

The Last Great Ape Organization - LAGA

May 2008 Report



Highlights

- **Investigations** covered all the **10 Provinces** this month.
- A principal **Internet Scammer** arrested trying to sell tortoises using **falsified government documents**
- **2 dealers arrested** trying to illegally sell leopard skins.

General

This month was marked by Investigations covering all the 10 Provinces of Cameroon, the arrest of 3 targets following 2 operations, and an increase in media activities.

2 dealers were arrested in Bamenda – North West Province trying to **illegally trade in leopard skins and skins of other endangered wildlife species**. They have been doing this business for many years.

Besides the good rate of operation, this month continued with a special focus on **Internet Wildlife** fraud in Cameroon after studying the worrying growth of this type of fraud. A **well-known scammer** engaged in fraud and illegal wildlife trade over the Internet was arrested in Buea, South West Province following a report to us and international collaboration with a victim in Malaysia. He was arrested trying to sell tortoises over the Internet to an importer in Malaysia using **falsified government documents and CITES Permits**. He has a Cameroonian accomplice based in China who fully operates and promotes the illegal commercialisation of wildlife over the Internet. He also has accomplices in Spain and England who claim to be his satisfied customers. His connection to other forms of fraud including illegal immigration and adoption scams is still being investigated. The link between Internet wildlife fraud and other forms of fraud had been discovered before and discussed with the Prime Minister of Cameroon.

The Director of LAGA held a meeting in Lyon - France at the **International Interpol Headquarters** with Interpol on International wildlife trafficking. Other issues discussed were corruption in NGO projects and setting up of Central Africa branch.

Le Point, a world renowned Magazine published an **article** on the goals, team and activities of LAGA with a special focus on the LAGA director and his crusade against wildlife dealers. It also focused on the unprecedented arrest of an international ivory trafficker in Brazaville-Congo.

Media activities were on the increase this month, above the monthly average with 45 media pieces produced and pushed through to the radio, TV and written press.

Investigations

- **24 investigations** of varying lengths were carried out in all the **10 Provinces** of Cameroon- North West, South West, West, South, North, Extreme North, East, Littoral, Center and Adamawa.
- **Field Investigations led to a successful operation** after targeting dealers: 2 dealers were arrested in Bamenda – North West Province.
- Internet Investigations identified and initiated communication with 5 wildlife Internet scammers. **One was targeted and arrested in Buea** – South West Province. He was engaged in fraud and illegal wildlife trade over the Internet.
- Field tests continue for new candidates. **5 new candidates were tested** this month with encouraging results.

- Collaboration involving Internet Investigations was initiated with Malaysia and concretised with an arrest of an Internet scammer trying to sell tortoises to an importer in Malaysia.

Operations

2 operations were carried out this month with MINFOF against **3 subjects**.

- **06/05/08 - 2 dealers were arrested** in Bamenda – North West Province trying to **illegally trade in leopard skins and skins of other endangered wildlife species**. They have been doing this business for many years.
- **10/05/08 - A well-known scammer** engaged in fraud and illegal wildlife trade over the Internet was arrested in Buea, South West Province following a report to us and international collaboration with a victim in Malaysia. He was arrested trying to sell tortoises over the Internet to an importer in Malaysia using **falsified government documents and CITES Permits**. He has a Cameroonian accomplice based in China who fully operates and promotes the illegal commercialisation of wildlife over the Internet. His connection to other forms of fraud including illegal immigration and adoption scams is still being investigated. The link between Internet wildlife fraud and other forms of fraud had been discovered before and discussed with the Prime Minister of Cameroon.

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **15 missions** out of the Center Province: 2 in Bamenda (North West), 2 in Buea (South West), 2 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Nanga-Eboko (Center), 1 in Abong-Mbang (East), 2 in Ngaoundere (Adamawa), 1 in Garoua (North), 1 in Maroua (Extreme North), 1 in Mamfe (South West), 1 in Limbe (South West), 1 in Bafang (West).
- There are **14 dealers behind bars during this month**: 2 in the Littoral Province, 2 in the East Province, 1 in the West Province, 6 in the South West Province, 2 in the North West Province, and 1 in the Center Province.
- **33 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **17 cases** are scheduled and being trailed in the court this month.
- **9 cases** waiting for the process of appeal to reach the court. 4 in the West, 2 in the Littoral, 2 in the South and 1 in Center Province. The courts of first instance have not completed the files needed for transmission to the Attorney General.

