

The Last Great Ape Organization – LA GA

February 2013 Report



Highlights

- **3 international ivory traffickers belonging to the same network arrested with 24 elephant tusks.**
- **The busted network has connections in Congo, Gabon, France, Belgium and Italy.**
- **WCO invited LAGA director to speak on anti-corruption strategies.**

General

This month was marked by the arrest of 3 international ivory traffickers in Cameroon

3 international ivory traffickers belonging to the same network were arrested in Yaounde – Center with 24 elephant tusks. The leader of the network is a Cameroonian based in Congo where he has a web of suppliers. The traffickers have connections in many other countries including Congo, Gabon, France, Belgium and Italy. They drive ivory trade in Congo, Gabon and Cameroon, exporting the products through Cameroon to Europe and Asia.

World Customs Organization invited LAGA director to speak in its headquarters in Brussels at the annual meeting of the Ethics sub-committee **on anti-corruption strategies and steps Custom authorities around the world to curb corruption.** This has been a rare occasion for an NGO to appear in front of the sub-committee.

Investigations

- **22 investigations** of varying lengths were carried out in **7 Regions** of Cameroon- North West, South, West, East, Littoral, Far North and Center.
- Head of Investigations Department traveled to Gabon to tap from the AALF experience of operations, arresting traffickers of wildlife and their derivative products through the airport and the seaport. He also worked with AALF investigators on investigations and operations procedures.
- Good investigations led to the arrest of 3 international ivory traffickers in Yaounde – Center.
- 3 candidates are being tested in the field this month. One in the Far North Region so as to push for arrest operations in that part of Cameroon.
- LAGA Investigations Department assisted PALF-Congo Investigations Department on Investigations and Operation Procedures.

Operations

An operation carried out this month led to the arrest of **3 international ivory traffickers.**

- **13/02/13 – 3 international ivory traffickers belonging to the same network were arrested in Yaounde – Center with 24 elephant tusks.** The leader of the network is a Cameroonian based in Congo where he has a web of suppliers. The traffickers have connections in many other countries including Congo, Gabon, France, Belgium and Italy. They drive ivory trade in Congo, Gabon and Cameroon, exporting the products through Cameroon to Europe and Asia.

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **14 missions** out of Yaounde - Centre Region: 2 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Bangangte (West), 1 in Dschang (West), 1 in Limbe (South West), 1

in Buea (South West), 1 in Mamfe (South West), 1 in Bertoua (East), 1 in Djoum (South), 1 in Ebolowa (South), 1 in Kribi (South), 2 in Sangmelima (South), 1 Abong-Mbang (South).

- There are **36 dealers behind bars during this month**: 14 in the East Region, 1 in the South West Region, 5 in Centre region, 1 in North West region, 12 in South Region and 4 in West Region.
- **20 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **16 cases** are scheduled and being trailed in the court this month.

Media front

- **34 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to TV, radio, and written press including: 18 written press material (8 in English 10 in French), 4 radio talk shows in English, 2 TV news features (1 each in English and French) and 10 news flashes (5 each in English and French).
- **Guests include:** Lecturer at the Catholic University of Buea, PHD student in the University of Buea, and a guest lecturer at the Pan-African Institute for Development in Buea.
- **Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including;** 3 Cameroonian ivory traffickers arrest in South Africa, the arrest of ivory traffickers in Yaounde, baby baboon rescued in Yaounde and 2 ivory traffickers arrest in Gabon.
- 18 media pieces in English, 16 in French making a percentage of 52.9% in English and 47.1% in French.

External Relations and Policy

- LAGA director played an important role in a WCS meeting in Kigali and process of shift of strategy towards a stronger NGO role in Wildlife Law Enforcement. A similar role was played in a parallel process in WWF.
- LAGA director visited Nairobi and held meetings with different NGOs and Government officials on how LAGA can assist Kenya in improving arrests and prosecution of major wildlife criminals.
- LAGA director presented in the PASA education workshop on Illegal trade in apes.
- World Customs Organization invited LAGA director to speak in its headquarters in Brussels at the annual meeting of the Ethics sub-committee on anti-corruption strategies and steps Custom authorities around the world to curb corruption. This has been a rare occasion for an NGO to appear in front of the sub-committee.

Management

- A Jurist on trial was let go because of lack of engagement and 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>.

Education activity this month was on:

Film projection: The Ambassador

The Ambassador is a documentary that unmask some of the filthy businesses that go underneath diplomacy relationship in Africa. In other words diplomats who leave Europe, Asian etc. come to Africa not just for the purpose of diplomacy but to run businesses and other illegal transaction like trafficking of drugs. The many interests (the quest for African resources) of these European and other diplomats in Africa at times spark conflicts in the region. The film shows a high level of corruption between diplomats, the states and individuals.

Replication

During this month, LAGA helped other replication projects in completing their 2012 Annual Reports; planning and coordinating missions with the PALF and AALF Investigations Department.

Finance

LAGA Expenditure by Budget Line for February 2013

Amount FCFA			Amount USD
1,818,408	Investigations	27 inv, 7 Regions	\$3,696
596,000	Operations	1 Operations against 3 subjects	\$1,211
2,429,923	Legal	follow up 20 cases 36 locked subjects	\$4,939
1,511,978	Media	34 Media pieces	\$3,073
13,844,902	Policy & External Relations	WCO ,CITES, WCS-kigali, Kenya/Rwanda/Gabon/Togo/Congo	\$28,140
907,900	Management	Coordination	\$1,845
1,741,462	Office		\$3,540
234,000	LAGA Family	Women day/Wedding	\$476
23,084,572	TOTAL EXPENDITURE FEBRUARY		\$46,920

LAGA Expenditure by Donor for February 2013

AmountCFA	Donor	Amount USD
1,935,325	FWS	\$3,933.6
3,772,468	FWS-Replication	\$7,667.6
978,117	BornFree UK	\$1,988.0
331,500	Rufford	\$673.8
	IFAW	\$0.0
5,946,571	EIA	\$12,086.5
1,202,013	ProWildlife	\$2,443.1
8,918,578	ARCUS Foundation	\$18,127.2
0	Conde Nast Award	\$0.0
23,084,572	TOTAL	\$47,111.4

This Month in Pictures



The leader of a network of 3 international ivory traffickers busted in Yaounde – Center with 24 elephant tusks weighing 27.5 kg. He is a Cameroonian based in Congo where he has a web of suppliers. The traffickers have connections in many other countries including Congo, Gabon, France, Belgium and Italy. They drive ivory trade in Congo, Gabon and Cameroon, exporting the products through Cameroon to Europe and Asia.

Links of this month

3 international ivory traffickers arrested in Yaounde - Hello Cameroon Program, Cameroon National Television Broadcast. The arrest of the ivory traffickers took place in Bastos, a rich neighbourhood in Yaounde with 24 ivory tusks including mostly those of baby elephants. The suspected men are locked up while waiting the provisions of the 1994 wildlife law to be applied.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6RAIXy6LKrc>