

Beat: News

Hong Kong confiscates 1,200 pieces of ivory tusks in record haul

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USPA News - More than 1,200 pieces of ivory tusks which were being smuggled in containers shipped from Africa were confiscated in Hong Kong this week, making it the region's largest ever seizure of products from endangered species, customs officials said on Saturday. The seizure followed a tip-off from police in mainland China, where seven people have since been arrested in connection with the case.

During the operation, Hong Kong Customs confiscated a total of 1,209 pieces of ivory tusks and 1.4 kilogram (3 pounds) of ivory ornaments, weighing about 3,813 kilograms (8,406 pounds), inside two containers shipped from Tanzania and Kenya to Hong Kong. Hong Kong authorities said the container from Tanzania, which was declared as containing plastic scrap, was seized on Tuesday. Upon examination of the contents, customs officers found 972 pieces of raw ivory tusks, weighing about 1,927 kilograms (4,248 pounds), and 1.4 kilogram (3 pounds) of ivory ornaments inside 91 bags of plastics scraps. A day later, Hong Kong Customs inspected a container from Kenya which was declared as containing rosecoco beans. Instead, the customs officers discovered 50 "roscoco beans"-marked bags which contained an additional 237 pieces of raw ivory tusks, weighing about 1,884 kilograms (4,153 pounds). The record haul, worth about \$26.7 million, is Hong Kong's largest ever of products from endangered species.

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