

ROBIN DES BOIS

ON_{the} TRAIL

Information and analysis bulletin on animal poaching and smuggling

n°15 / 1st October - 31th December 2016

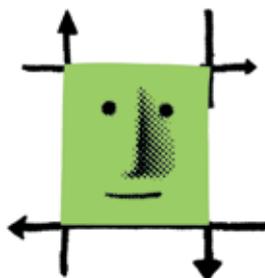
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Carried out by Robin des Bois (Robin Hood)
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ON the TRAIL n°15

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cf. page 73

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. 182 Member States.

Sea Cucumbers



Thelenota rubralineata

AMERICA

MEXICO

October 11, 2016

Miguel Alemán, State of Tamaulipas, Mexico

Seizure near the border to Texas of 14 bags containing in all 600 kg of sea cucumber. Two arrests.¹

October 18, 2016

Progreso, State of Yucatan, Mexico

Seizure of 300 kg of sea cucumber. Two arrests.²



ASIA

INDIA

October 6, 2016

Mandapam, State of Tamil Nadu, India

After a car chase, 3 officers on motorbike from the anti-poaching brigade stopped a truck. Inside the trailer, there was 750 kg of sea cucumber, meaning about 1900 individuals. The driver and his apprentice, a 16-year-old kid, admitted that they have been provided by fishermen from Mandapam and were intended to a smuggling network based in Perungulam, about 20 km away. The driver is in custody, the young assistant was taken to a dedicated facility. The sea cucumbers were destroyed.³

November 2, 2016

Ramanathapuram, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Seizure of 200 kg of fresh sea cucumber. Three arrests.⁴

December 8, 2016

Chinna Erwadi, District of Ramanathapuram, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Artisanal fishermen hunt a motorized fishing boat in the coastal area, find 50 kg of sea cucumbers on board and alert the police. The illegal fishing is destroyed by order of the prosecutor. Five arrests.⁵

December 15, 2016

Vedalai, District of Ramanathapuram, State of Tamil Nadu, India



The suspect fishing boat was spotted by a patrol ashore. Feeling troubles coming, the crew gets rid of several bags before going back on the beach. They were found by rangers in the shallows. The rescued weighed 70 kg. They were put back into the water.⁶

December 21, 2016

Off Mandapam, Ramanathapuram District, Tamil Nadu, India

Nocturnal seizure of 100 kg of sea cucumber and a fishing vessel heading for Sri Lanka. Arrest of the 5 crew members.⁷

SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka is keeping pressure on sea cucumber fishermen.

- **October 5, 2016. Point Pedro, Northern Province.** Two boats, 22 air tanks, 3 pairs of flippers, 2 GPS were confiscated. On board 330 individuals were found.



- **October 5, 2016. Point Pedro, Northern Province.** Three boats, 7 diving masks, 30 air tanks, 3 GPS were confiscated. On board there were 2105 individuals.



- **October 20, 2016. Pungudutivu, Northern Province.** One boat, scuba diving equipment and 4 individuals were confiscated. Coast guard's efforts are not only benefitting sea cucumbers. In the South of the country, 2 km of illegal nets were seized in the Charalakadei Bay.⁸

OCEANIA

AUSTRALIA

October 28, 2016

Darwin, Northern Territory, Australia

Seizure at 175 nautical miles from the Darwin coastline of 20 kg of fresh sea cucumber, 12 bags each 30 kg of dried sea cucumber, 15 kg of fish and scuba diving equipment. The Indonesian fishing boat and its 8 crew members were re-routed towards the continent.⁹



REPEATED OFFENSE

November 3 and beginning December, 2016 Gladstone, State of Queensland, Australia

16 sailors were onboard the Vietnamese cockleshell that wandered into Australian waters and was spotted in full fishing action near the Saumarez reef. On board 2 tons of sea cucumber were seized. While being re-routed to Cairns, the fishing boat caught fire. The crew was transferred to the *Maitland* run by the Australian Navy. "It is an example of the dangers that some illegal foreign fishers can pose, not only to our unique marine environment, but also to themselves and to our officers" says the Australian Navy spokesperson.

The captain was sentenced to 2 months prison suspended and the 15-crew members to 2 months prison



suspended and a year on probation. One of the convicted had already a suspended sentence for the same illegal fishing offense. He will now have to do the 2 months' time.¹⁰



© newsroom

November 19, 2016
Gladstone, State of Queensland, Australia
 "Bêches-de-mer" as Australians call them truly are farmers. They stir and clean the ocean floor. There were 3 tons of them on the Vietnamese ship's deck that was re-routed with her 13 crew members towards Cairns as it was being fishing near the Saumarez reef 700 nautical miles away.¹¹



© Australian Fisheries M. A.

2 December 2016
North-east of Gladstone, Reefs of Saumarez, State of Queensland, Australia
 Seizure of 7 tons of sea cucumber and diving equipment aboard a Vietnamese fishing boat. 17 arrests.¹²



© Australian Customs

Queen Conches and Clams

AMERICA

FRANCE

REPEATED OFFENSE
December 24, 2016
Vieux-Bourg, Morne-à-l'Eau, Guadeloupe department, France
 Flagrante delicto ! Seizure in the heart of the National Park of 38 shelled Queen conches (*Strombus gigas*, Appendix II) and the boat of the poacher, former professional fisherman having already been controlled in action of illegal fishing and sanctioned.¹

ASIA

CHINA

October 20, 2016
Gongbei, Province of Guangdong, China
 New seizure of 5 clams (*Tridacna* spp., Appendix II) thanks to the imagery detection equipment. The Chinese passenger was returning from Thailand and claims he bought them for 45 US\$. "Souvenirs" he says. For the time being, the clams have been confiscated while waiting for the export permits to be delivered by the country of origin.²



© Gongbei Customs

THAILAND

November 17, 2016
Krabi International Airport, Province of Krabi, Thailand
 Seizure of a giant clam (*Tridacna gigas*, Appendix II) and a conch in the luggage of a traveler heading for Russia. The individual at first refused to turn over them to authorities. "I didn't have any problems at the last airport, in Trat." They had to call in a translator to convince him to let go of his "souvenirs". The local administration for maritime and coastal resources plans to set up information billboards in Thai and English in airports.³

SRI LANKA

December 30, 2016
Jaffna, North Province, Sri Lanka
 Seizure of 2394 conches (genus *Strombus*) and a fishing boat by a marine patrol. Five arrests.⁴

Corals

AFRICA

ALGERIA

Beginning October, 2016

Sidi Salem, Annaba Province, Algeria

Seizure of 5 kg of red coral (*Corallium rubrum*), 3 speed boats, 70 diving air tanks, compressors, wet suits, gasoline, a St Andrew's cross to rake the coral and 4 dinghies. Eight arrests. The equipment worth 20 million dinars (€ 162,966) was stored in 2 garages. The coral pickers operated at the oued Seybouse mouth. Sidi Salem East of Annaba and Chatt West of El Tarf are considered by police to be 2 pillars in coral trafficking. Algerian press says the dismantled network's equipment are worthy of a Commander Cousteau's expedition. During the month of August, in the same area of the oued Seybouse, the national gendarmerie seized 30 million dinars worth of equipment and coral.¹

November 8, 2016

Guebèsè beach, Skikda Province, Algeria

Seizure on Guebèsè beach of 8 kg of coral, 2 dinghies, Three pickup vans and diving and fishing equipment. 3 coral poachers arrested. Two others are on the run. El Tarf, Annaba and now Skikda wilayas are hit. The trafficking network is suspected to go through Tunisia before connecting with Turkey and Italy. See "On the Trail" n°5 p. 5, n°7 p. 3, n°10 p. 6.²

MADAGASCAR

October 29, 2016

Ambovombe-Androy, Province of Toliara, Madagascar

Seizure of 4.5 kg of black coral (*Antipatharia* spp., Appendix II) and 23 air tanks.³



ASIA

THAILAND

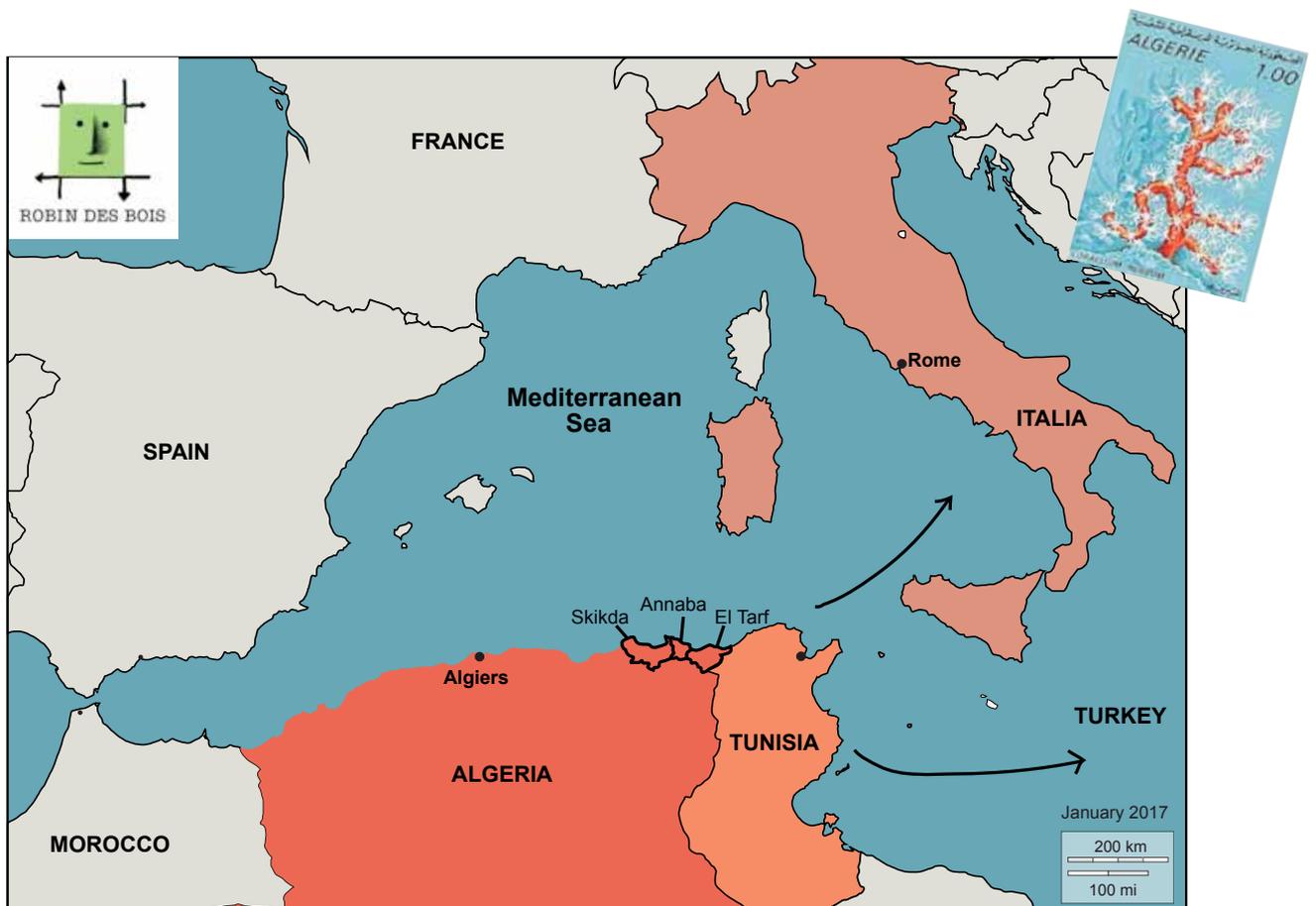
December 21, 2016

Phuket, Phuket Province, Thailand

226/5000

Thailand

Seizure of 37 kg of dead coral used as decoration in the garden of a "meditation sanctuary". The owner who is going to be summoned by the police risks on paper up to 4 years and or a fine of 40,000 baht (\$ 1120 US).⁴



Fishes

AFRICA

October 2016 Somalia-Kenya

As its name suggests, the *Greko 1* pirate ship owner would be Greek. The trawler had been operating for 2 years in Somalia's Exclusive Economic Zone, without a license and to the detriment of local fishermen. It was thanks to observers from the EU NAVFOR (European Union Naval force operating against piracy in Somalia) and the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission that the *Greko 1* was spotted. She was inspected in the Mogadiscio port within the framework of the FISH-i Africa Task Force, an international agreement uniting the Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Tanzania and supported by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and USAID (United States Agency for International Development). Inside the *Greko 1* hold, there were 30 tons of frozen fish. In the early morning of October 13, a week after she was immobilized, the ship fled from Mogadiscio.

On October 18, the *Greko 1* entered the port of Mombasa. Banned from Kenya, the rebel trawler through the voice of her captain claimed force majeure warning that one of the crewmen was seriously ill. Authorities of the port in relation with those in Mogadiscio took on to try to retain at dock the runaway that is under Belize flag.



The owner of the *Greko 1* accepted to pay a \$ 65,000 US fine to the Somali government. The ship remains at dock in Mombasa until payment is complete.

The State of Belize and its Fishing administration suspended the *Greko 1* right to navigate and repealed the ship's fishing license. Somalia is satisfied with Kenya's solidarity in this mutual action of repression of illegal fishing. "The fishing industry has a strong part to play in Somalia's economic reconstruction."¹

MOROCCO

October 28, 2016. Al-Hoceima, Tanger-Tétouan-Al Hoceima Region, Morocco

November 21, 2016. Vilamoura, Algarve Region, Portugal

1- Seizure after the port area exit of 500 kg of swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*), bought about € 10,000 and prohibited from fishing between October 1st and November 30th by an order of the Moroccan Ministry of Agriculture and maritime Fisheries dated April 8th 2013.

- Transfer of the seizure in a waste collection truck specially requisitioned for destruction required by attorney general.

- Altercation with Mouhcine Fikri, the litigious fish buyer. With other persons, he occupies the rear of the tipper truck to prevent the loading.

- Inopportune start-up of the compacting waste mechanism and Mouhcine Fikri's death. He was 30 years old.

- Appearance and remand of 11 suspects for manslaughter, including the Sea Fishing Delegate, his assistant and the chief of the veterinary medicine service.

2- The International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) decided to reduce by 3% each year for 3 years the swordfish global fishing quota, starting from 2018. It is currently at 10,500 tons. This coming effort is almost symbolic. This regulatory break is a stage in the swordfish decrease. On the other hand, an intensive poaching is feared in 2017 especially with driftnets. The demand for swordfish is too high. 70% of the caught specimens might be less than 3 years. The ideal solution and certainly radical would be to punish restaurateurs and customers for endangered species fencing.^{1bis}

SEYCHELLES

December 26, 2016 Victoria, Seychelles

Jin Shyang Yih 668 was on the run in the Indian Ocean. Held back in the Seychelles from February to December 2016, she escaped from Port Victoria the day after Christmas. Everyone in Thailand was expecting it, but it never came. It apparently was flying 2 false or expired flags, the Belizean and Thai ones. She turned off all its signals. In 2014 and 2015, she fished tuna without a license in the Indian Ocean. Starting from 2005, under the name *Jin Shyang Yih 666*, she practiced illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. Fish-i Africa Task Force countries are on the alert to identify attempts of pirate ship to intrude into any port.²



TANZANIA

October 19, 2016

Dar es Salaam, Dar es Salaam Region, Tanzania

The request for release on bail was rejected for 2 businessmen and a Chinese female citizen for the fraudulent import of 499 bags of fishnets made of synthetic monofilaments.³

AMERICA

BRAZIL



October 18, 2016

Manaus, Amazonas State, Brazil

Seizure of 240 kg of arapaima (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II) in a fish shop. Fine of 120,000 real (\$ 40,000 US).⁴

October 25, 2016

Piaçabuçu, State of Alagoas, Brazil

Capture at the Pontal do Peba of 5 sharks including a baby. The site is listed as a Federal Conservation Unit. At the Sao Francisco river mouth, it is placed under the responsibility of the ICMBio (Instituto Chico Mendes de Conservação da Biodiversidade). The fishermen claim the catch was non intentional and that the sharks can be sold.⁵

October 26, 2016

Formoso do Araguaia, State of Tocantins, Brazil

Seizure of 5 arapaima (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II) 1.5 to 1.7 m long and 300 m of fishing nets on the banks of Lake Calumbi.⁶

From November 29 to December 10, 2016

Baixo Juruá Extractive Reserve, Amazonas State, Brazil

Seizure of 452 kg of arapaimas (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II). This species is strictly protected. This type of reserve tries to reconcile wildlife protection with the basic needs of the local communities - hunting, fishing, and flora collecting.⁷

December 6, 2016

Iranduba Port, Amazonas State, Brazil



Seizure of 44 t of arapaimas (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II) in a boat in the Port of Iranduba, at the confluence of Rio Negro and Rio Solimoes, major tributaries of the Amazon River. The boat, goods, and freezers were confiscated. A fine of 30,000 real (\$ 10,000 US).⁸

UNITED STATES AMERICA

OPERATION BROKEN GLASS

From October 4 to 6, 2016

Portland, State of Maine, United States of America

The 7 American glass eel (*Anguilla rostrata*) traffickers and poachers, Yarann Im, Mark Green, John Pinkham, Thomas Reno, Michael Bryant, George Anestis and Thomas Choi, pleaded guilty. The business was worth close to 2 million dollars. They would catch young eels on the East coast in Virginia, in New Jersey, Massachusetts and Rhode Island. They were in contact with buyers in Asia. They were selling glass eels for \$ 2000 US a pound. Glass eel fishing is forbidden in the United States except in Maine, South Carolina and Florida. In these 3 States, licenses and fishing permits are required and strict quotas must be respected as well as the fishing season. The culprits were using false official permits to hide illegal catches and facilitate export. They face up to 5 years prison, \$ 250,000 US fine and up to 2 times the value of illegal sales in damages. No less than 18 administrative agencies, judicial and police services collaborated in fulfilling this operation.⁹

November 28, 2016

Charleston, State of South Carolina, United States of America

Three people pleaded guilty to inter-State trafficking in glass eels (*Anguilla rostrata*) estimated worth \$ 740,000 US.¹⁰

MEXICO

Before the big jump into the United States, totoaba swim bladders converge towards Mexicali.

- December 29, 2016. Mexicali, State of Baja California, Mexico

A cardboard box in the grips of a courier service. Inside, 28 packs containing 8.4 kg of swim bladders of dried totoaba (*Totoaba macdonaldi*, Appendix I). Totoaba swim bladders are considered as costing more than cocaine. 1.5 kg of cocaine sells for the same price as one kilo of swim bladder. This is why criminal organizations have been diving into this new market since 2014. Poaching is in on the rise.

- End of December 2016. State of Baja California, Mexico

The vehicle is checked for lack of license plate between Puertecitos and San Felipe. A plastic bag is located under the driver's seat. Inside, 3 totoaba swimming bladders (*Totoaba macdonaldi*, Appendix I). 60 orangemouth corvinas (*Cynoscion xanthurus*) are also found in the trunk. Two arrests. They say they are coming from Puertecitos and going to Mexicali to sell their "merchandise".

- End of December 2016. State of Baja California, Mexico

He also came from Puertecitos and went to Mexicali. The man carried a fresh totoaba swim bladder 56 cm long. Total weight: 1.4 kg. Value on the international black market: \$ 15,000 US.



ASIA

CHINA

October 14, 2016

Sanya Phoenix International Airport, Hainan Province, China

Seizure of 1.15 kg of fish swim bladders coming from Hong Kong.¹²

EUROPE

SPAIN

End of december 2016

Madrid, Autonomous Community of Madrid, Spain

End of the prosecution for Vidal Armadores of which 3 old toothfish fishing vessels remain stranded in Cape Verde and Senegal (see "On the Trail" n°12 p.10). The Supreme Court considers itself incompetent to rule on illegal fishing in Antarctica and on the profits derived from this activity by the Vidal clan (about € 100 million). The € 17 million fines, the prohibition of engaging in any fishing activity and the ban on receiving subsidies from the Spanish Government are annulled.¹³



FRANCE

November 4, 2016

Beach Valras, Hérault Department, France

Seizure of 2 undersized tunas, without a permit and outside fishing periods. They were ground up to make feed for breeding farm animals. The 3 poachers of the leisure fishing type are no new comers. The area near Béziers is known by the maritime gendarmerie to be a hotspot for unloading illegal bluefin tuna. The 3 men face up to € 22,500 in fine and permanent seizure of their boat.¹⁴

December 7th 2016

Ploumanac'h, Department of Côtes-d'Armor, France

Poaching and cutting up of a porbeagle shark (*Lamna nasus*, Appendix II) by recreational fishermen. It is prohibited to fish this species in the European Union.¹⁵

ITALY

December 2016

Italy

Special Christmas holidays operation. In order that prohibited fishes and other sea products won't end up on festive tables, the coast guard launched in December a vast surveillance operation. 40 tons of fish and shells have been seized, including swordfishes and date mussels (*Lithophaga lithophaga*, Appendix II). 598 administrative sanctions, 94 fines of a total amount of more than a million euros have been notified, 302 fishing gears have been seized.



Date mussel is known in the entire Mediterranean and in eastern Atlantic from Portugal to Angola. It is appreciated in kitchens in Spain and along Adriatic. It lives in the heart of the calcareous rock where it digs galleries. To fish it, it is necessary to break the rock. The favoured techniques - pneumatic drill, dynamite, burin - are destructive for the environment. That is why France forbade its fishing on November 26th 1992 (Appendix IV of the Habitat Directive).¹⁶

OCEANIA

AUSTRALIA

November 9, 2016

Cap Londonderry, State of Western Australia, Australia

Re-routing to Darwin of an Indonesian fishing boat in Australia's Exclusive Economic Zone, seizure of 500 kg of fish, 18 shark fins and a long line one-kilometer long. The captain was fined \$ 15,000 A (11,163 US\$).¹⁷



November 22, 2016

Croker Island, Arafura Sea, Northern Territory, Australia

Boarding of an Indonesian fishing boat 150 miles from Darwin and seizure aboard of shark teeth, fins, fillets and 15 kg of skin. The boat was re-routed to Darwin, the 5 fishermen put in custody.¹⁸



Marine Mammals

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

Early December 2016

Cape Town, Western Cape Province, South Africa



The brown fur seal or Cape fur seal (*Arctocephalus pusillus*, Appendix II) was on a dirt floor in full sunlight at a traditional healer's house. He was covered with sores. He had an bulging eye and a swollen head. All the veterinary care he received was useless. "We had no choice but to finish off the

seal" says Janet Van der Vyver, wildlife inspector for the SPCA (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals). The SPCA worries about the increase of wild animals capture for "muti", a body and soul medicine using rituals and witchcraft (see "On the Trail" n°4 p.51) and for traditional Asian medicine. Persons at fault may be prosecuted under the 1973 Act stating that "no person shall pursue or shoot at or willfully disturb, kill or capture any sea bird or seal", under the Marine Living Resources Act 18 of 1988 and under the Animals Protection Act 71 of 1962.¹

MADAGASCAR

October 22, 2016

Marofototra Beach, Vatovavy-Fitovinany Region, Madagascar

Stranding of a whale. Chopped and sliced for its meat despite the ban.²

AMERICA

VENEZUELA

October 17, 2016

Valmore Rodriguez, State of Zulia, Venezuela

Arrest of 4 men on the verge of shooting down a dolphin. They are suspected of selling Guyana dolphin meat (*Sotalia guianensis*, Appendix I) for human consumption. They are part of a gang called "predators". Seizure of 500 meters of nets and harpoons.³



October 19, 2016

Choroni, State of Aragua, Venezuela

The remains of a dolphin cut into pieces are discovered on the "Great beach".⁴



OCEANIA

SALOMON ISLANDS

Saturday Octobre 29, 2016

Mbungana Island, Central Province, Solomon Islands



Opening of the floating cages of about thirty Indian Ocean bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops aduncus*, Appendix II) and release into the waters surrounding Mbungana Island. A veterinarian had managed to get authorization to detain dolphins in captivity for research purposes that remain quite unclear. Earth Island Institute, an American NGO, very quickly suspected this stock of dolphins was intended to the Asian marine parks market. The Ministry of Fishing based his action on the 2013 regulation banning dolphin captures for commercial or export purposes. M. Ferral Lasi also intends to protect the nation tuna market that provides jobs for over 2000 people. "Pressure groups can get their hands on the issue and set up campaigns against us to harm our tuna industry."

-A second dolphin release operation took place in Kolombangara, Western Province.

- Solmarine Mammal Breeding Centre run by the vet Baddeley Anita claims to be taking legal action against the government. "Saturday's events are disastrous, 6 years of work destroyed in 15 minutes." Doctor Anita, it seemed, benefited from the green light from an environmental administration.⁵

FRANCE

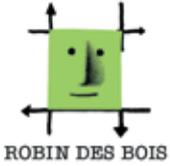
November 25th 2016

Le Havre, Department of Seine-Maritime, France

Theft of teeth on a beached sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*, Appendix I).⁶



Ivory Theft in the Seine Bay



Press release. November 30, 2016

An adult sperm whale was found stranded in the Seine mouth on Friday, November 25, 2016 downstream to Port 2000, Le Havre. The carcass is still in place. Thieves have snatched or cut the ivory teeth. A biologist confirms that teeth are quickly stolen from the sperm whales carcasses after their stranding.

Such acts of poaching and desecration are increasing in Europe, Iceland and Canada. Each sperm whale has 20 to 25 conical teeth on its lower jaw. Some weigh as much as one kilo ; a kilo of ivory sells between 2000 and 5000 € on the black market.

The lower jaw of toothed whales is a vestige sought after by museums of natural history for a pedagogical function. It also makes it possible to do different researches on the age or the contamination of the animal. Its mutilation is a scientific loss. Robin des Bois recommends that, as soon as possible after the stranding, the lower jaw should be removed by the experts.

This dreadful Christmas sperm whale present reminds us that the Channel and the North Sea waters have become hostile environments for cetaceans.

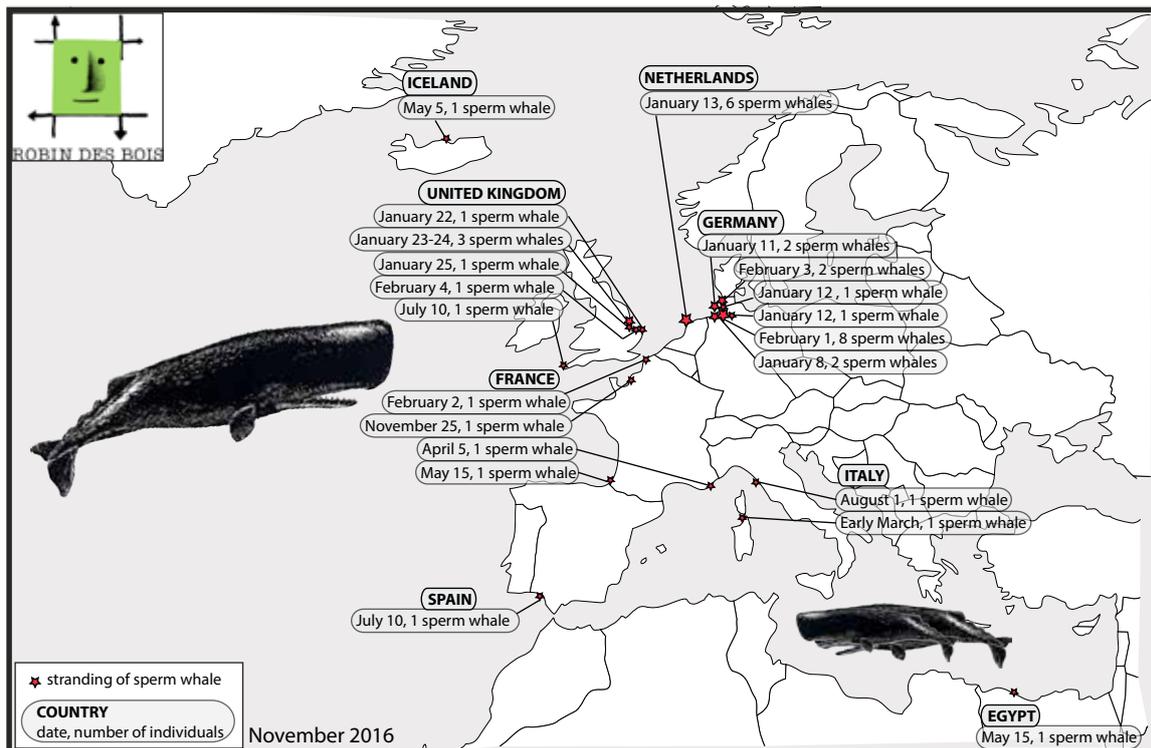
Submarine acoustic chaos, collisions with ships and ingestion of plastic waste are the main causes of unnatural death for sperm whales.

Submarine noise pollutions come from dredging, ship engines, seismic research, military sonars and offshore industrial activities. Offshore wind farms are an additional source of disorientation for whales, sperm whales, killer whales and dolphins.

The autopsy of whales on the shore often reveals ingestion of plastic clusters and ropes.

Stranded whales carcasses are usually cut into slices and transported to renderers. Robin des Bois has been demanding for several years that marine mammals carcasses be towed and dumped at sea. Scientific research around the world shows that they become actual biological oasis for decades thus contributing to the improvement of marine ecosystems.

Stranded sperm whales in Europe and the Mediterranean since January 2016



Marine Turtles

Marine turtles (families Cheloniidae and Dermochelyidae) are listed under CITES Appendix I, including Ridley sea turtles (*Lepidochelys olivacea*), green turtles (*Chelonia mydas*), Hawksbill sea turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricata*), Kemp's Ridley turtles (*Lepidochelys kempii*) and loggerhead sea turtles (*Caretta caretta*).

AFRICA

ANGOLA

Sunday, November 27, 2016
Ilha do Cabo, Baía de Luanda, Luanda Province, Angola

A female leatherback turtle weighing 70 kg was poached at night. Two fishermen killed the turtle while she was laying its eggs on the beach. They fled when the police arrived.¹



FRANCE

November 23, 2016
Mtsamboro islet, Oversea Department of Mayotte, France

The REMMAT (Mahorais Stranding Network of Marine Mammals and Turtles) continues its duty of memory and its macabre inventory. This year, the network has counted on the coast of the archipelago 230 dead turtles. At least 80% of them were poached. The Mtsamboro islet remains a sanctuary for poachers (see "On the Trail" n°11 p. 11). 30 shells and bones of sea turtles were discovered there on November 23.

REMMAT notes that poacher's modus operandi are diversifying. Now they attack young turtles at sea while continuing to kill the adult green turtles that come to lay eggs on the beaches.²



On The Trail #15. Robin des Bois/Robin Hood

GUINEA

October 15, 2016
Kassa Island, Region of Conakry, Guinea



Arrest of Moussa Camara and Salifou Kassa Sylla and seizure of 9 shells. They were sentenced to 2 months in prison and 90,000 Guinean Francs (10 US\$) in fine and 10,000,000 Guinean Francs (\$ 1104 US) on damages each. May this trigger warning lead the 2 artists or their accomplices apply their talent to other mediums than protected animal parts and threatened by fishing gear. Kassa Island, 7 km from Conakry is a preferred laying spot for marine turtles. It would also be the starting point of an important shark fins trafficking network towards China.³



KENYA

End of October, 2016
Watamu, Kilifi County, Kenya

Rescue performed by the teams from the Watamu herpetofauna shelter of a hawksbill turtle seriously wounded by a harpoon on his left shoulder.⁴



AMERICA

MEXICO

October 14, 2016

Compostela, State of Nayarit, Mexico

Seizure of 380 turtle eggs in 4 bags on Boca de Custodia beach.

On the Nayarit riviera 3 species of marine turtles have just laid: olive Ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*, Appendix I), leatherbacks (*Dermochelys coriacea*, Appendix I), green turtles (*Chelonia mydas*, Appendix I). Emblem of the State of Nayarit, olive Ridley turtles lay from June to November. They owe their Latin and French name to the color of the shell.⁵



November 8, 2016

Cabo San Lucas, State of Baja California Sur, Mexico

Another backpack full of eggs. 109. The man was controlled in the streets of the city.⁶

November 11, 2016

Compostela, State of Nayarit, Mexico

He was carrying 208 eggs in his backpack. They were seized and taken to the Marine Turtle Conservation and Protection Center (Campamento Tortuguero de Nuevo Vallarta) under the responsibility of SEMARNAT, the Secretariat for the Environment and Natural Resources.⁷

PANAMA

October 6, 2016

Province of Los Santos, Panama

Seizure inside a taxi of 9117 turtle eggs exported from the Caña de Tonosí Island inside 15 black bags.⁸

October 28, 2016

Guararé, Province of Los Santos, Panama

Seizure of 2060 turtle eggs stolen from the Caña de Tonosí Island. Three people in a taxi arrested. Each received a \$ 300 US fine. Eggs seizures are increasing in the province.⁹



November 9, 2016

Panama

Seizure in the night of 1400 eggs inside 3 bags hidden under the hood of a car. Four arrests.



Eggs from green turtles and Ridley's turtles on Panama beaches on the Pacific coast have high levels of cadmium from shrimp, algae and jellyfish eaten by adult females. The regular consumption of eggs is likely to be harmful to human health, according to a study by the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institution.¹⁰

ASIA

CHINA

November 15, 2016

Hong Kong, China

Follow up on the seizure of 35 green turtles in an aquaculture park in the Hong Kong Bay (cf. "On the Trail" n°14 p. 16). Ten of them weighing between 10 and 23 kg and from 45 to 61 cm long were set free into the sea under veterinarian surveillance. They were equipped with various electronic devices in order to trace their location and migration paths.¹¹



MALAYSIA

November 10, 2016

Sandakan, State of Sabah, Malaysia

Seizure at the bus station of 3 boxes containing 3011 turtle eggs leaving on a bus Sandakan-Kudat. The boxes were going to come off the bus at Kota Marudu 300 km before Sandakan. Police have no news from the sender, they have some regarding the receiver.¹²

SRI LANKA

October 20, 2016

North West Province, Sri Lanka

Seizure by maritime police of a marine turtle caught between the Norochcholai and Kappalady lagoons, of a boat and prohibited nets. Two arrests.¹³



November 9, 2016

Negombo, Western Province, Sri Lanka

Seizure on board a small size trawler of 1.8 kg of dried turtle meat. Four crew members were arrested and the ship was sequestered.¹⁴

November 12, 2016

Mandathivu Island, Northern Province, Sri Lanka

Dead turtle in meat form and a live one in the fishing boat that the Navy chased. The 4 crew members are brought in custody, 2 nets were confiscated.¹⁵



December 2, 2016

Nachchikuda, Northern Province, Sri Lanka



60 kg, live, intentionally caught in a net. Released and returned to the sea by the Sri Lanka navy. Three interpellations.¹⁶

VIET NAM

November 15, 2016

Da Nang, South Central Coast Region, Viet Nam

She was in a basin in the middle of the restaurant on Sunday and on Monday she rapidly left Sontra beach to go deep into the China sea.¹⁷

November 25, 2016

Nha Trang, Province of Khanh Hoa, Viet Nam

Seizure of a hawksbill turtle in a pet shop.¹⁸



The little one in one hand. An adult one-meter long.

December 3, 2016

Nha Trang, Khanh Hoa Province, Viet Nam

The investigation was believed to be bogged down or even evaporated. However, Hoang Tuan Hai, 44, responsible for the death of at least 4379 turtles preserved in formaldehyde and intended for sale in China and Taiwan is definitely charged. He remains free but he is forbidden to leave the province. See "On the Trail" n°7 p. 11.¹⁹

YEMEN

December 2016

Sharmah, Hadramout Governorate, Republic of Yemen



The nesting site of green turtles is plundered by vandals. "At least 250 of them were killed, cut up on the spot. The beach covered with viscera and broken eggs became a place of refuge for stray dogs", reports Al Jazeera. "They catch them the moment they leave the sea and do not wait for them to lay their eggs." Hawksbill turtles have already died off in the area and the green turtles will face the same fate, if their killers are not stopped." In spite of the civil war, Sharmah is attracting more and more visitors. Turtle meat is sold as goat meat.

The local Authority, although faced with other emergencies, has just reinforced the sanctions:

- For manual poachers fine of 100,000 rial, or \$ 400 US, and 24 hours in prison.

For those who use a firearm, additional fine of \$ 200 US and seizure of the weapon.

Twenty guards will be deployed on the beaches provided that funding for salaries and renovation of the guard posts are found. Mr Attamimi, administrator of the Sharmah district, calls for the solidarity of international NGOs. Already, volunteers removed plastic waste, tripes and turtle fragments from the beaches.²⁰

OCEANIA

FRANCE

December 31, 2016

Bora-Bora, French Polynesia, France

Flagrante delicto ! Arrest of 3 fishermen and 5 accomplices for dismembering 8 turtles on the "motu" of Bora-Bora. Motus are accumulations of sand and corals. They had been fished at Tupai. The meat was in a cooler. The gang was monitored closely. It was not its first crime. Four other turtles weighing 150 and 180 kg were saved in extremis by the arrival of the police.²¹



Various Marine Species

AFRICA

NAMIBIA



December 21st 2016

Namibia

Supposed withdrawal of an application for catch permit of water birds, African penguins (*Spheniscus demersus*, Appendix II), killer whales, dolphins and sea lions in Namibian waters by a Chinese company* specialized in the supply to zoos and marine parks of wild animals (cf. "On the Trail" n°14 p. 17). As drafted and available in the Namibian press, the project is a scientific, educational and tourist combination. The scientific line is inspired by the Japanese scientific whaling and its anti-whale argumentation. "This project could be of great importance by enabling Namibia to determine the precise nature (types, numbers, habitats, fish consumption numbers etc.) of its marine mammal species, and its' comprehensive impact on the fisheries sector."

A letter supposedly drafted and signed by the captain of the *Ryazanovka*, whose former ship-owner was Russian and who would have been bought by the partner in Namibia ** of the Chinese company, announces the withdrawal of the project. This ship is known to have participated in the catch and delivery of killer whales in Asia. In this surrealist message, the promoters regret the negative advertising surrounding the project since the beginning and regret that Namibia did not jump at the chance to develop the tourism on the coast just like what takes place in Dubai or Disneyland in the United States.

The project intended to "solve the problem with overpopulated marine animals to protect the fishing sector". "Marine mammals in excess which feed on fishes as cetaceans, pinnipeds as well as penguins will be captured, exported and in return receipts will allow to finance the sustainable development of the project". The Namibian Ministry of the Environment keeps uncomfortably silent about this affair.¹

* Beijing Rare Animal Breeding & Promotion Co

** Welwitschia Aquatic and Wildlife Scientific Research Pty Ltd

ASIA

CHINA

October 31, 2016

Pingxiang, Guangxi Autonomous Region, China

Seizure of 109 beheaded hawksbill turtles, 102 turtle heads, 17 tons of giant clam (*Tridacna gigas*, Appendix II) and 1110 horned helmets (*Cassis cornuta*), a marine gastropod of the Cassidae family.²



EUROPE

ITALY

December 2, 2016

Leonardo da Vinci Rome International Airport, Fiumicino, Italy

Good fishing at Rome International Airport: 2 tons of live coral of different species, *Euphyllia* spp. (Appendix II), *Fungia* spp. (Appendix II), *Scolymia* spp. (Appendix II), *Trachyphyllia* spp. (Appendix II), *Catalaphyllia* spp., Shrimp (*Lysmata debelius*) and 25,000 tropical fishes, powder blue surgeon fish (*Acanthurus leucosternon*), emperor angel-fish (*Pomacanthus imperator*), pennant coralfish (*Heniochus acuminatus*) and lionfish of the genus *Pterois*. Overall value: € 250,000. Coming from Indonesia and Singapore, the parcels were officially bound for the Republic of San Marino, 33,000 inhabitants, enclave at the south of Rimini. The cargo was in fact destined for a wholesaler in aquariophilia in the outskirts of Rome. It was to be sorted somewhere in the airport area and run in batches on pet shops in the provinces of Ravenna, Latina, Rome, Frosinone, Pescara, Aquila, Campobasso, Naples, Salerno, Potenza, Syracuse and Catania.

The intervention of the financial brigade and the Italian CITES service made it possible to avoid the purchase by thousands of uninformed consumers of illegal Christmas presents. Six persons are charged with breaches of the CITES Convention and abuse of animals. The record of fish mortality during the voyage was not reported. Survivors are waiting at the Livorno Aquarium and at the Calci Natural History Museum.³

Illustrations p.17.

OCEANIA

AUSTRALIA

REPEATED OFFENSE

November 15 and 18, 2016

Browse Island, Timor and Darwin sea, Northern Territories, Australia



Boarding at 415 nautical miles west of Darwin of the *Akrab 01*, an Indonesian fishing boat. Seizure of 150 kg of dried fish, 24 sea snail shells (genus *Trochus*), 50 sharks, a large quantity of shark and fish fillets. The Browse Island is about a hundred miles from the Australian coast. The *Akrab 01* was destroyed. The captain and a crew members were repeat offenders and were fined \$ 10,000 (\$ 7442 US).⁴

Seizure at Rome International Airport, Italy



Pterois miles © Randall, J.E. / *Pomacanthus imperator* (juvenile) © Dennis Polack - FishWise Professional / *Heniochus acuminatus* © Bernard Dupont / *Acanthurus leucosternon* © Steff Kriel - FishWise Professional / *Catalaphyllia jardinei* © Ed Lovell / *Euphyllia ancora* © 2006 California Academy of Sciences / *Fungia scutaria* © Dr. Dwayne Meadows, NOAA/NMFS/OPR. / *Lysemata debelius* / *Scolymia cubensis* © NOAA / *Trachyphyllia geoffroyi* © Valerie Taylor

Tortoises and Freshwater Turtles

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

December 4, 2016

Blikkiesdorp, Uitenhage, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

Seizure of a dead leopard tortoise (*Stigmochelys pardalis*, Appendix II) and a live angulate tortoise (*Chersina angulata*, Appendix II) wounded and bleeding under the scales. According to Clarina Hanekom of the NGO Tin Can Town, more and more tortoises are used in the Muti. People say that "tortoises have the power to protect from evil spirits". Holes are drilled into their shells so they can be attached with a string to bed posts.¹



Stigmochelys pardalis

MADAGASCAR

Antananarivo, Province of Antananarivo, Madagascar

- **November 8, 2016.** Conviction of a woman and her accomplice for illegal trade of 227 radiated tortoise babies (*Astrochelys radiata*, Appendix I) to 12 and 18 months in prison and damages of 4 million of ariary (\$ 1210 US). See "On the Trail" n°14 p.18.

