ROUTES
Reducing Opportunities for Unlawful Transport of Endangered Species

Ethiopia
Wildlife Trafficking Profile
2015-2019

Country Enforcement Index

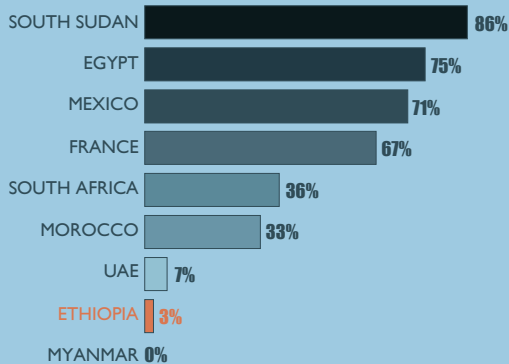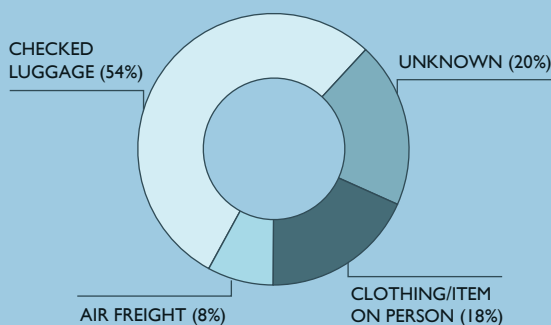| Country	Value
SOUTH SUDAN	86%
EGYPT	75%
MEXICO	71%
FRANCE	67%
SOUTH AFRICA	36%
MOROCCO	33%
UAE	7%
ETHIOPIA	3%
MYANMAR	0%

The Country Enforcement Index (CEI) is a proportion of the number of trafficking instances seized in a country divided by the total number of trafficking instances that touched the jurisdiction, whether the instance was stopped there or simply transited through. A trafficking instance is defined as a singular incident of wildlife trafficking in or through a country, whether or not it was stopped there. The CEI contains an inherent bias based on a country's position in the supply chain (i.e. origin, transit, or destination). For example, because a shipment is either stopped at its destination or not stopped at all, destination countries have higher enforcement indices than origin or transit countries (which may miss shipments later seized in the destination country). For this reason, in the CEI above, Ethiopia is compared with countries that are similar in location and/or trafficking profile. Trafficking profile is determined based on both the country's primary role in the supply chain and overall volume of trafficking instances. Additional information on the CEI is included on the back of this page.

Wildlife Transport Methods

- CHECKED LUGGAGE (54%)
- UNKNOWN (20%)
- AIR FREIGHT (8%)
- CLOTHING/ITEM ON PERSON (18%)

Common Obfuscation Methods

ALUMINUM
Aluminum appears consistently as a concealment method for ivory and rhino horn seized along Ethiopian air routes. Products obfuscated in aluminum were transported in either checked luggage or on the passenger's person.
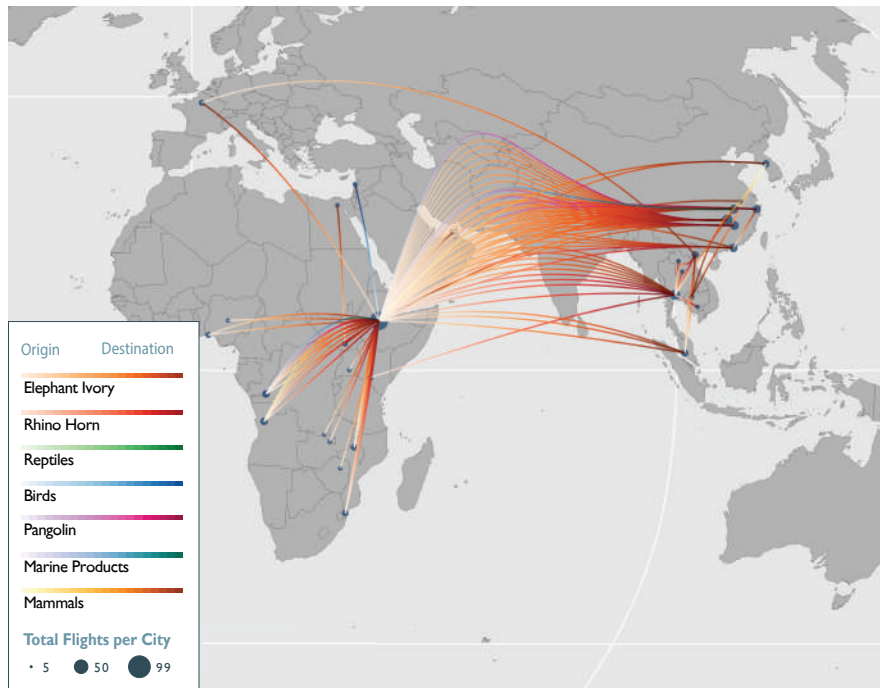
CLOTHING
The overwhelming majority of wildlife products obfuscated in clothing were worked ivory products seized in China. In multiple instances, the contraband was found both on the passenger's person and in their luggage.

