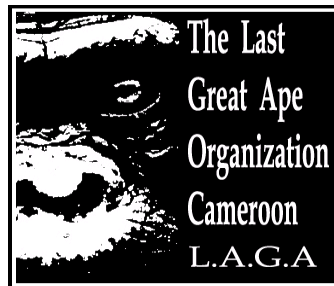


THE LAST GREAT APE ORGANIZATION, CAMEROON LAGA

FIRST SEMESTER REPORT JANUARY – JUNE 2020



Executive Summary

Despite many obstacles, prominent among which was the Covid-19 pandemic, tangible achievements were made over this period in LAGA's collaboration with MINFOF in the fields of investigation, arrest, prosecution, media exposure, government relations and international activities with focus on the fight against corruption, illegal wildlife trade, principally traffickers in ivory, leopard skins and pangolin scales, human bones and mandrills. The team stepped up its activism, fortitude and belief during the health crisis to push forward for operations. Government measures and guidelines were strictly respected alongside organisational measures put in place to prevent the spread of the corona virus. The efforts produced sterling results in combatting the trafficking of pangolin scales, ivory, human bones, mandrills and leopard skins. An operation against two corrupt military men witnessed the seizure of 380kg of pangolin scales while wildlife investigations uncovered a sinister trade in human skeletons in the West of the country with the arrest of 6 traffickers.

23 major traffickers were arrested, at a rate of one for every 8 days, approximately. 35 % stayed behind bars from the day of arrest and the low rate of imprisonment was the result of guidelines by the Ministry of Justice to reduce the population of those locked up for fear of congestion at the various prisons because of the nature of the spread of Covid-19. Corruption was observed and combated in a number of the cases. 23 new cases were brought to the courts and 13 traffickers were found guilty and given prison sentences and or fines, damages and penalties. 4 traffickers given a penalty of 5 years. Damages awarded the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife (MINFOF) stood at 5,942,00 F CFA (about \$11,884). Media exposure was at the rate of one media piece per day.

The EAGLE network had significant results taking into considerations the lockdown measures implemented in the various countries as 50 traffickers were arrested across 4 countries within the network. The handling of the Covid-19 crisis for all the EAGLE countries was effectively managed by the Central Coordination Unit working in collaboration with the management of the various countries. The LAGA team hosted an activist from Gabon for a month-long experience sharing visit.

The work of The Last Great Ape Organization was supported by: Wildcat, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Born Free, CIDT, Neu Foundation, Pro Wildlife

LAST GREAT APE ORGANISATION, CAMEROON (LAGA)
SEMESTER REPORT
January - June 2020

OVERVIEW

Investigations

- A total of 72 investigation missions (of varying lengths) were carried out in 6 regions.
- Network of informants continued producing results leading to 2 good operations.

Operations

- Operations were carried out in 5 regions arresting 23 major traffickers resulting in 23 court cases at a rate of 1 per 8 days.
- Operations on pangolin scales, ivory, human bones, leopard skins and mandrills each accounted for 20% of the total number of operations
- The rate of imprisonment of arrested offenders stood at 35%, a comparatively low percentage as a result of measures taken by authorities to decongest prisons to prevent the spread of Covid-19.
- 2 live mandrills were rescued from 3 primate traffickers.
- 2 military men were arrested for trafficking in pangolin scales
- 6 traffickers were arrested for dealing in human skeletons.

Legal

- 23 new cases were brought to court and represented (many of the cases began during the period have not yet reached the prosecution stage but procedures still ongoing).
- 13 traffickers were found guilty and 5 handed prison sentences, fines and damages while 8 were given fines and damages only. Damages amounted to some 5,942.000 F CFA (about \$11,884) to be paid to MINFOF.
- 13 court judgements were passed during the 6-month period and one of the court rulings gave a prison sentence of 5 years to 4 human bones traffickers.
- June had 4 court rulings handed to traffickers by the various courts.

Media

- A total of 188 media pieces were produced in national media (television, radio, press and internet) achieved at a rate of approximately one media piece per day.
- French TV channel France 2 broadcast a LAGA pangolin scales operation during its prime time programme “Sur le Front”.
- The three top TV channels in Cameroon covered and broadcast the human bones trafficking operations carried out in the West of country.
- Over 20 media pieces were published on the link between wildlife trade and Covid-19 pandemic.

Management

- The annual report for 2019 was printed and distributed to all stakeholders.
- An internet investigator came to end of his stay with the organisation and moved on for newer challengers.
- Focus was on respecting measures to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic and push forward for operations.

- A new head of the Media Department was appointed and Anna Etaka Egbe has been with the department since joining the organisation in 2006.

External Relations and Policy

- Several meetings were held with Justice officials, the diplomatic community, national and international NGOs to discuss corruption issues and wildlife law enforcement etc.
- LAGA pushed for articles in newspapers as part of activities to celebrate the World Pangolin Day and the Deputy Director joined the Cameroon Pangolin Working Group to carry out several activities marking celebrations for the day.

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Strategic Highlights

- The strategic focus during this period was on pangolin scales and ivory trafficking that led to the uncovering of the human bones trafficking in the West of the country.
- Focus was equally shifted from other areas to addressing the health situation.
- Strategies to improve on operations were equally developed and implemented.

EAGLE Activities

- A total of 50 traffickers were arrested across 4 countries of the network during this semester.
- Under the framework of the EAGLE exchange visits, an investigator from Gabon arrived the country where he stayed for a month.
- At least 144 media pieces were published in the countries spreading the message about the link between the illegal wildlife trade and the Covid-19 pandemic.

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Also available:

1. Annual Financial Statement and Semester I 2020
2. Monthly Financial and Activity Reports January to June 2020
3. Media archive – Excel database linked to recorded media pieces
4. Photo archive for media use

For copies contact email; eric@laga-enforcement.org

NARRATIVE REPORT

This report covers activities from January to June 2020. The report includes: the progress in activities of each department (Investigations, Operations, Legal, Media and Management), strategic overview and the impact of the operations on wildlife crime in Cameroon, progress in relations with the Cameroonian Government, non-governmental bodies, in the international arena, and in non-enforcement initiatives LAGA undertook.

1. Investigations

LAGA’s investigation unit carried out 72 investigation missions in 6 regions of the country. Collaboration with CCU investigation officer was very efficient and produced many good operations. Several meetings were held mainly on planning of departmental activities in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Early on before the onset of the pandemic, the department carried out a series of trainings and recycling sessions to upgrade the skills of investigators. New methods of carrying out information collection and analysis were developed and tried, while teamwork and combination of efforts were used in several instances to enable smooth investigations, elaboration and execution of strategies. These strategies led to the uncovering of human bone trafficking networks in the west of the country.

