



Two Vietnamese men sentenced to 16 months in jail for smuggling ivory

Date of issue: 22 January 2014

On 22 January 2014, two Vietnamese men were each sentenced to 16 months in jail for smuggling African elephant ivory through Singapore.

2 On 14 January 2014, aviation screening officers at Changi Airport detected two luggage bags with suspected elephant ivory. The bags had arrived in a flight from Dubai and were in transit to Laos via Singapore. Further checks revealed that the bags contained a total of 13 pieces of elephant tusks, 16 pieces of ivory bangles and 109 pieces of ivory cubes weighing at about 45kg. The value of the ivory was estimated to be worth at least SGD60,000.

3 The owners of the bags, the two Vietnamese men, were immediately arrested. Investigations revealed that one of the men had met an unknown Vietnamese man at a market in Angola, who promised that he would be given US\$1,000 for each luggage bag of African elephant tusks and its products that are successfully smuggled from Angola to Laos. He then roped in his nephew for help in transporting the luggage bags from Angola to Laos, via Dubai and Singapore.

4 Elephants are listed as protected species under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), and are also scheduled species listed under the Endangered Species (Import and Export) Act. Under the Act, CITES permits are required to import, export and re-export scheduled species, including its parts and products. The same requirement applies for scheduled species in transit. Penalties for infringing the Act include fines of up to \$50,000 per scheduled species (not exceeding a maximum aggregate of \$500,000) and/or up to 2 years imprisonment.

M E D I A R E L E A S E

5 The Singapore Government does not condone the use of Singapore as a conduit to smuggle endangered species and their parts and products. AVA will continue to cooperate and collaborate with partner enforcement agencies nationally and internationally to curb wildlife trafficking. Should anyone have information on illegal trade in elephant ivory or other endangered species, they should contact AVA at 6325 7625 or via AVA's [online feedback form](#). All information shared with AVA would be kept strictly confidential.

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22 January 2014

MEDIA RELEASE

Illegal trade of elephant ivory

The illegal trade in ivory is at its highest level in nearly two decades, and new figures released recently indicate that elephant poaching for the illegal ivory trade could wipe out a fifth of Africa's elephants over the next decade.

Elephant ivory are often favoured as a choice material for manufacture into intricate carvings, hand seals and other ornaments. They are also believed to have mystical powers and used to make religious artifacts and amulets.

Illegal elephant ivory seized in Singapore

2013

In January 2013, following a tip-off, Singapore Customs and AVA officers jointly investigated into a container in transit via Singapore, and found 1.8 tonnes (1099 pieces) of elephant ivory concealed within broken stone slabs. The container with the ivory was returned to Africa for follow-up investigations as there was no local consignee involved in this shipment.

2011

A Chinese national was fined \$2500 by AVA after he was found selling 12 pieces of illegally imported hand seals made of elephant ivory at a trade fair.

A traveller had his 8 pieces of ivory bangles confiscated by AVA after he declared them to Immigration and Checkpoints Authority upon arrival at Changi Airport.

2010

A retail shop owner was fined \$2500, for selling 13 pieces of ivory products which were illegally imported.

MEDIA RELEASE

Photos of the items seized

No	Image
1	
2	
3	

MEDIA RELEASE