

The Last Great Ape Organization – LAGA May 2011 Report



Highlights

- **2 major ivory dealers arrested in Douala with 364 ivory pieces weighing 34 kg.**
- **A network of 7 well known elephant poachers/dealers busted in Mintom-Djoum – South.**

General

This month was marked by a very good operation in Douala with 2 dealers arrested and more than 364 ivory pieces seized.

2 major ivory dealers known by the authorities for being involved in illegal ivory trafficking for a long time **were arrested in Douala Littoral with 34 kg and more than 364 worked ivory pieces.** They were arrested and the ivory seized in a well known workshop in Akwa – Douala wherein other operations had been carried out before and an area difficult to penetrate. One of the dealers who had been arrested in 2006 for ivory trafficking claimed to have been in the ivory business for more than 25 years and that his father and grandfather taught him about ivory trafficking. The other dealer **attempted to bribe one of the arresting officers with about \$400** and was captured in LAGA's camera; the bribery attempt was vigorously combated. Amongst the worked ivory pieces were **Hankos (Chinese name seals)** and this lays credence to the fact that the worked ivory pieces were destined for the foreign market especially the Chinese market which has been in the limelight for the past years.

A network of 7 elephant poachers/dealers was busted in Mintom-Djoum – South. 3 of them have been arrested **with a hunting rifle and ammunition in the Dja - Reserve while preparing to kill elephants in the reserve.** LAGA was involved in the arrest of the suspects after receiving information from some Ecoguards, and has been in charge in writing the complaint reports (PV), ensuring that the culprits were transported and locked-up in Djoum while at the same time following up the cases in the Court. Investigations are still ongoing and operations planned to arrest the other members of the network.

Investigations

- **12 investigations** of varying lengths were carried out in **5 Regions** of Cameroon- South West, North West, East, Littoral and Center.
- Investigations led to a successful operation after targeting 2 main dealers in Douala – Littoral.
- 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.
- Attention will shift to the Northern part of the country after a long time without focused attention.
- This month saw more involvement in investigations and operations procedures in the replication projects especially PALF – Congo and RALF – CAR (Central African Republic) that registered 3 successful operations with 5 dealers arrested.

Operations

2 operations were carried out this month against 5 major dealers.

- **25/05/11 – 2 major ivory dealers** known by the authorities for being involved in illegal ivory trafficking for a long time **were arrested in Douala Littoral with 34 kg and more than 364 worked ivory pieces.** They were arrested and the ivory seized in a well known

workshop in Akwa – Douala wherein other operations had been carried out before and an area difficult to penetrate. One of the dealers who had been arrested in 2006 for ivory trafficking claimed to have been in the ivory business for more than 25 years and that his father and grandfather taught him about ivory trafficking. The other dealer **attempted to bribe one of the arresting officers with about \$400** and was captured in LAGA's camera; the bribery attempt was vigorously combated. Amongst the worked ivory pieces were **Hankos (Chinese name seals)** and this lays credence to the fact that the worked ivory pieces were destined for the foreign market especially the Chinese market which has been in the limelight for the past years.

- **30/05/11-** A network of 7 elephant poachers/dealers was busted in Mintom-Djoum – South. 3 of them have been arrested with a hunting rifle and ammunition in the Dja - Reserve while preparing to kill elephants in the reserve. LAGA was involved in the arrest of the suspects and has been in charge in writing the complaint reports (PV), ensuring that the culprits were transported and locked-up in Djoum while at the same time following up the cases in the Court. Investigations are still ongoing and operations planned to arrest the other members of the network.

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **27 missions** out of Yaounde- Centre Region: 5 in Douala (Littoral), 2 in Buea (South West), 2 in Limbe (South West), 1 in Abong-Mbang (East), 1 in Bertoua (East), 4 in Kribi (South), 1 in Ebolowa (South), 2 in Djoum (South), 2 in Bengbis (South), 1 in Bafoussam (West), 4 in Bafang (West), 1 in Foumban (West) and 1 in Bamenda (North West).
- There are **19 dealers behind bars during this month**: 2 in the East Region, 2 in the South West Region, 11 in the South Region, 2 in the West Region and 2 in the littoral Region.
- **35 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **43 cases** are scheduled and being trailed in the court this month.
- **Prosecutions**: 1 dealer was sentenced this month.
 - 16/05/2011: The court of First Instance of Bafang - West sentenced NTANTANG Daniel Gwe to 1 year suspended sentence during three years and to pay **\$1070 as damages and fine**. He was arrested in Bafang for the illegal detention and trying to trade in 1 leopard skin.
- **1 appeal** was registered this month against the ruling given by the Court of First Instance of Bafang in the matter of MINFOF Vs NTANTANG Daniel Gwe.

