



Conservation Justice

*Projet AALF*  
*(Appui à l'Application de la Loi sur la Faune)*



Conservation Justice

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## FEBRUARY 2011 ACTIVITY REPORT

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### 1 Overview

The month of February 2011 was marked by the first court rulings following arrests carried out in January and the operation against a wildlife trafficker who was on the run since the January 13 operation.

While the collaboration with the Libreville court is positive, the first two court rulings show a lack of consideration of the wildlife law by the judges. In fact, the two court rulings completely freed the offenders and considered them not guilty. Whereas, the accused were arrested in the act and acknowledged the accusations levelled against them. They are 5 traders in heads and hands of gorillas, leopard skins and elephant tails who were arrested on January 13 and a chimpanzee trader arrested on the January 27. The state counsel made an appeal that will be presented in the Court of Appeal.

The 6th trafficker who escaped during the arrest on January 13 was arrested on the 11th of February and handed over on February 15.

The confirmation of the training of close to 1000 gendarmes of the National Gendarmerie School of Owendo should equally be highlighted.

Finally, the new decrees of application of the forestry code are now available and they enabled the updating of the legal guide.

### 2 Operations

Just one operation could be realised on February 11. It concerned the 6<sup>th</sup> trader who escaped during the January 13, 2011 operation.

The offender failed to collaborate during his arrest and went as far as lying about his identity. Whereas, this trader was arrested in possession of leopard and lion skin while selling them. (apparently he is from Benin).

The offender was taken to the premises of the Direction Générale des Contre-Ingérences et de la Sécurité Militaire (DGCISM) where an offence statement was drawn.

### 3 External Relations

#### Meetings

Numerous meetings took place with :

1. Authorities of the Ministry of Water and Forestry including the Director General, the Director of Wildlife and Hunting, the Chargé d'Etudes of the Ministry, the Legal



- Adviser of the Ministry, the Ministry's Chargé d'Etudes in charge of projects concerning NGOs;
2. Authorities of the Judiciary including the State Counsel, the Secretary General of the Ministry of Justice and the President of the Court;
  3. Gendarmes forces and precisely the Director of Studies of the National Gendarmerie School;
  4. The Director of Contre-Ingérences ;
  5. Different NGOs including WCS, WWF, JGI and Brainforest.

All the authorities met showed interest and encouraged the AAL F project idea.

#### **4 Legal Departement**

The principal dossiers developed by the legal department were :

1. Legal analysis following the February 11 operation;
2. The presentation of the case to the lawyer and its follow-up on the 17th and 22nd ;
3. The follow-up of other cases on the 3rd, 10th and 17th of February ;
4. Updating of the legal guide

A third jurist was recruited

#### **5 Investigations**

The third investigator continues to criss-cross Libreville and its environ. He enabled the localisation of the offender who was arrested on February 11.

Among others, he is tracking different leads on hunters working for diverse personalities.

#### **6 Media**

Two articles were published in 2 of the country's newspapers: l'Union and Gabon Matin. Unfortunately, because of the negative court rulings, no article was published on the subject.

#### **7 Activities planned for March 2011**

The follow-up of the appeals made by the State Counsel will be the priority for the legal department.

The second phase which is particularly important will be the carrying out of trainings in the Gendarmerie School in Owendo.

Moreover, it seems necessary to recruit more personnel and to continue the training of the present personnel, this, through exchange with LAGA – Cameroon.