

ROBIN DES BOIS

ON_{the} TRAIL

Information and analysis bulletin on animal poaching and smuggling
n°4 / 1st January - 31th March 2014

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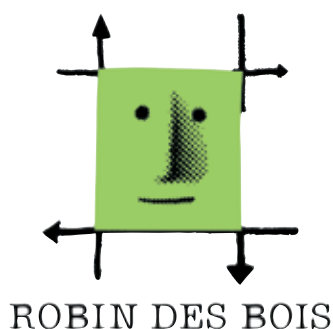
Introduction

Here now the 4th edition of « On the Trail », 112 pages, 468 events, 352 information sources. All dials are in the red. On the endangered species market prices are soaring. China and the world exotic pet trade are weighing heavily. The red-fronted parrot in Congo smuggled by Blue Helmets are sold for 800 US\$ on Internet. Rhino horns reach 100,000 US\$/kg, leopard skin more than 30,000 US\$/kg. Mumbai golden youth gets high on cobra venom (180,000 US\$/l). Isilo, the elephant who became a symbol of South Africa, is dead. His 2 tusks worth 600,000 US\$ have disappeared. Poachers were the first to find his body by spotting the vultures. Suspicion lingers. Daytime rangers become night-time poachers. Prices go wild, the violence does also. Animals, thieves and rangers fall. Traffickers kill each other like traffickers of a drug cartel. Gangs rule, gangrene thrives. This is war. Justice is incoherent. From severe punishment to set an example to a mere bail, justice sometimes goes astray. Traffickers are often very young. Poachers ride BMWs. Killing methods are both modern and archaic.

Good news is rare but good wills are steadfast and countless. Customs manage some grand catches. Inspired by the Koran, the Indonesian Council of Oulemas pronounced a fatwa addressing the 200 million Muslims in the Country according to which poaching and smuggling species endangered of extinction is forbidden. The fatwa mentions tigers, rhinos, elephants, birds, reptiles, and orangutans. The look on «Mademoiselle Chinoise's» eyes when she was freed is more good news, that « On the Trail » be on the right track is another.

ON_{the} TRAIL

Carried out by Robin des Bois with the encouragement and financial support of the Fondation Brigitte Bardot, the Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux and the Fondation Franz Weber



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CITES* Appendices

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.

* Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. 180 Member States.

Seahorses Sea

Seahorses (*Hippocampus spp.*) are all listed under Appendix II.

ASIA

**Seizure of 494 kg of dried seahorses
Hong Kong, China
January 15 and 16, 2014**

The raw salted legal leather hid 50,000 seahorses from the Pacific Ocean. The stench of one hid the odor of the others. The fraud was uncovered 2 days in a row in 2 20 feet maritime containers coming from Peru, one from Païta, another from Callao.



4 individuals among the 50,000



A bag of dry seahorses among leather hides



**Seizure of 15 kg of seahorses
Mayiladuthurai, Tamil Nadu, India
March 11, 2014**

The woman escaped while the police searched the bags and got their hands on the sea horses.

EUROPE

**Seizure of 54 dried seahorses
Paris-Orly Airport, Region of Ile-de-France, France
February 28, 2014**

From rice to sea horses: this was the menu the woman planned to cook landing in France coming from Dakar.



Sea Cucumbers

See the article "A Sea Cucumber Ending", page 107.

AFRICA

**Seizure of a ton of sea cucumbers
Scattered Islands in the Indian Ocean, attached to the French Southern and Antarctic Lands
March 29, 2014**

While on a surveillance campaign of the maritime domain, the frigate *Nivose* intercepted 5 Malagasy fishing ships and confiscated cucumbers that were thrown back to sea.

AMERICA

**Seizure of 1500 kg of sea cucumbers of the *Isostichopus fuscus* species (Appendix III in Ecuador) about 7500 individuals
Tijuana International Airport, State of southern California, Mexico
January 23, 2013**

Sea cucumbers benefit from special protection in Mexico. A batch of sea cucumbers came from the port of Ensenada. 50 cases were due to leave for Hong Kong from the Tijuana Airport via Tokyo or Shanghai. Anomalies had been detected in the documentation accompanying the expedition. In May 2013, 898,660 individuals had already been seized in the Ensenada port (cf. « On the Trail » n°1, p. 3).



Tijuana International Airport

Seizure of 3 tons of sea cucumbers (*Isostichopus fuscus*, Appendix III in Ecuador)
Colonia Obrera, State of Yucatan, Mexico
January 2014

The seizure took place in the clandestine warehouse of a family business after a complaint from an intrigued neighbour who observed many trips of small trucks coming and going and was disturbed by continuous smoke and cooking smells. 6 traffickers were taken into custody.

Court appearance for the smuggling 46.5 kg of brown sea cucumbers (*Isostichopus fuscus*, Appendix III in Ecuador)
San Diego, State of California, United States
March 6, 2014

He pleaded not guilty for the fraudulent import into the United States of brown sea cucumbers hidden in the spare wheel compartment of his 4x4 Hyundai. There were some for 5000 to 10,000 US \$. He risks 5 years of prison and a fine of 20,000 US\$. Judgment in June.

On the Atlantic Coast, sea cucumber fishing has almost quintupled in Florida, rising in one year from 14,000 to 54,000 catches. The State is about to limit catches while in the north, off the coast of Canada, in the French waters of the territory of Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon, sea cucumbers fishing is developed as an alternative to dead cod fishing.

Corals

ASIA

Seizure of 30 kg of corals antlers (*Acropora formosa*, Appendix II) and *Tubipora musica* (Appendix II)

Kolkata, State of West Bengal, India

January 6, 2014

Gopal Shaw imported the corals apparently from Singapore. Value of the smuggling is estimated at RS 5 lakh (8315 US\$).



Skeleton of *Tubipora musica*

Queen Conches and Giant Clams

AMERICA

Seizure of 1852 kg of queen conch (*Strombus gigas*, Appendix II)

La Trinité, Department of Martinique, France

February 19, 2014

The fishing boat was the target of land and maritime customs officers, Maritimes affairs and a helicopter. It was searched on arrival at the Port of Cosmi, Trinité. On board were the small Queen Conches or sea conches clearly below the authorized size. The *Strombus gigas* measures twenty cm in length. The females are slightly bigger than the males. Some specimens can reach 30 cm and weigh up to 1.5 kg. They are the deep-sea sorters and the digesters of detrital sand. They fix and fertilize marine sediments and prepare the ground for benthic communities and crustaceans to settle in. They are overexploited and captured in 25 territories and Caribbean countries.



Behind the poacher-fisherman, there was a shady fishmonger that would receive clients' orders. A smuggling network of giant conches coming from Saint-Martin arriving to Martinique via Guadeloupe has recently been revealed. 1 kg of Queen Conch is sold for 20 € in the markets of Fort-de-France. In the whole Caribbean Ark, supplies are maintained thanks to the exploitations of juveniles. Controls on professional and leisure maritime fishing is a 2014 priority for services of the French State in particular in the perimeter where fishing is banned for cause of Chlordecone, the pesticide used in banana plantations whose residue washed away by the tropical rain and cyclones lastingly contaminate the mangroves and the marine environment.



EUROPE

Seizure of 24 queen conch (*Strombus gigas*, Appendix II)
Franz Josef Strauss International Airport in Munich, Free State of Bavaria, Germany
March 24, 2014

The conches were empty. The shells were to be used to decorate a swimming pool. Beyond 3 conches, declaration and importation permits are needed. Tourists, who come back from the Caribbean, do not participate to the pillage. Drop the conches! They are more useful on the seabed than on the shelf.

OCEANIA

Seizure of 60 giant clams (*Tridacna gigas*, Appendix II) and sea cucumbers
180 miles water northwest of Darwin, Northern Territory, Australia
March 12 & 13, 2014

The 4 boats were destroyed. They practiced IUU fishing (Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated). 58 Indonesian crewmembers were directed towards the center for immigration of the North. The boats have been towed to Darwin. The AFMA (Australian Fisheries Management Authority) had spotted them while fishing inside the Australian waters. On board, there were 60 Giant clams more than a meter long, aged from 80 to 100 years old. Each of them is saleable up to 5000 A\$. Several barrels of sea cucumbers were in the holds to the side of the giant clams, hidden under the fish. The global

value of the illegal bêche de mer is 55,000 A\$. The captains will be prosecuted. Indonesian fishermen in the search of sharks and sea cucumbers regularly and illegally visit the Australian waters.



Fishes

AMERIQUE

Seizure of 970 kg of shark fins (class Elasmobranchii)
San Francisco, State of California, USA
January 29, 2014

Since July 2013, it is forbidden to detain and sell shark fins in California. This past January, it was discovered that Hong East Ocean Sea Food in Emeryville was offering shark fin soup on the menu illegally. Investigators found the source of their sharks came from, Kwong Yip Inc.



The restaurant Hong Kong East Ocean Seafood

Michael Kwong, seafood wholesaler, would fiddle with sharks. In his stocks, almost one ton of fins were there. Kwong is on the Asian American Rights Committee in which he protested against the prohibition of fins in California. The law would be unconstitutional and discriminating for the Asian community. The complaint by the Committee was revoked a little after the seizure. Another group defending commerce had complained in front of a Federal Court. They have very little chance of achieving anything according to Jennifer Feary, the director of the California Humane Society. The US National Marine Fisheries came to recognize the

legitimacy of the embargo on shark fins in California and in 7 other States: Hawaii, Illinois, Oregon, Washington, Maryland, Delaware, and New York. There are bills being introduced in 6 other States: New Jersey, Massachusetts, Florida, Nebraska, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Texas.

Kwong was not arrested. He will receive a fine at a later date of an amount yet to be determined by the judge. Some fish vendors of the 66,000 who are surveyed by the Californian services had a fine 1000 US\$ for the possession of 5 to 10 kg of fins.



Seizure of 80 kg of fish including arapaima (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II) Iquitos, Region of Loreto, Peru

March 2014

The *Don Lucho* came back from fishing with arapaima and barred sorubim (*Pseudoplatystoma fasciatum*, unlisted in CITES) too small to be fished and sold. They were seized and given to charity organizations.

Conviction for smuggling of 270 totoaba swim bladders (*Totoaba macdonaldi*, Appendix I)

San Diego, State of California, United States

March 26, 2014

The Federal Court of San Diego has sentenced Jason Xie Jin, the Chinese American trader arrested in April 2013 (see «On the Trail» n° 1 p. 3) to a fine of 500,000 US\$ and 4 months in prison. He bought the swim bladders in Mexico (1500 US\$ / kg) and smuggled them into the United States. He acknowledged having illegally imported 270 of them on American soil. In fact, the damage is estimated at about 3 million US\$, the sum needed by Mexican authorities and scientific organizations to preserve 270 totoabas for 15 years.

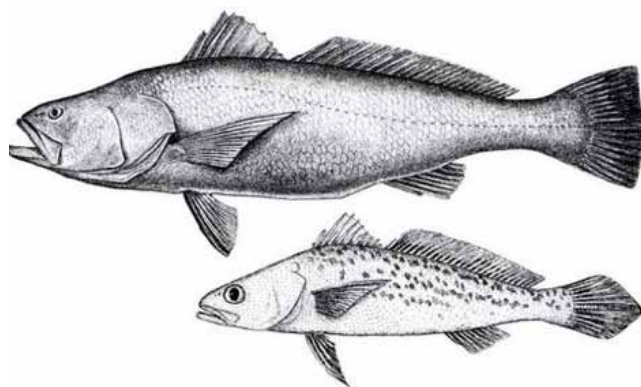


Seizure of 6 swim bladders of totoaba (*Totoaba macdonaldi*, Appendix I)

San Felipe, Baja California State, Mexico

March 2014

The goods weighed 8.2 kg. The sedan was checked between the airport and the port. The driver and passenger were arrested.



Seizure of 153 shark fins

Golfito Bay, Province of Puntarenas, Costa Rica

March 30 & 31, 2014

153 fins. At least 40 sharks caught and thrown overboard.



Golfito Port

ASIA

Poaching of a whale sharks (*Rhincodon typus*, Appendix II)

China

January 24, 2014

"On the Trail" owes it to members of the NGO Wildlife Risk in Hong Kong for their accurate accounts on the transformation of sharks in China.

Whale sharks are the favorite target of entrepreneurs along with white sharks and basking sharks. The shark liver oil is exported under the name liver oil or tilapia fish liver oil. Liver oils of species listed in Appendix II of CITES are mixed with the liver oil of unlisted blue sharks.



The company is called «China Wenzhou Yueqing Marine Organisms Health Protection Foods Co Ltd». Oil production would be of 200 t / year and by-products of the traffic would be fin soup, galuchat - shark skin - of which Italian and French fashion designers are the promoters, cosmetics and Omega 3 capsules.



Poaching of a whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*, Appendix II)

Phor, Province of Baluchistan, Pakistan

March 2014

A whale shark was taken unintentionally by fishermen who had illegally pulled their trawl within 12 miles of the coasts of Baluchistan. The 5 m whale shark awkwardly captured by the shrimp fishermen was sold in an auction and turned into flour for chicken feed.



Note that on worldwide coasts, as well as in Africa after hunting the "big ones", Man likes to show off, one boot resting on his catch, so as to demonstrate his domination over biodiversity.

Seizure of 54 shark carcasses including hammerhead sharks (*Sphyrna lewini*, Appendix II)

20 nautical miles from Taytay, Region MIMAROPA, Philippines

March 26, 2014

The sharks including hammerhead sharks are spotted aboard the fishing boat licensed under KH96365TS, a Vietnamese fishing boat: 50 sharks and 11 Vietnamese fishermen 20 miles from the Philippine island. The hammerhead shark is listed under Appendix II since September 2013



Missing fins



KH96365TS

Seizure of 2 kg of caviar (*Acipenseriformes spp.* Appendix I and II)

Antalya International Airport, Turkey

February 12, 2014

The passenger, coming from Russia, was carrying 2 kg of caviar in 13 boxes in his luggage. The Turkish customs had already seized in the same circumstances in November 2013: 12.8 kg of caviar distributed in 24 boxes.



November 2013 seizure

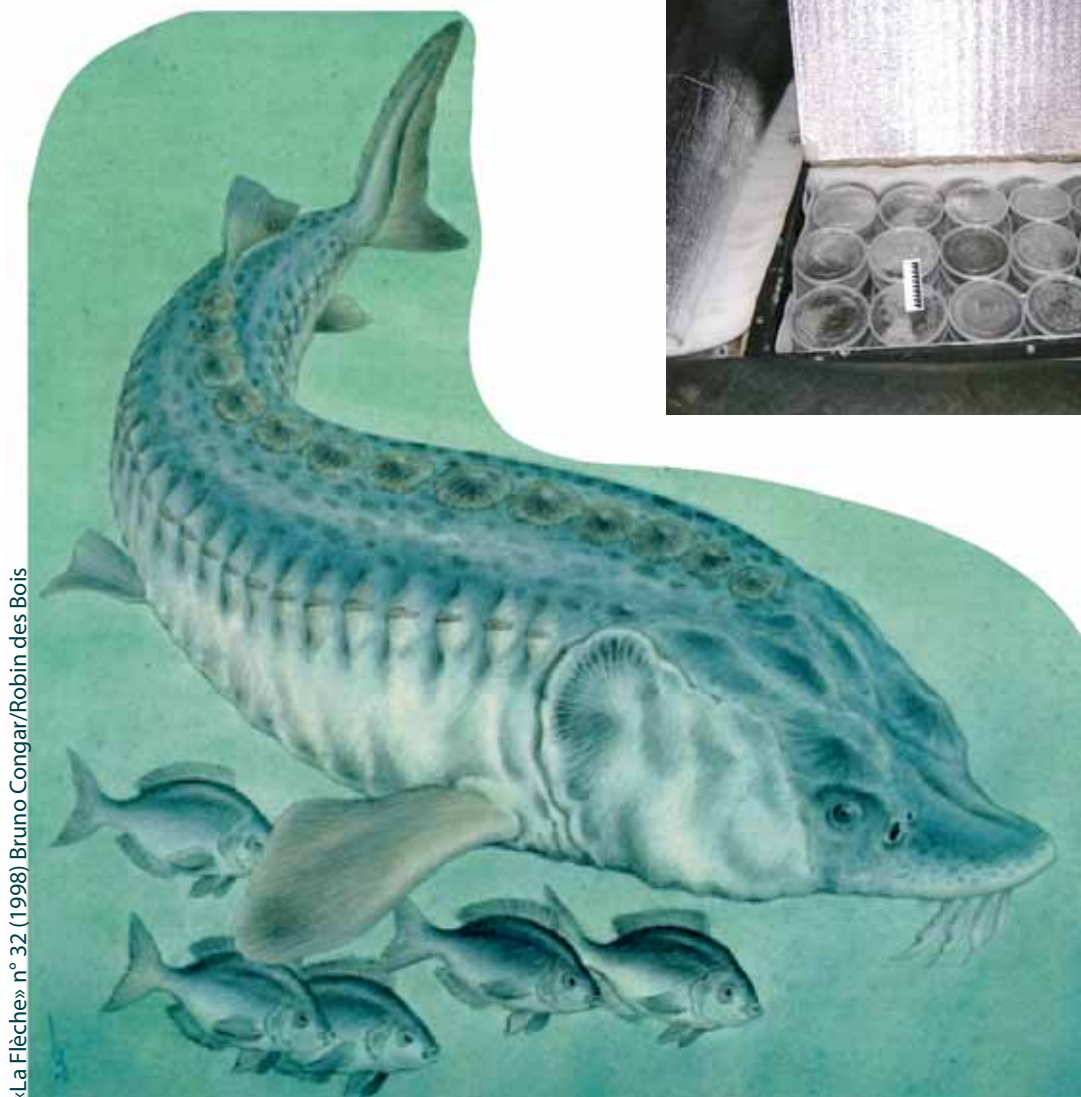
Custom officers of the United Kingdom seized between April 1st and December 31, 2013 more than 2.1 tons of caviar and caviar extract (*Acipenseriformes spp.* Appendix I and II).

Seizure of 94 kg of caviar (Amur sturgeon, *Acipenser schrenckii* or kaluga, *Huso dauricus*, Appendix II)

Khabarovsk Krai, Extreme Orient Russia

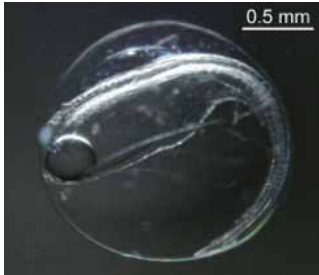
February 2014

The 27 years old driver was transporting 50 kg of caviar in his SUV. According to him, it was an artisanal preparation. It can only come from poaching Amur sturgeons or kaluga (great Siberian sturgeon). A few hours later, police intercepted the same type of vehicle driven by a resident of 33 years old. There were 44 kg of caviar on board.

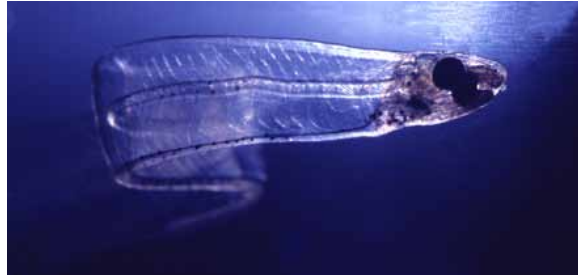


Glass Eels, More Brittle Than Crystal

Glass eels are nipped in the bud: 3.3 grams, 6 to 10 cm long, translucent. After 3 to 25 years according to their sex and environmental conditions, they will measure between 50 cm and a meter long. A 10-year-old adult female eel can weigh 6 kg.



Ocean eel egg



Leptocephalus, larval stage



Glass eel



Anguilla anguilla

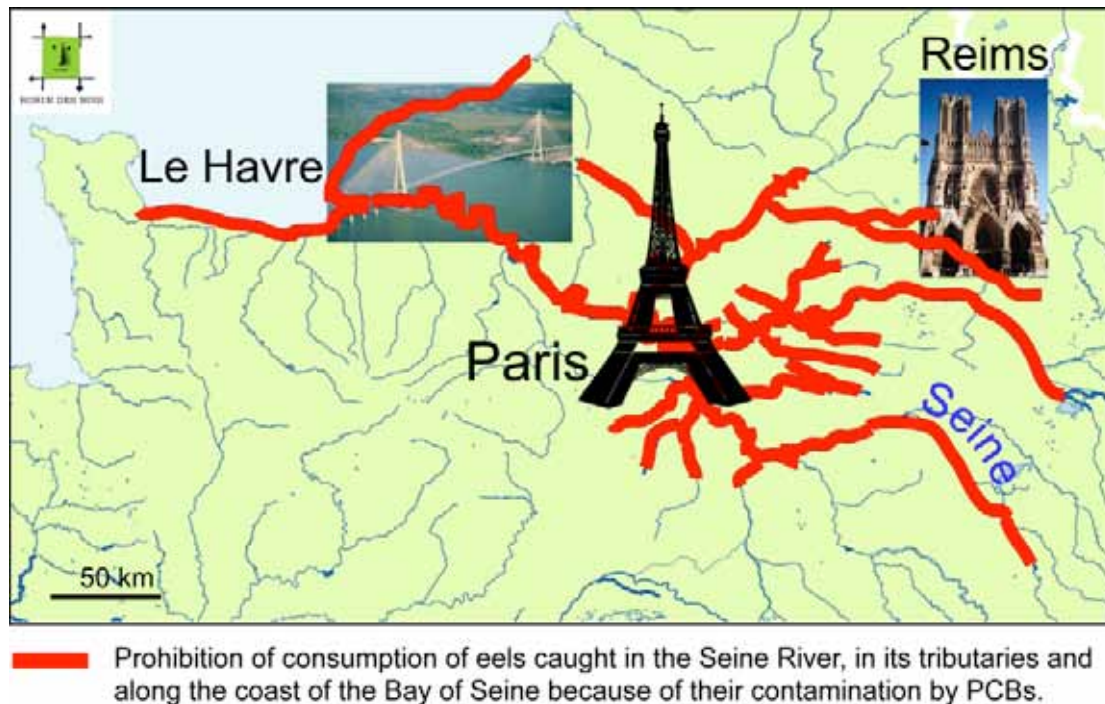
After a 2 or three-year voyage in the Atlantic Ocean from the Sargasso Sea, glass eels carried by the currents arrive to the European continent from October to April. In 1828, the English physician Humphrey Davy, author of books about fishing and fish behavior noticed this rush of glass eels into North Ireland.

"The mouth of the river was blackened by millions of little eels, about as long as the finger, which were constantly urging their way up the moist rocks by the side of the fall. Thousands died, but their bodies remaining moist, served as a ladder for others to make their way; and I saw some ascending even perpendicular stones, making their road through wet moss, or adhering to some eels that had died in the attempt. Such is the energy of these little animals that they continue to find their way, in immense numbers, to Loch Erne"

Towards the middle of the 19th century, other observers described "glass eel ropes", "bands as big as barrels", whole processions going up the Rhone delta and streams in the Balearic Islands, crawling into the Lac Constance despite the Rhine waterfalls in Schaffhausen.



The first signs of the reduction of adult eel populations were visible from the 1970s and 1980s. Since then the decline has been worsening. Overfishing, the sushi mania, the filling of wet zones, multiplication of dams, water and sediments pollution, contamination by PCBs and mercury have broken the eels reproduction cycle.



Between 1995 and 2005, despite foresight of this disaster, the European Union officially exported towards Asia half a billion glass eels each year. 2 combined events have worsened glass eel poaching around the world:

- Listing of the European eel *Anguilla anguilla* in Appendix II of CITES according to Germany's request, voiced in the name of the European Union, coupled with a zero quota for exports in force since March 2009.
- Destruction on the Japanese East coast of all glass eel, small and adult eel breeding farms by the earthquake and tsunami in March 2011. The whole stock of aquaculture eels is yet to be rebuilt while a grilled eel on a bed of rice is as popular dish in Japan as a hamburger is in the United States.

On every continent a glass eel mafia is at work. A kilogram is more expensive in Japan than a kilogram of caviar. Glass eels are poached for restaurants in Spain and South-East Asia and to repopulate eel breeding farms. Eel production in aquaculture rests only on capture of wild glass eels and 90% of eels consumed in the world come from aquaculture. There are no other eels than wild ones because no attempts of reproduction in captivity have proved successful. Except any mishaps, worldwide aquaculture produces 250,000 tons of eels of which 180,000 tons in China.

The markets for the three main eel species, the European *Anguilla anguilla*, the American *Anguilla rostrata* and the Asian *Anguilla japonica* are becoming a globalized trade. The frozen eels cover as many kilometers inside containers as they would during their normal migration.

In 2010, 25 tons of eels were seized in the Port of Szczecin in Poland; the container had arrived to Europe via Hamburg. It came from China. According to the transport register, they were *Anguilla japonica* non-protected by CITES. DNA tests proved them to be European *Anguilla anguilla*. Customs in the Paris airport have uncovered in 70 packages coming from Spain and heading to Hong Kong 270 kg of live glass eels, that is more than one million individuals. The animals were set free into the Loire River.

In December 2011, 120kg of live glass eels poached in Spain and expected in the Philippines were seized at the Sofia airport in Bulgaria. The packages had been registered as frozen fish. The glass eels ended in the Sofia zoo as animal feed.



In mai 2013, 2 brothers escaped in the Main swamps in the United States. By night, they would go about poaching glass eels, described by the local newspaper, the Gloucester Daily Time as "as thin as spaghetti" and adds: "10 years ago glass eels would sell for around 25 \$ a pound, now they're sold for 2000 to 3000 \$". The Kenneth brothers had 2 buckets full. In the State of Maine, fishing is still allowed under restricted quotas. 407 professional fishermen hold licences. In Massachusetts and New Hampshire fishing is completely banned and poaching is sky-high. A trickster with a lot of nerve, experience, a sieve-net, high-up relations and a little luck can earn 100,000 US\$ in 3 nights. In the meantime, environmental police effectives have been reduced by a third. Pillagers even manage to deter surveillance and net the glass eels coming out of the canalizations set up to let them pass dams without being slashed in the turbines. Volunteers that give their time in spring to help glass eels swim upstream don't even dare speak out un- masked. That's to say how tense the subject is.

In January 2014, the Airport in Beijing was almost invaded by 10,000 glass eels. Packed into plastic bags divided into 12 cardboard boxes, they were seized from a Chinese citizen's luggage who intended, according to what he says, to start a breeding farm in Fujian.

A ray of hope shines through the night. Glass eel arrivals in the Atlantic coast estuaries show a spectacular rise. It's too soon to say whether this is a one-time event or a new upward trend consolidated by the European plan to rebuild eel populations and by control of international trade by CITES.

This ray of light could quickly dim if States don't put forth all needed means to put a stop to poaching, smuggling and insidious trade circuits linked to leisure fishing. Illegal fishing is not the only threat leading to the eels' extinction. Historical contaminants and emerging ones damage eels, diminish their fertility and their legendary mobility.



Watermill with eel traps in the Middle Ages



Marine Mammals

AMERICA

OPERATION LONGTOOTH

Court appearance for the traffic of at least 100 narwhal tusks (*Monodon monoceros*, Appendix II)

**State of Maine, United States of America
January 7, 2014**

2 American citizens, Jay Conrad and Eddie Dunn, have pleaded guilty for trafficking narwhal tusks. One of them was accused of laundering money, illegal importation and illegal trafficking of tusks. Dunn reaped about 1.1 million US\$ and his accomplice 1 million US\$ in the resale of tusks on EBay or with direct sales. The buyers are from the United States, in particular Alaska. The 2 individuals face a sentence of 5 to 20 years in prison and a 250,000 US\$ fine.

A third party, Andrew Zaruskas, living in New Jersey, was on trial in February. Between 2002 and 2008, he bought 33 narwhal tusks. Gregory Logan, who is the source of the trafficking, not to mention corruption among Inuits in the Canadian Arctic, has already been convicted in Canada. (cf. «On the Trail » n°3).

The function of the male whale tusk still remains a mystery, but a few hypotheses are proposed. A number of specialists think that it is a secondary sexual characteristic, similar to the antlers of a deer. It could also be used as a sensory organ that can detect subtle changes in temperature, salinity and pressure.

Court Appearance of the sale of sei whale meat (*Balaenoptera borealis*, Appendix I)

**Santa Monica, State of California, United States
February 10, 2014**

The whale meat came from Japan via a Japanese fishmonger installed in California. It was labelled "bigeye tuna" on the import-export papers. This was the meat of a Sei whale, also called Rudolphi whale. Rudolphi whales are targeted by Japanese "scientific" hunting in the northeast Pacific Ocean. The beautiful creature, average size between 12 and 14m, up to 16 m for females- can reach up to 60 km/h on short distances. Mating takes place in hot waters in November-December. Gestation lasts one year. The baby measures 4 m at birth and nurses for 5 months.

The whale meat grocer had several clients in California. The fraud concerns many kg. Sei whale sushi was sold in particular in Santa Monica at the table or the bar at the Hump. The 2 cooks and the fishmonger pleaded guilty, and carried on and on with apologies. The 3 of them risk 3 years of prison, a fine and community service time.



ANTARCTICA

Evidence of poaching of 4 Antarctic minke whales (*Balaenoptera bonaerensis*, Appendix I with reservations from Japan, Iceland and Norway)

**Whale Sanctuary in the Southern Ocean
January 2014**

The factory vessel *Nisshin Maru* is hard at work in the Antarctic. The Sea Shepherd has been observing the ship and complicating its activities for 10 years. News this year: Whale meat stolen from the southern ocean is granted Halal. The guardians of Muslim culinary orthodoxy had inspected the *Nisshin Maru* in Hiroshima and officially certified it as a legal slaughterhouse November 24, 2013 just before it departed for its scientific hunt. There was only one particular recommendation, to change the alcohol solution used by the whale cutters to wash their hands. Kyodo Senpaku, the Company owner of the *Nisshin Maru*, answered the request of one of his commercial partners according to whom the approximate 100,000 Muslims living in and travelling to Japan, should have several different types of meat available.



ASIA

Seizure of 7.65 tons of dolphin meat (family Delphinidae, Appendix I or II)

**Kaohsiung, Tawain
January 11-12, 2014**

The search of a frozen products company uncovered the existence of the trafficking. The meat had been bought from local fishermen. The seizure is equivalent to the poaching of about 150 dolphins. Since 1989, Taiwan law forbids the fishing and sale

of all marine mammals species. The director of the company faces a maximum of 5 years in prison and/or a fine of 50,000 US\$.

EUROPE

Seizure of 3 kg of Northern minke whale meat (*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*, Appendix I with reserves of Norway, Palau, Iceland and Japan) Berlin, Land of Berlin, Germany

January 22, 2014

The whale meat proposed at the Norwegian stand at the world's biggest food and agricultural fair "Green Week" in Berlin, which had more than 400,000 visitors. Alerted by the NGOs Meer eV and the Whale and Dolphin Conservation, customs seized 3 kg of meat. 4 kg had already been sold at a price of 2 US\$ per portion either smoked or marinated with blueberry jam. In complete bad faith, the stall's supervisor claimed to be surprised to learn that the sale of whale meat was not allowed in Germany and in the European Union. The merchandise had passed through customs with no problems. «We wanted to showcase Norway's variety.»



Conviction for the sale of protected species Kingston-upon-Thames, Region of Great London, United Kingdom

January 24, 2014

He would sell the dismantled skeletons of sperm whales, dolphins and ivory on Ebay. His 2 shops on the net were called Arctic Antiques and Ice Antiques. His ivories were hidden under the code name "cattle bones"; he would personally carve the marine mammal teeth. All his collections have been seized and he has been sentenced to a 1375 £ fine (2246 US\$), a mere slap on the hand for 12 indictments. However the World Society for the Protection of Animals shows hope in saying "We welcome the news of this successful prosecution and hope that this will encourage Londoners to report similar crimes involving endangered species to the Met's Wildlife Crime Unit." "On the Trail" has been following the adventures of Alick Edward Brown since the beginning of October 2013 (cf. "On the Trail" n°2 p. 76).



Transport of 2000 t of fin whale meat (*Balaenoptera physalus*, Appendix I with a reservation from Iceland and Japan) Port of Hafnarfjörður, Capital Region, Iceland

March 31, 2014

At the end of March, the *Alma* loaded 2000 t of whale meat in Hafnarfjörður in Iceland. Mid April, *Alma*, under Cyprus flag, Ukrainian shipowner (based in Crimea), had been forbidden to enter the Durban port, South Africa, where it intended to fill its fuel tanks to continue the trip until Tokyo.

Between 2008 and 2012, Iceland has exported 1600 t of whale meat and whale products to Japan. In 2011 and 2012, the subarctic island candidate for the integration into the European Union, had suspended its hunting activities, the openly commercial hunt, without the scientific alibi. Iceland entered a reservation to the listing of the fin whale to Appendix I of the CITES Convention. Iceland risks diplomatic troubles and logistic complications in selling whale meat to Japan, its partner that doesn't either acknowledge the prohibition of international trade of fin whale products. Iceland has just announced reopening the hunt with a global quota of 770 individuals between 2014 and 2018. This also exposes them to commercial retentions on behalf of the United States.

The American administration considers that Iceland's whaling polity undermines the efforts of the International Whaling Commission and compromises the recovering of whale populations.

In February 10 containers of fin whale meat had crossed Canada. Arriving in an Atlantic port, they had been sent to Halifax before being loaded again on an unknown container ship on its way to Japan. Canada said that it had no judicial means to prevent this transit and tests were run to verify that it was effectively fin whale meat.

"Be a Viking", this is the slogan launching the first whale beer. The Icelandic brewer Steðji in collaboration with the whaling company Hvalur launches a limited and special series with a pinch of fin whale flour (fin whale *Balaenoptera physalus*). Whale and Dolphin Conservation also said that the Hvalur, the whale hunter ships in the Arctic are lubricated with whale oil for economy reasons.



Hvalur 9

The whale beer was sold for one month during the winter festivals and was not intended for export. A way to test the market? Soon Asahi with sperm whale flour?

Japan knocked out in Antarctica



Robin des Bois's Press Release, March 31, 2014

The International Court of Justice ordered Japan to stop its whaling program JARPA II and therefore cease all whaling activities in Antarctica. Since 1987, Japan has killed over 10,000 whales in the Southern Seas.

In its decision delivered this morning, at The Hague, the Court declared that the "scientific whaling" program in Antarctica, as it has been designed and implemented by Japan, entails a disproportionate number of whales hunted and killed. According to the Court, Japan did not provide adequate explanations to justify the lethal take of whales particularly minke whales. The Court pointed out that the number of whales killed under the framework of "Japanese scientific whaling" is offset by financial reasons. The product from treating whales – which is to say the commercialization of whale meat – finances the whaling campaign carried out by the factory ship the *Nisshin Maru* and support vessels.

It's a great day for whales and a bad day for Japan's fishing politics.

"Scientific whaling" carried out by Japan from April to October, in the Northeastern Pacific, is not officially impacted by the decision of the International Court of Justice. This program, JARPN, takes important numbers of minke whales, Bryde's whales, Sei whales and sperm whales.

Two questions remain to be answered:

- Shall Japan apply the judgment and arguments presented by the Court to their "scientific whaling" program in the North by ceasing immediately?
- Shall Japan leave the International Whaling Commission (IWC) and decide to carry out commercial whaling particularly in their Exclusive Economic Zone?

In any case, the notorious factory ship the *Nisshin Maru* should have no other destiny than to be scrapped.



The press release of Robin de Bois ends with 2 questions. Today the answers are known.

- 1- As considered by Robin des Bois, Japan pursues scientific hunting in the Northeast Pacific.
- 2- Japan remains for the time being member of IWC.

Japan considers designing a new program of scientific hunting in Antarctica that takes into consideration the arguments that drove the International Court of Justice to irrevocably condemn the current program. The Japanese government confirms that there will be no hunting in the Antarctic Ocean for the summer season 2014-2015. The next IWC meeting which will be held in Slovenia in September 2014 will be very important.

In European diplomatic circles that unfortunately invade scientific circles, Australia's complaint before the International Court of Justice was considered economically dangerous and very susceptible of triggering Japanese retaliation against Australia.

Wrong. Totally wrong. Some weeks after Japan was sentenced, the 2 countries, their prime ministers in the lead, signed after 7 years of negotiations, a bilateral agreement on enlarging trade. Australia is going to lower its duty rates for imported cars, electronic materials and Japanese appliances. Japan is going to do the same for beef meat, custom barriers for crustaceans, urchin, abalone, yellow fin tuna and... bluefin tuna of the South Pacific. Japanese hunting in Antarctica is suspended. Business is growing including in the sector of sea products.

Marine Turtles

Total from 1st January to 31th March

**18 marine turtles and
3000 marine turtles eggs seized
60 poached marine turtles**

AMERICA

REPEATED OFFENSE

Indictment for poaching of 316 marine turtle eggs (Appendix I)

Palm Beach, Florida, United States

January 9, 2014

He is 51 years old and is under investigation for having taken 316 marine turtle eggs on Juno Beach in 2 days beginning of July 2013. The value is estimated between 948 US\$ and 1580 US\$. Plastic bags and a wooden stick used to rummage in the nests have been kept as evidence. The eggs have been reburied in the sand. Kenneth Cornelius Coleman was hired for this. The identity of the principal waiting for him in a pickup truck at the top of the beach was not revealed. In August 2005, Coleman had already been arrested on the same shore with 142 eggs. Watchmen from the Loggerhead Marinelife Center had signalled his presence on the beach. This Center's role is to protect the eggs of the 3 marine turtle species laying on Juno Beach and Jupiter Beach, the leatherback turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*), loggerheads (*Caretta caretta*), and green turtles (*Chelonia mydas*), all listed in Appendix I of CITES. The main predators for eggs are foxes, raccoons and man. The Loggerhead Marinelife Center recalls that it is strongly unrecommended to illuminate the top of beaches because the artificial light dissuades adult turtles to come lay their eggs and disrupts the navigation of baby turtles that have just hatched.



Young and adult leatherback turtle



© Loggerhead Marinelife Center

Seizure of 3000 olive Ridley turtle eggs (*Lepidochelys olivacea*, Appendix I)

State of Chiapas, Mexico

January 2014

The roadblocks of the Mexican army in the State of Chiapas during the first 15 days of January allowed Ridley turtle eggs to be seized by thousands. Picking eggs on the beach of the Pacific Ocean is a Mexican form of shore fishing for shellfish that reeks havoc along the French coastline. The eggs have been taken to specialized centers of Pijijiapan and Puerto Arista.



