

The Last Great Ape Organization – LAGA

April 2023 Report



Highlights

- **A trafficker arrested with 55 kg pangolin scales during a crackdown on pangolin scales trafficking in Bertoua, East Region.**
- **The Deputy Director participated at meeting at US Embassy on environmental programs in Cameroon**

General

This month was marked by the arrest of **a trafficker for trafficking with 55 kg of pangolin scales.**

A trafficker arrested with 55 kg pangolin scales in Bertoua, East Region. He travelled from Diang, a locality some 41km from Bertoua with the bag of pangolin scales strapped to his motorcycle. He was arrested when he arrived Bertoua and attempted to sell the pangolin scales. The operation came at the end of a long investigation that tracked and monitored the pangolin trafficker who is experienced in the illegal business. He activated a host of small traffickers in several villages, who supplied him with pangolin scales.

The Deputy Director participated at meeting at the US Embassy in Yaounde that included several conservation stakeholders. The meeting focused on presenting US Embassy environment programs to the conservation community. He had a brief discussion with the Deputy Chief of Mission during the event.

Investigations

- **15 investigation missions** were carried out in **5 regions** out of 10 of Cameroon including the Littoral, Centre, East, South, and South West regions.
- Good investigation in Diang led to the arrest of one pangolin scales trafficker with 55 kg of pangolin scales seized in Bertoua.

Investigations Table

Investigation Missions	Regions	No. of Operations	No of traffickers arrested
15	5	1	1

Operation

Operations carried out this month with MINFOF **arresting a trafficker.**

- **14/04/2023 – A trafficker arrested in Bertoua in the East Region with 55 kg of pangolin scales.** He travelled from Diang; a locality some 41 km from Bertoua with the bag of pangolins scales strapped to his motorcycle. He was arrested when he arrived Bertoua and attempted to sell the pangolin scales. The operation came at the end of a long investigation that tracked and monitored the pangolins trafficker who is experienced in the illegal business. He activated a host of small traffickers in several villages, including Diang, Kapan, Kariol, Mbang and Molobo in the East Region, who supplied him with pangolins scales.

Operations Table

No of Operations	Regions	No of Traffickers Arrested	Contraband
1	1	1	55 kg of pangolin scales

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **9 missions** out of Yaounde - Centre Region: 1 in Sangmelima (South), 1 in Ebolowa (South), 2 in Bertoua (East), 1 in Akonolinga (Centre), 1 in Ntui (Centre) and 3 in Douala (Littoral).
- There are **13 traffickers behind bars this month:** 3 in East region, 2 in South region, 2 in Centre and 6 in West region.
- **32 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **29 cases** were scheduled in court this month.

- **2 traffickers** were convicted this month.
- **Prosecutions:** There was a court ruling this month.
 - **13/04/2023:** The Centre Administratif Court of First Instance found the accused **BELUCHUKWU Oduche and OKALA NDENGUE Mathieu guilty and sentenced them to pay 200,000 FCFA as fine and 4,855,000 FCFA as damages.**

They were arrested in Yaounde on the 15/10/2022 for the illegal possession of 66, 2 kg of pangolin scales.

Legal Table

No of Missions (Out of Yaoundé)	No of Court Judgements	No of Traffickers Given Prison Sentence	Prison term (in)	No of Traffickers Sanctioned (No prison sentence)	No of Appeals lodged	No of Cases Tried in Courts
16	1	0	0	2	0	29

Media

- **11 media pieces** were produced and pushed in the media including: 11 radio news flashes (7 in French and 4 in English)
- Giving a total of 7 media pieces produced in the French and 4 in English making 63.6% in French and 36.4% in English.
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including: The arrest of two traffickers with 45 kg of pangolin scales in Bertoua

Media table

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

External Relations and Policy

- The Deputy Director participated at meeting at the US Embassy in Yaounde that included several conservation stakeholders. The meeting focused on presenting US Embassy environment programs to the conservation community. He had a brief discussion with the Deputy Chief of Mission during the event.
- A legal adviser participated at a workshop in Douala that aimed at strengthening the capacity of state counsels and wildlife officials in the fight against wildlife crime. He did a

presentation on court case monitoring with focus on the support to the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife, by its partners. He equally had several discussions with some the state counsels. The workshop was organized by TRAFFIC.

- The Head of the Legal Department and a legal adviser met with the State Counsel of Bertoua to discuss legal strategies after an operation in the town.
- He and another legal adviser met with the Attorney General in Douala to discuss legal strategies concerning a matter pending before the Appeal Court.
- A legal adviser held a meeting with the Attorney General of Ebolowa to discuss legal strategies concerning a matter pending before the Appeal Court.
- Another legal adviser held a meeting with the State Counsel of Yaounde Centre Administratif to discuss legal strategies concerning a wildlife case at the court.
- A legal adviser held meeting with the Attorney General of Bertoua to discuss legal strategies concerning a matter pending before the Appeal Court.

Management

- Preparations for celebrations to mark the 2023 Labour Day were carried out.
- Preparations for the annual audit went well underway. The audit team is expected to arrive in May 2023

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/Activism/tabid/77/Default.aspx>.

Finance

In preparation and would be made available soon as possible on the LAGA website www.laga-enforcement.org.

Link of the month

There were no links this month.

This Month in Pictures



Trafficker at the wildlife office ready for prosecution process to begin as officers weigh bag of pangolin scales