

The Last Great Ape Organization - LAGA

September 2008 Report



Highlights

- A **LAGA family member** effectively **kicks off RALF activities** in the Republic of Congo.
- **6 operations against 6 dealers** in the replication of LAGA's experience in the Republic of Congo.

General

This month was marked by a special focus on replicating LAGA's model of effective wildlife law enforcement in the Republic of Congo.

LAGA's vision of replicating its model to other countries in the sub-region has already started to be realized. In April the transfer of experience was concretised in tangible results with a successful operation when a renowned international ivory dealer was arrested. **A LAGA family member** arrived the Republic of Congo to coordinate the activities of RALF and charged with transferring Cameroon government's globally acclaimed wildlife law enforcement experience to Congolese wildlife law enforcement authorities. This followed **a special mission carried out by the Director of LAGA** in April to the Republic of Congo. The mission was very successful and was geared at igniting law enforcement through precedence and creating a structure to sustain effective law enforcement at the request of the government. It was carried out at 3 levels:

1. Political
2. Structural
3. Operational

The newly arrived RALF Coordinator following this model has held meetings with Ministry officials, Judiciary, Forces of Law and Order, Embassies, International bodies etc. At the operational level, **6 operations** have so far been carried out with **7 dealers arrested**. In one of the operations, the dealer had a **gorilla hand**, products and parts of other endangered wildlife species. In another operation a well-known ivory trafficker of **Senegalese nationality** was arrested trying to illegally trade in 45 pieces of ivory. He has been in the republic of Congo since 1982 and was arrested in the Plateau market in Brazzaville known to be one of the main ivory supply points in **West Africa** with **Chinese** as the main customers.

Also, The Director of LAGA held a meeting with the Minister of Forestry and Wildlife to discuss about the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between LAGA and MINFOF.

Investigations

- **23 investigations** of varying lengths were carried out in **5 Provinces** – South West, West, Littoral, East and Center.
- Recruitment of field investigators and field test continued. The process will continue until competent investigators are recruited. 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.**

Operations

- No operations succeeded in this month due to the problem of **“test missions”** of new investigators results in low return rate of produced operations.

Legal

- LAGA legal department carried out **11 missions** out of Yaounde – Center Province: 2 in Buea (South West), 1 in Limbe (South West), 1 in Mamfe (South West), 1 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Bertoua (East), 1 in Abong-Mbang (East), 1 in Dschang (West),.
- There are **6 dealers behind bars during this month**: 1 in East Province, 2 in the West Province, 2 in the South West Province, and 1 in the Center province.
- **33 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- 19 cases are scheduled and being tried in the court this month.

Media front

- **16 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to radio, TV and written press including: 1 written press material in French, 3 radio talk shows (all in English), 1 radio news feature (English), 9 radio news flashes (7 in English, 2 in French), 2 TV news features (in English).
- **Guests include:** Minister of Forestry and Wildlife, LAGA Legal Unit, Assistant Programme Officer for CARPE, Information Officer of US embassy, Head of Media and External Relations of LAGA, Control Brigade Unit - MINFOF, Research Officer CEFOR, British High Commissioner to Cameroon, and Barrister Olivia Mah.
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including: Tania Siyam convicted in USA for trafficking in ivory, Parrot follow up cases in Douala and Congo ivory arrest.
- 12 media pieces in English, 4 in French making a percentage 75% in English and 25% in French.
- Online sensitization still stood at more than 500 visits to the LAGA website in the month of August.

External Relations and Policy

- The Director of LAGA held a meeting with the Minister of Forestry and Wildlife to discuss about the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between LAGA and MINFOF.
- Meeting held between the Head of Media and External Relations of LAGA, the Consultant of GRASP and Focal point CARPE to discuss negotiations on gorilla agreements scheduled to take place in Rome in November 2008, the year of gorillas which is 2009 and the Congo Basin forest partnership.
- LAGA participated and presented a paper on wildlife law enforcement operations at a workshop organised by CCORUD on monitoring the effectiveness of forestry control post in implementing the wildlife law for good governance in Cameroon, under the support of Cameroon Regional Programme for the Environment and Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife.
- The Head of Media and External Relations met with the British High Commissioner Syd Madicott and discussed about the problems inherent in the revision of the MoU between LAGA and Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife.
- The Director of LAGA held meeting with the Director for the Centre for Environment and Development; discussion was based on fighting corruption in the NGO sector and corruption involving logging companies.
- Meeting was also held with the Secretary of State Minister Delegate in charge of Prisons to discuss on the permission for LAGA to interview convicted wildlife dealers in order to increase professionalism for investigation.

Management

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- One intern joined LAGA this month to study about wildlife conservation in Cameroon with a special focus on the potentials of ecotourism.
- All Departments of LAGA gave their support and assisted the LAGA family member in the Republic of Congo to effectively kick-off the activities of the RALF project.

Finance

LAGA Expenditure by budget line for September 08

Amount CFA	Budget line	Details	Amount USD
1,193,705	Investigations	24 inv,5 provinces	\$2,653
400,000	Operations		\$889
1,666,330	legal	follow up 33 cases 6 locked subjects	\$3,703
1,551,150	Media	16 media pieces	\$3,447
888,400	Policy & External Relations	Congo Replication	\$1,974
944,500	Management	Coordination	\$2,099
1,216,416	Office		\$2,703
7,860,501	TOTAL EXPENDITURE SEPTEMBER		\$17,468

LAGA Expenditure by donor for September 08

Amount CFA	Donor	Amount USD
934,776	Born Free	\$2,077.3
2,847,585	FWS	\$6,328.0
2,363,440	Rufford Foundation	\$5,252.1
	WSPA	\$0.0
221,450	ProWildlife	\$492.1
1,493,250	Arcus	\$3,318.3
7,860,501	TOTAL	\$17,468

THIS MONTH IN PICTURES



Leopard skins and skin of mandrill – Dealers were arrested during different operations in Brazzaville.



Gorilla hand and 2 hands of mandrill seized during operations in Brazzaville. A total of 6 operations have so far been carried out with 7 dealers arrested. In one of the operations, the dealer had a gorilla hand, products and parts of other endangered wildlife species. In another operation a well-known ivory trafficker of Senegalese nationality was arrested trying to illegally trade in 45 pieces of ivory. He has been in the republic of Congo since 1982 and was arrested in the Plateau market in Brazzaville known to be one of the main ivory supply points in West Africa with Chinese as the main customers.

Links of this month

A renowned international ivory trafficker arrested – Congolese National Television Broadcast. A well-known ivory trafficker of Senegalese nationality arrested while trying to illegally trade in 45 worked pieces of ivory. He was arrested in the Plateau market in Brazzaville known to be one of the main ivory supply points in West Africa with Chinese as the main customers.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1NaOuA73_hE

The website of Aspinall Foundation – Congo that has undertaken the management of the RALF Project.

www.ppg-congo.org