



THE TRAFFIC BULLETIN SEIZURES AND PROSECUTIONS SECTION IS SPONSORED BY THE FORESTRY BUREAU, COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURE, TAIWAN: COMMITTED TO SUPPORTING CITES ENFORCEMENT

The following section features a selection of seizures and prosecutions reported between October 2015 and April 2016. Sources are cited at the end of each country section. Readers are referred to the TRAFFIC website (www.traffic.org/media-reports/) for regular updates on cases reported from around the world.

BEARS

CANADA: On 4 March 2016, at the provincial court in Port Coquitlam, British Columbia, acupuncturist and traditional Chinese medicine practitioner Yunhee (Sarah) Kim was fined CAD22 400 (USD17 000) for the illegal trade in bear *Ursus* (CITES I/II) gall bladders and paws.

The Province (Canada): <http://bit.ly/1oyflHY>, 4 March 2016

RUSSIA: On 23 December 2015, it was reported that police in Chuguyevsky district, Primorsky region, had seized 527 bear *Ursus* (CITES I/II) paws, 11 bear gall bladders (and three musk *Moschus* (CITES I/II) deer gall bladders) concealed in bags of sawdust in railway carriages at the premises of a timber processing company.

Siberian Times: bit.ly/1RW44Mj, 3 December 2015

BIRDS

BRAZIL: On 11 January 2016, Jeffrey Lendrum was sentenced to gaol for four and a half years for the illegal trade in Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* (CITES I) eggs that had been collected days earlier in Patagonia, Chile. He was fined BRL40 000 (USD10 000).

Lendrum, a serial offender previously convicted of trying to smuggle birds of prey eggs out of Britain and elsewhere (see *TRAFFIC Bulletin* 23(1):30), was arrested in October 2015 at São Paulo Airport, in transit to Dubai, with four eggs in his possession after authorities in Chile were alerted by IBAMA, Brazil's federal environmental enforcement agency, that Lendrum was preparing to strike again.

Two of the eggs subsequently hatched but only one chick survived; it was returned to Chile where it was placed on an existing Peregrine Falcon nest.

UK National Wildlife Crime Unit press release: <http://bit.ly/23tRVaa>; *Shanghai Daily:* <http://bit.ly/1WRFPjO>, 29 January 2016; Daniel Eduardo Visciano de Carvalho, IBAMA, in litt. to R. Thomas, *TRAFFIC*, 22 February 2016

CONGO, DEM. REP. OF: On 14 February 2016, some 420 Grey Parrot *Psittacus erithacus* (CITES II) chicks were seized from a holding

CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) establishes international controls over trade in wild plants and animals, or related products, of species that have been, or may be, threatened due to excessive commercial exploitation. Parties have their own legislative instrument by which to meet their obligations under CITES. The species covered by CITES are listed in three Appendices, according to the degree of protection they need:

APPENDIX I includes species threatened with extinction which are or may be threatened by trade. Trade in specimens of these species is permitted only in exceptional circumstances. An export permit from the country of origin (or a re-export certificate from other exporting countries) and an import permit from the country of importation are required.

APPENDIX II includes species not necessarily yet threatened, but which could become so if trade is not strictly controlled. Species are also included in Appendix II if they are difficult to distinguish from other species in Appendix II, in order to make it more difficult for illegal trade to take place through misidentification or mislabelling. An export permit from the country of origin (or a re-export certificate from other exporting countries) is required, but not an import permit.

APPENDIX III includes species that any Party identifies as being subject to regulation within its jurisdiction for the purpose of preventing or restricting exploitation and as needing the co-operation of other Parties in the control of trade. Imports require a certificate of origin and, if the importation is from the State that has included the species in Appendix III, an export permit is required.

All imports into the European Union of CITES Appendix II-listed species require both an export permit/re-export certificate and an import permit.

facility in Kindu, Maniema, before their shipment to Kinshasa. Two local buyers were arrested and later gaoled; at least 65 birds subsequently perished and 295 live birds were transferred to the Congolese Conservation Institute.

<http://bit.ly/1Wrl407>, 10 March 2016

INDONESIA: On 3 December 2015, authorities in East Java seized 2711 live native birds from a passenger ship at Tanjung Perak port, Surabaya. One person suspected of purchasing the birds from collectors in Kalimantan was arrested. It is believed the birds were destined for Jakarta's Pramuka bird market. The shipment included 1411 Greater Green Leafbirds *Chloropsis sonnerati*, 712 White-rumped Shamas *Copsychus malabaricus*, 557 Hill Mynas *Gracula religiosa*, 20 Australasian Larks *Mirafra javanica*, eight Crested Jays *Platylophus galericulatus*, two Oriental Magpie-robins *Copsychus saularis* and a Red-eyed Bulbul *Pycnonotus brunneus*. 1192 birds died (678

Greater Green Leafbirds); the condition of 1230 birds was being assessed. 308 birds were returned to East Kalimantan.

On 11 November 2015, 200 Greater Green Leafbirds were seized at the same port; 25 were dead. A day earlier, 1014 birds were seized from a passenger vessel arriving from Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan, including 468 White-rumped Shamas, 408 Greater Green Leafbirds, and 24 Hill Mynas, all believed to be destined for Pramuka bird market.

TRAFFIC: <http://bit.ly/1lt8BET>, 4 December 2015; *Surya Online:* <http://bit.ly/1Vou7Qp> (in Indonesian)

ELEPHANTS

The African Elephant *Loxodonta africana* is listed in CITES Appendix I (except the populations of Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe, which are included in Appendix II); the Asian Elephant *Elephas maximus* is listed in Appendix I

CAMBODIA: On 4 October 2015, at Siem Reap Airport, a Vietnamese national was arrested after arriving on a flight from Angola with 46 kg of ivory and 11 elephant tails in his suitcase. The buyers were believed to live locally. The suspect awaits trial.

