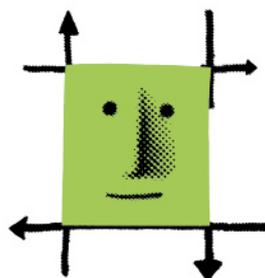


ON_{the} TRAIL

The defaunation bulletin
n°31. Events from the 1st October to the 31th December, 2020



Quarterly information and analysis report on animal poaching and smuggling
Published on December 22, 2021
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ROBIN DES BOIS

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NOTE AND ADVICE TO READERS

“On the Trail”, the defaunation magazine, aims to get out of the drip of daily news and 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” also relates ongoing trials and the evolution of regulations and sanctions.

“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. No continent is spared.

• A single event may refer to several species (e.g. simultaneous seizure of ivory, bear bile and snake skins); it is then analysed in the “Multi-species” chapter, with the exception of events that bring together the following species and which have their own chapter:

- Pangolins + rhinoceroses + elephants
- Elephants + rhinoceroses
- Rhinoceroses + elephants + felines
- Marine and freshwater multispecies (simultaneous seizure of several aquatic species)
- Multi-species reptiles (simultaneous seizure of several reptile species)

• Geographic regions at the continental scale are based on the UN classification.

• The main sources are indicated at the end of each event. Each event reported and/or analysed is from a recension of one or more articles or press releases. This critical review eliminates inconsistencies in date, price and quantity if necessary, and if possible mistakes or looseness about the description of the species. The original source(s) are sometimes enriched by cross-checking and additional information from previous issues of “On the Trail”, by Robin des Bois’ investigations and archives, and by international bibliography and iconography. The US\$ conversion rates used are those applicable during the month of the event.

Robin des Bois thanks the Species Survival Network, the NGO Save the Elephants and the Eagle Network for their alerts which enrich the daily monitoring carried out by the “On the Trail” team.

• When a species is CITES-listed, the Appendix is specified after its scientific name.

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.

PICTOS



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



Judgment and sanction. Condemnation, acquittal, fine...



Trapping. Poaching by jaw trap, snare, net ...



Poisoning. By chemicals, pesticides and medicines: cyanide, carbofuran, diclofenac, M99 ...



Full moon. Moonlight poaching

ACRONYMS

EAGLE : Eco Activists for Governance and Law Enforcement

ENV : Education for Nature – Vietnam

IBAMA : Instituto brasileiro do meio ambiente e dos recursos naturais renováveis

IEW : Iran Environment and Wildlife Watch

KWS : Kenya Wildlife Service

LAGA : The Last Great Ape Organization

OIC : Orangutan Information Centre

PROFEPA : Procuraduría Federal de Protección al Ambiente

SAPS : South African Police Service

SPCA : Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

SSB : Sashastra Seema Bal

SVW : Save Vietnam Wildlife

SWT : Sheldrick Wildlife Trust

USFWS : United States Fish and Wildlife Service

WCCB : Wildlife Crime Control Bureau

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December 1st, 2020

Kapilash, Dhenkanal District, State of Odisha, India

Kapilash is a centre for stealing animals. While 2 men poaching wild boar with nets and initially freed by a village riot and 8 others were arrested here and there with bows and arrows, ammunition and deer antlers, Ghanashyam Behera and Jitendra Pradhan were caught redhanded in possession of a 15 kg pangolin, a rarity.

The New Indian Express, December 2, 2020 ; Odisha TV, December 3, 2020.⁴⁶



December 18, 2020

Sarra, Balaghat District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

Seizure by officers of the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau and of the Forestry Department of a live pangolin held in a village house.

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, December 21, 2020.⁴⁷

December 22, 2020

Kandarpur, Cuttack District, State of Odisha, India

A pangolin weighing over 10 kg whose value is estimated at 500,000 rupees (6,750 US\$) is in the hands of Santosh Kumar Dalai near a canal. Thanks to confidential information, he was freed by the police and has the bad luck of now being in the zoo. The Times of India, December 24, 2020 ; Lokmat Times, December 23, 2020.⁴⁸

December 30, 2020

Waraseoni, Balaghat District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

Seven kilograms of scales. Two arrests.

The Hitavada, January 2, 2021 ; Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, December 31, 2020.⁴⁹

PAKISTAN

November 14, 2020

Fateh Jang, Punjab Province, Pakistan

An endangered species in the province but still appearing on the Internet. After the August pangolin ("On the Trail" n° 30 p. 15), now the November pangolin. Using the role of henchman of a Chinese employer, an officer of the Islamabad Wildlife Management Board feigned to pay 42,000 rupees (260 US\$) for him. "Students" came to make the delivery. He was freed in a secret place. A few days later the IWMB received threats of reprisals via a telephone number in Greece! In Pakistan, the best-known use of pangolin scales is the manufacture of bulletproof vests.

Dawn, November 15, 2020.⁵⁰

■ PANGOLINS, FELINES / ELEPHANTS / RHINOCEROSES ■

AFRICA

NAMIBIA

Year 2020

Namibia

The year 2020 toll (cf. "On the Trail" n°30 p.15 for the report on events as of July 2020) is less severe than the one of the year 2019, with only two exceptions : the number of suspects arrested for rhinoceros poaching and the number of seized horns, that is - 64 suspects arrested (127 in 2019 and 67 in 2018) for elephants poaching or ivory trafficking and 3 sentences. The Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MET) counts 11 poached elephants (13 in 2019 and 27 in 2018) and 62 seized tusks (115 in 2019 and 97 in 2018).

- 145 suspects arrested for poaching including 46 for poaching conspiracy (134 in 2019 and 75 in 2018) or rhinoceros horns trafficking and 2 sentences. The MET counts 31 poached rhinoceros (52 in 2019 and 81 in 2018) and 21 seized horns (8 in 2019 and 13 in 2018). 216 rhinoceros were dehorned (310 in 2019 and 139 in 2018).

- 103 suspects arrested (175 in 2019 and 122 in 2018) for poaching or pangolins trafficking and 12 sentences. The MET counts 74 seized pangolins (129 in 2019 and 90 in 2018) including 8 survivors and 66 skins or carcasses.

91% of the arrested suspects are Namibians. The other ones are Angolans, Zambians and Botswanans.

Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism, "Combatting Wildlife Crime in Namibia - Annual Report 2020", March 2021.¹

REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

October 7, 2020 and March 24, 2021 Ouesso, Sangha Department, Republic of the Congo



Gentlemen Merlin Thibault Onguele, Genèse Mobula, Pie Antounga Mani, Adam Djamal, Don Engoko Matoubou and Boviv Bolia Mbemba appealed against their sentences of imprisonment and fines for trafficking in raw ivory, pangolin scale and leopard skin (see "On the Trail" n°24 p.50 and n°26 p.102). The Ouesso court of appeal is now hearing the prosecutor's speech. The verdicts were delivered on March 24, 2021. The convictions and sentences were upheld. Eighteen-month imprisonment and a fine of one million CFA francs (1,800 US\$) and damages for some, a fine of 600,000 CFA francs (1,110 US\$) and damages for others.

Vox Congo, October 2, 2020 ; Congo Medias Group, March 16 and April 2, 2021.²

October 27, 2020 Yangandou, Sangha Department, Republic of the Congo. Border with Cameroon.

176.5 g of scales and 10 kg of raw ivory. Four arrests—a Congolese and 3 Cameroonians on the road from Souanké to Ntam. The traffickers were about to meet the purchaser in Cabosse.

Agence d'information d'Afrique centrale, November 10, 2020.³

ASIA

CHINA

October 21, 2020 Fangchenggang, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China

Eight prison sentences of from 5 to 11 years. The head of the gang was sentenced to 15 years and a fine of 2 million yuans, that is to say 306,500 US\$. They had organised the export of 3 containers from the Democratic Republic of the Congo containing tonnes of ivory and pangolin scales. Thanks to unusual customs cooperation between China and Singapore the containers were seized in 2019 in the port of Pasir Pajang ("On the Trail" n° 26 p. 52).

CCTV, October 24, 2020.⁴



November 24, 2020

Rizhao, Shandong Province, and Dongxing, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China

The investigation started in March 2019 in Rizhao when a man was arrested in possession of several worked ivories. One thing leading to another, from shadowing surveillance to static observations, the police tracked down the network to the south of Dongxing, near the border of Viet Nam, at 2,300 km of Rizhao. Two men were arrested in possession of ivories, rhinoceros horns, and lion bones. The investigation has then been expanded to 12 provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions with seizures of several tiger skins and pangolins scales. 25 suspects are in the meshes. Next step : the trial. Luwang, November 24, 2020.⁵



Early December 2020

Changsha, Hunan Province, China

A Chinese citizen received a suspended 3-year prison sentence and a 20,000 yuan fine, that is to say 3,000 US\$ for having attempted to import 16 pangolin scales and 8 tiger bone sections in 2019 ("On the Trail" n°2 p.112). Xioxiang Morning Herald, December 7, 2020.⁶



INDIA

October 17, 2020

Adhav, Amravati District, State of Maharashtra, India

Seven persons were involved in contraband tiger claws and canines, skins of Bengal monitors (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I) and pangolin scales.

The Times of India, October 21, 2020.⁷

December 17, 2020

Seoni District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

Arrest in the south of the district by the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau and the Forest Department of a trafficker in possession of tiger claws, bones and a tiger skin in pieces together with some 1kg of pangolin scales. WCCB, December 18, 2020.⁸



ELEPHANTS



African forest elephant (*Loxodonta cyclotis*). Photo Mattluizza

The African forest elephant (*Loxodonta cyclotis*) is listed in CITES Appendix I, the African savannah elephant (*Loxodonta africana*) is listed in 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°31
Black market raw ivory quotation from media or official sources
The values were estimated at the time of the seizures

Value of 1kg of raw ivory

Continent	Country	US\$	Ref. (year)
Africa	Burkina Faso	613	4 (2020)
	Kenya	925	27 (2020)
		913	48 (2020)
	Zambia	1,923	55 (2020)
Asia	India	268	119 (2020)
		12,100	122 (2020)

NORTHERN AFRICA

ALGERIA

Year 2020

Wilaya of Médéa, Algeria

The time has come for annual reports. The gendarmerie of the Wilaya announces without detailing that raw rubies, ivory tusks and a pharaonic style bust have been seized in the context of the fight against organized trafficking. Unlike Tunisia, Morocco and Egypt, Algeria has been very discreet about wildlife seizures in recent years. The Wilaya of Médéa is a mountainous region in the north of the country, in the Tellian Atlas, 88 km west of Algiers.

Algérie Presse Service, January 25, 2021.¹

WESTERN AFRICA

BENIN

End of November 2020

Kandi, Alibori Department, Benin

Sentencing of 4 criminals to 12 months of prison, a fine of 300,000 CFA francs Jambi Province and a million CFA francs damages, that is to say 535 and 1,784 US\$. They were arrested in October 2020. They were trying to sell 4 elephant tusks. In the field the night before the arrests, the director of AALF-Bénin (Appui à l'Application des Lois sur la Faune et la Flore au Bénin) had a serious car accident. This did not prevent the team from assisting the sovereign forces to succeed the operation.

Eagle, October 17, 2020 ; Actu Bénin, November 25, 2020.²

December 9, 2020

N'Dali, Borgou Department, Benin

"Elephants are in critical danger of extinction. In spite of this, the network of traffickers is still after these wild animals in order to sell the tusks illegally". The Republican Police arrested 2 traffickers. A baby elephant had been killed. The two tusks were tiny.

Eagle, December 10, 2020 ; Matin Libre, December 15, 2020 ; Actu Bénin, January 27, 2021.³

BURKINA FASO

October 16, 2020

Ouagadougou, Centre Region, Burkina Faso

Eleven tusks and a piece of tusk, 32 kg. Where? In a hotel. The value? 613 US\$/kg. Two arrests: Maiga Saïdou and Maiga Alassane. A third man, Derme Ibrahim, was summoned.

Eagle, October 17, 2020 ; Koaci, October 23, 2020 ; L'express du Faso, October 26, 2020 ; Conservation Justice, October 2020.⁴

December 9 and 15, 2020 and February 15, 2021

PONASI (Pô-Nazinga-Sissili) ecological complex, Centre Sud and Centre-Ouest Regions and Bieha, Centre-Ouest Region, Burkina Faso

"While the trafficker in question was attempting to sell 4 elephant tusks, he was questioned by officials in charge of the protection of fauna." He was sentenced to 6 months of prison at an external hearing of the Court of Leo, plus an 18-month suspended sentence, a fine of 100,000 CFA francs and a million CFA francs in damages, that is to say 184 and 1,840 US\$.

Minute.bf, December 16, 2020 ; Conservation Justice, December 2020 ; Faso Actu, February 18, 2021.⁵



COTE D'IVOIRE

October 15, 2020

Attécoubé, Abidjan District, Côte d'Ivoire

He travelled from Bouaké to Abidjan to negotiate the sale of 3 statuettes and 9 bracelets. Ivory is one of the only raw materials in West Africa to be subjected to processing before sale.

Eagle, October 2020 ; Koaci, October 26, 2020.⁶



TOGO

October 13, 2020 and January 14, 2021

Lomé, Maritime Region, Togo



- Arrest of Daglo Kossi who described himself as a great fetish specialist, Bouyo Essozimna, Gagnon Kodjo, Assih Manèyassouwé and Zodogadji Grégoire. Their job was that of transferring elephant tusks from Benin to Togo before they were forwarded to Asia. Seizure of 3 large forest elephant tusks.

- The sentences for all were 6 months with 2 to 3-month suspended sentences. Fines were 200,000 CFA francs, that is to say 374 US\$. The fetish man was released.

Eagle, October 2020 and January 2021 ; Afrik 21, October 20, 2020 ; Viv Afrik, October 16, 2020 ; La Dépêche d'Abidjan, January 19, 2021.⁷



CENTRAL AFRICA

CAMEROON

October 22, 2020

Ambam, South Region, Cameroon



The lorry came from Gabon. The ivory was well hidden in a false compartment but the customs focused. Seizure of 118 tusks with a total weight of 626 kg and an average weight of 5 kg per tusk. 59 sub-adult elephants had been killed. Mohamadou Ibrahim was on his way to Yaoundé.

News Ghana (with Xinhua), October 22, 2020 ; Cameroon-Info.Net, October 22, 2020 ; Traffic, October 26 2020 ; Gabon Review, October 29, 2020 ; Eagle, October 2020 ; Camer.be, November 7, 2020.⁸

November 26, 2020

Douala, Littoral Region, Cameroon

Lydie Makembe and Théophile Tchiekou were sentenced to one year suspended sentences and Samuel Joël Manyombe to one year of imprisonment. Each of the 3 was fined the equivalent of 364 US\$. They had been caught redhanded with 26 kg of raw ivory in the Littoral region in May 2020 ("On the Trail" n°29 p.22). The booty was heavy and the punishment was light.

Alwihda Info, November 19, 2020 ; Actu Cameroun, December 2, 2020 ; Camer.be, December 2, 2020.⁹

REPEATED OFFENSE

December 2-3, 2020

Bertoua and Yokadouma, East Region, Cameroon



It's like seeing a mother and daughter walking in a forest being killed. The international network has business links with Nigeria to the north. Six suspects are in preventive custody. One of them is a Nigerian national and another an arrant repeated offender who has already spent time in prison. The operation was coordinated by the forestry forces of Lom and Djerem

with assistance from the NGO LAGA.