Under the framework of the EAGLE exchange programme an investigator from Gabon spent a month-long training and experience sharing visit to the country.

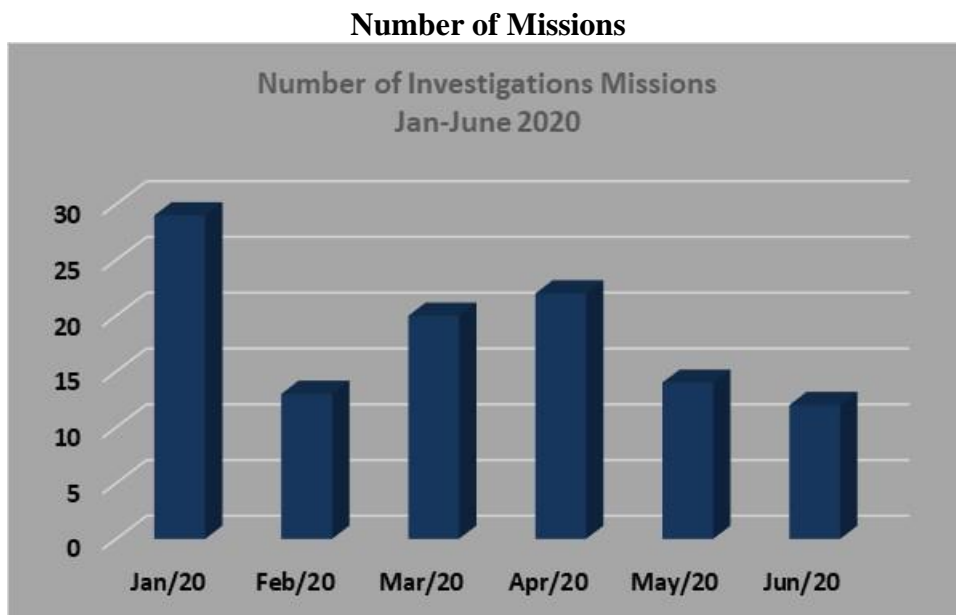


Figure 1: Number of Investigations Missions per Month

2. Operations

LAGA and the Government of Cameroon carried out operations in 5 regions against 23 individuals resulting in 23 court cases at a rate of one every 8 days. This represented 88% of the targeted results expected for the first semester of the year. New techniques were used during investigations and operations and it produced some stellar results with the arrest of two military men with 380kg of pangolin scales and the dismantling of some human bones trafficking networks in the West Region. Other bigger and important targets were equally investigated and it is expected that these would produce some important operations in the near future. Meanwhile operations carried out were distributed as follows: 20% for pangolin scales trafficking, 20% for, ivory trafficking, 20%, human bones trafficking, 20% for leopard skin trafficking and 20% for mandrill trafficking.

In February, a trafficker was arrested in Bandjoun, West Region with five leopard skins. The trafficker belongs to a network of leopard skins trafficking that is rife in the region. Members of the network are located in different towns of the region. The trafficker is a businessman in one of Bafoussam's main markets where he owns a shop. He equally passes as a traditional herbalist.

In April, four significant operations were carried and during the first operation four traffickers arrested in Kye-Ossi, South Region with a leopard skin. The traffickers belong to a trafficking ring close to the Gabon border, operating along three countries, Cameroon, Gabon and Equatorial Guinea, ensuring smooth illegal trade in parts of protected wildlife species including leopard skins and ivory. While two are dealers, two others are professional drivers ensuring the transboundary trafficking is expertly carried in the area.

During the second operation, a trafficker was arrested in Dimako, East Region with 50kg of pangolin scales, amidst the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. The woman had been arrested several times by the gendarmerie and released without any charges brought against her. She kept a gang of several poachers in several localities including Mbang and Atchoc in the East Region, who supplied her with wildlife products. She would travel to the notorious Nkolndongo market in Yaounde where she supplied other traffickers. She violently resisted arrest during the operation hoping his friends at the gendarmerie who constantly release her following each arrest would come to her rescue. It is considered that the origin of the pandemic is related to the illegal trade in pangolins and consumption of its meat in China.

A third operation of the month would see a trafficker arrested in Yaounde, Centre Region with a young mandrill. He had been keeping the mandrill he had bought in Akom II in the South Region for some time while exploring opportunities to sell the animal.

During the last operation of the month two traffickers arrested in Lolodorf, South Region with a young and wounded mandrill. The pair had travelled overnight to avoid detection and arrived the town of Lolodorf where they set out to sell the animal before their arrest. They collaborated in wildlife trafficking; one of them specializing in the buying and the other checking out clients. They bought the mandrill in a small village called Bipindi.

In May, three traffickers were arrested in Douala, Littoral Region with two ivory tusks weighing 26kg. The three ran a small ivory trafficking group that was very cautious in their dealings but at the end the operation succeeded in ensuring all were arrested.

Still in May, four traffickers were arrested in Foubot in the West Region with human bones, following a wildlife crime investigation. Three of them were arrested with an almost complete human skeleton that still had dried up flesh on the bones and a human skull with hair on it. Further investigation by the gendarmerie led to the arrest of a 4th trafficker. The four belong to a larger

network that was specialized in trafficking human bones and had connections to other countries of the sub region. Investigations show they seem to be able to supply dozens of human bones. The corpse of the deceased young lady was dug out from Kouoptamo in the West Region. They operated an organized network with each having a specific role to play; those who dug out the corpses; those who did the marketing, searching for customers and the lady who was the 4th to be arrested kept the human remains at her residence.

In June, two traffickers were arrested in Bertoua, East Region with two ivory tusks. One of the two had been under investigations for a long time as he had been involved in ivory trafficking for several years. He violently resisted arrest during the operation. They are part of a network stretching to CAR and connected to Congo.

During the second operation of May, three traffickers including two military men were arrested in Yaounde in the Centre Region with 380kg of pangolin scales. A woman who was part of the deal was arrested a couple of hours later at her residence following the arrest of the two military men. She is a well-known trafficker in several wildlife products at the Nkolndongo bushmeat market and a house search at her premises would reveal several animal carcasses including pangolins. She had been the target of investigations for at least two years. The military men explained explicitly how they used their military status to avoid arrest during trafficking. One of them was of the Presidential Guard, and was swiftly removed by his hierarchy following this arrest in a strong message that its uniforms will not be used to cover illegal activities, and any knowledge of an illegal activity will result in swift action.