Media front

- **45 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to radio, TV and written press including: 3 written press material in English and 2 in French, 5 radio talk shows (all in English), 1 radio news feature in English, 34 radio news flashes (24 in English, 10 in French).
- **Guests include:** Minister of Forestry and Wildlife, The Chairperson of Manyu Economic Development World Conference, Director of LAGA, The Traditional Ruler of Bali, Provincial Delegate of Forestry and Wildlife South West Province, Head of the Department of the Media and External Relations LAGA, Executive Secretary of Biodiversity Development Committee Project - Cameroon, Treasurer of Biodiversity Development Committee Project-Cameroon, and Barrister Sulesco Mbuun.
- **Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including;** Internet scammer arrest on protected wildlife species in Buea, Congo ivory dealer arrest, Leopard skin and caracal dealer arrest in Bamenda, Leopard skin dealer arrest in the East.
- 33 media pieces in English, 12 in French making a percentage 73.3% in English and 26.7% in French.
- **Le Point**, a world renowned Magazine published an **article** on the goals, team and activities of LAGA with a special focus on the LAGA director and his crusade against wildlife

dealers. It also focused on the unprecedented arrest of an international ivory trafficker in Brazaville-Congo

- Online sensitisation resulted in over 500 visits to the LAGA website in the month of May. It should be noted that the LAGA website was entirely created from scratch and is maintained by the LAGA family.
- The distribution of the Wildlife Justice Magazine continued this month. The recipients amongst others include UNDP, SNV, WWF, GTZ, and IUCN.

External Relations and Policy

- Meeting between the Director of Wildlife and Protected Areas and LAGA officials to discuss issues related to the review of the MoU and the case of the parrots trafficker.
- LAGA team held a meeting with the South West Delegate of Forestry and Wildlife to explore ways of combating wildlife crimes in general and Internet scamming in particular.
- The Director of LAGA held a meeting in Lyon - France at the International Interpol Headquarters with Interpol on International wildlife trafficking. Other issues discussed were corruption in NGO projects and setting up of Central Africa branch.
- Another meeting was held in the Interpol headquarters between the Director of LAGA and Interpol wildlife specialist Peter Younger. Issues discussed were the creation of Interpol sub-regional Bureau in Cameroon, potential of wildlife enforcement of Central and West Africa, and framework of future operations.
- Meeting between LAGA and the UNDP Anti-corruption programme CHOC to discuss on using LAGA's experience in the fight against corruption.
- LAGA participated as a member in the Regional CARPE Small Grant Selection Committee and pushed for the fight against corruption within the NGO sector. LAGA also addressed the problems of lack of transparency in the handling of public funds.
- Meeting with the US Embassy to discuss on the fight against corruption, wildlife law enforcement, the case of the Greek logger and obstruction of justice, the corruption in the parrot cases and using LAGA experience in the fight against corruption in general.
- LAGA and the new 1st Secretary of British High Commission in Cameroon held meeting to discuss on the replication of LAGA in Congo, Anti-corruption organization in the fight against corruption.
- LAGA met with the Consulate of the Congo Embassy concerning LAGA work and results in Congo, collaboration with Congolese government and creating channels of communication with the embassy. The Consulate was very satisfied and congratulated LAGA for its assistance to the Congolese government.

Management

- An agent in the Investigations Department was relieved of his functions following numerous digressive behaviour from the LAGA values. He was removed after several warnings and many chances given to redeem himself.
- LAGA started an evaluation of its telephone expenses system identified as a major expense in LAGA activities spread over the country's different provinces.