- **November 15 2016.** Conviction to 10 and 30 months imprisonment and damages of 200 million ariary (\$ 60,500 US) for 6 traffickers involved in the trafficking of 198 radiated tortoises. See "On the Trail" n°14 p.18.

- **November 25 2016.** A policeman in office at the Ivato airport is implicated. A representative of international institutions in Madagascar is also implicated. The third one involved has no particular profile. The trio was carrying a full bag of radiated tortoises and Angonoka tortoises (*Astrochelys yniphora*, Appendix I). They were selling the latter at a price of \$ 907 US per specimen. There is cleaning to do at Ivato airport. A few days before the discovery of this new traffic, a policeman suspected of complicity had been subjected to a "disciplinary transfer" as a precautionary measure.²



December 22, 2016

Antananarivo, Province of Antananarivo, Analamanga Region, Madagascar



Jack-in-the-box release by the Court of Appeal of 2 men previously sentenced in first instance to 30 months imprisonment and 200 million ariary damages to the Regional Department of Environment and Forests (DREF). The two men were arrested red-handed in September 2016 while selling of 198 radiated tortoise babies (*Astrochelys radiata*, Appendix I), a species that Madagascar is the only country in the world to host (cf. "On the Trail" n°14). Three accomplices remain in prison.³

AMERICA

BRAZIL

October 27, 2016

Porto de Moz, State of Para, Brazil

Seizure of 78 turtles from two different species: yellow-headed sideneck river turtles (*Podocnemis unifilis*, Appendix II) and giant South American turtles (*Podocnemis expansa*, Appendix II). The boat was in the Moz Port, on the Xingu River. The turtles were to be sold for 100 real (\$ 35 US) a piece in the town of Gurupa 100 km away from the Amazon.

Biodiversity around the Xingu, approximately 600 fish species most of which are endemic to the Amazon basin, is threatened by illegal fishing, by dams and other industrial exploitation. The most controversial project is the Belo Monte hydroelectric dam coupled with a gold mine managed by the Canadian company Belo Sun.⁴



Podocnemis unifilis

REPEATED OFFENSE

December 2, 2016

Canindé de Sao Francisco, State of Sergipe, Brazil

105 red-footed tortoises (*Chelonoidis carbonaria*, Appendix II) were seized from the homes of private individuals. Some of them have already faced similar charges, while others have been reported to the police.⁵

COLOMBIA

December 21, 2016

Puerto Leguizamo, Putumayo Department, Colombia

Seizure of 1,175 eggs of a yellow-spotted river turtle (*Podocnemis unifilis*, Appendix II). This is in addition to the 6,000 eggs that have already been seized in the southern part of the country since the beginning of the year.⁶

ASIA

INDIA

October 1, 2016

Dadar train station, Mumbai, State of Maharashtra, India

The turtles continue to take the train. The railroad brigade found a bag in the Pushpak Express at Dadar station. Inside, 80 Indian roofed turtles (*Pangshura tecta*, Appendix I) and Indian tent turtles (*Pangshura tentoria*, Appendix II) of which 75 were still alive after examination. A few hours later there were only 65. The Pushpak Express connects Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh to Mumbai. 1428 km in over 24 hours.⁷



October 13, 2016

Chhatrapati-Shivaji International Airport, Mumbai, State of Maharashtra, India

Seizure of 199 juvenile Indian star tortoises (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II) and black pond turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I) in the luggage of 2 United Arab Emirates nationals working in the Dubai Police Department. The Air Intelligence Unit ensures that both smugglers will be sued.⁸

October 22, 2016

Mullimetta, State of Andhra Pradesh, India

Seizure at dawn of 204 live Indian softshell turtles (*Nilssonina gangetica*, Appendix I) and 16 dead ones near the forests of Mullimetta. They were packed in bags. The survivors were handed over to the Vizag Gandhi Zoo. Connoisseurs say they were about to leave by road toward Odisha where the demand for turtle meat is strong. People attribute medicinal virtues to it. Dead or alive, the turtles weighed between 200 and 1500 g. The poachers have not been caught.⁹

November 8, 2016

Tehsil de Karhal, State of Uttar Pradesh, India

Seizure of 711 Indian flapshell turtles (*Lissemys punctata*, Appendix II). Three arrests.¹⁰

Indian flapshell turtle, See "On the Trail" n°3 p.10-11, n°6 p.16, n°7 p.14, n°12 p.19.



November 24, 2016

Barpeta, State of Assam, India

Seizure in a roadside restaurant of 5 Indian softshell turtles (*Nilssonina gangetica*, Appendix I) that were soon to be cooked and eaten. As for them these turtles eat fish, amphibians, organic waste and aquatic plants.¹¹

December 20, 2016

District of Malda, State of West Bengal, India Border with Bangladesh

Seizure of 10 kg of shells and turtle bones and 900 bottles of Phensedyl in the kit of a 19 years old. The value of the turtles remains is 70,000 rupee (\$ 1020 US) and that of the drugs 104,400 rupee (\$ 1520 US).

India has just banned the manufacturing and marketing of Phensedyl, a cough syrup based on codeine, to stop the consumption for "recreational" purposes. A part of the youth is affected by the addiction to this drug especially in the State of Bihar. The fashion of Phensedyl is even more prevalent in Bangladesh where its manufacturing is already prohibited. Phensedyl clandestine traffic between India and Bangladesh would reach 1.5 billion rupee (\$ 21.8 million US). Clandestine laboratories would manufacture syrups richer in codeine than the Phensedyls sold until then in Indian pharmacies. Codeine is an opiate with analgesic function less effective than morphine but also less toxic. Its side effects are drowsiness, vomiting and dizziness.¹²

December 21, 2016

Nalasopara, District of Thane, State of Maharashtra, India

Seizure at Blue Waves, a pet shop, of 4 Indian star tortoises from India (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II). Abdul Khan was heard by the police. The NGO People For Animals participated in the seizure. "Indian star turtles trafficking is a big problem today."¹³

**December 28th - December 31st 2016
Kolkata, West Bengal State, India**

Seizure of 1850 Indian flap shell turtles (*Lissemys punctata*, Appendix II) and arrest of 5 persons living in the Uttar Pradesh. They were going to Kolkata by car. Three days later, first seizure of the year 2017, 1625 turtles of the same species were seized in Memari, 30 km from Bhardaman. Four arrests. We will talk about it again in "On the Trail" n°16. These turtles requires the same level of protection as the Bengal tiger", declares Mr. Das, chief conservator of forest.¹⁴

MALAYSIA

**December 7, 2016
Between Pulau Sapi and Pulau Manukan, State of Sabah, Malaysia**

Big catch by coast guards. 1400 turtles on their way to Viet Nam. 200 dead. Custody for the 6-crew members. Two, including the captain, are native of Malaysia. Four are of unknown nationality.¹⁵



PAKISTAN

**December 25, 2016
Islamabad, Federal territory of Islamabad, Pakistan**

Seizure at the Sunday Bazaar of 36 turtles including black spotted turtles (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I) and brown river turtles (*Pangshura smithii*, Appendix II). These aquatic turtles are useful. "They clean up lakes and rivers". They are threatened with extinction in Pakistan" says Anisur Rehman, chairman of the Wildlife Management Board in the Islamabad Federal Territory. Mr. Rehman recently illustrated himself by denouncing a Court decision authorizing the restitution of a Himalayan bear to his "owner" to whom he had been seized. The bear whose teeth had been torn off to avoid bites will in fact be entrusted to a specialized refuge of Chakwal.¹⁶

TAIWAN

**November 22, 2016
Port of Kaohsiung, Taiwan**

Seizure of 1149 yellow-margined box turtles (*Cuora flavomarginata*, Appendix II). Three arrests. The Maritime Police knew that the nicknamed Sun, captain of a fishing boat, would someday try to illegally export turtles to the People's Republic of China. When the time came, the fishing boat was chased by the

coast guards. Sun and 3 crewmen, a Taiwanese and 2 Indonesian nationals are in custody, the turtles are at Chung Hsing University.¹⁷



THAILAND

**December 24, 2016
Bang Phra, Si Racha District, Province of Chonburi, Thailand**

New theft of turtles in the specialized establishment under the supervision of the National Parks administration. 62 Indian star turtles (*Geochelone elegans*, Appendix II) worth 1,000 to 2,000 Baht (\$ 28-56 US) per unit on the local market and 3 radiated tortoises from Madagascar (*Astrochelys radiata*, Appendix I) worth 20,000 baht (\$ 560 US) per unit have been hijacked in the bags of 2 gloved, hooded individuals and for one of them tattooed, who entered the scene around 3 a.m. on the night of December 23rd to 24th. Investigators are convinced that the kidnapping was carried out by someone of the staff and are surprised that the only angonoka tortoise (*Astrochelys yniphora*, Appendix I) was not selected by the thieves. Its value would be 1 to 2 million baht (28,000 to 56,000 US \$) on the international market. In June, 6 angonoka tortoises and 72 radiated tortoises from Madagascar had disappeared from the same center and the culprits are still on the loose (see "On the Trail" n°13, p.17).¹⁸



VIET NAM

- **October 4, 2016. Province of Thai Binh, Viet Nam.** The 37 big-headed turtles (*Platysternon megacephalum*, Appendix I) were in company of pangolins (cf. page 47) in the back of a truck coming from Quang Binh, in the center of the country, and going dangerously close to the northern border of China. Big-headed turtles appreciate rivers and waterfalls.

- **October 10, 2016. Province of Kon Tum, Viet Nam.** Voluntary handover. The big-headed turtle (*Platysternon megacephalum*, Appendix I) was released into the Dak Uy Forest.¹⁹



December 7, 2016
Hoi An, Quang Nam Province, Viet Nam

Seizure of a keeled box turtle (*Cuora mouhotii*, Appendix II) for sale on the Internet. The turtle is entrusted to the forest of Cu Lao Cham.²⁰



EUROPE

CROATIA

November 24, 2016
Zupanja, Vukovar-Syrmia County, Croatia. Border with Bosnia

Croatian customs seized 715 turtles including Hermann tortoises (*Testudo hermanni*, Appendix II) and freshwater turtles worth 2,884,000 kuna (\$ 419,606 US) or nearly \$ 600 US per turtle.²¹



SPAIN

November 16, 2016
Ingenio, Autonomous Community of Canary Islands, Spain

Seizure of a spur-thighed tortoise (*Testudo graeca*, Appendix II) for sale on the Internet. It has been entrusted to the animal center of Agüimes.²²

FRANCE

Mid-October 2016
Saint-Girons, Ariège Department, France

Seizure of 11 Greek tortoises (*Testudo graeca*, Appendix II). Discreetly brought back from Tunisia by a couple, they were shamelessly put on sale via Facebook. Collected in the wild for free or bought for a few euros a piece on a market, they were priced around € 50 each on line. The ONCFS (French National Hunting and Wildlife Agency) and the police located the sellers after one month of investigation. They are charged with 3 counts ranging from the illegal transport and import of a non-domestic species to the attempted sale of a CITES-protected species.²³



ITALY

Early October 2016
Bari, Puglia Region, Italy

Seizure of 63 live tortoises (*Testudo* spp., Appendix II) in a car leaving the ferry coming from Albania and driven by an Italian citizen. An official report was issued. The fate of the turtles is not precisely known.²⁴

Scorpions

ASIA

CHINA

October 13, 2016
Nanjing, Jiangsu Province, China

Seizure of 15 scorpions sent from the United Kingdom. The species was not cited. A customs spokesperson reminded that posting live animals is prohibited, and was startled to see potentially dangerous insects transported over thousands of kilometers in just plastic boxes that could crack.¹



Snakes

AMERICA

BRAZIL

October 8, 2016
Mafra, State of Santa Catarina, Brazil



Seizure of 7 pythons including 4 tiger pythons (*Python molurus*, Appendix II) in a car licensed in Sao Paulo coming from Uruguaiana, a border town with Argentina. The receipts prove that the snakes were bought in Argentina for a total value of 8000 real (\$ 2500 US). Each of the two car's occupants received a 3400 real (\$ 1000 US) fine.¹



The pythons were kept in socks

November 28, 2016
Brasilia, Distrito Federal, Brazil

Passengers from a bus terminal call the police: "There is a snake strolling through the parking lot." The boa (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II) had fled during the transaction, 900 real (\$ 300 US). Arrest of a 17-year-old. He says he has 2 more at his house.²



November 30, 2016
Sao Paulo, State of Sao Paulo, Brazil

Seizure of 2 living ball pythons (*Python regius*, Appendix II) hidden in socks in a parcel posted in Spain. To the agents surprise in the international postal center, one of the socks "moved". Arrest of a 21-year-old man at the reception of the "order". He confessed having been paid to receive the "merchandise" in place of the actual consignee and organizer of the expedition.³

On The Trail #15. Robin des Bois/Robin Hood

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Mid-December 2016
Alameda county, California State, United States of America

Seizure of 116 purses, wallets and bags in python skin (*Python* spp., Appendix II).⁴

December 27, 2016
Arlington County, State of Virginia, United States of America

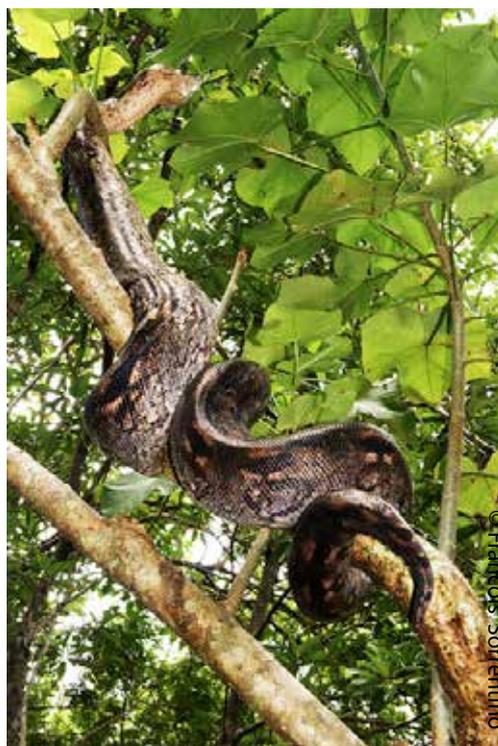
A young yellow anaconda (*Eunectes notaeus*, Appendix II) was discovered in the toilet of a flat. This species is non-venomous, but an adult can measure 4 m long, weigh 45 kg, and may sometimes be dangerous for children, the elderly, and anyone with a weak heart. Anacondas are not pets. This species is from the Amazon Basin. It is said that the snake was entrusted to an expert. Anaconda imports into the United States have been prohibited since 2012.⁵



PERU

October 10, 2016
Piura, Region of Piura, Peru

Seizure of 28 live or stuffed boas (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II): one adult and 27 babies in a "natural products" shop.⁶



INDIA

October 21, 2016

Pune, State of Maharashtra, India

1.20 m long. 3 kg. Two heads after his nickname. A black bag. A 22 years old suspect. The Indian sand boa (*Eryx johnii*, Appendix II) sells for high prices. He is said to bring luck and money. Some laboratories would make potions and miraculous uses from the snake.

The seized specimen was captured in the area of Shirwal, 50 km from Pune. For now he is hosted in the Katraj zoo.⁷

December 26, 2016

Near Chakan, Pune District, State of Maharashtra, India

Seizure of 41 Russell's vipers (*Daboia russelii*, Appendix III) and 31 cobras (*Elapidae* family) in wooden boxes and a 30 ml bottle of venom at Ranjit Kharage's home. The raid did not result in his arrest. Only his children were on the scene. With an accomplice, a certain Dhanaji Belkute, he obtained the snakes from professional trappers and indulged in a juicy venom trafficking.⁸

ITALY

October 5, 2016

Bologna, Emilia-Romagna Region, Italy

It is still rare for people from the suburbs of Bologna to notice a 2 m long live python (*Pythonidae* spp., Appendix I or II) in the ditch.¹⁰

December 1, 2016

Imperia, Liguria Region, Italy

Rescue of a Burmese python (*Python molurus*, Appendix II) abandoned in a plastic box on the edge of the A10 motorway.¹¹

FRANCE

November 18, 2016

France

The French group Kering also known internationally as PPR (Pinault-Printemps-Redoute) gets into the fair and sustainable python trade. Kering markets GUCCI. With IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) and the ITC (International Trade Centre), Kering is launching an alliance for the conservation of pythons. The three-year program focuses on controlling catches of wild pythons, techniques for differentiating between wild and farmed python skins, improvements in farming conditions and social impact of the trade.⁹



M. Jacky Bonnemains
Président
Association Robin des Bois
14 rue de l'Atlas
75019 Paris

Paris, le 31 août 2015

Monsieur le Président,

Par courrier en date du 6 août 2015 vous avez attiré l'attention de Monsieur François-Henri Pinault sur l'approvisionnement en peaux de crocodiles au Cambodge. Je souhaite, par la présente, apporter réponse aux différents points que vous évoquez dans ce courrier.

Depuis de nombreuses années, Kering a mis en place une stratégie de développement durable et des actions associées, s'engageant notamment à appliquer les standards les plus élevés tant au plan écologique qu'au plan du bien-être animal, et ce, tout au long de nos chaînes d'approvisionnement.

Afin de soutenir cet engagement, nous avons publié des objectifs quantifiés et avons également développé des politiques et lignes directrices en interne. En complément, nous travaillons de manière étroite avec nos fournisseurs afin de partager avec eux les standards que nous sommes fixés, et faire en sorte que tout nouveau fournisseur du Groupe adhère à ces standards.

Notre prise en compte du développement durable dans nos relations avec nos fournisseurs concerne tous les aspects de l'élevage des animaux, y compris l'alimentation donnée aux crocodiles. Il est utile de rappeler qu'aujourd'hui, la plupart des fermes de crocodiles n'utilisent plus de serpents provenant du lac Tonle Sap. Par ailleurs, nous soutenons une étude scientifique menée pour apprécier la situation globale de la pêche dans le « grand lac » et apporter des recommandations permettant de rendre les pratiques plus écologiques.

Le C. Siamensis étant une espèce menacée à l'état sauvage, nous travaillons dans le but d'aider à sa préservation. L'an dernier, nous avons débuté un projet pluriannuel aux côtés d'une ONG et avec le soutien du gouvernement du Cambodge pour réintroduire le C. Siamensis dans la nature et protéger leur habitat.

Au travers de ce projet et d'autres collaborations avec des experts, nous encourageons les éleveurs de crocodiles du Cambodge à s'engager dans la préservation des espèces à l'état sauvage pour que, à long terme, le commerce d'animaux en captivité provenant des fermes contribue de manière positive à la préservation de la faune sauvage.

J'espère que ces actions du groupe Kering vous auront convaincus de notre engagement et de leur pertinence par rapport à votre préoccupation quant à la préservation des crocodiles au Cambodge, préoccupation que nous partageons.

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur le Président, l'expression de mes salutations distinguées.


 Marie-Claire Davin
 Directrice du Développement durable et des Affaires institutionnelles internationales

Sauria

AMERICA

CANADA

October 14, 2016

Province British Columbia, Canada

Conviction of Gregory Anderson to \$ 6000 CA (\$ 4458 US) in fines and damages for fraudulently importing in the pocket of his hooded sweatshirt 6 ornate mastigures (*Uromastyx ornata*, Appendix II) at the US border post of Abbotsford-Huntingdon.¹



ASIA

CHINA

December 20, 2016

Dongxing, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China

Seizure of what seems to be 2 Komodo dragons (*Varanus komodoensis*, Appendix I).²



INDIA

October 27, 2016

Chennai, State of Tamil Nadu, India

On the street, 2 men stick a live varan (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I or II). The blood is mixed with soda and sold in a plastic cup to the passers-by for 200 rupee (\$ 3 US).³

Varans in India, see "On the Trail" n°2 p. 21, n°3 p.16, n°6 p. 23, n°7 p.17-18, n°12 p. 24.

EUROPE

GERMANY

October 6, 2016

Nuremberg Airport, Land of Bavaria, Germany

Seizure of 11 chameleons, one dead, packaged in socks and coming from Madagascar via Abu Dhabi and Frankfurt. All chameleons from Madagascar are listed in CITES Appendix I or II. They are divided in 3 genus: *Brookesia* spp., Appendix I or II, *Calumma* spp., Appendix II, *Furcifer* spp., Appendix II. The man aged 20 faces a € 1000 fine and, if the offense is confirmed, he will have to pay for the accommodation costs of the 10 unwitting immigrants. He has 4 weeks to provide documents proving the legality of his purchases in Madagascar.⁴



Brookesia stumpffi

ITALY

November 4, 2016

Pieve Emanuele, Milan, Lombardy Region, Italy

It is rare for a dog walking with his master in the countryside to sniff and point at an homeless and chilled iguana.⁵



Crocodylians

AMERICA

MEXICO

November 1, 2016

Villahermosa, State of Tabasco, Mexico

Seizure of 13 Morelet's crocodile skins (*Crocodylus moreletii*, Appendix II) in a FEDEX warehouse. The "merchandise" was destined for Leon, in the center of the country (1000 km).¹

PARAGUAY

December 26, 2016

Asuncion, Paraguay

It was alive and was supposed to be sold at a market. "However, this is not a pet", said an angered spokesperson from the Environment Ministry. As there was no refuge for him, the crocodile (*Crocodylidae* spp., Appendix I or II), was temporarily entrusted to a zoo in the city.²

ASIA

CHINA

November 21, 2016

Nanjing, Jiangsu Province, China

At the international airport, seizure of 2 Siamese crocodile skins (*Crocodylus siamensis*, Appendix I) coming in from Thailand.³



Various Reptile Species

AFRICA

BENIN

December 22, 2016

Parakou, Department of Borgou, Benin

Seizure of 11 African dwarf crocodile skins (*Osteolaemus tetraspis*, Appendix I), 2 African python skins (*Python sebae*, Appendix II) and 5 varan skins (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I or II). Arrest of a man trying to sell them. "Fortunately, the security forces are keeping their eyes open and hunt down poachers and traffickers of fully or partially protected animals. So there is hope for the protection of the wildlife heritage. Nevertheless, justice must play its part with dissuasive decisions so that the traffickers give up their dirty work" emphasizes the Actubenin site.¹



AMERICA

BRAZIL

OPERATION TEIA (CANVAS)

November 7, 2016

Iranduba, State of Amazonas, Brazil

Seizure of a boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II), 2 anacondas (*Eunectes* spp., Appendix II), 2 caimans and one brown-throated sloth from Bolivia (*Bradypus variegatus*, Appendix II). Six tour operators are being prosecuted for the detention and exploitation of wild animals and for illegal advertising. Policemen invited themselves to an organized excursion on Lake Januari adjacent to the Rio Negro. Overall fine of 1.3 million real, \$ 400,000 US.²



MEXICO

November 16, 2016

Cuautitlán, State of Mexico, Mexique

Seizure on a market of a 18-month-old boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II) and a 3-year-old crocodile. A 17-year-old boy was arrested for questioning.³



ASIA

THAILAND

BABY CONNECTION

November 22 2016

Suvarnabhumi Airport, Bangkok, Thailand

Seizure of 32 turtles of protected species, 8 monitor lizards (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I or II) and 15 Chinese crocodile lizards (*Shinisaurus crocodilurus*, Appendix II) bound for Tokyo. In the boarding room, the woman was pushing her 6-month-old son in a pram. Ms. Takahashi, 44, said she was paid 100,000 yen (\$ 950 US) to carry the luggage, that she did not know what it contained and that she needed money to raise her child. Nevertheless, this deliberate choice of traveling with a baby is one of the common ploys used to facilitate the smuggling of illicit goods and wildlife. Contacts were made with the Japanese embassy in Thailand to allow bail for the "mule".⁴



EUROPE

FRANCE

REPEATED OFFENSE

December 5, 2016

Beauvoir, Manche Department, France

Police raid in Alligator Bay, near Mont-Saint-Michel. Seizure of a hundred reptiles, turtles, lizards and snakes. Falsification in the registers for entry and

exit records of animals are noted. In 2010, for the same reason, the director of the zoo was sentenced to a € 20,000 fine including € 10,000 suspended. Parodying the Internet presentation of this "animal park like no other" comes back to: "During a course on wooden pontoons, slip into the skin of a trafficker by observing reptiles of doubtful origin and in the turtles farm, pet the African specimens that have not been seized".⁵



ITALY

October 1, 2016

Aversa, Province of Caserta, Italy

Exotic animals fair ends badly for 24 Italian and foreign merchants. They have been heard. 732 snakes, insects, frogs, turtles, toads without CITES permits were seized.

OCEANIA

AUSTRALIA

November 7, 2016

Joondalup, Perth, State of Western Australia, Australia

Conviction to a fine of \$ 13,000 A (\$ 9840 US) for a snakes and geckos catcher. He was sending his preys by parcel post from the Kimberley area in Western Australia to an accomplice in New South Wales 10,000 km away to the East. "The animals were horribly treated". Most of the parcels were seized at the departure post offices. Fifteen reptiles were already dead. A dozen parcels were seized upon arrival. Given their poor state, the survivors cannot be released into the wild. Mr. Carstairs, an agent of the Department of Parks and Wildlife, says that "these people claiming to be reptile enthusiasts have only one idea in mind: to make money." "One can really doubt their honesty". "Some of the specimens sell on the domestic market for 3000 dollars [\$ 2270 US] and on the international market 60% more". An accomplice was sentenced to a fine of 5000 dollars (\$ 3800 US) and a minor of 16 years receives a suspended sentence not registered on his criminal record (see "On the Trail" n°8, p. 106).⁶



Birds

AFRICA

EGYPT

End of October 2016

Cairo International Airport, Egypt

Seizure of 41 peregrine falcons (*Falco peregrinus*, Appendix I) bound for Bahrain. Arrest of the Egyptian smuggler and 4 policemen from the airport who accepted a bribe. A peregrine falcon is worth 300,000 pound (\$ 33,830 US) in Egypt.¹



© Patricia Simpson

MOROCCO

Early November 2016

Al Mansoura Forest, Chefchaouen Province, Morocco

Poaching of a griffon vulture (*Gyps fulvus*, Appendix II) and display of the crime on Facebook. The species has disappeared from Morocco, notes Magreb Ornitho. The vulture came from Spain or France and was migrating through Morocco to reach sub-Saharan Africa. See also the exposure of a poached condor on Facebook, "On the Trail" n°1 p.4.²



© Yabliadi

AMERICA

ARGENTINA

22 novembre 2016

November 22, 2016

La Para, Córdoba Province, Argentina

At dawn, in a sedan, seizure of 20 parrots (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I or II) piled on top of each other in just one cage. Three people were arrested, including a 17-year-old young man. An investigation is underway to determine whether this is animal trafficking or a capture for domestic use.³

November 23, 2016

Salta, Province of Salta, Argentina

It was detained for 8 years by a family. It has been reported to the authorities. They tell them that they didn't know it was illegal, and handed over the toucan (*Ramphastos toco*, Appendix II). A veterinarian examination concluded that its health condition is satisfactory. No one knows what will happen to the bird.⁴



© Cláudio Dias Timm

Ramphastos toco

December 18, 2016

Tartagal, General José de San Martín Department, Province of Salta, Argentina

The gendarmerie brigade was on patrol on side roads and intercepted a suspicious car. Seizure of 150 monk parakeets (*Myiopsitta monachus*, Appendix II) and 10 parrot chicks in fruit crates covered with mesh. They were handed over to the Finca bird refuge.⁵

BRAZIL

October 8, 2016

Paranavai, State of Parana, Brazil

Seizure of 10 birds including 2 blue-fronted amazons (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II) from an underground breeding farm. Some of them were set free into the wild. 5000 real (\$ 1600 US) in fine.⁶



October 11, 2016

Palmas, State of Tocantins, Brazil

Seizure of 2 young blue and yellow macaws (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II).⁷



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October 15, 2016

Marialva, State of Parana, Brazil

Seizure in an hacienda of a marijuana plant, a fire arm and 9 birds including a plain parakeet (*Brotogeris tirica*, Appendix II) and a common toucan (*Ramphastos toco*, Appendix II). Hotline number: (44) 39011936.⁸



October 17, 2016

Brasilandia, State of Minas Gerais, Brazil

Seizure at the farm worker's home of 13 parrot nestlings (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix II). He caught them to make money. Fine of 6500 real (\$ 2500 US).⁹



**Between October 17 and 21, 2016
State of Minas Gerais, Brazil**

Intervention on the northern roads: seizure of a green-winged macaw (*Ara chloropterus*, Appendix II) among the 604 animals, 7 fire arms and fishing gear. 23 people arrested. Total amount in fines: 400,000 real (\$ 130,000 US). The area is known to be a poaching and transit zone. Transport is done both by road and river.¹⁰



October 18, 2016

Alfredo Chavez, State of Espirito Santo, Brazil

Seizure of 2 red-browed amazons (*Amazona rhodocorytha*, Appendix I). They had been taken very young from the nest.¹¹

October 21, 2016

Juara, State of Mato Grosso, Brazil

Seizure at home of a scarlet macaw (*Ara macao*, Appendix I), wings cut, a white-throated toucan (*Ramphastos tucanus*, Appendix II) 20 years old and parrots. 57,000 real (\$ 22,000 US) in fine.¹²



October 27, 2016

Brasilia, Federal District, Brazil

Seizure of a young couple of yellow-chevrons parakeets (*Brotogeris chiriri*, Appendix II) in a cardboard box. They were for sale on the Internet. The woman selling them was questioned by police.¹³



October 31, 2016

Serra dos Dourados, State of Parana, Brazil

Seizure of a blue-fronted amazon (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II) and 2 white-eyed conures (*Aratinga leucophthalmus*, Appendix II).¹⁴

November 2, 2016

Três Lagoas, State of Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil

Seizure of 3 amazons (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix II) in the luggage of the trafficker as they were approaching Sao Paulo. A fine of 15,000 real (\$ 4,500 US).¹⁵



November 4, 2016

States of Parana and Santa Catarina, Brazil

An awareness-raising campaign resulted in the seizure and handing over of 16 vinaceous amazons (*Amazona vinacea*, Appendix I). Depending on their condition, they will be released in a few months.¹⁶



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November 7, 2016

Paranoá, Federal District, Brazil

Seizure of one common toucan (*Ramphastos toco*, Appendix II), one macaw, several birds of unknown species, and 2 turtles in a countryside home. Police officers were in the neighborhood when they heard the bird calls.¹⁷

November 8, 2016

Jardim, State of Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil

Seizure of one scarlet macaw (*Ara macao*, Appendix I), 2 blue and yellow macaws (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II), and 3 toucan chicks in the backpacks of 2 Paraguayan traffickers aged 34 and 14. They pushed a motorcycle on the shoulder of the highway. The adult was arrested.¹⁸

FPI OPERATION

November 24, 2016

Paulo Afonso et Jeremoabo, State of Bahia, Brazil

Seizure of 600 animals, including parrots (*Psittacidae*, spp., Appendix I or II), a golden conure (*Guarouba guarouba*, Appendix I), a blue-fronted amazon (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II), and turtles. The trafficker was reported. The judge will hand down the sentence later.¹⁹

The golden conure is a very rare bird in the Brazilian fauna. It is one of the 12 species of parrots that is in critical danger of extinction. The main threats to it are the reduction of its habitat by urban and farming sprawl and the construction of roads. It is said that only 150 individuals remain in Nordeste. There is no captive breeding program. Only a few experts have the prerogative of hand feeding.

November 26, 2016

Tupã, State of São Paulo, Brazil

Seizure of 2 blue-fronted amazons (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II) and a coati. Fine of \$ 3000 US. Alert number: 0800-0555-190.²⁰



December 7, 2016

Governador Valadares, State of Minas Gerais, Brazil

A road inspection at the intersection of BR-381 and BR-116. In the trunk, cages and boxes are closing 26 birds, including one parrot (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I or II). The 2 men, aged 25 and 56, were heard by the police. The birds should be able to fly off again soon.²¹



© Zana Ferreira/G1

December 11, 2016

Serranópolis, State of Minas Gerais, Brazil

Seizure of 12 birds, including pionus parrots (*Pionus* spp., Appendix II), cages and a bird trap in a hacienda. The 45-year-old man was reported to the authorities. The birds were taken to a refuge.²²



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Guarouba guarouba

December 14th 2016

Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro State, Brazil

Astonishing discovery: a Magellanic penguin (*Spheniscus magellanicus*), macaws (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I or II), owls, toucans and primates in a flat. All animals are seized.



The penguin was transferred 7 days later in the Rio Grande do Sul State. In the South weather conditions are more adapted to his well-being. He will go through a rehabilitation process before being brought back to Patagonia, his natural habitat.²³

December 15, 2016

Marília, State of Sao Paulo, Brazil

Seizure of 2 white-eyed conures (*Aratinga leucophthalma*, Appendix II).



One of them had its wing cut. The other one was wingless. A fine of 7,000 real (\$ 2,500 US). Alert number: 0800-0555-190.²⁴

December 15, 2016

Euclides da Cunha Paulista, State of Sao Paulo, Brazil

Seizure of 2 blue-fronted amazons (*Amazona aestiva*, Appendix II) and 2 blue and yellow macaw chicks (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II). Without water or food, the hygiene was terrible. Fines of 16,000 real (\$ 5,500 US). The birds were entrusted to the NGO Apass dedicated to the preservation of wild animals and will be released later.²⁵



December 18, 2016

Rondonópolis, State of Mato Grosso, Brazil

A man targeted a blue and yellow macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II) with a catapult. It is wounded. It can open its wings, but it has trouble flying. The veterinarians are optimistic and believe that it could be released within 15 days. The bird hitter was reported to the authorities by his neighbors. He is nowhere to be found.²⁶



December 20, 2016

Hortolândia, State of Sao Paulo, Brazil

Seizure of 250 birds, including parrots (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I or II). The police have been conducting an investigation for 2 months. The man was heard by the police, but he denies involvement in the affair. He was released while awaiting his sentence.²⁷

December 24, 2016

Rio de Janeiro, State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

"Would anyone like an owl chick?" he asked on Facebook. Police officers said yes and arrested him. After the 33-year-old man was heard by the police, he was released. The birds will be quarantined before their release.²⁸



December 26, 2016

Paraíso Do Tocantins, State of Tocantins, Brazil

The day after Christmas, at 8:30 in the morning, the police stopped an Opel Vectra. A 54-year-old man and 3 adult parrots (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I or II) were inside.²⁹



COLOMBIA

November 14, 2016

Cartagena, Bolívar Department, Colombia

While the city was preparing to celebrate its independence, 203 canaries and 2 amazons (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I or II) were seized at dawn in a house in the heart of the neighborhood of San Jose de Los Campanos. Four arrests. The authorities estimate that the "ecological" value of the 205 birds is 687 million Colombian pesos, or \$ 229,458 US.

Cartagena was the first city to declare its independence from the Spanish crown, in 1811. Each year, the independence celebration lasts several days, with parades, marches, concerts, and more.³⁰

COSTA RICA

November 17, 2016

Canton of Los Chiles, Costa Rica

A keel-billed toucan (*Ramphastos sulfuratus*, Appendix II) found on a public thoroughfare had a horrendous wound on its beak. Its healers don't know whether it was due to an illness or improper care. Its behavior gives reason to believe that it is domesticated. It was taken to a bird refuge.³¹



A prosthesis laying is considered.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

October 19, 2016

Hartford, Connecticut, United States of America

Conviction of Thomas Kapusta, 63, to a one-year probation, \$ 55,000 US fine and 90 hours of community service in an animal shelter for repeatedly killing in October 2015 red-tailed hawks (*Buteo jamaicensis*, Appendix II) and Cooper's hawks (*Accipiter cooperii*, Appendix II). "On the Trail" n°12, p.29 recounted the sad exploits of this pigeon fancier who, with his accomplice, captured in trap cages the birds of prey who, according to them, harassed the racing pigeons during their training flights. The raptors were then shot at close range and in cold blood and the bodies were thrown in the garbage.



The Kapusta probation includes specific clauses on the exercise of his pigeon-fancier activities. His pigeon house will be the subject of planned and unforeseen visits by the federal authorities. Boguski, who made the pair with Kapusta, pleaded guilty to the trapping and murder of only Cooper's hawks. He is awaiting trial.³²



Accipiter cooperii

REPEATED OFFENSE

December 3, 2016

Los Angeles International Airport, State of California, United States of America

Seizure of about 20 singing birds, including Chinese hwameis (*Garrulax canorus*, Appendix II). From Viet Nam. Two American citizens of Vietnamese origin were arrested. The Vietnamese authorities already knew that 44-year-old Truaong trafficked in wildlife. Truaong had turned his 2 suitcases into cages. 54-year-old Dong was waiting for him at the airport. He already spent 4 months in prison for wildlife trafficking in 2009. A Chinese hwamei prized for the melody of its singing can be purchased for \$ 30 US in Viet Nam and sold for \$ 400 US in California. The poachers kill the females and send them to butchers. The females sing less well than the males.³³



MEXICO

October 21, 2016

Simojovel, State of Chiapas, Mexico

Voluntary handing over of a military macaw of a year and a half (*Ara militaris*, Appendix I). Neighbors were targeting him with slingshots. His right leg was broken.³⁴

November 22, 2016
Santiago de Queretaro, State of Queretaro d'Arteaga, Mexico

On information, seizure of a scarlet macaw (*Ara macao*, Appendix I), a military macaw (*Ara militaris*, Appendix I) and 2 yellow-naped amazons (*Amazona auropalliata*, Appendix I).³⁵



Ara militaris

November 25, 2016
Mexico City International Airport, Fédéral District, Mexico

Seizure of 30 painted buntings (*Passerina ciris*), 2 slate-colored solitaires (*Myadestes unicolor*), 2 Montezuma oropendolas (*Psarocolius montezuma*), 20 hooded grosbeaks (*Hesperiphona abeillei*), 10 blue grosbeaks (*Passerina caerulea*), 4 northern cardinals (*Cardinalis cardinalis*), 4 northern mockingbirds (*Mimus polyglottos*), and one blue-crowned chlorophone (*Chlorophonia occipitalis*). They were divided into 10 plastic boxes in 2 suitcases. Three people arrested, 2 are Spanish.³⁶



Passerina ciris

PERU

October 6, 2016
San Juan Bautista, Province of Huamanga, Region of Ayacucho, Peru

Seizure of a blue and yellow macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II) in a house. He was transferred to the Totorilla zoo managed by the San Cristóbal National University in Huamanga.³⁷

December 4, 2016
Jorge Chávez International Airport, Callao, Callao Region, Peru

In the belongings of a Spanish traveler and 2 Peruvian accomplices, seizure of 2 toucan barbets (*Semnornis ramphastinus*, Appendix III in Colombia), 6 pavonine quetzals (*Pharomachrus pavoninus*), 2 paradise tanagers (*Tangara chilensis*), one flame-faced tanager (*Tangara parzudakii*), 5 green-and-gold tanagers (*Tangara schrankii*), one golden-naped tanager (*Tangara ruficervix*), 3 saffron-crowned tanagers (*Tangara xanthocephala*), and 5 thick-billed euphonias (*Euphonia laniirostris*) shoved into tubes. They were dehydrated and had lost many of their feathers. They were taken to Huachipa Zoo in Lima for emergency treatment.³⁸



Semnornis ramphastinus

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

December 15, 2016
Pedernales Province, Dominican Republic



Seizure of 36 pionus parrots (*Pionus* spp., Appendix II) and one conure (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I or II) from Sierra de Bahoruco National Park, via a joint operation of soldiers from the National Environmental Protection Department and Park rangers. One month in prison for Totolo Mishael and the Haitian catcher. It is said that the birds were released.³⁹



VENEZUELA

October 15, 2016

Santiago Mariño and Libertador, State of Aragua, Venezuela

Seizure of a black-necked Aracari (*Pteroglossus aracari*, Appendix II) and a blue-headed parrot (*Pionus menstruus*, Appendix II).⁴⁰



ASIA

CHINA

October 1-7, 2016

Autonomous Municipality of Tianjin, China

It is not only the container ships which stop in Tianjin. Migratory birds too. With the approval of the municipal authority, volunteers removed bird nets from the reed beds near the shore. Put end to end, they were 10 km long. 3000 birds were unraveled. Many were already dead. Nocturnal raptors such as Oriental scops-owls (*Otus sunia*, Appendix II) and a large number of passerines are the main victims. The plague is expanding according to Chinese friends of birds.⁴¹



China

- November 7-8, 2016. Yan'an, Shaanxi Province

The circular Buddhist economy. Seizure of more than 1000 birds, 300 in a shed, 700 in a van. They were going to be sold to a temple. Monks make bird releases after receiving offerings during pardon ceremonies.⁴²

- Mid November 2016. Xian of Chun'an, Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province

Seizure of 260 red-billed leiothrixes (*Leiothrix lutea*, Appendix II).



