



## PRESS RELEASE

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### Major Criminal Hunting Business Squashed in South America



*Jorge Nestor Noya poses with client on jaguar hunt*

#### **Argentine Task Force Stings Safari Kingpin Who Hosted Thousands of Hunters**

(Sao Paulo)-- Today Argentine authorities confirmed to Freeland that 4 major suspects are in custody following raids on 13 locations across Argentina where over \$50 million USD worth of wildlife, land, and other assets were seized. This operation is the biggest counter wildlife crime operation conducted in Argentina's history. Investigators are now chasing down remaining fugitives and investigating possible ties to neighbouring countries.



*Guns seized during the operation. Credit: Brigada de Control Ambiental de Argentina*

Jorge Nestor Noya was targeted by a multi-agency task force led by prosecutors, federal police and environmental officers, following more than 2 years of investigations into his business, which revealed, among other things, that he was hosting some thousands of hunters per year to kill jaguars, cougars, capybaras, peccaries, deer, and other species. It was an investigation carried out by Argentina's Federal Prosecutor, Office 1 of Lomas de Zamora, led by Deputy Attorney General, Sergio Mola, Secretary in charge of the Assistant Prosecutor Juan Pablo Arci. They collaborated with the Environmental Crimes Department of the Federal Police (PFA) and the Brigade of Environmental Control. These agencies collaborated with Freeland over the past 23 months, including international networking to obtain and share information, and receiving open-source intelligence training and support (OSINT).



*Hunting trophies and wildlife parts seized during search and seize at one of the 13 raided places. Credit: Brigada de Control Ambiental de Argentina*

Besides arresting Jorge Nestor Noya, the head of the operation, authorities also arrested Federico Manuel Testa, Guillermo FUNES and Marcelo Alejandro Araujo. Federico Gustavo Oliva, Leonardo Martin Destefani Villafañe and Carlos Pablo Escontrela are fugitives and have arrest warrants issued in their names.

Freeland's South America director, Juliana Machado Ferreira called the operation "unprecedented for Argentina, and impressive on any scale, globally." "Freeland congratulates the Argentine Task Force for taking down this notorious criminal organization" Ferreira added. "We also thank the US Department of State, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs for sponsoring the training and networking activities that were helped lead to this landmark enforcement action."



*Cougar rescued during the operation. Credit: Brigada de Control Ambiental de Argentina*

While investigators continue their probe, authorities are weighing prosecution options that cannot be revealed, but will likely go well beyond environmental laws. During the operation, 1 puma and 3 peccaries were rescued. Hunters signing up for Noya's hunts came mainly

from the United States and Europe. His hunts were also promoted through US and European hunting platforms.

For more information and photos: [info@freeland.org](mailto:info@freeland.org)

Freeland is a global organization that helps governments and civil society protect wildlife, people and ecosystems from trafficking. Freeland currently manages a regional counter wildlife crime program in South America, including Argentina, supporting law enforcement agencies with training and network facilitation. The program is sponsored by the US Department of State, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs.

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