

THE LAST GREAT APE ORGANIZATION, CAMEROON LAGA

SECOND SEMESTER REPORT JULY - DECEMBER 2019



Executive Summary

Tangible achievements were made in LAGA's collaboration with the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife, despite several challenges and obstacles encountered during this period. Achievements were obtained in the fields of investigation, arrest, prosecution, media exposure, government relations and international activities with focus on the fight against corruption and the illegal wildlife trade, principally trafficking in ivory. The team strengthened its procedures for greater efficiency and effectivity in order to maximise the use of financial and human resources. Trafficking in ivory tusks was mainly targeted with some results reinforcing the idea that the illegal trade in ivory continue to be a major illegal activity and a threat to the survival of the elephant in the region. Five traffickers including the son of a former finance minister were arrested for ivory trafficking in Yaounde and two members of an international network of ivory traffickers between the Central African Republic and Cameroon were arrested at the border town of Kenzou. Several difficulties encountered during the semester hampered the attainment of very good results and strategic meetings were held to resolve the issues for results to get to levels previously attained and even higher, next year.

10 major traffickers were arrested and 50% stayed behind bars from the day of arrest and 50% were released on bail as the trials started. Corruption was observed and combated in two cases. 13 new cases were brought to the courts while 10 traffickers were found guilty and damages totalling 45,711,000 FCFA (about \$91,522) was ordered to be paid to the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife (MINFOF) by the convicts. Media exposure was at a rate of almost one media piece per day.

During this semester, 63 traffickers were arrested across 7 countries of the EAGLE network. LAGA continued to provide technical assistance to some of the EAGLE projects during investigations, operations and media outreach.

Several meetings were held with government and diplomatic officials in Yaoundé and with many other stakeholders within the wildlife law enforcement domain.

The work of LAGA was supported by: US Fish and Wildlife Service, Wildcat, AVAAZ, The Dutch Gorilla Foundation, RGS, The Born Free Foundation and CIDT.

LAST GREAT APE ORGANISATION, CAMEROON (LAGA)
SEMESTER REPORT
July - December 2019

OVERVIEW

Investigations

- A total of 100 investigation missions of varying lengths were carried out in 5 regions.
- A collaborative platform with some officials at the Nsimalen and Douala International airport was initiated.

Operations

- Operations were carried out in 3 regions arresting 10 major traffickers and 13 court cases were started. 3 of the cases were from operations not initiated by LAGA and done by wildlife or customs officials and LAGA provided technical assistance in the legal follow up of the cases only.
- Operations on ivory trafficking accounted for 70% of the arrested traffickers.
- The rate of imprisonment of arrested offenders was 50%, the lowest rate ever witnessed, demonstrating the problems associated with governance issues in wildlife law enforcement.

Legal

- 13 new cases were brought to court and represented. LAGA provided legal assistance to MINFOF and Customs in 3 other cases which were not initiated from arrests operations done with the assistance of the organisation. Many of the 13 cases began during the period have not yet reached the judgement stage but trials are ongoing.
- 10 court judgements were passed during the 6-month period.
- The period was marked by some very weak court rulings, an acquittal and controversial decisions at the level of prosecutions.
- 17 traffickers were found guilty and handed at least two of the following: prison sentences, suspended prison sentences, fines, damages and penalties. Damages amounted to some 45,711,000 FCFA (about \$91,522) to be paid to MINFOF.
- 2 appeals were lodged during this semester because of the very weak rulings handed out the courts that tried the matters.

Media

- A total of 144 media pieces were produced in national media (radio, press and internet) achieved at a rate of almost one media piece per day.
- The Assistant Head of Department travelled to the US within the framework of the State Department's International Visitors Leadership Programme.

Management

- The first semester report of 2019 was made available online.
- Training was carried out for the benefit of a legal adviser from EAGLE Senegal and a staff from an NGO preparing to tackle illegal forest exploitation and logging.
- Internal collaboration amongst the departments was effective and created an efficient working environment.

External Relations and Policy

- Several meetings were held with MINFOF officials, the diplomatic community, national and international NGOs to discuss issues on collaboration, governance, wildlife law enforcement among others.
- Meetings were held with the following; a team of USAID officials who were visiting the country; Ghana-based US Regional Environment team for West and Central Africa; UNODC Regional Coordinator for Central Africa Global Programme for Combatting Wildlife and Forest Crime and two World Parrot Trust officials to discuss the wildlife law enforcement process and governance issues.

Strategic Highlights

- The strategic focus over this period was cracking down on the illegal trade in ivory that represented 70% of the operations carried out.
- Attention was also concentrated on improving collaboration within and amongst departments and the maximisation of the use of all resources available within the organisation.

EAGLE Activities

- A total of 63 traffickers were arrested across 7 countries of the network during this semester.
- LAGA provided technical support during investigations, legal activity and media outreach to some of the projects across the network

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Also available:

1. Annual Financial Statement and Semester I 2019
2. Monthly Financial and Activity Reports January to June 2019
3. Media archive – Excel database linked to recorded media pieces
4. Photo archive for media use

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NARRATIVE REPORT

This report covers the organisation’s activities from July to December 2019. The report includes the progress in the activities of each department specifically the investigations, operations, legal, media departments and management. It also looks at the strategic overview of and the impact of our operations on wildlife crime in Cameroon, the progress in relations with the Cameroonian Government, non-governmental bodies, activities in the international arena, as well as non-enforcement initiatives undertaken by the organisation.

1. Investigations

LAGA’s investigation unit carried out 100 investigation missions in 5 regions of the country. The investigations department worked in close collaboration with the EAGLE Central Coordination Unit (CCU and some of the field investigations were carried out with their collaboration. Weekly meetings were held in the department to plan activities, develop strategies, techniques and team spirit to improve results, identify and cover key trafficking areas.