The Phnom Penh Post: <http://bit.ly/1Nnd0KX>, 7 October 2015

CAMEROON: In February 2016, it was reported that three ivory traffickers had been sentenced to one year in gaol and fined USD11 000.

The Eagle Network: [EAGLE_Briefing_February_2016_public.pdf](http://bit.ly/1Vou7Qp)

CHINA: On 10 October 2015, at Lichuan Court, Jiangxi province, Hong Kong resident Xu was sentenced to 10.5 years in gaol and fined CNY200 000 (USD33 333). In November 2014, Lichuan police intercepted a vehicle carrying



Two Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* chicks which hatched from eggs illegally smuggled out of Chile; only one chick survived.

AGRICULTURAL AND LIVESTOCK SERVICE (SAG), CHILE

22 figurines (13 kg), claimed to be mammoth products but subsequently identified as ivory. During their investigation of another suspect, police found that Xu had rented a certified ivory processing factory but was carrying out business involving ivory from both legal and illegal sources. He was arrested in February 2015 with 600 kg of ivory products.

On 23 November 2015, officials in Xiamen, Fujian province, confiscated 57 elephant tusks, allegedly imported from Uganda, declared as timber, and concealed in a container of wood. One arrest.

In December 2015, suspect Zhao was sentenced in Taiyuan People's Court, Shanxi province, to 11 years in gaol/fined CNY300 000 (USD46 000) and suspect Dongmou was gaoled for three years/fined CNY50 000 (USD7700) for their role in smuggling over 10 kg of ivory from Japan in 2013. Further investigations by Taiyuan Customs anti-smuggling bureau subsequently resulted in the confiscation of over 70 kg of smuggled ivory products, involving 16 suspects.

On 4 March 2016, border guards in Zhuhai, Guangdong province, seized 221 cut ivory pieces (450 kg) being transported by speedboat from Hong Kong; the suspects had fled.

<http://bit.ly/1Sz4Agu> [in Chinese], 18 November 2015; *Daily Mail (UK)*: <http://dailymail.in/1HzrPlx>, 24 November 2015; <http://bit.ly/1Sf9oh2> [in Chinese], 27 January 2016; *Macau Daily Times*: <http://bit.ly/1S9S3TH>, 22 March 2016

CONGO, DEM. REP. OF: During the first quarter of 2016, authorities arrested a dozen people and seized a total of 80 kg of ivory during three separate operations.

WWF—Democratic Republic of Congo media release, 21 March 2016

GABON: In December 2015, a forest official and one other person arrested in possession of 206 kg of ivory, were gaoled for six months and fined USD35 000.

The EAGLE network: www.eagle-enforcement.org/data/files/eagle-briefing-january-2016-public.pdf, January 2016

HONG KONG: During November 2015, Customs officials at Hong Kong International Airport seized a total of 146.5 kg of suspected ivory products from five separate shipments; the ivory had been concealed in tailor-made vests or in hand luggage; one package arrived by courier from Malaysia declared as pet food. A number of arrests; two prosecutions at Tsuen Wan Magistrates' Court both resulted in fines of HKD65 000 (USD8300); another person was fined HKD90 000. All items had been shipped from, respectively, Harare, Zimbabwe; Abuja, Nigeria; Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, via Dubai, and one direct from Dubai. A further two shipments (10 kg and 26 kg) from Abidjan, via Dubai, arrived in luggage on 14 March and 16 April 2016, respectively.

Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region press releases: <http://bit.ly/1H6ihEx>, 3 November 2015; <http://bit.ly/1Sf9y85>, 4 November 2015; <http://bit.ly/1Q6uYgh>, 7 November 2015; <http://bit.ly/1S9SIKk>, 14 November 2015; <http://bit.ly/1V0UOu8>, 19 November 2015; <http://bit.ly/1Q6vkmQ>, 14 March 2016; <http://bit.ly/23W1NWX>, 17 April 2016

INDIA: On 10 October 2015, officials in New Delhi arrested a key ivory trader known to the authorities and subsequently seized 488 kg of ivory—believed to be the largest haul of ivory in the city; another suspect was arrested when the tusks and ivory artefacts were seized from a house in Maujpur, New Delhi.

The Hindu: <http://bit.ly/1SMp2uD>, 12 October 2015

INDONESIA: On 16 February 2016, it was reported that Customs officers at Soekarno-Hatta Airport had arrested a Chinese citizen smuggling elephant tusks (109 kg) from Abu Dhabi and a Zambian national arriving from Zambia in possession of 163 elephant tusks (and two rhinoceros horns), which he claimed were to be carved into table decorations.

Tempo.co: <http://bit.ly/1NnYGgK>, 16 February 2016

MALAYSIA: On 26 February 2016, at Kuala Lumpur International Airport, in two separate incidents, Customs officials seized a total of 159 kg of ivory tusks: two Vietnamese nationals believed to have been travelling from Angola were found with 101 kg in their luggage; some 58 kg was recovered from unidentified luggage bound for Hanoi, Viet Nam.

The Sun Daily (Malaysia): <http://bit.ly/23tUg4O>, 2 March 2016

MOZAMBIQUE: On 3 October 2015, two Chinese nationals bound for Qatar were arrested in Nampula with 104 kg of elephant tusks.

Bloomberg: <http://bloom.bg/1Rs6iSp>, 6 October 2015

MYANMAR: On 1 January 2016, police in Irrawaddy Division arrested two suspected members of an elephant poaching ring in Chaungtha Forest Reserve; 66 pieces of elephant trunks and tails, dried elephant hide and a knife were seized. A skinned elephant and a structure to cure the hide was also found.

The Irrawaddy: <http://bit.ly/1O4TVuY>, 5 January 2016

SINGAPORE: On 12 December 2015, authorities impounded 505 kg of elephant tusks in reportedly one of the largest ivory seizures made in the territory in over a decade. The tusks were found with 324 kg of pangolin scales in an air shipment from Nigeria, bound for Lao PDR, labelled as synthetic wigs.

