

The Last Great Ape Organization – LAGA

November 2016 Report



Highlights

- **7 traffickers arrested during 4 operations.**
- **A live chimpanzee was rescued and 3 arrested. It was sent to the IDA Sanaga Yong Chimpanzee Rescue Centre for lifetime support and care.**
- **2 major long time ivory traffickers were arrested in Ebolowa with ivory tusks and statuettes.**
- **An ivory trafficker trading from a hotel kiosk in Yaounde was arrested with several carved ivory pieces.**
- **A wildlife trafficker was arrested in Melong with a leopard skin and other contraband.**

General

This month was marked by the arrest of **7 traffickers, 3 for trafficking in a live chimpanzee, 3 for ivory trafficking and one for leopard skin trafficking during 4 operations.**

A live chimpanzee was rescued while 3 arrested during an operation that was carried out in Batouri in the East Region. The trafficker concealed the locked cage containing the animal on the back of a truck with a dusty tarpaulin in order to evade law enforcement detection. The female chimp was probably an orphan that had been separated from her mother after she was killed for bushmeat. She was taken to IDA Sanaga Yong Chimpanzee Rescue Centre where she would be given lifetime care and support.

The first operation was carried out in **Melong in the Littoral Region** arresting **one trafficker with a leopard skin, a python skin among other contraband.** He regularly deals in diverse wildlife products, buying them from neighbouring villages to supply his potential buyers.

3 traffickers were arrested during 2 operations for ivory trafficking. The first was arrested in **Yaounde** in the Centre Region with **14 carved ivory pieces** found among other arts objects he sells at a hotel kiosk while 2 others were arrested in **Ebolowa** in the South Region with **two carved ivory tusks** and several other pieces.

Investigations

- **29 investigations** of varying lengths were carried out in **8 Regions** of Cameroon including Littoral, East, North West, Centre, Adamoua, West, Nord and South Regions.
- Good investigation in **Melong** led to the arrest of one trafficker with **a leopard skin, a python skin and a gorilla skull among other wildlife contraband.**
- Good investigations in **Yaounde** led to arrest of **one trafficker with ivory bangles.**
- Excellent investigations in **Ebolowa** led to the arrest of **2 traffickers with 2 ivory tusks and sculpted ivory statuettes.**
- Excellent investigations in Batouri led to the arrest of **3 traffickers** with a live chimpanzee

Investigations Table

Investigation Missions	Regions	No. of Operations	No of traffickers arrested
29	8	4	7

Operation

4 operations carried out this month with MINFOF **arresting 7 traffickers.**

- **04/11/16 – one trafficker arrested in Melong, Littoral Region with a leopard skin, a chimpanzee skull among other wildlife contraband.** He regularly trafficked diverse wildlife products, buying them from neighbouring villages to supply his potential buyers.
- **07/11/16 – one trafficker arrested in Yaounde, Centre Region with 14 carved ivory objects.** He operated from a hotel kiosk, using wood carving as a cover to illegally sell carved ivory objects. The art dealers use the trade as a perfect cover not only to traffic in ivory but also to have an easy access and exposure to clients. The same pattern was witnessed last month during a similar operation. They work in a gang consisting of suppliers providing raw ivory, sculptors and sellers.
- **09/11/16 – 2 significant traffickers arrested in Ebolowa, South Region with 2 carved ivory tusks, 2 statuettes and several other carved pieces.** Both belong to a wider circle of traffickers, operating in the area for years. One of them owns a restaurant where they regularly made deals with traffickers. At the time of their arrest, an ivory statuette was visible in the restaurant. This may have served as an ad slot for the traffickers or a lead to inform potential traffickers. He buys ivory from poachers, sculpture it in various forms and sells to potential buyers.

- **21/11/2016 - 3 ape traffickers**, members of a circle specializing on trafficking live animals, **arrested in Batouri, East Region**, trying to smuggle a **chimp** in a car. The live chimpanzee was rescued. One of them, the declared owner of the chimpanzee, confessed that he had caged the chimp for 12 years, but the rescued chimp is barely 6 years old, which seems to indicate other chimps have been captured, died and replaced during this time. The trafficker concealed the locked cage on the back of the truck with a dusty tarpaulin in order to evade law enforcement detection. The female chimp was probably an orphan that had been separated from her mother after she was killed for bushmeat. Akim, as the chimp was called, was frail, underfed and wore a melancholic look when she was rescued. She was taken to the IDA Sanaga Yong Chimpanzee Rescue Centre for lifetime care.

