

Mozambique: 160 Pangolins Rescued From Traffickers

Maputo — Gorongosa National Park (PNG), in the central Mozambican province of Sofala, has recovered 160 pangolins from trafficking routes over the last eight years.

The pangolin (sometimes known as the scaly anteater) is one of the species most under threat from poaching in Mozambique. Pangolins have the unique characteristic of being the only terrestrial mammals entirely covered in scales, and their existence is becoming increasingly rare.

According to PNG administrator, Pedro Muagura, cited by the Portuguese News Agency, Lusa, of the 160 pangolins recovered, 121 were found on the illegal market, mostly for export, and the remaining 39 were voluntarily surrendered by communities surrounding the park, who "already know that the capture of pangolins constitutes an environmental crime."

Muagura explained that, on the trafficking route, which also covers the central provinces of Manica, Zambézia, and Tete, the species can pass through up to 20 traders and intermediaries, with the Asian market as the main destination.

"It is in the exchange of intermediaries that information sometimes gets lost and reaches the park. In our country, there are people who believe that whoever owns a pangolin will have great luck, so people within the country end up keeping these animals for that purpose", he said.