Eagle, December 2020 ; Camer.be, December 9, 2020.¹⁰

GABON

August 28, 2020

Franceville, Haut-Ogooué Province, Gabon



Sentencing of Mambelo Francis ("On the Trail" n°27 p. 100) to a 2-year prison sentence, a fine of a million CFA francs and 500,000 CFA francs in damages (i.e. 1,790 and 895 US\$). Conservation Justice, August 2020.¹¹

October 3, 2020

Lopé, Ogooué-Ivindo Province, Gabon

Charging of Allini Mikoto Neslon, Hygiene Sécurité Environment referent at Segas Rails, a railway works company, who was in possession of a piece of tusk. Release on bail while awaiting the case.

Conservation Justice, October 2020.¹²

REPEATED OFFENSE

October 9-November 20, 2020

Tchibanga, Nyanga Province, Gabon



Seizure of 4 tusks at the exit from a taxi. Total weight 19 kg. Arrest of Jean Mouvoumbi Moussavou and Ange Mougou. Seizure from Mouvoumbi Moussavou of a 375 special big five. Already sentenced in 2016 to 6 months in prison for illicit dealing in ivory, he was sentenced to 3 years in prison, including a 1-year suspended sentence, a fine of the equivalent of 2,676 US\$ and 3,570 US\$ in damages. He risked a 10-year jail sentence. Mougou was discharged.

Gabon Review, October 12, 2020 ; Agence gabonaise de presse, October 11, 2020 ; Conservation Justice, October 2020 ; Eagle, October 2020.¹³

**October 15- December 4, 2020
Mouila, Ngounié Province, Gabon**



Four tusks, 21 kg. Arrest of Arnaud Ulrich Mounanga who played the role of sales agent and then of Nzigou Ndinga, 25 years old, studying in the town, and of Jean Luc Nzissila, retired gendarme, considered to be the 'joint owners' of the ivory.

Nzissila: sentenced to 24 months of prison including an 18-month suspended sentence. Fine equal to 9,542 US\$.

Mounanga and Ndinga: 24 months of prison of which 12 months were suspended sentences. Fine equal to 9,542 US\$ and 5,452 US\$ damages to be paid by each of them.

Joint operation handled by the local police and the Water and Forestry authorities with assistance from Conservation Justice.

Eagle, October and December 2020 ; Gabon Review, October 16, 2020 ; Conservation Justice, October and December 2020.¹⁴

November 2, 2020 and January 15, 2021



Libreville, Estuaire Province, Gabon

Diakité Oumar, a scrap metal dealer native of Mali, was arrested red-handed with, in his bag, 15 sections of tusk purchased from a poacher near Gamba for the modest sum of 1.6 million CFA francs, i.e. 2855 US\$. 'I got a good deal' he told himself when going to the capital to make a profit. He was sentenced 4 years in prison including 1 year as a suspended sentence, a fine of 13 million CFA francs and 5 million CFA francs damages, that is to say 24,340 US\$ and 9,360 US\$.

Eagle, November 2020 ; Gabon Média Time, November 11, 2020 ; Conservation Justice, November 2020 and January 2021.¹⁵

**November 12, 2020
Koulamoutou, Ogooué-Lolo Province, Gabon**



In a bag, the colour of black magic, Emerson Necker Moukagna Pango carried 6 tusks in 16 sections coated in black. The colour code did not work. He was arrested by the police and Water and Forestry officers. Conservation Justice participated in the operation. He was a hyperactive person. Just over 20 years old, he said that he had killed the elephants. A firearm was seized at his home.

7 Jours Info, November 13, 2020 ; Eagle, November 2020 ; Conservation Justice, November 2020.¹⁶

**December 11 and 13, 2020
Ndendé, Ngounié Province, Gabon**

Fabrice Ngueba and Elino Nzie Boussougou, farmers, transported in a clandestine taxi-bus 4 whole tusks and 3 others cut into 8 sections. They said that they were just transporters and commercial agents for a poacher who lived alone in an unknown place in the forest where there was no telephone network. Fabrice Mangui was arrested 2 days later. Joint operation by the local police, the Water and Forestry authorities and Conservation Justice.

Eagle, December 2020 ; 7 Jours Info, December 14, 2020 ; Conservation Justice, December 2020.¹⁷

**December 15, 2020-August 2021
Mouila, Ngounié Province, Gabon**



"Large eaters of fruits elephants spread seeds in their dung that help the forest to continue. They make clearings that are good for large animals (buffaloes, leopards, large apes and many other mammals, including antelopes). Their disappearance will have repercussions for the whole forest—from the tiniest insect to the large mammals." The on-line site "La Pratique du Gabon" is very clear and contains no embellishments. It is in the future tense. François de Salle Sandaogo, from Burkina Faso and a builder's labourer, and Oumar Kourouma, a Guinean mechanic, contributed to the disappearance of the "big greys". Arrested on December 15, 2020 for the transport and trafficking of 10 kg raw ivory, they were both sentenced on appeal to 7 months and 12 days in prison and ordered to pay jointly the sum of 500,000 francs CFA (905 US\$) in damages to the Water and Forests Administration.

Eagle, December 2020 and March 2021 ; 7 Jours Info, December 16, 2020 ; Conservation Justice, December 2020, February and August 2021.¹⁸

**December 28, 2020
Gabon**

You cannot stop progress. Will there be a wave of electrocutions in Gabon as has happened in India? The Minister of the Environment wants a denser network of electric fences to halt conflicts between elephants and men in the fields. A thousand million CFA francs (1.81 million US\$) have been earmarked for this in the 2021 budget. Let us hope that Lee White will run the right current in the wires. Discouraging the elephants is enough. There is no point in burning them and damaging their hearts with high voltages.

Gabon Review, December 31, 2020.¹⁹

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

September 20-October 5, 2020

Butumba and Kamina, Haut-Lomami Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo

- Upemba national park (11,730 km²): killing of a young elephant with the complicity of the local population.

- Arrest of Kyayo and Ntungule.

Politico, October 9, 2020.²⁰

REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

December 12, 2020

Nkayi, Bouenza Department, Republic of the Congo



The two strong lads transported without any problem a 1 kg tusk stolen from a young elephant. He was reported to have been purchased in Sibiti. They wanted to resell it 130 km away in Nkayi. The successful operation was organised

by the gendarmerie and the Water and Forestry administration with support from the PALF (Projet d'Application de la Loi Faunique).

Eagle, December 2020 ; Vox Congo, December 21, 2020.²¹

December 16, 2020

Owando, Cuvette Department, Republic of the Congo



They had 90 kg of raw ivory in their bags. The seizures and arrests ("On the Trail" n°24 p. 74) were the result of cooperation between the gendarmerie, the guards at Odzala Kokoua park and the PALF. Akouango Roméo, Aboro Rusel, Ompaba Mbori Organ Renève, Makagna Drenny and Atoumba Hoxel were sentenced to 2 years in prison and fine of 500.000 CFA francs, i.e. 892 US\$.

Madaka Ibanza Darny received a suspended 2-year sentence and a fine of the same amount. The 6 men were sentenced to the joint payment of a fine of 5 million CFA francs, that is to say nearly 9,000 US\$.

Groupe Congo Médias, December 18, 2020.²²

EASTERN AFRICA

KENYA

October 1st, 2020

Kimana Sanctuary, Kajiado County, Kenya

The elephant was suffering of an injury on the rump, probably caused by a spear throw.

The prognosis is positive.

SWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit, October 2020.²³

October 10, 2020

Oloisukut Conservancy, Kenya

The elephant is limping. He was injured by an arrow on the back left leg, under the knee joint. The vets find him hiding under a tree. Anesthesia. Care. Antidote. The prognosis is positive.

SWT/KWS Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit, October 2020.²⁴



October 12, 2020

Tsavo East National Park, Kenya

Arrow wound on the abdomen. Emergency treatments. The prognosis is positive.

SWT/KWS Amboseli Mobile Veterinary Unit, October 2020.²⁵

October 15, 2020

Oloisukut Conservancy, Kenya



A 20 elephant herd walk throw Mara river. One of the elephants is limping. The herd is nervous. The injured elephant is anesthetized from a helicopter. An arrow has caused the injury. The prognosis is positive. He has joined his herd.

SWT/KWS Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit, October 2020.²⁶

October 23, 2020
Kitale, Trans-Nzoia County, Kenya



48 kg of raw ivory. The local value is 4.8 million Kenyan shillings, i.e. 925 US\$/kg. The tusks are fresh. Edwin Nabiswa Wanyonyi, Godfrey Ngura Tugongora and Solomon Churia Pokot, age 23 to 37, are in prison. Joint operation by the police and the KWS, without forgetting the members of the public who provided useful information. The Standard, October 23, 2020; Kenya Broadcasting Corporation, October 24 and 26, 2020.²⁷

October 27, 2020
Rukinga Ranch, Taita-Taveta County, Kenya

Arrow injuries to elephants are increasing during the September and October 2020 months. The elephant is limping and he is exhausted. He has been anesthetized from a helicopter and then has been copiously sprayed with water during the care to his left front leg, to enforce the thermoregulation. The prognosis is very uncertain. SWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit, October 2020.²⁸

November 6, 2020
Kimana, Kajiado County, Kenya



An injured elephant is located by the rangers. The vets arrived by helicopter. The victim has spear wounds near the head and on the front left leg. The prognosis is positive. SWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit, November 2020.²⁹

November 8, 2020
Kasigau, Taita-Taveta County, Kenya



A female is located by the rangers. She is in the company of an injured baby elephant. The mother is removed from the scene so as to examine the baby elephant. When the vets are finally able to approach him, they unfortunately stated his death. He has been mutilated by a trap and could no longer feed. SWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit, Nov. 2020.³⁰



However, in the beginning of October in Tsavo East national park, a baby elephant who had ventured in a water hole to spray himself with mud was saved from drowning by the vets who pulled him out of the mud by wrapping him in ropes and pulling him out with the help of a land cruiser. His eyes have been carefully sprayed with water so as to avoid mud infection. He then joined his family who was waiting for him. SWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit, October 2020.³¹



November 10, 2020
Naboisho Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya
 The young female elephant is walking with difficulties. She has a purulent wound on the front left leg caused by a spear. The prognosis is positive. SWT/KWS Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit, November 2020.³²

November 10, 2020
Oi Malo Conservancy, Laikipia County, Kenya
 The adult male elephant has been injured on his right side by a spear. It is twisted, the elephant probably rubbed against a tree so as to try to get free. After an etorphine anesthesia, the elephant has undergone an emergency treatment. The prognosis is positive. SWT/KWS Mount Kenya Mobile Veterinary Unit, November 2020.³³

November 10, 2020

Amboseli National Park, Kajiado County, Kenya



A young elephant female is injured by the steel wire of a trap or a fence. Anesthesia, care, wake-up. The prognosis is positive. SWT/KWS Amboseli Mobile Veterinary Unit, November 2020.³⁴

November 10, 2020

Oinobmoi, Baringo County, Kenya

"I don't feel very well at the moment and I would like bail." In the middle of the Covid crisis, the request of Mathew Kiptis Nyomboi, caught red-handed carrying 3 tusks on a motorcycle at night on the road from Oinobmoi to Barwessa, was granted. In exchange for bail and a bond of 5,700 US\$, he was freed while awaiting trial.

Kenya News Agency, November 16, 2020.³⁵

November 13, 2020 and end of January 2021

Namanga, Kajiado County, Kenya. Border with Tanzania



Christopher Watia was sentenced to 10 years in prison, with no possibility of a replacement fine, for having transported and attempted to sell 3 sections of tusk. His accomplice Suyanga Merin pleaded not guilty and his trial was postponed. Kenya News Agency, January 29, 2021.³⁶

November 14, 2020

Kuku Group Ranch, Kajiado County, Kenya

Post-mortem examination. The day before, as a precaution, the tusks had been removed by the rangers. A spear injury is suspected. SWT/KWS Amboseli Mobile Veterinary Unit, November 2020.³⁷

November 14 2020

Kuku Group Ranch, Kajiado County, Kenya



The elephant body is located in a river bed. Spear poisoning injury is suspected. SWT/KWS Amboseli Mobile Veterinary Unit, November 2020.³⁸

November 19, 2020

Rukinga, Taita-Taveta County, Kenya

Wildlife Works ranger patrol spotted a limping male elephant. He has been anesthetized from a helicopter. He had already been treated for the same spear injury but had not totally recovered. The prognosis is very uncertain.

SWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit, November 2020.³⁹

November 23, 2020

Kenya

A member of parliament, member of the ODM (Orange Democratic Movement) and a jurist by profession has come to the help of a boda boda driver in his constituency. The man is in prison. Babu Owino paid a million shillings (i.e. 9,095 US\$) in exchange for the release of M. Zakayo who was making a trip for a client and was caught red-handed while transporting raw ivory. He says that he did not know that there was ivory in the package that he was transporting. Babu Owino's generosity is a subject of discussion.

Tuko, November 24, 2020.⁴⁰

Early December 2020

Isiolo, Isiolo County, and Laisamis, Marsabit County, Kenya

- Two tusks, 7.1 kg. Mutungi and Gitonga were on a motorcycle. They plead not guilty. They can be released on 3 million shillings, i.e. 27,380 US\$, bail and bond.

- Six tusks, 51.5 kg. James Legalorah and Lesarin Leejer arrested. KWS officers, operating anonymously, played the role of purchasers.

The Star, December 3, 2020 ; Kenya Broadcasting Corporation, December 3, 2020.⁴¹

December 3, 2020

Nanyuki, Laikipia County, Kenya

Seizure of 10 tusks. Total weight 31.6 kg. Five sub-adult elephants were poached. Arrest of Alphonse Otieno and Kangai Alpham. Operation organised by the KWS in collaboration with the police of the counties of Isiolo, Meru and Laikipia.

The Star, December 5, 2020.⁴²

December 3, 2020

Mugie Ranch, Laikipia County, Kenya

An elephant was unable to walk and feed. He had been injured by the poachers' bullets. The rangers called the vets. Anesthesia. Treatment of several front and back leg wounds. Despite the emergency treatments, the ultimate option was to finish off the victim.

SWT/KWS Mount Kenya Mobile Veterinary Unit, December 2020.⁴³

December 6, 2020

Ol Jogi Conservancy, Laikipia County, Kenya



The metal wires of the trap encircled the 2 back legs. After anesthesia, they were removed with a pair of wire cutters.

