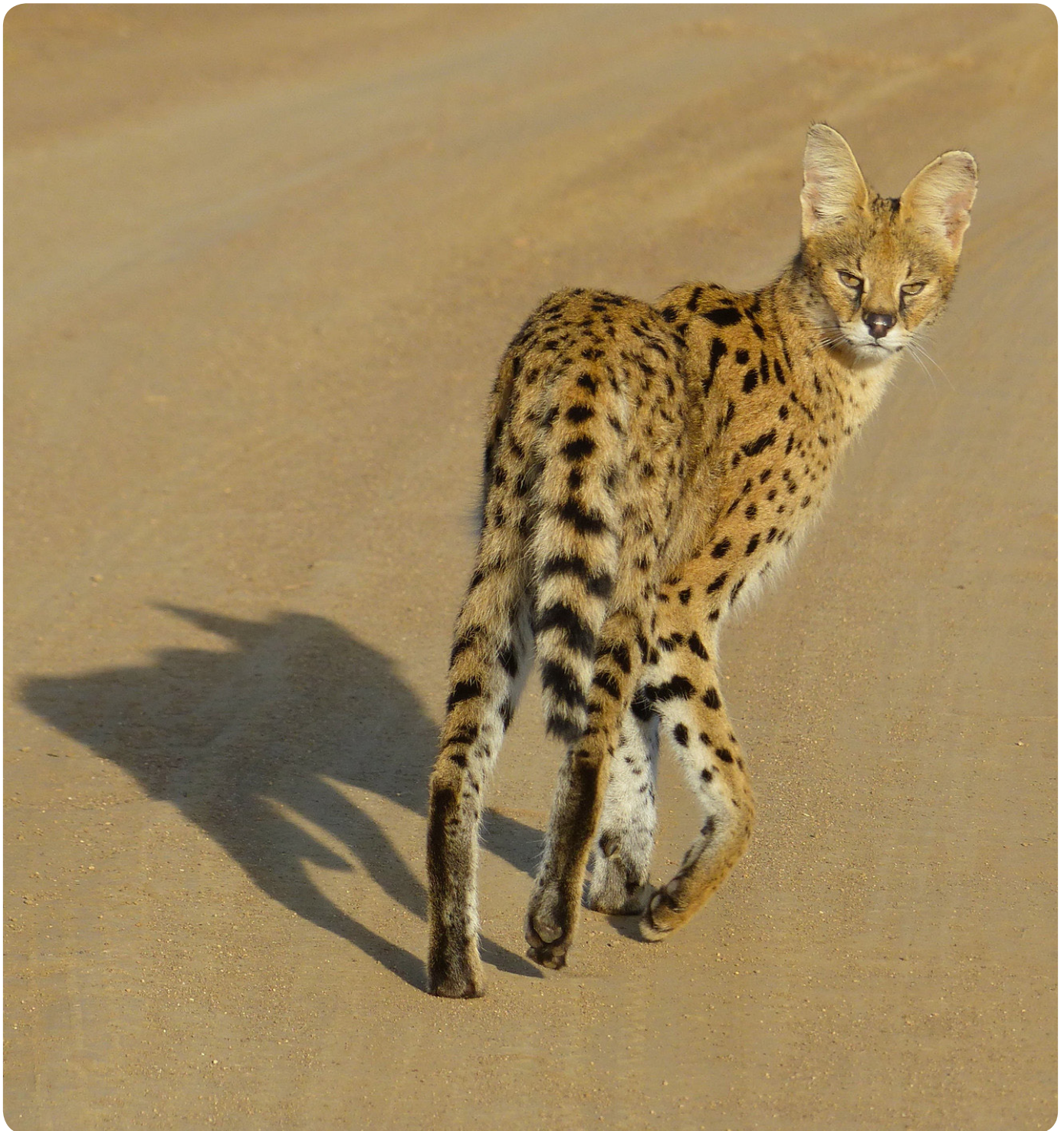


ROBIN DES BOIS

ON_{the} TRAIL

The defaunation bulletin
Quarterly information and analysis report on animal poaching and smuggling
n°27. Events from the 1st October to the 31th December, 2019
Published on July 7, 2020

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/>

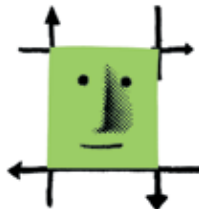
Previous issues in French

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

Covid-19 Special Edition

Pangolin trafficking ante Covid-19 from the 1st October to the 31st December, 2019 and post Covid-19 from the 1st January to the 31st March, 2020. Published on April 30, 2020, available at :

http://www.robindesbois.org/wp-content/uploads/ON_THE_TRAIL_COVID19.pdf



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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°27
The value of horn on the black market, according to media or official sources

