

# The Last Great Ape Organization – LAGA

## May 2021 Report



### Highlights

- **An ape trafficker arrested at the banks of the River Sanaga and a live baby chimp rescued.**
- **The chimp was later taken to the Sanaga Yong Chimpanzee Centre where it shall receive lifetime support and care**
- **2 traffickers arrested with 72kg of pangolin scales. They operated in Mbalmayo at a strategic junction, gateway to the South Region.**
- **Head of Legal Department participated at a training workshop for ecoguards at the Mbere Valley National Park where he did several presentations on the law enforcement procedure.**

### General

This month was marked by the arrest of **3 traffickers during 2 operations with a baby chimp rescued and 72kg of pangolin scales seized.**

An ape trafficker was arrested with a baby chimp in Nanga Eboko. The baby chimp was rescued during a high risk, nerve-racking cross river operation. Courage and initiative saved our investigator and the chimp from the hands of a trafficker. He traveled dozens of kilometers to the banks of the Sanaga River and camped there holding our investigator captive, refusing to cross over to the safer side of the river. The arresting team stormed in to take the chimp and trafficker to the safer side of the river. As the team, wildlife officers and the authorities got to the station and prepared for interrogation, the criminal suddenly made a run into the bush attempting to escape. He was hotly chased and captured

2 traffickers arrested with 72kg of pangolin scales in Mbalmayo, Centre Region. The seizure, represents up to 360 slaughtered pangolins (depending on the species). They operated at a strategic road junction, gateway to the South Region. When the arresting team arrived the home of one of the traffickers, they found a grain bag with full pangolin scales in the corner of the living room. They had been in the illegal business for quite a long time.

## Investigations

- **20 investigation missions** out in **5 Regions** out of 10 of Cameroon including: Littoral, West, South, Centre and East Regions.
- Good investigation in Minta led to the arrest of an ape trafficker and a live baby chimpanzee rescued in Nanga Eboko.
- Good investigation in Mbalmayo led to the arrest of 2 pangolin scales traffickers with 72kg of pangolin scales in Mbalmayo

*Investigations Table*

<b>Investigation Missions</b>	<b>Regions</b>	<b>No. of Operations</b>	<b>No of traffickers arrested</b>
20	5	2	3

## Operation

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

**10/5/2021 – A trafficker arrested in Nanga Eboko, Centre Region with a live baby chimpanzee.** The baby chimp was rescued during a high risk, nerve-racking cross river operation. Courage and initiative saved our investigator and the chimp from the hands of a trafficker. He traveled dozens of kilometers to the banks of the Sanaga River (the longest in Cameroon) and camped there holding our investigator captive, refusing to cross over to the safer side of river. The trafficker got the chimp from an area called Ndondzoua, that is considered to be a hotspot for bushmeat. The arresting team stormed in to take the chimp and trafficker to the safer side of the river. As the team, wildlife officers and the authorities got to the station and prepared for interrogation, the criminal suddenly made a run into the bush attempting to escape. He was hotly chased and captured. The baby chimp, a survivor of the slaughter of his family, was smuggled in a tiny closed box, and was pulled out frightened and stressed. He was given special first aid attention and care by the team. The chimp is in the Sanaga Yong Sanctuary for his lifetime care.

**19/5/2021 – 2 traffickers were arrested in Mbalmayo in the Centre Region with 72kg of pangolin scales.** The seizure alone represents up to 360 slaughtered pangolins (depending on the species). When the arresting team arrived the home of one of the traffickers, they found a grain bag full with pangolin scales in the corner of the living room. The traffickers operated at a strategically important road junction, a gateway to the towns in the south of the country where wildlife traffickers are very active. They are experienced pangolins scales traffickers. One of the traffickers tried every trick in the book to avoid arrest saying he has been arrested in the past.

**Operations Table**

<i>No of Operations</i>	<i>Regions</i>	<i>No of Traffickers Arrested</i>	<i>Contraband</i>
2	1	3	A live baby chimp and 72kg of pangolin scales

**Legal**

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **8 missions** out of Yaounde - Centre Region: 1 in Nana Eboko (Centre), 2 in Mbalmayo (Centre), 2 in Bertoua (East), 1 in Djohong – Mbere Valley National Park (Adamaoua) and 2 in Douala (Littoral).
- There are **14 traffickers behind bars this month**: 4 in East region, 4 in Centre region, 1 in Littoral, and 6 in West region.
- **28 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **24 cases** were scheduled in court this month.
- **No new conviction was handed this month**
- **Prosecutions**: There was a court ruling this month.
- **06/05/2021**: The Court of Appeal maintained **AKANZE AKONGLO Bertrand's** 6 months' imprisonment sentence and acquitted **TEGOUM Alphonse Raoul, BOUGNIA Kamta Francis and TCHAMTCHEU Francis Romuald**. On the other hand, the Court overturned the lower court's decision with regards to the damages and ordered **AKANZE AKONGLO Bertrand** to pay the sum of 163.000.000 FCFA as damages.

They were arrested in Douala on the 14/03/2019 for illegal possession, circulation and commercialization of 156kg of ivory tusks and 1,500kg of pangolin scales.

