

Swiss seize \$400,000 ivory haul in transit to China

August 4 2015



Photo released on August 4, 2015 by the Swiss Federal Customs Administration shows elephant ivory—worth more than 400,000 USD on the black market—which was seized at Zurich airport on July 6

A large haul of ivory, worth more than \$400,000 on the black market, was seized at Zurich airport last month on its way from Tanzania to

China, Swiss authorities said Tuesday.

The 262 kilos (577 pounds) of [ivory](#) had been chopped up and stashed in eight suitcases, along with around a kilo of lion teeth and claws, Swiss customs authorities said in a statement.

The suitcases, registered to three Chinese citizens, were intercepted at Zurich airport on July 6 during a routine control of tourists arriving from Dar es Salaam, it said.

The stash of ivory was estimated to be worth around 400,000 Swiss francs (\$413,500, 377,000 euros) on the [black market](#), the statement said.

"In light of the offences committed by the three men against customs law and species conservation efforts, they can expect to receive steep fines," it said.

The United Nations last week voted to work harder to combat the poaching of endangered species, and expressed concern over what it called a steady rise in the level of rhino poaching and alarmingly high levels of killings of [elephants](#) in Africa.

There are now an estimated 470,000 African elephants living in the wild, compared to 550,000 in 2006, said the NGO Elephants Without Borders.

China meanwhile accounts for 70 percent of world demand for ivory, NGOs say. They say Chinese hunger for ivory is responsible for the death of 30,000 African elephants each year.

© 2015 AFP

Citation: Swiss seize \$400,000 ivory haul in transit to China (2015, August 4) retrieved 19 April

2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2015-08-swiss-seize-ivory-haul-transit.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.