

China customs in mammoth ivory tusk bust

Customs authorities in northeast China's Heilongjiang Province said Wednesday that they had seized more than 1 tonne of mammoth ivory smuggled from Russia.



The seized mammoth ivory is fossils of extinct species.
[Photo/Chinanews.com]

Luobei customs found 107 mammoth tusks, along with 37 woolly rhino horn parts and 1.11 tonnes of jade in secret compartments in a truck attempting to enter China through Luobei port in mid-February.

The driver of the truck fled after being informed that the truck, which claimed to carry soybeans, needed further examination. He and the owner of the goods were caught in a hotel later that month.

The owner, surnamed Han, had bought the truck and built secret compartments for smuggling. He was accused of smuggling goods under the country's criminal law.

Russia's Siberia region is a major source of mammoth tusks, a raw material for ivory-carving, which are usually uncovered by hunters when the tundra snow melts.