New investigative methods and techniques were devised to meet up with the ever changing tactics used by traffickers to circumvent enforcement. Old strategies were analyzed and revamped, evolving them into highly target specific strategies, taking into consideration several socio-cultural dimensions of the various targets. One of the revamped strategies that was used this time around concerned grouping investigators on specific cases and swapping them as the situation warranted. This is an old strategy that was reshaped to meet some investigations requirements. The recruitment process for a new generation of high caliber and specialized investigators and informants that was initiated last year continued.

The Head of the Investigations Department accompanied by the Assistant Head of Department held meetings with some customs and security officials at the Nsimalen International Airport to initiate collaborative platforms; enabling effective investigations and information exchange. He equally held meetings with some security and customs officials at the Douala International Airport for the same purpose and was accompanied by the Head of the Legal Department. The focus was to create collaborative platforms at this strategic points.

No arrests were done during the months of August, October and December and this is an unusually highly frequency and it was decided that next year, more work would be carried out to avert such an occurrence.

Number of Missions

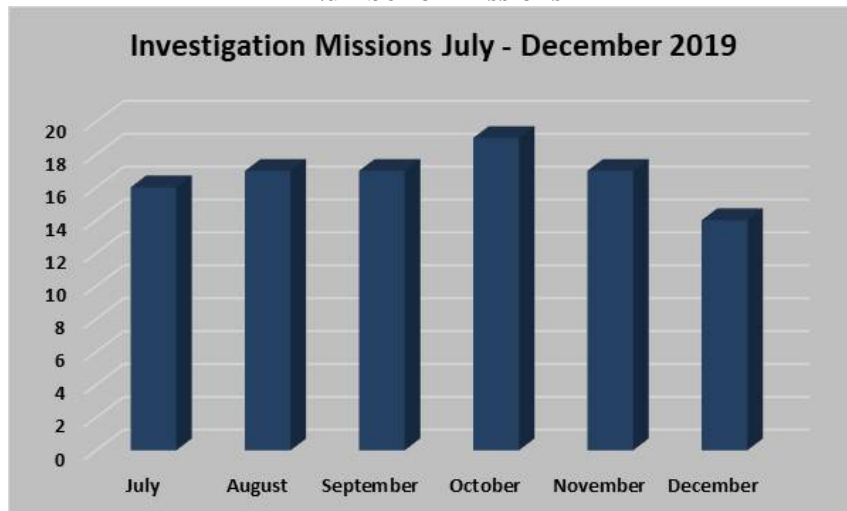


Figure 1: Number of Investigations Missions per Month

2. Operations

LAGA and the Government of Cameroon carried out operations in 3 regions against 10 individuals resulting in 13 court cases. LAGA provided legal assistance to wildlife officials in 3 of the 13 cases concerning traffickers who were arrested by wildlife, or customs officials without LAGA's participation during the arrest. Most of the cases were on ivory trafficking and this represented 70% of those arrested.

In July, 3 traffickers arrested with 4 leopard skins in Loum, Littoral Region. On a bike, they arrived to the place of transaction under torrential rains and were arrested during an attempt to sell the skins. One of them attempted to escape when he realized that they were to be arrested but law enforcement officials moved swiftly and stopped him. They are regular suppliers of illicit leopard skins in an area that is notorious for leopard skins trafficking. They also took advantage of an easy and flexible transport mood - a motorbike

In September, 5 traffickers were arrested in Yaounde, Centre Region with 2 ivory tusks weighing 53kg. The son of a former finance minister who was the main trafficker in the deal was arrested alongside four others during the operation that was the result of an investigation that was started following operations carried out in Douala. Leads from the past operations were followed by the investigation and this led to the arrest in the heart of the capital city of the traffickers with two extraordinarily large elephant tusks that were transported in a black Toyota Prado car belonging to the son of the former minister. Tusks with this size are rarely seen nowadays because poachers kill elephants even when they are still babies with very small tusks.

November month saw the arrest of 2 traffickers in Bertoua, East Region with 2 ivory tusks. The two are international ivory traffickers plying the border areas between Cameroon and the Central African Republic. They are part of an international network of ivory traffickers based in Kenzou who supply ivory to some main cities in the country including Bertoua, Yaounde and Douala. Prior investigations show one of them had been arrested In Yokadouma in March 2019 by the gendarmerie and released without any charges made and without the matter handed over to wildlife officials who have competence over the handling of wildlife offences. The same trafficker had once also been arrested in Gamboula in the East Region and released without prosecution

Operations Table

<i>Number of Operations</i>	<i>Number of Traffickers</i>	<i>Contraband</i>
3	10	4 leopard skins, 2 ivory tusks weighing 53kg, 2 ivory tusks