During the third operation, two traffickers were arrested in Foubot in the West Region with human bones, following a wildlife crime investigation. The two were arrested with two almost complete human skeletons that had been carefully packed in two suitcases. They used the internet to carry out their illegal activity where they advertised their products under code names and equally searched for clients who they claim included clients from abroad. One of the traffickers travelled from Ambam near the Cameroon south border to the west to carry out the transaction.

Operations Table

| Number of Operations | Number of Traffickers | Contraband |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| 9 | 23 | 5 leopard skins, 1 leopard skin, 2 live mandrills, 50kg pangolin scales, 2 ivory tusks, an almost complete human skeleton, 2 full human skeletons, 380kg of pangolin scales, 2 ivory tusks |

Figure 2: Operation Table

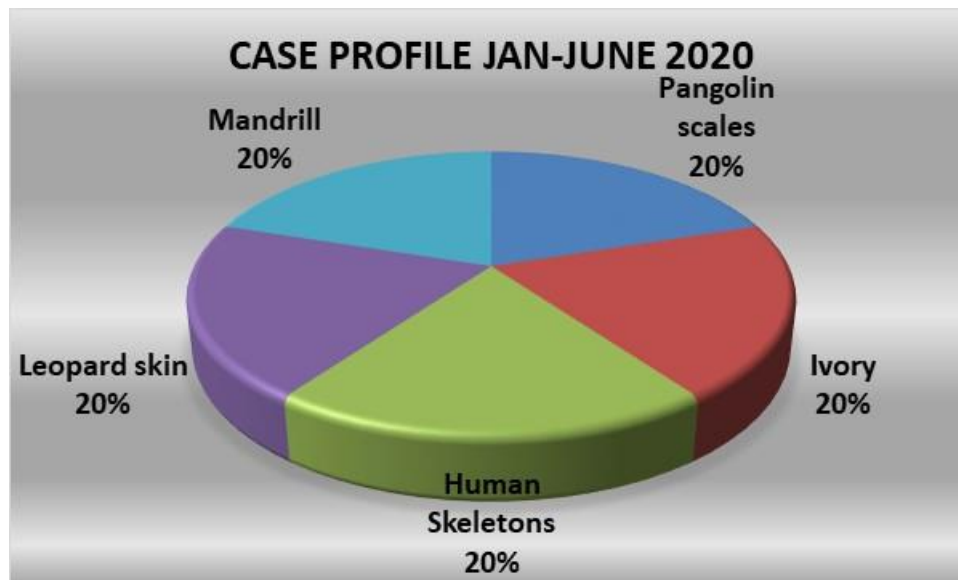


Figure 3: Case profile

3. Legal

During this period, 23 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. Most of the cases initiated within this period have not yet reached the prosecution stage with 35% imprisoned throughout the process. On the instruction of the government department in charge of justice and because of the Covid-19 pandemic, state prosecutors were given new guidelines on releasing on bail, people arrested for offences following measures aimed at reducing congestion at prisons where people are kept while their trials take place.

A total of 52 missions were carried out of the Centre Region for follow-up of new cases and the creation and strengthening of relations with judiciary authorities. More emphasis as a direct result of operations was on, pangolin scales, ivory and leopard skins.

During this period, 6 court judgements were passed with 13 traffickers found guilty and one not guilty. 5 were given prison sentences while 8 were ordered to pay fines and damages in a worrying spectre of sentences passed with an unusual tendency for leniency. Despite the weaknesses of the sentences, no appeals were lodged and this lack of deterrent sentences is being addressed through other mechanism.

One significant court judgement was passed in the Court of First Instance in Foubot where four were found guilty and given 5 years in prison for trafficking in human bones. Damages awarded to MINFOF amounted to some 5,942,000 F CFA (about \$11,884).

In February 2 judgements were passed and in the first judgement, the Ekounou Court of First Instance found the accused LOKO BASSILIKIN, FOGANG FOKOUA Bruno, NKOUGA Valère, OUSMANOU Baba and KENNE Emmanuel guilty and sentenced them to 200,000 FCFA (about \$400) each as fines, 46,000 FCFA (about \$90) each as court fees and 400,000 FCFA (about \$800) jointly as damages. They were arrested in Yaounde on the 05/09/2019 for the illegal possession of 2 elephant tusks.

In April, the Douala - Bonanjo Court of First Instance found the accused SUA Jocelin not guilty and LADINGA Joseph NCHUNU guilty, and sentenced him to pay 100,000 FCFA (about \$200) as fines

and 1,000,000 FCFA (about \$2000) as damages. They were arrested in Douala on the 24/05/2019 for the illegal possession and circulation of 237 kg of pangolin scales.

In June, three court rulings were passed and included the judgement at the Kribi Court of First Instance that found the accused NGAMBI Ruben and TSOGO BIKUE Sinclair guilty and sentenced them to pay 50,000 FCFA (about \$100) each as fine and 500,000 FCFA (about \$1000) as damages. He was arrested in Lolodorf on the 25/04/2020 for illegal possession of a mandrill.

The Foubot Court of First Instance found the accused AMADOU TIJANI, KPOUHENZEN Radifatou, SAPTT Aboubakar and ABDEL Aziz guilty and sentenced them to a 5-year imprisonment term and to pay 100,000 each FCFA as fines. They were arrested on the 20/05/2020 for illegal sale of a human skeleton.

The Douala – Ndokoti Court of First Instance found the accused ABDOUL NASSIR Sali guilty and sentenced him 20 days closed imprisonment term and to pay 54,000 FCFA (about \$108) as fines and 1,042,000 FCFA (about \$2084) as damages. He was arrested in Douala on the 20/06/2019 for the illegal possession, circulation and commercialization of 95 Kgs of pangolin scales

The Abong-Mbang Court of First Instance found the accused NGOBA Lucie guilty and sentenced her to pay 500,000 FCFA as fine and 3,000,000 FCFA (about \$6000) as damages. She was arrested in Dimako on the 09/04/2020 for the illegal possession, circulation and sale of 50kg of pangolin scales.

