

The Last Great Ape Organization – LAGA

June 2017 Report



Highlights

- **3 traffickers arrested during two operations.**
- **A trafficker arrested with a leopard skin and 45kg of pangolin scales in Yaounde. He travelled from Douala with the contraband.**
- **2 ape traffickers arrested and a trafficking ring crushed as 2 adult chimps rescued. Chimps immediately taken to Limbe Wildlife Centre.**
- **The Director visited the country and held several meetings including meetings with American Ambassador and British High Commissioner,**
- **The Deputy Director went to coordinate the new replication in Ivory Coast for training and recruitment of new staff for project and after his returned the Interim Director travelled there to continue the same mission.**

General

This month was marked by the arrest of **three traffickers during two operations.**

During the first operation, a trafficker was arrested with a leopard skin and 45kg of pangolin scales in Yaounde. He travelled from Douala to Yaounde to carry out a transaction that started with an advert on Facebook.

During the second operation of the month, 2 traffickers were arrested in Yaounde at the entrance to the Douala airport freight terminal with two female chimpanzees, crammed into two small cages. One of the traffickers had been in the business of primate trafficking for a long time. A house search that followed at his premises found a patas monkey and a Nile monitor.

The Director travelled to the country where he held several meetings including meetings with the American Ambassador and the British High Commission among others. The Deputy Director travelled to Ivory Coast to continue training and recruiting new staff and the Interim Director also travelled there for the same mission.

Investigations

- **12 investigations** of varying lengths were carried out in 4 **Regions** of Cameroon - Littoral, Centre, West and South Regions.
- Good investigations in Douala led to the arrested of 2 traffickers with 2 adult chimpanzees.
- Good investigations in Yaounde, led to the arrest of one trafficker with a leopard skin and 45kg of pangolin scales .
- Meeting with Gary Hyde of UNODC in Yaoundé, to discuss wildlife crime and safari hunting.

Investigations Table

Investigation Missions	Regions	No. of Operations	No of traffickers arrested
12	4	2	3

Operation

Two operations carried out this month with MINFOF **arresting 3 traffickers**.

- **8/06/2017 – One trafficker arrested in Yaounde, Centre Region with a leopard skin and 45kg of pangolin scales..** He travelled from Douala with the contraband to sell in Yaounde and was arrested in the act. He is part of a network that uses the social media to advertise wildlife contraband to prospective buyers all over the world. He resides in Gabon where he ran a criminal ring of small traffickers supplying the contraband and a network of Chinese and Nigerians with whom he did business.
- **30/6/2017 – During an operation carried out in Douala, 2 ape traffickers were arrested at the entrance to the freight terminal at the airport with 2 female adult chimps**, crammed into tiny cages that could not contain their size. They had been living in these tiny cages for years and could not even stand up. One of the traffickers has been in the business of trafficking primates for a long time. He had been trying to buy a male chimp to mate and reproduce with the two female chimps. He demonstrated his expertise, presumably from his experience, in transporting the adult chimps as he drove the truck across the town, with the chimps hooting, grunting and screaming behind the car in their cages. They were immediately attended to by a veterinarian from the Limbe Wildlife Centre and then quickly taken to the centre for the commencement of treatment and lifetime support and care by the experienced caregivers. The trafficker equally had used Facebook to advertise the presence of one of the chimps in his company. On the instructions of the state prosecutor, a house search carried out at the residence of the traffickers found a patas monkey and a Nile monitor.

Operations Table

No of Operations	Regions	No of Traffickers Arrested	Contraband
2	2	3	One leopard skin 45 kg of pangolin scales Two adult chimpanzees

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried **8 missions** out of Yaounde Centre Region: 3 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Mbanga (Littoral), 1 in Sangmelima (South), 2 in Abong-Mbang (East) and 1 in Meiganga (Adamaoua).
- There are **26 traffickers behind bars this month**: 4 in East region, 3 in Adamaoua region, 3 in Northwest Region, 3 in Centre Region, 4 in Southwest Region, 3 in West Region, 3 in South Region and 3 in Littoral Region.
- **21 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **17 cases** were scheduled and being tried in court this month.
- **One** trafficker was convicted this month.

