

The defaunation bulletin n°37. Events from the 1st July to the 30th September, 2022



Quarterly information and analysis report on endangered animals poaching and smuggling Published on July 4, 2023 Original version in French

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ELEPHANTS AND FELINES



ZIMBABWE

August 3, 2022

Victoria Falls, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe. Border with Zambia.

Arrest of Listed Munkuli, 35, Kudakwashe Ndlovu, 31, Darlington Moyo, 35, and Simon Nyoni, 45, in Zambezi National Park. They were carrying 2 elephant tusks weighing 4.28 kg and 15 claws and 4 lion fangs (*Panthera leo*, Appendix II). Pindula, August 6, 2022.¹

ASIA

INDIA

September 20, 2022

Bangalore, Bangalore Urban District, State of Karnataka, India

At a jewellery store in the Hanumanthnagar District, police caught a certain Dinesh, age 47, trying to sell several elephant-shaped ivory statuettes and an effigy of Krishna, the 8th incarnation of the Hindu god Vishnu. He was also in possession of tiger fangs and claws (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I). The Times of India, September 22, 2022.²

ELEPHANTS AND RHINOS

AFRICA

ANGOLA

September 23, 2022

Quatro de Fevereiro International Airport, Luanda Province, Angola

A Vietnamese man who had been in Angola for 5 days and was returning to his country via Dubai was arrested at the boarding gate of an Emirates flight. His luggage contained 26 kg of carved ivory, rings, bracelets and necklaces, 5 rolls of braided elephant hair, and 6 kg of rhinoceros horn. His name is Zung, and he's 30 years old. Angola is a country where elephants are turned into junk. There are no more rhinos in Angola.

Na Mira do Crime, September 27, 2022; Novo Jornal, October 18, 2022.¹

AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

August 18, 2022 New York, State of New York, United States of America



I

Moazu Kromah, a.k.a. Ayoub, a.k.a. Ayuba, a.k.a. Kampala Man, a Liberian citizen residing in Uganda, was sentenced to 63 months' imprisonment by the Southern District of New York for his role in a conspiracy that was trafficking rhinoceros' horns and elephant ivory between Africa and the USA and trying to expand it. Kromah was arrested in Uganda and extradited to the USA in June 2019 (see "On the Trail" n°18 p.86, n°25 p.81 and n°29 p.42).

US Department of Justice, August 18, 2022; New Vision, August 28, 2022.²

Elephants + rhinos + pangolins, see page 15

RHINOCEROSES

The white rhinoceros *Ceratotherium simum* and black rhinoceros *Diceros bicornis* ranging in Africa are listed in Appendix I, except for the white rhinoceros populations of Eswatini and South Africa which are listed in Appendix II for trade of live animals and hunting trophies.

The 3 Asian rhinoceros species are in Appendix I: the Indian rhinoceros Rhinoceros unicornis, the Sumatran rhinoceros Dicerorhinus sumatrensis, and the Javan rhinoceros Rhinoceros sondaicus.

On the Trail n°37 Black market horn quotation from media or official sources The values were estimated at the time of the seizures

Continent	Country	US\$	Ref. (year)
Africa	Mozambique	62,670	2 (2022)
Asia	Malaysia	65,460	4* (2022)
Europe	Portugal	63,100	34 (2022)

Value of 1kg of raw horn

* cf. chapter Pangolins, elephants / felines / rhinoceroses

CENTRAL AFRICA

CAMEROON

August 5, 2022

Douala, Littoral Region, Cameroon Elisabeth Ndawou is sentenced to 6 months' imprisonment with a 3-year



probationary period. She must also pay 1.07 million CFA francs (1,650 US\$) in damages. She was arrested in Douala on 3 August 2020 in possession of a rhinoceros horn. LAGA, August 2022.¹

EASTERN AFRICA

MOZAMBIQUE

July 26, 2022

Maputo, Maputo Province, Mozambique

Arrest of Simon Valoi, age 45, and Paulo Zucula, age 32, by SERNIC (National Criminal Investigation Service) in a hotel where they were delivering 7.5 kg of rhinoceros horns. Valoi is considered a major player in the trade. He is also suspected of killing a veterinarian in South Africa. The value of the seizure is estimated to be 30 million meticais (470,000 US\$ or 62,670 US\$/kg). Trying at all costs to consolidate his image as a deliveryman and small-time middleman, Valoi claims that the commission he was promised amounted to 20,000 meticais (310 US\$).

