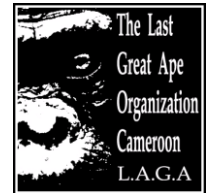


The Last Great Ape Organization – LAGA

June 2011 Report



Highlights

- LAGA Director was invited by ILEA (International Law Enforcement Academy) in Botswana **to train in the first anti-corruption program** for wildlife enforcers.
- **Regional collaboration among the projects increased** with a regional meeting of country coordinators in Gabon planning regional crackdowns.
- **LAGA makes a presentation on regional law enforcement at first Interpol** specialized environmental conference organized by Interpol Central African Regional Bureau in Yaounde – Cameroon.
- **A major leopard skin dealer arrested** in Yaounde – Center **with a leopard skin and leopard skull.**
- **Another dealer belonging to a network of 7 well known elephant dealers** that was busted in Mintom-Djoum – South **arrested.**
- **2 dealers were arrested while trying to trade in chimp parts in Mindaurou – East.**

General

This month was marked by 3 operations against 4 major dealers.

LAGA Director was invited by ILEA (International Law Enforcement Academy) to create and train the first anti-corruption program for law enforcement officials in Africa in Botswana. He also met the head of the academy who in addition to wildlife, wants to integrate the anti-corruption program in other sectors on which ILEA focuses such as security, drugs, trafficking, terrorism, arms trade etc. It was generally agreed that LAGA will train every year, and that anti-corruption has to become a major part of their program. The LAGA Director was one of the trainers on surveillance techniques and made suggestions on more topics such as internet trade, and many other aspects especially on procedures of operations.

Regional collaboration among the projects increased with a regional meeting of country coordinators in Gabon planning regional crackdowns. The meeting **resulted in a regional collaborative arrest operation between Gabon and Congo.** The regional meeting covered among others - strategic planning, identifying priorities for improvement in the projects, boosting Gabon's efforts of AALF.

LAGA participated and presented its vision for Regional Wildlife Law Enforcement of enforcement without borders in the regional Interpol meeting organized by Interpol Central African Regional Bureau in Yaounde. Collaboration was established with Head of Interpol Central Africa Region Bureau in preparation of regional crackdown operations in four countries by the projects (Cameroon, CAR, Gabon and Republic of Congo) in regional wildlife law enforcement strategy.

Another dealer belonging a network of elephant dealers was arrested in Mintom – South. This network of 7 elephant poachers/dealers was busted in May 2011. LAGA was involved in the arrest of the suspects after receiving information from some Ecoguards, and has been in charge in writing the complaint reports (PV), ensuring that the culprits were transported and locked-up in Djoum while at the same time following up the cases in the Court.

A leopard skin dealer was arrested in Yaounde with a leopard skin and a leopard skull. He has a group of suppliers from Tonga – West and sells in the main cities of Yaounde – Center and

Douala – Littoral. **His father is his accomplice in whose house he hides the products of the protected wildlife species.**

2 dealers were arrested while trying to trade in chimp parts and other wildlife species in Mindaourou – East. They were arrested with arms, ammunition and traps. Unprocedural court process was observed in this case in the court in Abong Mbang. This led the State prosecutor to reverse his decision of closing the dealers during the trial by granting bail to them. This is the second time to observe this problem within 3 months.

Investigations

- **15 investigations** of varying lengths were carried out in **6 Regions** of Cameroon- South West, West, East, Littoral, South and Center.
- AALF Investigator from Gabon arrived to be trained in LAGA in the program for the exchange of Investigators in regional enforcement. This training exercise was carried out with an Investigator from PALF – Republic of Congo and will continue with RALF – CAR (Central African Republic).
- Investigations led to a successful operation after targeting a main dealer in Tonga – West; the dealer was arrested in Yaounde - Center.
- Training of Investigators on operations procedure continued this month so that they could start to actively assist and help in controlling some operations in the field.
- Attention shifting to the Northern part of the country after a long time without focused attention.
- This month saw more involvement in investigations and operations procedures in the replication projects especially PALF – Congo and RALF – CAR.

