

The Last Great Ape Organization – LA GA

August 2014 Report



Highlights

- **2 traffickers arrested with a collection of wildlife products.**
- **The traffickers were also found in possession of marijuana an illegal substance that they had consumed shortly before their arrest.**
- **A trafficker arrested in the Littoral with 3 ape skulls**
- **An official from the Prague Zoo visited the LAGA office.**

General

This month was marked by the arrest of 3 traffickers during 2 operations that saw many gorilla bones and skulls seized from the traffickers.

In Tombel, in the South West Region, **two traffickers were arrested** during an operation **and 6 gorilla bones including a skull, an ivory tusk and an elephant tail were seized.** They were also found in possession of marijuana a prohibited substance and they had smoked the drug shortly before their arrested.

In an operation carried out in Pouma, Littoral, **a trafficker was arrested with 3 skulls including that of a chimpanzee and a gorilla.** The trafficker was arrested after coming in from a locality called Sibongo, where he obtained the ape skulls and rode back to Pouma where he arrested immediately after he attempted to sell the skulls.

An official from the Prague Zoo visited the LAGA office and had a working session with the Deputy Director.

The Yaounde Centre Administratif Court of First Instance sentenced a wildlife trafficker to 3 months imprisonment. He was arrested in Yaounde on the 21st of May 2014 for illegal possession of 7 gorilla skulls, 10 chimpanzee skulls and 1 elephant teeth.

The Director of LAGA continues his stay in Kenya, working on the establishment of a replication project in the country and on EAGLE network.

Investigations

- **18 investigations** of varying lengths were carried out in 5 Regions of Cameroon-Littoral, North West Centre, South West and East Regions.
- Good investigations in Tombel led to the arrest of two dealers with an elephant tusk, gorilla skulls and other elephant parts.
- Good investigations in Pouma resulted in the arrest of a trafficker in gorilla and chimpanzee skulls.
- Good investigations in Nkambe led to the identification of products but due to bad roads, operation will be planned subsequently.

Operations

Two operations carried out this month with MINFOF arresting **3 suspects**

- **22/08/14 – a major trafficker arrested 3 ape skulls including a chimpanzee and a gorilla skull** – Pouma, Littoral while illegally trying to trade in them; he is a professional trafficker who uses the cover of another normal business activity – commercial bike riding to cover his illicit wildlife trafficking. He rode his bike to Sibongo some 20 km from Pouma where he collected the skulls and rode back to Pouma to sell them and was immediately arrested.
- **27/08/14 – 2 traffickers arrested in Tombel during an operation and a collection of wildlife products seized. Marijuana was equally found on them and they had just smoked the drug in a hotel room shortly before their arrest.** The two were arrested during their attempts at selling the products that included **an ivory tusk, an elephant jawbone, a gorilla skull and 5 gorilla bones**. They are professional traffickers and are suspected to have bought the products from Bangem in the South West Region and from a woman in Tombel where they were arrested. Investigations are on-going to determine the identity of the woman.

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **18 missions** out of Yaounde- Centre Region: 1 in Mfou (Centre), 3 in Nanga Eboko (Centre), 1 in Meyene (Centre), 2 in Douala (Littoral) , 3 in Edea (Littoral), 1 in Abong-Mbang (East), 1 in Bertoua (East), 1 in Bangangté (West), 1 in Dschang (West), 1 in Kribi (South) and 1 In Tombel (South West), 2 in Mamfe (South West).
- There are **32 dealers behind bars during this month**: 13 in the East Region, 8 in Centre region, 2 in Littoral Region, 2 in South Region, and 7 in South West Region
- **32 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **26 cases** are scheduled and being trailed in the court this month.
- **Prosecutions**: We had 1 judgment this month.
 - 28/08/2014: The Court of First Instance of Yaounde – Centre Administratif sentenced OBAM Willy to **3 months imprisonment** and to pay **7.127.000 CFA Frs as damages**. He was also ordered to pay **361.025 CFA Frs or serve 12 months of imprisonment**. He was arrested in Yaounde for illegal detention of 7 gorilla skulls, 10 chimpanzee skulls and 1 elephant teeth.