Figure 2: Operation Table

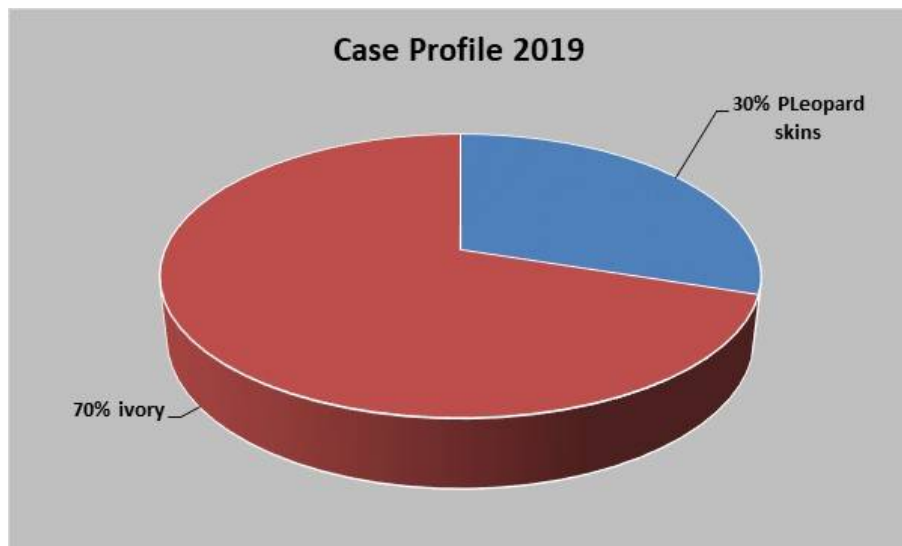


Figure 3: Operations profile

3. Legal

During this period, 13 new cases reached the court and the cases joined old cases that were scheduled, followed-up, tried in various courts and jail visits were organized. 10 of the cases resulted from operations assisted by LAGA and 3 cases were from operations carried out by wildlife and customs officials and LAGA provided technical assistance in the legal follow-up of the matters. Most of the cases initiated within this period have not yet reached the ruling stage with 50% imprisoned during trial. This is the lowest percentage ever recorded and indicates a worrying trend involving governance issues within the wildlife law enforcement process in the country.

A total of 57 missions were carried out of the Centre Region for the follow-up of new cases and the creation and strengthening of relations with wildlife and judiciary authorities. The majority of the missions were focused on ivory and pangolins scales matters resulting from past operations.

During this period, 10 court judgements were passed with 17 traffickers found guilty and 8 of them given prison sentences while 8 others were given suspended prison sentences while one was ordered to pay only fines and or damages and one was found not guilty. A very high number of weak sentences were witnessed and this is a continuing trend that has been witnessed over a couple of years now. Two appeals were lodged. The department assisted the Ministry and Customs in the follow up of 3 new cases that were not initiated by the organisation.

The Djoum Court of First Instance found the accused AKO'O MENDO Gervais guilty and sentenced him to 3 months suspended sentence for 3 years and to pay 25,000 FCFA (about \$ 50) as fines and 490,000 FCFA (about \$980) as damages. He was arrested in Djoum on the 08/09/2017 for illegal possession of a baby chimpanzee.

The Meïganga Court of First Instance found the accused ABOUBAKAR guilty and sentenced him to a 2-month prison term and to pay 379,000 FCFA (about \$760) as fines and 5,200,000 FCFA (about \$10,400) as damages. He was arrested in Meïganga on the 12/04/2019 for illegal possession and circulation of 25kg of ivory tusks and 12kg of pangolins scales.

The Douala – Ndokoti Court of First Instance found the accused ABDOUL NASSIR Sali guilty and sentenced him to a 20-day prison term and to pay 54,000 FCFA (about \$108) as fines and 1,042,000

FCFA (about \$2,084) as damages. He was arrested in Douala on the 20/06/2019 for illegal possession, circulation and commercialization of 95kg of pangolin scales

The Bonanjo Court of First Instance found the accused NSANGOU NFOYA Oumarou not guilty, MOUNCHIKPOU Aboubakar and NJIKAM Amidou guilty and sentenced them to a one-year prison term and to pay 546,000 FCFA (about \$1,092) as fines and 10,380,000 FCFA (about \$20, 760) as damages. They were arrested in Douala on the 21/11/2017 for illegal possession, circulation and commercialization of 128kg of pangolin scales.

The Sangmelima Court of First Instance found the accused BERRY NGANE Stéphane and ZANG AFANE Daniel Patrick guilty and sentenced them to one year prison sentence suspended for 3 years and to pay 300,000 FCFA (about \$600) each as fines. BANGA Ruphin was also found guilty and sentenced to 4 months imprisonment and to pay 50,000 FCFA (about \$100) as fines. All of them were also sentenced to jointly pay 4,000,000 FCFA (about \$8,000) as damages. They were arrested in Sangmelima on the 11/04/2019 for illegal possession, circulation and sale of 5 ivory tusks and an elephant tail.

The Douala-Ndokoti Court of First Instance found the accused BANDOUMA Benoit guilty and sentenced him to one month suspended sentence during 3 years and to pay 200,000 FCFA (about \$400) as fines and 1,300,000 FCFA (about \$2,600) as damages. He was arrested in Douala on the 30/07/2019 for the illegal possession, circulation and sale of 16 ivory tusks.

The Yaounde-Ekounou Court of First Instance found the accused ENGUELE Jean Bernard guilty and sentenced him to 4 months' imprisonment term and to pay 5,000,000 FCFA (about \$10,000) as damages and 274, 650 FCFA (about \$550) as court cost. He was arrested in Yaounde on the 18/05/2019 for the illegal possession, circulation and sale of 5 lion skulls, 122 elephant teeth, 1 leopard skin and 1 ivory tusk.

The Douala-Bonanjo Court of First Instance found the accused ADAMU Ibrahim, UPAH Macmillan and AKENJI Ebenezer Ajeko guilty and sentenced them to 6 months suspended sentences for 3 years and to pay 1,000,000 FCFA (about \$2,000) each as fines and 10,000,000 FCFA (about \$20,000) jointly as damages. They were arrested in Douala on the 10/11/2017 for illegal possession and circulation of 158 elephant tusks, 124 grey parrot heads and 1394 grey parrot feathers.

The Mbanga Court of First Instance found the accused TCHAPDA Dieunedort, TCOUAKWE Hervé and DJOFANG guilty and ordered to pay 100,000 FCFA (about \$200) each as fines and 3,920,000 FCFA (about \$7,840) jointly as damages. They were arrested in Douala on the 24/07/2019 for illegal possession and circulation of 4 leopard skins.