© Diario del Sur

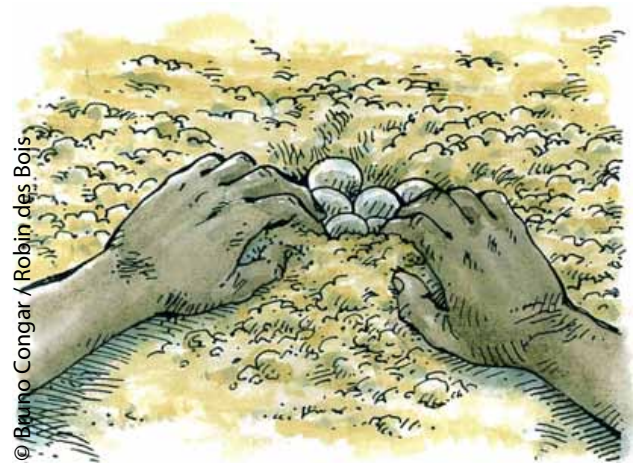
REPEATED OFFENSE

Court appearance for poaching of 316 marine turtle eggs (Appendix I)

State of Florida, United States

March 2014

Coleman, as we've already seen, is involved in collecting marine turtle eggs on nesting beaches. He had picked 316 eggs in the nest of the green turtle and in 3 nests of loggerhead turtles. He pleaded guilty. In 2010, he had already been sentenced to 30 months of prison for the same wrongdoings. When he will be judged for this repeated offense, he will risk 5 years of prison and 3 years of probation. On the black market, a marine turtle egg is sold between 3 & 5 US\$.



© Bruno Congar / Robin des Bois

ASIA

Seizure of a live green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*, Appendix I) and a live hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*, Appendix I)

Ho Chi Minh City, Province of Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

January 15, 2014

A small newspaper advertisement caught the attention of the NGO Education for Nature Vietnam. Activists presenting themselves as potential buyers had caught the trafficker red handed with the support of the local environmental police. The 2 young turtles were released.



Eretmochelys imbricata

Seizure of 2 live green turtles (*Chelonia mydas*, Appendix I)

Ho Chi Minh City, Province of Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

February 13, 2014

January 23, the NGO Education for Nature- Vietnam had 2 marine turtles released. They were prisoners in the aquarium of a restaurant.



Chelonia mydas

Poaching of 60 marine turtles (Appendix I)

Pulau Tiga, State of Sabah, Malaysia

March 2014

A sociology researcher studying the economy of local communities discovered about 60 carcasses on the island of Pulau Tiga. They could be those of hawksbill sea turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricata*), green turtles (*Chelonia mydas*), olive ridley turtles (*Lepidochelys olivacea*) or loggerheads (*Caretta caretta*). The scales had been collected off the shells. In close range of where the massacre took place, a hut was discovered. The islanders said that they had warned the authorities about this regular poaching but no investigation was launched. Poachers hunt turtles day and night. Once caught, they are brought onto one of the islands where they are kept alive in cages. The survivors are delivered in the strait of Balabac to the Chinese and Vietnamese fishermen. The poachers are Filipino and Indonesian.

The island of Pulau Tiga is inside the Tun Mustapha marine park project that covers 12,000 km² and includes 50 islands. In this perimeter, there are also dugongs that are on their way to extinction.

Previously in November 2013, 10,000 eggs had been seized in the strait of Balabac. They were originally from the State of Sabah (See «On the Trail» n° 3).



Dr Alin Surrounded by the turtle carcasses on the grounds of the Tun Mustapha marine park project



OCEANIA

Conviction for the capture at sea, transport, detention and sale of marine turtles (Appendix I)

Papeete, French Polynesia, France

March 18, 2014

2 turtle poachers have respectively scooped a month and 3 months of prison and a custom fine that they will have to pay together for having hunted a marine turtle in 2010. Following complications during the procedure, the judgment came 4 years after the facts. This delay allowed one of the accused of reoffending and to be sentenced to 6 months in prison and seizure of his boat in April 2011. He declares: "That's it, I gave it up, I completely stopped it. Seen that they have seized my boat, I have no more fishing material." In 2010 they had struck a turtle of 112 kg with an underwater shotgun hoping to draw 100,000 Pacific francs (840 €) in reselling the meat to individuals. The association Te mana o te moana, working for the protection of marine species, was party to the trial and obtained 1 franc (0.008€) symbolic of damages.

Having done months of preventive detention, the 2 convicted left the courtroom free but bitter: «In the Leeward Islands, they are people who do much worse», « it looks like here justice is only after the small ones.»



Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles

**Total seizure
from 1st January to 31th March
30,332 tortoises and freshwater turtles**

AFRICA

Seizure of 49 turtles, snakes and chameleons Antananarivo-Ivato International Airport, Province of Analamanga, Madagascar

March 4, 2014

The Russian woman was about to board a plane to Nairobi. A contradictory source mentions a flight to the Mauritius Islands. In her luggage in the hold, the turtles were still alive. They would not have been so on arrival. Among the 8 Malagasy species, 6 are banned from international trade.

Seizure of 127 turtles including spider tortoises (*Pyxis arachnoides*, Appendix I)

Ivato International Airport, Province of Antananarivo, Madagascar

March 11, 2014

The endangered turtle hemorrhage from the island of Madagascar continues. This flight was headed for Nairobi. The Malagasy offender declares his final

destination was Tanzania. Before passing through baggage controls, he showed a hint of honesty. He declared the carried objects to be "fragile". The turtles were probably intended to the Asia market via East Africa.

Spider tortoises are endemic to Madagascar. Their range covers about 500 km². The Island surface is 587,040 km². During the dry season, they hibernate under rocks, between roots, under vegetation detritus. During the rainy season, the *Pyxis arachnoides* come out of the dark.



AMERICA

Conviction for trafficking black-breasted leaf turtles (*Geoemyda spengleri*, Appendix II) and Arakan forest turtles (*Heosemys depressa*, Appendix II)

Seattle, Washington, United States

January 2014

The individual already identified in "On the Trail n°1" imported turtles from Asia and exported American turtles towards Asia. National and international laws protected all the species involved in the traffic. Nathaniel Swanson had been sentenced to one year of prison and 28,500 US\$ in damages that will contribute to rehabilitation costs and care for the turtles having survived his actions. To avoid being identified in the airports, the turtles in Mr. Swanson's packages had their legs attached to the shell with rubber bands.



ASIA

Seizure of 10 Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II)

Vadodara, State of Gujarat, India

January 4, 2014

The Special Railway Brigade seized 10 elegant turtles and caught the recipient red handed when he came to take delivery of the merchandise at the train station. Forest agents and a local turtle specialist were called in to identify the species. The *Geochelone elegans* alive or stuffed are in strong demand. According to the doctrine of Feng Shui, putting a turtle in the northern sector of a housing or professional headquarter leads to prosperity and symbolizes stability. The Indian Star Turtle can be worth 500 US\$ on the black market.



Seizure of 8368 baby pig-nosed turtles (*Carettochelys insculpta*, Appendix II)

Airport of Indonesian Papua and International Airport of Jakarta, Province of Banten, Indonesia
January 7 and 9, 2014

The first seizure -5400 individuals- took place in one of the 2 airports of Indonesian Papua neighboring Papua New Guinea. An identical one took place 2 days later at the Jakarta airport on arrival of one of the airliners coming from the same Papua. There were 2968 turtles. In Indonesian Papua, the 5400 baby Pig-nosed turtles were distributed in 7 bags. In Jakarta, after the 2000 km voyage in the air in a baggage hold, many of the turtles had died. They were packed in plastic boxes, 15 to 20 per box. The final destination of the reptiles was Singapore or China. The expeditor is identified. The surviving turtles will be released into their natural environment. Those who were seized in Jakarta must be taken back on the plane. These turtles live exclusively in the wild in Indonesian Papua, in Papua New Guinea and Australia.



Good news

2264 pig-nosed turtles seized January 12 in Hong Kong were taken back to their home country, Indonesia. They are survivors a 2657 turtle load. They had first been given shelter in specialized care centers in Hong Kong. They will be released into the wild.

It is rare for wild animals caught in smugglers' nets return to their original habitats. Good news then, tainted by the fact that 490 individuals of an endangered species died during the previous flight. Traffickers, for their part, are still at large in Hong Kong and Indonesia.

Seizure of keeled box turtles (*Cuora mouhotii*, Appendix, II)

Vietnam

January 22, 2014

Word of mouth seems to function in Vietnam. A member of ENV informed a turtle owner that he was in an illegal situation. The Keeled Box Turtle was put in the care of the Cuc Phuong Turtle Conservation and Rehabilitation Center. Founded in 1998, this center collects all terrestrial turtles seized by customs or other State services. It is situated in the National Park of the same name. It also works to inform the agents in charge of protection wildlife on turtle ecology and to facilitate their identification of species.



Seizure of 440 live Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II) and 65 live black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I)

Don Mueang Airport, Province of Bangkok, Thailand

January 31, 2014

The turtles were held prisoners in 5 bags. They were travelling aboard a plane that had left from Chennai (State of Tamil Nadu, India).



Seizure of 6980 live Indian softshell turtles (*Nils-sonia gangetica*, Appendix I)

Bongaon, Western Bengal, India

February 3 & 5, 2014

4980 turtles were seized 12 km away from the border to Bangladesh. The driver and 2 escorts were arrested. The turtles were packed in boxes underneath crates of fish. In Bangladesh, they were intended for food consumption. 270 were dead; the survivors were released the same night and the next day in 3 State sanctuaries.

2 days after this first seizure, 2000 other Indian Softshell Turtles were recovered thanks to the information provided by the first arrests. The turtles were in jute bags in a truck coming from Andhra Pradesh, the driver was arrested. This time also, the cargo was heading towards Bangladesh.

The seizure of 6,980 turtles is estimated worth 69,936 US\$.

Seizure of 420 Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II)

Chennai International Airport, State of Tamil Nadu, India

February 12, 2014

The turtles were discovered in baggage control. The agents had detected them thanks to X-rays. They yet had been slid into plastic sachets surrounded by opaque paper of carbon and graphite. The 6 passengers of Indian nationality were about to embark on the inevitable turtle airport of Bangkok. For one of the smugglers this was his 4th turtle-shuttle for Bangkok in 5 months. The turtles had been captured in Andhra Pradesh.



Young Indian star tortoise

Seizure of 13 Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II)

Freeganj, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

February 20, 2014

The Forest Department had searched 2 pet aquarists where 13 turtles were sold. The 2 shop keepers were arrested. An investigation is underway to trace back. A Indian star tortoise is sold for between 50 and 500 US\$ depending on age and markets.

Seizure of 750 live turtles including black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I) and tricarinate hill turtles (*Melanochelys tricarinata*, Appendix I)

District of Purnia, State of Bihar, India

March 1, 2014



Bulk turtle transport in a pick-up truck from Uttar Pradesh to Myanmar (over 2000 km)

Seizure of 18 black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I)

Chennai International Airport, State of Tamil Nadu, India

March 1, 2014

The traveller missed his flight on Air Asia set to land in Bangkok in Thailand. He was stopped when were found in his luggage turtles who are endemic to Pakistan and North India. Chennai is 2000 km south of the black pond turtles' habitat. Customs are on the alert. "Provided information claims that smuggling occurs increasingly from smaller airports such as the one in Tiruchi with flights for Malaysia 3 times a day." Tiruchi is 320 km away from Chennai.

REPEATED OFFENSE

Court appearance for illegal possession of 5 elongated tortoises (*Indotestudo elongata*, Appendix II)

Balik Pulau, State of Penang, Malaysia

March 2014

Cheah Bing Shee, a 56 year-old woman, manager of the Syarikat Rona Wildlife Enterprise, appeared in court under 2 charges: for one the illegal possession of 3 male tortoises and secondly for illegal possession of 2 female elongated tortoises. The law is stricter regarding the females of the species. The fine can reach 100,000 RM (30,486 US\$) for a male of a totally protected species, 300,000 RM for a female of that same species and 200,000 (60,973 US\$) for an underage individual. The Syarikat Rona Wildlife Enterprise and its director K. Muthukumar are also charged in this case.

Cheah Bing Shee is the wife of Ansong Wang, the sadly famous wildlife trafficker.

A predator couple

Cheah Bing Shee and her husband Anson Wong are a faithful and close couple. Anson Wong, an animal trafficking warlord, was arrested in 1998 at the Mexico Airport. Transferred to the United States, he was sentenced to 71 months in prison for reptile smuggling. They were all Appendix II! With the help of complicities inside Fedex, Phoenix, Arizona, he would send the live animals in the best speed conditions. He is also specialized in bear bile from Canada. "I can deliver anything to you" he would tell his clients. "If you want a panda, you only just have to pay." In Malaysia, his wife kept business flourishing and on his return from that forced stay in the US, Anson Wang joined in full swing...

Seizure of 218 black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I) and 54 Indian narrow-headed softshell turtles (*Chitra indica*, Appendix II)

Bangkok Suvarnabhumi Airport, Province of Samut Prakan, Thailand

March 12, 2014

For failing to catch the traffickers, they caught the mules. The latter had avoided the airport of Chennai in India and flew for Bangkok from the less monitored airport of Gaya. They were taken on arrival. In Thailand, the Hamilton turtle is considered as a pet with a high-added social value. Numerous breeding farms exist. Powered by turtles captured in the wild, they have never produced a viable egg.

Seizure of 72 turtles

Howrah, State of West Bengal, India

March 13, 2014

The turtles were discovered aboard the Kalka mail, the train connecting Kalka to the station of Kolkata in Howrah. The railway police arrested one person, others escaped. The apprehended suspect, with a bag full of turtles, admitted to having taken them for the State of Kanpur to sell on the Gariahat, south of Kolkata, a giant market with big stores and small stands where one finds everything from morning to night all year.



Gariahat market

Seizure of 27 turtles (family Trionychidae)

New Delhi, State of Delhi, India

March 27, 2014

4 Soft-shelled turtle species present in Rajasthan are listed in CITES in Appendix I or II.

The shells of these turtles are dried, broiled and used in traditional medicine. The meat is considered as aphrodisiac.



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EUROPE

Conviction for illegal trade of spur-thighed tortoises (*Testudo graeca*, Appendix II) and Hermann's tortoises (*Testudo hermanni*, Appendix II)



Slough, England, United Kingdom

February 24, 2014

Graham Martin was sentenced to 12 months probation and a 265 £ fine (441 US\$) after having been found guilty of the illegal sale of protected species in 2012. He had been arrested January 9, 2013. This sentence is a result of a long investigation led by the Thames Police and the Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency (AHVLA). Official spokespersons say they are satisfied with the verdict that would be both dissuasive to traffickers and encouraging for law enforcement of environmental crime. On the contrary, the NGO Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) declared that this sentencing coming some weeks after the International Summit of London on the trafficking of endangered species is insignificant and shows that English justice still has not taken the full measure of this issue.

Illegal tradesman in endangered species, Graham Martin, favourably presented himself as a saviour for reptiles and claimed to be directing an alleged wildlife center, « Berkshire Reptile Rescue».

Other imposture, some months ago, Andrew Mc Manus-Dunkley who presented himself as a healer of wounded raptors was found by in Court to be an illegal trafficker of birds of prey. He was only sentenced to couple weeks of community service.

The line between a refuge for abandoned or crippled animals and an illegal pet shop is in certain cases difficult to draw.

OCEANIA

Theft of 8 leopard tortoises (*Stigmochelys pardalis*, Appendix II)

Shoalhaven Zoo, State of New South Wales, Australia

March 5, 2014

Leopard tortoises originate from South Africa. The 8 who were stolen by breaking the lock on their pen were of different sizes. "The smallest was as big as a softball (10 cm in diameter), the largest the size of a basketball (24 cm)" according to the director of the Shoalhaven zoo near Sydney.



Seizure of 2 Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II) and 2 ball pythons (*Python regius*, Appendix II)

Sydney, State of New South Wales, Australia

March 2014

Custom Officers at the International mail Center in Sydney could not get over it. Instead of toys, lamps and hair decorations, there were live creatures, the 4 protected under CITES plus 2 white-lipped pitvipers (*Trimeresurus albolabris*) and 2 Asian vine snakes (*Ahaetulla prasina*).

On the Ferme Tropicale (France) web site, the ball python listed in Appendix II of CITES is almost presented as an invasive species in Africa. A misleading argument aimed to deter potential buyers from any guilty feelings. The Ferme Tropicale sells ball pythons between 40 and 200 €. Some « special » specimens can be worth as much as 2000 €.



Barranquilla carnival
The tusks are fake

Snakes

AFRICA

Seizure of a Southern African python (*Python natalensis*, Appendix II)

Entumeni Reserve, Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

March 2014

Captured, scorched, grilled, the snake had no chance. The 5 farmers were caught in the middle of their meal.



AMERICA

Seizure of 2 live boa constrictors (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II) and a live American crocodile (*Crocodylus acutus*, Appendix II)

Puerto Marqués and Revolcadero Beaches, Acapulco, State of Guerrero, Mexico

March 2014

A boa constrictor measuring 1.20m was confiscated on the Puerto Marqués Beach. He later was released. On the Revolcadero beach, another specimen of 1.50 m and a crocodile of 1.40 m were confiscated from showmen demonstrating their animals.

Seizure of 4 boa constrictors (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II)

Barranquilla, Department of Atlántico, Colombia

March 2014

The Barranquilla carnival has existed for over a century, since 2008 it is listed by UNESCO as part of immaterial heritage of humanity. It brings together 1.5 million people and is the third worldwide after the ones in Rio de Janeiro and Venice. It took place from March 1 to 4, 2014.

The snake was spotted on a dancer's shoulders who fled leaving him behind. The boa was found his mouth sown up with a nylon thread, most probably to avoid biting. The animal showed signs of dehydration. After his rescue he was released.

Police had not witnessed the use of wild animals in the carnival since the ban in 2008 on their participation in parades. Before that, boas and sloths were a common part of the scenery.

The 3 other boas were seized at the Barranquilla Airport at the end of the carnival.

**Seizure of a boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II)
District of La Oroya, Region of Junín, Peru
March 2014**



© RPP/Beatriz López

The boa was hidden under the bus seat

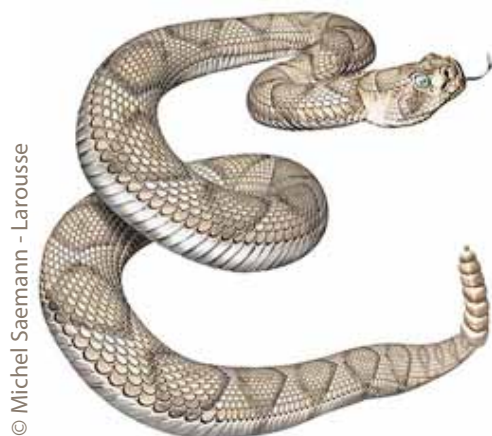
**Seizure of a live boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II) and a live American crocodile (*Crocodylus acutus*, Appendix II)
Puerto Marqués beach, Acapulco, State of Guerrero, Mexico
March 2014**

Bis ! Puerto Marqués beach certainly is used by wild animal exhibitors. The animals of the 3 showmen, including a minor, were released into the mangroves of an aquatic zoo.

**Seizure of 92 pieces of dried cascabel rattlesnake meat, 67 heads and 68 rattles (*Crotalus durissus*, Appendix III in Honduras)
San Luis Potosí, State of San Luis Potosí, Mexico
March 2014**

At the road side station, Federal police dogs came to a halt in front of the boxes. They contained 76 heads (14kg) of peyote (*Lophophora williamsii*, Appendix II) a sort of thornless cactus originating from the south of North America. It is consumed for its psychotropic properties. The boxes also contained a feline skin, a coyote skin, 4 paws and the tail of a raccoon and 14 viper skins. The owner of the boxes has not been identified.

The cascabel is the organ of the rattlesnake's tail that enable them to "rattle" when they feel in danger.



© Michel Saemann - Larousse

Eastern diamondback rattlesnake.
At the end of his tail, the rattle.

**Seizure of 472 leather goods and reptile skins
Trinidad, Province of Beni, Bolivia
March 2014**

Wallets, stuffed lizards, belts, lizard and snake skins, turtle shells and feathers are part of the seizure in the city center and airport shops. Species are not indicated.



© El Diario

ASIA

**Seizure of 9250 live snakes
State of Shan, Myanmar
January 10, 2014**

Is Myanmar waking up to CITES that it signed in 1997 or to its own laws on the protection of wild fauna that it promulgated in 1994? A truck transporting 376 crates filled with 9250 snakes was stopped on the Pinlon – Laechar road in the center of the country. The cobras and vipers were put aside and given to the first pharmaceutical company of the country to extract antidote venom. The other snakes were released into their natural environment.



Seizure of 2 liters of snake venom
Pimpri, State of Maharashtra, India
January 18, 2014

The venom was in 2 scotch bottles. The transporters are 30 and 40 years old. The value is estimated at Rs. 2 crore (323,000 US\$). The arrest took place at 3:00 am ; near the new express track Pune-Bombay. "The 2 people arrested are without a doubt the links of a big organization." "Hundreds of snakes must have been killed in Western Ghats" these are the remarks of the Pimpri police official. Western Ghats or Sahyadri are a mountain range. Samples have been taken for DNA tests to find the origin of the liquid and know the species. The police had confirmed that the snake venom sold on the black market was available under various forms in rave parties (cf. "On the Trail" n°3).



Seizure of 23 live king cobras (*Ophiophagus hannah*, Appendix II)
Hanoi, Vietnam
February 14, 2014

The police stopped a motorcycle and discovered the reptiles in a cube in the back of the vehicle. The driver of the motorcycle admitted to having bought the snakes from a shady seller for 100 US\$ and he had set off to sell them to restaurants. The snakes were put back into their natural habitat.



Seizure of 5 live Indian sand boas (*Eryx johnii*, Appendix II)

Siliguri, State of West Bengal, India

February 15, 2014

Police officers had led 3 raids in the town. The non-venomous snakes had been captured by 5 people aged from 16 to 25 years old. The guilty are professional snake charmers from Delhi or apprentice snake charmers. 3 were released after having received a warning. The boas were freed into the forest. After this brief excursion in town, they dug themselves into the sand.

Seizure of a live Indian sand boa (*Eryx johnii*, Appendix II)

Porayar, Etat of Tamil Nadu, India

March 15, 2014

The police descent enabled to find the captive boa and free him into the Kodiakarai forest.

Seizure of 9 Pythons (*Pythonidae* spp., Appendix I or II)

Fengjing, Autonomous Municipality of Shanghai, China

March 28, 2014

Police discovered 9 packed pythons in the luggage compartment of a bus liner. No one knew who put them there and where they were going. The bus line connects with numerous stops, from Shanghai to Kuming in Yunna, i.e. a 40 hours trip. The name of species was marked in English on each plastic box.

Seizure of 0.5 liter of snake venom

Thane, Maharashtra, India

March 29, 2014

1/2 liter of venom. RS 55 lakh, 91,500 US\$.

EUROPE

Seizure of cobras (family Elapidae) and vipers (family Viperinae)

Getafe, Community of Madrid, Spain

January 2014

At a person's home, 127 reptiles belonging to 54 different species were waiting to be sold. Among them at least 40 are venomous. Cobras, vipers and other reptiles were kept in terrariums and plastic crates. The venomous ones were taken in by the Madrid zoo, the other were taken to more "adapted" places. The animals were found after a neighbour called in to denounce a burglary. When police came to the premises, they found the reptiles. The owner did not have the required documentation. Not to mention the risk that one of the animals could escape which could represent a danger to the public. There are about 30 species in the *Naja* genus including most cobra species. 11 of them are listed in CITES. European population of Ursini's vipers (*Vipera ursinii*) is listed in Appendix I.

Sauria

AMERICA

Seizure of 6 iguanas (family Iguanidae) Villas Cacao, Province of Limón, Costa Rica January 9, 2014

"The police were patrolling down there and heard detonations coming from the mountains; approaching, the officers saw people hunting iguanas." (Erick Calderón, assistant-director of the public force of Limón). 3 of the poachers fled and one was arrested. He is 25 years old and is Costa Rican. The officers discovered 6 iguana corpses at the place. Costa Rica is home to the green iguana (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II) and the black iguana (*Ctenosaura similis*, outside of CITES). The animals had been killed with a bullet from a 22-caliber gun. The weapon and ammunition were confiscated. Poaching benefiting from the dry season, increases at the beginning of the year.



Seizure of 22 green iguanas (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II) Tres Valles, State of Veracruz, Mexico January 15, 2014

The green iguanas and the Mexican spiny tailed iguanas (*Ctenosaura pectinata*, unlisted in CITES) were hidden in suitcases belonging to soldiers in the bus luggage trap. The saurians had spent several days without food or water. 9 were found dead from dehydration. Both species are listed in the NOM 059-SEMARNAT-2010.

Seizure of 19 live green iguanas (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II) Portobelo, Province of Colon, Panama February 2014

They were poaching in the protected area of Portobelo. The iguanas were seized by ANAM (Autoridad Nacional del Ambiente). 15 of them were released in the park; the other 4 were dead. Volunteers assure the protection of the iguanas in the park. Faced with the intensity of international iguana traffic, for the pet trade and local consumption of meat, willingness is just not enough and the iguanas of Panama are too threatened with extinction. The National Park of Portobelo has an area of 360 km². UNESCO listed it as part of world heritage. It includes 70 km of littoral with coral reefs, mangroves, lagoons and beaches where 4 turtle species

come to lay each year, among which the Hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*).



Seizure of 18 live iguanas (family Iguanidae) Choluteca, Department of Choluteca, Honduras February 2014

The iguanas had been poached for their flesh, they were intended for the restaurants of Choluteca or San Lorenzo. They were found by border police in a suitcase inside the baggage hold of an interurban bus at the border with Nicaragua. The bus came from Guasale. No one was arrested. The bag was a so-called orphan.

4 iguana species are found in Honduras and listed in CITES: the spiny-tailed iguana from Utila Island (*Ctenosaura bakeri*, Appendix II), the *Ctenosaura melanosterna* (Appendix II), the spiny-tailed iguana from Roatan Island (*Ctenosaura oedirhina*, Appendix II) and the green iguana (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II).



Seizure of 492 iguana eggs (family Iguanidae) and a live yellow-spotted river turtle (*Podocnemis unifilis*, Appendix II) Camaguán, Guárico, Venezuela February 2014

The eggs were intended for the local market. It is planned to release the aquatic turtle of Cayenne into his suitable natural environment. The 2 seizures were led by the Guardia Nacional Bolivariana (GNB).

ASIA

Seizure of 170 pieces of monitor lizard skin (genus *Varanus* Appendix I and II) Joranda, State of Odisha, India February 13, 2014

This seizure took place during the religious and musical celebration of Joranda Mela. The skins are used to make the khanjira, an instrument akin to the tambourine. With a diameter of 17 to 23 cm, it is traditionally made with monitor lizard skin that is progressively being replaced by goat hide.



Khanjira

EUROPE

Seizure of 13 San Salvador rock iguanas (*Cyclura rileyi*, Appendix I) of which 12 were alive Heathrow Airport, Region of Great London, United Kingdom February 3, 2014



The iguanas were found in the bag of 2 women aged 24 and 26 of Romanian nationality. They arrived from the Bahamas and had to take the reptiles up to Dusseldorf in Germany. Each iguana was partly inserted into a sock. According to a border agent, "it is incredible that all, except for one, had survived such a long flight." The dehydrated animals were put under the care of a veterinarian specialist. The 2 smugglers were arrested. The concern is now to work with experts to find a way to save the survivors. The species living exclusively in the Bahamas

is threatened with extinction. There would only be a few hundred individuals left. Tourism, plantations and predation from domestic animals are the main enemies of the San Salvador rock iguana without mentioning the cactus moth larvae. Introduced sixty years ago to control population of cactuses of the *Opuntia* family, which is precisely an important source of food for the iguana.

The 2 women were sentenced to one year in prison on April 3rd 2014.



Crocodilians

AMERICA

Seizure of a live Morelet's crocodile (*Crocodylus moreletii*, Appendix II) Valladolid, State of Yucatán, Mexico January 2014

Children saw the crocodile tied to a tree. He was suffering from minor wounds, dehydration and starvation. He was first taken to an animal park in Valladolid then released in the protected Area for Flora and Fauna of Otoch Ma'ax Yetel Kooh, north of the Yucatan peninsula. Covering 5360 ha, this area harbors 19 floristic endemic species, pumas (*Puma concolor*), jaguars (*Panthera onca*), Guatemalan black howlers (*Alouatta pigra*)...

Morelet's crocodiles can reach 4.7 m and 58 kg. They live in Belize, Guatemala and Mexico. They were mass hunted during the 20th century for their skin. Heavy sanctions have considerably curbed illegal hunting. Populations have recovered since then and have now stabilized.

Seizure of 7 tons of caiman meat (genus *Caiman*, Appendix I and II)

Amazon River, Amazonas State, Brazil

March 20, 2014

The *Comandante Dilson Pantoja* was navigating on the Amazon River. The small ship carrying passengers and cargo was searched by the criminal and military police. They found 7 tons of caiman meat on board. The captain is accused of illegal hunting and wildlife trafficking. The meat was distributed to charities in Manaus.



Comandante Dilson Pantoja

EUROPE

Seizure of a live spectacled caiman (*Caiman crocodilus*, Appendix II)

Montemor-o-Velho, Central Region, Portugal

January 31, 2014

The National Republican Guard seized the 2-month old reptile, measuring 30 cm. The arrest followed an investigation on the sale of prohibited animals led by the territorial center for the protection of environment. The owner has been identified and the animal has been taken to the Maia Zoo. The subspecies *Caiman crocodilus apaporiensis* from the name of Rio Apaporis in Colombia is in Appendix I.



FAMILY AFFAIRS

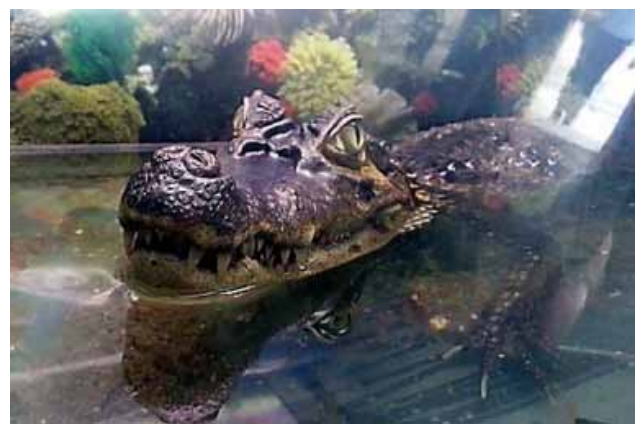
Conviction of a man to 4500 € fine for having taken in and sheltered a spectacled caiman (*Caiman crocodilus*, Appendix II)



Perpignan, Region of Languedoc-Roussillon, France

March 3, 2014

One of his friends had asked him to take in the reptile for a month but never came back. His helping-out lasted for 8 months. The 1.20m long crocodile was kept in a fish aquarium (cf. « On the Trail » n°2). The family was neither authorized nor competent to care for such a cumbersome animal and in certain ways somewhat dangerous. The family father was sentenced to 4000 € suspended fine, to a non suspended 100 € fine, 300 € in damages to be paid to the Association for the Protection of Wild Animals and 100 € in legal fees.



Multi-Species Reptiles

AMERICA

Seizure of a boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II) and a spectacled caiman (*Caiman crocodilus*, Appendix II)

Villagarzon, Province of Putumayo, Colombia

January 2014

The seizure took place following a call to an environmental protection group part of the Putumayo Department police. The export channel towards Europe for spectacled caimans is quite active. In this issue of "On the Trail" there has been one found in Spain and one in France.

Seizure of an American crocodile (*Crocodylus acutus*, Appendix II) and a boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II)

Puerto Marqués beach, Acapulco, State of Guerrero, Mexico

February 2014

Ter ! The animal showmen strolled on the beach. The tourists took photos with the reptiles for a fee. This practice is common on this beach. The crocodile is young, measuring 66 cm. The boa measures 1.32 m, surely a young one considering that an adult measures an average of 4 m. The beach of Puerto Marqués is known for this type of performances.



Crocodylus acutus



Puerto Marqués Beach



Conviction for illegal import of reptiles Cornwall, Province of Ontario, Canada

February 10, 2014

A man was sentenced for having illegally imported reptiles listed in CITES to Canada from the United States. He had bought the animals, mainly turtles, in the United States between February 26, 2011, and November 1, 2011 then he had brought them back to Canada without a CITES permit. The reptiles had been pre-sold to pet stores or individuals of Ontario via Internet sites. The individual was sentenced to 5000 \$ CA (4472 US\$) fine and a suspended sentence of 6 months prison term for the illegal trafficking of protected species. An identical penalty, merged with the first, has been inflicted on him for the smuggling.



**Seizure of an African spurred tortoise (*Geochelone sulcata*, Appendix II), 2 ball pythons (*Python regius*, Appendix II), a rainbow boa (*Epicrates cenchria*, Appendix II), all alive
Mérida International Airport, State of Yucatan, Mexico**

February 15, 2014

The package came from Mexico. Its recipient denies any responsibility.

The African Spurred Tortoise is originally from the African Sahel. They are herbivores. They are in direct competition with the nomad agriculture herds in the Sahel-Sudan region. Furthermore, in a region where the human population has doubled in 30 years, they have the misfortune to be considered a lucky-charm. There are several thousands of turtles in captivity in the area, particularly in Senegal. In their ecosystem, the African Spurred Tortoise is an engineer species. They scour the ground in its superficial layers and enrich it with dejections that disperse in the grass, date palms or cucurbits grains. Their burrow is like a granary. When it collapses, a micro-oasis rises from the ground where it was. Along an African Spurred Tortoise's trail, density of the desert date palms that provide Gum Arabic is higher.



ASIA

Seizure of 10 live black-breasted leaf turtles (*Geoemyda spengleri*, Appendix II) and 19 live Chinese crocodile lizards (*Shinisaurus crocodilurus*, Appendix II)

District of Aranyaprathet, Province of Sa Kaeo, Thailand

January 2014

The paramilitary army guards have intercepted at the border between Thailand and Cambodia a Vietnamese citizen in possession of the specimens. He says he is a realtor. Having captured the animals in Vietnam, he wished to resell them in Bangkok. He hoped to derive 60 US\$ (2000 Baht) a piece for the turtles and 30 US\$ (1000 Baht) a piece for the lizards at the Chatuchak Weekend Market where you can find anything: clothes, plants, food, miscellaneous items and art as well as prohibited animals are for sale there.



Geoemyda spengleri



Shinisaurus crocodilurus

Seizure of 462 cobras (family Elapidae), 30 black marsh turtles (*Siebenrockiella crassicollis*, Appendix II), 8 softshell turtles (family Trionychidae)

**Province of Nong Khai, Thailand
January 2014**

3 young men, one of whom is a 17 years old teenager, said that they had been recruited to transport the snakes and turtles by car between Phichit in the center of Thailand and Vietnam via Laos. They were arrested at a check point between Thailand and Laos. The value of the wild animals that the smugglers were in charge of is estimated at 1 million Bath (30,500 US\$).

**Seizure of 127 radiated tortoises (*Astrochelys radiata*, Appendix I), 10 ploughshare tortoises (*Astrochelys yniphora*, Appendix I), 96 chameleons (*Brookesia spp.*, Appendix I or II) all alive Hong Kong Airport, Special administrative Region of Hong Kong, China
February 11, 2014**

Danger. Extinction is for tomorrow or the day after. They have been in Appendix I of CITES since 1975. The Ploughshare Tortoise lives in Madagascar and nowhere else. Their area covers 25 to 50 km² and it is ravaged by deliberate fires set off in the savannah lit by the zebu farmers in search of pastures. No turtle can escape such a rapidly spreading fire as brush fires or forest fires. The Malagasy trafficker had come through Bangkok. He risks 2 years of prison.

The Ploughshare Tortoise is also harshly threatened by the market of new pets. 199 of them were seized in Asia in the last 3 months.



EUROPE

**Seizure of 4 crocodiles (order Crocodylia, Appendix I & II) and a nested turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*, Appendix I) all stuffed Olympic port of Barcelona, autonomous community of Catalonia, Spain
January 31, 2014**

The animals were on display to the public in a night club. The owner could not provide documents proving the legal origin of the individuals.



Seizure of 2 Nile crocodiles (*Crocodylus niloticus*, Appendix I), a Burmese python (*Python bivittatus*, Appendix II) and a reticulated python (*Python reticulatus*, Appendix II)

**Fresnedoso de Ibor, Province of Cáceres, Spain
February 2014**

The reptiles seized in the travelling circus by the Nature Protection Service of Civil Guardia (SEPRO-NA). The owner of the circus could not provide documents proving the origin of the animals or documents certifying the legal import of the reptiles on Spanish territory.

The Nile crocodile measures between 2 and 6 m maximum and can weigh up to a ton for the biggest.

The Burmese python lives in the grassy marshes and the less dense jungles. An individual in full form reaches 7 m and 90 kg.

The reticulated python lives in the tropical forests of Southeast Asia. They measure 6 m in length and can sometimes reach up to 10 m. The reticulated python can be dangerous.



Thousands of animals from endangered species gone up in smoke

Press release, April 21th 2014.

At least 15.000 exotic animals died in a fire of the Savannah Reptiles Planet warehouse in Saint-Sulpice-la-Pointe in the south-western part of France. The animals were intended for the exotic pet market.

Sand boas, boa constrictors, royal pythons, panther chameleons, green iguanas, Hermann's tortoises, Asian leaf turtles, leopard tortoises, African spurred tortoises, poison dart frogs are listed under CITES Appendix II (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora). Appendix II regulates international trade.

Thousands of other exotic animals perished in the fire along with hundreds of thousands of bred mice and insects, mainly crickets. Called "consumables" in the pet market jargon, they are used as feed for the captive animals to eat. Tarantulas could have also perished.

On the Savannah Reptiles Planet website (« in maintenance » since the fire happened during the night from Saturday to Sunday), the animals are considered simple « merchandise ». Prices are "chopped". Deliveries can be exchanged. Sold over the Internet, the animals were sent off by postal packages or carriers.

The Savannah Reptiles Planet warehouse was not listed as an industrial site under regulation for the protection of the environment. No administrative regulations are laid down for this type of utility. Safety management and useful devices in the construction of warehouse were not taken for spotting the fire and hindering its spread. The animals were stacked on shelves in crowded and inflammable plastic boxes. Just as the ones that frequently destroy battery chicken farms, an electrical failure probably started the fire.

Exotic pet wholesalers and retailers contribute to the looting of the wild fauna in Asia, Africa and South America. Robin des Bois measures the extent of the exotic pet markets through editing "On the Trail", the quarterly information and analysis bulletin on animal poaching and smuggling.