Known Ethiopian Air Trafficking Routes

Origin → Destination
- Elephant Ivory
- Rhino Horn
- Reptiles
- Birds
- Pangolin
- Marine Products
- Mammals

Total Flights per City
· 5   ● 50   ● 99

Country Trends: Small Shipments, Asia Bound

Ethiopia is a transit hub for wildlife moving eastward—85% percent of known Ethiopian trafficking instances were destined for Asia.[1] Ivory is the most commonly smuggled wildlife product in Ethiopian trafficking instances (present in over 80% of known seizures), followed by rhino horn and pangolin (each present in approximately 20% - note that these percentages collectively exceed 100 because a single trafficking instance can contain multiple species).[2] The number of known Ethiopian trafficking instances rose by over 200% from 2017 to 2019, to 27 shipments.[3] However, this increase in shipment number has coincided with an even sharper decrease in shipment size. As a result, the total weight of ivory seized along Ethiopian air routes in 2019 is just 2% of the weight seized in 2017.[4] Lastly, in the past two years, all known Ethiopian trafficking instances have stopped downstream of Ethiopia, that is, after having already transited through the country.[5]

Recommendation: Expand capacity to identify small-scale trafficking and improve reporting protocols.

Case Study: Hidden in Milk Powder

On August 14, 2019, nine pieces of carved ivory products weighing 0.309 kg were found in a container of milk powder in a passenger's suitcase at Guangzhou Baiyun Airport.[6] This small shipment, which was routed through Addis Ababa en route to China, obfuscated in foodstuffs, and transported in carry-on luggage,[7] is typical of known trafficking instances transiting Ethiopia.

Source: QQ News[8]

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C4ADS Air Seizure Database

The C4ADS Air Seizure Database is compiled through extensive, multilingual open source research conducted by C4ADS analysts on a monthly basis, and supplemented wherever possible with additional information obtained through C4ADS' partner network. The publicly available resources C4ADS used for this assessment included, but were not limited to, customs press releases, local news reports, CITES annual reports, Robin des Bois's On the Trail Bulletins, TRAFFIC Bulletins, academic and statistical reports (e.g. CITES ETIS reports, etc.), and social media.

Data contained within the C4ADS Air Seizure Database is constantly being revised and updated to reflect the most current and accurate information available. As a result, changes are occasionally made to previous seizure data that may impact the analysis. The data used for this assessment was accessed in January 2020.

Data Gaps & Biases

The reliability of the data compiled within the C4ADS Air Seizure Database, and as a result C4ADS' associated analysis, is dependent on a variety of factors. Some airports and countries more proactively report on wildlife seizures, leading to an overrepresentation of those locations in the C4ADS Database. Further, some countries simply have better enforcement, while still others have effective customs and enforcement agencies but do not prioritize the identification of illegal wildlife. Data also varies due to differences in government seizure reporting protocols and to varying media and public interest. For instance, seizures of animals and animal products from charismatic species (like elephants) and species facing well-documented and intriguing challenges (like the totoaba) are more likely to receive media attention, and are therefore more likely to be captured in the C4ADS Air Seizure Database.