INDIA

REPEATED OFFENSE

October 26, 2016

Meerut, State of Uttar Pradesh, India

Seizure of 3 owls (*Strigiformes* spp.), 14 parakeets (*Psittaciformes* spp.) and 40 other wild birds. One arrest.⁴³

December 18, 2016

Tehsil de Sorab, Shimoga district, State of Karnataka, India

Owls were trafficked for black magic. Nine men were heard by the forestry police. Azim was the ringleader. He paid the Anavatti Forest inhabitants for any reliable information on the presence and nesting of an owl. The investigators say that the financial stakes are high. It appears that an owl was bought from people living in the area for 400,000 rupee, or \$ 5,830 US. It was then resold in New Delhi for between 1.5 and 2 million rupee, or for between \$ 22,000 and \$ 30,000 US.⁴⁴

INDONESIA

October 7, 2016
Palembang, Province of South Sumatra Province, Indonesia

Seizure of 4 eagles (*Accipitridae* spp., Appendix I or II), 3 chicks and 1 juvenile. The possessor is a member of an "Eagle Lovers" club. Many eagles are captured to be caged or used for hunting. The man is a specialist in the sale of eagles and hawks on Facebook. He had been in the radars for a while.⁴⁵



Mid October 2016
Province of South Sulawesi, Indonesia



Failure of an attempt at intra-Indonesian trafficking of 64 lesser birds of paradise (*Paradisaea minor*, Appendix II) and 83 bundles of casuar feathers (*Casuaris* genus) from the province of South Sulawesi toward the province of Papua via Jayapura airport. Both species are protected by a national law and a regulation dating from 1990 and 1999. In Indonesia, they are exclusively present

in the province of Papua. According to the courier company, which was responsible for shipping in cardboard packages, the animals remains were first exported from Papua to Maros in the province of South Sulawesi to be naturalized and plucked by taxidermists. If the outward journey had passed unnoticed by the authorities, the return journey failed. Casuar feather crowns and stuffed paradise birds are used in traditional ceremonies in the province of Papua.⁴⁶



December 13, 2016
Kacangan, Kabupaten of Langkat, North Sumatra Province, Indonesia

Liberation by the BBKSDA (Balai Besar Konservasi Sumber Daya Alam, Center for the Conservation of Natural Resources) of a couple of brahmyn kites (*Haliastur indus*, Appendix II) near Medan, stronghold of wildlife trafficking on northern Sumatra.⁴⁷



JORDAN

1-5 October 2016
Jordan

- The largest case of poaching and trafficking ever found in the Kingdom of Jordan, 6800 black-caps (*Sylvia atricapilla*), 40 Eurasian golden orioles (*Oriolus oriolus*) and 45 laughing doves (*Spilopelia senegalensis*) and a Blanford's fox (*Vulpes cana*, Appendix II) in a hunter's freezers. Each bird was packed and ready to be shipped to the Gulf countries or delivered to fashionable restaurants which feature migratory passerines on their menus. According to the director of the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN), the offender will be fined 20 to 25 Jordanian dinars (28 to 35 US \$) for each frozen bird. To catch birds, he places trap cages or nets near farms or water points. The hunter who is not known to act alone or in a network is an official of the Kingdom.⁴⁸



Sylvia atricapilla

KAZAKHSTAN

November 20, 2016

Astana, Republic of Kazakhstan

Seizure of 32 saker falcons (*Falco cherrug*, Appendix II) in 4 suitcases in the airport of the capital city. They were about to board a plane for Charjah in the United Arab Emirates, where they are said to have sold the falcons for € 50,000 each. Temperature in Astana: -4°C. In Sharjah: 25°C.⁴⁹

KYRGYZSTAN

TAILOR NETWORK

October 14, 2016

Manas International Airport, Kyrgyzstan

Seizure in the trousers of 2 United Arab Emirates nationals of 4 saker falcon chicks (*Falco cherrug*, Appendix II) with hooded heads, legs and wings attached. They were hidden in inside pockets specially sewn at knee level.⁵⁰

IRAN

November 27 2016

Iranshahr, Sistan-Baluchistan Province, Iran

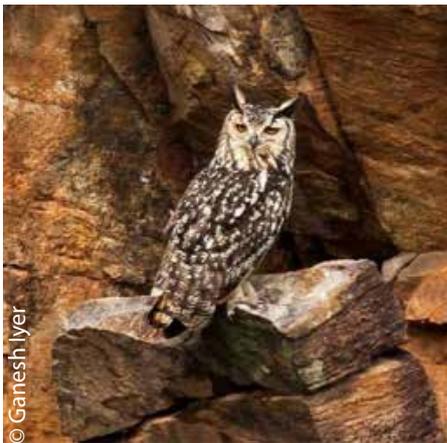
Seizure of 12 Houbara bustards (*Chlamydotis undulata*, Appendix I) in a Peugeot car. Three interpellations.⁵¹

NEPAL

November 25 2016

Tribhuvan International Airport, Kathmandu, Nepal

Seizure of 6 live Eurasian eagle-owls (*Bubo bubo*, Appendix II). Arrest of 2 men with Indian and Qatari passports.⁵²



SINGAPORE

December 2016

Singapore

Two Vietnamese citizens were sentenced to 6 months in prison for the attempted smuggling of 12 melodious laughingthrushes (*Garrulax canorus*, Appendix II). They were also sentenced to 4 months in prison for animal cruelty. The birds



were locked up in plastic boxes with holes - a bit of air please! - and covered with clothing. One of them was already dead. Another one was deliberately killed. It had the H3N8 avian flu. The other birds are in quarantine.⁵³



VIET NAM

October 27, 2016

Dong Nai Province, Viet Nam

Seizure of a brown wood owl (*Strix leptogrammica*, Appendix II) chained since childhood in a small restaurant.⁵⁴



December 21, 2016

Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam

Seizure in a pet cafe of one brown wood owl (*Strix leptogrammica*, Appendix II) and 2 parrots from South America (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I or II), which were handed over to the Cu Chi refuge. Due to its secrecy, it is difficult to inventory the brown wood owl populations. Because of this discretion the status of the species has to be very cautious.⁵⁵

EUROPE

GERMANY

**November 14, 2016
Düsseldorf Airport, State of North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany**

Seizure of one Fischer's lovebird (*Agapornis fischeri*, Appendix II) from Turkey in the belongings of a 24-year-old passenger. The bird was returned to the Parrot Park Bochum.⁵⁶



BELGIUM

**December 14, 2016
Brussels, Brussels-Capital Region, Belgium**

The Supreme Court of Appeal confirms the culpability of the leader of the international traffic in raptors (see "On the Trail" n°5, p.42). However, the prison sentence is reduced from 3 to 2 years.⁵⁷



SPAIN

**October 20, 2016
Burgos, Province of Burgos, Spain**

Seizure in a car of 80 birds from South or Central America including 4 keelbilled toucans (*Ramphastos sulfuratus*, Appendix II), 6 emerald toucanets (*Aulacorhynchus prasinus*) and 23 northern cardinals (*Cardinalis cardinalis*). They were packed into a suitcase bathing in their feces.⁵⁸



Novembre 2016

Gallipienzo, Chartered Community of Navarre, Spain

Who is going after forest wildlife? Red kites (*Milvus milvus* Appendix II) died after feeding on the poisoned decaying carcasses of hoofed animals, and even hunting dogs.⁵⁹



**November 24, 2016
Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain**

Seizure of one invasive rose-ringed parakeet (*Psittacula krameri*) from Africa and the Asia continent, which was introduced to the archipelago some time ago. It was supposed to be sold online. The species is colonizing the islands at breakneck speed, and is competing for food and space with bats, night birds and woodpeckers. Parakeets settles near grain stores and in cities. It is a potential threat to public health and the bird wildlife on the island. The psittacosis is feared. This is a typical story for a delightful pet that has mutated into a cursed pest.⁶⁰



FRANCE

**October 7, 2016
Tours, Indre-et-Loire, France**

Condemnation to 1 month and 2 months of suspended prison and to fines of € 800 and 1000 of which € 300 and 600 suspended for the trapping and possession of goldfinches (*Carduelis carduelis*) dead or alive. The 2 men were members of a criminal network dismantled in September 2015 thanks to the intervention of the ONCFS (cf. "On the Trail" n° 10, p 27 and n°12, p 34). Twelve frozen goldfinches had been found at the place of one of the convicts. The French Birds Protection League received € 2,400 in damages.⁶¹



Early October 2016

Region Provence-Alpes-Cote d'Azur, France

A rare osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*, Appendix II) targeted by a rifle shot. One eye was hit. In the absence of a specialized establishment for disabled raptors, it will surely have to be finished off. The shooting took place in Roquebrune by the river Argens.⁶²



November 17, 2016

France

French army indulges in a squadron of golden eagles (*Aquila chrysaetos*, Appendix II). The blog "Air Force" reports that the 4 eagles were "acquired" in Austria to be trained in the hunt for drones. Meat is attached on the flying machines so that the eagles learn to spot and seize them in their talons. This new idea of enlisting animals in war or counter-terrorism operations is not of the best taste. The 4 golden eagles would be "already operational" according to the general Jean-Christophe Zimmermann. "They can detect drones at several thousand meters." "Their use is adapted to the urban environment where it is necessary to control the fallout of the unwanted drone".

In this falconry of a new type, eagles are likely to be injured by propellers during the pursuit or to be shot down like fighter jets. The French initiative is inspired by the recruitment by the Dutch National Police of bald eagles imported from the United States of America. Based in the Hague, the company "Guard from above" promotes guard eagles posted in prisons, military bases or any facility likely

to be attacked by hostile drones. Soon eagles will watch over nuclear power stations and SEVESO factories! And why not, as suggested by Nicholas Lund ornithologist in the United States of America related to the Audubon Society, trained giraffes to spot poachers over fences and panthers in town to hunt jaywalkers.

Fortunately Air Force General Zimmermann adds that we're still at the training stage. All hopes are therefore authorised and it can reasonably be hoped that after this blow of bad publicity, the new equipment of the French army will be returned to the wild.⁶³



Department of Landes, France

- November 30, 2016. Laurède. Seizure at 2 private homes of:

- 78 bird traps, some forty live birds in cages and 435 finches and ortolan buntings.
- 78 bird traps, about 20 caged birds and 41 frozen birds. Live ortolan buntings and finches serve as callers (see "On the Trail" n°10, page 26).⁶⁴

- December 1, 2016. Mont-de Marsan.

Condemnation to maximum fines of € 1000 partially suspended for 11 poachers of ortolan buntings (*Emberiza hortulana*) aged from 60 to 83 years and destruction of their bird traps.⁶⁵



Ortolans



The ortolans are reported missing or on the way to be so in Hungary, Slovakia, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Switzerland.

The populations are dramatically declining in Scandinavia, in the Baltic States, and in Poland.

Between 2008 and 2012 in Lahemaa National Park in Estonia, 300 to 500 couples were counted, and only 4 male songbirds were counted in 2014.

In Switzerland, only one male songbird was detected in the springs of 2014 and 2015.

In Belarus, the residual populations were concentrated in the exclusion zone of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. In western Russia, nesting and migrating ortolans have almost died out in the regions of Leningrad and Karelia. Their populations in the region of greater Moscow are sporadic.

The situation is contrasting in Spain, where the ortolan is said to have colonized Mediterranean forests in the post-fire phase. There would be between 180,000 and 365,000 couples in the overall population, but ornithological societies have observed a decline of more than 50% in Catalonia between 2002 and 2014.

The situation in Germany is unclear. Recent inventories suggest that the overall number of ortolans has increased, but these encouraging results may be biased by previous inventories that have been clearly underestimated. It is said that the species has a stronghold in Lower Saxony. The populations are too isolated from each other and may not be viable beyond this decade, especially as there are not enough female ortolans. The most part of the country is exposed to a decline and even an extinction.

In France, it is said that there are 5,000 to 8,000 nesting couples. This decline may be considered as 'significant', much more than 'moderate', as BirdLife International stated in its 2015 risk assessment.

These are some of the lessons and conclusions drawn from the trans-European study coordinated by Frédéric Jiquet of the Museum of Natural History of Paris. 12 international specialists published it under the title "An update of the European breeding population sizes and trends of the Ortolan Bunting (*Emberiza hortulana*)" in the *Ornis Fennica* journal in August 2016. The study attributes the massive and general decline of the species to the loss of habitat diversity, to converting prairies to cereal farming, to the shortage of wild seeds and earthworms to eat, and the many sources of pressure during the migration journey in the resting and wintering areas.

Ortolans that are trapped in southwestern France in the beginning of the winter come from Sweden, Norway, the Baltic countries, Germany, and Finland. They are survivors of decimated populations that try to reach Saharan Africa for spending the winter. Hunters and ortolan enthusiasts must have noticed this, as this study was co-funded by the Departmental hunter federation of the Landes, the Landes General Council, the Aquitaine General Council, the Departmental association of traditional fall-trap hunting, the French Ministry of Ecology, and the National Museum of Natural History.

Coordinated efforts of the National hunting and wildlife office and the Dax public prosecutor are trying to weaken the cruel cultural practices of hunters and consumers in the Southwestern region of France. The well-known allowance—no more than 30 traps, 5 decoys, and 20 captures—is being reduced.

However, the female mayor of Mont-de-Marsan, a senator, well-known and starred chefs, and bullfighting nostalgics protested on October 1st, 2016 in front of the arena of the city, in favor of ortolan hunting, bullfighting, and foie gras. The diktats of environmentalists are said to be threatening the 'spirit of the South'. Sources say that there were between 2,400 and 5,000 protesters.

For France's breach of the European Directive on the conservation of wild birds, on December 8th, the European Commission submitted the case to the Court of Justice. The Commission considers that the continued hunting of ortolan buntings in France jeopardizes positive actions in other member States. The Birds Directive prohibits killing and intentionally capturing species threatened with extinction, as well as the ensuing activities such as trade in live or dead specimens. The European Union is targeting the Departmental association of traditional fall-trap hunting ('ACDTM'). Fall-traps are trap cages placed on the ground or hooked onto posts.

ITALY

October 19, 2016

Pozzallo, Region Sicily, Italy

Seizure in a pickup truck leaving on a car ferry bound for Malta Island of a thousand passerines (family Fringillidae). The driver, a Calabrian aged 46, is accused of animal abuse, detention and fencing of protected species.⁶⁶



REPEATED OFFENSE

Early November 2016

Arzignano, Veneto Region, Italy

Seizure in a deep-freezer of 400 birds belonging to protected species, including swallows, finches, red throats. The couple living in the hills had set up between the trees a real bird-catching plant with nets, calling birds, trap cages. Then he proceeded to the sale of the game.⁶⁷

December 20, 2016

Vicenza, Region of Veneto, Italy

In a butchery, seizure of 3,700 dead birds representing 30 protected species, pipits, goldfinches, canaries, finches, and redstarts, all destined for consumption during the Christmas festivities.⁶⁸



MALTA

- **November 3, 2016. Victoria, Malta.** Condemnation to € 700 fine for illegal trapping of passerine birds. Revocation of his hunting license for 2 years. He was filmed in poaching action on the island of Gozo last March by the Committee Against Bird Slaughter (CABS). The Committee denounces the insignificant amount of the fine.

- **November 6, 2016. Pembroke, Malta.** An arrest by the police following a CABS report on a trapping site. The man held 10 living passerines. He was surrounded by cages, nets and all the paraphernalia of the perfect bird trapper.

- **November 6, 2016. Tour Ghallis, Salini, Malta.** Arrest of a man in action with a net trap and 15 calling birds in cages, goldfinches, hawfinches, siskins and linnets.⁶⁹

NETHERLANDS

November 6, 2016

Amsterdam-Schiphol Airport, North Holland Province, Netherlands

Recycling of latrines. The empty rolls of toilet paper were pierced and inhabited by birds whose species are not identified. They survived part of the journey between Suriname (South America) and the Netherlands. The trafficker was briefly heard then released.⁷⁰



UNITED KINGDOM

November 9, 2016

Plymouth, England, United Kingdom

Convicted to £ 4705 (€ 5230) for detention of eggs of barn owl (*Tyto alba*, Appendix II), little tern (*Sternula albifrons*), ciril bunting (*Emberiza cirilus*), red throated diver (*Gavia stellata*) and avocet (genus *Recurvirostra*). He started at the age of 5 with crow eggs. Today, William Beaton is 73 years old. 500 eggs of rare birds were seized at his home. The investigation in United Kingdom began after a first conviction in Scotland to a fine of £ 4000 (€ 4450) for transport of eggs of great skua (*Stercorarius skua*). "The number of eggs in my collection may seem excessive but it is the result of several decades of research" Beaton told the Court. The eggs were handed over to a museum.⁷¹



Sternula albifrons



Tyto alba

© Klaus Rassinger und Gerhard Cammerer

Pangolins

The four African pangolin species (*Manis gigantea*, *M. temminckii*, *M. tetradactyla*, *M. tricuspis*) et the four Asian species (*Manis crassicaudata*, *M. culionensis*, *M. javanica* and *M. pentadactyla*) are listed under CITES Appendix I since January 2, 2017.

**The seizure from
October 1st to December 31th
is equal to 14,729 pangolins**
Taking the average weight of 3 pangolins
for 1 kg of scales.

**“On the Trail” n°15
The value of scales on the black market,
according to media or official sources**

Continent	Country	US\$/kg	Réf
Africa	Kenya	592	8
	Uganda	50	11
	Zimbabwe	7/unit	20
Asia	India Uttara- khand	104	33
	India Tamil Nadu	1500	35
	India Kerala	7300	37

**“On the Trail” n°15
The value of a pangolin on the black market,
according to media or official sources**

Continent	Country	US\$/animal	Réf
Africa	Zimbabwe	7000	19
Asia	China	1969	22
		318	27
	Indonesia	600	43
	Malaysia	403	45

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

**October 11, 2016
Pretoria, Gauteng Province, South Africa
Protrack’s logbook**

A Temminck’s ground pangolin had been seized in Pretoria before being offered for sale at the Faraday Muti Market in Johannesburg.

The range of the Cape pangolin or Temminck’s ground pangolin in South Africa covers the provinces of North Cape, North-West and KwaZulu-Natal. He likes savanna, he shuns deserts and forests,

needing an annual rain of 250 to 1400 mm. He appreciates private reserves where he should be protected from human predation. The gestation period is 105 to 140 days. Twins are very rare. Couples are fleeting. They do not survive mating. Yet Protrack specifies that the male can take care of the juvenile for 3 or 4 weeks after the 3 months of breastfeeding. In all cases, young people leave the parent (s) after one year. The life of Temminck’s ground pangolin could be 20 years and more, Protrack said.¹

**Mid October 2016
Johannesburg, Gauteng Province, South Africa**
Acting on information, the police seized a pangolin in a desperate state. Despite intensive care, he could not be saved.²

**October 20, 2016
Lianjiang, Province of Guangdong, South Africa**
Forest services set free 21 pangolins into a dry natural environment far from human activities. Witnesses noticed with satisfaction that the small mammals quickly began climbing the trees.³

**October 22, 2016
Acornhoek, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa**
Miscellaneous
- Three guys are arrested while bargaining pangolins which were later released in a safe place.
- One guy is arrested for bushmeat poaching and copper stealing.⁴

**December 4, 2016
Makhado, Limpopo Province, South Africa**
Seizure of 2 pangolins. The 2 men were also carrying a gun and ammunition.⁵

CAMEROON



**December 11, 2016
Tibati, Adamaoua Region, Cameroon**
Conviction in first instance of Nwana Doh Felix and Ndjohou Jean Marie to 3 months imprisonment each and to 8 million CFA francs (\$ 12,900 US) in fines and damages for transport and trade of pangolin scales (see “On the Trail” n°14, p.32). One of the condemned, nicknamed Eto’o, enjoys social prestige in the city of Tibati, 28,000 inhabitants. Tibati is close to the Natural Park of Mbam Djerem and serves as a back base for wildlife traffickers flourishing in Yaoundé and Bertoua.⁶

**December 21, 2016
Yaoundé, International Airport, Cameroon**
Based on confidential information, seizure of 670 kg of scales as they were about to board a flight heading for Malaysia. This is the first time that such a major seizure has been made in the airport, according to the customs officer. It appears that insiders arranged for the truck transporting the scales to get close to the plane. Three arrests.⁷

KENYA

November 9, 2016

Nairobi International Airport, Kenya

Seizure of 100 kg of scales worth 6 million shilling (\$ 59,200 US) or \$ 592 US/kg. The suitcase came from Cameroon.

The daily Star talks about a value of 60 million shilling or \$ 6000 US per kilo which is not consistent with the price on the local black market.⁸



NAMIBIA

November 11, 2016

Oshakati, Oshana Region, Namibia

Pangolin's divagation. Our dear unknown pangolin in the north of the country strolled through the streets of Oshakati. "He was captured somewhere and locked up here" say the highest authorities in the city. He managed to escape. The undocumented was picked up by the police.⁹

Mid December 2016

Katima Mulilo, Zambezi Region, Namibia

Seizure of a pangolin skin. Arrest of a Chinese national and 5 years jail sentence or \$ 20,000 N fine (1429 US\$).¹⁰



UGANDA

October 9, 2016

Gulu, Northern Region, Uganda

Seizure of 33 kg of scales. Two arrests.¹¹



He is the seller. He's a Congolese. She is the buyer. The basic price for the kilo was \$ 50 US.

End of October 2016 Northern Uganda



15 kg of scales and 2 torturers. The scales are torn off the animals previously thrown alive in boiling water.¹²

November 15, 2016

Uganda

Seizure of a pangolin. Two hearings. In bad shape, the mammal is in care and under observation at the zoo. It is not tomorrow that he will make a 12-hour drive to be released into Murchison National Park.¹³

December 7, 2016

Northern Region, Uganda

Four traffickers arrested and one pangolin saved.¹⁴

Mid-December 2016

Uganda

A man arrested. Three to four pangolins scalded, skinned and scaled.¹⁵



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

December 21, 2016

Garamba National Park, Orientale Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Seizure of 73 kg of pangolin scales and 2 pieces of raw ivory.¹⁶



ZAMBIA

October 31, 2016

Zambia

Release of 3 pangolins that had been seized from the trafficker's things. A fourth is still under antibiotics. David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation was associated with the operation.¹⁷



© David Shepherd Wildlife Found.

ZIMBABWE

November 30, 2016

Zimbabwe

18 months. 7.1 kg. Now released into the wild. He weighed 4.9kg on arrival at the Tikky Hywood Trust based in Harare on July 7th (picture below).¹⁸

December 19, 2016

Mutare, Manicaland Province, Zimbabwe



29-year-old Moses Piwa was sentenced to 9 years in prison for the attempted sale of a dead pangolin for \$ 7,000 US in Sagambe shopping center at 8 PM on November 30.¹⁹

December 21, 2016

Hwange, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe

Arrest of 3 men who were trying to sell 145 pangolin scales for \$ 7 US each.²⁰



Pangolin Men Campaign avec Tikky Hywood Trust / © Adrian Steirn

CHINA

China Crazy about Pangolin

In the 60s, 70s, and 80s, slightly less than 200,000 pangolins were caught each year in the provinces of Fujian, Yunnan, Guangxi, Guizhou, and Guangdong. Between 1980 and 1990, the country nearly exhausted its pangolin resources. Starting from 1993, to satisfy demand, China turned to 2 countries that host the *Manis pendactyla* species, Viet Nam and Myanmar. Only the scales of this species are cited in the traditional pharmacopoeia of the People's Republic of China.



In 2007, the central administrations covering forests, food, health, traditional Chinese medicine, trade and industry, and family planning published a "notice on strengthening the management of the medicinal products of saiga antelope, pangolins, and rare snakes". This notice specifies that the use of pangolin parts should be restricted to clinical treatments in designated hospitals. Starting from 2007, pediatric establishments and maternity hospitals were no longer approved. Traditional Chinese medicine does not recognize the positive effects of prescribing pangolin scales on lactation and child growth. However, 716 hospitals are authorized to prescribe pangolin. The central forestry administration allowed an overall quota of 186 tons of scales divided into all the provinces between 2008 and 2015. The Chinese national NGOs consider this official open-source figure is "shocking", and rightly so. 186 tons are equal to 550,000 pangolins or so. The leading provinces in terms of consumption are Beijing, Zhejiang, Shanghai, Jilin, and Guangdong. On its website devoted to "nature conservation", the city of Shanghai (20 million inhabitants) published the list of 11 institutions that use pangolin scales - 7 laboratories, 3 hospitals and clinics, and Shanghai Zoo.

Since March 1st, 2008, all drugs and related products that contain pangolin must be stamped with an official label. From 2001, this obligation has been experimented on all products containing musk. For pangolins, this obligation has not been fulfilled. Most of the by-products are made in the province of Jilin. In many pharmacies in Beijing, pangolin products are not stamped. A similar inconsistency has been observed on e-commerce sites. For the 66 specialties available, there are a lot of suspicions about their legal origin and compatibility with traditional Chinese medicine. Chinese laboratories obtain most of their supplies from Africa now.

They use misleading advertising. The miracle Qianlie Tongyu capsules contain 0.05 gram of scale crushing that is chemically equivalent to the keratin in human nails. You'd really have to be naive or misinformed to consider that such nonsense could have any positive impact on health.

The conclusions of this important document are clear: Pangolins should be removed from the pharmacopoeia of the People's Republic of China. The medical use of pangolins should be banned. Seized pangolin scales should be publicly destroyed. The re-entry of seized pangolin scales onto the market should be strictly prohibited. In the event that the seized pangolin scales are sold, the Departments involved should be severely punished.

We would like to thank the Biodiversity Conservation and Green Development Foundation for conducting this study, and the EIA for sending it to us.

October 2, 2016
Tengchong City, Yunnan Province, China

Seizure at the border to Myanmar of 6.302 kg of pangolin scales and a patch of one baby elephant skin. The official communiqué stresses that “other medication” than pangolin scales can be used.²¹

October 26, 2016
Jiangmen, Province of Guangdong, China

International trafficking in pangolins. Sentencing for transshipment and smuggling of frozen pangolins to 5 years prison time and a 200,000 yuan (\$ 29,497 US) fine for the 2 sailors who were promised 15,000 yuan (\$ 2212 US) compensation per voyage. End of August 2015, 2674 frozen pangolins worth 35.7 million yuan (\$ 5,265,355 US) had been found on the ship registered in Zuhai, Guangdong province (see “On the Trail” n° 10, p 30). Another maritime expedition and meeting in the high sea with a foreign vessel had a few weeks earlier already enabled to transfer 360 parcels of pangolin.²²



November 1st, 2016
Sai Kung, Hong Kong, China

Smuggling by sea is increasing in Hong Kong. This time police seized 25 boxes of frozen meat at 2:30 a.m. It was worth \$ 1.45 million HK (\$ 188,000 US). Transshipment operations were underway. A boat and a truck were seized. Eight men are on the run.²³

November 2, 2016
Futian Port, Province of Guangdong, China

5 p.m., rush hour. A man crosses the canal “nothing to declare” with a small black backpack. Inside 5 kg of damp slices resembling shells and emitting a strong smell. “Some of the pieces are as sharp as diamonds.” A closer look confirms they are scales.²⁴



November 2, 2016
Tengchong Xian, Province of Yunnan, China
Border to Myanmar.

Second border police operation on the spot. Seizure of 7.9 kg of “dead and hard leaves” that turn out to be scales. The man admits having gone to Myanmar to buy them.²⁵



November 8, 2016
Fangchenggang, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China

Conviction of a Vietnamese who has snuck in 15 live pangolins by river (see “On the Trail” n° 13 p. 38).²⁶



November 30, 2016
Xian de Changting, Fujian Province, China

Seizure of a 4,5 kg pangolin with a commercial value of 2200 yuan (\$ 318 US). A man had bought the animal to treat his wife. Eating pangolin meat could cure the lupus according to the hearsay.²⁷

December 10th 2016
Shanghai, China

Discovery by scanner and seizure of 3 tons of pangolin scales inside a maritime container containing wood, distributed in 101 bags and corresponding according to the Chinese customs to the death of 5,000 to 7,500 pangolins. Scales have also the up-setting and deceptive reputation to be aphrodisiac. The network worked since 2 years. It is the last big seizure before the coming into force of the pangolin up-listing in Appendix I. Starting from January 2nd 2017, sanctions will be more severe for the traffickers.²⁸

December 12 and 17, 2016
Shenyang, Liaoning Province, China

- Seizure of 11 live pangolins and a fake license plate in a car and arrest of the driver identified as Lee.

- On the same road, seizure of 20 live pangolins and 11 fake license plates in a car. Arrest of 2 young men identified as Panmou and Wei Mou.²⁹

December 20, 2016

Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China

In a car, customs seized 53 kg of scales split into 28 suspicious packages shaped like bolsters, wrapped up in several layers of yellow and black plastic meant to cover up the strong smell. According to the accounts of the customs officers, "There are translucent or opaque odorous objects shaped like a shell with a diameter of about 3 cm, and 2 mm thick. An examination revealed that these were pangolin scales." "When traffickers are caught with scales in their baggage, they say that they're "chips", a customs officer said. A man from Hong Kong was arrested. The police already had a file on him.³⁰



INDIA

October 2016

India

A pangolin scale and tiger parts smuggler is subject of an Interpol notice. Jay Tamang alias Passang Limi had been arrested and put in jail in September 2015, and released under bail in November. Since he has been living undercover and has never answered to summons. He is suspected to be pursuing his international trafficking in Nepal or another country neighboring India. Interpol is answering to a request formed by the State of Madhya Pradesh, a pangolin poaching hot spot especially in the Balaghat and Chhindwara districts. Ritesh Sarothiya is in charge of tracking down Tamang. He is deputy conservator for the Madhya Pradesh forests. He was officially rewarded by CITES in Johannesburg for having dismantled a large-scale network of pangolin poaching and smuggling.³¹



Jay Tamang alias Passang Limi

October 25, 2016

Pen Taluka, State of Maharashtra, India

It is a rare event for a pangolin to wander into the Vashigaon village. A local wild animal protector, Dhanaji Thakur wishing to brush aside any misunderstanding or attack to the anteater immediately warned forest services. The pangolin was caught and taken back to his natural environment. Times of India reminds us that the name pangolin comes from the Malaysian word "pengguling" that means "rolled up".³²

Pangolins do not Vote

October 2016

State of Uttarakhand, India

The Saperas were so far specialized in snake trapping. They are opening up to pangolins. They hunt down pangolins with dogs. They sell the kilo of scales for 7000 rupee (\$ 104 US). When police intervene in their camp, the Saperas are mean and violent. Hand in hand with the Kanjars and the Bawarias, they rake the Corbett and Rajaji National Parks. Anonymously testifying, a high rank official from the forest department says "We are often discouraged by politicians to conduct raids or search operations in the colonies of these communities". As elections approach, candidates do not want to antagonize any important vote banks.³³

November 7, 2016

Balaghat District , State of Madhya Pradesh, India

Seizure of 2 kg of pangolin scales. The man was supposed to deliver them to Maharashtra. Since the beginning of the year, 113 people implicated in pangolin trafficking have been arrested by a Special Task Force in 10 Indian States.³⁴

November 14, 2016

Coimbatore, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Seizure of 2.5 kg of pangolin scales. Two arrests. They were attempting to sell the batch for 100,000 Rp i.e. \$ 1500 US per kg.³⁵

December 14, 2016

Tarikere, Karnataka State, India

Seizure on a search warrant of 5.5 kg of scales and 65 kg of sandalwood buried in Boti Chandrashekar's cellar and his wife's, both absent at the time of the incident. Two people on site, Manja and Murugesh, were arrested. The seized exhibits are worth one million rupee or \$ 14,500 US.³⁶

December 22, 2016

Kochi, Ernakulam District, State of Kerala, India

Two arrests, 24 and 26-year-old. This operation that caught them in the act was a coordinated effort of forest officers and the SPCA (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals).³⁷



\$ 7,300 US per kg. Some of the scales still had chunks of flesh attached to them.

INDONESIA

October 15, 2016

Belikai, Province of Western Kalimantan, Indonesia

Seizure of 15 frozen pangolins at the home of a 42-year-old man named Ben alias Ajan. The police spokesperson says pangolin scales contain a substance used in making methamphetamine, that many have a taste for pangolin meat and the skin is used to make shoes and handbags. On Borneo Island natural predators of pangolins are snakes, Sunda clouded leopards and leopard cats.³⁸

October 27, 2016

Pontianak, Province of Western Kalimantan, Indonesia

The 40 "trenggilings" weighed between 2 and 9.5 kg, 200 kg in all. They were scaled and frozen. A little one weighing 2 kg was saved, one of them was stuffed and given to a museum.³⁹



October 29, 2016

Jambi, Province of Jambi, Indonesia

Seizure in a warehouse of 2.5 tons of frozen pangolin meat and 279 kg of scales worth 7 billion rupee (\$ 540,000 US). Three suspects arrested, a man with a Malaysian passport and 2 locals from Jambi only known under the initials YKY, 44 years old and WMA, 40. "The case keeps getting bigger" notices a police spokesperson while showing the 20 bags of scales. The business also dealt in drugs. Crushed

pangolin scales are also an ingredient in illegal fabrication of methamphetamine in China. Despite resounding seizures, the regional BKSDA branch complains of a lack of human and financial means. "We have 2 million hectares to watch over and only 19 agents". They deplore a lack of coordination with the law department. The 35 pangolins saved from trafficking on 21 August 2013 (see "On the Trail" n°2 p. 24) are still under responsibility of the BKSDA. The public prosecutor in charge of the case has not yet given orders to release them.⁴⁰

November 20, 2016

Sibolangit, Province of North Sumatra, Indonesia

He was captured a few days earlier. He was rapidly released after being seized at a farmer's home who faces a fine worth 100 million rupee, that is \$ 7400 US.⁴¹



November 23, 2016

Jambi, Province of Jambi, Indonesia

Destruction by incineration and burying of 4.7 tons of pangolin meat and 292 kg of scales.⁴²



December 14, 2016

Kaba Wetan, Kepahiang Kabupaten, Bengkulu Province, Indonesia

The man on a motorbike was rushing into the night. He was carrying 3 plastic bags. He was arrested by a police patrol. He managed to escape into the sides. Inside the bags there were 3 live pangolins (30 kg). They will be released in the Bukit Kaba Natural Park. Their market value is approximately \$ 600 US per unit.⁴³

LAOS

December 13, 2016

Ban Tha Deua, Bolikhamsai Province, Laos

Seizure of 165 pangolins in poor condition, weighing one ton in all, in 2 minivans coming from Thailand and heading to Viet Nam and China. Three arrests. The day before Christmas, the 121 survivors went on a new car trip that went all the way into the heart of a forest. They were split up there.⁴⁴

MALAYSIA

December 30, 2016

Changlun, State of Kedah, Malaysia

Seizure of 109 specimens. They were in bags in a shed next to a house. The few young specimens (one kilo on average) were already dead. The adults (5 kg on average) were still alive. The local value of the batch is 196,200 ringgit (\$ 44,000 US). They were awaiting delivery by smugglers responsible for sneaking them into Thailand. Arrest of a 49-year-old man.⁴⁵



NEPAL

October 16, 2016

Panauti, Central Development Region, Nepal

Seizure. This Sunday, Sonam Singh Waiba, 28 years old, was transporting 1.7 kg of scales.⁴⁶

November 23, 2016

Katmandu, Central Development Region, Nepal

Seizure of 180 g of pangolin scales, blackbuck horns (*Antelope cervicapra*) and 4 deer antlers. Two arrests, 29 and 32 years old, in the Holy Temple Tree hotel.⁴⁷



THAILAND

November 24, 2016

Mueang Ratchaburi District, Province of Ratchaburi, Thailand

Seizure in a truck of 217 live pangolins. They came from the South, maybe Malaysia.⁴⁸

VIET NAM

October 4, 2016

Province of Thai Binh, Viet Nam. In direction of Hanoi

Seizure of 61 pangolins. Three didn't survive the trip. Another is in severe hypothermia. The box was too close to an icebox at the back of the truck. The massacre continued. When they arrived to the overcrowded CUC Phuong shelter or just after, a few others died of the cold and humidity because of the melting ice in the trailer, suffocation inside the piles of boxes, digestive problems because of the force-feeding and stress. A happy event was found when one of the boxes was opened. A female gave birth to a young one a few hours earlier. Turtles were also found in the truck (cf. page 20) arrested at dawn by economic police and national environmental police.⁴⁹



Miracles can happen anytime, anywhere.

October 20, 2016

Yen Mo, Province of Ninh Binh, Viet Nam

Seizure of 7 pangolins particularly mistreated. Bloodstains, scales ripped off or trimmed.⁵⁰



November 8, 2016

Hai Ha, Province of Quang Nin, Viet Nam

Seizure inside a truck of 149 pangolins for a total weight of 738 kg, 172 kg of pangolin scales and 105 big-headed turtles (*Platysternon megacephalum* Appendix I). The driver, a 33-year-old, was arrested.⁵¹

November 13, 2016

Province of Ca Mau, Viet Nam

46 pangolins return to freedom.⁵²



November 23, 2016

Ninh Binh, Province of Ninh Binh, Viet Nam

Seizure of 7 live pangolins (33,5 kg). The 36-year-old woman had come by train from the Gia Loc District in the Hai Duong province. She was riding in a taxi with the pangolins.⁵³

November 28, 2016

Dien Chau District, Province of Nghe An, Viet Nam

Seizure of 17 pangolins (60 kg). Before being transported in the hospital crates belonging to the NGO Save Viet Nam's Wildlife, they were in bags and Styrofoam boxes. It was a close call for them.⁵⁴



December 11, 2016

Yen Mo District, Ninh Binh Province, Viet Nam

Seized aboard a Toyota Land Cruiser with a set of several license plates of 70 specimens (400 kg) live or dying. Collected in Laos and bound for China. Two arrests.⁵⁵



December 19, 2016

Duy Tien District, Hà Nam Province, Viet Nam

A motorcycle brigade intercepted the vehicle transporting 10 dead pangolins weighing a total of 28.2 kg. The suspect, Tran Van Kien, bought pangolins in the provinces of Ha Tinh and Quang Binh before selling them in restaurants in Hanoi and Hai Phong.⁵⁶

December 29, 2016

Central Viet Nam

54 pangolins were released into the wild under the scientific authority of Cuc Phuong National Park and the Hanoi wildlife refuge.⁵⁷

Primates

Gorilla (*Gorilla* spp.), chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes*), orangutan (*Pongo* spp.) are listed in CITES Appendix I. Macaques (*Macaca* spp.) are in Appendix II except the lion-tailed macaque (*Macaca silenus*) and the Barbary macaque (*Macaca sylvanus*) listed in Appendix I.

AFRICA

CAMEROON

November 21, 2016

Cameroon

Seizure of a chimpanzee. Three arrests. The young monkey is going to join others of his kind in the Ida Sanaga reserve.¹

KENYA

.....

End of november 2016
Sweetwaters Chimpanzee Sanctuary, Laikipia County, Kenya
 Transfer of a 4-year-old solitary chimpanzee from Duhok Zoo in Iraq, 50 km from Mosul, to the Ol Pejeta Sweetwaters Chimpanzee Sanctuary in Kenya. Despite the horrors of war, he was well fed, but was locked up in a tiny cage. His transfer was made possible by the patience and dedication of Spencer Sekyer, a professor from Edmonton in Canada, who was a former volunteer carer at Duhok Zoo, in 2013, and of Jane Goodall, Iraqi Kurdistan Prime Minister Nechirvan Barzani, Daniel Stiles, manager of the Project to End Great Ape Slavery, Jason Mier, director of Animals Lebanon, a former United States ambassador to Iraq, the Canadian journalist Andrea Huncar, animal rights activist Cheryl Benard, Kenyan health authorities, and the entire reception and veterinary team of the Ol Pejeta Conservancy. Please forgive us if we've forgotten anyone. Thanks to all of them, 'Manno'- the victim of an abduction in Africa and of ape trafficking to the Middle East- returned to his continent, and could once again aspire to freedom one day. Although Kenya is not in the chimpanzee distribution range, when the 1993 civil war forced the Burundi orphan sanctuary to close down, Ol Pejeta took over.²

.....



LIBERIA

End of October, 2016
Zwedru, Grand Gedeh County, Liberia

Thanks to the Liberian forest services, to the Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP) and the logistical help of the United Nations Organization, a one year old baby chimp was freed and transferred to Zwedru in the South-East of the country in Charlesville near Monrovia in an ad hoc shelter that already is home to 6 of the same species (see " On the Trail " n°14 p. 36).³



UGANDA

October 2016
Kafu, Uganda

Are the skewer sellers on the road between Gulu and Kampala selling baboon meat (*Papio* spp., Appendix II)? The executive director of the UWA (Uganda Wildlife Authority) sparked things off when he declared that some skewer sellers on the Kampala-Gulu express way were forking over baboon meat to their clients calling it antelope meat. "Mchomo" sellers are threatening to block all major roadways in the country in protest. Their union leader claims it to be false and regrets the sudden fall in sales. The risk of Ebola has deterred buyers just as much as deceit regarding the meat. Baboons are protected under national law and by CITES. Before claims from the UWA founded on genetic analysis of meat skewers sold near Kafu, the sellers on the road side would sell 7 cows and 15 goats worth of meat per day. Now they are down to one cow and 3 goats.⁴



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

**October 4, 2016
Kahuzi-Biéga National Park,
Democratic Republic of Congo**

Death of the ranger Jacques Munganga Nzonga, 26 years old, while attempting to protect the Grauer gorillas. Rangers and gorillas are victims of political and ethnical disagreements ruling over the country (see "On the Trail" n°12 p. 41). The upcoming presidential elections are increasing tensions.⁵



**End of October, 2016
Kindu, Province of Maniema, Democratic Republic of Congo**

Seizure of 3 chimpanzees.



4-year-old, male



3-year-old, female



3-year-old, female

After being removed from the poachers dungeons in Kindu, they have joined the forest shelter in Lwiro. There are now 26 of them to have been taken in by the Lwiro shelter. That is 3 more chimps than during the all the year 2015.⁶

AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**November 8, 2016
Alexandria, State of Virginia, United States of America**

Philip Lloyd, director of de BioChemed Service had organized a delivery of monkey blood to Canada. Declared value of the parcel was of \$ 100 US and it was registered under "human blood". In a separate FedEx envelope, the receiver who was aware of the trick had received a bill for \$ 3090 US. Lloyd pleaded guilty; trial will be held at the end of January 2017. Squirrel monkey blood (*Saimiri* spp., Appendix I or II) is sold for 30 time more than human blood on the international market. To avoid administrative and financial complications, BioChemed Service sent to Canada and South Korea between 2014 and 2016 lab animals' blood labeled human blood. The company specialized in biological products was that way bypassing customs and US Fish and Wildlife Service's rules. The attorney general highlighted the fact that trafficking in animal blood can spread uncontrollable viruses and was therefore a health hazard for humans.⁷



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INDONESIA

ORANGUTANS



October 1, 2016
Sangatta, East Kalimantan Province, Indonesia
 Seizure of a male orangutan about 2 years old by the rangers of the Kutai National Park and the BOSF (Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation). This is the sixth since early September.⁸

Beginning of October 2016
Province of Central Kalimantan, Indonesia

The young orangutan was in a bag of rice. His 2 abductors were armed with an airgun. They were remanded in custody. The baby is on the way to the refuge of Pangkalan.⁹

Mid-October 2016
Central Bagendang, Central Kalimantan Province, Indonesia¹⁰



He is the 17th in 3 months to be saved from prison in villages. He is a young male.

Mid-October 2016
Indonesia

The female baby was treated as the child or the doll of the family. After a few years “the adopted daughter” would have been very difficult to raise with the widening gap between the parents and their “daughter” or perhaps she would have ended up in a corner tied to an old tire or discarded in the middle of nowhere.