Following this huge loss of worldwide biodiversity, Robin des Bois urges the ministers of Environmental affairs and of Agriculture to strengthen the procedures for import, transit, selling, confining and shipping of wild fauna. According to first evaluations, the estimated cost of the disaster is 4 to 5 millions euros. For Robin des Bois, the loss is priceless.



Birds

Total from 1st January to 31th March

2308 seized birds

2100 poached birds

AFRICA

Seizure of 27 live red-fronted parrots (*Poicephalus gularis*, Appendix II)

National Airport of Kindu, Province of Maniema, Democratic Republic of Congo

January 8, 2014

The Blue Helmets are trafficking red-fronted parrot. The agents of the General Direction of Migration intercepted the birds belonging to an Egyptian contingent of the Mission of United Nations Organization for the stabilization in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO). The parrots were found in 2 cages covered by a United Nations flag. Congolese authorities suspect the UN soldiers to have used fraudulent means to acquire and transport the animals through the DRC. The military spokesman of the UN mission, colonel Felix Prosper Bassé, said the incident to be regrettable and recalled that all of the United Nations personnel are required to strictly abide by state laws. The red-fronted parrot is sold between 20 and 30 US\$ in the markets of the Maniema province. On the Internet, it sells for 600 €. The global population of the red-fronted parrot of Congo still has not been estimated. Like all birds, the red-front parrot is also a victim of deforestation.



Seizure of a live grey parrot (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix II)

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

February 2014

The bird was spotted by a member of Born Free Foundation in a workshop on the outskirts of Addis Ababa. Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority was alerted and took care of the matter to go and get the parrot. It took threats of legal action and more than a week to recover the bird who was entrusted to Born Free. The Grey parrot is not naturally present in Ethiopia.

Conviction for possession of 7 ostrich eggs (*Struthio camelus*, Appendix I in 12 African countries) Kilgoris County, Narok, Kenya

March 7, 2014

The eggs are worth more than 1000 US\$ a piece. 3 eggs thieves were caught bargaining with a potential buyer. The trio said they were victims of a set up and have never been involved in this kind of case. They were sentenced to 8 months in prison.

Ostrich populations from Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Sudan are listed in Appendix I of CITES.



Conviction for the poaching of 476 vultures and 2 bateleur eagles (*Terathopius ecaudatus*, Appendix II)

Mpika, Northern Province, Zambia

March 14, 2014

After the cyanide disaster in the Hwangé Park, there is a carbofuran disaster in the Luangwa Park in Zambia. All the vultures were poisoned to death. Carbofuran is an extremely toxic insecticide when administered orally or by inhalation. In a concentrated form, it is deadly. It has been prohibited in France since 2008.

The poachers dispersed poisoned bait in the park. 4 elephant carcasses were also found. The autopsy proves that they had also been poisoned. Carbofuran and an entire assortment of ammunition were found in the home of a man to whom a penalty of 6 years in prison was inflicted. 7 years ago, he had already been sentenced for being in possession of 40 kg of elephant meat.

Faithful readers of "On the Trail" know that vultures disappear for many reasons. The elephant poachers considered them to be harmful by spinning in mass above the carcasses, signalling to the rangers of their criminal activity. The vulture brain, broiled, dried and smoked, is famous in southern and particularly in South Africa to bring success at bets and gambling games.

The bateleur eagle is also a victim of the poisoned bait.





Terathopius ecaudatus

AMERICA

Seizure of 250 blue-fronted amazons (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II)

Pampa del Infierno, Province of Chaco, Argentina

January 3 to 6, 2014

They were confiscated during a series of verification operations in a rural area carried out from Friday 3 to Monday 6 of January. 6 people were arrested. The final count includes the carcasses of a boar, 3 armadillos (family Dasypodidae), 3 rifles, 3 bullet belts, 25 cartridges and 2 motorcycles.

The blue-fronted amazon measures between 35 and 37 cm (a little more than the average among amazons) for a mean weight of 450g. They can live 40 years. Their natural habitat is in South America.

Seizure of a live blue-fronted amazon (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II)

Herval d'Oeste, State of Santa Catarina, Brazil

January 21, 2014

Environmental police proceeded to the intervention following information. At the home they searched, they found 7 birds in cages. The penalty could reach 500 Brazilian Real per bird, for a total of 3500 Real (1500 US\$). The animals were put under the care of the center for wild animal rehabilitation (CE-TAS) in Florianópolis.



Seizure of live red-crested cardinals (*Paroaria coronata*, Appendix II)

Mandaguari, State of Paraná, Brazil

January 24, 2014

The Disque-denuncia program reinforces the struggle against environmental crime. It enables any Brazilian to anonymously denounce crimes and misdemeanors or any offense that could require police action. Concerning this case, when environmental police intervened, they discovered that under cover of a legal breeding farm, the culprit had organized a trafficking business: he had forged IBAMA certificates, the Brazilian institute for the environment and natural resources. About 120 birds were confiscated. In addition to the red-crested cardinals, the seizure included: green-winged saltators (*Saltator similis*, unlisted in CITES), ultramarine grosbeaks (*Cyanocompsa brissonii*, unlisted in CITES), double-collared seedeater (*Sporophila caerulescens*, not listed in CITES) and giant cowbirds (*Salpinctes obsoletus*, not listed in CITES). The trafficker was arrested. He faces a 2 to 6 year prison sentence, an administrative fine that could reach 500 Real per bird, representing in this case 60,000 Real (26,000 US\$). He also risks losing his permit for breeding. The birds will be released into the wild after a rehabilitation period in a specialized center.



Paroaria coronata

Seizure of 120 live lilac-crowned amazons (*Amazona finschi*, Appendix I)

San Blas, State of Nayarit, Mexico

January 2014



In the Nissan a double floor was hiding double cages with the birds. They were too small and the

birds are in bad condition. The amazons were taken to a center for care. They will be released once healed. Traps were also part of the seizure. The 4 traffickers were arrested. They said their intention was to sell the birds in Ruiz (State of Nayarit).

Lilac-crowned amazons are endemic to Mexico. The species is listed in the NOM-059-SEMARNAT-2010 in the "threatened by extinction" category. Populations were estimated between 7000 and 10,000 individuals in 2003. The birds gather in the late afternoon which makes it easy to catch them with nets.

Conviction for poaching of one Andean condor (*Vultur gryphus*, Appendix I)

Province of Azuay, Ecuador

January 2014

The despicable facts date back to May 2013 (cf. "On the Trail" n°1 p. 4). A 61-year-old farmer was arrested in November after his identification on a photo that he and his buddies had exhibited on social networks. The age of the accused and his good conduct since the arrest has been presented as mitigating circumstances; the tribunal sentenced him to 6 months in prison. In Ecuador, condors are extremely rare. 32 live in the wild and 18 others are in captivity. The condor is a part of the cultural and natural heritage of South America. They are a national symbol in Ecuador, Bolivia, Colombia, and Peru.



Seizure of 2 great horned owls (*Bubo virginianus*, Appendix II), a prairie falcon (*Falco mexicanus*, Appendix II), a Harris's hawk (*Parabuteo unicinctus*, Appendix II), a red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*, Appendix II), 2 barn owls (*Tyto alba*, Appendix II) and an American kestrel (*Falco sparverius*, Appendix II)

Casa Grande, Arizona State, United States

Late January or early February 2014

The Pinal Wildlife Rescue Centre was denied renewal of its license. Inspections over several years have revealed repeated violations of animals' living conditions. Some species were illegally detained.

Were also part of the menagerie a turkey vulture (*Cathartes aura*, unlisted in CITES), 4 mourning doves (*Zenaida macroura*, unlisted in CITES), a short-eared owl (*Asio flammeus*, unlisted in CITES), a burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*, unlisted in CITES), a striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*, unlisted in CITES) and a Gila monster (*Heloderma suspectum*,

unlisted in CITES) one venomous lizard. This new case shows once again that some alleged wildlife shelter centers have in reality commercial aims.



Bubo virginianus



Tyto alba

REPEATED OFFENSE

Seizure of 30 parrot and macaw chicks (family Psittacidae)

Department of Caldas, Colombia

February 2014

They were hidden in cardboard boxes in the hold of a public transport bus connecting La Dorada (Caldas Department) to Cali (Valle del Cauca Department) on the road Manizales - Bogotá. A 24 years old suspect was arrested. He is already known to police for wildlife trafficking.

Seizure of 200 blue-fronted amazons (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II)

Rafaela, Santa Fe Province, Argentina

February 3, 2014

The seizure took place on Highway 34. They were crammed into a new brand pickup. After travelling 800 km without eating or drinking, 27 were dead. The survivors were entrusted to a guard of Esperanza wildlife. The Argentine government does not fund food for the animals.

The chicks need to be individually fed by hand twice a day. After 15 or 20 days, they should be able to fly and thus be released. The wildlife guard receives donations. He even sometimes finances himself the food purchases.

Each bird is worth between 800 and 2500 Argentine pesos (between 100 and 312 US\$) in major cities.



Seizure of more than 1000 white-winged parakeets (*Brotogeris versicolurus*, Appendix II)
Nueva Cajamarca, San Martín Region, Peru
February 20, 2014

The birds were about to be sold in coastal towns. The operation was carried out through an anonymous call signaling a very high concentration of birds in a house. The owner fled when he saw the police. The birds were distributed into 12 small crates with 80 to 100 parakeets in each; some had already died by asphyxiation. The survivors will be quarantined before being released into their habitat.



Seizure of a toucan (family Ramphastidae), 2 toucanets (family Ramphastidae), 2 parrots (family Psittacidae), a monk parakeet (*Myiopsitta monachus*, Appendix II), a chachalaca (genus *Ortalis*, Appendix III)
Mineral del Monte, Hidalgo State, Mexico
February 2014

The birds were found in a grocery store. The tenants were arrested. They had no detention licence issued by the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT). At the same time, 2 guns and 750 cartridges of different calibers were seized. The investigation began with an alert from a citizen. The toucan is probably a keel billed toucan (*Ramphastos sulfuratus*, Appendix II).

Seizure of a live red-and-green macaw (*Ara chloropterus*, Appendix II)
International Airport of Merida, Yucatan State, Mexico

February 28, 2014

He was about to take a flight to Mexico. The owner had no documents proving his origin. The bird was temporarily transferred to El Centenario Zoo located in the city of Merida. He will only be released at the end of the procedure.



Seizure of 11 orange-chinned parakeets (*Brotogeris jugularis*, Appendix II) and 21 live orange-fronted conures (*Aratinga canicularis*, App. II)
San Salvador, Dpt. of San Salvador, Salvador
March 2014

The birds were about 2 months old. The seller was arrested. The animals had been mutilated; their wings had been cut. They were apparently bought in Chalatenango.



Seizure of live military macaw (*Ara militaris*, Appendix I)
Papalotla, State of Guerrero, Mexico
March 2014

The bird was wounded. He was transferred to the Zoolochilpan Park to receive preliminary care before his reintroduction in his habitat.

The military macaw is considered to be extinct in Guatemala, neighbour of Mexico. The military macaw captured in the forests finishes in cages all over the world. Between 2007 and 2010, in the ranking of seizures of Psittacidae in Mexico, the military macaw is fourth.

Seizure of 4 live Darwin's rheas (*Pterocnemia pennata*, Appendix I or *Pterocnemia pennata*, Appendix II)

Chichillapi, Region of Puno, Peru

March 2013

They are only 4 months old. They were domesticated to be then sold in Bolivia. They are apparently in good health and were transferred to Centro de Rescate del Proyecto Especial Lago Titicaca.



Seizure of live vinaceous-breasted amazons (*Amazona vinacea*, Appendix I)

Lages, South Region, Brazil

March 14, 2014

24 wild birds in cages were found in a home of the Bela Vista quarter following an anonymous tip. Species not listed in CITES but protected on a national level have also been seized: diademed tanagers (*Stephanophorus diadematus*), plumbeous seedeaters (*Sporophila plumbea*), green-winged saltators (*Salta-tor similis*). The suspect will have to answer to crimes against the environment.

The Vinaceous-breasted Amazon is native to Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay. It is undergoing a rapid decline. Many consider them more beautiful in a cage than in the forest.



REPEATED OFFENCE

Seizure of 4 live lovebirds (genus *Agapornis*, Appendix II)

El Trapiche, State of Colima, Mexico

March 2014

The birds were transported without documents. The car was intercepted on the Cuauhtémoc-Colima road. The driver came from the State of Michoacan.



The man is not on his first trafficking deal in the region. 153 other birds were also seized including 8 Atlantic canary (*Serinus canaria*, unlisted in CITES), one verdin (*Auriparus flaviceps*, unlisted in CITES), 33 gray silky-flycatchers (*Ptiliogonys cinereus*, unlisted in CITES), 6 mocking birds (genus *Mimus*, unlisted in CITES), 6 brown-backed solitaire (*Myadestes occidentalis*, unlisted in CITES).

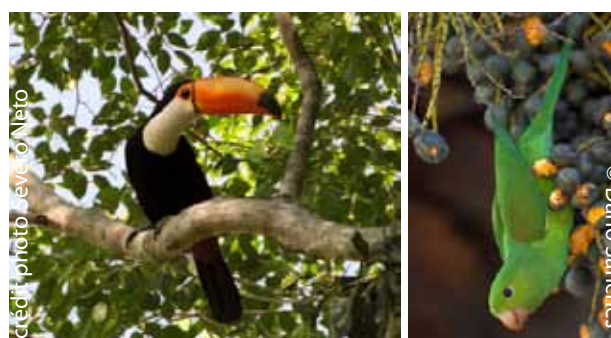


Seizure of 4 toucans (family Ramphastidae) 4 white-eyed parakeets (*Aratinga leucophthalma*, Appendix II), 2 red footed tortoises (*Chelonoidis carbonaria*, Appendix II) and a plain parakeet (*Brotogeris tirica*, Appendix II)

Piratininga, State of Sao Paulo, Brazil

March 21, 2014

The Environmental Police seized the 13 animals protected by Brazilian and international law in an isolated farm.



Ramphastos toco and *Brotogeris tirica*

Seizure of 2 yellow cardinals (*Gubernatrix cristata*, Appendix II)

Yofre, Province of Corrientes, Argentina

March 2014

They were to be sold in the province of Cordoba.

Seizure of 2 toucans (genus *Ramphastos*, Appendix II or III) and other birds

Recife, State of Pernambuco, Brazil

March 30, 2014

The birds which sale is prohibited were displayed on market stalls west of Recife.

Seizure of a white-eyed parakeet (*Aratinga leucophthalma*, Appendix II) and other birds

Bauru, State of Sao Paulo, Brazil

March 31, 2014

The 54 volatiles were detected and seized in 3 distinct houses. The head of the Environmental Police is satisfied. «In three months this year, we proceeded to more seizures than in all of 2013.» He explains this increase by the largest number of patrols and public confidence. The dedicated phone line (14) 3203-2700 or 3203-3034 is increasingly solicited.

ASIA

Conviction of 3 people for poaching of green-necked peafowl (*Pavo muticus*, Appendix II)

Sangli, State of Maharashtra, India

January 9, 2014

October 3, 2013, 2 women, in the process of cooking the peafowls, were caught by the National Park Guards of Chandoli. Before being eaten, the peafowls are hunted for their feathers to be sold. At the same time, a third culprit was placing explosives in the forest to hunt boars. He was later arrested at the Miraj train station. Weapons and accessories used for poaching were seized (scissors, knives, traps, sulfur, matches, ammonium chloride). The culprits aged 27 to 31 years old were sentenced for the illegal entrance in the protected forest, possession of weapons and ammunition and peafowl poaching. They each were sentenced to 3 years of prison and a 160 US\$ fine (Rs 10,000).



Seizure of 6 pink flamingos a which 4 were alive (family *Phoenicopteridae*, Appendix II)

Nalsarovar, State of Gujarat, India

January 2014

Guards are noticing a rise in pink flamingo poaching in this sanctuary. The Nalsarovar Bird Sanctuary covers 12,000 acres. It is listed as a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention since 2012. The migratory birds arrive from Central Asia in October and leave again in April. The pink flamingos are captured with nets. Some are killed on site. Others have their legs twisted or broken to prevent escape. One of the 2 poachers had succeeded, for his part, to escape. This is the fourth act of poaching sanctioned in 6 months. The tactic is always the same. The poachers pretend to be fishermen. They deploy the nets in the take-off area of the birds at the border of the marsh. They go to the other side and make noise with anything. The flamingos are frightened, fly off and get caught in the nets.



Nalsarovar Bird Sanctuary

Poaching of 2100 Houbara bustards (*Chlamydotis undulata*, Appendix I)

Province of Balochistan, Pakistan

From January 11 to 31, 2014

The Saudi Prince loaded up his freezers and batteries. In 3 weeks in Balouchistan, Fahd bin Sultan Abdul Aziz al Saud and his team killed more than 2000 houbara bustards. The steppes desert bird symbolizes all forms of power for the Middle East elite. International Commerce is banned for this species. This did not prevent the Saudi Sultan from taking home 1977 dead bustards.

These birds have been chased down by tamed falcons (see « On the Trail n°3 p. 22). Peshawar is a feather market. Saker falcons and peregrine falcons captured in Russia, China, Afghanistan, or Pakistan are sold there for 500,000 US\$ each good-looking female specimen.

After the dressage period, falcons become members of the falconry teams and hunt bustards in the Emir's service in Tunisia, Algeria and Pakistan. Meanwhile this country forbids the falconry on its territory. For time to time some seizures of captive falcons are made and highly publicized. These bailed out birds were waiting for to be expatriated workers in the Middle East. The final toll of the Arabian Emir's hunting rum actually goes beyond 2000 Houbara bustards. 123 have been attributed to the

attendants, which come with the royal hawking and enable the sumptuous desert convoy to enjoy comfort and total safety.

GANG

Seizure of 4 yellow-crested cockatoos (*Cacatua sulphurea*, Appendix I), 2 palm cockatoos (*Probosciger aterrimus*, Appendix I), 56 violet-necked lory (*Eos squamata*, Appendix II), 29 amazons (genus *Amazona*), 3 pangolins (*Manis spp.* Appendix II), 4 wallabies (probably *Dorcopsulus vanheurni*, not listed in CITES), 1 black-headed Caique (*Pionites melanocephalus*, Appendix II)
Port of Lipata, Surigao City, Region of Caraga, Philippines

February 15, 2014

In the port of Lipata, near the village of Surigao, north of the Mindanao Island, the 4x4 Toyota was about to embark on the *Maria Vanessa* to arrive at Liloan, province south of Leyte, to then reach Manila, the capital. Investigators think that the animals, most of which are endemic of Indonesia, first came by the Celebes Sea and were smuggled in the south of the Mindanao island, in the Sarangani Bay, near the village of General Santos.

The 2 passengers of the intercepted vehicle did in fact admit to having taken delivery of the captive animals in the Sarangani province. "This is a big case put together by an international gang" according the department of environmental crimes in Manille. Certainly a big deal but a small penalty; The 2 links of this criminal chain risk a maximum of 6 months of prison and 50,000P (1120 US\$) fine.



Maria Vanessa



Eos squamata



Dorcopsulus vanheurni



SECOND EPISODE

Seizure of 24 dusky lorries (*Pseudeos fuscata*, Appendix II), 2 palm cockatoos (*Probosciger aterrimus*, Appendix I), 2 white cockatoos (*Cacatua alba*, Appendix II), a long-beaked Echidna (*Zaglossus bruijini*, Appendix II), 3 pesquet's parrots (*Psittrichas fulgidus*, Appendix II), a Malaysian box turtle (*Cuora amboinensis*, Appendix II)
Glan, Region of Soccsksargen, Philippines
February 22, 2014

The boat came from the Halmahera Island in the archipelago of Moluccas, Indonesia. It was boarded by the customs in the Sarangani bay, close to of the Mindanao Island, Philippines. The crew was composed of 5 Filipinos, including a father and his son. It had been recruited to convey of the wildlife by sea. Leonilo Lomokso, head of the troop admitted, "the transport of wildlife is my means of subsistence." He remains a poor care taker. Many animals were dead on board and many others died in quarantine despite the veterinarian care: "they died of hunger, thirst and stress from the sea voyage".

Filipino services in charge of wildlife on the island of Mindanao believe they are dealing here with a large chain of smuggling and made the connection with the seizure that occurred on land north of the island of Mindanao.

Animals are the same or resembling and are all from the Moluccas and Papua, the Indonesian Papua contiguous to Papua New Guinea. «We think it is the same order split into 2 batches.»



Petaurus breviceps



Pseudeos fuscata



Zaglossus bruijini

Poaching of flamingos (family Phoenicopteridae, Appendix II)

Phunde village, Maharashtra, India

February 19, 2014

Beaks, feathers and bones were found near the village. Flamingos arrive in October-November from the North and Iran and feed on plankton in the marshes of Uran. This wetland was a favourite feeding spot for flamingos and other migratory birds. It is becoming a wasteland and loses ground to the extension of new economic activities and port area, less wet but more lucrative.

The spokesperson for the NGO Friends of Nature is outraged. «The Indian tradition of hospitality is violated!», «The migratory flamingos get double sentence: they have less and less to eat and in addition they are hunted...»

After period of calm, flamingo hunting is developing. Flamingo meat is sold under the name «special chicken».

Seizure of 13 Alexandrine Parakeets (*Psittacula eupatria*, Appendix II)

Coimbatore, State of Tamil Nadu, India

March 3, 2014

The birds were seized on the fish market of Ukadam where they were put to sale for 2000 Rs (32 US\$) a piece. The high rate of capture threatens the species with nearing extinction.



Seizure of 25 barn owls (*Tyto alba*, Appendix II), 25 Alexandrine parakeets (*Psittacula eupatria*, Appendix II) and black kites (*Milvus migrans*, Appendix II)

Mumbai, State of Maharashtra, India

March 28, 2014

191 birds and bats were discovered in the sheds of a man posing as a rescuer of wounded birds. It hosted 25 beautiful barn owls who are known to be used as martyrs in Indian witchcraft and 95 black kites.

The parakeets' wings were cut.

The owner of the place, Gabriel D'Souza, claims to have often called the forestry services to come pick up rehabilitated birds for release in the forest.

On the other side, police and justice are sceptical. The Indian State of Maharashtra is a wildlife traffic hot spot.



EUROPE

Seizure of 100 live red-billed leiothrix (*Leiothrix lutea*, Appendix II)

A9 motorway around Montpellier Region Languedoc-Roussillon, France

February 17, 2014

About a 100 live red-billed leiothrix, also known as Japan nightingale, were stuck in the trunk of a car. Each one is worth € 105 to 500 on the French market. The species is native to the Himalayas, Myanmar and Vietnam. Some escaped from captivity and colonized the Bearn area. They would be about 1000 around Pau city. Some couples would even have nested in the forest of Montmorency, Ile-de-France. The 2 traffickers were left free. Their car was seized. According to Customs, the seized birds were entrusted to «a rescue center in the Landes.»



Seizure of bustards

Malta International Airport, Luqa Local Council, Malta

February 23, 2014

Falconry is active in Azerbaijan and bustards are victims of this practice.

Remember that hawks are captured in their natural environment before being educated into hunting. Malta Customs found 50 birds trophies in a hunter luggage returning from Azerbaijan via Frankfurt, Germany. Among the 50 birds, 15 are protected and listed in Appendix I of the EU Birds Directive.



3 bustard species present in Azerbaijan are listed in CITES Appendix I or II : the Houbara bustard (*Chlamydotis undulata*, Appendix I), the great bustard (*Otis tarda*, Appendix II) and the little bustard (*Tetrax tetrax*, Appendix II). Tour operators organize hunting trips there.



The ex-American Passenger Pigeon



September 1st 1914, the last Passenger pigeon died in the Cincinnati zoo. Frozen in a block of ice and conveyed by train to Washington, then stuffed and exhibited in the Smithsonian Institute, Martha almost had the right to a national funeral amidst a population that had other troubles and other calls for compassion than respect for biodiversity but who, here and there behind the scenes in science, politics and the intelligentsia, felt the worry and guilt of having pushed in less than 100 years a species of several billion individuals to extinction.

Ectopistes migratorius, the American Passenger pigeon, wanderer and migrator, fed on beechnuts, acorns, nuts, fruits, berries, juniper tree buds and on the side, worms and snails. The species was dependent on half of the virgin eastern forests in the United States and Canada where the maple, oak, beech and walnut trees were associated. The passenger pigeons could not settle to a single-species forest cover. The diversity of deciduous trees, most importantly the oak-beech tree combination, guaranteed them food autonomy despite the cyclic production of the trees that provided their food. When acorns grew scarce, they would eat beechnuts or chestnuts.

It was believed that there were billions of them, but in fact there was only one. They possessed techniques of collective reconnaissance flights and an assortment of visual and acoustic devices that allowed them over a territory and canopy of millions of square kilometers to identify the most fertile sectors to gather, to nest, to feed and to drink.

They would alternate every year between the spring and summer seasons with the oaks of Wisconsin and Minnesota and the beech trees of Michigan and Pennsylvania.

On the way to southern wintering, the scout pigeons would determine in autumn, before the snowfall, the best grain spots and on return after the snow melted would help the larger group relocate these appropriate sectors. On the ground, on the seed mat, the eaters would regularly emit characteristic acoustic messages relayed under another vocal form by the perched bird to "radioguide" those in flight. After the snow melted, the gatherings could cover 1000 to 2000 km² and include up to 100 million birds. Density of the colonies was proportionate to the availability of food resources.

Pressure from local predators, foxes, raptors, weasels and wolves was by all means insufficient to inflict harm to the intergenerational equilibrium of the species and to their future. Native American tribes and the first waves of immigration were not numerous, equipped, well organized and motivated enough to bring down the entire species. But when the European immigration swept in the 19th century, things turned ugly.

The passenger pigeon was successively confronted with 2 major difficulties:

Deforestation:

40 million immigrants landed in New York in the 19th century had the same distribution area as the passenger pigeon. Forests were cut down for fuelwood. The largest trees were first to fall. Oaks have their highest acorn production at 100 years old, beech trees do not produce beechnuts before age 50. Fuelwood for human populations devoured the food forest for all grain eating birds and passenger pigeons especially, a strong consumer individually and as a group. As an example, 95 % of trees in Connecticut in 1909 were tree shoots less than 30 years old. Added to the fuelwood, 2 other reasons, compelling and territorially invasive, were imposed: the need for railway sleepers and the conversion of the majority of forests to agricultural land. In consequence, at the beginning of the decade 1880-1890, the habitat of the passenger pigeon was fragmented and reduced to parcels less than 50 acres large dominated by the young and unproductive trees from the point of view of the passenger pigeon and not adapted to its gregarious organization.

Hunting:

It reached the point of no return and a fatal apotheosis in the second half of the 19th century. Deforestation eased access to the more remote territories for hunters. Development of the telegraph and refrigerated transport facilitated information on the location of the main colonies for thousands of professional hunters and transport of the game to New York where it rapidly became fashionable in restaurants to eat ballotine of pigeon a la Madison squab sauce.

On street corners, pigeons were sold by the dozen, for a few 10 cent coins. Pigeons were caught with nets, killed with guns, pummeled in the nests, stunned by lighted sulfur at the foot of perching trees. Entire flocks were slaughtered as they passed above fields of wheat and corn they hoped to feed on. Hunting also became a hobby, ball-traps spread all over with mechanical launching machines that would fire live pigeons into the air, ancestors of the clay pigeons. Before being shot dead, there was the transportation, a deadly migration for our sorely missed travelling pigeon.

Springtime massacres were impressive. In 1871, in Wisconsin, 1,200,000 were trapped or shot. In 1878, in Petoskey in Michigan, 50,000 pigeons were killed per day. In 1879, professional hunting came to an end. There were more hunters than surviving pigeon colonies.

Political response was late and ineffective. In 1887, Michigan outlawed hunting with nets in a 2 mile (3km) radius around the colonies. In 1897, the same State banned hunting for a 10 year period.

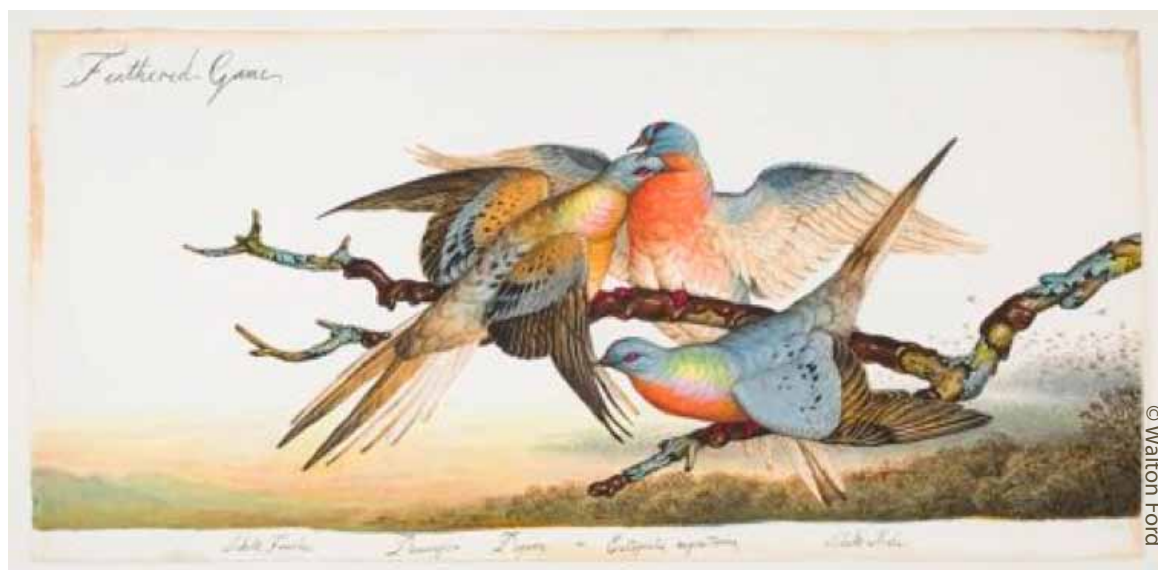
In 1900, the Lacey Act is enforced on the whole United States territory. It regulates and restricts bird hunting. Tears are shed inside the House of Representatives over the passenger pigeons' agony.

From 1909 to 1912, the Union of American Ornithologists offered a 1500 US\$ reward to whomever would report a passenger pigeon brood or a colony.

In 1916, the Treaty for the protection of migratory birds between Canada and the United- States is enforced.

No good. Too late. 100 years later the best specialists understand: habitat fragmentation, frenetic deforestation, drastic decline of food resources and the incapacity to change behaviour and social links led to extinction of the multibillionaire passenger pigeon. Hunting finished him off.

They would fly in groups over long distances at speeds of 90km/hour. They were blue with touches of gray, red, silver brown and black. Males were an average 40cm in length. The female were slightly smaller.



Pangolins

The 8 pangolin species *Manis spp.* (4 African and 4 Asian) are listed in Appendix II.

The seizure from 1st January to 31th March is equal to 2754 pangolins (operation COBRA II excluded)

Taking the average weight of 3.5kg per animal and 3 pangolins for 1 kg of scales.

ASIA

Seizure of 14 kg of pangolin scales
District of Sankhuwasabha, Eastern Development Region, Nepal
January 2014

The region is a breach in the borders between North India, Nepal, Tibet and China. Bear parts, bones and feline skins, ivory compose part of the traffic. This scale smuggler was a regular. The scales were transported with dried fish. They sold on this transborder market between Rs 65,000 and 85,000 per kilo. The Nepalese officials of the Makalu Barun National Park said that the regional population of Chinese pangolins (*Manis pentadactyla*) is on its way to extinction.

Seizure of 86 pangolins
Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan, Indonesia
January 4, 2014

The 12 crates of frozen shrimp contained in fact frozen pangolins. The truck was searched in the port area. The terrestrial mammals were destined to the Surabaya port on the Java Island. The final destination could be China.



Seizure of more than 2 kg of pangolin scales
Dandeli, State of Karnataka, India
January 2014

Scales of *Manis crassicaudata*, the great Indian pangolin, were kept in a store, a hub for regular traffic. The network including collecting hunters and scale removers is the target of investigators.

Seizure of 26 live pangolins
Fangchenggang, Province of Guangxi, China
January 9, 2014

The road security patrols saved the pangolins from an imminent death. The driving was dangerous. The license plates were false. The car was intercepted on the express way in direction of Nanning (Guangxi). The pangolins were taken to a shelter before it is to be decided on their fate, a zoo or a release. The animals weigh between 3 and 4 kg.



Seizure of 300 kg of pangolin meat (90 individuals)
Palangka Raya, Province of Central Kalimantan, Indonesia

January 20 2014

The wholesaler in pangolin meat had been running this business for 3 years. Now 24 years old, he started very early in environmental crime. The meat was seized in freezers. It can not be excluded that the discovery of this traffic is linked with the seizure on January 4.



Seizure of 263 kg of pangolin scales
Hanoi, Region of Red River Delta, Vietnam
January 23, 2014

The fake GPL gas tank of the car that came from Laos and had been rented to the restaurant owner contained 6 bags stamped with the Kenyan label and so far known to contain plastic trinkets and textile articles. They were filled with pangolin scales, strange alcohol and cosmetic products. The driver tried to calm things by putting a good sum of money on the table. The police did not succumb to the attempted corruption.

Seizure of 39 live pangolins
Fangchenggang, Province of Guangxi, China
January 24, 2014

This road is very popular among pangolins. After the vehicle was stopped at 3:00 a.m., one of the 2 passengers managed to escape. The police immediately detected a suspicious odor. The pangolins were in the back, rolled up in boxes.



Some were tied up



Others hurt

Seizure of 7 kg of pangolins
Benazir Bhutto International Airport, Federal Territory of Islamabad, Pakistan
January 27, 2014

There were 7 kilos of pangolins cut into pieces in the luggage of a Chinese passenger.

Seizure of pangolin scales
Katmandou, Center Region, Nepal
January 30, 2014

Another scales peddler caught by police in Kathmandu !

Seizure of 32 kg of pangolin scales
Wenzhou, Province of Zhejiang, China
January 31, 2014

The secret was hidden in 2 postal packages. The scales were packed in aluminum and plastic sheets. The global financial value is 4,000 yuans (650 US\$) per kg i.e. 128,000 yuans (20,800 US\$). The biological value is equivalent to 80 pangolins captured in the wild.

Seizure of 2722 g of pangolin scales
District of Tengchong, Province of Yunnan, China

February 16, 2014

Close to the frontier with Myanmar, China seized the byproducts of 4 pangolins.



Seizure of 15 live pangolins
Pasaman, Province of West Sumatra, Indonesia
February 18, 2014

15 bags containing pangolins and birds were found in the luggage hold of a bus. The driver was questioned. He claimed to not know what was in the packages, nor to know who were the sender and receiver. He was taking a nap when the bags were given to him. He was only to telephone to Medan on arrival for the receiver to come pick them up. A tip off enabled police to intercept the load. The pangolins were put under the care of a Center for the conservation of natural resources (BKSDA).

Seizure of 1019g of pangolin scales
Zhuhai, Province of Guangdong, China
February 19, 2014

A little over a kg of scales was found in the computer case thanks to sniffer customs who smelled the stench. Gongbei is the port of entry to China from Macao.

Seizure of a live pangolin
Kepahiang, Province of Bengkulu, Indonesia
February 24, 2014

The pangolin was crossing a countryside road near midnight. 2 men on a motorcycle passing by decided to catch him. He weighed 3 kg. Soon later, passing in front of the hospital, the 2 motorcycles were halted by an unexpected police block. Under one of the men's jacket, there was the pangolin. He will be released without being subjected to questioning.

Court appearance of 5 people for pangolin trafficking

District of Chaling, Province of Hunan, China
February 2014

In the BMW there were 5 passengers and a pangolin in the trunk. Investigations showed that the small enterprise was quite successful. About 400 individuals were victims. Before being sold to restaurants, they were force-fed noodles to fatten them up and make a little more money to ride in a BMW.

Seizure of 5 pangolins (32 kg)
Thanh Hoa, Province of Thanh Hoa, Vietnam
February 2014

The car was traveling from the south to Hanoi or the Chinese border.

Seizure of 8 pangolins including 5 live ones
Bengkalis, Province of Riau, Indonesia
March 3, 2014

Smuggling was prepared in the mangrove between the Bengkalis Island and continental Malaysia. The custom maritime officers stayed on post all night to catch the fishermen in the act. Nobody came looking for blue bags. In it, there were 8 pangolins including 3 who were already dead.

Seizure of live pangolin, 1.4 kg of pangolin scales and a live monitor lizard (*Varanus spp.*, Appendix I or II)
Wenshan, Province of Yunnan, China
March 6, 2014

The 4 computer cases contained 1 kg of scales, a live pangolin of an exceptional size (7.2 kg) and a live monitor lizard exfiltrated from Vietnam.



Seizure of 73 kg of pangolin scales
Haji AsanSampit Airport, Province of Central Kalimantan, Indonesia
March 10, 2014

The recipient is NFTA (Not Found at This Address). The expeditor is anonymous. The scales represent 200 to 250 Sunda pangolins (*Manis javanica*). The packages were brought to the airport by 2 unknown people, who had fled quickly when airport agents looked at the parcels with circumspection.



© Balai Konservasi Sumber Daya Alam Seksi Wilayah II Pangkalan Bun

Seizure of pangolin skin
Tengnoupal, State of Manipur, India
March 11, 2014

Who wants boots or shoes made of pangolin scaled leather?

Seizure of 6 pangolins
District of Lianghe, Autonomous Dai and Jingpo Prefecture of Dehong, Province of Yunnan, China
March 18, 2014

The 6 pangolins were in the trunk of a sedan. The driver is in prison.

The district of Lianghe is about 50 km from the border with Myanmar.

Seizure of 18.3 kg of pangolin scales
National Highway 102, State of Bihar, India
March 21, 2014

Smuggling between Assam and Myanmar.

Seizure of 95 kg of pangolin
Yen Le, Thanh Hóa Province, Vietnam
March 2014

26 pangolins or 95 kg were seized in a car.



Seizure of 37 pangolins
Province of Udon Thani, Thailand
March 25, 2014

37 pangolins in a truck licensed in Bangkok were in plastic boxes. The 2 drivers were not aware that pangolins are protected animals. The police do not believe this fib.

Seizure of 169 pangolins
Province of Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand
March 28, 2014

There were 169 pangolins in the truck that were taken in the fatal direction of China via Laos. Yum yum. The 2 drivers were in charge of part of the voyage. They had already done this mission 5 times. The planned route in Thailand was 1,200 km long.

Seizure of 52 pangolins
Mai Son, Province of Ninh Bình, Vietnam
March 2014

Always rolled into a ball in adversity, our 52 pangolins friends were rolling to Hanoi caught in nets. The police officers did not provide much detail: they weighed 197.3 kg.



