

# Customs intercepts 40-ft container of illegal wildlife products



The Special Wildlife Office of the Nigeria Customs Service, NCS, has intercepted a 40-foot container of illegal wildlife products in Vietnam.

Three suspects were also arrested in connection with the crime, barely six weeks after a similar seizure by Vietnam authorities.

The Nigeria Customs Service, in a statement made available to newsmen, and signed by Asst. Comptroller Abimbola Isafiade, said the operation was conducted by the combined efforts of the officers of the Federal Operations Unit, FOU, Zone C, in a joint enforcement operation with the Wildlife Justice Commission, WJC.

Isafiade disclosed: “On the 16th of May 2024, in the eastern part of Nigeria, we identified and apprehended the shipper of the 40ft container of illegal wildlife products that was intercepted and reported by Vietnam authorities in April 2024.”

He also revealed that the team equally arrested a suspected supplier of ivory (in addition to the shipper), adding that it was a clear signal to other perpetrators of these illegal acts, which are in contravention of the Customs Export Guidelines, Nigeria Customs Service Act, and the Endangered Species Act of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, that wildlife trafficking, illegal wildlife trade and any form of wildlife crime will not be condoned.

“We reaffirm NCS’ commitment to support all global initiatives to fight wildlife crime in all its forms.

“The comptroller in charge of FOU Zone C, Comptroller Mike Ugbagu, has already declared that NCS will continue to follow the money to find all those who benefit from this crime,” he said.

The statement noted that the NCS and WJC partnership was strengthened and more determined than ever to dismantle the entire supply chain of illegal wildlife criminal networks operating from Africa to Asia and the duo has set a gold standard.

It further stated: “The efficient and multi-focused response by NCS to the seizure in Vietnam demonstrates that it is not business as usual concerning the Nigeria-Vietnam trafficking corridor, and NCS’s success in apprehending both the shipper and supplier builds on the three years of successful arrests and prosecutions of key members of local and international IVORY trafficking networks.”