The Batouri Court of First Instance found the accused ALIOUM Abdou and MAHAMAT Abdoulaye guilty and sentenced them to 6 months prison term and to pay 100,000 FCFA (about \$200) each as fines and 4,000,000 FCFA (about \$8,000) as damages. They were arrested in Batouri on the 13/11/2019 for illegal possession and circulation of 2 elephant tusks.

Two appeals were lodged during this period against court rulings; one in September and the other in October.

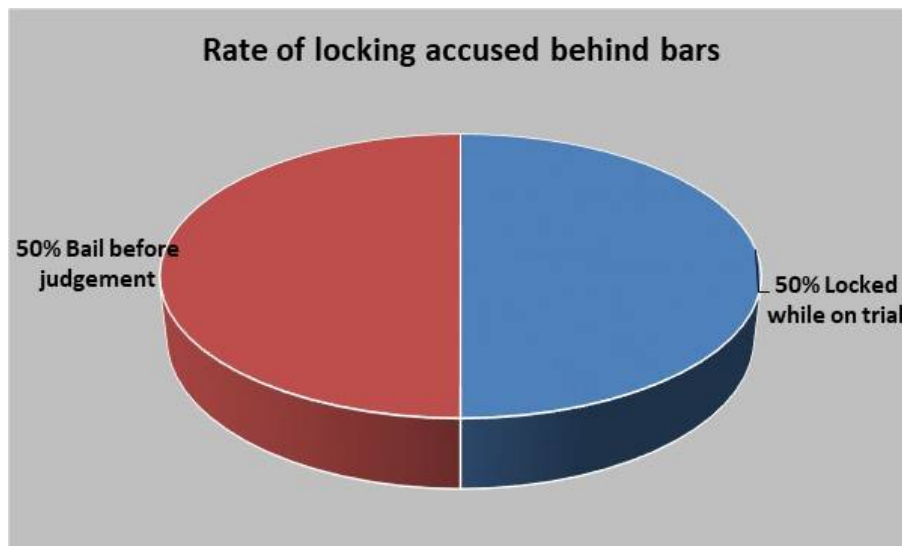


Figure 4: Rate of locking accused behind bars

4. Media

A total of 144 media pieces were produced and pushed into media including numerous articles in all media – radio, television, written press and the internet; achieved at a rate of almost one media piece per day. September and November months witnessed the highest number of media pieces recorded while October had the lowest number partly because of the absence of operations within the month.

Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including: a travel ban against a Gendarmerie colonel, the Loum arrest of three traffickers with four leopard skins, the court case of a policeman arrested with an ivory tusk, lion skulls among others in Yaounde, the Kribi court case against a Ghanaian national arrested with 18 African grey parrots, the Yaounde arrest of 5 ivory traffickers with ivory tusks and the subsequent court hearings, the trial of two arrested in Douala by Judicial Police bags of pangolin scales, the imprisonment of a court registrar in the Congo Republic and the Batouri arrest of two with ivory tusks as well as the court hearings.

Interviews and quotes used in the various media pieces were from; the Deputy Director of LAGA, the Littoral Regional Delegate of Forestry and Wildlife and the Doume Chief of Forestry and Wildlife Control Post.

The Assistant Head of the Media Department and External Relations Department travelled to the United States where she participated at International Visitors Leadership Programme of the State Department that focused on the fight against corruption.