As the nicknamed “Anjas” (see “On the Trail” n° 14 p 39) who was soap bathed several times a day and dressed with luxury baby clothes, “Bianca” will return to her biological rhythm, orangutan culture, her tree climbing skills and other social codes of her species.¹¹

October 19, 2016

Kehje Sewen forest, Kabupaten de Kutai Timur, Oriental Kalimantan Province, Indonesia

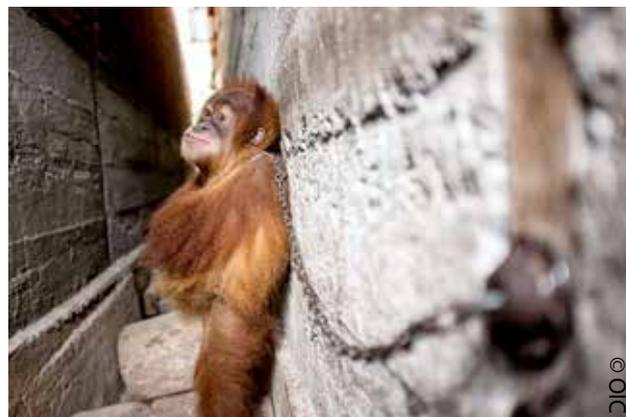
Return to the forest for 5 orangutans aged 10 to 24. The forest of Kehje Sewen covers more than 8000 km². In principle, human activity within this woodland is not likely to harm orangutans.¹²



October 20, 2016

Kabupaten de Aceh Barat Daya, Aceh Province, Indonesia

Seized and secured.¹³



The young male was chained by the neck between the walls of 2 neighbouring houses.

October 29, 2016

Langkat rency, North Sumatra Province, Indonesia

Rescue of an orangutan.¹⁴ He went astray in an industrial plantation. 60 air-gun bullets in the body and one in the eye.



End of October 2016

Ujong Padang, Aceh Province, Indonesia



Trapped in clear-cut plots planted with oil palms, the 2 specimens were anaesthetised and transported on man's back to the Leuser Mountains by a team from Aceh BKSDA (Balai Konservasi Sumber Daya Alam) and HOCRU (Human Orangutan Conflict Response Unit).¹⁵

November 13, 2016
Sampit, Central Kalimantan Province, Indonesia



One year old male, the 56th this year to be taken in by the COP (Centre for Orangutan Protection).¹⁶

November 15, 2016
Jakarta, Indonesia

Disappointment. 14 orangutans seized in Thailand had been duly returned to Indonesia with great fanfare and the assurance that they would be returned to the forest or handed over to a specialized shelter. But 8 are rotting in a zoo in Jarkata.¹⁷

November 18, 2016
Sandai, Western Kalimantan Province, Indonesia¹⁸



Eighteen months old female tied by the neck. "Found" by her jailer amidst oil palms. Released.

End of November 2016
Bukit Baka Bukit Raya National Park, Western Kalimantan Province, Indonesia
 One male and one 8-year-old female were released in a forest area where they should be self-sufficient.
 Before returning to freedom, they have completed a wildlife apprenticeship course 4 years for the male and 3 for the female in the refuge to which they had been entrusted after a forced stay with humans who had turned them into objects.¹⁹



End of November 2016
Sumber Priangan, Ketapang Kabupaten, Western Kalimantan Province, Indonesia

Rescue of a female orangutan about 3 years old wandering with a rope around the neck in a mixed plantation of oil palms and rubber trees. She was anaesthetized by members of the International Animal Rescue (IAR) and taken to the Ketapang Shelter, West Kalimantan.²⁰



December 6, 2016
Batu Mbelin SOCP refuge, Kabupaten of Deli Serdang, Province of North Sumatra, Indonesia



These 2 male and female individuals whose exact origin and age are unknown were living behind closed doors at the home of a public figure protected from law by connexion with the political microcosm. According to the Sumatran Orangutan Conservation Program (SOCP), increasingly frequent prosecution of orangutan kidnappers has a deterrent effect and is causing more and more people to return orangutans to the hands of authorities or NGOs.²¹

End of December 2016
Sukadana, North Kayong Regency, West Kalimantan Province, Indonesia

Four rescues:
 - A mother, her baby in a rubber plantation and an adolescent who was directly released in the National Park of Gunung Palung, 4 km walk from there. Immediately arrived, he went out of the wooden cage and tucked himself up there.
 - An orphan of 3 to 4 months who had been adopted we do not know in which circumstances by a villager of Randau Jekak. ^{21bis}

Indonesia, except orangutans

Mid-October 2016
Bandung, West Java Province, Indonesia

Seizure of 34 slow lorises (*Nycticebus coucang*, Appendix I), 2 civets (*Viverridae* family) and a protected turtle offered for sale on Facebook. The slow lorises were captured by hunter-gatherers around Garut, Sumedang, Cililin, Cianjur, Sukabumi and Tasikmalaya, West Java Province, and sold to wholesalers at a price of 50,000 Rp (\$ 3.80 US) per unit. Each was then resold between 200,000 (\$ 15 US) and 500,000 Rp (\$ 38 US) on the Internet or on local markets. Arrest of 3 hunters and 2 traffickers.²²



All are dehydrated and skinny. Several have already had the teeth pulled out to avoid bites. Letting them back into the wild will be impossible.



Five are pregnant. One of them has 3 air-rifle bullets in the head.

They need care day and night. A donation of a few euros, dollars or pounds will be appreciated:

<https://www.internationalanimalrescue.org/>



November 5, 2016

Sibolangit, North Sumatra Province, Indonesia

Release of a slow loris (*Nycticebus coucang*, Appendix I).²³

November 17, 2016

Pecawan, Medan, North Sumatra Province, Indonesia



Soon the slow loris (*Nycticebus coucang*, Appendix I) should see something other than bars. He was voluntarily handed over to the BKSDA, the Authority for the Protection of Wild Fauna, through the NGO Scorpion (see "On the Trail" n°14 p.42).²⁴

KOWEIT

November 13, 2016

Koweit

The orangutan baby, about one year old, has not yet been repatriated to Indonesia. He was seized 6 months ago on the passenger seat of a drug addict driver (see "On the Trail" n°14 p.43). The little orangutan was also drugged. The extradition process is unnecessarily long. The Indonesian NGO Scorpion is worried and impatient "The longer we wait, the harder it will be to rehabilitate him to wildlife".²⁵

LAOS

End of November 2016

Vientiane, Laos

Seizure of 2 southern pig-tailed macaques (*Macaca nemestrina*, Appendix II) and a stump-tailed macaque (*Macaca arctoides*, Appendix II) in a Buddhist temple. They had been there for 8 years, in pitiful cages, in the heart of the capital of Laos. They had to be anaesthetized before being taken to the Laos Wildlife Rescue Center (LWRC).²⁶



THAILAND

October 11, 2016

Thailand

Hand over of a young dusky leaf monkey female (*Trachypithecus obscurus*, Appendix II). The favorite prey of leopards continue to be the popular pet in Thailand. Her host family agreed to return her to the WFFT Wildlife Rescue Center. She shows signs of malnutrition and does not know what a tree is. She is 7 months old; in the wild they stay clinging to their mother until the age of 2.²⁷



December 2016

Thailand

Rescue of 2 baby orangutans and arrest of a trafficker who tried to sell them for \$ 21,000 US each online. The Freeland Foundation helped the police in the successful conclusion of this affair. It will continue its efforts so that the 2 survivors a few months old will be sent back to Indonesia, their home country.²⁸

End of december 2016

Thailand



Voluntary handover. WFFT has just picked up a young Bengal slow loris (*Nycticebus bengalensis*, Appendix I). It is half paralyzed. It suffers from a metabolic bone disease that affects animals in captivity that are

not fed properly and kept away from sunlight or natural lighting. Its bones are deformed. The prognosis is not good.²⁹

VIET NAM

October 2016

Viet Nam

- **October 4, Nghe An Province.** Seizure of a gibbon (*Hylobatidae* spp., Appendix I) and a red shanked douc (*Pygathrix nemaeus*, Appendix I).

- **October 12, Binh Duong Province.** Seized in of a hotel a stump-tailed macaque (*Macaca arctoides*, Appendix II).

- **October 12, District of My Duc, Hanoi.** Seizure in 2 stores next to a pagoda of 2 macaques (*Macaca* spp., Appendix II).

- **October 14, Duc Linh District, Binh Thuan Province.** Seizure at home of 2 pig-tailed macaques (*Macaca nemestrina*, Appendix II).

- **October 18, Van Thang, Khanh Hoa Province.** Seizure and release of a northern pig-tailed macaque (*Macaca leonina*, Appendix II). He had been spotted chained in front of a house.

- **October 21, Province of Lam Dong.** Release of a pig-tailed macaque recently seized in a restaurant where he was chained.³⁰

ENV alert number: 1800 1522



November 10, 2016

Kontum, Kontum Province, Viet Nam

Buddhists like to cage wild animals. This time, it is a gibbon in the corner just released from a pagoda. ENV deplors the fact that the faithful bring wild animals as an offering. The pools near the pagodas are full of turtles.³¹

November 10, 2016

Province of Ba Ria-Vung Ta, Viet Nam



facebook

Seizure of a black-shanked douc langur (*Pygathrix nigripes*, Appendix I).³²

Completely satisfied with not being on sale on Facebook anymore. Taken to the refuge of Cat Tien. One arrest.

OCEANIA

AUSTRALIA

November 26, 2016

Helensburgh, New South Wales State, Australia

Theft of 3 pygmy marmosets (*Cebuella pygmaea*, Appendix II) in Symbio Animal Park: an adult, a 10-month-old female, and a 4-week-old baby. They were found quickly. The family is back together again and it is hoped that the upset mother will be able to breastfeed again her offspring soon. Two arrests, 23 and 26-year-old. The Sydney Daily Telegraph says that a specimen can sell for \$ 5,000 A on the black market.³⁵



December 7, 2016

Soc Trang, Soc Trang Province, Viet Nam

Seizure in a hospital of 2 pig-tailed macaques (*Macaca leonina*, Appendix II) and a 3rd one in a private home. The 3 were released into the Cu Lao Dung Forest.³³

December 13, 2016

Thanh Hoa, Thanh Hoa Province, Viet Nam



Rescue of a loris (*Nycticebus* spp., Annexe I) for sale on Facebook.³⁴



Gorilla, cf. page 110

Felines

Leopard (*Panthera pardus*), tiger (*Panthera tigris*), jaguar (*Panthera onca*) and ocelot (*Leopardus pardalis*) are in Appendix I. Lion (*Panthera leo*) and puma (*Puma concolor*) are in Appendix II.

LEOPARDS

AFRICA

CAMEROON

November 3, 2016

Dschang, West Region, Cameroon

Seizure of 2 skins and 14 ivory trinkets. Two arrests, 42 and 52-year-old. One of them is a carver. He runs a store. The other person is a village chief in Bafou.¹

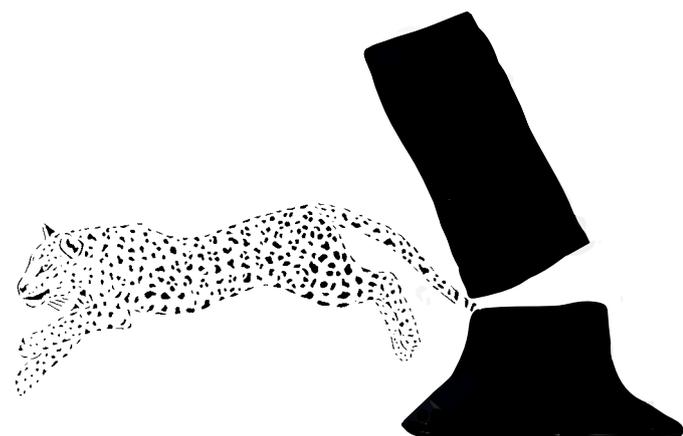


GABON

November 9, 2016

Oyem, Woleu-Ntem Province, Gabon

The man turned up at the hotel at night and found himself face-to-face with individuals from the criminal investigation department. They asked him to open a cardboard box that he was holding. There were pelts of what were formerly 2 beautiful leopards inside. Yet another guy working in the forest industry, and part-time in poaching. Edouard works at the forest company Bordamur. Bordamur is a Malaysian company—Gabon's second-largest employer with 30,000 employees. The company manages over a million hectares in the northwestern part of the country, with number of okoumé and ozigo trees.²



November 27, 2016

Makokou, Ogooué-Ivindo Province, Gabon

The authorities have had 31-year-old Jenny Cédric Gnaziet Indemet and 29-year-old Cyrile Nguel on their radar for a long time. They finally fell into the trap set for them by the investigative services. The people who bought the 3 skins were official agents on assignment. The haggling took place at the bus station. The 3 leopards did not escape death, but their skins have escaped trafficking.³

KENYA

November 24, 2016

Nakuru, Nakuru County, Kenya

Sentenced to 2 years in prison and 80,000 shillings (\$ 790 US) in fine for transporting 2 leopard skins in May 2012. The man has 14 days to appeal.⁴



ASIA

INDIA

October 20, 2016

Seoni District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

The Seoni-Barghat bus was searched. A man named Namdeo had 4 leopard paws in his bag. He obtained them from a man named Kawi from Balaghat. He is nowhere to be found. Imran Khan, a local wildlife specialist, confirms that tiger and leopard claws are used by some locals for tantric rituals to get wealthy and feel powerful.⁵

October 21, 2016

Rishikesh, Dehradun District, State of Uttarakhand, India

In a car, seizure of 2 leopard skins over 2.70 m long. Two arrests.⁶

October 25, 2016

Sehore District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

Seizure of a skin, 2 motorcycles, and a rifle. The 4 suspects, including a shady police officer and a teacher, came to deliver the pelisse to a monk in an ashram.⁷

October 29, 2016

Manda Deer Park, State of Jammu and Kashmir, India

An adult leopard pelt was tracked down in a bag. It was 2.56 m long.⁸

November 2, 2016

Similipal, State of Odisha, India

Seizure of a pelt near Similipal Reserve. Two arrests in a roadside restaurant. The death of the adult leopard was very recent. Three accomplices took off.⁹

Lynching

November 3, 2016

Wadi, Surat district, State of Gujarat, India

A live leopard trapped in a cage was drenched in kerosene by several hundreds of hotheads. They then proceeded with burning him alive. To be sure that he was had, his burnt body was then taken out of the cage and burned again. It is suspected that the animal killed a 7-year-old girl a few days earlier. It was the second time in 15 days that a leopard attacked a child in the village. The family received 400,000 rupee (\$ 5,800 US) in compensation. Wadi is the hometown of Ganpat Vasawa, the State Minister of Forests and Tourism.¹⁰

November 24, 2016

Mandawar, Gurugram district, 220 km from



New-Delhi, State of Haryana, India
We'll never go to Mandawar again

A new leopard lynching. The 3-year-old leopard was panic-stricken and cornered in the village. Tens then hundreds of shouting villagers went after it, with clubs and axes. It is said that it wounded about 10 of its attackers in its legitimate self-defense. It was clubbed to death in a few minutes. A "victory march" blocked train traffic for 20 minutes on the Shona-Faridabad express route. The guards who arrived on scene were also beat up with the sticks. They had trouble recovering the burned body. The forests of Bandhwari, Mangar Bani, and Damdama cover 5,000 ha. They are day after day encroached by human activities; thirty or so leopards are living there.¹¹

November 29, 2016

Sayalkudi, Ramanathapuram District, Tamil Nadu State, India

The district of Ramanathapuram is mostly known for its seahorse and sea cucumber trafficking. However 2 men, 36-year-old Nizamudhin and 32-year-old Anish came from Kerala to purchase the skin of a leopard that was 5 or 6 years old.

They are in custody. The person whose home was used for the deal was also arrested. The one who brought the pelt to the scene, a man named Ismail, is on the run.¹²

Beginning of December 2016

Rajaji tigers Reserve, Uttarakhand State, India



A goat is tied to a tree. Three sheds are set up with 3 men armed with anaesthetic rifles. Cameras are hidden in the reserve. Breeders' wives are forbidden to enter but they come anyway to cut off the grass for the cattle. Sickles have been seized. Several families were asked not to set foot outside. Several cages-traps are waiting around the crime scene. Which crime? A leopard is accused of having killed and partially eaten a truck driver who was having a break in the forest at night. The presumed guilty leopard has a neck injury according to the video surveillance images. "Our aim is to trap him, not to kill him", says the director of the Reserve.¹³

A Gift for Leopards

December 20, 2016

While lynching of leopards multiply (cf. "On the Trail" n°11 p. 46, n°13 p. 57, n°14 p. 47), the High Court of Justice orders the suspension of the voluntary slaughter of leopards and tigers. Indian NGOs welcome this decision and hope that an information campaign will be spread in the villages and towns concerned by the proximity of leopards. The plan of prevention and management of conflicts between men and leopards launched in 2011 by the Indian Minister of Environment and Forests after consultation with 35 specialists and institutions is slow to become widely accepted. Some of the recommendations to forestry agents about conflict resolution on the ground are beyond their capacity.

Extracts from the Plan of Prevention and Management of Conflicts between Men and Leopards

"Even in such high human density areas of the order of 200 or more to a sq.km, attacks on humans and domestic animals in most cases can be kept to very low levels."

"The efficacy of capture and translocation of leopards from conflict areas as a mitigation measure is increasingly being questioned."

"Awareness programmes should target the people sharing space with leopards, in human dominated landscapes like sugarcane fields, tea gardens, fruit orchards, etc."

"Leopards are not usually inclined to attack people."

"Leopards, like other wild carnivores may attack in self-defence, and, therefore, it is advisable to avoid provoking them."

"Arbitrary removal of leopards could lead to increased conflict. The space vacated by a captured animal will soon be occupied by another leopard."

"The focus should be on long term solutions. These include better sanitation measures including proper garbage disposal in villages and towns so that feral pig and dog populations are kept under check, and do not attract wild carnivores."

"Immediate response is crucial to manage all conflict situations. A trained Emergency Response (ER) team consisting of an officer not below the rank of Assistant Conservator of Forests, one qualified veterinarian, and a minimum of five trained support staff may be formed in the identified conflict area."

"Each emergency team should be equipped with chemical capture equipment, drugs, appropriate cages, etc. and should wear specially designed uniforms so that they are easily identifiable during the operation."

"Establishing such well advertised ER teams that respond effectively and quickly to conflict situations will help diffuse the usual public outrage and retaliation that invariably follows such conflicts."



Open Area

"If the leopard is on an open area, which could mean barren land, grassland, street, thicket, crop field or woodland, either up on a tree or on the ground, all attempts should be made to keep the crowd and local people from approaching the animal in order to allow him to escape under the cover of darkness. Drug immobilisation should be avoided in open area situations, even if the target presents itself in an appropriate position, since a darted animal in the open can retaliate injuring people."

"The management of the crowd is essential to carry out a rescue operation of the animal. Intervention teams often encounter flash protests that prevent the smooth running of operations."

"The area should be cordoned off with barricades and the public alerted with regular updates about the evolution of the situation".

Semi-confined area

"If the animal is confined in a dry well or trench, a ladder let down into the well will allow the animal to escape in the night. Here too, the public must be kept away from the site, and the rescue team should monitor the situation until the animal escapes."

Closed area

"If the animal is confined in a closed area, for example in a house, garage, under a culvert, or caught in a snare, etc., the surrounding entrance and exits should be made secure to ensure no injury to the public. If the area is adjoining a forested area, the animal should be allowed to escape in the night, but if it is in a high human density area it should be tranquilized."

In Chapter 4 about compensation to farmers for lost livestock, it is expressly mentioned that "after inspection by the forest Guard and the Gram Sevak, the carcass should be taken to a nearby secluded area, the same evening. If a leopard is deprived of its kill, it will make more kills, inflicting more losses on the farmers."

In this remarkable work's appendices, instructions are given which confirm the authors' good knowledge of the behaviour of the leopard and feedback from field operations.

"There should be a gap of 1.5 inches between the cage floor and the lower edge of the trap door to prevent tails getting slammed."

"Trap cage should not be used for long term captivity (no more than one week) and should not have any artificial padding (no rubber etc) as leopards have a tendency to rip off and eat it while struggling to escape. These synthetic materials could get lodged in the stomach of leopards and result in their death." .../...

Situations of conflict between man and leopard occur when a leopard is reported in the vicinity of a village or other human community and a state of collective anxiety, hysterical panic spreads inside, when a leopard is suspected of attacking livestock, other domestic animals or persons.

The annual survey of human mortality by leopard attacks throughout the country is between 30 and 40 people. The ratio between deliberate attacks and accidental attacks is not known.

The guide also contains a chapter on immediate compensation or within a maximum period of 8 days in the event of an attack of people or livestock, pointing out that leopards caught after deliberate attacks on persons should never be released in the natural environment.

An attack is considered deliberate when it is not caused by inopportune behaviour of men, when the leopard attacks a child outside the house or attacks a person sleeping at night in the house.

An attack is called accidental when the leopard follows a dog in a house and finds himself face to face with people, when the leopard hides in a cattle shelter and attacks when he is spotted, when he is hunted or harassed and attacks in defence, when he is surprised by a person engaged in any activities in the forest.

The deliberate attack is most often concluded by the death of the human victim, the accidental attack by his wound.

The general philosophy of the guide is summarised in Chapter 3 on animal management.

"The objective should be to give the animal enough space and opportunity to return to its habitat. The best method of dealing with a wild cat, in the absence of attacks on humans, is not to intervene."

December 11, 2016

Balaghat, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

Ganpat, the gang leader, is a vocational high school teacher. He was blocked on Balaghat Road with 2 assistants and a fresh pelt that was 2 m long, that did not have any bullet marks. The leopard had been poisoned or trapped. The remains of the 'barahsingha', the swamp deer (*Cervus duvaucelii* Appendix I) were found in the home of the suspects. The size of this network and its potential link with States other than Madhya Pradesh are to be examined.¹⁴

December 31, 2016

Baripada, Mayurbhanj District, State of Odisha, India

Three people were on the motorcycle with 2 skins. The authentic pelt was 1.5 m long, and the other one was fake - a disguised skin of an unidentified animal. This is the 3rd seizure in the district since October 31, and the 19th seizure between 2012 and 2016.¹⁵

IRAN

November 6, 2016

Farashband, Fars Province, Iran

A pelt was seized. One arrest.¹⁶

December 1, 2016

Khar Turan National Park, Semnan Province, Iran

In Khar Turan National Park, a shepherd found the carcass of a female leopard about 3 years old. She had been shot dead. This Park is Iran's second largest, covering 14,000 km².¹⁷

NEPAL

October 5, 2016

Lamahi, Mid-Western Development Region, Nepal

A pelt was seized. Two arrests.¹⁸

December 22, 2016

Katmandou, Central Development Region, Nepal

Seizure of a leopard pelt and arrest of 5 young men (17 and 23 years of age). They were coming with the pelt from Swayambhu, on the heights of Kathmandu.¹⁹

OMAN

December 12th 2016

Sultanate of Oman

A few tens of leopards travel the desert and the mountains. The survival of the species depends on this last bastion. A new disturbance invites itself on the ground. Harvesters of the aromatic resin of *Boswellia* entering the composition of perfumes and incenses camp near water sources in the Jabal Samhan Reserve, very appreciated by leopards. To eat, the semi-nomad collectors hunt gazelles and ibex.

The resin enters the composition of incenses. It is also used in aromatherapy and in ayurvedic medicine. *Boswellia* are several times a year bled to collect the resin. This fanatical operation reduces of 70 % the germination of seeds and contributes to the progressive disappearance of "incense trees".²⁰



LEOPARDS - FOLLOWED

EUROPE

GERMANY

November 1, 2016

Hamburg Airport, State of Hamburg, Germany

Seizure of a pelt in a suitcase coming from South Africa.²¹



TIGERS

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

October 10, 2016

Philippolis, Free State Province, South Africa

Vivienne McKenzie was the chief carer at the Laohu Valley Tiger Reserve, where Asian tigers are raised over 378 km². The official purpose of the project is to prepare tigers born in zoos for reintroduction into the forests of China. The pilot project is based in South Africa for economic reasons - land prices are less expensive than in China - biological reasons - prey is abundant - and medical reasons - there are a relatively high number of wildlife veterinarians in South Africa. A male tiger killed Vivienne in unknown circumstances. The male tiger was shot dead. He had been imported into South Africa from China, in 2003. He was a cub at the time.²²

AMERICA

MEXICO

November 21, 2016

Parácuaro, State of Michoacán, Mexico

A 4-year-old female Bengal tiger was captured in a deserted house in the middle of this region that 4 drug trafficking gangs fight over. The starving and dehydrated tigress was transferred to Benito Juárez de Morelia Zoo, 200 km from there.²³

ASIA

INDIA

State of Assam

November 1, 2016

Manas National Park, State of Assam, India

A pelt was seized. Four arrests. It looks like the tiger was killed by poisoning and quickly skinned, gutted, and tanned. It is said that 6 years ago, the victim has been transferred to Manas Park to consolidate - in terms of numbers and genes - the tiger population isolated and hunted down by rampant human colonization. The Indian park intermeshes with the Royal Manas National Park of Bhutan. The entire Park could be a visionary tourist mecca if it wasn't poisoned by all kinds of trafficking.²⁴

Manas National Park: cf. "On the Trail" n°1 p. 21, n°2 p. 45, n° 3 p. 53 and 54, n°7 p. 73, n°13 p. 74, n°14 p. 70, 71 and 92.

Lynching

November 24, 2016

Baghmara, State of Assam, India

The animal was accused of attacking 3 people that day. It was cornered and stabbed to death with daggers and machetes in a rice field. The claws, teeth, and meat were stolen from the carcass. The tiger left Kaziranga Park to find something to eat. Other tigers were spotted on the banks of Brahmaputra River in previous weeks. The forest wardens rushed to the scene before the killing, but they were not able to intervene due to a lack of tranquilizer rifles and the fury of the locals. The remains of the bodies were burned.²⁵



State of Haryana

October 20th 2016

Gurgaon, State of Haryana, India

New arrest of a tough guy, 30 tigers to his credit. Bheema (or Bhima according to the sources) is in the records since 15 years for poaching and meat, skins and 20 kg bones of tigers trafficking in Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh. He is 47 years old and a member of the Bawaria tribe which know-how is recognised regarding trapping, skinning and tanning of skins. Bheema is also an expert in releasing on bail. The man has been arrested at his home where he lives with his wife and 6 children. To escape the policemen better, he disguised himself with a Buddhist monk's saffron yellow dress or as a beggar. The genetic analyses confirmed that the dried meat and the 2 fat's bottles seized at his home come from one or several tigers.



It is not the first time Bheema has the honours of "On the Trail" (cf. n°5 p. 65) and the Times of India. At the time of one of his arrest in 2014, a spokesman of the Administration triumphed: "the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) helped us in this monumental tracking". He added: "He is sharp, and has been able to hoodwink authorities times and again". When will happen the next escape thanks to a new release on bail? Bheema also sells ivory and turtles.²⁶



State of Karnataka

December 8, 2016

Bhadravati, State of Karnataka, India

Accidental discovery of 2 tiger carcasses of unknown sex, about a hundred meters from each other, without any bullet marks or fatal wounds.

15 tigers killed in Karnataka since January 2016.

90 killed in India.

There is talk of poisoning. Forest officials from the Bhadra Tiger Reserve are definitely full of ideas. They're also talking about a disease. In a nutshell, the word 'poaching' is never used.²⁸

December 19, 2016

Bandipur National Park, State of Karnataka, India

The paws and jaws of a poisoned tiger were cut and torn off. He was about 9 years old. Locals remember that another tiger met the same fate in 2010, and a leopard 6 months ago as well.²⁹



State of Madhya Pradesh

October 22, 2016

Kanha National Park, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

A tiger was poached. A few parts of its body were missing. The 4 paws were cut. "We have not disturbed the body from its current position as a dog squad will reach the spot in the morning and investigate. It is not clear yet whether the body is that of male or a female tiger." This is the 23rd tiger poaching since the beginning of the year.³⁰

November 22, 2016

Balaghat District, State of Madhya Pradesh, India

Black magic was in the air. It is well known that tiger paws can make money fall from the sky. The tiger was electrocuted, and its paws were cut off and stolen. The killers then buried the carcass. Men and dogs were looking for them.



A few weeks ago, the exact same story happened to Manegaon. A leopard that collided with a train in Ratapani was mutilated in the same way.

Local wildlife guards remind that according to rumors, the fat of a tiger poached in Satpura last year was known for curing migraines and erection problems (see "On the Trail" n°10 p.40).³¹



December 1, 2016

State of Madhya Pradesh, India

To control the amount of cash in circulation and combat the underground economy, in the beginning of November, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a vast operation to demonetize 500 and 1,000 rupee bills. Citizens had 50 days to exchange these bills for new 500 and 2,000 rupee bills.

An unexpected consequence of this operation is that tiger poaching is on the rise again. Frauds are encouraging gullible villagers to strip tigers of their paws, saying they could use them to cast magic spells to rain money in new currency. Those who pay 10,000 rupee are promised rain of 30,000 rupee (\$ 440 US). The rumor is going around in the Lamta Project area, northern and southern Seoni, and southern Balaghat. Tigers are electrocuted and their paws are amputated. Their cadavers are then buried. One of them was exhumed 200 m from Pench Tiger Reserve. All of its paws were gone. "All of that is because of black magic", deplored an official. "People are looking for easy ways to make money." "There is a belief that you can get wealthy with magic spells using tiger paws." "We'll start awareness campaigns in remote areas."³²



State of Maharashtra

Beginning of October 2016

Nagpur, State of Maharashtra, India

Two sentences: 3 years and 3 months in prison, and 10,000 rupee (\$ 150 US) in fines for killing a tiger in Masondi in 2013.³³



October 15 and 16, 2016

Gondia, State of Maharashtra, India

The seizure of a cub tiger skin led to the arrest of 7 suspects and their custody for 3 days. "It looks like an inter-State racket." "The kingpin is still at large", said a spokesperson from the forestry department. "The seizure of the tiger skin is just the tip of the iceberg", added another officer. Two other pelts are yet to be found, the mother's pelt and the pelt of another cub. The entire family was poisoned.³⁴



November 4th 2016

- North of Brahmapuri, Maharashtra State, India

Trapping of a "problem tigress" accused of having killed a villager and wounded 3 since the end of September. The suspect has been transferred to the Chaprala Reserve, 100 km from where a team of veterinarians and trackers on elephants' back had managed to locate and anaesthetized her.

- Vyankatpur, Maharashtra State, India

Death by electrocution of a tiger. The victim in his hunting range ran into a 440 volts line supplying a water pump in normal use. Sandeep Vaidya, a 20-year-old farmer, had protected his crops with an electric fence on November 1st. The next day at dawn he had discovered the tiger's body, and with the help of 8 neighbours, he had dug a meter-deep hole to bury him. The story does not say whether the gravediggers intended once the affair smothered to reopen the grave and share the remains and profits of the tiger. Rangers had received several reports about the event. It is the ninth suspect death of a tiger in the Chandrapur district since the beginning of the year. "The threat of electrocution is increasingly weighing upon wildlife". The Wildlife Protection Society of India's spokesman raises the alarm.³⁵



November 10, 2016

Umred, State of Maharashtra, India

Acquittal of 4 major poachers and traffickers (cf. "On the Trail" n°1 p. 43, n°2 p. 37 and p. 41, n°4 p. 41 and p. 57, n°7 p. 53 and 57, n°8 p. 47, n°10 p. 40). One of these 4 men, Rauna, heard the good news while he was on the run. He was released on bail and stopped attending his summons. The High Court of Bombay tends to impose increasingly stiffer sanctions on tiger killers and pelt sellers. In contrast, the Court of first instance of Umred was lenient with the 4 rogues. This decision seems to be due to the negligence of the forestry services. They did not show all the reports, exhibits, and testimonies for the prosecution that they had.³⁶



State of Uttarakhand

October 18, 2016

Jim Corbett Tiger Reserve, State of Uttarakhand, India

Hunting down of a tigress said to be a man eater. After one week of tracking on earth, droning in the air and riding elephants, after several unsuccessful attempts to reach her with anaesthetic hypodermic syringes to catch her alive, the decision was made to shoot her on sight. She died.³⁷

State of Uttar Pradesh

October 29, 2016

Rampur District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India

The authorities were ready and waiting for them, with roadblocks and cops on every corner. Sunder Singh and Ompal were arrested as they were approaching a bus stop. They wanted to go to New Delhi with the pelt of an adult tiger in their bag.³⁸

TIGERS - FOLLOWED

FAMILY AFFAIRS

November 29, 2016

Lakhimpur Kheri District, State of Uttar Pradesh, India

Behind bars in Kuttu again.

He thought he was untouchable, in the middle of the small Baheliya group which usually stayed between Dudhwa National Park and the forests of Pilibhit, right by the border with Nepal. He was busy with illegal sandalwood logging, another specialty of the clan. His brother narrowly escaped the dragnet. The last Kuttu escape was particularly romantic. Rumors about it were running all around ministries and other relevant institutions. He is considered as a poaching master by his peers and the police. During his short stays in remand, he was forthcoming about the details of his practices. He almost considers it as art, in 5 acts: locating, snare-setting, boning, stripping, and tanning. The NGOs WPSI (Wildlife Protection Society of India) and SEAT (Save Ecosystem and Tigers) helped to locate him. The Uttar Pradesh special task force and the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau from New Delhi were responsible for his arrest. Cf. "On the Trail" n° 8 p. 49 and n°12 p. 56.³⁹

State of Telangana

November 21, 2016

Bejjur, State of Telangana, India

Two arrests. One of the two is the husband of the "mayor" of the village of Kethini. The other is an employee of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS). He was responsible for finding employment for rural populations. He has been suspended for some obscure reason. There were 2 people with the pelt on the motorcycle. The tiger was 2 years old. The poaching and tanning of the skin were executed by professionals. No holes, no trace, no smell. "We cross-checked the pattern of stripes on the skin with our database of tigers in Kawal Tiger Reserve and in the Kagaznagar forest area." "This animal was killed somewhere else", says a categorical Rammohan. As the head wildlife guard, he knows all the tigers in the area. He thinks that the plunder comes from Maharashtra, a neighboring State. One thing is for sure: the pelt is not from UK T1, known as 'Jay' - one of the largest tigers of Maharashtra, whose identification collar has stopped sending signals since April 2016.⁴⁰



December 3, 2016

Chennur reserve forest, Adilabad district, State of Telangana, India



The carcass of a tiger was found buried. Six people were questioned, one of them was a minor. It is increasingly common for authorities to speak of unintentional poaching. Nomads and farmers try to capture wild boars and rabbits to either protect their crops or to eat them. These poor chaps end up with tiger carcasses to take care of ! In the State of Telangana, electrocution trapping is on the rise. As a precaution, the carcasses of poached tigers are often buried before the skin is prepared, and before all the marketable limbs are amputated and the bones are removed. In India, tigers are not doing well at all. Their mortality increased 25% in 2016 compared to 2015. 86 tiger carcasses have been found and burned. 21 pelts seized since the start of the year.⁴¹

INDONESIA

Mid October 2016

Medan, North Sumatra Province, Indonesia

A tiger pelt was seized. The trafficker was preparing to sell it for 70 million rupee (\$ 7,400 US) to buyers who were actually police officers. Three kilos of pangolin scales were then found in his car, and 2 potential clients were also arrested. The 17,000 islands of the archipelago are among the last of the biodiversity reservoirs on planet Earth.⁴²



THAILAND

Mid December 2016

Thailand

DNA testing on 10 tiger cubs preserved in jars in an outbuilding of the Tiger Temple (cf. "On the Trail" n°13 p. 60) shows that there are no family ties with the 147 live tigers that the Court decision ordered for evacuation. Based on the latest information from the investigation, some or all of them were bought from a zoo in Nakhon Nayok.⁴³

TIGERS - FOLLOWED

VIET NAM

October 27, 2016

Dien Lam Commune, Nghệ An Province, Viet Nam

26-year-old Le Van Duc had a dead tiger in his freezer. He intended to cut him into pieces of steak and legs, and then to stuff him.⁴⁴

November 25, 2016

Thai Nguyen, Thai Nguyen Province, Viet Nam

Seizure of a frozen tiger. 304 kg. Bought for one billion dong (\$ 44,780 US) in the province of Nghe An. Doomed to be cut up, eaten, used for traditional medicine, and decoration. Arrest of Cao Tien Duc and 2 accomplices.⁴⁵

December 23, 2016

Huong Son District, Ha Tinh Province, Viet Nam

Seizure of 120 kg of tiger offal in a freezer in the mountainside home of Nguyen Van Thanh, a 46-year-old man. The man wanted to put together remedies for rheumatism and decrease in sex drive. To obtain these placebo effects, the bones are boiled and the gelatin that seeps out of it is dried and sold as 100 g cubes for about \$ 1,000 US. The NGO ENV (Education for Nature Viet Nam) estimates that in 10 years, it has followed 971 cases of trafficking, transport, sale or advertising for dead or live tigers and of their parts.⁴⁶

EUROPE

UNITED KINGDOM

October 27 and December 5, 2016
Dunfermline, Scotland, United Kingdom

Appeared in Court and sentenced to 250 h of community service. It's always the same old story in court - the suspect was led astray. In the beginning, he went to auction houses to buy spare motorcycle parts. It was just a hobby. Then he was tempted by spare animal parts, especially tiger claws. He sold them for € 120 each on eBay for fun, not for the money. And to top it all off with a touch of employment blackmail, the lawyer Gary Whyte said that if his client were to receive a heavy sentence, he would lose his job in the Rosyth dockyard.⁴⁷



LIONS

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

October 2016

Sabi Sand Game Reserve, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

Despite the petition that Wildlife At Risk (WAR) put on its website, lions that have fallen victim to mange will not receive treatment. The packs in Styx and Nkuhuma are infected. It is not possible to intervene on each of the infected lions. This would involve capture, anaesthesia and skin treatment each time.

Edwin Pierce, the conservation officer at SSW, the Sabi Sand Reserve, consulted 8 veterinarians. They all agree that the sick lions would not be able to handle the stress. The rain that has started to fall brings hope. The long drought has offered conditions for mange to proliferate. But in most cases, the rain could result in self-healing. The situation remains critical. Several lion cubs are dead. The question now is whether certain adults that are too weak to recover should be killed, although each pack only has ten or so individuals at the most.⁴⁸



December 17, 2016

Alldays, Limpopo Province, South Africa

A lion was poached. There's nothing much left on the scene. Human scavengers pillaged its carcass.⁴⁹

Between December 20th and 24th 2016

Potgietersrus, Waterberg District, Limpopo Province, South Africa

Three lions poisoned by chickens sprayed with Temik pesticide in a private Reserve. One of the 3 has been decapitated and 4 legs amputated. His organs have joined the sorcery wardrobe of healers and sorcerers. In 2015, a dozen lions suffered the same fate in Limpopo.⁵⁰



LIONS - FOLLOWED

KENYA

October 2016

Amboseli National Park, Kajiado County, Kenya

As the lion had been trapped and hurt without any hope of being cared for, the veterinarians finished him off.⁵¹



MOZAMBIQUE

Beginning of October 2016 Limpopo National Park, Gaza Province, Mozambique

Mass destruction.

Two antelope carcasses covered in concentrated pesticides poisoned 2 lions, 51 vultures (*Accipitridae* spp., Appendix I or II), 3 African fish eagles (*Haliaeetus vocifer*, Appendix II), one black kite (*Milvus migrans*, Appendix II), and one giant eagle owl (*Bubo lacteus*, Appendix II). Limpopo is next to Kruger Park. The lions were dragged 100 m away from the mass grave. The lions were then dismembered. They were skinned. Intestine parts are gone. The 2 torture victims were about 2 years old. The skin will be sold as a rug or a decorative object. The entrails are used in Muti traditional ritual medicine, and the bones will take to the seas or the air, heading for China or a neighboring country. The NGO Born Free has a lot to be upset and outraged about, as CITES rejected the proposal to list all lions in Appendix I, submitted by Niger, Chad, the Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Nigeria, and Togo. The lion remains in Appendix II, with a zero export quota for the bones, claws, skulls and teeth except from captive lions bred in South Africa. Who can distinguish a bone of a wild lion from that of a lion raised on a farm?⁵²



© Bernard Dupont

October 24, 2016

Gorongosa National Park, Sofala Province, Mozambique

- On the range of a lioness, arrest of a poacher equipped with 6 gin traps.
- Dismantlement of 2 workshops for making various traps and homemade firearms. Arrest of 2 gunsmiths and blacksmiths.⁵³



© Gorongosa Lion Project

UGANDA

November 19, 2016

Latoro, Nwoya District, Northern Region, Uganda

The 34-year-old farmer of modest means had the skin, teeth, and jaws of an adult lion, estimated to be worth 3 million shillings (\$ 860 US).⁵⁴

ZAMBIA

Beginning of November 2016

Kafue National Park, Southern Province, Zambia

Two snared lions and a spotted hyena (*Crocuta crocuta*) were saved just in time by veterinarians from the Zambia Carnivore Program (ZCP).⁵⁵



© ZCP

AMERICA

MEXICO

October 5 and 22, 2016

Culiacán, State of Sinaloa, Mexico

Anti-drug operation.

Seizure of a lioness and other live animals, firearms, dollars, and armored vehicles. Destruction of 2,000 cannabis plants, 3 illegal labs, and 30 kg of cannabis.⁵⁶

December 7th 2016

Ocoyoacac, Mexico State, Mexico

More consequences of the country bad circus practices. Two miserable lionesses in a cleared enclosure in the middle of a forest plot were seized by a task force arrived on the scene with a prosecutor's mandate.⁵⁷

TIGERS - FOLLOWED

ASIA

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

October 17, 2016

Sharjah, Emirate of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates

Seizure of 4 lions, one lioness, 3 pythons (*Pythonidae* spp., Appendix I or II), 2 crocodiles (*Crocodylidae* spp., Appendix I or II), and other wild animals for disturbance of law and order.