Julian Rademeyer, July 28, 2022; Club of Mozambique, July 29 and August 1, 2022.²

September 28, 2022 Maputo, Maputo Mozambique



Sentencing of Vusi Geraldo Mucavele, age 22, to 30 years in prison. On January

13, 2022, he was arrested in the region of Lebombo bordering Eswatini. He was leaving a rhino farm. He entered by climbing over the fence. Mucavele was carrying a 375-caliber rifle, an axe, and some foodstuff. The investigation file does not mention the presence of horns in his belongings or on his route. At the time of the crime, 2 accomplices fled the scene. Mucavele was therefore convicted of premeditated and repeated attempts to poach rhinos. He was also fined the equivalent of 26 years at the rate of 1% of the Civil Service salary.

National Administration of Conservation Areas (ANAC), October 2, 2022; Club of Mozambique, October 3, 2022.³



July 2022

Midlands Black Rhino Conservancy, Midlands Province, Zimbabwe

This protected area, dedicated to the conservation and development of wildlife and rhinos in particular, covers 631.13 km². It is in the process of being colonized by intensive grain farming and cattle ranching, promoted by Patrick Mnangagwa, brother of President Emmerson Mnangagwa, Mthuli Ncube, Minister of Finance, and Douglas Kwande, Zimbabwe's cattle "king." Among the invaders of the Midlands Black Rhino Conservancy. The NewsHawks also lists Chitsaka Chipaziwa, former Zimbabwean representative to the United Nations, and David Douglas Hamadziripi, former Zimbabwean ambassador to France during the Robert Mugabe era, now in office in South Africa. Zimbabwe's current representative at the United Nations is also taking part. From New York, he tells The NewsHawks that he wants to go into horticulture and cattle breeding.

Brilliant Chibura, manager of the Midlands Black Rhino Conservancy, says that the land grabbers are moving in without consultation, erecting fences that interfere with the movement of wildlife and hinder the black rhinos' ability to forage. "Rhinos are selective feeders and major herbivores, meaning they have to travel a very long distance to select what they can eat. A rhino can eat 200 kg of food daily and for that he must travel for 50km to 60km. Over this distance he will be selecting thickets of feed."

One of the founders of the Midlands Black Rhino Conservancy in 1987 also expresses his concerns and opposition to the encroachment of agribusiness industrialists and income hunters: "We are having an increase in poaching and a decrease in wildlife habitat. This has led to a reduction in tourism potential. The country's reputation is being damaged. Large investments to protect wildlife which we made 35 years ago are now going down the drain. It is a big loss."

The Midlands Black Rhino Conservancy is home to elephants, antelopes, hippos, wild dogs, leoaprds, hyenas, cheetahs, zebras, giraffes, and thousands of birds.

The NewsHawks, July 16, 2022.⁴

September 16, 2022

Zimbabwe

Preventive dehorning of rhinos has been tried in Zimbabwe since 1992 and a collective campaign was launched in 2016. The horns grow back 5-6 cm per year. ZimParks spokesperson Tinashe Farawo today announced that all rhinos in the country will be dehorned. "The reason is to make them less attractive to poachers." ZimParks refuses to disclose the cost of the overall operation. The financial cost of dehorning an animal was estimated in 2016 at 1,200 US\$ (see "On the Trail" n°14 p.60 and 61). Amputation requires anaesthesia beforehand. Given the corruption that reigns in Zimbabwe, as in many countries in Africa and other continents, there are serious doubts about the management of amputated horns and chips from dehorning. Horns are cut with a chainsaw.

Bloomberg, September 16, 2022; DailyNews (Zimbabwe), September 16, 2022; Getaway, September 22, 2022.⁵

SOUTHERN AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

July 1, 2022

Between Malelane and Skukuza, Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

Three illegal immigrants from Mozambique launched a manhunt in the air with a helicopter and on land with a ranger patrol. The alarm had been raised by visitors worried about hearing gunshots in the park. On the poachers, a rifle, a silencer, 3 knives, 3 survival bags, and 4 cell phones were seized. Nearby there were 3 dead rhinos and 3 freshly cut horns. There was also a rhino in agony who was finished off.