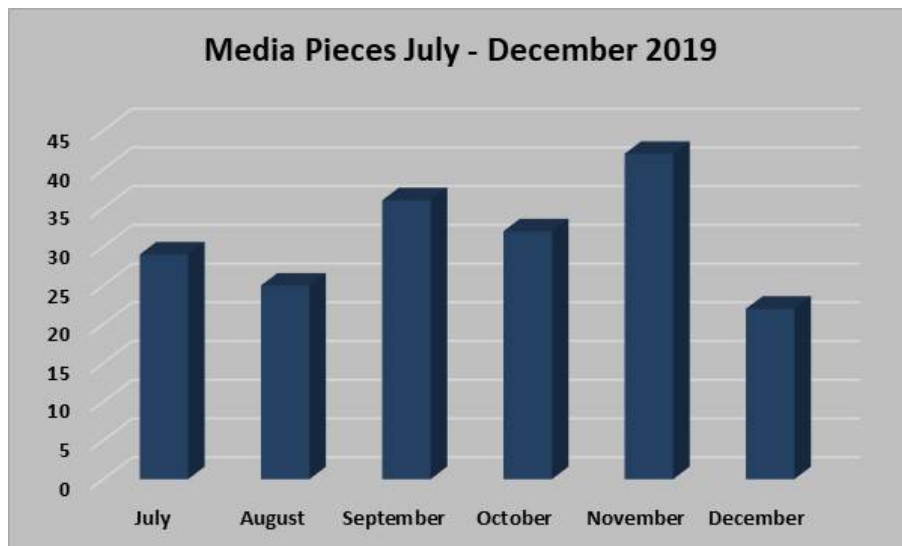


Figure 5: Number of Media Pieces Produced and Published

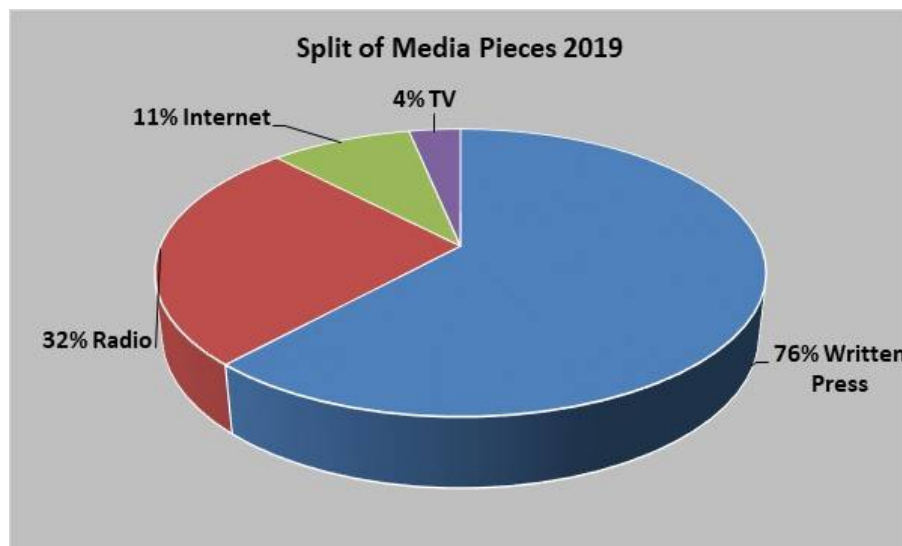


Figure 6: Split of Media Pieces

5. Management

Sustained efforts were made by management to ensuring efficient and effective use of resources and skills available to the organisation. Management continued with its coaching roles especially on and moral and ethical values among staff. This was roundly encouraged and praised. New directives on handling holiday responsibilities were issued and enforced. Reporting and the respect of procedural lines and commitments were tremendously improved and adhered too.

The team worked with two separate filming crews, one from Italy and the other from South Africa and both focusing on the increasing threats to pangolins. The Italian team shot several scenes with the Head of the Investigations Department and are expected back next year to continue filming. The South African team focused their attention on the Deputy Director who gave several interviews on the law enforcement against pangolin scales trafficking.

Several team building activities were carried out during the period and included common office lunch, sporting sessions at the gym and the office premises and a touristic visit to Nkonlandom in the South Region. The last group of members did the first aid training and obtained their diplomas while language and computer courses were also taken by some of the LAGA personnel.

A legal adviser returned to the country after completing a diploma course on wildlife management at the Durrell Conservation Academy in the UK.

Preparations and management of the trip of the Assistant Head of the Media Department to the United States where she spent two weeks, on the invitation of the US government, to participate at the International Visitors Leadership Programme that focused on the fight against corruption, was done.

All financial reports were duly drawn and made available while the results of the independent auditing of the organisation finances that was carried out by an international auditing consortium in May was made available to the organisation.

The first semester of 2019 uploaded online. The electronic versions are available on line on the LAGA website www.laga-enforcement.org. This is a result of teamwork involving all the departments in LAGA – Investigations, Legal, Media, Operations and Management.

A series of thought-provoking sessions of presentations and debates for the LAGA team were organised to foster activism and leadership skills. A wide range of topics including activism were presented and debated. This initiative also aims at strengthening the capacity, unity and values of the LAGA family.

Management hosted the CCU financial officer to work on some procedures on funding execution. Preparations and hosting of a legal adviser from the Senegalese project EAGLE Senegal was done. He underwent a month of training and experiences exchange specifically with the legal department and generally with the entire team. A staff from the African Alliance for Development Action (AADA) was trained at the various departments of the organization to equip the trainee with the various skills in effective office and project management.

6. External Relations and Policy

The Deputy Director held a meeting with a team of USAID officials who were visiting the country and had a discussion with them on the wildlife law enforcement process and governance issues. He was one of several invitees who joined the French to celebrate their National Day at the Residence of the French Ambassador. He also participated at a reception at the residence of the Belgian Ambassador on the occasion of the country's National Day

The Deputy Director held a meeting with the Ghana-based US Regional Environment team for West and Central Africa and later held another meeting with the same team and several other NGOs. Discussions focused on challenges to effective wildlife conservation initiatives.

The Deputy Director held a meeting in Bamenda with the North West Chief of Customs Sector on the implementation on the MoU signed with the Customs Department and later granted a talk on the subject to the staff of the sector. He was accompanied by the Assistant Head of the Legal Department.

The Deputy Director participated at an international workshop in Yaounde organised by the Bushmeat working group called CABAG and he did a presentation on the challenges to effective wildlife law enforcement. He met with some officials during the workshop among whom was Nancy Gelman, of

the US Fish and Wildlife He also participated and partly facilitated another workshop organised by TRAFFIC where he did a presentation on the state of the illegal pangolin scales trade in the country.

The Deputy Director participated at the opening ceremony for the Pangolin Rescue and Rehabilitation Center where he actively participated in discussions that focused on finding solutions to the pangolin problem in Cameroon. He held a meeting with the UNODC Regional Coordinator for Central Africa Global Programme for Combatting Wildlife and Forest Crime and two World Parrot Trust officials to discuss projects on wildlife law enforcement, parrot trafficking, some wildlife parks issues, among other matters.

The Deputy Director alongside the heads of the investigation and legal departments held a meeting with Interpol officials on building collaboration for effective wildlife law enforcement. Present during the meeting was an Interpol intelligence analyst from the Singapore office.

The Deputy Director participated at an international workshop on conservation conflicts organized by the Congo Basin Institute that brought together conservation biologists from around Africa. He did a presentation on conservation conflicts as related to wildlife law enforcement and among other issues he cited a few conflicts including deterrent punishments and strict respect of the law vs respect for human rights, soft vs hard conservation measures, sensitization vs enforcement. He equally participated at another workshop that validated the updated list of protected species.

The Deputy Director participated at a follow up meeting of the experts' meeting that held in Ndjamená earlier this year and produced the Ndjamená declaration of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership. Deliberations The meeting focused on rendering the resolutions taken at the Ndjamená meeting operational.

The Head of the Legal Department actively participated at a national workshop to build the capacity of magistrates and other judiciary officials on effective wildlife law enforcement and to encourage collaboration between the different stakeholders involved in the fight against wildlife crimes. During the workshop, he did a presentation on how to calculate the general and specific damages accruing from court rulings. He also participated at an international seminar in Yaounde on the collection of court decisions and analysis in wildlife crime within central Africa. During this seminar, he did a presentation on the lapses in the wildlife law, the strengths and weaknesses of the monitoring and enforcement mechanism.

