

# The Last Great Ape Organization – LA GA

## August 2010 Report



### Highlights

- **4 arrests in 1 day in 2 different parts of Cameroon** – 2 dealers arrested with 13 Turtle shells in Limbe – South West; 2 dealers in leopard skin arrested in Sangmelima - South.
- **A dealer in ivory sentenced in Abong Mbang - East.**
- **LAGA assists in the burial of the wife of a LAGA member in Nkambe – North West.**

### General

This month was marked by 2 good operations – 4 arrests in 1 day in 2 different parts of Cameroon. In the month of August, LAGA found itself in the worse cash-flow crisis it experienced for years. It pleaded with Born Free-US for financial support to save it from a total stand still. LAGA operates with clear measurable objectives that need to be achieved on a monthly cycle and a month with no arrest is a disaster that should be avoided. Luckily Born Free –US came to our help to try to save the month and made efforts for the funds to arrive Cameroon through a speedy transfer. This assistance helped us get 4 wildlife dealers arrested in an exceptional effort. Right after, the initial cash flow problem was resolved.

**In Limbe – South West Region, 2 dealers were arrested with 13 turtle shells** (one of them had 7 and the other 6 shells). The 2 dealers also act as tourist guides in the Bakingili area in Limbe – taking people to view the lava from Mount Cameroon, while at the same time carrying out illegal wildlife trade. The 2 dealers arrested called the Mayor of the town to come and intervene on their behalf. On arriving at the MINFOF office, the Mayor upon seeing the turtle shells and after an explanation for the reason of the arrest of the dealers, declared openly and for all the parties concerned to hear that he has “NO HAND” in the matter and that the dealers should be sanctioned according to the provisions of the law.

**In Sangmelima – South Region, 1 female dealer with the accomplice were arrested with 1 large fresh leopard skin.** They are highly involved in illegal trade of protected bushmeat and other wildlife products; have a network of suppliers at Djoum - South and sell the in the major cities of Sangmelima and Yaounde.

The Court of First Instance of Abong-Mbang - East sentenced a dealer to 6 months of prison suspended sentence during three years and to pay **\$2575 as damages**. He was arrested in Abong-Mbang for illegally detaining and trying to illegally trade in 2 elephant tusks.

### Investigations

- **14 investigation missions** of varying lengths were carried out in **6 Regions** of Cameroon- North West, South, South West, West, Littoral and Center.
- Field investigations led to the **identification and arrest of 4 wildlife dealers** – 2 dealers in Turtle shells in Limbe – South West, and 2 dealers in Leopard skin in Sangmelima – South Region.
- Investigations are still ongoing pertaining to a target who is illegally keeping a Drill in the South Region of Cameroon.
- Internet Investigations are still ongoing concerning some accomplices of an Internet Wildlife trafficker who was arrested in Bamenda – North West Region. He is engaged in the falsification of government documents and CITES Permit.

- The department is experiencing a shortage in effective investigators resulting into less arrest operations. Recruitment of more Investigators will be carried out next month to compensate for this dip in performance and results.

## Operations

**2 operations** were carried out this month against **4 subjects in 1 day.**

- **27/08/10** - A long time **dealer in sea turtle shells arrested in Limbe – South West Region.** He declared that he has been in the illegal trade for more than 10 years, also acting as a photographer and tourist guard which made it easy for him to get clients especially foreigners. He was arrested with his partner and out of the 13 turtle shells seized, he owned 7. After their arrest, he called for the Mayor of Limbe to intervene on his behalf but the Mayor refused, stating that they are involved in illegal deals and should be punished according to the provisions of the law.
- **27/08/10 – Another member of a network of sea turtle shells arrested in Limbe – South West Region.** He has also been in the illegal business for more than 10 years. He was the owner of 6 of the 13 sea turtle shells seized. He is also a tourist guard at the foot of Mount Cameroon making it easy for him to have a market for his illegal products. Together with his partner, they tried to make the Mayor of Limbe to intervene on their behalf but the Mayor refused.
- **27/08/10 - A major female dealer** in protected bushmeat and products of protected wildlife species **arrested in Sangmelima - South for trying to illegally trade in a big fresh leopard skin.** Has a network of suppliers at Djoum - South and sells in the major cities of Sangmelima and Yaounde. She was arrested with her accomplice who goes out to look for the products and she looks for clients to whom she sells.
- **27/08/10 – A partner of the female dealer arrested in Sangmelima – South with a big fresh leopard skin.** He combs the Southern Region of Cameroon looking for protected wildlife products and suppliers. He later takes the products to the female dealer who later sells in mainly Sangmelima and Yaounde – Center.

## Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **5 missions** out of Yaounde- Centre Region: 1 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Limbe (South West), 1 in Abong-Mbang (East) and 2 in Sangmelima (South).
- There are **07 dealers behind bars during this month:** 2 in the East Region, 3 in the South West Region, and 2 in South Region.
- **12 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **8 cases** are scheduled and being trailed in the court this month.
- **Prosecutions:** 1 dealer was sentenced this month.
  - **03/08/2010:** The Court of First Instance of Abong-Mbang - East sentenced Kenfack Etienne to 6 months of prison suspended sentence during three years and to pay **\$2575 as damages.** He was arrested in Abong-Mbang for illegally detaining 2 elephant tusks.
- **1 appeal** was registered this month against the ruling given by the Court of First Instance of Abong-Mbang in the matter of MINFOF Vs Kenfack Etienne.

