

# Vietnam seizes illegal ivory shipment

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Around a half tonne of ivory hidden in a timber shipment has been seized in Vietnam, an official said Friday, the second large haul of the illegally-trafficked product in a week.

Although the ivory trade is banned in Vietnam, the country remains a top market for ivory products prized locally for decorative and medicinal purposes.

It is also a busy thoroughfare for tusks trafficked from Africa destined for other parts of Asia.

The latest ivory haul was discovered at a Ho Chi Minh City port in two crates of timber from Mozambique, customs official Vo Thanh Hung told AFP.

He said authorities were testing the 500-kilogramme haul to "conclude if they are [elephant tusks](#)".

The latest catch follows last week's discovery of 300 kilogrammes of [elephant ivory](#) in Hanoi's airport, where officials found tusks from Nigeria falsely labelled as glass.

Vietnam outlawed the [ivory trade](#) in 1992, but shops still sell ivory dating from before the ban and weak law enforcement has allowed its illegal trade to persist.

A two-week long survey last year found more than 16,000 ivory products available in Hanoi, according to The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

Meanwhile, conservation group Save Vietnam's Wildlife said Friday they received 61 rescued pangolins that were being trafficked, three of them dead, from police in the northern Thai Binh province.

The reclusive creatures, often called scaly anteaters, are the world's most heavily trafficked mammal, sought after in Vietnam and other parts of Southeast Asia for their meat and scales used in traditional medicine.

Vietnam is hosting an international conference on [illegal wildlife trade](#) from November 17 to 18, which will be attended by Britain's Prince William, who has repeatedly spoken out against wildlife trafficking.

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