

# The Last Great Ape Organization - LAGA

## March 2008 Report



### Highlights

- A **Manager in a Logging Company of Greek Nationality** arrested with 2 live Chimpanzees, 1 live De Brazza's monkey and 5 parrots.
- A **live chimpanzee** rescued from high a personality, **The Senior Divisional Officer** of Upper Sanaga, Centre Province.
- **2 dealers** arrested in Lomie, East Province with **elephant tusks**.
- **2 dealers** arrested in Douala for **illegally trading in Leopard skins**.

### General

This month was marked by a special focus in Nanga Eboko regarding a logging company and illegal trade in apes, operations in Douala and Lomie, and much TV coverage.

A **manager in a logging company** Pangiotis Marelis of **Greek nationality** was arrested and put behind bars for illegally dealing with 2 chimps, 5 parrots and a DeBrazza's monkey. He was also caught with a hunting rifle with no sufficient permit. There are investigations being carried out on his possible to other chimps supplied in Douala. The operation comes at a time when the government and the International community are renewing pressure on logging companies to meet their legal responsibilities by controlling their facilities and workers against illegal hunting and related trade.

A **live chimpanzee** was rescued from a high personality, **The Senior Divisional Officer** of Upper Sanaga Division - Nanga Eboko in the Centre of Cameroon. Nanga Eboko has been an area of great concern for trade in great apes for a while now and has been noted as one of the major road junctions for wildlife trafficking in the country. **Highly placed official figures hold apes in their houses** as if they are above the law while trade through the town intensified.

**2 dealers** were arrested in Lomie – East Province with **2 tusks and meat of endangered wildlife species** including elephant, gorilla and giant pangolin. They were also arrested with **3 guns** and ammunition, which they use to kill the animals for their meat and trophies. One of the dealers threatened to kill the arresting officers with his gun and machete.

**2 dealers were arrested** in Douala, Littoral province for **illegally trading in leopard skins** and trophies of other endangered wildlife species. They were laundering illegal wildlife trade in the cover of a medicine store. One of them is a regular dealer in skins and ivory, working with many suppliers in the East of Cameroon.

Several important meetings were held with the Minister MINFOF, Diplomats, Officers of the forces of law and order, national and international NGOs to discuss cases of illegal trade in endangered species, corruption, MoU etc.

### Investigations

- **34 investigations** of varying lengths were carried out in **7 provinces** including - North West, South West, West, East, North, Littoral and Center.
- Investigations led to 3 successful operations in Nanga-Eboko in the Center and Douala in the Littoral Province after targeting dealers.
- Field tests continue for new candidates. **5 new candidates were tested** this month with encouraging results.
- Internet Investigations **identified** and initiated communication with **2 wildlife Internet scammers**.

## Operations

**4 operations** were carried out this month against **6 suspects** with MINFOF.

- **18/03/08 - A manager in a logging company** Pangiotis Marelis of **Greek nationality** was arrested and put behind bars for illegally dealing with 2 chimps, 5 parrots and a DeBrazza's monkey. He was also caught with a hunting rifle with no sufficient permit. There are investigations being carried out on his possible to other chimps supplied in Douala.
- **19/03/08 - A live chimpanzee** was rescued from high personality, **The Senior Divisional Officer** of Upper Sanaga Division - Nanga Eboko in the Center of Cameroon. Nanga Eboko has been an area of great concern for trade in great apes for a while now. **Highly placed official figures hold apes in their houses** as if they are above the law while trade through the town intensified.
- **21/03/08 - 2 dealers** were arrested in Lomie – East Province with **2 tusks and meat of endangered wildlife species** including elephant, gorilla and giant pangolin. They were also arrested with **3 guns** and ammunition, which they use to kill the animals for their meat and trophies. One of the dealers threatened to kill the arresting officers with his gun and machete.
- **25/03/08 - 2 dealers were arrested** in Douala, Littoral province for **illegally trading in leopard skins** and trophies of other endangered wildlife species. They were laundering illegal wildlife trade in the cover of a medicine store. One of them is a regular dealer in skins and ivory, working with many suppliers in the East of Cameroon

## Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **16 missions** out of Yaounde - Center Province: 4 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Abong Mbang (East), 2 in Djoum (South), 3 in Nanga Eboko (Center), 4 in Bamenda (North West), 1 in Bafia (Center), 1 in Mamfe (South West)
- There are **10 dealers behind bars during this month**: 3 in the Littoral, 3 in East Province, 2 in the West Province, 1 in the South West Province and 1 in the Centre province.
- **34 cases** were followed up by the legal department this month.
- **17cases** are scheduled and being tried in the court this month.
- An operation took place in Pela in the Upper Sanaga Division with National Brigade and the MINFOF sub-divisional. It concerns the manager in a company Pangiotis Marelis which he using as a cover. The suspects threatened the police officers and resisted arrest. The subject was released on bail by the state counsel for the sum of 2.000.000 FCFA (about \$4000) after spending some time in the police cell.
- Another operation in Douala Littoral concerned 2 dealers illegally trading in leopard skins and trophies of other endangered species. After 2 days in police cell, the subjects are kept in jail while waiting for trial.
- 2 dealers were arrested in Lomie – East Province for dealing in elephant tusks and meat of other endangered wildlife species. They were locked up and are now awaiting trial.
- **Prosecutions**: One case was sentenced this month  
The Court of First Instance of Djoum, South Province convicts Konglo Etoa and Abolo Ngong to six months suspended sentence during three years and to pay an amount of 500 000 FCFA (about \$1000) each as fine, 310 000 FCFA (about \$700) as damages and 68900 FCFA (about \$150) as judiciary fine. The duration of imprisonment in default of non-payment shall be fixed at 18 months.
- **1 appeal** was registered this month in the south province in the case of Konglo Etoa and Abolo Ngong dealing with two crocodiles in Djoum area.

