

# The Last Great Ape Organization – LAGA

## August 2017 Report



### Highlights

- **A baby chimp rescued and ape trafficker arrested with additional pangolin scales in Ebolowa, South Region.**
- **Deputy Director travelled to the assist new Ivory Coast replication project.**
- **Recruitment of investigators intensified with 3 new candidates on test.**
- **A new project development officer was recruited on part-time to provide support to several departments of the organisation.**

### General

This month was marked by the arrest of **a trafficker and the rescuing of a baby chimpanzee.**

**A trafficker arrested with a baby chimpanzee and 35kg of pangolin scales.** He travelled from Mevo to Ebolowa where he was arrested and the animal hidden in a black bag inside a yellow plastic bag rescued. He deals in several protected wildlife species including primates and sells pangolin scales across the border; in Gabon and Equatorial Guinea. The little baby chimpanzee was found in a state of trauma and malnourishment and immediately rushed to the Mefou National Park where caregivers of the Ape Action Africa, immediately set to provide appropriate treatment and care.

The Deputy Director travelled to the Ivory Coast where he continued with the training and recruitment of new staff for the EAGLE's latest replication of the LAGA model.

## Investigations

- **30 investigation missions** of varying lengths were carried out in **6 Regions** of Cameroon-Littoral, Centre, South, East, Southwest and West Regions.
- Good investigations in Meyo Centre led to the arrest of one trafficker with a baby chimpanzee and 35kg of pangolin scales in Ebolowa.
- The investigation department started a voluntary and testing period for 3 new investigators.
- The Assistant Head of Investigation Department travelled to Tiko and Limbe where he continued building collaborative platforms for investigations.

*Investigations Table*

Investigation Missions	Regions	No. of Operations	No of traffickers arrested
30	6	1	1

## Operation

**One operation** carried out with MINFOF this month **arresting a trafficker.**

**5/7/2017 – One trafficker was arrested in Ebolowa, South Region with a baby chimpanzee and 35kg of pangolin scales.** The arrest took place at a police checkpoint as he travelled with the animal hidden inside a bag. The little animal that was frail and badly nourished was immediately rushed to the Mefou National Park where it is being given the required, appropriate treatment and care. The trafficker is known to deal in several primate species which he gets from an organized ring of poachers in the Meyo area including places such as Mann, Nyambisa and equally sells huge quantities of pangolin scales across the border in Gabon and Equatorial Guinea. He deals in a wide variety of protected species, including primate species as he was expecting a live mandrill from a poacher shortly before he travelled, but this did not go as planned.

*Operations Table*

No of Operations	Regions	No of Traffickers Arrested	Contraband
1	1	1	One live baby chimp 35kg of pangolins scales

## Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried **6 missions** out of Yaounde-Centre Region: 2 in Ntui (Centre); 1 in Yoko (Centre), 1 in Makenene (Centre), 1 in Yokadouma (East), 1 in Ebolowa (South).
- There are **24 dealers behind bars this month**: 4 in East region, 3 in Adamaoua region, 3 in Northwest region, 3 in Centre region, 4 in Southwest region, 3 in West region and 4 in South region.
- **20 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **14 cases** were scheduled and being tried in court this month.
- No dealers were convicted this month.
- **Prosecutions**: There were no court rulings this month.

### *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
6	0	0	0	0	0	24

## Media

- **20 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to written press and radio, including; 5 written press material all in English, and 15 radio news flashes (9 in French and 6 in English).
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including: the trial of a priest arrested in Sangmelima, the trial of two traffickers arrested in Douala for trying to export two adult chimps and the case against the trafficker arrested in Yoko with 2 fresh elephant tusks and the arrest of a trafficker with a baby chimp in Ebolowa.
- 11 media pieces in English and 9 in French making a percentage of 55% in English and 45% in French.

### *Media Table*

No of Media Pieces	TV	Radio	Newspapers	Internet
20	0	15	5	0

## **External Relations and Policy**

- The Head of the Legal Department and legal advisers of the department held meetings, variously with state counsels of Ntui, Ebolowa, Yokadouma and Yaounde – Ekonou to discuss some wildlife cases in courts.
- The Assistant Head of Investigation Department and Dr. Noga Shanee held a meeting with sub director of wildlife conservation sitting in lieu of the director of wildlife to discuss the persistent problem of illegal parks in the country.

## **Management**

- The Deputy Director travelled to Ivory Coast to continue training and recruitment of new staff for the project.
- Several recruitment interviews for the legal and investigations department were carried out and three people were put on test in the investigation department. .
- The department hosted a guest for close to a month. The Peru-based primatologist, Dr. Noga Shanee was on a mission to understand and share experiences.

## **Activism Front:**

Power point presentation: Activism and community conservation against wildlife trafficking

The head of the project, Neotropical Primate Conservation & Reclaim Conservation in Peru presented the objectives and goal of her project to LAGA team and these weren't very different LAGA's. Dr. Noga said they included the confiscations of wildlife while ensuring traffickers get proper punishments for breaking the law, identifying authorities deficiencies' in acting against wildlife traffickers and draw the authorities and the public's attention to the fight against wildlife trafficking in Peru. However, she made mentioned of the challenges the project is facing in implementing the country's wildlife law which are complex and twisted. The presenter equally talked of another form of conservation which has to do with empowering the community to carryout self-conservation.

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**

Please check LAGA website [www.laga-enforcement.org](http://www.laga-enforcement.org) for monthly financial reports.

## This Month in Pictures



*Arrested chimp trafficker in front of regional wildlife office in South, refuses to take baby chimp he had been carrying for the greater part of the day before his arrest, he was aiming to sell (left). Baby chimp was immediately rushed to the experienced and specialised caregivers of the Mefou National Park (right).*



*35kg of pangolin scales were seized from the trafficker.*