

# The Last Great Ape Organization – LAGA

## November 2011 Report



### Highlights

- **LAGA makes a breakthrough in the collaboration with Interpol in an Interpol Regional meeting in Chad.**
- **The replication of LAGA activities started this month in Chad.**
- **5 dealers arrested in 3 separate operations.** 2 of the operations within 2 days.
- Unprecedented number of media pieces produced and pushed through this month. **A total of 64 media pieces obtained.**

### General

This month was marked by a breakthrough in LAGA's collaboration with Chad, and 3 operations arresting 5 dealers.

LAGA makes a breakthrough in the collaboration with Interpol in an Interpol Regional meeting in Chad. A collaborative partnership recommended between Interpol Central African Regional Bureau and LAGA on the fight against wildlife crime in Central Africa was adopted and formalized by the Committee of Heads of Police of Central Africa during the Interpol Conference held in Ndjamena – Chad. The convention should be extended to the other members of the Central African Wildlife Law Enforcement Network and will enable further actions such as joint operations in border areas and increase the sharing of information through the Ecomessage system.

The LAGA Head of Legal Department travelled to Chad and his visit paved the way for the start of replication. A series of meetings were held with key governmental authorities including the Secretary General of the Ministry of Environment, the Director of Wildlife and the Technical Adviser of Prime Minister. Contacts were made with two NGOs: APROCOFF (Association pour la Promotion et la Conservation de la Faune et de la Flore) and APN (African Parks Network). Meetings were also held with the Police (including Interpol National Central Bureau); the State Counsel of N'Djamena Court of first instance; the European Union and US Embassy.

**5 dealers were arrested this month in 3 different operations;** 2 of the operations took place within 2 days in Lomie – East that resulted in the arrest of 4 dealers. In the first operation in Lomie, the dealer who also works in the Lomie Treasury was arrested with gorilla parts and other protected wildlife were taken from a deep freezer in his house in which he kept the meat of the protected wildlife species before supplying a network of customers in bigger cities notably Yaounde. In the second operation in Lomie, a network of bushmeat dealers was busted resulting in the arrest of 3 dealers with totally protected wildlife species. They supply the main towns of Bertoua, Ngaoundere and Garoua.

In another operation, a regular dealer arrested while trying to trade in a live mandrill in Ambam - South. He is well known for trading in live protected animals and he has a bike that he uses to transport the animals. The mandrill was rescued and taken to the Mvog-Betsi Zoo in Yaounde for proper follow-up and upkeep.

An unprecedented number of media pieces were produced and pushed through this month. A total of 64 media pieces obtained. 29 media pieces were in English and 35 in French. Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including operations, court judgements, and Interpol meeting in Chad.

## Investigations

- **30 investigation missions** of varying lengths were carried out in **6 Regions** of Cameroon- East, Littoral, South, North West, South West and Center.
- Investigations led to the identification of dealers in Lomie and Ambam leading to 3 operations and the arrest of 5 dealers.
- 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 **5 subjects**.

- **09/11/11** – A well known **dealer working with the Lomie Treasury was arrested with gorilla parts** and meat of other protected wildlife species **stacked in a deep freezer** in his residence at Lomie. He has a network of poachers and suppliers who kill animals for him; and he in turn supplies bushmeat sellers in major cities especially Yaounde.
- **10/11/11- 3 dealers including a man and his wife arrested in Lomie** for dealing in protected wildlife species including Agile Mangabeys, Preuss's Monkeys, Yellow-backed Duiker, Forest Tortoise among other wildlife species. They were **also arrested with a gun and ammunition** that they give to poachers who kill the animals for them. These dealers supply the major cities of Bertoua, Ngaoundere and Garoua.
- **25/11/11-** A regular **dealer arrested while trying to trade in a live mandrill** in Ambam - South. He is well known for trading in live protected animals and he has a bike that he uses to transport the animals. The mandrill was rescued and taken to the Mvog-Betsi Zoo in Yaounde for proper follow-up and upkeep.

## Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **27 missions** out of Yaounde - Centre Region: 4 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Limbe (South West), 1 in Mamfe (South West), 1 in Muyuka (South West), 4 in Bamenda (North West), 5 in Lomie (East), 1 in Mindourou (East), 1 in Abong-Mbang (East), 3 in Djoum (South), 2 in Ebolowa (South), and 4 in Ambam (South).
- There are **15 dealers behind bars during this month**: 3 in the East Region, 3 in the South West Region, 1 in North West region, 6 in South Region and 2 in West Region.
- **42 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **31 cases** are scheduled and being trailed in the court this month.
- **Prosecutions**: 2 dealers were sentenced this month.
  - **15/11/2011**: The Court of First Instance of Djoum - South sentenced ZEZE Bedel to **pay 100.000 Frs. (About \$200) as fine and 500.000 Frs. (About \$1000) as civil damages**. He was arrested on 21/07/2011 for illegal detaining one mandrill, a totally protected class A animal.
  - **22/11/2011**: The Court of First Instance of Djoum - South sentenced VOX Christopher to pay **40.000 Frs. (About \$80) as fine and 835.000 Frs. (About \$1700) as civil damages**. He will be retained in jail for 6 months in default of payment of fine. He and his accomplice were arrested in August in Djoum for illegal detaining of 2 elephant tusks, 1 leopard skin and one gun.

