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## *Angolan authorities arrest two suspected suspected elephant poachers*

The accused were eating the elephant meat when neighbours reported them to the police

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(Matt Burke)

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SELL: The accused were eating the elephant meat when neighbours reported them to the police

By Gaspar Jindanji for Epito Reporter

Angola's Criminal Investigation Service (SIC) in Bengo Province bordering the capital city Luanda, detained two poachers for killing an elephant in the municipality of Pango Aluquem.

The detention took place this Monday due to complaints from people who saw the accused consuming and selling meat from the great mammal. The two, José Sebastião and Malambo Castro, aged 28 and 30, respectively, countered the accusations by saying that they found the animal already dead and that they only enjoyed the meat and ivory in the company of other people from their community.

José Sebastião and Malambo Castro also stated that the elephant in question was a calf, allegations refuted by environmentalist Júlio Bravo who stated that the average lifespan of an elephant is 58 years and an individual of this species only has tusks when it reaches adulthood so it is impossible for a calf to have tusks the size found in the possession of the accused.

The provinces of Bengo and bordering Kwanza Norte have recorded the presence of some herds of elephants, and in some cases, individuals from these herds get lost and appear alone in residential areas, a fact that sometimes generates panic and uproar that require the intervention of environmentalists and specialists from the Civil Protection Services, as well as firefighters.

The SIC spokesperson in Bengo, Peterson Casul, stressed that all Ministry of the Interior services at the level of the two provinces are oriented to help environmental inspectors in combating poaching and other practices that harm the environment..

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