

# The Last Great Ape Organization - LAGA

## July 2008 Report



### Highlights

- An **International wildlife trafficker of British Nationality** arrested in the South West Province. He was **convicted and served jail time in the U.S.** for wildlife trafficking.
- **4 operations** carried out, **4 dealers arrested.**
- **3 cases** were **prosecuted** against **4 wildlife dealers.**
- LAGA participates **57<sup>th</sup> CITES Standing Committee** in Geneva - Switzerland.

### General

This month was marked by a special focus on international wildlife trafficking.

A well-known wildlife **trafficker of British Nationality** with an importer in the U.S was arrested in Limbe – South West Province. Has a company called Equatofauna and claims reptiles arrive from Equatorial Guinea, even inventing flights from there. Mostly sends reptiles through Air France. He **is connected to other wildlife traffickers** in Cameroon, notably a parrot exporter whose parrots (720) were seized last year at the Douala International Airport about to be sent out illegally. He was convicted and served jail time in the U.S. for illegal wildlife trafficking.

3 other operations were carried out this month. A retired civil servant still active in the Menoua Delegation of Mines arrested in Dschang - West Province trying to illegally trade in leopard skins. A worker of the sugar production company (SOSUCAM) was arrested in Nkoteng – Centre Province trying to trade in a live chimp and a regular dealer with a network of suppliers from the Northern part of Cameroon was arrested in Bertoua – East Province trying to illegally trade in **lion skin**, leopard skins and skins of other endangered wildlife species.

3 cases were sentenced this month involving 4 dealers, 1 in Abong-Mbang – East Province, 1 in Bafang – West Province, and 2 in Foumban – West Province. The **2 dealers in Foumban** were sentenced to serve **4 months of prison term**. Damages to MINFOF and fines were awarded for all the cases.

LAGA participated in the 57<sup>th</sup> CITES Standing Committee in Geneva - Switzerland. LAGA has been very active in the UN convention for the last 5 years. During this session, LAGA stirred up a debate through initiating a side event, screening the film “The Cairo Connection” by Karl Amman showing the trade in apes from countries in Central Africa including Cameroon through Nigeria to Egypt. LAGA also worked with other partners within the Species Survival Network to send the message to the Egyptian Delegate that lack of action will not be tolerated.

### Investigations

- **21 investigations** of varying lengths were carried out in **7 Provinces** – Extreme North, Adamawa, West, South West, East, Littoral and Center.
- Field Investigations led to **4 successful operations** after targeting dealers: **4 dealers were arrested.**
- Field tests continue for 5 new candidates.
- Internet Investigations identified and initiated communication with 3 wildlife Internet scammers.

## Operations

**4 operations** were carried out this month with MINFOF against **4 subjects**.

- **02/07 - A retired civil servant** still active in the Menoua Delegation of Mines arrested in Dschang - West Province. He has been doing this business for many years becoming very wealthy from it. He claims to have a client in **Germany** to whom he supplies ivory. He was arrested trying to illegally trade in leopard skins.
- **07/07- A chimp trader** arrested in Nkoteng – Centre Province trying to illegally trade in a live chimp. He is a worker of SOSUCAM (a sugar company) and has been dealing in live chimps for many years, selling them to foreigners.
- **09/07** – A regular dealer with a network of suppliers especially from the Northern part of Cameroon and from the **Republic of Congo** arrested in Bertoua – East Province. He was arrested with a **Lion skin**, a Leopard skin and skins of other endangered wildlife species.
- **30/07** - A well-known wildlife **trafficker of British Nationality** with an importer in the U.S was arrested in Limbe – South West Province. Has a company called Equatofauna and claims reptiles arrive from Equatorial Guinea, even inventing flights from there. Mostly sends reptiles through Air France. He is **connected to other wildlife traffickers** in Cameroon, notably a parrot exporter whose parrots (720) were seized last year at the Douala International Airport about to be sent out illegally. He was convicted and served jail time in the U.S. for illegal wildlife trafficking.

## Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **22 missions** out of Yaounde - Center Province: 2 in Bamenda (North West), 4 in Buea (South West), 1 in Limbe (South West), 1 in Mamfe (South West), 2 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Bertoua (East), 1 in Abong-Mbang (East), 1 in Nanga-Eboko (Center), 3 in Bafoussam (West), 2 in Foumban (West), 1 in Dschang (West), 2 in Bafang (West), 1 in Baham (West).
- There are **15 dealers behind bars during this month**: 1 in East Province, 7 in the West Province, 5 in South West Province, and 2 in Center province.
- **33 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **21 cases** are scheduled and being trailed in the court this month.
- **Prosecutions**: 3 cases involving 4 dealers were sentenced this month
  - **15/07**: The Court of First Instance of Abong-Mbang convicts Akoul Dagobert to 6 months imprisonment, 3 years suspended sentence and to pay an amount of 250.000 Frs. as damages, 50.000 Frs. as fine and 82240 Frs. as judiciary charges.
  - **21/07**: The Court of First Instance of Bafang convicts Noubayouo Andre to pay 100.000 Frs. as fine, 50.150 Frs. as court charge and 300.000 Frs. as damages. He will be retained in prison for 9 months in case he fails to pay the fine.
  - **21/07**: The Court of First Instance of Foumban convicts Pouamou Ahmadou Ahidjo and Kouongni Dikko Samuel 4 months of prison and to pay 28.000 Frs. as fine and 560.000 Frs. as damages.

