if required by national law.

Appendix III : species that are protected in at least one country, which has asked other CITES Parties for assistance in controlling the trade. In the case of trade from a State that included the species in Appendix III, an export permit of that State is required.

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°26

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

Continent	Country	US\$/kg	Ref.
Asia	Viet Nam	60,000	27

EASTERN AFRICA

KENYA

September 13, 2019

Nanyuki, Laikipia County, Kenya

Mohammed Hussein Warsame, former KWS agent, sentenced to 12 years in prison for poaching and dehorning a rhino and an African buffalo (*Syncerus caffer*) in the Ol Pejeta protected area.¹



September 22, 2019

Tsavo West National Park, Kenya

Death of 2 black rhinos. They would have been victims of anthrax. A calf was found wandering around his mother's body and taken to an orphanage.²



MOZAMBIQUE

September 2, 2019

Mozambique

Two poachers sentenced to 16 and 17 years in prison for killing 2 rhinos in the Limpopo National Park bordering the Kruger Park in South Africa. This is the first time in 10 years that this type of crime has been punished by prison in Mozambique. South Africa, through the Director of National Parks, has taken note of this sentence with satisfaction.³



REPEATED OFFENSE

September 30, 2019

Maputo, Mozambique

Lucílio Matsinhe has been arrested. He is better known by his pseudonym “Tchenguela” and even better known for being the eldest son of General Mariano de Araujo Matsinhe, former Minister of Domestic Security and considered to be one of the “liberators of the nation.” “Tchenguela” was in possession of 2 rhinoceros horns and was about to sell them at a hotel in town. In the middle of an electoral campaign, the incident caused quite a commotion among leadership circles. It did not get much coverage in the press, but spread like wildfire through social networks. Newsrooms apparently received “recommendations” discouraging them from divulging the identity of the trafficker. A few days after the arrest, a spokesperson from the ANAC (Administração Nacional de Áreas de Conservação) announced that the horns were fake, that they were made from a mixture of goat hair and resin, and even added that at the heart of each horn was an empty beer can that was meant to lighten the horn and reinforce the apparent authenticity of the forgery. Many people believe that the ANAC declaration is a scam that enables FRELIMO, the majority political party, to avoid being tarnished by yet another case of wildlife trafficking. However, the ANAC may be telling the truth since “Tchenguela” has been involved in the past in a case of counterfeited precious stones.⁴



ZIMBABWE

September 20, 2019

Victoria Falls, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe

Seven Chinese citizens suspected of horn smuggling escaped. At their home in December 2018, 30 kg had been seized by the police (see “On the Trail” n°23 p. 101). They were released on bail in April 2019 with confiscation of their passports, obligation to report daily to the police station and a ban on traveling beyond 10 km from Victoria Falls except to respond to summons from the Hwange court.⁵

SOUTHERN AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

Beginning of July, 2019

Near Hoedspruit, Limpopo Province, South Africa

It's a big day for the orphanage and for the 2 young rhinos in a state of distress who were taken in after their mothers were poached in 2014. At the time, they were one month old and 3 months old. They were fed with baby bottles every 3 hours until they were 16 months old. In the beginning, a ewe was put in each of the enclosures to accompany the orphans and to reassure them with the constant and peaceful presence of another animal and contact with caretakers was reduced to the strict minimum. A one-month-old rhinoceros weighs a little over 100 kg. After the milk came grass and alfalfa. When rhinos reach 5 years old, at the earliest, they can fend for themselves to eat and are strong enough to defend themselves against natural predators. They weigh over 500 kg. The orphans had to be released together. They had grown to know each other while they were in captivity, and since they were released, they have stuck together like glue. The ex-"Gertjie" and "Matimba" are inseparable in the reserve where they were freed. However, there is still reason to be concerned about their futures. "We cannot simply release a wild animal and assume that he or she will be fine until the end of their lives, but a wild animal needs to live in a wild environment. Rehabilitation is only half of the process." "In the end, we have to find them a reserve or a protected area with a good anti-poaching team and effective fencing." That explains why, at the time of the release – and the separation – Karen Swiegers, orphanage manager, Corlet Grobler, safety manager at the orphanage and Janelle Genis, assistant veterinarian, were both happy and worried.⁶

July 2019 South Africa

After a 3-hour flyover, the Saving the Survivors team managed to locate the female and her young under a tree. After anaesthetizing the mother and moving her young away, Dr. Johan and his team treated the wound but could not explain its origin. To prevent the wound from being constantly searched by oxpecker birds, they covered it with a dressing made of elephant skin collected from a taxidermist.⁷

July 3, 2019 Acorhoek, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

Two men, aged 20 and 37, were stopped driving a Ford on the outskirts of a private hunting reserve. They are suspected to have planned to poach a rhino. Seizure of a large-calibre weapon.⁸

July 16, 2019 Limpopo Province, South Africa Two slaughters.⁹



July 16, 2019 Thulamahashe, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

Three poachers from Mozambique and aged between 30 and 36 sentenced to prison terms of 13 to 18 years. They begged for the court's indulgence but the rhino bloodstains on their poaching clothes did not argue for them.¹⁰



August 15, 2019 Johannesburg, Gauteng Province, South Africa

Three suspects arrested. They're members of a network that sells horns in Asia. Seizure of 2 horns, 2 vehicles and 70,000 rand, 4,600 US\$, in cash. The police statement highlights that 11 State services and the Mpumalanga Province Parks Directorate have been investigating for a year and in a coordinated manner to bring this rhino crime syndicate to justice.¹¹

August 17, 2019 KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa

Rescue of a 7-month-old orphan girl who was being harassed by hyenas and lions. Her mother was found dead and dehorned.¹²



August 28, 2019 Pilanesberg National Park, North West Province, South Africa

Disinfection of an infected wound attributed by the vet to a poaching shot. The park has lost 10 rhinos since the beginning of the year.¹³



September 4, 2019

Rankin's Pass and Vaalwater, Limpopo Province, South Africa

Arrests in 2 different places of 3 men linked to a single case, namely the poaching of a rhino on a ranch and the poaching of his 2 horns. The manhunt mobilized several police crews and private air means. Along with the 2 horns, a rifle with silencer, ammunition, an axe and a car were seized. ¹⁴



September 17, 2019

Midrand, Gauteng Province, South Africa

Arrest by the Hawks of 2 men with a rhino horn hidden in a bin bag under the passenger seat of their car. ¹⁵

ESWATINI

July 9 and 10, 2019

Eswatini

Sixteen black rhinoceroses have been transferred from South Africa – males, females, adults, sub-adults and juveniles. They came from a private hunting reserve 700 km away from the kingdom.



When the road convoy arrived, the rhinos were all preventively de-horned and they are all monitored individually to make sure that they eat and drink properly and that the mothers are not separated from their 6-month-old young. The zoos in Dallas, Omaha and Sedgwick all contributed financially to the transfer operation and the preparation of their new site. Four years ago, the Kingdom of Swaziland, now the Kingdom of Eswatini, sent 12 elephants to the 3 zoos (see "On the Trail" n° 12 p. 90). Big Game Parks, who operate 3 parks and reserves in the kingdom, took this opportunity to deny accusations claiming that the export of elephants to the United States was purely commercial. In other words, it is implied that the revenue from the American public's curiosity with regards to the elephants participated in the transfer of these black rhinoceroses. ¹⁶

NAMIBIA

July 20, 2019

Etosha National Park, Kunene Region, Namibia

Take 2 out of a population estimated [or overestimated] to be about 3,000. Next to the carcasses, there were spent cartridges. ¹⁷

September 8, 2019

Otavi, Otjozondjupa Region, Namibia

Gunfight at noon this Sunday between a man suspected of poaching and pursued by 15 policemen and one helicopter. Later in the evening, around 11pm, he was arrested with a horn, food and ammunition but without the firearm he allegedly got rid of during the chase. ¹⁸

ASIA

CHINA

July 3, 2019

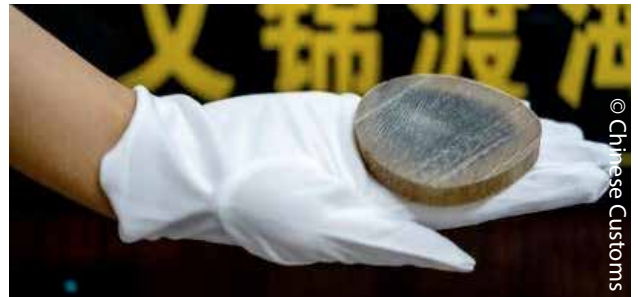
Rizhao, Shandong Province, China

Seizure of a horn fragment, 170 g, purchased in Viet Nam. ¹⁹

July 6, 2019

Wenjindu Border Post, Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China

Seizure of 860 g of slices and other fragments of suspected rhino horn. ²⁰



INDIA

GANG REPEATED OFFENSE

July 6, 2019

Borgang, Biswanath District, State of Assam, India

Arrest on the NH-15 of 2 rhino snipers: Arfan Ali already convicted twice for poaching and Ramkuiba who came from Nagaland for the occasion. Thanks to their first confession, 3 accomplices in charge of the logistics and transport of weapons and ammunition were arrested. In conspiracy, they were preparing to hunt in Kaziranga Park. Official figures put the number of rhinos in Kaziranga Park at 2,413, 102 in the Pobitora Sanctuary, 100 in Orang National Park and 34 in Manas National Park. ²¹

