

The Last Great Ape Organization – LAGA

April 2016 Report



Highlights

- **2 operations carried out and 3 traffickers arrested with primates skulls and turtle shells.**
- **2 traffickers arrested in Nkambe and in Kumbo, North West Region, with dozens of mandrill and gorilla skulls and parts.**
- **A trafficker arrested in Eseka, Centre Region, with sea turtle shells, chimpanzee skulls and pangolin scales.**
- **LAGA carried out a three-day training under the US Fish and Wildlife Service Fellowship Programme ongoing in Yaounde.**
- **Deputy Director held several meetings with wildlife and environment officials, UN experts and conservationists.**

General

This month was marked by MINFOF arresting **3 traffickers during 2 operations.**

The first operation was carried out in **Kumbo and in Nkambe in the North West Region** arresting **2 traffickers with 6 gorilla skulls, 15 mandrill skulls, a pair of buffalo horns and 4 chimpanzee hands.** The first trafficker was arrested with the contraband, and preliminary investigations showed that they worked as a pair and interrogations confirmed that a second trafficker was involved and this was followed up with the arrest of the second suspect.

The second operation was carried out in **Eseka, in the Centre Region** arresting a **wildlife trafficker with 8 sea turtle shells, 3 chimpanzee skulls and 2 kg pangolin scales.** He is a supplier of sea turtles shells in the region as he is known to have some regular buyers of the shells.

The Deputy Director held several meetings with some UN experts, wildlife, environment officials, and conservationists, to discuss high profile ivory trafficking within the region, wildlife law enforcement, the illegal trade in manatee, and other conservation initiatives. The Head of the Legal Department carried out a presentation on LAGA/Government engagement in fighting wildlife crime during the meeting of National Chiefs of Interpol within the sub-region. For the first time in the country, the government of Cameroon incinerated 3.5 tons of ivory.

Investigations

- **22 investigations** of varying lengths were carried out in **7 Regions** of Cameroon - Littoral, East, West, Centre, North West, South West and South Regions.
- Good investigations in **Nkambe** led to the arrest of two trafficker in Kumbo and in Nkambe with 15 mandrills skulls, 6 gorilla skulls, a pair of buffalo horns and 4 chimpanzee hands.
- Good investigation in **Eseka** led to the arrest a trafficker in possession of 8 sea turtle shells, 4 chimpanzee skulls and 2 kg pangolin scales.

Operation

Two operations carried out this month with MINFOF **arresting 3 traffickers**.

- **15/04/16 – 2 traffickers arrested in Kumbo, Bui Division and in Nkambe Donga Mantung Division, in the North West Region with 15 mandrill skulls, 6 gorilla skulls, a pair of buffalo horns and 4 chimpanzee hands.** The first trafficker was arrested as he proceeded to a sell the products after travelling from Nkambe to Kumbo for the transaction. Then the second trafficker was arrested in Nkambe following the interrogation of the first who confirmed earlier investigation reports that indicated that the two functioned together as a small team and one of them had to travel with the products to Kumbo to conduct the transaction while the second waited to collect his share of the money. After the findings, the state counsel immediately issued an arrest warrant and the arresting team travelled over 80 km to get the second trafficker in Nkambe which is not very far from the Nigeria border providing further proof that the border division is a transit zone for wildlife products.
- **26/04/16 – A sea turtle shell trafficker arrested in Eseka, 8 sea turtle shells, 3 chimpanzee skulls and 2 kg of pangolin scales.** He is a known supplier of sea turtle shells in the area and has a number of regular buyers.

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried **21 missions** out of Yaounde - Centre Region: 3 in Ebolowa (South), 2 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Bafoussam (West), 1 in Bertoua (East), 2 in Abong Mbang (East), 1 in Lomie (East), 1 in Mamfe (South West), 2 in Djoum (South), 3 in Kumbo (North West), 2 in Ndop (North West), 1 in Kribi (South), 1 in Eseka (Centre) and 1 in Bafang(West)\
- There are **38 dealers behind bars this month**: 13 in East region, 3 in Centre region, 6 in North West region, 3 in South West region, 3 in Littoral region, 4 in West region and 6 in South region.
- **32 cases** were followed up by the legal department this month.
- **29 cases** were scheduled and being tried in court this month.
- **Prosecutions**: 3 court rulings were done this month.
 - 26/04/2016: The Ebolowa Court of First Instance-,South found the accused **MBALLA AMOUGOU Benoit** guilty of illegal possession and commercialization of trophies of totally protected species and was sentenced to: **2 months imprisonment term, payment of civil damages - 2.000.000 FCFA, fines - 300.000 FCFA and 18 months imprisonment in default of payment of fines.** He was arrested in Ebolowa for illegal possession of 3 elephant tails, 3 elephant hoofs and 2 elephant teeth.

