

# The Last Great Ape Organization – LA GA

## April 2010 Report



### Highlights

- **A dealer arrested in Kribi – South Region with 2 sea turtle shells**, as a continuation of the crackdown on illegal trade in these products.
- **4 dealers were sentenced this month** – 2 in Bafoussam and 2 in Kribi.

### General

This month was marked by a continuation of the crackdown in the illegal trade of sea turtles in Kribi – South region.

**A dealer was arrested in Kribi – South Region with 2 sea turtle shells.** He has been in this illegal business for long and was carrying out this illegal activity openly and with impunity because of the lack of any concrete action to repel this illegal trade. This operation, following that of March when 2 dealers were arrested with 14 sea turtle shells concretizes the fact that illegal trade in sea turtle shells has been ongoing for long and very strong in that area. This problem necessitated LAGA's intervention in hitting main actors and exposing the silence of the local authorities and projects in the area. For a long time **several projects claimed to work on the protection of sea turtles for years with strong contrast to the open sale of sea turtle shells in Kribi and Campo.** This contrast, a symptom for a larger failure can be seen in the sign in the photograph (this month in pictures), one of many decorating the area around where sea turtle products were openly sold for a long time. One of the hopes is that this serves as a message that we **demand more from conservation, than publicity and workshops.**

The Court of First Instance of Bafoussam – West Region sentenced 2 dealers in protected wildlife products to 1 month of imprisonment and to pay over \$2500 as fines and damages each. They were arrested in Bafoussam for illegally trading in 2 leopard skins. In another case, the Court of First Instance of Kribi - South Region sentenced 2 main dealers to 1 year of prison suspended sentence during three years and to pay over \$1056 as fines and damages. They were arrested in Kribi for illegally trading in 14 sea turtle shells.

### Investigations

- **16 investigation missions** of varying lengths were carried out in **6 Regions** of Cameroon- North West, South, West, Littoral, South West and Center.
- **Investigations are still ongoing pertaining to 3 targets** that are implicated in trying to illegally export the more than 1000 parrots seized at the Douala International Airport destined for Bahrain and Kuwait.
- Internet Investigations are still ongoing concerning 2 Internet Wildlife trafficker in Buea – South West Region. They are engaged in the falsification of government documents and CITES Permit.
- Field tests continued with more candidates as the department is experiencing a shortage in effective investigators. 1 new candidate is being tested with encouraging results.

### Operations

**An operation** was carried out this month against **1 subject.**

- **14/04/10 – A dealer was arrested in Kribi – South Region with 2 sea turtle shells.** He has been in this illegal business for long and was carrying out the illegal activities openly and with impunity because of the lack of any concrete action to repel this illegal trade. This operation proves that illegal trade in sea turtle shells which has been ongoing for long is

very strong in that area, a problem that necessitated LAGA's intervention in hitting main actors and exposing this illegal trade.

## **Legal**

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **6 missions** out of Yaounde- Centre Region: 1 in Abong Mbang (East), 1 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Ntui (Centre), 1 in Kribi (South), 1 in Sangmélima (South) and 1 in Mamfe (South West).
- There are **6 dealers behind bars during this month**: 1 in the East Region, 1 in South Region, 4 in the South West Region.
- **23 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **18 cases** are scheduled and being trailed in the court this month.

**Prosecutions:** 4 dealers were sentenced this month.

- **26/04/2010** - The Court of First Instance of Bafoussam – West Region sentenced 2 dealers in protected wildlife products to 1 month of imprisonment and to pay over \$2500 as fines and damages each. They were arrested in Bafoussam for illegally trading in 2 leopard skins.
- **27/04/2010** - The Court of First Instance of Kribi - South sentenced 2 main dealers to 1 year of prison suspended sentence during three years and to pay over \$1056 as fine and damages. They were arrested in Kribi for illegally trading in 14 sea turtle shells.
- **1 appeal** was registered this month against the ruling given by the Court of First Instance of Bafoussam in the matter of MINFOF Vs Moupe Amza and Njiki Yamekue Mamadou ( 2 dealers in leopard skins).

## **Media front**

- **21 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to radio and written press including: 7 written press materials (6 in English and 1 in French), 12 radio news flashes (4 in English, 8 in French), and 2 radio talk shows in English.
- Guests include: MINFOF Minister, Director of Wildlife and protected areas and Sub Director MINFOF in charge of the promotion of wildlife.
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including; Kribi arrest of dealers in sea turtle shells – court hearing, 15<sup>th</sup> CITES conference Qatar and replication of LAGA's model in the sub region.
- 11 media pieces in English, 10 in French making a percentage of 52.4% in English and 47.6% in French.

## **External Relations and Policy**

- LAGA Director presented a paper at the US Embassy on corruption in NGO sector and the APT – AID principles to a group of 50 NGOs.
- LAGA Director met with US Embassy to discuss corruption in NGO sector and wildlife law enforcement.
- Meeting held between LAGA Director and Dutch Embassy to discuss corruption in NGO sector and wildlife law enforcement.
- Shannon, a PHD researcher working on bushmeat gave a presentation on her research work on bushmeat markets in Yaounde to LAGA's Staff.
- Meeting held between Peace Corps Country Director and LAGA Director concerning the collaboration on education modules for activism based on the LAGA model.

