

The Last Great Ape Organization – LAGA

October 2020 Report



Highlights

- **LAGA provided technical assistance to customs and wildlife officials following the arrest of a trafficker in Ambam with 118 ivory tusks. The tusks were hidden in a secret built-in compartment in a truck he was driving from the south to Yaounde. The team carried out follow up investigations, exposing international links and equally followed up the legal and prosecution procedure.**
- **The Deputy Director attended the ceremony presided over by the Minister of Forestry and Wildlife that saw the presentation of the National Anti-Poaching and Wildlife Crime Strategy document.**
- **The Deputy Director facilitated a workshop that focused on contributing to the deepening and harmonization of the understanding of institutional actors of the causes and consequences of agro-pastoral conflicts.**

General

Following the arrest of a big time ivory trafficker with 118 ivory tusks in Ambam by the customs, and under the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding with customs, LAGA provided technical assistance to customs and wildlife officials in relation to the legal procedure in prosecuting the wildlife law offender. The team carried out further investigations that show some of the ivory came from Gabonese government stockpiles and from operations carried out by the Gabonese government assisted by the Gabonese EAGLE project named Conservation Justice. The trafficker is connected to a network stretching from countries such as Gabon, Congo, Equatorial Guinea to Nigeria.

The Deputy Director attended the ceremony presided over by the Minister of Forestry and Wildlife that saw the presentation of the National Anti-Poaching and Wildlife Crime Strategy document and a copy of the document was given to LAGA that participated in the elaboration of the strategy during workshops held for that purpose.

The Deputy Director facilitated a workshop that focused on contributing to the deepening and harmonization of the understanding of institutional actors of the causes and consequences of agro-pastoral conflicts. The workshop, organized by human rights group RECODH, brought together state actors and NGOs working in the domain.

He equally was a guest on prime time CRTV News programme Twilight to talk on the recent seizure of 118 ivory tusks in the south of the country, the causes and consequences of ivory trafficking and elephant extinction.

Investigations

- **18 investigation missions** were carried out in **5 Regions** out of the 10 Regions of Cameroon including the Centre, East, Littoral, South and West Regions.

Investigations Table

Investigation Missions	Regions	No. of Operations	No of traffickers arrested
18	5	0	0

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **4 missions** out of Yaounde - Centre Region: 1 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Foubot (West), 1 in Ebolowa (South) and 1 Ambam (South).
- There are **15 traffickers behind bars this month**: 5 in East region, 2 in Centre region, 1 in Littoral region, 1 in South region and 6 in West region.
- **31 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **27 cases** were scheduled in court this month.
- **No trafficker** was convicted this month.
- LAGA provided technical assistance to customs and wildlife officials following the arrest of a trafficker in Ambam with 118 ivory tusks hidden in a secret built-in compartment in a truck he was driving from Ambam to Yaounde. The ivory was trafficked from Gabon and Equatorial Guinea and was heading to the Yaounde for an illegal transaction. He is considered to be one of the main traffickers in a ring that deals in huge quantities of ivory in the sub region and right to Nigeria. The team carried out further investigations into the case exposing international links and the fact that some of the tusks were from Gabonese government stockpiles and seized from operations carried out in collaboration with Conservation Justice, the EAGLE member based in Gabon.

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
4	0	0	0	0	0	27

Media

- **30 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to written press, internet and radio including: 15 written press materials (8 in French and 7 in English), 8 internet publications (6 in French and 2 in English), and 6 radio news flashes (3 in French and 3 in English), and 1 TV production in English
- Interviewee: The Director and the Deputy Director of LAGA
- Subjects focused this month on wildlife law enforcement including: the arrest of two people with 3 African grey parrots and 6 Rose-ringed parakeets in Yaounde, and a man arrested with 626kg of ivory in Ambam.
- 17 media pieces in French language and 13 in English language making a percentage of 56.66% in French and 43.33% in English.

Media table

<i>No of media pieces</i>	<i>TV</i>	<i>Radio</i>	<i>Newspapers</i>	<i>Internet</i>
30	1	6	15	6

External Relations and Policy

- The Deputy Director attended the ceremony presided over by the Minister of Forestry and Wildlife that saw the presentation of the National Anti-Poaching and Wildlife Crime Strategy document and a copy of the document was given to LAGA that participated in the elaboration of the strategy.
- The Deputy Director facilitated a workshop that focused on contributing to the deepening and harmonization of the understanding of institutional actors of the causes and consequences of agro-pastoral conflicts. The workshop, organized by human rights group Recodh brought together state actors and NGOs working in the domain.

- He attended a workshop organized by TRAFFIC that focused on presenting the preliminary analysis of the impact of training workshops organized and the tools developed by TRAFFIC and WWF to combat wildlife crime in Cameroon between 2015 and 2019.
- The head of department held a meeting with the Ambam state counsel to discuss a case at his chambers. He held another meeting, accompanied by a legal advisor, with the Yaounde centre administratif state counsel to discuss matters forwarded to him. Another legal advisor held a meeting with the attorney general of the Littoral Region to discuss a case forwarded to his chambers and the legal advisor would later hold another meeting with the Douala-Ndokoti state counsel for the same purpose.

Management

- The entire LAGA team took time off from work to visit the seaside resort town of Kribi for relaxation and team building activities and returned ready to contribute more to ensuring successful operations before the year runs out.
- An evaluation meeting was held to take stock of how things have evolved over the Covid-19 period, examining our efforts, results and plans to make a final dash for more results before the year ends. There was a review of measures taken to ensuring comprehensive protection of everyone during the trying period of the pandemic.

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>.

Movie: Harriett

When a young black woman escapes from her slave master she comes back to take the man she loved to her new abode only to get disappointment as he is married off to another woman and this mission turns into a slave freeing mission as she uses underground routes to start freeing slaves. Harriett is a captivating movie and she is a heroine of the slave era with courage, determination and commitment. The young lady demonstrates extraordinary bravery and leadership in the dangerous task of freeing slaves under the noses of rampaging gun welding white men. Her guide is her religion she constantly calls upon to lead her way. Discussions focused on slavery, activism, Black Lives Matter and other social ills faced by the society in those days and faced by the society today.

Finance

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

Link of the month

The online news site Camer.be focused this month on the arrest of the two with 3 African grey parrots and 6 Rose-ringed parakeets in Yaounde. They belong to a big parrot trafficking network in the country.

<https://www.camer.be/mobile/82568/11:1/cameroun-arrest-of-a-notorious-african-grey-parrots-trafficker-cameroon.html>

This Month in Pictures



Deputy Director facilitates workshop on agro-pastoral conflicts held in Yaounde



Launch of the National Anti-Poaching and Wildlife Crime Strategy presided over by Minister Jules Doret Ndongo



Customs seize 118 ivory tusks from trafficker and ivory from Gabonese government stockpiles found among. The team provided technical assistance to authorities in the legal procedure