Overview of known trafficking routes, concealment methods and misdeclarations of wildlife products commonly trafficked in containerized sea cargo in recent years

### Elephant Ivory

**Shipping routes**

**Origin**
- Benin
- Cameroon
- Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)
- Gabon
- Ivory Coast
- Kenya
- Mozambique
- Nigeria
- Tanzania
- Togo
- Uganda

**Transit**
- Kenya
- Malaysia
- Mozambique
- Philippines
- Republic of Congo
- Singapore
- Sri Lanka
- South Korea
- Tanzania
- Zanzibar
- Thailand
- United Arab Emirates (UAE)

**Destination**
- Cambodia
- China
- Hong Kong
- Lao PDR
- Malaysia
- Vietnam

**Concealment methods**
- Hidden in the middle of the container between timber logs;
- Hidden among large quantities of legal product;
- Hidden inside hollowed-out timber logs and later sealed in wax;
- Hidden inside modified container compartments.

**Misdeclarations**
- **Wood**
  - Timber / processed wood / plywood / wooden floor tiles / white wood
- **Animal Products**
  - Dried anchovies / frozen fish / frozen beef / fish maws / dried seaweed / snail shells / donkey skin
- **Non-animal Food Products**
  - Sunflower seeds / groundnuts / peanuts / cashew nuts / ginger roots / red beans / tea leaves / coffee / cocoa / fruits
- **Materials**
  - Scrap plastic / recycled crushed plastic / used plastic / plastic waste / plastic resins / polypropylene resin / rubber / asphalt / tar barrel / stone / ceramic / cotton wool
- **Manufactured Products**
  - Jerrycans of palm oil / plastic bottles

**Comments**
- Mostly raw ivory tusks or cut into smaller pieces and packed into multiple boxes, bags or sacks;
- In recent years often smuggled in combination with pangolin scales.

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**Supported by:**

- GEF
- UNODPI
- TRAFFIC
- WWF
**Pangolin Scales**

**Shipping routes**
- **Origin**
  - Burundi
  - Cameroon
  - DRC
  - Ghana
  - Indonesia
  - Kenya
  - Mozambique
  - Nigeria
  - Uganda
- **Transit**
  - Cameroon
  - China
  - Hong Kong
  - Indonesia
  - Lao PDR
  - Malaysia
  - Nigeria
  - Republic of Congo
  - Singapore
  - South Korea
  - Togo
  - Vietnam
- **Destination**
  - Cambodia
  - China
  - Hong Kong
  - Singapore
  - South Korea
  - Togo
  - Vietnam

**Concealment methods**
- Hidden among large quantities of legal product;
- Wrapped with layers of ginger slices in bags.

**Misdeclarations**
- **Wood**
  - Timber / logs / wood
- **Animal Products**
  - Marine products / oyster shell / fish maw / frozen beef / frozen meat
- **Non-animal Food Products**
  - Moringa seeds / dry herbs / ginger / cassia seeds / cashew nuts / beans / cocoa
- **Materials**
  - Scrap plastic / plastic waste / asphalt / charcoal / tar / quartz / cotton wool / charcoal
- **Manufactured Products**
  - Jerrycans of palm oil / general products
- **Machinery**
  - Broken machines

**Comments**
- Sometimes smuggled in combination with ivory;
- Often declared as variations of plastics (under Customs HS code prefix 39) or charcoal (HS code prefix 4402);
- Indirect shipments are often booked as two separate shipments or through switched Bills of Lading (B/Ls);
- Traffickers are known to be able to switch the port of origin to Tema, Ghana, on shipments from Nigeria.

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**Pangolin Meat**

**Shipping routes**
- **Origin**
  - Indonesia
  - Malaysia
- **Destination**
  - China
  - Taiwan

**Concealment methods**
- Hidden in refrigerated shipping containers;
- Hidden with frozen sardines.

**Misdeclarations**
- **Animal Products**
  - Frozen fish
### Rhino Horn

**Shipping routes**
- **Origin:** Kenya, Malaysia, Mozambique, South Africa
- **Transit:** Cambodia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, UAE
- **Destination:** China, Hong Kong, Vietnam

**Concealment methods**
- Hidden among large quantities of legal product, such as in shipments of logs, cut timber, and other wood-based commodities

**Comments**
- Secondary product sometime found in association with big shipments of ivory or pangolin scales;
- More often smuggled by air.

