

The Last Great Ape Organization – LAGA

December 2011 Report



Highlights

- **Concretization of replication in Chad continued this month**
- **7 dealers arrested in 3 different operations**
- **The year ended with excellent results from all the Departments**

General

This month was marked by a follow-up on replication in Chad and 3 operations arresting 7 dealers.

The concretization of replication in Chad continued with the LAGA Head of Legal Department travelling to Chad. He had a meeting with the Chadian Minister of Environment for an authorization to kick-start the projects. Other meetings were held with APROCOFF (Association pour la Promotion et la Conservation de la Faune et de la Flore) and APN (African Parks Network) on putting in place field procedures and starting investigations to identify major dealers. Another meeting was with the European Union to rally support from the International community.

7 dealers arrested this month in 3 different operations. In Mindourou – East, a female dealer of Baka origin and the Director of an NGO known as CADDAP (Action Centre for the Sustainable Development of Indigenous Communities) arrested with her accomplice while trying to traffic 4 elephant tusks, elephant tails and teeth. She uses the cover of the NGO to traffic ivory products.

In another operation, 4 dealers belonging to a network of ivory traffickers were arrested in Moloundou – East with 44 elephant tusks weighing 107 kg and 2 elephant tails stashed between bags of cocoa. The elephants were killed in the Lobeke National park. One of the dealers attempted to bribe the arresting officers with 5 million FCFA (about \$10,000) which was combated. The operation was headed by the Conservator of the Lobeke National Park. LAGA was instrumental in assuring that the right legal procedures were followed and the suspects conveyed to the Court. LAGA also planned and arrested another member of the network in Yokadouma.

In Mvangan – Ebolowa, a dealer in live primates was arrested with a live chimp while trying to illegally trade in it. He got the baby chimp after the mother had been killed. He is also reputed for selling bushmeat in the main town of Ebolowa. After his arrest, an unprocedural court process was observed. Instead of legally deciding on the steps to be taken, the State Counsel decided to send the file back to MINFOF stating that a transaction should be carried out with the dealer in question.

The year ended with excellent results - all the departments meeting up with the set targets despite some obstacles especially the Presidential elections that contributed in limited field missions and operations. Movement was limited and collaborators in the Ministry in charge of Wildlife could not travel, also, officers of the forces of law and order used in operations were all on security alert, therefore not available to go to the field.

Investigations

- **17 investigation missions** of varying lengths were carried out in **5 Regions** of Cameroon-East, Littoral, South, South West and Center.
- Investigators continued to be more involved in writing reports on illegal trade of protected wildlife and wildlife products. One investigator wrote a report on ivory trade in Cameroon and all encouraged by the LAGA Director to undertake more of such initiatives.

- Training of Investigators on operations procedure continued this month so that they could start to actively assist and help in controlling some operations in the field.
- This month saw continued involvement in investigations and operations procedures in the replication projects especially PALF – Congo and AALF – Gabon.

Operations

3 operations carried out this month against **7 subjects**.

- **04/12/11** – A well known **dealer in live primates** arrested in Mvangan – Ebolowa – South Region with a **live chimp** while trying to illegally trade in it. He got the baby chimp after the mother had been killed. He is also reputed for selling bushmeat in the main town of Ebolowa. After his arrest, an unprocedural court process was observed. Instead of legally deciding on the steps to be taken, the State Counsel decided to send the file back to MINFOF stating that a transaction should be carried out with the dealer in question.
- **07/12/11- 2 dealers arrested** in Mindourou – East with **4 elephant tusks, 2 elephant tails and 2 elephant teeth**. One of the dealers is a female dealer of Baka origin and the Director of an NGO known as CADDAP (Action Centre for the Sustainable Development of Indigenous Communities) that she uses to launder the trafficking of tusks and other elephant products.
- **12/12/11- 4 dealers** belonging to a network of ivory traffickers were **arrested** in Moloundou – East with **44 elephant tusks weighing 107kg and 2 elephant tails** stashed between bags of cocoa. The elephants were killed in the Lobeke National park. One of the dealers attempted to bribe the arresting officers with 5 million FCFA (about \$10,000) to no avail. The operation was headed by the Conservator of the Lobeke National Park. LAGA was instrumental in assuring that the right legal procedures were followed and the suspects conveyed to the Court of First Instance in Yokadouma. LAGA also planned and arrested another member of the network in Yokadouma.