A legal adviser participated at a training workshop for wildlife law enforcement officials of the Northern part of the country. During the training, she did presentations on the drafting of good wildlife offence statements, calculation of general and specific damages and corruption in the law enforcement process

The heads of the legal and investigations departments held meetings with security and customs officials at the Nsimalen and Douala international airport to foster closer collaboration within the framework of the convention signed with the Customs Department. The Head of Legal Department held a meeting with the Kadey Divisional Delegate of Forestry and Wildlife.

7. LAGA and the EAGLE Network

LAGA's new model for NGO – Government collaboration establishing wildlife law enforcement, bringing about results with an innovative approach geared at changing the existing system and triggering a paradigm shift in the way NGOs tackle wildlife crime is being realised within the EAGLE

network. The model is focusing on the prosecution of major traffickers, not the small-time poacher who is motivated by the city dwelling traffickers. This involves fighting head on the major obstacle to the application of the wildlife law in Africa – Corruption. LAGA’s experience and model is currently operating within the EAGLE network that group 9 countries.

The replication of the LAGA model is also geared at taking cross section lessons outside of wildlife conservation; these include the fight against corruption, fostering activism, fight against child trafficking etc.

<http://www.laga-enforcement.org/Replication/tabid/166/Default.aspx>

The EAGLE network is now responsible for the replication activity of the LAGA model that was formerly the handled by LAGA and activities carried out with the other EAGLE projects were focussed on information sharing. LAGA provided technical advice on investigations, operations and media outreach to some other projects. A legal adviser from Senegal was retrained in the country and experience sharing was vital part of the process.

8. Fostering Activism

During this period, LAGA continued to foster activism internally and externally. Creating independent activists is one aspect that LAGA uses to foster activism. The NGO members are encouraged to develop their own projects on the various development issues of their country and are given NGO time and management time to develop the project in the vision of turning it in to an independent NGO/paper/book. The function of leadership is not producing more followers but to produce more leaders.

<http://www.laga-enforcement.org/Activism/tabid/77/Default.aspx>

Activism building was focused on the presentations below that were done in the office.

The Rwandan War and Genocide: Cameroon is going through an unprecedented crisis that has seen the country succumb to violence in the Anglophone section while political upheavals following the 2018 presidential elections have resulted in a rise in violent and tribal rhetoric which are similar to what happened in Rwanda. The presentation takes us down memory lane to look at the history of the damaging civil war and genocide that took place in the early nineties in Rwanda. The presenter tells the history of the war and explains how it gradually slipped into a genocide while looking at the lessons that could be learnt from the tragedy. These lessons, the presenter says, are very important to pre-empt and forestall the same fate for Cameroon. Questions focused on the post genocide era and how Rwanda is faring today and an analysis of the lesson.

Movie: The Last King of Scotland: Idi Amin ranks amongst one of the most brutal and violent dictators the world has seen and the movie reminds us of how just bad things were during his reign. The movie gives us a picture of the man, how he ruled Uganda and some of the most melodramatic moments of a dictator’s life. He could be seen in glittering fun and amidst the violence and bloodshed. It reminds us of how far we have come from the period when coup d’états and military dictatorships were the norm. A comparative analysis of dictatorships in Africa then and now was carried out after the screening.

Operation Sparrow Hawk: The purpose of this presentation was to take stock of the arrests of suspects, judgments and recovery of public funds during Operation Sparrow Hawk launched by the president in order to determine the main goal of the operation. The presentation predicates its conclusions on the sheer number of arrest - more than 300 persons convicted by the courts - that this is indeed a fight against the embezzlement of public funds and corruption, even as it proves to be

ineffective. Subsequently, the discussions focused on the shortcomings of the law creating the Special Criminal Court; on the political will of the Head of State to really fight against this scourge and finally on the solutions to stem the scourge.

Rural Exodus: The presenter walks us through the phenomenon of rural exodus and defines some related concepts such as migration, immigration, emigration to clarify rural exodus. The presentation deals in the causes and consequences of rural exodus, splitting the causes into endogenous and exogenous causes but say there are invariably socio-economic in nature. These include poverty, conflicts, climate changes etc. The consequences are dire on both the rural milieu where youths who are abled body to sustain these communities leave for urban areas to congest the cities and add to the woes of managing big cities with its problems of population explosions, unemployment and housing among the many. It also takes on the Anglophone crisis to exemplify how conflicts can force movement of people. The discussions centered around the question whether the movement due from the Anglophone crisis could be considered rural exodus and what are the developmental policies to address rural poverty, how far and how successful, among other issues, were raised.

Administrative Tolerance; a Door to Anarchy: A presentation Administrative Tolerance exposes some of the underlying facets of this notorious conundrum in public life. It is fairly normal to see schools, radio stations, road pharmacies which are all illegal, running in the country and the presentation tells us the consequences are worrying; the health of the citizen is at stake, children get poor education and fake news from the illegal structures and all these undermine efforts to build a vibrant, educated and healthy citizenry. The reasons for this state of affairs is administrative tolerance which is caused by failure in the implementation of public policies, incompetence, corruption and lack of political will. This results in more corruption and precariousness. The discussions focused on distinguishing administrative tolerance which is a voluntary decision from an incapacity to make a decision. Administrative tolerance it was discussed, is used as a political weapon in the country to keep some institutions, especially the private media, on their toes and toe official line.

