

The Last Great Ape Organization - LAGA

June 2008 Report



Highlights

- **3 cases** prosecuted sentencing **4 wildlife traffickers** to prison terms and to pay damages.
- **3 operations** carried out in the West Province, **5 dealers** arrested.
- LAGA participates in **the launching of MINFOF anti-poaching unit.**

General

This month was marked by a special focus on illegal trade in Leopard skins in the West Province.

5 dealers were arrested in the West Province **clamping down on leopard skins trade** in this sensitive area. The focused operation was effective in media sensitization sending the message of a strong concentrated strike in the specific locations that are hotspot for leopard skin trade.

In addition to the operations, a total of **4 wildlife traffickers** were **prosecuted** this month. 2 by the Court of First Instance Bonanjo – Douala, 1 by The Court of First Instance Ndokoti - Douala in the Littoral Province, and 1 by The Court of First Instance Ngaoundere – Adamawa, all for illegally trading in leopard skins and skins of other endangered wildlife species. All were sentenced to serve prison terms, and to pay damages each to the Cameroon government with an amount of more than \$3000 for the Ndokoti-Douala case.

LAGA participated in a meeting of the Committee Members of the Anti-Poaching Unit of MINFOF. This meeting was presided over by the MINFOF Minister. LAGA was represented by the Head of Legal Department who made a presentation on tackling ivory syndicates with a special focus on the 3.9 Tons Ivory Trafficking involving some Chinese Nationals.

Investigations

- **17 investigations** of varying lengths were carried out in **6 Provinces** - North West, South West, West, East, Littoral and Center.
- Field Investigations led to **3 successful operations** after targeting dealers: **5 dealers were arrested** in Bafoussam and Bagangte in the West Province.
- **A new investigator** undergoing field tests produced **very good results** targeting 5 dealers who were all arrested. Field tests continue for 5 other new candidates.
- Internet Investigations identified and initiated communication with 3 wildlife Internet scammers with 2 case files and warrants of arrest already issued for their arrest.
- An international collaboration involving Internet Investigations was initiated with Germany following a report to us from victim in Germany. The scammer is being targeted as a result of good collaboration with the German authorities and the victim.

Operations

3 operations were carried out this month with MINFOF against **5 subjects.**

- **05/06 - 2 dealers** were arrested in Bafoussam – West Province trying to **illegally trade in leopard skins and skins of other endangered wildlife species.** They have been doing this business for many years with a network of suppliers in the West Province.
- **10/06 – 2 more dealers** belonging to a network were arrested in Bafoussam – West Province trying to illegally trade in leopard skins and skins of other endangered wildlife species.

- **24/06/08** – A regular dealer with a network of suppliers from the Northern part of Cameroon was arrested in Bagangte – West Province trying to illegally trade in leopard skins and skins of other endangered wildlife species.

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **22 missions** out of the Center Province: 1 in Bamenda (North West), 3 in Buea (South West), 1 in Kribi (South), 5 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Abong-Mbang (East), 1 in Ngaoundere (Adamawa), 1 in Mamfe (South West), 3 in Bafoussam (West), 3 in Foumban (West), 1 in Dschang (West), 2 in Bagangte (West).
- There are **16 dealers behind bars during this month**: 2 in the Littoral Province, 2 in the East Province, 6 in the West Province, 3 in the South West Province, 2 in North West Province, and 1 in the Center Province.
- **34 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **29 cases** are scheduled and being trailed in the court this month.
- 9 cases waiting for the process of appeal to reach the court. 4 in the west, 2 in the littoral, 2 in the South province and 1 in Center province. The court of first instance has not complete the file needed for the transmission to the attorney general.
- **Prosecutions: 3 cases** were sentenced this month
- **11/06**: The Court of First Instance of Douala-Bonanjou convicts Gangnou Marcus and Medjeck Robain to 2 months of imprisonment and to pay 500.000 Fcfa as damages. They will be also retained in prison for 6 months for non-payment of damages.
- **23/06**: The Court of First Instance of Ngaoundere convicts Chetene to 1 year of prison term, suspended sentence during 3 years and to pay 100.000 Fcfa as damages.
- **27/06**: The Court of First Instance of Ndokoti-Douala convicts Donfack to 7 months imprisonment and to pay 24.000 Fcfa as court fees, 1.600.000 Fcfa (about 3200 Dollars) as damages. He will be returned in prison for 3 months in case of non-payment of court fees.