July 10, 2019

Guwahati, Kamrup District, State of Assam, India

Toyikhu Zhimomi, alias Master, alias Hokopo Zhimo, alias Hokup, has been arrested. He is suspected of being the mastermind of several cases of rhinoceros poaching in the Kaziranga park. He is reputed to have never set foot on the field, nor dirtied his hands in blood. He supplied weapons and allowances to sharpshooters recruited in the states of Manipur and Nagaland, and maintained a network of guides and informers around Kaziranga. Upon request, he exfiltrates horns through Moreh, a town on the border between India and Myanmar. Kaziranga covers a surface area of 450 km². Poaching is in decline there. In 2017 and 2018, 12 cases of poaching were recorded, while in the first 5 months of 2019, only one case was recorded. According to Rohini Ballav Saikia, who is the park forest ranger manager, several attempted cases of poaching have failed thanks to cooperation with local residents.²²



September 17, 2019

Baghmari, Guwahati District, State of Orissa, India

Rhino's nails, 3 per foot, are now sought after by networks. This is at least what stands out of the seizure of 12 nails and one horn in possession of 5 poachers - in short all the keratin of a rhino killed at the beginning of April on the Biswanath side. The loot was reportedly transported into Arunachal Pradesh before being smuggled to Myanmar and then to China.²³

VIET NAM

July 18, 2019

Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam

A 22-month-old toddler is admitted to a paediatric hospital in absolute emergency. It turns out that he was poisoned after his parents made him drink a potion supposedly containing rhinoceros horn powder to cure him of a mild fever. Thanks to the diagnosis and the treatment of the chief doctor and his team, he was saved.²⁶

July 15, 2019

Gia Tran, Ninh Binh Province, Viet Nam

He was on his way to the Huong Tra Hotel to deliver it to a client. The horn weighs 0.83 kg. Dinh Van Thuong was stopped on the road by a patrol.²⁵

July 28, 2019

Noi Bai International Airport, Hanoi, Viet Nam

Seizure of 55 horns and fragments. 125 kg. 7.5 million US\$ near the Chinese border. Police used piolets to break the plaster wrapping the cargo. Half a day's work. The 14 parcels came from an unidentified African country via the United Arab Emirates. The consignees were the Yang Shin Company and the Thien Ha Garment Export Company in Bac Giang, 100 km from the border with China.²⁷



Rhinoceroses and Elephants

AFRICA

ANGOLA

Beginning of August 2019

Angola

Great catch by SIC (Serviço de Investigação Criminal) 2 weeks before the CITES plenary session in Geneva. Seizure of 700 kg of raw and worked ivory, a rhinoceros horn, giant sable antelope horns (*Hippotragus niger variani*, Appendix I) and teeth of leopards and lions, 4 weapons with telescopic scopes, 2 pistols, a drone and large amounts of cash. Thirteen arrests: 6 Chinese, 6 Angolans and one Vietnamese. The gang was also trafficking in ebony.¹



KENYA

GANG

End of September 2019

Litein, Kericho County and Sotik, Bomet County, Kenya

- Dismantling of a gang specialised in stealing, trafficking and selling exhibits in court administration services. Seizure of 5 sections of tusks and a rhino horn in a shopping centre. Arrest of Mathew Kipkemoi Maritim, Emmanuel Ngetich and Edi Abdi Kontoma.

- Bail was denied by the Sotik court. Behind the scenes and mostly anonymously, there are rumours that the conditions of storage of evidence before trials and its management after trials should be audited. The complicity of clerks or other agents of the Ministry of Justice is not excluded.²



NAMIBIA

August 14, 2019

Mukuyu, Zambezi Region, Namibia

A Zambian caught in the act of transporting raw ivory and rhino horn in the middle of the Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area - KAZA - (see "On the Trail" n°12 p. 82, n°13 p.67 and 89, n°14 p. 83), a transboundary park uniting Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.³



OCEANIA

AUSTRALIA

August 22, 2019

Australia

Draft bill on the closure of the domestic ivory market in all states and territories. A list of exemptions has yet to be drawn up; musical instruments containing less than 20% ivory, antique pianos with ivory keys would be part of it. The measure will be extended to rhinoceros horns or objects made of rhinoceros horn.⁴

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°26 Black market raw ivory quotation from media or official sources

Continent	Country	US\$/kg	Ref.
Africa	Kenya	960	4
		963	7
		960	13
		937	15
	Malawi	100	20
	Uganda	72	25
	Zimbabwe	166	38
Asia	India, state of Karnataka	3,480	121
	India, state of Maharashtra	1,453	124
	Singapore	1,465	4*

* Cf. chapter « Pangolins and Elephants »

EASTERN AFRICA

KENYA

July 5, 2019
Nairobi, Nairobi County, Kenya

Seizure of 2 sections of tusks and ammunition. Arrest of Peter Mugi Kamau and Jamal Dida Guyo.¹



July 10, 2019
Samburu, Kwale County, Kenya

Seizure of 82 kg of raw ivory. Arrest of Hussein Wanjala, 57, and Stephen Riziki, 20, during the transaction with buyers who turned out to be agents of the DCI (Directorate of Criminal Investigations).²

July 21, 2019
Oi Pejeta Conservancy, Laikipia County, Kenya

Surgical intervention on a female elephant who was victim to a gunshot fracture on her left front leg. The fracture was incurable and terribly painful. There was no choice for her to be finished off. Her calf was sedated by an injection of Stressnil® and he was then transferred to the Reteti Elephant Sanctuary.³

July 30, 2019

Makobeni, Kilifi County, Kenya

Seizure of 35 tusks and sections of tusks. Total weight, 183 kg. Value of 960 US\$/kg. Arrest of John Chisiwa Ngoma and Mwauchi Mgaza.⁴



End of July 2019

Tsavo East and Tsavo West National Parks, Kenya

Deep trunk cut. The young male was ambushed by a trap for antelope or other small ungulates. Prognosis reserved.⁵



August 2, 2019

Nakuru, Nakuru County, Kenya

Arrest of 2 men. On their motorbike, they were carrying 14 kg of raw ivory that had allegedly been snatched from elephants poached in Laikipia county several months ago.⁶

August 10, 2019

Nyandarua County, Kenya

Seizure by the DCI of 100 kg of raw ivory worth 96,312 US\$ or 963 US\$/kg. Arrest of David Ndegwa. His accomplice managed to escape.⁷

**August 13 and 17, 2019
Tsavo East National Park, Kenya**

- An elephant with several fractures died. Presumed cause: collision with a vehicle.
- Death of an elephant that fell into a water hole. Foot fractured. Presumed cause: collision with a vehicle.⁸



**August 17, 2019
Ol Kinyei Conservancy, Kenya**

Rescue of an elephant by mobile veterinarian team. The head of an arrow was deeply embedded in one foot.⁹

**August 14 and 19, 2019
Jomo-Kenyatta International Airport, Nairobi, Nairobi County, Kenya**

A French woman wearing an 85 g ivory bracelet is liable to a fine of one million shillings, or 9,631 US\$, or, failing payment, to 12 months' imprisonment. Same offence, same penalty, for a Spanish woman.¹⁰



**August 20, 2019
Nairobi, Nairobi County, Kenya**

Four policemen caught in the act of transporting 5 kg of raw ivory in February 2016 (see "On the Trail" n°12 p. 77 and n°25 p. 82) sentenced to life imprisonment or payment of a fine of 20 million shillings (192,000 US\$) each. Stephen Ngawai, Martin Mwiti, Francis Karanja and Peter Kuria Kimungi have 14 days to appeal.¹¹



**August 21, 2019
Near Maasai Mara National Reserve, Narok County, Kenya**

The crisis in Narok county is ongoing. Another dead elephant was found in a steep, mountainous area. A deeply-planted lance was extracted from the elephant's flesh. The 2 tusks are in place and observers declared that it was not a case of poaching, without even suggesting the possibility that the elephant was able to flee after being hit with the lance, and hid in the rocks before collapsing. Nicholas Murero, coordinator of the forum for the environment and wildlife in the county of Narok, regrets the crime and the propagation of conflicts between elephants and human activities. This disastrous series of events could end up killing tourism, is essentially what he means. Last year, the Masai Mara Reserve brought in 2.73 billion shillings, or over 26 million US\$, for the county.¹²

**2 August 23, 2019
Maritati, Meru County, Kenya**

Seizure of 6 tusks, 17.5 kg in total, with an estimated value of 1.75 million shillings or 16,800 US\$ and 960 US\$/kg in a Toyota Probox.¹³