**Seizure of 145 kg of pangolin scales
Islamabad Benazir Bhutto Airport, province of
Pendjab, Pakistan
March 31, 2014**

Thai Airways almost illegally exported 145 kg of scales composing the main load of the bags of 2 Chinese voyagers and reaching according to estimations of Pakistani experts the price of 150,000 US\$ (PKR 15 millions). The scale loot was seized but the 2 Chinese thieves have flown for Hong Kong after having filled out formalities and without paying a fine.

Pangolin poaching in Pakistan is increasing. The *Manis crassicaudata* are pursued on the plateau of Potohar. The species is adapted to dry habitats. Healers use the scales as well as the flesh and fat. The skin is used to fabricate ornamental clothes and shoes. The violence that has been raging in Pakistan over the last decade has without a doubt also reactivated the use of pangolin scales as shields and bulletproof vests. The experts of the Wildlife Management of Rawalpindi University confirm that the pangolins are plunged alive into boiling water to make easier pulling off the scales. They cite the discovery of 45 pangolin corpses including 8 juveniles stripped of their scales at the entrance of an abandoned gallery. Poaching is family business; the children are involved. The report evokes an export channel to China via Islamabad and Lahore. Pakistani specialists fear a short term loss of the regional population of pangolins and recommend sanction reinforcements and listing of the species to Appendix I of CITES.



Ebay

**Seizure of pangolin scales
Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport, Pro-
vince of Guangdong, China
March 31, 2014**

With a total weight of 40 kg, the frozen lizards and pangolin scales were in the luggage belonging to 2 Chinese passengers coming from Cambodia.

**The Species Survival Network -SSN- has just
created a Working Group dedicated to pan-
golins.**

It will focus on the poaching and legal and illegal trade of the 8 species of African and Asian pangolins. The goal is to better the protection of populations in the countries of range, transit and consumption of pangolins and their scales, as well as to provide information about the essential role in the ecosystem of this little known mammal. This working group includes Animal Welfare Institute, Annamiticus, Born Free Foundation, Care for the Wild, Environmental Investigation Agency, International Environmental Law Project/Lewis & Clark Law School, Pro Wildlife E.V., Robin des Bois, Tikki Hywood Trust and Wildlife Protection Society of India.



Primates

AFRICA

Seizure of a live chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I)

Douala, Region of Littoral, Cameroon

January 17, 2014

"Mademoiselle Chinoise" is about 13 months. She served as an attraction in a Chinese restaurant, the Shanghai, somewhat of a hostess there to entertain and relax the clientele.

She suffered from liver troubles. Her new veterinarians think that the restaurant owners gave her alcohol to drink; maybe even the clients.

"Mademoiselle Chinoise" was saved by the Limb Wildlife Center (LWC) who after receiving an alert contacted LAGA and the Cameroonian Minister of Forests and Fauna (MINFOF) and a NGO specialized in the care of primates, Pandrillus.

She is still in captivity but in much better conditions. She is in quarantine under medical surveillance and must be soon, if all goes well, introduced in the chimpanzee "nursery" managed by LWC. There, she will have the chance to grow up and become again a chimpanzee, after having been sold as an animal attraction and having without a doubt witnessed her parents' slaughter by hunters in search of bush meat.



Seizure of a live collared mangabey (*Cercocebus torquatus*, Appendix II)

Douala, Region of Littoral, Cameroon

March 6, 2014

During the day, the monkey was kept on a 1.5 m long rope leash and at night he was locked in a cage inside a welding workshop. Care-takers of the Limbe shelter came to get him.



Seizure of a live chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I)

Franceville, Province of High Ogowe, Gabon

March 12, 2014

An individual detained the female adult chimpanzee. She was given anaesthesia so that she could be transferred to the International Center of Medical Research in Franceville. After a complete check-up, she should be transferred to the sanctuary of the Park Exploitation Society of Lekedi and join a group of her own kind.



AMERICA

Seizure of a live vervet monkey (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*, Appendix II) and a live Japanese macaque (*Macaca fuscata*, Appendix II)

North Middleton Township, State de Pennsylvania, United States

January 31, 2014

Called about an attempted burglary, police officers discovered 50 animals living in unsanitary conditions. 3 days later, the animals were seized. The 2 monkeys were living in cages. After a period of quarantine and rehabilitation, they will, if possible, be admitted in the main enclosure of 75 acres of the Dilley sanctuary managed by Born Free USA with the 600 other primates who live there.



Chlorocebus pygerythrus

Lady Gaga bitten by a loris (genus *Nycticebus*, Appendix I)

Hearst Castle, State of California, United States

February 2014

The slow loris, perhaps informed about the Lady's inclination for fur and raw meat, bit her in the backstage area of her new promotional clip. A kangaroo and an «exotic goat» were part of the casting. The slow loris, rented out by an animal exhibitor, was fired from the shooting.



FAMILY AFFAIRS

Seizure of one live common marmoset (*Callithrix jacchus*, Appendix II)

Waterbury, Connecticut State, United States

February 4, 2014

Aladdin is a marmoset. The girl of the house, 10 years old, opened the cage. She was clawed in the face or bitten by the minuscule - he can be held in the palm of a hand- but unpredictable primate. Her mother applied Bacitracin on the wound, nothing more. The next day, the school called the police, teachers considered the health risks of the aggression should not be underestimated.

The case got out of hand. In Connecticut, it is illegal to have a monkey as a pet. In South Carolina, it is legal to have a marmoset in your home. Aladdin was bought in South Carolina and imported to Connecticut. The mother of the family is accused of illegally keeping an exotic animal and having exposed a minor to the sanitary risks.

The DEEP (Department of Energy and Environmental Protection) put the marmoset in quarantine in a zoo. The mother of the family was freed under the bail of 500 US\$ and is waiting for her Court hearing in the weeks to come.



Will National Assemblies follow the marmosets' example?

Marmosets' conversational skills allow one who speaks to be sure of having been listened to and understood. They do not speak at the same time and do not cut each other off. In conversations, they wait about 5 seconds after the precedent speakers' vocalization before responding. In the lush forests of South America, the marmosets, whose maximum body size is 27 cm, often lose sight of each other and acoustic signals are essential to enable social connections, access to food, mutual aid, warnings of intrusion and education of the young. Daniel Takahashi and Asif Ghazanfar, researchers of the Neuroscience Institute and Psychology Department of Princeton University, also think that this few seconds waiting time allows the receptor marmoset to better analyze what the emitter marmoset has said.

This language ritual perhaps unique in the animal kingdom does not seem subjected to disturbances and scientists hope one day, from the exemplary conduct of marmosets, to find what in the learning and practice of dialogue between the members of the human species often induces breaches in communication.

ASIA

Seizure of 3 live chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*, Appendix I) and 5 live marmosets (family *Calitrichidae*)

Kolkata, State of Western Bengal, India

January 22, 2014

3 chimpanzees found in the backyard of an Indian trafficker of Kolkata illustrates the globalization of rare or exotic animal traffic. There are 2 hypotheses on the origin of these great apes.

1. The monkeys were raised in Singapore – a deemed running practice- and they were sent to India via Myanmar and Bangladesh. The first part of the trip was made by plane, the second part by road. The NGO Compassionate Crusaders Trust privileges this hypothesis.

2. The monkeys were captured in Nigeria and imported in India via Dubai, Singapore, Bangladesh, and Sunderbans, transborder region between Bangladesh and India.

The trafficker had the intention of reselling them to a zoo or to an attraction park little bothered by the legality of its guests' origin, such as it has already happened for 2 chimpanzees sold in Mumbai and Chennai by the same trafficker. Instead, the chimpanzees were taken in by the Alipore zoo in Kolkata, where they will be on show to the public after a period of quarantine.

The direction of the zoo saw there a legal opportunity to rebuild its stock of chimpanzees, since the female recently died and the male is very old. Jane Goodall, the "sister" of all wild chimpanzees, said she is relieved that the 3 chimpanzees were not separated from one another and that they can profit from social proximity essential to their survival.



Pan troglodytes

GANG

Seizure of 4 live baby silvery gibbons (*Hylobates moloch*, Appendix I), 4 live baby siamangs (*Symphalangus syndactylus*, Appendix I) and 2 live palm cockatoos (*Probosciger aterrimus*, Appendix I)

Bali, Archipelago of the small islands of Sonda, Indonesia

January 2014

The trafficker specialized in smuggling living animals was arrested. He is thought to be linked with

illegal networks in Russia, Thailand, Singapore and Cyprus. The siamangs were destined to Russia according to the investigation. Last month, the wild animals broker had delivered cockatoo beaks and turtles in Singapore and 2 Komodo dragons (*Varanus komodoensis*, Appendix I) in Thailand. This lizard is listed in the vulnerable category. They are the biggest lizard in the world. Adults measure up to 3 meters, 2 on average, for a weight of 80 kilos. An adult can kill a deer or buffalo. It is venomous. Because of their size, they have inspired many legends.

In 2008, the number of adult silvery gibbons alive in the wild was around 2500. The species is endemic to Java, strictly tree bound and diurnal. The siamang is still surviving in Indonesia, in Malaysia and Thailand. They are tree bound. They are essentially threatened by the conversions of the forests into industrial plantations and capture for the pet trade. Palm cockatoos live in Indonesia, Australia and Papua New Guinea. There is no recent census.



Seizure of a live crab-eating macaque (*Macaca fascicularis*, Appendix II)

District of Phu Quoc, Province of Kien Giang, Vietnam

January 2014

He was freed thanks to a call from an informant of the NGO Education for Nature – Vietnam. The owner accepted to give the animal to authorities. The crab-eating macaque was released back into nature on March 5th.

Conviction of a man for illegal possession of wild animals

Singapore

February 6, 2014

Mr. Ong housed in his apartment a slow loris, serpents, turtles, frogs, 3 prairie dogs and lizards of course in deplorable conditions. "On the trail" talks about this case in its first issue (page 9). During the trial, it was not proved he was part of an international gang. However, suspicion of illegal trade is heavy. He was sentenced to a 41,000 S\$ fine (32,000 US\$). The law has set a maximum fine for this offense that could be 10 times more.

The NGO ACRES (Animal Concerns Research and Education Society) deems the penalty to be minor and non dissuasive. Mr. Ong has avoided prison and ACRES says, with supporting documents, that the owners of strictly protected animals with



simple domestic and ornamental uses without the intention of any trade, in the past have been sentenced to a prison sentence. The NGO hopes that the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority, author of the dragnet at Mr. Ong's is going to form an appeal. ACRES is especially upset because the day before the judgment was pronounced, a slow loris abandoned on the banks of Bedok Lake was taken in by their care center. Despite the provided care, the small-dehydrated animal died some hours later.



Conviction for having hunted and killed a Bornean orangutan (*Pongo pygmaeus*, Appendix I) Lahad Datu, State of Sabah, Malaysia

February 12, 2014

More tortures on an orangutan. The 2 workers in the oil palm plantations beat up an orangutan with sticks and parangs (broad and curved knives) after having tied him with a nylon cord. They wanted to "get revenge". They did not say of what exactly. The Bornean orangutans are considered pests on the plantations. The poor victim died from his wounds and from brain haemorrhage.

The 2 criminals were sentenced to 30 months of prison for capturing the animal and 18 supplementary months for having beaten him to death.



Seizure a live crab-eating macaque (*Macaca fascicularis*, Appendix II)

Singapore

February 15, 2014

The occupants of the house describe themselves as "animal lovers" ready to collect the orphans and the abandoned. The ACRES NGO did not believe in this romance. The monkey who was less than 2 years old coexisted with a squirrel and rabbits. The intervention of AVA made at least one happy: at the opening of the cage, the squirrel succeeded to escape climbing the trees.



Seizure of 18 macaques (genus *Macaca*, Appendix I or II) including 15 live ones Handan, Province of Hebei, China

February 25, 2014

Between the starting point of the monkeys in the luggage compartment of the bus and the point of arrival, there were 2,300 km and 48 hours of a nightmare.

Conviction for the slaughter of 3 silvered langurs (*Trachypithecus villosus*, Appendix II)

Province of Kien Giang, Vietnam

March 5, 2014

4 poachers were sentenced to 2 and 2 and half years prison terms.



One of the victims

Good news

This langur *Pygathrix cinerea* was set free by the poachers thanks to the help of a school teacher. The animal activist is well known in the Kon Tum region. He hung an ENV banner on the front of his home. There are so many notables and state representatives around the world who profit from environmental criminality, it is urgent to pay a tribute to the actions of a defender of animal life on the high plateau in the center of Vietnam.



Seizure of a live macaque (*Macaca spp.*, Appendix I ou II)

Province of Dong Nai, Vietnam

March 11, 2014

A person close to the animal cause called ENV to inform them of the presence of a macaque in a restaurant. The monkey will return to the forest soon.



Seizure of live loris (genus *Nycticebus*, Appendix I)

Hanoi, Vietnam

March 13, 2014

A young person had illegally acquired him one year ago then gave him to a relative one month ago. But during a visit he realized that the loris lived in bad conditions, the former owner contacted the NGO Education for Nature - Vietnam. The animal was transferred to the primates' shelter of Cuc Phuong Park.



Seizure of live long-tailed macaque (*Macaca fascicularis*, Appendix II) and a live pig-tailed macaque (*Macaca nemestrina*, Appendix II)

Province of Binh Duong, Vietnam

March 14, 2014

Once more it's the ENV hotline that enabled their liberation.



EUROPE

Seizure of a live common marmoset (*Callithrix jacchus*, Appendix II)

Weil-am-Rhein, Land of Bade-Württemberg, Germany

January 2014

He said he was transporting a cat in a shoebox. When it was opened, the German Customs discovered a strange wild animal who turned out to be a marmoset from Brazil. The Italian conductor entered in Germany coming from Bâle in Switzerland. The fate of the marmoset is still not set. He will not be returned to Brazil, unless of a miracle. After a period of quarantine and eradication of parasites from his coat, he could be taken to a zoo.

Seizure of a live ring-tailed lemur (*Lemur catta*, Appendix I)

Perpignan, Region Languedoc-Roussillon, France

March 1, 2014

The animal, an adult male, was used as an exhibit in a fair by an animal trainer who did not have the legal documents. The ring-tailed lemur was set under the care of a organism specialized in sheltering seized animals, Tonga Terre d'Accueil, in an annex of the Saint-Martin-La-Plaine zoo near Lyon.

Vicuñas and Guanacos

AMERICA

Poaching of 93 vicuñas (*Vicugna vicugna*, Appendix II in this area)

Viscapalca, Province of Huaytará, Peru

January 2014

Contrary to certain experts' affirmations, the massacre of vicuñas continues despite the establishment of some sort of vicuña wool cartel in the Andean countries. One kg of vicuña wool can be sold between 300 and 500 US\$.

Seizure of 3 vicuñas (*Vicugna vicugna*, Appendix II in this area)

Paso de San Francisco, Province of Catamarca, Argentina

February 2014



3 vicuñas were found cut in pieces in the trunk of the car on the 602 national highway. Their wool was not found.

Poaching of at least 120 vicuñas (*Vicugna vicugna*, Appendix II in this area)

San Pedro Region Ayacucho, Peru

February 2, 2014

Poachers broke down the park gates with their 4 wheeler. Vicuñas were shot dead and brutally mowed, depriving local communities of sustainable wool profits and the natural park of 120 herbivores involved in the maintenance of highlands biodiversity by their diet, excrements and mobility. The average yield of vicuña wool is 200 g every 2 years.

Seizure of 500 kg of guanaco meat (*Lama guanicoe*, Appendix II)

Sarmiento, Chubut Province, Argentina

March 2, 2014

The law is clear. Guanaco hunting is permitted but under certain conditions: only males can be slaughtered at one per day per hunter and only certain weapons are allowed.

In this case, the 3 hunters were in breach: they carried 17 shoulders which is at least 5 animals and they did not have permits. It is also impossible to determine whether females were part of the shooting.

2 caliber .308 and .223 rifles with telescopic lenses and 3 knives were recovered.

Poaching of 20 vicuñas (*Vicugna vicugna*, Appendix I)

Los Flamencos National Reserve, Antofagasta Region, Chile

March 2014

The vicuñas were probably chased with dirt bikes to exhaustion. According to forensic veterinarians, they were also hampered in their race by wooden poles. The meat was not stolen. The purpose of the band was mowing the wool off the dead vicuñas.

Seizure of 500 kg of guanaco meat (*Lama guanicoe*, Appendix II)

National Route 3, Trelew, Chubut Province, Argentina

March 23, 2014

It is night. The truck undergoes a routine check. Inside, police discover 27 to 30 dead animals cut up. Certain parts are frozen. The killing lasted many days and the meat was frozen gradually. The purpose was to sell it in shops. The driver was alone and was carrying no weapons. He was freed but will have to come pay his bail. As for the meat, it was incinerated, there was no assurance that the cold chain had been respected so it cannot be given to charity.



Poaching of 122 vicuñas (*Vicugna vicugna*, Appendix II)

Pampas of Puquio, Region of Ayacucho, Peru

March 2014

The poachers had been in the area since the beginning of the month. They took advantage of the rainy season and of the governor of the region's decision to suspend the anti-poaching surveillance program. This decision was made in 2012 for financial reasons and reactivated vicuña hunting. Only the vicuñas' capture and shearing the wool is allowed under strict conditions prescribed by the CITES Convention.

In the province of Lucanas, 322 families live off the legal trade of wool. 24,000 vicuñas are scattered over about 13,000 ha. Demand for vicuña wool far exceeds the supply. The Loro Piana Company, one of the big players in the market, sells scarves in vicuña wool at 4000 US\$.

Poachers are very aggressive with local farmers.

The president of the Lucanas community, supported by the people, demands that the surveillance plan be reactivated and for police forces to be sent to the area.



Felines

Tiger (*Panthera tigris*), leopard (*Panthera pardus*), jaguar (*Panthera onca*) and ocelot (*Leopardus pardalis*) are in Appendix I.

Total from 1st January to 31th March

**78 skins, carcasses and stuffed animals seized
12 poached**

AFRIQUE

**Seizure of 2 leopard skins
West Cameroon
February 2014**



2 less leopards

**Poaching of 2 lions (*Panthera leo*, Appendix II)
Tembé Elephant Park, Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
March 2014**

A series of traps in the savannah took the adult lion and the young lioness. The lion was decapitated. Its head has disappeared. It has been delivered to one of the countless healers of South Africa, practicing "muti", a traditional medicine of the body and soul that heals and prevents sicknesses and protects the victims from bad luck spells thrown by ancestors or live enemies. The vials of skull extract from hippopotami, lions, vultures as well as other animals are available in specialized markets or in pharmacies. The lion bone based potion with vegetable and animal ingredients "guarantees" to those who buy it and consume it according to prescription, the strength of a lion. It's as simple as that.



Mai Mai market

**Seizure of leopard skin
Bangangté, Western Region, Cameroon
March 19, 2014**

In the town center of Bangangté, eco-guards of the Divisional Delegation of Forestry and Wildlife in collaboration with police forces have arrested an individual who was about to sell the skin. There are no leopards in the Western region of Cameroon although the traffic of skin is important there. The felines are probably trapped in the south or east of the country in the forests of the Congo Basin. Cameroon is a transit country for animal ornaments originating from Congo, the Central African Republic, and Zaire. This is the fourth leopard skin seized near the Douala port since the beginning of the year.



AMERICA

**Seizure of 2 live baby tigers
Phoenix and Gilbert, State of Arizona, United States
January 1 and 4, 2014**

The 2 are of the same litter, 90 kg, 8 months, and natives of Texas. They were first identified on Facebook. A call from an inhabitant of Phoenix, Arizona enabled to locate one of the tigers. He had seen the tiger many times in his neighbour's garden. The second was found in the town of Gilbert. The identity of the owner has not been leaked. It is not

prohibited to own tigers in Texas. It is however very supervised and subjected to many constraints regarding veterinarian care and housing conditions. Only 3 permits have been given to the Phoenix Zoo, Litchfield Park and the Out of Africa Wildlife Park at Camp Verde. It is there that the 2 young tigers were taken to.



Poaching of a female jaguar
State of Sonora, Mexico
February 25, 2014

She was slaughtered by a farmer who feared she would attack his livestock. She had just killed a wild boar near his ranch. He decided to poison the flesh of the board before she returned to eat. He then burned the jaguar along with her geolocalization collar. This collar had been placed as part of a jaguars protection program. Dr. Rodrigo Medellín Legorreta, researcher at the Ecology Institute of UNAM, does not understand such behavior. He explains that the federal government provides insurance for livestock, if it is proved that a jaguar kills any, it will pay for the losses.



Seizure of an ocelot skin
Mariposa Port of Entry, Nogales, State of Arizona, United States
March 3, 2014

The great fashion of ocelot fur has pushed up prices to the summit on the coats market between 1980-1990: 40,000 €.

The ocelot fur comes from a beautiful adult according to the experts of the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The ocelot has been listed in Appendix I of CITES since 1990. The fur had been given to the conveyer by a friend of his. The felines of America are under pressure.



Seizure of 2 live pumas (*Puma concolor*, Appendix II)
Córdoba, Province of Córdoba, Argentina
March 2014

They are between 4 and 5 months and are in good health. They are transferred to the zoo of the town Córdoba where specialists will define what will be their future destination: captivity or freedom. According to their "owner", the pumas come from the province of Formosa, at the border with Paraguay. They claim they took them in while their mother was already dead.



ASIA

Seizure of a Siberian tiger (*Panthera tigris altaica*, Appendix I)
Wenzhou, Province of Zhejiang, China
January 8, 2014



© Bruno Congar / Robin des Bois

There are only 300 to 400 left in the wild. Police officers found one of them dead in the trunk of a big car. The corpse had been placed in a plastic tarp. The patrol at first believed they were uncovering a crime. It actually really was one. But not the kind the policemen expected. One of the traffickers was able to escape. The dead tiger had been driven many miles in the car. Originating from Oriental Russia or the Chinese province of Jilin where a surviving population of about 10 remains, his funeral voyage was interrupted south of Shanghai. Another hypothesis states the possibility that the tiger was stolen from a zoo or circus. The chief-kidnapper claims he is a cook and that his intent was to make tiger wine.



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Seizure of 40 kg of tiger bones
International Airport, Region of Red River Delta, Vietnam
January 8, 2014

The supposed tiger bones were in a package with grains and cigarettes. The tiger bones ground up and mixed with "booze" under the name of "tiger wine" is one of the placebos set at an outrageous price used by Asian charlatans. DNA tests are in course to identify the origin of the bones.

Seizure of 3 tiger skins
Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose International Airport, Kolkata, State of West Bengal, India
January 11, 2014

A 32-year-old man with 3 skins was arrested by the Indian security forces. He was also transporting many foreign goods like shoes, leather articles, cell phones and computers. The skins could be those of Sumatran tigers.

Some poaching talks and tricks of one «pattawala», tiger, and «chuggawala», leopard, hunter. The man is freely talking in front of forest rangers and a few other witnesses. According to a report of Jose Louies, Regional Head of the Wildlife Trust of India.

"We camped here for two days, between those boulders," "The leg trap and utensils are hidden on the left side of the boulders." The crack in a rock was used as a cache for vessels, spoons, flour, salt and traps. The opening was hidden by a stone and twigs.

Seizure of a dead Amur leopard (*Panthera pardus orientalis*, Appendix I)
Province of Shaanxi, China
January 17, 2014

The Amur leopard is more than sentenced to death. He is condemned to extinction in the months or years to come. There could be less than 50 in a small area of 2500 km² shared between Far East Russia and North East China. The Amur leopard links both sides of the border. A police patrol of the Province of Shaanxi checked a van on the forest road. There was a dead female Amur leopard in the inside and a leghold trap. One of the passengers fled. The presence of the Amur Leopard in the south of its privileged range has not been proven for decades. "There have been rumors for some time of the presence of a leopard in the province, but there has never been any proof" said a regional official in charge of wild fauna. "This is terrible that the first proof of its existence be bloody remains."



© Colin Hines

Arrest for poaching a female leopard and 2 small leopards

Panvel, State of Maharashtra, India

January 2014

The 85-year-old venerable head of the tribal clan, Goma Hari Vir was the mastermind of the massacre, mutilation and skinning of 3 leopards. These 3 individuals are accused by Goma Hari Vir of having stolen and eaten 2 sheep and some geese. Goma used great silent means to come near the female leopard and her offspring. Endosulfan, an insecticide whose use is prohibited in Europe, is an organochlorine. The leopards were poisoned. The hyperconcentration of the dose caused the corpses to quickly decompose and only one skin could be ripped off, that of a small one. Goma and his 8 partners aged from 22 to 33 years old tried to sell the fleece for Rs 1.5 lakh (2400 US\$) and nails for Rs 900 a piece (14 US\$). The traffickers were all from the villages of Khalapur and Karjat. Knives and 2 motorcycles were seized. 3 other people are being investigated. Events took place 50 km from Bombay.

I was almost caught once but managed to escape. A police man had once apprehended me at a railway station and questioned me for quite some time but couldn't get any information out of me! They searched my belongings in vain trying to find something suspicious but of course nothing turned up. They never even bothered to check the bundles which were in the hands of the children with me. Now had they looked in there, there would have been enough 'evidence' to put me away for a long long time."

Seizure of leopard skin

Neryamangalam, State of Kerala, India

January 2014

The skin of an adult leopard seized by the mobile brigade is estimated to be worth Rs 10 lakh (16,000 US\$).

Seizure of the carcass of an Amur leopard (*Panthera pardus orientalis*)

District of Huangling, Province of Shaanxi, China

January 19, 2014

Second alert on the Amur leopard in the province of Shaanxi. The suspects said they bought the remains near the Xianyang village and had transported them to Yun'an. The first contact between the traffickers and policemen pretending to be interested in buying the feline skin took place at 2:00 a.m. in an isolated spot. The sellers discovering the trap managed to escape on foot leaving the car and other evidence in place. They turned themselves in the next day. The police suspect them of having killed the leopard themselves.

Arrest of tiger poachers

Sariska Tiger Reserve, State of Rajasthan, India

January 20, 2014

Survival of tigers in the Reserve is uncertain but the poachers were perhaps targeting other species like leopards or antelopes. One weapon was seized.

Seizure of 2 leopard skins

District of Adilabad, State of Andhra Pradesh,

District of Gadchiroli, State of Maharashtra, India

January 2014

Is cooperation between administrations in charge of countering poaching and trafficking on a better track? In any case thanks to the shared information between Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra, the 2 leopard skins were seized.

Poaching of a Bengal tiger (*Panthera tigris tigris*, Appendix I)

Rajiv Gandhi Orang National Park, State of Assam, India

January 2014

The paws were cut off. The claws of the tiger are highly sought for. As a first measure, 4 forest guards have been suspended following the administration's orders.



"Meetings happened with the financier and the other guy, with me present for one of them in which the financier came armed with 4 new leg traps for him to inspect. He selected three. The financier described a place far away from our area where we could hunt for tigers and leopards. We sat and made plans for our poaching trip and three others from our community decided to join us for the trip. We were given the address, the routes which should be ideally followed by us and specific descriptions of dam to watch out for. Turns out the financier had visited the place barely a year back with another person and had found an ample population of tigers and leopards which could easily be hunted in the area. Each of us was given 3000-4000 INR for our expenses."

Seizure of a Sumatran tiger skin (*Panthera tigris sumatrae*, Appendix I) and a live pangolin

Kabupaten of Mukomuko, Province of Bengkulu, Indonesia

January 23, 2014

A 50-year-old poacher indulged in tiger hunting and other rare wild animals for at least 20 years using traps and a gun. In the sheds at his home, live pangolins, deer trophies and bird feathers were discovered with the hide of a baby tiger around 5 months old and 90 cm in length. He had been killed by a bullet to the mouth.

**Seizure of 4 teeth, whiskers and a tiger skin
Katmandou, Central Region, Nepal**

January 29, 2014

The 5 accomplices were currently fixing the sale price of the skin and sharing the money before having sold it. They had found an agreement on the sum of Rs 450,000 (7180 US\$). They were surprised by the police. The tiger skin was seized on the spot with 4 teeth and whiskers, also called vibrissae. They are used in Chinese traditional medicine to treat toothaches. According to other beliefs, they carry courage and protection. The final buyer has not been identified.

**Seizure of 17 claws and tiger whiskers
State of Andhra Pradesh, India**

January 31, 2014

5 individuals were arrested. They are accused of having killed a tiger in the Nagarjunasagar Srisaigram Reserve. Established in 1983, it is the biggest tiger reserve of India with an area of 3568 km². It was home to 39 tigers in 1997, an updated census is in course. The tiger is accused of having killed a cow in the village on the edge of the Reserve, the shepherd immediately poisoned the carcass. Coming back to the spot, the feline died 2 km further.

"The others in the gang made a move for the target area with a few women, children and the leg traps safely tucked away in their cloth bundles. They boarded the train from Delhi and got down at a railway station about 150 km away from the destination and further made their way by bus. After arriving, they proceeded to select a location to set up their base camp. Meanwhile, the women and children positioned themselves on to the streets in and around the city, begging and selling plastic flowers."

**Seizure of a leopard
Karak, State of Pahang, Malaysia
February 2014**



© Department of Wildlife and National Parks

5 leopards within 5 months. Traps are used in Asia for poaching felines.

**Seizure of leopard skin including the tail
Pune, State of Maharashtra, India**

February 9, 2014



It is estimated worth Rs 8 lakh (12,760 US\$)

"They scouted the areas and observed the movement of the forest staff to finalise a suitable time to enter the forest. They entered it through the right flank of the dam after three days, avoiding the eyes of the forest guards and villagers, well prepared for one of the final trips to the forest. Sugar mixed with tea powder, curry powder, masala, rice, wheat flour, batteries, flashlights, blankets, salt, oil... they even had khaki shirts of exactly the same colour what the forest guards wear."

**Conviction for the trafficking of
leopard skin**

State of Uttarakhand, India

February 2014

The 2 individuals arrested in September 2009 with 2 leopard skins were sentenced to 3 years of prison and a 15,000 Rs fine (239 US\$) each.



Poaching of 3 leopards

Ajmer, State of Rajasthan, India

February 2014

The 3 felines were poisoned. One of the carcasses was found scorched. Fulled, wet, scraped and polished, the skin will later sell for 10,000 to 15,000 US\$.

Seizure of a snow leopard (*Panthera uncia*, Appendix I)

Ulaanbaatar, Province of Töv, Mongolia

February 10, 2014

The Environmental Crimes Unit of the Department of Criminal Police arrested a suspect on the verge of selling the animal.

The snow leopard lives in the mountains of the Himalayas, of Altai and in Siberia. Their body measures from 90 cm to 1.30 m. The tail measures at least 75 % of the body length, generally 80 cm to 1 m. It helps the leopard keep balance on the dangerous cornices.



The leopard is illegally hunted for its fur, highly sought for in Central Asia, Eastern Europe and Russia and transformed into a coat and other accessories. The bones and other parts of the snow leopard's body are also prescribed in traditional Chinese medicine. Finally, the felines are often captured in the wild to be sent to join private animal collections in Central Asia. The species is a victim of habitat loss and food shortage, which sometimes leads them to attack domestic herds and provides poachers with an alibi for their actions. The global population was estimated between 4080 and 6590 individuals in 2003.

Seizure of a leopard skin
Thiruvananthapuram, State of Kerala, India
February 15, 2014

Agents from the Forest Department pretended to be buyers. The sellers were asking Rs 2 lakh (3227 US\$) for the skin, 136 cm in length. A great deal ! They had bought the skin from the poachers "customer service" that operates in the forests of the neighbour State, Tamil Nadu.

"I'm known for skills as a hunter and a skinner, which is why they needed someone like me with them on the trip in the first place. All the traps were set in the three locations, a little distance from each other so that three tigers could be easily trapped. Two of them were placed on paths leading to a small water hole on top of the hill which was the only source of water in the area. The third was placed near the river bed, right next to a tree which bore witness to the assaults of a big tiger."

Seizure of 2 live leopard cats of Bengal (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II)

Province of Tra Vinh, Vietnam

February 17, 2014

A call to the hotline of the Education for Nature-Vietnam (ENV) allowed the release of the felines in the Long Khanh Natural Reserve. After having been informed of their presence in a restaurant, ENV had immediately warned the environmental police and the forest protection department that proceeded to the seizure.

Seizure of the leopard skin
Gondia, State du Maharashtra, India
February 19, 2014

The Baheliya clan is still hard at work. This task, it turned out, failed. Only the sellers (4) of the leopard skin were arrested. The trappers are on the run, on the roads or in the forest.

Seizure of a leopard skin
Satpura Tiger Reserve, State of Madhya Pradesh, India
February 19, 2014

The forest guards had arrested 3 traditional poachers. 5 deerskins in addition to that of the leopard were seized.



"We don't set traps near patrolling routes," The staff could easily detect the traps and we may get caught while digging the ground or setting up the traps. We only set it up in paths mostly used by the big cats, which are away from the forest staff's patrolling route. There are exclusive tiger paths which are often avoided by other animals and we search for such paths to ensure that we don't catch anything other than a tiger."

Poaching of a leopard
Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve, State of Tamil Nadu, India
February 2014

The carcass of the animal was discovered February 21. 3 people were arrested the next day. According to these poachers, the leopard had killed a goat in the village on the edge of the forest. The trio had then poisoned the carcass. They waited for the leopard to come back to eat and die to snatch the claws and teeth.

FAMILY AFFAIRS

Seizure of leopard skin

Ghaziabad, State of Uttar Pradesh, India

February 22, 2014

Police who had been informed that an individual was on his way to Ghaziabad to sell the skin, set a trap for him and arrested him. The man with the help of his uncle would have captured the animal some days earlier. They are suspected of having ties with a gang of poachers established for a long time. The skin is estimated at Rs 20 lakh (32,316 US \$), an exceptional price, the animal must have been a magnificent adult male.

"We usually wait for the animal to be trapped and completely exhausted before we move closer to it, since by that time the shock will have drained it of most of its energy."

Investigation regarding a leopard coat

Khanpur, State of Uttarakhand, India

February 2014

True or false. The leopard coat of "Champion" Pranay Singh's wife, famous deputy of the State assembly triggered a controversy. "Champion" Pranay Singh was president of the Board of Uttarakhand Forest Development Corporation. Poaching of leopards, who are totally protected by law, the laws of the Indian States and the International CITES Convention, is usual in Uttarakhand and the neighbor States. It is planned to seize the litigious coat for verification. In our opinion, there's no doubt about it.



Poaching of a lion cub (*Panthera leo persica*, A. I)

Chandgad, State of Gujarat, India

February 27, 2014

The remains of the cub were found at the edge of the Gir sanctuary. Authorities of the Forest Department suspect that the young feline of 5 months had been taken in a trap and that the poachers had taken his paws and his bones used as substitutes to tiger bones in traditional medicine. Coal wood producers illegally settled in the area are suspected. The National Park and Wildlife Sanctuary of Gir is the only place in the world where Asian lions can be found in the wild state. The ensemble covers a surface of 1153 km². In 2008, it had 175 mature lions for a total population of 350 individuals. The population is considered stable today but very vulnerable to epizootics and forest fires. The attempt to

install a sub-population in the State of Uttar Pradesh was at first a success, but ultimately failed. The lions have disappeared probably hunted or poisoned. The genetic difference with the African lion is very small.



Seizure of leopard skin

Ranipokhri, State of Uttarakhand, India

February 28, 2014

Thanks to a tip off, police were able to arrest a 34-year-old man on the market place with a 2 m long and 1.2 m wide skin. This 1st man was supposed to meet a 2nd man who then would have helped sell the skin to a 3rd man who would have in turn sold the skin to a 4th man or woman. The smell of decomposing flesh coming from the skin indicated that it came from an animal slaughtered about 15 days earlier.

"We stab the tiger after that right in the mouth and leave it bleeding. This stops it from making any noise and it dies faster as well. The best part is, the skin is not damaged in the process which ensures that we get high price for it in the market."

Conviction for traffic of a leopard skin

Narendranagar, State of Uttarakhand, India

March 2014

3 years of prison and 10.000 Rs (161 US\$) fine for the traffic of leopard fur in July 2011.



GANG

Release on bail of the tiger parts trafficker

Nagpur, State of Maharashtra, India

March 6, 2014

Guilty slack from the Nagpur Court. Lala, one of the backbones of the tiger trappers gang active in many States of India and momentarily retired from business due to pre-trial detention (see "On the trail" No. 2 pg. 41), has just been released on bail. Arrested September 8, 2013 driving his car in the company of Sarju, another Bengal tigers tormentor, Lala through his lawyer's lips, had claimed to not know that there was 18 kg of tiger bones and fur in his passenger's bag. Lala's lawyer has put forward the fact that 3 other gang members, the one who forged the traps and 2 others who housed poachers have been freed on probation. The Service of forests of the State of Maharashtra formed an appeal against the judgment.

Seizure of 3 leopard cats of Bengal (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II)

Province of Dong Thap, Vietnam

March 7, 2014

Notification to leopard cats of Bengal: you can be welcomed in Vietnam restaurants for 2 main reasons: to be eaten and while waiting to be used as decoration. 3 of them were freed after the intervention of ENV.



Seizure of tiger skin

Charla, State of Rajasthan, India

March 11, 2014

Tiger, jackal, leopard? The subordinates of the forestry services hesitate but the senior official confirms "this is tiger skin".

Seizure of 2 leopard skins

Delhi, India

March 13, 2014

The 44-year-old man had been arrested in a shopping center of Delhi. The authorities had been informed of the imminent arrival of an individual looking to sell wild animal parts and fur. The accused had poached the felines in the district of Mandi (Himachal Pradesh), his home district, to the north of the country.

The leopards were about 4 to 6 years old.



"Our plan was to get at least three animals in this trip and we were sure we would be able to, since we had determined that there were three tigers in the areas we had set up the traps."



Seizure of a tiger carcass

Zhanjiang, Guangdong Province, China

March 14, 2014

Under the guidance of a businessman owner of 2 nightclubs and wholesaler of seafood and of a retired employee of a local abattoir, tigers were presented to guest clients in an iron cage and then electrocuted within 10 seconds. Under the expert hands of the butcher, the tiger was then skinned, boned and cut in pieces. Then the pieces were weighed on an electronic scale to the handpicked buyers. The customers group was composed of amateurs willing to pay high prices for fresh tiger meat and also business men anxious to make prestigious gifts to well placed relations in financial and judicial administrations in the Leizhou Peninsula or Guangdong Province. Several dozens of tigers would have been so sacrificed. One of the regular customers was the director of a traditional Chinese medicine clinic. The kg of tiger bone would sell for 1600 €. At this stage of the investigation, 3 assumptions are made about the origin of the slaughtered tigers. They could come from zoos or illegal breeding farms but the most likely option is the illegal import of Bengal tigers, live and anesthetized, by road from Vietnam, barely 300 km away. An adult tiger weighing 150-200 kg would be purchased from 200,000 to 300,000 yuan (24,000 to 36,000€) and profits from the sale including meat, fur, whiskers, penis, claws, nails, bones and tiger wine could reach 10 million yuan (1.2 million €).

