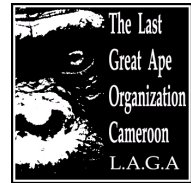


# The Last Great Ape Organization – LAGA

## January 2018 Report



### Highlights

- **3 traffickers arrested, live chimp rescued and 80kg of pangolin scales seized**
- **LAGA resumed work after an annual vacation.**

### General

This month was marked by the arrest of **3 traffickers**.

**3 traffickers were arrested in Ambam, South Region with a live baby chimpanzee and 80kg pangolin scales.** The three traffickers, including a Nigerien national, worked as a team and one of them brought the chimpanzee while the other two brought the pangolin scales from other smaller traffickers and put the quantities together. The chimp was found during the house search that led to their arrest, hidden inside one of the toilets of the home of one of the traffickers. The first two were arrested on the spot while a third who arrived on a bike stumbled on the arresting team and attempted to escape but was immediately stopped.

LAGA members carried out a primate first aid training organized by the Ape Action Africa and some started English language classes to improve on their proficiency.

The LAGA family resumed work on January 12, after an annual vacation that started in December

## Investigations

- **22 investigation missions** of varying lengths were carried out in **5 Regions** of Cameroon viz: Littoral, Center, South, East and West Regions.
- Good investigations in Olamze led to the arrest of 3 traffickers with live male baby chimpanzee and 80kg of pangolin scales in Ambam.

*Investigations Table*

Investigation Missions	Regions	No. of Operations	No of traffickers arrested
22	5	1	3

## Operation

**An operation** carried out with MINFOF this month **arresting 3 traffickers**.

**30/01/2018 - Three traffickers were arrested with a live baby chimp and 80kg of pangolin scales in Ambam, South Region.** The three operated a wildlife crime ring that ran pangolin scales and primate trafficking from the area. The operation involved a house search and the live chimp was found hidden inside a toilet. Administrative officials of the region followed with keen interest as the operation occurred. In an unprecedented and surprise move, the baby chimp was taken to the Mvogbetsi zoo despite informed advice and explanations from professionals against this destination and preferred the animal taken to the Mefou sanctuary where appropriate care and facility were available. Despite repeated efforts to get the chimp to Mefou, the decision which was primarily not for the interest of the animal but for people who want to put the animal on display, was maintained.

*Operations Table*

No of Operations	Regions	No of Traffickers Arrested	Contraband
1	1	3	One live baby chimp 80kg of pangolin scales

## Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried **10 missions** out of Yaounde-Centre Region:  
2 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Nkongsamba (Littoral), 1 in Ebolowa (South), 4 in Sangmelima (South) and 2 in Djoum (South).
- There are **15 traffickers behind bars this month**: 2 in East Region, 2 in Adamaoua Region, 2 in Northwest Region, 1 in Southwest Region, 1 in West Region, 4 in South Region, and 3 in Littoral Region.
- **35 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **31 cases** were scheduled and being tried in court this month.
- **8 traffickers** were convicted this month.
- **Prosecution**: We had 5 judgments this month.
  - **05/12/2017**: The Sangmelima Court of First Instance found the accused **EVEGUE Frederick Marie** guilty as charged and ordered him to **pay 200.000 FCFA as fine, 27.850 FCFA as court fees and 6.000.000 FCFA as damages**. He was arrested in Sangmelima on the 20/04/2017 for the illegal possession, circulation and commercialization of trophies of totally protected species including 2 elephant tusks, 1 leopard skin and 4 leopard teeth.
  - **05/12/2017**: The Ebolowa Court of First Instance found the accused person **OBA'A ABOUTOU Celestin** guilty as charged and sentenced him to **4 months imprisonment term and to pay 41.561 FCFA as court fees and awarded to MINFOF the amount of 1.500.000 FCFA as civil damages**. He was arrested in Ebolowa on the 30/08/2017 for the illegal possession, circulation and commercialization of a baby chimp and pangolin scales.
  - **08/12/2017**: The Appeal Court of Centre maintained the ruling of the Bafia Court of First Instance that found **MBENTAIE Douglas** guilty as charged and sentenced him to **6 months suspended sentence during 3 years and 10.000 FCFA as fine, and awarded to the MINFOF the amount of 450.000 FCFA as civil damages**. He was arrested in Yaoundé on the 6/06/2015 for illegal capture, possession, circulation and commercialization of 4 chimpanzee skulls and duiker skulls
  - **12/12/2017**: The Ebolowa Court of First Instance found the accused **ANVELA Ernest Laurent and ZOBO EVINA Samuel** guilty of the illegal capture, possession, circulation and commercialization of trophies of totally protected species (50kg pangolin scales). They were sentenced to: **3 months imprisonment term suspended during 3 years and to pay 167.783 FCFA as court fees and 2.700.000 FCFA as civil damages**. They were arrested in Ebolowa on the 11/10/2017.
  - **19/12/2017**: The Sangmelima Court of First Instance found the accused **MENGUE Jeanette** not guilty, **MBELECK Rigobert and NSUM NSUM Dany** guilty as charged and sentenced them to **6 months suspended sentence during 3 years and to pay 150.000 FCFA as fine, 35.850 FCFA court fees and 2.625.000 as damages**. He was arrested in Sangmelima on the 15/11/2017 for the illegal possession, circulation and

commercialization of trophies of totally protected species including 4 elephant tusks, 10kg of pangolin scales.

