

The Last Great Ape Organization – LAGA

February 2016 Report



Highlights

- **2 back to back operations arresting 2 traffickers in Bertoua and Dimako, East Region.**
- **Major international trafficker of Nigerian nationality is one of 2 traffickers arrested within the month, contraband found in his possession include 12 ivory tusks and over 200 kg of giant pangolin scales.**
- **An ape skulls trafficker arrested in the second operation with 9 ape skulls.**
- **Two legal advisers from the SALF project in Senegal and the GALF project in Guinea arrived the country for a three-week long training period under the EAGLE Exchange Programme.**
- **3 ivory traffickers slammed one year imprisonment term each by the Dschang Court of First Instance.**

General

This month was marked by **2 back to back operations arresting 2 traffickers**

The first operation was carried out in **Bertoua, East Region** and this led to the **arrest of a major trafficker of Nigerian nationality with 12 elephant tusks and 200 kg of giant pangolin scales.** The trafficker who used the cover of a businessman dealing in car spare parts had a storeroom where huge quantities of wildlife products could be stored. He ran his illegal activity across the Central African sub region from Gabon, Congo, Cameroon right to Nigeria and he equally had as clients Chinese traffickers.

The second operation carried **out in Dimako, in the East Region brought to the arrest of an ape skulls trafficker with 5 chimpanzee and 4 gorilla skulls.** Investigations revealed that they bought the skulls from some poachers around a logging company near Dimako.

The arrests are below the monthly target and efforts will be carried out next month to catch up with the gap.

The EAGLE Exchange programme resumed with two legal advisers from Senegal (SALF project) and Guinea (GALF project) arriving for intensive training.

Several meetings with some diplomatic officials, the judiciary and wildlife officials were held this month to discuss wildlife law enforcement, illegal pangolin trade, and illegal logging among other issues.

Investigations

- **25 investigations** of varying lengths were carried out in **5 Regions** of Cameroon - Littoral, East, Centre, South West and South Regions.
- Good investigations in Bertoua, East Region, led to the arrest of one trafficker in possession of 12 elephant tusks and 200 kg giant pangolin scales.
- Good investigation in Dimako led to the arrest of a trafficker in possession of 5 chimpanzee skulls, and 4 gorilla skulls .

Operation

Two operations carried out this month with MINFOF **arresting 2 traffickers**.

- **09/02/16 – A major international trafficker of Nigerian nationality arrested in Bertoua, in the East Region with 12 ivory tusks and 200 kg of giant pangolin scales.** His client base include Chinese buyers and he had a long list of Chinese contacts and names. The extent of his business and professionalism is impressive as he buys the wildlife products from poachers in the East, in Congo and Gabon and then sells to Chinese and Nigerian buyers. He ferries wildlife products to Nigeria while a fraction of his main clients are based in Yaounde and Douala. He owns a storeroom close to Garoua Boulai which is used to store wildlife products. He masters the region very well and was born in Bertoua. He used the front business of car spare parts dealer as a cover for his illegal activities but the shop barely had any car parts. The trafficker is known to wildlife law enforcement officials in the region and is suspected to have been trafficking wildlife species since 2013.
- **09/02/16 – An ape skull trafficker arrested in Dimako, in the East Region with 5 chimpanzee skulls, and 4 gorilla skulls.** He was known to regularly trade in primate parts as a middleman getting supplies from poachers and selling to other traffickers. He got the ape skulls from poachers near a logging company that is close to Dimako.

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **15 missions** out of Yaoundé- Centre Region: 3 in Kribi (South), 2 in Douala (Littoral), 2 in Bafoussam (West), 3 in Bertoua (East), 2 in Abong Mbang (East), 1 in Dimako (East), 1 Dschang (West) and 1 in Edea (Littoral).
- There are **31 dealers behind bars during this month**: 15 in East Region, 5 in Centre Region, 4 in North West Region, 3 in South West Region, 1 in Littoral Region and 3 in West Region.
- **29 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **28 cases** scheduled and being tried in court this month.
- **Prosecutions**: We had 2 judgments this month.
 - 5/02/2016: The Dschang Court of First Instance – West, found the accused **NNA AMBROISE, MOUKAM DEUTOU JEROME** and **DIEUPE YOUSSE HONORE** guilty of illegal possession and commercialization of trophies of totally protected species and were sentenced to: **- 1 year closed imprisonment term each, 5.650.000 CFA F for civil damages and fines-1.000.000 FCFA.** They were arrested in Santchou for illegal possession and circulation of 2 ivory tusks.
 - 23/02/2016: The Kribi Court of First Instance- South, found the accused **MAKOTA MASSELA MARTIN** and **NDJONDJE NDENBWE AUGUSTIN** guilty of illegal possession and commercialization of trophies of totally protected species and was

