

June 2006 Report

Highlights -

- Operation against **lions products laundering** operation of Safari Company Worker
- Operation against a **shop systematically trading protected species**.
- **Ape dealer operation** in Littoral Province.
- **Complaint report is completed** with charges against 3 main suspects of a syndicat accused in the ivory trafficking affair, an **international request for their arrest** is issued by the INTERPOL.

General

March month has been a difficult but successful month. The suspension of officer Julius and major health problems of Marius, the head of investigation unit presented a major set back this month. Despite these difficulties LAGA managed to deliver results in all four fronts.

The international ivory investigation continued to produce results and ended a first round in concrete charges against an identified syndicate and an international request for the arrest of its members. Efforts have started to secure good governance in a future trial and the incident was used to gain more support from the international community in more meetings with the American Ambassador, the British High Commissioner, and the First Secretary of the German Embassy.

Efforts sponsored by the Born Free Foundation concerning illegal trade in lions were concretised in an important operation discovering illegal trade in lions products in the cover of legal trade of a safari company. Another operation saw the rescue of a baby chimpanzee. The survivor is now in the Limbe Wildlife Centre. Yet another operation was carried against a shop in Yaounde identified to trade in large scale in various protected species including – apes, elephants and crocodiles in a systematic manner. Some of these operations targeted wealthy and well connected individuals and are a test to this process.

All of this month's operations were documented by a foreign TV crew.

As a vote of confidence, the head of Cameroon's INTERPOL NCB has invited LAGA to join its delegation to the Interpol Wildlife Working Group meeting.

LAGA Director is invited to a panel in the US Embassy and presents the paper – "Know Your Enemy – Revising Protected Areas Strategy".

Investigations

- **16 investigations were held in 6 provinces.**

Operations

- **4 operations** were carried out in 3 provinces with the National MINFOF brigade, department of wildlife and the provincial delegations.
- 11/6 – **Lions operation in Garoua** North Province. A long-time worker in Hunting Safari companies has been arrested undertaking lions trade in Garoua, North Province. The dealer is noted to have been using the legal activities of these companies to cover illegal trade in products of protected wildlife species,

notably lions and leopards. This is the second arrest in the North province involving lions trade, and it comes a few months after Cameroon hosted an international conference on African lions conservation strategy initiated by the secretariat of the convention on trade in endangered species (CITES) in response to the declining population of the world's lions. Lion conservation is thus undergoing a political process in reaction to research indications that the world's lion population has dropped by 50 per cent in the last decade. During the lion conservation conference held in Douala, Cameroon identified trade in lion skins as a major cause of in the declining of lion population in Central and West Africa, and strongly insisted on the effective application of the wildlife laws as only solution to the crisis.

- 27/6 - an operation was carried against a **shop in Yaounde** identified to trade in large scale from its basement in various protected species including – apes, elephants and crocodiles in a systematic manner. Catalogue numbers were given to items described as Elephant skull, Chimpanzee bone, Gorilla skull (probably a mandrill skull misidentified), Aardvark hand , stuffed Turaco birds, and many other Class A animals. The owner Mrs. C. Fouda is a daughter of the first mayor of Yaounde, a sister to a former minister and a very wealthy and well connected individual. This case presents a challenge to the fight against corruption LAGA is undertaking.
- 29/6 –**Ape dealer operation** in Kopongo Littoral Province. The operation was not fully successful, as while the chimp was rescued and the complaint report channelled, the offender managed to escape. An arrest warrant was issued and LAGA will insure the offender gets arrested.
- Operations continued on the **international ivory investigation** front including the arrest of Thierry Bella.
- **Officer Julius is suspended** from LAGA after failing to appear on time for an attempt for a 5th operation.
 - For more details see LAGA's case tracking System.

