

Analysis of seizure data for *Manis* spp. submitted by Member States of the European Union to the European Commission

January 2012 - December 2013

Prepared by TRAFFIC for the European Commission (April 2014)

Overview

This analysis of seizures involving pangolin *Manis* spp. (App. II/Annex B) is based on reports of significant seizures¹ submitted by Member States of the European Union (EU) to the European Commission (EC) for the period January 2012 to December 2013, inclusive.

Five EU Member States submitted data to the EC on significant seizures involving pangolin for the period January 2012 to December 2013: Belgium (4 records), France (9 records), Germany (30 records), the Netherlands (2 records) and the UK (2 records). The 47 seizure records reported for this two-year period involved a total of 1682 kg of pangolin parts and products, with medicinal items² (pangolin scales/products derived from pangolin) accounting for over 99% of the total mass of parts/products in reported seizures (and 40 of the 47 reported seizure records). The remaining seizure records involved bushmeat – a total of 14.5 kg and 8 “specimens” (meat [MEA] or whole dead animals [BOD]) reported as seized, primarily from the luggage of passengers arriving in France and Belgium from Cameroon and the Central African Republic.

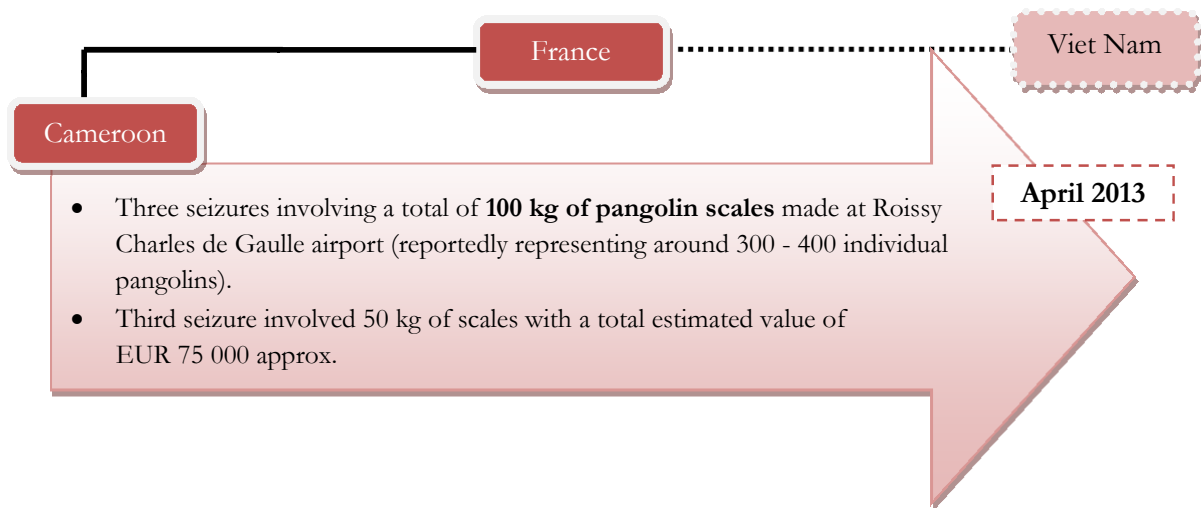
With the exception of two seizure records reported by France, EU Member State reports of significant seizures involving pangolin (for 2012-2013) generally did not provide information on the species of pangolin concerned (reporting taxa as “*Manis* spp.”). The French seizures involved species of African pangolin (Long-tailed Pangolin *Manis tetradactyla* and Tree Pangolin *Manis tricuspis*), although were internal seizures with no country of origin reported. In view of information on trade routes involved in EU seizures of pangolin, it may be assumed that the majority of seizures carried out in EU Member States in 2012 and 2013 involved African species of pangolin rather than species from Asia.

The majority (85%) of seizure records reported for 2012 and 2013 involved the seizure of pangolin parts and products exported from West and Central Africa (Cameroon, Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea and Nigeria). Over 80% of seized items exported from these countries were destined for Hong Kong or mainland China, having been seized from the baggage of transiting passengers or postal parcels at EU airports. A large proportion of these seizures took place in Germany in the first half of 2013 (25 seizure records), with approximately 600 kg of pangolin scales seized from postal parcels while in transit *en route* between Nigeria and Hong Kong. Several of the shipments were the subject of controlled deliveries in Hong Kong, with the cases resulting in the imprisonment of at least four individuals.

In addition to seizures of items arriving from Africa, two seizures took place in EU Member States in 2012 involving large quantities of pangolin parts/derivatives exported from Nepal and China, respectively. The first of these cases (March 2012) involved a postal parcel containing 240 kg of pangolin scales seized while in transit in Belgium *en route* from Nepal to Uruguay. The second (October 2012) involved 630 kg of medicinal products seized while in transit at a Dutch airport *en route* from China to Ghana.

Information shared by EU Member States via restricted channels, as well as reported in open sources, highlights further illegal trade in pangolin parts and products involving the EU (in addition to seizure information reported to the EC by Member States for the period 2012-2013). For example, in 2012 and 2013, Belgian Customs shared information on several seizures of pangolin scales concealed in the luggage of Chinese citizens in transit between West and Central Africa (for example, Guinea, Ivory Coast and Liberia) and China. These were not considered as significant on an individual basis (and so were not reported to the EC); however taken together with reported seizures from other Member States, they indicate a significant trend. Further seizures involving pangolin that were reported in open sources are depicted in **Figure 1** below.

Figure 1
French seizures of pangolin scales from Cameroon to Viet Nam (open sources)³



It should be noted that, since the beginning of 2014 (i.e after the reporting period on which this document is based), the number of seizures seems to have considerably decreased, which might indicate a shift in trade routes.

Notes:

¹ It is noted that EU Member States determine (and report) the seizures they consider to be significant according to their own criteria. In addition, not all EU Member States submitted reports on their significant seizures during two-year period in question, while other Member States provided information for only part of this time period. To allow for a quantitative analysis of seizure data, seizures that involved several species were separated and treated as distinct records. Therefore, this analysis refers to “seizure records” as opposed to seizures. This also means that the actual number of seizures may have been lower than the number of seizure records.

² When it is stated that a medicine contains a CITES-listed species, this refers to the packaging which lists the species as one of the ingredients.

³ <http://tuoitrenews.vn/international/9183/french-customs-seize-pangolin-scales-headed-for-vietnam>