No appeals were lodged during this period against court rulings;

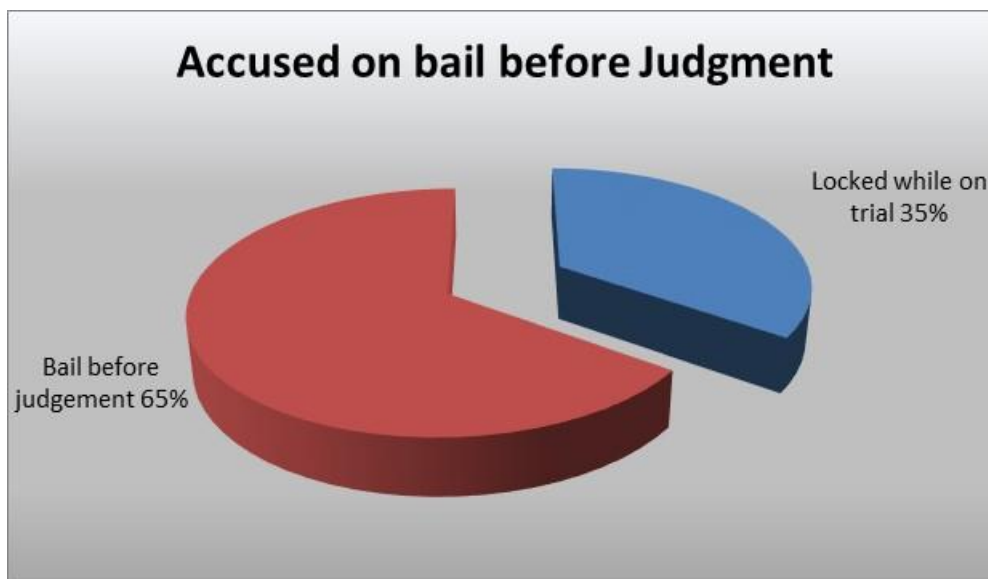


Figure 4: Rate of locking accused behind bars

4. Media

A new head of the Media Department was appointed and Anna Etaka Egbe has been with the department since joining the organisation in 2006.

A total of 188 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 one media piece per day. April had the highest number of media pieces while January recorded no media pieces because of

the absence of operations and important court trials and work resumed mid-way through the month following the annual vacation.

Special efforts were made on spreading the message on the link between the illegal wildlife trade and the Covid-19 pandemic with over 20 media pieces published.

Subjects were on a broad range of wildlife law enforcement issues including all of LAGA-MINFOF operations, prosecutions and fighting corruption. Among the topics featuring in the media include, the celebration of the World Pangolin Day, the Bandjoun arrest of a trafficker with five leopard skins and the court hearing, , parrot traffickers' arrests in Kribi, the Kye-Ossi arrest of four with a leopard skins, the Dimako arrest of a trafficker with two bags of pangolin scales, Covid-19 and wildlife trade, the Yaounde arrest of a trafficker with a live mandrill, the Lolodorf arrest of two with a live mandrill, the Douala arrest of three ivory traffickers, the Foubot arrest of human bones traffickers, the arrest of three traffickers with close to 400kg of pangolin scales in Yaoundé, the arrest of two human bones traffickers in Foubot and the Bertoua arrest of two with ivory tusks.

Interviews and quotes used in the various media pieces were from: The Gendarmerie Company Commander in Foubot, the Foubot Gendarmerie Brigade Commander, the LAGA Deputy Director and the Director of LAGA.

The writing and collection of articles for the 9th edition of Wildlife Justice went underway and its production is expected in the months ahead.

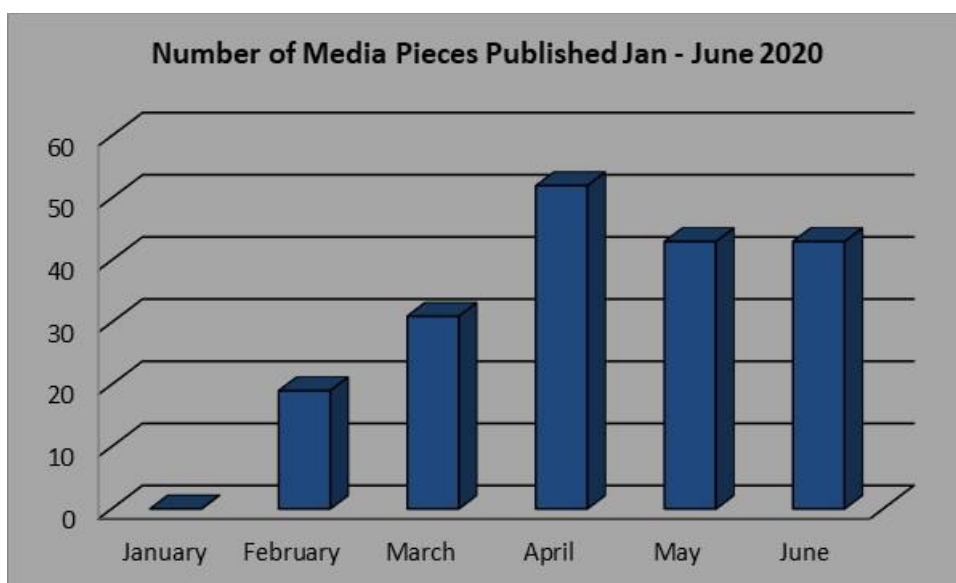


Figure 5: Number of Media Pieces Produced and Published

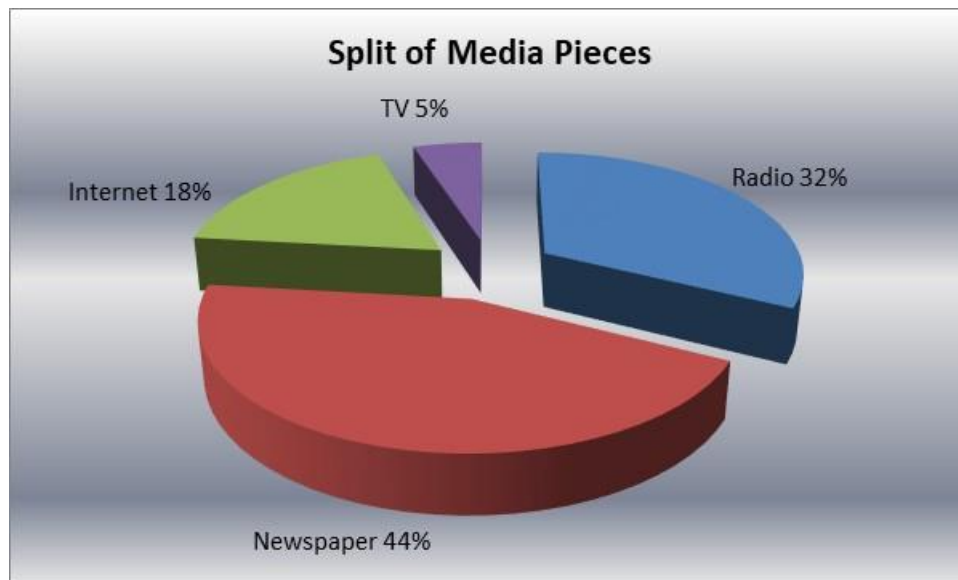


Figure 6: Split of Media Pieces

5. Management

Covid-19 pandemic piled obstacles but the LAGA team keep pushing forward. As with many other organisations, the pandemic affected the normal functioning of the organisation and management put in place an effective mechanism to running activities. The entire team was sent home following the increase in cases of Covid-19 but came back to push for operations with remarkable success, courage and activism. Management placed emphasis on the conscientious application of prescribed measures. The measures included governments instructions to preventing Covid-19 in the country and supplementary directives developed by the organization to fully reinforce and protect the health of every LAGA member. Coordination of field activity and ensuring financial activities were efficiently carried out despite the difficulties presented by the situation.

