

Smuggled trash, coal targeted in customs crackdown

China's customs authorities will launch a year-long smuggling crackdown prioritizing in imported garbage and natural products.

Industrial waste, electronic scrap and plastics will be in the cross hairs of the watchdogs, the General Administration of Customs (GAC) said on Tuesday.

Those convicted of smuggling could face a maximum penalty of the death sentence, according to China's Criminal Law.

The counter-smuggling efforts will target gangs and well-organized operations acting illegally, GAC said.

Customs investigated 2,633 smuggling cases in 2016, up 17 percent year on year, according to the GAC.

In December 2016, Shanghai customs authorities seized 3.1 tonnes of pangolin scales in the biggest smuggling case of its kind to date.

The scales, worth over 10 million yuan (1.45 million U.S. dollars), were reportedly bought from Nigeria. The trade in pangolin is banned by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species.