Operations

3 operations were carried out this month against 4 major dealers.

- **01/06/11 – Another dealer belonging a network of elephant dealers was arrested in Mintom – South.** This network of 7 elephant poachers/dealers was busted in May 2011. LAGA was involved in the arrest of the suspects after receiving information from some Ecoguards, and has been in charge in writing the complaint reports (PV), ensuring that the culprits were transported and locked-up in Djoum while at the same time following up the cases in the Court.
- **16/06/11 - A leopard skin dealer was arrested in Yaounde with a leopard skin and a leopard skull.** He has a group of suppliers from Tonga – West and sells in the main cities of Yaounde – Center and Douala – Littoral. **His father is his accomplice in whose house he hides the products of the protected wildlife species.**
- **24/06/11 – 2 dealers were arrested while trying to trade in chimp parts and other wildlife species in Mindaourou – East. They were arrested with arms, ammunition and traps.** Unprocedural court process was observed in this case in the court in Abong Mbang. This led the State prosecutor to reverse his decision of closing the dealers during the trial by granting bail to them. This is the second time to observe this problem within 3 months.

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **16 missions** out of Yaounde- Centre Region: 2 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Buea (South West), 1 in Mamfe (South West), 1 in Abong-Mbang (East), 1 in Mindourou (East), 2 in Kribi (South), 1 in Djoum (South), 1 in Bengbis (South), 1 in Sangmelima, 1 in Bafoussam (West), 1 in Dschang (West), 1 in Bafang (West), 1 in Foumban (West) and 1 in Bamenda (North West).
- There are **17 dealers behind bars during this month:** 4 in the East Region, 2 in the South West Region, 7 in South Region, 2 in West Region and 2 in the littoral Region.

- **39 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **35 cases** are scheduled and being trailed in the court this month.

Media front

- **44 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to radio, TV and written press including: 19 written press materials (13 in English and 6 in French), 4 talk shows all in English, 4 TV news feature (3 in English and 1 in French), 7 news feature in English and 10 news flashes (3 in English and 7 in French).
- Guests include: Minister of forestry and wildlife, South West Delegate of Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife, conservator of Edea-Douala reserve, lecturer in the university of Dschang and researcher in lion and former MINEP Technical Adviser.
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including; leopard skin dealer arrest in Yaounde and ivory dealers arrest Douala.
- 30 media pieces in English, 14 in French making a percentage of 68.2% in English and 31.8% in French.

External Relations and Policy

- LAGA Director was invited by ILEA (International Law Enforcement Academy) to create and train the first anti-corruption program for law enforcement officials in Africa in Botswana. He also met the head of the academy who in addition to wildlife, wants to integrate the anti-corruption program in other sectors on which ILEA focuses such as security, drugs, trafficking, terrorism, arms trade etc. It was generally agreed that LAGA will train every year, and that anti-corruption has to become a major part of their program. The LAGA Director was one of the trainers on surveillance techniques and made suggestions on more topics such as internet trade, and many other aspects especially on procedures of operations.
- LAGA participated and presented its vision for Regional Wildlife Law Enforcement of enforcement without borders in the regional Interpol meeting organized by Interpol Central African Regional Bureau in Yaounde. Collaboration was established with Head of Interpol Central Africa Region Bureau in preparation of regional crackdown operations in four countries by the projects (Cameroon, CAR, Gabon and Republic of Congo) in regional wildlife law enforcement strategy.
- A meeting held between the US Embassy Head of Political and Economic Section and LAGA director concerning corruption in the forest sector, establishing regional briefing on wildlife enforcement by LAGA and its replication, APT-AID principles, and fighting corruption in USAID programs.
- LAGA director held meeting with a potential international volunteer for LAGA replication in Yaounde.
- Meeting with WWF - CARPO Regional Coordinator to discuss measures to fight against corruption in WWF.
- The Director of LAGA met with CARPE – Cameroon Director to discuss on corruption in conservation projects and ways that USAID can fight it.
- Meeting with PASOC (EU program for building capacity for civil society in Cameroon) giving presentation about the APT-AID principles certification scheme resulting in the agreement in principles to engage about 200 NGOs in APT-AID.
- Two presentations were given to Peace Corps volunteers on fostering community activism for the development of an educational manual for fostering activism to transform rural communities in Cameroon.
- Meeting with GIZ Head of Health program to discuss corruption in development Aid programs and implementing innovative technology to track mosquito nets distribution in Cameroon.