Continent	Country	US\$	Ref.
Asia	China	25,500	24 and 26

EASTERN AFRICA

KENYA

December 6, 2019

Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, Meru County, Kenya

They were brothers. They died just a few feet from each other. The anterior horns were cut off by poachers. The posterior horns were in place with a few cuts at the base. They tried to pull them out. The older one was shot three times in the head, the younger one in the aorta and another in the heart. The protected area covers more than 100,000 ha. For 6 years, it wasn't harassed by poaching and has even had a high birth rate. The peace has been broken off.¹

MALAWI

November 12, 2019

Liwonde National Park, Southern Region, Malawi

After an adjustment period in a pen, the 17 black rhinoceroses transferred from South Africa to Malawi were set free in the Liwonde National Park. They had been captured in the Imfolozi Park, quarantined for 6 months and transported by plane from Durban to Lilongwe. From the capital of Malawi, they were then transferred by truck (200 km) to Liwonde. At the same time, 2 rhinoceroses from the Liwonde park were transferred to the Majete park and one rhinoceros travelled the other direction, from Majete to Liwonde. All of this shifting about was organized by African Parks and designed to increase the rhinoceros population in Malawi (which nearly disappeared completely in 1985) and to contribute to genetic mixing essential to the long-term viability of the reintroduction that is underway. The black rhinoceroses from KwaZulu Natal traveled north 1,800 km. African Parks signed a cooperative agreement with the Malawi national parks administration, and has observed that in the past 2 and a half years, no rhinoceroses or elephants have been poached in Liwonde or Majete.²



MOZAMBIQUE

November 8, 2019

Sabie Game Park, Maputo Province, Mozambique

Attempted poaching of a female white rhino. The bullet passed through the neck without reaching the spinal cord or arteries. Emergency care and preventive dehorning. The animal was saved thanks to helicopter pilot James Schuen, the team of Carlos Lopes Pereira, veterinary doctor, and the rangers who set up a safety perimeter to avoid harassment from the curious.³

TANZANIA

End of November 2019

Serengeti National Park, Tanzania

After being transferred in September 2019 from South Africa to Tanzania, 9 adult eastern black rhino (2 males, 5 females and 2 pups) are now at large after being kept in a transit enclosure. They are under increased surveillance and are constantly geolocated to detect poaching attempts and possible wanderings outside Serengeti Nature Park and the adjacent Singita Grumeti Protected Area. The operation is coordinated by TANAPA (Tanzania National Parks) and the Frankfurt Zoological Society.⁴

SOUTHERN AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

October 3 and 7, 2019

South Africa

The bullet probably hit the spinal cord. The male white rhino isn't dead but he's unable to stand up. His horns have been ripped off by poachers. Injections of anti-inflammatory drugs and cortisone are given by the veterinarians at his bedside. After 24 hours, it was no more possible not to yield to the facts and vets had to finish him off.⁵

October 4, 2019

Ngwelezane, KwaZulu Natal Province, South Africa

Aged between 29 and 52, they had been wanted for over a year and were suspected of involvement in the poaching and dehorning of several rhinos on the Ntambanana and Esikhaleni side. They were all arrested thanks to search warrants and simultaneous interventions by the police forces. Two rifles were seized from the homes of the 5 suspects. They were allegedly used to kill rhinos.⁶

October 10, 2019

South Africa

Appearance of Johannes Viljoen and Johannes Davies aged 55 and 65. They were caught transporting 2 horns and 5 sections of horns worth 1.9 million rand (126,000 US\$) and in possession of an undeclared firearm.⁷

November 2, 2019

South Africa



The big "patapouf" was in bad shape after being attacked and an attempt to extract his anterior



horn.

Thanks to the care of Saving The Survivors, he's recovering.

November 5, 2019

Germiston, Gauteng Province, South Africa

Arrest for possession of rhino horns.⁸

November 6, 2019

South Africa

Use by Saving The Survivors of a South American buffalo leather as a dressing and protection of the frontal wound of a rhino left for dead after having undergone poaching and dehorning.⁹

Elephant skin dressing on a rhinoceros, see "On the Trail" n°26, p.76.

November 10, 2019

Pilanesberg National Park, North West Province, South Africa

Another loss of a white rhino to the benefit of the transnational horn mafia. This time the assassination took place near Bakubung.¹⁰

November 14, 2019

Rietvlei Nature Reserve, Pretoria, Gauteng Province, South Africa



Electrocution of a female rhinoceros, her calf and 2 zebras (genus *Equus*) after the fall in the middle of the night of a Eskom's wooden pylon. The cables that continued to convey electric current were 1m50 high. The other pylons are currently being inspected. The corpses were discovered Saturday morning by a patrol. Dana Wannenburg on behalf of the Minister of Agriculture and Environment deplored "this tragic accident" and asked Eskom to "find the causes of the collapse and to implement measures to prevent the recurrence of such events".¹¹

November 15, 2019

Modimolle, Limpopo Province, South Africa

Arrest at a gas station of a 25 year old young man in possession of 2 horns wrapped in a plastic bag inside a backpack. The police was tipped-off.¹²

November 15, 2019

South Africa

Discovery of the decomposed and dehorned carcass of a black rhinoceros.¹³

November 23, 2019

Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

Truth: poaching of 3 rhinos in the Malelane section. Two of the carcasses are found under a pile of grass and small branches.