Media front

- **20 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to radio, written press, and internet including: 5 written press material (3 in English 2 in French), 5 radio talk shows all in English, 8 news flashes (6 in English and 2 in French) and 2 internet publication all in English.

- **Guests include:** The conservator of Korup national park and the conservator of Korup national park.
- **Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including:** Zoetele arrest of a dealer with a dead baby gorilla, Benin arrest of three ivory dealers, Pouma arrest of a trafficker with 3 chimp skulls and two dealers arrested with ivory and gorilla parts.
- 16 media pieces in English, 4 in French making a percentage of 80% in English and 20% in French.

External Relations and Policy

- The Deputy Director of LAGA held a meeting with an official from the Prague Zoo and discussions focused on LAGA's activities and wildlife crime around the Dja biosphere reserve where the zoo is carrying out conservation initiatives. Discussions were also based on the Prague Zoo's conservation initiatives around the world. Furthermore, the intensification of wildlife law enforcement operations around the Dja Biosphere reserve and the compilation of arrest operations carried out under the framework of the effective wildlife law enforcement programme in and around the reserve, it was concluded should be carried out.
- The Head of the Legal Department attended the Littoral Regional Anti-poaching Committee meeting whose aim is to outline strategies in combatting poaching in the country. This meeting was focused on "Preventing the Ebola virus through the fight against poaching".

Management

- LAGA Director continued stay in Kenya working on the establishment of a replication project in Kenya while work on the structuring basic EAGLE network procedures and operationalization continues.

Activism Front

Power Point presentation: The uprising in the world: A third world war in the making!

The presentation examines the present issues in the Middle East giving brief reasons for the conflict between Israel and Palestine, the Syrian civil war, the Libyan political crisis, the expansion of the insurgent group, ISIS in the Iraq and the escalation of the crisis into other part of the world. In situ, the talk was to demonstrate that there issues of religion, ideology and politics that govern these crises in the Middle East which could ignite a war or a third world war? if nothing is done to resolve the situation.

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>.

Replication

The management department continued assisting in compiling financial data for the new replication project that is underway in Kenya.

Finance

LAGA Expenditure by line for August 2014

Total Expenditures CFA				Total Expenditures USD
1,878,490		Investigations	18 Investigations, 5 Regions	\$3,810
1,282,200		Operations	2 Operation against 3 subjects	\$2,601
3,359,108		Legal	follow up 32 cases 32 locked subjects	\$6,814
1,422,490		Media	20 Media pieces	\$2,885
774,263		Policy & External Relations	Kenya Mission	\$1,571
1,468,060		Management	Coordination	\$2,978
1,381,378		Office		\$2,802
11,565,989	TOTAL EXPENDITURE AUGUST			\$23,460

LAGA Expenditure by Donors for August 2014

AmountCFA	Donor	Amount USD
19,500	FWS	\$39.6
0	FWS-Replication	\$0.0
2,057,878	BornFree UK	\$4,174.2
0	Rufford	\$0.0
0	IFAW	\$0.0
4,333,368	NEU Foundation	\$8,789.8
4,260,743	WILD CAT	\$8,642.5
894,500	Prowildlife	\$1,814.4
11,565,989	TOTAL	\$23,460.4

This Month in Pictures



Two arrested for illegal possession of wildlife products and drugs. They just smoked marijuana in a hotel room shortly before they were arrested by wildlife officials (*above*) and the products seized included an elephant tusks and numerous gorilla bones (*below*)



He uses the cover as a commercial motor bike rider to traffick in ape skulls and was arrested after using his bike to ferry the skulls for sale (*above*) and three primate skulls up for sale by trafficker (*below*)



Link of the month

Standard Tribune published story on maximum sentence given to notorious elephant bones traffickers arrested in June 2014

Effiam Peter Effiong was arrested alongside Nwese Solomon Nwese, a corporal with Cameroon's *marine marchande* corps on June 17, 2014 in the southwest of the country during their attempts at selling over 100 elephant bones.

<http://www.standard-tribune.com/?p=1926>