

The Last Great Ape Organization – LAGA

December 2015 Report



Highlights

- **2 wildlife traffickers arrested in East Region with 3 gorilla skulls and other protected wildlife contraband**
- **Another wildlife trafficker arrested in Yaounde with shocking amount of 19 chimpanzee skulls he transported from the South.**
- **The year ended meeting targets in full and the LAGA family went on traditional vacation during the end of year festive period.**

General

This month was marked by 2 operations that led to the arrest of 3 wildlife traffickers.

The first operation carried out in Doume, East Region led to the **arrest of two gorilla skulls traffickers**. Following investigations into their activity and that also indicated the movement of the two with the wildlife contraband, they were intercepted at a gendarmerie control post and arrested after finding the contraband including 3 gorilla skulls, a chimp skull and an elephant tail inside a bag.

During the second operation carried out in **Yaounde, Centre Region, an ape trafficker was arrested** when he arrived Yaounde from Meyomessala in the South Region where he is based. He had transported 19 chimpanzee skulls from the South to Yaounde was just about to sell off his booty when he was arrested.

The entire LAGA family took a vacation during the end of year festive period after a very successful year during which all targets earmarked at the beginning of the year were met.

Investigations

- **20 investigations** of varying lengths were carried out in **5 Regions** of Cameroon including the Littoral, East, West, Centre, and South Regions.
- Good investigations in Doume near Abong Mbang led to the arrest of two traffickers in possession of 3 gorilla skulls, 1 chimp skull among other products from protected wildlife species
- Good investigation in Meyomessala led to the arrest in Yaounde of one trafficker in possession of 19 chimpanzee skulls.

Operation

2 operations carried out this month with MINFOF **arresting 4 traffickers.**

- **08/11/15 - Two traffickers arrested in Doume, in the East Region for illegal possession of 3 gorilla skulls, a chimp skull, an elephant tail, a Red river hog skull and a skin from an unidentified wildlife species.** Following an investigation on their illegal activities they were finally intercepted at a checkpoint carrying the contraband on a motorbike. One of the skulls was painted in red but the mystery for the red paint was only solved in a consecutive arrest later in the month.
- **16/11/15 - An ape skull trafficker arrested in Yaounde, Centre Region for trafficking in 19 chimpanzees skulls.** He revealed that his elder brother is a poacher who kills the apes in the forests and he got some of the skulls from him and from some other poachers. It was later discovered during his interrogations that he is a Pastor. His uncle who came for him in a corruption attempt to negotiate a bribe for his release declared that he was a Pastor. Another relative of his who is a policewoman attempted to get him released but failed. As noticed in the first operation of the month, one could find patches of red paint on one of the skulls. Following his interrogations, it was found out that this is black magic aiming to render the contraband invisible.

Legal

- **LAGA Legal Department carried out 9 missions out of Yaounde-** Centre Region: 1 in Kribi (South), 1 in Djoum (South), 1 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Wum (North West), 3 in Bertoua (East), 1 in Dschang (West), 1 in Doume (East).
- There are **26 dealers behind bars during this month:** 14 in East Region, 4 in Centre region, 4 in North West Region, 3 in South West Region and 1 in Littoral region.
- **37 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **36 cases** scheduled and being tried in court this month.
- **Prosecutions:** We had 3 judgments this month.
 - 18/12/2015: The Douala Court of First Instance – Littoral, found the accused KAKEU MICHEL and GUEZE JULES guilty of illegal possession and commercialization of trophies of totally protected species and were sentenced to: 1 year suspended sentence within 3 years and 1.260.000 FCFA for civil damages. They were arrested in Douala for the illegal possession and commercialization of 202 sculptured Ivory objects.
 - 21/12/2015: The Wum Court of First Instance- North West, found the accused AKOU EMMANUEL guilty of illegal possession and commercialization of trophies of totally protected species and was sentenced to: fines- 500,000 FCFA or 9 Months imprisonment term, cost Fees- 51,640 FCFA or 6 months imprisonment term and civil

damages- 500,000 FCFA. He was arrested in Wum for the illegal possession of 5 chimpanzee skulls, 9 other chimpanzee bones and 5 Mona monkey skulls.

- 24/12/2015: The Ekounou Court of First Instance- Centre, found the accused ESSOMBA MICHEL SEVERIN guilty of illegal possession and commercialization of trophies of totally protected species and was sentenced to: 6 months imprisonment term, fines-100,000 FCFA, civil damages- 500,000 FCFA, cost fee-44,050 FCFA. He was arrested in Yaoundé for illegal possession of 3 gorilla skulls.
- **Appeal:** An appeal has been filed this month in the case of Kakeu Michel and Gueze Jules in the Littoral Court of Appeal.

Media

- **27 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to written press, radio and internet including: 17 written press (10 in English 7 in French), 8 radio news flashes all in French, and 2 internet publication, 1 each in English and French.
- **Interviewees include:** Regional Chief of Wildlife, East region.
- **Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including:** Yaounde arrest of giant pangolin scales trafficker, Belabo arrest of giant pangolin scales trafficker, Ndop arrest of trafficker with 18 ape skulls, 2 traffickers arrested in Doume with 4 gorilla skulls and an elephant tail,
- 15 media pieces in French and 12 in English, making a percentage of 55.6% in French and 44.4% in English.

External Relations and Policy

- Several meetings were held by the legal department and some state prosecutors handling wildlife cases.

Management

- **The year ended meeting targets in full** and the LAGA family was given an end of year meal during which they were wished happy feasting as December 16, 2015 marked the beginning of vacation to enable the staff feast, rest, refresh and start the new year with much vigour. The vacation ends on January 6, 2016.
- An American anthropologist and PhD research student completed her volunteer and research work with the team. She assisted LAGA and AC on several issues including office and administrative duties, website and data analysis, project writing and programme development while focusing on her subject of research which is the understanding of the relationships between humans and rescued chimpanzees and all of the legal and law enforcement processes that shape them.

Activism Front

All the activism fostering activities carried out by the LAGA family are online; this could be gotten at the LAGA website – <http://www.laga-enforcement.org/Activism/tabid/77/Default.aspx>.

Finance

In preparation and would be made available soon as possible.

This Month in Pictures



19 chimpanzee skulls from trafficker (right) arrested after he travelled more 100 km to sell skulls in Yaounde. The rising number of skulls seized in the country is testimony to the devastating impact of the poaching of great apes. Trafficker who is equally a pastor is at police station.



Three gorilla skulls and a chimpanzee skull seized from 2 trafficker as they ferried the products to do business. One of the skulls is painted red to make it invisible according to black magic



Arrest for trafficking in ape skulls, two traffickers answer to questions at the Gendarmerie Brigade in Doume, East Regin

Link of this month

[Four wildlife traffickers arrested in Cameroon](#)



Four wildlife traffickers arrested in Cameroon

Four wildlife traffickers arrested in Cameroon

[View on en.cihan.com.tr](#)

Preview by Yahoo

Four illegal wildlife traffickers were arrested on Sunday near the Yaounde-Nsimalen international airport in Cameroon, a wildlife agency official told Xinhua on Monday. The traffickers were found in possession of primate skulls and pangolin scales that they were about to export to their trading partners, said the Director of the Last Great Ape Organisation (LAGA) in Cameroon, Ofir Drori.

<http://en.cihan.com.tr/en/four-wildlife-traffickers-arrested-in-cameroon-1966363.htm>