There was an appeal made this month against the ruling on the case of **EVEGUE Frederick Marie** at the Sangmelima Court of First Instance

***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
10	5	1	4	5	1	35

**Media**

- **19 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to written press, radio and internet including; 6 written press material (5 in English and 1 in French), 10 radio news flashes (6 in French and 4 in English) and 3 internet publication (2 in French and 1 in English).
- Quotes used were obtained from the Ambam Divisional Delegate of Forestry and Wildlife
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including: the arrest of a Vietnamese ivory trafficker in Ivory Coast and the court hearing of 3 men who were arrested in Douala over the illegal possession of pangolin scales.
- 10 media pieces in English and 9 in French making a percentage of 52% in English and 48% in French.

***Media Table***

No of Media Pieces	TV	Radio	Newspapers	Internet
19	0	10	6	3

**External Relations and Policy**

- The Deputy Director attended a meeting organized by TRAFFIC and that brought together a US Embassy official, WWF, and ZSL, to prepare for the World Pangolin Day that comes up next month.

- He equally held a meeting with Chris Plowman ZSL law enforcement coordinator who was on a working visit to Cameroon.
- The Head of the Legal Department held two meetings with the state counsels at Bonanjo, Douala and Djoum to discuss wildlife cases and operations while two legal advisers held meetings each with the state counsels in Sangmelima, Ebolowa, Ambam and Nkongsamba for to discuss wildlife cases pending..

### **Management**

- Some LAGA members started a special English language classes organized by LAGA with objective to improve on their English.
- LAGA attended a primate first aid training organised to acquire skills necessary for handling primates after operations.
- LAGA members resumed work after the annual leave that started in December.

### **Activism Front: Movie – The Ghost of King Leopold**

The colonial past in Africa keeps revealing its nastiness every day, indicating the enormity of the cruelty and evil inflicted on the African people and there is no other movie that captures this bitter reality better than The Ghost of King Leopold. Cutting someone's arm to justify you actually did not waste bullet may look bizarre but understanding that the bullet was supposed to shot and kill the person and the hand brought back to the colonial master to indicate that the person had been killed, is mindboggling and that is what happened when Congo was the property of King Leopold of Belgium who unleashed untold cruelty and harshness on a people in their own land. The movie depicts the essential cruelty of the king, his spin to deflect public attention, his illicit and grotesque enrichment, the mechanisms of power domination in the areas and the braveness of some to report on the activities. The debate focused on the colonial past, Africa's inability to emancipate, neo-colonialism, geopolitics and international and bilateral relations.

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/Activism/tabid/77/Default.aspx>.

### **Link of the month**

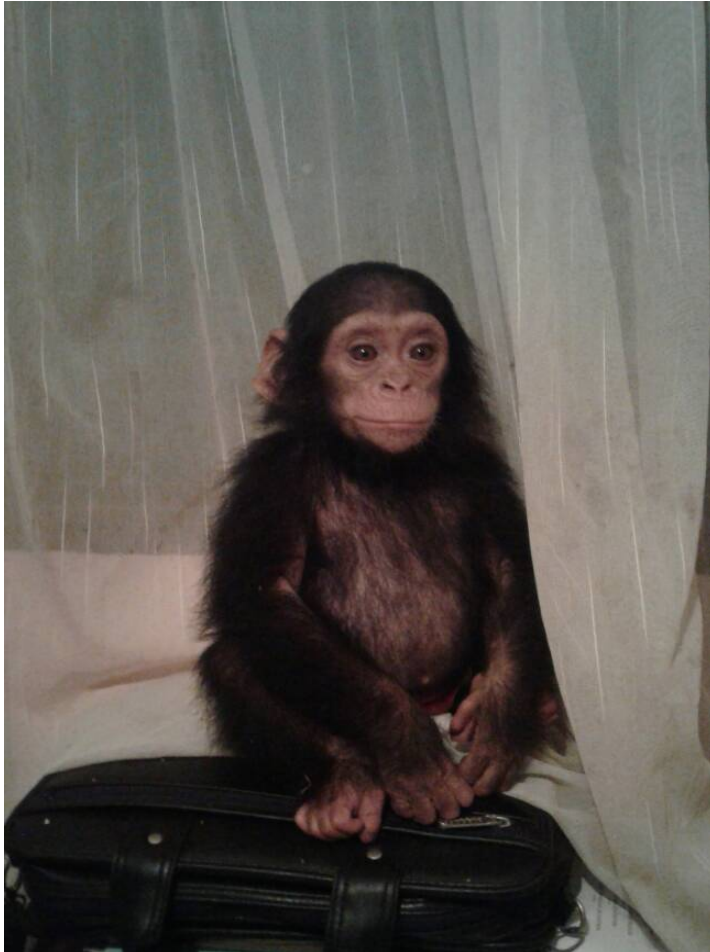
Camer.be, a renowned website reporting on mainly Cameroon news published the arrest of a Vietnamese kingpin in Ivory Coast, detailing the arrest and the extent of the crime ring that operated in several countries. It also indicates the link between EAGLE Ivory Coast that assisted authorities during the arrest and LAGA

<http://www.camer.be/65984/11:1/cate-divoire-rapression-contre-la-criminalita-faunique-un-vietnamien-arratae-en-cate-daivoire-cote-divoire.html>

### **Finance**

Please check LAGA website [www.laga-enforcement.org](http://www.laga-enforcement.org) for monthly financial reports.

**This Month in Pictures**



*Baby chimp rescued from wildlife traffickers in Ambam, is now leaving in the Mvogbetsi zoo*



*Arrested traffickers waiting for complaint reports wildlife office*



*Wildlife officials who carried out arrest with pangolin scales (giant pangolin scales and black bellied pangolin scales) and traffickers being matched off after arrest (right)*