sentenced as follows: **cost fees- 110.000 FCFA, civil damages- 1,000,000 FCFA and 500.000 FCFA each for fines.** They were arrested in Kribi for illegal possession of 31 Sea turtle shells.

Media

- **52 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to written press, TV, radio and internet including; 27 written press material (19 in English and 9 in French), 1 TV production in French, 17 radio news flashes (11 in French and 6 in English) and 7 internet publications 6 in French and 1 in English.
- **Guests include:** East Regional Chief of Wildlife.
- **Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including:** Douala arrest of 3 cybercriminals, Dimako ape trafficker arrest, Bertoua arrest of Nigerian with 12 tusks and 200 kg pangolin scales
- 27 media pieces in French and 25 in English making a percentage of 52% in French and 48 % in English.

External Relations and Policy

- The Deputy Director held a meeting at the US Embassy with two officials; a Foreign Service Officer from the US State Department and a Senior Counsel with the Justice Department and discussions focused on illegal logging and initiatives to address the situation in the country.
- Two other meetings were held by the Deputy Director with the Director of the Prague zoo from the Czech Republic to discuss conservation initiatives including wildlife law enforcement in the Dja Reserve, the conception and implementation of conservation projects with the communities living close to the Reserve and with Nancy Gelman from the US Fish and Wildlife Service to discuss progress on the Pangolin Mentor Fellowship Programme.
- The Assistant Head of the Media Department attended the Pangolin Day celebrations on an invitation from ZSL.
- Heads of the Legal and Investigations Departments held a meeting with the South Regional Delegate of Forestry and Wildlife to enhance collaboration.
- The Head of the Legal Department and some legal advisers held meetings with some state counsels and presidents of courts in areas where wildlife cases are being heard or where operations were planned and the areas include Douala in the Littoral Region, Bertoua and Abong Mbang in the East Region.

Management

- Several interviews were carried out to select a suitable candidate for the post of an accountant to replace the departed one who left us last year but unfortunately, those interviewed did not meet the required standards. The process continues.
- Worked with tax consultants in evaluating and resolving taxation issues which have been pending for some years. The situation was clarified and brought to order. Problems with the social security fund and contributions were equally resolved.

Activism Front

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



An international ivory trafficker arrested in East Region. He has links throughout the sub region and right to Nigeria. At the wildlife office answering to questions (left) and contraband including 12 ivory tusks, over 200 kg of giant pangolin scale(above) seized from trafficker who uses a cover as a car spare parts dealer and owns a storeroom for wildlife products



Ape trafficker arrested with 9 ape skulls (left) in the East Region and ape skulls (above) recovered from the trafficker who bought the skulls from poachers near a logging company

Links of this month

CRTV reports on the operation leading to the arrest of a big time international ivory trafficker of Nigerian nationality arrested in Bertoua for ivory and giant pangolin scale trafficking. He has been suspected by wildlife officials for trafficking and his illegal business spans the Central African sub region including Cameroon, Gabon, Congo and right to Nigeria. He equally counts Chinese traffickers among his client base. The story was equally carried by the Cameroonian French website Camer.be

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ju3BX_SAl8M&feature=youtu.be

[Cameroun: Un Nigérian arrêté à Bertoua pour trafic d'ivoire. :: CAMEROON - Camer.be](#)

	<p><u>Cameroun: Un Nigérian arrêté à Bertoua pour trafic d'ivo...</u></p> <p>Un ressortissant nigérian a été arrêté à Bertoua dans la région de l'Est pour détention et commercialisation illégales des pointes d&#</p> <p>View on www.camer.be</p> <p>Preview by Yahoo</p>
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