The butcher killed himself by jumping from the building while trying to escape.

Seizure of a leopard
Kathmandu, Central Development Region, Nepal

March 15, 2014

The 38 cm long and 35 wide fur was seized in Kathmandu. It was transported by a young 24-year-old man.

Seizure of 2 tiger skins and a leopard skin
District of Sangli and of Nashik, State of Maharashtra, India

March 13, 16 & 17, 2014

The director of the Internet cafe participated in tiger trafficking. The fur was seized in his shop while the 2 accomplices and him were arrested, all aged from 25 to 30 years old. The young generation learns very quickly how to make money off wildlife. In this area of business, knowledge transmission is definitely assured. A member of the trio is a student. By pulling on the strings and unraveling the branch, the police interrogated 4 other suspects and seized the last tiger fur. New revelations resulted in the search of the home of the eighth sidekick, a young 19 year old man where was found the skin of... a leopard.

The 3 hide were estimated at about Rs 30 lakh, i.e. 50,000 US\$.

It's the flower selling ladies who then become the transporters for the skin and often hide it under their loose clothes while they travel. They apparently deliberately keep themselves so filthy that no one wants to touch them to avoid frisking during their travel. They almost always travel by train.

Seizure of live Bengal leopard-cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II)

Ho Chi Minh City, Province of Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

March 20, 2014

A new leopard cat saved from cooking pans or wall decoration. The ENV Hotline rang again.

Seizure of an leopard skin
Shahpura, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

March 25, 2014

The leopard was one to one and half years old. Its 3 killer-skinners had killed him in the forest some days ago. They were carrying their trophy on a motorcycle. They intended to sell it around Mumbai.

"Jaw traps like these are manufactured by specialized blacksmiths who only supply these high quality products to the hunting communities." Bails are paid by the financier.

Seizure of 4 leopard skins
Odisha and Kerala States, India

March 2014

Who wants the leopard's skin?



1 - Odisha: the «mule» is stopped, the motorcycle is seized too.



2 - Odisha: one skin, 2 brothers.

3 - Kerala : skins were in the hands of 3 Odisha bandits.

"What is one to do... we were just simply unlucky this time."

EUROPE

Seizure of lion cub (*Panthera leo*, Appendix II)
Train station of Moscow, Central Federal District, Russia

January 21, 2014

The lion cub of about 2 months was in a small abandoned cage in the compartment of a train coming from Saint Petersburg. No document justifying this transport was found.

Seizure of 2 live baby tigers
Amsterdam, Province of North Holland, Netherlands
February 11, 2014

The American company Paymentwall inaugurated its Holland branch. It wanted a big media stunt. It managed that through an event company that, supreme and actually quite common idea in the world of fashion and advertising, had invited 2 baby tigers to the party that were passed from arms to arms among guests. A cocktail in one hand, a tiger in the other, how delightful! Except that one of guest had directly called the Dutch Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. The baby tigers were seized, for fault of essential CITES documents. The small felines are undesirable in the Netherlands. They were given for care to officially approved recipients.

**Seizure of a live tiger and a lion
Ardon, Central Region, France
February 19, 2014**

They were locked inside of an old circus truck in 4 x 2 m cages on a litter of straw and excrements. Lion roars are unusual in the Orleans region in the center of France. This is what caught the ear of the Office National de la Chasse et de la Faune Sauvage (ONCFS). The tormentor was sentenced to 6 months of prison and 15,000 € bail. The doors of the cages were welded.



Bears

AMERICA

Arrest of 2 men for the illegal purchase of American black bear parts (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II)

**Midland, State of Michigan, United States
February 27, 2014**

The 2 individuals approached hunters and offered to buy choice pieces of bear. Their identity is not known. They risked 90 days of prison, a 1000 € fine and 1500 € in damages for each bear part that was bought.

"This is quite a rare case" according to the Department of natural resources of Michigan that led the investigation. Following outside information, inspectors organized the operation and took the 2 bear amateurs red handed attempting the transaction.

"Those who want to buy bear parts create a market and encourage hunting outside of legal dates and quotas and authorized hunting methods."



FAMILY AFFAIRS

Conviction for the poaching a brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II)

Fort Macleod, Province of Alberta, Canada

March 21, 2014

A young man of 17 years old was sentenced to a 600 Canadian dollars fine (540 US\$) and forbidden to hunt for 4 years.

"This was a mistake, I will never do it again". It certainly was a terrible mistake. The grizzlies hunting is prohibited in Alberta. The hunter accompanied by his uncle had been informed that the female grizzly with her 2 cubs was in the area. Only hunting deer and elks was allowed. When he had the grizzly in sight, the young hunter could not help pulling the trigger... and kill in the presence of an eyewitness. The Fisheries and Wildlife services collected the bear cubs. One of them died a few days later.



ASIA

Poaching of Malaysian sun bear (*Helarctos malayanus*, Appendix I)

Belum-Temengor Forest Complex, Northern Region, Malaysia

January 2014

The bear carcass was discovered near the expressway. A paw was still engaged in the trap. The road allows poachers to penetrate into the Belum-Temengor forest, one of the most ancient tropical forests in the world and the only ecosystem where 10 species of hornbill are still present.

Traps are widespread. "Today a bear, tomorrow a tiger" predicts an officer of WWF Malaysia. The ecosystem of the Belum-Temengor forest is the last refuge for tigers, elephants, and rhinoceros in Malaysia. The WWF demands more surveillance patrols.

3 weeks ago, another bear was taken in a trap 250 meters of the expressway; he was freed after rescuers working on it for 2 hours. 2 years ago, a fixed camera had taken a photo of an amputee bear of a paw, no doubt lost to a trap.



On the expressway East-West between Gerik and Jeli, the federal road n°4



Belum-Temengor Forest

FAMILY AFFAIRS

Poaching of a sloth bear (*Melursus ursinus*, Appendix I)

District of Betul, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

January 2014

The bear remains were discovered at nightfall. There must have been at least a dozen who tracked him down. 3 traditional hunters of the same tribal clan and from the same family were arrested.

Seizure of the gallbladder of a Himalayan black bear (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I)

Pithoragarh District, State of Uttarakhand, India

February 25, 2014

The gallbladder was in a backpack. The removal had been practiced on a bear from the Himalayas.

Seizure of 22 live Himalayan black bear (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I)

Chongqing, autonomous municipality of Chongqing, China

March 2014

The bear cubs were on the back seat. The driver had pretended at first that they were puppies. The police then found in the trunk a suitcase containing a bear carcass and 4 bear paws as well as milk. The driver then admitted that the animals were bears and that he was transporting them from the province of Yunnan up to Chengdu.



EUROPE

FAMILY AFFAIRS

Seizure of 3 live brown bear cubs (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II)

Peja, district of Peja, Kosovo

March 12 & 19, 2014

In Kosovo, it is illegal for individuals to keep brown bears in captivity.

A family denounced itself by posting on Facebook images of a 3 week old bear cub in captivity in the apartment. The bear cub was freed and put in the care of an accommodation accredited by the minister of environment in Pristina, the Four Paws Bear Sanctuary. Soon after, 2 other bear cubs in captivity were identified and freed in the same sector. The 3 bears could be from the same litter.



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 Swaziland and South Africa which are listed in Appendix II for trade of live animals and hunting trophies.

The 3 Asian rhinoceros species are in Appendix I: *Rhinoceros unicornis*, *Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*, *Rhinoceros sondaicus*.

From 1st January to 31th March
220 rhinoceros killed
in South Africa, Kenya and India

AFRICA

6 rhinos poached
Kruger Park, Province of Mpumalanga, South Africa
January 2014
In 6 days, 6 rhinos killed.

4 rhinos poached
Palala Rhino Sanctuary, Mookgophong, Province of Limpopo, South Africa
January 3, 2014
4 rhinos in one night.



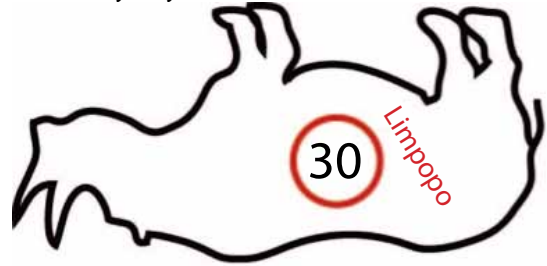
One white rhino poached
UMkhuze Game Reserve, Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
January 2014
The de-horned carcass was found 3 days after the slaughter. This is the first rhino of the year in this province.

3 rhinos poached
Gravelotte, Province of Limpopo, South Africa
January 6 and 7, 2014
A male was killed during the night of the 6th. The next night it came their turn for a female and her calf.



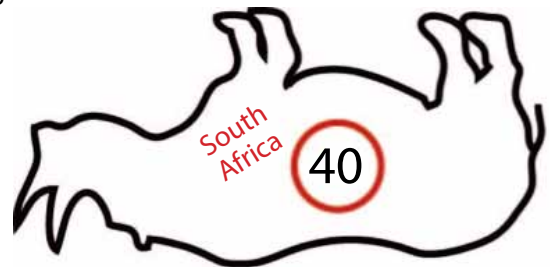
30 rhinos poached
Province of Limpopo, South Africa
1st half of January, 2014

30 rhinos were killed and mutilated in 15 days in the province of Limpopo, north of the capital Pretoria. 2 every day.



Seizure of 2 rhino horns
Kruger National Park, Provinces of Mpumalanga and Limpopo, South Africa
January 17 and 18, 2014

7 poachers killed in Kruger Park over the weekend. 11 have been killed since the beginning of the year, 40 rhinos have also. "It's getting rougher, the hunters go by groups of 4 or 6. They are more and more aggressive."



One black rhino poached
Serengeti National Park, Region of Mara, Tanzania
January 18, 2014

The day before, near Serengeti, 3 armed bandits probably poachers had attacked a minivan around 3 p.m. and robbed the passengers. Just after, reinforcement was sent on site to carry out road checks. That night, a black rhino was killed and his horn taken nearby. According to witnesses the 3 gangsters could come from one of Kenya's neighbour countries and the poaching could have been organized by a criminal network.

As a result there are now only 35 black rhinos left in Tanzania. The newest victim was one of the 5 rhinos who had been transferred by a Hercules C130 aircraft from South Africa in attempts to rebuild populations. The Serengeti National Park is listed by UNESCO one of the world heritage sites. It is also listed a priority site by poachers.



M. Lazaro Nyalandu, Minister of natural resources and tourism has much to do with ivory, horns, and a possible new launch of operation Tokomeza.
 "We are losing 2 elephants a day."

5 rhinos poached

Private reserve, Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
January 2014

5 more rhinos in this province.

6 rhinos poached

Hoopstad, Province of Free State, South Africa
Around January 23, 2014

6 in the Free State.

2 rhinos poached

Private reserve in the Hoedspruit area, Province of Limpopo, South Africa
January 23, 2014

5 policemen arrested for rhino horn trafficking **Massingir, Province of Gaza, Mozambique** **January 2014**

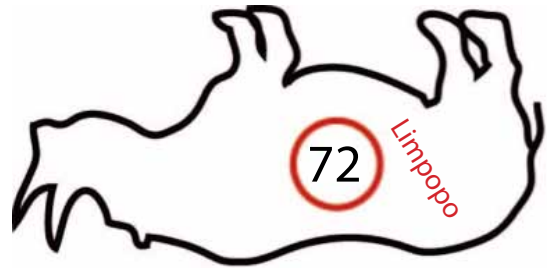
The policemen had received information concerning rhino horns held at the home of a suspect. Without any warrant, they searched the place and found a horn. The chief of police for the Province of Gaza apparently then directly negotiated its price. The amount is unknown but he would then have given out 300,000 meticaís (9930 US\$) to his accomplices, the chief of police of the Massingir district, the chief of the Crimes Investigation Police Brigade of Massingir (PIC), a PIC officer, a traffic policeman and the car driver that took the whole team on site. Information revealed by the Savana weekly have been confirmed by the highest authorities of the Province of Gaza's police force.

One rhino poached

Nairobi National Park, County of Nairobi, Kenya
January 2014

The rhino was killed and his horn taken in the Nairobi National Park, the fortress of all national parks, where the KWS is based, 7 kilometers from the capitals' towers. The emblematic park had already received such a blow in august 2013.

One rhino poached **Thornybush, Province of Limpopo, South Africa** **January 24, 2014**



One rhino poached

Mossel Bay, Province of Western cape, South Africa
January 27, 2014

The 7-year-old male named Sir Fabian was found dead and mutilated. The Nyaru Game Lodge Reserve had sold all its other rhinos for fear of poachers. Maybe to his misfortune, Sir Fabian had been seen on television last year because of his friendship with a small dog named Madam Gigi. "We think it happened in the middle of the afternoon. We are devastated."



Death and arrest of poachers

Kruger National Park, Provinces of Mpumalanga and Limpopo, South Africa
January 29, 2014

A Winchester Magnum with a silencer, ammunition and other hunting material were found by police. One of the poachers was killed during the fight, a second one was arrested, a third one got away.

One rhino poached

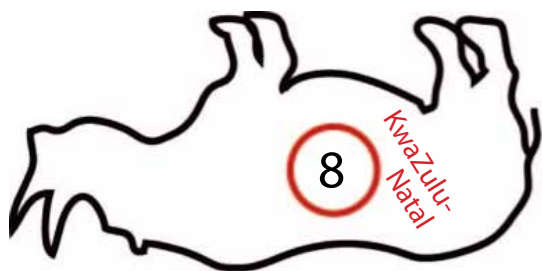
Olifants Game Reserve, Hoedspruit, Province of Limpopo, South Africa
January 31, 2014

2 poachers arrested

Phinda Game Reserve, Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
February 5, 2014

The guards had sighted the intruders in the late afternoon. The crossfire ended with the death of 2 poachers and the arrest of 2 others. A big caliber gun equipped with silencer, an axe, a knife and 8 telephones were discovered on the spot. 8 poachers

and 8 rhinos: in this province, so is the toll for the horn war as of the 5th of February.



Seizure of a rhino horn

Lephalale, Province of Limpopo, South Africa

February 10, 2014

A rhinoceros was slaughtered; another one was wounded. 4 people, aged from 30 to 48 years old, were arrested. A big caliber gun, ammunition, a saw, a car and a rhino horn were seized. One of the poachers is a local guy. Request for bail will be examined at the end of March. While waiting, they will stay in jail.

Seizure of a rhino horn

Bela-Bela, Province of Limpopo, South Africa

February 11, 2014

5 of them have been arrested. They are between 23 and 34 years old. The group was in possession of a horn apparently stolen some months ago.

Poaching of 2 white rhinos

Oi Jogi Ranch, County of Laikipia, Kenya

February 11, 2014

Slaughter at nightfall. One horn torn off despite the electrified fence.

Conviction for rhino poaching **Lehurutshe, Province of North-west, South Africa**

February 13, 2014

Arrested after having poached a rhinoceros in the Botsalano Game Reserve, he was sentenced to 10 years of prison, 5 of which are suspended. He was also sentenced to a 5 years prison term for having an unregistered weapon. The 2 penalties are combined. The severity of the judgment is considered a judicial progress. Outside the Courtroom, there was a protest in favor of rhinos. One accomplice will be judged at a later date. Not having been paid, his lawyer withdrew at the last minute, a procedure for judiciary assistance is launched and another lawyer should be assigned in the weeks to come.



Poaching of 4 rhinoceros

Solio Ranch, Nyeri County, Kenya

And Nakuru National Park, Nakuru County, Kenya
February 2014

Kenyan press mentions the existence of a tycoon in ivory and rhino horn trafficking which would radiate from the County, a mysterious character in a high position to whom agents or former agents from KWS would be submitted. He would pull the strings of the traffic from Nyeri County with connections in Uganda, throughout Eastern Africa and Central

Africa. On the ground, the poachers would in turn be murdered to prevent «leakage», confidences or incriminating confession. For now, the «revelations» of the press portray a ghost. Maybe one day he will become a being of flesh and bone.



2 rhinos less in Solio Ranch



and 155 km farther, 2 rhinos less in the Nakuru National Park

Poaching of one rhino

Kruger National Park, Province of Mpumalanga, South Africa

February 2014

Belgian tourists signaled the presence of an rhino, amputated of his horn, wandering along the road. The rangers of South African National Parks began looking for him. It took them several days to find the animal again. Because of strong rains, it was impossible for a helicopter to take off and locate the injured rhino who had left the road tracks. After finding him thirty kilometers further, veterinarians have assessed his condition. It turned out that the rhino had a bullet lodged in his brain. To end his suffering, they decided to kill him.



One white rhino poached
Nakuru National Park, County Nakuru, Kenya
February 28, 2014

The rhinoceros was slaughtered 200 meters from the Rangers' General headquarters. In only a week, this makes 3 rhinos murdered in a reserve deemed to be well guarded. Has the rot set in? Are the poachers well connected?

Poaching of a black rhino
Musiara Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya
March 5, 2014

He was killed in the night, the poachers escaped with its horn. He has bullet wounds and wounds from a poisonous arrow. This second ambush in one month in the famous park Masai Mara worries and threatens tourism that carries to the region revenue, jobs and reputation.

"Regarding ivory, we've reached the catastrophic levels of poaching as in 1980."

"Regarding rhino horns, this has never been seen."

Poaching of a black rhino
Masai Mara Reserve, Narok County, Kenya
March 6, 2014

The guide and the tourists fell nose to nose with the dead black rhinoceros. The main horn had been equipped with an electronic microchip presumed to facilitate monitoring of the rhinos and if necessary the itinerary of the stolen horn. For the moment, more classical means such as the intervention of dogs has not enabled to find the shooters.

Poaching of 2 rhinoceros
Nakuru National Park, Nakuru County, Kenya
March 4 & 6, 2014

In broad daylight, 200 m from the Park Rangers headquarters! Surveillance units are on alert 24/24h but they do take from time to time a siesta with earplugs. Motivation is wearing down. 20 guards had recently been transferred to other parks. The Kenyan NGO Save the Rhino would have preferred that they be laid off. The population of some dozen rhinos of the lake Nakuru National Park is melting like snow in the sun.

Conviction for illegal possession of rhino horns

Richards Bay, Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

March 2014

"What is in the black bag at your feet?" This was March 15, 2013. The officers had just stopped a car on the road between Vryheid and Dundee. Inside the bag, there were 2 horns. The 2 passengers, one year later, were sentenced to 6 years of prison for trafficking. One of them will still have to appear for poaching, this time in front of the Richards Bay Court.



Poaching of a white rhino
Thanda Private Game Reserve, Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
March 14, 2014

The horn would not have been taken.

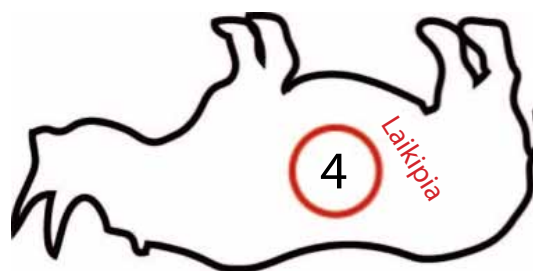


© Christian Sperka

Thanda private game reserve

Poaching of rhinoceros
Conservancy de Ol Pejeta, Laikipia County, Kenya
March 16, 2014

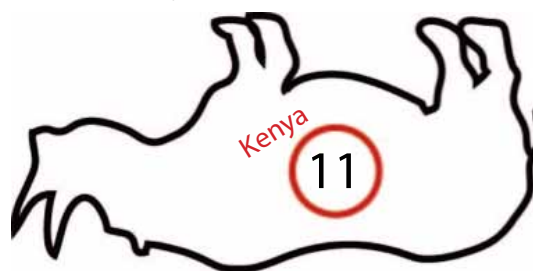
4 here so far since the beginning of the year. "The carcass without the horn was found in the thicket."



Poaching of a rhino
Ngulia Sanctuary, Tsavo Park, Taita Taveta County, Kenya

March 16, 2014

It happened at night. The horn and an ear disappeared. The trail followed by the dogs from the crime scene led to the Mombasa Road. The suspects probably had a car waiting. During an entire year- March 2013 to March 2014- the Tsavo National Park had to be protected from horn hunters. It's a hard blow for the surveillance team's moral. Since the beginning of the year, Kenya has lost 11 rhinoceros brought to a violent death.



Poaching of a white rhino
Weenen Game Reserve, Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
March 16, 2014

The horn has disappeared.

Poaching of a white rhino
Oi Jogi conservancy, Laikipia County, Kenya
March 18, 2014

6 years old, named Dennis, he was slaughtered around 7:00 p.m. The shooting was reported by 4 ranger stations: dogs, security agents were deployed and thermal cameras were used. The carcass was found in the morning thanks airplane searches. The poachers were not able to take the horn.

Poaching of 2 rhinos
Mkhuze Private Reserve and the private reserve in Zululand, Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
March 2014

Despite the dissuasive interventions of the new anti-poaching helicopter, a rhino has been killed in each reserve.

Poaching of one rhino
Chyulu National Park, Makueni County, Kenya
March 2014

The rhinoceros died after being caught in a trap. He was found by the guards before the hunters had come to retrieve the horn.

Rhino poaching
Mkhaya Game Reserve, Lubombo District, Swaziland
March 2014

It was 23 years since the park had not known rhino poaching. A reward of 50.000 Emalangeni (4715 US\$) was announced for information leading to the arrest of poachers.

Poaching of 3 rhinos
Reserve Pumba, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa
March 21, 2014

2 dead young rhinos were found in the morning by a guide and tourists. The horns were cut with surgical precision. The next day, a third adult victim was found. The horn was still in place.

Poaching of 3 white rhinoceros
Spioenkop Reserve, Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
March 23, 2014

The white rhinoceros were killed on Sunday. Poisonous arrows hit them. The bodies were found on Wednesday without the horns. 19 have been killed since the beginning of the year.



Seizure of 14 rhino horns and a leopard skin
(Panthera pardus)
Hosea Kutako International Airport, Windhoek, Khomas Region, Namibia
March 24, 2014

9th in China. 10th in Zambia. 12th in Namibia. 23th in the can.

3 men were taken at the main airport in Namibia with 14 rhino horns and the feline skin. They were leaving for Johannesburg, final destination Hong Kong. One of 3, speaking Mandarin, says he has nothing to do with this story. The court denied provisional release on bail. «The risks are too great to see them run away.»

The Hosea Kutako International Airport of Windhoek had a reputation of sieve.



Hosea Kutako International Airport

Conviction for illegal activity in the natural reserve, illegal possession of guns and ammunition and illegal entry in the national park



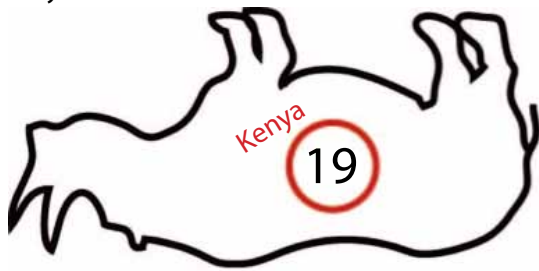
Louis Trichardt, Province of Limpopo, South Africa
March 24, 2014

In October 2013, the suspect aged 27 years old was caught with a .375 Winchester and ammunition in the process of prowling through the Punda Maria area. He then argued that he was simply looking for small game and bushmeat.

The prosecutor expressed his surprise that he wanted to hunt "the small" with a strong calibre usually used to hunt elephants or rhinos. The suspect had been sentenced to a R 20,000 fine (1886 US\$) and 4 years of prison suspended sentence. The fine will be given to the fund for the preservation of the rhinoceros managed by the Natural Park.

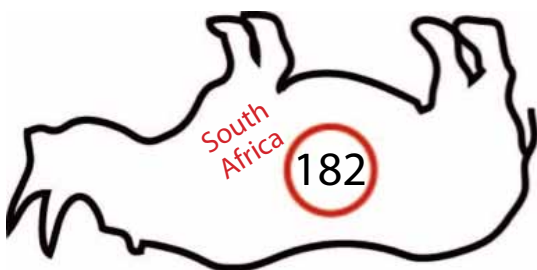
Rhino poaching
Nakuru National Park, County Nakuru, Kenya
March 27, 2014

The 3 year old rhino was killed by poachers in the night. This is the 19th in Kenya since the beginning of the year.



Arrest of 5 suspected of rhino poaching
Gravelotte, Limpopo Province, South Africa
March 27, 2014

It was the early morning. The Isuzu pickup was in a parking lot in the center of Gravelotte. Police decided to check the driver and 2 passengers. At that time, a black BMW X5 parked to the side and 3 occupants of the pickup tried to jump it and escape. Everyone was arrested. Inside the Isuzu pick-up a shotgun whose number was erased, cartridges, 3 butcher knives and 2 coveralls were recovered and will be used as evidence. The intention of poaching rhinos is liable of a conviction in South Africa. One of the suspects has a poaching criminal record.



AMERICA

Conviction for rhino horn trafficking
Brooklyn, State of New York, United States
January 10, 2014

The well known Michael Slattery, member of the Rathkeale Rovers followed by « On the Trail » for many months has been sentenced to 14 months prison term and 3 years probation, to a 10,000 US\$ fine and to pay back 50,000 US\$, the equivalent of his earnings in illegal trade.



ASIA

One rhino poached
Bihpukhuri, State of Assam, India
January 8, 2014

Officially this is the first rhino killed in or around the Kaziranga Park. He was first severely wounded by gunshot. Despite the veterinarians care he died the next day.



Seizure of one rhino horn (800 g)
Tezpur, State of Assam, India
January 13, 2014

5 days later in the same district 2 men leaving a bus were arrested by police acting on information they had been given. They were carrying on them a 800 grams rhino horn whose value is estimated at Rs 50 lakh, that is 80,000 US\$.



Seizure of 8 pieces of black rhino horns and conviction (21,5 kg)

Singapore Changi airport, Singapore
January 10, 2014

The young 22-year-old from Vietnam tried to pull a big one off. 22 kilos of black rhino horn. The equivalent of 2.2 million US\$ according to the Bloomberg agency. He had bought the package in Mozambique, the initial origin probably being South Africa. His flight plans led him from Uganda to Vietnam via Dubai, Singapore and Laos. It was interrupted in Singapore where customs noticed the 22 kilos of keratin locally worth an estimated 1.3 million US\$. The horns were seized. May they be burned! The smuggler was arrested and sentenced to 15 months prison term.

One rhino poached
Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India
January 16, 2014

Poaching by night in Kaziranga. The horn has disappeared.

Seizure of 9 rhino horns (21,8 kg)
Suvarnabhumi Airport, Province of Samut Prakan, Thailand

January 19, 2014

It's the Bangkok airport's turn this time to find in a Vietnamese passengers luggage heading for Hanoi from Nairobi 21.8 kg of rhino keratin. May they be burned! The total value is estimated by customs at 21 million Bahts- or 640,000 US\$- nearly half what was estimated by the Singapore customs for the same quantity.



One rhino poached
Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India
January 25, 2014

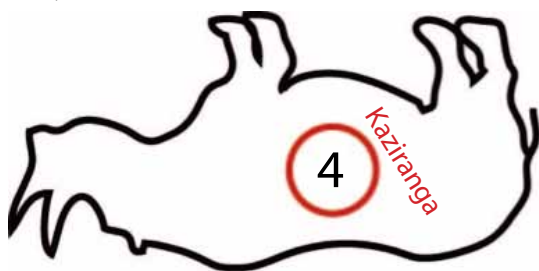
The female rhino was killed around 3:20 a.m. The forest guards found the carcass without the horn at 3:50. The suspect was arrested with the help of a sniffer dog who followed his trace over 15 km over hills all the way to the Amguri village. The horn wasn't found. It isn't known how many poachers participated in the forfeit but at least 2 weapons were used. AK47 and .303 rifle cartridges were found on the crime scene. The dog named Jorba, a Belgian Shepherd, had been given by the David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation in cooperation with the Aaranyak NGO. The female was with her calf. The park employees have localized him and are following his movements.



Jorba

Poaching of one rhino
National Park of Kaziranga, State of Assam, India
February 1, 2014

That makes 4 in the park. The crime scene is near Brahmapoutre but according to investigators the killers came by the road.



Seizure of a rhino horn
Napam, State of Assam, India
February 3, 2014

3 people were arrested. The horn that weighed 500 g was found. It came from one of the 4 rhinos poached in the Kaziranga Park since the beginning of the year.

Poaching of one rhino
Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India
February 15, 2014

"Poaching is not nearing extinction in the Kaziranga Park". The press of Assam relays the worry of the civil society.

Poaching of a rhinoceros
Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India
February 23, 2014

The tragic series of events continues. One more victim of an AK 47, despite installation of 8 cameras in the park (430 km²) that detect the movements of animals and intruders.

Poaching of one rhino
Kaziranga, State of Assam, India
February 27, 2014

2 deaths among the poachers. One death among the rhinos. 3 poachers escape with the horn.

Seizure of 3.19 kg of rhino horn
Shanghai Pudong International Airport, Autonomous Municipality of Shanghai, China
February 2014

The keratin valued at 180,000 € was uncovered in an express package coming from South Africa containing, according the accompanying declaration, 5 ceramic plates with a total value of 1,222 yuans (199 US\$).



REPEATED OFFENCE

Arrest for rhino poaching and horn smuggling
Shaktikhor, Central Region of Development, Nepal
February 23, 2014

In 2006, a complaint had been filed by the administration of the Chitwan Chepang National Park for poaching and smuggling. The trafficking senior had relapsed. He is in prison for the moment. He is waiting for what will come. If declared guilty, he risks 15 years of prison or a fine of RS 100,000 (1000 US\$) or both.

Seizure of 5 rhino horns (13.1 kg)
Tan Son Nhat International Airport, Ho-Chi-Minh-City, Vietnam
March 12, 2013



705,000 US\$. Estimation of Vietnam customs

Rhino poaching
Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India
March 17, 2014

Gunshots were heard in the distance and 3 days later the carcass of a male without his horn was found in a secluded area of the park. A local NGO member is appalled: «poaching becomes a regular affair in the National Park.»

Poaching of rhinoceros
Kaziranga, State of Assam, India
March 19, 2014

Since the beginning of the year, the toll is 17.



Seizure of a rhinoceros horn
Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India
March 22, 2014

2 poachers were killed by rangers after an exchange of gunfire that lasted nearly an hour. The horn was found on site. Violence increases.

Rhino poaching
Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India
March 23, 2014

Kaziranga has lost a third rhino in 5 days. Poachers will take any kind of risk in this pre-election period. The political climate is tense and all police and administration focus on the organization of elections.

Rhino poaching
Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary, Assam, India
March 26, 2014

8 poachers, a sawed horn, a 30 minutes shootout. 2 dead poachers. Others fled with the horn under cover of darkness.



Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary

Seizure of a rhino horn
Attariya, Region of development Extreme West, Nepal

March 31, 2014

2 officers dressed as civilians had an appointment with 2 sellers of a 25cm long horn. The contract was concluded on the base of Rs 5.5 millions (56,600 US\$). The 2 sellers became nervous when the 2 buyers wanted to take a photo. The 2 traffickers were arrested when police reinforcement arrived on scene.

EUROPE

Conviction for attempt to auction
3 elephant tusks and 2 rhino horns
Copenhagen, Region of Hovedsta-
den, Denmark

January 20, 2014

In 2012 the Danish auctioning company Bruun Rasmussen had already been sentenced to a 50.000 crowns fine (9140 US\$) brought down to 10,000 crowns (9180 US\$) following negotiations after the trial for having sold a rhino horn without a CITES permit. Bis repetita. Bruun Rasmussen is brought once again before court for having put for sale in the same conditions 2 rhino horns and 3 elephant tusks. The Danish auctioneers are getting off with a good deal. The fine is only of 14,000 crowns (2570 US\$). Rasmussen had withdrawn the illegal goods after being called upon by CITES authorities and the Danish administration.



A rhino horn stolen
Cork, Province of Munster, Ireland
January 27, 2014

The theft took place in Michael Flatley's mansion, the American dancer and choreographer of Irish descent. The Rathkeale Rovers is suspected to be the perpetrators. One African rhino horn, estimated worth a half a million dollars and other objects from the collection were taken. The artist and his family were present in their home when the theft happened, they only saw 2 shadows running and escaping by car. It was then found out that the safari room had been broken into.

Sentencing of a man to 16 months
of prison for theft of a rhino horn
Nottingham, Region of the East
Midlands, United Kingdom
February 2014

On June 11 2011, Daniel O'Brien, 43 years old, fixed a meeting with the antiquarian on a fast food parking lot in Newark. Him and his accomplice grabbed the horn and fled in a 4 wheeler. The antiquarian attempted to stop them by clinging to the car. He spent weeks in the hospital to recovering from his injuries. Spotted and identified thanks to video surveillance and his mobile telephone, O'Brien was arrested in Cambridge at the end of 2011, charged and released in the wait of judgment. He then left the UK. In his escape, he toured Europe and was the subject of a Europol arrest warrant. Signaled in Germany and Spain, he was intercepted at the Alicante airport in Spain. His accomplice, Michael Kealy, 27 years old, was arrested in Kilkenny



(Ireland). Extradited by Ireland, he served 3 months in prison for gang robbery. The 2 Irish hoodlums are members or followers of Rathkeale Rovers. The antique dealer is not completely cleared either. The victim had accepted a shady appointment on a McDonald's parking lot with rhino horn of unknown origin worth, he says, of 20,000 £ (33,000 US\$). The antique seller had been put in contact with his 2 aggressors by a colleague.



© Nottingham Post

Daniel O'Brien

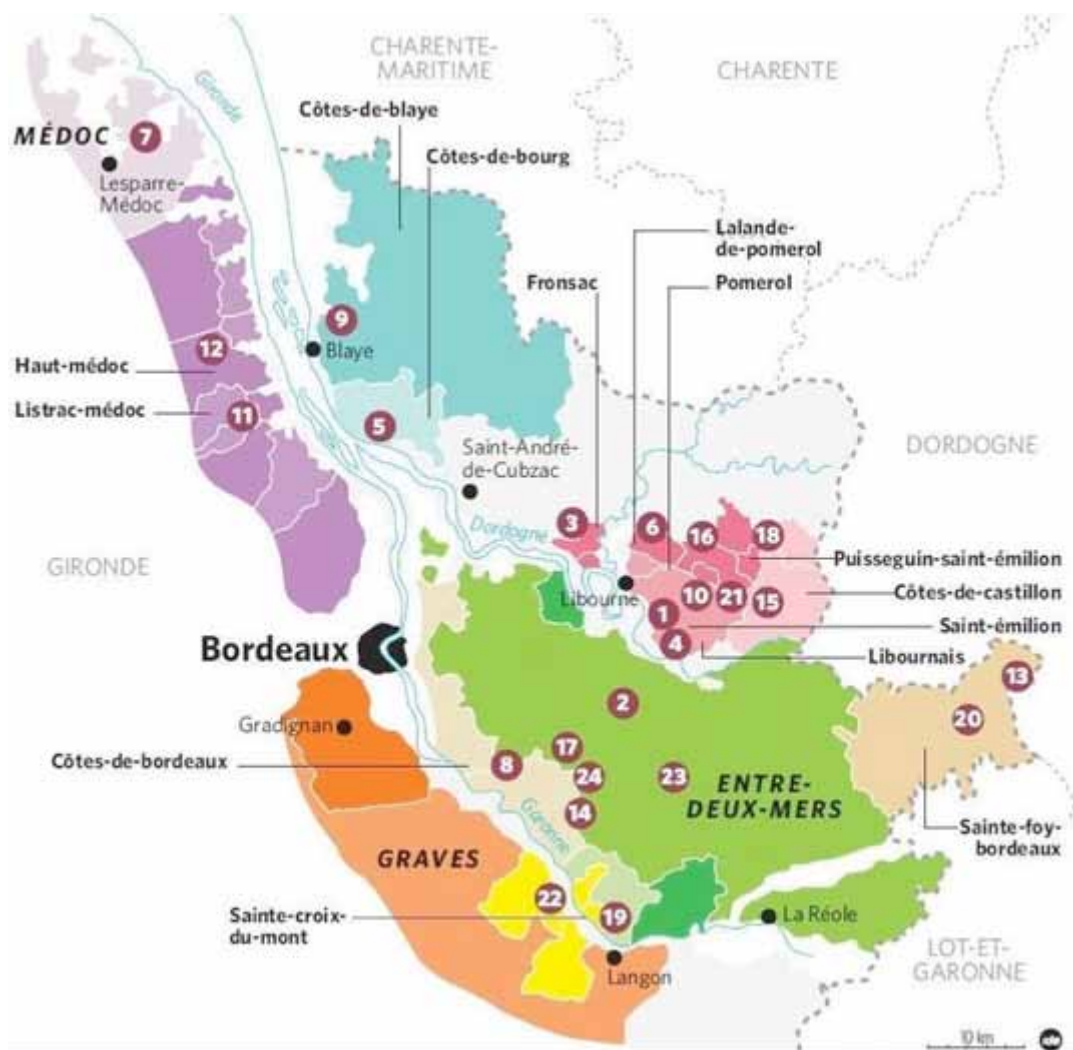
**Seizure of 10 rhinoceros horn parts (9.5 kg)
Poitiers, Poitou-Charentes Region, France
February 28, 2014**

Customs officers in Poitiers struck again. In the trunk of the car driven by a Chinese national and heading towards Bordeaux they dug up 10 rhinos horn parts for a total weight of 9.5 kg. The driver, placed in custody, explained that he wanted to negotiate their sale in Bordeaux. This specialist of great Bordeaux wine exports to China explained that he had been burdened by someone he knows to find a buyer for the fraudulent horns. This sensational arrest opens the way to a great rhino vintage worthy of Chinese traffickers' inventiveness.

This seizure of almost 10 kg of rhino horn sheds new light on colonization of the Bordeaux vineyards by the Chinese tycoons. Private jets, experts' trips, direct expeditions of big and small vintages between the airports of Bordeaux-Mérignac and China. Economic interests, red carpet and white wine, St. Emilion rhyming with millions, everything is truly place to slip in between the bottles a few rhino horns. Robin des Bois believes that the illegal export industry exists. One does not lug around 700,000 € of keratin in a trunk without being sure that they can be delivered. The conveyor was taken. The exporter hasn't been yet. Will he ever be or will he benefit from oenological immunity?



