

The Last Great Ape Organization - LAGA

January 2009 Report



Highlights

- **2 principal Internet wildlife dealers arrested** trying to sell chimps to U.S.A using falsified government documents and CITES Permits.
- **A wildlife dealer is sentenced to imprisonment** for illegally trading in a chimp.
- **LAGA family resumes work** after 3 weeks Christmas holiday.

General

This month was marked by the resumption of work and the arrest of 2 Internet wildlife dealers.

Following a report to LAGA and international collaboration with a victim in U.S.A., **2 principal Internet wildlife dealers were targeted and arrested in Bamenda** in the North West Region. They are engaged in fraud and illegal wildlife trade over the Internet and were arrested trying to sell a chimp to a victim in U.S.A. using **falsified government documents and CITES Permits**. Their connection to other forms of fraud including illegal immigration and adoption scams is still being investigated. The link between Internet wildlife fraud and other forms of fraud had been discovered before and discussed with the Prime Minister of Cameroon.

LAGA family resumed work after 3 weeks Christmas holiday. It was a good feeling to be back and activities immediately kicked off in all the departments resulting into the arrest of the 2 Internet wildlife dealers. Work started in the absence of the LAGA Director and the **excellent results in all fronts was further proof of** the growing capacity and independence of the departments.

The Court of First Instance of Bertoua in the East Region has sentenced a wildlife dealer to 3 months imprisonment and to pay over \$3000 as fines and damages to the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife. He was arrested in Bertoua while trying to sell a live chimp. The chimp was rescued but later died because of maltreatment and as a result of injuries sustained from boiled water that was thrown on it.

Investigations

- **26 investigations** of varying lengths were carried out in **6 Regions** of Cameroon- North West, South West, West, East, Littoral and Center.
- **Internet Investigations led to a successful operation** after targeting dealers: 2 Internet wildlife dealers were arrested in Bamenda – North West Province.
- Internet Investigations targeted 5 other Internet wildlife dealers engaged in fraud in Bamenda – North West Region. Investigations are still ongoing.
- Field tests continue for new candidates. **1 new candidate was tested** this month.

Operations

An operation was carried out this month with MINFOF against **2 subjects**.

- **10/01/09** - Following a report to LAGA and international collaboration with a victim in U.S.A., **2 principal Internet wildlife dealers were targeted and arrested in Bamenda** in the North West Region. They are engaged in fraud and illegal wildlife trade over the Internet and were arrested trying to sell a chimp to a victim in U.S.A. using **falsified government documents and CITES Permits**. Their connection to other forms of fraud including illegal immigration and adoption scams is still being investigated. The link between Internet wildlife fraud and other forms of fraud had been discovered before and discussed with the Prime Minister of Cameroon.

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **11 missions** out of Yaounde - Center Region: 2 in Bamenda (North West), 1 in Bertoua (East), 1 in Mamfe (South West), 1 in Buea (South West), 1 in Douala (Littoral), 2 in Ntui (Center), 2 in Bafoussam (West) and 1 in Nkongsamba.
- There are **7 dealers behind bars during this month**: 1 in the East Region, 2 in the West Region, 1 in the South West Region, 1 in the Center Region and 2 in the North West Region
- **21 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **22 cases** are scheduled and being trailed in the court this month.

Prosecutions: 1 case was sentenced this month.

- **21/01/09:** The Court of First Instance of Bertoua - East Region convicts Tamdjo Alain to 3 months imprisonment and to pay 143.225 Fcfa as fine and 1.500.000 Fcfa (over \$3000) as damages. He will be retained in prison for 9 months in case of non-payment of damages. He was arrested in Bertoua while trying to sell a live chimp. The chimp was rescued but later died because of maltreatment and as a result of injuries sustained from boiled water that was thrown on it.