Media front

- **35 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to radio, TV and written press including: 3 written press in English and 1 in French, 3 radio talk shows (all in English), 25 radio news flashes (20 in English, 5 in French), 3 TV features (2 in English and 1 in French).
- **Guests include**: Minister of Forestry and Wildlife, Provincial Delegate of Forestry and Wildlife South West Province, The Traditional Chief of Bali, Technical Adviser N° 1 of the Ministry of Environment and Nature Protection.
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including; Leopard skin and Caracal skin dealers arrests in Bafoussam, prosecution of wildlife dealers in Douala High Court, Minister's Instruction to Economic Operators, Leopard and Caracal skin arrest in Bamenda, and creation of anti-poaching unit – MINFOF.
- 28 media pieces in English, 7 in French making a percentage 80% in English and 20% in French. The Media Department has made a commitment to improve on these results next month.
- Online sensitisation resulted to more than 650 visits to the LAGA website in the month of June. And recent statistics for the month of June put you tube views to more than 20.000.

External Relations and Policy

- LAGA met with the Minister of Forestry and Wildlife to discuss on parrot cases, MoU and review of wildlife law enforcement.
- Meeting between the Director of Wildlife and Protected Areas and LAGA officials to discuss issues related to the MoU.

- Presentation of wildlife law enforcement paper by the Head of Legal Unit of LAGA at a meeting of the Committee members of the Anti-poaching Unit of MINFOF, presided over by Minister Elvis Ngolle Ngolle.
- LAGA took part in a National Committee meeting to study and ameliorate the pre-project of the anti-corruption laws. This was made up of The Focal Point of the Services of the Prime Ministry, The Principal Technical Adviser of the “CHOC” project, anti-corruption leaders, representatives of the civil society, and representatives of the business world.
- Meeting with the First Secretary of the Dutch Embassy to discuss on LAGA’s experience in the fight against corruption and using LAGA’s experience in the general fight against corruption within the NGO sector.
- Meeting held with Congo EU Head of programmes, a jurist with the interest of fighting corruption in the court and the key actor for the transfer of LAGA’s experience in Congo on the fight against corruption and wildlife cases development.
- The Director of LAGA held meetings with the US Embassy, Dutch Embassy, British High Commission and UNDP on using LAGA’s experience in the fight against corruption outside wildlife. LAGA met with the US Embassy to discuss on fight against corruption within the NGO sector.
- Meeting held between the Director of LAGA and WWF International Director of Project Management concerning the fight against corruption.

Management

- This month was marked by the LAGA family working normally despite the financial problems that faced the organization and the non-payment of salaries.

Finance

LAGA Expenditure by budget line for June 08

Amount CFA	Budget line	Details	Amount USD
1,415,375	Investigations	18 inv,6 provinces	\$3,369.9
743,000	Operations	3 Operations, against 5 subjects	\$1,769.0
2,472,625	Legal	Follow up 34 cases 16 locked subjects	\$5,887.2
1,504,225	Media	35 media pieces	\$3,581.5
251,600	Policy & External Relations	UK/Congo/USA	\$599.0
1,006,900	Management	Coordination	\$2,397.4
972,824	Office		\$2,316.2
8,366,549	TOTAL EXPENDITURE JUNE		\$19,920.4

LAGA Expenditure by donor for June 08

Amount CFA	Donor	Amount USD
0	Born Free	\$0.0
2,974,263	FWS	\$7,081.6
1,512,011	Rufford Foundation	\$3,600.0
1,000,000	WSPA	\$2,381.0
1,389,900	ProWildlife	\$3,309.3
1,490,375	Arcus	\$3,548.5
1,036,425	UNEP General	\$2,467.7
8,366,549	TOTAL	\$19,920

THIS MONTH IN PICTURES



A regular dealer with a network of suppliers from the Northern part of Cameroon arrested in Bagangte – West Province trying to illegally trade in leopard skins and skins of other endangered wildlife species.



Leopard skin and skins of other endangered wildlife species. 2 dealers were arrested in Bafoussam – West Province trying to trade in the skins. They have been carrying out the illegal business for many years and also have a network of suppliers in the West Province and a ready market.

Links of this month

- Two dealers trading in products of totally protected wildlife species arrested in Bamenda, North West Province of Cameroon – Cameroon National Television Broadcast - The Control Brigade of the North West Forestry and Wildlife **Delegation arrested two dealers trying to sell skins of endangered and totally protected wildlife species.** The North West Forestry and Wildlife Delegation was assisted in the operation by the Forces of Law and Order, the Judiciary and the Last Great Ape Organisation - LAGA. Sections 101 and 158 of the law stipulates that anyone found in possession of part of dead or live protected wildlife species is liable to a prison term of up to 3 years and or payment of a fine up to 10 million CFA francs. The two dealers were released yesterday on bail.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y_RtNPMxgK8

- Strategies put in place by the South West Delegate of the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife to fight against illegal wildlife trade – Cameroon National Television Broadcast. In the attempt to translate the Minister's policy on effective wildlife law enforcement into concrete field reality, The South West provincial Delegate for Forestry and Wildlife with the strong support of her able provincial Chief of Forestry and Wildlife Control Brigade immediately designed a strategy to fight against illegal wildlife trade in South West province. This resulted to the **arrest of two Internet wildlife scammers trying to sell endangered and protected wildlife species through the Internet.**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b0m1vyswzP8>