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Ghanaian national sentenced for possession of over R3m abalone

Over R3 million worth of abalone was seized. File PICTURE: WILLEM LAW

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Cape Town - A 50-year-old Ghanaian national was sentenced in the Kroonstad Regional Court in the Free State after he pleaded guilty for being in possession of abalone.

Husaini Adam was arrested on Tuesday, July 5, after he was caught by members of the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (Hawks) transporting abalone from Free State to Gauteng.

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Adam was arrested along with three accomplices.

According to the provincial spokesperson for the Hawks, Captain Christopher Singo, members of the Serious Organised Crime Investigation team in Bloemfontein received information about a suspect who was transporting abalone to Gauteng.

Husaini Adam pleaded guilty of possession of abalone worth over R3 million. Photo: Hawks

“Members of Welkom Serious Organised Crime Investigation team and Kroonstad Highway Patrol was then activated. They followed the truck and stopped it at a filling station in Kroonstad.

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"During the search of the Tata truck, police discovered 26 boxes of abalone packed with 8 381 units with an estimated value of more than R3 million. The abalone, the Tata truck and R25 000 which was found in possession of the suspects were all seized," Singo said.

The court ordered Adam to pay a R60 000 fine or face 10 years' imprisonment, of which R30 000 and half of the 10-year-sentence was suspended for five years.

The co-accused in the matter, Johannes Myberg, Fu Lin, and Dasham Desram, also appeared in court.

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Myberg has been remanded in custody while Lin and Desram are out on R10 000 bail.

The matter against the trio was remanded to December 17.

In an unrelated matter in the Western Cape, two men were arrested on Monday in an operation by the Hawks' Organised Crime Investigation team in Bellville, Crime Intelligence and the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment.

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The men were caught in possession of abalone weighing more than 638kg with an estimated street value of over R1.17m.