**August 24, 2019
Kieni, Nyeri County, Kenya**

Express skinning of an elephant that died of electrocution. Arriving urgently on the scene, KWS agents interrupted the sharing by pointing out the health risks of meat unfit for human consumption. The angry villagers promised to continue to kill elephants they considered a threat. The KWS repelled the crowd and then proceeded to burn the remains. The fate of the tusks is unknown.¹⁴



**September 5, 2019
Baringo County, Kenya**

Seizure of 21 tusks with a total weight of 72 kg, average weight per tusk 3.5 kg, and estimated value of 7 million shillings or 937 US\$/kg. The ivory is believed to come from Laikipia county or Uganda. Five arrests.¹⁵

**September 17, 2019
Mombasa, Mombasa County, Kenya**

8.5 kg of raw ivory at the heart of a family business. Japheth Bakari was arrested along with one of his friends, Ibrahim Ali, on May 16 with the tusks stashed in a sack of corn. He said he was the victim of a plot by a rich businessman who is also the father of his girlfriend. The "tycoon" would have found no other way to compromise his future son-in-law, who is too poor from his point of view, and to keep him away from his daughter once and for all than to offer him a trapped bag of corn. For the time being, Bakari remains in pre-trial detention and it will be known later whether the justice system gives credit to this airport novel.¹⁶



September 11, 12, 14, 17, 20, 22 and 27, 2019

Tsavo East and Tsavo West National Parks, Kenya

Rescue of 8 elephants and calves caught in traps, hit by throwing weapons or stuck in water holes.¹⁷



September 23, 2019

Amboseli National Park, Kenya

Discovery of an elephant carcass. Chest pierced by a spear.¹⁸

MALAWI

FAMILY AFFAIRS

July 15, 2019

Lilongwe, Central Region, Malawi

Sentence of 8 years in prison for the Kaunda brothers (See "On the Trail" n°1 p. 33, n°10 p. 56, n°19 p. 92) responsible in May 2013 for the clandestine importation of 2.6 t of raw ivory, that is 781 tusks and sections of tusks under a cargo of bags of cement from Tanzania. At first trial, they had each been fined 5,500 US\$. The prosecution appealed on the grounds that in view of the loss of 400 elephants and the value of the seizure, the fine was insignificant. The Kaunda brothers were not on the stand for this second trial, although they had pleaded guilty in the first, and a warrant has been issued for their arrest.¹⁹



July 2019

Kasungu, Central Region, Malawi

34 kg at less than 100 US\$/kg, to bait the Chinese or Vietnamese. On the street, they were trying to sell the ivory. At home, there was the meat and weapons. Four arrests.²⁰

End of July 2019

Nkhotakota, Central Region, Malawi

Arrest of Gift Nyirenda, court clerk. He is suspected of having stolen or facilitated the theft of 2 tusks that were secured as exhibits in the court's vault.²¹

September 13, 2019

Liwonde and Mangochi, Southern Region, Malawi

One thing leading to another, thanks to the use of anonymous information, tailing and the confidences of all stakeholders, the police seized 6 kg of raw ivory and arrested Vincent Mwathaya, Ibrahim Daudi Nyenje, Ayami Wiales Meya and Moses Allii. The tusks were originally acquired in Mozambique.²²

MOZAMBIQUE

Beginning of August 2019

Bárué District, Manica Province, Mozambique

Arrest of 2 men presumed to be Cambodian nationals in possession of 10 ivory tusks. They are currently known as S. Deh and M. Deioulbe. The national press is making the connection with the seizure in Phnom Penh in December 2018 of 1,026 tusks or sections of tusks that were allegedly stolen in Lichinga, Niassa province, from the vault where the government stores the ivory seized from poachers (see "On the Trail" n°23 p. 128).²³

UGANDA

August 2, 2019

Kamdini, Northern Region, Uganda

A disabled elephant was quickly butchered after being shot by UWA rangers, on the same day as the funeral of Benson Omara who was killed in an attack by a female elephant followed by her calf. All of them were part of a herd who had left the Murchison Falls national park and had been arousing fear and public anger. For 2 days, children were kept home from school, for fear that they could be charged by raging elephants. Warning messages were published for car-drivers and bikers, advising them to avoid driving on the road between Karuma and Kamdini, especially at night.

Rumor was spreading that the elephants were marching in procession on the road to avoid getting stuck in the trenches that the villagers had dug to try to slow down the invaders' progress. It was in this unhealthy atmosphere that an isolated elephant, clearly handicapped by a fracture to his front right leg, was targeted. He had been injured since Wednesday night as he crossed the road along the Abang marshes. He was limping along on 3 legs, unable to get back to the park, and also unable to charge anyone, or even to destroy a hut or trample a vegetable garden. In fact, we might say that he was not slain by rangers, but simply put out of his misery. A broken leg cannot heal in an adult elephant and is terribly painful. The villagers cut up the hot body removing the meat all the way to the bones with the consent of the rangers who are supposed to have removed and stored the tusks in a safe place.²⁴

September 13, 2019

Kampala, Central Region, Uganda

Detention pending trial in Luzira prison for Joshua Wanbuzi who was caught transporting 28.8 kg of raw ivory worth an estimated 7 million shillings (2,070 US\$ and 72 US\$/kg).²⁵

TANZANIA

July 2019

Selous Game Reserve, Tanzania

Inaugural speech in front of a model of the hydroelectric dam across the Rufiji River. IUCN and UNESCO have called for the suspension of clearing operations and preparatory road works. The President moderates concerns. He says the villagers who will be served by the electricity generated by the dam will no longer have to fell trees for their energy needs. For President Magufuli, this is the beginning of the country's economic emancipation. The 2 Egyptian companies chosen after a call for bids have undertaken to deliver the 750 m long and 130 m high dam within 3 years. The project in the heart of the Selous reserve is disputed. 2.6 million trees will be cut down and 1,200 km² flooded by the dam's reservoir.²⁶



August 2, 2019

Chamalendi Village, Katavi Region, Tanzania

Arrest of Emanuel Lukanda, 26 years old, with 3 elephant tusks with a total weight of 10 kg. He was denounced by neighbours. He has ties to poachers operating in Katavi National Park.²⁷

August 19, 2019

Lupa Itewe, Chunya District, Mbeya Region, Tanzania

Seizures of 13 tusks in 2 stages :

- Zungu Paulo and Baraka Lazaro were arrested at 2pm in the village streets. They were carrying 3 tusks in a bag.
- Nyirenda John 'Daimon' and Igelele Daniel were arrested in a guesthouse in possession of 10 tusks.²⁸

September 3, 2019

Dar es Salaam, Dar es Salaam Region, Tanzania

Seizure of 413 tusks or sections of tusks corresponding to the poaching of at least 117 elephants and 2 hippopotamus teeth. Arrest of 6 people including Hassan Likwema alias Nyoni, who had been wanted for more than 3 years. Among the 5 others, 2 are police officers. The value of the raw ivory is estimated at 1.75 million US\$ and the value of the 2 hippopotamus teeth at 1,500 US\$.²⁹



ZAMBIA

July 2019

Mpika, Muchinga Province, Zambia

Fredrick Chilufya and Ackson Mvula sentenced to 5 years imprisonment with hard labour for possessing 68 kg of elephant meat and 28 kg of raw ivory divided into 6 sections of tusks.³⁰



August 13, 2019

Harry Mwanga Nkumbula Airport, Livingstone, Southern Province, Zambia

Arrest of Samuel Mulekwa, police officer in charge of public security in Zimba District. He was transporting raw ivory. His accomplices are reportedly in custody at Livingstone and Dambwa police stations.³¹

**FAMILY AFFAIRS
REPEATED OFFENSE**

July 2019

Between Kaulzi and Nyonyo, Eastern Province, Zambia

Transmission of skills. Father and son were busy in the dry forest with various weapons, firearms, throwing weapons and traps, bushmeat and elephant tusks when they were caught by a Nsefu Wildlife Conservation Foundation patrol.³²

ZIMBABWE

Beginning of July 2019

Kariba, Mashonaland West Province, Zimbabwe. Border with Zambia.

