

January 2007 Report

Highlights -

- **1 Operation in the West Province, 7 Leopard skins busting network.**
- **A record of 27 investigations** carried out.
- **Training new investigator on internet Investigations.**
- **A meeting the Minister of Forestry and Wildlife.**

General

January month has been troubled by a sharp drop in capacity. Stretching recruitment processes in three LAGA departments is a major setback, especially in investigation and legal units where the recruitment was supposed to compensate an already expected capacity drop. This problem is likely to continue in February month.

Despite this major setback this month had political operational and organizational achievements.

Operational - one important operation was against a network of trade in leopard skins. Two dealers specialised in protected wildlife trade for a long time have been arrested trying to sell 7 leopard skins in the West Province. They have established a network of supplying to other dealers upon order. The two are behind bars.

Political - In an important meeting with the Minister of Wildlife and Forestry LAGA managed to achieve immediate changes in the Ministry. Meetings continued in the level of the secretary General and Director of Wildlife in the spirit of the fight against corruption and with an objective to practically resolve problems stretching from September month. LAGA was instrumental in coordinating and preparing the participation of the Director of Wildlife in an international Interpol meeting.

Organizational – Work on reconstruction of LAGA and action plans for departments continued. Addressing the challenges of Internet Investigation, an investigator was recruited and started training. Training in media department started on electronic media with some immediate results.

Investigations

- **27 investigations** were carried out in **8 provinces** including-North West, Littoral, South West, Adamawa, West, East, Centre, and south.
- **Recruitment** of field investigators continued and field test continue where one candidate was rejected. The process will continue in February.
- Before the recruitment process is finished, the investigation unit is **in low capacity** and sending candidates to “test missions” results in **low return rate of produced operations**. This problem is likely to continue next month.
- Investigation in the west was good and produced good results (5 leopard skins were seized from 2 dealers).
- One investigator recruited for **internet investigations**.
- **Training** was carried out for Internet investigations and will continue the following month.
- LAGA Continues to exercise forestic science DNA testing as lion skin samples are sent for DNA testing to Jean Dubach in USA.

Operations

1 Operation and 1 failed operation were held.

- 23/01- An Operation in the West Province, **7 Leopard skins**, with difficulties and resistance. **Two dealers** specialised in protected wildlife trade for a long time have been arrested trying to sell 7 leopard skins in their shop in Bafang in the West Province. They have established a network of supplying to other dealers upon order. The two are behind bars.
- 13/01- A failed operation in West Province, An ivory dealer has become suspicious on the day of operation and the operation was aborted at the last minute. The dealer will continue to be a target for a future operation. This highlights both LAGA's achievement in breaking the trust between dealers in the trade chain as well as the challenge to combat more sophisticated modus operandi.

Legal

- There are **13 dealers behind bars** during this month: 6 in the South province, 1 in the Littoral, 1 in the North, 2 in the extreme north, 2 in the West and 1 in the central province.
- 12 cases are scheduled and being trailed in the court this month.
- 4 cases waiting for the process of appeal to reach the court of appeal. 2 in the west, 1 in the littoral and 1 in the central province. The court of first instance has not completed the file needed for the transmission to the attorney general
- 4 cases (Fonseca, Catherine Fouda, Ngbwa Ella, Eyong James are presented to the secretary general with proposed solutions for the problems occurring for those specific cases).
- 15 cases on execution process.
- LAGA legal department organized 5 missions to Djoum to follow step by step the evolutions of the ivory cases there in the court and also to find the right and the faster way to arrest the suspects, considering the new penal procedure code which is now totally applicable.
- In a meeting of LAGA Director with the MINFOF Minister, the Minister agreed to LAGA's request to appoint a stable focal point in the legal unit for wildlife cases.
- **Capacity of legal unit is damaged** as head of Legal unit pregnancy advances and recruitment process not finished. 4 volunteers are managing the work. This problem is likely to continue next month.

