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## **Vietnam jails trafficker for 13 years over 10-ton haul of ivory, rhino horn**

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The man was found guilty of transporting elephant tusks, ivory, pangolin scales and lion bones from Africa. Michele D'ottavio, EyeEm, Getty Images

A court in Vietnam on Tuesday sentenced a man to 13 years in prison for trafficking nearly 10 tons of endangered animal parts from Africa, including ivory and rhino horns, police said.

The court in the central coastal city of Danang found Nguyen Duc Tai, 33, guilty of transporting elephant tusks, ivory, pangolin scales and lion bones from Africa to Vietnam in 2021, the police-run ministry of public security said.

Trade in ivory is illegal in Vietnam but wildlife trafficking remains widespread.

The country is a transit point for elephant ivory for consumers in mostly China and the United States and Vietnam is a major consumer of rhino horn, which many believe to have medicinal value.

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Earlier this month, 600kg of ivory smuggled from Africa was seized at two ports in Vietnam's northern city of Haiphong, one of which weighed nearly 500kg, the country's biggest seizure in more than four years.

Bui Thi Ha, deputy director of wildlife protection group ENV, or the Centre for Nature Education, said Tai's conviction on Tuesday was a rare case where authorities had successfully convicted someone for criminal liability in wildlife trafficking.

"Although it is very regrettable that we have been unable to find and prosecute the real people behind this shipment of nearly 10 tonnes of wild animals, the initial success of the Danang city's prosecutors ... is remarkable, worthy of being an example for others," Ha said in an email.