© Robin des Bois



The beginning of the Chinese investments in Bordeaux. April 2012.

DR. Source l'Express.

1. Haut-Brisson (Saint-Emilion) by Peter Kwok from Taiwan in 1997 in Vignonet.
2. Latour-Laguens (Entre-Deux-Mers) by Haiyan Cheng (Longhai Group) in 2008 in Saint-Martin-du-Puy.
3. Richelieu (Fronsac) by A & A (Hongkong) en 2009 in Fronsac.
4. Vieux-Brondeau (Libournais) by Zhejiang Cy in 2009 in Sainte-Terre.
5. Chenu-Lafitte (Côtes-de-Bourg) by Group Hai-chang in 2010 in Bourg-sur-Gironde.
6. Viaud (Lalande-de-Pomerol) by Cofco in 2011 in Lalande-de-Pomerol.
7. Laulan-Ducos (Médoc) by Richard Shen (Tesiro) in 2011 in Jau-Dignac-et-Loirac.
8. Lagarosse (Côtes-de-Bordeaux) by Carlico (Hongkong) in 2011 in Tabanac.
9. La Salle (Côtes-de-Blaye) by Zhongai in 2011 in Saint-Genès-de-Blaye.
10. Monlot (Saint-Emilion) by Zhao Wei and Huang You Long in 2011 in Saint-Hyppolyte.
11. Lafon (Lustrac) by Marvelake Wine in 2011 in Lustrac-Médoc.
12. Barateau (Haut-Médoc) by Marvelake Wine in 2011 in Saint-Laurent-Médoc.

13. La Bourguette (Sainte-Foy-Bordeaux) by Beverly Koo (Hongkong) in Saint-Philippe-du-Seignal.
14. Lezongars (Entre-Deux-Mers) by Dashang in 2011 in Villenave-de-Rions.
15. La Roche-Pressac (Côtes-de-Castillon) by Skyvast Properties (Hongkong) in 2011 in Saint-Magne-de-Castillon.
16. La Patache (Pomerol) by Peter Kwok (Taiwan) in 2011 in Saint-Emilion.
17. Grand-Branet (Entre-Deux-Mers) by Cheng Qu in 2011 in Capian.
18. Branda (Puisseguin-Saint-Emilion) by Cheng Qu in 2011 in Puisseguin.
19. Laurette (Sainte-Croix-du Mont) Cheng Qu in 2011 in Sainte-Croix-du-Mont.
20. Thébot (Sainte-Foy-Bordeaux) by Cheng Qu in 2011 in Saint-André-et-Appelles.
21. Tour-Saint-Christophe (Saint-Emilion) by Peter Kwok (Taiwan) in 2011 in Saint-Christophe-des-Bardes.
22. Bertranon (Sainte-Croix-du-Mont) by Meng Gao in 2012 in Loupiac.
23. Cugat (Entre-Deux-Mers) in 2012 in Blasimon.
24. Grand-Mouëys (Entre-Deux-Mers) by Jinshan Zhang (Ningxiahong) in 2012 in Capian.

Elephants

The African elephant, *Loxodonta Africana*, is listed in CITES Appendix I, except populations from South Africa, Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe which are in Appendix II. The Asian elephant, *Elephas maximus*, is listed in Appendix I.

RAKUTEN, red and white catalog

The Environmental Investigation Agency NGO revealed in June 2013, 773 whale meat offers on the website of the Japanese subsidiary of the international group of online sales Rakuten. The offer was still flourishing in the beginning of 2014. The most current species were the minke whales (*Balaenoptera acutorostrata*), sei whales (*Balaenoptera borealis*), bryde whales (*Balaenoptera edeni*), bairds beaked whales (*Berardius bairdii*) and the fin whales (*Balaenoptera physalus*). All these species are listed in CITES Appendix I with a reservation from Japan. 14 ads did not mention the name of the species contrary to the Japanese regulation itself. It can for example be the meat of sperm whales captured under the deemed scientific hunt in the Northeast Pacific. The fin whales steaks and bacon come from Iceland or from the ex- Japanese scientific hunt in Antarctica. The Norway origin has not been excluded. 3 weeks after the publication of the EIA report, Rakuten removed its whale article catalogue.



"Carving representing the diverse characters, sculpted in an animal tooth, 21 cm long" on Price Minister

The seizure of ivory from 1st January to 31th March is equal to 1133 elephants including Operation COBRA II

Taking the average weight of 4.5 kg per tusk. The 3898 seized ivory articles of which the weight was not communicated have not been included in the total.

The ivory articles for their part remain available. 26,000 ads ivory had been released in February of this year on the site of the Japanese giant. Price Minister is the French branch of Japanese Rakuten. One can observe that Price Minister talks the good line. No ivory can be found on this site, but "animal teeth" objects were found.



WHERE WE PROFIT FROM POACHED ELEPHANTS

Rakuten

Tell Rakuten to stop selling elephant and whale products
To take action now, visit www.eia-international.org
Find us on Facebook at [/environmentalinvestigationagency](https://www.facebook.com/environmentalinvestigationagency)
and on Twitter as [@EIAinvestigator](https://twitter.com/EIAinvestigator)

eia

AFRICA

Seizure of 120 kg of ivory

Kamuzu International Airport, Central Region, Malawi

January 2014

The orphan ivory- the owner has not been identified and has not claimed property- was found in the luggage holds of a plane from Ethiopian Airlines coming from Addis Abeba. Final destination was China. The goods are estimated worth 380,000 US\$.

Disciplinary Layoff for complicity with poachers Tanzania

January 2014

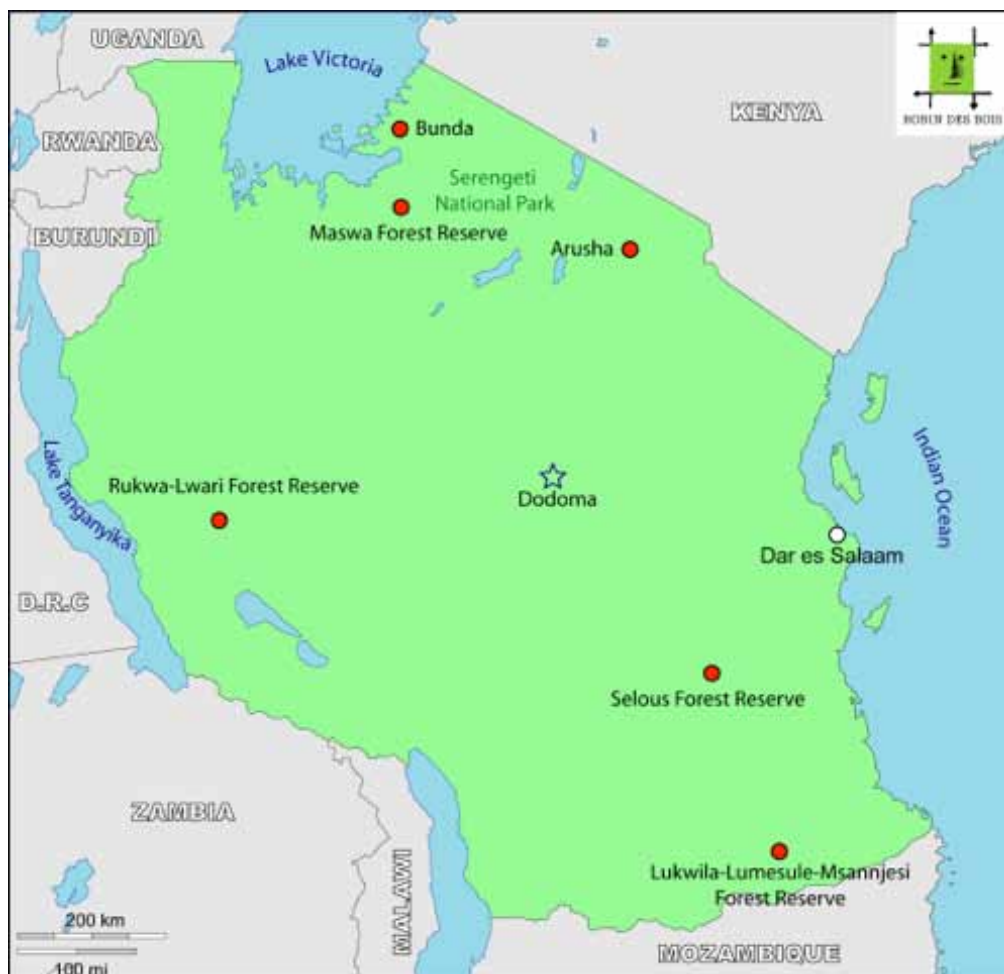
21 employees from the fauna and flora wildlife department have been suspended for suspected complicity with elephant poachers: 11 agents of the Arusha anti poaching unit, 4 agents of the Rukwa-Lwari Forest Reserve, one from the Bunda anti poaching unit, 3 from the Maswa Forest Reserve, one from the Selous Forest Reserve, one from the Lukwika-Lumesule- Msanjesi Forest Reserve. Another officer from the wildlife department was arrested at his house, where 2 weapons and 12 pink flamingos (family Phoenicopteridae, Appendix II) were seized.

Seizure of 3 ivory bracelets and conviction

Bole International Airport, Region of Oromia, Ethiopia

January 1, 2014

A woman from Zambia was arrested at the airport for illegally carrying 3 ivory bracelets. She had left Florida, in transit through Ethiopia before heading towards Zambia. She was sentenced to a 263 US\$ fine. The Zambia Wildlife Authority (ZAWA) took seized the occasion to remind that almost all African countries have signed the CITES Convention and that, during inter-African trips, legal permits are required when transporting protected animal parts or products. The ZAWA press release lists raw or carved ivory, elephant hairs, reptile or feline skins, bird eggs, feathers, horns, teeth, claws and bush meat. ZAWA gives the example of a traveller coming from Namibia and who was arrested at the Lusaka airport in possession of a bottle opener that's handle was made of a warthog tooth.



Tanzania: the Map of Suspicion

Seizure of 81 tusks (303 kg) and 120 kg of pangolin scales

Port of Dar es Salaam, Region of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

January 2, 2014

The port of Dar es Salaam is once more the scenery for a sordid affair. Ivory trafficking that consists of ripping from the body of an elephant brutally slaughtered a few kilograms of hard white matter actively sought for by bad tasted people has struck again.

Luckily the container holding an unknown number of tusks was opened before going off to sea. Dock rumours not yet confirmed speak of 81 tusks to which must be added, since these morbid counts must be complete, 120 kg of pangolin scales. Sea products complete the toll. One of the high ranking port officials admitted to having been informed of the case but refused to say more leaving communication on the affair to the government. A well informed source tells us the tusks were "green" i.e. freshly cut and could be for part taken from elephants killed after Operation Tokomeza was suspended. 2 suspects would currently be under questioning.

Seizure of 6 pieces of ivory **Ngomeni, Eastern Province, Kenya**

January 3, 2014

He was arrested carrying 6 pieces of ivory estimated worth 75,000 Sh (881 US\$). He denies the charges held against him. He was let out on bail for 50,000 Sh (587 US\$).

Seizure of 2 pieces of ivory **Murchison Falls National Park, Northern Region, Uganda**

January 5, 2014

The Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) is continuing efforts to clear up Murchison Falls Park and restore its roles as a tourist attraction and protected area for wildlife. Some ivory, a fire weapon, 65 bullets were seized after the poachers were arrested.



Seizure of 16 pieces of ivory (34 kg) **Libreville, Province of Estuaire, Gabon**

January 10, 2014

Farouk Alim is considered a big-shot in ivory trafficking in Gabon. The goods are cut out of 10 elephant tusks. The operation was led by the Brigade d'Intervention de la Police Judiciaire and les Eaux et Forêts agents assisted by the Conservation justice NGO. The Forest Legal Code states a maximum penalty of 6 months. After 72 hours in custody, Farouk Alim was presented to the Office of the Public Prosecutor. Last year, 2 of his colleges of the same likings were found holding 176 kg of ivory and arrested. They were released awaiting trial.



One elephant poached **Mount Kenya National Park, County of Kirinyaga, Kenya**

January 2014

Another elephant was found dead in the Hobe Forest surrounding Mount Kenya. Is this elephant sanctuary becoming a sanctuary for poachers? The solitary victim whose tusks were ripped off had returned to the Hobe forest while his herd had been taken to safer grounds.

Conviction for illegal possession **of 12 kg of elephant tusks** **Kilgoris, County of Narok, Kenya** **January 2014**



He was arrested on December 17, 2012 in possession of ivory by the KWS police force who had accurately been informed by local citizens. Against all evidence from investigations, he denied the charges.

OPERATION TOKOMEZA continued **Seizure of 37 kg of elephant tusks** **Ugenza village, Region of Iringa, Tanzania** **January 2014**

The government spokesperson is walking on eggs since the suspension of the large scale operation led at the end of last year aiming stamp out elephant poaching and ivory smuggling. Controversy spreads across the country regarding the aims, modalities and results of this campaign. The press

release reads: "Despite the announced arrests in various places across the country for ivory trafficking, including the one that has just occurred in Dar es Salaam, we are sad to hereby inform the public that Madam Salomé Aloyce, Mister Rajab Omar and Mister Kadili Kisanduku, taxi driver, have been arrested in the village of Ugenza onboard a Toyota Corola in which were hidden 37kg of ivory (...). The suspects are at present in custody awaiting future judicial action."

Seizure of 3 elephant tusks
Naikara, County of Narok, Kenya
January 10, 2014

The suspect will shortly be presented before the County Court.



Seizure of 13 pieces of ivory and conviction
Bole International Airport, Region of Oromia, Ethiopia

January 13, 2014

3 Chinese citizens were arrested. They were quickly presented before Court in Arada where they admitted to be in possession of ivory without any documentation certifying its origin. They were each sentenced to a 7000 birr fine (364 US\$). The ivory was handed over to the government.

Seizure of 5 kg of raw ivory
Kanja village, County of Embu, Kenya
January 16, 2014

Based on information provided by locals, police went to a suspect's home where they found the ivory.

COBRA II

Seizure of ivory and one leopard skin (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I)
Nairobi, County of Nairobi, Kenya
January 17, 2014

The President of Kenya had called China to cooperate in aims of stamping out trafficking of endangered animals and animal parts that is worsening in Kenya. The first results of this cooperation are just being revealed. Chinese investigators who arrived in Kenya on January 15 encouraged the Nairobi police force to arrest a suspect on January 17. This Chinese citizen was expelled to China on the first available flight on the 18th. At his home in the chic part of Nairobi, ivory, a leopard skin and several passports were seized.

In order to deploy teams in Kenya, China based itself on the international operation Cobra II working to ameliorate cooperation between states to counter environmental criminality. The anti-smuggling bureau of the Chinese Customs general administration worked hand in hand with operational forces of the Lusaka Agreement and Kenya for this case.



OPERATION COBRA II

From December 30 to January 27, 2014

Operation Cobra II is co-organized by China, the United States and South Africa along with the Lusaka Agreement Task Force (LATF), the ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network and South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network, supported by CITES, the World Customs Organization and INTERPOL, with the financial and documentation support of IFAW, the Freeland Foundation and a Canadian NGO-the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives. 28 countries participated from December 30, 2013 to January 26, 2014. Over this period, Cobra organizers claim to have arrested 400 suspects and seized 3 tons of ivory and ivory products, 10,000 freshwater turtles, 10,000 European eels, 1000 wild animal skins, 36 rhino horns, hundreds of kilos of pangolin scales, 200 tons of sandalwood. Cobra II also enabled to dismantle a Kenya-China channel.

Seizure of 1.5 kg of ivory
Bordj Badji Mokhtar, Wilaya of Adrar, Algeria
January 18, 2014

The persistent disorder in North Mali where some few hundred elephants still remain is spilling into southern Algeria. National Police searched a home in the 20 août block in wilaya d'Andar, 2200 km south of Algiers. Ivory, 1.5 kg of cocaine, 3 diamonds, 2 satellite phones and 129 vials of an unknown substance were seized.

Seizure of 3.4 kg of ivory and conviction
Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, County of Nairobi, Kenya
January 18, 2014



The 40 year old Chinese citizen was arrested at the Nairobi international airport. He was coming in from Mozambique ready to fly to Guangzhou. The ivory was hidden in his luggage. It had been declared as dishes. An airport official notes that the Mozambique- Kenya- China is more and more active. According to the new law strengthening sanctions for smuggling ivory, rhino horns and other animal products banned from international trade, the suspect risked a heavy penalty. As it turned out, a few days later, he was sentenced to pay a 20 million shillings fine (230,000 US\$) or a 7 year prison term. He "inaugurated" the new law. Under the former legislation, for the same amount of ivory he would have faced a maximum fine equivalent to 500 US\$. The KWS spokesperson declared to be satisfied with the verdict saying it was both an encouragement towards the rangers and a warning to smugglers.

Seizure of 6 pieces of ivory
Itiryo village, Region of Mara, Tanzania
January 24, 2014

In the north of Serengeti Park, near the border with Kenya and Uganda, a man unknown to the village was found on a regular bus line with 6 ivory pieces in his bag. Interrogations allowed to localize and in turn interrogate 3 accomplices with expert knowledge of the Park in the Tarime District. Some farmers lead their herds to graze inside the park where they keep themselves busy with activities much more violent and lucrative than looking over a bunch of ruminants. Total value of the ivory take is estimated at 20 million shillings (12,300 US\$).

Arrest of 4 poachers
Enduimet Wildlife Management Area, Arusha Region, Tanzania

Between January 16 and 26, 2014

The killers had neither a bow nor fire weapons, only arrows and a large pot of deadly poison that accelerates body decay and eases tusk extraction, a post mortem butchery that in normal circumstances takes hours if one wants to take the teeth all the way to its roots. They were tracking a herd of elephants west of the Kilimanjaro. They in turn were being followed by rangers with the help of sniffer dogs expert in the art of tracking. These "noses" played an essential role in the trailing which lasted several days. The 4 poachers fell one after the other. The hunting technique they say to have been

using for years is both archaic and modern; archaic for it implies to harass and to wound with arrows, modern because the weapons are coated with one those 20th century deadly agricultural poisons that local experts haven't even found a specific name for yet. One of the poachers was arrested just after having poisoned a zebra (*Equus grevyi*, Appendix I). A year ago near Arusha, 4 elephants died of poisoning after eating watermelons insidiously placed by the side of their trail.

Seizure of 3 kg of ivory
Igembe, County of Meru, Kenya
January 2014

The transaction was interrupted, the sellers are in custody.

Seizure of 300 g of ivory in the shape of 2 bracelets, 3 necklaces, 10 pendants and 2 rectangular pieces



Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, County of Nairobi, Kenya
January 27, 2014

Arrested on January 27, sentenced on January 30 to a 1 million shillings fine (12,000 US\$) or 5 years prison term, he paid the fine February 3, was released immediately, tried to get on the first plane to China and was arrested a second time. This time he wasn't carrying any ivory but the General Attorney for the Prosecution formed an appeal against the sentencing that he considers too light with regards to the new law on wildlife protection.

Seizure of 3815.75 kg of ivory and 22.55 kg pangolin scales
Autonomous Port of Lomé, Lomé City, Togo
January 22 and 28, 2014

Classic case (see July 19, 2013 « On the Trail » issue 2), the tusks and pieces of tusks were hidden in 3 containers loaded with wood leaving for Vietnam. DNA tests could confirm that 500 forest elephants were killed in Central Africa to fuel this attempted smuggling. The finding occurred thanks to the central Office for Repression of Illegal Trafficking of drugs and money laundering (OCRTIDB). Ofir Drori, founder of the Last Great Apes Organization who assisted police in their investigations is glad for that and yet fears that the underground illegal export networks will move towards ports of West Africa less monitored. The Vietnamese smuggling organizer living in Togo was arrested along with 2 Togolese accomplices.

The Port of Lomé is the only deep water one in Western Africa. It takes in transocean container carriers. More than 60% of exports are heading towards Asia. Lomé exports coffee, coton, cacao, plantation grown teak wood. The Danish ship owner Maersk is the leader there of container transport. The French company Bolloré coordinates the major part of container handling. A recent model of Gantry scanners makes it possible to inspect them. Priority is set on import containers. The scanner use and management are under the control of the Swiss Company Cotecna.



The Gantry container scanner in Lomé Port

3 elephants poached

Masai Mara, County of Narok, Kenya

January 29, 2014

3 elephants fell victims of a violent death and ivory theft and were found in the Mara Reserve near the border with Tanzania.

Seizure of 2 ivory bracelets

Kenneth Kaunda International Airport, Lusaka, Zambia

January 29, 2014

The Chinese seller of farming and building equipment based in Lusaka was returning to his home Country via the United Arab Emirates. In his computer case there were 2 ivory bracelets. His departure has been rescheduled. He will soon be presented to court.



FAMILY AFFAIRS

Seizure of 3 sections of elephant tusks

Mpanda Township, Region of Rukwa, Tanzania

January 29, 2014

The seizure took place at the home of 2 brothers. The value is estimated at 24 million Tanzanian shillings (14,800 US\$).

REPEATED OFFENCE

Seizure of elephant meat and ivory

Lomié, Eastern Region, Cameroun

January 30 and 31, 2014

His nickname is "Saturday". He says he is a farmer. It seems his farm is the forest and his cattle are the wild elephants. He was arrested at a roadside check

specially set up for him. Among his personal belonging carried with him there was raw ivory and elephant meat. The victim appears to have been killed in the Nki Park, near Lomé where 3 of Saturday's accomplices were arrested. The trafficker admitted to having killed 12 elephants over the last 2 months. He has already been involved in a case of ivory and killed elephants in 2011. He had just barely escaped.

Seizure of 34 pieces of elephant tusks, 4 hippopotamus teeth (famille Hippopotamidae, Appendix II), 12 lion claws (*Panthera leo*, App. II) Dar es Salaam, Région of Dar es Salaam, Tanzanie January 2014

East of Dar es Salaam, searches in a Toyota uncovered 34 sections of elephant tusks, 4 hippopotamus teeth and 12 lion claws. This high priced animal bazaar seems to have been stolen from the State services stocks. The 4 occupants of the vehicle gave information concerning another stock of the same origin in an artisan's shop in Dar es Salaam. The anti-poaching rangers' and police force's have not neutralized the traffic master.

One elephant poached

Rumuruti Forest, County of Laikipia, Kenya

January 2014

The 2 gun shots broke the air before sun down and echoed in all the forest. 12 hours later, the search brigades, exhausted by the nighttime tracking stumbled on the body almost still warm. If only 2 bullets were enough to kill the young male of about 15 years old, the ivory thieves had to lash out with an axe to rip off the tusks. Sniffer dogs were set on the trail of the escapees but late intervention made the hunt unsuccessful. A week before, gun shots had already been heard and last year, 5 confirmed cases of elephant poaching were counted in this forest.



Poaching of one elephant
Chyulu Hills National Park, County of Makueni,
Kenya

January 2014

The death of a giant. Torn Ear was more than 40 years old and tusks more than 50 kg. He was in the north of the Park, as every year when the rainy season comes. Near a water point, Richard Bonham suddenly noticed something strange in Torn Ear's way of walking. On examination, he saw 2 small wounds at the back of his rib cage. Minor injuries but great pain. The 2 arrows had been poisoned. Despite a team of veterinarians that arrived to Tsavo Park in just hours, irreparable fate had been triggered. The poison had done its job. Peritonitis was triggered. It was necessary to end the suffering of Torn Ear and kill him. He was still carrying his tusks. At the Big Life Foundation, the team is devastated, a bit by the guilt of failing to protect Torn Ear and much because the same day as Torn Ear, roughly 100 other elephants suffered a violent death on the African continent.

3 satellite collars carried by elephants in the 741 km² Park helped to see that they would come close to the expressway Nairobi - Mombasa that facilitates access to the Park for the poachers and also their escape.



Death of 4 ivory buyers
Binga, Matabeleland North, Zimbabwe
January 2014

The poachers and the ivory buyers were unable to agree. The 2 sides apparently failed to find a compromise. The 4 potential buyers including a woman were shot. Drug trafficking, ivory trafficking, same bloody settling of accounts.

Poaching of one elephant
Uganda
February 2014



Uganda. The opening day of "London Summit" on environmental crimes

Seizure of 143 kg of ivory
Sengbot, East Region, Cameroon
February 8, 2014

In France, rhino horns are probably sent to China amid bottles of Bordeaux. In Cameroon, the tusks carry around amid crates of beer. The driver of the truck disappeared into nature.

Seizure of 28 ivory bracelets (226.7 g)
Lomé, Maritime Region, Togo
February 14, 2014

Cherif Abdoul Gadri alias Kader of Guinean nationality was arrested with 28 ivory bracelets. His name has already been cited in the N'Bouké affair (see "On the Trail" n°2 p.60). The arrest of Kader will possibly allow a better understanding of his exact position in ivory trafficking in Togo, around Togo and leaving Togo. The Central Office of Repression of Illicit Drugs and Laundering is leading investigations.

N'Bouké had been caught with 680 kg of ivory. He could be trafficking since 1970. He is in prison since August 2013. He says he "is victim of an injustice". He does not risk more than 5 years prison term. The Court is refusing to confirm his official indictment.



Seizure of 0.68 kg of ivory including jewelry, a piece of ivory worked, a block of ivory
Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, Nairobi, Kenya
February 14, 2014

32 years old, a Chinese national, was arrested at the airport. He was in transit, travelling on Kenya Airways (KQ), 741 flight Maputo / Mozambique in Nairobi / Kenya and was about to board the flight KQ 882 to reach Guangzhou (formerly Canton) in China.

Seizure of 2 tusks
Ecosystem of Tarangire Manyara, Tanzania
February 14, 2014

Rocky and Jerry, the new assistants of the rangers within the Big Life Dog Unit proved their efficiency. After 7 hours of effort, following the poachers' traces over the rocks and hills of the savannah they discovered 2 hidden tusks for a total weight of 58 kg. The poachers had no doubt buried them with the intention of coming to find them after the alert passed.

"The modern techniques have their use, but the dogs' skills, man's best friend, are always relevant". "More than ever in these circumstances they are used". Lembris Kephas, dog handler, wishes that his team could be in post at the closest to the poacher's range of action to help track down the poachers themselves.



Jerry & Rocky, dogs of the Big Life with their masters Shinini, Lempris et Kalasinga

Seizure of 58 elephant tusks (130 kg)
Chungu village, Mtwara Region, Tanzania
February 15, 2014

4x4 was speeding to Dar Es Salaam nearly 700 km away. 58 tusks were on board which means those of 29 baby elephants. The total weight of ivory was 130 kg. The car was not stopped by chance. The tusks were in a false gas tank. They were seized and put in a safe place. Except diversion, they will not take the direction of Asia by sea or air.

Tanzanian President said to be thinking about the full and public destruction of illegal ivory stocks of his country.

Seizure of 31 tusks (152 kg of ivoire)
Eldoret, County of Uasin Gishu, Kenya
February 19, 2014

Their car had been intercepted not too far from the frontier between Kenya and Uganda. They were going to Kampala. The traffic in east Africa has been redirected to the roads because of reinforced controls in the airports. Behind the 2 smugglers, there was 15 million Kenyan shillings, or 173,000 US\$.



Seizure of 47 kg of ivory and conviction
Chitungwiza, Province of Oriental Mashonaland, Zimbabwe
February 2014



Near Harare, the honorable artisan came to take the delivery of 47 kg of ivory. He had already made 120 bracelets, 110 baguettes and 368 failed items. He was sentenced to 10 months of prison suspended sentence and a 500 US\$ fine. This isn't much of a price to pay. The possible origin of raw ivory could be the elephant massacre with cyanide in Hwange Park.

Seizure of the elephant's teeth and jaw bones
Yaoundé, Central Region, Cameroon
February 2014

The man had a full carton box of elephant teeth and jaws. He came to deliver a wholesaler in Yaoundé. For that, he came from east Cameroon.

Seizure of 2 ivory pieces
Matalani, County of Kilifi, Kenya
February 24, 2014

The KWS arrested a notorious poacher on the run for a year. He was taken in his hide-out where guns were found, ammunition and 2 tusks sections. His principal room for manoeuvre was Natural Park of Tsavo.

Poaching of 2 elephants
Sitoka village-Kilgoris, Narok County, Kenya
February 2014

The 2 big "tuskers" were found 50 m one from the other. They were dead and invaded by maggots. The trunks had been cut and thrown in the bushes. They get in the way of cutting off the tusks.

Seizure of 3 elephant tusks (12 kg)
Chitungwiza, Province of Oriental Mashonaland, Zimbabwe
February 24, 2014

The 2 brothers fell for the trap. They accepted to finalize the transaction in Harare. They climbed into the car of the potential clients with a bag of ivory and they were picked up 3 blocks further by the route control. In the bag, there were 3 tusks. From beginning to end, the ambush had been set up by the police.

INEDIT

Justice takes a stand in favor of ivory traffickers

Uganda

February 26, 2014

Big mess in Uganda.

A maritime container with 832 tusks or sections was seized in October 2013 near Kampala. The ivory was destined to China via the Kenyan port of Mombasa. They were hidden in a batch of plastic bottles to be recycled (see "On the Trail" n°3 p. 59) Owino Odhiambo, the Kenyan director of the Silver Shipping Limited Company was immediately suspected. He was the recipient of the container to Mombasa. The expeditor, Emile Ogane has also clearly identified him. Director of the Ogane Company Limited, this businessman of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) had exported the container by road tracks in Uganda. The truck registered in the Democratic Republic of the Congo had crossed the border between the DRC and Uganda to the post of Bunagana, of course without declaring any ivory. That ivory was shameful. The DRC, member of CITES, did not have any legal possibility of exporting such quantities of ivory.

Incredible turnover of the situation. The lawyers of Mr. Ogane had filed a complaint in front of a highest court of Uganda and in the absence of their client, accused the national administration of having illegally seized the tusks. According to the defense of Mr. Ogane, he had authorization from his government to export the ivory and the services of the Ugandan State had no right to interfere with the routing of the container to the foreign port of Mombasa.

It was even argued in court that if Mr. Ogane had hid the tusks in the midst of other merchandises declared and known by Uganda Customs as a transit country, i.e. the recycled plastic bottles and of coffee, it was to prevent theft during transport.

The judge Wilson Masalu Musene gave way to the arguments of the Congolese trafficker's council and ordered February 26th that the Ugandan State return the merchandise that, it must be recalled, is estimated worth 2,360,000 US\$ and cost the lives of 400 forest elephants.

This is "Ubu" in Uganda especially as Mr. Ogane is the ghost that never responded to the convocations of the Ugandan justice. The police plans to prevent the container of ivory from returning to the border to Congo. The representative of Interpol in Uganda declared that his institution opposed with all possible measures to the "legislation" of illegal ivory. The wish of Interpol is that Mr. Ogane physically comes and explains the origin and the dating of the smuggled ivory. This courtesy visit of the Congolese trafficker is all the more improbable than the Ugandan government delivered an international arrest warrant against him and his Kenyan correspondent in charge of the expedition in China of the 832 pieces of ivory.

The Ugandan State had formed an appeal against the Supreme Court's decision. Uganda conserves for the time a global stock of 5 tons of seized ivory distributed in many warehouses.



Poaching of an elephant

Siana conservancy, State of Narok, Kenya

March 12, 2014

The young male was hit by 2 poisonous arrows, one in the lungs, the other near the tail. The attack took place at the edge of the reserve, just on the outside of its limits. The tusks were still there when the corpse was found. A small cabin was discovered very close by. It served as an observation post for the poachers. The gun-man was above its victim, no-doubt a lookout hidden in a tree.



Seizure of 8 ivory pieces (12 kg)

Okondja, Province of Upper-Ogooué, Gabon

March 13, 2014

Abdou Dan Kassoua, of Nigerian nationality and the organizer of a large-scale poaching, has been arrested with 8 tusks or parts of tusks, a trifle with regards to what he is capable of handling in the frame of his criminal activities. At the moment of his arrest, he was preparing to provide .458 caliber ammunition (photo) to his recruited poachers. He has a small flat in Okondja, in East Cameroon. Kassoua extends without doubt his influence to the Democratic Republic of Congo.



Dismissal of charges for illegal possession of 19 kg of ivory
Nairobi, Nairobi County, Kenya
March 2014



The assistant director of Amboseli Trust for Elephants and his son were charged in May 2013 of illegal transportation of ivory tusks (See "On the Trail" no.1) for a weight of 19 kg and a local value of Sh 19 million or about 20,000 US\$. The 2 suspects were released on bail for Sh 200.000 each (2300 US\$).

Almost a year later, charges were dismissed at the request of the prosecutor on the ground that the evidence was insufficient. The lawyer for the 2 Amboseli Trust for Elephants employees argued that they were victims of a conspiracy by Kenya Wildlife Service officials. «This case shows that investigations on elephants and rhinos poaching must be led by the services of justice.» A way to doubt the reliability of surveys conducted unilaterally by the KWS.

Court Appearance for a police inspector associated with an elephant poacher

Lupane, Province of Northern Matabeleland, Zimbabwe
March 2014

Zimbabwe is still floundering in cyanide. The chief of Tsholotsho police in charge of the investigation on the mass poisoning of elephants in the Hwange has just been arrested by his colleagues. Signs of complicity between him and the poachers raised suspicions. He in particular would use the car of a condemned ivory trafficker, sentenced to 9 years but let out on bail awaiting a judgment in appeal. His superiors believe that these doubtful relations compromise the reputation of the police forces and shed doubt on the honesty of the head inspector Muyambirwa Muzzah.

Court Appearance for poaching of an elephant
Kilgoris, Narok County, Kenya

March 13, 2014

They deny all. They were released into their natural habitat after each posting bail of 1 million Sh (11,526 US\$). They will be appearing in court at the end of April.

Sentencing for trafficking of 81 tusks and pangolin scales

Dar es Salam, Region of Dar es Salam, Tanzania

March 2014

Yu Bo, 45 years old, Chinese national living in Tanzania, has apparently proven his great naivety in the total lack of knowledge on the gravity of his crime and the judiciary risks. Or had he heard about the ancient practices today revolving concerning the entrance of the port of Dar es Salam.

Arriving in Tanzania at the end of November 2013, he had immediately got in contact with the poaching milieu and had collected 81 elephant tusks and pangolin scales.



December 30, end of the afternoon, he loaded his loot in the pickup van and reached at 8:30 p.m the doors of the Dar es Salam port with the declared intention of loading the tusks on board one ship headed to China. With the elephant tusks and pangolin scales, he had gathered wooden carvings for good-measure and good-show.

Attentive to the prosecution statements, the judge had not been sensitive to the circumstantial confessions of the trafficker and his criminal record deemed clear in his home country. She was no more moved by the large family of which Yu Bo claimed to be the sole care taker. She was sentenced to a staggering fine or a penalty of 20 years of prison. For failing to be able to pay the fine, the second penalty will be enforced.

Seizure of a tusk

Isiolo, Isiolo County, Kenya

March 16, 2014

New failure within the rangers. One of the 2 suspects is an agent of KWS posted in Isiolo. He had important responsibilities within the poachers team interested in the Lewa Reserve. In 6 months, 6 elephants and 2 rhinos were killed there. This story casts doubt on the vigilance and honesty of some rangers. Officially, it is called «laxity».

Seizure of 4 skulls and jaws of elephants

Mindourou, East Region, Cameroon

March 17, 2014

The 4 elephant skulls, according to sources familiar with the matter, are probably those of elephants killed for their ivory in the Dja Biosphere Reserve between December 2013 and January 2014. The trafficker had to hire 4 people to carry the remains out of the reserve. The elephant trophies and the trafficker were seized and arrested in a bush taxi.

No rituals using skulls and skeletons of elephants are known. They could be used as decorations on after polishing and whitening. They could also be placed close by to villages to attract hedgehogs and enable young people to practice shooting.



Poaching of one elephant
Mugie ranch, County of Laikipia, Kenya
March 18, 2014

One pillaged elephant. After having killed him, some men stole his teeth. In July 2013, 2 tusks probably from poaching another elephant in this ranch had been seized in the neighbour village of Loniak (see "On the Trail" n°2, p. 55).

Seizure of 28.32 kg of ivory
Lome, Maritime Region, Togo
March 19, 2014

Bracelets and trinkets in large quantities, especially for the elephants who were killed for this purpose, were flushed at the home and garage workshop of the accused.



Elephant poaching
Amboseli National Park, Kajiado County, Kenya
March 20, 2014

On the gentle slopes of Kilimanjaro, the shepherd came across the body of a female elephant who was about to give birth. She collapsed with a Masai spear deep in the chest. She was still bearing her tusks.



Listen

Experts in animal psychology of Brighton University, United Kingdom, studied in Amboseli Park the behavior of elephants when they perceive a noise issued by lions and by men. Hearing the roars of a lion, the group of elephants generally face and approach the source in a dense formation, confident in their capacity to repel and dissuade the predator from attacking one of the group members.

The elephants are a lot more defensive and operate a strategic retreat after a few minutes of acoustic surveillance and olfactory investigations when voices of Massai men reach them. The men of the Massai ethnic group have a long tradition of attacking wild animals with spears. The elephants react less to the voices of Massai females and children and the voices of the Kamba ethnic group. In the Kamba ethnic group, there are more farmers than hunters.

Poaching of 3 elephants
Mbale ranch, County Taita Taveta, Kenya
March 21, 2014

5 poachers. 20 shots. It was night. Thermal imaging cameras didn't help. They are not connected to a server allowing to identify and intervene in real time. 6 tusks are gone. The ivory thieves were familiar to the place. Park management Tsavo (20,800 km²) wants rangers to perform night patrols. Somali traffickers are discussed.

Seizure of 8 elephant tusks
Amka ranch, Wundanyi County, Kenya
March 22, 2014

4 elephants killed. 8 tusks found by the KWS. It happened on the edge of Tsavo Park.

Poaching of 2 elephants
Aberdare National Park, Nyandarua County, Kenya

Beginning of March and March 22, 2014

1.5 tons, 20 years, caliber .458 and .375 on the one hand. An ax, cloths, 3 bags, shoes, food and a poisonous arrow in the other hand.

The 5 poachers rode in the forest for many days in search of good deals. On Saturday evening, shots had been heard. The following day, a patrol came across the band striving in silence to tear away the tusks. A clash broke out immediately. The poachers fled. Some would be wounded. Police appealed to local residents.

Seizure of 30 kg of ivory
Kamuzu International Airport, Lilongwe, Central Region, Malawi
March 23, 2014

The 2 travel bags stuffed with ivory belonged to a man of Nigerian nationality travelling on Ethiopia Airlines from Addis Ababa to Lagos. The bags were intercepted but the traveller vanished into thin air.