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **16 missions** out of Yaounde - Centre Region: 4 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Bamenda (North West), 1 in Lomie (East), 1 in Mindourou (East), 2 in Abong-Mbang (East), 1 in Yokadouma (East), 1 in Djoum (South), 1 in Ebolowa (South), 2 in Ambam (South), 1 in Kribi (South), 1 in Bafoussam (West).
- There are **20 dealers behind bars during this month**: 8 in the East Region, 3 in the South West Region, 1 in North West region, 6 in South Region and 2 in West Region.
- **32 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **20 cases** are scheduled and being trailed in the court this month.

Media front

- **18 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to radio, and written press including: 16 written press materials (9 in English and 7 in French), 1 news feature in English and 1 news flash in French.
- Guests include: LAGA head of legal unit.
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including; Mvangan arrest of dealer in live chimp, INTERPOL meeting in Chad, Ambam arrest of dealer in live mandrill and court hearing of dealer in sea turtle shell Limbe.
- 10 media pieces in English, 8 in French making a percentage of 55.6% in English and 44.4% in French

External Relations and Policy

- **The concretization of replication in Chad** continued with the LAGA Head of Legal Department travelling to Chad again this month. He had a meeting with the Chadian

Minister of Environment for an authorization to kick-start the projects. Other meetings were held with APROCOFF (Association pour la Promotion et la Conservation de la Faune et de la Flore) and APN (African Parks Network) on putting in place field procedures and starting investigations to identify major dealers. Another meeting was with the European Union to rally support from the International community.

- The Director of LAGA had a meeting with Freedom House on civil society in Cameroon.

Management

- LAGA continued with the objective of being more cost effective with matching performance. The various Departments are continuing to effectively put in place plans to reconstruct and measures to cut costs while maintaining the good results.
- LAGA family members went for a 3 weeks holiday that started on the 16th of December 2011 with a special lunch and Christmas bonuses for good produced results.

Activism Front

All the education 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>. Education activities were not carried out this month.

Replication

The replication of the LAGA model and the transfer of LAGA experience in other countries throughout the sub-region is a continuous process whereby LAGA works with other NGOs. More information on replication is available on

<http://www.laga-enforcement.org/Replication/tabid/166/Default.aspx>

Replication in Chad was followed-up with the LAGA Head of Legal Department travelling to Chad. Meetings were held with the Chadian Minister of Environment, NGOs and European Union on authorization to concretely start activities and to rally support from the International community res. RALF project coordinator took part in Interpol training course on criminal analysis in Brazzaville and he also met with Head of Interpol CAR, Bangui on how to establish collaboration within the framework of the fight against wildlife crimes at the international level.

In Gabon a dealer was arrested with more than 50 animal species. In Congo, an ivory dealer was sentenced to 3 years in prison and another given a 2 year suspended sentence. In CAR, work on the reconstruction of AALF was started and in Gabon, the AALF antenna in Oyem supported the Minkebe conservator in two cases concerning a recidivist dealer who denounced the first assistant of a Deputy in Oyem and an MEF agent intercepted with illegal elephant tusks.

Corruption continues to be a problem and combated where identified; complicity and involvement of local authorities in illegal wildlife trade. There was a serious obstacle to PALF's work in Sibiti, PALF has re-launched a complaint so that the sous-prefet could face justice for his act of corruption and participation in the traffic of protected species; a report was filed against a corrupt gendarme in Sangha in order to remove him from service. In Gabon, three cases where corruption was observed have been sent to the Commission against illicit enrichment.

RALF-CAR needs to produce more arrest operations.

