

The Last Great Ape Organization – LAGA

June 2019 Report



Highlights

- **An international trafficker arrested with 95kg of illicit pangolin scales in Douala.**
- **He is part of an international network of pangolin scales traffickers along the Douala – Bangui axes.**
- **The implementation of protocol agreement with customs continued as several visits were made to the various customs sectors in the country.**
- **The Assistant Head of the Media and External Relations Department returned to the country following a visit to the US under the International Visitor Leadership Programme.**

General

This month was marked by the arrest of **a trafficker with pangolin scales during an operation carried out in Douala.**

The trafficker belonged to an international network of pangolin scales traffickers running the illegal trade between the Central African Republic (CAR) and Cameroon and this includes other sub regional countries right to Nigeria. He facilitated movement of the pangolin scales between traffickers in Cameroon and CAR and played a crucial role in facilitating the illegal wildlife, taking care of the logistics including transportation and storage. He equally looked for buyers and facilitated the transactions. He had close ties to the international network of pangolin scales traffickers who were arrested on August 18, 2018 for illegal possession of 700kg of pangolin scales. The case was very poorly handled and the traffickers who were released before trial fled would fail to appear court but curiously were handed very lenient sentences.

Several meetings were held at the various customs regional sectors as part of the implementation of the protocol agreement signed with customs.

Investigations

- **17 investigation missions** of varying lengths were carried out in **4 Regions** of Cameroon including the Littoral, West, South and Centre Regions
- Good investigation in **Yaounde** led to the arrest of a pangolin scales trafficker with 95kg of pangolin scales in Douala.

Investigations Table

Investigation Missions	Regions	No. of Operations	No of traffickers arrested
17	4	1	1

Operation

An operation carried out this month with MINFOF **arresting a trafficker**.

20/6/2019 – A trafficker arrested in Douala with 95kg of pangolin scales. He belongs to an international network of pangolin scales traffickers that was the focus of an operation last year but seemingly the network was not totally dismantled. He linked up traffickers in Cameroon with those based in Bangui in the Central African Republic. facilitating the illegal wildlife trade from the Central African Republic. The pangolin scales are sent through trucks plying the Douala – Bangui corridor and are sold in Douala. The notorious network has been trafficking in several tons of pangolin scales and at least one of its members who were arrested last year and released was connected to the present deal that led to the arrest of the trafficker. The modus operandi for these international trafficking networks is simple, and consist of buying the scales from smaller traffickers in Cameroon, the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and exporting to Nigeria via Cameroon.

Operations Table

No of Operations	Regions	No of Traffickers Arrested	Contraband
1	1	1	95kg pangolin scales

Legal

- The LAGA Legal Department carried out **12 missions** out of Yaounde-Centre Region: 3 in Douala (Littoral) and 1 Bertoua (East), 1 in Kribi (South), 1 in Meiganga (Adamaoua), 2 in Bafoussam (West) and 4 in Bangangte (West).
- There are **22 traffickers behind bars this month**: 2 in East Region, 5 in South Region, 4 in West Region, 1 in Adamaoua Region, 1 in Centre Region and 9 in Littoral Region.
- **36 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **33 cases** were scheduled in court this month.
- **5 traffickers** were convicted this month.
- **Prosecutions**: There were two court rulings this month.
 - **03/06/2019**: The Douala - Bonaberie Court of First Instance found the accused **TEGOUM Alphonse Raoul, BOUGNIA Kamta Francis and TCHAMTCHEU Francis Romuald not guilty**, but the court found the accused **AKANZE AKONGLO Bertrand guilty and sentenced him to 6 months imprisonment term and to pay 945,000 FCFA as fines and 15,000,000 FCFA as damages**.

They were arrested in Douala on the 14/03/2019 for the illegal possession, circulation and commercialization of 156kg of ivory tusks and 1.500kg of pangolin scales.
 - **20/06/2019**: The Bangangte Court of First Instance found the accused **NYONSE NANDEP Stéphanie, ABAGNO Joséphine, NOUNKEU Romuld and BAKATCHOU FEUTEU** guilty as charged and sentenced them to **22 days imprisonment term each and to pay 38,000 FCFA each as court charges and 1,000,000 FCFA jointly as damages**.