SWT/KWS Mount Kenya Mobile Veterinary Unit, December 2020.⁴⁴

TANZANIA

December 10, 2020

Lemek Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya

The adult elephant had a large wound on his right side caused by a large spear. The vets found him in a dense thicket. He was refusing to move. He was finally brought to open ground, anaesthetized and treated. The peritoneum and the liver were hit by the spear. The prognosis was very uncertain. After 18 hours, he succumbed. According to protocol, the tusks were removed and put in a safe place. SWT/KWS Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit, December 2020.⁴⁵

December 10, 2020

Olarro Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya

The big male is 40 to 45 years old. He is deeply injured on his right side by a spear and an arrow. He is one in a herd of 100 elephants. Anesthesia, treatments, antidote. The prognosis is positive. SWT/KWS Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit, December 2020.⁴⁶

December 11, 2020

Oi Kinyei Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya

The elephant suffers from an abscess on the abdomen caused by an arrow throw. He is going along with 7 other elephants. It is a beautiful male herd, on its defensive and in great shape. When the vets arrived, they all went away to a wooded hill. However, the injured one has been isolated. The abscess has been drained and treated. The prognosis is positive. SWT/KWS Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit, December 2020.⁴⁷

December 12, 2020

Migori County, Kenya. Border with Tanzania

54 kg of raw ivory. Local value: 54 million shillings, i.e. 49,277 US\$ and 913 US\$/kg. Arrest of Joseph Matoiga in an SUV on the road between Narok county and Migori county near the frontier with Tanzania. Capital FM, December 13, 2020 ; The Standard, December 13, 2020 ; Stop Crime Kenya, December 16, 2020.⁴⁸

September to November 2020

Tanzania

A new wave of false information spread by the poaching sector has caused damage. "Elephant liver can treat liver cancer, cancer of the uterus and ulcers." Allan Kijazi of Tanapa (Tanzania National Parks Authority) is sounding the alarm. Twelve elephants have been poached in 3 months. Xinhua, December 10, 2020.⁵⁰

October 13, 2020

Dar es Salaam, Dar es Salaam Region, Tanzania

The trial of 22 persons suspected of having organised the assassination of Wayne Lotter ("On the Trail" n°18 p. 87, n°27 p. 4) or of contributed or participated has been postponed for the requirements of the investigation. They include bank staff, business men and women and two persons from Burundi. Tanzania Daily News, October 15, 2020.⁵¹

November 26, 2020

Rombo District, Kilimanjaro Region, Tanzania. Border with Kenya

Ten tusks or portions of tusk, 23 kg, near the frontier with Kenya. Two arrests. Pouvoirs d'Afrique, November 29, 2020 ; China Internet Information Center (with Xinhua), November 28, 2020.⁵²

December 24, 2020

Mpwapwa District, Dodoma Region, Tanzania

First instance sentencing of Parson Sekandi Mkombola, an Anglican pastor, to 20 years in prison. He was arrested in October 2019 in possession of 2 large elephant tusks with an estimated value of 69.15 million shillings, that is to say 30,152 US\$. The priest has 30 days to make an appeal. The Citizen, December 26, 2020.⁵³



MOZAMBIQUE

November 24, 2020

Mozambique

Desperate attempt by Saving the Survivors to save an elephant about 5 years old whose left foreleg had been caught in a trap. "The only humane course of action was to end the young bull's suffering." Saving the Survivors, November 24 and 25, 2020.⁴⁹



ZAMBIA

October 23, 2020

South Luangwa National Park, Eastern Province, Zambia

Death of a female baby elephant whose mother had been poached. With a back injury and incapable of feeding, she approached a village. People tied her up while awaiting the arrival of a vet and a carer from Lilayi orphanage. Unfortunately, she was too weak to be saved. Forever Trunks, October 24, 2020.⁵⁴

Early November 2020

Zambia

Zambia is profiting from the Covid sanitary and economic catastrophe to request various UNO authorities for the right to sell on the international market all or part of the 52 t of ivory collected following seizures or natural deaths. It estimates that its stock is worth 100 million US\$, that is to say 1,923 US\$/kg.

The Southern Times, November 6, 2020.⁵⁵

November 15, 2020 and January 19, 2021

Chama District, Eastern Province, Zambia



Condemnation of Jurious Sakala to 7 years in prison combined with forced labour for having illegally owned 2 tusks weighing a total of 9.5 kg. He was arrested on November 15, 2020.

Lusaka Times, January 19, 2021 ; 5fm Radio Zambia, January 18, 2021.⁵⁶

ZIMBABWE

Early November 2020

Musango Island Safari Camp, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe



Saving of a female elephant injured by a trap. Her left foreleg was seriously injured. The diagnosis is relatively optimistic. Her baby elephant returned valiantly to watch the surgical operation closely. Removed forcefully, he watched from a distance. He is at the breast-feeding stage. Saving was coordinated by the Musango Island Safari Camp and the Bumi Hills Foundation.



Sarah Silverstone, November 2, 2020 ; LADbible, December 3, 2020.⁵⁷

Mid-November, 2020

Hwange National Park, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe



The mother and baby were anaesthetised. The young animal was then released from a metal trap that cut into a hind leg. Diagnosis favourable. The surgery was directed by Paul de Montille.

Hwange Conservation Society, November 14, 2020.⁵⁸

December 2020

Sengwe, Masvingo Province, Zimbabwe



Apopo, the Belgian NGO specialized in mine-clearing operations on battlefields, is at work in the Sengwe wildlife migration corridor between Zimbabwe and Mozambique. Along 37 km, the corridor was mined by the British Rhodesian regular army to prevent liberation fighters from entering what is now Zimbabwe. 50 years later, 1,500 landmines remain in the area, threatening to blow up elephants, cattle and anyone who ventures into this "corridor of death". Work has started with funds awarded by the U.S. and Swiss ambassadors in Harare. Completion is expected by the end of 2025, provided that new funding is made available. NewsDay, December 24, 2020 ; Swiss Confederation, December 17, 2020.⁵⁹

SOUTHERN AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

November 16, 2020

East London, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa



The Hawks caught Chukuwuebuka Kingsley Izuagwu, a dealer of crystal meth, also known as Tik in South Africa. They purchased Tik undercover 3 times for an overall 16,000 rand, the equivalent of 1,000 US\$. During the search of his home, 260 g of Tik worth 4,000 US\$, 3,000 US\$ in cash and an elephant tusk were seized. SAPS, November 18, 2020.⁶⁰

BOTSWANA

**November 2020
Botswana**

Wars generate flows of migrants, not only of men, women and children. During the decades of civil war, thousands of elephants fled Angola to take refuge in Botswana. The two governments plan to open corridors between the two countries and remove the fences. The director of the Kavango-Zambezi Trans-frontier Conservation Area (KAZA) agrees with this. "The long-term survival of elephants hinges on ensuring that we secure and reconnect wildlife corridors on a trans-boundary scale."

"Before implementing a project that all defenders of elephants dream of Angola must remove mines from its frontier with Botswana and the areas used by elephants." Voice of America, November 28, 2020.⁶¹

NAMIBIA

**November 19, 2020
Namibia**

Namibia wishes to sell 70+ tonnes of ivory collected in seizures and from increasingly rare natural deaths. It estimates that its stock is worth about 8 million US\$, that is to say 114 US\$/kg, and annual storage costs total 75,000 US\$. The problem is that no country wants it, even if it were given. Ivory and other fauna sub-products are the only goods to be kept after seizure by the authorities. When will we see auction sales of cocaine and fake clothes, Vuitton bags, whisky and Messi tee-shirts?

The Namibian, November 19 and December 15, 2020 and March 17, 2021.⁶²

December 2020-March 2021

Omatjete, Erongo Region, Kamanjab, Kunene Region, and Grootfontein, Otjozondjupa Region, Namibia

In December 2020, Namibia announced its intention to auction off 170 wild elephants to national and foreign entrepreneurs. The government hopes to win at least one million US\$ from this operation, i.e. 5,880 US\$ per elephant. All capture, quarantine and transport costs will be borne by the buyers. This massive harvest is said to be justified by water shortage due to global warming and the need to share the aquatic resource between wildlife and agricultural needs.

In August 2021, Namibia announced that it had sold 57 elephants, including 42 destined for export, for 400,000 US\$, or 7,000 US\$ per elephant. Since then, Namibia has refused to communicate on the countries of destination, while assuring that the first captures are imminent.

The KEPA (Kunene Environmental Protection Association) had immediately attacked the initiative, expressing indignation that some 30 elephants from the Kunene desert and the Ugab basin, known for their temperance and adaptation to aridity, were among the elephants put out to tender. Internationally, the protests had quickly gathered tens of thousands of signatures, built in particular upon the resolution of the 18th CITES Conference of the Parties (Geneva, August 2019, 87 countries for, 25 against) according to which "appropriate and acceptable destinations" for elephants captured in the wild are applying to in situ conservation programmes within the species' natural and historical range.

It seems that this double wave of internal and external protests has dampened the enthusiasm of foreign investors anxious to avoid global controversy and harm to their reputation. There are assumptions that the most credible buyers include zoos in the United Arab Emirates. An attempt by Dubai to buy elephants aged between 4 and 8 years old captured in the Otjozondjupa region had failed miserably in 2017 ("On the Trail" n°17 p.97 and n°19 p.100).

Namibia is merciless with desert elephants. In 2014, despite strong protests, 7 hunting permits were granted. Males with large tusks were the victims ("On the Trail" n°6 .74-75). In June 2019, Voortrekker (Pioneer), Namibia's most famous elephant, aged about 40 years, was killed by a sport hunter who had been issued a licence for 8,000 US\$. Voortrekker and his small family were accused of drinking too much water in the Ugab ("On the Trail" n°25 p.87).

Firstpost (with Reuters), December 3, 2020 ; Kunene Environmental Protection Association, December 29, 2020 and August 11, 2021; Afrik 21, December 27, 2020 ; Namibian Sun, January 22, March 3, May 14, June 7, September 10, October 1st and November 17, 2021 ; Mongabay, January 29, 2021 ; Business Daily, February 26, 2021; Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism, February 1st, 2021 ; New Era, August 12, 2021 ; The Canary, August 15, 2021 ; Fondation Franz Weber, September 11, 2021 ; CITES, September 17, 2021 ; Journal of African Elephants, September 23, 2021 ; Pro Elephant Network, Sep-tember 21 and October 27, 2021.⁶⁴

December 21, 2020
Kawe, Kavango East Region, Namibia

THE TEXAS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA CHAPTER 2

"On the Trail" was among the first to sound the alarm about oil and gas exploration and exploitation in the Okavango Delta (see "On the Trail" n°28 p.104). According to the Canadian trust ReconAfrica and the governments of Botswana and Namibia, derricks, oil spills, flares and truck processions can coexist with elephants and native populations. Oil revenues can be added to tourism and agricultural revenues. Elephants are often seen as problem animals but not the machines drilling which will blend into the landscape and social fabric. The *Yellowstone* coming from Houston, Texas, unloaded in Walvis Bay in early December 2020, the drilling rig, hundreds of metres of pipe, tractor trailers and seismic exploration systems. ...



© Michael Farrell / Marine Traffic

Yellowstone (ex-Cielo di Monfalcone). IMO 9225251. General cargo ship. Length 185.5 m, deadweight 37,548 tonnes. Marshall Islands flag. Classification society Registro Italiano Navale. Built in 2002 in Shanghai (China) by Shanghai Shipyard. Detained in 2012 in San Francisco (California, United States of America). Owned by Silverfjord Schifffahrts (Germany) c/o Fort Canning Lighthouse Pte Ltd (Singapore). Chartered by Maritime Carrier Shipping GmbH & Co (MACS) based in Hamburg (Germany).

... The earth is going to shake around the Okavango Delta and the technicians from North America have benefited from a safe conduct during this period of travel restrictions imposed by the Covid. In one week, the oil procession crossed Namibia and the Kunene Desert. The first exploratory platform began drilling in the Omatako riverbed, a tributary of the Okavango Delta, on January 11, 2021.



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According to ReconAfrica, the exploratory drilling is encouraging. To implement a large-scale seismic investigation programme, ReconAfrica is looking for partners. Seismic exploration operations aim to locate deep hydrocarbon deposits. They provoke vibrations whose dispersal and velocity will be amplified in the sandy and alluvial substrates of the Okavango Delta.

In addition to their acoustic communication, the elephant herds geolocate themselves by analysing the telluric infrasound emitted by the intensity of their movements and vocalisations. Industrial vibrations from ReconAfrica may trigger elephant panic and erratic collective movements. Territorial conflicts with human activities will also increase.

The NGO SOUL (Saving Okavango's Unique Life), a group of associations, collectives, animal rights activists and legal experts, is trying to stop the rush for black gold. Namibia and Botswana resort to arms over 5 km² of marshland on a Chobe island (see p.5), but they are thick as thieves to welcome with open arms the oil industry, for whom Africa is one of the last suitable refuges. Total and the Chinese CNOOC (China National Offshore Oil Corporation) are weaving their web of pipes from Uganda to Tanzania (see "On the trail" n°30 p.153). It would please them to carry on in southern Africa. While waiting for reinforcements, Reconnaissance Africa (Recon) is available to fight poaching and in this regard has recruited... one ranger. The propaganda is underway.

Daily Maverick, December 15, 2020; ReconAfrica, March 26, 2021; Windhoek Observer, May 14, 2021; Reuters, November 9, 2021.⁶³

AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

October 8, 2020

State of Arizona, United States of America

facebook

The Wild Things Initiative had already pointed out the sham in June. Safari Club International and Shikar-Safari Club International were spreading fabricated messages in favour of sport and trophy hunting via Facebook under the banner of the Inclusive Conservation Group (ICG). The Let Africa Live and Proud American Hunter misinformation campaigns claimed tens of millions of followers. The link between ICG and Masisi, the president of Botswana, was clear. Masisi shared ICG's content and ICG repeatedly expressed gratitude to Masisi, the glorious leader who lifted the ban on elephant hunting. Four months after the Wild Things Initiative alert, Facebook removed all the nonsense invented by the trophy business that played on solidarity. One of the imposters' slogans sparked off enthusiasm among readers: "An Attack on One Hunter is an Attack on All Hunters".

The Humane Society of the United States, October 13, 2020.⁶⁵

EASTERN ASIA

CHINA

CHONGQING MUNICIPALITY

November 15, 2020

Chongqing Municipality, China

Seizure of 24 knives and forks with ivory handles, total weight 914.2 g. Chongqing, November 15, 2020.⁶⁶

TIANJIN MUNICIPALITY

December 2020

Tianjin Municipality, China



The parcel was supposed to contain "a painting". In fact, it was containing a painting scroll with solid ivory tips (total weight : 414.3 grams). The origin is not indicated. Painting scrolls usually come from Japan.



Chinese Customs, December 28, 2020.⁷⁹

7.8 kg of bracelets, necklaces, statuettes, other worked ivories seized in China between October 1 and December 31, 2020



GUANGDONG PROVINCE

From October 1 to 14, 2020

Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China

Seizure of 30 bracelets, pearls and chopsticks. Total weight 1,159 g.

Chinese Customs, October 14, 2020.⁶⁷

Early December 2020

Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China

Seizure from a passenger going to South-East Asia of two ivory necklaces, 165.4 g.

Chinese Customs, December 2, 2020.⁶⁸

December 18, 2020

Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China



Seizure from passengers on a flight from Africa of 11 worked ivories (bracelets, necklaces and a comb) weighing a total of 637 g.

Chinese Customs, December 24, 2020.⁶⁹

December 27, 2020

Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China

Seized in 4 pieces of luggage on the arrival of a Rwandair flight from Kigali of 71 worked ivories (bracelets, pearls, pendants, Buddha effigies) total weight of 1,906 g.

Chinese Customs, January 6, 2021 ; Sohu (with Xinhua), January 8, 2021.⁷⁰

December 29, 2020

Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China

Life sentences for Chen Chengzong and Lin Zhiyong and 15 accomplices given prison sentences of from 2 to 15 years for having participated in what is termed the largest raw ivory contraband operation in modern China. Chen used false passports to cross frontiers 21 times. The ivory came mainly from Nigeria via Singapore and South Korea. The network is accused of having imported a total of 20 tonnes of ivory with an estimated worth of a thousand million yuans, that is to say 156 million US\$ and 7,800 US\$/kg. 20 tonnes of tusk on the basis of 10 kg per tusk corresponds to 1,000 elephants.