Each of the owners was sentenced to pay 100,000 dirham (\$ 27,235 US). Since November 2015, a decree has prohibited residents from having wildlife or other animals that may frighten neighbors or wander off into public roads. After quarantine, the environmental agency of the Emirate tries to put the animals up in zoos in the United Arab Emirates or in Europe.⁵⁸



© Gulfnews

INDIA

November 17, 2016

Gir Wildlife Sanctuary, State of Gujarat, India

15 "man eaters" freed ! They were in custody in an enclosure. An analysis of their excrement proves that they bear no relation to those who killed 3 villagers in the buffer zone of Gir National Park (cf. "On the trail" n°13 p. 63). "It was a historic moment. It was a first-of-its-kind operation of wild cats where 15 lions were released back into the wild together. We were preparing for the release operation for the last 10 days. One of the lionesses was not released as she had given birth to 3 cubs recently. It will be released in the wild at a later stage" said Karuppasamy. The lions were released into Jenagar Forest. Scientists have been working for 6 months on this issue that is crucial for Asiatic lions. Scientists believe that they will have enough food and space in Jenagar Forest, and that they will not need to go near villages on the forest edge.⁵⁹

PUMAS, JAGUARS, LYNX, SERVALS, LEOPARD CATS, SNOW LEOPARDS AND CLOUDED LEOPARDS

AMERICA

BRAZIL

October 8, 2016

Jari, State of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil

On farmland, seizure of a puma skin, firearms, and munitions. Before it was skinned, the cat had been tortured to death. Its photos were found in the mobile phone of the criminal. One arrest.⁶⁰



© Melonorte

October 19, 2016

Rio Claro, State of Sao Paulo, Brazil

Release of a puma stuck in a trap in Edmundo Navarro de Andrade State Forest. Four arrests.⁶¹



November 7, 2016

Trairão, State of Para, Brazil

Arrest of 3 triumphant hunters -they had just killed a jaguar. Facebook photos were used to unmask them.

facebook

In their camp, seizure of a black-fronted piping guan (*Pipile jacutinga*, Appendix I), a red brocket (*Mazama americana*), firearms, and hunting dogs. The black-fronted piping guan is endangered. It has nearly disappeared in the northern and southern parts of the South American continent. It has become very rare in Brazil, Paraguay, and Argentina.⁶²



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Pipile jacutinga

OTHER FELINES - FOLLOWED

OPERATION MOUSTACHE

Rio Branco, Bujari, Capixaba e Senador Guimard, Acre State, Brazil

Operation Moustache, like the name poachers give to the jaguar.

The operation was targeting a band of poachers who practiced jaguar and puma poaching to make them trophies or carpets. 18 searches. Two arrests for carrying of weapons without a licence. On site, the police found 42 kg of wild animals meat.⁶³



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

December 20, 2016

Frederick County, State of Virginia, United States of America

Theft of 2 lynx (*Lynx* spp., Appendix I or II) less than 10 months old in the Siberian animal park. The loot is worth \$ 8,000 in all. A 3rd individual remained in the cage.⁶⁴



MEXICO

December 6th 2016

La Paz, State of Baja California Sur, Mexico

Seizure of a 4-year-old male puma in a private individual. He is transferred to the El Nino Zoological Park in Ensenada (State of Baja California). 1500 km.⁶⁵

ASIA

CHINA

October 19th 2016

Ürümqi Diwopu International Airport, Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, China

Seizure of a serval (*Leptailurus serval*, Appendix II) in a cat cage accompanying a passenger from Almaty, Kazakhstan.⁶⁶



November 15, 2016

Manzhouli, border city with Mongolia, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, China

In a hotel, seizure of a snow leopard (*Panthera uncia*, Appendix I) and 50,000 yuan (\$ 7,279 US). Arrest of a Mongolian and 4 Chinese people.⁶⁷

INDONESIA

November 2, 2016

Sibolangit, North Sumatra Province, Indonesia

Handover of a clouded leopard (*Neofelis nebulosa*, Appendix I) to the Indonesian Species Conservation Program (ISCP). It should be released into the real wild as soon as possible.⁶⁸

VIET NAM

November 25 and December 13, 2016

Binh Thuan and Ben Tre Provinces, Viet Nam

Two seizures at home of 2 young Bengal leopard cats (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II).⁶⁹



VARIOUS SPECIES FELINES

AFRICA

UGANDA

- **October 29, 2016.** Seizure of a leopard pelt (*Acinonyx jubatus*, Appendix I).

- **October 30, 2016. Kapchorwa, Eastern Region.** Seizure of a cheetah skin, a leopard skin, and a serval skin (*Leptailurus serval*, Appendix II). The 2 suspects are not the type to die of hunger. One of them is a hairdresser. Until then, they easily made a living from their trafficking. These animal extinction capitalists live on the border between Uganda and Kenya. The investigators do not know where the 2 cats were killed. As any good salesperson would do, they reserved a hotel room in the city for discussions with buyers.

Leopards will disappear from the Ugandan landscape soon. The prairies and forests will miss their tawny colors spotted with rosettes. In the Sebei region, there are more and more clashes between the survivors on the verge of extinction and the human flood of farmers and road builders. The UWA spokesperson says that leopards have come into conflict with the farmers. "Cheetahs tend to encounter conflict with farmers when loss of their natural prey leads them to attack livestock, and farmers kill them, as pests, in retaliation." He finished with a politically correct dash of optimism, saying that he and his colleagues "are working hard to create sustainable solutions for agricultural and settlement growth for both cheetahs and farmers to have space in which to live without encroaching on one another".⁷⁰



Cheetahs were widespread throughout Africa except tropical forests and the center of the Sahara. They covered 23 million km². Today, they are confined to three small million km² and divided into thirty populations separated from one another by fences, roads and other logistical barriers. The hunting grounds of cheetahs are nibbled by agriculture and forestry. Their energy expenditure is increased by a longer and longer alimentary quest as their preys disappear like gazelles, antelopes and zebras. The home range of a cheetah can exceed 3,000 km². The most threatened and fastest of the felines is too often out of the boundaries and buffer zones of the national parks and is all the more exposed to poachers' traps. In Uganda, in Kidepo National Park and the adjacent areas of Kenya and South Sudan, they would be less than 50 and below the viability threshold.

SENEGAL

October 21 and November 30, 2016

Kaolack, Kaolack Region, Senegal

- The police arrested Abdou Karim Diop in a luxury hotel. A search of his market stall led to the seizure of the trophies and skins of felines from the savanna and forest. It appears that this affair is related to the colossal seizure of 2,634 cat skins and patches in Dakar in November 2014 (cf. "On the Trail" n°7 p.103). Diop has close ties with the Dakar network. His supply comes from Niger, Mali, and Guinea. He sells to foreigners living in Dakar and to tourists. He says that the remains of the lions and leopards that were on his shelves came from Mali, and even from Kenya and Niokolo Koba National Park. There are no more than around 40 live lions in Senegal left. On the fur black market and food markets, dead lions are a lot more. Charlotte Houpline, a wildlife criminality expert in West Africa, recalls that traffickers of this standing have tens, even hundreds of poachers in their address books. The operation was conducted with the NGO WARA and SALF - Sénégal Application de la Loi Faunique. Together, they aim to protect parrots and other threatened species in Senegal.

- Diop was sentenced to a 6-month suspended prison sentence, a fine of 500,000 CFA francs (\$ 806 US) and one million CFA francs (\$ 1,612 US) in compensation. The national press highlights that this very light sentence is far below the expectations of the Environment Ministry and its National Parks Department.⁷¹



AMERICA

MEXICO

December 6th 2016

Sinaloa State, Mexico

- **Culiacán.** A male lion is voluntarily returned to the UMA, Wildlife Conservation Management Unit, "Fiesta Safari". He shows signs of malnutrition and some injuries on the body.

- **Los Mochis.** The municipal police seized an adult female lynx at a private home and returns her to PROFEPA. She has been freed.⁷²

CHINA

October 29th 2016

Lhasa, Tibet Autonomous Region, China

Seizure of 2 tiger skins, 2 leopard skins, 17 snow leopard skins (*Uncia uncia*, Appendix I), 4 bear paws, 2 deer antlers and other parts of wild animals.⁷³



NEPAL

October 18, 2016

Katmandou, Central Development Region, Nepal

Seizure of a tiger pelt and a leopard skin. One arrest.⁷⁴

VIET NAM

REPEATED OFFENSE

December 1st 2016

Hô-Chi-Minh-City, Viet Nam

Conviction of a man and his accomplice to 5 years jail with 3 years suspended for the transport of 2 tigers, a leopard and pangolins. The seizure occurred in January 2015 on route 22 between Ha Tinh and Ho Chi Minh City. Nguyen Hu Tien is smart. To reduce the risk of police interception, he does not hesitate to get around in an ambulance with a screaming siren (cf. "On the Trail" n°3, page 31).⁷⁵



Waste and Protected Species

October 15, 2016. Lake Chivero Recreational Park, Western Mashonaland Province, Zimbabwe.

When waste attack a rhinoceros.

At the bottom of the water hole there was an old tire, the rhinoceros came to drink, the tire coiled around his snout like a rubber padlock. Impossible to drink or eat and to get rid of the waste attached to the horn. The dominant male was on the brink of exhaustion. Veterinarians had to anaesthetize him and it took several men and minutes to relieve it. The bottom of the lake is covered with tires and discarded fishing nets.¹



October 28, 2016. Ushakovskoye, Wrangel Island, Chukotka Autonomous Okrug, Russia.

When waste attack a polar bear.

A cleaning brigade is busy collecting waste scattered on the island since Soviet times. The cub did not find better than to go snooping in a collecting barrel. A box of condensed milk remained attached to his tongue. The rangers decided to intervene after 2 weeks of observation. It was necessary to anaesthetize the mother before releasing the young one from his iron muzzle. Wrangel Island is doubly famous. It was the ultimate haven of mammoths before their extinction and it is the Arctic sanctuary where the density of polar bears is highest.²



Elephants victims of plastic waste, see "On the Trail" n°12, p.85.

Bears

AMERICA

CANADA

December 9, 2016

Tuktoyaktuk, Northwest Territories, Canada

Are legitimate defense and the precautionary principle actually a cover for greed and for the hate of bears? You'd be tempted to think so. Joe Nasogaluak says that he heard a bear at about midnight. With his 16-year-old son, he threw himself onto the quays and took the prowler by surprise, near the fish trays. After running after it, the crusader claims he was mainly concerned about keeping children safe. This was the 3rd time this winter that he saw a bear in the port village. He shot to death the intruder.¹



"I'll make clothes out of it." A polar bear pelt sells for between 20,000 and 35,000 dollars.

ASIA

CAMBODIA

November 12, 2016

Thma Bang District, Koh Kong Province, Cambodia

Seizure of a sun bear (*Helarctos malayanus*, Appendix I).²



Three months, 7 kg. Snatched from his parents in the Cardamom Mountains. Thirsty, scared, thrown out of the motorbike by the trafficker while the rangers were chasing after.

INDIA

November 15 and 26, 2016

Rishikesh and Doiwala, State of Uttarakhand, India

- Seizure of 2 gall bladders of Asian black bears (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I). One arrest.
- Seizure of 4 gall bladders. Two arrests.

The forest services official says that the accused are in their mid-twenties, and are unaware about the

gravity of their doings. Owing to unemployment in the hills, they commit such crimes and sell each gall bladder for as little as 5,000 rupee (\$ 73 US), or whatever they get. They even go into the mountains to collect 'keera jari' cordyceps, a mushroom that parasitizes a caterpillar and that is said to do wonders (cf. "On the Trail" n°13 p. 111, n°11 p. 89).³

December 12, 2016

Mount Abu, State of Rajasthan, India

The postmortem examination proves that the sloth bear (*Melursus ursinus*, Appendix I) was stabbed in the back with sharp weapons that broke its bones and reached its heart. "Manual work" by a gang covering the region. Two men were arrested. The knives and remains of the bear were found in their home.⁴

IRAN

Mid December 2016

Buin va Miandasht, Isfahan Province, Iran

Poaching of a brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II). Shot dead.⁵

MALAYSIA

October 22, 2016

Kuala Lipis, State of Pahang, Malaysia

What a deal! A one-month-old Asian black bear cub (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I) was for sale on Facebook.

facebook

This species is not native to Malaysia or to Indonesia. The little animal was either imported, as if it were a teddy bear, or perhaps it came from a zoo. The vendor was not very clear about this. This is the first time that a young, live *Ursus thibetanus* was seized in the country.⁶



VIET NAM

End of November 2016

Hanoi, Viet Nam

It took 7 months or so for the masters of an Asian black bear (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I) locked for over 10 years to agree to part with it. It was transferred to the refuge in Soc Son.⁷

Beginning of December 2016

Dak Lak Province, Viet Nam

Seizure of 6 Asian black bears (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I) on a bile farm. They were in a sorry state close to death. Teeth torn out, wounded ribs, infected legs, a cut tongue.⁸

Traffic network takes a close look at bears

A new report reviews the situation of the bile trade in 6 cities. It's still being sold. Out of 70 stores specialized in traditional medicine, 40% sell bile. The percentage was 56% in 2012. Bear bile is still the most expensive product on the shelves. Two stores say that the bile is from wild bears from Viet Nam, Laos, Thailand, or Russia. Enthusiasts want the bile to be fresh. And they're ready to pay for it. It is said that as bile extraction from captive bears is gradually declining, bear poaching is increasing. Traffic would thus like the government to close down the last bear farms in the country, and also strengthen regulations against international smuggling in bile and gall bladders. When you take a good look at the global poaching patchwork, you see that all bear species, under all kinds of pretexts, serve as the punching bag for all of humanity across the world.

EUROPE

ALBANIA

December 15, 2016

Albania

The NGO Four Paws rescued a brown bear (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) in captivity. Four Paws estimates that 80 bears have been captured in the country's forests. There are around 250 wild bears in the residual population. The Albanian branch of this English NGO signed an agreement with the Ministry of Environment to find sustainable care for each brown bear found in private homes or exploited by animal tamers in restaurants, on beaches, and other tourist spots.⁹

Cf. "On the Trail" n°4 p. 61.



© Four Paws / Hazir Reka

Ursus thibetanus

POLAND

14 décembre 2016

Braniewo, Warmia-Masuria Province, Poland

Rescue of a 21-year-old brown bear mother (*Ursus arctos*, Appendix II) born in Ukraine and her 15-year-old daughter born in the substandard zoo in Braniewo. After being anaesthetized, the pair was transferred to the certified zoo in Poznan. They are still in captivity, but they have much more space, better food, and veterinary care now. The mother had been bought one year before, from a Ukrainian circus touring in Poland. The daughter was born in the Braniewo's zoo.¹⁰



© Four Paws

RUSSIA

WAGON NETWORK

November 1 and 13, 2016

Zabaykalsk, Zabaykalsky Krai, Siberian Federal District, Russia. Border with China

It's winter, the season for smuggling frozen bear paws meant for Chinese restaurants.

- Seizure of 23 paws under the floor of a wagon loaded with ore.¹¹

- Seizure of 22 paws (14.9 kg) in a bag hidden between the axles under the floor of a wagon loaded with wood.¹² Cf. "On the Trail" n°10 p.44, n°11 p.55, n°12 p.64.



© Smithsonian Wild

Wolves

Wolves *Canis lupus* are listed under CITES Appendix II except the populations of Bhutan, Nepal and Pakistan listed under Appendix I. They are listed in Appendix II of the Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats.

AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

October 6th 2016

Fremont-Winema National Forest, State of Oregon, United States of America

Shooting of a female grey wolf in the Fremont-Winema Forest near Summer Lake. A reward of \$ 5,000 US is offered for any information leading to the murderer arrest by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. In addition, there is a reward of \$ 10,000 US promised by a NGO defending wolves, the Center for Biological Diversity. Alert number 503-682-6131.¹



© John and Karen Hollingsworth/USFW

Night of December 13th, 2016, 0h30. Luxembourg Palace, Paris, France

EUROPE

Compared to the balance, humaneness and sense of moderation and precision of the leopard cohabitation guide developed by the Indian government (cf. p.58), the debate on “big predators”, which made the French Senate shudder, is a draft of illiterates. The debates took place in the context of the presentation of the Draft Law on the modernization, development and protection of mountain territories. The wolf was accompanied by the bear accused of having made disappear in the French-Spanish Pyrenees mountains 676 ewes “which have not gone down from the mountains”.



It is difficult to distinguish the Red Riding Hood golden palm from senators as competition is rough in the field of excessive accusations. Out of their institutional context and without the benefit of parliamentary immunity, certain remarks go beyond the bounds of rationality and raise doubt over these elected representatives capacity to speak on behalf of the French people.

The wolf strategist

“The wolf wins the geographical battle by progressing on the lands and getting closer and closer to the dwellings, he wins the economic battle because the breeders distress is such that many want to stop their activity and he is winning the political battle because of the absence of proposal from the public authorities.” Michel Savin, senator of Isère.

The wolf torturer

“Why don’t our environmental colleagues take into consideration the 10,000 sheep that die in abominable conditions, shredded by wolves and suffering for nights? And then we film in the slaughterhouses, it’s absurd!”. Duo of Mr. Gérard Bailly, Senator of the Jura and Michel Bouvard, Senator of Savoy.

The wolf nuclear

“We are facing a phenomenon of proliferation”. Bouvard bis.

The wolf homicidal

“In the Jura, we remember the little Jupille bitten by wolves and saved by Pasteur’s vaccine” G Bailly bis. Fantasy! Louis Pasteur reveals that the young shepherd Jean-Baptiste Jupille was bitten in 1885 by one rabid dog.

On October 12th 2016, the wolves beating in the National Assembly had already been marked by the relentlessness of Bernard Accoyer and Laurent Wauquiez, two influential figures in the political exchequer on the eve of the 2017 presidential and legislative elections. These two deputies set themselves up as wolfcatcher royals, a corporation founded by Louis XI in 1491 and still in exercise today.

The law of December 28th 2016 consolidates the “differentiated management” of wolves and other wild predators susceptible to attacking livestock. According to the words of the Parliamentary Committee rapporteur, it is a question of “authorizing more shootings where danger will be the most evident depending on the proliferation, the outbreak of the wolves”. The “differentiated management” can descend from the mountains and apply in the plains to counter the wolf invasion. Nothing in the debates of senators and deputies about the positive role of wolves who, for example, contribute to regulating the populations of cervids but also of wild boars considered by foresters and farmers as “destructive” animals. There would be 300 wolves in the country. Metropolitan France covers an area of 551,500 km².

End of October 2016
Finland

Targeted slaughter of wolves would be the best way to combat poaching. During the 2015-2016 winter, 55 wolves were killed as part of the national culling plan but the same number were victims of collisions with cars, various poaching actions or preventive shots to protect homes. A spokesman from the Ministry of Agriculture told the Agence France Presse that in order to limit the number of wolves killed intentionally or “accidentally” the government will set an overall ceiling quota of wolves to be killed. The wolves in the country were 250 to 300 in 2007. The Finnish League for Nature SLL (Suomen Luonnonsuojeluyhdistys) estimates that they are today between 200 and 235. Finland covers an area of 338,144 km².²

December 16th 2016
Nancy, Meurthe-et-Moselle Department, France

As a first step, the Administrative Court invalidates an inter-prefectural notice authorizing the sight firing of a wolf suspected of having left the Vosges mountain range and attacked flocks of sheep in the plains.³

December 20th 2016
Norway

Norway is backing off. The wolf killing quota decreases from 47 to 15. Four packs are spared. “They do not represent a sufficient nuisance to reindeer and sheep breeders to justify their destruction”. Cf. “On the Trail” n°14 p.102.⁴

December 30th 2016
Sweden

The legal slaughter of 24 wolves is confirmed on appeal. The species is protected according to the law and harmful according to the sheep breeders. There would be 340 wolves in the country. Sweden covers an area of 450,000 km².⁵

African Wild Dogs

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

December 16th 2016
Hoedspruit, Limpopo Province, South Africa



Rescue of an African wild dog (*Lycaon pictus*) by two experts from Provet. Caught in a trap, the painted dog was about to be strangled, the collar was removed, the wound was cleaned and re-sewn. The traps threaten the last African wild dog populations. Gregory Rasmussen, founder in Zimbabwe of the Painted Dog Conservation is a very good connoisseur and defender of these beautiful canids generally put aside by public opinion.

“As the dog struggles to escape, the whole pack tries to help him instead of running away”. “And poachers take advantage of it to pose 10 or 20 snares in a row and you can have a pack snared in a single shot” he adds. “It breaks our hearts”. The packs of African wild dogs apply the “Three Musketeers Approach”, all for one and one for all.

To halt the plague of snares set by antelope poachers, a couple of biologists Martha and Brandon Davis is attempting to develop, with the support of the Houston Zoo (Texas), anti-trap collars to facilitate the self-releasing of painted dogs captured in the savannah by food traps. They hope to be able to equip 10 to 20 African wild dogs in the National Parks of Hwange and Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe in the near future. Rasmussen knows that these ingenious devices will not save the painted dogs alone. “It’s not an instant cure, but if it works it will certainly be something—in high-snare areas—that will make all the difference for the survival of the packs” he says in a rush of hope to Tina Deines a freelance journalist based in Albuquerque, New Mexico.¹



Hippopotamuses

Hippopotamuses (*Hippopotamus amphibius*), are listed under CITES Appendix II.



AFRICA

UGANDA

- **October 22, 2016, Katunguru, Western Region, Uganda.** Seizure of 32 teeth. One arrest.



- **October 23 and November 30, 2016, Uganda**
Seizure of 15 kg of hippopotamus teeth, pangolin scales, and snake skins. Arrest of a businessman. The teeth are said be from the Democratic Republic of Congo, just next door. ¹

November 8, 2016
Wanseko, Buliisa District, Western Region, Uganda

There is a very fine line between the wholesale animal feed trade and trafficking in wildlife products. Moses Oketch and Fred Byenkya crossed this line and became rich quick. They are 35 and 37 years old. In the middle of nowhere, near Wansek, they drew admiration, jealousy, and disdain. They had just been caught in the act of trailing 234 hippopotamus teeth, or 100 kg, to sell 70,000 Sh/kg (\$ 20 US/kg). They were supplied by some awful poacher dentist. According to the latest information from the investigation, he was a fishmonger. The 2 men were sentenced to 2 years in prison.²



Hippopotamus teeth trafficking has been prohibited in the country since 2014. From January to November 2016, nearly 500 kg of teeth were seized by the police and customs. The main destination of the legal and smuggled exports is the special administrative region of Hong Kong of the People's Republic of China. Year in and year out, Hong Kong imports 1 to 3 tons of hippopotamus teeth with CITES certificates. Until 2014, Uganda was the main exporter. The main exporting countries now are Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Malawi. In workshops in Hong Kong, the molar teeth are converted into statuettes, miniatures, everyday accessories such as razor handles. Hippopotamus ivory is increasingly common on the global ivory market, with elephant ivory and mammoth ivory. Just like elephant tusks, long 20 cm canines are carved, decorated and mounted. It is said that part of the hippopotamus ivory seized in Uganda is from the Democratic Republic of Congo. For poachers, hippos bring in a lot of business, with their meat, leather, and teeth.

Hippopotamuses and Rhinoceroses

AFRICA

UGANDA

December 22, 2016
West of Uganda

Seizure of 135 kg of hippopotamus teeth and 2 elephant tusks. Two arrests. ³



EUROPE

PORTUGAL

October 18, 2016
District of Lisbon, Portugal

Seizure of 41 ivory objects, 3 turtles remains and 2 hippopotamus teeth in a commercial area.⁴

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*.

“On the Trail” n°15

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

Continent	Country	US\$/kg	Ref.
Africa	South Africa	11,000	33
Asia	Cambodia	114,000 - 200,000	56
	China	27,000	26
	India Assam	44,910	62
	India Assam	916	69
	Viet Nam	44,450	73

EASTERN AFRICA

KENYA

October 8, 2016

Oi Pejeta Conservancy, Laikipia County, Kenya

Rangers and poachers exchanged gunfire in the middle of the night. Dogs were following fugitives. It appears that one of them was wounded. Oi Pejeta is known for its 100 black rhinoceroses and its 3 northern white.^{1bis}

- December 20-22, 2016.

There is always an additional upsurge in poaching during the Christmas and New Year holidays. The end of 2016 was no exception.

- Four poachers intruded into Ruma National Park and shot a female rhinoceros and her little 3-month-old son. KWS (Kenya Wildlife Service) reacts, which led to the arrest of a suspect.

At his home, a metal trap and a rhinoceros hoof were found. They were presented as incriminating evidence.



- December 31, 2016. 5:15 AM. Shots in Ngulia Sanctuary in Tsavo National Park. A mother rhinoceros and her little one were located. They were lying down and motionless. The foot patrol confirmed that they had died 33 m from one another.¹

MALAWI

November 23, 2016. Zomba, Southern Region, Malawi.

Haiwa has been sentenced to 8 years in prison without remission. No alternative fine. He had sold the horn of a rhinoceros shot dead in Liwonde Park.¹²



MOZAMBIQUE

October 17, 2016

Greater Lebombo Conservancy, Maputo Province, Mozambique

Traffic imposes its law. The anti-poaching patrol was assaulted by dozens of people as it was taking 2 suspects of rhinoceros poaching to a police station. The riot took place when the patrol was going through a “township” corrupted by “horn syndicates”. When the crowd formed, policemen in uniform ran off. The 3 rangers were saved by the intervention of a policeman who was not on duty. They were transferred to the hospital by helicopter. One of them was scarified with a shard bottle. The area is on the road of the horns looted in the Kruger Park in South Africa and brought back to Mozambique through the savanna. The information was first disclosed by the International Anti-Poaching Foundation (IAPF).²



October 30, 2016

Maputo International Airport, Mozambique

When the border police took an interest in his suitcase around 10 PM, the Vietnamese smuggler managed to escape - before they discovered 8.8 kg of horns divided into 8 horns or horn sections.³

ZIMBABWE

December 25, 2016
Beitbridge District, Matabeleland South Province, Zimbabwe

43-year-old Godknows Mashame poached a rhinoceros on Christmas Day and forgot his mobile phone on the scene afterwards. He was arrested in his home on New Year's Day. Seizure of 2 greater kudu horns (*Tragelaphus strepsiceros*) and an arms cache, three .303 caliber rifles, one 12 mm revolver, one rifle, 71 sticks of Emex (nitroglycerin), a GPS system, special hunting flashlights, and munitions of all calibers.⁴



SOUTHERN AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

October 6, 2016
Lovemore Heights, Port Elizabeth, et Motherwell, Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

Seizure of a Golf GTI in the home of Jabulani Ndlovu, a poacher holding a passport from Zimbabwe. An Audi is also wanted. Money in cash and in a bank account was seized. The Justice and Treasury Departments consider that the vehicles and funds are from poaching and trafficking. Cf. "On the Trail" n°13 p. 72.⁶



Tragelaphus strepsiceros

SOUTH AFRICA - TANZANIA

The Animals of National Parks are Going Down the Drain⁵

- End of November 2016 North West Province, South Africa

Suspicion of a shady deal between the national parks administration of the province and a company that was created out of nothing by Matthew Wolmarans, the former mayor of Rustenburg, and Mike de Kock, his technical director and one public works company, who had obtained public roads contracts for the city in the amount of 1.4 billion rands (\$ 108 million US). The SARGBA (Southern Africa Rare Game Breeders Association) received an exceptional gift from the parks administration: 50 giant sable antelopes (*Hippotragus niger*, Appendix I), 10 buffaloes, 32 nyalas (*Tragelaphus angasii*), and 50 white rhinoceroses caught in national parks with a total value of 100 million rand (\$ 7.2 million US).

As of now, only 31 giant sable antelopes, 29 nyalas, and 25 buffaloes have actually been transferred. The other animals are in quarantine. The donation is said to be part of a special program aimed at allowing black farmers to gain entry to the game breeding industry. Matthew Wolmarans was the local coordinator of the ANC (African National Congress) in last year's elections. A parliamentary investigation is underway.

- December 7, 2016. Ngorongoro Conservation Area, region of Arusha, Tanzania

What has become of John Superman Black Rhino?

He was the stud of the line of black rhinoceroses of the Ngorongoro Crater reserve. He has at least 26 descendants there. It is said that in a secret transaction, "John" was sold by 2 executives and an "environmentalist" from Serengeti and Mkomazi National Parks, to the private Singita Sasakwa Lodge, 100 km away. It is believed that the transaction involved Sh 200,000 or \$ 100,000 US. Ngorongoro Reserve officials would have also received \$ 150,000 US in commissions. The Minister of Natural Resources did not express an opinion on the conditions in which 'John' was transferred, but did consider that it had to be moved to avoid inbreeding within the Ngorongoro Reserve. 2 horns weighing 3.6 and 2.3 kg were presented to Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa as belonging to what was Mister "John". He died on August 18, 2016. It is said that he was buried in Sasakwa. The plot thickens. The last veterinary reports show that "John" was in very good health. He is part of the national heritage, safeguarding the black rhinoceros species in Tanzania. Illegal animal trafficking between the national Parks and the private sector is more and more suspected.

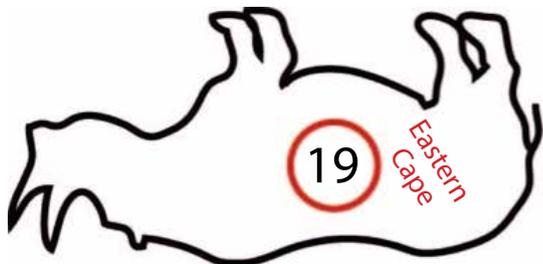
October 10, 2016

Great Fish River Nature Reserve, Grahamstown, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa

A black female rhinoceros was poached.

A very common sight in the early morning. A dead mother lying on the ground and a little one standing by her, dazed. She was 18 years old. After she was hit in her thorax, she fled with her little one who was one and a half years old. The horns were still there.

This is the 19th incident of the year in the province.⁸



October 9 and 11, 2016

Melkrivier, Limpopo Province, South Africa

3 in 2 days, 1 km apart. The first one was dehorned with a chainsaw, and the 2 other ones with an ax. The footprints stop on a gravel path. The bandits fled by car there.⁹



October 12, 2016

Hluhluwe-Umfolozi Game Reserve, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa¹⁰



One of the 2 victims, with the eyes wide open.

October 13, 2016

Mkuze, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa

News in brief:

- A man killed his partner with a knife.¹¹

- A man was carrying a rhinoceros horn in his black and yellow bag. The police had every reason to suspect this. The man will ask to be released on bail.¹²

October 14, 2016

Nelspruit, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

The former soldier Boet Mashego and the herbalist Michael Sithole are appealing their sentences of 26 years in prison each. They requested legal aid from the government. Cf. "On the Trail" n° 14 p. 61¹³

Mid October 2016

Madikwe, North West Province, South Africa¹⁴



© Plianesberg Nat. Park & Wildlife Trust

Rescue of a shot rhinoceros, by the Bell 407 helicopter of Rhino 911, an emergency call service for rhinoceros.

Mid October 2016

South Africa

A bullet in the hind quarters, right through the pelvic area of the 8-week-old orphan. It screams at night in its emergency enclosure. The NGOs Boots on the Ground and Wild Vet took care of it. Her life is in the balance.¹⁵



© Wild Vet

**Mid October 2016
South Africa**

"We've killed a rhinoceros." Wild Vet made at the end the decision to finish off a baby rhinoceros with a rifle. 2 poachers had riddled him with bullets.¹⁶

**October 19-25, 2016
Kruger National Park, South Africa**

Arrest of 14 poaching suspects in 7 days by the K9, the anti-poacher canine unit.¹⁷

**October 25, 2016
Mafikeng Game Reserve, North West Province, South Africa**

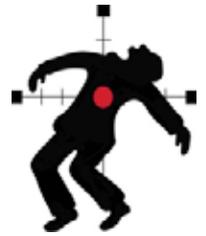
Capture of a one-year-old orphan. Mother killed in one poaching incident. She was placed in a specialized orphanage. She was wasting away in the veld. The operation was made possible by Flying for Freedom, Rhino Orphanage, OSCAP, Wilderness Leadership School, and Pilanesberg Wildlife Trust.¹⁸



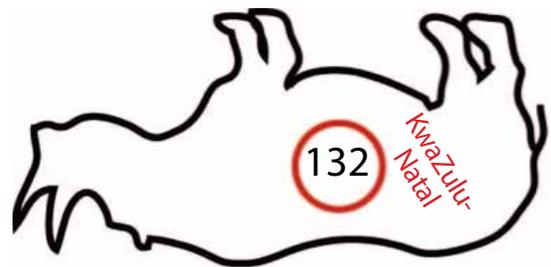
**November 1, 2016
Kempton Park, Gauteng Province, South Africa**

The most famous trafficker from September appeared in court. Lingyun Sheng had the nerve to make his attempt on the opening day of the plenary conference on the international trade in endangered species of wild fauna and flora (CITES), in Johannesburg. He was caught in the act at the international airport, when he was about to fly off to China ("On the Trail", n° 14 p. 66). In October, his request to be released on bail was rejected. His presence in South Africa is illegal. His visa had expired a long time ago. According to Activists for Animals Africa (AAA), the 23 kg of horns came from 3 adult females that were killed in mid-September in Hluhluwe Umfolozi Reserve in KwaZulu-Natal. It seems that the horns came into Swaziland via border post n°6, which is not constantly monitored. Mr. Sheng said that before returning to China, he visited a friend in Swaziland, a so called Mr. Chen. When they were about to leave each other, he put the horns and 20,000 rand (\$ 1,500 US) in his hands in return for the favor. Mr. Sheng could face 10 years in prison. Mr. Chen is nowhere to be found. A common trick was used to wrap up the horns. They were hidden by three layers of carbon paper, aluminum sheets, and wrapping paper.¹⁹

**November 3, 2016
iSimangaliso Wetland Park, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa**



The rangers were nearby when 2 strangers approached 4 rhinoceroses and shot them. The rangers retaliated. One poacher was killed. The rhinoceroses seemed safe and sound. They didn't spread blood around when they fled. There is an outburst of poaching in the province. -132 since the beginning of the year - According to a University of Pretoria study, the crisis is starting to hit the tourism sector. Visitors are worried, and even nervous. Visitors do not feel comfortable with the general atmosphere, with long lines at park entrances due to the searches, and the helicopter patrols flying over. Tourists understand that poaching is war.²⁰



**November 5, 2016
South Africa**

Saving The Survivors mainly works in Mpumalanga, Limpopo, and the Northern Cape. This time around, the veterinarians Johan Marais and Mélani Kuhler saved a mother who was shot in the head. None of her vital organs was affected. After awakening, she got up, and trotted along to her little 8-month-old.²¹



**November 4-10, 2016
Kruger National Park, South Africa**

It was full moon. That turns poachers into insomniacs. In the Park, the police is on the qui-vive. 18 arrests in one week, 10 weapons seized.²² Alert n°: 013 735 0197, 076 801 96 79.



November 9, 2016

Gauteng Province, South Africa

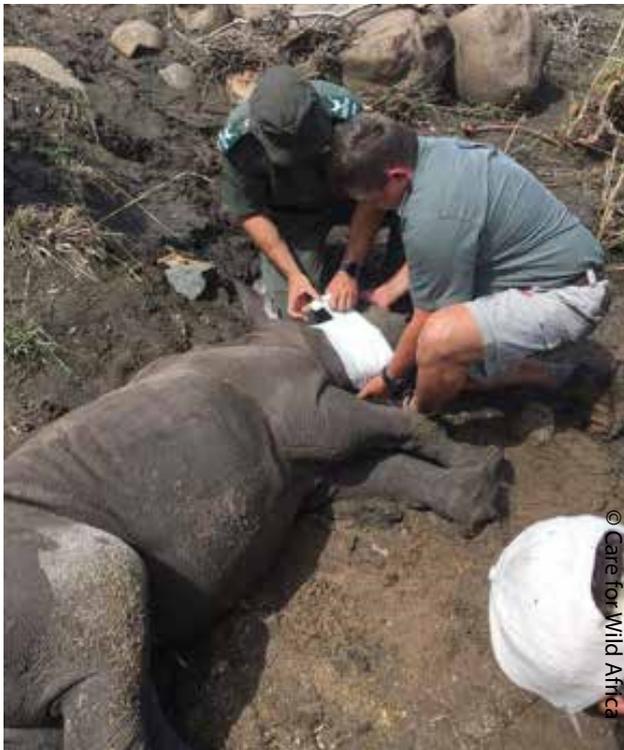
On the N3 connecting Johannesburg and Durban, 2 Chinese drivers fell into a trap, one big road inspection for the police operation "Blitz on crime". The horn may have been bought near Rustenburg.²³



12 novembre 2016

Jock Concession, Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

Rescue of a young female 6-month-old wandering in the reserve after her mother was poached. Her body had not been found yet. The calf weighs 200 kg. She was bottle-fed for the first time 5 hours after her arrival at the orphanage. If she had not been swiftly evacuated, she would have died from the cold, or would have been attacked by a lion or a hyena after a night or 2 or 3.²⁴



November 13, 2016

Limpopo Province, South Africa

Death of "Hope" (cf. "On the Trail" n°9 p. 62, n°10 p. 46).

Is animal testing the dark face of the "Hope" operation that the media all over the world has relayed? In April 2015, it was a victim of an appalling poaching operation. Its horns were ripped out. The Ethics Committee of the Veterinary Science Faculty of Pretoria considers this young female 7-year-old rhinoceros as a "research project". This animal suffered 18 operations in 18 months of agony. The question is whether "Hope" was also a victim of an advertising operation liable to the South African law that punishes animal cruelty.²⁵

Mid November 2016

Pretoria, Gauteng Province, South Africa

An Al Jazeera report showed that David Mahlobo, Minister of State Security had regular and friendly relations with the manager of a massage parlor and spa. The minister was also on good terms with one of the masseuses of the beauty salon. On Facebook, the young Chinese woman nicknamed Chelsea speaks of Mr. Mahlobo as her father.



In the report of the Doha-based TV channel, the spa manager, Guan Jiang Guang, reveals some unsettling secrets: "My employees are illegal immigrants. I settle the deal by giving about \$ 70 US to 2 guys of immigration services." "Regarding an illegal gambling room, he reveals that the affair was promptly settled with a small bribe for the justice ministry officials." And to go back to the main subject of "On the Trail", the same man revealed information and recommendations on rhinoceros horn trafficking to the news journalist - but he didn't know that he was a journalist. "If you buy the horn from a black person, he tells the police and during the delivery, you lose the horn. And you come out with a fine of a million rand [\$ 72,000 US]." Guan Jiang Guang thus kindly advised the person to be careful. It's better to deal with Chinese people, and if possible, in China. Guan then gave the infiltrated buyer an "untouchable" contact who works at the Beijing international airport. A few weeks afterwards, the Al Jazeera investigator met the man in question in a car, on the edge of a road in the province of Fujian. He did not come empty-handed. He offered a 2.5 kg rhinoceros horn for \$ 27,000 US per kg, or nearly 900,000 rand (\$ 65,000 US). On the ivory side, the documentary tells the same spiel. Several guides and cooks say that in Johannesburg, during the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in December 2015, they were bombarded with ivory orders for bracelets, stamps, pen cases, and chopsticks. There were so many orders that in 2 days, all the suppliers were sold out. All this ivory left South Africa in the diplomatic bags of the President Xi Jinping's entourage. "On the Trail" reported several cases of ivory or rhinoceros horn smuggling or attempts to do so by diplomats and members of foreign delegations stationed in or visiting Africa. Cf. "On the Trail" n°7 p. 89, n°9 p. 60, n°11 p. 60, and n° 13 p. 84.²⁶

Mid November 2016

Limpopo Province, South Africa

A young 6-month-old female rhinoceros was admitted to the orphanage under the name Thula. A bullet that went straight through and killed her mother went on to reach her in her shoulders. Although she suffered severe wounds, the general prognosis is positive. However, shrapnel hit her left eye, and the veterinarians and ophthalmologists are pessimistic about the full recovery of her vision. The Limpopo rhinoceros orphanage was founded in 2012 by par Arrie van Deventer. Its mission is to “fix up” orphans and release them back in the wild, without involving any kind of commercial transaction.²⁷

November 17, 2016

South Africa

Nothing could be done. Poached the night before. Wounded on the left shoulder. Humerus fracture. Cannot be straightened or set.²⁸



- **From mid- to end October 2016.** 6 rhinos poached in 2 weeks. 2 black rhinos and 4 white ones²⁹

- **November 18, 2016.** New message from Limpopo Rhino Security Group. “Sadly . . . We have lost another 2 rhinos in our group. The onslaught is rising and the infiltration attempts are skyrocketing. We wish all our rangers good luck.”³⁰

November 19, 2016

Ngodwana, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

Secret agreement between 2 rotten cops and 4 poachers. During the night, one police car picked up the poachers to safely evacuate them from the zone. Clean police officers chased them down, and brought the 6 swine to a standstill 5 km further down. There were 2 pieces of horn and a loaded gun in the back of the car (see page 82 for more details).³¹

November 21, 2016

KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa

7 carcasses found. 2 orphans. A young 2-year-old female had been shot during a savage attempt to remove its horns. After 2 weeks of suffering and treatment, she died.³²

November 23- 28 and December 13, 2016

O. R. Tambo International Airport, Johannesburg, South Africa

Namibia

- Near Era, a major pressmedia wonders how the Namibian services could let the suitcase of a Chinese passenger full of 18 horns weighing 43 kg go by. The same services identify and have no qualms about seizing shampoo models and toothpaste tubes. The Chinese passenger, Ye Zhiwei, was arrested in Johannesburg International Airport (cf. page 83). He was in transit on his way from Windhoek and was about to fly off to Hong Kong. The carelessness of the Windhoek airport border police is all the more astounding as rhinoceroses are dying in mass in the north of the country.

- Arrest and release on bail of Pendapala Abraham litula, a police officer on duty at Hosea Kutako Airport in Windhoek.

- For the Chinese trafficker, release on bail rejected.³³



November 25, 2016
Madikwe Game Reserve, North West Province, South Africa³⁴



A collapsed rhinoceros. A dismayed Belgian Shepherd Malinois.

The horns are still there.

November 28, 2016
Florida, Gauteng Province, South Africa

Nothing was found in the house search. At the last minute, the suspect had thrown the horns into the backyard.³⁵



December 2, 2016
Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

A bullet's crater on its right flank. The young 8 month-old rhinoceros was found alive in the thickets 8 days after the savage poaching of her mother. The slashing rain wiped out its footprints, which meant that those looking for him by land and air took more time to find him. She is slowly recovering from her pain and fright, in the good hands of the Care for Wild Africa Rhino Sanctuary.³⁶

December 3, 2016
Mahikeng, North West Province, South Africa

Poaching and mutilation of the mother, rescue of the little one. The 3-month-old had survived for at least one week. She tried in vain to be adopted by another female with her calf. A Rhino 911 helicopter transported her. She was cared for by Dr. Gerhardus Scheepers. She's doing well. Fortunately, she did not eat too much sand during those days of distress and solitude.³⁷

December 5, 2016
Magudu, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa



A poacher's basic arsenal.³⁸

December 5, 2016
Boksburg, Gauteng Province, South Africa

News in brief. The trio in the stolen car was transporting drugs, a falsified weapon, and a horn that was initially considered to be from a rhinoceros, and after verification, from a buffalo. 3 arrests. A 20-year-old black woman, a white man, and a 41-year-old Nigerian national.³⁹



December 7, 2016
Roedtan, Limpopo Province, South Africa⁴⁰



Poached

Poacher

December 12, 2016
Mbombela, Nelspruit, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

Police war in Mbombela (see page 80).⁴¹ Two officers from Hawks, an anti-poaching task force, were prevented from taking the fingerprints of 2 officials from the SAPS (South Africa Police Service) during custody. Simanga Mnisi and Manguni Nyalunga, are accused of assisting 4 men in a poaching incident on Waterval Boven Farm near Ngodwana. In particular, they are blamed for using a police vehicle in which slices of horn, the tail, and the ears, knives and a hunting rifle with its silencer and ammunition were found. According to their accounts, the 4 presumed poachers hitch-hiked and asked the policemen to take them to Mbombela. During the bail hearing, the Hawks said that some of the suspects had legal records that were quite hefty, especially for intrusion into Kruger Park. Mnisi, one of the 2 cops, was already involved in 2 burglaries and had illegally detained a weapon. In his defense, one poacher said that it was initially just a wild pig hunting party that went bad. When they saw a rhinoceros, they instinctively aimed at its head. After contacting an 'Inyanga', a traditional healer, they cut its ears and tail, as the healer instructed them to do.