Sentencing to 36 months in prison each of 2 Zambian suspects who entered Zimbabwe illegally and engaged, at least on June 29, in poaching activities, in particular of a warhog (genus *Phacochoerus*) which they intended to eat. Three accomplices fled. The gang was targeting elephants.³³



July 8, 2019
Hwange National Park,
Matabeleland North Province,
Zimbabwe

Discovery at dawn of 7 elephant corpses. They died several days ago. The patrol was guided to the mass grave by the smell. Strong suspicion of cyanide poisoning (see " On the Trail " n°15 p. 92, n°18 p. 89 and n°20 p. 93).³⁴



July 2019
Near Bumi Hills, Mashonaland
West Province, Zimbabwe

The elephant calf had been spotted with the steel rope of a trap wrapped around its left front leg. His mother, always standing nearby and refusing to move away, also had to be anaesthetized. The calf was freed and both woke up and left to be with their herd.³⁵



Mid-July 2019
Zimbabwe

After the privatisation of POSB (People's Own Savings Bank), IDBZ (Infrastructure Development Bank of Zimbabwe), the privatisation projects of Willowvale Motor Industries and Allied Timbers which is consumed by corruption, the president has just announced that he is looking for private buyers to manage ZimParks which covers 5 million hectares -approximately 13% of the country- and which, like all the above-mentioned entities, is in deficit.³⁶

August 1, 2019
Dete, Matabeleland North
Province, Zimbabwe

Police and park rangers followed the footprints of 4 poachers from Hwange National Park to the home of one of them where 8 elephant tusks and 2 warthog teeth (genus *Phacochoerus*) were seized. Cyanide is their weapon.³⁷



August 6, 2019
Harare, Harare Province, Zimbabwe

Appearance of 3 men between 43 and 70 years old caught transporting 34 kg of raw ivory. Moikothai Molathegi, a national of Botswana, pleads guilty while Mathew Matusu and Mathew Kasisi plead not guilty. The seizure is estimated at 5,664 US\$, or 166 US\$/kg.³⁸

August 26, 2019
Harare, Harare Province, Zimbabwe

Harare Drive was the scene of an incredible coup de main. As ZimParks agents were about to break into a suspicious house, 4 men got out of a car and presented them with cards from the CID (Criminal Investigation Department) and asked them to get lost. Police war was declared. Unsure of the alleged identity of the new arrivals, the ZimParks guys asked for backup. The true cops then apprehended the fake ones after warning shots were fired. That's when 5 guys loomed out of the house, jumped over the parapet and blended into the crowd. One of them, carrying a bulky bag full of raw ivory, got stuck. He was arrested. The 3 tusks weighing 12 kg were labelled by official and indelible stamps. They come from a State vault or a court clerk's office.³⁹

August 29, 2019
Harare, Harare Province, Zimbabwe

A police officer is caught illegally transporting tusks to an unknown destination.⁴⁰

September 11, 2019
Harare, Harare Province, Zimbabwe

Arrest of 2 individuals while they were haggling an ivory sale at a restaurant in the Belgravia district.⁴¹

SOUTHERN AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

July 12, 2019
Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa
Seizure of 4 tusks from the trunk of a car. Arrest and release on bail equal to 350 US\$ each of Glen Baadjies and Tanyan James Gradwell.⁴²

BOTSWANA

June 13, 2019
Kasane Forest Reserve, Chobe District,
Botswana. Border with Zimbabwe.



Intervention of Elephants Without Borders veterinarians to remove the steel ropes from 2 traps, one around the neck, the other around the right hind leg. The alert had been given by the Elephant Valley Lodge.⁴³

NAMIBIA

July 16, 2019

Katima Mulilo, Zambezi Region, Namibia. Border with Zambia.

Arrest of an educator for children in difficulty who was driving a government vehicle carrying sections of elephant tusks.⁴⁴

Beginning of September 2019

Near Twyfelfontein and Khowarib Schlucht, Kunene Region, Namibia

- A dead elephant by the road D2162. The villagers climb on him and take selfies. A tourist is angered on WhatsApp. An Environment Ministry spokesman confirms the incident. According to him, the death was due to a fight with another elephant and he adds that in these circumstances, the meat is distributed to rural communities and the tusks are removed and added to the stock managed by the ministry.

- Another young male elephant was found dead with its tusks removed in Khowarib Schlucht. The weekly wildlife crime report says that in addition 3 tusks, a section of tusk and 2 elephant skins were seized from 4 suspected poachers or traffickers.

Namibia currently holds 69,391 kg of ivory worth an estimated 125 million N\$ (8.2 million US\$ and 118 US\$/kg). Of this state-owned stockpile, 39,427 kg come from seizures.⁴⁵

September 20, 2019

Walvis Bay, Erongo Region, Namibia

Dirk Vermeulen, Edgar Clarke and Mike Lusse (Michael) were arrested for attempting to sell 2 tusks weighing a total of 63.5 kg. The trio was freed on bail for 30,000 N\$, or 1970 US\$, each. An article in Namib Times tells the extraordinary tale of the 2 tusks of a "super tusker," an elephant with particularly large tusks. It all started with a hunting permit issued in 1999 to a certain Mr. Hainson, former manager of a fish-processing plant in Walvis Bay, Namibia, who had retired to Cape Town in South Africa. Hainson killed the elephant in the Maun region, and the tusks were properly stamped with the code "Maun" and 3 indelible numbers. Hainson asked a friend, Bryce Edwards, former mayor of Walvis Bay and owner of several fishing boats, to ship his tusks to South Africa. Edwards had sold one of his ships, the *Emerald Isle*, to a shipowner in South Africa, and asked the captain, Basson, to deliver the tusks when he delivered the ship to Cape Town. However, before leaving Namibian waters, a Nampol patrol boat intercepted and searched the *Emerald Isle*.



The 2 majestic tusks were found and seized, the ship was escorted to the port in Lüderitz, the crew was put under house arrest in a hotel and the captain was charged with ivory smuggling. Edwards called on a well-known lawyer from Walvis Bay, and a few days later he got the crew freed on bail and the ship released. Several months later, the public prosecutor recognized the validity of the hunting permit issued to Hainson and ruled that the administrative and fiscal noncompliance in the attempted exportation was negligible. Charges of smuggling were dropped. The 2 tusks were returned to Edwards who stated that he intended to send them to his friend. The operation never happened and Hainson died in 2010 without having recovered the fruit of his dirty deed. Edwards got the Hainson family to agree to let him start procedures to get the ownership license transferred to himself, in remembrance of his friendship with the deceased and also in exchange for the considerable legal expenses that he had paid in 1999 to get the crew and ship released. In 2012, the tusks were still in Edwards' possession, but in Hainson's name. That is when, due to some unknown difficulties, Edwards entrusted them to a certain Mike Lusse for safekeeping until the property license was transferred to him. Some time later, Edwards died in an accident in the staircase of his estate. In early 2019, Lusse and his 2 acolytes were caught trying "to get rid of" the 2 cumbersome tusks by selling them to buyers who were none other than undercover police officers. The Walvis Bay Court has stated that it is a "serious offense" and that the 3 accomplices knowingly engaged in illegal ivory trafficking. To be continued.⁴⁶

WESTERN AFRICA

BENIN

September 27, 2019

Banikoara, Department of Alibori, Benin

Seizure of 4 tusks with a total weight of 26.5 kg. Arrest of 3 suspects in the north of the country near W national park which brings together Niger, Benin and Burkina Faso.⁴⁷

BURKINA FASO

July 2019

Po, Centre-Sud Region, Burkina Faso

Seizure of 2 tusks. Three arrests.⁴⁸

COTE D'IVOIRE

September 12, 2019

Cocody, Northern Abidjan, Ivory Coast

Seizure of 2 tusks. Two arrests. The authorities claim to have seized 582 kg of raw ivory and 300 worked ivories in 2 years. From more than 1,000 in 2000, elephants in the country have now fallen to less than 300.⁴⁹

NIGERIA

August 20, 2019

Yola, State of Adamawa, Nigeria. Border with Cameroon.

Customs report the seizure of 2 elephant tusks, buffalo horns, 210 bales of second-hand clothing and used tires.⁵⁰

CENTRAL AFRICA

CAMEROON

Mid-August 2019

Douala, Littoral Region, Cameroon

Seizure in a suitcase of 16 tusks or sections of tusks. They are labelled and may have been stolen from court vaults.⁵¹



September 5, 2019

Yaoundé, Centre Region, Cameroon

There were 5 of them in the black Toyota Prado driven by the son of a former finance minister. They were about to take out of the trunk the 2 tusks of a savannah elephant coming from a bygone era. They each weigh 50 kg. Nowadays, a 20 kg tusk is considered exceptional. The Yaoundé gang is said to have been gripped thanks to information obtained from the Douala gang that was nabbed for its part in March 2019 about to export 2 t of pangolin scales and 73 tusks or sections of tusks (see "On the Trail" n°24 p. 50).⁵²

GABON

August 23 and September 25, 2019

Makokou, Ogooué-Ivindo Province and Libreville, Estuaire Province, Gabon

Alain Roger Moumbonzi and Ikagna aka Francky caught in the act of transporting 11 tusks or sections of tusks weighing a total of 80 kg. The duo is sentenced respectively to a 3 years suspended prison and to one year including 6 months suspended, to pay fines equal to 833 and 416 US\$ and to pay a joint fine equal to 8,335 US\$ in damages.⁵³



August 27, 2019

Fougamou and Sindara, Ngounié Province, Gabon

Marie-Laure Motambi Ngoubou, 22 years old, caught red-handed transporting and attempting to sell 3 tusks. Her presumed husband, Sylla Demba, 24 years old, was arrested a few hours later.⁵⁴

