

The Last Great Ape Organization – LA GA

December 2014 Report



Highlights

- **Four court rulings leading to the imprisonment of 4 traffickers were carried out this month**
- **One of the court rulings sentences a major ivory trafficker who had been arrested twice before and was never prosecuted.**
- **LAGA family goes on end of year vacation to resume work in January.**
- **Deputy Director represented LAGA during the first EAGLE network meeting that held in Benin. EAGLE coordinator and LAGA Director was also in attendance.**

General

Several court rulings handed down prison sentences this month as the year drew to a close and LAGA members went on vacation. Before and during the vacation several investigation operations were carried out but unfortunately none resulted in an arrest.

A notorious and **major ivory trafficker who was arrested in Djoum on October 15, 2014 was finally convicted and given a 4-month prison sentence** by the Djoum Court of First Instance. His co-accused also received a similar sentence. **Chingo Zacharie was arrested for illegal possession and circulation of 39 ivory tusks** and he had earlier escaped prosecution for wildlife related crimes twice. **They were ordered to pay fines and damages of close to 9 500 000 CFA F.**

Another court ruling this month **sentenced an ape dealer in Nanga Eboko to 3 months in prisons and payment of fines and damages of over 1 000 000 CFA francs.** He was arrested on September 8, 2014 for illegal possession and commercialisation of 4 fresh gorilla heads and 16 limbs.

Two other court rulings were passed this month and **1 trafficker was convicted and given a 1-year suspended sentence for a period of 5 years and ordered to pay fines and damages of over 2 000 000 CFA F or serve 3 months in jail** and in another court a **trafficker was sentenced to 2 months imprisonment and to pay fines and damages of over 1 000 000 CFA F.** He was arrested for illegal possession of chimpanzee, gorilla and elephant parts.

The Director and Deputy Director of LAGA attended the first EAGLE network meeting that was hosted by the AALF-Benin. Discussions focused on the organisational structure of the EAGLE network, its functioning and the space of member countries within the network. The entire LAGA family went on annual vacation and activities for the month were cut down to essentials.

Investigations

- **13 investigations** of varying lengths were carried out in **5 Regions** of Cameroon-Littoral, East, Centre, South West and South Regions.

Operations

- Investigations failed to produce any arrest operations this month.

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **12 missions** out of Yaounde- Centre Region: 3 in Nanga Eboko (Centre), 1 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Batouri (East), 1 in Djoum (South), 2 in Ambam (South), 1 in Mamfe (South West), 1 in Nguti (South West), 1 in Fouban (West), and 1 in Dschang (West).

44 deals

- There are **44 traffickers behind bars during this month**: 13 in the East Region, 10 in Centre region, 2 in Littoral Region, 10 in South Region, 2 in West Region and 7 in South West Region.
- **27 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **26 cases** scheduled and being tried in court this month.
- **Prosecutions**: We had 4 judgments this month.
 - 11/12/2014: The Fouban Court of First Instance – West, convicted and sentenced **Djowe Daniel and Mapande Marcel** to 1 year suspended sentence during 5 years and to pay **2.000.000 CFA frs as damages**. They were also ordered to pay **30.050frs as fines or serve 3 months imprisonment in default of payment of the said fines**. They were arrested in Magba while trying to illegally trade in 30 fresh Chimpanzee hands, 08 fresh chimp skulls, a live baby Chimp and huge quantity of Giant Pangolins scales.
 - 12/12/2014: The Bertoua Court of First Instance – East, convicted **Emene Wilfred Amba 2 months of imprisonment** and to pay **1.080.000 CFA Frs as damages**. He was also convicted to pay cost fees of **30.000 FCA Frs**. He was arrested in Bertoua for illegal detention and commercialization of 1 chimp skull, 4 gorilla limbs, 3 elephant skins and many elephant parts.
 - 16/12/2014: The Nanga-Eboko Court of First Instance – Center, convicted **Ndem Emeni Dieudonne 3 months of imprisonment** and to pay **1080.000 CFA Frs as damages**. He was also convicted to pay cost fees of **82425 FCA Frs or serve another 6 months imprisonment in default of payment**. He was arrested in Nanga-Eboko for illegal detention and commercialization of 4 fresh Gorilla heads and 16 fresh Gorilla hands.
 - 24/12/2014: The Djoum Court of First Instance – South, convicted **Chingo Zacharie and Yaya Amadou 4 months of imprisonment each** and to jointly pay **9.000.000 CFA Frs as damages**. They were also convicted to jointly pay cost fees of **110.910 FCA Frs or serve another 6 months imprisonment in default of payment and also to pay 300.000FCA Frs as Fine**. They were arrested in Djoum for illegal detention and circulation of 39 Elephant Tusks.

Media front

- **5 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to written press, and radio internet including: 3 written press material (2 in English & 1 in French) and 2 radio talk shows all in English.
- Guests include: an official from the United States Fish & Wildlife Service.
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including: the arrest of a trafficker with chimp and gorilla skulls in Ma'an.
- 4 media pieces in English, 1 in French making a percentage of 80% in English and 20% in French.

Replication

- The Deputy Director represented LAGA during the first EAGLE network meeting. The first EAGLE Network meeting with activists representing 8 countries meeting in Benin to discuss strategy.
- This landmark event of the growing community of activists included discussions on the new EAGLE vision, increasing quality and guarding the unique identity of the replications while taking a leap to the next level.

External Relations and Policy

The Deputy Director of LAGA and the Media Assistant held a working session with Dr. Thomas Leuteritz and Kathleen Moore from the US Fish and Wildlife Service and later the entire LAGA office welcomed the pair at our premises during the second working session where the activities of LAGA were explicitly presented to them by the various department heads. Meetings were held by jurists from the legal department with the state prosecutors of Nanga Eboko and Bertoua on pending wildlife cases.

Finance

In preparation, will be made available as soon as possible

This Month in Pictures



He trafficked ape skulls to clients coming, was convicted and given a 3-month jail term (*left*) while major ivory dealer found in illegal position of 39 ivory tusks was sentenced to 4 months imprisonment (*above*)



He violently attacked law enforcement officers during his arrest and was later sentenced to 2 months imprisonment for wildlife trafficker in Bertoua, East (*left*). Gorilla heads and limbs seized from a trafficker (*above*)