- Meeting between “Chargé d’Etude Assistant” N°1 at the General Delegation for National Security and LAGA Head of Media and External Department to discuss MoU between LAGA and the Delegation of National Security.
- LAGA Head of Media and External Relations met the Conservator of Douala –Edea Wildlife Reserve, discussion was based on the welfare problems of the Pongo Songo chimpanzee facility.

## **Management**

- LAGA still experienced severe cash flow problems this month that slowed down the work and results of the LAGA’s departments. Despite this problem, a successful operation was carried out against a dealer in Kribi – South. This again showed the commitment of LAGA staff to function with limited financial resources

## **Activism Front**

Education activities were carried out on the following:

### **1) Film: Lord of war**

The film demonstrates the mafia and dangerous involvement of individual and high officials of the army into arms trading in order to make fast money. Trade in arms have been embraced by most African tyrants and governments who most often carry out trade in arms to perpetually intimidate and oppress their subjects to stay in power.

1. Is it man who kills his fellow man or the gun that kills?
2. What quantity of arm should each country have?

### **2) Trade in small arms (deadly trade) - by Arrey Emmanuel Enow – Management Department.**

The presentation shows how small and light arms are being trafficked in Africa and to raise awareness due to the devastating effects of this trade on humans, the environment, the economy and the political and social destabilization in Africa. This trade has been going on for long and is ranked the second richest trade after drugs trade.

1. What is an illegal arm?
2. Why are all the treaties signed not yielding fruits?
3. Is it that those who sign these treaties are those involved in this trade?
4. Can the trade in small and light arms trade be stopped?
5. Is killing one person less evil than killing 100?

### **3) Amendment of the law on the creation, organization and functioning of ELECAM – by Serge Banyimbe – LAGA Media Department.**

The law of ELECAM was modified by an amendment on March 25th, 2010. While the defenders of the revision find it necessary for free and transparent elections for Cameroon, opponents consider it as a legitimization of the electoral manipulations by the government. The presentation shows the arguments of both parties, and presents the opportunities which the reform offers to both the party in the power and the parties of opposition, without forgetting sections of the law that affects the civil society.

1. Who justifies the sidelining of the civil society in the pre-electoral dialogues?
2. Is the new revision increasing the chances of one party to win?
3. How does the revision relate to electoral fraud?

### **4) Electricity power supply in Cameroon.**

This presentation focuses on unveiling the truth about electricity, its prices and its consumers and the Lom Pangar Dam to be built. She describes the importance of electricity in the aluminium industry which consumes huge amounts of cheap electricity. Reason why Lom Pangar Dam is to be built. Cheap electricity is fundamental for this industry and because of this ALUCAM the company

that produces aluminium in Cameroon has a contract with AES SONEL the electricity company to ensure a steady supply of cheap electricity. But what Cameroonians do not know is that the price they pay for this electricity is far too expensive compared to ALUCAM's token fee. This creates a situation where the ordinary consumer is paying huge cost to keep SONEL in business while ALUCAM is doing virtually nothing. ALUCAM consumes close to 50% of the electricity produced.

1. Is it profitable and worthwhile to keep ALUCAM going when we all know the cost?
2. Should resources invested in building dams, in updating and increasing electricity supply structures not be used in more profitable ventures?
3. Who is benefiting from such huge waste in resources?

## **Finance**

### **LAGA Expenditure by budget line for April 2010**

<b>Amount CFA</b>	<b>Budget line</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Amount USD</b>
<b>1,208,765</b>	<b>investigations</b>	16 inv, 6 Regions	\$2,572
<b>469,500</b>	<b>Operations</b>	1 Operation against 1 subjects	\$999
<b>1,948,070</b>	<b>legal</b>	follow up 23 cases 6 locked subjects	\$4,145
<b>1,258,325</b>	<b>Media</b>	21 media pieces	\$2,677
<b>251,300</b>	<b>Policy &amp; External Relations</b>	Congo/CAR/Chad/Thailand	\$535
<b>902,100</b>	<b>Management</b>	Coordination	\$1,919
<b>1,815,387</b>	<b>Office</b>		\$3,863
<b>7,853,447</b>	<b>TOTAL APRIL 2010</b>		\$16,709

### **LAGA Expenditure by donor for April 2010**

<b>AmountCFA</b>	<b>Donor</b>	<b>Amount USD</b>
3,764,545	FWS	\$8,009.7
1,233,468	ProWildlife	\$2,624.4
1,002,265	ARCUS Foundation	\$2,132.5
436,000	EIA	\$927.7
	World Parrot Trust	\$0.0
1,000,869	BornFree Foundation	\$5.3
416,300	SFS France	\$5.3
7,853,447	TOTAL	\$16,709.5

## THIS MONTH IN PICTURES



**2 sea turtle shells seized from a dealer arrested in Kribi – South. He has been in this illegal business for long and was carrying out their illegal activities openly and with impunity because of the lack of any concrete action to repel this illegal trade. This operation proves that illegal trade in sea turtle shells has been ongoing for long and very strong in that area. This problem necessitated LAGA’s continued intervention in hitting main actors and exposing this illegal trade.**



**A poster put up by some projects claiming to protect sea turtles in the town of Kribi. For a long time several projects claimed to work on the protection of sea turtles for years with strong contrast to the open sale of sea turtle shells in Kribi and Campo. This contrast, a symptom for a larger failure can be seen in the sign in the photograph (this month in pictures), one of many decorating the area around where sea turtle products were openly sold for a long time. One of the hopes is that this serves as a message that we demand more from conservation, than publicity and workshops.**