

# The Last Great Ape Organization – LAGA

## November 2019 Report



### Highlights

- **2 traffickers with links to the Central Africa Republic arrested with 2 ivory tusks amid reports they had earlier been arrested twice and released without any charges brought against them.**
- **Italian TV crew starts shooting with the LAGA team, a documentary focused on the illegal trafficking in pangolin scales.**
- **South African TV crew that produced a documentary called The Eye of the Pangolin shot scenes with the LAGA team for an upcoming documentary highlighting on the illegal pangolin trade**
- **The Deputy Director and several other pangolin conservationists joined Tikki Hywood Cameroon in the opening ceremony of the Pangolin Rescue and Rehabilitation Center at the Mefou National Park**

### General

This month was marked by the arrest of **2 traffickers with 2 ivory tusks weighing 20kg.**

The traffickers belong to an international ivory trafficking network based in Kenzou close to the border between the Central African Republic and Cameroon. One of the traffickers is reported to have been arrested in March 2019 in Yokadouma by the gendarmerie with over 250kg of ivory seized and released without any charges brought against him. Kenzou serves as a collection point for the ivory that generally leaves the CAR and smuggled into Cameroon. An upsurge in ivory trafficking between the town countries has been observed recently.

The Deputy Director participated at the opening ceremony of the Pangolin Rescue and Rehabilitation Center at the Mefou park. This is the first ever facility dedicated to the rescue and rehabilitation of pangolins in the country.

Two movie crews; an Italian and a South African movie company, arrived the country to work separately on the illegal trade in pangolins with the LAGA team. They shot scenes and gave interviews to the Deputy Director and the Head of the Investigations Department.

## Investigations

- **17 investigation missions** of varying lengths were carried out in **4 Regions** of Cameroon including Littoral, Center, South and East Regions.
- Good investigation in Kenzou led to the arrest 2 traffickers with 2 elephant tusks of 20kg in Batouri.

*Investigations Table*

<b>Investigation Missions</b>	<b>Regions</b>	<b>No. of Operations</b>	<b>No of traffickers arrested</b>
17	4	1	2

## Operation

**An operation** carried out this month with MINFOF **arresting 2 traffickers**.

**13/11/2019 – 2 traffickers arrested in Bertoua, Eat Region with 2 ivory tusks.** The two are international ivory traffickers plying the border areas between Cameroon and the Central African Republic. They are part of an international network of ivory traffickers based in Kenzou who supply ivory to some main cities in the country including Bertoua, Yaounde and Douala. Prior investigations show one of them had been arrested In Yokadouma in March 2019 by the gendarmerie and released without any charges made and without the matter handed over to wildlife officials who have competence over the handling of wildlife offences. The same trafficker had once also been arrested in Gamboula in the East Region and released without prosecution.

*Operations Table*

<b>No of Operations</b>	<b>Regions</b>	<b>No of Traffickers Arrested</b>	<b>Contraband</b>
2	1	2	2 ivory tusks

## Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **10 missions** out of Yaounde-Centre Region: 1 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Mbanga (Littoral), 1 in Kribi (South), 2 in Djoum (South), 1 in Bangangte (West) 3 in Batouri and 1 in Bertoua (East).
- There are **9 traffickers behind bars this month**: 4 in East region, 3 in South region, 1 in Centre region and 2 in Littoral region.
- **34 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **31 cases** were scheduled in court this month.
- **3 traffickers** were convicted this month.
- **Prosecutions**: There was one court ruling this month.
  - **14/11/2019**: The Mbanga Court of first instance found the accused **TCHAPDA Dieunedort, TCOUAKWE Hervé and DJOFANG** guilty and ordered to **pay 100.000 FCFA each as fine and 3.920.000 FCFA jointly as damages**.

They were arrested in Douala on the 24/07/2019 for illegal possession and circulation of 4 leopard skins.

