

The Last Great Ape Organization – LA GA

September 2014 Report



Highlights

- **1 trafficker was arrested this month in Nanga Eboko - Centre Region and 4 gorilla heads, 16 limbs were seized.**
- **Maximum 3 years imprisonment term meted on two traffickers in South West and one of them is a corporal.**
- **A series of meetings were held with the Minister Delegate at the Ministry of Territorial Administration, the US Ambassador, the British High Commissioner, the Canadian High Commissioner,**
- **LAGA Director travelled to Cameroon for a week-long working stay.**

General

This month was marked by the **sentencing of two major traffickers** and the arrest of **an experienced trafficker** with a collection of **fresh gorilla parts**.

The Court of First Instance of Mundemba – South West **gives maximum punishment to two notorious traffickers** who were arrested in June 2014 for illegal possession, circulation and commercialization of 2 elephant skulls, 55 molar teeth, 40 premolar teeth, 8 tibia bones and one jawbone in Mundemba in the South West. One of the two dealers is a corporal with the marine marchande corps that is charged with the policing of Cameroon's territorial waters.

They were ordered to pay **3 000 000 CFA F (\$6000)** or serve the **3 years maximum imprisonment term for wildlife crime**, and were fined **99 005 000 CFA F as damages (\$200 000)**. A fee of **148 000 CFA F (\$300)** was further levied on each of them or they serve an additional **9 months in prison**.

In another case, **a long time trafficker and repeat offender was convicted and sentenced to 18 months in prison** by the Abong Mbang Court of First Instance **and to pay 1 007 500 CFA F (\$2000) as damages and a fee of 25, 750 CFA F (\$50)**. He was arrested for illegal possession and commercialization of 1 elephant tusk and elephant meat.

A trafficker was arrested in Nanga Eboko – Centre and gorilla heads and limbs were seized from the trafficker who is well known for his illegal activities by wildlife officials in the town and has been arrested several times but not prosecuted.

Investigations

- **20 investigations** of varying lengths were carried out in **6 Regions** of Cameroon-Littoral, East, Centre, South West, South and West Regions.
- Good investigations **in Nanga Eboko** led to the arrest of a dealer in possession of gorilla skulls and other parts.
- Good investigations in **Nkoteng** led to the identification of products but operation failed because dealer did not show up.

Operations

1 operation carried out this month led to the **arrest of 1 major trafficker** who is a serial offender and had previously been arrested 4 times.

- **8/09/14 – a major trafficker in wildlife products was arrested in Nanga Eboko with 4 fresh heads and 16 limbs of a gorilla** He has been illegally trading in wildlife parts for a very long time and these activities were well known to wildlife officials who would arrest him, warn him about the illegality of his business and set him free. He installed an 800-litre capacity fridge at his home for preserving the parts. The four gorilla heads and 16 limbs, cut off from four gorillas were all fresh. The 16 limbs represent the fore and hind limbs of the gorillas. He is the owner of 4 motorbikes bought with money generated from the sale of illegal wildlife products. He supplies the products to buyers from big towns in the country including Yaounde, Bertoua, Ebolowa and Douala. He buys the products from poachers at the banks of the Sanaga River where poachers who ferry the wildlife products on canoes while he equally provides them with ammunition for poaching.

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **20 missions** out of Yaounde- Centre Region: 2 in Mfou (Centre), 4 in Nanga Eboko (Centre), 1 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Abong-Mbang (East), 2 in Bertoua (East), 2 in Bangangté (West), 1 in Bafoussam (West), 1 in Dschang (West), 2 in Kribi (South), 1 in Ebolowa (South), 2 in Tombel (South West), and 1 in Mamfe (South West),
- There are **33 dealers behind bars during this month**: 13 in the East Region, 9 in Centre region, 2 in Littoral Region, 2 in South Region, and 7 in South West Region.
- **35 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **34 cases** scheduled and being tried in court this month.
- **Prosecutions**: 2 court rulings were passed this month.
 - 2/09/2014: The Abong-Mbang Court of First Instance – East, sentenced ATANGANA JEAN who had earlier served an imprisonment term for a wildlife crime, to **18 months of imprisonment** and to pay **1 007 500 CFA F as damages**. He was also ordered to pay fees of **25.750 FCA F**. He was arrested in Lomie for illegal possession and commercialization of 1 elephant tusk and elephant meat.
 - 2/09/2014: The Mundemba Court of First Instance – South West, sentenced NWESE SOLOMON NWESE and EFFIAM PETER EFFIONG to **3 years imprisonment or pay a fine of 3.000.000CFA F** and to pay **99.005.000 CFA F as damages**. They were also ordered to pay a fee of **148.000 FCA F each or serve another 9 months imprisonment term**. They were arrested in Mundemba for illegal detention of 55 elephant molars, 2 elephant skulls, 08 tibia elephant bones, 40 premolars, and 01 elephant jawbone.