Salary is out, what next? : The presenter engages us in an unusual topic, personal finances and takes us down some of the problems connected with living on a salary or living on a single source of income. He starts by defining some important terms and these include income, wage, and salary. He then tells us how salaries are used and how insufficient it may become and what is generally said about part time jobs or a second source of income. He gives us tips on these and ends up encouraging the audience to try some of his methods. Discussions focused on the issues that were not said or the underlining issues such as personal preferences for not seeking further income and or challenges in trying to do so.

The Situation of Internally Displaced Persons: The crisis facing the country is on everybody's mind and several presentations have treated this topic and this continues with a legal adviser painting the picture of how those who were displaced by the various conflicts in the country are faring. He geographically locates where these IDPs are coming from and where they have mostly settled with three regions, North West, South West and Far North regions mostly affected. While the causes by now are pretty well known to everybody, the living conditions are still a matter of great conjecture and he tells the story of some of the hardships they are going through including psycho-social trauma while enumerating some of the relief efforts carried out by government. The discussions focused on what solutions are available both politically and socially to resolve the various conflicts in the country.

9. Strategic Overview of Wildlife Crime in Cameroon and Operations' Impact

Beyond the number of operations and their effectiveness, there is an even more important factor in evaluating LAGA's work – the strategic value of the operations in reducing the level of illegal wildlife trade. In this regard, LAGA is choosing diversified operations, which carry an added value to expose and map the different angles of wildlife crime in Cameroon. Consequently, the LAGA-MINFOF work sheds light on the nature of illegal wildlife trade in the sub-region. The strategic focus over this period was on pangolin scales, primates (chimps and a mandrill), ivory and leopard skins.

9.1 Pangolin Scales

Operations during this semester were mostly focused on ivory trafficking as 7 of the 10 traffickers arrested were dealing in raw ivory tusks. Organised ivory trade relies heavily on complicity and corruption and attracts big time traffickers who may reap huge incentives from the trade. This was once again exemplified when five were arrested in Yaounde and notable amongst them was the son of a former finance minister. The former finance minister's son transported the tusks in his black Toyota Prado car, accompanied by his accomplices to a Yaounde neighbourhood and attempted to sell the ivory tusks when they were arrested. The arrest was the result of another investigation into a big network of ivory traffickers and the leads obtained from the investigations that was carried out in Douala pointed to the network in Yaounde. The importance of this trafficker could be felt when family members would immediately attempt freeing him at the gendarmerie station where he was held in custody. Once again this points to the calibre of people running the illegal ivory trade in the country. The two ivory tusks seized during the operation were unusually big and weighed over 50kg indicating they were cut from a big elephant, something which is not very common today because the elephants are hardly left to grow that big.

In another ivory trafficking case that took place in November, two traffickers were arrested in Batouri in the East Region. During the operation, the two traffickers violently tried to escape but were restrained by the arresting team. The arrest opened up a new window into the illegal ivory trade taking place at the frontier with the Central African Republic. The traffickers ply the border areas between Cameroon and the Central African Republic with impunity. The two are part of an international network of ivory traffickers based in Kenzou and the areas has just recently been discovered to be hotspot for ivory trafficking. Ivory that leaves parts of the East Region and the Central African Republic is first held there before being moved to bigger cities in the country.

9.2 Leopard Skins

An operation was carried out in the West of the country and leopard skins were seized from four traffickers who arrived on a motorbike under torrential rainfalls. There is always some leopard skin networks manoeuvring in this region to illicitly sell fresh leopard skins which have been sourced from the south and east of the country that still have populations of leopards. They are equally adept in using the bikes in moving the skins around, taking advantage of the flexibility bikes offer and its ability to access difficult areas which are not accessible to cars. This mode of transport has become that of choice for ferrying wildlife contraband that may not be too bulky or heavy to carry.

10. Corruption and Wildlife Crime

LAGA was an experiment field for methods of fighting corruption within a law enforcement and application process. All bribing attempts are documented into our case tracking systems. LAGA is not an observer of corruption; it was created to fight corruption, redirecting the positive pressures existing within the system, usually wasted in large conference, to specific corruption attempts and the

field realities that form corruption. These bribery attempts are vigorously fought against and vehemently condemned by LAGA. LAGA is not a watchdog group and not created as an observer, it fights directly whenever corrupt practices or bribery attempts have been observed.

During this period, the corruption attempts presumably had a big negative influence in two of the procedures despite the brave and continuous fight we carried out to stop these challenges. Those handling the prosecutorial processes were faced by bribery attempts, peddling of influence and pressure. When wildlife officials arrested the son of a former minister in September, the wife of the former minister, mother to the arrested trafficker initiated several moves to foil the process, first by meeting the Centre Regional Delegate of Forestry and Wildlife to try and stop the prosecution but seeing stiff resistance, she then approached LAGA members for the same result and then the state counsel.

In November when wildlife officials arrested two ivory traffickers in Batouri and went on with their duty of establishing a complaint report, they received pressure from the two who used several tactics to influence the officials to stop doing their job. The wildlife officials were clearly given a bribe that was rebuffed.

Overview of International Wildlife Traffic in Cameroon



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Annex I – Case Tracking System – July – December 2019