Asiaone: <http://bit.ly/1mpfjly>, 17 December 2015

TAIWAN: In December 2015 and January 2016, officials seized seven parcels (six from UK; one from France) containing 45 ivory pieces; two suspects claimed to have purchased the items at antique auction websites overseas. Further pieces were recovered from their premises (a total of 400 pieces/28 kg). The suspects were reportedly also selling ivory products on a social media site in Taiwan.

Liberty Times Net: <http://bit.ly/1Wrmj5U>, 19 February 2016; *Taiwan Customs pers. comm. to J. Wu*, TRAFFIC, 11 March 2016

TANZANIA: On 18 December 2015, at Mpanda District Magistrate Court in Katavi Region, two local men Justin Bruno and Philbert Leo were gaoled for 42 years after being apprehended transporting four elephant tusks (47 kg) on a motorbike.

On 22 December 2015, it was reported that authorities had seized 156 ivory tusks (200 kg); two Tanzanian suspects were arrested in Dar es Salaam.

On 29 December 2015 it was reported that Stephano Jonas and Franko Hamisi, Burundian refugees from Katumba refugee camp at Mlele District, Katavi Region, had been sentenced at Mpanda District Court to 20 years in gaol for possession of elephants tusks. Police arrested the duo in May 2015 at the camp, where they found the tusks under a bed.

On 19 March 2016, at Kisutu Resident Magistrate's Court, Dar es Salaam, Chinese nationals Huang Gin and Xu Fujie were each sentenced to 30 years in gaol or ordered to pay a fine of Sh54.3 billion (USD25 million) each following their arrest in 2013 after 707 tusk pieces (1.8 t) were found in sacks of garlic at their house.

The Citizen: <http://bit.ly/1PjMSif>, 19 December 2015; *Voice of America*: <http://bit.ly/1NNkS3W>, 23 December 2015; *allAfrica*: <http://bit.ly/1XuYfam>, 29 December 2015; *Reuters*: <http://reut.rs/1Sz6D-kx>, 19 March 2016; *The Citizen*: <http://bit.ly/1UC-4QIS>, 19 March 2016

UK: On 14 October 2015, Border Force officers at Heathrow Airport seized 110 kg of raw elephant tusks, carved ivory bangles and beads from luggage abandoned in transit from Angola to Hanover, Germany. The items were taken away for forensic analysis and confirmed to be ivory; the case is being investigated by the National Crime Agency.

UK Border Force

UGANDA: In November 2015, at Entebbe International Airport, four Vietnamese nationals were arrested attempting to export 36 kg of ivory (and 3 kg of rhinoceros horn). The contraband was declared as wood samples, destined for Viet Nam. The suspects were gaoled (term not reported).

EAGLE_Briefing_December_2015_public.pdf

VIET NAM: On 29 November 2015, a container holding 835 (2204 kg) African Elephant *Loxodonta africana* tusks hidden in beans, arriving by sea from Mozambique, was seized.

On 29 January 2016, at Hanoi's Noi Bai Airport 137 kg of elephant tusks and ivory carvings were seized from six checked-in cases arriving from Angola, via Malaysia.

(see also Other / multi-seizures)

Haiquan online: <http://bit.ly/1T3vYb>, 17 December 2015; Thanh Nien News: <http://bit.ly/1S6fE5B>, 30 January 2016; <http://bit.ly/1NnZout>, 30 January 2016

ZIMBABWE: On 24/25 October 2015, at Harare International Airport, Customs officials seized 173 kg of ivory on route to Singapore; three locals and a Malian national were arrested. It is reported that an undisclosed amount of ivory was recently seized at the airport allegedly involving officials at Hwange National Park who were trying to smuggle the ivory out of the country.

Newsdze Zimbabwe: <http://bit.ly/1R95sts>, 26 October 2015

MARINE/FRESHWATER

AUSTRALIA: On 3 February 2016, at the County Court, Victoria, the ringleader [name not reported] of an illegal abalone *Haliotis* syndicate based in Melbourne was gaoled for 23 months and 14 days, with a non-parole period of 12 months. She was also convicted and banned indefinitely from all fishing activity, ordered to pay AUD18 007 (USD13 700) and a vehicle was forfeited. She had pleaded guilty to trafficking commercial quantities of abalone, and also to selling rock lobsters and molluscs without authorization. The 10-month investigation, code-named Operation Quantum, had observed the woman repeatedly selling illegally taken abalone at a discounted price around St Albans and Sunshine, Victoria, supplied by a team of ten divers. Four divers were gaoled on 11 January for periods of up to two months, however those sentences remain under appeal. The other six men were required to complete between 60 and 280 hours of unpaid community work, were banned from all fishing activity indefinitely and ordered to pay between AUD220 and AUD16 500 (USD168 and USD12 600) each.

Fishing World: <http://bit.ly/1KZICka>, 3 February 2016; The Standard, <http://bit.ly/119bboj>, 12 January 2016; <http://bit.ly/1XuYKbf>, 12 January 2016

HONG KONG: On 11 December 2015, officials with a quarantine detector dog at the Air Mail Centre of Hong Kong International Airport seized a shipment containing 9 kg of dried seahorses *Hippocampus* spp. (CITES II).

Customs officials at Hong Kong International Airport have seized five separate shipments of suspected European Eels *Anguilla anguilla* (CITES II) in 2016 to date (total 341 kg) from the check-in luggage of passengers arriving from Spain and Portugal via Abu Dhabi, Paris, Amsterdam and Istanbul without the requisite licences.

On 7 March 2016, at Hong Kong International Airport, an unclaimed bag was found to contain 46 kg of suspected dried fins of Smooth Hammerhead Sharks *Sphyrna zygaena* (CITES II).

On 14 December 2015, some 16 kg of suspected dried shark fins of Sphyrnidae spp. (three species in CITES II) were seized from a passenger arriving from Mozambique via



HONG KONG CUSTOMS

A shipment of dried seahorses *Hippocampus* (CITES II) was seized at the Air Mail Centre of Hong Kong International Airport in December 2015, with the assistance of a quarantine detector dog.