**Legal Table**

<i>No of Missions (Out of Centre Region)</i>	<i>No of Court Judgements</i>	<i>No of Traffickers Given Prison Sentence</i>	<i>Prison term (in months)</i>	<i>No of Traffickers Sanctioned (No prison sentence)</i>	<i>No of Appeals lodged</i>	<i>No of Cases Tried in Courts</i>
8	0	0	0	0	0	28

## Media

- 27 media pieces were produced and pushed to the media including the written press, radio, television and internet, 6 written press (3 in English as well as in French), 11 radio news flashes (6 in English and 5 in French), 5 TV production (3 in English and 2 in French), and 5 internet publication (3 in French and 2 in English).
- Interviewee: Upper Sanaga Divisional Delegate of Forestry and Wildlife
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including the Nanga Eboko arrest of a trafficker with a baby chimp and Mbalmayo arrest of two with over 70kg of pangolin scales.
- 14 media pieces in the English and 13 in French making 51.9% in the English language and 48.1% in the French language.

### *Media table*

<i>No of media pieces</i>	<b>TV</b>	<b>Radio</b>	<b>Newspapers</b>	<b>Internet</b>
<b>27</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>

## External Relations and Policy

- The Deputy Director participated at a meeting of the Cameroon Pangolin Working Group that was focused on drawing avenues for collaboration and an action plan for pangolin protection by the group.
- The Head of the Legal Department participated at a workshop in Djohong – Mbere Valley National Park that was organized by CABAG and aimed at strengthening the capacity of frontline wildlife ecoguards in the fight against wildlife crimes. He did presentations on the wildlife offence statements, the management of court cases and techniques in auditioning.
- The Head of Department, accompanied by some legal advisers, held meetings with the Bertoua Attorney General and the State Counsels in Nanga Eboko and Mbalmayo, Bertoua to discuss strategies on some matters pending at the various courts,
- A legal adviser held a meeting with Douala Attorney General for the same purpose

## Management

- Preparations and organization of events marking the Labour Day took place with meetings, presentations and a luncheon being the main highlights.

## **Activism Front**

### **Presentation : Culture d'entreprise et management de l'organization**

The presenter talked on the notion of an organisation's culture, its use and importance within the organisation. He equally talked on the different types of cultures, their advantages and disadvantages. Organizational culture, he said, plays a role in effective management and the upkeep of organizational vision.

## **Finance**

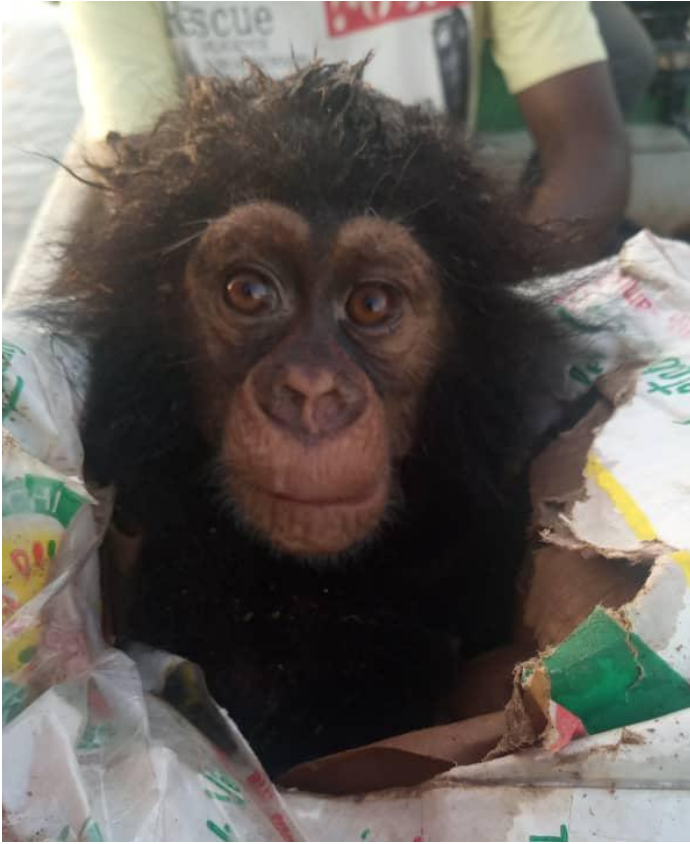
In preparation and would be made available soon as possible on the LAGA website [www.laga-enforcement.org](http://www.laga-enforcement.org) .

## **Link of the month**

Camer.be, an online news site published the story of the arrest of a man who was ferrying a baby chimp to sell. He was arrested and the chimp rescued by the joint effort of wildlife officials and LAGA.

<https://www.camer.be/86348/11:1/cameroun-arrested-in-nanga-eboko-for-chimp-trafficking-cameroon.html>

**This Month in Pictures**



*Baby chimp rescued from a chimp trafficker in Nanga Eboko at the banks of the River Sanaga*



*He camped on the banks of River Sanaga with a baby chimp that was later rescued*



*Two arrested in in Mbalmayo in custody of 72 kg of pangolin scales.*