September 19, 2019

Libreville, Estuaire Province, Gabon

Seizure of 6 tusks. Two arrests.⁵⁵

September 30, 2019

Minkébé National Park, Woleu-Ntem Province, Gabon

After a gunfight with poachers that did not result in any deaths or injuries, the ecoguards of the National Parks Agency managed to recover 82 tusks weighing a total of 200 kg and 37 elephant tails. The average weight of the tusks is 2.4 kg. Clearly, these elephants died early, far too early.⁵⁶



September 30, 2019

Oyem, Woleu-Ntem Province, Gabon

Seizure of 6 tusks. Norbert Ndzang would have bought them in Minvoul from Cameroonians.⁵⁷

REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

August 2019

Republic of the Congo

Conviction of 5 years in prison to an ivory trafficker recidivist for having detained and attempted to market 2 raw tusks. He had already been sentenced to prison for 2 years in 2017 to similar crimes, but had managed to escape due to the complicity of a police officer. Unless his sentences are adjusted, he should spend 7 years in prison.⁵⁸



August 26, 2019

Brazzaville, Republic of the Congo

Seizure of 15 kg of raw ivory, a buffalo tail and 7 Kalashnikovs magazines in the hands of 2 civilians and 2 military personnel.⁵⁹

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

September 16, 2019

Lubumbashi, Haut-Katanga Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Seizure of 200 kg of raw ivory from rampant poaching in the Manono region 500 km to the north. The tusks were placed in the vaults of the Banque Commerciale du Congo.⁶⁰

CHAD

August 6, 2019

Pala, Mayo-Kebbi Ouest Region, Chad. Border with Cameroon.

Seizure of 25 elephant tusks and 2 military weapons in the hands of 6 poachers operating in conspiracy in the Binder-Léré Faunal Reserve.⁶¹



AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

April to June 2019

Washington, District of Columbia, United States of America

While the federal law prohibits the sale of elephant ivory outside the borders of each of the 51 states, the trade continues unabated in the White House and Capitol district. At an antique shop and flea market in Georgetown, investigators from the Humane Society found an ivory boat (25,000 US\$), a pair of carts (12,000 US\$), a Buddha statue (540 US\$) and a carved tusk at a record price of 600,000 US\$.⁶²

ASIA

CHINA

HONG KONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION

July 7, 2019

Hong Kong-West Kowloon Station, Hong Kong, China

Seizure of ivory bracelets and necklaces on 4 passengers.⁶³

CITY OF BEIJING

August 20, 2019

Beijing Municipality, China

Appearance of Zhang Weihua. He was extradited from Viet Nam in March after 8 years on the run. In June 2011, he had fled when Beijing airport customs officials were about to open his luggage and get their hands on 17 kg of worked ivory he had bought in Nigeria. "I knew such products were prohibited in China, but I took a chance", he said 8 years later at the bar of the People's Court No. 4 in the Chinese capital. Verdict to come.⁶⁴

SHANGHAI MUNICIPALITY

September 16, 2019

Shanghai Pudong International Airport, Pudong District, Shanghai Municipality, China

Seizure of an ivory pendant.⁶⁵

July 13, 2019

Shanghai Pudong International Airport, Pudong District, Shanghai Municipality, China

Seizure of 66 beads, a bracelet and 2 charms: 154 g.⁶⁶

TIANJIN MUNICIPALITY

July 14, 2019

Tianjin Binhai International Airport, Tianjin Municipality, China

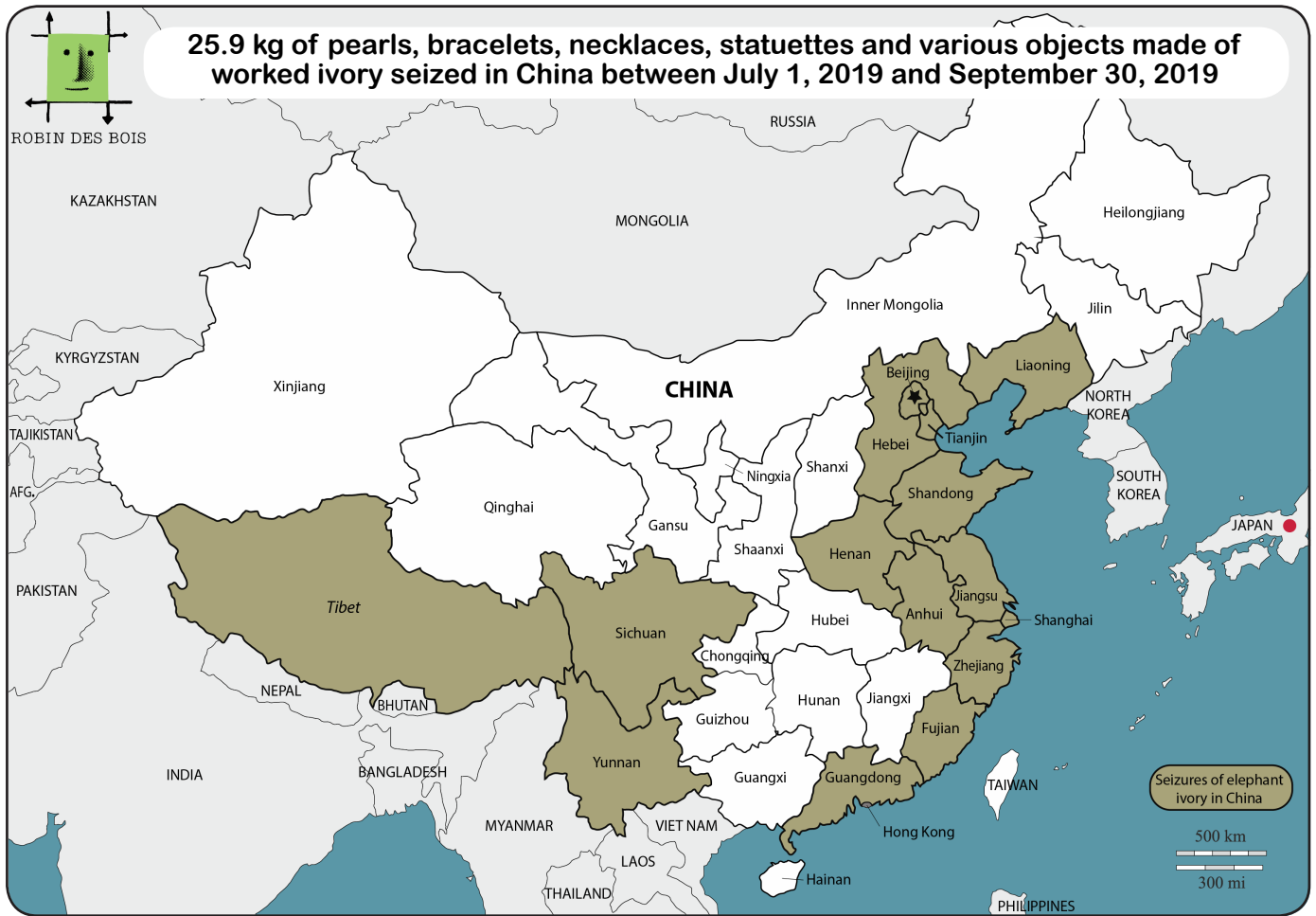
Eight pearls and a candlestick: 125.17 g.⁶⁷

ANHUI PROVINCE

July 24, 2019

Suzhou, Anhui Province, China

Seizure in a parcel of a Buddha statuette, 564 g, and 2 ivory bracelets, 149 g.⁶⁸



FUJIAN PROVINCE

July 3, 2019

Fuzhou Changle International Airport, Fujian Province, China

Six bracelets: 140 g.⁶⁹



July 19, 2019

Quanzhou, Fujian Province, China

719 g of worked ivory in a package from the Netherlands officially carrying "powdered milk for adults."⁷⁰



August 22 and 29, 2019

Xiamen International Airport, Fujian Province, China

- Two bracelets: 280 g.

- One bracelet and 2 necklaces: 405 g.⁷¹

September 18, 2019

Fuzhou Changle International Airport, Fujian Province, China

A necklace and a pendant.⁷²

GUANGDONG PROVINCE

Beginning of July 2019

Huanggang Border Post, Guangdong Province, China. Border with Hong Kong.

