

The Last Great Ape Organization - LAGA

September 2007 Report



Highlights -

- **3 dealers arrested** in a single operation attempting to sell **14 elephant tails, 4 tusks** and elephant tooth.
- **6 prosecutions**
- International investigations **extended to France and Nigeria**
- **Head of Legal Department gives a presentation at Interpol wildlife working group** meeting in Tanzania.
- LAGA's assistant manager **continues studies in the UK**

General

September month gave high international activities, good results in operations, legal, and media.

The investigations and operation units showed a very high level performance as 3 dealers were arrested in a single operation attempting to sell **14 elephant tails, 4 tusks** and elephant tooth.

Investigations also went International with Agents being sent to the field in France and Nigeria to investigate international wildlife trafficking.

This month saw the **LAGA Assistant Manager continuing her studies in Britain**. The challenge will be to continue engaging her in activism while she is in the UK. This was succeeding with Marius who is now in France doing his Phd on wildlife law, while doing missions for LAGA.

The Head of Legal Department attended an International Conference of Interpol Wildlife Working in Tanzania and gave a **presentation on fighting wildlife crime**, continuing more staff involvement in International conferences.

This month also showed very good results in the Legal Department with **10 dealers serving prison terms**.

Investigations

- **25 investigations** were carried out in **7 provinces** including - North West, South West, West, East, Littoral, Center and South.
- International investigations were carried out in **France and Nigeria** regarding cross-boarder ivory and bush meat trafficking.
- Investigators initiated 2 Operations this month: 1 in Mamfe in the South West Province, and 1 in Kekem in the West Province.
- Investigations are ongoing regarding 32 elephant tusks seized by the Judicial Unit of the Gendarmerie, Ngoa-Ekele in Yaounde involving some foreigners.
- **9 new Internet scam cases** developed and sent to collaborators in U.S.A. and The Netherlands for contacts.
- **Training and Testing** continued with Internet undercovers in Bamenda and Buea.
- **Procedure on Internet Scam identification** continues and collaboration with South Africa, PASA and Interpol NCB Cameroon continues, collaboration with U.S.A and The Netherlands started.
- New Internet undercover recruited and trained in Bamenda.

Operations

1 operation was carried out **against 3 subjects who are large scale dealers in elephant tusks and other trophies**.

- 15/9 – 3 dealers arrested in an unprecedented operation in Mamfe in the South West Province. Dealers were arrested with 4 tusks, 14 elephant tails and one elephant tooth.

Legal

- There are 10 **dealers behind bars during this month**: 1 in the Littoral Province; 2 in the Extreme North, 1 in the Centre Province, 2 in the West Province, and 4 in the South West Province.
- **38 cases were followed-up** by the Legal Department this month
- 26 cases are scheduled and being tried in the court this month
- 1 case scheduled and tried in the Appeal Court of Garoua this month (Hassana)
- 3 cases waiting for the process of appeal to reach the Court of Appeal. 2 in the West Province, 1 in the Littoral and 1 in the South Province (Djoum). The Courts of First Instance have not completed the files needed for the transmission to the Attorney General
- **19 cases on execution process**
- LAGA Legal Department had **11 missions out of the Central Province**: 3 in Bafoussam (West), 1 in Maroua (Extreme North), 2 in Foumban (West), 1 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Mbouda (West), 2 in Bafang (West), and 1 in Mamfe (South West) to follow up operations and cases before the courts.
- **Prosecutions**: 6 prosecutions were carried out.
- **03/9**: The Court of First Instance of Bafoussam convicts Petho Basilide, Keunang Jean Pierre and Kamdem Barnabe to a **suspended sentences of six months** during three years and to pay 15 000 FCFA as fine, 150 000 FCFA as damages and 34 950 FCFA as fine.
- **25/9**: The Court of First Instance of Mbouda convicts Fontsa Pierre to **three (3) years suspended sentence** during four (4) years and to pay 300.000 FCFA as fine, 2.370.000 FCFA as damages and 131 850 FCFA as judiciary fine. He was **retained in prison for 18 months** for non-payment of the fine and the court charges.
- **01/10**: The Court of First Instance of Foumban convicts Ngoumpeguou Oumarou to **six (6) months imprisonment** and to pay 2.210.000 FCFA as damages
- 1 appeal was registered this month, in the case of Petho Basilide, Keunang Jean-Pierre and Kamdem Barnabe dealing with three leopard skins.
- **Head of Legal Department participated** in the conference of the **Interpol wildlife working group** this month in Tanzania. She gave a presentation on the wildlife Crime Syndicates, Teng case study of Cameroon. The presentation was really welcomed and appreciated. She had the opportunity of making new contacts with law enforcement agencies represented there.
- Concerning the latest **seizure of 32 ivory tusks** made by the **Gendarmerie- Judicial Unit** of Ngoa-Ekele, the case was transmitted in the court against unknown suspects. LAGA proposed to the MINFOF to send samples from the seizure for the DNA test, to open an investigation in order to identify the fugitives and to send civil claim to court, as he will be standing as a civil party in that procedure. Head of legal department met the gendarmerie officer who conducted the operation, in order to put in place a strategy to continue with the investigations. Unfortunately, the said officers are not ready to continue the investigation. Attempts of corruption were observed in this operation

