

# The Last Great Ape Organization – LA GA

## January 2014 Report



### Highlights

- **LAGA Director survives crocodile attack in Ethiopia**
- **Traffic of influence, lack of collaboration and breach of procedure observed in MINFOF Littoral Regional Delegation following the arrest of a Chinese with a chimp.**
- **4 dealers arrested with ivory in Lomie – East.**
- **The 2013 Annual Report on activities and finance completed and posted online.**

### General

This month was marked by the crocodile attack on LAGA Director and good operations arresting 5 suspects.

**LAGA Director survives a crocodile attack while on nature trip in the tribal woodlands of Ethiopia's Omo River banks. He was attacked by a 3-meter crocodile** that charged at his canoe and locked its jaw on his leg; fighting to release himself and fighting for his life, he found that part of his calf was missing and blood was gushing out of his leg at a potentially fatal rate after freeing his leg. Using his tourniquet and after getting grabbing small personal items, he went searching for help from nearby villages and finally found it after 2 days. He is presently receiving treatment and recovering in Israel after getting initial treatment in Ethiopia.

Traffic of influence, lack of collaboration and breach of procedure was observed in MINFOF Littoral Regional Delegation following the arrest of a Chinese with a live chimp. **The Chinese national who is also the manager of Shanghri-LA Restaurant in Douala was arrested with a chimp** he claims was given to him and his sister by a General in the Cameroon army. Here again, **traffic of influence, lack of collaboration and breach of procedure by MINFOF was observed.** The General supposedly called MINFOF and the MINFOF Delegate with the Chief of Wildlife of the Littoral Regional Delegation refused to sign the PV which the suspect had signed and forward it to the State Counsel as procedure demands. The chimp was rescued after overcoming many obstacles and taken to the Limbe Wildlife Center.

**A network of elephant poachers and ivory traffickers dismantled in Lomie – East following the arrest of 4 members with elephant tusks and elephant meat.** One of the members, a well-known poacher and a recidivist popularly called "Samedi" confessed on record to have killed 12 elephants for the past couple of months mostly in the Nki National Park. Another member of the network tried to bribe the arresting team for their release. They supply 2 major traffickers in Lomie and investigations are still ongoing to arrest them. The operation was carried out with the MINFOF - Djomedjo Chief of Post and Lomie Delegation.

The 2013 LAGA Annual Report on activity and finance promptly completed, sent to the various donors and posted on the LAGA website. The link to the report is [http://www.laga-enforcement.org/Portals/0/Documents/Activity%20reports%202013/LAGA Annual Report %202013.pdf](http://www.laga-enforcement.org/Portals/0/Documents/Activity%20reports%202013/LAGA%20Annual%20Report%202013.pdf)

### Investigations

- **20 investigations** of varying lengths were carried out in **7 Regions** of Cameroon - South West, South, East, West, Littoral, North West and Center.
- 1 Investigator suspended for lack of produced operations for the past 7 months.

- 3 volunteers are being trained on investigation and operation procedures with the goal of identifying and arresting major dealers in and out of Cameroon and on data analysis especially phone data.
- The distribution of hotline flyers in both English and French continued.
- LAGA Investigations Department assisted replication projects TALFF – Togo and PALF-Congo on Investigations and Operations procedures.

## Operations

**2 operations** carried out this month with MINFOF arresting **5 suspects**

- **16/01/14 – A Chinese national and manager of Shanghri-LA Restaurant in Douala arrested with a live chimp.** He claims the chimp was given to him and his sister by a General in the Cameroon army. Here again, **traffic of influence, lack of collaboration and breach of procedure by MINFOF was observed.** The General supposedly called MINFOF and the MINFOF Delegate with the Chief of Wildlife of the Littoral Regional Delegation refused to sign the PV which the suspect had signed and forward it to the State Counsel as procedure demands. The chimp was rescued after overcoming many obstacles and taken to the Limbe Wildlife Center.
- **30/01/14 – A network of elephant poachers and ivory traffickers dismantled in Lomie – East following the arrest of 4 members with elephant tusks and elephant meat.** One of the members, a well-known poacher and a recidivist popularly called "Samedi" confessed on record to have killed 12 elephants for the past couple of months mostly in the Nki National Park. Another member of the network tried to bribe the arresting team for their release. They supply 2 major traffickers in Lomie and investigations are still ongoing to arrest them. The operation was carried out with the MINFOF - Djomedjo Chief of Post and Lomie Delegation.

## Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **13 missions** out of Yaounde - Centre Region: 2 in Mfou (Centre), 1 in Nanga-Eboko (Centre), 1 in Kribi (South), 1 in Djoum (South), 1 in Mamfe (South West), 1 in Bamenda (North West), 3 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Abong-Mbang (East), 1 in Lomie (East) and 1 in Maroua (Far North).
- There are **34 dealers behind bars during this month:** 14 in the East Region, 10 in Centre region, 2 in North Region and 8 in South Region.
- **36 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **32 cases** are scheduled and being trailed in the court this month.