Seizure of an elephant skin
Lari, Kiambu County, Kenya
March 24, 2014

He walked into the small shopping center with a good piece of elephant skin in his hands. He was going to deliver or negotiate it. The village is near the Aberdare forest where poaching is rampant.

Seizure of 14 pieces of ivory
Kidatu, Region of Morogoro, Tanzania
March 25, 2014

"The businessman" was travelling on a motorcycle with 15 elephant tusks in the rear. 250 km away from Dar es Salam; he was arrested in his trip. On the motorcycle, the load was worth 45,000 US\$. In the region, the elephants are apparently poisoned with Furadan 5G, containing carbofuran, one of the most toxic insecticides.

According numerous local observers, the sanctions are too weak and there are more and more "free-lance" poachers who connect with the "traders" to sell the ivory in Asia.



Seizure of 4 tusks
Katindiuka, Morogoro Region, Tanzania
March 2014

4 tusks (value 30,000 US\$) were found on a bicycle. The suspects fled.

Poaching of 2 elephants
National Park of Nki, East Region, Cameroon and National Park of Minkébé, Province of Woleu-Ntem, Gabon
From March 20 to 27, 2014

10 poaching camps were destroyed in the natural park of Nki to the south of Cameroon and that of Minkebe to the north of Gabon between March 20 and March 27 2014. Multiple weapons and 2 elephant carcasses were found. The operation was lead jointly by the ecoguards of Gabon and Cameroon.

Poaching of an elephant
Samburu County, Kenya
March 29, 2014

15 detonations went off at sunset. 15 bullets were needed to kill the giant. The series of post mortem photographs demonstrate the savagery of the am-

bush. The elephant was under fire from both sides. He tried to catch his right tusk in a tree to hold himself up before collapsing. The poachers did not have the time to get the ivory.

The victim was well known by the guards in the reserve. They had noticed for 3 years that his left tusk was broken probably following a conflict with other male elephants.



Seizure of 6 + 55 tusks
Kiombo, Singida Region, Tanzania
March 31, 2014

6 poachers were arrested at dawn. The 55 tusks weighed 170 kg. Tanzania is preparing to launch the second phase of the operation Tokomeza. Research on Rungwa and Kizigo reserves (13,000 km²) are underway to find other tusks and locate elephant carcasses (to accumulate evidence). Poaching operations may extend over a much wider area. The 2 reserves are part of a theoretically protected natural area of 51,000 km², almost 1/10th of France.

The police has a machine gun in hand.

Another catch took place the day before in the area: 6 tusks whose local value was estimated at Sh 27,368 millions, which is about 17,000 US\$. The minister had shaken his agenda to come congratulate the mobile anti- poaching brigades.



Violence in the Zambezi Valley Zimbabwe and Namibia

March 2014

Elephants are transboundary, poachers too. High Zambezi Valley is boiling. Cyanide and AK47 compete as deadly weapons. Dead line up on men's side and elephants' side. Coming from Zambia and infiltrating Zimbabwe near Victoria Falls or other ways, poachers increase incursions and prey on elephants in the Zambezi National Park and the infamous Hwange Park. In the first half of March, several confrontations took place between the rangers and outlaws making at least 3 dead and 3 wounded on the second side. Survivors fled across the border to Botswana and Namibia.

Food, ammunition, guns, cell phones and at least 6 tusks were recovered in abandoned camps. The Government of Zambia asked his Zimbabwe counterpart clarifications about the conditions under which its nationals were killed, wounded or arrested.

Simultaneously, 6 other Zambian citizens were arrested on the border with Namibia at Katima Mulilo post. They are in the hands of the Namibian Police.

Chinese community living in Namibia and especially in Katima Mulilo plays a role of magnet in the trafficking sector. Katima Mulilo is the principal city of a Namibian enclave cutting like a blade between Zambia and Zimbabwe. This strategic location allow Chinese ivory traffickers to consolidate and develop exfiltration pathways. Ivory would be purchased to Zambians and other poachers about 300 Namibian dollars per kg (28 US\$) to be compared with market price of 3000 to 5000 US\$ in Hong Kong and mainland China.

Seizure of 2 elephant tusks

Kenya

March 2014



Theft of 2 tusks

Tembe Elephant Park, Province of Kwazulu Natal, South Africa

March 2014

Presumed natural death ended Isilo's life, the Tembe Park elder. When his body was found, his 3m long tusks, weighing 65 and 60 kg had vanished.

Scott Ramsay, author of "A year in the Wild" and photographer paid a tribute to Isilo. To me, he was the living proof of the unique and incomparable characteristics of Africa. There is almost nothing more impressive and inspiring than a venerable elephant carrying his colossal tusks."



Conviction for illegal possession of 2 kg of dried meat

Livingstone, Southern Province, Zambia

March 28, 2014

The 2 dried meat consumers put forward their heavy family responsibilities as an explanation. They were yet sentenced to 18 months in prison 12 of which are suspended. They risked a maximum sentence of 7 years.



AMERICA

2 tusks stolen

**Washington, District of Columbia, United States
Information dating January 8, 2014**

Destroying seized ivory is necessary to avoid thefts and misappropriations. In the United States and no less than in the Washington the capital has just had 2 historical tusks stolen, tusks that were given in 1954 by the Emperor Haïlé Sélassié I. They were not illegal, they were part of US governmental stocks. They were stolen in a building belonging to the Columbia District, 3 blocks away from the white house, somewhere between the August 12 and 27

2013, time at which they were temporarily moved so workers could renew the wooden panels in the salon where they were kept. The theft was kept secret several months, as if it were a State affair.



© Metropolitan Police Department

ASIA

Seizure of 20 kg of sculpted objects in ivory Shenzhen, Province of Guangdong, China January 6, 2014

The car was driving around in the airport zone near the passenger terminal. Customs found the worked ivory in the trunk. Fake antiques.



Seizure of 35 tusks (275.2 kg) Province of Fangchenggang, Autonomous Region of Guangxi, China January 8, 2014

In the border region between Vietnam and China, a mobile Chinese brigade stopped a small pick-up truck. Inspection of the vehicle uncovered at the bottom between the 4 tires a hidden compartment where was stored the ivory of an estimated value of 132,000 US\$. The longest tusk measured 1.5 m long.



© CNR

Seizure of 3 tusks Mumbai, State of Maharashtra, India January 11, 2014

He works on the docks in Mumbai. He said he accidentally found the 3 elephant tusks while unloading merchandise. Indian experts evaluate the seizure at Rs 4 lakh (6450 US\$). The tusk "finder" and 2 other people suspected to be part of a large scale port network were arrested in the Dharavi mega slum.



© Jyoti332 - dharavi slum

FAMILY AFFAIRS

Seizure of 13 tusks, 16 ivory bracelets and 109 ivory cubes (45 kg)



Singapore Changi Airport, Singapore January 14, 2014

It was all kept in 2 suitcases. 2 Vietnam citizens were arrested. One of them apparently met a compatriot in Angola who promised him 1000 US\$ per suitcase successfully transported to Laos. The person called upon his nephew to assist him with this job. The travel plan was Angola, Dubai, Singapore, Laos. Total value of the merchandise is estimated at 60,000 \$ (47,087 US\$). The 2 smugglers were sentenced to 16 months prison term.



Photo: AVA

© AVA

Seizure of 2 elephant tusks Kadankode, State of Kerala, India January 15, 2014

There were 4 of them on the motorcycle, along with the 2 tusks. The whole lot was intercepted by an anti-poaching patrol warned by colleges in Thiruvananthapuram in the neighbour State of Tamil Nadu. The 4 motorcyclists admitted to police that the ivory had been delivered to them by a villager in Velakundapuram who in turn was arrested along

with his 2 associates. The tusks apparently are from an *Elephas maximus* of the Coimbatore forest.

Seizure of 8 pieces of ivory (5 kg)

**Pudong International Airport, Shanghai, China
January 16, 2014**

Wine and ivory go very well together. Rhino horns prove do too as we have seen earlier. The ivory pieces and wine bottles were in the luggage of a passenger whose story does not say if he came from California or France.

One elephant poached

**Jamankira, State of Odisha, India
January 20, 2014**

4 days apart, this is the second victim in the area. The mafia is on the prowl.

Seizure of one elephant tusk (14kg) and 2 gaur horns (*Bos gaurus*, Appendix I)

**Dharmapuri, State of Tamil Nadu, India
January 21, 2014**

The 26 year old school teacher and his accomplice where driving by motorcycle towards Bangalore where they had an important meeting. Reason was, the baggage carrier of their motorcycle was carrying an elephant tusk piece of quite a size (91 cm long) and 2 gaur horns. If they were heading to Bangalore the only reason could be to sell them. Their ride was stopped at Pappalapatti by a well-informed police squad.



Seizure of 2 tusks

**Kadambur, State of Tamil Nadu, India
January 2014**

At the edge of the forest, the gang of 4 was acting strangely. In a bag were 2 elephant tusks all "green" from one of the last male elephants of the State of Tamil Nadu. One more hard blow to future generations.

Ivory market in Myanmar

**Mong La, Shan State, Myanmar
January 2014**

A team from the Oxford Brookes University uncovered a wide ivory market at the border between Myanmar and China. On the Mong La market at the border thousands of worked ivory and dozens of tusks are sold in public. Myanmar is the last place in the world, a sort of free zone, where can be exposed for sale ivory tusks laid out on a leopard skin. Yet Myanmar has signed the CITES Convention since 1997. In their defence, Myanmar will stress that

Mong La is its interior market, that the ivory comes from its own elephants and that the Mong La market has nothing to do with international commerce.

One elephant poached

**Larasara, State of Odisha, India
January 20 or 21, 2014**

The body was in the jungle. « We burned it on site. » « He was 15 years old. » « The ivory mafia is behind this. » say local authorities and environmentalists.

One elephant poached

**Denkanikottai, State of Tamil Nadu, India
January 2014**

Villagers say that elephant murders are not rare. According to them, they are not all reported to the ranking hierarchy by forest rangers, of which some are suspected to inform poachers and profit from the ivory trade. This one was 10 years old. The Thai Pongal celebration was no party for him.



Elephant poaching

**Jamankira, State of Odisha, India
January 27, 2014**

The 40 years old male had 2 beautiful tusks which were stolen. Death would date back to about a week. The body was cremated on the spot.

Arrest for elephant poaching

**Sambalpur, State of Odisha, India
January 2014**

3 in 10 days! 2 guides and suppliers for poachers who they are working in the middle of the forest were intercepted on board a Mahindra Jeep. The 4 wheeler specially adapted had 3 struts, leverage points to enable easier shooting and 4 gas tanks. It's a customized hunting jeep. An arsenal was found inside, carefully dispatched and hidden. Hundreds of .303 caliber bullets for large game hunting had a cross carved on them so to better perforate the elephants. There were also iPhones, GPS, flashlights and more primitive accessories to finish off the dirty work such as axes and crowbars.

At the top of the Odisha State, it is willingly said that the poachers are part of far leftist groups who need to finance their actions.

At this stage of the investigation, one suspect turns out to be living close to the forest and knows very well the grounds, the other is from Ranchi in the State of Jharkhand and the 4 rifles belong to locals.

Political motivations of the group are uncertain and it is more likely to be collusion between expert poachers and local delinquents. The local Court refused to take on the case so it was sent to the High Court.

Seizure of 8 elephant tusks and 200 ivory objects (95kg)

**Pudong International Airport, Shanghai, China
January 28, 2014**

The cargo and 2 smugglers were coming from Africa. The ivory was hidden in trench coat linings.



GANG

**Seizure of 2 elephant tusks
Chamarajanagar, State of Karnataka, India
February 3, 2014**

2 members of a gang of 7 have admitted to killing an elephant. Bullets, axes, machetes, blades, a battery and a muzzleloader weapon were seized. A senior officer evoked the disastrous memory of Veerappan who had killed 500 elephants in 20 years in the same states.

"The Veerappan gang had the same weapons".

**Poaching of one elephant
Kendujhar, State of Odisha, India
February 3, 2014**

Gathering wood in the forests sets out to make terrible discoveries. One of the 22 elephants of the site was at an advanced stage of decomposition. He was buried there, without his tusks that had been cut off by the murderers.

**Seizure of an elephant bone
Dhupguri, State of Western Bengal, India
February 4, 2014**

There was a bone in a biker's bag, an elephant bone. At present, research aims to find the animal's age. The biker fled on foot. As for the bone, its origin is a mystery. In the region, the carcasses of elephants are immediately burned after their discovery.

**Seizure of 4.2 kg of ivory
Ho-Chi-Minh city, Vietnam
February 12, 2014**

Departing Paris. Destination Hanoi. But the air-freight company made a mistake and the package ended up in Ho-Chi Minh city.

The seizure consists of 3 segments of a tusk, 2 of them measuring between 45 cm long with a maximal circumference of 15 cm. The 3rd measured 33.5 cm long and a circumference of 33 cm. The whole is estimated at 2 million VND (9600 US\$). The Vietnamese Institute of tropical biology confirmed the African origin.

The lost package contained clothes like the customs documents stipulated. The clothes were used to pack the ivory.

**Seizure of 80 kg of ivory
Siem Reap, Province of Siem Reap, Cambodia
February 17, 2014**

The Vietnamese landed at the airport that serves the temples of Angkor. They came for South Korea. The ivory came from Angola. According to the traffickers' declarations, it was intended for the Vietnam market.

**Seizure of 2.5 kg of ivory
Dehradun, State of Uttarakhand, India
February 19, 2014
3 suspects.**

**Conviction for ivory trafficking
(70 kg)
Vietnam
February 21, 2014**



The trafficking network between Angola-Vietnam is a well established one. 2 years ago, 70 kg of ivory was seized in the bags of a passenger. He has just been sentenced to 9 months prison term.

**Conviction of 2 men for smuggling 31 pieces of ivory
Beijing, Autonomous Municipality of Beijing, China
February 2014**



Liang, an airport security agent of the Beijing airport, had prompted Yang to transport 31 pieces of ivory from the Republic of Togo to Beijing. The transfer of ivory would be made in the airport men's room and the 2 men were caught in the act.

The seizure is estimated worth 1 million yuans (163,177 US\$). Yang was sentenced to 11 years of prison and Liang 10 years and 6 months. Having confessed to his crimes, he had a slightly less penalty than his accomplice.

**Seizure of 4 kilos of ivory products
Haining, Zhejiang Province, China
March 8, 2014**

The door to door salesman had bought a batch in Jinan from a peddler in the street and for a bargain (24,000 yuan, or U.S. \$ 4,000). The legal market value (in China) of the total is of 183,000 yuan (U.S. \$ 30,000). He was arrested about 80 km downstream near Shanghai. The ivory is of African and Asian origin.



Seizure of 14.7 kg of ivory
Canton, Province of Guangdong, China
March 17, 2014

The guy was caught conveying 14.7 kg of ivory in his car.

Seizure of 77 tusk parts (263kg)
Province of Svay Rieng, Cambodia
March 21, 2014

The minivan was intercepted 10 km from the border towards Vietnam. The driver escaped. Inside, there were 10 suitcases. The origin of the tusks is not known. Analyses will allow us to say whether the Asian elephants or the African elephants were victims of this poaching and smuggling. To be continued...

Elephant poaching
Buxa Tiger Reserve, State of West Bengal, India
March 2014

Again a dead elephant close to the border with Bhutan. This is the fifth in a year. According to Himalayan Nature NGO spokesman, poaching increases and «officials» fail to pay attention to the residents' testimonies.

Poaching of an elephant
District of West Singhbhum, State of Jharkhand, India
March 2014

A male killed and its tusks removed.

Seizure of about a ton of ivory
Port of Pasir Panjang, Singapore
March 25, 2014



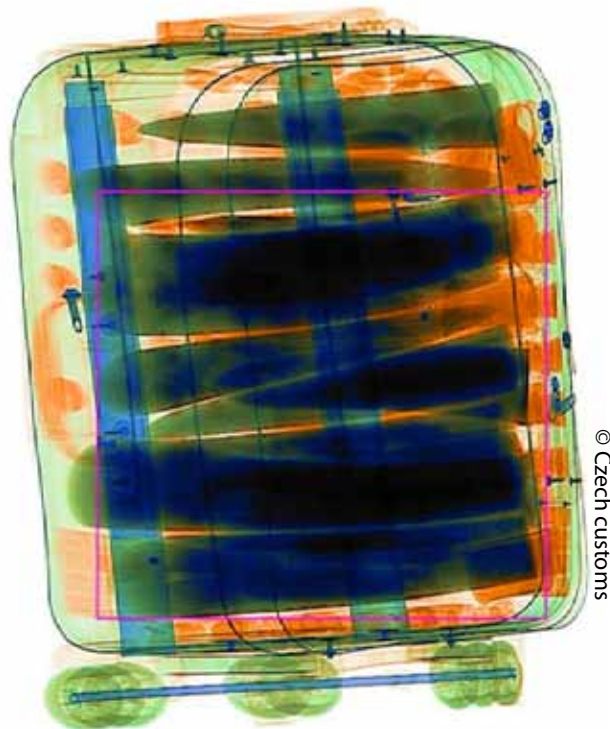
Port of Singapore.

The coffee cherries were made of African ivory

EUROPE

Seizure of 33.05 kg of ivory
Vaclav Havel International Airport, Province of Bohemia, Czech Republic
January 28, 2014

Clearly identifiable by X-rays despite the paper and tape packaging, the tusks and tusk sections came from Africa. Via Moscow, the 24-year-old passenger was going to Vietnam.



Seizure of 3 tusks and 23 manufactured ivory objects

Departments of Var and Alpes-Maritimes Region
Provence-Alpes-Azur Coast and the department
of Herault, Languedoc-Roussillon, France
February 11, 2014

Salesroom are often the host of lost or robbed ivory. The Office national de la chasse et de la faune sauvage (ONCFS) has spotted in the salesroom of Cannes tusks and ivory objects presented to be of "Belgian Congo" origin, therefore prior to regulation on international trade. Investigations resulted in arrest of 3 men of the "travelling community" and the seizure of 3 tusks and 23 carved ivory objects including a dildo.



Illustration

OPERATION MARFIL

Seizure of 20 ivory objects
Totana, Autonomous Region of Murcia, Spain
February 2014

Same situation in Spain. The 20 ivory pieces did not dispose of documents proving their legal origin and authorizing their sale.



OCEANIA

Seizure of ivory jewelry and ivory objects
Sydney, State of New South Wales, Australia
February 20, 2014

The ivory seller on Internet was established in Sydney. Bracelets, Ganesh statuettes and amulets, searches proved successful. The global seizure is estimated at 80,000 US\$. To start with, it was the NGO IFAW that signaled the site and abundance ivory offered there to the authorities.



How ironic!



Follow up on the Destruction of Illegal Ivory

Stolen in museums, stolen in governmental stockpiles, lost in the basements, illegal ivory seized by customs and police forces must be destroyed just like cocaine.

The most beautiful destruction took place in Paris on 6 February 2014.



Ivory chips were then burned in a waste incinerator of the Paris Region.

After Paris, seized stockpiles were destroyed in Chad (1.1t) and Belgium. Unfortunately Belgium gave in to pseudo recuperation combining pathos and creation. The crushed ivory will be given out to "Art Schools" which have been given the mission to turn the crumbs into art and "the works of art will be exposed in symbolic places". Returning artistic value, i.e. money value, to an ivory by-product is a monumental mistake.

Tanzania and Hong Kong in turn have expressed their intention of destroying illegal ivory.

Destruction of illegal ivory and Robin des Bois's elephants:

http://www.robindesbois.org/dossiers/A_LA_TRACE/Destruction-ivoire-illegal-France.html

Other Mammals

AMERICA

Seizure of 3 armadillo shells (family Dasypodidae), a stuffed ocelot (*Leopardus pardalis*, Appendix I)

**Uyuni, Departement of Potosí, Bolivia
January 2014**

The shells had been used to make charangos, a traditional musical instrument from the Andes with 5 strings that resembles a small guitar. The first charangos were built using armadillo shells as a sound box. Nowadays this practice remains despite that some armadillos are now protected and it's more common to use wood. The owners try to defend themselves: they had owned the instrument for many years.

In Bolivia 2 armadillo species are listed in CITES, the giant armadillo (*Priodontes maximus*, Appendix I) and the Bolivian hairy armadillo (*Chaetophractus nationi* Appendix II).



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© Pantanal Giant Armadillo Project

Seizure of 9 Darwin's rhea eggs (*Pterocnemia pennata*, Appendix I or *Pterocnemia pennata*, Appendix II)

Malargüe District, Province of Mendoza, Argentina

January 2014

The seizure took place following operations led by rural police. The 6 hunters attempted to escape in a Ford F 100. In addition to the Darwin's rhea eggs, 20 dead pichis (*Zaedyus pichiy*) were also seized along with a 22 calibre rifle. A pichi is a small armadillo no bigger than 40 cm long found in Argentina and Chile. They are not listed in CITES.

Darwin's rheas are found in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile and Peru. Populations have not been counted but they are considered rare. They are poached for their meat and eggs. They live exclusively in open plains.



© Cláudio Dias Timm

Zaedyus pichiy

Seizure of a marsh deer (*Blastocerus dichotomus*, Appendix I)

Province of Corrientes, Argentina

March 2014

The deer was in the back of the truck with the gun. The marsh deer disappear along with wetlands. They are replaced by food plantations or disappear in the reservoirs of hydroelectric dams.



© Carmelo López Abad

Seizure of 8 kg of agouti meat (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III in Honduras)

Manacapuru, State of Amazonas, Brazil

March 2014

They were selling it all on the Manacapuru Liberdade market. On arrival of the environmental battalion of the military police, they succeeded to escape.

5 species of Agouti exist in Brazil, only the Central American Agouti species (*Dasyprocta punctata*, Appendix III in Honduras) is listed in CITES. Turtles were also part of the seizure.

ASIA

Conviction for the poaching of mongooses (genus *Herpestes*, Appendix III)

Maharajganj, State of Uttar Pradesh, India

January 10, 2014

The mongoose is strictly protected in India (see "On the Trail" n°3 p.78) For killing 2 of them; the poacher was sentenced to 3 years of prison and a 10,000 RS (161 US\$) fine.



Seizure of a markhor skin (*Capra falconeri*, Appendix I)

Chitral Gol National Park, Province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

January 26, 2014

The newcomer in the bestiary from "On the Trail" is on a very bad slope. The markhors are on the trail of extinction. The male has spiral horns. They can reach a length of 1.50 m. The markhors suffer from predation from armed groups in northern Afghanistan and Pakistan in search of food resources. The mountains of central Asia house less than 2,500 individuals.

In the Chitral Gol National Park, they benefited from reinforced protection. One hundred in 1970, the population would be around 650 today. Observers have doubts about these optimistic estimations and say that there is active poaching persisting in the park.

3 inhabitants of the Singur village were arrested and charged for poaching under 4 articles of the Pakistanian criminal Code. The markhor's fleece was found. The horns and the meat are missing.



Seizure of the skin and 2 horns of Antelope cervicapra (*Antilope cervicapra*, Appendix III in Nepal) District of Sehore, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

January 31, 2014

6 men were arrested. Hunting of antelope cervicapras is prohibited in all the States of India.



Seizure of 5 live otters (*Lutrinae spp.*, Appendix I and II)

Hô-Chi-Minh-City, Vietnam

March 10, 2014

He sold otters on internet. With the help of information from ENV, a parcel sent from Hô-Chi-Minh-City and Hanoi was intercepted. The smuggler was caught red handed.



Seizure of 2 otters (*Lutrinae spp.*, Appendix I and II)

Ernakulam, Sate of Kerala, India

March 12, 2014

Poachers have killed the 2 otters. The corpses have been seized.

Seizure of a blackbuck (*Antilope cervicapra*, Appendix III in Nepal)

Katpon, Madhya Pradesh, India

March 17, 2014

The young men of a wealthy family in Bhopal used prestigious guns imported from the United States. 59 cartridges were also seized. The dead antelope and peacock were in the ATV. At the time of arrest, clashes took place. The villagers wanted to judge the poachers themselves. The peacock is a national symbol in India. The trio is in custody until court appearance in April.

Seizure of the horn of a cervicapre antelope (*Antilope cervicapra*, Appendix III in Nepal)

Pune, State of Maharashtra, India

March 23, 2014

The call of an informer enabled to arrest of 2 people, aged 25 and 27 years old, in possession of a cervicapre antelope horn and skin. The value is estimated at 1660 US\$ (Rs 1 lakh). The suspects are members of a gang that reeks havoc in many Indian States.

EUROPE

Seizure of 4 wolf skins (*Canis lupus*, Appendix I & II)

Dusseldorf International Airport, Land of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany

January 18, 2014

Do not sell your wolf skin before having passed customs. Taking the green line for those who have nothing to declare, the passenger arriving from Russia was yet still invited to show the content of his bags.



Seizure of a stuffed armadillo (family Dasypodidae Appendix I ou II)

Barcelona, Autonomous Community of Catalonia, Spain

January 28, 2014

The stuffed animal was used as decoration in a shop specialized in latino products. It is either giant armadillo or a hairy armadillo (*Priodontes maximus*, Appendix I), or hairy armadillo (*Chaetophractus nationi*, Appendix II).

The armadillo is originally from Latin America. The captain of the Civil Guard, specialized in the protection of wildlife, denounces the role of Spain as the point of entry to the European market for animals who are victims of poaching in Latin America. "Some drug traffickers have actually turned to the business of smuggling exotic animals because it is lucrative and less dangerous than the narcotics trade."

Slaughter of a wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II)

Coole, Marne Department, France

February 2014

(This article echoes back the French history and the fresh and scared breaking news on the move of wild wolves towards Paris.)

Wolves are getting closer to Paris. Rumors are growing. Calls for mobilization are spreading in the countryside, suburbs and Rue de Varenne at the Ministry of Agriculture. The enemy comes from the Rhine, treading the paths from Verdun. He is in frontline in the Ardennes, the Meuse and Haute-Marne departments. He would be on the verge of invading the Marne department. Glory to the unknown soldier who, just as the brave in 1870 and 1914, shot the enemy and killed him, defying eco-pacifists' inertia and accomodating Conventions that protect the invader.

The body was found on grounds belonging to the village of Coole, near Vitry-le-François. It seems that

in a last cunning ruse, the pirate hid to die and grab victory away from us. The autopsy could not tell if he belonged to the Italian packs, the Swiss Jurasian army or the Eastern Empire troops.

Seizure of a wolf (*Canis lupus*, Appendix II)

Barruelo Santullán, Province of Palencia, Spain

March 2014

He was shot on the night of February 28. Poachers risk a hunting license suspension and prosecution. They also face up to 13,000 € fine, 9000 for damages and up to 4000 € administrative penalty. The skin could have been sold for about 3000 €.



OCEANIA

Court hearing for poaching a colony of Marianas flying foxes (*Pteropus mariannus*, Appendix I)

Rota, Northern Mariana Islands, Commonwealth of the United States

January 3, 2014

A former Customs officer and a former member of the US Fish and Wildlife Division pleaded guilty to an act of poaching on a colony of Mariana flying foxes on the Mariana Islands in 2008. The bat of the Mariana Islands has a restricted range: the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam Island, certain atolls of Micronesia. The judgment will be known in the months to come. The giant bat, better known under the name Mariana flying fox, measures between 19 and 25 cm in length and a wingspan of 86 to 106 cm. Cooked, it is considered a refined dish.



Multi-Species

AFRICA

Seizure of 5 lion skins and heads (*Panthera leo*, Appendix II), 2 pieces of elephant skin (*Loxodonta africana*, Appendix I), 14 marine turtle shells (Appendix I), 15 panther skins and 10 panther heads (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I), 2 gorilla skins (*Gorilla gorilla*, Appendix I) and a patas monkey skin (*Erythrocebus patas*, Appendix II)

Lome, Maritime Region, Togo

January 11, 2014

The Forever neighbourhood in Lomé was the scene for an exceptional arrest. 3 members of a network specialized in selling parts of land and sea animals protected under International and African laws were taken in. Later, 4 other members of the network were arrested including a woman. The 7 people from Togo and Benin were part of a intra-African organization also thought to be active in Ghana. Such variety in the targeted species and environments from where they were caught off, cut up, prepared and tanned proves that behind the 7 standing now in the spotlight, there is a coordinated, organized and ramified network. The OCRTIDB is leading investigations with technical and logistical support of the network Togo Application of the Law on Fauna and Flora (TALFF).



The king with no territory

The lion occupies only 25% of his historic range in the whole of Africa. In Western Africa, they survive on 49,000 km², 1.1 % of the territory occupied 100 years ago. On these savannah confettis, 400 lions subsist of which less than 250 are in age to reproduce. CITES is slow to transfer the African lion from Appendix II to Appendix I. The manes, the skulls, the living and captive individuals are still susceptible to be subject to legal international traffic.

Seizure of 15 hippopotamus teeth and a tail (*Hippopotamus amphibius*, Appendix II) and a python skin (family Pythonidae, Appendix II)
Jozini, Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
January 2014

Major exercises in KwaZulu-Natal. All Forces united bursted into district contaminated by rhino poaching including Zululand. Hippopotamus ivory is more and more sought for. Hippos are easier to hunt than elephants; combats with rangers and the judicial system are less likely. Pressure set onto the hippos had already gone up in 1989 with the ban on international trade of elephant ivory. Results of the operation: 2 fire arms, 2 Nyala antelope horns (*Tragelaphus angasii*, unlisted in CITES), one Southern reedbuck skin (*Redunca arundinum*, hors CITES), one hyena skin, one honey badger skin (*Mellivora capensis*, Appendix III in Botswana), an aardvarks paw (*Orycteropus afer*, hors CITES), plus 15 hippo teeth and a hippo tail and a python skin along with 40 small rafts and 25 fishing gillnets (4.3 km long). 2 people were arrested.

Seizure of 1600 reptile and amphibian specimens

OR Tambo International Airport, Johannesburg, South Africa

January 29, 2014

The Johannesburg- Atlanta flight was delayed several days because of snow storms in the United States. In the meantime, a Malagasy community made up of geckos, chameleons, frogs, lizards, toads was stranded in the airport warehouses, in the animal quarantine section, suffering, starving and dying of cold and thirst. The small wild troop ripped away from the trees and marshes of Madagascar was intended for the exotic pet or ornament trade in the US. 400 individuals were already dead when a rotting smell caught the attention of a routine inspection carried out by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Every cubic meter in airways transportation is expensive. That is why all this small fauna was compressed into plastic boxes the size of yoghurt pots of picnic Tupperware.

Neglect from some of the airport export agents is pointed to. According to the NSPCA they deserve to be sent before Court for cruelty against animals. The survivors were put under the care of the Johannesburg zoo that is now completely overwhelmed by this unexpected massive arrival. Out of the 1600 animals declared on the transport documen-

tation, maybe half will be saved and South Africa doesn't know what to do with them. Discussions with Madagascar have been opened. Several species are listed in Appendix II of the CITES Convention.



Seizure of 3.95 kg of ivory and a cheetah skin (*Acinonyx jubatus*, Appendix I)
South Africa
February 2014

Good pick. The airport customs seized the ivory in a coffee machine and the cheetah skin was camouflaged in a coat in the middle of a shipment of clothes.

600 kg abalone of a value of 2 million South African Rands (177,786 US\$) were divided in 2 packages arriving to Hong Kong. The abalones are very appreciated for cooking in Hong Kong and in Asia.

Charged with illegal possession of 3427 ivory pieces and 116 kg of abalone
Cape Town, Cape Province, South Africa
February 28, 2014

Cheng Jie Liang, 34 years accumulates charges :

- 1- 3232 ivory chopsticks were found in 2 storage facility units for which he had the keys.
- 2 - He is accused of unlawfully detaining 195 other ivory items worth R 146,348 or 13,600 US\$.
- 3 - He is also engaged in abalone traffic. 116 kg of this sea food most popular in China were found in outbuildings.

All these offenses date from the end of 2012. Release on bail was then denied. At a new hearing, the prosecutor understanding that the investigation was underway to find accomplices of the suspect, confirmed his pre-trial detention and refused bail. The trial of Cheng Jie Liang will take place in May.

Seizure of bush meat from pangolins (*Manis spp.*, Appendix II), monkeys (genus *Cercopithecus*, Appendix II), duikers (genus *Cephalophus* and genus *Philantomba*, Appendix II), and African wood owl (*Strix woodfordii*, Appendix II)
M'Vengue International Airport, Franceville, Moanda, Province of Haut-Ogooué, Gabon
March 8 and 9, 2014

With the opening of hunting season approaching, on March 15, a police operation was led to remind the population of the laws on hunting and on the protection of wildlife. Coercitive and pedagogical actions took place over 2 days on market places, shops and at the Franceville and Moanda train-station, just as in the Mvengué airport. The maximum penalty for an offence against a species entirely protected is 6 months prison term and 10 million Fcfa fine (20,818 US\$). Products that were seized were then incinerated by the Waters and Forests Department Agents.

5 species of the *Cercopithecus* genus found in Gabon are listed in CITES in Appendix II. 4 species of duikers (antelopes) found in Gabon are listed in Appendix II of CITES.

Species unlisted in CITES were also seized: bush pigs (genus *Potamochoerus*), brush-tailed porcupines (genus *Atherurus*), a porcupine and a genet (genus *Genetta*).





Bush Meat

In Central Africa alone, populations consume 1 to 3 million tons of bush meat per year. The dismemberment of wild animals, the prolonged and unprotected handling of wild animal parts exposes the hunters, butchers, conveyors, vendors, chefs and consumers at risk of zoonosis (an animal sickness transmissible to man). The episodes of the virus Ebola in Western Africa are attributed to the consumption of bush meat most of all to that of the chimpanzees that had been found dead. The virus of Ebola family could be housed by monkeys, antelopes, porcupines without them being direct victims. A species of bat, Egyptian fruit bat *Rousettus aegyptiacus*, is also cited. They are subjected to illegal captures and consumption in a rural and urban environment. Bush meat is susceptible of transmitting leishmaniasis, toxoplasmosis and sleeping sickness. The absence of the regulation procedures of control and hygiene at the slaughter places, consolidation and sale promotes the dispersion of contaminants. At the Paris-Roissy airport, coliforms, E. coli, and especially *Listeria* in big numbers are currently found in the seized meat in the bags of passengers and intended for domestic consumption or commercialization in restaurants or African supermarkets.

Seizure of bones from leopards (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I) and elephants (*Loxodonta africana*, Appendix II in this country)

Isimangaliso Wetland Park, Province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

March 18, 2014

Deadly crossfire broke out between poachers and rangers. One suspect was shot dead, a second one arrested. A .375 calibre gun was seized along with a silencer. Leopard, giraffe and elephant bones were also found in the poachers' hide-out.



Seizure of ivory jewellery and 2 leopard claws (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I)

Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, County of Nairobi, Kenya

March 2014

The 2 Vietnamese also had on them a warthog tooth. They were let out on bail for 11,000 US\$ and kept in home arrest awaiting trial scheduled for mid-April.



Seizure of a leopard skin (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I) and 3.5 kg of ivory

Mpika, Holland Province, Zambia

25 and 26 March 2014

3 villagers were seen busy with a leopard skin and ivory (3.5 kg). The ZAWA (Zambia Wildlife Authority) took action.

AMERICA

Seizure of a Bolivian three-toed sloth (*Bradypus variegatus*, Appendix II) an Argentine tortoise (*Chelonoidis chilensis*, Appendix II), a boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II), a green iguana (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II), a white-nosed coati (genus *Nasua*, Appendix III) all alive

Province of Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas, Ecuador

January 1 to 13, 2014

The operation lasted 13 days. The animals were on sale in several stores. The juvenile green iguana, the Bolivian three-toed sloth and the boa constrictor were released after a medical check-up into the Bosque Protector of the Unidad Educativa Kasama. The others were put under the care of the Center for the protection of wild fauna where they will receive necessary care then after a quarantine period be released into nature.



Nasua narica

Seizure of 7 live Chaco tortoises (*Geochelone chilensis*, Appendix II), and 3 live burrowing parakeets (*Cyanoliseus patagonus*, Appendix II) Antofagasta, Region of Antofagasta, Chili January 21 and 22, 2014

The 3 interventions were launched thanks to anonymous calls. At one of the homes concerned, environmental authorities found a terrarium with the 6 tortoises of about 40 years old. The birds were sent to a rehabilitation center before if possible being released into their natural environment. Just as the other seized animals, they are in bad condition. The 3 owners will be taken to Court; they risk a fine anywhere between 220 and 3500 US\$ for illegal possession of wild animals.

Efforts to tackle trafficking and help from the public are leading to a rise in animal seizures in the region: 18 animals in 2012, 19 in 2013 and 10 over the single month of January of the year 2014.



Cyanoliseus patagonus

© Erik Schepers / <http://www.erikschempers.com/>

Seizure of jaguar's skin, teeth and claws (*Panthera onca*, Appendix I), paca remains (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III in Honduras), Eurasian sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*, Appendix II) Cobán, Département d'Alta Verapaz, Guatemala January 2014

Agents from the nature protection division of the National Council for protected areas police (CONAP) proceeded to this seizure under a warrant delivered by a local court. No one was arrested; the home was empty at the time of the intervention.

Remains of nine-banded armadillos (*Dasypus novemcinctus*), goats, boars (*Sus scrofa*) were also found. According to authorities, the animals were hunted in the Laguna de Lachua National Park.

Seizure of a kinkajou (*Potos flavus*, Appendix III in Honduras), a yellow-headed amazon (*Amazona oratrix*, Appendix I) Tamasopo, State of San Luis Potosi, Mexico February 5, 2014

The Humedales Continental operation aims to protect the wet zones of the country by locating human activities, especially illegal constructions that threaten these ecosystems. There are 53 of these occupying an area of about 20,000 km².

The range of kinkajou goes from Mexico to Bolivia. This small arboreal and nocturnal mammal of the humid forests feeds on fruits and can complete its food regime with flowers and leaves. The kinkajou is appreciated for their flesh and their good looks as the perfect pet.



© Joe Philipson

Kinkajou

Good news

Release of 9 animals in the environment Ahuehuetzingo, Morelos, Mexico January 2014

The neotropical rattlesnake (*Crotalus simus*, Appendix III in Honduras), the boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II), the 3 turtles *Kinosternon integrum*, the snake *Micrurus latifasciatus* and the 3 iguanas *Ctenosaura pectinata* (1 adult and 2 young) had been recovered by PROFEPA. They were released in their natural ecosystem.