C4ADS analysts worked to minimize inconsistencies by researching every seizure to obtain as much information as possible, thereby filling in most gaps left by inadequate seizure reports published by a government agency or news outlet. Of course, some seizures still lack important information. In fact, some seizures lacked so much information that they could not be included in the C4ADS Air Seizure Database. At a minimum, C4ADS analysts needed the date of the seizure (at least the year), the location of the seizure (at least the country), and some indication as to the contents of the seizure to include it.

One of seizure data's biggest failings is inherent to its very nature—seizures can only capture trafficking strategies that have been ineffective. Along the same lines, seizures may reflect enforcement efforts operating as they should, and so high seizure numbers can be indicative of particularly effective enforcement activity rather than an indication of a problem, as they are often interpreted. To that point, another significant downside to seizure data is its frequent inability to determine the cause of trafficking patterns. For instance, high seizure numbers in an airport can be due either to effective enforcement or high volumes of trafficking activity—sometimes both. Without being able to count the true number of trafficking instances that move through that airport undetected, it is impossible to know which factor plays the greater role, and therefore how to respond—should enforcement strategies be revised and improved, or can the country's anti-wildlife trafficking strategy shift to begin to address wildlife trafficking before it reaches the airport, since enforcement within the airport is already functioning as needed?

Although there are no perfect solutions to these problems, comprehensive data collection can serve to alleviate a few. Detailed route information, for example, can help to reveal whether illegal wildlife shipments are successfully moving through an airport to be seized elsewhere (suggesting poor enforcement or limiting legal frameworks), or if they are primarily seized prior to arrival at an airport (no implication for enforcement effectiveness), or within an airport (suggesting good enforcement). As a result, C4ADS strove to base the analysis on detailed seizure data, supplemented with additional information wherever possible. In this assessment, C4ADS provides seizure analysis with the acknowledgement that seizure data are an imperfect measure of an immeasurable crime, but with the understanding that even with its shortcomings, seizure data provide a rare window into otherwise clandestine trafficking operations.

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About

This assessment is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents are the responsibility of C4ADS and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID, the United States Government, or individual ROUTES partners.

For more information, visit the ROUTES Dashboard: http://www.routesdashboard.org/.

The mention of any individual, company, organization, or other entity in this assessment does not imply the violation of any law or international agreement, and should not be construed as such.

Country Enforcement Index

The Country Enforcement Index is intended as a comparison of enforcement effectiveness for countries with similar supply chain roles (e.g. origin, transit, and destination countries). A high enforcement index suggests effective screening and interdiction operations. However, the metric contains an inherent bias regarding a country's role in the supply chain. For example, destination countries are the last stop for a wildlife shipment--if the shipment is not seized here, then it is not known to have successfully entered the country. Due to this bias, the CEI is not intended for comparisons of countries that primarily serve different functions in the illicit wildlife trafficking supply chain (e.g. an origin country to a destination country).

Sources

1 C4ADS Air Seizure Database.

2 C4ADS Air Seizure Database.

3 C4ADS Air Seizure Database.

4 C4ADS Air Seizure Database.

5 C4ADS Air Seizure Database.

6 "奶粉罐里藏象牙?我们不要这样的象牙白." QQ News, 6 September 2019. https://new.qq.com/rain/a/20190906A0K2LA.

7 "奶粉罐里藏象牙?我们不要这样的象牙白." QQ News, 6 September 2019. https://new.qq.com/rain/a/20190906A0K2LA.

8 "奶粉罐里藏象牙?我们不要这样的象牙白." QQ News, 6 September 2019. https://new.qq.com/rain/a/20190906A0K2LA.

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