

I.Coast burns 3 tonnes of pangolin scales

March 3 2020



The scaly mammal—listed as threatened with extinction—is a traditional delicacy across China and much of southeast Asia

Ivory Coast officials on Tuesday burnt three tonnes of scales of the pangolin, the most trafficked mammal on Earth.

The scales were seized in raids in 2017 and 2018, following which some

20 people were arrested.

Beijing announced a total ban on the sale and consumption of the [pangolin](#) after the novel coronavirus outbreak.

The scaly mammal—listed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (ICUN) as threatened with extinction—is a traditional delicacy across China and much of southeast Asia.

"It was an international trafficking network that was dismantled and 3.6 tonnes of scales were burnt," Minister of Forests Alain Richard Donwahi said after setting three lots on fire in the economic capital Abidjan.

He said the scales were worth "millions", adding: "We are fighting poaching and also trafficking in protected species."

"Pangolin scales are highly prized in traditional Chinese medicine ... and in Vietnam.

"In Asia, the price can go up to \$ 1,000 per kg," he said.

The international sale of pangolins was outlawed in 2016 under the CITES convention against species exploitation.

The illegal trafficking of wild species is estimated by the WWF to be worth around \$15 billion annually, particularly among booming Asian markets.

Endangered pangolins

The world's most heavily trafficked mammal

No reliable global population estimates but drastic local declines documented

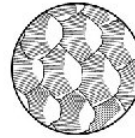


Behaviour

- Solitary, nocturnal
- Digs long burrows to hunt termites and for shelter
- Can climb trees
- Good swimmer

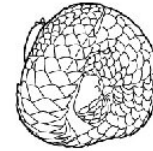
Diet: ants, termites

Scales



- Made from keratin, the substance that also forms human hair and nails
- Sought on the black market for supposed medicinal benefits

Defence



- Rolls into a ball
- Easy to catch for illegal meat and medicine market

Trafficking

- Increasing **demand for their meat and body parts** is fuelling illegal hunting
- More than **1 million pangolins** believed to have been **poached** from the wild in the past decade

CITES* in September 2016 banned all international trade

Eight species of pangolin worldwide

Four Asian species

Critically endangered

Chinese
Malayan

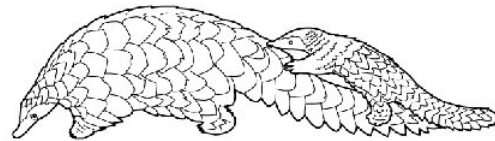
Endangered

Indian
Philippine

Four African species

Vulnerable

African white-bellied
Giant ground
Temminck's ground
Long-tailed



Young travel on mother's tail

*Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species

Source: [CITES/savepangolins.org](https://www.cites.org/eng/savepangolins.org/)/[IUCN/pangolins.org](https://www.iucn.org/pangolins.org)

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Graphic on pangolins, the world's most heavily trafficked mammals.



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