Johannesburg, South Africa. Both shipments were without the requisite licences.

Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region press releases: <http://bit.ly/1Sz7gL2>; <http://bit.ly/1qHELoj>, 14 December 2015; <http://bit.ly/1qotk4k>, 8 March 2016; <http://bit.ly/1Z5doi1>, 5 January 2016; <http://bit.ly/1XkThx9>, 11 February 2016; <http://bit.ly/1XuZ5Un>, 25 February 2016; <http://bit.ly/1Le8Kxx>, 4 March 2016; <http://bit.ly/1qotk4k>, 8 March 2016

INDIA: On 1 February 2016, at Alanthalai, in Thoothukudi district, two persons were arrested during a vehicle check in possession of 2500 conch shells (protected under Schedule I and II of the Wildlife Protection Act) reportedly bound for tourist destinations such as Kanyakumari and Rameshwaram. They included Horned Helmets *Cassia cornuta*, Horse Conch *Fasciolaria trapezium*, Scorpion Spider Conch, *Lambis scorpius* and *Lambis chiragra arthritica*.

The Hindu, <http://bit.ly/2092xUE>, 3 February 2016

INDONESIA: In early October 2015, authorities at Jakarta International Airport seized some 3000 fins of Oceanic Whitetip Sharks *Carcharhinus longimanus* (CITES II; protected in Indonesia and banned from export) bound for Hong Kong, reportedly from sharks caught in waters around Java island.

Close to 8000 freshwater turtles were confiscated in recent seizures in Indonesia, the majority of them protected Pig-nosed Turtles *Carettochelys insculpta*.

On 21 February, officials at Jakarta's Soekarno Hatta International Airport discovered 3737 Pig-nosed Turtles and 883 Snake-necked Turtles *Macrochelodina rugosa* in boxes headed for Hong Kong. The turtles were placed in quarantine and were to be returned to the wild.

Days earlier, authorities foiled an attempt to smuggle 3230 Pig-nosed Turtles out of Mozes Kilangin Airport in Timika, Papua province, bound for Jakarta, via Jayapura.

<http://yhoo.it/1MeqyqG>, 7 October 2015; TRAFFIC: <http://bit.ly/1SMqg9d>, 23 February 2016

MEXICO: On 11 October 2015, it was reported that 3.5 t of dried shark fins and 529 kg of fish swim bladders had been seized

from a container in Manzanillo, Colima, bound for Hong Kong. The seizure was made because the shipper did not present documents confirming the legal provenance of the products or authorization for harvesting the animal parts.

Fox News: <http://bit.ly/1MtOnwR>, 11 October 2015

PAKISTAN: On 11 March 2016, it was reported that Punjab Wildlife and Parks Department officials at Faisalabad Airport had seized 45 Black-spotted Turtles *Geoclemys hamiltonii* (CITES I) from suitcases ready for loading onto a Malaysia-bound flight.

Customs officials seized two consignments at Lahore Airport earlier this year containing some 184 Black-spotted Turtles.

<http://bit.ly/1S6h8g7>, 11 March 2016

SOUTH AFRICA: On 29 October 2015, an undisclosed amount of abalone (*Perlemoen*) *Haliotis midae* was stolen from the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries' storage facility for confiscated abalones in Paarden Island, Cape Town, after armed and masked men overpowered security personnel.

In November 2015, in separate cases, at least four tonnes; 73 bags; 985 kg of abalones *Haliotis midae* were seized in Western/Eastern Cape provinces from vehicles and a number of arrests were made; another 39 627 abalones being processed at a suspected abalone factory were seized and four Mozambicans and three South African nationals were arrested.

Other significant cases in these provinces during 2016 to date include seizures of 620 kg and 8000 abalones from vehicles and from one property; a further 6151 shucked wet and 14014 dry abalones from a property in Atlantis; numerous arrests.

Times Live: www.timeslive.co.za/scitech/2015/11/02Abalone-storage-facility-hit-by-poachers, 2 November 2015; IOL news: <http://bit.ly/1TQTPeL>, 1 November 2015; News24: <http://bit.ly/1MtOt7V>, 1 November 2015; <http://bit.ly/1S6hhAc>, 6 November 2015; IOL News: <http://bit.ly/1oX6lfj>, 5 November 2015; RNews: <http://bit.ly/1o079B2>, 8 February 2016; Eyewitness News: <http://bit.ly/1QhjZR0>; Times Live: <http://bit.ly/21x8nju>, 17 March 2016

SPAIN: On 9 March 2016 it was reported that six people in Galicia had been arrested on charges of illegal fishing of Patagonian Toothfish *Dissostichus eleginoides* in Antarctic waters, reportedly the first illegal fishing investigation involving collaboration between the Spanish Civil Guard, INTERPOL and Europol.

The Guardian: <http://bit.ly/1T3y1KI>, 9 March 2016

TOGO: In January 2016, a Ghanaian fisherman living in Nigeria was arrested as he crossed the Hilla-Condji (Togo-Benin) border en route to Ghana, in possession of almost 80 kg of shark fins.

ANCE (Alliance Nationale des Consommateurs et de l'Environnement) Togo newsletter: <http://bit.ly/1TQUgWA>, 11 January 2016

PANGOLINS

All pangolin species are listed in CITES Appendix II

CAMEROON: On 11 November 2015, a person was arrested at an unnamed airport with 100 kg of Giant Pangolin *Smutsia gigantea* scales contained in sacks stamped with Chinese characters.

In February 2016, a Nigerian ivory trader was arrested with 200 kg of pangolin scales (and 12 ivory tusks).