December 13, 2016
Pretoria, Gauteng Province, South Africa
 Hugo Ras is still in prison (cf. "On the Trail" n° 14 p. 64). His lawyers keep trying every 6 months.⁴²

December 16, 2016
Tonga, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa
 The police received a tip off. The police dashed to the suspect's home in Block C in the neighborhood of KaSiboshwa. They seized a horn in the bag of the man who was trying to flee via a sugarcane field.⁴³

Vendredi 18 décembre 2016
Potchefstroom, North West Province, South Africa

Search of a car reported. Firearms. Pigsticker. Ax. Ammunition. 2 arrests. A deadly weekend for rhinoceroses averted.⁴⁴



December 19, 2016
Askari Game Lodge, Gauteng Province, South Africa

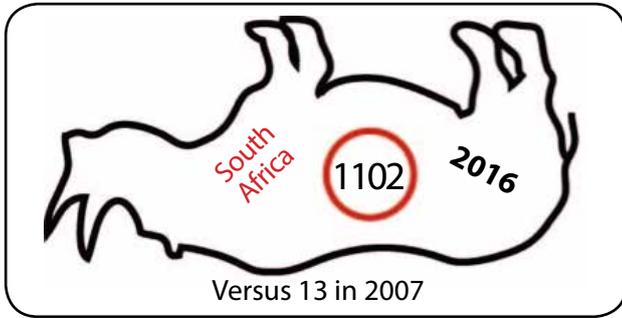
Two poached. One of them was pregnant. The 3rd one is missing. Informants can contact 08600 10111 and may remain anonymous if they prefer.⁴⁵



December 22, 2016
Crocodile Bridge Gate, Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province, South Africa

Death of 2 poachers. No horn or carcass on the scene of the clash with the rangers. Seizure of 2 firearms.⁴⁶





**December 24-25th 2016
Madikwe Game Reserve and
Klerksdorp, North West Province,
South Africa**

Four rhinos poached, three females and one male, a few meters from each other near the northern fence of the park. Five rhinos poached. According to OSCAP (Outraged South African Citizens Against Poaching), they were in a boma waiting for export to Viet Nam. "Normally we have a peak at the beginning of December then it goes down. But apparently the poachers are not going home for Christmas, they are staying here and are busy poaching our rhinos to extinction". OSCAP draws up a black picture of this end of the year.⁴⁷



**December 29, 2016
Polokwane Game Reserve,
Limpopo Province, South
Africa**

One of the last rhinoceroses of the reserve was the victim of poaching at the end of the year! For peanuts, just a horn stump! The animal had been dehorned 5 months beforehand as a precaution. According to people who are familiar with it, the Reserve resembles a free-for-all inn. Booze, blasting music, random searches!⁴⁸



Limpopo, end of December
Breaking into a veterinary office. Massive theft of anaesthetic drugs. The hypodermic syringe rifles are going to be fashionable in the beginning of 2017.

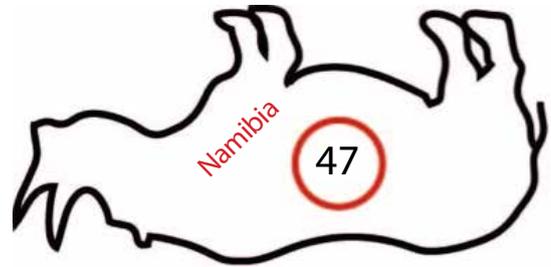
BOTSWANA

**Mid November 2016
Okavango Delta, North-West District, Botswana**

A rhinoceros was poached. The poachers did not have time to remove the horns. With the passing of time, the Delta has earned the reputation of being a haven of peace for rhinoceroses, which have been translocated from South Africa. The last poaching incident was 3 years ago, in Xaraga. It seems that Partson Tapera Gatora, a Zimbabwean native, was involved in exporting the horns.⁴⁹

NAMIBIA

**November 2016
Etosha National Park, Kunene Region, Namibia**
In November alone, 7 new carcasses were counted.
- 47 since January 1, 2016⁵⁰
Elephant poaching is also on the rise in the country:
- 78 in 2014
- 91 in 2015
- 76 between January 1 and October 30, 2016.



**October 30 and beginning of
December 2016
Etosha National Park, Kunene
Region, Namibia**

Death of 4 poachers after gunfire was exchanged with the rangers. 3 poachers then died of hunger and thirst in the desert.



Among the families of the victims, the rumor is going around that there is something suspicious about the affair, and that it has something to do with the export of 18 rhinoceros horns by Ye Zhiwei via the Windhoek international airport, with the supposed complicity of a security guard. Namright, the Namibian human rights League, is looking into the fate of the poachers who died in the desert.⁵¹

**December 11, 2016
Etosha National Park, Kunene Region, Namibia**

The AZ editorial staff (Allgemeine Zeitung, a Namibian newspaper in German) confirms that one of its readers witnessed Etosha Park officials near their Namutoni base camp taking a dead rhinoceros from the bushes, near the waterhole in small Namutoni, on Saturday December 10. The animal was dehorned, and some of it was skinned.⁵²



REPEATED OFFENSE

December 22 and 29, 2016
Near Gobabis, Omaheke Region, Namibia

- Two rhinoceroses dehorned. The female was pregnant, she had a stillbirth after she had been shot. Two others were severely wounded. The poachers are on the run and did not leave any clues behind. The poachers' weapon had a silencer.

- Three people arrested. One of them was Kandjii, the former doctor for the Namibian football team, the Brave Warriors. The trio was freed on bail after the murder of a farmer in February 2015. Kandjii was also involved in rhinoceros poaching in Etosha National Park in 2014.⁵³



AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

OPERATION CRASH

November 8, 2016
St. Louis, State of Missouri, United States of America

46-year-old Robert Wesley Newman was sentenced to 2 years of probation, 40 hours of community service, and a \$ 170,000 US Community Service Payment to the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), for trafficking 4 black rhinoceros horns and 2 white rhinoceros horns between Tennessee and Illinois. In exchange for 6 horns, Newman had received \$ 170,000 US in cash in a brown paper bag. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service had him on close watch. This service monitors horn trafficking within the United States and trafficking for export. As part of the CRASH operation, the US Courts have sentenced several national and international traffickers to suspended sentences or prison sentences without remission, and to fines or compensation amounting to \$ 7,600,000 US in all. Cf. "On the Trail" n°1 p. 24, n°2 p. 49, n°3 p. 52, n°5 p. 76, n°6 p. 69 and 107, n°7 p. 72, n°8 p. 66, n°9 p. 66 and 71, n°11 p. 60, n°12 p. 90.⁵⁴

The NFWF is devoted to maintaining and restoring wildlife and natural habitats for "current and future generations."



OPERATION CRASH

November 29, 2016
New York, State of New York, United States of America

Zhou pleaded guilty. This Asian art expert admits that he bought 5 raw horns from a colleague from the State of New York who is also an Asian art expert, knowing that these horns had been illegally transported from Texas to the eastern coast of the United States. Shortly afterwards, they were sold for \$ 130,000 US to a partner responsible for exporting them to the People's Republic of China.⁵⁵

ASIA

CAMBODIA

November 1, 2016

Phnom Penh International Airport, Cambodia

Seizure of 35 kg of horns. Arrest of a passenger holding a Chinese passport coming from Johannesburg via Singapore. Cf. "On the Trail" n°14 p.68.⁵⁶



Between \$ 4 to \$ 7 million US according to the Wildlife Alliance NGO.

INDIA

Beginning of October 2016

Mon District, State of Nagaland, India

Arrest of 60-year-old Roizuddin, a poacher, arms trafficker, and organized crime chief wanted for 15 years. Nagaland is a transit point for horns heading for China. Naga tribe members poach in Kaziranga National Park.⁵⁷

October 18, 2016

Jaldapara National Park, Alipurduar District, State of West Bengal, India



Seizure of a horn, an assault rifle, and 46 cartridges. 4 arrests in a village inside the Park. This is the first time that an AK47 was found in a poacher's home. It was under a cushion. It seems to be from Assam.⁵⁸

October 21, 2016

Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India

Discovery of a tiger carcass. This is the 16th poaching in the park since the beginning of the year.⁵⁹

October 25, 2016

Karbi Anglong District, State of Assam, India

Near Kaziranga National Park, midnight arrest of 3 people in possession of a .303 caliber rifle, a silencer, ammunition, an ax, and a flashlight.⁶⁰



October 26, 2016

Burachapori Wildlife Sanctuary, State of Assam, India

After the death of her mother (cf. "On the Trail" n° 13, p. 74), it was the daughter's turn to die. She was 3 years old. She was infested with intestinal parasites, anemic, and was not responding favorably to the treatment. The program to translocate rhinoceroses from Kaziranga National Park to other parks in Assam is harshly criticized. Several NGOs (Early Birds, Aranya Suraksha Samity, Green Guard, The Green Society and Centre for Conservation, Education and Research) and student trade unions are demanding its immediate suspension. In addition to the health hazards for the pachyderms, the opponents of the program are in fear of poaching in parks that are not protected enough. Speaking anonymously, an Assam forestry services officer revealed that the female rhinoceros dead in May suffered many traumas during her capture and during the waiting period in the 'boma', the enclosure where she was confined. "It was a terrible sight". "When waken up the mother rhino wounded herself with multiple injuries each time she stumbled on the thorny barrier in the effort to free herself." "Further, the mother suffered a grave cut in the ear that turned septic and the animal died a slow and

painful death." The 2020 Indian RhinoVision program has support from the Assam Department of Forests, the Bodoland Territorial Council, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. It is said to be responsible for the death of 13 rhinoceroses during the transfer and afterwards.⁶¹

October 26, 2016

Silbari, Baksa District, State of Assam, India

Seizure of a rhinoceros horn (500 g). 3 arrests. The examination revealed that the horn came from Bhutan and that it was to be sold in Baghmara for 1.5 million rupee (\$ 22,455 US).⁶²

26 octobre 2016

Sonitpur District, State of Assam, India

Arrest of Omar Farukh, wanted for many rhinoceros poachings in Orang National Park.⁶³

November 15, 2016

**Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India
Gangrene**

Five officers responsible for monitoring Kaziranga National Park have been caught by the justice system. They would have sold the horn of the rhinoceros that had been poached in Bagori to traffickers from the district of Karbi Anglong for Rs. 40 lakh (\$ 60,000 US).⁶⁴

November 16, 2016

Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India

This is the 16th one in Kaziranga National Park. This one was shot 32 times in 2 seconds. That's what you get with an AK47. The immediate action of the rangers prevented the attackers from getting a hold of the horn. They fled into the hills via Rong Bong.⁶⁵

December 14, 2016

Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India

A carcass riddled with AK46 bullets of the young adult who was about 9 years old. The dehorned carcass was found early in the morning, one km from the express route that runs through the park. This is the 17th incident since the beginning of the year.⁶⁶



December 17, 2016

Karbi Anglong District, State of Assam, India

At night, seizure of a horn and 3 firearms in a bivouac of rebels who fled.⁶⁷

December 22, 2016

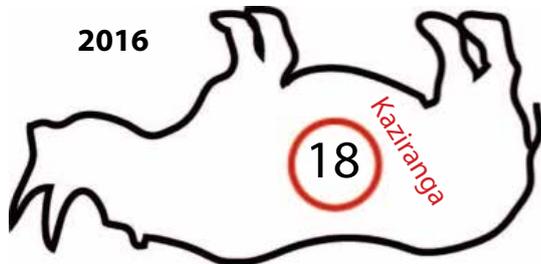
Kaziranga National Park, State of Assam, India

The bullets shot him around 6:30 near a backwater of Diphlu River. He was a young subadult male, about 10 years old. He fell into the water after



the shooting. The poachers dehorned him after he drowned. It is said that the rescuers couldn't see anything at the time because of the dense fog. The carcass was found later. 3 Park rangers were suspended for their lack of vigilance.

This is the 18th rhinoceros that has been poached since the beginning of the year. The gruesome count will be higher than in 2015 (17 poaching incidents), but will be lower than in 2014 (27 poaching incidents).⁶⁸



**End of December 2016
State of Assam, India**

With the 2 individuals, the undercover police officers agreed on the price of 75,000 rupee (\$ 1,100 US) for the purchase of the 1.2 kg horn. The 2 sellers were arrested, caught in the act.⁶⁹

**December 29, 2016
State of Assam, India**

The Rhino Horn Verification Committee appointed by the Assam government continues to scan the Tezpur inventory, where the disturbing presence of 5 fake horns has been reported (cf. "On the Trail" n°14 p. 70). The available archives reveal that they were recorded as "fake horns".

Experts are intrigued by the reliability and validity of this procedure, which has not been identified in the 5 other official horn's safes.⁷⁰

NEPAL

Pink Notebook

**December 24, 2016
Bardia National Park, Bardiya District,
Mid-Western Development Region, Nepal**

While 5 rhinoceroses were getting ready to be transferred from Chitwan National Park to Shuklaphanta Wildlife Reserve, Bardia National Park management announced a happy event, of unknown sex. There are now 7 rhinoceroses in the Park.⁷¹

VIET NAM

**October 12, 2016
Mong Cai, Quang Ninh Province, Viet Nam**

Seizure in a car of a 900 g horn that seems to be from a rhinoceros. 2 arrests. The 2 men said that a Chinese partner paid them 3 million dong (\$ 134 US) to transport it all the way to Hanoi. The horn was passed from China to Viet Nam. Demand stays high in Viet Nam.⁷²

November 18, 2016

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

Seizure of a rhinoceros horn and scraps. Provoc : On the same day in the Vietnamese capital, there was an international conference on strengthening the fight against wildlife trafficking. The value of the seizure is estimated or underestimated at 4 billion dong (\$ 177,800 US), or \$ 44,450 US/kg. The average annual revenue of a Vietnamese citizen is \$ 2,100 US, according to World Bank calculations.⁷³



The horn came from the north, near China. The man had taken a domestic flight. His goal was to sell it in Ho Chi Minh City.

December 29, 2016

Noi Bai International Airport, Hanoi, Viet Nam

A record seizure of 50 kg of horn in an anonymous suitcase. The Kenya Airways flight was coming in from Kenya.⁷⁴

EUROPE

IRLANDE

**December 14, 2016
Rathkeale, County Limerick, Ireland**

Seizure at 7 homes and 4 sheds used by the Rathkeale Rovers (cf. "On the Trail" n° 12 p. 72, n°13 p. 76, n°14 p. 97) of a supposed libation cup made of horn, a significant amount of cash, and 3 very expensive watches. The raid of 50 'gardai' (Irish police) happened at the same time as the return of several members of the clan who came back to the family nest from all over the world for the holidays.

The garda raid was conducted with the Irish Criminal Assets Bureau (CAB), in the presence of its filers.

Two 20- and 40-year-old men who slowed down the search by physically blocking it were arrested for a minor breach of the peace. They were released with bail under strict probation.⁷⁵

**Pierre Pfeffer 1927-2016
Life and Death of a Giant**

On the spot in Corsica to discover the moufflons, in Malaysia to discover the lizards, in Africa to discover the elephants and other large herbivores. Behind the scenes of governments and CITES to defend elephants, to the end. "Do not let go," he said from Paris to all African delegates meeting in favour of Appendix I in Johannesburg in October 2016. It looked like he was live from the savannah.



Pierre Pfeffer with the masked elephants of Robin des Bois during the destruction of 3 tons of illegal ivory in Paris in February 2014.



Rhinos and Elephants

AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Mid-December 2016

State of California, United States of America

The California law prohibiting the sale of rhinoceros horns and ivory has been in effect since July 1st, 2016. It concerns ivories of elephant, mammoth, mastodon, walrus, warthog, hippopotamus, sperm whale and narwhal.

Mastodons (*Mammuth americanum*) lived exclusively in North America. They were slightly smaller than mammoths. The tusks were not curved like those of the mammoths. The species died about 10,000 years ago.

- **San Francisco.** Seizure in 2 shops of a rhinoceros horn bracelet, 18 ivory statuettes from 38 to 66 cm high and 37 ivory miniatures from 1.2 cm to 15.2 cm, a whale tooth, 2 ivory chess boards and 2 engraved tusks presented as mammoth ivory. The items seized globally exceed the value of \$ 500,000 US.

- **Los Angeles International Airport.** Seizure of 377 jewels containing ivory from Indonesia.¹

ASIA

CHINA

November 8, 2016

Beijing, China

A Tibetan religious art dealer (cf. "On the Trail" n°14 p.73) was sentenced to 14 years in prison without remission and a fine of 60,000 yuan (\$ 8,850 US) for involvement in several cases of wildlife trafficking, above all in ivory and rhinoceros horns. 4 accomplices were sentenced to 3 and 13 years in prison.²



VIET NAM

October 25, 2016

Hanoi, Viet Nam

Sentenced to 9 months in prison. Vu Thanh Hung was working in Angola, more or less. Actually less. One of his acquaintances suggested that he return to the home country with 50 kg of ivory and rhinoceros horns in his belongings, in exchange for the tidy sum of \$ 1,300 US. Upon arrival in 2015, the suitcases were rightly diagnosed as being suspicious. 31-year-old Hung fled when he sensed this would not turn out nicely. He lived in the district of Ha Thin. He went into hiding for one year, under threat of an arrest warrant.³



November 27, 2016

Mong Cai, Quang Ninh Province, Viet Nam

The customs motorcycle brigade brought a car to a standstill a few kilometers away from the Chinese border. Result: 27 rhinoceros horn slices, 1,075 g of rhinoceros skin pieces. 11 bracelets, 10 necklaces, 4 ivory pendants weighing 1,181 g in all. A couple was arrested. An investigation has been launched.⁴

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.

"On the Trail" n°15 Black market raw ivory quotation from media or official sources

Continent	Country	US\$/kg	Ref.
Africa	Benin	290	52
	Gabon	245 - 416	71
	Kenya	980	80
	Malawi	1930	13
	Tanzania	2100 - 2300	23
	Zambia	1075	30
	Zimbabwe	263	33
Asia	Hong Kong (China)	1290	81
	Viet Nam	1764	7

Raw mammoth ivory

Continent	Country	US\$/kg	Réf.
Asia	China	106	120

EASTERN AFRICA

KENYA

October 9, 2016 Kenya

The result of 2 months of cooperation between the Big Life team and the KWS: 260 kg of ivory seized in 7 operations. Big Life usually goes into action after receiving confidential information.¹

FAMILY AFFAIRS October 9, 2016 Kenya

The 2 Jefwa brothers have been on the run since April 2015. They are suspected of sending 3,127 kg of ivory from the port of Mombasa, falsely manifested as 'tea leaves'. The container had been seized in Thailand (cf. "On the Trail" n°9, p.77, n°13 p. 95). Interpol is hot on their heels. 2 red notices have been sent out on them. Their presence has been reported in Tanzania and Uganda. They would be now hiding in South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, or the Central African Republic.²



October 10, 2016 Meru, Meru County, Kenya

The first request for release on bail was rejected for 3 men arrested in possession of 22 kg of raw ivory next to Meru Safari Hotel.³

October 13, 2016 Mombasa, Mombasa County, Kenya

Feisal is back.

Through his lawyer Taib Ali Taib and with the consent of the High Court, he will go to appeal again within 3 weeks. Feisal says that his health condition is worsening, and continues to say that he is the scapegoat in the Tudor case (cf. "On the Trail" n°5, p. 90, n°6 p. 81, n° 7 p. 78 et 87, n°8 p. 79, n°10 p. 59, n°12 p. 78). He was sentenced to 20 years in prison on July 22, 2016. All the other accused have been acquitted.⁴

November 13, 2016 Samburu National Reserve, Samburu County, Kenya

She was part of the 'Poetic Family'. She was about 20 years old. She bore the name of Rozz Williams, the singer-songwriter of the Christian Death punk group (1963-1998). The elephants in the Reserve are split into small re-knitted families named after flowers, poets, or artists. They are all orphans. The matriarchs were killed at the beginning of the major resurgence in poaching between 2009 and 2012. "2011 was a disaster", says Dr. Wittemyer, an animal biology specialist at the University of Colorado. With the NGO Save the Elephants, he studies how orphans gradually assume leadership in groups by imitating the behavior or their dead mothers. "The story of the Samburu orphans is one of the most heart-gripping examples of mutual aid and friendship I have seen in a nonhuman system."⁵

December 13, 2016 Marsabit National Park, Marsabit County, Kenya

Once again, heroic poachers shot dead a 6-month-old elephant calf, and left with the tail and an ear. This new raid happened in Marsabit County, about 200 km from the Ethiopian border. It is reminiscent of the May 2016 poaching (cf. "On the Trail" n°13 p. 82). 5 men were sentenced to 20 million Sh (\$ 197,000 US) in fines each, or if they could not pay, to 20 years in prison.⁶

December 15, 2016 Kibera, Nairobi, Nairobi County, Kenya

Either 5 years in prison or 1.8 million shillings (\$ 17,700 US) in fines for transporting and trafficking in tusks in 2014. The accused asked for leniency for family reasons. He is a father of 3. He is the only wage earner in his family.⁷



Mid December 2016

Tsavo Conservation Area, Kenya

With Sky Vet and the KWS, the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust finally located the young male wounded by an arrow in the savanna. The wound was treated with green clay. The prognosis is positive.⁸



© The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust

Taita wildlife sanctuary, Kenya

December 20-22, 2016

A trio spotted. Exchange of gunfire. Death of a suspect. Seizure of 2 tusks. The poachers had come to recover the tusks, 15 days after they had killed the elephant.^{8bis}



December 25, 2016

Kenya

Intense traffic during this holiday period. When the cat's away, the mice will play. Right. But the cats are still there - or at least Big Life and KWS: the 2 tusks of one adult elephant are seized. Two arrests.⁹



© Big Life

MALAWI

October 6, 2016

Mchinji, Central Region, Malawi

5 years and 5 months in jail for the possessing and trafficking 24 kg of raw ivory. No fine as alternative sentence.¹⁰



© Lilongwewildlife

November 4, 2016

Machinga, Southern Region, Malawi

Arrest of a 31-year-old man, Elifa Makhwele for planned killing of an elephant in Liwonde National Park. His 2 accomplices are still free.¹¹



November 23, 2016. Lilongwe, Central Region, Malawi.

Convicted ! 5 men, including 2 police officers, with sentences running from 3 years and 5 months to 4 years for possessing and transporting 14 tusks or pieces of tusks weighing 27.5 kg in all.¹²

December 29, 2016

Lilongwe International Airport, Lumbadzi, Malawi

In the suitcase of Nan Zhuang, a Chinese citizen, seizure of 5 strips of ivory weighing 114 g. Value: 159,000 Malawian kwacha (\$ 220 US), or \$ 1,930 US/kg. The suspect claims that a fellow Chinese friend slipped them into his baggage out of his knowledge. In mid-December, the parliament amended the National Parks and Wildlife Act. Trafficking is now punishable by a maximum sentence of 30 years in prison without remission, with no option of a fine.¹³

MOZAMBIQUE

Mid October 2016

Quissanga District, Cabo Delgado Province, Mozambique

The elephants were probably poached in Quissanga National Park. Arrest of a Mozambican and a Tanzanian in possession of 13 tusks and a firearm. They are claiming everything they did was " necessary for their survival ".¹⁴

October 14 and 21, 2016

Niassa Reserve, Niassa and Cabo Delgado Provinces, Mozambique

The pace is picking up here too. 180 elephants since the beginning of the year—or one elephant poached every two days. 10 between October 14 and 21. The border patrols between Tanzania and Mozambique (800 km) will be strengthened.

Niassa Reserve, cf. "On the Trail" n° 6 p. 84 and 87, n° 7 p. 77, n° 10 p. 55, n° 11 p. 51 and 70. ¹⁵

Beginning of December 2016

Limpopo National Park, Gaza Province, Mozambique

'Charlie', a Park icon, was poached.¹⁶



© CAT

December 12, 2016

Limpopo National Park, Gaza Province, Mozambique

Pieter Jansen van Rensburg, a South African hunting guide living in Maputo, his wife, another family member, and a guide living in Massinger were arrested in Limpopo National Park. They had powerful weapons on them. Without being able to prove it, they claimed that the director of economic activities of Massingir District had issued a hunting license for them.

The Van Rensburg case came shortly after 'Charlie' was poached in Limpopo National Park. Those who are very familiar with the field point out that elephants huddle together, are distrustful, and very aggressive. These are all clues that their confidence has decreased and their stress has increased. Michelle Henley, an Elephant Alive member, is pessimistic. "The technical adviser had flown the southern part of the PNL and he found 66 live elephants and 53 carcasses." "We're looking at a rapidly declining population." "Poaching in PNL is definitely out of control and elephants are now being killed right along the Kruger border, South Africa. "We're the final stronghold of African elephants and poachers know that." It is clear to everyone that the poaching contagion has hit southern Africa, and that the elephants of Mozambique in open parks are particularly vulnerable and exposed to bursts and to cyanide.¹⁷



UGANDA

November 14, 2016

West of Uganda

Seizure of a tusk. Two arrests.¹⁸

December 2, 2016

Bwambara Sub-County, Rukungiri District, Western Region, Uganda

Arrest of a soldier from the regular army for the possession of 3 tusk sections weighing 2.5 kg in all. They came from an elephant poached in Queen Elizabeth National Park.¹⁹

SOUTH SUDAN

December 6, 2016

Juba International Airport, Central Equatoria State, South Sudan

Seizure of 500 kg of raw ivory on board an Ethiopian Airlines flight coming from Kenya and heading to Cairo. Based on the stamps and marks identifying the tusk and tusk sections, the government spokesperson mentioned an inter-African network that involves Entebbe, Nairobi, Addis Ababa, and Juba as well.²⁰



TANZANIA

October 19, 2016

Dar es Salam, Dar es Salaam Region, Tanzania

Court appearance of 3 suspects: a retired police officer, a farmer, and a watchman. Chaula, Cheleko and Bamie were arrested with 5 tusks estimated to be worth \$ 75,000 US. They are still in prison.²¹

October 2016

Dar es Salam, Dar es Salaam Region, Tanzania

It appears that Yang Feng Clan, the Ivory Queen of Tanzania (cf. "On the Trail" n°11 p. 71, n°13 p. 80) confessed shortly after her arrest, during a police interrogation. With 2 Tanzanian accomplices, between 2000 and 2014, she is accused of planning the poaching and smuggling of 706 tusks weighing 1,889 kg in all, worth an estimated 5.4 billion Sh (\$ 2.5 million US), or \$ 1,320 US/kg on the Tanzanian market. A witness summoned by the public prosecutor is not available. He has to take his wife to the hospital. The trial is thus adjourned to January 16, 2017.²²



November 17, 2016

Kisutu Court, Dar es Salaam Region, Tanzania

Court appearance of 5 men. They could have conscience burdened by ivory. They are charged with purchasing, possessing, transporting, and trying to sell 50 tusks or sections worth \$ 180,000 US, with other people who are wanted. This illegal ivory is worth between \$ 2,100 and \$ 2,300 US per kilo.

The businessman Yusuf, Mrutu, Kungwa, Chima, and Nyagongo were not heard by the court on the main issue. As they are accused of economic sabotage, they will appear before the Anti-Corruption Court.²³

November 1 and 3, 2016

Ruvuma Region, Tanzania

- **Tunduru.** Arrest of a man and seizure of elephant meat.

- **Ruvuma River.** Arrest of 2 poachers and seizure of 2 tusks cut into 4 pieces.²⁴

Mid November 2016

Mbeya, Mbeya Region, Tanzania

Court appearance of 9 people for poaching 86 elephants. Most of the suspects, including the son of a congressmen, are affiliated with the ruling party, Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM). It is said that between 2006 and 2014, the gang plagued the regions of Mbeya, Iriga, Tanga and Morogoro, and made one million US dollars in profit from its poaching, mainly of elephants and buffaloes.²⁵

REPEATED OFFENSE

December 19, 2016

Lushoto District, Tanga Region, Tanzania

Arrest of Michael Kijangwa, a tough nut to crack. In 2014, he had been sentenced in absentia to 25 years in prison and 3.7 billion shillings (\$ 1,701,337 US) for his involvement in raw ivory trafficking, between the port of Tanga and Taiwan in June 2006. Officially, the 2 maritime containers were loaded with 60 bales of sisal heading to Philippines. He had been released with bail at the end of 2008. An official from the Treasury had been sentenced in this affair for corruption, after submitting a visit report certifying the compliance of the goods inside the containers. Kijangwa would be also involved in a massive ivory smuggling between the port of Dar es Salaam and Viet Nam in 2009.²⁶

December 28, 2016

Tanzania

Arrest of a man with 2 tusks. The elephant was poached in Selous Game Reserve.²⁷



December 29, 2016

Tarangire National Park, Manyara Region, Tanzania

Arrest of a man on the edge of the Park, 100 km from Arusha, with 2 kg of cyanide in his possession. The use of cyanide for elephant poaching is on the rise in the country.²⁸



ZAMBIA

November 23, 2016

Mosi oa Tunya National Park, Southern Province, Zambia

Near Victoria Falls, the veterinarian Chris Foggin rushed from Zimbabwe to rescue a wild elephant whose one paw had been hurt by a snare and which was stuck near an enclosure for pet elephants. From 1989 to 2012, Foggin headed up the wildlife unit of the Ministry of Agriculture in Zimbabwe. As such, he has been on the field hundreds of times to provide care to poached rhinoceroses and elephants.²⁹



December 22, 2016

Kaoma, Kaoma District, Western Province, Zambia

Seizure of 47 kg of ivory worth 500,000 kwacha (\$ 50,500 US), or \$ 1,075 US/kg, and a leopard skin worth 10,000 kwacha (\$ 1,010 US) in a guesthouse. Arrest of a police officer of the Kaomo police station and of 2 businessmen in the airport area.³⁰



ZIMBABWE

October 1, 2016

- Hwange National Park, Matabeleland North Province, Zimbabwe

Discovery of 4 elephant carcasses. The tusks that were still there were cut by the rangers. The 8 tusks weighed 36 kg. 4.5 kg per tusk. The elephants were young, 4 to 6 years old. An elephant usually lives up to 60 or 70 years.

- Gonarezhou National Park, Masvingo Province, Zimbabwe

Discovery of the carcass of a poisoned elephant. Its tusks were stolen. The patrol followed the men footprints. 3 guys sitting under a tree were located. Warning shots. The suspects fled. On the scene, they left behind ammunition, an ax, a knife, 2 mobile phones with a SIM card from Mozambique, a large caliber rifle, and 4 tusks.³¹

October 2016 Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe is coming out of the closet before the presidential elections in 2018.

- With the approval of Mr. Mugabe, the Vice President has launched an investigation on the involvement of several ministers in the illicit ivory trade after the mass cyanide poisoning of elephants in Hwange Park in 2013.

- ZimParks wants to get to the bottom of this, in Tsholotsho District. Did Jonathan Moyo, the Minister of Education, use all or part of the money from the sale of baby elephants to China? It is said that on this occasion, Jonathan Moyo diverted \$ 200,000 US which was



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meant to build a football stadium in the northern district of Tsholotsho. This district is the electoral stronghold of Jonathan Moyo. It is also the departure point for elephants from Hwange Park when they are exported to China and other destinations. The successive Ministers of Higher Education and cabinet members always thought that were there to serve themselves. Special funds meant to train staff were used to buy luxury cars, fund family funerals, purchase opulent apartments and rent them at derisory prices to colleagues, purchase quantities of oil so large that you would think it was for a refinery, or purchase \$ 3,000 US of nautical books and other nautical documents for 2 yacht race female champions. All of these revelations are from the theft of a confidential report that the monitoring council of the ZIMDEF (Zimbabwe Manpower Development Fund) has written.³²

November 17, 2016 Kwekwe, Midlands Province, Zimbabwe

The night bus was heading to Harare. At 2 a.m. in the morning, when the luggage compartment was opened, seizure in the bags of 2 passengers of 4 tusks weighing 19 kg in all, estimated to be worth \$ 5,000 US on the local market, or \$ 263 US/kg. Low grade ivory?³³

November 21, 2016 Mana Pools National Park, Mashonaland West Province, Zimbabwe

Aware Trust veterinarians rescued a young male that was snared. On-site surgery.³⁴



November 23, 2016 Bumi Hills Reserve, Mashonaland West Province, Zimbabwe.



After a 9-month truce, it's war again in Bumi Hills. Ivory is part of the Christmas gifts.

December 19, 2016 Zimbabwe - Hwange, Matabeleland North Province

Sentenced to 9 months in prison. He had 4 kg of ivory and 3 kg of cyanide on him.³⁶



- **Masvingo, Masvingo Province**
One arrest. He had 2 kg of cyanide on him. He was leaving for a poaching mission in the Chishakwe protected area.



- **Guruve, Mashonaland Central Province**
Sentenced to 12 months in prison. He had 500 g of cyanide on him in Mana Pools National Park. Since the slaughter of poisoned elephants in Hwange Park in 2013, cyanide has become the preferred weapon of poachers. Cyanide is a silent killer. This has affected the national parks of Gonarezhou, Chizarira, Matusadona, Zambezi, and Matetsi.

Beginning of November and December 21-25, 2016 Zimbabwe

- It is said that China has "reserved" 200 baby elephants for its zoos and leisure parks for the next 5 years. The Shanghai Wild Animal Park and Yunnan Safari Park are expecting 17 and 15 baby elephants in the coming days or weeks. 2 of them died in the transit enclosure, after they were captured and separated from their groups.

The 2012 and 2015 deliveries do not give rise to optimism about the quality of life or survival's probabilities of free and sociable animals that have abruptly been resettled into a closed and artificial space in China. They're either sentenced to death or sentenced to a lifetime in prison, as Humane Society International says.³⁷

- Export of 35 elephants 5 to 12 years old to China in a cargo plane via Moscow. It is said that 8 lions, a dozen hyenas, and a giraffe were sent a few days afterwards.

The demand for African wildlife from Chinese zoos (cf. "On the Trail" n°7 p. 105, n°9 p. 80, n°10 p. 61) is a concern for environmentalists, and above all, for the Zimbabwe Conservation Task Force. Everyone is using the term "cruelty" to talk about this.

Oppah Muchinguri, the Minister of the Environment, justifies the sale: "Elephants are a local resource and the sale will support the livelihoods of our local communities." The ambassador of Zimbabwe in China refutes the information in the international press telling that the Mugabe couple negotiated the sale of elephants and other wild animals to pay a debt that the Democratic Republic of Congo owed to China, for thousands of military uniforms. The solidarity between Zimbabwe and the Democratic Republic of Congo was expressed as early as 1997, with the sending of troops to support Laurent Kabila, the father of the current president, Joseph Kabila.³⁸

SOUTHERN AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

FAMILY AFFAIRS October 29, 2016

O. R. Tambo International Airport, Johannesburg, Gauteng Province, South Africa

2 Chinese brothers on their way to Hong Kong had problems at the airport. A passport caught the attention of the border police. It was a fake. 3,000 rand (\$ 360 US) was offered to the customs officer to settle the affair.

The departure was delayed, as it took time to go through the bag of one of the brothers who was already sitting in the plane. In his bag, there were diamonds, ivory, 10 kg of fresh abalone, and dried abalone. The duo is accused of corruption, fraud, illegal possession of diamonds, and wildlife products. Their estimated market value is 6 million rand, or \$ 432,240 US.³⁹



End of October 2016

Greater Kruger National Park, South Africa

A very tight corner for the female elephant. Her left ear was stuck in a giraffe trap for several days. She was released and cared for by a Provet Wildlife Services team. Her half-torn ear was full of maggots. The miraculous survivor received antibiotic and analgesic treatment, and managed to return to her herd after several unsuccessful attempts.⁴⁰



November 4, 2016

Hammanskraal, Gauteng Province, South Africa

Neighborhood conflict. A farmer close to the Dinokeng Reserve shot one of the 13 elephants. He had gone through a breach in the fence. Richard Lydaff, spokesman for the Reserve, deplors this fatal outcome. Until then, this kind of small problem was settled smoothly with the intervention of the Dinokeng's rangers. At 50 km from Pretoria, the Reserve has an area of 18,500 ha. This original

initiative in the province gathers former farmlands that have been converted into "Big Five" trails and tourist activities and accommodations. 271 owners are grouped within the Dinokeng Management Association. Five entrance gates are available for visitors. The entrance fee is 30 rands per adult and 20 rands per child. The Reserve will be extended to 30,000 ha in the near future. The surface area of the neighbouring Park of Pilanesberg is 57.200 ha. "Maintenance of 200km of electrified fences is an ongoing challenge to the reserve due to cuts being made by potential poachers and lightning strikes" says Lydaff.⁴¹

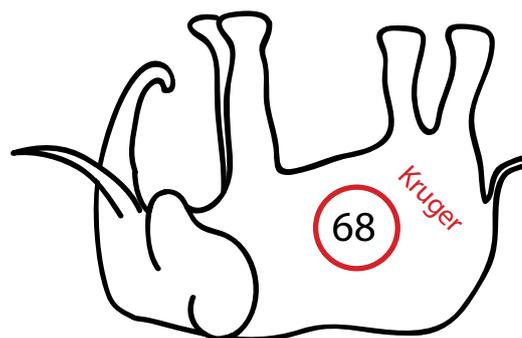
November 29, 2016

Phalauteni, Limpopo Province, South Africa

Seizure of 2 small tusks and arrest of a 54-year-old adult male.⁴²



Beginning of December : 68 dead in 12 months in Kruger Park.



NAMIBIA

October 6 and 7, 2016

Katima Mulilo, Zambezi Region, Namibia

- Joe Walubita, a Zambian national, was sentenced to 3 years in prison, with one year suspended, and a fine of \$ 1,000 N (\$ 72 US), or an additional 6 months in prison if not paid. The Toyota that was used to transport the 8 tusks was seized. Walubita had been arrested in the evening on August 19 near the Zambian border.

- Kufuna Kambembe was found guilty. He had been arrested on August 28 near the Wenela border post. He was carrying 6 tusks cut into 14 pieces in a wheelbarrow. He was sentenced to pay a fine of \$ 7,000 N (\$ 504 US), or to 24 months in prison.⁴⁴



October 11, 16, 19 and 20, 2016

Linyanti and Katima Mulilo, Zambezi Region, Namibia

Seizure of 4 tusks, a sophisticated firearm, a knife, an ax and ammunition.

Since the beginning of the year, 67 elephants have died in the poaching slaughterhouse. The pace is accelerating. Three carcasses were discovered between October 11 and 16 in the protected area of Salambala. Four suspects were arrested.

John Lutibezi, school principal at Simataa, had a double life. He was released on bail for 5,000 Namibian dollars (\$ 360 US). His 2 accomplices, one of whom is of Zambian nationality, remain in prison. Lutibezi must appear twice a day at the Chichimane police station pending trial. He was indicted through an information received by the police. The teaching profession is a relatively common cover for ivory traffickers or poachers (see "On the Trail" n°14, p. 81).⁴⁵

October 31, 2016

Rundu, Kavango-East Region, Namibia

Seizure of 2 tusks and 9 duiker carcasses in the 2 homes of a senior official of the Regional Ministry of Information and Communication. Johannes Joachim was released on bail of \$ 10,000 N (\$ 720 US). He was accused of illegal possession of raw ivory and poaching.⁴⁶

December 7, 2016

Kappsfarm roadblock, Khomas Region, Namibia

Seizure of raw ivory cut into pieces and hidden in coffee and chocolate powder cans. Arrest of 2 Chinese citizens at a checkpoint. The 2 men were preparing to return to their country. They were employed on a construction site in the region of Kavango East. Their release on bail was rejected.⁴⁷



Kavango East, cf. "On the Trail" n°5 p. 113, n°9 p. 73, n°11 p. 91, n°12 p. 86, n°13 p. 67, n°14 p. 67.

December 8, 2016

Mashare, Kavango-East Region, Namibia

Three men, 4 tusks, one river. The suspects managed to swim across the Kavango and to reach Angola. The Namibian police were just about to arrest them. They left the tusks on bank.⁴⁸

December 9, 2016

Katima Mulilo, Zambezi Region, Namibia

Seizure of 4 tusks. New arrest of a school manager. He had 4 accomplices.⁴⁹

December 21 and 30, 2016

Bwabwata National Park, Namibia

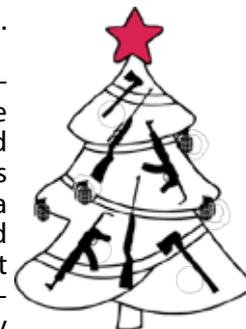
Bwabwata National Park is on the border between Botswana, Angola, and Zambia.

- The carcass was still warm. The anti-poaching brigade rushed in. The tusks were intact. Manhunt. Gunfiring. Death of an unknown



poacher without ID on him. Three accomplices on the run.

- We are starting to have information on the gang: A little body of forest stowaways and transboundaries poachers with an Angolese identity, a Namibian driving license and nicknames in thousands. Eight days after the skirmish, investigators do not know who they are even if some have been taken up. They are aged 30 and 40 years old at first sight or after examination of a forensic pathologist. Between September and December, 24 elephants were poached in the Park.⁵⁰



BOTSWANA

December 2016

Botswana

Elephant-back riding is prohibited in Botswana as of the end of 2016. Although this measure actually covers only Abu Camp, there are no less than around 40 leisure parks in southern Africa that use elephants to amuse tourists. But elephants are not amused. In general, they are overexploited, receive poor care, are isolated from each other, trapped in the wilderness when they are young, and brutally domesticated. Knysna Elephant Park and Elephants of Eden in South Africa have a very bad fame. The craze for elephant-back rides came from Asian countries, and entered Africa via Zimbabwe in the 1990s.