They were arrested in Tonga on the 23/05/2019 for the illegal possession, circulation and commercialization of 96,5kg of pangolin scales.
- **Appeal**: An appeal has been filed this month in the case of **TEGOUM Alphonse Raoul, BOUGNIA Kamta Francis and TCHAMTCHEU Francis Romuald and AKANZE AKONGLO Bertrand** at the Littoral Court of Appeal.

Legal Table

No of Missions (Out of Centre Region)	No of Court Judgements	No of Traffickers Given Prison Sentence	Prison term (in months)	No of Traffickers Sanctioned (No prison sentence)	No of Appeals lodged	No of Cases Tried in Courts
13	2	5	7	2	1	33

Media

- **35 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to written press, radio, and internet including; 21 written press materials (13 in English and 9 in French), 10 radio news flashes (6 in French and 4 in English) and 4 internet publications, 3 in French and 1 in English.
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including, the Yaounde arrest of a policeman with an ivory tusk, a leopard skin, 5 fresh lion skulls, and 3 lion jawbones, the Kribi arrest of a repeat offender with African grey parrots and the Douala arrest of a trafficker with 100kg of pangolin scales.
- 18 media pieces in English and 17 in French making a percentage of 51.4% in French and 48.6% in English.

Media Table

<i>No of Media Pieces</i>	<i>TV</i>	<i>Radio</i>	<i>Newspapers</i>	<i>Internet</i>
35	0	10	216	4

External Relations and Policy

- The Deputy Director with the Director of ZSL and AWF accompanied four visiting US Representatives and the Ambassador to the Mefou Park where he took an opportunity to brief the distinguish guests from the US Congress on LAGA's activities and some pressing conservation needs of the country.
- The Head of the Legal Department, accompanied by a legal adviser, held a meeting with the state counsel in Douala – Ndokoti, to discuss operation procedures and he held another meeting with the state counsel of Douala – Bonaberie to discuss matters pending before his court while another legal adviser held a meeting with the state counsel in Meiganga to discuss legal strategies in a matter pending before the court. A legal adviser equally held a meeting with the state counsel in Douala – Bonanjo to discuss legal strategies on matters pending before the court and a volunteer held a meeting with the state counsel in Bangangte for the same purpose.
- The Assistant Head of the Media and External Relations Department returned to the country after a short visit to the US where she participated in the International Visitor Leadership Programme that focused on the theme Combatting Corruption: Promoting Transparency and Accountability in Business.
- The Deputy Director and the Head of Investigations Department visited and held meetings with customs officials of the three Northern regions, that is the Extreme Nord, North and Adamawa regions. During the visits they equally held meetings with state counsels and wildlife officials of the various regions.
- The Head of the Legal Department and the Assistant Head of Investigations equally held similar meetings with customs officials in the East and Littoral Regions, with state counsels in the various regions and with wildlife officials.

Management

- The Interim Director participated at a training course titled Advanced Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation and Microsoft Project Training at the Shama Consult Africa in Nairobi, Kenya.

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/Actiwithvism/tabid/77/Default.aspx>.

Finance

In preparation and would be made available soon as possible on the LAGA website www.laga-enforcement.org .

Link of the month

An internet site published the arrest of a notorious parrot trafficker of Ghanaian nationality in Kienke, in the Ocean Division by customs with a consignment of illegal African grey parrots. The man who was arrested during an operation carried out by the customs mobile brigade in collaboration with the gendarmerie is a repeat offender and has been arrested several times for unlawful possession of African grey parrots.

<https://www.camer.be/75230/11:1/cameroun-customs-arrests-ghanaian-national-with-illegal-parrots-cameroon.html>

This Month in Pictures



Trafficker at the wildlife office in Douala shortly after arrest, he belongs to an international network of pangolin scales traffickers, bags of pangolins scales weighing 95kg were seized



Impounded bike used by trafficker



Deputy Director, in the middle with white cap at the Mefou park with visiting Representatives from the US Congress and the Ambassador