Macao Business (with AFP), December 31, 2020 ; China Daily (with Xinhua), December 31, 2020.⁷¹



December 29, 2020

Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport, Guangdong Province, China



Seizure from the luggage of a passenger travelling from Africa of 11 worked ivories hidden in packets of instant noodles that were in turn placed in the pockets of work clothes. Total weight 330 g.

Chinese Customs, January 12, 2021 ; China News, January 13, 2021.⁷²

HENAN PROVINCE

Early December 2020

Zhengzhou Xingzheng International Airport, Henan Province, China

A bracelet and an effigy of Buddha made of ivory, 101.7 g.

Chinese Customs, December 15, 2020.⁷³



JIANGSU PROVINCE

Early December 2020

Suzhou, Jiangsu Province, China

Ivory jewellery seized from a package sent from abroad, 51.5 g.

Chinese Customs, December 11, 2020.⁷⁴

LIAONING PROVINCE

October 21, 2020

Dalian International Airport, Liaoning Province, China

Seizure of a bracelet, 62.63 g.

Chinese Customs, October 21, 2020.⁷⁵

November 2, 2020

Dalian International Airport, Liaoning Province, China

Seizure of a necklace and 2 bracelets.

Chinese Customs, November 2, 2020.⁷⁶

December 3, 2020

Dalian International Airport, Liaoning Province, China

Seizure of a painting scroll with ivory tips in the luggage of a passenger.

Chinese customs, December 3, 2020 ; General Administration of Customs, People's Republic of China, December 7, 2020.⁷⁷

December 8, 2020

Dalian, Liaoning Province, China

One painting scroll with ivory tips. Total weight : 64 grams. Some tips are in solid ivory, some others in hollow ivory.

Chinese Customs, December 8, 2020.⁷⁸

SHANDONG PROVINCE

November 1st, 2020

Jinan Yaoqiang International Airport, Shandong Province, China

Seizure of 3 bracelets and a necklace. Total weight 176 g.

Chinese Customs, November 4, 2020.⁸⁰

Mid-November, 2020

Yantai, Shandong Province, China

Liu sentenced to 8 months in prison and Zhu and Sun to 6 months. Fines equivalent to 300 and 150 US\$. They were found guilty of having purchased and sold ivory jewellery and beauty accessories from April to October via WeChat for a total amount of 2,960 yuans, i.e. 440 US\$.

Procuratorial Daily, November 12, 2020; Guangming Daily, November 15, 2020.⁸¹



Early December 2020

Qingdao Liuting International Airport, Shandong Province, China

Seizure of a bracelet, 32 g.

Chinese Customs, December 4, 2020.⁸²

FAMILY AFFAIRS

December 14, 2020

Zhifu District, Shandong Province, China

Sentencing of a person to 6 months probation and a 6-month suspended prison sentence for having sold in the shop run by his wife a necklace weighing 54.76 g and an ivory pen-holder weighing 69.41 g. Overall value estimated at 3,000 yuans, that is to say nearly 450 US\$. Fine of 2,000 yuans, i.e. 300 US\$ compensatory damages of 5173 yuans, i.e. 790 US\$. The convict must also - at his own expense - publish circumstantial excuses in the provincial medias.

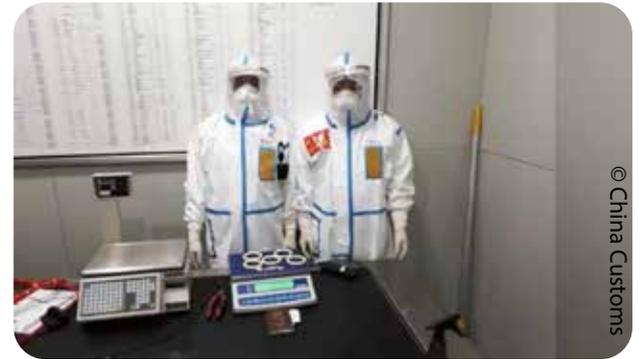
Qilu Evening News, December 14, 2020.⁸³



SICHUAN PROVINCE

December 2020

Chengdu Shuangliu International Airport, Sichuan Province, China



Seizure of 8 items by 2 customs officials in full anti-Covid dress, 224 g.

Chinese Customs, December 29, 2020.⁸⁴

YUNNAN PROVINCE

Early December 2020

Kunming Changshui International Airport, Yunnan Province, China

A necklace, 78.7 g.

Chinese Customs, December 16, 2020.⁸⁵

Early December 2020

Mengla County, Yunnan Province, China. Border with Laos and Myanmar

Seizure of 4 items in ivory, 34.7 g.

Chinese Customs, December 18, 2020.⁸⁶

December 2020

Menglian Border Post, Yunnan Province, China. Border with Myanmar

The "cream-coloured" bracelet was indeed made of ivory, 49.1 g.

Chinese Customs, December 31, 2020.⁸⁷

ZHEJIANG PROVINCE

Early November 2020

Hangzhou Xiaoshan International Airport, Zhejiang Province, China

Seizure of 12 ivory trinkets. Total weight 308.52 g.

Chinese Customs, November 3, 2020.⁸⁸

Early December 2020
Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, China



Seizure of 8 painting scrolls in a parcel from abroad.
164 ivory grams in the tips.
Chinese Customs, December 17, 2020.⁸⁹

December 2020
Hangzhou Xiaoshan International Airport, Zhejiang Province, China

Seizure in cans of powdered milk, gloves and shoes of 34 items made of ivory, total weight 451.58 g.
Chinese Customs, December 24, 2020.⁹⁰

INNER MONGALIA AUTONOMOUS REGION

Early November 2020
Baotou and Hohhot, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, China

Seizure of an ivory chess set for sale on WeChat and questioning of the seller.
Baotou Evening News, November 6, 2020.⁹¹



SOUTH-EASTERN ASIA

INDONESIA

2020
Balai Raja Wildlife Reserve, Bengkalis Regency, Riau Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

The number of elephants is dwindling seriously. There were 25 in 2014 in the 180 km² reserve and 7 in 2019. Corruption, roads, oil palm and unrestrained development are the reasons for this.



Mongabay, October 26, 2020.⁹²

11, 2020
Jake, Kuantan Singingi Regency, Riau Province, Sumatra Island, Indonesia

Seizure of 2 tusks 80 cm long. Three arrests: a teacher who was the seller, a man 'working in the private sector' who was the intermediary and a farmer who was the buyer.
The Jakarta Post, November 13, 2020.⁹³

November

MALAYSIA

October 10, 2020
Jeli, State of Kelantan, Malaysia



A "Good Samaritan" sent an alert by phoning 1800-88-5151. A team from the Perhilitan moved in and succeeded in locating the elephant and giving him treatment. His right foreleg was swollen and purulent after being caught in a trap.

The Star, October 16, 2020.⁹⁴

October 26, 2020
Kampung Chebong, State of Pahang, Malaysia

A female elephant was foraging in an oil palm plantation. She was under threat of reprisals. It required 4 hours for 22 rescuers and, for Abot and Rambai, 2 elephants acting as lures to attract the female to the removal truck before releasing her in a forest. The operation was coordinated by the Perhilitan and the elephantology experts at the Kuala Gandah National Elephant Conservation Centre in Temerloh.

The Star, October 27, 2020.⁹⁵

November 22, 2020
Kinabatangan, State of Sabah, Malaysia



Finding of a female elephant about 20 years old some 24 hours after her death. Poisoning is suspected. She was lying in an oil palm plantation referred to as Ladang Leepang 3. Blood was flowing from her mouth.

Malay Mail, November 29, 2020 ; Free Malaysia Today, November 28, 2020.⁹⁶

End of November 2020
Near Telupid, State of Sabah, Borneo Island, Malaysia

The roads and the logistic networks that cross wildlife migration corridors are universal problems. The present case is the 4-line highway known as the Pan



Borneo Highway (PBH). The existing sections between Ranau and Sandakan and Keningau

cross the Ulu Payau and Sungai Sumagas forest reserves and Malayan civets (*Viverra zibetha*), snakes and the white-breasted waterhen (*Amurornis phoenicurus*) are killed regularly. The project for the extension of the PBH around Telupid runs through the forest habitat of pygmy elephants and experts fear collisions that are fatal for elephants and road users.

Daily Express, November 26, 2020 ; New Straits Times, November 23, 2020.⁹⁷

December 13, 2020

Kampung Bahagia, Kuala Krai District, State of Kelantan, Malaysia

A farming couple is under arrest. They are suspected of having shot at least 2 elephants attempting to enter their rubber plantation. An AK-47 assault rifle and 142 rounds of ammunition were seized at their home. The rounds were sold to them for 15 ringgits (4 US\$) by an arms dealer who is being sought actively.

The Kelantan forests are pillaged by illegal woodcutters and nibbled by small farms. The movement and quest for food by some 200 elephants that are still in the remaining forest are disturbed. 31 km of electric fences have been placed to attempt to reduce conflict with human activities.

New Straits Times, December 10 and 15, 2020 ; The Sun Daily, December 9 and 15, 2020.⁹⁸

MYANMAR

Early December 2020

Tanintharyi Region, Myanmar

The tusks were sawn off by the poachers. The elephant was ambushed at the edge of the trees and next to water. He was about 30 years old and the 4th victim since the beginning of the year.

YC News, December 9, 2020.⁹⁹

THAILAND

October 29 – November 6, 2020

Rayong Province, Thailand



An elephant is dead. He was buried with respect of administrative and religious procedures. The vets found 15 gunshot wounds in the body. The final destination of the tusks is not known.

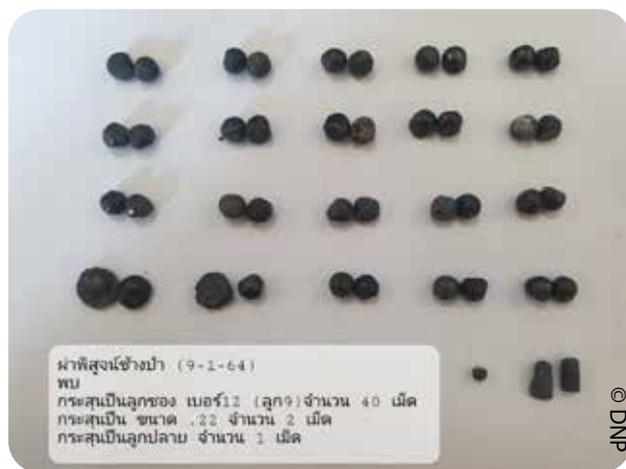
The Nation Thailand, November 9, 2020.¹⁰⁰

December 10, 2020

Tha Wang Hin, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province, Thailand



An elephant is dead. Vets used a metal detector to site 40 rounds of ammunition of all calibres below the eyes, through the trunk and in bones. A ritual funeral was held before he was buried.



Bangkok Post, January 11, 2021 ; Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, January 10, 2021.¹⁰¹

VIET NAM

October 21, 2020

Hanoi, Viet Nam

Le Minh Phuong of Ho Chi Minh City and Nguyen Tai Phuong of Hanoi were charged for having organised in April 2019 the illegal import of a batch of statuettes and for having used the services of a female mule for this ("On the Trail" n°25 p. 97).

Zing News, October 21, 2020.¹⁰²

BANGLADESH

November 6, 16 and 17, 2020

Khutakhali ; Jowarianala Forest ; Mithakhal, Cox's Bazar District, Chittagong Division, Bangladesh

Totalling some 200 to 250, elephants in Bangladesh risk eradication. Two-thirds of them live in the Cox's Bazar district ("On the Trail" n°18 p. 102, n°29 pp. 36 and 37) and in the neighbouring districts of Khagrachari, Rangamati and Bandarban. The last resistants continue to suffer the assaults of humans. A young elephant about 3 years old died in spite of care intervention - he had been hit by 8 bullets. A female about 30 years old was hit by several bullets and another victim died after being shot and electrocuted. Nothing seems to be able to halt the massacre and conflicts between humans and elephants in a district tangled up by railway lines and Rohingya refugee camps, the galloping spread of agriculture and other improvised practices.

Dhaka Tribune, November 25, 2020 ; The Asian Age, November 19, 2020.¹⁰³

November 23, 2020

Borohatiya Union, Chittagong District, Chittagong Division, Bangladesh

Elephants are firmly considered to be harmful around Chittagong. Observations show that their incursions are sporadic and seasonal in fields and cause less damage than wild boar and rodents. But elephants are a focus for hatred and considered to be Public Enemy No 1. The new victim is about 35 years old. He is a male that was electrocuted and then finished off by shooting. What happened to the tusks is not known.

Dhaka Tribune, November 23, 2020.¹⁰⁴

December 20, 2020

Eidgaon Union Parishad, Cox's Bazar District, Chittagong Division, Bangladesh

A female elephant who was close to a pepper plantation was killed by a bullet in the head. She was about 35 years old.

The Business Standard, December 22, 2020 ; The Daily Star, December 21, 2020 ; Dhaka Tribune, December 22, 2020.¹⁰⁵



October 1st and 4, 2020

Angul and Balangir Districts, State of Odisha, India



- The body of a male elephant—with the tusks removed— was found in Angul district. He was about 8 years old and had been electrocuted. Eight suspects are being questioned by the police.

- A dead elephant was found at the edge of Ratakhandi, a village in Balangir district. The New Indian Express, October 7, 2020 ; Hindustan Times, October 1, 2020.¹⁰⁶

October 3, 2020

Kodihalli, near Bannerghatta National Park, Ramanagara District, State of Karnataka, India



Two dead electrocuted elephants lie near a water point. The scene of the crime is in the buffer zone of the park and referred to as an ESZ (Eco Sensitive Zone). The ESZ of the park is regularly losing ground, decreasing from 268 km² in 2016 to 168 km² in 2019. The official argument is that the reduction of ESZ allows the continuation of exploitation of the quarries that were originally set up illegally. Bannerghatta park covers 260.51 km². It was created in 1970 and gained national park status in 1974.

The Hindu, October 3, 2020.¹⁰⁷

October 5, 2020

Oodlabari, Jalpaiguri District, State of West Bengal, India



Arrest of a woman caught in possession of a 800 g tusk in an hotel carpark. Hemanti Gurung was found through information that reached the ears of the Forest Services.

Siliguri Times, October 5, 2020.¹⁰⁸

October 6, 2020

Kotekere, Chamarajanagar District, State of Karnataka, India



He was about 10 years old. The medium voltage electric fence was therefore to prevent (definitively) deer and wild boar from entering a cotton field and a tomato plantation. This type of fencing is not designed to halt wild animals. It is aimed at killing and elephants, peoples and children are sometimes the victims.