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Operations Table

No of Operations	Regions	No of Traffickers Arrested	Contraband
4	4	7	A live chimp 14 carved ivory objects 2 ivory tusks, 2 statuettes A leopard skin, a python skin and a chimp skull

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried **19 missions** out of Yaoundé- Centre Region: 4 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Mbanga (Littoral), 1 in Nkongsamba (Littoral), 1 in Melong (Littoral), 2 in Ebolowa (South), 1 in Akonolinga (Centre), 2 in Dschang (West), 1 in Mbouda (West), 2 in Dschang (West), 2 in Batouri, 1 in Lomie (East) and 1 in Bertoua (East).
- There are **40 dealers behind bars this month**: 11 in East Region, 3 in Centre Region, 5 in North West Region, 4 in South West Region, 1 in North Region, 5 in West Region, 2 in Adamaoua Region, 6 in South Region and 3 in Littoral Region.
- **43 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **40 cases** were scheduled and being tried in court this month.
- **4 dealers** were convicted this month.
- **Prosecutions**: We had 2 judgments this month.
 - **21/11/2016**: The Douala - Bonanjo Court of First Instance – Littoral, found the accused **ABDOUL KARIM IBRAHIM** guilty of illegal possession, circulation and commercialization of trophies of totally protected species and was sentenced to: **3 months imprisonment term; payment of 1,000,000 F CFA for civil damages and 75.000 F**

CFA as fine, 27.950 FCFA for cost fees and 6 months imprisonment in default of payment of fines. He was arrested in Douala for the illegal possession, circulation and commercialization of 160 pieces of carved ivory.

- **16/11/2016:** The Douala - Bonanjo Court of First Instance – Littoral, found the accused **BETECK OROCK MARTIN** guilty and sentenced him to a **one-year suspended sentence** during 3 years and to pay **1,000,000 F CFA as civil damages and 59.400 F CFA as cost fees.** The two others were found not guilty for lack of evidence and release. They were arrested in Douala for illegal exportation of lion cubs, cheetah, tiger and forgery of CITES permit and certificate of origin
- **Appeal:** An appeal has been filed this month in the case of **BETECK OROCK MARTIN and others** at the Littoral Court of Appeal.

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
19	2	1	3	1	1	40

Media

- **57 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to written press, radio and internet, including 28 written press material (18 in English and 10 in French), 22 radio news flashes (13 in French and 9 in English) and 7 internet publications (4 in French and 3 in English).
- Interviewee: Chief of Section Wildlife of the Divisional Delegation of Forestry and Wildlife Menoua.
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement operations including: Douala arrest of trafficker with carved ivory pieces, Dschang arrest of two with ivory and leopard skins, arrest in Yaounde of trafficker with carved ivory objects, two major ivory traffickers arrests in Ebolowa, Melong leopard skin trafficker arrest, and Batouri arrest of three with a chimp.
- 30 media pieces in English and 27 in French making a percentage of 52% in English and 48% in French.

Media Table

No of Media Pieces	TV	Radio	Newspapers	Internet
57	0	22	18	7

External Relations and Policy

- The Deputy Director held a meeting with an official from the Enough Project that seeks to assist wildlife rangers at the Waza National Park. The discussions focused on an analysis of their project and imperatives to be tackled for a successful implementation.
- He also held a meeting with an official from the Prague zoo who visited the office to talk about a buffer zone project the zoo is intending to carry out in the Dja area.
- Another meeting was held with Thomas Bacha of IUCN to discuss issues related to organizational governance and transparency.
- Several meetings were held by some legal advisers with State Counsels in Douala, Nkongsamba, Ebolowa and Dschang to discuss cases in their jurisdiction.

Management

- Interviews for the recruitment of legal advisers continued following a process that involved the publication of a job advert on Cameroon Tribune – the government run daily and the selection of candidates suitable to undergo interviews.
- A super volunteer Rens Frederik Ilgen continued his training during the month. He is expected to complete his training in the upcoming days.