SAPS, July 3, 2022; SANParks, July 6, 2022; Lowvelder, July 9, 2022.⁶

REPEATED OFFENCE July 6, 2022

Ekurhuleni, Gauteng Province, South Africa

Njabulo Mbatha, age 31, and Armando Amosse Chingo, a 33-year-old Mozambican national, are taking the road to Johannesburg with 2 rhino horns. They were unaware that they were reported. As they entered the suburb of Bedfordview, their journey was stopped by officers from the K9 Brigade, the Hawks, and the Green Scorpions. The 2 horns were recovered. DNA tests will be carried out to try and link them to poached rhino carcasses. Mbatha is a former ranger at Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park (KwaZulu-Natal). He was dismissed in 2018. He was strongly suspected of being involved in the poaching and dehorning of at least 6 rhinos one night in early July 2017 in the Mbuzane section (see "On the Trail" n°18 p.70). He is said to have provided information to poaching gangs originating from the Mpumalanga province.

Mail & Guardian, July 11, 2022; Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, August 1, 2022.⁷

July 8, 2022 Gravelotte, Limpopo Province, South Africa

At 5 a.m., the doublecab Toyoya was driving Letsitele. near It matched a description. It was intercepted and the 3 occupants were ejected. promptly Two managed to escape. Inside, a highcaliber firearm with ammunition, 2 horns, and an axe were found. At daybreak, a search of the ranch revealed the death of a rhinoceros



and the extraction of his 2 horns. Another rhino escaped immediate death. He is now in the hands of the vets. Lieutenant Thembi Hadebe thanked the lookouts of the Farm Watch collective: "Being our ears and eyes is very crucial in the fight against crime and it is very important for anyone who notices criminal activity to report immediately to the police."

SAPS, July 9, 2022; Polokwane Review, July 10, 2022; Letaba Herald, July 14, 2022.8

July 2022

Barberton Nature Reserve, Mpumalanga **Province, South Africa**

For safety reasons, 6 orphans approximately 3 vears old were dehorned. This was a first for them. Anaesthesia, blankets over the eyes, earplugs in the ears, horns cut with a chainsaw, splinters filed off to prevent the rhinos from injuring each other, the operation lasted around 30 minutes. The horns are taken care of by SAPS. The orphanage wishes to make it clear that it does not own any.

Care for Wild Rhino Sanctuary, July 2022.9

Beginning of August 2022 South Africa

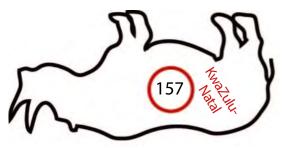
Transfer of an orphaned rhino to the Baby Rhino Rescue sanctuary. Its location is being kept secret for security reasons. He was discovered next to the body of his mother, killed by poachers.

Baby Rhino Rescue, August 11 and 16, 2022.¹⁰

Mid-August 2022 KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa

Carcasses of 2 freshly poached rhinos found. Since the beginning of the year, 157 rhinos have been killed in the province.

Sue Spurgin, August 16, 2022.11



August 17, 2022

Majakaneng, North West Province, South Africa The suspects had inside information. They were about to enter a reserve. They were in possession of a firearm, a silencer, ammunition, a butcher's knife, and an axe. On checking their identities, investigators discovered that the 6 individuals were already wanted by the Hawks and the Special Anti-Poaching Force.

Kormorant, August 26, 2022.¹²

August 31, 2022 Sabi Sand Private Game Reserve, Mpumalanga **Province, South Africa**

Orphans are alike and they are different. They have lived through common horrors, but each has specific cries and visions in their eyes and ears. This one was wandering at dusk in the Sabi Sand (650 Reserve km²). His movements were monitored all night by drones. Orphans sometimes seek refuge in inaccessible areas and risk being attacked by hyenas and lions. In the early hours of the morning, he was sedated



and flown by helicopter to the Care for Wild shelter. The first year of care for a baby rhino costs 12,000 US\$, with 24-hour care required, the second 8,000 US\$, the third 5,000 US\$, and in the fourth vear, if all goes well, he is once again confronted with freedom and the risks of poaching.

