

Nigeria: Court Jails Poachers Over Illegal Possession of Live Pangolins

Justice Yellim Bogoro of the Federal High Court has convicted and sentenced two animal poachers, Bunmi Dagunduro and Olusegun Oniyide, to 18 months in prison for unlawfully possessing three live pangolins, an endangered species.

Justice Bogoro jailed the convict after they pleaded guilty to a three-count charge of conspiracy, possession and trade of endangered wildlife.

They were arraigned before the court alongside one Godwin Nwali by officers from the Special Wildlife Office of the Nigeria Customs Service based on credible intelligence.

The Customs accused the convicts of possessing three live pangolins, an endangered species, which is illegal under the First Schedule of the Endangered Species (Control of International Trade and Traffic) Act, Cap E9, Laws of Nigeria, 2004.

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The prosecutor, Michael Osong, told the court that the offences were committed on December 6, 2025, at Iyana Ipaja, area of Lagos State, in violation of section 516 of the Criminal Code Act, Cap. C38, Laws of Nigeria, 2004.

The convicts, who had initially pleaded not guilty, later changed their pleas.

Prosecutor Michael Osong reviewed the facts of the case and tendered exhibits, urging the court to convict and sentence the defendants.

The lawyer urged the judge for mercy, emphasising his client's lack of prior convictions and his client's status as a first-time offender, and requested leniency.

While considering their pleas, Justice Bogoro sentenced them to 18 months in prison, offering the option of a fine and a week of community service as alternatives.

The court adjourned the trial of Godwin Nwali to June 24, after he refused to change his plea.