Seizure of 2 green iguanas (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II), ara macro (*Ara macao*, Appendix I), monk parakeet (*Myiopsitta monachus*, Appendix II), 3 blue-and-gold macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II), 3 Java sparrow (*Lonchura oryzivora*, Appendix II), 4 zebras of which one is white Acapulco, State of Guerrero, Mexico February 5, 2014

The owner of the pet store could not provide the documents proving the legal origin of the animals. Except for the 14 specimens abovementioned, 29 others were seized: 19 turtles (*Trachemys scripta*, outside of CITES), 2 European polecat (*Mustela putorius*, outside of CITES), a Mongolian gerbil (*Meriones unguiculatus* outside of CITES), African pygmy hedgehog (*Atelerix albiventris* outside of CITES), Guinea pig (*Cavia porcellus* outside of CITES), 2 chinchillas, 2 cockatiel (*Nymphicus hollandicus*, outside of CITES) and a red factor canary.

Good news

Parallel to this seizure, the PROFEPA reintroduced 53 animals into their natural habitat: 50 turtles (*Kinosternon integrum* outside of CITES), a bobcat lynx (*Lynx rufus*, Appendix II), a Northern raccoon (*Procyon lotor* outside of CITES) and a quail. Meanwhile, 6 other animals have been transferred to the Center of Conservation and Research for the wildlife of La Paz: African pygmy hedgehog, lilac-crowned amazon (*Amazona finschi*, Appendix I), a snake (*Ficimia publia* outside of CITES), Virginia opossum (*Didelphis virginiana* unlisted) and 2 monk parakeets (*Myiopsitta monachus*, Appendix II).

Seizure of 200 kilos of meat from deer (family Cervidae), monkeys, tapirs (genre *Tapirus*), armadillos (family Dasypodidae) and birds and 90 live turtles

National Park of Serra do Divisor, State of Acre, Brazil

February 2014

13 hunters equipped with 7 guns and ammunition have been apprehended while they were travelling in a boat inside of the park. The meat was intended to be sold. Spoiled at the time the seizure took place, it was incinerated. The turtles were freed.

2 deer species present in Brazil are listed in Appendix I of CITES.

4 tapir species exist in South America; the only one listed by CITES is the South American Tapir (*Tapirus terrestris*, Appendix II).

2 armadillo species present in Brazil are listed by CITES, one in Appendix III, the other in Appendix I. The National Park of Serra do Divisor has an area of 8463 km². It was created June 16, 1989. Since the beginning of the year, it has been infested by hunter's stealth. 60 kg of rock dredged from the water bottoms have been seized. The pillage is assimilated to illegal extraction of minerals. The stones would be used for sharpening knives and machetes.



National Park of Serra do Divisor

Seizure of a live screech-owl (genus *Otus*, Appendix II), a live red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*, Appendix II) and about 100 living baby turtles

New York, State of New York, United States

February 2014

John P. Volpe, 62 years old, enjoyed the reputation of a turtle and other wild animals savior. A charitable activity that he merged with that of a taxidermist and breeding of turtles in incubators. The 2 birds were still alive while various other relics of bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*, Appendix II) and the golden eagles (*Aquila chrysaetos*, Appendix II) decorated the table.

M. Volpe did not have any legal capacity to detain the animals: dead or alive, 190 specimens of 35 species were discovered at his home. He risks 250 US\$ fine for each animal or part of an animal and a maximum penalty of one year in prison.

Seizure of 3 pacas (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III in Honduras) and 9 alligators (*Alligator spp.*, Appendix I or II)

**Region of Alto Acre, State of Acre, Brazil
Between February 27 and March 5, 2014**

The operation enabled to arrest 4 suspects. 4 dead capybaras and 2 live turtles were also seized. In all, 350 kg of bush meat were taken in by authorities. The turtles were released into the forest.



Cuniculus paca

Seizure of a sloth (order Pilosa), a turtle an iguana and an owl

**Ulloa, Department of Valle del Cauca, Colombia
March 2014**

Several operations enabled the seizure of the animals within a few hours. The sloth was found in a neighbourhood where he was kept as a pet. When they saw coming the men in uniforms, the sloth's owners abandoned him.

The 2 species of sloths found in Colombia are listed in CITES in Appendix II and III in Costa Rica.

Good news

More than 180 animals trafficked wildlife were released. Ariporo Paz , Department of Casanare , Colombia. February 2014

120 red footed tortoises (*Chelonoidis carbonaria*, Appendix II), 35 yellow-spotted side-neck turtles (*Podocnemis unifilis*, Appendix II), 9 squirrel monkeys (genus *Saimiri*, Appendix I or II), 3 forest fox crabs (*Cerdocyon thous*, Appendix II), 3 boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II), 3 iguanas, 3 bush dogs (*Speothos venaticus*, Appendix I), 2 groove-billed Ani (*Crotophaga sulcirostris*), 1 agouti (genus *Dasyprocta*), 1 coati (genus *Nasua*), 1 opossum (order Didelphimorphia) were released in a private reserve. They were seized in the Colombian capital Bogota.

The Colombian government authorities estimate that there are more than 4500 wild animals seizures per year since 2008. Studies show peaks of activity: traffic of bush meat for instance is more important during the Holy Week, summer holidays and January.

Seizure of yellow cardinals (*Gubernatrix cristata*, Appendix II), parrots (order Psittaciformes, Appendix I or II) and iguanas (family Iguanidae) Montevideo, Departement of Montevideo, Uruguay March 2014

Montevideo wildlife agents and the Ministry of Agriculture and Fishing have seized more than 300 animals on the markets of Tristán Narvaja and Larraide in Montevideo. Total value of the seizure is estimated at 25,000 US\$. The cardinals were sold for 10,000 pesos (447 US\$) each. Parrots smuggled from Paraguay were sold 20,000 pesos each (895 US\$). Snakes, spiders, lizards and turtles were also taken by police forces and sworn officials.

Seizure of otters (*Lutrinae spp.*, Appendix I or II) and Darwin's rheas (*Pterocnemia pennata*, Appendix I)

Several Departments, Argentina March 8 and 9, 2014

In the course of prevention operations against rural crime, products from illegal hunting and 13 fire-arms were seized. Gray brockets (*Mazama gouazoubira*, unlisted in CITES), and latin-american cervids were also seized.

Seizure of live burrowing parakeets (*Cyanoliseus patagonus*, Appendix II), Harris hawks (*Parabuteo unicinctus*, Appendix II), monk parakeets (*Myiopsitta monachus*, Appendix II) and Brazilian tegus (*Tupinambis teguixin*, Appendix II)

Buenos Aires, Province of Buenos Aires, Argentina March 2014

Federal police seized 104 animals on 5 stands at the bird market place in the Pompeya neighbourhood: 93 birds and 11 reptiles. They all were in a terrible state.

A State agent explained that out of 10 animals captured only 1 survives long enough to be presented on the market place.

Goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*), hooded siskins (*Spinus magellanicus*), dooble-collared seedeaters (*Sporophila caerulea*) and thrushes (genus *Turdus*) were also part of the aviary; these species are not listed in CITES but are protected by national laws.

The sanitizing operation occurred following complaints phoned in over a specialized telephone line set up specifically for this purpose. The saved animals were sent to specialized centers where they will be quarantined and will receive veterinarian care before being set free.

The black tegu is hunted for his skin and meat and for the pet trade. They measure between 60 cm and 1 m.



Tupinambis teguixin

Seizure of an American black bear (*Ursus americanus*, Appendix II), of a Bengal tiger (*Panthera tigris tigris*, Appendix I), a lion (*Panthera leo*, Appendix II), and 3 Geoffroy's spider monkeys (*Ateles geoffroyi*, Appendix II)

Dzidzantún, State of Yucatan, Mexico March 2014

The "Harley Circus" is going to have to convert to an animal-free circus. The tiger was an invalid. The lion had neither claws nor fangs. The monkeys were all toothless. This unworthy treatment was imposed upon phantom animals with no administrative existence. All the victims were taken to the El Centenario Zoo in Merida.

Seizure of the corpse of a yacare caiman (*Caiman yacare*, Appendix II) and 2 pacas (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III in Honduras)

Linhaires and Sooretama, State of Espírito Santo, Brazil

March 18, 2014

The dead specimens were found in neighbouring homes to the Sooretama and Vale natural reserves. Searches were triggered by rumours of hunting inside the reserves. The dead caiman was found at the home of a 64 year-old man along with .36 and .38 calibre guns, ammunition and a dozen traps. At the home of a 36 year-old man, State agents seized the remains of the 2 pacas, a .22 calibre rifle and 2 rounds of ammunition. At a third individuals' home, a whole underground hunting armoury was uncovered.



Caiman yacare

Seizure of 690 giant arapaima meat (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II), 135 kg of Amazonian manatee (*Trichechus inunguis*, Appendix I), 345 kg of white-lipped peccary (*Tayassu pecari*, Appendix II), 20 kg of agouti meat (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III in Honduras) and 35 kg of South American tapir (*Tapirus terrestris*, Appendix II)

Manacapuru, State of Amazonas, Brazil March 28, 2014

Very bad news. On the Amazon river, the *Gloire de Dieu II* transported 135 kg of manatee meat, cows of the river, estuaries and coast waters, grazing peacefully the aquatic weeds. The Amazonian manatee is listed in Appendix I of CITES since 1975 and strictly protected by Brazilian law. They are on the path to extinction, threatened internally by the mercury and pesticides and externally by the loss of mangroves, also by the dams that isolated the remaining population from one another and aggravated the risks of consanguinity. These 135 kg of meat could be from a baby manatee. An adult weighs 400 kg.



Gloria de Deus II

ASIA

GANG

Seizure of 2 Sumatran tigers (*Panthera tigris sumatrae*, Appendix I), a sun bear's skin and 8 teeth (*Helarctos malayanus*, Appendix I), a leopard (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I), a hornbill (family Bucerotidae), a clouded leopard (*Neofelis nebulosa*, Appendix I) and 2 Asian golden cats (*Catopuma temminckii*, Appendix I). All the animals were stuffed.

Province of Aceh, Indonesia

January 3, 2014

Before stuffing tigers, they must be killed. 2 taxidermists were arrested. They were apparently supplied in corpses by 4 poacher gangs. According to civil authorities, this case has no link with the stuffed tiger and bear found in military homes in the same district (see "On the Trail" n°3 p. 75). "That case is particular, it is followed by a military court but we may not exclude any new developments that may rise from ongoing investigations." The total value of the seizure is estimated to be worth several thousands of US\$.



Poaching's Red Spots



The Indonesian Council of Oulemas has produced a fatwa against those who partake in poaching and smuggling of endangered species such as tigers, rhinos, elephants and orangutans. This announcement made to the 200 million Muslims of Indonesia concerns individuals, members of Government, administrations and even companies whose immediate interests go against those of wildlife such as the palm oil industry. « Illegal hunting or illegal trading of endangered species are forbidden ». « People can escape government regulation but they cannot escape the word of God ».

**Seizure of over 335 products from wild animals
Kunming, Province of Yunnan, China
January 10, 2014**

This is the biggest fauna supermarket uncovered in the Yunnan Province over the last 10 years. Mr. Ding, a salesman on the Kunming flower market and bazaar, was in fact at the head of an international network. The goods for sale would come from Myanmar and Vietnam, 2 countries of origin or transit and the Chinese Provinces of Guangdong and Guangxi. Mr. Ding could provide products in any form: live (pangolins), ground up products (rhino horn powder), tanned (3 Bengal tiger skins and a piece of an Asian elephant skin), carved (ivory), morbid (lion, tiger, leopard and bear skulls and bones), traditional (hornbill casques), stuffed (Golden eagles, monkeys, cats...), edible (bear paws) and curiosities such as raptor claws.



Seizure of 2 bags of pangolin scales (*Manis spp.*, Appendix II), 8 boxes of pangolin meat, dried sea horses (*Hippocampus spp.*, Appendix II), pieces of sea turtle shells (Appendix I), shark fins, sea cucumbers, marbled turban shells (*Turbo marmoratus*), pearl oysters, dried seadragons (family Syngnathidae), dried seaweed pipefish (genus *Syngnathus*) and about 6000 seashells including helmet shells (*Cassis cornuta*)

Puerto Princesa City, Region of Mimaropa, Philippines

January 17, 2014

After several months of surveillance, environmental authorities searched 2 warehouses used for illegal wildlife trade. The owner is a local businessman of Chinese nationality. He could be linked to a seizure of pangolin meat carried out at the Puerto Princesa Airport last year. The boxes of pangolin- 2 to 3 kg each- contained culinary preparations using the head, a newcomer to the already very diverse range of products derived from the small scaly mammal from Africa and Asia. The wild fauna trader is indicted for breach of the Philippine law on protection of wild fauna and breach of the law on fishing.

Conviction of a man for illegally buying and selling pangolin meat (*Manis spp.* Appendix II) and Bengal lizard meat (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I)



Wuxi, Province of Jiangsu, China

January 21, 2014

In November 2012, in order to meet demands from a client, the man running a catering business ordered a pangolin and 3 lizards in their meat form. On the order forms, the pangolin meat was labeled AA (like an andouillette) and the lizard meat labeled n°5 (like the perfume).

Seizure of elephant bones, claws, teeth and bile from bears (family Ursidae), stuffed felines, lorises (famille Lorisidae), weasels (genus *Mustela*, Appendix III in India), squirrels (family Sciuridae) and deer and moose trophies

Dak R'Lap, Region of Central Highlands, Vietnam

January 22, 2014

It all started with a motorbike that was stopped on December 23 last year by police in Kien Duc. The driver was in company of a 12 kg sun bear. He was delivering him to Ho Chi Minh City. He said to have bought him for 711 US\$ from a lady in the Dak Nong province. A month of investigations later, police raided a shop in the Kien Duc district and found the precious animal bric-à-brac on the shelves.

Sentencing for trafficking of King cobras (*Ophiophagus hannah*, Appendix II), Chinese pangolins (*Manis pentadactyla*, Appendix II), common rat snakes (*Ptyas mucosus*, Appendix II), clouded monitors (*Varanus bengalensis*, Appendix I), common palm civets (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*, Appendix III in India)



Province of Gia Lai, Region of Central Highlands,

Vietnam

January 2014

In April 2013, police had checked a vehicle and caught 3 people red handed illegally in possession and transporting animals protected under Vietnamese law and CITES. 9 months later, the traffickers have been sentenced to 16 and 20 months prison term for 2 of them and 24 months probation for the third.

OPERATION COBRA II

Seizure of 34 kg of pangolin scales, 64 g of rhino horn, 1 leopard skin, 1.5 kg of tiger bone, a live python and a live adult leopard

Nepal

January-February 2014

A member of the Central Investigation Bureau of Nepal had been sent to Bangkok (Thailand) to help coordinate operations on an international level. 14 people were arrested in one month.

Seizure of 331 objects made of hawksbill turtle shell (*Eretmochelys imbricata*, Appendix I) and of black coral (*Ordine Antipatharia*, Appendix II) Chalong, Province of Phuket, Thailand

February 4, 2014

Hold-up of customs in Phuket. 200,000 bath (6000 US\$).

To show off or to show them?



Coral as a lucky charm.

In the sea, they grow 5 mm per year



The scale of turtle, very classy.

Naïve tourists, throw them in the non-recyclable trash and sleep peacefully.

Seizure of 27 packs of flying fox meat (genus *Pteropus*, Appendix II), 12 packs of civet meat (family *Viverridae*, Appendix II & III), 4 packets of macaque meat (genus *Macaca*, Appendix II), 4 packs of Malay batgaur meat et 2 live river ter-rapin (*Batagur baska*, Appendix I)

Machap Baru, State of Melaka, Malaysia

February 14, 2014

Since 1980, the town is known for its CITES menus. 3 restaurants were foraged in the morning. They had stocked up for Saint Valentine's Day.

"The meat of civet is claimed to cure asthma that of Malay batagaur would so for cancer" Vincent Low, president of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty "but in the present case, it's for the so-called aphrodisiac virtues that all these meats were about to be served for Saint Valentine dinner."

Sweet night for lovers. 2 Florida turtles (*Trachemys scripta elegans*, outside of CITES) had been delivered for a special candle-light dinner.

The Flying Fox or bats are big bats. There are 30 species of Flying-fox found in Asia and listed by CITES, only 2 species are present in Malaysia, the *Pteropus hypomelanus* and the *Pteropus vampyrus*. The Malay batagaur is doomed to extinction in some years.



Pteropus vampyrus

Sacrilege in Malaya- 1951 - Pierre Boulle

« The indentation between two hills revealed a small triangle, still luminous, cut out in the highest mountains in Malaysia. The last demonstration of life was the passing of the flying fox bats. These were giant bats, almost as big as vultures, who each night accomplished a pilgrimage. They rose far, by the seacoast, flying at dusk over the plantations zones and went looking for their food in the jungle. Their altitude varied following the period of the year and the air movements, but their apparition always happened at the same hour, with clockwork accuracy. In minutes, their swarm would cover the sky(..). Each black spot appeared a mechanical toy directed by an invisible spring. The flight spreads in a slow and regular movement.»

**Seizure of 5 baby tigers (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I), 312 monitor lizards (genus *Varanus*), 174 aquatic turtles and 11 land turtles
Province of Khon Kaen, Thailand
February 20, 2014**

The police intercepted a pick-up truck transporting 502 animals including the 1 month old baby tigers. Police think that the reptiles were intended for the food market and traditional medicine in Vietnam and China. The tigers were probably going to stay in Laos until the age of 1 before being exfiltrated to Vietnam or more surely China. The 2 drivers were arrested, they admitted having received 20,000 baht (666 US\$) for the transport from the central province of Ayutthaya up to the Laos border. All the animals were in bad condition; they are currently in the stage of care and recovery.

**Seizure of 2 Bengal leopard-cats (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II) and 11 hill mynas (*Gracula religiosa*, Appendix II)
Bataraza, Mimaropa Region, Philippines
February 23, 2014**

Genesis Palasigue, notorious trafficker in Bataraza- he was denounced by his neighbours- was in the process of preparing transport and the cages for the poached animals. Genesis fled when police officers arrived.

Leopard cats in the Philippines are very rare. The care-takers and veterinarians of Palawan Wildlife Refuge are going to do all they can so that the captives are placed back into a natural environment protected from poachers.



Prionailurus bengalensis

**Seizure of 2 bear skins (*Ursidae* spp., Appendix I or II), a crocodile skin (*Crocodylidae* spp., Appendix I ou II) and a tiger skin (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I)
Dhaka, District of Dhaka, Bangladesh
March 8, 2014**

Urban violence has led to environmental criminality. At the home of one of the thugs involved in an attempt to kidnap a student, wild animal skins were found among daggers, knives, machetes, ammunition, police uniforms.

The tiger population in Bangladesh was estimated at 440 individuals in 2010. There is no current estimation for bear populations.

**Seizure of 8.93 kg of tiger bone (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I), 8 Asian black bear paws (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I) and 22 and brown bear paws (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix I)
Dongning and Suifenhe Districts, Heilongjiang Province, China
March 11, 2014**

Sino-Russian border traffic in the Far East. A Russian truck driver sold to a Chinese receiver tiger bones and bear paws. The first transaction was made on the basis of 160,000 Yuan (26,000 US\$). In a second step, Wang Hao sold the whole lot for 220,000 Yuan (35,000 US\$). On analysis, 2 kg of bones were not tiger bone. The species of origin is unknown.

**Seizure of 49 live turtles (*Testudines* order) and 9 live frogs (*Anura* order)
Kandasankadavu, Kerala, India
March 23, 2014**

The trio was selling on the sly turtles and frogs caught in the marshes of Varappuzha. Destination aquariums. It could be Indian bull frogs (*Hoplobatrachus tigerinus*, Appendix II) or Indian pond frogs (*Euphlyctis hexadactylus*, Appendix II).



Hoplobatrachus tigerinus



Euphlyctis hexadactylus

**Seizure of a leopard skin (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I) and a live European eagle owl (*Bubo bubo*, Appendix II)
Katmandu and Jorpati, Central Development Region, Nepal
March 24, 2014**

The 90 cm long and 50 cm wide leopard skin was soon going to change hands. The Central Investigation Bureau of Kathmandu and Jorpati acted in due time according to The Himalayan Times. The European eagle owl was in the hands of 2 young people who were awaiting a client.

Seizure of 13 bracelets in ivory and pangolin scales

Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport, province of Guangdong, China

March 27, 2014

The sniffer dogs newly in action at the Canton airport were no doubt alerted by the odour of the pangolin scales. Among them, there were 13 ivory bracelets.

Poaching of an ebony leaf monkey (*Trachypithecus auratus*, Appendix II) and leopard cat (*Priodailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II)

Indonesia

March 2014

ProFauna Indonesia warned Justice in Java about a gang of hoodlums heavily armed fooling around on Facebook with the remains of ebony leaf monkeys.



Poachers have also caught 2 young monkeys. At present, they are likely to be dead

EUROPE

Seizure of 2 elephant tusks, one cheetah skin (*Acinonyx jubatus*, Appendix I) and a stuffed baby tiger (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I)

Eindhoven, Province of North Brabant, Netherlands

January 2014

Alert on the Internet. Netherlands police received information from abroad. Investigations led to a 15 year old boys home where everything- computers, skins, tusks and the little baby tiger- was seized.



Seizure of 3 carved ivory tusks and coral necklaces

Avignon, Region of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, France

February 10, 2014

The Avignon festival is in full swing. The so-called "professional market" always comes through with great surprises and presents choice pieces to the marveled eyes of the custom officers assiduous to these regular events that attract the scam professionals of the entire world.



Seizure of parts of eurasian buzzard (*Buteo buteo*, Appendix II), barn owl (*Tyto alba*, Appendix II), parrots (family Psittacidae) and bontebok (genus *Damaliscus*)

Menoux, Centre, France

February 2014

ONCFS (Office national de la chasse et de la faune sauvage) was on the spot for several months. The trophies were for sale online. Skulls, paws and bones. Wildlife was local or African origin. Several m3 of feathers from protected birds were found at the trafficker's place. One of its sources is said to be the butchering of birds and mammals, such as badgers, victims of collisions with cars and lying by the roadside. The undertaker was in contact with hunters.



Seizure of 23 Greek tortoises (*Testudo graeca*, Appendix II), a Herman's tortoise (*Testudo hermanni*, Appendix II), a blue-and-yellow macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II)
Marseille, Region of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, France
February 16, 2014

Selling on the sly of wild animals, selling in public goldfinches captured in the bush, this is also done in France. This is a small job that can bring in big money while waiting to find a employment. Under the direction of the Deputy Prosecutor, 7 police officers, 7 custom agents, 2 agents of the Departmental Direction of the protection of people (ex-DDCCRF and veterinarians services), 7 agents of the National Office of Hunting and Wild life supported by about 30 CRS special force police have attempted to put an end to the traffic by means of searches, fines and custody.

The creatures have been placed in "accredited shelters". 7 sellers are caught in the nets. One veterinarian of Court set up the operation.



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Testudo graeca



© Ministère de la Justice

Diplomatic immunity

« The CITES Secretariat has received information suggesting that diplomats are increasingly involved in moving CITES specimens across international borders without the appropriate permits or certificates. » It is reminded that there is no diplomatic immunity for wild fauna and flora traffickers even for those serving on diplomatic missions in foreign countries or under the flag of the United Nations. In this issue, «On the Trail» reports a case in which Blue Helmets were trafficking red-fronted parrots.

Beware of CITES permits issued by the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Fake or falsified CITES permits apparently issued by the Democratic Republic of the Congo have been in circulation for several months while genuine permits are missing and have ended up goodness knows where. It is recommended that parties should not accept any CITES export permit or certificate apparently issued by the Democratic Republic of the Congo unless its validity has been confirmed by the Secretariat and inform the Secretariat if any of the missing permits listed in the Annex of the Notification 2014/017 is presented or has been presented, to authorize import or re-export of CITES specimens.

Loss of 21 CITES export permits in Tanzania

On 29 January 2014, 21 CITES export permits with serial numbers 26601 to 26618 and 26621 to 26623, were lost during transport from Arusha to Dar es Salaam. Could they more likely have been stolen? The permits had security stamps attached, but no signature or seal. Tanzania calls on all Parties for vigilance and cooperation should any of these permits be detected.

Pakistan lists 13 animal species in Appendix III of CITES

Pakistan includes the following species to Appendix III: blackbuck (*Antilope cervicapra*), nilgai (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*), *Capra aegagrus hircus*, Siberian ibex (*Capra sibirica*), Indian gazelle (*Gazella bennettii*), blue sheep (*Pseudois nayaur*), hog deer (*Axis porcinus* except the subspecies listed under Appendix I), Indian grey mongoose (*Herpestes edwardsii*), small Asian mongoose (*Herpestes javanicus*), striped hyaena (*Hyaena hyaena*), kalij pheasant (*Lophura leucomelanos*), Indian peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*), and koklass pheasant (*Pucrasia macrolopha*).

Lifting of voluntary moratorium on trade in CITES specimens

In 2003 Paraguay had decided to suspend the issuance of CITES permits to combat illegal trade. This voluntary suspension was partially lifted in 2009. It is now completely lifted. Paraguay is home in particular to the marsh deer (*Blastocerus dichotomus*), white-lipped peccary (*Tayassu pecari*), ocelot (*Leopardus pardalis*), jaguars (*Panthera onca*) and cougars (*Puma concolor*).

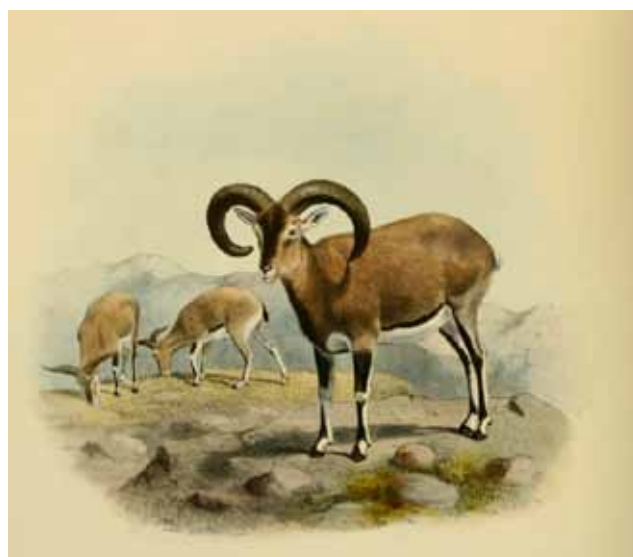
To purchase or give as a gift

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) agrees to offer to CITES Parties a 15% discount for purchase of the Live Animals Regulations manual on international standards for transport of live animals (40th edition, effective until 31 December 2014) and/or the Perishable Cargo Regulations manual (13th editions, effective until 31 December 2014).

CITES Standing Committee

The meeting will be held from 7 to 11 July 2014 in Geneva. Observers must send in the registration form by 7 June and participants who wish to submit a document must submit it to the Secretariat by 8 May (12 pages maximum).

* Literally «think-animal» in French, which means «reminder».



Blue sheep. Biodiversity Heritage Library

A Sea Cucumber Ending

Sea cucumbers are not plants. They are known in the entire world under the French name of “bêche de mer” (sea diggers). Sea cucumbers are the gardeners of the seafloor and coral reefs.

These dark and bright animals, passive and inventive, creepy and spectacular, useful and silent, do not particularly attract cameras and have yet to unleash passion like the blue whales, white sharks and bluefin tuna. Yet sea cucumbers do not have a peaceful life. If they are not the hosts of news, they are invited to be the meal of the party in Asia. Sea cucumbers are part of 5 essential gastronomy delicacies along with shark fins, swallows’ nests, swim bladders, and abalones. The most popular species in Asian food are distributed in coastal waters of tropical countries with high human density and low income. Sea cucumbers, edible and exportable, are accessible there by foot fishing and divers snorkeling or equipped.

In China, sea cucumbers are called Haichen; the “ginseng of the sea”. This means there is imminent danger for the cucumbers. They are consumed more for their supposed virtues than for their taste. The ginseng of the sea is supposed to prevent or cure asthenia, impotence, constipation, senility, and urinary incontinence. Some fantasists say the same thing for cancer.

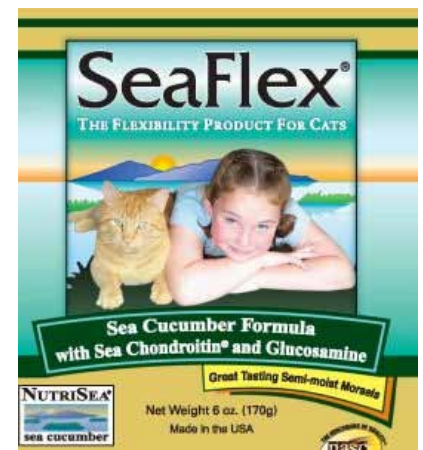
In recent years and with the global fashion of food supplements, the crushed and lyophilized ginseng has been incorporated in pills and tablets, sold in stores or on the Internet. In fresh food, it is boasted for its anti-obesity virtue.



“Good for all” potion



Powder of ananas sea cucumber
(*Thelenota ananas*)



Sea cucumbers against
the cat rheumatism



Sea cucumber
hydrating body lotion



Sea cucumber
soap



Sea cucumber with sauce

Humanity's bulimia is accelerating and knowledge on the sea cucumbers' capacity to resist this wave of predators has stagnated. Species that were not served to the table during the Ming Dynasty (1368 – 1644 B.C.), started to be eaten in the 21st century, the age of nuclear waste. Since 1970, Arctic, Subarctic or Coral species are set into the interior markets in Canada, the United States, and without doubt Europe at the request of communities of Asian origin.



The pineapple sea cucumber (*Thelenota ananas*) is considered to be vulnerable. It is sold for a retail price of around 200 US\$/kg. Its average weight is 2 kg. It can be up to 80 cm long.



Isostichopus fuscus sells for 1100 US\$/kg and weighs an average 200 g. It lives in the East Pacific and Southern California near the Galapagos Islands. It is threatened by extinction. After 28 days, the juvenile measures 1 mm.



Apostichopus japonicus is threatened by extinction. It sells for more than 2000 US\$/kg and weighs an average of 100 g.

Sea cucumbers

Sea cucumbers have a 5 to 10 years life span. They move slowly with the help of their ambulacra feet. The nervous system of a sea cucumber radiates throughout the body. Sexual maturity is attained between the ages of 2 and 6 years. This is late. The majority of the species scatter out into the water column, spawning male and female gametes. The external fertilization is possible with the condition that their density is sufficient before being dispersed by the ocean currents. For an easier fertilization, the species of temperate water regroup during the reproduction period.

Tropical sea cucumbers do not have that technique. Grouped and easily spotted in the mangroves, flats of coral reefs, seagrass, they are overexploited today and their capacity to reproduce is now under-dimensioned to guarantee a future for the species.

The decline of sea cucumber populations has grave consequences for other species and exacerbates intra marine food shortages. The eggs, larvae, and juveniles of sea cucumbers feed small planktonic crustacean, mollusks and fish. The female *Apostichopus japonicus* lays between 1 and 10 million eggs during spawning season.



Cleaner Shrimp *Periclimenes imperator* on *Bohadschia argus*



Lion's paw sea Cucumber *Euapta godeffroyi* lives in the Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean. The mouth tentacles are used to sort the sediments

Crustacean species or fish live in association with sea cucumbers.

Coral reef specialists think that the calcium carbonate and ammonia rejected at the term of sea cucumbers' long cycle of digestion is contributes to the growth of corals and counters ocean acidification. The sea cucumber communities are key links to the coral ecosystem.

Sea cucumbers are often compared to earthworms. They dig the upper layers of sand. They favour the penetration of oxygen into the sediments. The sea cucumbers are detritivores and prevent the accumulation of oceanic debris and the proliferation of bacterial pathogens and toxic algae on the seabed. A subject of an average weight of 200 g screen, ingests, digests and rejects about 50 kg of sand and debris per year. The sea cucumbers loosening the seabed and therefore promote the installation of other benthic species. When they disappear, the seabed will encrust and desertify.



Thanks to its tree tentacles *Cucumaria miniata* feeds on organic particles suspending in the water.



Certain sea cucumbers like *Holothuria sanctori* emit white filaments and tights called Cuvier tubes that paralyze and dissuade predators.

Saving Sea Cucumbers

14 years ago in Chili, the question of the future of sea cucumbers was raised in the plenary meeting of CITES. It remains today with no answer and no perspective.

Sea cucumbers are a typical example of the lack of human foresight toward biodiversity and ecosystems. UICN – The International Union for Nature Conservation- is exceeded by the speed of animal and plant extinctions. It is powerless to ring the alarm in due time from anticipation and in the entire world. According to the UICN tabloid, only 4% of 377 sea cucumber species are vulnerable or in danger of extinction, 29 % correspond to minor concern and 66% have an unknown status due to insufficient data.

The lack of data on biology and the lack of data on the global catch are two artifices that dissuade the world community on making a decision on the management of international commerce of sea cucumbers. These two gaps are “Cuvierian tubules” deployed by the industry to repel good resolutions.

The difficulties of specific identification of live animals, and even more so boiled, dried or crushed ones, discourage in advance national administrations and customs. All countries with an opening to the sea have a responsibility. Some of them have taken measures to control the practices of local fishing and traditional use. These measures, always in effect, were not prolonged and consolidated while species or isolated population were robbed by fishermen from afar, new species are exploited when others are cleared out and deep water fishing techniques are developing.

In 1983, declared fishing counted 25,000 tons of fresh sea cucumbers. In 1995, 13,000 tons of dried cucumbers equivalent to 130,000 tons of fresh animals had been placed on the international market. Today, the only established figure is 1 kilogram of dried *Apostichopus japonicus* is sold for 3000 US\$ in China.

Only *Isostichopus fuscus* is listed in Appendix III in Ecuador. With this initiative, Ecuador called on international cooperation to control its trade.

Doctor Purcell argues that the 7 species threatened by extinction of which *I. fuscus* should be listed in Appendix II of CITES, to provide a frame for international commerce and to shed light of the diversity of this market. To demine the opponents and convince the reluctant, the expert underlines that these 7 species even in a dried form are easily identifiable and that the risks of resemblance with species not registered to CITES are minimal.

With four other specialists from the Philippines, Canada and the United States, Doctor Purcell estimates that without concerted international action completed by national dynamics, the most popular species could become extinct in the short term despite their wide distribution.

Sources

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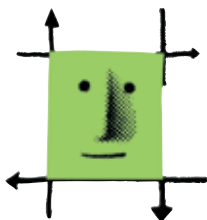
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Publication Director :

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Maps and illustrations:

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Writing:

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with Marie-Florine Baudot and Elise Longcamp.

Research :

Marie-Florine Baudot, Elise Longcamp,
Christine François
and collectif Robin des Bois.

Translation English edition « On the Trail »:

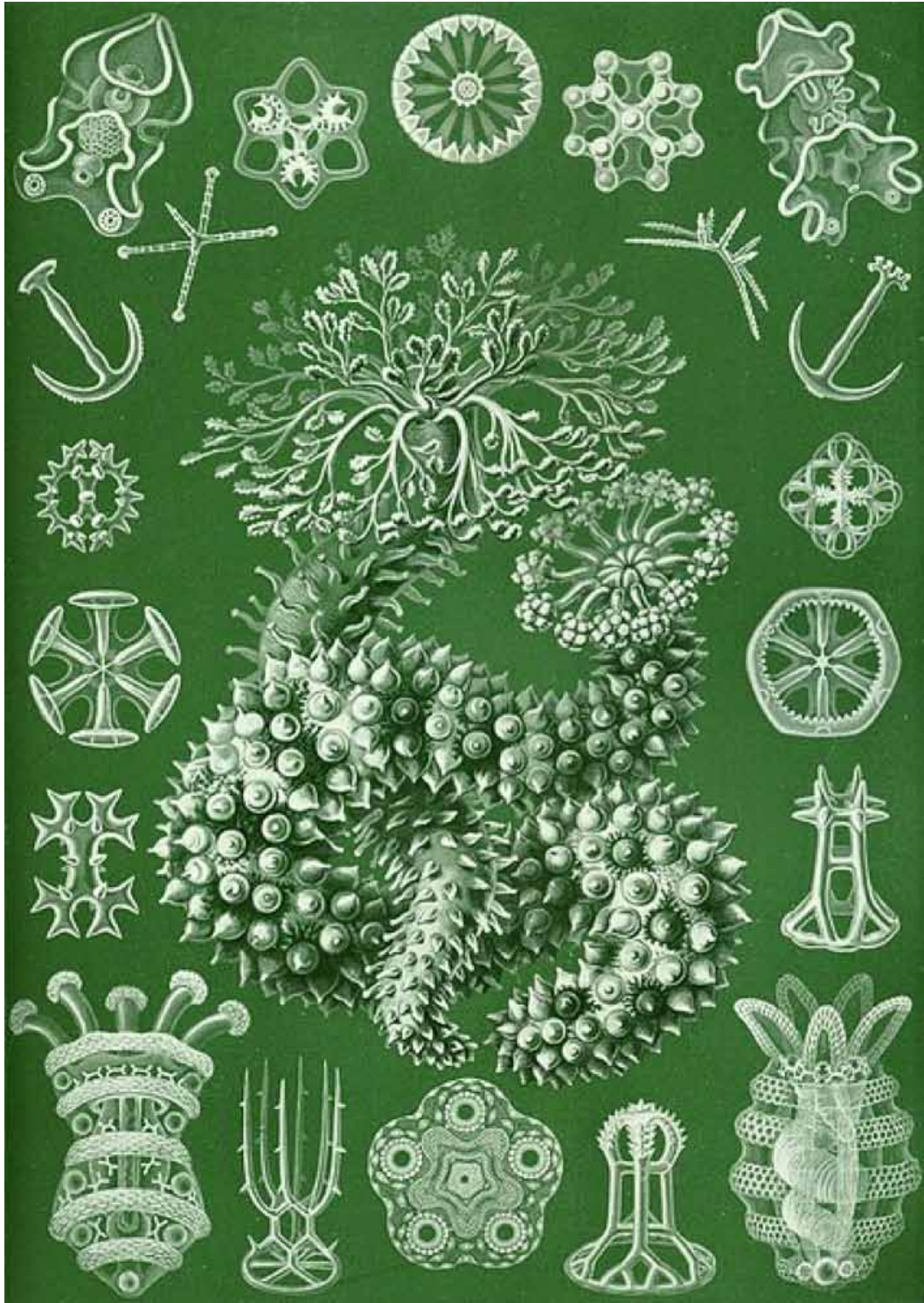
Collectif Robin des Bois, Emilie Courtin,
Christine François and Laurence de Bodinat.



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April 29, 2014



The skin of the sea cucumbers contains calcareous ossicles, which give the animal, in the almost total absence of skeleton, some resistance to routine external aggressions. It will be particularly noted that sea cucumbers have invented marine anchor. Art forms of nature by Ernst Haeckel (1904).