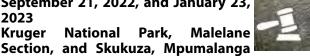
Care for Wild Rhino Sanctuary, October 18, 2022; The Citizen (South Africa), November 19, 2022.13

Beginning of September 2022 KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa

Poachers have claimed new victims in KwaZulu-Natal. Two new orphaned rhinos, a 7-month-old male and a 2-month-old female, have just arrived at the sanctuary of the NGO Zululand Conservation Trust.

Zululand Conservation Trust, September 4, 2022.¹⁴

September 21, 2022, and January 23, 2023 Kruger National Park, Malelane



Province, South Africa The 2 Mozambigue nationals entered the park through the Malelane section. They were carrying a rifle, ammunition, an axe, food, 3 cell phones, and 2 horns when, hiding in the tall grass, they were spotted by a helicopter crew and were quickly surrounded by a ground patrol.

Mpumalanga News, September 28, 2022; TimesLIVE (South Africa), January 23, 2022.¹⁵



REPEATED OFFENCE September 22, 2022 Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa



Aron Manique, a Mozambigue national, and Alex Baloyi, a South African national, were sentenced to 8 years in prison for attempted poaching of rhinos in conspiracy, and 7 years

in prison for illegally carrying a firearm and ammunition. The 2 sentences run concurrently. They had been arrested on May 17, 2021, on the road near Colchester, and police had seized an unregistered high-caliber weapon, a silencer, and a hunting knife concealed behind the trim of a door and in the engine compartment of their vehicle. In addition, a bag in the trunk contained, among other belongings, a pair of sports shoes which Baloyia acknowledged ownership of. Traces of blood on the soles were analyzed for DNA. They matched the DNA of 2 rhinos poached in Hoedspruit, Limpopo province. "It is incredibly helpful that although the DNA sample in this case was not fresh, it showed that at some point the suspect had probably stood in the blood of those 2 rhinos," said Buks Coetzee, senior prosecutor in the Eastern Cape province.

On the other hand, cross-referenced investigations in the judicial files revealed that Manigue and Baloyi had been arrested 10 years earlier with the carcass of an impala antelope in their vehicle, compelling evidence that the 2 had a history of poaching, especially since after their arrest, they had admitted to also being in search of a rhino.

The Herald (South Africa), October 8, 2022.¹⁶

September 30, October 18, and November 3, 2022

Makhanda, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa The eclipses of Operation Full Moon.

At the end of July 2018, 6 men between the ages of 25 and 30, all from Zimbabwe, were arrested with weapons, luggage, ammunition, and money on the Grahamstown Road now known as Makhanda. According to the investigators, ballistic tests and the decryption of their telephones showed that these 6 men were serial killers responsible between March 2016 and June 2018 for the death of 13 rhinos in the Eastern Cape province, which until then had presented itself as an anti-poaching fortress.

On September 30, 2022, the 6 who had been held in prison since their arrest were found guilty of rhino poaching by the Makhanda High Court. On this occasion, the prosecutor pointed out that according to the information available to him, rhino poaching in the province had ceased since the July 2018 incarceration of the 6 accused. The director of the Kragga Kamma Game Park in Ggeberha, where the gang in June 2018 allegedly accomplished their latest feat by poaching a female whose horns had nonetheless been shortened, enthusiastically declared, "We are always sending out a strong message that if you come poach in the Eastern Cape you are not going to get bail. You are going to sit in jail, and you are more than likely going to be prosecuted - which is very different to many other provinces in South Africa."

Following the indictments, the trial of the 6 suspects is set for November 4.

On Tuesday, October 18, 2022, almost all the poachers, who had been promised the harshest punishment, escaped during the night, along with 2 other criminals, after sawing through the bars of their cell! To be continued.

Algoa FM, October 1, 2022; Daily Maverick, October 18, 2022; News 24, October 24, 2022; Talk of the Town, October 24 and November 3, 2022.¹⁷

Beginning August 2022 Khama Rhino Sanctuary, Central District, Botswana

A white rhino has been poached and dehorned inside the Khama Rhino Sanctuary (KRS), according to 2 NGOs. The information has not been officially confirmed by the DWNP (Department of Wildlife and National Parks). The Khama Rhino Sanctuary covers 85 km² in the arid Kalahari bush. The Times says the most common way for poachers to enter the sanctuary is to buy an entry ticket.