- Raising democracy and corruption issues in a round table discussion with Johnnie Carson Under Secretary of Africa Affairs in US State Department and the US Ambassador to Cameroon.
- LAGA director met with Pauline Biyong and discussed on deadlock anti-corruption legislation.
- A meeting with World Bank governance officer discussing corruption in the forest and health sectors, the Apt-Aid principles and the deadlock with anti-corruption legislation in Cameroon.

Management

- The LAGA Family is less than a dozen activists. An NGO without a single vehicle. In a world of multi-nationals among the conservation industry giants, LAGA is proud to be small and slim. The LAGA family took off some time from work and had a 2 day trip at the sea resort town of Kribi – South. Families travelled together to enjoy many activities with the main one being swimming. It was the first time many people entered into the sea. The general consensus was that it was an enjoyable experience, the initiative well lauded and that there should be more of such trips. It should be noted that the trip was not only about having a good time, but to commune together, get to know one another out of the working environment, and meet spouses and children of LAGA family members.
- LAGA held a series of meetings to discuss about finance, donors, and the bonus system among others.
- The various Departments are putting in place plans to reconstruct and on measures to cut costs while maintaining the good results – for instance, choosing lawyers whose offices are close to areas of jurisdiction of cases they are handling, grouping cases passing in the same town as much as possible in one or a maximum of two dates, paying lawyers' fee as per performance, fielding targeted investigation missions etc.

Activism Front

All the education 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>. Education activities for this month were on:

1). The Wind of change in Africa

The presentation is on the crisis in the Maghreb that started in Tunisia and later extended to other countries like Egypt, Libya, Morocco etc. A new era has started in Africa from December 2010 in Tunisia. This era I term the wind of change started in Tunisia by one person due to self-immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi

This presentation shows;

- That just very few individuals can bring a change.
- Power belongs to the people.
- Corruption can be stopped if the society decides to stop it.
- Activism and patriotism should be a part and parcel of every one.
- The strategies used in non violent protest in one area can work in different areas.

Questions for reflection

- Did the crises in Tunisia provoked that of Egypt, Syria, Yemen, Libya etc
- Do foreign powers play any useful role in African crises?
- Are the problems of Tunisia similar to that of Cameroon?
- Uprisings had been noticed in Arab states why is it difficult in Sub Saharan Africa?
- Will the new leaders be different from their predecessors?

2). A film - Francafrique

Former colonial master France is known to have strong ties with its former colonies in Africa, but the nature of the ties is largely unknown to the common man; this documentary takes us through the history and under linings of a conspicuously complex master-servant relationship driven by big financial interests of the colonial master raping the resources of the colonies in the new kind of colonialism. State interests for sure, but the documentary equally exposes the corruption of the political elite from both spectrum with the looting of African by its own leaders and the leaders from France. This complex state/personal interests keep the African countries in perpetual poverty and their leaders in an ever-growing rich environment up till the moment when some of the African leaders, Omar Bongo for example, building power from corrupt riches start dictating to France who they want to be Minister in a Western democracy.

Replication

The replication of the LAGA model and the transfer of LAGA experience in other countries throughout the sub-region is a continuous process whereby LAGA works with other NGOs. More information on replication is available on

<http://www.laga-enforcement.org/Replication/tabid/166/Default.aspx>

Regional collaboration among the projects increased with a regional meeting of country coordinators in Gabon planning regional crackdowns. The meeting resulted in a regional collaborative arrest operation between Gabon and Congo. The regional meeting covered among others - strategic planning, identifying priorities for improvement in the projects, boosting Gabon's efforts of AALF.