In cases where live animals were seized, extra measures were put in place and applied in addition to the animal first aid measures that are normally applied. Management equally liaised effectively with the Central Coordination Unit on reporting and updating on the situation in all EAGLE countries and the prescription of barrier measures to be applied.

Under the EAGLE exchange programme, training sessions continued to be held in Yaoundé – Cameroon, with an investigator from Gabon arriving the country for a month-long training and experience sharing visit.

The internet investigator who had been with the organisation for over two years came to the end of his stay and moved on to newer challenges.

The monthly of thought-provoking sessions of presentations and debates were suspended as part of measures put in place to fight the Covid-19 pandemic.

The LAGA team travelled to Batie, West Region to participate at funeral activities of their former colleague and member, Ma Mado who died after a long illness.

An Italian movie crew returned to the country to continue filming with the investigation and legal departments for the production of a movie depicting efforts may by the Cameroon government in fighting the illegal pangolins scales trade.

The Annual and the Second Semester reports of 2019 were printed with copies made available upon request. 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 including Investigations, Legal, Media, Operations and Management.

6. External Relations and Policy

One of the measures put in place by government was to avoid physical meetings and contacts as much as possible and the use virtual meetings whenever possible, because of the nature Covid-19 spreads and in this light, external relations activities were reduced to the barest minimum.

The Deputy Director held a meeting with the ZSL law enforcement advisor who was visiting the country. Discussions focused principally on wildlife law enforcement strategies, techniques and conservation in general. They also explored possible areas of cooperation and assistance.

The Deputy Director participated at meetings organized by the Cameroon Pangolin Working Group that was focused on preparations for the World Pangolin Day that took place on the 15th of February. Activities were carried out by several conservation organisations including LAGA, working under the framework of the Cameroon Pangolin Working Group and a press conference facilitated by the Deputy Director was done.

The Deputy Director did a short talk on LAGA's activities and its collaboration with Interpol at a three-day Interpol meeting that brought together Interpol, Wildlife and Customs officials who focused on finding state-level priorities and needs for an upcoming Interpol operation against wildlife trafficking.

On the invitation of the Belgian Ambassador, the Deputy Director participated at a meeting at the Secretariat of Defence in Charge of the Gendarmerie that brought together 5 top gendarmerie officials including the Central Deputy Director of Coordination and a technical adviser. The meeting was focused on discussing some wildlife cases at the courts with links to the gendarmerie.

The Deputy Director held a meeting with the President of Global Earth Watch and a consultant working for the conservation group. They discussed conservation problems in the northern regions of Cameroon including public awareness campaigns, transhumant pastoralism, community participation in initiatives. He exchanged with them, some experiences and practical ideas on how to optimise efforts towards the achievement of conservation objectives in the region.

The Deputy Director held a meeting with the Director of Criminal Matters at the Ministry of Justice to discuss a wildlife case.

The Head of the Investigations Department held a meeting with the Project Manager of the Ebo Forest Research Project to discuss issues pertaining to the proposed plan to contract portions of the forest to logging companies.

A legal adviser participated at a workshop organized by ZSL that aimed at training ecoguards of the TRIDOM on the protection of African grey parrots. She did two presentations, one on law enforcement activities carried out by LAGA against parrot traffickers and the other on the calculation of damages to be awarded MINFOF in wildlife cases.

Two legal advisers met with the Director of Criminal Matters at the Ministry of Justice to discuss the fight against wildlife crime.

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 preserve of LAGA. Collaboration between the EAGLE CCU and LAGA was intensified during this semester at all levels including investigations, operations, legal, media and management levels. LAGA continued to host training sessions in the country and in this regard, LAGA hosted an investigator from Gabon.

8. Fostering Activism

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>

Every normal year, activism activities include a couple of monthly documentaries and presentations to building the activism insight and spirit of members but due to the measures enforced to preventing Covid-19, the presentations were suspended. But before the situation grew worse at least one presentation had been done:

Control and Co-ordination in an organization: The presentation is on how to control and coordinate an organization, in other to achieve organizational objectives. The presenter mentions the fact that control and coordination are crucial managerial functions for every entrepreneur, to make sure that their goals are achieved within a given time. She started by defining the main concept, and explains how do these two functions are often confused with each other and sometimes seem to mean the same thing. Discussion focused on the difference between control and coordination, and how to effectively put these functions in place. In conclusion, it turns out that control is part of coordination, and one cannot be done without the other for the proper functioning of an organization.

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, apes, ivory and other elephant parts while sea turtles, pangolins and other wildlife received some attention too.

9.1 Pangolin Scales

A relatively significant seizure of pangolin scales was done in the depth of the health crisis highlighting the resolve of traffickers to carry out their illegal business irrespective of the dangers and threats associated with their activity. This was further compounded by the fact that the two who were arrested with 380kg of pangolin scales were military men who used that status to foster impunity in trafficking. They took advantage of the fact that they belonged to the Cameroon military and would inevitably never be arrested, using their uniforms to scare anyone especially wildlife officials who attempt to create any problems for them. To exemplify the case, a woman was arrested a couple of hours after the arrest and one of the two military men is her son she sent because of his military status to ensuring the illegal business was conducted to completion without any obstacles for them. .

Another pangolin scale operation was carried out in April with the arrest of another woman who had in the past been arrested several times by the gendarmerie and released without any charges brought against her. This was because a boyfriend of hers who is gendarmerie brigade commander in the town and would use his uniform to get her out of trouble. The trafficking of pangolin scales seems to be going unabated despite the health crisis enveloping the world today. Despite the link of pangolins with the Covid-19 pandemic, pangolin scales traffickers still calmly run their business. She kept a gang of several poachers who supplied her with wildlife products. She would travel to the notorious Nkolndongo market in Yaounde where she supplied other traffickers.

