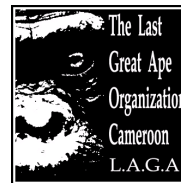


The Last Great Ape Organization – LAGA

March 2018 Report



Highlights

- **5 traffickers arrested during 2 operations, with raw and carved ivory and a gun.**
- **3 arrested in Ebolowa during first operation with 4 ivory tusks and a gun.**
- **Crackdown on an arts shop selling ivory in a hotel in Yaounde. The owner and the seller both arrested with 121 carved ivory pieces.**
- **The Deputy Director participated in a GIS for combatting wildlife trafficking workshop in Ethiopia**
- **The Deputy Director did a presentation on corruption in the wildlife law enforcement process during a workshop in Yaounde organised by the US department of justice.**

General

This month was marked by the arrest of **5 traffickers**.

5 wildlife traffickers were arrested in Ebolowa in the South region and in Yaounde in the Centre region for ivory trafficking. During the first operation, 2 traffickers were arrested in Ebolowa with 4 ivory tusks and a gun. A military uniform was also recovered from the traffickers and while the uniform is reported to have been obtained by one of the traffickers from a relative who is a colonel in the army, the gun was provided by the widow of a senior police officer. The lady was also arrested following the arrest and interrogation of the first two.

During the second operation, **2 traffickers were arrested with 121 carved ivory objects found in an arts shop in Yaounde.** The seller was arrested in the shop that displayed the ivory among wooden art objects. The owner who was later arrested is a notorious trafficker, dealing in ivory for over 40 years and working with a large supplying network.

The Deputy Director participated in a workshop in Addis Ababa that brought together GIS and data professionals to build a collaborative platform on using GIS as a tool for combatting wildlife trafficking. He was a panellist on one of the panels during the workshop.

Investigations

- **29 investigation missions** of varying lengths were carried out in **6 Regions** of Cameroon namely; Littoral, Center, South, East, Adamawa and West Regions.
- Good investigations in **Campo** led to the arrest of **2 traffickers** with 36.5kg raw elephant tusks with a gun in Moyo-centre, and the **arrest of a woman** who supplied them with the gun in Ebolowa.
- Good collaboration with external partners saw the denunciation of a shop dealing in sculptured ivory objects in Yaounde leading to the arrest of **the owner and shopkeeper** with 121 pieces of sculptured ivory objects and an elephant molar in **Yaounde**.
- The Head of Investigation Department met with the Chief of the judicial police for the South and Centre Regions where he reinforced working relations in their respective regions.

Investigations Table

Investigation Missions	Regions	No. of Operations	No of traffickers arrested
29	6	2	5

Operation

An operation carried out with MINFOF this month **arresting one trafficker**.

03/03/2018 – 2 traffickers were arrested with 4 ivory tusks in Ebolowa. They were arrested along a highway that is notoriously used by traffickers to transport ivory from the source area in the South of the country to major towns. Four ivory tusks, a rifle and a military uniform were seized. The gun was given to one of the arrested traffickers by a lady whose husband had been a senior police commissioner and had died some years back, leaving the weapons with her. She was later arrested. The military uniform was given to one of the traffickers by an army colonel, who is a relative to the trafficker.

28/03/2018 – 121 carved ivory objects were seized from a shopkeeper who was arrested on the spot while the owner of the shop was later arrested. The ivory was found displayed among hundreds of wooden arts objects for sale in a shop on the ground floor of a popular Yaounde hotel. The owner of the shop had been in the business for 40 years, getting cover

from the husband who is a colonel in the army and who used his influence to get her out of jail following the operation. She has been dealing mostly with Chinese buyers.

Operations Table

No of Operations	Regions	No of Traffickers Arrested	Contraband
2	2	5	4 ivory tusks, 121 ivory pieces An elephant molar

