

The Last Great Ape Organization – LAGA

August 2020 Report



Highlights

- **2 traffickers arrested with a lion skin and a leopard skin during an operation carried out in Yaounde, Centre Region.**
- **A trafficker arrested in Ebolowa, South Region with 23kg of pangolin scales.**
- **Heads of the Investigation Department and Legal Department held a meeting with Foubot Public Security Commissioner to discuss collaborative efforts.**

General

This month was marked by the arrest of **3 traffickers with feline skins and pangolin scales.**

The first trafficker was arrested with the two feline skins including a lion and a leopard skin and a woman who later claimed she is the owner of the two skins was arrested an hour later at her residence. The man has two crafts shops in Yaounde he used as front businesses to carry out the illegal sale in wildlife products. The woman is a former high school teacher who claimed the skins belong to her. Cameroon is home to less than 300 lions.

During the second operation of the month, **a trafficker was arrested in Ebolowa with 23kg of pangolin scales.** He activated several small time traffickers who collected the scales in villages in the south. He had travelled all the way from Akom II, in the South Region to Ebolowa where he expected to sell the pangolin scales. He activates several poachers and traffickers in the region, who supply him with the pangolin scales.

The heads of the legal department and the investigations departments held a working session with the Police Commissioner of Public Security Foubot during which they discussed collaborative initiatives to improve on wildlife law enforcement in the area.

Investigations

- **12 investigation missions** were carried out in **4 Regions** out of the 10 Regions of Cameroon including the Centre, East, South and West Regions.
- Good investigation in **Garoua** led to the arrest of **2 traffickers with a lion skin and a leopard skin in Yaounde.**
- Good investigation in **Akom II** led to the arrest of **a trafficker with about 30kg of pangolin scales pangolin scales in Ebolowa.**

Investigations Table

Investigation Missions	Regions	No. of Operations	No of traffickers arrested
12	4	2	3

Operation

Two operations carried out this month with MINFOF **arresting 3 traffickers.**

6/8/2020 – Two traffickers arrested in Yaounde, Centre Region with a lion skin and a leopard skin. The first trafficker who was very cautious was arrested shortly after he had consulted a soothsayer to determine if his illegal business was going to be risk free and changed destinations. He had a two artisanal shops as front businesses for cover of illegal wildlife trafficking. A woman who was formerly a secondary school teacher was arrested an hour later at her residence and she claimed the skins belong to her.

26/8/2020 – A trafficker arrested in Ebolowa, South Region with 23kg of pangolin scales. He had under his employ several small time traffickers he activated in several villages in the south, whose job was to collect the scales for him. He travelled by night to avoid arrest from Akom II to Ebolowa where he tried to sell the scales shortly before his arrest.

Operations Table

No of Operations	Regions	No of Traffickers Arrested	Contraband
2	2	2	A lion skin, a leopard skin and 23 kg of pangolin scales

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **13 missions** out of Yaounde - Centre Region: 2 in Ebolowa (South), 1 in Sangmelima (South), 2 in Bertoua (East), 3 in Douala (Littoral), 3 in Foubot (West), 1 in Bandjoun (West), 1 in Bangangte (West) and 1 in Mfou (Centre).
- There are **14 traffickers behind bars this month**: 5 in East region, 3 in Littoral region and 6 in West region.
- **28 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **23 cases** were scheduled in court this month.
- **7 traffickers** were convicted this month.
- **Prosecutions**: There were 3 court rulings this month.

- **05/08/2020**: The Bandjoun Court of First Instance found the accused **TCHAPTCHET Noe guilty and sentenced him to pay 100.000 FCFA as fines.**

He was arrested in Bandjoun on the 24/02/2020 for the illegal possession of 5 leopard skins.

- **07/08/2020**: The Douala – Bonaberie Court of First Instance found the accused **NDONGO Jean, TEGWI TIKU Clifford and Emmanuel Willy BRIGHT guilty and sentenced them to 6 months’ imprisonment and to pay jointly 90.592.000 FCFA as damages.**

They were arrested in Douala on the 23/12/2020 for the illegal possession and circulation of 274 grey parrots, 3 ivory tusks and 3 bags of pangolin scales.

- **24/08/2020**: The Yaounde – Ekounou Court of First Instance found the accused **ATOUBA BEKONO Martin Paul, AYO’O ATOUBA Margu rite N lie and ETOA MVIE Marcelin Junior guilty and sentenced them to one year suspended sentences during 3 years and to pay 500.000 FCFA each as fines, 8.000.000 FCFA jointly as damages.**

They were arrested in Yaounde on the 07/06/2020 for the illegal possession, circulation and commercialization of 400 Kgs of 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
13	3	2	12	3	0	23

Media

- **29 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to written press, internet and radio including: 14 written press materials (10 in English and 4 in French), 4 internet publications (3 in French and 1 in English), and 11 radio news flashes (7 in English and 4 in French).
- Quotes: Lion specialist and Coordinator of the Center for Environment and Development Studies, Precillia Tumenta was quoted.
- Subjects focused this month on wildlife law enforcement including: The Yaounde arrest of two people with a leopard skin and a lion skin, and the Ebolowa arrest of a man with 23kg of pangolin scales.
- 18 media pieces in English language and 11 in French language making a percentage of 62.6% in English and 37.9% in French.

Media table

<i>No of media pieces</i>	TV	Radio	Newspapers	Internet
29	0	11	14	4

External Relations and Policy

- The Heads of the Legal Department and the Investigation Department held a meeting with a the Fombot Public Security Commissioner on discussions to foster collaboration.
- The head of department accompanied by a legal adviser held a meeting with the state counsel of Ebolowa to discuss on a matter at this chambers while they equally held another meeting with the state counsel of Douala – Ndokoti for a mater pending at the court.
- A legal adviser held a meeting with the state counsel in Bertoua for discussions on a case pending before the court and another legal adviser held a meeting in Fombot with the state counsel for a similar purpose.

Management

- Preparations for the reception of a super volunteer from France were carried out.
- The continued observance of barrier measures against Covid-19 was duly followed up and ensured it work properly.

Activism Front:

Due to the Covid-19 situation in the country, presentations and debates have been postponed until the situation allows for proximity in office.

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>.

Finance

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

Link of the month

The online news site Africtelegaph.com published the arrest of 2 wildlife traffickers with a lion and a leopard skins in Yaounde. The news site underlines the fact that both lions and leopards are threatened and totally protected species.

<https://africtelegaph.com/cameroun-deux-personnes-arretees-pour-traffic-illegal-despeces-sauvages/>

This Month in Pictures



Lion and leopard skin trafficker arrested and at the gendarmerie office shortly before he the legal process to prosecute him began. It should be noted that experts say less than 300 lions are found in the wild in the country. A woman was also arrested in connection with the trafficking of the feline skins.



He activated several poachers and traffickers in pangolin scales the South of the country. He was arrested as he attempted to sell 23kg of pangolin scales in Ebolowa