The Times of India, October 7, 2020.¹⁰⁹

October 6, 2020
Kurubarahundi, Chamarajanagar
District, State of Karnataka, India



Being electrocuted by approaching a field of tomatoes was the fate of this elephant who was about 16 years old. The farmer ran away.
Deccan Herald, October 6, 2020.¹¹⁰

October 18, 2020
Kolkata, Kolkata District, State of West Bengal, India

Seizure of 2 tusks 45 cm and weighing 3 kg. Authentication of the ivory is in progress. Seven arrests.
The Telegraph India, October 19, 2020.¹¹¹

October 19, 2020
Chinna Coonor, Nilgiris District, State of Tamil Nadu, India



This elephant with fine tusks was electrocuted when he approached a field of potatoes. The 3 potato growers then managed to bury their 2-tonne kill before coming back a few months later to dig up the tusks.
The New Indian Express, October 20, 2020 ; The Hindu, October 19, 2020.¹¹²

October 30, 2020
Bamandanga, Jalpaiguri District, State of West Bengal, India



Tea is also a motive for electrocution. An elephant ran up against this. A circular was sent to all planters, instructing them to take measures against electrocution.
In Eastern Bengal 7 elephants were electrocuted and died during a period of a few months.
Outlook India, October 31, 2020.¹¹³

October 30, 2020
Bangalore, Bangalore Urban District, State of Karnataka, India

Lokesh and his friend who works in a dhaba near Magadi were instructed by Krishna to sell 3 sections of raw ivory. They were arrested when they left their hotel.
The Times of India, November 2, 2020.¹¹⁴

October 30, 2020
Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport, Kolkata, State of West Bengal, India

Two carved tusks in the possession of a female passenger were seized when she landed in a flight from Delhi.
Ei Samay, November 1, 2020.¹¹⁵

October 31, 2020
Gulikeri, Giridih District, State of Jharkhand, India



The body of an elephant was buried after the removal of his tusks and after locals had scattered flowers on his grey skin. He had been solitary for a short time and moved around between Giridih and Dhanbad. Apparently, he had damaged a few huts. He was caught in a boar trapping system. When they arrived, forestry official say that his trunk was torn. The elephant died of suffocation. The village was alerted by his cries of distress.
Outlook India, November 3, 2020 ; The Telegraph India, November 1, 2020.¹¹⁶

November 3, 2020
Tuticorin, Thoothukudi District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Nocturnal interception of two men on motorcycles and the seizure of 4 tusks 25 to 34 cm long. Rajavel and Muniyasami said that they were fish merchants and had bought the raw ivory for 3,000 rupees (40 US\$) from nomads in transit in Kulasekarapattinam.
The Times of India, November 3, 2020 ; The Hindu, November 3, 2020.¹¹⁷

November 3, 2020

Sonari, Charaideo District, State of Assam, India



An elephant was poisoned near a tea plantation. It is said to be “an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth” reprisal after a farm labourer was charged by an elephant from a herd of several tens accused of having trampled rice fields and damaged homes.

The Times of India, November 4, 2020.¹¹⁸

REPEATED OFFENSE

Early November 2020

Mysuru, Mysuru District, State of Karnataka, India



Four persons, including 2 from Kerala, were encircled by the mobile forestry brigade near the rail station when they were trying to sell 8 tusks, 6 of which were old and 2 were fresh. 25 kg of raw ivory was seized. The sellers wanted 20,000 rupees (268 US\$) per kg.

Star of Mysore, November 3, 2020.¹¹⁹

November 4, 2020

Sennamalam, Krishnagiri District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

A female elephant 8 to 10 years old was found dead in a trench aimed at preventing wild animals from entering cultivated land. A post-mortem examination revealed several fragments of bullets in her head. A farmer is under arrest.

The Times of India, November 5, 2020.¹²⁰

Early November 2020

Puthenkulam, Kollam District, State of Kerala, India

Suspicion of the trafficking of domestic elephants between the States of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Assam and Kerala. Certificates of domesticity were forged. A figure of 200 elephants is mentioned. Two elephants named Prasad and Modi were seized in Kollam district. Two traffickers were arrested and are being questioned by the police. Five others are sought after.

Domestic elephants in India, “On the Trail” n°7 p. 93, 8 p. 85, n°12 p. 93, n°13 p. 93, n°14 p. 91, n°17 p. 101 and n°19 p. 106.

The Hindu, November 6, 2020.¹²¹

November 6, 2020

Bangalore, Bangalore Urban District, State of Karnataka, India



Seizure in Food Street of 2 tusks offered at 900,000 rupees per kg (12,100 US\$). Arrest of 5 men all younger than 30.

Deccan Herald, November 8, 2020.¹²²

November 12, 2020

Koila Moila, Chirang District, State of Assam, India



Seizure of four tusks of a total weight of 16.16 or 17.85 kg depending on the source. The SSB and the federal police had received confidential information according to which 10 raw tusks (27 kg) were in the hands of 6 traffickers in Aamguri Nangalbhanga forest. The gang was intercepted. The arrest finished in a fight and 3 men succeeded in escaping with 6 tusks. The 4 other tusks were seized and the 3 men imprisoned except for one who was taken to hospital. Indian officials are in contact with their colleagues in Bhutan. The escapers are suspected of transporting the tusks to Tibet, the autonomous region under Chinese control.

News Move, November 13, 2020 ; Time 8, November 13, 2020 ; WCCB, November 13, 2020 ; Sashastra Seema Bal, November 12, 2020.¹²³

November 15, 2020

Kavipuram, Krishnagiri District, State of Tamil Nadu, India



An elephant was electrocuted mortally at the edge of a forest. A farmer has been questioned and his accomplice fled.

The Hindu, November 16, 2020.¹²⁴

November 15, 2020

Vaveli, Ernakulam District, State of Kerala, India



The elephant was electrocuted and died when he approached a field of cassava. The farmer has run away.

The New Indian Express, November 16, 2020.¹²⁵

**November 16, 2020
Hebbal, Bangalore Urban District, State of
Karnataka, India**



Three young unemployed farm-workers were caught red-handed with 4 tusks that they wanted to sell in Guddadahalli in the north of the metropolitan area. Lokesh, the leader, explained to the police that he had lost his job during the Covid shut-down and borrowed money from several persons who now wanted to be paid back. He said that another person had promised him a commission of 50,000 rupees (672 US\$) if he succeeded in selling the 4 tusks. In a press release, Karnataka forest officials said officially that the raw ivory did not come from the Seshachalam reserve in Chittoor district or from the Koundinya sanctuary. "After a four days investigation, we got clarification on Thursday that the tusks were from Tamil Nadu."

The Hindu, November 21, 2020 ; The Times of India, November 18, 2020 ; Deccan Herald, November 18, 2020.¹²⁶

**November 18, 2020
Puthukkadu, Coimbatore District,
State of Tamil Nadu, India**



A 30-year-old elephant died electrocuted when he approached a banana plantation. The high voltage was connected illegally from irrigation pumps on a farm. K. Mohanraj, a local animal activist, condemned the negligence of the administration and the Tangedco (Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation). "The death could have been averted if the officials had inspected the area to check for illegal electric fences." "The Madras High Court has already ordered the removal of illegal fences near the Bhavanisagar Dam. It is the forest department's duty to watch out for violators and curb such deaths in the future."

The farm where the tragic event took place was supplied with free electricity for irrigation. The NGO Osai was of the same opinion as Mohanraj. "Tangdeco has a greater role to intervene as illegal electric fencing is also a misuse of free electricity given by the government to farmers." The local populations do not share this opinion. When the farmer responsible for the death of the elephant was taken for questioning in the forest range office, the locals did not agree. A group of people halted the convoy and released the suspect using force. The situation became calmer after mediation by the village headman and intervention by the Sirumugai urban police. Murugesan, the man who triggered the scandal unexpectedly said only one thing: "I erected the fencing to protect the crop from wild boars."

The Times of India, November 19, 2020 ; The New Indian Express, November 19, 2020 ; The Hindu, November 18, 2020.¹²⁷

**November 20, 2020
Malayinkeezhu, Thiruvananthapuram District,
State of Kerala, India**

Elephants are good at causing arguments. On the one hand the Sree Vallabhan's mahout says that he can no longer reach the coconut leaves that he loves because of the length of his tusks. On the other, the Board of the Kerala administration for animal well-being said that the shortening of tusks requested by the mahout was only an aesthetic question and asked innocently how wild elephants managed without tools for shortening their tusks. The caretakers of captive elephants claim that elephants in forests have natural options for trimming tusks during their routine activities in the forests. In turn, the Kerala forestry administration made a reminder that it was the only body with legal empowerment for "shortening" the tusks of domestic elephants and stated that this was performed each year on about 15 elephants and that the tips were kept in security in an appropriate place. Sree Vallabhan has links with the Malayinkeezhu Sree Krishna temple, participating in processions and other ritual events. He is 20 years old.

Deccan Herald, November 19, 2020.¹²⁸

**November 27, 30 and December 4,
2020**

**Mohas, Jabalpur District ; Parsatola,
Balaghat District, State of Madhya
Pradesh, India**



The expedition of Ram and Balaram is over. Starting from Odisha in February 2019, the 2 brothers—20 and 18 years old— entered Chhattisgarh via Mahasamund district. They continued to Kanker and Bastar, where the inhabitants had not seen an elephant for a very long time. In April, they were reported in the Kawardha and then Rajnandgaon districts before crossing the frontier with Madhya Pradesh and staying in the forest of Seoni and Balaghat for several months. After a pause in Madhya Pradesh, they went into Maharashtra and were a sensation in the Gadchiroli district. They were seen in August 2020 in the Kanha tiger reserve where they were thought to have brawled with 4 domestic elephants belonging to the forest guards and were then in neighbouring forests where they kept quiet for a few months.

In November, Ram and Balaram set off towards Jabalpur (population 1.47 million). On Friday, November 27, one of the adventurers was stopped. He was electrocuted when going to drink in the reservoir of Bargi dam. The 2 brothers looked the same, dead or alive. Profilers consider that the victim is Balaram. He touched the wire with his trunk. He looked burned alive and died immediately. Ram was located on Thursday, December 3, in the Kanha district and since then the noose was tightening ...

... Prints were seen on the Friday in Parsatola forest. The final chase was led by 6 mahouts riding elephants. Ram was sighted in the morning and in the afternoon was injected with a large dose of tranquilliser and his legs were chained before he woke up. Ram the wild, who has travelled for more than 2,000 km across India is now heading for domestication.

The Times of India, November 28 and December 8, 2020 ; NewsIndia24Live.com, December 6, 2020 ; The Indian Express, November 30, 2020 ; Outlook India, November 28, 2020.¹²⁹

**November 30, 2020
Chandil Forest, Seraikela-Kharsawan District, State of Jharkhand, India**

"We are not very clear about who killed the tusker. We still need to ascertain if he was killed by poachers or villagers. But some people with a criminal bent of mind certainly cut off his tusks, in the most unprofessional way. We have put the forest guards on alert so that no tusker may fall victim to such cruelty," says the head of the State Administration. Poisoning is suspected. There are a few rice fields along the natural migration corridor of elephants and so the animals are considered as pests. The Telegraph India, December 1, 2020.¹³⁰

**December 1st and 4, 2020
Kadala, Dhenkanal District ; Jadu Loisingha, Sambalpur District, State of Odisha, India**



- Death of a makhna – a male elephant with no tusks – and of a wild boar who touched an 11,000-volt electrical line.
- An elephant about 12 years old ended in the same way. Three persons described as "poachers" were arrested. The fate of the tusks is not known in this case.
From the beginning of April to the beginning of December 40 elephants died in Odisha as a result of electrocution, poaching and by collisions with trains and lorries. The death of 64 persons and the injuring of 71 others are attributed to elephants in conflict with human activities.
Hindustan Times, December 1, 2020 ; Odisha TV, December 4, 2020.¹³¹

**December 4 and 18, 2020
Banarhat, Jalpaiguri District, State of West Bengal, India**



The investigation performed after the death by electrocution of an elephant in a tea plantation proved that the electricity was taken illegally from a transformer and bare cables were laid out in the plantation, with a risk of killing wild animals, employees or the families of employees. The director of the plantation is on the run. His assistant has been placed in custody for at least 5 days. The plantation staff and their families are blocking traffic on a dual carriageway to ask for him to be freed. "If nothing happens, we'll block the railway lines as well" said one of the demonstrators. The Telegraph India, December 5 and 19, 2020.¹³²



**FAMILY AFFAIRS
December 11, 2020
Malaiyadi, Tirunelveli District, State of Tamil Nadu, India**



The autopsy showed that the victim died of a massive haemorrhage when she touched the electrical cable with her trunk. This female elephant about 40 years old was said to be part of a herd of 6 to 8 animals who had damaged 25 coconut palms and a few mango trees two days before. Other sources said that she was a solitary animal and had come out of the forest very early in the morning. A father and his son had defended a rice field by diverting the electricity supplied to them free of charge to feed an irrigation well. The father is being questioned by justice officials and the son has run away. The Times of India, December 11, 2020.¹³³

December 15, 2020

Jiling Sereng, Ranchi District, State of Jharkhand, India

The herd of 35 elephants was reported to be moving in the forests in the district. During the night, one of them fell into a dry well 6 m deep. As per the villagers, the first to come to help him were the elephants. "The elephants carried water by filling it into their trunks from a nearby pond and poured it into the well. The jumbos might have thought that their fellow may come out of the well if they filled it with water. Since the well was deep, they could only fill it partially," this said with a point of admiration by a local forest administration official. But seeing the number of villagers arriving out of curiosity, the elephants left the scene in the morning leaving the official aid services to operate and save the unfortunate animal by digging an exit trench using excavation machines.

Hindustan Times, December 17, 2020.¹³⁴

December 16, 2020

Bhikipur, Jajpur District, State of Odisha, India

Seizure of 4 kg of elephant molars (i.e. 2 adult elephant molars), a live Indian chameleon (*Chamaeleo zeylanicus*, Appendix II) that was released in the forest immediately and 5 deer horns (*Axis axis*). Arrest during the night of Sidharth Raj, 23, and Dibyalochan Sahoo, 22. Two accomplices ran off. Release on bail was refused and the two remain in detention. The value of the seizure is estimated at 13,500 US\$.



Seizure of elephants molars, "On the Trail" n°5 p.91-92, n°12 p.95, n°13 p.94, n°21 p.82, n°27 p.100, n°30 p.34. Down To Earth, December 17, 2020 ; The New Indian Express, December 17, 2020 ; Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, December 16, 2020.¹³⁵

December 16, 2020

Sikajhora, Chirang District, State of Assam, India

She is the 6th elephant killed by electrocution in the Chirang district since August. This time it was a pregnant female. Practically all of these cruel deaths are the result of theft of electricity from the public network. After discussions with the forestry division, APDCL (Assam Power Distribution Company Limited) disconnect 29 transformers from where electricity was diverted to facilitate illegal agricultural colonisation.

The Sentinel Assam, December 18, 2020.¹³⁶



December 19, 2020

Jeerahalli, Erode District, State of Tamil Nadu, India



Mortal electric shock for a young tusker 8 years old. V. Kalaiyaa is being questioned by the police. "He hadn't obtained any permission from the forest department for erecting the electrical fence." The official removed the tusks before burying the body in the nearby Sathyamangalam tiger reserve. The Times of India, December 20, 2020.¹³⁷

December 22, 2020

Pollachi, Coimbatore District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Great disturbance in official services! The 2 tusks for sale in an animal shop were obtained via the schemes of an anti-poaching watchman and a polyvalent official at the Aanamalai tiger reserve. Samiyappan and Kathavarayan had apparently succeeded in pulling off the two tusks without using an axe. The theft was made easier by the state of decomposition of the body of the elephant whose presence had been reported to them by accomplices. They succeeded in taking the tusks out of the forest by tying them to their legs and hiding them under their dhotis, long aprons worn by Hindus and resembling ample trousers stopping at the knee. Seven people are now compromised in this painful affair.