### Big Cat Parts

**Shipping routes**
- **Origin:** Bolivia, Brazil, Kenya, Mozambique, Peru, South Africa, Suriname
- **Transit:** Lao PDR, Singapore, Vietnam
- **Destination:** China, Vietnam

**Concealment methods**
- Hidden and misdeclared as other legal commodities

**Misdeclarations**
- Non-animal Food Products
  - Tea leaves

**Comments**
- Found in shipments with other wildlife contraband such as Elephant ivory and rhino horn.

### Donkey Skins

**Shipping routes**
- **Origin:** Burkina Faso, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania
- **Transit:** Hong Kong, Sri Lanka
- **Destination:** China, Hong Kong, Vietnam

**Concealment methods**
- Non-animal Food Products
  - Table salt

**Misdeclarations**
- Hidden and misdeclared as other legal commodities

**Comments**
- Secondary product found in shipments with other wildlife contraband such as Elephant ivory and rhino horn.
**Shark Fin**

**Shipping routes**
- **Origin**
  - Ecuador
  - Egypt
  - Ghana
  - Guinea Bissau
  - India
  - Indonesia
  - Iran
  - Kenya
  - Panama
  - Peru
  - Republic of Congo
  - Senegal
  - Sierra Leone
  - Spain
  - Sri Lanka
  - The Gambia
  - UAE
- **Transit**
  - EU
  - Malaysia
  - Singapore
  - UAE
  - U.S.
- **Destination**
  - China
  - Hong Kong
  - Singapore
  - Taiwan
  - Vietnam

**Concealment methods**
- Mis-declared as other legal commodities;
- Mixed with legal look-alike species

**Misdeclarations**
- **Animal Products**
  - Frozen seafood / dried seafood product / Blue fin / blue shark fin
  - dried marine products / dried ray skins / edible ray skin / fish maw
- **Non-animal Food Products**
  - Cucumbers / gherkins

**Comments**
- Shark fin is often shipped with other high valued seafood products including fish maw, dried sea cucumber and dried sea horses;
- Key words: Aileron de Requin; requin; Sirip hiu; hiu; Aleta de Tiburon; tiburon; Vi cá map; cá map; 魚翅 / 鱼翅

**Seahorses**

**Shipping routes**
- **Origin**
  - Egypt
  - Guinea
  - India
  - Indonesia
  - Peru
  - Senegal
  - South Africa
  - Thailand
  - Togo
- **Transit**
  - Belgium
  - France
  - Sri Lanka
- **Destination**
  - Hong Kong
  - Vietnam

**Concealment methods**
- Hidden and mis-declared as other legal commodities

**Misdeclarations**
- **Animal Products**
  - fish maw / sheep skins
- **Non-animal Food Products**
  - Table salt

**Comments**
- Often found in shipments with dried shark fins and/or sea cucumber
**Sea Cucumbers**

**Shipping routes**
- **Origin**
  - Egypt
  - India
- **Transit**
  - Sri Lanka
- **Destination**
  - China
  - Hong Kong
  - Vietnam

**Concealment methods**
- Hidden and mis-declared as other legal commodities

**Misdeclarations**
- Animal Products
  - Squid bones
- Non-animal Food Products
  - Table salt

**Comments**
- Often found in shipments with dried shark fins and/or seahorse

**South African Abalone**

**Shipping routes**
- **Origin**
  - South Africa
- **Destination**
  - Hong Kong

**Also transported by road or by air from South Africa to the following countries acting as countries of export: Angola, DRC, eSwatini, Mozambique, Namibia, Republic of Congo, Zambia, Zimbabwe**

**Concealment methods**
- Hidden and mis-declared as other legal commodities;
- In frozen form it has been concealed between boxes of other frozen fish.

**Misdeclarations**
- Animal Products
  - Frozen fish
- Manufactured Products
  - Duvets / plastic bags
Protected Timber

Shipping routes

Origin
- Belize
- Cambodia
- Cameroon
- Colombia
- DRC
- Equatorial Guinea
- Gabon
- Ghana
- Guatemala
- Guinea Bissau
- Honduras
- India
- Indonesia
- Lao PDR
- Madagascar
- Myanmar
- Mozambique
- Nicaragua
- Nigeria
- Panama
- Papua New Guinea
- Peru
- Russian Federation
- Senegal
- Solomon Islands
- Tanzania
- Thailand
- The Gambia
- Togo
- Republic of Congo

Transit
- Hong Kong
- Lao PDR
- Malaysia
- Mexico
- Mozambique
- Myanmar
- Namibia
- Singapore
- South Africa
- Sri Lanka
- Tanzania
- UAE
- Vietnam
- The Gambia

Destination
- China
- Croatia
- Greece
- Hong Kong
- Italy
- United States
- Netherlands
- Vietnam

Concealment methods

Hidden with other legal timber or non-timber commodities;
False CITES and other documentation (e.g., use of certificate of origin issued by non-recognised entities such as timber associations, individuals);
No CITES re-export permits; misuse of CITES annotations;

Misdeclarations

Wood
- Sawn tropical wood / mixed wood / other species names / Rosewood / African wood

Agriculture and agro-forestry products
- high-grade vanilla (for Malagasy rosewood)

Materials
- Polyester Yarn

Comments
- Use of reference to ‘NON CITES’ or ‘Pre-CITES convention specimens’
- Key words: Cocobolo / Bois ordinaire / Kosso wood / Cuban Mahogany / Rosewood / Black wood / 紅木 ("rosewood")
- Use of incorrect country of origin (e.g. South Africa, Congo);
- HS codes 9504; 4409; (logs, lumber) 4403; and veneer HS4408