Media front

- **19 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to radio, TV and written press including: 7 written press materials (4 in English, 3 in French), 9 radio news flashes (6 in English, 3 in French), 2 radio talk shows in English, 1 TV news features in English.
- Guests include: Minister of Forestry and Wildlife, Information officer at the US Embassy, British parliamentarian, Director of "In Defence of Animals" – Africa.
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including; Bamenda wildlife Internet dealers arrests, Court sentence ape dealer in Bertoua.
- 12 media pieces in English, 7 in French making a percentage of 63.2% in English and 36.8% in French.

External Relations and Policy

- The Minister of Forestry and Wildlife held an important meeting with LAGA Director to discuss on the following issues - internet trade, signing of CITES permit only by the Minister, update of the Pongo Songo chimps welfare, delay in the cases on African grey parrot in court, a proposed letter to Ministry of External Relations concerning large scale trafficking of apes from Cameroon to Egypt, ongoing trafficking of African grey parrot to the Middle East, procedure for court cases to court concerning wildlife damages, the advice from LAGA on the issue of game ranching and breeding on the risks it could cause in wildlife enforcement.
- LAGA Director met with British Members of Parliament to discuss on issues concerning the fight against corruption and investment in the forest sector.
- Meeting was held between LAGA Director and CARPE Focal Point to discuss on strict regulation in fighting corruption in NGO projects.
- LAGA Director took part in a meeting alongside WWF auditor and Dutch consultant to discuss corruption in WWF.
- US Embassy and the LAGA Director held a meeting to discuss on corruption in wildlife cases.
- LAGA Director met with CEW to discuss on recommendation of the revision of the wildlife law.
- Meeting between World Conservation Society and LAGA Director issues discussed - conservation of African grey parrot, the new project in Deng Deng, NGO best practice for transparency and good governance.

Management

LAGA family resumed work after 3 weeks Christmas holiday. It was a good feeling to be back and activities immediately kicked off in all the departments resulting into the arrest of the 2 Internet wildlife dealers. Work started in the absence of the LAGA Director and the excellent results in all fronts was further proof of the growing capacity and independence of the departments.

Finance

LAGA Expenditure by budget line for January 09

Amount CFA	Budget line	Details	Amount USD
1,878,055	Investigations	26 inv, 6 provinces	\$3,756.1
495,800	Operations	1 Operation	\$991.6
1,871,525	legal	follow up 21 cases 7 locked subjects	\$3,743.1
1,471,310	Media	19 media pieces	\$2,942.6
116,500	Policy & External Relations	Congo Replication	\$233.0
951,900	Management	Coordination	\$1,903.8
1,362,103	Office		\$2,724.2
8,147,193	TOTAL EXPENDITURE JANUARY		\$16,294.4

LAGA Expenditure by donor for January 09

AmountCFA	Donor	Amount USD
675,900	Born Free	\$1,351.8
2,579,050	FWS	\$5,158.1
2,717,243	Rufford Foundation	\$5,434.5
1,775,000	Arcus	\$3,550.0
400,000	SFS France	\$800.0
0	UNEP-General	\$0.0
8,147,193	TOTAL	\$16,294.4

THIS MONTH IN PICTURES



The 2 principal Internet wildlife dealers targeted and arrested in Bamenda in the North West Region. They are engaged in fraud and illegal wildlife trade over the Internet and were arrested trying to sell a chimp to a victim in U.S.A. using falsified government documents and CITES Permits. Their connection to other forms of fraud including illegal immigration and adoption scams is still being investigated.



The 2 Internet wildlife dealers with officials of MINFOF Delegation – North West Region and the forces of law and order who collaborated in carrying out the arrests.

Links of this month

- 2 Internet wildlife dealers arrested following a report from a victim in U.S.A. – Cameroon National Television Broadcast. 2 principal Internet wildlife dealers were targeted and arrested in Bamenda in the North West Region. They are engaged in fraud and illegal wildlife trade over the Internet and were arrested trying to sell a chimp to a victim in U.S.A. using falsified government documents and CITES Permits.

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