The New Indian Express, December 24 and 25, 2020 ; The Times of India, December 23 and 24, 2020 ; Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, December 24, 2020.¹³⁸

December 24, 2020

Naidu Nagar, Mysuru District, State of Karnataka, India

Seizure of 3 carved tusks. Manohar, Sumanth and Shivadas arrested by a flying squad. The 3 men were in their car looking for a potential buyer. An investigation has started to know who made such a skilful carving of Krishna playing the flute on a wooden base and to question him about the origin of the ivory.



Star of Mysore, December 25, 2020.¹³⁹

December 27, 2020

Dighal Doriali, Sivasagar District, State of Assam, India



Death of 2 female elephants. They touched a line in the Pani Dihing bird sanctuary where locals have illegally appropriated areas of prairie.

The Times of India, December 28, 2020 ; Outlook India, December 27, 2020.¹⁴⁰

NEPAL

November 22, 2020

Paremara, Saptari District, Province n°2, Nepal

In Nepal too an elephant is found at dawn next to a rice field, struck down by an electrical pole. The road from Kanchanpur to Fattepur was closed. A crowd arrived from everywhere to see the event.

The Himalayan Times, November 22, 2020.¹⁴¹

SRI LANKA

October 1st, 2020

Oluvil, Eastern Province, Sri Lanka

Elephants and carrion-eating birds are present with enthusiasm at the rubbish tip supplied by 7 sub-districts: Sammanthurai, Kalmunai, Karaitheevu, Ninthavur, Addalachchenai, Akkaraipattu and Alaiyadi Vembu. Polystyrene spheres and fragments of plastic sheet were found in the dung of 25 to 30 elephants. The tip started about 10 years ago in the middle of an elephant movement corridor.



It is next to the forest. A fence used to prevent access, but such a long time ago that one wonders if it ever existed. Elephants are therefore exposed to long-term health risks or poisoning. Grouped at the tip, they are an easy target for poachers. This feeding option changes their behaviour and leads them to approaching other human activities in search of new splendours. They expose themselves to violent deaths triggered by a desire for revenge. "The wild elephants that come to the landfill hang around here day and night," said the responsible of a collective farming. "Then they go into neighbouring villages and harm the villagers, their property and agricultural land. The end result is that the human-elephant conflict gets worse and we lose elephants that are a national asset."

Elephants and rubbish, "On the Trail" n°10 p. 61, n° p. 85, n°16 p. 84, n° 18 p. 100, n°19 p. 113, n°20 p. 104, n° 23 p. 130, p. 134.

Daily Mail, October 1, 2020 ; Channel News Asia, November 25, 2020 ; Daily Sabah (with Reuters), November 25, 2020.¹⁴²

Early October 2020

Thabbowa Wildlife Sanctuary, North Western Province, Sri Lanka

Two people were questioned concerning the illegal extraction of sand and one for carrying bangers to keep away elephants.

News First, October 3, 2020.¹⁴³

November 7, 2020

Nimalawa Sanctuary, Southern Province, Sri Lanka



Electrocution of an elephant at the edge of the reserve. It houses 2 small groups but the males tend to leave the reserve in search of new trails. According to Sumith Pilapitiya, an expert on Asian elephants and former Director of the Wildlife Conservation Department, the people responsible for this electrocution should be punished as severely as the law permits, that is to say a 150,000 rupees (805 US\$) fine or 5 years in prison. "Because this will then serve as a deterrent for future actions such as this." Pilapitiya deplors the fact that housing estates and farming have been allowed at the edge of reserves and sanctuaries. He says that where there is inevitable proximity between elephants and farming activities village communities should cooperate and organise themselves to build fences in the right places and maintain them. Fences have been erected by community networks in the districts of Kurunegala Anuradhapura, the Trincomalee and Hambanthota with the technical aid of the CCR (Centre for Conservation and Research) for 8 years. They are giving satisfactory results. With some bitterness, the specialist notes that politicians and bureaucrats have never visited these pilot sites while experts have come from Malaysia, India, Myanmar and 13 African countries to draw inspiration from them. The SLIC (Sri Lanka Inventors Commission) is also racking its brains about the subject. The main idea is to make batteries or generators that produce dissuasive but not lethal charges. It should be noted that in India this measure is recommended for use with electricity generated by solar panels. The other major idea of the SLIC is to use the capacity of elephants to broadcast alerts by analysing soil vibrations and to develop bio-acoustic sounds that would discourage the animals from entering fields. Cf. page 26 (The Texas of Southern Africa – chapter 2). Leopocon Sri Lanka, November 7, 2020 ; Daily Mirror, November 17, 2020.¹⁴⁴

December 27, 2020
Kilinochchi, Northern Province, Sri Lanka



It's raining. A 17-year-old elephant has died, entangled in electrical cables. A suspect is being questioned.

Sunday Times, December 28, 2020.¹⁴⁵

AMERICA - EUROPE

November - December 2020 Elephants in isolation cell

News of the prisoners.

- **The United States.** Happy, the lone elephant in the zoo in the Bronx, lives in small quarters, especially in winter when the zoo is closed. The NGO Nonhuman Rights Project (NhRP) is asking the courts for a transfer to a sanctuary in Tennessee and above all requests habeus corpuse of Happy. According to the NGO, she is the first elephant to have passed successfully the mirror self recognition test that assesses the ability of an animal to recognize its reflection in a mirror. While it recognises Happy's great intellectual qualities the Bronx Supreme Court has refused to consider her as a person and has refused to hold that her lodging in the Bronx is illegal.

Habeas corpus, "On the Trail" n°28 p. 87.

- **The Netherlands.** Buba, 45 years old and retired from a circus, is to stay with her family of employers. The decision was taken by the Ministry of Agriculture. The NGOs Animal Rights and Bite Back and a section of public opinion are requesting her transfer to a sanctuary in the South of France that is not yet operational.

- **The United Kingdom.** Action for Elephants UK (AFEUK) would like an elephant imported from Sri Lanka to be settled in the EHEES (Elephant Haven European Elephant Sanctuary) at Bussière Galant in south-west France. When she was small, she was used by one circus after another before reaching Longleat Safari and Adventure park where she has lived with 3 goats in recent years. Nothing has been settled for the moment, especially as the French paradise for elephants is having difficulty in opening officially.

Dutch News, November 27 and December 2, 2020 ; The Canary, December 17, 2020 ; United Press International, November 19, 2020 ; Spectrum News NY1, December 17, 2020 ; Nonhuman Rights Project, January 27, 2021 ; Law & Crime, May 4, 2021 ; Court of Appeals of the State of New York, May 4, 2021.¹⁴⁶

NORTHERN EUROPE

UNITED KINGDOM

Between June and November 2020 United Kingdom

The NGO Space for Giants deplores the late entry into force of the Ivory Act celebrated by politicians and ecologists as the most persuasive of the laws against trade in ivory. The Ivory Act is getting stuck in the Brexit and Covid crises. During this latent period salerooms are making a lot of money. It were as if owners of colonial ivory were profiting from the respite to clear their stock and make profits.

The Independent, December 27, 2020.¹⁴⁷

November 24, 2020

Harrow, England, United Kingdom

Sentencing of Rajtharan Mahalingam, a luxury jeweller, to a suspended 6 and a half-month prison sentence, 200 hours of community service, a 200 £ fine (259 US\$), 2,500 £ (3,235 US\$) costs and 140 £ (181 US\$) tax for having offered for sale at his shop in Wembley rings, bracelets and other jewellery in gold mixed with African and Asian elephant hair. All this fashionable booty has been confiscated definitively. This is somewhat uncomfortable for the jeweller who lives in comfort on the Isle of Wight.

Brent and Kilburn Times, November 25, 2020 ; Daily Mail, November 25, 2020.¹⁴⁸



WESTERN EUROPE

GERMANY

October 29, 2020

Cottbus, Brandenburg State, Germany

Sentencing to a 20-month suspended prison sentence for having in 2016 attempted to export fraudulently 625 kg of raw and carved ivory and for storing in a workshop 570 kg raw ivory intended for carving ("On the Trail" n°13 p. 96 and n°14 p. 97) with the aid of an accomplice who is now nowhere to be found. In contrast with what one might believe, the story did not take place in certain countries where the more serious the offenses concerning animals, the lighter the sentences. This judgement was made in Germany and concerned a person of Vietnamese origin who has speculated on elephants all his life and who had the nerve to open in Germany in the 2010s—more than 20 years after the forbidding of international trade in ivory—a clandestine workshop with a view to making statuettes using raw tusks bought at flea-markets and auction sales and to sending them to Viet Nam to distributors under various cheap labels.

Rundfunk Berlin-Brandenburg, October 29, 2020 ; Wetterauer Zeitung, November 6, 2020 ; Nürnberger Blatt (with AFP), November 12, 2020.¹⁴⁹



November 19, 2020
Leipzig/Halle International Airport, Saxony State, Germany



Seizure of 210 ivory rosaries in a parcel sent from Congo to the Lebanon. Total weight 20 kg. German customs, November 23, 2020.¹⁵⁰

FRANCE

October 2020
Department of Nord, France
Seizure of 32 worked ivories in an auction room. Value : between 20,000 and 26,000 € or 23,480 and 30,530 US\$. Biodiversity French Office, April 14, 2021.¹⁵¹

SOUTHERN EUROPE

ITALY

Mid-October, 2020
Parma, Province of Parma, Region of Emilia-Romagna, Italy
Seizure of a pair of tusks by the Carabinieri CITES at an antiques fair. Parma Repubblica, October 13, 2020.¹⁵²

December 1st, 2020
Metropolitan City of Turin, Provinces of Novara, Verbano-Cusio-Ossola and Vercelli, Region of Piedmont, Italy
Seizure from antique dealers, sellers on the Internet and at auction rooms of 258 pieces of carved and worked ivories or raw tusks with an estimated total value of 150,000 €. 27 persons were questioned by legal authorities. Torino Today, December 8, 2020 ; Novara Today, December 9, 2020.¹⁵³

MAMMOTHS

EASTERN EUROPE

RUSSIA

November 24, 2020
Vladivostok Port, Primorsky Krai, Russia



Seizure of 4.6 tonnes of mammoth tusks in a container leaving for a "foreign country". Estimated value 62 million roubles, that is to say 780,000 US\$ and 170 US\$/kg. 90% of legal and contraband business in mammoth ivory is destined for China. Two people questioned. Fourteen tusks were listed in view of their width and their "cultural heritage" state. The traffickers live in Yakutsk in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) in Siberia. Pillage of the permafrost started in Siberia about 100 years ago. Tusks are dug up or exposed by high-pressure jets. Rivers and marshes are polluted by the mud. The use of mammoth ivory is a debatable matter. Quality A is sold in Siberia to Chinese buyers or their intermediaries at from 20,000 to 25,000 roubles per kg, that is to say 260 to 330 US\$/kg. Elephant ivory is sold in Asia at 2000 to 2500 US\$ on the black market. ...

... An average buyer can be sold a bauble or a statuette in mammoth ivory under the name of elephant ivory for the greatest possible profit of forgers and sellers. A plan for a mention in Appendix of the CITES was presented and then withdrawn at the last plenary session in Geneva in August 2019. A new working document should be available at the next session in Panama in November 2022. Since the beginning of 2021, entire tusks weighing more than 100 kg and tusks of exceptional quality with no cracks are considered by the government of Yakoutia as non-exportable cultural treasures. These meritorious measures can be got round easily by cutting up the tusks. This trick has also been used by Yakutsk traffickers. A draft law that would consider the extraction of mammoth tusks the equivalent of mineral resources is being examined by the Russian parliament. Today, the legal export market is based on documents tracing the precise origin and the procedure for road or air transport. It takes about 2 months to ship a batch from Siberia to Hong Kong. Illegal operations are considered to be worth 1.5 to 3 billion roubles per year, that is to say 19.5 to 39 million US\$, and the latest fashion in both Russia and Hong Kong is to have USB keys in mammoth ivory. EastRussia, November 24, 2020 ; Yakutia Daily, November 24, 2020 ; The Tokyo Shimbun, November 26, 2020 ; China Dialogue, June 1, 2021 ; RIA FAN, December 11, 2020.¹



IVOIRY AND IVOIRIES



Colt Revolver, model Lighting 6 shots. Caliber .38

AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

October 8, 2020

State of Vermont, United States of America

Vermont casts a wide net. Elephant, hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*, Appendix II), mammoth and mastodon ivories are covered by Act 169, as are gorillas (*Gorilla* spp., Appendix I), bonobos (*Pan paniscus*, Appendix I), orangutans (*Pongo* spp, Appendix I), gibbons (*Hylobatidae*, Appendix I) and chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I), as well as rhinoceroses and big cats, as well as marine turtles, endangered rays and sharks. Act 169 comes into force from January 2022 onward. Furniture and other items that are more than 100 years old and contain no more than 200 grams of animal by-products covered by the law will be eligible for an exemption. Musical instruments, knives (for the handles), firearms (for the butts) containing less than 200 grams of ivory will also be eligible for derogation on condition that the origin of the ivory is legal.

VTDigger, October 14, 2020.¹

ASIA

CHINA

October 16, 2020

Dalian, Liaoning Province, China

Seizure in a parcel from Japan and declared to contain "PVC and sculpture materials" of sliced sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*, Appendix I) and hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*, Appendix II) teeth (203 and 53 grams) and black coral (order Antipatharia, Appendix II. 149 grams).

Chinese Customs, October 16, 2020.²



October 30, 2020

Xining, Qinghai Province, China

Two shopkeepers are sentenced to 5 and 6 year-prison terms and fines equal to 1,490 and 4,470 US\$. They used to sell elephant and hornbill (*Rhinoplax vigil*, Appendix I) ivory junk, rhinoceros horn slices and deer antlers in their shop.

Chinanews, November 17, 2020.³



EUROPE

UNITED KINGDOM

December 24, 2020

United Kingdom

- eBay is happy. Its director sent a self-satisfactory message for the Christmas and New Year celebrations: 257,000 animal trafficking ads were removed in 2020. Cooperation of the group with the WWF, Traffic and IFAW is considered to be fruitful. These institutions do everything that they can to educate the personnel at eBay.

- On the same date, explorers of Internet sites published a report on ivory and eBay. Their work was focused on the Japanese tradition of netsukes. Of the 512 netsukes that sellers said were made of bone from cows, oxen, water buffaloes and deer horn, a minority (218) were authenticated after examination of photos and other documents available. But the majority (294) were in elephant, mammoth, sperm whale and walrus ivory. A month later, the researchers returned to eBay UK. Practically all the netsukes had been sold or were still for sale. The authors give eBay a simple warning: beware of cow bones.

Venturini S, Roberts DL. Disguising Elephant Ivory as Other Materials in the Online Trade. Tropical Conservation Science, 2020 ; WWF, June 1, 2021.⁴



ELEPHANTS AND RHINOCEROSES

AFRICA

KENYA

7 octobre 2020

Nakuru, Comté de Nakuru, Kenya



Mansour Mohamed Surur alias Mansour has lost a battle. On December 18, 2020, after 6 months of requests for liberation on bail and of denials of his participation in an international traffic in ivory, rhinoceros horns, heroin and "money laundering", his extradition to the United States was definitively considered to be legal by Kenyan justice. Mansour left Nairobi on a specially chartered aircraft and after a filling stop in Dakar, Senegal, landed in the County of Westchester, New York, 16 hours later. Mansour is now in the hands of US justice. Many people wondered why he returned to Kenya by the end of July. He had paid 600 US\$ to board a Skyward Express flight from the Yemen, whose nationality he also has and where he benefited from immunity with regard to the warrant for his arrest issued by the United States, as there is no extradition treaty between the two countries. Nostalgia for his home country, Yemen war, a friendly 61st birthday celebration, fear of Covid and of reprisals in the Yemen or had he received adequate assurance of anonymity on his return to Kenya?