## Media front

- **41 media pieces** were produced and pushed through the radio, and written press including: 11 written press material 7 in English and 4 in French, 3 radio talk shows (all in English), 27 radio news flashes (10 in English, 17 in French).
- **Guests include**: Minister of Forestry and Wildlife, Provincial Delegate of Forestry and Wildlife South West Province; Lecturer on International Environmental Law the University of Douala, Illegal Wildlife Prosecution Lawyer; Manager of Community Forest Fako Division, and Social Officer for Forest Stewardship Council

- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including; leopard skin dealer in Dschang, arrest of lion skin dealer in Bertoua; arrest of chimp dealer in Nkoteng, prosecution of Internet scammer in Buea, and the prosecution of leopard skin dealer in Fouban.
- **20** media pieces **in English, 21 in French** making a percentage **48.8%** in English and **51.2%** in French correcting the imbalance witnessed last month.
- Online sensitisation stood at more than **300 visits** to the LAGA website in the month of July.

### **External Relations and Policy**

- LAGA participated in the 57<sup>th</sup> CITES Standing Committee in Geneva - Switzerland. LAGA has been very active in the UN convention for the last 5 years. During this session, LAGA stirred up a debate through initiating a side event, screening the film “The Cairo Connection” by Karl Amman showing the trade in apes from countries in Central Africa including Cameroon through Nigeria to Egypt. LAGA also worked with other partners within the Species Survival Network to send the message to the Egyptian Delegate that lack of action will not be tolerated.
- Meeting with the new officials (Delegate and Provincial Chief of Wildlife) of the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife for Centre Province
- Meeting between the Director of Wildlife and Protected Areas and LAGA officials to discuss issues related to the review of the MoU.
- Meeting held between the Head of Media and External relations and CARPE Focal Point.

### **Management**

- LAGA members once more proof their independence in the absence of the LAGA Director with excellent performance from all the departments by carrying out 4 successful operations, prosecuting 4 wildlife dealers and media sensitisation.

### **Finance**

#### **LAGA Expenditure by budget line for July 08**

<b>Amount CFA</b>	<b>Budget line</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Amount USD</b>
<b>1,980,900</b>	<b>Investigations</b>	21 inv,7 provinces	\$4,773.3
<b>1,052,400</b>	<b>Operations</b>	4 Operations	\$2,535.9
<b>2,385,400</b>	<b>Legal</b>	Follow up 33 cases 15 locked subjects	\$5,748.0
<b>1,525,550</b>	<b>Media</b>	41 media pieces	\$3,676.0
<b>1,320,364</b>	<b>Policy &amp; External Relations</b>	UK/Congo/CITES	\$3,181.6
<b>1,044,300</b>	<b>Management</b>	Coordination	\$2,516.4
<b>1,249,697</b>	<b>Office</b>		\$3,011.3
<b>10,558,611</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE JULY</b>		<b>\$25,442.4</b>

#### **LAGA Expenditure by donor for July 08**

<b>Amount CFA</b>	<b>Donor</b>	<b>Amount USD</b>
	Born Free	\$0.0
3,016,276	FWS	\$7,268.1
2,999,835	Rufford Foundation	\$7,228.5
1,010,000	WSPA	\$2,433.7
518,700	ProWildlife	\$1,249.9
3,013,800	Arcus	\$7,262.2
10,558,611	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$25,442</b>

**THIS MONTH IN PICTURES**



**Wildlife Dealer arrested for trading in lion skins, leopard skins and skins of other endangered animal species in Bertoua – East Province. – He is a regular dealer with a network of suppliers especially from the Northern part of Cameroon and from the Republic of Congo.**



**Leopard skins arrest in Dschang – West Province. A retired civil servant arrested trying to illegally trade in leopard skins. He has been doing this business for many years becoming very wealthy from it. He claims to have a client in Germany to whom he supplies skins and ivory.**



**Giant African Tortoises seized during an operation in Limbe – South West Province. A well-known wildlife trafficker of British Nationality with an importer in the U.S was. Has past records of conviction pertaining to wildlife trafficking in the U.S. Has a company called Equatofauna and claims reptiles arrive from Equatorial Guinea, even inventing flights from there. Mostly sends reptiles through Air France. He is connected to other wildlife traffickers in Cameroon, notably a parrot exporter whose parrots (720) were seized last year at the Douala International Airport about to be sent out illegally.**

## **Links of this month**

- Cameroon wildlife sector condemns biopiracy - Cameroon National Television Broadcast. The Provincial Delegate for Forestry and Wildlife and the Technical Adviser No 1 in the Ministry of Environment and Nature Protection stress on the importance of biopiracy. Special emphasis was made on Manyu Division of the South West Province noted to be a biopiracy junction for endangered and protected wildlife species coming from countries bordering the South East of Cameroon and moving through Nigeria to black markets in other parts of the world.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4nyYULIHIA>

- “The Cairo Connection” - a film by Karl Amman shown by LAGA during the 57<sup>th</sup> CITES Standing Committee in Geneva - Switzerland. LAGA has been very active in the UN convention for the last 5 years. During this session, LAGA stirred up a debate through initiating a side event, screening the film “The Cairo Connection” showing the trade in apes from countries in Central Africa including Cameroon through Nigeria to Egypt. LAGA also worked with other partners within the Species Survival Network to send the message to the Egyptian Delegate that lack of action will not be tolerated.

<http://karlammann.com/pasa-cairo-connection.php>