## Media front

- **06 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to radio and written press including: 2 written press materials, 1 in English and 1 in French, and 4 radio news flashes in French.
- Guests include: Director of the Last Great Ape Organisation, Head of Legal Department – LAGA.
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including; replication in the sub-region,

Leopard skin dealer arrest in Sangmelima and Limbe sea turtle shell arrest.

- 1 media pieces in English, 5 in French making a percentage of 16.7% in English and 83.3% in French. The low number of media pieces is due to the reduced number of produced operations and the cash flow problems that LAGA was facing.

### **External Relations and Policy**

- The Minister of Forestry and Wildlife had in audience the Director of The Last Great Ape Organisation to discuss on the following issues; corruption in the Douala Airport and a proposed removal of its Chief of Post, Pongo Songo problem, the finalisation of tablets of lawyers, problems of collaboration with the Delegate of South Region and a fore mission to Douala to work on parrot trafficking.
- Meeting between LAGA Director and CHOC to discuss on corruption in the transport sector and assistance in training and supervising the CHOC project.
- Volunteers of Wild Planet Eco-project met with LAGA Director to discuss on the continuity of the environmental educational activities of their organ after the death of its founding Director, late Wolfgang Heilmann.
- LAGA Director met with Hilaire Kamga of Nouvel droit de l’homme to discuss on election monitoring and promotion of democracy.
- Meeting between LAGA Director and Bridge Africa Foundation issues discussed; election monitoring and promotion of democracy.
- LAGA Director held meeting with Mica, the Head of Economic and Political Section of America Embassy to introduce to him the work of LAGA and AC.

### **Management**

- LAGA still experienced severe cash flow problems this month that slowed down the work of the LAGA’s departments but 4 successful arrests were still carried out.
- The LAGA family was bereaved this month. Eric of the Media and External Relations Department lost his wife due to illness. The LAGA family comprising of a delegation of 8 members assisted in the burial of the deceased in Nkambe – North West Region.

### **Activism Front**

All the education activities carried out by the LAGA family are online; this could be gotten at the LAGA website – [www.laga-enforcement.org](http://www.laga-enforcement.org)

### **Finance**

#### **LAGA Expenditure by budget line for August 2010**

<b>Amount CFA</b>	<b>Budget line</b>		<b>Amount USD</b>
<b>925,550</b>	<b>investigations</b>	12 inv, 6 Regions	\$1,783
<b>538,800</b>	<b>Operations</b>	2 Operation against 4 subjects	\$1,038
<b>1,102,470</b>	<b>legal</b>	follow up 12 cases 7 locked subjects	\$2,124
<b>1,059,560</b>	<b>Media</b>	6 media pieces	\$2,042
<b>726,500</b>	<b>Policy &amp; External Relations</b>	Congo/UK	\$1,400
<b>884,400</b>	<b>Management</b>	Coordination	\$1,704
<b>1,642,580</b>	<b>Office</b>		\$3,165
<b>6,879,860</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE AUGUST</b>		<b>\$13,256</b>

**LAGA Expenditure by donor for August 2010**

AmountCFA	Donor	Amount USD
3,498,516	FWS	\$6,740.9
634,500	FWS-Replication	\$1,222.5
717,600	ProWildlife	\$1,382.7
912,494	BornFree Foundation	\$1,758.2
132,300	World Parrot Trust	\$254.9
984,450	Rufford Foundation	\$1,896.8
6,879,860	TOTAL	\$13,256.0



## THIS MONTH IN PICTURES



A major female dealer in protected bushmeat and products of protected wildlife species arrested in Sangmelima - South for trying to illegally trade in a big fresh leopard skin. Has a network of suppliers at Djoum - South and sells in the major cities of Sangmelima and Yaounde. She was arrested with her accomplice who goes out to look for the products and she looks for clients to whom she sells.







**2 dealers arrested with 13 turtle shells in Limbe – South West Region. The 2 dealers also act as tourist guards in the Bakingili area in Limbe – taking people to view the lava from Mount Cameroon, while at the same time carrying out illegal wildlife trade. The illegal trade in sea turtle shells has been ongoing for long with impunity and very strong. This problem necessitated LAGA’s intervention in hitting main actors and exposing this illegal trade; the crackdown on these illegal dealers in sea turtle shells started in Kribi – South and will continue with the arrest of these dealers in other parts of Cameroon.**



## **Links of this month**

- A dealer in chimpanzee parts arrested in Yabassi, Littoral Region – Cameroon National Television Broadcast. The wildlife trafficker was arrested in Yabassi in the Littoral Region for killing a chimpanzee in the Ebo Forest Reserve. The chimp killer was arrested thanks to the local population and their traditional ruler who denounced the act.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VYp99PpJpZ0>

- 2 dealers in leopard skin arrested in Sangmelima, South Region – Cameroon National Television Broadcast – Hello Cameroon Program. The wildlife dealers were arrested thanks to MINFOF assisted by LAGA trying to sell leopard skin in Sangmelima.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QKkvM2VLj1I>