Media front

- **28 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to radio and written press including: 7 written press materials (5 in English and 2 in French), 4 talk shows (3 in English and 1 in French), 6 news feature in English and 11 news flashes (4 in English and 7 in French).
- Guests include: Minister of Forestry and Wildlife, South West MINFOF Delegate, LAGA Director, Centre Regional Bureau Chief of the Eden newspaper, Victor Epie Ngome – a veteran journalist, Head of Translation Unit at the ministry of Public Service and Administrative Reform, Director of Wildlife - MINFOF and Director of Wildlife School Garoua – North Region.
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including; Kribi chimp dealer arrest, Kribi dealer arrest of sea turtle shells, patriotism in saving wildlife and ivory dealer arrest Douala.
- 18 media pieces in English, 10 in French making a percentage of 64.3% in English and 35.7% in French.

External Relations and Policy

- LAGA Director had a meeting with communication consultant from Norway on an upcoming great apes media campaign stressing a new approach has to be taken to create African conservation based on Africa values to deal with the justified negative sentiments towards western conservation.
- A meeting held by LAGA Director with Transparency International Cameroon's Director on the fight against corruption and combating electoral fraud.
- LAGA Director met with PASOC Coordinator (EU support program for Civil Society) on corruption in the NGO sector, using LAGA experience to develop new accountability standards, the APT-AID principles of increasing accountability and transparency in development projects and developing the concept of the New Generation NGO that LAGA has created.
- Meeting with Governance Officer of the World Bank in Cameroon discussing various corruption issues, and developing the concept of the New Generation NGO that LAGA has created.
- LAGA Director met with the First Secretary of the German Embassy discussing wildlife law enforcement, corruption in the forest sector, the APT-AID principles of increasing accountability and transparency in development projects, the disappointment from the fight against corruption in Cameroon and the urgency of pushing for an Anti-Corruption Legislation in Cameroon.
- A meeting with Freedom House Director concerning promoting democracy in the country.
- LAGA Director met with the US Ambassador to discuss corruption in the forest sector, the LAGA experience and its replication in the sub-region, wildlife crime, trafficking in Northern Cameroon, using the LAGA model to fight child trafficking, democracy in Cameroon and the need for an Anti-Corruption legislation.
- A meeting with project CHOC (UNDP led Multi-Donor program against corruption) Auditor discussing the disappointment from the fight against corruption in Cameroon, international community and the CHOC project becoming more of an obstacle than as a solution and the urgency of pushing for an Anti-Corruption Legislation in Cameroon.
- LAGA Director met with WWF-CARPO Coordinator discussing corruption in WWF and ways to combat it.
- Meeting with Dr. Per Aaroug on the trade in Great Apes, the dire situation of lions in Cameroon, and management of the national Parks in Northern Cameroon.
- LAGA Director met with Transparency International Consultant discussing general corruption issue and using LAGA experience to combat corruption in Cameroon.
- LAGA Director met with a German Journalist of Focus Magazine discussing the LAGA experience, corruption in conservation, and problems relating to FSC.
- LAGA Director met with GIZ Health Program Coordinator on corruption in the health sector, LAGA experience, the APT-AID principles of increasing accountability and transparency in development project, using technological tools to monitor distribution of subsidized health using the beneficiaries as auditors.
- LAGA Director met with the First Secretary of the Spanish Embassy to discuss the LAGA experience and democratic process in Cameroon.
- LAGA Director met with potential replication volunteer discussing test period and collaboration.

Management

- This month saw the Investigator, i35 getting married. There LAGA family comprising of a delegation of 12 actively took part in the marriage and the newly wedded couple was assisted materially, morally and financially showing that the family as a unit is always there not only for work but for happy and sad moments.

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 for this month were on:

-Presentation on C4D

Communication for development can be defined as: Systematic planned and evidence-based process to promote positive and measurable behavior and social change that is integral to development programs; policy advocacy, humanitarian work and the creation of culture that respect and helps realize human rights.

This presentation shows how the C4D appears like the missing ingredient in development programs most of the time considered as designed by the west for less or no result.