The Eagle network: <http://bit.ly/1Q6yuqQ>, 11 November 2015; *EAGLE_Briefing_February_2016_public.pdf*

CHINA: On 8 December 2015, at Fangshenggang Intermediate People's Court, Tang Guoli was gaoled for five years and fined CNY50 000 (USD8065); He Bingyuan was gaoled for one year and fined CNY20 000 (USD3226). The duo had reportedly been hired to deliver live pangolins from Dongxing, Guangxi province, to Guangdong province; the animals had arrived by boat from Viet Nam. Dongxing Customs officers intercepted the suspects in April 2015 and seized 20 live Sunda Pangolins *Manis javanica* and six live Chinese Pangolins *M. pentadactyla*.

On 15 January 2016, at Baiyun International Airport, Guangzhou, the luggage of a passenger arriving from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, was found to contain 30 kg of pangolin scales.

On 17 January 2016, 51 live pangolins were discovered by police in the boot of a car that had been involved in an accident in Yulin City, Guangxi province.

On 19 January 2016, suspect Zhou was sentenced to over five years in gaol/fined CNY100 000 (USD15 385) following his arrest in 2014 after Zizhong forest police in Sichuan province seized 60 kg of pangolin scales from him.

On 28 January 2016, it was reported that one person hired to deliver 960 dead pangolins from Haiquan Bay to Guangchang Market in Zhuhai, Guangdong province, seized by police in May 2014, had been sentenced to five years in gaol/fined CNY20 000 (USD3000).

On 10 April 2016, officials in Guangdong province seized 76 bags containing 1.6 t of pangolin scales from a speedboat in waters off Zhongshan City. One person was detained.

<http://bit.ly/1HA98EK>, 23 October 2015; <http://bit.ly/1WrsfFH> [in Chinese], 9 December 2015; <http://bit.ly/1RMOTpB>, 14 December 2015; *Southcn.com*: <http://bit.ly/1Xv0HgZ> [in Chinese], 15 January 2016; *Eastday.com*: <http://bit.ly/1MtWc5J> [in Chinese], 18 January 2016; *SCOL.com*: <http://bit.ly/1T3yZqP> [in Chinese], 19 January 2016; *SINA*: <http://bit.ly/1oX8U1i>, 28 January 2016; <http://bit.ly/1VvZran>, 16 April 2016

HONG KONG: On 17 December 2015, marine police arrested eight mainland sailors and confiscated 50 boxes of pangolin meat (weight not reported) after intercepting their mainland-bound boat off Lung Kwu Tan.

On 12 December, police seized another shipment of pangolin scales during an anti-smuggling operation in Sai Kung. During pursuit by police, two speedboats ran aground off Sharp Island. Six crew members fled; no arrests.

South China Morning Post: <http://bit.ly/1Qr7mZR>, 17 December 2015

INDONESIA: On 11 November 2015, police in north Sumatra province seized 91 pangolins from a boat in the waters off Belawan port; the animals were to be smuggled to Malaysia. Nine specimens had perished. Four crew members were arrested.

Malysiakini: <http://bit.ly/1N8fwFP>, 11 November 2015

MALAYSIA: On 6 November 2015, Penang's Wildlife and National Parks Department (Perhilitan) found 46 pangolins in the boot of an abandoned car in Butterworth.

New Straits Times: <http://bit.ly/1RTNsWG>, 6 November 2015

VIET NAM: On 25 March 2016, 129 suspected Sunda Pangolins *Manis javanica* (535 kg) were seized from a car at Mong Cai, Quang Ninh province. Two people were arrested.

On the same day, in Quang Ninh province, 104 kg of pangolins *Manis* spp. were recovered from a vehicle. One arrest.

(see also Other / multi-seizures)

<http://bit.ly/123xiCL7>, 30 March 2016; <http://bit.ly/123Hq3fg>, 4 April 2016

ZIMBABWE: Zimbabwe imposes a nine-year minimum mandatory gaol sentence for pangolin trade offences.

In November 2015, it was reported that police officers Tinashe Mushaikwa and Albert Gwere from Gokwe had been sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment after being found in possession of a pangolin. The duo had been part of a four-member gang; their accomplices Gordon Chitima, and James Matsungu were sentenced to imprisonment for nine years. They were caught in October 2015 after authorities were tipped off and a detective posed as a buyer.

The police officers will effectively serve nine years: according to the Magistrate, each of the 10 years is suspended for six months on condition the duo do not commit a similar offence in the next five years, and four months suspended on condition of good behaviour.

On 9 December 2015, Osman Friday of Harare was gaoled for nine years for possessing a pangolin. He was arrested after police officers posed as potential pangolin buyers.

On 14 December 2015, two men were each given nine-year gaol sentences for possessing a pangolin after attempting to sell the animal to undercover police officers. Joseph Masakanya went straight to gaol; the court had not decided what action to be taken in the case of the second subject, Stanley Madhaiza, who was unwell.

On 8 February 2016, Moses Gatsi was sentenced to nine years' imprisonment for being in possession of a pangolin. He was arrested after offering a pangolin for sale to police, who were acting as buyers.

(see also Other / multi-seizures)

<http://bit.ly/1GHEEA1>, 2 November 2015; *New Zimbabwe:* <http://bit.ly/125ZGe9S>, 9 December 2015; *New Zimbabwe:* <http://bit.ly/1NQ18Bq>, 14 December 2015; *Newsday:* <http://bit.ly/1TQZfFK>, 9 February 2016

REPTILES / AMPHIBIANS

CHINA: In November 2015, Customs officials at Shanghai Pudong International Airport intercepted a parcel declared as "crabs" arriving from Indonesia. On inspection it was found to contain 2000 live turtles, including 53 Black Pond Turtles *Geoclemys hamiltonii* (CITES I), and the following CITES-II listed species: 1290 South Asian Box Turtles *Cuora amboinensis*, 1002 Pig-nosed Turtles *Carettochelys insculpta*, 30 Asian Leaf Turtles *Cyclanops dentata*, plus 160 *Emydura subglobosa*.

On 29 January 2016, Customs officials in Haikou, Hainan province, seized 68 000 pieces of python skins and arrested 16 suspects during a raid in five cities in Hainan, Fujian and Guangxi provinces. A local company is alleged to have obtained a wild animal import licence to produce folk instruments, but since 2014 had been smuggling python skins from Viet Nam.