Legal

- There are **16 dealers behind bars**: 2 in the west province; 7 in the south province (5 in Nsangmelima, 2 in Kribi); 4 in the littoral; 2 in the north, 1 in the central province)
- - 8 cases are scheduled in the court this month.
 - 9cases waiting for the process to reach the court of appeal
 - 1 case waiting for the process of opposition to start
 - 7 cases waiting for a date of trial (on process in front of the state attorney or the MINFOF)
 - 9 cases on execution process

- **One prosecution:** the court fined the parties with a civil award of 300.000 in the case of Djikombe and Goumbe in fouban
- 1 appeal filed concerning the sentence on the case mentioned above.
- Legal unit is still involved in the international **investigation of 3.9 tones** of ivory smuggled from Cameroon to China. **A complaint report is prepared** and sent to the National brigade MINFOF to put in form and sent to the court.
- Two letters are initiated by LAGA to be signed by the MINFOF and send one to the wildlife and fish service of USA and 2nd for the CITES management authority of Hong Kong concerning DNA testing on the ivory seized in Hong Kong
- A trip was planned to **DRC for the Bonobo smuggling case** LAGA represents there. The trip is later postponed to September.

Media front

- **32 media pieces** were produced and pushed to radio TV and written press: 3 radio talk shows (2 French, 1 English), 16 radio newsflashes (10 French, 6 English), 1 English radio news feature, 2 TV news features (English+ French), 10 written press pieces.
- Subjects – wildlife law enforcement including Signing the agreement with the Government, Garoua lions operation, Douala arrest on a Chinese ship, Yaounde shop operation, Guinean ivory dealers, West Province prosecution, North west seizure, parliamentarian involvement in wildlife law enforcement, wildlife school ex-student join the fight against wildlife trade, new project tracing illegal trade in wildlife launched, wildlife trade and related diseases.
- Guests – including, Minister MINFOF, Members of parliament, British High Commissioner, Chief of Dja Periphery, CARPE Focal Point, Vice President of ASSANEFG, , and NGOs as IDA, CWF and EIA.
- All of this month's operations were documented by a **foreign TV crew**. – Cicada Productions working on a series documenting Wildlife Law Enforcement.

External Relations and Policy

- As a vote of confidence, the head of Cameroon's **INTERPOL NCB** has invited LAGA to join its delegation to the Interpol Wildlife Working Group meeting.
- LAGA Director is invited to a panel in the **US Embassy** and presents the paper – "Know Your Enemy – Revising Protected Areas Strategy".
- LAGA attends **two policy meetings** on revising the protection classification of animals and traditional hunting.
- The **Bonobo smuggling case** in DRC is continuing to the next stage.
- Efforts have started to secure good governance in a future trial and the incident was used to gain more support from **the international community** in more meetings with the American Ambassador, the British High Commissioner, and the First Secretary of the German Embassy.

Finance

LAGA Expenditure for June 06

Amount CFA	Budget line	Details		Amount L
1,910,390	Investigations	13 investigations, 7 provinces	-1,910,390	\$3,674
1,835,050	Operations	4 operations including arrest HK	-3,745,440	\$3,529
2,158,375	legal	follow up 17 cases 16 locked su	-5,903,815	\$4,151
912,600	Media	32 media pieces	-6,816,415	\$1,755
248,983	Policy and External Relations		-7,065,398	\$479
1,504,400	Management	Coordination	-8,569,798	\$2,893
492,508	Office		-9,062,306	\$947
0	LAGA Family - Investing in team spirit and pro		-9,062,306	\$0
9,062,306	TOTAL EXPENDITURE JUNE		0	\$17,428

AmountCFA	Donor				Amount U
2,409,350	Born Free	Used	June	-2,409,350	\$4,633.4
1,954,881	World Bank	Used	June	-4,364,231	\$3,759.4
1,777,600	BHC	Used	June	-6,141,831	\$3,418.5
1,817,475	FWS	Used	June	-7,959,306	\$3,495.1
1,103,000	Arcus	Used	June	-9,062,306	\$2,121.2
9,062,306	TOTAL				\$17,427.5

Ofir Drori
 Director
 The Last Great Ape Organization

THIS MONTH IN PICTURES



Lions products seized, laundering activity of a Safari co.



Delegate with leopard skin and lions products seized

Hidden Camera picture before operation



Delegate with rescued chimp



**Yaounde shop operation -
Chimp bone and
a mandrill skull
identified as
gorilla skull**



**Yaounde shop operation
- Elephant skull - price
tag of 2,000 dollars**