## **Media front**

- **32 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to radio, TV and written press including: 1 written press material in English, 4 radio talk shows (all in English,), 21 radio news flashes (16 in English, 5 in French), 6 TV feature (4 in English, 2 in French).
- Guests include: Minister MINFOF, Head of the sustainable development team of British foreign and commonwealth office in London, Director of LAGA, Barrister Mbuan, Minister MINFOF, Divisional delegate of Upper Sanaga, Controller with National Brigade of the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife.
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including; follow-up of parrot cases by Littoral Delegation of Forestry and wildlife, British government's contribution in protecting endangered species, Arrest of a manager in a timber company of Greek nationality, Arrest of 2 Leopard skin dealers in Douala.
- 25 media pieces in English, 7 in French making a percentage of 78.1%in English and 21.9%in French.

## **External Relations and Policy**

- LAGA meeting with the Minister -MINFOF to discuss on the follow-up cases on parrot, MoU and plan operation against trade in apes; and meeting with Director of Wildlife and protected Areas to discuss on MoU, operations in Nanga Eboko concerning the logging company and Senior Divisional officer of Upper Sanaga Division.
- The Head of Media and External Relations also met with the Inspector General of the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife to discuss and explain clauses that need revision in the MoU between the ministry of Forestry and Wildlife and LAGA.
- The Director of LAGA held meeting with Greek Ambassador concerning the plan for chimp operation in Nanga Eboko against a Greek logger.
- Meeting between LAGA and British High Commission 1<sup>st</sup> Secretary on fight against corruption, recent parrot cases and the replication of LAGA experience to other sectors.
- LAGA met with Dutch Embassy to discuss on corruption in big NGOs.
- LAGA also attended a dinner party organized by British High Commission on the occasion of exchange of mandate between the former 1<sup>st</sup> Secretary of British High Commission and the present one.
- Meeting between LAGA and the new 1<sup>st</sup> Secretary of British High Commission. Top on the agenda wildlife enforcement, replication of LAGA and general fight against corruption.
- LAGA met with the US Embassy on the fight against corruption, parrot cases and replication of LAGA and general fight against corruption.
- Meeting with CED to discuss on corruption in NGOs.
- The Director of LAGA held meeting with Colonel of gendarmerie Inspector n° 2, on collaboration of gendarmerie in wildlife enforcement.
- Meeting with Project Grand Singe to discuss on poaching problem and trade in their area of work.
- Meeting between LAGA Director and Director of information (CRTV-Radio) to discuss on threats on media from Greek logger lawyers.
- Participation of LAGA at a rally in Bambili, Mezam Division of the North West province to disseminate information on wildlife law enforcement in Cameroon.

## **Management**

- One volunteer joined the LAGA family this month to assist the Management Department with administrative, financial and managerial duties.

## **Finance**

### **LAGA Expenditure by budget line for March 08**

<b>Amount CFA</b>	<b>Budget line</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Amount USD</b>
2,818,375	Investigations	34 inv, 7 provinces	\$6,631.5
1,483,600	Operations	4 Operations	\$3,490.8
2,132,025	Legal	Follow up 34 cases 10 locked subjects	\$5,016.5
1,614,950	Media	32 media pieces	\$3,799.9
434,560	Policy / External	UK/Congo/S. Africa	\$1,022.5
208,100	Management	Coordination	\$489.6
1,098,054	Office		\$2,583.7
9,789,664	<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE MARCH</b>		<b>\$23,034.5</b>

### **LAGA Expenditure by donor for March 08**

<b>Amount CFA</b>	<b>Donor</b>	<b>Amount USD</b>
0	Born Free	\$0.0
1,008,300	BHC	\$2,372.5
2,924,955	FWS	\$6,882.2
0	UNEP-Congo	\$0.0
512,855	UNEP-General	\$1,206.7
2,583,200	Rufford Foundation	\$6,078.1
217,700	Parrot Trust	\$512.2
2,302,654	WSPA	\$5,418.0
240,000	SFA France	\$564.7
9,789,664	TOTAL	\$23,035

**LAGA Director gave up his salary in reaction to the exceptional high total cost.**

## THIS MONTH IN PICTURES



**A total of 3 live chimps rescued in Nanga Eboko an area of great concern for trade in great apes for a while now and noted as one of the major road junctions for wildlife trafficking in the country. 2 chimps were seized from a manager of a logging company of Greek nationality and 1 chimp from a highly placed government official, the Senior Divisional Officer of Upper Sanaga.**



**2 dealers were arrested in Douala, Littoral province for illegally trading in leopard and trophies of other endangered wildlife species. They are laundering illegal wildlife trade in the cover of a medicine store. One of them is a regular dealer in skins and ivory, working with many suppliers in the East of Cameroon**

### **Links of this month**

- 3 chimps rescued, logging company manager behind bars: A logging company manager has been arrested in the Upper Sanaga Division of the Center Province for illegally detaining in his home two live chimpanzees, five parrots and a De brazza's Monkey, classified as totally protected wildlife species under the Cameroon law of 1994 governing the wildlife sector. Investigations continue concerning his connection to a sale of another chimpanzee. He was arrested by a team of wildlife law enforcement officials sent on a special assignment in the area by the Minister of Forestry and Wildlife, Professor Elvis Ngolle Ngolle.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=30eNA51thno>