Sunday Standard, August 19, 2022; The Times (UK), August 26, 2022.¹⁸

NAMIBIA

End of July and beginning of August 2022 Gobabis District, Omaheke Region, Namibia

Two rhinos were poached on a ranch whose owner prefers to remain anonymous for security reasons. Another rhino had already suffered the same fate at the end of July. The crooks fix pieces of mattress under their soles to hide the footprints, and often change their footwear from flip-flops to sneakers during their raids. The breeder adds that, given the way the animals are dehorned, he's dealing with a gang of professionals.

Allgemeine Zeitung (Namibia), August 17, 2022.¹⁹

August 8, 2022

Outjo District, Kunene Region, Namibia

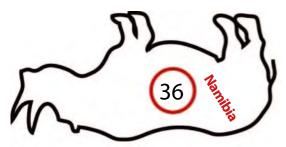
Carcasses of 2 white rhinos found near a private reserve. No arrests. Namibian Sun, August 8, 2022.²⁰

August 9, 2022

Okahandja district, Otjozondjupa Region, Namibia

Discovery of a white rhino carcass in a game farm. Since the beginning of the year, 36 rhinos have been poached in Namibia.

Namibian Sun, August 10, 2022.²¹



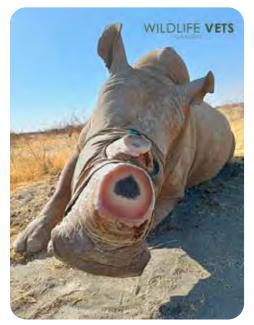
August 17, 2022 Namibia

Wildlife Vets Namibia press release, excerpts.

"Recently we have dehorned several white rhinos at the Rhino Momma Project. A sad but needed measure to prevent poaching. Rhino horns grow continuously throughout the life of a rhino at an average rate of 25 to 66 mm per year. The horn has absolutely no medicinal value; you can compare it you your fingernail (or even better, to a horse's hoof). Currently, a rhino is worth more dead than alive. Much money is being raised, many anti-poaching techniques are being used, but somehow, we are fighting a losing battle. We feel it is important that people are educated about the negative effects of the CITES ban on the legal rhino horn trade. The legal trade would give rhino owners an incentive again to have rhinos on their property, and to invest in them. A big thanks to the entire Rhino Momma Project-team for a job well done!"

The Rhino Momma Project presents itself as a nonprofit organisation and boasts that it has exported 17 rhinos to the Democratic Republic of Congo, 3 to Angola, and 10 to the United States of America. "A vaccination program ensures that all Rhinos on the reserve are vaccinated against rabies and anthrax, including calves once they reach the age of 6 months." "To ensure and increase the protection and safety of our rhinos, we manage a regular horn trimming program, but the process is unfortunately very costly and can therefore only be done sustainably if the necessary funds are available."

Wildlife Vets Namibia, August 17, 2022.22



August 22, 2022 Otjituuo, Otjozondjupa Region, Namibia

Discovery of the carcass of a female black rhino shot near a game farm. The damage is estimated at 500,000 Namibian dollars or 29,770 US\$. Namibia News Digest, August 27, 2022.²³

End of August 2022

Otjiwarongo, Otjozondjupa Region, Namibia

Another discovery of a black rhino carcass. It is a female. Both her horns are missing. She was shot while about to give birth. The damage is estimated at 1 million Namibian dollars or 59,540 US\$. Namibia News Digest, August 27, 2022.²⁴

End of August 2022

Etosha National Park, Oshikoto Region, Namibia

Discovery of 2 new poached rhino carcasses. Since the beginning of the year, 20 rhinos have been fatally attacked by poachers in Etosha Park. Informanté, August 31, 2022.²⁵

End of August 2022

Onguma Šafari Camps, Oshikoto, Namibia

The anti-poaching unit spots 2 highly equipped men. One manages to escape, the other is injured during his arrest and transferred to hospital. Allgemeine Zeitung (Namibia), September 1, 2022.²⁶

September 9, 2022

Gobabis, Omaheke Region, Namibia



The prophet and founder of the evangelical sect House of Joy Ministries will have to exercise his talents in prison:

- 3 years' imprisonment for poaching in a protected reserve, 3 years' imprisonment for organised poaching, and a fine of 100,000 Namibian dollars (almost 6,000 US\$) for each sentence.

- For theft of 4 horns from a female rhino and her calf: 2 years' imprisonment.