On a daily basis all LAGA Departments assist in the various activities of the replication projects (PALF – Congo, AALF – Gabon and RALF – CAR) on all managerial and financial issues especially reports; Investigations and Operations planification and supervision; legal follow-up of

all court cases; and publishing and pushing through all the media pieces with all the necessary information posted on the various project websites.

Finance

LAGA Expenditure by Budget Line for December 2011

Amount CFA	Budget Line		Amount USD
1,628,870	Investigations	18 inv, 6 Regions	\$3,258
810,300	Operations	3 Operation against 7 subjects	\$1,621
2,269,205	Legal	follow up 32 cases 20 locked subjects	\$4,538
1,435,980	Media	18 Media pieces	\$2,872
1,157,385	Policy & External Relations	Chad Mission/Congo/Gabon/CAR/Isreal	\$2,315
865,500	Management	Coordination	\$1,731
1,371,280	Office		\$2,743
53,100	LAGA Family		\$106
9,591,620	TOTAL EXPENDITURE DECEMBER		\$19,183

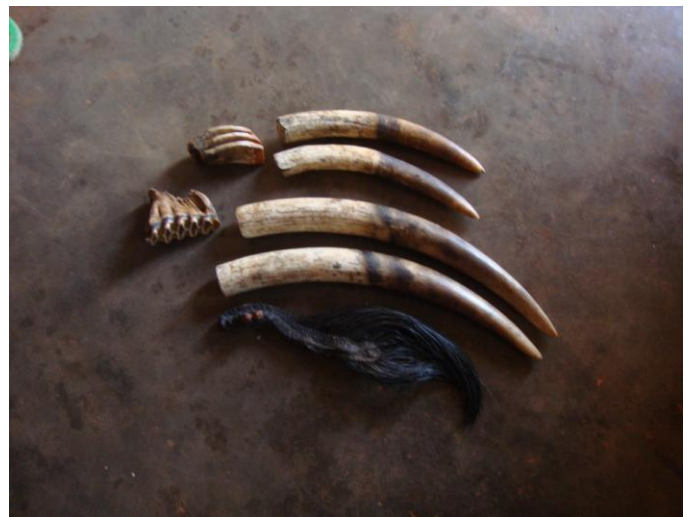
LAGA Expenditure by Donor for December 2011

AmountCFA	Donor	Amount USD
2,230,350	FWS	\$4,460.7
701,400	FWS-Replication	\$1,402.8
376,635	BornFree UK	\$753.3
1,092,455	Rufford Foundation	\$2,184.9
1,341,405	BornFree USA	\$2,682.8
2,801,050	Future for Nature	\$5,602.1
1,048,325	ARCUS Foundation	\$2,096.7
9,591,620	TOTAL	\$19,183.2

THIS MONTH IN PICTURES



Dealers belonging to a network of ivory traffickers arrested in Moloundou – East with 44 elephant tusks weighing 107 kg and 2 elephant tails stashed between bags of cocoa and packed in the truck (seen behind them). The elephants were killed in the Lobeke National park. One of the dealers attempted to bribe the arresting officers with 5 million FCFA (about \$10,000) to no avail.



Dealer (left) arrested in Mindourou – East with 4 elephant tusks, 2 elephant tails and 2 elephant teeth (right). He is the accomplice of the female dealer of Baka origin and the Director of an NGO known as CADDAP (Action Centre for the Sustainable Development of Indigenous Communities) that she uses to launder the trafficking of tusks and other elephant products.

Links of this month

A baby gorilla rescued in Ngoyla – East Region – Cameroon National Television Broadcast – HELLO Programme. The baby gorilla was rescued in the Eastern Region of Cameroon by forces of law and Order, officials from the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife, technically assisted by LAGA - Cameroon. Few days later, in the same part of the country, another trafficker of ape was arrested with gorilla parts and other protected wildlife were taken from a deep freezer in his house where he keeps the bush meat before supplying a network of customers in bigger cities notably Yaounde.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kuvm7Zhj9B8>