<http://bit.ly/125ZHlpZ> [in Chinese] 31 January 2016; *Shanghai Daily:* <http://bit.ly/1VyyzL5>, 18 March 2016

INDIA: On 12 January 2016, at least 5000 tortoises were seized from 75 sacks on a lorry at a check post in Dumka district, Jharkhand, including Indian Star Tortoises *Geochelone elegans* (CITES II); around 107 tortoises were dead. Two people evaded capture. The live animals were released into a lake in Dumka district.

On 20 March 2016, at Mumbai Airport, Customs officials seized 146 tortoises from the luggage of a Nepali in transit from Madagascar who had continued on to Kathmandu leaving the bag behind; it was left undetected for a week. The consignment included 139 Radiated Tortoises *Astrochelys radiata* (two dead), and seven Ploughshare Tortoises *A. yniphora*, both Critically Endangered tortoise species of Madagascar and CITES I-listed. Efforts were under way to return the tortoises to Madagascar.

<http://bit.ly/1KeXBX5>, 13 January 2016; *DNA India:* <http://bit.ly/1pV8rxU>, 20 March 2016; *Mid-day:* <http://bit.ly/1SMuxK3>, 22 March 2016

INDONESIA: In January 2016, a tip-off from the Australian police led to the arrest of two Indonesian students who had smuggled from Papua a Yellow Monitor *Varanus flavescens* (CITES I), 30 Green Tree Pythons *Morelia viridis* (CITES II), three Emerald Tree Monitors *V. prasinus* (CITES II), a Peach-throated Monitor *V. jobiensis* (CITES II), a Blue-tailed Skink *Cryptoblepharus egeriae* and a Frilled-neck Lizard *Chlamydosaurus kingii*. The duo had reportedly been involved in an online international wildlife trafficking operation since 2012, primarily trading in reptiles. Both were sentenced to five months' gaol.

The Sydney Morning Herald (Australia): <http://bit.ly/1QXR3Rv>, 11 February 2016

SINGAPORE: On 14 October 2015, Russian nationals Maksim Pavlychev and Aleksei Radkov were each sentenced to 15 months' in gaol for the attempted smuggling of 206 Black Pond Turtles *Geoclemys hamiltonii* (CITES I). Their sentences were backdated to 9 July when they were detained after the reptiles were found in their luggage as they transited Changi Airport, en route from Bangladesh to Surabaya, Indonesia. The turtles were dehydrated and in poor condition; 27 have since perished or were put down. The remaining specimens were placed under the care of Wildlife Reserves Singapore.

Today: <http://bit.ly/1Lm4xBU>, 14 October 2015

THAILAND: On 22 December 2015, a man was arrested in Prayuen district, Khon Kaen province, after he offered several protected wildlife species for sale over the internet, including Burmese Starred Tortoises *Geochelone platynota* (CITES I) stolen from a Myanmar wildlife conservation centre in October. Also seized were African Spurred Tortoises *Geochelone sulcata* (CITES II) and marmosets.

Markings on the Burmese Starred Tortoise shells matched those of specimens for which the Burmese authorities had sought the co-operation of the Thai authorities in the recovery of the specimens following their theft.

<http://bit.ly/1TR0vtl>, 23 December 2015

RHINOCEROSSES

All species of Rhinocerotidae are listed in CITES Appendix I except the South African and Swaziland populations of *Ceratotherium simum simum*, which are listed in Appendix II.

MOZAMBIQUE: On 9 November 2015, at Maputo International Airport, police arrested a Vietnamese national carrying 14 pieces of rhinoceros horn (plus 59 Lion *Panthera leo* (CITES II) claws and 49 teeth believed to be Lion).

On 11 March 2016, police at the airport seized 76 kg of rhinoceros horns from two cases as they were being put on a flight to Kenya.

Star Africa: <http://oran.ge/1MtUlse>, 9 November 2015; *Shanghai Daily:* <http://bit.ly/1M49zsU>, 15 March 2016

NAMIBIA: On 21 December 2015, at Opuwo Magistrates' Court, Chinese businessman Xu Jin Den was sentenced to 10 years in gaol (or ordered to pay NAD100 000 (USD6500) for the illegal possession of two rhinoceros horns which the defendant said he had purchased from local people in Sesfontein.

The Namibian: <http://bit.ly/22tYsfd>, 22 December 2015

SOUTH AFRICA: On 27 October 2015, at Nelspruit Regional Court, Andolino Mulcube and Jermano Tive were gaol for 14 years for killing and dehorning a White Rhinoceros *Ceratotherium simum* and for killing a second rhinoceros, in Kruger National Park in January 2013. Their sentences comprised three months for entering South Africa illegally, four years for illegal entry into the park, seven years for killing and dehorning a rhinoceros, and seven years for killing the second rhinoceros (sentences on count one and two to run concurrently, while count three and four would run consecutively).

On 12 November 2015, at Klerksdorp Regional Court, Bennet Navunga of Mozambique was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment after being found in possession of an unlicensed hunting rifle. He was arrested with five other suspects in July 2013 during a road block in Klerksdorp, North West, after authorities established that the suspects were intending to poach rhinoceroses at a game reserve. Three were granted bail and are still at large. Navunga will have to spend two-thirds of his sentence in gaol before he becomes eligible for parole.

On 11 March 2016, at Ladysmith Regional Court, two women received gaol terms for rhinoceros poaching: Confidence "Angel" Mlambo was sentenced to three years for conspiracy to hunt rhinoceroses; four years for illegal possession of a firearm and six months for possession of ammunition. On all counts, half of the imprisonment is suspended, making her effective gaol term two years. Nokwanda Khumalo was sentenced to three years for conspiracy to hunt rhinoceroses; four years for illegal possession of an unlicensed firearm and a further six months for possession of ammunition. On all counts, half of the imprisonment is suspended, making her effective gaol term also two years.