25 worked ivories in a passenger's luggage: 1,237.2 g.⁷³

Beginning of July 2019

Guangzhou-Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China

Another scam with ivory dyed to look like wood. 16 bracelets and other trinkets: 1,496.5 g.⁷⁴

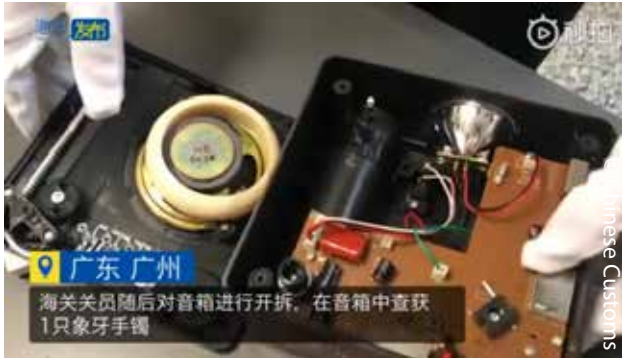


July 8, 2019
Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China
 A 2-strings pearl necklace 105 g.⁷⁵

July 8, 2019
Guangzhou-Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China

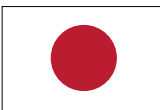
Seizure in the luggage of a female passenger coming from Addis Ababa of 28 worked ivories including :

- a bracelet hidden in a radio set.
- 25 pearls disguised as lollipops.⁷⁶



July 11, 2019
Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China

Another seizure of a so-called toy in a parcel from Japan and bound for Guilin in Guangxi. Intrigued by the weight of the parcel and its small size, and remembering that toys from Japan are mostly made of lightweight plastic, customs officials opened it. They discovered 3 finely worked ivory parts which after assembly constituted a 30 cm high vase engraved with lions and dragons.⁷⁷



Mid-July 2019
Huanggang Border Post, Guangdong Province, China. Border with Hong Kong.

- Seizure on 3 passengers of 25 jewels: 1,237.2 g.
- Seizure on a passenger of 19 worked ivories: 1,116.4 g.
- Seizure on 2 passengers of 6 worked ivories: 120.4 g.⁷⁸

July 26, 2019
Futian Border Post, Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China
 Seizure of 2 bracelets and a pendant.⁷⁹

August 15, 2019
Futian Border Post, Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China

Two ivory fans, 46 and 98 g, in the luggage of a young 20-year-old woman. She says she was paid to smuggle them.⁸⁰

September 2, 2019
Guangzhou-Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China

Customs opened a 5 kg box of powdered milk in the luggage of a passenger arriving from Addis Ababa and seized 9 worked ivories including 5 bracelets and combs.⁸¹



Beginning of September 2019
Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China

Ivory fans are trending. This one came from Italy in a parcel declared as clothes. It is described by Chinese customs as a "modern product".⁸²



September 5, 2019
Wenjindu Border Post, Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China

Seizure of 2 worked ivories: 56 g.⁸³

HEBEI PROVINCE

End of September 2019
Tianjin, Hebei Province, China

Seizure on board a fishing vessel of 63 ivories, including 3 tusks weighing a total of 5,335.7 g. The 10 crewmen are heard by the police.⁸⁴



HENAN PROVINCE

July 12, 2019
Zhengzhou, Henan Province, China

Four bracelets: 391 g. From South Africa.⁸⁵

September 20, 2019
Zhengzhou, Henan Province, China

Seizure of an engraved tusk in a parcel from Taiwan: 1.14 kg.⁸⁶

End of September 2019
Zhengzhou, Henan Province, China

Seizure in a parcel from abroad officially containing "treats" of 32 ivory objects, 5,449 g.⁸⁷



JIANGSU PROVINCE

August 10, 2019
Nanjing, Jiangsu Province, China

A statuette in a parcel from Belgium: 545 g.⁸⁸



September 22, 2019
Sunan Shuofang International Airport, Suzhou and Wuxi, Jiangsu Province, China

Seizures of worked ivories, including 2 painting scrolls.⁸⁹



LIAONING PROVINCE

August 29, 2019
Dandong, Liaoning Province, China

Seizure by the railway brigade of a collar in a passenger's luggage: 52 g.⁹⁰

September 11, 2019
Dandong, Liaoning Province, China. Border with North Korea.

Seizure of a necklace in the belongings of a rail traveller. 92 g.⁹¹

September 18, 2019
Dalian International Airport, Liaoning Province, China

Jewellery and mah-jong games: 1,429 g.⁹²



SHANDONG PROVINCE

July 3, 2019
Rizhao, Shandong Province, China

Seizure of 740 g of worked ivory purchased in Viet Nam.⁹³

Beginning of July 2019
Qingdao Liuting International Airport, Shandong Province, China

Pearls, bracelets, statuettes on 4 passengers: 283.2 g.⁹⁴

End of July 2019
Qingdao, Shandong Province, China

A sculpture from Japan: 1,026 g.⁹⁵



August 27, 2019
Rongcheng, Shandong Province, China

An ivory pendant on a passenger disembarking a car-ferry from Incheon, South Korea: 35 g.⁹⁶

September 2, 2019
Qingdao Liuting International Airport, Shandong Province, China

A fan, 4 bracelets, a statuette, a necklace, 3 animal figurines and a box: 864 g.⁹⁷

September 17, 2019
Qingdao Liuting International Airport,
Shandong Province, China
Seizure of 7 ivory painting scrolls.⁹⁸



SICHUAN PROVINCE

Beginning of August 2019
Chengdu-Shuangliu International Airport,
Sichuan Province, China
Seizure of 26 worked ivories, 687 g, upon landing of a flight from Addis Ababa.⁹⁹

September 27, 2019
Chengdu-Shuangliu International Airport,
Sichuan Province, China
Seizure in the luggage of 2 Chinese passengers coming from Addis Ababa of a bracelet and 398 beads and other semi-raw products to be refined and assembled: 2,730 g.¹⁰⁰

YUNNAN PROVINCE

August 9 to 13, 2019
Kunming Changshui International Airport,
Yunnan Province, China
Eight pendants, bracelets and other charms on 6 Chinese passengers from Kathmandu, Nepal, Vientiane, Laos and Sihanoukville, Cambodia.¹⁰¹

September 8, 2019
Mohan Border Post, Mengla County, Yunnan
Province, China. Border with Laos.
An elephant tusk in a loose tea box: 1,434.5 g.¹⁰²



ZHEJIANG PROVINCE

July 31, August 7 and 16, 2019
Yiwu, Zhejiang Province, China
- A bracelet: 31.44 g.
- A bracelet: 22.7 g.¹⁰³



August 22, 2019
Wenzhou, Zhejiang Province, China
A vase and 3 bracelets in a parcel from abroad: 1,126 g.¹⁰⁴

August 31, 2019
Hangzhou Xiaoshan International Airport,
Zhejiang Province, China
Two bracelets, 2 necklaces, 2 pendants, a cigarette-holder, a figurine and a cylinder upon landing of a flight from Hong Kong: 1,452 g.¹⁰⁵



September 18, 2019
Hangzhou Xiaoshan International Airport,
Zhejiang Province, China
Seizure upon landing of a flight from Laos of a bracelet and 2 pendants: 115.24 g.¹⁰⁶

September 22, 2019
Yiwu International Airport, Zhejiang Province,
China
One necklace, 2 bracelets on 2 Chinese passengers from Cambodia: 210.57 g.¹⁰⁷

TIBET

First Semester of 2019
Lhasa, Autonomous Region of Tibet, China
Seizure by customs since the beginning of the year of thirty ivory workings weighing a total of 535 g (see "On the Trail" n°25 p. 53, p. 93).¹⁰⁸

INDIA

July 8, 2019

Anemaala, Mysore District, Karnataka State, India

Lethal electrocution of a female elephant aged around 40 years old on the edge of a banana plantation.¹⁰⁹



July 12, 2019

Muthuppetai, Thiruvarur District, Tamil Nadu State, India

Seizure by a Coastal Security Group of a pair of long tusks, 53 cm in length. The 2 holders fled the scene. The investigation focuses on an attempted smuggling operation by sea. Tamil Nadu, the state where the incident took place, is less than 100 km by sea from Sri Lanka.¹¹⁰

July 15, 2019

Kanhmun forest area, Mamit District, Mizoram State, India

Suparna Ganguly, co-founder of Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Center in Bangalore and Noyal Thomas, Inspector general of Forests in charge of "Projet Eléphant" at the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), today filed a joint complaint following the death of Laxmi, a 47-year-old female elephant whose ordeal ended last June with a heart attack after an inordinate and uninterrupted workload. Once dead, villagers then cut up her body in pieces for consumption. The elephant was used to discharge logs illegally cut from the neighboring jungle. The elephant's executioner, Pu Khualhina, is a timber trader who had rented the elephant to Mastufa Ahmed Laskar, her so-called owner in Assam State. In fact, Laxmi's ownership certificate had expired in 2014 and no authorization had been issued to transport her from Assam to Mizoram. The forestry departments of both states are now in the hot seat.¹¹¹



July 17, 2019

Jalahalli, Bangalore District, Karnataka State, India

Arrest on tip-off of Unnikrishnan and Jayaseelan who were trying to sell 2 tusks of 78 and 83 cm. They say they got them from a certain Vijay based in Erode in Tamil Nadu. The police is looking for him.¹¹²

July 17, 2019

Litami, District de Zunheboto, Nagaland State, India

Another elephant was skinned, cut into pieces and shared for consumption by the inhabitants of a village. This elephant was cut down in the forest. Pictures have been posted on social networks, but the Forest Department has made no official statement. At this stage, it is not known whether he was wild or captive.¹¹³

