

The Last Great Ape Organization – LA GA August 2012 Report



Highlights

- **5 dealers arrested in 3 different operations** within 1 week in 2 different Regions.
- **4 dealers sentenced this month, 18 months imprisonment term obtained.**
- **The Central African Wildlife Law Enforcement Newsletter launched.**
- **2 Jurists from PALF – Republic of Congo** trained in Yaounde.

General

This month was marked by good operations

3 operations were carried out against **5 dealers**. 2 of the operations took place in Yaounde Center Region. **A long time ivory dealer arrested with 35 kg of ivory** in the Briqueterie neighbourhood in Yaounde, an area very difficult to penetrate because of violence and noted for harbouring major ivory dealers. He **attempted to bribe the arresting officers with 500,000 FCFA** so that the case could not be forwarded to the court; an act stopped by the LAGA team in the field. Still in Yaounde, **2 dealers, a man and his female partner arrested with a large fresh leopard skin** while attempting to illegally trade in it. They initially resisted arrest, fighting in the car and the woman biting the hand of one of the arresting officers while being conveyed to the police station.

In another operation in Mindourou – East, 2 major dealers who had been on the run for months when initially suspected to be in possession of meat of protected wildlife species **arrested with meat of wildlife including chimp parts**. They were in possession of 2 guns and ammunition used in killing the animals. The operation was initiated by the MINFOF team and the arrest coordinated with the LAGA team in Yaounde. LAGA was also responsible in supervising the writing of the complaint report and the conveyance of the case with the suspects to the court in Abong Mbang - East Region.

2 cases were prosecuted this month sentencing **4 dealers with an 18 months imprisonment term obtained against a major ivory trafficker**. The Court of First Instance of Ambam - South sentenced 2 dealers to **5 months of imprisonment suspended during 3 years and to pay jointly 350.000 FCFA (about \$700)** as damages to MINFOF. They were arrested in Ambam for illegally trying to traffic a life Mandrill. The Court of First Instance of Abong Mbang - East sentenced 1 ivory trafficker to **8 months of prison and his partner who drives the trade to 18 months of prison and to pay a sum of 12.000.000 FCFA (about \$24,000) as damages**. They were arrested in Messok for illegal killing of elephants and trying to trade in their parts.

The maiden edition of the Central African Wildlife Law Enforcement Newsletter (CAWLEN) was produced and distributed electronically to over 500 people; it seeks to expand the scope of readers on issues of wildlife law enforcement in the sub-region and beyond. The newsletter that is expected to be published each month shall concisely give a picture of the activities of the various projects working on wildlife law enforcement within the sub-region and in Guinea Conakry replicating the Cameroon's wildlife law enforcement model and it is expected to harness reports of the various projects into one piece for easy reading and reference.

2 Jurists from PALF – Republic of Congo were **trained in Yaounde under the regional exchange program**. This is a continuation of training and exchange of project personnel in regional enforcement to further improve output and make investigations, operations, legal follow-up and media coverage more effective.

Investigations

- **28 investigations** of varying lengths were carried out in **9 Regions** of Cameroon- South West, North West, West, South, East, Littoral, Adamawa, Far North and Center.
- Good investigations identified 2 major dealers leading to 2 arrest operations. One of the operations was as a result of investigations carried out by a new Investigator on trial.
- LAGA Director and Head of Investigations Department held a meeting with CED (Center for Environment and Development) on ways of working together to identify major dealers and recruit informants in the East to fight trade in wildlife and their derivative products.
- The English version of hotline was printed and distribution started. The distribution of the French version of flyers for the hotline that was produced also continued this month. Strategies have been put in place to track distribution and for it to be more effective. This is part of a new strategy to get credible information and to make the Investigation missions more performant.
- LAGA Investigations Department assisted PALF-Congo on Investigations and Operation Procedures.

Operations

3 operations were carried out this month against **5 subjects**.