Activism Front: Presentation Non Human Primate Use in Biomedical Research

The presentation takes a look at the use of non human primates in biomedical research and explains what is the practice. One of the reasons primates are preferred in biomedical research is the similarity between non human primates and their fellow human being. What animals are frequently used, their origins and where they eventually end up after use were some of the issues dealt with. They are used for all kinds of testing including drugs, tobacco, military and sex experiments but their use raises several medical as well as ethical problems as the presentation takes us through these issues while also getting on the legislative and legal concerns related to the practice. Comments at the end of the presentation focused on the ethical questions, interrogating the consequences for the animals as they face threats for their survival, our rights and responsibilities and statistics involved. It should be noted that there is strong opposition to this practice in several quarters.

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>.

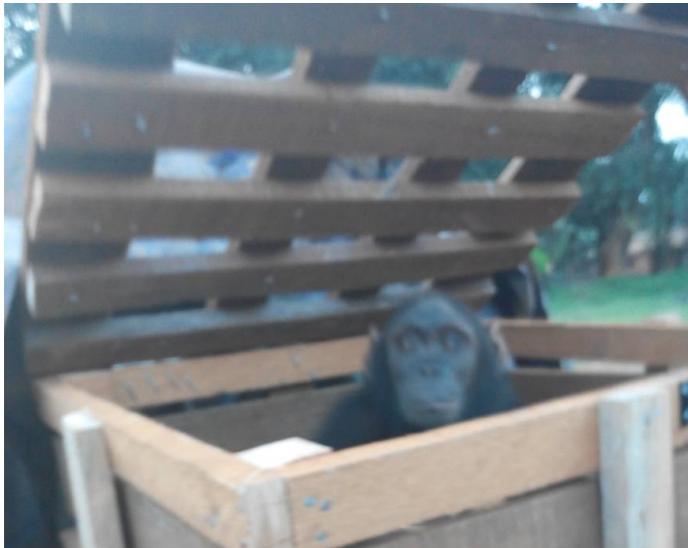
Finance

In preparation and would be made available soon as possible.

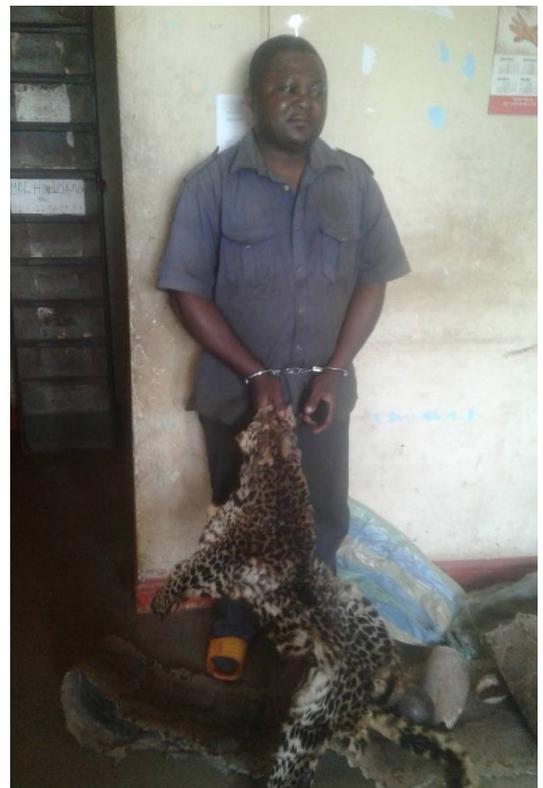
This Month in Pictures



Akim rescued after six years of caged traumatic life, she was underfed, melancholic and frail; traffickers arrested and facing trial (above). After her rescue she was removed from her cage and taken to IDA Sanaga Yong Sanctuary Chimpanzee Rescue Centre for lifetime care and freedom (below)



One of two significant ivory traffickers arrested in Ebolowa (above) and shortly before his interrogation leopard trafficker at wildlife office (below)



Link of the month

[CAMEROUN :: Cameroon: Two major ivory traffickers arrested in Ebolowa - Camer.be](#)

**CAMEROUN :: Cameroon: Two major
ivory traffickers arrested in Ebolowa -
Cam...**

Two people were arrested in Ebolowa during a crackdown carried out in Ebolowa by the South Regional Delegation o...

Cameroon website camer.be reports on the arrest of two for trafficking in ivory in the South of the country following an operation carried out by wildlife officials and the organization around these two and how they conducted their business through a restaurant.