Media front

- **39 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to radio, written press, and internet including: 27 written press material (15 in English 12 in French), 2 radio talk shows all in English, 1 radio news feature in English, 5 news flashes (4 in English and 1 in French) and 4 internet publication all in English.
- **Guests include:** The Minister of Forestry and Wildlife, the conservator of Korup National Park and the Conservator of Kwagame National Park.
- **Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including:** maximum wildlife sentence to the two notorious ivory dealers in Mundemba, gorilla parts trafficker arrested in Nanga Eboko and Pouma arrest of a trafficker with 3 chimp skulls.
- 26 media pieces in English, 13 in French making a percentage of 66.7% in English and 33.3% in French.

External Relations and Policy

- LAGA Director was present in Cameroon during the period from the 10th to the 17th and during this period, accompanied by the Deputy Director, they held a number of meetings on wildlife law enforcement activities with the Minister Delegate at the Ministry of Territorial Administration, the US Ambassador, the Canadian High Commissioner, the British High Commissioner and officials of the European Union in Yaounde .
- The Deputy Director and the Head of the Investigation Department held a meeting with the Interpol Regional Chief to discuss issues related to the organisation of the Interpol meeting that was scheduled to hold in Equatorial Guinea in September 2014 and LAGA's participation during this meeting .
- The Deputy Director held a meeting with an official of AADA, an organisation fighting illegal logging, to discuss the illegal exportation of timber from border areas of the South West and North West Region to neighbouring Nigeria and the link to illegal wildlife activities and the possibilities of collaboration between the two organisation.
- The Deputy Director held a discussion on Cameroon's ivory stock management during the CCPM (MINFOF partners, mainly donors) meeting held in Yaounde.
- The Head of Legal Department held a meeting with the customs officials at their head office –Yaounde, to continue work on the Memorandum of Understanding that is expected to be signed between LAGA and the Customs department.

Management

- Management department completed monthly financial records and reports of the months of January to June 2014.
- The new financial system Sage Saari continued to be tested for the recording of LAGA's financial activity.
- Management department continued work on the financial records of the new replication project being set up in Kenya.

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

The media department exchanged information with replication projects on the ebola threat in order to facilitate the work of communication on the threats of ebola and its link with wildlife trafficking.

The management department assisted in establishing financial records of an investigator working in the Kenyan project.

Finance

LAGA Expenditure by line for September 2014

Total Expenditures CFA				Total Expenditures USD
2,119,165		Investigations	20 Investigations, 6 Regions	\$4,155
648,600		Operations	2 Operation against 3 subjects	\$1,272
3,163,373		Legal	follow up 35 cases 33 locked subjects	\$6,203
1,530,250		Media	39 Media pieces	\$3,000
862,400		Policy & External Relations	Kenya Mission/Congo	\$1,691
1,539,700		Management	Coordination	\$3,019
1,073,499		Office		\$2,105
23,300		LAGA Family		\$46
10,960,287	TOTAL EXPENDITURE SEPTEMBER			\$21,491

LAGA Expenditure by Donors for September 2014

Amount CFA	Donor	Amount USD
2,740,800	Kuenzi	\$5,559.4
0	FWS-Replication	\$0.0
1,357,625	BornFree UK	\$2,753.8
1,530,250	Rufford	\$3,104.0
0	IFAW	\$0.0
1,966,697	NEU Foundation	\$3,989.2
2,119,165	WILD CAT	\$4,298.5
1,245,750	Prowildlife	\$2,526.9
10,960,287	TOTAL	\$22,231.8

This Month in Pictures



A major trafficker arrested in Nanga Eboko – Centre with 4 gorilla heads and 16 limbs. especially in reserves near Edea. He is waiting for the drafting of a complaint report against him in the offices of wildlife officials



Arrested gorilla trafficker uses a box to load his products which he obtains from poachers who using canoes transport the parts from the forest to the banks of the Sanaga River where he meets them, buys the products and equally supplies them with ammunition;



16 gorilla limbs and four heads all cut off from four recently killed gorilla were seized from the trafficker



Maximum three years sentence meted on two traffickers arrested in June with over 100 elephant bones

Links of this month

- Cameroon web, an online site, published the operation of the arrest of a wildlife trafficker with a collection of wildlife product.

Rangers and gendarmes have arrested two men trying to sell a collection of wildlife products including ivory, an elephant tail, an elephant jawbone, a gorilla skull and five other gorilla bones. Gendarmes are pursuing a separate drug possession case against the men arrested in Tombel on Tuesday August 27 with the assortment of wildlife parts and marijuana.

<http://www.cameroonweb.com/CameroonHomePage/crime/artikel.php?ID=310018>