9.2 Ivory

Ivory trafficking was part of operations carried out within the semester. Three were arrested in an operation carried out in Douala, the most important ivory trafficking hotspot in the country. This is true by nature of its location as the exit port of the country where ivory can easily be exported to several destinations. Three traffickers were operating as a small group when they were arrested with two ivory tusks weighing 26kg. They were very cautious in their dealings and transactions but were arrested as they attempted to sell the ivory.

A long time ivory trafficker who had been under investigations for a long time was finally arrested alongside an accomplice in Bertoua with two ivory tusks at his disposal. The arrest that was carried in June concluded a long running investigations against him. He was well known to carry out illegal activities and he admitted to gold trafficking. They are part of a network stretching to CAR and connected to Congo.

The two ivory operations carried out over the 6-month period once more indicate the nature of ivory trafficking that is connected to other forms of trafficking such as gold trafficking, it extends beyond borders in the sub region and it is a permanent feature in Cameroon's port city of Douala. Ivory trafficking is ongoing all the time there.

9.3 Leopard Skin

Two operations carried out within this period witnessed the arrest of several leopard skin traffickers amidst the continuous trade in the feline skins. As natural as it already looks, one of the operations was carried out in the West Region where traffickers are now using traditions and rites to justify trafficking in leopard skins. Because leopard skins is a huge part of the tradition of the people of the West Region, traffickers are taking advantage tradition to attempt “leopard skin launder”. Fresh skins are seized from traffickers who most of the time lie they are traditional products of the various palaces. There is also a new phenomenon in the area where traffickers steal skins from the palaces and sell. The trafficker who was arrested in Bandjoun with five leopard skins had travelled to the East Region where he bought one of the skins. He owns a shop at one of the main markets in Bafoussam, the capital of the West Region.

During a second leopard skin operation four traffickers were arrested in Kye-ossi, South, with a leopard skin. They ran an illegal business of leopard skins across the border from the neighbouring countries to Cameroon extending to the West Region where leopard skin trafficking is rife. That is the nature of leopard skin trafficking, sourcing the skins from areas where demand is not very strong to areas where demand is strong in the country.

9.4 Mandrills

Mandrills do not frequently come up in illegal trade as their cousins the chimps and gorillas but two operations were carried out within the period that saw the seizure and rescue of two live mandrills. Mandrills generally end up as food in the bushmeat chain or as pets. A trafficker was arrested in Yaounde, with a young mandrill he had been keeping for a while after buying it in the south of the country, home to mandrill populations. And still in the south, two traffickers were arrested in Lolodorf, South Region with a young and wounded mandrill. They collaborated in wildlife trafficking; one of them specializing in the buying and the other checking out clients.

9.5 Human bones

In the fight against wildlife trafficking, several other areas of criminality have been brought to the fore to enforcement officials. The trafficking in drugs, human beings, arms, terrorism are all other forms of criminality that wildlife law enforcement is constantly and increasing uncovering. In carrying out wildlife investigations, severally traffickers have been found to engage in these forms and this was the case when six traffickers were arrested during two separate operations with human skeletons. The link between wildlife criminality and other forms is being proven on the ground every day.

In May, during investigations into wildlife trafficking in the West Region, leads were found into human bones trafficking and this resulted in the arrest of four traffickers with an almost complete human skeleton that still had dried up flesh on the bones and a human skull with hair on it.

In June, during a new round of wildlife investigations in the same area, human bones trafficking was gains discovered and this led to the arrest of two with two almost full human skeletons. One of them left from the border town of Ambam in the south to complete business in the area that has become notorious for human bones trafficking. Ivory investigations were being carried out in the area leading to this discovery.

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 conferences, 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 fight directly whenever corrupt practices or bribery attempts have been observed.

This ongoing fight is being manifested in some results either directly or indirectly. In March and following the arrest of leopard skin traffickers in Kye-ossi and as wildlife law enforcement officials were establishing the offence report, they received pressure from one member of a trafficker's family and the chief of the Bamoun community in Kye-Ossi. They proposed money to the judicial police officers to facilitate the release of those arrested but the officers who were in charge of writing the offence reports refused. Failing to bring in their expected results they turned to the LAGA team on the ground but failed.

In April, when a trafficker was arrested with 50kg of pangolin scales, the wildlife law enforcement officials establishing the offence report received pressure from the boyfriend of the suspect who is a Brigade commander. He tried to influence his colleagues to free her at their level but the wildlife officials and police handling the matter stood their ground. Seeing that his colleagues could not help, he approached the LAGA team, unfortunately this too failed to produce any effect. He wanted to use his position to influence the preliminaries enquiries. When the state prosecutor became aware of the situation he decided to direct and control the preliminaries enquiries himself.

Still in April when a mandrill trafficker was arrested, his mother would arrive the offices of the gendarmerie to find a way to stop the matter at the level of the gendarmerie but the wildlife officials and gendarmes handling the matter again stood their ground. She would attempt the same approach with the LAGA team on the ground for the same results.

The same situation would obtain in Lolodorf in the south following the arrest of two with a live mandrill and as wildlife law enforcement officials were writing the offence report, family members of the traffickers came to the brigade to propose a bribe to the brigade commander to end the procedure there but he chased them away. He also said MINFOF officials had full control of the procedure. Such strong commitment to fighting corruption may not have been the same after the prosecution file went further than the judicial police officers and at the end of the day one of them was found not guilty.

When three were arrested in Douala for unlawful possession of two ivory tusks, the commonly used tactics of trying to influence officers doing offense reports was once again witnessed as they approached the Littoral Regional Delegate of Forestry and Wildlife to influence the procedure and get the traffickers released but this failed and their next move was to try the same tactics with the state prosecutor.

In a totally different town this time in Bertoua, same offence, unlawful possession of two ivory tusks and same commonly used tactics; trying to get officers drop the prosecution was again witnessed. As wildlife law enforcement officials wrote the offence report at the offices of the regional delegation, one of the traffickers' brother proposed a huge amount of money as bribe to the MINFOF official, who was in charge of the matter for him to find a way to stop the matter at his level but he simply refused to take the money. They equally approached the LAGA team but obviously failed to get any results. .