It shows how the C4D approach reflects the principles of inclusion, equity, self determination, participation and respect by insuring that marginalized groups are prioritized and given high visibility and the opportunity for their voices to be heard.

It finally presents an example on how to draft a Communication campaign based on C4D principles.

By Serge Banyimbe – Media Department

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>

On a daily basis all LAGA Departments assist in the various activities of the replication projects (PALF – Congo, AALF – Gabon and RALF – Central African Republic etc.) 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. For this month, LAGA assisted in:

- Assisting in the setting up of PALF Investigations Department, giving directives on recruitment and coordinating the field testing of 2 Investigators with encouraging results as 1 investigator has given an operation.
- Assisting PALF in the coordination of an operation, working specifically with Adelphe on procedures in Manual from Investigations through to operations planification and strategies. The said operation was successful (31/05/11) – 3 dealers arrested with 17 sea turtle shells.
- Assisting Hubert (RALF) on Investigations and Operations procedures in the 2 successful operations (1 leopard skin, and 1 crocodile skin). Also discussing with Ida and Florence to encourage them and discuss with them on how to get more operations.
- Assisting in the legal follow-up of all the cases resulting from the various operations especially those of PALF and RALF.
- Supervising the legal follow-up of the case of 2 Chinese arrested with ivory in Chad.
- Ensuring that the media pieces concerning the various operations were produced and pushed through to the respective national media.
- Ensuring that the activity and financial reports of the past months are all updated and posted on the various websites.

Finance

LAGA Expenditure by budget line for May 2011

1,524,480	Investigations	12 inv, 5 Regions	\$3,278
1,325,200	Operations	2 Operations against 5 subjects	\$2,850
3,440,110	Legal	follow up 35 cases 19 locked subjects	\$7,398
1,736,440	Media	28 Media pieces	\$3,734
3,029,616	Policy & External Relations	Congo/Gabon/CAR/Chad/France/kenya/USA	\$6,515
983,400	Management	Coordination	\$2,115
1,816,640	Office		\$3,907
178,050	LAGA Family		\$383
14,033,936	TOTAL EXPENDITURE MAY		\$30,181

LAGA Expenditure by donor for May 2011

AmountCFA	Donor	Amount USD
2,607,825	FWS	\$5,608.2
1,951,158	FWS-Replication	\$4,196.0
	BornFree Foundation	\$0.0
1,918,361	Rufford Foundation	\$4,125.5
2,086,440	Neu Foundation	\$4,487.0
1,524,480	ProWildlife	\$3,278.5
955,200	J M FINN	\$2,054.2
2,990,472	Future for Nature	\$6,431.1
14,033,936	TOTAL	\$30,180.5

THIS MONTH IN PICTURES



2 major ivory dealers arrested in Douala with 34 kg and 364 worked ivory pieces destined for the foreign market. They have been in the ivory business for a long time and attempted to bribe one of the arresting officers with about \$400 to no avail.



Bribery attempt observed and captured in LAGA's camera during the ivory operation in Douala. On the left is an officer of law and order collaborating with LAGA during the operation that resulted in the arrest of 2 major dealers, one of whom is attempting to bribe as seen in the picture. This attempt was vigorously combated by the LAGA team in the field.

Links of this month

This month, a “**Donate Now**” button was added to the website’s homepage; it is linked to the following page:

Don’t give us money – Give us your activism

If you cared enough to give a donation, there are better things you can do with this feeling. Giving a donation is not the best you can do with this wonderful energy. Giving money is the easy way out because it releases the pressure to do more. Getting people to show passion for our cause, the last thing we ask them for is money, as we know the potential for their involvement and contribution to our cause with their talent and conviction is far higher.

You can either contact us to see how you can help with your talent or use it to do other things in the same spirit - It doesn’t have to be in Africa, it doesn’t have to be big, activism can start just outside your door.

Everybody is pissed off about something: a billboard put up in front of your house, a park in your neighbourhood that was bulldozed, something you heard about on television. But we move on, we zap to another channel with the usual excuse – “nothing I can do”. But you can. The difference between an activist and a non-activist is understanding you have the ability to make a change. There are so many things that are just waiting for you to come and change. If instead of using your dollars you use your time, if instead of donating you take action – writing a letter to a congressman, calling a radio talk show, convincing your neighbours to sign a petition, volunteer for an hour in the local school... - if you do that you will make us happier. You will give us much strength in our fight by writing us back with one action our work inspired you to take.

<http://www.laga-enforcement.org/Home/tabid/36/Default.aspx>