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried **13 missions** out of Yaounde-Centre Region: 2 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Nkongsamba (Littoral), 3 in Ambam (South), 2 in Ebolowa (South), 3 in Djoum (South), and 2 in Bertoua (East).
- There are **15 traffickers behind bars this month**: 3 in East region, 2 in Adamawa region, 1 in Southwest region, 1 in West region, 6 in South region, and 2 in Littoral region.
- **27 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **24 cases** were scheduled and being tried in court this month.
- **4 traffickers** were convicted this month.
- **Prosecutions**: There were two court rulings this month.
 - **02/03/2018**: The Bertoua Court of First Instance found the accused **MOUATCHO KAMENI Pierre Armel** guilty as charged and sentenced him **to a one-month imprisonment term**. He was arrested in Betare-Oya on the 02/02/2018 and charged with illegal possession, circulation and commercialization of trophies of totally protected species including 36,5kg of pangolin scales, 6 hippopotamus teeth and 2 python skins.
 - **14/03/2018**: The Ambam Court of First Instance found the accused **KOUALIAGNIGNI Soulé, NTIECHE Issah and ABOUBAKAR Moussa** guilty as charged and sentenced them **to 2 years suspended sentence during 3 years and to pay 145.000 FCFA as court fees, 100.000 FCFA each as fine and awarded to the MINFOF the amount of 1.800.000 FCFA as civil damages**. They were arrested in Ambam on the 30/01/2018 for illegal possession of trophies of totally protected species including 80kg of pangolin scales and a baby chimp.

There were appeals this month in two cases: **MOUATCHO KAMENI Pierre Armel** – Bertoua; **KOUALIAGNIGNI Soulé, NTIECHE Issah and ABOUBAKAR Moussa** - Ambam.

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
13	2	1	1	2	0	27

Media

- **26 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to written press, radio, TV and internet including; 15 written press material (10 in English and 5 in French), 6 radio news flashes (3 in French and 3 in English), 2 TV productions (1 in English and 1 in French) and 3 internet publication (2 in French and 1 in English).
- Interviewee: Head of the South Regional Judicial police, and wildlife controllers
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including: Djoum ivory court case, the arrest of a man at Betare-Oya with pangolin scales, hippo teeth and 2 python skins, and the arrest of 3 persons in Meyo centre with ivory tusks and a rifle.
- 15 media pieces in English and 11 in French making a percentage of 57% in English and 43% in French.

Media Table

No of Media Pieces	TV	Radio	Newspapers	Internet
26	2	6	15	3

External Relations and Policy

- The Deputy Director held a meeting with the President of Papaye International on the situation of the chimpanzees and the association's activities in the Douala Edea Reserve.
- He equally held a meeting with Russ Stanford of the USFWS on issues of collaboration.
- The Deputy Director held a meeting with the new Deputy Chief of the Political - Economic Section at the US Embassy, Jonathan Baas and the environment specialist Ramatou Njanzou on continuing collaboration with the embassy.
- He equally attended a workshop on combatting corruption in wildlife law enforcement held in Yaounde and did a presentation on LAGA's collaboration with government.
- He attended another workshop in Addis Ababa on the use of GIS to combatting wildlife trafficking and was a panellist on one of the topics.
- The Head of the Legal Department attended a meeting with other partners to brainstorm on initiatives towards ensuring an effective court process against traffickers arrested last December in Djoum with 216 ivory tusks.

- A legal adviser attended a meeting organised by CABAG to brainstorm for ideas that shall enable a successful organisation of a regional meeting for CABAG partners.
- The Head of the Legal Department held a meeting with the state counsel of Douala – Bonanjo and Djoum to discuss legal matters concerning cases pending in the courts within their jurisdiction and two legal advisers equally held meetings, with the first holding meetings with the state counsels of Ambam and Nkongsamba to discuss legal issues on cases in courts within their respective jurisdictions while the second held a meeting with the state counsel in Ambam for the same purpose.

Management

- Three recruitment interviews were conducted, one for a jurist who shall soon be called up for a volunteer period and two others for the position of an accountant. A volunteer for the later position started his trial period
- More LAGA members continued vaccination against communicable diseases and zoonosis that has been organised for those exposed to handling baby primates during operations. The process started in February.
- LAGA continued search for a new office. The search was started last year because of the dilapidated state of the present office and the increase in the number of members who are finding it difficult to have enough space within the present structure.

Activism Front

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/Activism/tabid/77/Default.aspx>.

Link of the month

This month saw the arrest of two persons in Meyo Centre (Ebolowa) with ivory tusks and a rifle given to them by a widow of a superintendent of police. Among other things found in their possession was a military uniform. This was broadcast over one of Cameroon national television programs, Hello Cameroon.

<https://youtu.be/7bakCb58fDw>

Youtube Statistic:

385 views within 2 weeks

Finance

Please check LAGA website www.laga-enforcement.org for monthly financial reports.

This Month in Pictures



Two arrested are in front of police station shortly after the operation, they had a rifle given to them by widow of a senior police officer, she too was arrested



4 ivory tusks cut into pieces were seized from traffickers



Traffickers travelled a notorious road from the south of the country with ivory and military uniform



Shopkeeper arrested with over 100 ivory pieces at police station shortly before commencement of prosecution