Media front

- **29 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to radio and written press including: 19 radio news flashes (5 English, 14 French), 4 radio news features (3 English, 1 French), 2 radio talk shows all in French, 4 written press all in English.
- **Guests include:** Minister of MINFOF, SG MINFOF, Chief of Cooperation and Projects MINFOF, West Province Delegate, Chief of Forestry of Ebogo, British High Commission 2nd Secretary, North West MINFOF Delegate, CARPE Focal Point.
- **Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement** including: prosecution ivory Douala, two chimp dealers arrested, prosecution military driver sangmelima, Ivory seizure Djoum, chimpanzee seizure Mbalmayo, prosecution Congolese

leopard skin dealer, prosecution west province, lion skins dealers far north, swearing in new wildlife brigade, PM's order protects lions, leopard skin dealers arrested, Taiping 4.

- Bilingual split of media pieces is: 12 pieces in English, 17 in French giving percentages of 41.4% in English and 58.6%
- The media department is expanding and growing towards an international front. This is to meet the **challenge in internet** such as Youtube and blogs, website management, electronic media including video **layout, video editing and filming**, international (external) communication and improving **internal communication**.
- A search in YouTube under "Wildlife Law Enforcement" will lead to hidden footage clips from LAGA's latest operations.
- Interviews are being carried out for recruitment of a second media assistant to further assist the department towards achieving these objectives and meet the electronic challenges.

External Relations and Policy

- Meeting with the Minister of Forestry and Wildlife. In along working session LAGA director explained two major difficulties stretching from September month one concerning the National Brigade and the other the legal Unit. The Minister expressed himself freely on the issue of corruption and encouraged LAGA to continue and assist in the fight against corruption within his service. He pledged changes in the Legal Unit and building capacity within the department of Wildlife as a solution for the problems with the national Brigade.
- Meeting with the Secretary General of the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife to discuss on possible areas of more collaboration on wildlife enforcement with emphasis on the conditions of the MoU.
- Meeting with the Director of wildlife of the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife as a follow up to meeting with the Minister to discuss on the different areas of wildlife law enforcement, problems encountered and possible solutions.
- The media department of LAGA has been working with the Central African Regional Programme for the Environment-CARPE in building up their own database and organic system. This is in accordance of LAGA's objective to influence other NGOs to set measurable standards for their work.
- Meeting with Technical Adviser No. 2 of the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife to discuss on the Taiping 4.
- Meeting of LAGA with the Manager of Forest Governance Facility (FGF) in SNV on future collaboration on wildlife law enforcement.
- LAGA coordinated the participation of the Director of Wildlife in an Interpol meeting in Nairobi, and prepared him for a very active participation

Management

- Work on reconstruction of LAGA continues.
- Work on action plans for departments continues.
- Stretching recruitment processes in three LAGA departments is a major setback, especially in investigation and legal units where the recruitment was supposed to compensate expected capacity drop. This situation is likely to continue in February month.

- New recruit in investigation units received training in analysing data and training on internet investigations.
- Financial and Activity reporting of this month was done independently without LAGA's director.

Finance

LAGA Expenditure for January 07

Amount CFA	Budget line	Details			Amount U
1,466,514	Investigations	27 investigations,8 provinces		-1,466,514	\$2,904
708,500	Operations	1 operation+ 1 failed		-2,175,014	\$1,403
1,193,450	legal	follow up 31 cases13 locked s		-3,368,464	\$2,363
963,090	Media	29 media pieces		-4,331,554	\$1,907
187,532	Policy and Exte	T4/DNA-USA		-4,519,086	\$371
1,438,400	Management	Coordination		-5,957,486	\$2,848
697,476	Office			-6,654,962	\$1,381
6,654,962	TOTAL EXPENDITURE JANUARY			0	\$13,178

AmountCFA	Donor					Amount U
187,532	Born Free	Used	January		-187,532	\$371.4
1,433,090	BHC	Used	January		-1,620,622	\$2,837.8
2,559,326	FWS	Used	January		-4,179,948	\$5,068.0
2,475,014	Arcus	Used	January		-6,654,962	\$4,901.0
6,654,962	TOTAL					\$13,178.1

Ofir Drori
 Director
 The Last Great Ape Organization

THIS MONTH IN PICTURES



Operation in the West Province - 7 Leopard skins busting network.





Meeting with the Secretary General of the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife

Links of this month

- Hidden camera captures 7 leopard skins being offered for sale by two dealers in the western province of Cameroon. renowned for this illegal trade they have established a network of supplying to other dealers upon order. leopards are threatened and protected by the wildlife law in Cameroon providing a prison term of up to 3years. the dealers are behind bars.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H1b3WD2mJLw>