## Media front

- **4 media pieces** were produced and pushed through the radio, including: 3 talk shows all in English and 1 news flash in English. This low number is due to low produced operations and resumption of work after a 3 weeks holiday.
- **Guests include:** the program officer of wildlife without borders of U.S fish and wildlife and Uganda wildlife officer.
- **Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including;** ivory ecoguard arrested trading in elephant parts and meats, Brazzaville arrest of leopard skin dealer, Gabon arrest of an ivory dealer with over 35kgs of ivory and Lomie arrest of 4 ivory dealers.
- 4 media pieces in English, 0 in French making a percentage of 100% in English and 0% in French.

## **External Relations and Policy**

- LAGA meets with Customs in Yaounde general office for collaboration and operations arresting wildlife traffickers at the outlets especially the airports and the seaports; and to come out with a MoU between the two structures.
- LAGA meets MINFOF Regional Delegation in Douala on observed breach of procedure following the arrest of a Chinese chimp suspect and on how to collaborate in subsequent operations in the Littoral Region.

## **Management**

- LAGA family resumed work in the absence of the LAGA Director after a 3 weeks Christmas holiday that started on the 17<sup>th</sup> of December 2013.
- The 2013 LAGA Annual Report completed, sent to the various donors and posted on the LAGA website [www.laga-enforcement.org](http://www.laga-enforcement.org).
- 1 Investigator suspended due to lack of produced operations.

## **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>.

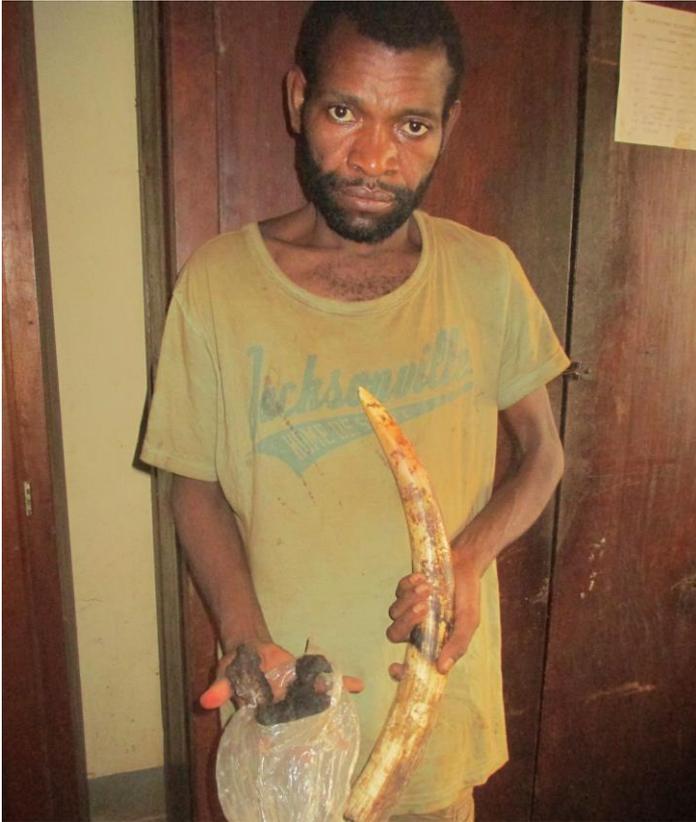
## **Replication**

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.

## **Finance**

**In preparation, will be made available as soon as possible**

## This Month in Pictures



**A well-known poacher / ivory trafficker and a recidivist popularly called "Samedi" arrested with his accomplices while trying to traffick elephant tusks and meat (some shown in the picture). He generally hunts in the national parks especially the Nki national park and he confessed on record that he had killed 12 elephants for the past couple of months. He supplies 2 major traffickers in Lomie and investigations are still ongoing to arrest them.**



**Baby chimp rescued in Douala following the arrest of a Chinese national who was illegally keeping it. Traffic of influence, lack of collaboration and breach of procedure was observed in MINFOF Littoral Regional Delegation. The Chinese, also the manager of a restaurant claims the chimp was given to him and his sister by a General in the Cameroon army. The General supposedly called MINFOF and the MINFOF Delegate with the Chief of Wildlife of the Littoral Regional Delegation refused to sign the PV which the suspect had signed and forward it to the State Counsel as procedure demands.**

## **Links of this month**

- Award-winning Israeli wildlife conservationist survives Ethiopian crocodile attack – The Jerusalem Post. Ofir Drori was enjoying nature in the tribal woodlands of Ethiopia's Omo River banks when a 3-meter croc charged at his canoe and he had to fight with the animal to free himself and seek for help after 2 days alone.

<http://www.jpost.com/Enviro-Tech/Award-winning-Israeli-wildlife-conservationist-survives-Ethiopian-crocodile-attack-337546>