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sent to vnnews-l by Stephen Denney <sdenney@OCF.Berkeley.EDU>
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Vietnam police seize nearly 7.3 tonnes of wild animals headed for China

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Police in Vietnam have seized nearly 7.3 tonnes of wild animals that were destined for sale in China, officials said Monday.

The animals, including endangered pangolins, snakes, turtles, civet cats and iguanas, were seized in the northern province of Ninh Binh on Friday and Saturday, an official from the provincial ranger department said.

He refused to say if the animals were dead or alive.

The Ministry of Public Security's Cong An Nhan Dan newspaper said they were hidden among sacks of dried fish on two trucks.

The truck drivers, both of whom were arrested, told police they had been paid to transport the animals from central Vietnam to Quang Ninh province, which borders China, the paper said.

Vietnam has a poor conservation record, with endangered species, favoured for their status value, regularly appearing on dining tables in the political capital.