Case num.	Date Operation	Location	Case name	Offence	Profile	Remarks	Int. Connection	Status
627	25/07/2019	Loum Littoral	TCHOUAKWE Hervé	illegal possession of 3 leopard skins	Hairdresser	He is a member of the network involved in the trafficking of leopard skins, he serves as the one who look for markets and propose to those with products for transactions to be completed	Cameroon	locked while on trial
628	25/07/2019	Loum Littoral	DJIOFANG NZENGANG Simplicie	illegal possession of 3 leopard skins	Farmer	He is a relation of TCHAPDA who is the owner of the skins seized, he called to provide additional protection on the day the transaction was to take place	Cameroon	locked while on trial
629	25/07/2019	Loum Littoral	TCHAPDA Dieunndort	illegal possession of 3 leopard skins	Farmer	He belongs and head a network of leopard skin trafficking, he moves to the eastern border of Cameroon where he gets the skin before travelling to his base where he intends to meet his potential buyers	Cameroon	Bail
630	30/09/2019	Douala Littoral	BANDOUMA Benoit	illegal possession of 16 ivory tusks	Mechanic engineer	He happens to belong to a big international network of ivory trafficking where they transport ivory all the way from RCA through Cameroon; he is in charge of transporting their products in order to go through all check points to meet their buyers	Cameroon	Bail
631	05/09/2019	Yaoundé Centre	LOKO Bassilekin	illegal possession of 02 ivory tusks	Computer	A son of a former minister, is the member of the group trafficking elephant tusk, he happens to have been the proprietor of the two giant tusk.	Cameroon	Bail
632	05/09/2019	Yaoundé Centre	FOGANG Fokoua Bruno	illegal possession of 02 ivory tusks	Metal Carpenter	He is a neighbor and member of the network and the first person to be contacted by Bassiliken to get a buyer. He snaps with the products and hide the face before posting.	Cameroon	Bail
633	05/09/2019	Yaoundé	NKOUGA Valère	illegal possession of 02 ivory tusks	Trader	He belongs to the same network and personal friend to Bassiliken, he is in charge of negotiating potential buyers. He shares the images of the tusk through WhatsApp and get the best price and expects his own share in	Cameroon	Bail

Case num.	Date Operation	Location	Case name	Offence	Profile	Remarks	Int. Connection	Status
634	05/09/2019	Yaoundé Centre	OUSMANOU Baba	illegal possession of 02 ivory tusks	Trader	He is a middleman and does many activities and gets his commission. He was contacted by Nkouga to also search for a buyer to get his commission as usual.	Cameroon	Bail
635	05/09/2019	Yaoundé	KENNE Emmanuel	illegal possession of 02 ivory tusks	Trader	He is also one of the members and close to his friend who is the son of former minister. He played a role of assisting the team to load and hide them in the vehicle and accompany the team to the market.	Cameroon	Bail
636	13/11/2019	Batouri East	MAHAMAT Abdoulaye	illegal possession of 02 ivory tusks	Trader	He belongs to a network of ivory trafficking based in the border locality and crosses the CAR; he is in charge of negotiating the market and gets his commission upon selling:	Cameroon	locked while on trial
637	13/11/2019	Batouri East	ALIOUM Abdou	illegal possession of 02 ivory tusks	Farmer	He is the main mechanism in a group of ivory traffickers, he is said to have been arrested but paid huge sums of money to be freed.	Cameroon	locked while on trial
638	23/12/2019	Douala Littoral	TEGWI TIKU Cliford	illegal possession of 274 grey parrots, 3 elephant tusks and about 600 kg of pangolin scales	Student / Trader	He is a trader who initially was into pepper but later embraced parrots business which according to him was more profitable. He is in a network who traffic parrots to Nigeria via the sea,	Cameroon	locked while on trial
639	23/12/2019	Douala Littoral	NDONGO Jean	illegal possession of 274 grey parrots, 3 elephant tusks and about 600 kg of pangolin scales	Storekeeper	He belongs to the same network who traffic in parrots, ivory and other contrabands like spirits, he is the stock keeper and masters the routes to Nigeria	Cameroon	locked while on trial

Annex II - Semester in Pictures



Leopard skin traffickers shortly after their arrest



The traffickers arrived scene of arrest on a bike amidst a thunderous downpour



Leopard skins seized from three traffickers



Two huge ivory tusks weighing 53kg and measuring over 1.7m in length seized in Yaounde from son of former finance minister



Wildlife officials measure ivory tusks that weighed over 53kg



Two arrested at the border town of Kenzou in East Region with two ivory tusks



Ivory tusks seized from traffickers

Annex III - Semester Media Links

In July, a website reporting on news in Cameroon takes up the story of the travel ban imposed on a gendarmerie colonel by the US State Department. The colonel is expected to appear in court in connection with an ivory trafficking case.

https://www.alwihdainfo.com/Cameroun-Un-colonel-au-tribunal-pour-criminalite-faunique_a75030.html

In August, arrested for trafficking in lion skulls and a leopard skin, a police officer is facing trial for illegal possession of parts of protected wildlife species and as the date of the hearing of the case approached Alwidha info carried the story to remind readers that the suspect shall soon stand trial.

https://www.alwihdainfo.com/Cameroun-Yaounde-Un-policier-au-tribunal-pour-traffic-d-especes-sauvages_a76272.html

In September, five persons were arrested in Yaounde with two large ivory tusks weighing over 50kg and one of the arrested is the son of a former finance minister. The arrest that was carried out by wildlife officials of the Centre Regional Delegation of Forestry and Wildlife was significantly important as the son of a former minister was involved. The press ran the story with the news site Alwidha info picking up the story.

https://www.alwihdainfo.com/Cameroun-Trafic-d-ivoire-le-fils-d-un-ancien-ministre-des-Finances-arrete_a76935.html

In November, when a court in Brazzaville sentenced a court registrar to one-year imprisonment for stealing ivory from the court premises, Alwidha info among several other news outlets including print takes up the story and shows how different is the strong and deterrent punishment to a very weak court ruling by the Bonanjo court of first instance in Douala to traffickers who were arrested with thousands of wildlife species in 2017.

https://www.alwihdainfo.com/Congo-Brazzaville-un-greffier-condamne-pour-vol-d-ivoire_a78718.html

In December, Alwidha info, announces that it is very possible that they shall be prison sentences for two ivory traffickers arrested in Batouri.

https://www.alwihdainfo.com/Cameroun-Abong-Mbang-Cinq-personnes-arretees-pour-traffic-d-ecailles-de-pangolin_a69072.html