Botswana is thus complementing its new overall elephant protection policy. This splits the position of southern Africa, which until then was unanimous in considering that poaching was not a threat in the region. Botswana expressed its opinion in the beginning of October at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES. It stated to be in favor of listing all African elephants in Appendix I. Up until then, Botswana, along with South Africa, Namibia, and Zimbabwe has its elephants under the lighter protection of Appendix II, which allowed for the trade of elephant skins, hair and trophies, and potentially opened the doors for ivory sales to requesting countries. The Ministry of the Environment, Wildlife and Tourism says to anyone who wants to listen—the United States and the European Union have not listened yet - that the current situation must be brought under control, that the current poaching rate, within 10 years, half of Africa's elephant population will be wiped out and that international ivory demand must be stemmed in order to protect the last herds of elephants together with their habitats. "When an elephant crosses a border does its Appendix situation change? That can't be right, we have to be consistent" adds the Minister. It should not be forgotten that the Appendix I proposal for all African elephants had been submitted for voting in Johannesburg by Benin, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sri Lanka, and Uganda, and was swept away.⁴³

WESTERN AFRICA

BENIN

African journalists are masters of the French language. An article in the newspaper *Fraternité* signed by Adrien Tchomakou reports that in the area of natural resource protection, “fruits hold the promise of flowers”. Between October 30 and November 11, 10 men were sentenced to 3 to 4 months in prison and 100,000 CFA francs (\$ 161 US) for trafficking 31 kg of ivory.⁵¹



- **October 3, 2016. Etoile Rouge, Cotonou.** The 3 nationals were going to exchange 3 tusks weighing 12.3 kg in all, for 2 million CFA francs (€ 3,048), or nearly 170,000 CFA francs/kg, or \$ 280 US/kg.

- **October 22, 2016. Kandi, Department of Alibori.** Seizure of 2 tusks from a calf. 1.6 kg each. 2 arrests.

- **October 27, 2016. Aplahoué, Department of Kouffo.** Seizure of 2 kg of ivory. It seems that the elephant was shot dead in Togo. 3 arrests.⁵²

- **November 11, 2016. Porga, Department of Atakora.**



Seizure of 2 tusks - 7 kg each. Two arrests on the border between Benin and Burkina Faso.⁵³

GUINEA

October 5 and November 8, 2016 Conakry, Conakry Region, Guinea

They tried to sell the 2 carved tusks to Asian clients for \$ 13,000 US. Article 129 of the wildlife Code states that it is prohibited to hold trophies or parts of protected animals that have been found dead especially ivory from elephant. It is also forbidden to hold the trophies and remains of protected animals that have been killed without a license. The public prosecutor required 3 months in prison without remission and a fine of 200,000 GNF (€ 20). The court met halfway. Only the Guinean trafficker was judged guilty. The fine was reduced to 90,000 GNF (€ 9). He will also need to pay 2 million GNF (€ 202) in damages. His accomplice from Côte d'Ivoire left free and easy. He'll be back in the ivory business in no time.⁵⁴



NIGERIA

End of October 2016 Plateau State, Nigeria

Arrest of Bello, the head of the gang, a poacher who killed a ranger in 2012, Hussaini Adamu Pau, and an unknown number of elephants.⁵⁵



CENTRAL AFRICA

CAMEROON

Beginning of October 2016 Kika, East Region, Cameroon

Arrest of 29-year-old Amadou Assan and 23-year-old Alex Narcisse Poyé. They were transporting 11 tusks. The commander of the Kika brigade exposed the complicity between the Congolese traffickers and the officers trackers who were supposed to help rangers eradicate poaching.⁵⁶

November 7, 2016 Yaoundé, Centre Region, Cameroon

One arrest and the seizure of 15 ivory trinkets.⁵⁷

November 10, 2016 Ebolowa, South Region, Cameroon

Arrest of a duo of experienced traffickers aged 60 and 61. One of them got the ivory, the other one carved it.⁵⁸

December 7, 2016 Lobéké National Park, East Region, Cameroon

A motorized patrol ranger in the Lobéké National Park near the border with the Congo and the Central African Republic (cf. “On the Trail” n°1 pp. 35, n°5 p. 92, n°6 p. 26) was shot 3 times in the hips and legs. Bruce Danny Ngongo died in the forest, losing his blood. A second soldier, Ngozo Martin, seriously wounded in the neck, died in hospital. The team consisted of 4 eco-guards and 2 soldiers. After the bloody clash, 9 ivory tips and elephant carcasses were found nearby.

The Park is invaded by plunderers from the Central African Republic. Eco-guards are often inexperienced. Military escorts are too light. An attack of the same type killed another technical agent in training in the Faro National Park in April 2016 (see “On the Trail” n°13 p.89). The government announces that troops will be deployed to monitor the Park and the course of the Sanaga River which delimits the border with the Central African Republic.⁵⁹



REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

REPEATED OFFENSE

October 16, 2016

Pointe-Noire, Pointe-Noire Department, Republic of the Congo

Two arrests. The first one is a national of the Democratic Republic of Congo. He had 160 small ivory jewels on him. His first revelations led the police officers to the second one, a Congolese national. The search of his home led to the seizure of about 30 more trinkets and tools for working ivory. He was the carver of the network. He had already been arrested for the same doings in 2014.⁶⁰



REPEATED OFFENSE

October 27, 2016

Ouéssou, Sangha Department, Republic of the Congo

Sentences in the case of Abbo Hamadou (cf. "On the Trail" n°14, p. 86) and his underlings.

The trio killed elephants with Kalachnikov. They are accused of transporting and trying to sell 9 tusks. 2 months after the Sembé police arrested Hamadou the first time for poaching in March 2015, he was sentenced to 3 months in prison without remission. He escaped this sentence due to his supposed health condition.

One year later, once again, the Sembé police brought him to a standstill, after what looked like a Western in the jungle. He was in top shape. Hamadou and his 2 assistants Minda Xavier and Gonock Evounanga were this time sentenced to 5 months in prison without remission each. The government instituted a civil action and obtained one million CFA francs (\$ 860 US) in compensation.

In the beginning of December 2016, Abbo Hamadou and 9 other prisoners, including another poacher, escaped from the Djambala prison. They were quickly taken up again.⁶¹

December 7, 2016

Pointe-Noire, Pointe-Noire Department, Republic of the Congo

Seizure of over 10 kg of ivory. 6 arrests. The gang is from the African Union of smugglers. Its members are nationals from Mali, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea, and Congo.⁶²

December 8, 2016

Ouéssou, Sangha Department, Republic of the Congo

Sentence of 28-year-old Oscar Yogo and 33-year-old Jules Bozenga, a national of the Democratic Republic of Congo (cf. "On the Trail" n°14 p. 86) to 3 years in prison without remission, a fine equivalent to \$ 1,612 US, and damages equivalent to \$ 3,224 US.⁶³



GABON

October 10, 2016

Libreville, Estuaire Province, Gabon

The jeweller Ibrahima Touré Sylla (cf. "On the Trail" n°14 p. 87) was sentenced to serve 40 days in prison without remission, to pay 50,000 CFA francs (\$ 83 US) in fines, and 2 million CFA francs (\$ 3,500 US) to the Gabonese Treasury. The NGO Conservation Justice considers the punishment too lenient for the offense.⁶⁴



October 11 and 23, 2016

Mandji, Ngounié Province, Gabon

The turbulent arrest of the Cameroonian Ibrahim Koda and the Ghanian Gabriel Opokou Gbenou. 4 tusks cut into 8 pieces. Koda offered 400,000 CFA francs (\$ 665 US) for his immediate release. The judiciary police refused to be blackmailed. 2 weeks afterwards, the network was unraveled thanks to Koda's confessions. 6 employees from Compagnie des Bois du Gabon were involved. Everyone is behind bars in the Mouila prison. Let's hope they're not rusty.⁶⁵

The area that Compagnie des Bois du Gabon operates on covers 568,543 ha. It has been FSC certified since 2009, and sells 30 species of trees. The concession is in the northern part of the cross-border ecosystem of Gamba-Mayumba-Conkouati, one of the richest biodiversity reservoir in the Congo Basin. With a French industrial, the CBG runs a wood-peeling factory in Port Gentil.

October 21-26, 2016
Afia, Woleu-Ntem Province
Oyem, Woleu-Ntem Province, Gabon

Seizure of 2 tusks.

The Oyem forest and water services were informed that there was a dead elephant in the village of Afia. A mission went to the scene. After walking several kilometers in the dense forest, it came across a decaying carcass. It was lying across a stream, the last watering point for the pachyderm that had been post mortem stripped of its ivory. The investigation in Afia progressed quickly. Biyogo Evoung was arrested. Then the 2nd suspect, Richard Mba, was arrested. He was hiding in Lambaréné, 480 km from Afia. Richard Mba led the investigators to one kilometer from Afia in the forest, where he had buried the 2 tusks.⁶⁶

October 31, 2016
Libreville, Estuaire Province, Gabon

Seizure of 15 kg of ivory. Donald Destin Nénangoyi, a truck driver from Kango, and Eroïne Ipedessi, a gardener who put his talent to the service of the Ministry of Agriculture, made a night-time appointment to sell the junk to a man named Ibrahim. The judiciary police infiltrated the transaction.⁶⁷

Beginning of November 2016
Minkébé National Park, Woleu-Ntem Province, Gabon

The joint patrol of the army and the 'ANPN' (National Agency for National Parks) seized 53 tusks (119 kg, or an average of 2 kg per tusk) after exchanging gunfire with poachers coming from Cameroon.⁶⁸

REPEATED OFFENSE
November 7 and 23, 2016
Mitzic, Woleu-Ntem Province, Gabon

- Seizure of about 5 kg of raw ivory. 3 arrests. Mitzic, cf. "On the Trail" n°10 p. 54, n°13 p. 91.

- The Oyem court handed down a sentence of 6 months in prison without remission, 200,000 CFA francs (\$ 322 US) in fines, and one million CFA francs (\$ 1,612 US) in damages for each.⁶⁹

November 9 and December 16, 2016
Ngounié Province, Gabon

- **Sindara.** A village chief and a Malian shopkeeper worked together to sell 44 kilos of fresh ivory. Pierre Nkelohin and his accomplice fell into the trap of the police, which succeeded in arresting him after their second attempt. During their interrogation, they mentioned a man named Martial Mabiala who also works for Compagnie des Bois du Gabon. He seems to be the "owner" of the ivory.⁷⁰

- **Mouila.** An encouraging sentence for poachers and traffickers. Go on! For 20 kg, you risk only 90 days in prison. 45 of these days are suspended. Follow the example of Nkelohin, and the Mouila court will be lenient with you.⁷¹

November 23, 2016



Franceville, Haut-Ogooué Province, Gabon

The sentence was heavier. On appeal, the court sentenced Fataï Gbadamas-si (cf. "On the Trail" n°14 p. 87) to pay the Forestry Ministry 15 million CFA francs (\$ 24,184 US) in damages.⁷²



REPEATED OFFENSE
December 19 and 20, 2016
Makokou and Mékambo, Ogooué-Ivindo Province, Gabon

- Kakou, a Gabonese national, was arrested trying to send 2 elephant tails. It was 8:15 PM in Mboló's neighborhood.

- At around 11 PM, arrest of 2 individuals, Enada Arnaud and Saleh Aroun, a Chadian national. They were arrested under the authority of the deputy public prosecutor after 4 hours on the road and 2 hours of tailing in Mekambo city. They were carrying 3 tusks weighing 2 kg each. Aroun had already been sentenced to 5 years in prison in Congo for the same doings. He continued his dirty work in Gabon. The 2 operations were led by the Makokou public department, with the cooperation of the judiciary police, forestry department officials, and the NGO Conservation Justice.⁷³

December 30, 2016
Minkébé National Park, Woleu-Ntem Province, Gabon

The calamity Park. Finding of 5 beheaded carcasses.⁷⁴



CHAD

November 21, 2016
N'Djamena, Chari-Baguirmi Region, Chad

Six elephants were poached. A significant amount of resources were deployed. Land patrols, helicopter flyovers, alert for 50 village chiefs around Zakouma National Park. But for the moment, the poachers have not been found. The Sudanese troopers may have made their comeback. Some elephants were decapitated. Other elephants still had one of the 2 tusks. The poachers obtained the complicity of some inhabitants by promising to distribute the meat.

Local guides have been arrested. They helped the poachers to locate the elephants. After their arrest, they took the local forces into the poachers' desert hideout. 14 tusks and 3 horses have been seized. Parliament is putting pressure on the Minister of Natural Resources so that additional resources can be deployed to protect the last elephants in Chad.⁷⁵



Africa - Asia: the Coffin Network

Introduction in containers loaded with sawn timber from Africa of hollowed out timber filled with resin, wax, plaster or sand, in the midst of which are inserted the ivory tusks and other animal parts. Timber are covered with one or two boards fixed by wooden dowels so there are no anomalies during scanning or X-ray checking. The sawn woods become coffins for endangered species. They have the same density as the genuine timber.



Cat Lai Port, Ho-Chi-Minh-Ville, Viet Nam

- **October 6, 2016.** Seizure of 2052 kg of ivory from Mozambique inside two containers.
- **October 21, 2016.** Seizure of bags containing pangolin scales and 500 kg of ivory inside two containers, coming from Africa. Global ivory is worth \$ 881,700 US or \$ 1,764 US/kg.
- **October 26, 2016.** Seizure of one raw ivory ton coming from Kenya.⁷⁷
- **November 24, 2016.** Seizure of 619 kg of raw ivory inside two sea containers from Africa and unloaded on December 18th.
- **November 28, 2016.** New seizure in three containers loaded with timber nearly 5m long containing this time 529kg of raw ivory. The containers came from Nigeria and were destined for Cambodia.⁷⁸



December 17, 2016

Royal Railway Phnom Penh dry port, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Seizure of 1,3 tons of tusks or tusk sections, and 5 kg of elephant tail hairs, 82,3 kg of big cats bones, 7 tiger skulls and 137 kg of pangolin scales inside 3 sawn timber 2,50 m long and 60 cm wide. The cargo is from Mozambique via Singapore and the Sihanoukville Port. The consignee company is an uncertain CAM Transit Import already involved in Viet Nam in a similar case in October. The recipient is Sar Ho Logistics. In recent years, Cambodia has imported 500 to 600 containers of African wood. In Mozambique, the shipping port is Pemba. A suspect is wanted, he is 31 years old and would be trading wildlife between South Africa and China.⁷⁹

December 20th 2016

Mombasa Port, Mombasa County, Kenya

Seizure of 1,97 ton of raw ivory estimated by the Treasury at 197 million shillings (\$1,938,459 US), about \$ 980 US/kg, inside two containers destined for Cambodia urgently unloaded in Singapore and returned to the departure port. Some tusks are stamped with red ink and could have been stolen from judicial or governmental stocks. This new seizure could come from several other old ones.⁸⁰

AMERICA

CANADA

November 14, 2016

State of Ontario, Canada

Sentence of the legal entity '888 Auctions' to 12,500 Canadian dollar in fines and 2 years of probation for illegally exporting to the United States a python skin suitcase (*Pythonidae* spp., Appendix I or II), a tusk, and an ivory statuette in February 2015.

The scientific analysis has proved that the elephant was killed in 2001 in Africa. '888 Auctions', which is presented as the leader in Asian antique auctions in Canada, is run by Dong Heon Kim.⁷⁶



CHINA

ASIA

Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China⁸¹

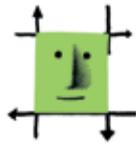
TAILORS NETWORK

- October 9, 2016. Seizure of 40 kg of semi-raw ivory



ry worth \$ 400,000 HK (\$ 51,580 US), or \$ 1,290 US per kg in the luggage of 2 passengers aged 40 and 46 coming from Harare in Zimbabwe via Dubai in the United Arab Emirates. The ivory was hidden in a special cut and tailored waist coat that was folded in a backpack.

-October 19, 2016. The 3 vests that had been tailored for the occasion were in 3 backpacks. They contained 60 kg of semi-worked ivory. The 3 Chinese citizens aged 32 and 33 were coming from Harare in Zimbabwe via Dubai in the United Arab Emirates.



ROBIN DES BOIS

A New Era for Elephants

Press release of December 30, 2016

The Chinese government decides to close its domestic ivory market. As a first step, on 31 March 2017 at the latest, approved ivory processing workshops will no longer have the right to engage in this activity. Secondly, by December 31, 2017, approved retail ivory stores will have to abandon this market. These workshops and stores were supplied with "legal" ivory from some Southern African countries and ivory poached across the African continent.

The reconversion of workshops and stores will be assisted.

The fight against raw and carved ivories smuggling and clandestine ivory workshops will be strengthened.

Consumer information will be increased to "create a propitious environment for the protection of elephants, other wild fauna and flora" according to the Chinese government's announcement.

"For cultural reasons", the only authorised commercial activity involving ivory will be the auction of certified antiques.

Robin des Bois welcomes this historical decision of the main ivory consuming country and hopes that Japan and all European countries will adopt similar measures, essential to slow down and ultimately eradicate elephant poaching in Africa and Asia. It will also be vital to avoid the transfer of the ivory market to other materials from endangered species.

Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China⁸²

- October 16, 2016. Seizure of 29 kg of semi-worked ivory worth \$ 290,000 HK (\$ 37,400 US) in the luggage of 2 passengers aged 28 to 34 coming from Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo via Addis Ababa in Ethiopia.



- **November 10, 2016.** Customs seized 44 kg of worked and raw ivory worth \$ 440,000 HK (\$ 56,800 US) and pangolin scales in the luggage of 4 passengers coming from Lagos in Nigeria via Istanbul in Turkey.



- **November 11, 2016.** Seizure of 9.2 kg of carved ivory worth \$ 92,000 HK (\$ 11,860 US) in the luggage of a passenger coming from Lagos in Nigeria via Istanbul in Turkey.



October 2016
Zhangjiagang, Jiangsu Province, China
Seizure of 216.2 g of ivory.⁸³

October 20, 2016
Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China
22-year-old Tang appeared in court. He is liable to 10 years in jail for the attempted import of 12 kg of ivory from Malaysia via a website. When the parcels arrived at the Chengdu airport, Tang did not go pick them up, as he became aware of the judicial risks. In the end, customs opened them. The Chengdu people's court considers that this was a case of smuggling and that there was clearly an offense. Tang is asking for leniency. He says that he never tried to receive the ivory.⁸⁴

November 1, 2016
Beijing, China

Sentenced to 4 months in prison without remission and a fine of 40,000 yuan (\$ 6,000 US) for importing 52 carved ivories from South Africa. 'Liu' bought them from 8,900 yuan (\$ 1,400 US). On the market in China, they are worth 420,000 yuan (\$ 62,000 US), according to Beijing's No. 4 Intermediate People's Court. The 10 kg of ivory items were hidden in Liu's shoes and in metal tins.⁸⁵



December 2016

Qingdao, Shandong Province, China

The postal customs seized in 3 parcels 5 worked ivory items weighing 388.5 g in all.⁸⁶

December 16th 2016

Luoning Xian, Henan Province, China

Seizure in a restaurant of ivory items among them a pearl necklace.⁸⁷

December 21, 2016

Debao County, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China

Hang Chuan's sentence was confirmed: 5 years in prison and a fine of 30,000 yuan (\$ 4,350 US) for illegally transporting ivory worth 250,000 yuan (\$ 36,000 US) from Jingxi to Nanning.⁸⁸



INDIA

October 15, 2016

Muvattupuzha, State of Kerala, India

Further investigation against Mohanlal, the Bollywood superstar (cf. "On the Trail" n°12 p. 94) for detention of several elephant tusks found in his home during a tax inspection.⁸⁹

REPEATED OFFENSE

October 15, 2016

Balichandrapur, State of Odisha, India

Seizure of a tusk, 3 mobile phones, and a car. 3 arrests. They were intercepted on the Chandikhola route. The traffickers had an appointment with a purchaser. One of them, 46-year-old Kedar Barik, is already wanted for similar affairs.⁹⁰

October 18, 2016

Tirupati, State of Andhra Pradesh, India

Humane Society International is claiming the release of a young male elephant that was recently trapped in the forest, so it could be displayed at the Tirupati zoo. "India already has close to 3,500 elephants in captivity. Hence, it would not be in the interest of wildlife welfare to place another elephant in captivity."⁹¹

October 20, 2016

Wayanad District, State of Kerala, India

They disguised a heinous crime as a human-elephant conflict. After the Mananthavady-Kutta roadblock, the family of the victim received compensation of 500,000 rupee (\$ 7,280 US), in addition to an indemnity of 100,000 rupee (\$ 1,455 US) from the emergency fund. The 3 murderers had transported the body of the victim on a path that is known for being used by elephants.⁹²

Wayanad District, State of Kerala, India

- **October 25, 2016.** Arrest of the manager of several resorts on the edge of Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary (cf. "On the Trail" n° 13 p. 94). He is accused of shooting dead an elephant within the sanctuary, to take revenge on the action that the forest service brought against his intrusive business activities.

- **November 6, 2016.** A male about 20 years old. Three bullets in his head. Two days afterwards, a villager went to see the authorities himself. During his testimony, he said he wanted to prevent wildlife, and elephants in particular, from entering his rice field, by installing at night a wire supplied by a battery. The elephant was electrocuted in the afternoon. In the evening, Mr. Gopalakrishnan removed the fence and made 3 holes with a stylet in the elephant's head to sham a bullet shooting. During the autopsy, the veterinarians did indeed pull a bullet out of the victim's skull. But according to the forest service, that bullet was from a previous poaching attempt that the elephant escaped from unharmed.⁹³



October 28, 2016

Gudai, State of Tripura, India

The elephant was lying on an uncultivated land. It is said it was poisoned by pesticides in a pond. It is a subadult about 4 years old. In the Kalyanpur sector, this type of poaching is rampant, especially during the dry season, when there is not enough water in the forests and the elephants leave the forest to drink.⁹⁴



November 3, 2016

Moolakadambur, Erode District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

4 electrocutions in 3 weeks. This time, the victim was a tusker about 25 years old. A farmer in custody. He installed a power line without the authorization of the forest service or of the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board. The elephant was burned with this illegal connection, in its neck, front paws, and trunk. No news on his tusks.⁹⁵



November 3, 2016

Tengabasti, State of Assam, India

In a rice field, the body of an adult elephant was found. One of its tusks had been torn off. An arrow had been driven into its head. The elephant had been poached 2 or 3 days beforehand.⁹⁶

November 3, 2016

Kolkata, State of West Bengal, India

The crook was heard in court. He sold elephant "pearls" that turn bad luck into good luck. 'Gajamukta' are a rare phenomenon that results from calcification. They can be found at the root of tusks. They are worth between \$ 1,000 and \$ 4,000 US each, depending on their size.⁹⁷



Three Electroshocks

- **November 6, 2016. Bheekawala, Budaun District, State of Uttar Pradesh**⁹⁸

A male elephant was electrocuted by a power line that was hanging between 2 poles in poor condition, at elephant and even human height. "There is no low-hanging electricity wire inside Corbett Park, but this problem persists on the peripheral areas." A villager confirmed: "We have complained a number of times regarding the loose wires." "This creates problems not just for us but also for animals." The forest service has complained against the power corporation.⁹⁹



- **November 20, 2016. Karuvarakkund, State of Kerala**

Electricity for all. He touched an electric fence that had an illegal connection. One interrogation.

- **November 27, 2016. Aluajharan, State of Odisha.** A wild boar trap on a forest route. One elephant electrocuted.

November 28, 2016

Sirumugai, Coimbatore District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

The illegal planters in the Sathyamangalam reserve objected to the presence of animals. They poison bananas that they use as bait. This killed an elephant.¹⁰⁰



A Short Story about Great Pain

December 9, 2016

40 km from Bangalore, State of Karnataka, India

35-year-old 'Sidda' came out of it blind. Villagers who were exasperated by seeing him in the fields chased him down. He fell into a pit and ended up with his front right paw completely broken.

Veterinary logic would have had him killed, as per the Wildlife Protection Act, which authorizes the killing of animals if they are incurable.

In public, specialists said that Sidda had a 30% chance of recovery. In private, they considered he had a 0% chance. A wild quadruped weighing over 3 t can no longer move around, eat, or protect itself from other wild animals and humans, especially when it carries around 2 ivory tusks that weigh about 10 kilos each. There can also be health complications for elephants that lie down for several hours.

However, public opinion is not familiar with logic. Days after a mob calling upon hundreds of villagers to chase and hit "Sidda", thousands of families went on a pilgrimage to his bedside, bringing fruits, leaves, cereal, vegetables, medicine, and improbable recipes that strengthen the bones, cure rheumatism, and soothe stress and pain. Elected officials and members of parliament from all over the political spectrum, up through Maneka Gandhi, the Indian Union Cabinet Minister for Women & Child Development, and the best Ayurvedic medicine specialists checked in with Sidda and showered his caregivers and the soldiers responsible for his close protection with advice and encouragement.



In a few days, 44 men from the Indian Army's Madras Sappers installed a metal frame for supporting Sidda's weight, hoisting him up via a set of straps and pulleys so he could comfortably remain in an upright position after a crane-truck put him back on his feet.

A crazy kind of hope emerged from this. So much goodwill, cleverness, and enthusiasm could not be in vain.

But on December 9, 3 months and 9 days after he had been chased, Sidda collapsed at the first light of day. This spread dismay among small farmers and computer programmer elites from the Indian Silicon Valley.

He was buried near the reservoir of the Manchanabele dam, where he had found refuge after he was kicked out from a neighboring village. For about ten days, he stayed in the artificial lake. He tried to relieve and care for his front right paw in the muddy lake bottom. The forest wardens and a water commando from the army then pushed him to land together.

No one - or barely anyone - knows what happened to Sidda's tusks. His body has been laid to rest in the forests of Magadi.¹⁰³



Eight days later a few kilometers from Sidda, poachers electrocuted 2 elephants with an illegal connection. An information or sanctions campaign against illegal electric fences will be launched.¹⁰⁴



December 5, 2016

Kodihalli forest, Bangalore, State of Karnataka, India

Shot dead. Killed by poachers or a private landowner who was upset by a herd moving and looking for watering points. Traces of blood could be seen over several kilometers.¹⁰¹

December 8, 2016

Reddiyarpatti, Tirunelveli District, State of Tamil Nadu, India

Seizure of 2 tusks. 480 g and 370 g! One arrest.¹⁰²

MALAYSIA

End of November 2016

Tawau, State of Sabah, Malaysia

The execution of the elephant accused of killing a man caused a stir in "The Star Online". Many netizens objected to this. "An eye for an eye? But why? To teach the other elephants a lesson?". There was also: "I'm sorry for the loss of (human) life, but we are the ones who have trespassed and destroyed their habitat. The elephant might have felt threatened seeing a bunch of humans near his herd. We cannot blame them for protecting themselves since we cannot even protect them despite their status as protected animals." There was also: "Animals can't tell what is right or wrong. They act on instinct. It does not deserve to be killed unless it really has a bloodlust for humans which they won't have unless provoked. Therefore, the elephant should (have been) sent to a nature reserve instead of killing it." There are less than 1,500 elephants remaining in the State of Sabah.¹⁰⁵

December 27 and 31, 2016

Kawag and Ulu Segama Forests Reserves, State of Sabah, Malaysia

One of the 2 that were killed had sabre tusks. Their headless carcasses were found between the plantations and the forest. They are far from being considered as problem elephants. They were just an ivory reservoir for a gang of criminals. They could be outsiders and they quickly withdrew into a boat. The trunks are also gone.

Faced with these 2 crimes, experts are speechless. They only had dark and terse comments to make. "Our elephants are already threatened by habitat loss, development such as the planned road." "If we add poaching for ivory, I don't give many years for the species to become extinct."¹⁰⁶

MYANMAR

December 25-26, 2016

Kyauk Chaung Kyi, Ayeyarwady Region, Myanmar

Discovery of the body of the skinned mother. Her tusks had been stolen. Her 2-month-old female elephant calf was picked up by Myat villagers on Christmas Day. She is in good health. She drinks milk every 2 hours. There are around 200 elephants remaining in the forests of Ayeyarwady. "On average one elephant was killed each month, but in December two elephants were killed," deplored the veterinarian Myo Min Aung. He is responsible for the anti-poaching elephant response unit set up by Myanmar Timber Enterprise, the State logging company.¹⁰⁷



SRI LANKA

November 3, 2016

Hambegamuwa, Uva Province, Sri Lanka

The young elephant is attached to a tree. Waiting for night transfer by truck to its wealthy unknown owner. Trapped in the forest while throwing panic in the group of his peers and mothers. One month of age or not much more.¹⁰⁸

The Sri Lanka's area amounts to 65,000 km² with a population of 20 million inhabitants, 14 million Buddhists. For them, a good elephant is a domesticated elephant. Elephants are servants of the Buddha. The elephants are there to wear ceremonial costumes and false ivory Buddha teeth. There are 20,000 temples in Sri Lanka. They all want elephants to decorate the processions. Wild elephants are between 3000 and 6000. Elephant calves are regularly trapped for domestication. This practice is prohibited. Section 22 of the Wildlife Act authorises only the sale or gift of elephants domesticated prior 2009. Several public figures of the economic or political world, senior monks of Buddhist temples, a magistrate of Colombo, illegally held elephants whose date of birth was falsified.

The issue made polemic between President Maithripala Sirisena and his prime minister Ranil Wickremesinghe backed by environmental NGOs. The president is accused of being too responsive to the pressures of the Buddhist monks and of considering the restitution of seized elephants before the justice has ruled. The last wild elephants of Sri Lanka are isolated in pockets of forests or meadows. Wild elephant calves are captured by specialists acting on behalf of wealthy individuals or religious communities.

This thorny problem combining culture, sacred history, big money - an elephant sells for \$ 200,000 US - and protection of threatened species must be resolved before 2019 when Sri Lanka, at its invitation, will host the 18th Plenary Meeting of the CITES.¹⁰⁹



Sri Lankan buddhist festival

TAIWAN

December 7 and 12, 2016

Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport, Taipei

Seizure of 4 carved ivories (3.1 kg) in the luggage of a named Liang from London on an Eva Airways flight. The ivory would be of recent origin according to a press release from the customs.¹¹⁰

THAILAND

October 2, 2016

Lampang Province, Thailand

Theft of a tusk after a road accident. The object of the offense, 2 kg, was stolen on site by an opportunistic witness. Police is investigating. The domestic elephant was walking on the road at dusk. He is dead. The bus driver was seriously injured in the collision. The elephant died. "Plai Udom" - the name of the elephant- who was entrusted to the Elephant Reintroduction Foundation was about to be released in the sanctuary of Doi Phamuang.¹¹¹

October 20, 2016

Kaeng Hang Maeo District, Chanthaburi Province, Thailand

Rescue of an elephant calf snared for about 3 days. He was entrusted to the Khao Ang Street Na wildlife sanctuary.¹¹²



FALSIFICATIONS

Mid December 2016

Thailand

- **Hua Hin, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province.** The "falsified" elephant, allegedly tuskless according to his ID and actually carrying two beautiful tusks (see "On the Trail n°13 p.112) was sequestered in the zoo until the authorities found for him an ethically and biologically acceptable destination. The zoo had taken the opportunity to send it to a colleague, on the pretext that the contract of hire and exhibition had expired. The elephant was taken to the Cha Am district transit center before being handed over to the Lampang refuge in Prachuap province.

- **Hua Hin, Prachuap Khiri Khan Province.** The wildlife police intervened in the "elephant village" to look closely at a female baptized "Somying" and her elephant calf one week old. After receiving her

death notice, the province's administration destroyed her identity card last September. A traffic of identity is strongly suspected. The genuine mother would have been trapped in the forest and the calf would have been born in captivity. In the critical period of breastfeeding, the mother and child can not be moved. They are placed under sequestration in the "elephant village".¹¹³



- Province of Ratchaburi

Seizure of a so-called domestic elephant whose health record and identity card were falsified. DNA analysis revealed the deceit. The wild-elephant elephant was transferred to an appropriated shelter in the province of Petchburi.¹¹⁴

- Province of Ayutthaya

New verification of the identity papers of a domesticated elephant under the name of "Phlai Phaya Petch". The Huahintique Animal Show trainers have long palavered to delay the blood test of "Phlai Phaya Petch". An initial analysis showed that his parents were not part of the domestic elephant pool. "Phlai Phaya Petch" was probably born in the jungle.¹¹⁵

VIET NAM

November 12, 2016

Soc Son District, Hanoi Province, Viet Nam

On the eve of the Hanoi International Conference on Trafficking in Wild Fauna and Flora, 2 tons of ivory and 70 kg of rhinoceros horns were destroyed by grinding, burning and burying in the district of Soc Son. The operation took place under the auspices of the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Public Health and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.¹¹⁶



EUROPE

AUSTRIA

Beginning of november 2016

Vienna, Austria

Seizure of 90 raw or carved tusks for a total weight of 564 kg. The longest is 2.13 m long. One arrest.¹¹⁷

UNITED KINGDOM

London, United Kingdom

October 31, 2016

Victoria Borwick, Member of Parliament (MP) and President of BADA (British Antique Dealers Association) responds to the request for full closure of the ivory market as published in the Telegraph on October 30, 2016 The hundred signatories, NGO leaders, university professors and well-known personalities recall that in 1989, under the administration of Mrs Thatcher, the United Kingdom was at the forefront of the implementation of the ban on international trade in ivory and calls on the current government to close down the entire domestic market. According to the president of BADA, "the fight against poaching is best carried out if resources of government are directed against modern ivory and tackling the problem at source, and not against our shared cultural heritage found in museums and collections across the UK."

November 2, 2016

BADA extends its certification of authenticity to carved ivories in order to guarantee ante 1947 manufacture, justify marketing and prevent fresh ivory from entering the market.¹¹⁸

November 2016

Rowsley, Derbyshire County, England, United Kingdom

Embargo on ivory

Bamfords Auctioneers and Valuers, a Derbyshire auction house renounces selling ivory items. Director James Lewis points out, however, that the sale of antiques such as teapots with ivory buttons or furniture with ivory inlays will continue. "My issue is with solid antique ivory, such as carved tusks and large Okimono figures (Japanese carvings) which end up on shelves in Hong Kong beside modern ivories". Lewis went to Hong Kong five times. "I realised then there's a major market in the Far East that looks at ivory as a commodity as well as an art form, and that the old ivory market is fuelling modern ivory demand." This is the second auction house in the United Kingdom which suspends or restricts the sale of ivory (see "On the Trail n°9, p. 88).¹¹⁹

Mammoths

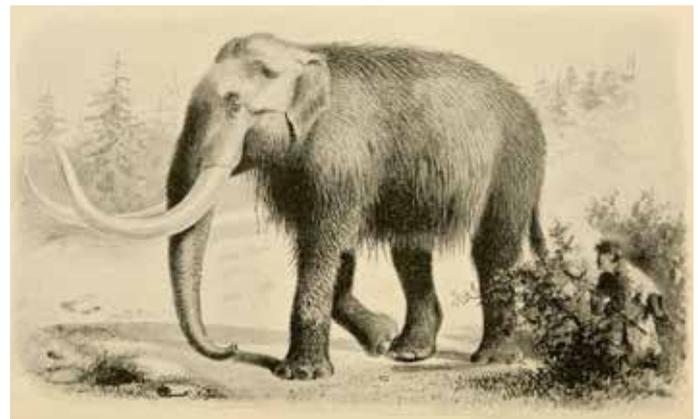
ASIA

CHINA

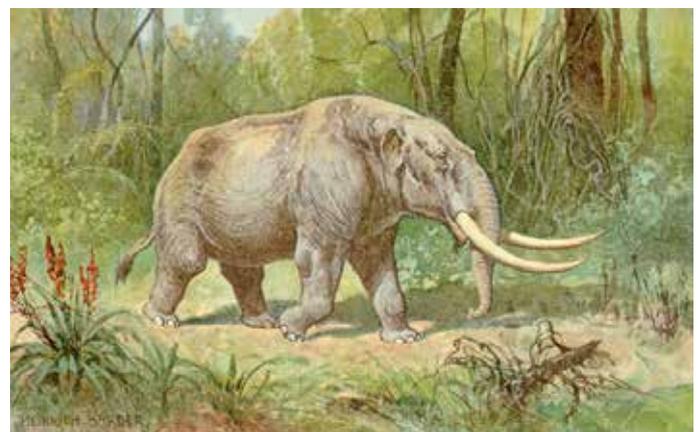
December 14, 2016

Heilongjiang Province, China

Seizure in the hidden compartment of a truck driven by a Chinese national of 60 sections of mammoth ivory for a total weight of 540 kg, worth 400,000 yuan (\$ 57,508 US) according to local authorities or \$ 106 US / kg.¹²⁰



Mammoth



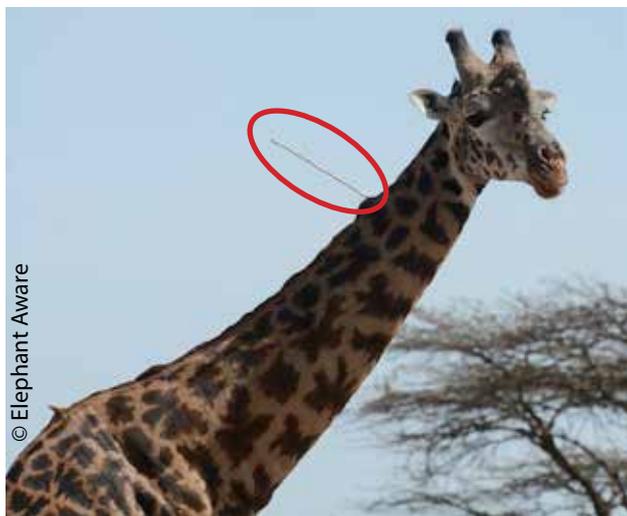
Mastodon (see. page 87)

Other Mammals

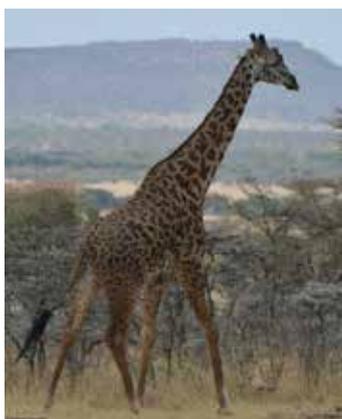
AFRICA

KENYA

October 11th 2016
Masai Mara, Narok County, Kenya¹



© Elephant Aware



Before the intervention of the Elephant Aware Masai Mara rangers and veterinarians.

After the intervention the giraffe returned apparently unharmed.

November 5th 2016
Masai Mara, Narok County, Kenya

Who holds something against giraffes? In less than a month two giraffes were spotted carrying poisoned arrows. Veterinarians can not always save them.²



© Elephant Aware

MAURITIUS

December 9-23, 2016

Mauritius

Litchis have a bitter bat taste. 10,000 "flying foxes" will be the target of a Special Mobile Force that will patrol the orchards between 6 pm and 6 am. Despite the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation, the Ministry of Agro-Industry is yielding to pressure from planters. The massacre could be avoided by the laying of nets. The management of the 10,000 corpses is posing sanitary issues.

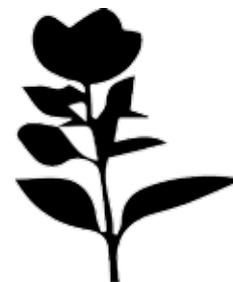


© Sandra Eglite

There are 2 species of endemic fruit bats from Mauritius: the greater mascarene flying-fox (*Pteropus niger*, Appendix II, photo above) and the Rodrigues flying fox (*Pteropus rodricensis*, Appendix II). The small Mauritian flying-fox or lesser mascarene flying-fox (*Pteropus subniger*) is considered extinct since the end of the 19th century by the IUCN.³

UGANDA

October 19th 2016
Murchison Falls National Park,
West Region, Uganda



Anthony Twesigye, member of a night patrol, has been killed by a bullet in the chest by a group of poachers chasing a herd of buffalo. This is the 10th ranger dead on duty in 2 years. The poachers were heavily armed. Owing to a lack of elephants, they had fallen back on the buffalo to make bushmeat.⁴

TUNISIA

October 2016

Tunisia

According to a specialist in the fight against hunting protected species, some Qataris through a travel agency hunt dorcas gazelles (*Gazella dorcas*, Appendix III in Algeria and Tunisia).⁵

The dorcas gazelle is small, she measures 53 to 67 cm at the withers with a weight of 12 to 25 kg. She lives in the Sahara in small groups of a few individuals. Her range extends to southern Israel, Syria and Jordan. Her population is estimated between 35,000 and 40,000 individuals. Major threats include hunting amplified by the use of cross-country vehicles and habitat degradation due to overgrazing.



ZIMBABWE

October 28th 2016

Hwange, Matabeleland Septentrional Province, Zimbabwe

Appearance of Sibanda, a famous poacher who had previously escaped prison thanks to influence and bribing. He has in his little black book many animals: elephant, lion, sable antelope, zebra, giraffe. His last misdemeanour is the poaching of a roan antelope (*Hippotragus equinus*) in Railway Farm 31. He had not paid his killing permit.⁶

November 3rd 2016

Harare International Airport, Zimbabwe

Short suspension of export to China of 8 spotted hyenas (*Crocuta crocuta*). A dozen hyenas were sent to China via Johannesburg and the Middle East. The addressee was Hangzhou Safari Park, Zhejiang Province. The cages were about to be loaded into the holds of the Air Zimbabwe aircraft when, after an inspection by the Zimbabwe Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ZNSPCA) requested by the airport customs, cruel treatments on hyenas were found. They supposedly fought amongst themselves in too small cages. One of them would have fallen on the road from the platform truck which transported them between the Hwange park where they were captured and the Harare airport (600 km, 10 hours of transport). The shippers are Chinese businessmen based in Zimbabwe. The conditions of carriage were not in accordance with the International Air Transport Association (IATA)

standards. The hyenas returned to Hwange. They are waiting in an enclosure. They are expected to join the Hangzhou Zoo whose housing conditions are criticized by Chinese NGOs. The spokesperson for the Hwange National Park says that spotted hyenas are not considered as threatened and that taking does not endanger the population of the park.⁷

AMERICA

ARGENTINA

December 4th 2016

Chaco Province, Argentina

Conviction of a hunter to one year of imprisonment and 2 years of probation. The facts took place in 2013.