- **17/08/12 - A long time ivory dealer arrested with 35 kg of ivory** in the Briqueterie neighbourhood in Yaounde - Center. This area is very difficult to penetrate because of violence and is noted for harbouring major ivory dealers. He claims to have a partner who brought the ivory from Mbalam in the East near the Republic of Congo. He **attempted to bribe the arresting officers with 500,000 FCFA** so that the case could not be forwarded to the courts; an act stopped by the LAGA team in the field.
- **21/08/12 - 2 major dealers who had been on the run for months** when initially suspected to be in possession of meat of protected wildlife species **arrested with meat of wildlife including chimp parts** in Mindourou - East. They were in possession of 2 guns and ammunition used in killing the animals. The operation was initiated by the MINFOF team and the arrest coordinated with the LAGA team in Yaounde. LAGA was also responsible in supervising the writing of the complaint report and the conveyance of the case with the suspects to the court in Abong Mbang - East Region.
- **22/08/12 – 2 dealers, a man and his female partner arrested with a large fresh leopard skin** while attempting to illegally trade in it in Yaounde - Center. The woman has a network of suppliers and keeps the skins while the man is charged with the search for clients. They initially resisted arrest and fought in the car while being taken to the police station. The female dealer bit the hand of one of the arresting officers but they were later put under control by the team.

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **22 missions** out of Yaounde - Centre Region: 1 in Nanga-Eboko (Centre), 4 in Douala (Littoral), 2 in Bamenda (North West), 2 in Bertoua (East), 1 in Mindourou (East), 2 in Abong-Mbang (East), 1 in Kribi (South), 2 in Djoum (South), 2 in Ambam (South), 2 in Mamfe (South West), 1 in Dschang (West) and 2 in Bangangte (West).
- There are **38 dealers behind bars during this month**: 21 in the East Region, 2 in Centre Region, 1 in the South West Region, 1 in the North West Region, 9 in South Region and 4 in West Region.
- **30 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **27 cases** are scheduled and being trailed in the court this month.
- **Prosecutions**: 2 cases were sentenced this month.

- **23/08/2012:** The Court of First Instance of Ambam - South sentenced OVONO Zollo Armand and MOUNGUETYI Mazou to **5 months of imprisonment suspended during 3 years**. They were also sentenced to pay jointly **350.000 FCFA (about \$700)** as damages and **36.800 FCFA (about \$74)** as court fees. They were arrested in Ambam for illegally trying to traffic a life Mandrill.
- **28/08/2012:** The Court of First Instance of Abong Mbang - East sentenced NEHA Jean to **8 months of prison**, ABDOU Kadiri to **18 months of prison and to pay a sum of 12.000.000 FCFA (about \$24000) as damages**. They were arrested in Messok for illegal killing of elephants and trying to trade in their parts.

Media front

- **31 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to radio, and written press including: 23 written press materials (11 in English and 12 in French), 3 radio talk shows in English, 1 radio news feature in French and 4 news flashes (3 in English and 1 in French).
- Guests include: officials of MINFOF at the department of wildlife and protected areas and the climate change and prosperity officer of the British High Commission.
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including Mintom arrest of elephant trafficker – decision; world elephant day; Yaounde wildlife trafficker arrest with over 35 kg of ivory and Yaounde leopard skin dealer arrest.
- 17 media pieces in English, 14 in French making a percentage of 54.8% in English and 45.2% in French.
- The distribution of the Wildlife Justice Magazine published continued this month.
- The maiden edition of the Central African Wildlife Law Enforcement Newsletter (CAWLEN) was produced and distributed electronically to over 500 people; it seeks to expand the scope of readers on issues of wildlife law enforcement in the sub-region and beyond. The newsletter that is expected to be published each month shall concisely give a picture of the activities of the various projects working on wildlife law enforcement within the sub-region and in Guinea Conakry replicating the Cameroon's wildlife law enforcement model and it is expected to harness reports of the various projects into one piece for easy reading and reference.

