

The Last Great Ape Organization – LA GA

December 2013 Report



Highlights

- **An ecoguard working in the Waza national park arrested with elephant parts and other protected wildlife products.**
- **2 ivory traffickers arrested in Lomie – East transporting ivory using the vehicle of the Ngoyla municipality – East Region.**
- **Lack of collaboration and breach of procedure observed in MINFOF Far North Regional Delegation.**
- **1 dealer sentenced in Bafia - Center**
- **The year ended on target in all Departments**

General

This month was marked by good operations arresting 3 major dealers

2 major ivory traffickers were arrested in Lomie – East by MINFOF officials of the control post of Djomedjo – East with elephant tusks while trying to **illegally transport them using the car of the Ngoyla municipality**. One of the dealers is the son of the Mayor of Ngoyla – East, who is based in Spain and tried to intimidate the arresting team, and later tried to bribe them. LAGA was involved in the Legal follow-up and questioned the Mayor on PV; and investigations are still on-going to see the involvement of the mayor and the trafficking of ivory to Spain by the arrested suspect.

An ecoguard working in the Waza national park arrested with a wide variety of elephant products and other wildlife products including elephant skull, jawbones, foot and ear; and other wildlife products including giraffe skull, 9 kob horns and the skull of a topi tsessebe. He transported the products on his bike from Waza to Maroua where he was arrested. **Lack of collaboration and breach of procedure by MINFOF was again observed** when the MINFOF Delegate of the Far North Region refused to write a remand warrant for the suspect to be locked up and the Conservator for the Waza national park endured lack of collaboration by MINFOF especially during the writing of the complaint report (PV).

The Court of First Instance of Bafia - Center a major dealer to **50 days imprisonment** and to pay 50.000 FCFA as fine, 200.000 FCFA (about \$400) as damages. He will be retained in jail for 6 months in case of default of payment of fine and court fees. He was arrested in Makenene – Center for the illegal detention and attempted sale of parts of the protected animals.

The year ended with very good results - all the departments meeting up with the set targets.

Investigations

- **21 investigations** of varying lengths were carried out in **7 Regions** of Cameroon - South West, South, East, Littoral, North Far North and Center.
- Good investigations led to arrest operations in the Far North Region involving an ecoguard working in the Waza national park
- A Wildlife Official Uganda was trained on investigation, operation, management, legal and media procedures with the goal of replicating LAGA activities in that country.
- The distribution of hotline flyers in both English and French continued.

- LAGA Investigations Department assisted replication projects PALF-Congo and TALFF-Guinea Investigations Department on Investigations and Operations procedures.

Operations

2 operations carried out this month with MINFOF led to the **arrest of 3 major dealers**

- **03/12/13 – 2 major ivory traffickers were arrested in Lomie – East by MINFOF officials** of the control post of Djomedjo – East with elephant tusks while trying to **illegally transport them using the car of the Ngoyla municipality**. One of the dealers is the son of the Mayor of Ngoyla – East, who is based in Spain and tried to intimidate the arresting team, and later tried to bribe them. LAGA was involved in the Legal follow-up and questioned the Mayor on PV; and investigations are still on-going to see the involvement of the mayor and the trafficking of ivory to Spain by the arrested suspect
- **04/12/13 – An ecoguard working in the Waza national park arrested with a wide variety of elephant products and other wildlife products including elephant skull, jawbones, foot and ear; and other wildlife products including giraffe skull, 9 kob horns and the skull of a topi tsessebe**. He transported the products on his bike from Waza to Maroua where he was arrested. **Lack of collaboration and breach of procedure by MINFOF was again observed** when the MINFOF Delegate of the Far North Region refused to write a remand warrant for the suspect to be locked up and the Conservator for the Waza national park endured lack of collaboration by MINFOF especially during the writing of the complaint report (PV).

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **14 missions** out of Yaounde - Centre Region: 1 in Mfou (Centre), 1 in Nanga-Eboko (Centre), 3 in Bafia (Centre), 2 in Kribi (South), 1 in Djoum (South), 1 in Mamfe (South West), 1 in Bamenda (North West), 1 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Abong-Mbang (East) 1 in Lomie (East) and 1 in Maroua (Far North).
- There are **40 dealers behind bars during this month**: 15 in the East Region, 13 in Centre region, 2 in North West region, 2 in North Region and 8 in South Region.
- **40 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **36 cases** are scheduled and being trailed in the court this month.
- **Prosecutions**: 1 dealer was sentenced this month.
 - **31/12/2013**: The Court of First Instance of Bafia - Center convicted BEYONGOL Sébatien to **50 days imprisonment** and to pay **50.000 FCFA as fine, 200.000 FCFA as damages** and **29.800 FCFA as court fees**. He will be retained in jail for 6 months in case of default of payment of fine and court fees. He was arrested in Makenene – Center for the illegal detention and attempted sale of parts of the protected animals.

Media front

- **06 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to radio and written press including: 4 written press material 3 in English and 1 in French, 1 news flash in English and 1 talk show in English.
- **Guests include**: Uganda wildlife official
- **Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including**; ecoguard arrest in elephants parts at the Waza national park.
- 6 media pieces 5 in English, 1 in French making a percentage of 83.3% in English and 16.7% in French.

External Relations and Policy

- LAGA Director meets with Luc Mathot, Naftali Honig and Charlotte Houpline for a week of sessions on the formation of the EAGLE network, and different aspects of taking the work of the LAGA replications to the next level as the network continue to grow.
- A legal adviser travelled to Chad in order to meet the authorities pertaining to the replication of LAGA activities in that country and to follow up cases initiated last year that are pending at the level of courts.
- Karl Karugaba, a Wildlife Official from Uganda was trained in Yaounde on investigation, operation, management, legal and media procedures with the goal of replicating LAGA's activities in that country.
- As a follow-up of training carried out by LAGA in the Garoua Wildlife School, Vournsebo Emmanuel, an official and a teacher in the school was trained on wildlife law enforcement procedure in LAGA; these included Investigations, Operations, Legal follow-up, Media publication, Management and the Fight against Corruption - all necessary for developing and teaching this module in the School. He carried out investigations and participated in an operation in Maroua – Far North Region.

Management

- LAGA family members went for a 3 weeks holiday that started on the 17th of December 2013 with a special lunch and Christmas bonuses for good produced results.

Activism Front

All the education activities carried out by the LAGA family are online; this could be gotten at the LAGA website – <http://www.laga-enforcement.org/Activism/tabid/77/Default.aspx>.

- The training of a super volunteer continued this month in LAGA to give her tools for larger activism and opportunities to continue in a path of independent activism that LAGA can support, and to take part in the fight to bring about a change in tackling corruption and enforcing wildlife laws.

Replication

During this month, LAGA worked with other replication projects in planning and coordinating missions with PALF, AALF, TALFF and GALF on investigations, operations and financial procedures.

EAGLE network held a meeting in Libreville – Gabon on the management of the network, expansion and getting more results in wildlife law enforcement and the fight against corruption.

A legal adviser travelled to Chad in order to meet the authorities pertaining to the replication of LAGA activities in that country and to follow up cases initiated last year that are pending at the level of courts.

Finance

In preparation, will be made available as soon as possible

This Month in Pictures



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