Overview of International Wildlife Traffic in Cameroon



Annex I – Case Tracking System – January – June 2020

| <u>Case No.</u> | <u>Date</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>Case name</u> | <u>Offence</u> | <u>Profile</u> | <u>Remarks</u> | <u>Int. link</u> | <u>Initial Status</u> |
|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|--|--|--------------------|--|------------------|-----------------------|
| 640 | 24/02/2020 | Bandjoun West | TCHAPTCHET Noe | Illegal possession of 5 leopard skins | Tradipraticitioner | He belongs to a network of trafficking in varied wildlife products notably leopard skins and elephant trophies. He is based in Bafoussam and receives products from partners, use his connections to sell them and his commission is paid based on the sales he makes. | None | Police custody |
| 641 | 03/04/2020 | Kye-ossi South | TCHATCHOUANG Duclio | Illegal possession of 01 leopard skin | Driver | He is part of a network that deals with leopard skins and ivory, he is one of the main person in charge of publicizing their products to get potential buyers then have his own commission. | Gabon | Police custody |
| 642 | 03/04/2020 | Kye-ossi South | MBENMOUN Aboubakar | Illegal possession of 01 leopard skin | Trader | Being part of the network, he has relations in Fouban where he places orders and organises products to be sent using travelling agencies to be sold. | Gabon | Police custody |
| 643 | 03/04/2020 | Kye-ossi South | ABBA Boukar | Illegal possession of 01 leopard skin | Trader | He is a tradipraticitioner and hides behind it to propose the real business to customers who come to buy his medicine, once a product is sold he receives his own share | Gabon | Police custody |
| 644 | 03/04/2020 | Kye-ossi South | NGOUNGA YAONGOJO Ismaïla | Illegal possession of 01 leopard skin | Driver | He is the main brain of this network, he organises and make all sales arrangements and plans when and where the transaction is to take place. | Gabon | Police custody |
| 645 | 09/04/2020 | Dimako South | NGOBA Lucie | Illegal possession of 22 Kg of pangolin scales | Trader | She is a big business woman who does many types of businesses including wildlife protected products, she is highly connected with the forces of law and order with whom she counts on her protection. She supplies great quantities of products to major towns | None | Police custody |

| <u>Case No.</u> | <u>Date</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>Case name</u> | <u>Offence</u> | <u>Profile</u> | <u>Remarks</u> | <u>Int. link</u> | <u>Initial Status</u> |
|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------|---|------------------|-----------------------|
| 646 | 17/04/2020 | Yaounde Centre | BIKAÏ ONGUENE Joseph | Illegal possession of 1 live Mandrill | Student | He is a student and take selling of live protected animals like a business, he buys live primate, grow and sell them to interested persons . He usually buys from far off villages and illegally transport them to Yaounde. | None | Police custody |
| 647 | 25/04/2020 | Lolodorf South | NGAMBI NGAMBI Ruben | Illegal possession of 1 live Mandrill | Trader | He belongs to a network of primate selling, he has agents he sends to the villages to get animals while he maintains and create new markets, | None | Police custody |
| 648 | 25/04/2020 | Lolodorf South | TSOGO BIKUE Sinclair | Illegal possession of 1 live Mandrill | Trader | He is one of the errand boys of Ngambi who goes around looking for live protected animals while his boss negotiates the | None | Police custody |
| 649 | 07/05/2020 | Douala Littoral | TCHEUKOU Théophile | Illegal possession of 2 ivory tusks | Mechanic | He is accomplice of Makembe and Manyombe. He was in charge of transporting of the ivory tusks | None | Police custody |
| 650 | 07/05/2020 | Douala Littoral | MANYOMBE Samuel | Illegal possession of 2 ivory tusks | Former stewardess | She is owner of the ivory seized. She is the one organized the traffic of wildlife products in their network. | None | Police custody |
| 651 | 07/05/2020 | Douala Littoral | MAKEMBE Juliette Lydie | Illegal possession of 2 ivory tusks | Businessman | In the network, he is in charge seeking customers for saling of wildlife products. He also smuggled gold and mercury | None | Police custody |
| 652 | 20/05/2020 | Foumbot West | KPOUHENZEN Radifatou | illegal traffic of skeletons | Farmer | Member of a well established network of the human bone traffickers. She is in charge of keeping of the products when they are dug up. It is a old traffickers network of wildlife products | Gabon, Nigeria | Police custody |
| 653 | 20/05/2020 | Foumbot Wesy | AMADOU Tijani | illegal traffic of skeletons | Taxi driver | Hi the head of the well established network of skeleton. Its role is to seek customers | Gabon, Nigeria | Police custody |

| <u>Case No.</u> | <u>Date</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>Case name</u> | <u>Offence</u> | <u>Profile</u> | <u>Remarks</u> | <u>Int. link</u> | <u>Initial Status</u> |
|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|---|---|------------------------------------|---|------------------|-----------------------|
| 654 | 20/05/2020 | Foumbot West | SAPTT Aboubakar | illegal traffic of skeletons | Farmer | Another member of a well established network of skeleton. His role is to unearth the bodies and hand over to Tijani who is looking for buyers | Gabon, Nigeria | Police custody |
| 655 | 20/05/2020 | Foumbot West | ABDEL Aziz | illegal traffic of skeletons | Farmer | Another member of a well established network of skeleton. His role is also to unearth the bodies and hand over to Tijani who is looking for buyers | Gabon, Nigeria | Police custody |
| 656 | 03/06/2020 | Bertoua East | NDINGA Babas Stanislas | Illegal possession of 2 ivory tusks | Cashier in a microfinance | A well-known dealer arrested for trading in the ivory tusk. Used cover as a banker to carry out illegal trade in wildlife. He has been doing this business for years with his accomplice | CRA | Police custody |
| 657 | 03/06/2020 | Bertoua East | TOUMAYA G r mie | Illegal possession of 2 ivory tusks | motobike rider | A member of NDINGA Baba network involved in ivory trafficking in the east region and between CRA and Cameroon. He is responsible for searching clients. Arrested in Yaounde while trying to illegally trade in 2 elephant tusks with. | CRA | Police custody |
| 658 | 07/06/2020 | Yaounde Centre | ATOUBA Bekono Martin Paul | illegal possession of 359 kg of pangolin scales | Military at the presidential guard | The biggest wildlife trafficker he is a sergeant at the garde presidentielle. He is at the center of a vast network of traffickers. He uses his military status to traffic wildlife products | None | Police custody |
| 659 | 07/06/2020 | Yaounde Centre | AYOO ATOUBA Marguerite | illegal possession of 359 kg of pangolin scales | trader | The biggest wildlife trafficker in Cameroon arrested in yaounde two military and a high level trafficker in wildlife products arrested with 359 kg Pangolin scales while attempting to sell. | None | Police custody |
| 660 | 07/06/2020 | Yaounde Centre | ETO ETOAMIE Marcelin Junior | illegal possession of 359 kg of pangolin scales | Second class navy soldier | He is the son of madame AYOO Atouba. His role is to collect the money and hand it over to his mother who is the head of the network | None | Police custody |

| <u>Case No.</u> | <u>Date</u> | <u>Location</u> | <u>Case name</u> | <u>Offence</u> | <u>Profile</u> | <u>Remarks</u> | <u>Int. link</u> | <u>Initial Status</u> |
|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------|---|------------------|-----------------------|
| 661 | 26/06/2020 | Foumbot West | LONTSI Saint Claire | illegal traffic of 2 human skeletons | Trader | Member of a well established network of the human bone traffickers. Its role is to seek customers. It is an old traffickers network of wildlife products. He also smuggled gold and mercury | None | Police custody |
| 662 | 26/06/2020 | Foumbot West | AMINOU Fakoue | illegal traffic of 2 human skeletons | Trader | Member of a well established network of the human bone traffickers. She is in charge of keeping of the products when they are dug up. | None | Police custody |