External Relations and Policy

- LAGA Director held very important meetings with the Secretary General at the Presidency of the Republic on wildlife law enforcement.
- LAGA Director also met with the US Ambassador on wildlife law enforcement.

Management

- LAGA Director started a 1 month visit to Israel for medical reasons. This saw the LAGA family running LAGA without the director and the excellent results in all fronts proved the growing capacity and independence of its departments.

Activism Front

All the education 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>.

The education activity for this month was on the emancipation of a woman and her accession to post of responsibility.

The presentation on women emancipation generally looks at the inequality between a man and a woman; the inability of a woman or her ability to do things equally if not better than men. It focuses more on the emergence of a woman. Before now a woman was limited to certain aspects of life such as cooking with some of her abilities and competence put to question. But over time some

women have ascended to important post of responsibility like Heads of State, International Judges, Secretaries of State etc. Some have received great distinctions (Nobel prizes) proving that women are capable of taking full responsibilities even for tasks considered to be very difficult and challenging.

The question therefore is why are women still not emerging? Or established? Who could be the cause?

- Is it because women are not self-confident?
- Do societal beliefs play in role in this?
- Or, is it the men who played an important role in women inferiority?

By Kouemo Anne Brenda – Anti-Corruption Cameroon

Replication

During this month, LAGA helped other replication projects in planning investigations and operations, following up court cases, the production of media pieces and training in Yaounde.

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LAGA continued to get more concrete information on the massacre of 40 elephants in the Chari Barguirmi area in Chad, and to put up a good strategy in arresting the poachers in question, as well as working with wildlife authorities in the Northern part of Cameroon to prepare for any eventuality in case the poachers cross over from Chad. Unfortunately still, it is difficult to have the right measure of control given that effective replication activities are still to kick-off in Chad.

LAGA also continued to work with RALF and PALF on planning investigations, strategies on operations and legal follow-up of court cases.

Finance

In preparation, will be made available shortly.

THIS MONTH IN PICTURES



A long time ivory dealer (wearing a black jacket) arrested with 35 kg of ivory in the Briqueterie neighbourhood in Yaounde – Center, an area very difficult to penetrate because of violence and noted for harbouring major ivory dealers. He attempted to bribe the arresting officers with 500,000 FCFA so that the case could not be forwarded to the court; an act stopped by the LAGA team in the field.



One of the major dealers arrested in Yaounde with his female partner with a large fresh leopard skin (at the background). They initially resisted arrest, fighting in the car used for the arrest and the woman bit the hand of one of the arresting officers while being conveyed to the police station. The man searches for customers while the woman who has a network of suppliers keeps the skins in her home in Yaounde.

CENTRAL AFRICAN WILDLIFE LAW ENFORCEMENT NETWORK

Newsletter N° 01/27.08.2012

Two baby chimp dealers arrested in Bazou Cameroon

Hello and Welcome,
We forward to you the first edition of the Central African Wildlife Law Enforcement Network Newsletter which shall regularly brief you on the activities of organisations under this framework and on regional wildlife law enforcement.
In this maiden edition of the newsletter we forward to you the first semester report of LAGA
We wish you nice reading

[LAGA's First Semester Report January - June 2012](#)

The semester report is on LAGA's activities for the first 6 months of the year and find below some highlights:

[LAGA-Cameroon](#)
[AALF-Gabon](#)
[PALF-Congo](#)
[RALF-CAR](#)
[GALF-Guinea Conakry](#)

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Links of this month

- 2 operations arresting 3 dealers within 6 days in Yaounde – Center Region. A long time ivory dealer arrested with 35 kg of ivory in the Briqueterie neighbourhood in Yaounde - Center; an area very difficult to penetrate because of violence and noted for harbouring major ivory dealers. 2 other dealers, a man and his female partner arrested with a large fresh leopard skin. They initially resisted arrest and fought in the car while being taken to the police station.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jWqq4Y2dDwg>