

## Africa Sustainable Conservation News

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AFRICA WILDLIFE AND CONSERVATION NEWS, ELEPHANTS, FIGHTING WILDLIFE CRIME, WEST AFRICA

### Ivory Coast – ivory trafficker caught in Treichville



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#### Afrique Sur 7

An ivory and elephant hair trafficker, arrested in Treichville (Ivory Coast)

Jean Kelly Kouassi,  
November 30, 2021

See link for photo.

In Côte d'Ivoire, an alleged trafficker operating in the illegal ivory trade was arrested on Friday, November 19, 2021 in the town of Treichville. The alleged trafficker, in possession of two ivory tusks was arrested when he was about to sell the goods in the cables of a jewelry store belonging to him.

#### Ivory Coast: Suspected Ivory Trafficker Arrested

The arrest was made possible thanks to the collaboration of elements of the Unit for the Fight against Transnational Organized Crime (UCT) and the Ministry of Water and Forests (MINEF), with technical assistance from the EAGLE Côte d'Ivoire project.

A jeweler was arrested in the act of selling 2 carved elephant tusks on Friday, November 19, 2021, in the town of Treichville. The assault was carried out in the morning of Friday by elements of UCT and MINEF with technical assistance from EAGLE Côte d'Ivoire when it was preparing to sell the goods.

He was caught red-handed in possession of two ivory tusks that he was trying to sell not far from the parish of Notre Dame de Treichville, where he owns a jewelry store.

Searches in his jewelry store, more than 20 years old, made it possible to seize 1 elephant tail, 17 steel bracelets encrusted with elephant hair, 8 elephant hair rings, a leopard tooth, 9 small sculpted objects in ivory and 12 woven elephant hair rods ready to be used on jewelry.

The arrested has been selling bracelets made from pachyderm hair at least since the 1990s. The elephant tail and the 12 stems woven from elephant hair seized are believed to have come from Cameroon. As the pachyderm population is low in Côte d'Ivoire, the products from them come mainly from Central Africa.

After the arrest, the alleged trafficker was taken to the UCT headquarters in Abidjan where he was interviewed, then referred on Tuesday, November 23, 2021 to the public prosecutor's office at the Abidjan-Plateau court of first instance.

The case was put in flagrante delicto and the suspect was placed under a warrant of committal. If he is found guilty of the facts weighing on him, namely: possession and marketing of products from wildlife, he risks a prison sentence of between two and twelve months with a fine ranging from 3000 CFA francs to 300,000. CFA francs.

A little dissuasive sentence for traffickers in view of the catastrophic situation in which the elephant population finds itself.

As a reminder, Ivorian wildlife law is far from dissuasive while the situation of protected species is increasingly alarming, especially that of elephants, killed mainly for their ivory. The international ivory trade has been declared illegal since 1989, but African elephant populations continue to decline.

Each year, 20,000 to 30,000 elephants are killed for their ivory, according to the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF); equivalent between 50 to 80 individuals per day. The species has only 415,000 pachyderms in Africa, compared to 3 to 5 million at the start of the last century. In Côte d'Ivoire, elephants, the country's emblem, are on the verge of extinction: their number has halved in thirty years. More than 1,139 have been counted in 26 habitats according to reports made between 1987 and 2000.

Two main factors are considered to be the cause of this drastic decrease in the number of elephants: on the one hand, the increase in illegal animal trafficking linked to the strong international demand for ivory and on the other hand, the abusive exploitation of the natural resources necessary for elephants due to industrial agriculture and the anarchic occupation of their habitat.

The illegal trade in elephant tusks is unfortunately constantly increasing and weighs 3 billion dollars (nearly 2000 billion CFA francs) per year with South East Asia as the main market, with China and Vietnam as the main market. main buyers.

Ivory is not the only part of elephants of interest to traffickers. Elephant hair is indeed a raw material sought after by certain jewelers who make bracelets of it that can sell for a high price.

Elephant hair is plucked from the tails of slain pachyderms, then processed for use in jewelry. Coming from elephants such as ivory, the trade in these hairs feeds traffic and contributes to the extinction of the last wild populations on the continent

◀ ELEPHANT HAIR ◀ IVORY COAST ◀ IVORY SMUGGLER ◀ TREICHVILLE



## Published by somervillesustainableconservation

Journalist, academic and writer on African wildlife journalism and politics. Specialist on eastern and southern Africa, politics and human aspects of conservation, lion-human relations, elephant conservation and ivory, rhino conservation, journalism, radio and propaganda. View all posts by somervillesustainableconservation

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