July 15 to 22, 2019

Chittoor District, Andhra Pradesh State, India

From 4 to 40 years old, elephants are good for electric fencing. For the baby elephant, it was at dawn near a back-up farm next to the reserve. For the adult bull elephant, it was at the edge of the Koundinya forest.¹¹⁴



July 24, 2019

Bangalore, Bangalore District, Karnataka State, India

Arrest of Nayak and Nagaraju. Vansatha flees. They were about to haggle over 2 long tusks, 76 cm and 94 cm long.¹¹⁵

August 8, 2019

Desangmukh, Sivasagar District, Assam State, India

Examination by forest rangers of the body of the baby elephant found by villagers last night shows that he died from several injuries. He was part of a herd that lives in the Pani Dihing Bird Sanctuary and leaves it from time to time. The forest ranger's hypothesis is that he moved away from the adults and had a fatal encounter with a group of poachers who had come to trap birds in the sanctuary.¹¹⁶

September 2, 2019

Bangalore, Urban Bangalore District, Karnataka State, India

P. Prabhakaran, Karanakaran, Shakthivel, N. Krishnamurthy, and M. Gopi had arrived by train from the Tamil Nadu province. They had with them 4 sections of tusks in a big plastic bag that they wanted to sell to their contacts in the city. The police surrounded them near the movie theater, Govardhan Talkies, and placed them into custody. The suppliers Muni Raju, Annamalaj, and Guru are wanted in Tamil Nadu.¹¹⁷

September 7, 2019

Perinthalmanna, Malappuram District, Kerala State, India

Stopped in a clothing store in possession of 2 tusks, 78 and 92 cm in length for a weight of 10 kg, Nidhin Shah, Shanu, Sumesh and Mohammed Sahil say they extracted them from a corpse found on a private land. An accomplice, Rishan, is wanted.¹¹⁸

September 10, 2019

Jhandi Chowk Purvi, Pauri Garhwal District, Uttarakhand State, India

It sounds like a provocation and the forest rangers call it a “revenge killing”. A 20-year-old male elephant was electrocuted less than 100 m from the Bijnor Forest Division. Villagers are suspected to be the perpetrators, in retaliation for the extensive damage caused to their crops by elephants. The investigation also extends to Uttar Pradesh, due to the close border between the two states.¹¹⁹



September 16-20, 2019

Kopar Khairane, Thane District, Maharashtra State, India

The Anti Narcotics Cell of Navi Mumbai was on the trail of a Nigerian citizen, Uzodima Hope, who was denounced as an amphetamine trafficker by one of his fellow citizens who had been arrested a week previously in possession of 64 g. During the search at of Hope’s home, police came across a 30.5 cm long tusk that he had fraudulently brought back from Nigeria. Charged with offences under the Anti-Narcotics Act and the Wildlife Protection Act, the 2 men were remanded in custody.¹²⁰

GANG

September 18, 2019

Belthangady, Dakshina Kannada District, Karnataka State, India

Seizure of 51.73 kg worth 12.7 million rupees (180,000 US\$ or 3480 US\$/kg) thanks to information provided by G. Veeresh, an honorary wildlife warden (see “On the Trail” no.21 p. 46). Three arrests, Abraham, Suresh Babu and Ramesh. Anwar is a fugitive. The tusks were notably purchased from Kerala, among other places. They were also responsible for poaching an elephant near the border of Kerala.¹²¹



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September 18, 2019

Masinagudi, Nilgiris District, Karnataka State, India

Destruction by incineration of 24 elephant tusks and deer antlers seized from traffickers or found on dead animals in the Mudumalai Tiger Reserve.¹²²

September 19, 2019

Kabbal Reserve Forest, Ramanagara District, Karnataka State, India

Negligence, laziness, corruption? Forest rangers and a veterinarian are implicated after the seizure of 2 large tusks in Mysore by agents of the Forest Mobile Squad. The 5 traffickers who have just been arrested say they cut them up this summer on a dead elephant in the Kabbal reserve forest. At the time, the autopsy report carried out in mid-July stated that the victim was a female elephant. Everyone knows that female elephants in Asia do not have tusks. After the autopsy, the corpse was cremated on site. It would not be the first time that the death of a bull was attributed by the services to the death of a female. It saves a poaching investigation when the tusks are taken away and improves the statistics.¹²³

September 19, 2019

Ghatkopar, Mumbai Suburbs District, Maharashtra State, India

Seizure of 2.5 kg of raw ivory worth 250,000 rupees or 3,632 US\$ (1,453 US\$/kg). Two arrests, Sachin Paswan and Saroj Paswan, aged 26 and 24.¹²⁴

GANG

September 20, 2019

Mettupalayam, Coimbatore District, Tamil Nadu State, India

Babu Jose is not finished with justice. Denounced by 2 poachers as the “brains” of a gang and the supplier of the weapons used in 2011 to kill a bull elephant near Sirumugai and 3 others around Mettupalayam, he was released on bail in the Sirumugai case and has since disappeared. In the Mettupalayam case, bail was denied.



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Appearing in court to answer for poaching in Sirumugai, the forest officers grabbed him during a recess while he went out for tea. He was taken to Coimbatore Central Prison to await his new trial.¹²⁵

September 21, 2019

Pune, Pune District, Maharashtra State, India

Bhima Mudawat alias Chauhan was expected by the crime branch in the Swargate district. He was carrying in his bag 4 carved tusks, perhaps antiques ones. In any case, he intended to sell them as such. He confessed to possessing 3 others, which were later seized along with 3 teeth of an unidentified wild animal. He allegedly obtained the tusks from a state in southern India. The value of the tusks is estimated at 8 million rupees (111,640 US\$). He was released on bail pending trial.¹²⁶

INDONESIA

July 9, 2019

Tunon Taka Port, Nunukan Regency, North Kalimantan Province, Borneo Island, Indonesia

Arrest of DP, 54 years old, in possession of 10 tusks while coming off a car-ferry from Tawau, in the state of Sabah in Malaysia. DP claims to have been an agricultural worker on a plantation near Lahad Datu in Sabah for over 30 years, and says that the tusks were meant to be a dowry for a family wedding (see "On the Trail" n° 16 p. 85). He allegedly purchased them for the equivalent of 2270 US\$. Christina Liew, Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Environment in the state of Sabah expressed her regret for the fact that 5 male elephants had been poached. "This is indeed bad news to our ongoing conservation of elephants in Sabah. We applaud the efficiency of the Indonesian Customs officials in detecting the illegal consignment, we hope that the perpetrator will be dealt with according to the law. It is also our desire to see that their Malaysian counterpart at our exit point demonstrate the same efficiency as the Indonesian officials to ensure that there will be no recurrence of such smuggling in the future." Ms Liew, who is also Vice-Prime Minister of the state of Sabah, is too concerned by the fact that foreign workers are engaged in activities that are incompatible with the wildlife protection policy. In her opinion, it is the responsibility of employers to make sure that their employees are not involved in illegal trafficking. Liew concluded her diatribe by encouraging plantation operators to cooperate with her services not only to protect their crops, but first and foremost, to protect the elephants nearby from poaching.¹²⁷

July 26, 2019

Bandar Lampung, Lampung Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

Arrests of Candra, Pratama and Suadi. They were about to sell 2 tusks, 47 and 50 cm long. Bandar Lampung City has a fatal specialty for elephants. Cigarette smokers made of Sumatranus elephant ivory (*Elephas maximus sumatranus*) made by craftsmen who pass on the know-how from generation to generation would be superior in quality to the competition that uses ivory from Africa or continental Asia. The trade is still flourishing and is mainly conducted over the Internet. A 25 cm long cigarette smoker sells for 1,700 US\$, a 20 cm long one for 1,500 US\$, the basic 10 cm model for 700 US\$.¹²⁸

JAPAN

August 28, 2019

Japan

Yahoo Japan Corporation announced its intention to ban raw and worked ivory elephant from its online sales platforms (see "Off the Trail" no.18 p. 102, n°20 p. 107). A Traffic study shows that from mid-June to mid-July of 2018, Yahoo Japan proposed to sell 4,144 ivory items including 35 tusks with a total value of 340,000 US\$.¹²⁹

MALAYSIA

September 25 and October 2, 2019

Tawau, State of Sabah, Malaysia

An elephant calf tied to a tree, lying in the Sungai Udin river, shot with 40 bullets to the back and right side, ready to be eaten by crocodiles – that was the unusual spectacle that the fishermen were met with.

The male elephant calf's tusks were found after the interrogation of 2 plantation guards and their 3 accomplices, including one undocumented immigrant. They were acting according to the two-sided scenario typical in the poaching world: I shoot or electrocute on the pretext of protecting a private estate or plantation / I steal the tusks, or the skin, or whatever I might be able to sell.