News24: <http://bit.ly/1GlehK8>, 27 October 2015; *Times Live:* <http://bit.ly/1N8hNAI>, 12 November 2015; *Ladysmith Gazette (South Africa):* <http://bit.ly/1P9CRBO>, 11 March 2016

TANZANIA: On 17 December 2015, at Mbeya Resident Magistrates' Court, Chinese nationals Song Lei, Xiao Shaodan, Chen Jianlin, and Hu Liang, were each sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment for smuggling 11 rhinoceros horns into the country from Malawi by car. They were also fined Sh9 billion (USD2.8 m) each.

Reuters: <http://reut.rs/1YqIA9H>, 18 December 2015

UK: On 4/5 April 2016, at Birmingham Crown Court, members of an organized crime gang accused of carrying out raids on museums and auction houses to steal rhinoceros horn and

high-value artefacts from UK museums were given gaol sentences of up to six-and-a-half years. In all, 13 men were sentenced over two days resulting in convictions for a conspiracy that spanned the UK, the Irish Republic, several European countries, Hong Kong and the USA. The gang also recruited others to undertake some of the raids to secure the rhinoceros horn and other artefacts which were reportedly later smuggled to Asia.

Daniel "Turkey" O'Brien of Cottenham, Cambridgeshire, was gaol for 6 years, 8 months. John "Kerry" O'Brien and Michael Hegarty both of Cottenham, Cambridgeshire and Rathkeale, Ireland, were gaol for 6 and a half years. Gaol for 5 and a half years were: Richard "Kerry" O'Brien Jr, of Cottenham, Cambridgeshire; Paul Pammen of Southend-on-Sea; Alan Clarke of London; Richard Sheridan of Cottenham, Cambridgeshire, Patrick Clarke of London and Donald Wong of London. John "Cash" O'Brien of Wolverhampton was sentenced to 5 years, 3 months in gaol, as was Ashley Dad, of Wolverhampton, who did not appear in court; Terrence McNamara of Belfast, and Daniel Flynn of Cottenham, Cambridgeshire, were gaol for 4 years. A 14th man was convicted and sentenced last year for his part in the crime. None of the stolen items has been recovered.

The Guardian (UK): <http://bit.ly/1N8rejz>, 4 April 2016; *The Irish Times:* <http://bit.ly/1NobR1m>, 4 April 2016; <http://bit.ly/1XviAML>, 5 April 2016

USA: On 21 October 2015, taxidermist James Hess of Iowa was sentenced to 27 months in gaol for buying and selling Black Rhinoceros *Diceros bicornis* horns, plus three years' supervised release after serving his gaol term. Hess arranged to acquire horns from an Oregon man in August 2011 and ship them to Iowa, where another man was to transfer them to California. He also purchased and resold at least two sets of Black Rhinoceros horns in 2011.

On 16 December 2015, San Francisco art dealer Lumsden Quan was sentenced in Las Vegas to a year in gaol for illegally selling Black Rhinoceros *Diceros bicornis* horns to an undercover agent. He was also given three years of supervision after his gaol sentence has been completed, fined USD10 000, and banned from working in the arts/antiques business for three years.

On 13 January 2016, Irish national Patrick Sheridan was sentenced to one year in gaol for the illegal trade in Black Rhinoceros *Diceros bicornis* horns. British agents, acting on a US warrant, arrested Sheridan in Holyhead, Wales, in 2015 and extradited him to the USA. Along with two others, he illegally bought rhino horns in Texas through a "straw buyer"—someone who makes a purchase for a client—and resold the horns in New York. Sheridan also used false documents to try to hide the illegal purchase. One of the other suspects was gaol for a year in 2014.

<http://yhoo.it/1PlwIQ7>, 21 October 2015; *Washington Times:* <http://bit.ly/1Ypp5Qa>, 17 December 2015; *Voice of America:* <http://bit.ly/1TXcL8N>, 13 January 2016

ZIMBABWE: In January 2016, a court in Masvingo sentenced Tawengwa Machona to 35 years' in gaol for the poaching of two rhinoceroses. His sentence will be reduced to 20 years if he pays USD480 000—the estimated value of the animals—within five years.

The animals were killed in 2014/2015 in the Save Valley Conservancy. Two accomplices are being charged separately. The alleged ringleader is reportedly an assistant officer in Zimbabwe's secret service. Two others are on the run.

News 24: <http://bit.ly/1UpPqMV>, 1 January 2016

FLORA

HONG KONG: On 8 October 2015, Customs detected 7015 logs (a reported one million kg) of suspected Malagasy Rosewood *Dalbergia baronii* (CITES II) from incoming cargo from Tanzania.

Hong Kong government press releases: <http://bit.ly/1VISWfs>, 12 October 2015; <http://bit.ly/1Q6Qsth>, 4 February 2016

INDIA: On 4 November 2015, 94 logs (3740 kg) of Red Sanders *Pterocarpus santalinus* (CITES II) were seized from a cattle shed during a raid in Vizianagaram, Andhra Pradesh.

On 24 March 2016, the Red Sanders Anti-Smuggling Task Force seized two tonnes of Red Sanders logs after being notified that woodcutters, after felling trees at Pincha and Rollamadugu on the Chittoor-Kadapa border, were loading the logs into a tipper near Chandragiri.

Business Standard: <http://bit.ly/1WzHg4Y>, 4 November 2015; The Hindu: <http://bit.ly/22QBzVe>, 25 March 2016

USA: On 1 February 2016, at a federal court in Norfolk, Virginia, the largest-ever penalty for violation of the Lacey Act was imposed on Lumber Liquidators Inc. for the illegal importation of hardwood flooring, much of which was manufactured in China from timber that had been illegally logged in Far Eastern Russia. The company was fined more than USD13 million, including USD7.8 million in criminal fines, USD1.23 million in community service and USD969 175 in forfeited assets; they agreed to a five-year term of organizational probation and mandatory implementation of a government-approved environmental compliance plan and independent audits and were also ordered to pay more than USD3.15 million in cash through a related civil forfeiture.