Prosecutions: We had 1 judgment this month

- **27/006/2017:** The Abong-Mbang Court of First Instance, found the accused **FEUSSI André** guilty of illegal possession, circulation and commercialization of trophies of totally protected species. He was sentenced to pay **50.000 FCFA as fine and 1.000.000 FCFA as damages**. He was arrested in Messamena for the illegal possession, and commercialization of 118 kg of pangolin scales.

Appeal: An appeal was filed this month in the case against **FEUSSI André** at the East Court of Appeal

Legal Table

No of Missions (Out of Centre Region)	No of Court Judgements	No of Traffickers Given Prison Sentence	Prison term (in months)	No of Traffickers Sanctioned (No prison sentence)	No of Appeals lodged	No of Cases Tried in Courts
9	1	0	0	1	1	21

Media

- **19 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to written press, radio, and internet including; 11 written press material (8 in English and 3 in French), 5 radio news flashes (3 in French and 2 in English), and 3 internet production (2 in French and 1 in English).
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including: an ivory trafficker arrested with 2 elephant tusks and another with 41kg of pangolin scales and a leopard skin in Yaounde.
- 11 media pieces in English and 8 in French making a percentage of 57.9% in English and 42.1% in French.

Media Table

o of Media Pieces	TV	Radio	Newspapers	Internet
19	0	5	11	3

External Relations and Policy

- The Director held a series of meetings including meetings with the British High Commissioner and the American Ambassador to discuss challenges to wildlife law enforcement in the country and the progress of the EAGLE network among other issues .
- The Head of the Legal and Investigations departments held a meeting with Gary Hyde of UNDOC to discuss links between wildlife crime and safari hunting, as well as collaborative approaches to tackling the problem.
- The Interim Director, the Heads of the Legal and Investigation Departments and the Assistant Head of the Media and Exernal Relations Department held a meeting with Limbe Wildlife Centre Pandrillus Manager on the rescue and transfer of animals to the centre.
- Head of the Legal Department held a meeting with the State Counsel at the Douala Bonango Court of First Instance while two legal advisers of the department met other State Counsels in Abong Mbang and Mbanga to discuss wildlife cases pending in courts.

Management

- A legal adviser was recruited after a rigorous period of volunteering
- Preparations for the visit of the Director to Cameroon and that of the Deputy Director and Interim Director to Ivory Coast were effectively carried out.

Activism Front: Tree Planting at the Mefou Park.

The entire LAGA family, on the occasion of World Environment Day, visited the Mefou National Park and joined several volunteers to plant several trees and held discussions with park management. They equally briefly watched the chimps and gorillas found in the park which caters for primates that have been rescued. After the tree planting, prizes were given to winners of the *LAGA Environment Day Poem Competition* that involved staff writing poems on the theme “Protection of the Environment”.

All the activism fostering activities carried out by the LAGA family are online; this could be gotten at the LAGA website – <http://www.laga-enforcement.org/Actiwithvism/tabid/77/Default.aspx>.

Finance

In preparation and would be made available soon as possible on LAGA website.

Link of the month

The Cameroonian run online site, [camer.be](http://www.camer.be) posts an online article telling the story of the arrest of a trafficker in Yaounde who travelled from Douala with a leopard skin and pangolin scales to sell in the capital.

<http://www.camer.be/60774/11:1/cameroun-cameroon-from-douala-to-yaounde-wildlife-trafficker-arrest.html>

This Month in Pictures



Trafficker arrested in Yaounde with a leopard skin and pangolin scales police station waiting for the commencement of legal proceedings. (left). One of two chimpanzees rescued from the hands of a trafficking network (above), two people arrested.

Inside a tiny cage at trafficker's resident below (left) and at Limbe Wildlife Centre, chimps are now enjoying life after a gruelling experience (below)