Jaifol Liun, the plantation operator, violated the wildlife protection law of 1997 by not handing over to the authorities the 2 tusks taken from the cadaver. He is suspected of having demanded that his security guards and employees kill the elephant calf who was considered aggressive. He was release on bail for 7000 ringgits, or nearly 1700 US\$. His passport was confiscated. He is forbidden to communicate with the witnesses or the participants who set the trap, and is required to report to the Tawau wildlife protection services once every 15 days. The killers, Parancoi Nordin, Abdullah Simin and Martin Alok are already in prison for illegal possession of weapons and for violating immigration legislation. A primitive compressed air rifle and a homemade firearm, known locally as a *bakakuk*, were seized from their places along with ammunition. The suspects justify the shooting frequency – 70 impacts were identified – by the fact that most of the bullets did not penetrate into the elephant's flesh. A hole as big as a cannonball on the elephant's right side is raising other questions.¹³⁰

MYANMAR

September 10, 2019

Myinttayar Forest Reserve, Patheingyi District, Ayeyarwady Region, Myanmar

Discovery of the half skinned body of a female around 23 years old shot down 2 days previously. She is the fifth poached elephant this year in Ayeyarwady, also adding 3 others killed in the Yangon region. Skin bits trafficking is now the main reason of poaching in the country. The patches are openly sold in the special economic zones as Mine Lar close to the Chinese border and Tachileik, close to the Thailand's border.¹³¹

Skinned elephants in Myanmar, see "On the Trail" n°15 p. 103, n°16 p. 86, n°18 p. 104, n°19 p. 98, n°20 p. 107, n°21 p. 98-99.

SINGAPORE

August 12, 2019

Singapore

The government has announced that starting on September 1, 2021, offering for sale or selling raw or carved elephant ivory by any channel will be illegal. Using ivory for teaching purposes or in religious ceremonies will remain authorized, as will be the sale of musical instruments or other personal items, such as bird cages, containing ivory. Any violation will be liable for a fine equivalent to 10,000 S\$, or 7300 US\$ and/or 12 months in prison. Preliminary public consultation was carried out and 99% of responses were favorable to closing the domestic ivory market.¹³³

SRI LANKA

September 24, 2019

Kegalle, Sabaragamuwa Province, Sri Lanka

The Temple of the Tooth was attacked from all sides for having enlisted in Buddhist processions a gaunt female elephant born in 1949. She was forced to parade through the night in early August with heavy and constricting costumes and paraphernalia on her back, preventing the thousands of spectators from realizing that Tikini was more than wasted. The "old lady" died on 24 September after more than 65 years of domesticity and enslavement.¹³⁴



September 27 and 28, 2019
Habarana, North Central Province, Sri Lanka

Poisoned death of 7 elephants aged between 4 to 25 years old including at least 5 females, one of which was pregnant. Farmers who claim to be harassed by the incursions of the wild beasts undoubtedly fomented the serial killing. The bodies were discovered in the Sigiriya forest, an area protected on paper from human activities and classified as a UNESCO-protected heritage site by the presence of the fifth-century rock fortress. Sigiriya is 175 km north of Colombo.¹³⁵



THAILAND

July 6, 2019

Bo Ngo sub-district, Ra-ngae District, Narathiwat Province, Thailand

Poaching near a rubber tree plantation of a male elephant around 20 years old. The tusks were torn off. The leader of the village reported discovery of the body.¹³⁶

VIET NAM

July 2019

Hai Phong, Viet Nam

Moi Truong ("The Environment") newspapers reveal that in the prestigious Cau Dat Street, jewelers specializing in gold and gemstone jewelry also sell ivory jewelry. A bracelet sells for around 300 US\$. The port of Hai Phong is a stronghold for the smuggling of raw ivory from Africa (see "Of the Trail" n°3 p. 66, n°5 p.100, n°6 p. 93, n°7 p. 91, n°11 p. 85, n°23 p. 70).¹³⁷

EUROPE

GERMANY

August 12, 2019

Frankfurt am Main International Airport, Hesse Land, Germany

Nela, an ivory specialist in the canine brigade, spotted 2 necklaces and a pair of earrings wrapped in cloth in a suitcase. The passenger was from Nigeria.¹³⁸

SPAIN

CELACANTO AND THUNDERBALL OPERATIONS

June-July 2019

Spain

Seizure of 543 worked ivories including carved tusks with a total estimated value and a range of 400,000 €. For the first time in Spain, carbon 14 was used to determine the dating of the ivory as accurately as possible.¹³⁹

FRANCE

September 7 and 8, 2019

The Andelys, Eure Department, France

Seized by the ONCFS at the 54th and aptly named "everything mess" of 17 worked ivories including an umbrella pommel and 4 big cat teeth in the bazaar of 7 exhibitors.¹⁴⁰



ITALY

The beginning of July 2019

Syracuse, Ortygia Island, Sicily Region, Italy

Seizure in the historical center of the city of 37 worked ivories representing animals or floral symbols. The sellers were unable to produce valid documents proving that the items had been made before 1947.¹⁴¹

August 25, 2019

Sarzana, Province of La Spezia, Liguria Region, Italy

Seizure among antique dealers of several undated ivory objects.¹⁴²

NETHERLANDS

September 21, 2019

The Netherlands

According to the Zambian newspaper *News Diggers!* an North Korean diplomat named Hyon Chol Kim was caught transporting raw ivory from South Africa. The event is believed to have taken place sometime this year. The Dutch customs authorities were asked by Robin des Bois to comment on this information, but said they were not legally entitled to do so.¹⁴³

North Korea and diplomats, see "Off the Trail" n°9 p. 60, n°11 p. 60, n°16 p. 72.

PORTUGAL

September 20, 2019

Setúbal, Setúbal District, Portugal

Crushing and irretrievable destruction in a cement factory of 1500 kg of raw ivory seized by the police 2 years ago as part of a drug trafficking investigation.¹⁴⁴



UNITED KINGDOM

August 13, 2019

London, England, United Kingdom

Guy Buckle, 62 years old, and Sik Hung Or, 72 years old, were sentenced to 28 months in prison for having illegally exported 136 ivory fans to continental China, Hong Kong and the United States between January 2014 and November 2017. On November 8, 2017, 2 packages destined for China and each containing a fan were intercepted by the UK Border Force at Heathrow. Then, in March 2018, a search at the home of the 2 traffickers led to the seizure of 291 fans and 4 tusks or tusk sections. The 136 fans, sold on eBay



before the smuggling operation was unveiled, had brought the 2 traffickers 145,259 £, or 176,800 US\$, in other words 1,300 US\$ per fan. The traffickers dealt mostly in fans made entirely of ivory, dating from the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries, made of ivory lace for the leaves and of carved ivory for the structure. Openwork ivory hand fans were fashionable in the United Kingdom and all of Europe. They were imported from China, especially from Canton, or from India. It is possible that craftsmen from Asia manufactured these prestigious fashion accessories on British soil.¹⁴⁵



Mammoths

EUROPE

RUSSIA

August 22, 2019

Moscow-Domodedovo International Airport, Moscow Oblast, Russia

A 10,000-year-old woolly mammoth (*Mammuthus primigenius*) tusk belonging to the national cultural heritage of which the smuggling is liable to 7 years and a fine of 1 million roubles, or nearly 16,000 US\$, was seized on a flight to Dubai.¹



Other Mammals

AFRICA

KENYA

**July 2019
Kenya**

For 3 months his left hind leg had been caught in a cable. This is how the frail legs of giraffes (genus *Giraffa*) are cut off when they are caught in the traps of bushmeat eaters. Ongoing intervention by veterinarians.¹



UGANDA

**July 2019
Moroto District, Northern Region, Uganda**

Foot-and-mouth disease harms dik-diks (genus *Madoqua*). The graceful little antelopes have unfortunately been a delight for the inhabitants and farmers of the district (3,538 km²) since the livestock has been quarantined and banned from marketing by order of the Ministry of Agriculture. "We cannot sell or slaughter our animals." "To eat, we rely on bush meat," says an inhabitant of Pupu, a stronghold of dik-dik traffic where 17 inhabitants were briefly held in police custody. Despite the quarantine, clandestine cattle meat markets are open in the bush and other discreet places. Foot and mouth disease is spreading.²

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

End of July 2019

The Democratic Republic of Congo

The army of the Democratic Republic of Congo has among its missions the fight against poaching and the protection of wildlife except when it's for eating. This is the third hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*, Appendix II) killed by the army for the benefit of the military canteen.³



ZAMBIA

June 2019

Mpika, Muchinga Province, Zambia

Sentencing of Alick Kunda Mwape to 5 years imprisonment with hard labor for the possession of 46 kg of black lechwe meat (*Kobus lechwe*, Appendix II).⁴



ZIMBABWE

August 9, 2019

Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe

A pack of African wild dogs (*Lycaon pictus*) died in a trap field. A puppy at one year old died, 2 others managed to run away, as did the dominant female but all 3 still had steel ropes wrapped around their necks. They were removed thanks to the veterinarian requested by the NGO Painted Dog Conservation. The African wild dogs travel great distances day after day and they are, more than other species exposed to the risk of traps.⁵