The day after his arrival in the State of New York, Mansour was charged with conspiracy with a view to trafficking wild animals, and conspiracy to sell heroin. He risks 45 years of prison. A new battle is starting for Mansour.

See "On the Trail" n°25 p. 81 and n°30 pp. 41-42 Nation, September 29 and 30, 2020 ; Kenyans.co.ke, December 19, 2020 ; U.S. Department of Justice, January 25, 2021 ; Citizen Tv, January 26, 2021 ; International Policy Digest, February 16, 2021.¹

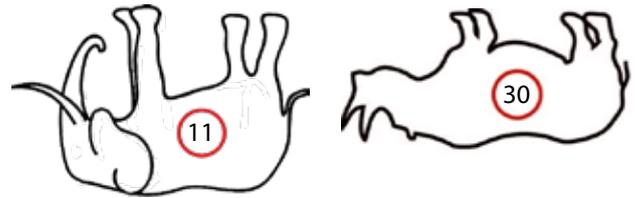
NAMIBIA

Year 2020

Namibia

30 rhinos poached in 2020. 50 in 2019. 11 elephants in 2020. 13 in 2019. Environment Minister Romeo Muyunda attributes the decrease in poaching to increased patrols, sanctions and cooperation between intelligence services and civil society. Muyunda does not cite the stay-at-home order and the difficulties for poachers to move around undetected as causes of the lull.

MENAFIN, November 26, 2020 ; Reuters, January 7, 2021.²



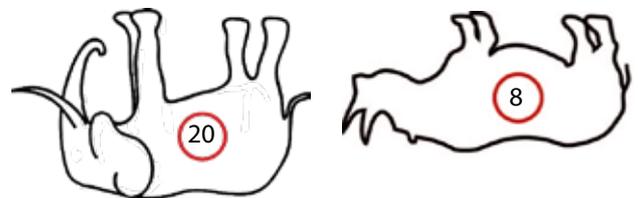
ZIMBABWE

January - December 2020

Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe has drawn up the statistics for the year. Twenty elephants, 8 rhinoceros and 4 lions were poached. There is a downward trend for these three famous species. In contrast, antelopes and buffaloes are paying a serious tribute to Covid. The closing of markets and the shortage of food have increased demand for bush meat. As in many countries around the world, wild meat has been sought by the poor in state of necessity and by the rich in state of idleness. The international distribution networks of rhino horn and elephant tusks have been obstructed by the suspension of national and international logistics imposed by Covid, and the local bushmeat networks have multiplied. Application of the shoot-to-kill policy has cost 5 presumed poachers their lives.

The Sunday Mail, December 13, 2020 ; ZimNews, January 23, 2021 ; Innovation and Technology Center, March 4, 2021.³



ASIA

CHINA

November 24, 2020

Tianyuan District, Hunan Province, China



The man had purchased on WeChat for resale an article in rhinoceros horn with a cash value of 13.000 yuans, that is to say nearly 2000 US\$, in July 2018 and 3 carved ivories in February 2019.

Zhuzhou Daily, November 27, 2020.⁴

RHINOCEROSES



White rhinoceros (*Ceratotherium simum*). Photo Max Sang

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: the Indian rhinoceros *Rhinoceros unicornis*, the Sumatran rhinoceros *Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*, and the Javan rhinoceros *Rhinoceros sondaicus*.

On the Trail n°30
Black market horn quotation from media or official sources
The values were estimated at the time of the seizures

Value of 1kg of raw horn

Continent	Country	US\$	Ref. (year)
Asia	Viet Nam	18,563	35 (2020)

EASTERN AFRICA

KENYA

October 30, 2020

Tsavo West National Park, Kenya

The black rhinoceros body is spotted by a patrol. He has been eaten up by scavengers. Only some bones, the skull and the 2 horns can be found. The horns examination enables to identify "Ekirapa", an around 7 year old male. The cause of death is unknown.

SWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit, October 2020.¹



© SWT/KWS

MOZAMBIQUE

Year 2020 Mozambique

183 Mozambican nationals imprisoned in South Africa took advantage of the Covid crisis. They have been released and deported. The South African government deemed necessary to de-densify the prison population to reduce the risk of transmission of the virus. This is good news for them, but at least a third of those Covid-pardoned were convicted of poaching in the Kruger park, and that is not good news for rhinos and elephants.

Oxpeckers, March 16, 2021 ; Correio da Manhã, July 14, 2020.²

ZIMBABWE

October 14, 2020 Bubye Valley Conservancy, Matabeleland South Province, Zimbabwe

The release of a female rhinoceros about 19 months old. She had been saved, treated and fed by a Lowveld Rhino Trust team after the poaching of her mother in July in the Bubye Valley Conservancy. People, October 14, 2020.³

REPEATED OFFENSE Early December 2020 Beitbridge, Matabeleland South Province, Zimbabwe



Sentencing of Ignatius Maiga to 22 years in prison for poaching 2 rhinoceros in the Bubye Valley Conservancy and of his accomplice Fanuel Mukucha to 18 years in prison. The 2 men had entered the reserve on August 11, 2020. After an exchange of shots they were encircled by the Zimparks rangers and the watchmen of the reserve. Ballistic analyses proved that the arms used by the men in 2020 were the same as those used for poaching a rhinoceros in the same place in April 2019.

Daily News, December 8, 2020.⁴

SOUTHERN AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

October 2, 2020 Pietermaritzburg, uMgungundlovu District, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa

Seizure of a BMW worth nearly 60,000 US\$ and a rhinoceros horn worth 70,700 US\$. Arrest of Wade van Staden, 30 years old. His release on bail was rejected.

SAPS, October 4, 2020 ; SA People, October 4, 2020 ; Eyethu News, October 2, 2020 ; South Coast Herald, October 8, 2020.⁵



© South African Police Service

October 2, 2020, Pietermaritzburg

Early October 2020 SanWild Wildlife Sanctuary, Gravelotte, Limpopo Province, South Africa



© EMS Foundation

Mortal poaching of a young male. The poachers did not have time to cut off the horn. EMS Foundation, October 9, 2020.⁶

October 13, 21 and 30, 2020 Kruger National Park and Care for Wild Rhino Sanctuary, Barberton Nature Reserve, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

- The young male 7- or 8-months old wandering in the park was flown by helicopter to the Care for the Wild orphanage. He recovered his assurance after a few days of treatment and bottle-feeding.



© Care for Wild

- Arrival by helicopter of another saved animal 4 years old who had survived the killing of his mother in the Kruger. He joins the other 5 inmates.

- Arrival by helicopter at the Care for the Wild orphanage of a thin and frightened baby rhinoceros hardly 4 months old found in Kruger park on October 30, 48 hours after the killing of his mother. He has joined the other orphans. The team welcomed him with a verse by Bob Marley: "You never know how strong you are until being strong is the only choice you have."

Care for Wild Rhino Sanctuary, October 13 and 19 and November 3, 2020 ; Gateway, October 21, 2020.⁷

October 20 and 29, 2020

Hazyview, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

BMW is the favourite car of poachers. Three employees at Kruger were arrested after a car chase. Two horns were seized. The management of the park was consternated by release of the 3 on bail of 5000 rand, that is to say 300 US\$. The value of a single horn has at least 2 more zeros.

SANParks, October 23, 2020 ; News 24, October 23, 2020 ; Lowvelder, October 30 and November 3, 2020.⁸

November 11, 2020

Centurion, Gauteng Province, South Africa

Two shots were heard the previous night. Discovery of a female that had been killed and her "small horn" amputated. She had had preventive corn removal the previous year.

Kruger National Park News, November 13, 2020.⁹

Friday, November 13, 2020

Lephalale, Waterberg District, Limpopo Province, South Africa

Not a lucky day! A worker at the game reserve found a dead rhinoceros whose horn had just been removed.

Review Online, November 14, 2020 ; Dispatch Live, November 14, 2020.¹⁰

November 16, 2020

Phalaborwa, Limpopo Province, South Africa

The ending of lock-down is a disaster for rhinoceros. Two deaths in one night. Nine in the country during the week of 4 to 10 November. Most had had been preventively dehorned. "The poaching syndicates are making up for lost time and are desperate for horn."

News 24, November 16 and 17, 2020.¹¹

November 16, 17, 21, 22, 23, 2020

Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

Nightmare in the HiP. Seven white rhino carcasses are discovered by the lookouts. High tech is powerless to stop poaching. 18,000 images were captured day and night by 85 cameras in November and viewed on a control post. The fences do not appear to have been broken into. "It's hard to swallow but we are not about to give up," says the HiP spokesman. "Poachers can enter the park as a paying guest," he said, adding that poachers have been moving easily from province to province since the anti-Covid restrictions were lifted.

A spokesman for the Democratic Alliance, an opposition political party, suspects complicity with the poaching ring among HiP staff.

Independent Online, November 25 and 26, 2020 ; News24, November 27, 2020 ; SA-People, November 29, 2020 ; Save the Beasts, November 16, 2020.¹²

November 19, 2020

Vaalwater, Limpopo Province, South Africa

On March 10, 2020, a poacher was killed in a private reserve in Dorset around 3 a.m. On the crime scene, 2 dead and dehorned rhinos were also found, along with a gun, an axe and ammunition (see "On the Trail" n°28 p.4).

On November 19, the two anti-poaching guards of the reserve, Bethuel Ndubani and Ebony Mokoena, were arrested. At their home and in a car, two firearms, ammunition, an axe, and a hunting knife were seized. A suspected accomplice, Moria Shongane, is also under investigation. All three are suspected of murder and rhino poaching in conspiracy. According to the investigators, the pact between the guards of the reserve and the poachers would have turned bad.

Mogol Pos, November 30, 2020.¹³

November 22, 2020

Kruger National Park, Limpopo and Mpumalanga Provinces, South Africa



Action stations to find a female rhinoceros filmed with a trap around one of her legs.

When they reached the site, the vets found that she had freed herself unaided, suffering only slight wounds.

PaintedDog TV, February 6, 2021.¹⁴

November 25, 2020

Mtubatuba, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa

There is no doubt about the involvement of Dumisani Gwala in the horn trafficking. On 5 occasions, he bought horns from undercover secret service agents (cf. "On the Trail" n°12 p. 71, n°14 p. 63 and 66, n°18 p. 72, n°19 p. 86, n°20 p. 81 and n°21 p. 75). Since the end of 2014, he has remained free under bail, waiting for his trial. Due to procedural shenanigans, including successive changes of lawyers, the last of whom never have time to get to know the case, Gwala has had at least her 30th trial postponement. The late November hearing has been once again postponed, this time because of Covid complications.

Zululand Observer, November 30, 2020 ; Saving the Wild, April 3, 2021.¹⁵

November 30, 2020

Grahamstown, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

It was a classic. The healer who had been on bail (50,000 rand 3,040 US\$) for 3 years did not have the time to appoint a lawyer. Trial postponed. Meanwhile the 4 accomplices from Mozambique remained in preventive custody. They had been arrested in the possession of 2 horns on December 30, 2018 ("On the Trail" n°23 p. 106).

Ayesha Cantor, November 29, 2020.¹⁶

November 2020

Pilanesberg National Park, North West Province, South Africa

And 2 more ! The chain of sinister disasters continues in the park—in spite of preventive horn removal.

("On the trail" n°9 p. 59, n°10 p. 45, n°12 p. 69, p. 70, n°14 p. 63, p. 64, n°16 p. 68, p. 70, n°18 p. 73, p. 74, n°19 p. 85, n°20 p. 82, n°21 p. 76, n°22 p. 78, p. 80, n°23 p. 106, n° 26 p. 76, n°27 p. 87, n°28 p. 94). "They still killed the Rhinos for what was left of their horn." Pilanesberg National Park & Wildlife Trust, December 2, 2020.¹⁷

Early December 2020

Kruger National Park, Stolsnek Section, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

Immediately after 2 rhinos were found dead and with their horns removed, the rangers—helped by airwing—intercepted the 2 poachers as night fell. Seizure of poaching equipment and a large bore firearm. The horns are missing. Lowvelder, December 3, 2020.¹⁸

Early December 2020

Enoch Mgijima, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

The town (population 250,000 habitants) manages the Lawrence de Lange Nature reserve. It is a public reserve. It has exchange 3 rhinoceros—a 2-year-old male and 2 females aged 2 and 6—for 10 buffaloes (2 males and 8 females) from a private owner whose identity has not been revealed. The agreement was in 2018. The rhinoceros have left and 2 years on the buffaloes have not arrived. The municipality justifies their absence on grounds of security. The fencing is in poor condition. The buffaloes might escape. The fence must be replaced. This has been planned for several years. If we understand correctly, it is an open gateway for the animals of the reserve ... and for poachers. The Democratic Alliance wishes to clarify this situation.

The Lawrence de Lange nature reserve ("On the Trail" n°19 p. 86) houses in particular zebras, rhinoceroses, giraffes, buffaloes, oryx, steenboks and 166 species of birds.

The Rep, December 3, 2020.¹⁹

December 3, 2020

SanWild Wildlife Sanctuary, Gravelotte, Limpopo Province, South Africa



Effervescence in the 2500-ha sanctuary.

There was an exchange of shots between an unknown number of intruders and coalition of the guards and the whole neighbourhood that came to help. A helicopter was included. SanWild ("On the Trail" n°21 p. 78) was protected by men and dogs, high-tech optical facilities and faultless fencing. The horns of the rhinoceros had been removed to discourage pillage but the poachers tried nonetheless to take tiny horns. After the Covid respite, tension has been strong around rhinoceros for 2 months. The rangers patrol in all directions to see if there have been deaths but both elephants and lions are upright and in good health.

SanWild Wildlife Sanctuary, December 3, 2020.²⁰

December 14, 2020-January 19, 2021

OR Tambo International Airport, Kempton Park and Benoni, Gauteng Province, South Africa

They had to look for them. The Hawks, informed by the customs and intelligence services, searched a suspect package leaving for Malaysia and supposedly containing just chicken-feed. A large hot water tank was opened and the chicken-feed emptied. They hid 17 nasal and frontal horns wrapped in aluminium foil. On January 19, the search of a private dwelling led to the seizure of a million rand in cash (70,200 US\$) suspected to be the product of dealing the horns with Asian middlemen. Arrest of Kelvin Chigwede.

SAPS, December 15, 2020 and January 19, 2021 ; Times Live, January 19, 2021.²¹



December 18, 2020
Klaserie Private Nature Reserve, Limpopo Province, South Africa

A rhinoceros was hit by a large bullet. He ran away.



The poachers did not have the time to find him and remove his horn. The diagnosis of Provet Animal Hospital, a team of vets dedicated to 'the health and safety' of the fauna in the Hoedspruit region for more than 20 years, is relatively optimistic. The animal is still alive a month after the ambush. The presumed poachers have been arrested and their arms seized.