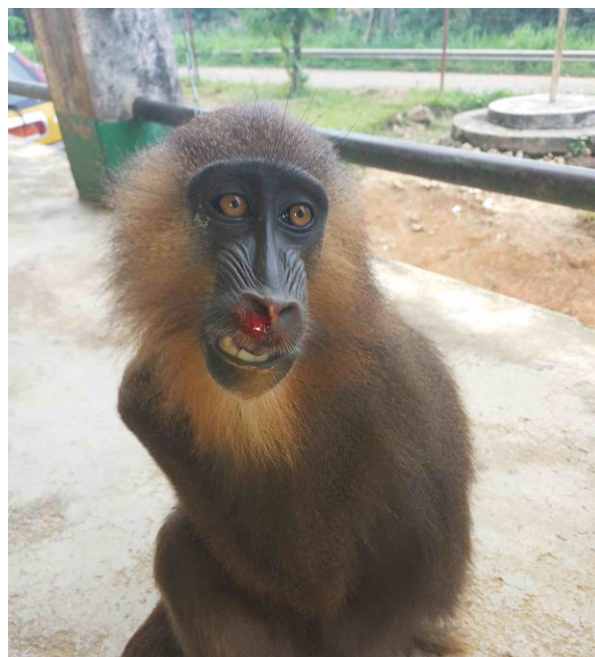
Annex II - Semester in Pictures



Gendarmes arrest human bones traffickers in the West Region (above) the woman kept the bones at her residence (right)



Two arrested in Fombot for human bones trafficking (left and above)



Rescued mandrill



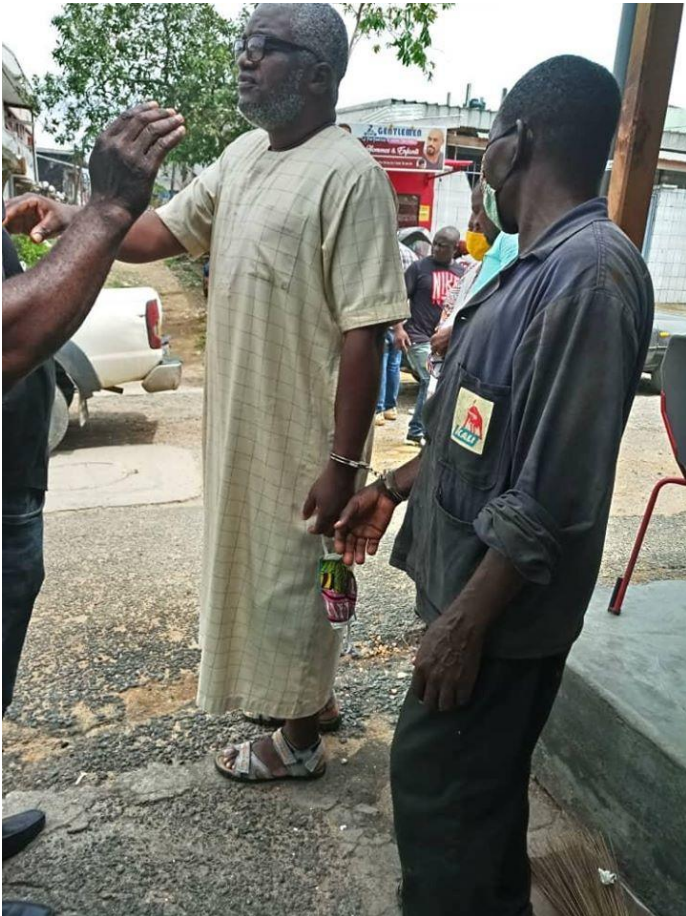
Gendarmes arrest military men trafficking in pangolin scales weighing 380kg (left and above)



50kg of pangolin scales seized from a trafficker



Wildlife officials measure ivory seized from two traffickers



Two arrested in Douala for ivory trafficking in Douala (left) and two arrested ivory traffickers in Bertoua (above)



Five big leopard skins seized from trafficker in Bandjoun West Region



He awaits the start of prosecutorial proceedings at the gendarmerie after his arrest with leopard skins

Annex III - Semester Media Links

In February Alwihda info, an online news website, focused on preparations for the celebration of the World Pangolin Day, which was held on February 15, 2020. It mentions the holding of a press conference in collaboration with other organizations such as TRAFFIC and TIKKI HYWOOD Foundation. The publication highlights the fact that the public must be informed and alerted to the threats facing the pangolin so as to act for the preservation of the endangered species.

https://www.alwihdainfo.com/Cameroun-Journee-mondiale-du-Pangolin-Les-preparatifs-s-accelerent_a82604.html

In March, Camer.be, an online news site focused on the arrest of a wildlife trafficker with 5 leopard skins in Bandjoun, West Region. The article also draws attention to the trafficking in leopard skins amidst the fact that the leopard is a totally protected species.

<https://www.camer.be/79324/11:1/cameroun-trafficker-arrested-in-bandjoun-cameroon.html>

In April, Camer.be, looked at the Covid-19 pandemic and its relationship with the illegal trade in pangolins. The article equally calls attention to the ban of wildlife trade as part of the solution to contain Covid-19 as well as prevent future health crisis.

<https://www.camer.be/mobile/79884/11:1/cameroun-covid-19-and-wildlife-trade-cameroon.html>

In May, Camer.be was on the arrest of human bones traffickers in Foubot. The news site exposes the fact that it was an investigation on illegal wildlife trafficking that led to the arrest.

<https://www.camer.be/mobile/80579/11:1/cameroun-gendarmes-arrest-three-with-full-human-skeleton-cameroon.html>

In June, , the link of the month was on our YouTube channel, and it focuses on human bones traffickers arrested in Foubot on the 20th of May 2020. The 3 traffickers were about to sell a full skeleton when they were arrested. Several traffickers in human bones have been arrested in the Noun Division.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=izFzdyh0EPE>