He was driving his car when three giant armadillos (*Prionotus maximus*, Appendix I) got on his way. He stops and kicks the tail of one of them. He then takes a piece of wood, hits his armor, takes a machete and picks on him again.⁸



BRAZIL

October 23th 2016

Itiquira, Mato Grosso State, Brazil

Seizure of collared peccary (*Pecari tajacu*, Appendix II) meat in a freezer and hunting weapons.⁹



November 3rd 2016

Gurupi, Tocantins State, Brazil

Seizure of 3 dead armadillos (*Prionotus maximus*, Appendix I) and a caliber 22 firearm. The 27-year-old person responsible was already wanted by the police for theft of gasoline.¹⁰



November 9th 2016

Belém, Para State, Brazil

Rescue of a brown-throated sloth (*Bradypus variegatus*, Appendix II). He was left out in the Zoo-Botanical Garden Rodrigues Alves. He showed signs of domestication. "He even had nail polish on his nails," said the veterinarian. He is under observation to assess his ability to survive once released. ¹¹



November 22nd 2016

Tupãssi, Paraná State, Brazil

Seizure of 25 kg of common paca meat (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III) and 9 firearms in a country house. Three arrests. The police had been informed of a poaching on the banks of the Piquiri, one of the tributaries of the Paraná River. ¹²

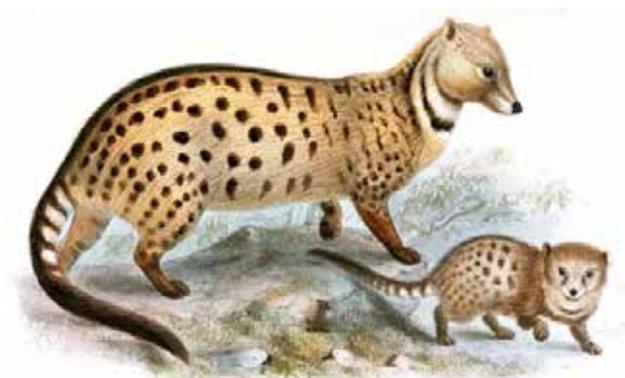
ASIA

CAMBODIA

October 20th 2016

Koh Thom District, Kandal Province, Cambodia

The 35 alive civets (*Viverridae* family) were in cages inside the car. The driver has fled. He was going to cross the border between Cambodia and Viet Nam. The civet is chopped up on the markets. The fur and tail are used as stuffing for cheap fashion. The fur also produce "ca phe chon" (civet coffee) via transit through the digestive tract of coffee beans which are then roasted (cf. "On the Trail" n°1 p.41). Their anal glands secrete a substance with a penetrating odour that serves as territorial marker. The 35 survivors will be released into the wild. ¹³



UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

End of December 2016

United Arab Emirates

After the hand of God, Maradona gets the hand of Devil. Arabian oryx (*Oryx leucoryx*, Appendix I) are not more than 1000: Oman about 50, Saudi Arabia about 600 (400 in Mahazat as Sayd and 200 in Uruq Bani Ma'arid), United Arab Emirates approximately 200, Israel about 100 and Jordan about 50. ¹⁴



INDIA

Mid-October 2016

Belgaum, Karnataka State, India

Seizure of a big lot of antlers (1790, 960 kg) including sambars (*Rusa unicolor*) in an urban house derelict and said to be "haunted" by the neighbourhood. The inquiry obviously wants to know more. Have they been collected in forests or are they the venomous fruit of an organized poaching? Three suspects have been arrested. The antlers are transformed into cutlery handle, buttons, various trinkets or even so-called medicinal powder, a sort of cheap substitute for rhinoceros horn. The suspects' SIM cards and mobile phones are being analyzed to attempt to uncover the ramifications of trafficking in Karnataka, in India and possibly abroad. Two kilos of pangolin scales and two wild boar tusks were also found in the haunted house. ¹⁵

NEPAL

November 4th 2016

Kathmandu, Development Region Center, Nepal

Seizure of a red panda skin (*Ailurus fulgens*, Appendix I). Arrest of a 20-year-old man. ¹⁶



December 27th 2016

Kathmandu, Development Region Center, Nepal

Seizure of a red panda skin (*Ailurus fulgens*, Appendix I) for sale at 2 million rupee (\$ 18,000 US). Arrest of 3 young people aged 27 to 30 years old. ¹⁷

TURKEY

Decembre 26, 2016

Fethiye District, Mugla Region, Aegean Region, Turkey

Conviction to 3731 Turkish pounds (\$ 1060 US) for trying to sell bats: 5 greater horseshoe bats (*Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*) and common bentwing bats (*Miniopterus schreibersii*).¹⁸



Miniopterus schreibersii

OCEANIA

AUSTRALIA

November 7th 2016

State of Queensland, Australia

Seizure of a koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*) weighing 1.5 kg and 12 months years old. The police searched the backpack of a 50-year-old woman. She confessed to finding him the night before her arrest by the roadside and said she wanted to take care of him. The koala was healthy although slightly dehydrated. He was taken to a koala shelter.¹⁹



A hundred years ago, there were millions of koalas on the Australian continent. It was a game to shoot them. In the years 1900-1920, the ash grey furs of the koala were all the rage. In 1924, 2 million hides were exported from Australia to Europe and the United States and 3 years later, the koalas had disappeared from the States of New South Wales and Victoria. According to the Australian zoologist Ellis Troughton (1893-1974), "it seems incredible that in a civilized society, a harmless aboriginal animal has been coldly slaughtered for the sole purpose of trade and greed."

After a century of contempt and extermination, the koala has become a fetish animal in Australia. Great restocking efforts have taken place in the States where the koalas had been eradicated. Phillip Island, south of Melbourne, served as a reservoir.

Koalas eat 1.5 kg of eucalyptus leaves per day. Today, the koala enemy is no longer the boomerang, it is deforestation. The gestations last from 25 to 30 days. The baby at birth weighs 5 g and enjoys 6 months of breastfeeding in his mother's central pocket.



Multi-Species

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

October 29th 2016

Cape Town, Cape Province, South Africa

Seizure of abalones, 3 shark jaws, chopsticks, pearls and bracelets in ivory, and of 31,538 rands in cash (\$ 2,280 US). Another Chinese who gets caught for seafood and jungle products trafficking.¹

CAMEROON

October 13th 2016

Bafoussam, West Region, Cameroon

Seizure at the back of a minibus of 32 olive baboons (*Papio anubis*, Appendix II), 32 red river hogs (*Potamochoerus porcus*) and 80 duikers. The driver was going to deliver the bushmeat to Sarah Kemjje Bamgha, 61 years old, living in Bamenda. She proposes to the Court to agree to a compromise. The bushmeat was auctioned without taking into account the Ebola risk.²



Papio anubis

November 4th 2016

West Cameroon

Seizure of a leopard skin and a gorilla skull. One arrest.³



GABON

December 29th 2016

Mekambo, Ogooué-Ivindo Province, Gabon

Arrest of Sunday Nwajou in the "Vie Chère" district. He was about to sell 5 kg of raw ivory and a fresh leopard skin. Sunday was brought back under safe guard to the Makokou court for the minutes.⁴



NAMIBIA

December 2016

Windhoek, Khomas Region, Namibia

Dead animals are making a good end.

In the workshop, more than 6,000 wild animals are stuffed each year at very fortunate hunters request, among others Americans and Germans proud to exhibit at home their trophies. The meat, except for snake meat, is sold to restaurants and gourmets. The eyes are made of glass. The hand-made work is done by 45 qualified employees. On condition of anonymity, one hunting guide says that "if you have enough money, you can kill what you want". Giraffes, lions and elephants are the most sought after.⁵



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© Tom Koene / Exclusivpix Media

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

December 14th 2016

Virunga National Park, North Kivu Province, Democratic Republic of Congo

It is the fourth victim among the Virunga Park rangers and the fourth homage of its director Emmanuel de Merode listed by "On the Trail".

Patrick Prince Muhayirwa was caught in an ambush of the Mai Mai militias on the shore of Lake Edward at the border with Uganda. One of his colleagues Fikos Kavedo made it out alive with a bullet in one leg.⁶



SENEGAL

December 12th 2016

Kaolack, Kaolack Region, Senegal

Seizure in the south of the country of a Noah's Ark on wheels from Gambia with a black kite (*Milvus migrans*, Appendix II), ostriches (*Struthio camelus*, Appendix I or NC), two pelicans (genus *Pelecanus*), yellow-billed storks (*Mycteria ibis*), a crocodile (*Crocodylidae* spp., Appendix I) and 5 spur-winged geeses (*Plectropterus gambensis*). Mr Mame Demba Sow is caught in the act of detention, transport and marketing of species protected by the Article L.27 of the Hunting and Wildlife Code and national and international regulations. He gives away the names of 3 stooges and some important information. The network exists since at least 10 years. Kaolack is the gathering center of animals. Thies and Dakar are the marketing centers.⁷



ZAMBIA

End of November

Zambia

- Chibombo District, Central Province

It chatters! Seizure of parrots (*Psittacidae* family, Appendix II) for sale by the roadside, 2 arrests and 5 years prison sentence and hard labour.

- Chilanga, Lusaka Province. Chipata, Oriental Province. Chinsali, Muchinga Province. Livingstone, Southern Province. Mongu, Occidental Province.

A bush butchery. Several operations resulted in the seizures of 2 teeth and 3 kg of hippopotamus meat, 2 leopard skins, 2 alive pangolins, 12 kg of dried impala meat (*Aepyceros melampus*), 1.5 kg of grysbok antelope meat (*Raphicerus melanotis*), 3.5 kg of common duiker meat (*Sylvicapra grimmia*), traps and firearms. 19 arrests.⁸

AMERICA

ARGENTINA

November 7th 2016

Reconquista, Santa Fe Province, Argentina

Seizure of caiman (*Crocodylae* spp., Appendix I or II) and capybara meat, firearms, ammunition and a motorcycle. Four arrests.¹⁰

November 14th 2016

Colon Department, Entre Ríos Province, Argentina

Seizure of a bay-winged hawk (*Parabuteo unicinctus*, Appendix II), a female black howling monkey (*Alouatta caraya*, Appendix II), a wildcat (*Felis silvestris*, Appendix II), 2 saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*) and 2 red-winged tinamou (*Rhynchotus rufescens*). The wildcat has been transferred to the Tekove Mymba refuge. The territorial squeals of black howling monkeys are heard up to 5 km away.¹¹



© Cláudio Dias Trindade

BOLIVIA

October 23rd 2016

Cochabamba, Cochabamba Department, Bolivia

Information and intervention campaign on the La Cancha market and on the Internet.

Voluntary submissions and seizures of a Giant anteater (*Myrmecophaga tridactyla*, Appendix II), an American Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus roseus*, Appendix II), 30 turtles, 22 parrots, 20 macaws, 12 primates, 4 falcons, 3 badgers, 3 caimans, an eagle, a viper, an alive toucan and lizard and 2 charangos, stringed instrument the body of which is made with an armadillo shell.¹²



BRAZIL

October 6, 2016

Novo Airão, Amazonas State, Brazil

Intervention of the ICMBio (Chico Mendes institute for biodiversity conservation). Seizure on board 2 boats on the Jau and Unini rivers of 1.2 tons of arapaima (*Arapaima gigas*, Appendix II) and 958 South American River Turtles (*Podocnemis expansa*, Appendix II). 180.000 real (\$ 60,000 US) in fine. The turtles were put back to the water. Hotline number: (61) 2028-9280.¹³



October 10th 2016

Tamboril, Piauí State, Brazil

Joint operation of the MP (Military Police) and the ICMBIO.

Seizure of 15 firearms and several dead and alive animals including central American agouti (*Dasyprocta punctata*, Appendix III), collared peccaries (*Pecari tajacu*, Appendix II) and armadillos in the Serra da Capivara National Park. One of the armadillos was a pregnant female who eventually gave birth in the basket where she was tied. The police "helped" her according to the local press. Arrest of 17 hunters.

The Serra da Capivara National Park was declared a Cultural Heritage of Humanity by the UNESCO in 1991. It covers nearly 129,140 ha, for 214 km of circumference. One of its vocations is to preserve one important archaeological heritage, cave engravings dating from 50,000 to 25,000 years. These exceptional testimonies of the Palaeo-Americans everyday life, rituals, dances, hunts, prehistoric animals such as glyptodon or giant armadillo (2 tons)

are today despite the UNESCO label and the desperate efforts of the archaeologist Niède Guidon in a state of abandonment and degradation. The Park holds one of the oldest representations by the man of a boat.¹⁴



October 22nd 2016

João Pinheiro, Minas Gerais State, Brazil

Seizure of 200 kg of Brazilian tapir (*Tapirus terrestris*, Appendix II), capybara and deer meat, 7 kg fish, a turtle and 3 birds, a craft, an outboard motor and cutting instruments. Four arrests.¹⁵

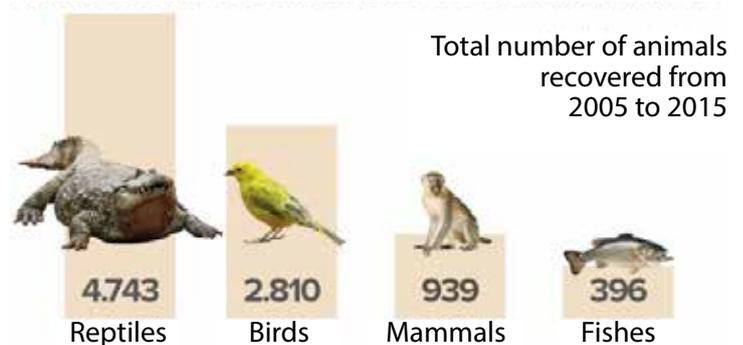


October 22nd 2016

Manaus, Amazonas State, Brazil

800 animals are seized each year in Manaus. Between 2005 and 2015, almost 9,000 animals have been rescued. Only 40% are reintegrated into the wild.¹⁶

Register of animals recovered by the IBAMA in Manaus



g1.com.br

Dados: Ibama
Infográfico elaborado em: 5/10/2016

November 1st 2016

Ipixuna do Pará, Para State, Brazil

Seizure of paca (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III), central American agouti (*Dasyprocta*, Appendix III), and deer (*Cervidae* family) meat, and hunting equipment on the rear of a pick-up on the BR-010 highway.¹⁷

November 6th 2016

Goiânia, Goiás State, Brazil

Documents control. The man is already under a research mandate for prohibited possession of weapons. The police decide to search his home. They discover a pampas Deer (*Ozotoceros bezoarticus*, Appendix I) and a blue and yellow macaw (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II) in cages.¹⁸

November 10th 2016

Pium, Tocantins State, Brazil

The police locate 3 hunters, 18 to 20 years old, from photos posted on Facebook. They seize 75 kg of common rhea (*Rhea americana*, Appendix II), caiman (*Crocodylae* spp), deer and snake meat in a freezer. The police then went to the game reserve and found two firearms and 354 ammunition.¹⁹



November 11th 2016

Goiânia, Goiás State, Brazil

Seizure of 2 boa constrictors (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II), an African python (*Python sebae*, Appendix II), a barn owl (*Tyto alba*, Appendix II), a short-beaked echidna (*Tachyglossus aculeatus*). The police believe they have laid hands on international traffic that has been going on for years. The man was banging the market. A python costs up to 5,000 real (\$ 1,400 US) on the legal market whereas he only required 600 (\$ 200 US). The individual was not at home during the search.²⁰



Tachyglossus aculeatus

November 11th 2016

Vera Cruz, Sao Paulo State, Brazil

Seizure of 3 blue and yellow macaws (*Ara Ararauna*, Appendix II) and 5 wood tortoises (*Chelonoidis carbonaria*, Appendix II). The macaws were half "legal". The owner was allowed to raise them, he was not allowed to expose them or



benefit from them. Regarding the turtles, he had no authorization. 4,500 real (\$ 1,300 US) fine. Alert number: 0800-0555-190.²¹

November 14th 2016

Serra da Capivara and Serra das Confusões National Parks, Piaui State, Brazil

Coordinated operation in the 2 parks linked by a green corridor. Seizure of 5 Brazilian three-banded armadillos (*Tolypeutes tricinctus*) and one yellow-legged tinamou (*Crypturellus noctivagus zabele*), 12 motorcycles, 15 professional firearms and 45 hand-made. 24 official reports are drawn up. The chief of the operation reminds that it is not a subsistence hunt, that it is trafficking and that the acts of maltreatment like sewing the armadillos between them to facilitate transport are still topical. Survivors were released into the parks.²²

November 17th 2016

Palmas, Tocantins State, Brazil

Rescue on the public highway of an orange-winged amazon (*Amazona amazonica*, Appendix II) sustaining injuries to his eyes, of a red-shouldered macaw (*Diopsittaca nobilis*, Appendix II) wings cut, 5 yellow-chevroned parakeets (*Brotogeris chiriri*, Appendix II) and 2 turtles.²³

November 27th 2016

Goias State, Brazil

- **Britânia.** Eleven kilos of turtle meat and 6kg of caiman meat in a car. He says it is for his personal consumption.

- **Itumbiara.** Sixteen birds including a parrot (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I or II) at a person in his forties' home.²⁴

November 28th 2016

Canindé do São Francisco, Sergipe State, Brazil

Seizure of 105 South American yellow-footed tortoises (*Chelonoidis denticulata*, Appendix II) and wood tortoises (*Chelonoidis carbonaria*, Appendix II) and 18 birds including cactus conures (*Aratinga cactorum*, Appendix II). A resident confides she and her neighbors are in the habit of pinching the chicks when they are still in their nests. "It is even very common to adopt them". "There are a lot of them in trees from around here".

The turtles were probably destined for markets in the region. All animals were brought to the Xingo Archeology Museum where a provisional rescue centre was set up.²⁵

December 2nd 2016

Paulo Afonso-Santa Brígida-Jeremoabo-Glória and Pedro Alexandre, Bahia State, Brazil



Results of the joint operation between the IBAMA, the Federal Police and the NGOs Animalia, Eco, Cemafauna and Cema. Seizures of 1,800 animals including a golden conure (*Aratinga guarouba*, Appendix I), parrots (*Psittacidae* spp., Appendix I or II), a bare-throated bellbird (*Procnias nudicollis*), red-footed tortoises (*Chelonoidis carbonaria*, Appendix II) and a southern Tamandua (*Tamandua*

tetradactyla) in houses or shops. Recently captured, 40% of the animals presented the sanitary conditions required to be released. The others have been transferred to a refuge. 15 reports issued. Total fine of 400,000 real (\$ 130,000 US).²⁶

December 3rd 2016

Manaus, Amazonas State, Brazil

The Sauim Castanheira Wildlife Refuge has already been the victim of several burglary attempts. The delinquents had searched during the night the premises for dead animals and had taken nothing. During their last visit, they stole in the infirmary a blue-headed parrot (*Pionus menstruus*, Appendix II), 2 common caracaras (*Caracara plancus*, Appendix II), 2 toucans and 5 parrots.²⁷

December 5th 2016

Mairinque, Sao Paulo State, Brazil

Seizure of 2 toco toucans (*Ramphastos toco*, Appendix II) and a tiger cat (*Leopardus tigrinus*, Appendix I) in an hacienda.²⁸

December 13th 2016

Londrina, Paraná State, Brazil

Seizure in a house of 19 animal including 2 common marmoset (*Callithrix jacchus*, Appendix II) and one toucan chick in really bad shape.²⁹



COLOMBIA

End of December 2016

Department of Antioquia, Colombia

The communication operation against illegal detention of wildlife and trafficking results in the seizure of 29 specimens, blue and gold macaws (*Ara ararauna*, Appendix II), yellow-crowned amazons (*Amazona ochrocephala*, Appendix II), yellow-throated toucans (*Ramphastos ambiguus*), saffron finches (*Sicalis flaveola*), northern screamers (*Chauna chavaria*), white-fronted capuchins (*Cebus albifrons*, Appendix II), red footed tortoises (*Chelonoidis carbonarius*, Appendix II), collared peccaries (*Pecari tajacu*, Appendix II), Central American agoutis (*Dasyprocta punctata*, Appendix III in Honduras) and spotted pacas (*Cuniculus paca*, Appendix III in Honduras). Three arrests. Value on the black market 13 million pesos (\$ 4250 US).²⁹

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

October 5, 2016

Studio City, West Hollywood, State of California, United States of America



Nancy Delap Smith, 56 years old, runs under the telltale name of "Necromance" a curiosity display so well loved on the West Coast. Necromance is a shop dedicated to natural history, skulls, feathers, deer antlers and horns, butterflies and other insects, furs, shark jaws, shells and fossils. Nancy Smith admitted to having illegally imported from Indonesia bat skulls, sea horses (*Hippocampus* spp., Appendix II), scorpions, frogs. The Necromance company was sentenced to \$ 20,000 US in fine and 2 years parole, its owner to 200h of community work and one year parole.³⁰

November 3rd 2016

Saratoga, California State, United States of America



Conviction of Sharham Roohparavar to 3 months imprisonment and 3 months of house arrest for falsifying the original documents and selling to foreign buyers, via the Internet and other means, elephant ivory, red coral, hornbill beaks and leopard skins.³¹

MEXICO

November 9, 2016

Juarez, State of Chihuahua, Mexico

Seizure of 5 toads (*Incilius valliceps*), 2 frogs (*Charadrahyla taeniopus*) and 2 iguanas (*Ctenosaura pectinata*). They traveled more than 2000 km between Cardel and Juarez on the border with the United States of America via FEDEX. Upon arrival, a toad and an iguana were dead.

The species *Ctenosaura pectinata* and *Charadrahyla taeniopus* are endemic to Mexico and protected.³²



Incilius valliceps

Mid-December 2016

Cuilápam de Guerrero, State of Oaxaca, Mexico

Seizure on a flea market of a Jackson's three-horned chameleon (*Trioceros jacksonii*, Appendix II), a Morelet's crocodile (*Crocodylus moreletii*, Appendix II), a boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II), 8 common iguanas (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II), one peacock, 2 red-eared sliders (*Trachemys scripta*), one Meso-American slider (*Trachemys venusta*), 2 common pheasants (*Phasianus colchicus*) and an African pigmy hedgehog (*Atelerix albiventris*).³³

PERU

End of December 2016

389/5000

Tumbes, Tumbes region, Peru

Seizure in the immediate vicinity of the Ecuadorian frontier of a grey-cheeked parakeet (*Brotogeris pyrrhoptera*, Appendix II), 11 common iguanas (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II), 4 Pacific parrotlets (*Forpus coelestis*, Appendix II), 4 small aquatic turtles from Amazonia and 2 tortoises. The seller fled before the arrival of the police.³⁴

SALVADOR

October 23, 2016

Santa Rosa de Lima, Department of La Union, El Salvador

Control at the border between El Salvador and Honduras. Seizure of 2 spider monkeys (*Ateles* spp. Appendix I or II), 3 common green iguanas (*Iguana iguana*, Appendix II) and 5 black iguanas of the species *Ctenosaura similis*.³⁵



ASIA

AZERBAÏDJAN

October 13th 2016

Azerbaijan

Arrest of two Iraqis and seizure of traps and baits. Fine of 2,000 Azerbaijani Manats (\$ 1,227 US) and request for expulsion by the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources to the National Migration Service.³⁶



CAMBODIA

November 3rd 2016

Laban Siek, Banlung District, Rotanah Kiri Province, Cambodia

Seizure of 66 kg of wild boar, flying squirrel, porcupine, red deer, monitor lizard (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I or II) and black softshell turtles (*Nilssonina nigricans*, Appendix I) bushmeat. The meats have been buried. Six Burmese mountain tortoises (*Manouria emys*, Appendix II) still alive have been released. Both carriers received a warning and express training about wildlife trafficking. They made a written commitment to never engage in transport or trade in wild meat again.³⁷

December 7th 2016

Stoeng Treng, Stoeng Treng Province, Cambodia

Confiscation of more than 100 kg of bushmeat in a market. Seizure of 5 monitor lizards (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I or II) weighing a total of 7.5 kg, 83 kg of wild boar meat, 34.5 kg of deer meat, some gymnures, 2 alive loris and 3 smoked (*Nycticebus* spp., Appendix I) and 2 Burmese mountain tortoises (*Manouria emys*, Appendix II). Gymnures are hedgehogs without spikes.³⁸

CHINA

October 14, 2016

Hong Kong, China

Seizure at dawn by Lok Ma Chau Customs of 24 frogs, 46 turtles and 52 chameleons in 2 trucks. Arrest of the 2 drivers. The value of the "goods" is estimated at \$ 200,000 HK (\$ 25,793 US). Species are not yet clearly identified.³⁹



October 2016

Mianyang, Sichuan Province, China

Revelation by the police about a raid made in October 2016.

Seizure of approximately 2 tons of butchered and dismembered wild animals including 16 Asian black bear heads (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I), 11 bear paws, 42 Chinese upland buzzards (*Buteo hemilasius*, Appendix II), 3 crocodile claws (*Crocodylidae* spp., Appendix I or II) and pangolin scales. Six people were arrested including the alleged gang leader, a certain Liang, known in the poaching world under the names "Wildlife Liang" or "Snake Liang". He admitted having "worked" with 3 underground bear slaughterhouses and 2 commercial agents including a 70-year-old lady. The "goods", the provenance of which has not yet been clarified, was resold at retail in several cities of the province. Everything that was perishable was stored in freezers.⁴⁰

November 11, 2016

Tianjin, China

Seizure in a luggage of miscellaneous items from the capture, dismantling and processing of birds of paradise (*Paradisaeidae* spp., Appendix II), hawksbill sea turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricata*, Appendix I) and Java mouse deers (*Tragulus Javanicus*).⁴¹

November 29, 2016

Liguo, Hainan Province, China

Seizure in the house of a named Zhang of 34 live cobras (*Elapidae* family), 7 live boas (*Boidae* spp., Appendix I or II), 5 live oriental rat snakes of the species *Ptyas mucosa*, a dead Bengal cat-leopard (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II) and 6 dead masked palm civets (*paguma larvatas*). One arrest.⁴²

SOUTH KOREA

November 11, 2016

Metropolitan City of Busan, South Korea

Seizure of 22 animals including Siamese crocodiles (*Crocodylus siamensis*, Appendix I) and slow loris (*Nycticebus* spp., Appendix I). Fifteen arrests of tenants of clandestine mini zoos and animal tamers who were touring kindergartens and day nurseries. The animals had been bought in Thailand in 2014, introduced without papers nor quarantine in the country by a mysterious 38-year-old Kim.⁴³

INDONESIA

October 5, 2016

Jakarta, Capital Territory Jakarta, Indonesia

Seizure of yellow-crested cockatoos (*Cacatua sulphurea*, Appendix I), purple-naped Lorries (*Lorius domicella*, Appendix II), Bali mynas (*Leucopsar rothschildi*, Appendix I), black-winged mynas (*Acridotheres melanopterus*) and slow loris (*Nycticebus* spp., Appendix I).

Two men sold the lemurs via the Internet between 250,000 and 450,000 rupee (19 and 34 US\$) per unit. On the Barito market, a woman sold poached birds protected by CITES or national law. The yellow-crested cockatoo, the bali myna and the black-winged myna sold for 4 million rupee (\$ 306 US), the ladies slow loris 2.2 million rupee (\$ 168 US).⁴⁴



October 18, 2016

Jambi, Jambi Province, Indonesia

Seizure of 3 estuarine crocodile skins (*Crocodylus porosus*, Appendix II in Indonesia), a Sumatran tiger skin (*Panthera tigris sumatrae*, Appendix I) and 2000 snake and varan skins (*Varanus* spp., Appendix I or II). The stock was in a warehouse. The gang had have among its suppliers zoos of Bandung and Yogyakarta, West Java Province.⁴⁵



November 2nd 2016

Jambi, Jambi Province, Indonesia

Seizure of 35 pangolins and a bag of tiger bones in a car bound for Medan.⁴⁶

MALAYSIA

October 19th 2016

Kedah, Selangor and Kelantan States, Malaysia

Seizures of 32 wild animals including one tiger cub (*Panthera tigris*, Appendix I), one Bengal leopard cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*, Appendix II), one black pond turtle (*Geoclemys hamiltonii*, Appendix I), one binturong (*Arctictis binturong*, Appendix III in India) and a salmon-crested cockatoo (*Cacatua moluccensis*, Appendix I) thanks to 5 raids led by the Perhilitan, the wildlife protection service in Malaysia. "These cases show that some citizens have the money to buy more exotic animals as pets and have developed a taste for luxury" notices the Minister of the Environment. The strengthening of financial and prison sanctions for the most serious offenses is considered. Five arrests.⁴⁷



NEPAL

November 15th 2016

Kathmandu, Central Development Region, Nepal

Seizure of a red panda skin (*Ailurus fulgens*, Appendix I) and a bear gallbladder (*Ursidae* spp., Appendix I). Arrest of 7 young men aged from 22 to 27 years old.⁴⁹

RUSSIA

November 1st 2016

Khabarovsk Airport, Federal District Far Eastern, Russia

Seizure from a couple of passengers going to Seoul of musk deer preputial glands (*Moschus* spp., Appendix I or II) and bear bile (*Ursidae* spp., Appendix I or II) estimated at 1 million and a half roubles (\$ 23,800 US).⁴⁸

PAKISTAN

December 4th 2016

Lakki Marwat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, Pakistan

Once again the Peshawar-Karachi buses! Mian Ejaz had hidden in secret compartments wooden boxes containing raptors and primates. The seizure took place 200 km after departure.⁵⁰



TAIWAN

October 28th 2016

Taiwan

Dismantling of a network of herbalists which were selling bear bile and other parts of endangered animals. Seizure of 18 rhinoceros, buffalo and antelope horns, 50 bags of bear bile, 124 sachets of musk deer (*Moschus* spp., Appendix I or II) and 21 sachets of crushed rhinoceros horn powder. Three arrests. Lien Chun-ying, the honorary chairman of the Taipei Chinese Herbal Apothecary Association and two other herbal and healing plants experts have been released on bail of 1 million New Taiwanese dollars (\$ 31,700 US), \$ 800,000 NT (\$ 25,300 US) and \$ 400,000 NT (\$ 12,650 US). The trio brought their miracle cures from China under cover of medicinal plants. Lien Chun-ying was sustaining through an online application a network of a hundred rich clients. He was organizing here and there promotions among a hand-picked clientele.⁵¹

VIET NAM

November 22nd 2016

Kon Tum, Kon Tum Province, Viet Nam

Seizure of an Asian black bear (*Ursus thibetanus*, Appendix I) weighing 24 kg and a grey-shanked douc langur (*Pygathrix cinerea*, Appendix I) of 9 kg in a freezer.⁵²

December 27th 2016

Thanh Hoa, Thanh Hoa Province, Viet Nam

Seizure of a tiger skin and 581 kg of frozen wild animals, a leopard (*Panthera pardus*, Appendix I), 4 binturongs (*Arctictis binturong*, Appendix III in India), an Asian Golden Cat (*Catopuma temminckii*, Appendix I), a clouded leopard (*Neofelis nebulosa*, Appendix I), a stump-tailed macaque (*Macaca arctoides*, Appendix II) and several civets. One arrest. The man would be a regular of trafficking. He would have ancient relationships with practicing poachers along the border with Laos.⁵³

EUROPE

SPAIN

OPERATION TITI

October 14, 2016

Alicante, Alicante Province, Spain

Seizure of 25 common marmosets (*Callithrix jacchus*, Appendix II), a gray parrot (*Psittacus erithacus*, Appendix II) and a boa constrictor (*Boa constrictor*, Appendix II) sold in a clandestine market. 25 sellers are involved. The marmosets were sold at the price of 2000 euros each.⁵⁴

December 16, 2016

Usera District, Madrid, Spain

Seizure of 56 fashion, leather and decorative items made of feathers, reptile and feline skins possibly from CITES-listed species in a store.⁵⁵



December 30, 2016

S'Aranjassa, Palma de Mallorca, Balearic Islands, Spain

Seizure of a white-faced capuchin (*Cebus capucinus*, Appendix II), 2 kinkajous (*Potos flavus*, Appendix III in Honduras), 5 mongooses and 3 turtles without CITES certificates. Where do they come from? Who sold them to this zoo of bad fame from where in October several mongooses escaped that have not been taken up since?^{55bis}

FRANCE

December 1st 2016

Vesoul, Department of Haute-Saône, Bourgogne-Franche-Comté Region, France



Conviction of three former leaders of the Haute-Saône hunters Federation and one senior technician to one year imprisonment, a technical agent and 3 apprentices to prison sentences from 4 to 12 months suspended for having between 2010 and 2013 organized and participated in poaching in the Noroy-le-Bourg game reserve of about 100 forest cats and raptors, variable buzzards, goshawks (*Accipiter gentilis*, Appendix II), European owls, all species protected by European directives, national regulations or international conventions. The poaching aimed to encourage the reproduction or on-site installation of small common game, rabbits and pheasants. The apprentices, in school and

work experience alternating, received a formation on hunting and executed poaching orders on the field, kept a record of the killed animals. "We had orders to bring back the tails of the killed animals," said one of the executioners to the court. Each of them received "a tail bonus" corresponding to the number of trophies brought back to the Federation headquarters.⁵⁶



ITALY

Mid-October 2016

Como, Region Lombardy, Italy

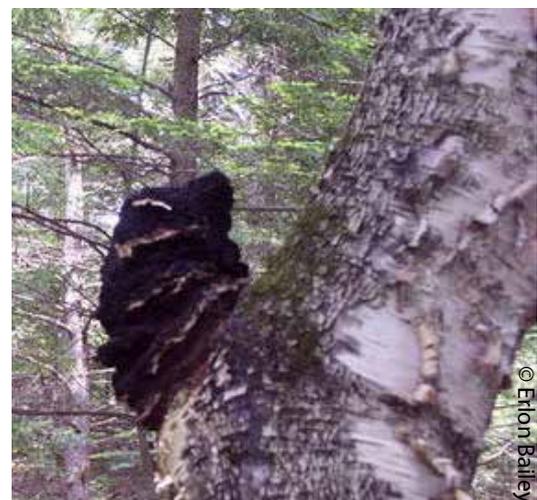
Seizure in a van of leather goods made of skins of CITES listed species valued at € 100,000 and not accompanied by the necessary certificates of origin.⁵⁷

RUSSIA

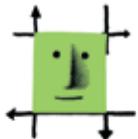
November 17, 2016

Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk Airport, Far Eastern Federal District, Russia

Seizure in the luggage of a Russian traveler flying to Seoul, South Korea, of 112 Siberian musk deers (*Moschus moschiferus*, Appendix II), deer antlers, 2 dried bear gall bladders (*Ursidae* spp., Appendix I or II), sturgeon caviar (*Acipenseridae* spp., Appendix I or II) and Chaga mushroom (*Inonotus obliquus*). The loot of this multi-card trafficker amounts to 6 million roubles or \$ 96,000 US. The Chaga is a parasitic fungus of birch. In Japan, it is known as the "diamond of the forest", in China as the "king of plants", in Siberia, as the "gift of God". It heals and prevents everything. Its retail price is \$ 80 US per kilo.⁵⁸



Donkeys



ROBIN DES BOIS

To Save the Donkeys from the Chinese Predators

Press release, December 19, 2016

A tremendous boom in donkey skin exports towards China from northern to southern Africa has been noticed over the last year. The countries hit the most are Egypt, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Kenya, Tanzania, Botswana and South Africa. In Egypt, one donkey was sold 17 € two years ago and € 170 today. Burkina Faso is the symbol of this sudden persecution.

- 1st quarter 2015: 1000 skins exported.
- 4th quarter 2015: 18,000 skins.
- 1st half of the year 2016: 65,000 skins.

On August 3, the Burkinabe government enforced a decree banning exports of live donkeys and donkey parts. Mali and Niger took similar dispositions. With such an exponential rhythm in slaughter, domestic donkeys in Burkina Faso (between 1 million and 1.3 million individuals) could be wiped out within 5 years. The meat is partly burned near the undercover slaughterhouses. Neighbors of the Sahel Slaughterhouse, a registered establishment run by a Frenchman and Chinese associates, are seeing trucks filled with donkeys coming in from Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Mauritius. In reenacting for donkey skins what had happened with pangolin scales, China is extending its gathering grounds by relying on the diaspora and expatriates present and influent on the African continent.

Loss of donkeys in Africa is a cultural, agricultural and social disaster. The Minister of animal resources in Burkina Faso regrets that a project to distribute 10,000 ploughs is on standby because the donkeys are disappearing. Donkeys are multitask accomplices in rural households. They help carry the water, wood, clay and are an on hand means of transportation for the children.

Some families do not resist the temptation of some quick cash and sell their donkey for € 150 to 200 to slaughterhouses or their middlemen. The average income for a farmer in the Sahel is € 30. Beware if one wants to keep the donkey! Now they must be protected from theft and, to lower the risk, tie them up at night in a fenced in place near the family home.

Once again it is inclination and appetite of the Chinese population for puppet remedies, sexual stimulants and youth elixirs all from animal origin that is the cause of such cruelty and social revolution.

Each year, 4 million donkey skins are transformed into gelatin that becomes an ingredient for cosmetics or consumables under the generic name Ejiao. The so-called best brands sell € 12,000 per kilo. The industrial center of the donkey trade is based in Shandong, an Eastern province in China.

In 2010, a television advertisement made sales skyrocket. In 2015, Qin Yufeng, CEO of Dong'e Ejiao was complaining before the Popular congress about the "donkey shortage" that hit the hundred specialized factories. Domestic donkeys are on the verge to be extinct in China and breedings beyond to be shameful are not sufficient to answer demand. Donkeys are all butchered at 3 years-old. Chinese scientists are working on a possible high rate growth species.

Ejiao or donkey gelatin or donkey glue is used since ancient times as French catholic missionaries certified as soon as 1704 : "This drug is in vogue, so it is not adequate for the whole Empire and a lot of fakes are made out of horse hide, mule hide, camel hide, and sometimes out of boots." Following the Emperors, communists elite have kept up the knack.

Given the matter of urgency and the power of Ejiao industry, it would be to no purpose to rely on educational words to the consumers.

Solutions

- While waiting for one united African political line on donkeys, each country can found on his animal protection law to convict the donkey dealers. Four of them have just been condemned to eight month jail in South Africa for cruelty to animals. The 4 were charged under the Animal Protection Act No 71 of 1962.
- The Organization of African Unity regroupes about fifty countries. Its executive council has the power to coordinate doctrines and policies in areas such as agriculture, breeding, animal resources and environmental protection. Robin des Bois advises the OAU to take on quickly the issue of pillaging of the donkeys livestock by Chinese industrials and adopt strict common measures to ban export in domestic donkeys and reinforce dispositions in favor of the protection of wild donkeys.
- The African wild donkey (*Equus africanus*) of whom a few hundred individuals survive in Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan and Ethiopia is listed since 1983 in Appendix I on CITES Convention (1). International trade in live specimens or their parts is banned. An annotation to this listing specifies that domestic African donkeys (*Equus asinus*) are not covered by the ban. It is needed that this annotation be removed rapidly and that domestic African donkeys be explicitly protected from international trade.

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA

October 2016

South Africa¹

- **Northwest Province.** 42 stolen donkeys are discovered on the property of an expatriate of Asian origin. In his statement to the police, the man says he is only interested in the skinning of donkeys and the extraction of gelatin.

- **Bloemfontein, Province of the Free State.** In the outskirts of the city, 70 sick and thirsty donkeys waiting for delivery to an indeterminate slaughterhouse are rescued by the SPCA (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals). Unfortunately, they were at the last extremity and the only human outcome was to kill them. Some female donkeys had aborted and the embryos lay at their side. The investigation is underway.

- **Polokwane, Province of Limpopo.**

Conviction of 4 men to 8 months in prison for cruelty to animals and to 2 months in prison for illegal immigration. The two sentences are combined. The truck carrying 41 skeletal donkeys, dead or barely alive, had been intercepted on the road from Limpopo to Randfontein where they were to be killed and cut up at the slaughterhouse. The SPCA is alarmed by the trafficking of donkeys and donkey skins to China for the gelatin industry. The survivors had to be finished off.



- **Tshipise, Province of Limpopo.** "We have our own hunters who kill impalas so that we feed our lions. In addition to that we also buy donkeys strictly from villagers on our side not from Zimbabwe". It is thus that Mr. Peet Bezuidenhout, owner of the Popallin ranch, is defending himself. He does not convince anyone. Last week, 8 donkeys bearing the V mark signing Zimbabwean origin were seized in Popallin ranch. In Zimbabwe, the current price of a donkey is 300 rand (\$ 22 US), in South Africa, on the other side of Limpopo, it reaches 2,000 rand or \$ 140 US.²



On The Trail #15. Robin des Bois/Robin Hood

TANZANIA

Mid-November 2016

Arumeru District, Arusha Region, Tanzania

In cooperation with the NGOs Donkey Sanctuary based in the United Kingdom and MAWO (Meru Animal Welfare Organization), 10 night shelters to protect donkeys from theft and poaching have been built. In a few weeks, a hundred donkeys have disappeared, likely victims of the ejiao network. Their skins will soon arrive in China.

In the country, as elsewhere in Africa and in the world, donkeys help men. Without them, the Massai villages would struggle organizing themselves. They go to the market. They're coming back from the market. They carry firewood, bring children to school.³

AMERICA

COLOMBIA

November 22, 2016

Sahagún, Department of Córdoba, Colombia

Seizure of 760 donkey skins in 2 trucks. They were intended for export. The vehicles were headed for the ports on the Caribbean Sea. The hides were handed over to the Colombian Institute of Agriculture (ICA). According to an ICA report, 180 tons of donkey skins, corresponding to about 18,000 donkeys, were exported in 2015 to Hong Kong by 3 approved companies, Curtidos Leathercol SAS in Villapinzon, Invermax del Caribe SAS in Barranquilla and Belen Leather SAS in Paso. The export ports are Cartagena, Buenaventura and Barranquilla. These deliveries of donkey skins are not accompanied by health certificates. Hong Kong does not ask for it.



The peasant association of Alta Montana, in the Monts de Maria, a small mountain range in the north of the country, complains of the theft of 50 donkeys. They were skinned. "The situation is alarming" according to the spokesperson of the association.⁴

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Sources are available on request by email to contact@robindesbois.org indicating the "On the Trail" issue number, section and reference of the event. For instance, for the last event of "On the Trail" n°15 (November 22, 2016, Sahagún, Department of Córdoba, Colombia): "On the Trail" n°15, chapter Donkeys, reference 4.

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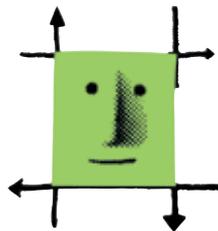
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