Media front

- **36 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to radio and written press including: 7 written press materials (3 in English, 4 in French), 2 radio talk shows (all in English), 1 radio news feature in English, 26 radio news flashes (16 in English, 10 in French).
- Guests include: MINFOF Provincial Delegate West province, MINFOF Provincial Delegate North West Province, MINFOF Chief of Wildlife and Protected Areas North West Province, Director General of CARPE.

- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including; Arrest of elephant tails and leopard skin dealer in Fouban, Leopard skin and elephant tails dealer in court in Fouban, leopard skin dealer arrest in the North West province, South African government acknowledges Cameroon ownership of gorillas, Arrest of three elephant dealers in Mamfe, Court judgement on the leopard skin dealer in Mbouda, The role media plays in wildlife law enforcement, Increase campaign against leopard skin trade,.
- 22 media pieces in English, 14 in French making a percentage of 61.1%in English and 38.9%in French.
- One volunteer is still in the recruitment process.
- Press releases include:

External Relations and Policy

- **LAGA meeting the Minister of Forestry and Wildlife.** The meeting, **initiated by the Minister was used as an opportunity to encourage LAGA** on its wildlife law enforcement work and fight against corruption and on a circular sent out on wildlife law enforcement to the different provincial delegates. He was very positive on the different suggestions brought up by the LAGA Director and promised to personally intervene in matters involving the ministry and wildlife law enforcement in general.
- LAGA attended and participated in the Interpol Meeting in Tanzania where LAGA's presentation on the 3.9 Hong Kong ivory seizure was very much applauded. This is the first time a LAGA member other than the Director is participating in such an international event.
- LAGA met with the Ambassador of Holland on wildlife law enforcement and the fight against corruption. The Ambassador was very open to the suggestions brought up by LAGA and promised further collaboration.
- LAGA meeting with the Director of Wildlife on the creation of a control unit in the Department of wildlife and Protected Areas.
- LAGA meeting with the MINFOF Provincial Delegates, for Extreme North, North, North West, East and South West Provinces to discuss about the implementation of the Ministers circular on wildlife law enforcement.
- LAGA participated in the British-sponsored regional meeting on The Access Initiatives (TAI) in Limbe for West and Central African Continent.

Management

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Finance

LAGA Expenditure by budget line for September 07

Amount CFA	Budget line	Details	Amount USD
2,795,708	Investigations	27 inv, 7 provinces + France + Nigeria	\$5,886
480,430	Operations	2 Operation, against 4 dealers	\$1,011
1,723,925	legal	follow up 38cases10 locked subjects	\$3,629
1,395,145	Media	36 media pieces	\$2,937
1,218,966	Policy & External R	INTERPOL meeting/Nigeria//France/UK/Israel/Spain	\$2,566
1,333,400	Management	Coordination	\$2,807
877,113	Office		\$1,847
9,824,687	TOTAL EXPENDITURE SEPTEMBER		\$20,684

LAGA Expenditure by donor for September 07

AmountCFA	Donor	Amount USD
141,050	Born Free	\$293.9
1,395,145	BHC	\$2,906.6
2,513,138	FWS	\$5,235.7
363,000	Arcus	\$756.3
308,868	Body Shop	\$643.5
268,300	ProWildlife	\$559.0
0	UNEP-Congo	\$0.0
2,578,918	UNEP-General	\$5,372.7
2,256,268	Rufford Foundation	\$4,750.0
9,824,687	TOTAL	\$20,468

THIS MONTH IN PICTURES



**Mamfe Operation,
Three dealers
were arrested
with 4 ivory tusks,
14 elephant tails
and an elephant
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**Send off party for Nekwa
Eunice, Assistant
Manager of LAGA who
was leaving to the UK for
Further Studies**



Moving seized ivory from Office of MINFOF Director to the Ivory room in Mvog-Betsi zoo



Cutting ivory samples for DNA testing