- One Appeal was filed in the court of First Instance of Djoum after the unsatisfactory decisions given by the court in the case of CHINGO Zacharie and VOX Christopher who were arrested in August in Djoum for illegal detaining of 2 elephant tusks, 1 leopard skin and one gun.

### **Media front**

- An unprecedented number of media pieces produced and pushed through this month. **A total of 64 media pieces** obtained from radio, TV and written press including: 33 written press materials (18 in English and 15 in French), 1 TV news feature in English, 2 talk shows all in English, 3 news feature in English and 25 news flashes (5 in English and 20 in French).
- Guests include: Lecturer in the university of Dschang and psychologist student in the University of Georgetown in Maryland.
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including; gorilla parts dealer arrest Lomie, Djoum judgement of ivory dealers, Bangui judgement of lion skin dealer, Lomie agile mangabey dealer arrest, Ambam arrest of a live mandrill dealer, and Interpol meeting -Chad.
- 29 media pieces in English, 35 in French making a percentage of 45.3% in English and 54.7% in French.

### **External Relations and Policy**

- LAGA makes a breakthrough in the collaboration with Interpol in an Interpol Regional meeting in Chad. A collaborative partnership recommended between Interpol Central African Regional Bureau and LAGA on the fight against wildlife crime in Central Africa was adopted and formalized by the Committee of Heads of Police of Central Africa during the Interpol Conference held in Ndjamena – Chad. The convention should be extended to the other members of the Central African Wildlife Law Enforcement Network and will enable further actions such as joint operations in border areas and increase the sharing of information through the Ecomessage system. This move was initiated and followed up by Alain Ononino, the Head of LAGA Legal Department who attended the conference.
- Meeting with the US embassy on wildlife law enforcement, child trafficking and the fight against corruption.
- Meeting with the British High Commissioner on wildlife law enforcement the fight against corruption and LAGA replications.

### **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.

### **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 activity for this month was on:

**-Democracy in some African societies before “Pre-colonialism”** – The presentation looks at the type of governance African societies had before the coming of European traders (before pre-colonialism). Contrary to what many people think, especially that Africa is a hub of dictatorship; Africa governance during this period was in a good state of balance of power as seen in some African societies like the Igbo, Baka and Maasai. Furthermore, the presentation envisages possibilities for Africa to learn from this balance of power; go back to their roots and take the

positive aspects while integrating the present ideologies in terms of good governance and balance of power.

## **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>

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In Gabon, several arrests took place and a live leopard saved; in Congo, the arrest of African Grey parrots traffickers highlighted the challenge of tackling this organized illegal trade and breaking government complicity; in CAR, 2 dealers in lion skins and other wildlife trophies were prosecuted for 6 months imprisonment – the maximum punishment under CAR law. Still in Congo, 2 significant prosecutions took place – 4 years prison for a criminal with an AK and 211 rounds and 3 years prison sentence for a chimp poacher.

On a daily basis all LAGA Departments assist in the various activities of the replication projects (PALF – Congo, AALF – Gabon and RALF – CAR 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.

## **Finance**

### **LAGA Expenditure by budget line for November 2011**

<b>Amount CFA</b>	<b>Budget Line</b>		<b>Amount USD</b>
<b>2,241,370</b>	<b>Investigations</b>	30 inv, 6 Regions	\$4,670
<b>852,100</b>	<b>Operations</b>	3 Operation against 5 subjects	\$1,775
<b>3,960,355</b>	<b>Legal</b>	follow up 42 cases 15 locked subjects	\$8,251
<b>1,687,780</b>	<b>Media</b>	64 Media pieces	\$3,516
<b>1,193,485</b>	<b>Policy &amp; External Relations</b>	Chad Mission/Congo/Gabon/France	\$2,486
<b>984,800</b>	<b>Management</b>	Coordination	\$2,052
<b>1,648,699</b>	<b>Office</b>		\$3,435
<b>12,568,589</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE NOVEMBER</b>		<b>\$26,185</b>

## LAGA Expenditure by Donor for November 2011

AmountCFA	Donor	Amount USD
3,275,113	FWS	\$6,823.2
804,100	FWS-Replication	\$1,675.2
801,226	BornFree UK	\$1,669.2
1,595,555	Rufford Foundation	\$3,324.1
1,436,405	BornFree USA	\$2,992.5
2,241,370	Future for Nature	\$4,669.5
2,414,820	ARCUS Foundation	\$5,030.9
<b>12,568,589</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$26,184.6</b>

## THIS MONTH IN PICTURES



**Gorilla parts and meat of other protected wildlife species stacked in a deep freezer in the residence of a well known dealer arrested in at Lomie - East. He has a network of poachers and suppliers who kill animals for him; and he in turn supplies bushmeat sellers in major cities especially Yaounde.**

## Links of this month

- The Future of Elephants assured by a group of dedicated members of an NGO in Cameroon known as LAGA – **ARTE.TV – French International TV Report**. Guillaume Dumant reports that the big ivory market of China and the consequent trafficking of ivory from Africa is on the rise, fuelled by a well organized mafia. This high level network of traffickers is being infiltrated by LAGA agents who work undercover leading to the arrest of these traffickers. This was seen in Douala where 2 high level traffickers 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 attempted to bribe an arresting officer with about \$400 and was captured in LAGA's camera; the bribery attempt was vigorously combated.

<http://global.arte.tv/fr/tag/guillaume-dumant>