Truth or cartoon: a single ranger manages to immobilize 5 suspects holding 5 horns. They were near the crime scene in a minibus. The hero acted in cold blood by subduing the driver and handcuffing 3 passengers, by finding a fourth hidden in a secret compartment, by miraculously escaping a deadly shotgun blast, the trigger of a fifth accomplice having refused to go off, and finally by calling for backup.¹⁴

Early December 2019

Kruger National Park, Crocodile Bridge Section, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

Two rangers back to work in the Kruger Park. They're suspected of poaching or conspiracy to poach rhinos. They're out on bail. Their case hasn't gone to trial yet. What is even more strange is that one of the conditions of bail is that they have no direct contact with their colleagues. The same ambiguity applies to rangers Hendrik Silinda and Musa Mlambo, who were also involved in poaching in February 2019 and were released on bail (see "On the Trail" n°23 p.106).¹⁵

December 7, 2019

Limpopo Province, South Africa

On the spot rescue of a rhinoceros calf, about 5 months old, orphaned after the poaching of his mother, attacked by hyenas, his right hind leg open to the bone. After his transfer by pick-up to the orphanage, he gradually recovers, covered with a large blanket, treated with antibiotics and local application of ointment and watched over by Hunter, the guard dog.¹⁶

BOTSWANA

December 2, 2019

Okavango Delta, North West District, Botswana

A new rhino, a white one, has passed away. This is the 17th killing since early April 2019 in the delta.¹⁷



December 23, 2019

Botswana

The government is seeing an upsurge in poaching. From October to December 2019, 13 rhinos were killed by poachers. Since October 2018, 31 have been poached of which 23 were white rhinos and 8 were black. There are less than 400 rhinos in the country.¹⁸

NAMIBIA

27 and 28 October 2019

Werda, Kunene Region, Namibia

Arrest of Johannes Petrus, Ngavepue Tijuana, Kavenamuruke Tjihange and Tjizo Tjiposa for attempting to poach a rhino in Etosha National Park. Seizure of a hunting rifle.¹⁹

November 22, 2019

Werda, Kunene Region, Namibia

Arrest of Noa Tuhafeni Timoteus, Eliaser Revo Amadhila and Paulus Ashingola. They were in very incriminating possession of 2 AK47s and 2 rhino horns.²⁰

November 25, 2019

Otjiwarongo, Otjozondjupa Region, Namibia

Chrissy Mukena Mukena's arrest in the Kunene Desert. He is charged with prohibited possession of a firearm and is suspected of planning poaching due to his behaviour and the place where he was arrested.²¹

December 30, 2020

Okahandja, Otjozondjupa Region, Namibia

Kandje Max Ngumi, Kunouwa Seven Tjambiru and Lubasi Mufaya thought the best time to attack rhinos were the New Year's nights. They were arrested with their high-calibre weapons and no less than 31 bullets. On 30 December, they had gone off hunting, on the 31st they were in jail.²²

AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

October 1st, 2019

Miami, State of Florida, United States of America

Richard Sheridan was sentenced to 14 months in prison and 2 years probation for having bought in conspiracy a libation cup at auction in North Carolina and fraudulently exporting it to Europe in 2012. Sheridan was extradited from Britain at the end of August 2019. He was subject to an international arrest warrant. His accomplice Michael Hegarty, also a member of Rathkeale Rovers, has been already sentenced to 18 months in prison (see "On the Trail" n°19 p. 87).²³





October 10, 2019, South Africa



November 6, 2019, South Africa



December 7, 2019, Limpopo Province, South Africa



October 24, 2019, Futian, China



November 7, 2019, Shanghai Pudong, China



CHINA

October 19, 2019

Hong Kong International Airport, China

Seizure from the luggage of a 33-year-old woman coming from Johannesburg and en route to Viet Nam of 16 kg of horn sections estimated by customs at approximately 408,000 US\$, or 25,500 US\$/kg.²⁴

October 24, 2019

Futian border post, Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China. Border with Hong Kong.