Klaserie private nature reserve covers 600 km². Created in 1969, it is part of the Greater Kruger national park. No fencing separates it from Kruger national park. It houses the big five, impalas, giraffes, zebras, hippopotamuses, hyenas, greater kudu and 264 species of birds.

Hope for Wildlife Helicopter Services, January 16, 2021.²²

December 28, 2020
Lephalale, Limpopo Province, South Africa

Two dead rhinoceros found—a female and a male. The horns have been removed. No arrest.

SAPS, December 30, 2020.²³



BOTSWANA

October-November 2020
Okavango Delta, Botswana

It is the killing game for the rhinoceros in the Okavango delta. They are shot as if it were a fair, in spite of preventive horn removal. With a selling price of 18 US\$ per g delivered in Viet Nam, horn fever is not likely to abate.

The Star (with Xinhua), December 11, 2020 ; Botswana Safari News, December 15, 2020.²⁴

NAMIBIA

October 1st, 2020
Oshivelo, Oshitoko Region, Namibia

Warrant for the arrest of Pekaha Solizo Vetumunaije who, after being involved in 3 poaching attacks on rhinoceros in 2018 has not replied to summons from the justice authorities after his release on bail. Republikein, October 8, 2020.²⁵

October 2, 2020
Mururani, Kavango West Region, Namibia

Indictment of Wakudomo Kudumo and Ludik Lourens. They are suspected of conspiracy with a view to poaching a rhinoceros. This is covered by the Riotous Assemblies Act.

Namibian Sun, October 21, 2020.²⁶

October 11, 2020
Grootfontein, Otjozondjupa Region, Namibia

Indictment of Raimo Kakongo. He is suspected of having plotted to poach a rhinoceros in August. Namibian Sun, October 21, 2020.²⁷

November 20, 2020
Near Gobabis, Omaheke Region, Namibia

The body of the suckling rhinoceros was found thanks to the vultures seen circling in the sky. Kinnear, father and son, who are running the ranch, remove the horns from all their adult rhinoceros each year. This costs them 18,000 N\$ or 1,060 US\$ per animal "The poachers are cruel enough to kill a baby rhino for her horn bud," says the son Kinnear. Namibian Sun, October 28, 2020.²⁸

November 26, 2020
Grootfontein, Otjozondjupa Region, Namibia

Arrest of Elliot Notako Damaseb in relation to 1 or 2 poaching operations carried out in August. Namibian Sun, December 3, 2020.²⁹

NORTHERN AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

December 2, 2020 and July 2, 2021

Madison, State of Wisconsin, United States of America

- Indictment of Chang Xiong, 47 years old, residing in Oakdale, Minnesota, for the illegal import of 4 feet of black and white rhinoceros between July 2016 and December 2018. The items seized at his home also included a fragment of horn, 5 rhinoceros nails, a carved elephant tusk, a statuette, 2 bracelets and an ivory ring. Xiong bought the rhinoceros feet at auction rooms abroad- especially in the United Kingdom - for the equivalent of 1,100 to 1,600 US\$ and sold them, or tried to sell them, with a mark-up of 800 to 2,000 US\$.



- He was sentenced to pay a 40,000 US\$ fine. He risks a year in prison. He escaped this thanks to the exemplarity of his professional and family life and his cooperation during the investigation. The judge warned him that prison would be practically inevitable in case of a further offense.



US Department of Justice, October 22, 2020 and January 2021 ; Hudson Star Observer, July 6, 2021.³⁰

EASTERN ASIA

CHINA

October 13, 2020

Beijing Municipality, China

Sentenced to 9 months in prison for having traded on WeChat horn goblets during the Chinese New Year in February 2020 and having made 18,000 yuans (2,640 US\$) in illegal profits, Mrs Zhang could not keep her tears back at the bar in the court. The judge made a reminder that products based on rhinoceros horn were reserved for scientific and medical research.



Justice Network, October 13, 2020.³¹

SOUTH-EASTERN ASIA

THAILAND

October 8, 2020

Songkhla, Songkhla Province, Thailand



Things are going wild in zoos. The Director-general of the ZPOT (Zoological Park Organisation of Thailand) was killed by about 20 shots fired by Phuwadol Suwana, the vet at Songkhla zoo. An hour later, Phuwadol committed suicide in the residential part of the zoo. He was being investigated about an albino Indian muntjac born in the zoo in December 2019 and that disappeared in February 2020. The explanation by the management of the zoo that the young deer had been swallowed by a python that had entered the compound maliciously did not convince either the Minister of Natural Resources or the Minister of Agriculture.

The affair gained a political dimension. "Snow", the name given to the missing animal, was a descendant of a deer given in homage to the Queen Mother of Thailand. Its economic value exceeded the usual level. All albino wild animals - from boas in Brazil to giraffes in Africa - change hands at very high prices and generally go to private collectors. Thailand does not escape the rule as albino elephants are venerated there.

Phuwadol was one of the four senior persons at the zoo targeted by investigators. He was about to be transferred as a protective measure. He had long been a friend of the director of the ZPOT. Both were from the southern provinces. Other animals are said to have disappeared from Songkhla Zoo without leaving any trace in the registers and accounts.

Songkhla has not finished with the complications of the zoo that until now had been its pride. Five days after the drama, a warrant was issued for the arrest of Kosin Rattanawibun former manager of the zoo. Rattanawibun gave himself on the day after the issuing of the warrant. He is suspected of having on March 21, 2013 used falsified documents to obtain the return of the two horns of a white rhinoceros that had died in February 2012 and entrusted to Prince of Songkhla University. The trick was discovered in June 2018 when the zoo said that it wished to recover the horns 'for educational reasons' without knowing that Rattanawibun had already recovered them. One of his accomplices was dismissed immediately. The nasal horn was found in his possession. The fate of the frontal horn is still unknown.

Given the scale of the scandal at Songkhla Zoo, it was decided at the highest level of the provincial police to awaken this 'cold case'. The ZPOT, doubly affected by the impact on its image and by the death of its director-general, launched with independent experts an enquiry on the possible trafficking of animals in the zoos of Chiang Mai (Chiang Mai Province), Nakhon Ratchasima (Nakhon Ratchasima Province), Khon Kaen (province of Khon Kaen), Ubon Ratchathani (province of Ubon Ratchathani) and Chonburi (province of Chonburi) without forgetting Songkhla. The Nation Thailand, October 9, 2020 ; Al Jazeera, October 3, 2020 ; Bangkok Post, October 4, 2020 ; The Thaiger, October 7, 2020.³²

VIET NAM

November 20, 2020

Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam

Sentencing of Nguyen Anh Duong, 49, to 6 years of prison for having transported from Mozambique 6 kg of horns and sections of horns ("On the Trail" n°28 p. 98). He is said to have been given a little less than 350 US\$ from a Chinese citizen to carry "rare goods" whose precise nature he claimed not to have known. VnExpress, November 21, 2020 ; Ho Chi Minh City Law Journal, November 20, 2020.³³



December 12, 2020

Van Don International Airport, Quang Ninh Province, Viet Nam

Seizure in the luggage of Tran Trong Manh at the arrival of a flight from Angola of 5 fragments of horn weighing a total of 7.8 kg. Báo giao thông, January 19, 2021.³⁴

December 22, 2020

Tan Son Nhat International Airport, Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam



A search performed in a warehouse in the freight zone of the airport led to the seizure of 94 kg of rhinoceros horns divided into 2 shipments from Manila in the Philippines and transported on a Singapore Airlines flight and a Cathay Pacific Airlines flight. Total value is estimated to be 40 billion dong, that is to say 1.73 million US\$ and 18,563 US\$ per kg. The horns were from Africa and destined for Cambodia.

ENV, December 23, 2020 ; Tuoi Tre Online, December 22, 2020 ; VN Express, December 23, 2020 ; Nguoi Viet, December 23, 2020 ; Bao Ve Phap Luat, December 24, 2020.³⁵

December 29, 2020

Can Tho Municipality, Viet Nam

Sentencing of Do Thanh Son to 12 and a half years in prison for having attempted to import into Viet Nam 28.7 kg of horns ("On the Trail" n°28 p. 98). He says that he was paid a bonus of 1,000 US\$ by his employer, a restaurateur in Mozambique, to handle transport to Viet Nam. The air ticket was also reported to have been funded by his employer, a certain "Domingos". Nguoi Lao Dong, December 29, 2020 ; VN Express, December 30, 2020.³⁶



SOUTHERN ASIA

INDIA

FAMILY AFFAIRS

October 7, 2020

Bokakhat, Golaghat District, State of Assam, India

Uruka Pegu and Konkoni Pegu, husband and wife, are compromised in a poaching affair. Sashi Doley, a forest warden, had entrusted them with a horn while waiting to find a buyer. The husband says that he was not there when the horn was brought and his wife says that she did not know that the bag handed over by Doley contained a rhinoceros horn. Bokakhat is 23 km from Kaziranga national park. The Sentinel Assam, October 7 and 8, 2020.³⁷

November 6, 2020

Duliajan, Dibrugarh District, State of Assam, India

A presumed rhinoceros horn was found in the courtyard of a house inhabited by Nijan Dutta, Dibya Das and Rumi Devi Bhagawati. Thanu Gogoi, the owner, was also questioned. Expert appraisal is being carried out to verify the authenticity of the horn.

The Sentinel Assam, November 7, 2020.³⁸

FAMILY AFFAIRS

December 13, 2020

Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India

Mohammad and Sambu Narzary were arrested at about midnight. Seizure of a firearm, ammunition and a machete. Two accomplices fled, profiting from fog and the night.

The Times of India, December 16, 2020.³⁹

NEPAL

November 3, 2020

Chitwan National Park, Bagmati Province, Nepal
Poaching of a female rhinoceros 20 to 25 years old and her 3-year-old son. The bodies were rotting. The attack was about 2 months ago. The poachers also took the horn of the young rhinoceros. Both animals were shot in the head.

The Kathmandu Post, November 6, 2020 ; Online Khabar, November 5, 2020.⁴⁰

December 3, 2020

Khurkhure, Chitwan District, Bagmati Province, Nepal

Arrest of Suraj Chaudhary, 36 years old. A deserter from the Nepalese army, he had been sentenced in absentia in 2008 to 15 years in prison and a fine of 100,000 rupees (2,350 US\$) for having poached a rhinoceros in 2005. He had been recruited by a gang of traffickers. On the run, Chaudhary had returned from Qatar a year previously.

The Himalayan Times, December 4, 2020 ; DC Nepal, December 4, 2020.⁴¹

December 6, 2020

Butwal, Rupandehi District, Lumbini Province, Nepal

Seizure of a presumed horn at the Kalash Hotel. Arrest of Bhakta Bahadur Thapa and Karna Bahadur Raut. According to an official press release, a 3rd man - Birendra Bahadur Singh - seized a policeman's gun and fired. In the confusion, a 4th suspect suffered serious facial injuries. He was taken to hospital. Birendra ran away.

Butwal, the leading town for the trafficking of fauna and transit to China, "On the Trail" n°30 p.15.

The Kathmandu Post, December 16, 2020 ; The Himalayan Times, December 7, 2020.⁴²

December 10, 2020

Kathmandu, Kathmandu District, Bagmati Province, Nepal

Questioning of 5 people 22 to 41 years old, including a woman, in possession of a presumed rhinoceros horn. It might be a fake.

Republica, December 11, 2020.⁴³



FELINES, ELEPHANTS / RHINOCEROSES

AFRICA

KENYA

Early December 2020

Kajiado County, Kenya

Arrest of 2 men aged 23 and 24 in possession of lion canines, claws and ribs and fragments of ivory. Upon interrogation, they revealed the animal parts were being taken to Tanzania to be sold for witchcraft purpose.

Nairobi News, December 3, 2020.¹



MOZAMBIQUE

November 9, 2020

Maputo International Airport, Maputo Province, Mozambique

A Vietnamese who had been living for one year in Mozambique was caught in flagrante delicto. Her luggage have been searched. Hidden among her clothes and chocolate, candy and mushroom boxes, there were 36 teeth and 127 lions claws and 4.3 kg of rhinoceros horns. Sasa, a 6 year old German shepherd dog had spotted a suspicious smell. The seizure comes from at least 10 lions and 4 rhinoceros. The investigation is ongoing so as to confirm the poaching in Kruger park, in South Africa. The mule was about to leave Maputo by a Qatar Airways flight. Her destination was Hô Chi Minh-City.

Noticias ao Minuto, November 11, 2020 ; The Times, November 12, 2020 ; Peace Parks Foundation, November 13, 2020 ; Lowvelder, November 27, 2020.²

December 5-6, 2020

Muanza and Dondo, Sofala Province, Mozambique

Two teachers and 5 accomplices including a farmer and a technical agent with the administration have been arrested during an attempt to sell a leopard skin for 20,000 meticaïs, 270 US\$) and two elephant tusks for 24.000 meticaïs, 323 US\$.

The farmer who was the head of the gang said that he had 'found' the items in a stream. They had travelled from Muanza to Dondo by train and were met at the station by a middleman who was to put them in contact with a buyer. They were found thanks to a phone call to the police.

Club of Mozambique, December 7, 2020.³

REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

FAMILY AFFAIRS

Near November 13, 2020

Brazzaville, Republic of the Congo

Seizure of 62 kg of raw ivory and a leopard skin. Arrest of 4 traffickers including a member of the regular army. The 'owner' of the skin said that it had been left to him by a friend and that he had associated with holders of ivory to sell it all in Brazzaville. The 'owner' of the tusks said that he had bought them in Zanaga (Lékoumou department) and had associated with his brother-in-law to go and sell it. 'We used the army man as cover'. The Director-general of the Agence Congolaise de la faune et des aires protégées (Congolese Agency for Fauna and Protected Areas), Frédéric Lambert Bockandza-Paco, reminds that another soldier had been sentenced in 2019 to 3 years in prison for traffic in ivory ("On the Trail" n°23 p.128). The operation was coordinated by the Interpol office in Brazzaville.

Vox Congo, November 13, 2020.⁴

ASIA

CHINA

October 20-21 and November 14, 2020

Puning, Guangdong Province, China

Seizure of 8 horns and 16 fragments of horns of rhinoceros and fragments of rhinoceros skins, 2 elephant tusks, 21 fragments of elephant skin and two tiger bones. Arrest of a 59-year-old 'dealer' and a 28-year-old pharmacist.

Xiaoxiang Morning Herald, December 20, 2020.⁶



MALAYSIA

December 30, 2020

Tanah Merah, State of Kelantan, Malaysia



Search, seizure and arrest. The police did a fine job. Having received information, they entered a house at dawn and found in a freezer the eviscerated carcasses of a black panther and a tiger and then found 10 elephants tusks in an outbuilding. The financial value of the tiger is estimated at 300,000 ringgits, that is to say nearly 74,000 US\$ and that of a panther at 100,000 ringgits or nearly 25,000 US\$. A 25-year-old man was arrested and held in preventive custody. There would seem to be a gang handling traps and AK-47s to neutralise big cats, elephants and Malayan sun bears (*Helarctos malayanus*, Appendix I) that they sold in various form. Some 10 suspects have been identified but cannot be found for the moment. They have left their homes. The police consider it is obvious that the gang had contacts with foreign countries. The Star, December 30, 2020 ; New Straits Times, December 30 and 31, 2020 and January 1 and 8, 2021.⁷