



AVA REPATRIATES 1.8 TONNES OF IVORY TO AFRICA

Issued on 23 July 2013

The Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority (AVA) is working with the Kenyan Wildlife Service, Kenyan Police and the Lusaka Agreement Taskforce (LATF) to repatriate a consignment of 1.8 tonnes of raw ivory tusks to Africa for further investigation and enforcement actions by the African authorities. The ivory was inspected and quantity verified by AVA and the African enforcement authorities on 23 July 2013 in preparation for the return to Africa.

2. The 1.8 tonnes of raw ivory tusks, with an estimated value of about S\$2.5 million, were seized by AVA and the Singapore Customs when the illegal consignment was in transit through Singapore on 23 January 2013, en route to another country from Kenya. The consignment was falsely declared as 'waste paper' and the ivory tusks were packed in 65 gunny sacks. AVA has concluded our investigations and determined that no local importer was involved in the case. We have reminded all shipping and logistics companies, declaring agents and freight forwarders to exercise prudence and adopt security measures to ensure they are not used as conduits for wildlife trafficking.

3. The shipment is the second largest ivory seizure since 2002 and also the second consignment to be repatriated to Africa (Annex A). "The repatriation signals strong collaborative effort between Singapore, Kenyan authorities and Lusaka Agreement Taskforce to disrupt the illegal ivory trade," said Ms Lye Fong Keng, Deputy Director of AVA's Quarantine & Inspection Group.

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4. Mr Pius Macharia, Assistant Commissioner of Kenya Police, said, “The ivory repatriation signifies continued cooperation between Kenyan and Singaporean authorities in efforts to curb illegal trade in African elephant ivory which is the main motivation for poaching. Elephant poaching threatens wildlife-based tourism in Africa. Through LATF (a regional wildlife law enforcement task force), Africa is cooperating with other international organizations and specifically with ASEAN and SAWEN to combat wildlife crime globally. This repatriation is in compliance with CITES requirements and is the second one from Singapore since 2004. We acknowledge the efforts of Singapore authorities towards this exercise.”

5. Under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), of which Singapore is a signatory to, all African and Asian elephants are endangered species. International trade in ivory has been banned under the Convention since 1989.

6. In Singapore, the maximum penalty for illegal trade (import, export and re-export) of ivory is a fine of S\$50,000 per scheduled specimen (not exceeding an aggregate of S\$500,000) and/or imprisonment of up to two years under the Endangered Species (Import and Export) Act. The same penalties apply to any transshipment of ivory through Singapore without proper CITES permits from the exporting/importing country.

7. The Singapore government will not condone any illegal wildlife trade activities going through our country. If any person has information on illegal trade in ivory, please contact AVA at 6325 7625. All information shared with AVA will be kept strictly confidential.

Issued by the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority of Singapore

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Background info on the 2002 case

In June 2002, AVA seized a shipment of about 6 tonnes of raw ivory tusks and cut ivory pieces transiting through Singapore from Africa. The shipment of 532 raw ivory tusks and 40,810 ivory pieces were packed in six wooden crates, labelled as "marble sculptures" and was estimated to be worth about S\$1.5 million.

Following AVA's investigations, a local shipper was prosecuted and fined S\$5,000, which was the maximum fine under the Endangered Species (Import and Export) Act then, for preparing the documents which facilitated the shipment. The illegal ivory was repatriated to Africa for further investigations.

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Photos taken during the inspection and verification of quantity by the African enforcement authorities

| No | Image | Caption |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 |  <p>Image 1</p> | Ivory extracted from one of the crates. |
| 2 |  <p>Image 2</p> | AVA officers and Kenyan officials inspecting the ivory. |
| 3 |  <p>Image 3</p> | Kenyan officials inspecting the ivory |

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4



Image 4

Kenyan official inspecting the ivory

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Image 5

Ivory extracted from one of the crates, weighing about 280 kg. (Note: figure on weighing scale include weight of wooden pallet, i.e. 60.5kg)

6



Image 6

Ivory that had been inspected and accounted for are repacked into the crate.

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