A jurist and an investigator from Gabon are trained in the regional headquarters in Cameroon under the regional exchange program. This training exercise has been carried out with an Investigator from PALF – Republic of Congo, a jurist from PALF – Congo, another jurist from AALF – Gabon and the Coordinator of RALF – CAR (Central African Republic).

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This month saw effective arrests in Cameroon, Congo and C.A.R against trade in ivory, primates, reptiles and leopard skins. Landmark prosecution has been achieved in Gabon against an ivory dealer with the maximum penalty under the law being handed, that is after several disappointing judgements in recent months. Another landmark prosecution of a wildlife dealer has been achieved in C.A.R. The year and half imprisonment term judgement is exceptionally high for this country.

Government authorities have been highly collaborative this month in C.A.R and in Gabon while problems of corruption have been observed in Congo and Cameroon.

On a daily basis all LAGA Departments assist in the various activities of the replication projects (PALF – Congo, AALF – Gabon and RALF – Central African Republic etc.) on all managerial and financial issues especially reports; Investigations and Operations planification and supervision; legal follow-up of all court cases; and publishing and pushing through all the media pieces with all the necessary information posted on the various project websites. For this month, LAGA assisted in:

- Assisting PALF in the coordination of investigation missions and preparation of operations, working specifically with Adelphe on procedures in Manual from Investigations through to operations planification and strategies.
- Assisting Hubert (RALF) on Investigations and Operations procedures – discussing directly with the investigators concerned.
- Assisting in the legal follow-up to get a good prosecutions in CAR
- Ensuring that the media pieces concerning the various operations were produced and pushed through to the respective national media.
- Ensuring that the activity and financial reports of the past months are all updated and posted on the various websites.

Finance

LAGA Expenditure by budget line for June 2011

1,533,270	Investigations	18 inv, 6 Regions	\$3,312
696,000	Operations	3 Operation against 4 subjects	\$1,503
2,810,985	Legal	follow up 39 cases 17 locked subjects	\$6,071
2,644,205	Media	44 Media pieces	\$5,711
1,406,426	Policy & External Relations	Congo/Gabon/CAR/Botswana/Germany/Israel/Thailand	\$3,038
940,500	Management	Coordination	\$2,031
1,620,673	Office		\$3,500
670,820	LAGA Family		\$1,449
12,322,879	TOTAL EXPENDITURE JUNE		\$26,615

LAGA Expenditure by donor for June 2011

1,247,926	FWS-Replication	\$2,695.3
0	BornFree Foundation	\$0.0
818,420	Rufford Foundation	\$1,767.6
1,239,835	Neu Foundation	\$2,677.8
510,100	ProWildlife	\$1,101.7
390,500	JOE FRANKLIN	\$843.4
2,038,708	Future for Nature	\$4,403.3
2,727,320	ARCUS Foundation	\$5,890.5
12,322,879	TOTAL	\$26,615.3

THIS MONTH IN PICTURES



Dealer was arrested in Yaounde with a leopard skin and a leopard skull in Yaounde – Center. His father is his accomplice in whose house he hides the products of the protected wildlife species.



2 dealers arrested in Mindaourou – East with chimp parts, other wildlife species, arms, ammunition and traps. Unprocedural and irregular behaviour was observed leading to their release. A relative of the dealers and a friend of the President of the court interfered in the process; this made the State prosecutor to reverse his decision of locking-up the dealers during the trial by granting them bail.

Links of this month

2 major ivory traffickers arrested in Douala – Cameroon National Television (CRTV) news report
The ivory traffickers were arrested in their workshop in Akwa - Douala with more than one hundred sculpted ivory and 2 tusks. Agents of the Littoral delegation of forestry and wildlife assisted by the Forces of Law and Order and LAGA caught these wildlife traffickers who will soon face the law accordingly.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q9NgrGh0tbE>