Finance

LAGA Expenditure by budget line for May 08

Amount CFA	Budget line	Details	Amount USD
2,072,901	Investigations	24 inv, 9 provinces	\$4,935.5
515,500	Operations	2 Operations, against 3 subjects	\$2,084.5
2,589,550	Legal	Follow up 33 cases 14 locked subjects	\$6,165.6
1,658,100	Media	45 media pieces	\$3,947.9
203,120	Policy & External Relations	UK/Congo/France	\$483.6
1,016,800	Management	Coordination	\$2,421.0
1,270,679	Office		\$3,025.4
9,326,650	TOTAL EXPENDITURE MAY		\$23,063.5

LAGA Expenditure by donor for May 08

Amount CFA	Donor	Amount USD
0	Born Free	\$0.0
3,002,714	FWS	\$7,149.3
0	UNEP-General	\$0.0
2,955,335	Rufford Foundation	\$7,036.5
1,325,000	WSPA	\$3,154.8
2,403,601	ProWildlife	\$5,722.9
9,326,650	TOTAL	\$23,063

THIS MONTH IN PICTURES

O R I G I N A L	1. Holder/Breeder (For specimens of species listed in Annex) Shante E Moore 37 Long Street Tiko, SW 237 Cameroon	CERTIFICATE		N° 1029/2008		
	Wildlife and Fauna Protection Council regulation N° 338/97 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora					
	2. Authorised location for live captive bred specimens //	Issuing Management Authority MINFOF Yaoundé-Cameroon				
	4. Description of specimen Four (04) captive bred alibaba tortoise babies Sexes unknown	5. Net Mass (kg) //		6. Quantity 4		
		7. CITES Appendix II	8. WWF Annex A	9. Source CB	10. Purpose Commercial/Breeding	
	11. Country of Origin Cameroon		12. Permit N° CMOO47/08SW		13. Date of issue 15/02/08	
	14. Member state of import //		16. Document N° //		17. Date of issue //	
	Scientific name of species <i>Geochelone gigantea</i>					
	Common name of species <i>Aldabra tortoise</i>					
	It is hereby specified that the specimen listed above					
<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Were in accordance with the legislation in force with.....taken from the wild/are recovered abandoned animals taken from the wild</p> <p>2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are captive born and bred specimens of an animal species or are derivatives thereof.</p> <p>3 <input type="checkbox"/> Are artificially propagated specimens or are parts or derivatives thereof</p> <p>4 <input type="checkbox"/> Were acquired or introduced into the community in compliance with the provision of Wildlife and Fauna Protection Council regulation N° 338/97</p> <p>5 <input type="checkbox"/> Were acquired or introduced into the community before June 1997 in accordance with council regulations of MINFOF N° 3626/82</p> <p>6 <input type="checkbox"/> Were acquired in or introduced into the community before Jan 01st in compliance with the provisions of CITES</p> <p>7 <input type="checkbox"/> Were acquired in.....or introduced into.....before the provision of the regulation cited in CITES 4 and 5</p> <p>8 <input type="checkbox"/> Are allowed to be used for the following purposes</p> <p>9 <input type="checkbox"/> Are allowed to be moved to the following locations</p>						
Special Conditions //		<p>Signature</p> <p>Name of issuing official <i>J. P. Mouton Koute</i></p> <p>Date and place of issue 14-04-2008 YAOUNDE</p>				

Falsified CITES Permit used by an Internet Scammer. He was arrested following a report to LAGA and an international collaboration with a victim in Malaysia. He was trying to sell tortoises over the Internet to an importer in Malaysia using falsified government documents and CITES Permits.



Bamenda Operation – North West Province. The 2 dealers arrested trying to illegally trade in leopard skins and skins of other endangered wildlife species. They claimed to be herbalists and were hiding behind this profession to launder illegal trade in skins. They have been doing this business for many years.

Links of this month

- 2 wildlife dealers arrested for trading in products of protected wildlife species – Cameroon National Television Broadcast. The control brigade of the North West Delegation of Forestry and Wildlife in Bamenda arrested two dealers in protected wildlife species. The two dealers were caught in possession of a consignment of leopard skin and skins of other endangered wildlife species.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n7IYbODbVQI>