Department of Justice Office of Public Affairs: <http://www.usa.gov/1QCZu2e>, 1 February 2016

OTHER / MULTI-SEIZURES

CHINA: On 21 January 2016, at Jiaocheng District People's Court, Bozhou City, Anhui province, a man and his wife were respectively

sentenced to eight years in gaol/fined CNY800 000 (USD123 000) and eight months/fined CNY2000 for buying wildlife products and selling them in their pharmacy in Bozhou.

In 2015, police confiscated from them 10 kg of pangolin scales, 103 musk *Moschus* (CITES I/II) pods, and Leopard *Panthera pardus* (CITES II) bones.

On 4 February 2016 at the Takeshenken border check point, Altay Prefecture, Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, police arrested a gang attempting to import wolf *Canis* carcasses. A total of 148 wolf skins, six carcasses and 255 decorative amulets made from wolf bones, meat and offal were discovered after police noticed that several containers smelled of rotting fish. The items were reportedly destined for sale on the exotic animal meat black market.

On 24 March 2016, seven people were gaoled for between 18 months and 12 years for illegally killing, transporting and trading protected species. The investigation began in October 2014 when police were called to a flat in Chengdu, Sichuan province, after a resident reported blood seeping from the ceiling of his flat; after breaking into the room above, police discovered 804 kg of ivory (CITES I), plus rhinoceros horn, five Golden Snub-nosed Monkeys *Rhinopithecus roxellana* (CITES I)—two still alive—Red Pandas *Ailurus fulgens* (CITES I), as well as bear *Ursus* (CITES I/II) body parts (including six heads and 76 limbs and paws) on the blood-soaked floor and in freezers. The two surviving monkeys were sent to a zoo.

China Wildlife Conservation Association: <http://bit.ly/1Mu5wGT>, 21 January 2016; Daily Mail (UK): <http://dailymail.com/1XffU5U>, 8 February 2016; South China Morning Post: <http://bit.ly/1S6EDWJ>, 27 March 2016

GUINEA: On 9 February 2016, three people were arrested in possession of 106 kg of wild meat, including that of Chimpanzee *Pan troglodytes* (CITES I). A motorbike rider arrested while distributing Chimpanzee meat gave police the identity of the owner of the meat and reportedly the head of a regional network of traffickers in Chimpanzee and ape meat involving poachers and traffickers from Sierra Leone over a 14 year-period. The third member of the gang was arrested in another operation with several bags of meat of Chimpanzees and other protected species.

The EAGLE network: <http://bit.ly/1qHV8Bi>, 9 February 2016

INDIA: On 10 December 2015, in Amravati, Nagpur, Ranjit Bhatia, Dalbir Bawariya and Sarju Bawariya were sentenced to gaol for seven years and fined Rs10 000 (USD150) for involvement in Tiger *Panthera tigris* (CITES I) poaching in Melghat Tiger Reserve in February 2013.

This is one of the first cases in the country where DNA analysis was used to conclude that a Tiger had been poached. Officials had seized an iron trap, rotten Tiger meat and cash and investigations involved preparation of maps of the crime scene, sniffer dogs and metal detectors. The poachers were part of an international racket

to hunt Tigers and smuggle their body parts to China. They were in gaol during the trial where they have already spent two years for previous Tiger poaching incidents.

On 11 February 2016, Customs officials at the Inland Container Depot in Tughlaqabad seized more than 15 000 kg of coral, later identified as Organ-pipe Coral *Tubipora musica* (CITES II) from a container arriving from China, apparently destined for medicinal and ornamental purposes. A Delhi-based importer was arrested. Officials claim this to be the biggest haul of red corals in the South-east Asian region in recent times.

On 13 March 2016, a man was arrested in possession of five Tiger *Panthera tigris* (CITES I) skins and bone (125 kg) in Haridwar district, Uttarakhand. It was reportedly the first case where Tiger skins and bones have been recovered in such quantities in the State.

Times of India: <http://bit.ly/1SRGZJQ>, 11 December 2015; <http://bit.ly/1PzueDv>, 13 February 2016; Kaumidi online: <http://bit.ly/1U3ocQm>, 14 March 2016

INDONESIA: On 20 November 2015, it was reported that a person appearing at the district court of Langsa, Aceh, had been gaoled for two years for trading in Sumatran Orang-utans *Pongo pygmaeus* (CITES I). He was also fined Rp50 million (USD3700) or ordered to serve three more months in gaol. The defendant had been arrested on 1 August and three Orang-utans and a Brahminy Kite *Haliastur indus* (CITES II), among other birds, were seized.

<http://bit.ly/1RU48xr>, 20 November 2015

THAILAND: On 10 December 2015, Customs officials at Samui International Airport in Surat Thani confiscated 280 African Elephant *Loxodonta africana* tusks (789 kg) and 587 kg of pangolin scales from a container labelled as "wigs" that had arrived on a flight from Nigeria via Singapore, destined for Lao PDR.

OANA news: <http://bit.ly/1RqvXxK>, 12 December 2015; Samui-passion.com: <http://bit.ly/1Vp8tvm>, 19 December 2015

VIET NAM: On 22 November 2015, Customs officers at Hoanh Mo Border Gate, Quang Ninh, seized 860 kg of tusks of Indian Elephant *Elephas maximus* (CITES I) and 2116 kg of pangolin (*Manis*, CITES II) scales that had been smuggled into the country from Taiwan in 105 boxes of frozen fish heads, bound for an undisclosed destination.

On 31 March 2016, Customs officials at Noi Bai Airport seized 238 kg of ivory and 248 kg of pangolins *Manis* scales arriving from Nigeria via Turkey by air, described as "hair attachments".

Haiquan online: <http://bit.ly/1SfCdtU>, 23 November 2015; TRAFFIC