-For keeping 2 horns at home: 3 years' imprisonment. - For attempting to bribe an investigator: 2 years' imprisonment or a fine of 20,000 Namibian dollars (1,190 US\$).

- For supplying and possessing ammunition: a fine of 5,000 Namibian dollars (300 US\$) or 12 months' imprisonment.

- For racketeering and money laundering: a fine of 50,000 Namibian dollars (2,980 US\$) or 3 years' imprisonment in the event of non-payment.

In all, Jackson Babi was sentenced to 10 years in prison and fines amounting to 370,000 Namibian dollars (22,000 US\$), with a further 17 years in prison in default of payment. For 4 years after his release, he will be prohibited from possessing a firearm.

Jackson Babi, see "On the Trail" n°29 p. 48.

New Era, September 12, 2022; The Namibian, September 13, 2022; Namibian Sun, September 13, 2022.²⁷

SOUTHERN ASIA

INDIA

July 7, 2022

Bhojmari, Biswanath District, State of Assam, India

After 3 years on the run in Kerala, Rasidul Haque (alias Meeru), killer of a rhinoceros in Kaziranga Park, was arrested. He had returned to his land. He was protected by 2 bodyguards and was hiding in a hut concealed in the marshes, 1 km from his home. Time8, July 7, 2022; The Times of India, July 8, 2022.²⁸

July 26, 2022

Mohbondha Grant, Jorhat District, State of Assam, India

Qadir Ahmed, a guy from Titabar, was riding a motorcycle when he was intercepted by the police. He was carrying a one-kilo horn.

India Today, July 27, 2022.²⁹

FAMILY AFFAIRS August 1, 2022

Behali Block, Biswanath District, State of Assam, India

Four men were apprehended on Monday night. They are suspected of attempting to poach a rhino in Kaziranga Park on Sunday. They include Dhanidev Saikia, whose whole family is involved in poaching, and Dipankar Boro, a former leader of the National Democratic Front of Bodoland, an ethnic community that claims to be the founder of the State of Bodoland and is considered a terrorist group by the federal government.

Asian News International, August 2, 2022; East Mojo, August 2, 2022.³⁰

August 15 and 18, 2022

Bandar Dubi, Nagaon District, Kuthuri, Golaghat District, and Rongbong, Karbi Anglong District, State of Assam, India

Three men have been charged, but no horns have been seized.

"Based on a tip-off, we conducted a raid on the night of August 15 and arrested one Imam Ali from his house and during interrogation, he revealed to have sold a rhino horn to Baharul Islam. Based on his revelation, we arrested Baharul Islam. After investigating Baharul, the third person, Mohan Teron, was arrested. We are continuing our investigation into the matter," Ramesh Kumar Gogoi, the divisional forest officer of Kaziranga National Park, said.

East Mojo, August 19, 2022; Northeast Now, August 19, 2022; Praditin Time, August 19, 2022.³¹

REPEATED OFFENCE

August 30, 2022 Bokakhat, Golaghat District, State of Assam, India

Seizure of a 2.3 kg rhinoceros horn. Arrest of Bhokto Bahadur Thapa and Budheshwar Shinte (alias Budhai Shinte). Thapa is said to have been involved in horn trafficking in the past.

Praditin Time, August 30, 2022; Golaghat Police, August 31, 2022; India Today, August 31, 2022.³²

September 19, 2022

Biswanath Chariali, Biswanath District, State of Assam, India

Arrest of Pinku Mandal, age 31, from Bihar. He was hiding in the shed of a grocery store run by Hanuman Pandya. He is suspected of having supplied the weapons and inflatable dinghies used to poach a rhinoceros in Kaziranga Park on January 20, 2022. See "On the Trail" n°35 p.41-42 and n°36 p.52.

The Sentinel, September 19, 2022; Asian News International, September 23, 2022.³³

SOUTHERN EUROPE

PORTUGAL

July 5, 2022

Humberto Delgado International Airport, District of Lisbon, Portugal

Seizure in the false compartment of a wooden crate from Angola of 2 rhinoceros horns cut into 13 sections, with a total weight of 10 kg and a total value of $600,000 \in (63,100 \text{ US}\text{s}/\text{kg})$. There are no more rhinos in Angola.

Portugal Posts English, July 22, 2022.34



Black rhinoceroses (Diceros bicornis). Photo Julian Mason