- 26/04/2016: The Abong Mbang Court of First Instance – East, found the accused **YANDA EMMANUEL and SAKOL JOSEPH** guilty of the illegal possession and commercialization of trophies of totally protected species and were sentenced to: **6 months suspended imprisonment sentence within 3 years, and payment 2,000,000 CFA F for civil damages.** They were arrested in Doume for illegal possession and circulation of 2 gorilla skulls, 1 chimpanzee skull and 1 elephant tail.
- 26/04/2016: The Abong Mbang Court of First Instance- East, found the accused **OLINGA BAKBOKE JEAN, YUODOM NGOMSI SIDOINE and TCHABO MBAKOP NORBERT** guilty of illegal possession and commercialization of trophies of totally protected species and were sentenced to: **6 Months suspended imprisonment term within 3 years, and payment of civil Damages - 3,170,000 CFA F for OLINGA and YUODOM and 105,000 CFA F for TCHABO.** They were arrested in Dimako for illegal possession of 4 gorilla skulls, 5 chimpanzee skulls, and 1 live crocodile.
- Two appeals were filed this month in the cases of **Yanda Emmanuel & Sakol Joseph and Olinga Bakboke, Tchabo & Youdom Sidoine** all in the East Court of Appeal.

Media

- **33 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to written press, TV, radio and internet including; 20 written press material (10 in English and 10 in French), 3 TV production (2 in French and 1 in English), 5 radio news flashes (3 in French and 2 in English) and 5 internet publications (4 in French and 1 in English).
- **Interviewee:** Bui Divisional Delegate of Forestry and Wildlife and the Deputy Director of LAGA
- **Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including:** Arrests of 2 primate traffickers in Kumbo and Nkambe, Eseka sea turtle shell trafficker arrest, Douala arrest of 3 cybercriminals and Yaounde arrest of chimp skull trafficker and ivory destruction.
- 19 media pieces in French and 14 in English making a percentage of 58% in French and 42 in English.

External Relations and Policy

- The Deputy Director met with two regional experts, Paul-Simon Handy and Ruben de Koning of the UN Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic to discuss the wildlife trafficking in the region.
- The Deputy Director held a meeting with the Director of Wildlife and Protected Areas to discuss wildlife law enforcement operations and another meeting with the Director of Environmental Policy in the Ministry of Environment to lay groundwork for collaboration on the upcoming World Environment Day.
- Two other meetings were held by the Deputy Director with the IUCN's PPI-PACO Coordinator Bacha Thomas and Aristide Takoukam, President of the African Marine Mammal Organisation (AMMCO) to discuss on collaboration, manatee and ape conservation. A meeting was held with the Coordinator of the Mentor PoP Fellowship Programme.
- The Deputy Director gave a live interview on Midday News on State TV on the occasion of the burning of 3.5 tons of ivory by the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife.
- The Head of the Legal Department did a presentation on LAGA/government collaboration during a Yaounde meeting of National Bureau Chiefs of Interpol in the Central African Region. The meeting focused on government's fight against wildlife crimes, while LAGA provided a case study in the Central Africa sub-region.

- The Head of the Legal Department and some legal advisers held meetings with state counsels in regions where cases are ongoing and include; Douala in the Littoral Region, Eseka in the Centre Region, Kumbo in the North West Region and Djoum in the South Region.

Management

- A new accountant was recruited, Shella Amaya joined the team on Thursday 21 April 2016 and we wish her a happy welcome.
- An investigator was swiftly removed following an internal investigation found dishonesty. LAGA is built on values that are rigorously kept, and this is an example for zero tolerance for violating these values.

Activism Front

Presentation: Activism Create Distinction

With less than 48 hours to the celebration of the International Labour Day, Anna Egbe takes a look at activism and the processes that define it, its importance and ramifications with a comparative look at our own brand of activism. In a very interesting presentation, people were very attentive and enjoyed it because that makes part of our daily life as she explores the value of activism, the passion activists have and their determination to succeed. Discussions were focused on some of the shortcuts activists use to promote their positions and the differences between influence peddling, lobbying and advocacy and a question was asked: is one born with an activist or can you become an activist?

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



One of two traffickers arrested in the North West Region for trafficking in several primate skulls and other wildlife parts; surrounded by law enforcement officials (top left) and dozens of wildlife parts seized from the two traffickers with who put the products together for sale in Kumbo town (left)



Sea turtle shell trafficker at wildlife office and shortly before the commencement of the writing of complaint statement after his arrest, as he attempted to sell the contraband including chimp skulls and pangolin scales

Links of this month

Cameroon bilingual news website Camer.be reports on the operation leading to the arrest of two traffickers in the North West Region for trafficking in dozens of wildlife products including mandrill and gorilla skulls. They functioned as a small team based in Nkambe and when one of them attempts to sell the contraband in Kumbo, he is arrested and his interrogation confirmed earlier investigative reports that a second trafficker was part of the deal.

[CAMEROUN :: Cameroon: Two traffickers arrested for Primate Skulls Trafficking in the North West Region - Camer.be](#)

	<p><u>CAMEROUN :: Cameroon: Two traffickers arrested for P...</u></p> <p>Two people were arrested in connection with the illegal sale of dozens of primates skulls in the North West Region during an operation carried out on April 15, 2016..</p> <p><small>View on www.camer.be Preview by Yahoo</small></p>
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