### *Legal Table*

<b>No of Missions (Out of Centre Region)</b>	<b>No of Court Judgements</b>	<b>No of Traffickers Given Prison Sentence</b>	<b>Prison term (in months)</b>	<b>No of Traffickers Sanctioned (No prison sentence)</b>	<b>No of Appeals lodged</b>	<b>No of Cases Tried in Courts</b>
10	1	0	0	0	0	31

## Media

- **44 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to written press, television, internet and the radio, including; 28 written press materials (16 in English language and 12 in French language), 2 TV productions (1 each in French and in English languages), 4 internet publications (all in French) and 10 radio news flashes (6 in French and 4 in English).
- Interviewee: Littoral Regional Delegate of Forestry and Wildlife
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including: the trial of 2 arrested in Douala, by Judicial Police, with bags of pangolin scales, the sentence of a court registrar in the Congo Republic and the Batouri arrest of two with ivory tusks.

- 23 media pieces in French language and 21 in English language making a percentage of 52.3% in French and 47.7% in English.

### *Media Table*

<i>No of Media Pieces</i>	<i>TV</i>	<i>Radio</i>	<i>Newspapers</i>	<i>Internet</i>
45	6	13	18	8

### **External Relations and Policy**

- The Deputy Director participated at a reception at the residence of the Belgian Ambassador on the occasion of the country’s national day.
- The Deputy Director participated at the opening ceremony for the Pangolin Rescue and Rehabilitation Center where he actively participated in discussions that focused on finding solutions to the pangolin problem in Cameroon.
- He held a meeting with the UNODC Regional Coordinator for Central Africa Global Programme for Combatting Wildlife and Forest Crime and two World Parrot Trust officials to discuss projects on wildlife law enforcement, parrot trafficking, some wildlife parks issues, among other matters.
- The Head of the Investigation Department and the Assistant held meetings with customs and security officials at the Nsimalen international airport.
- The Head of Legal Department held a meeting with the Kadey Divisional Delegate of Forestry and Wildlife.
- A legal adviser held a meeting with the state counsels in Kribi, while a second legal adviser held a meeting with the state counsel in Batouri and a third held a meeting with the state counsel in Djoum to discuss strategies concerning matters pending before the various courts.
- The Head of Legal Department participated at a workshop aimed at training ecoguards from 4 national parks in the country. He did two presentations; one on information gathering and the other on the legal procedure in prosecuting wildlife crimes. The workshop is part of measures aimed at combatting the illegal trade in African grey parrots.

### **Management**

- Preparations for end of year activities and planning began with emphasis on ensuring maximum results to fulfilling set targets at the various departments.

### **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/Actiwithvism/tabid/77/Default.aspx>.

**Presentation: Salary is out what next?**

The presenter engages us in an unusual topic, personal finances and takes us down some of the problems connected with living on a salary or living on a single source of income. He starts by defining some important terms and these include income, wage, and salary. He then tells us how salaries are used and how insufficient it may become and what is generally said about part time jobs or a second source of income. He gives us tips on these and ends up encouraging the audience to try some of his methods. Discussions focused on the issues that were not said or the underlining issues such as personal preferences for not seeking further income and or challenges in trying to do so.

**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**

When a court in Brazzaville sentenced a court registrar to one-year imprisonment for stealing ivory from the court premises, alwhida info among several other news outlets including print takes up the story and shows how different is the strong and deterrent punishment to a very weak court ruling by the Bonanjo court of first instance in Douala to traffickers who were arrested with thousands of wildlife species in 2017.

[https://www.alwihdainfo.com/Congo-Brazzaville-un-greffier-condamne-pour-vol-d-ivoire\\_a78718.html](https://www.alwihdainfo.com/Congo-Brazzaville-un-greffier-condamne-pour-vol-d-ivoire_a78718.html)

**This Month in Pictures**



*Two arrested at the border town of Kenzou in East Region with two ivory tusks*



*Lisa and Angelia of Tikki Hywood during the opening of the facility that shall cater for pangolins in the country. Deputy Director in middle*



*Ivory tusks seized from traffickers with international connections*