Seizure of the anterior and posterior horns of an African rhinoceros. Together they weigh 2.6 kg.²⁵

November 7, 2019

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

Seizure in a package said to contain plastic trinkets of 7 fragments showing all the characteristics of rhino horn. Total weight: 975.4 g. Value equal to approximately 25,000 US\$.²⁶

INDIA

October 31, 2019

Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India

Arrest of 2 alleged poachers. "The rhinos when wallow in the grass gets their skin covered with mud. When moonlight beams on its skin, its dazzles and becomes visible to poachers very easily. So we take extra care during full moon nights." With Ayub Nabi and Imran Ali aged 22 and 45, 7 suspected poachers were intercepted in the park in 4 days. "They use the Biswanath division the most as they can use country boats to cross the Brahmaputra and enter the park" added Ritu P Borah, one of the park's conservation officers.²⁷



MALAYSIA

November 23, 2019

Tabin Wildlife Reserve, State of Sabah, Borneo Island, Malaysia

"Iman," a female Sumatran rhinoceros (*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*), around 25 years old, has died. A few years ago, the veterinarians and caregivers had diagnosed her with uterine cancer aggravated by hemorrhaging. The guardians of the Borneo Rhino Alliance are thus mourning the extinction of the species in Malaysia. They had long hoped that Iman would mate with "Tam," the last male representative of the species in Malaysia, and there would be one or two happy events. When Tam died in May 2019, and then Iman in November, their bubble burst. The wild population of Sumatran rhinoceroses is now reduced to the last few dozen individuals on the island of Sumatra, Indonesia, living separated from each other in habitats that continue to be eroded by human encroachment. The distances between the individuals condemns them to unhealthy consanguinity and infertility. In 2016, it was said that there was still a very small population of Sumatran rhinoceroses living in East Kalimantan, the Indonesian part of the island of Borneo. Naturalists had hoped that a protocol would be defined between Indonesia and Malaysia to guarantee the survival of the *Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*, and that it would be implemented and considered by both countries to be a unifying, high priority political objective. For the moment, negotiations are at a standstill.²⁸

VIET NAM

October 23, 2019

Hanoi, Viet Nam

Sentencing of Melvin Van Zyl, 28, a South African national, to 10 years in prison for attempting to import 14.6 kg of horns in April 2019.²⁹



Rhinoceroses and Elephants

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

October 1st to 17, 2019

Kruger National Park, Limpopo and Mpumalanga Provinces, South Africa

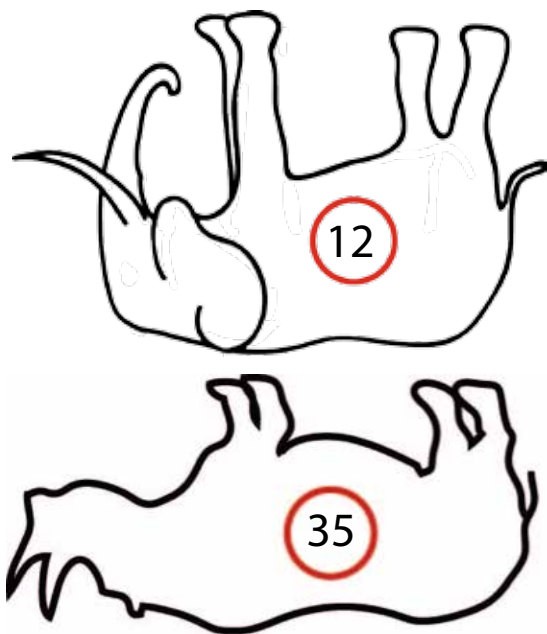
Arrest before acting of 6 alleged poachers in 3 different operations. Seizure of 3 large-calibre weapons. SANParks attributes these successes to the vigilance of the rangers and the coordinated engagement of the dog brigades and aerial survey and is pleased that since the beginning of the month no elephant poaching has been recorded in the park. However, SANParks is concerned about the involvement of local communities in the setting of traps for bushmeat trafficking.¹

NAMIBIA

October 18, 2019

Namibia

Poaching since the beginning of the year: 35 rhinos and 12 elephants and 150 poachers arrested. In 2018, the record was 72 rhinos, 27 elephants and 134 poachers arrested for the whole year.²



ASIA

CHINA

Mid-October 2019

Chengdu-Shuangliu International Airport, Sichuan Province, China

Seizures on landing of 4 flights from Africa of 21 pieces of rhino horn, 4 pieces of raw ivory and a bracelet, 4 springbok skins (*Antidorcas marsupialis*) and 2 common warthog teeth (*Phacochoerus africanus*).³

TURKEY

October 23, 2019

Kagithane District, Istanbul, Istanbul Province, Marmara Region, Turkey

Seizure in an apartment in the Kagithane district of 2 elephant tusks, a rhino horn and 265 rosaries and other worked ivories, a 4.6 m long python skin (Pythonidae, Appendix I or II), with a cumulative value of 1.5 million Turkish pounds, or 261,000 US\$. The suspect originates from Azerbaijan.⁴

