

The Last Great Ape Organization – LAGA

February 2020 Report



Highlights

- **A trafficker arrested in Bandjoun, West Region, with 5 large leopard skins**
- **A new Head of the Media Department was appointed by the Director.**
- **The Deputy Director attended an Interpol meeting aimed at setting state-level priorities and needs for effective operations.**
- **The LAGA family travelled to Batié in the West Region to participate at funeral activities of former investigator who passed away after a protracted illness.**

General

This month was marked by the arrest of **a traffickers with leopard skins.**

The trafficker is experienced in leopard skin trafficking and ran a network with traffickers spanning some major towns in the region. He equally travelled to the East Region where he bought one of the skins he was attempting to sell. He owns a shop at one of the main markets in Bafoussam, the capital of the West Region.

The Deputy Director participated at a meeting organized by Interpol officials that was aimed at developing priorities and needs for future operations within the West and Central African sub region.

On the invitation of the Belgian Ambassador, he participated at the meeting with top gendarmerie officials to discuss a wildlife case with connections to the gendarmerie.

The LAGA family travelled to Batié in the West Region to participate at funerals activities of former investigator who passed away following a protracted illness.

Investigations

- **16 investigation missions** were carried out in **5 Regions** out of the 10 Regions of Cameroon viz: Centre, East, South, Littoral and West Regions.
- Credible information from an informant in Bafoussam led to the arrest of 1 trafficker with 5 leopard skins in Bandjoun.

Investigations Table

Investigation Missions	Regions	No. of Operations	No of traffickers arrested
16	5	1	1

Operation

An operation carried out this month with MINFOF **arresting a trafficker with 5 leopard skins.**

24/2/2020 – a trafficker arrested in Bandjoun, West Region with 5 leopard skins. The trafficker belongs to a network of leopard skins trafficking that is rife in the region and members of the network are located in different towns of the region. The trafficker is a businessman in one of Bafoussam’s main markets where he owns a shop. He equally passes as a traditional herbalist.

Operations Table

No of Operations	Regions	No of Traffickers Arrested	Contraband
1	1	1	5 leopard skins

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **10 missions** out of Yaounde-Centre Region: 2 in Mfou (Centre), 1 in Ebolowa (South), 1 in Snagmelima (South), 1 in Kribi (South), 2 in Douala (Littoral), 2 in Bandjoun (West) and 1 in Bafoussam (West).

- There are **7 traffickers behind bars this month**: 3 in East region, 1 in South region and 3 in Littoral region.
 - **26 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
 - **24 cases** were scheduled in court this month.
 - **9 traffickers** were convicted this month.
- **20/02/2020**: The Ekounou Court of First Instance found the accused **LOKO BASSILIKIN, FOGANG FOKOUA Bruno, NKOUGA Valère, OUSMANOU Baba and KENNE Emmanuel guilty and sentenced them to 200,000 FCFA each as fines, 46,000 FCFA each as court fees and 400,000 FCFA jointly as damages.**

They were arrested in Yaounde on the 05/09/2019 for the illegal possession of 2 elephant tusks.

- **28/02/2020**: The West Appeal Court, in the case of **MINFOF against MELAT Blaise, NFONGOCK Didier, NYAMPE Charles and ATOKI Suzanne** upheld the decision of the Court of First Instance of Dschang. They were sentenced to pay 100,000 FCFA each as fines and 38,000 each as court fees

They were arrested in Santchou on the 04/05/2018 for the illegal possession of an elephant tusk, a turtle shell and pangolin scales.

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
10	2	0	0	9	0	24

Media

- A new head of the Media Department was appointed. Anna Egbe Etaka takes over from the Deputy Director who has held the position for over 9 years.
- **19 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to written press, television, internet and the radio, including; 6 written press materials (4 in English language and 2 in French Language), 1 TV production (in French), 1 internet publication (in French) and 11 radio news flashes (4 in French and 7 in English).
- Interviewee: The LAGA Deputy Director
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including: The celebration of the World Pangolin Day, and the Bandjoun arrest of a trafficker with 5 leopard skins.
- 11 media pieces in English language and 8 in French language making a percentage of 57.8% in English and 42.1% in French.

Media table

<i>No of media pieces</i>	TV	Radio	Newspapers	Internet
19	1	11	6	1

External Relations and Policy

- The Deputy Director did a short talk on LAGA’s activities and its collaboration with Interpol at a three-day Interpol meeting that brought together Interpol, Wildlife and Customs officials who focused on finding state-level priorities and needs for an upcoming Interpol operation against wildlife trafficking that shall be carried out in the various member countries within the West and Central African sub regions.
- On the invitation of the Belgian Ambassador, the Deputy Director participated at a meeting at the Secretariat of Defence in Charge of the Gendarmerie that brought together 5 top gendarmerie officials including the Central Deputy Director of Coordination and a technical adviser. The meeting was focused on discussing some wildlife cases at the courts with links to the gendarmerie.
- A legal adviser participated at a workshop organized by ZSL that aimed at training ecoguards of the TRIDOM on the protection of African grey parrots. She did two presentations, one on law enforcement activities carried out by LAGA against parrot traffickers and the other on the calculation of damages to be awarded MINFOF in wildlife cases.
- Activities were carried out by several conservation organisations including LAGA, working under the framework of the Cameroon Pangolin Working Group to mark the World Pangolin Day and included a press conference facilitated by the Deputy Director.
- The LAGA team joined other conservation organisations to carry out activities marking the World Pangolin Day. These included the sharing of handouts, a press conference that was facilitated by the Deputy Director among many others.

Management

- The LAGA team travelled to Batie, West Region to participate at funeral activities of their former colleague and member, Ma Mado who died after a long illness.
- Preparations were made for the trip of the new media head who is expected to attend the UN celebrations of the World Wildlife Day.
- An Italian movie crew returned to the country to continue filming with the investigation and legal departments for the production of a movie depicting efforts may by the Cameroon government in fighting the illegal pangolins scales trade.

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/Actiwithvism/tabid/77/Default.aspx>.

Presentation: Control and Co-ordination in an organization

The presentation was about how to control and coordinate an organization, in other to achieve the organizational objectives. The presenter mentions the fact that control and coordination are crucial managerial functions for every entrepreneur, to make sure that their goals are achieved within a given time. She started by defining the main concept, and explains how do these two functions are often confused with each other and sometimes seem to mean the same thing. Discussion focused on the difference between control and coordination, and how to effectively put these functions in place. In conclusion, it turns out that control is part of coordination, and one cannot be done without the other for the proper functioning of an organization.

Finance

In preparation and would be made available soon as possible on the LAGA website www.laga-enforcement.org .

Link of the month

Alwihda info, an online news website, focused this month on preparations for the celebration of the World Pangolin Day, which was held on February 15, 2020. It mentions the holding of a press conference in collaboration with other organizations such as TRAFFIC and TIKKI HYWOOD Foundation. The publication highlights the fact that the public must be informed and alerted to the threats facing the pangolin so as to act for the preservation of the endangered species.

https://www.alwihdainfo.com/Cameroun-Journee-mondiale-du-Pangolin-Les-preparatifs-s-accelerent_a82604.html

This Month in Pictures



Experienced in trafficking leopard skins, at Gendarmerie office following arrest



The Deputy Director facilitated a press conference on World Pangolin Day



5 large leopard skins seized from trafficker in Bandjoun