

# The Last Great Ape Organization – LAGA

## May 2022 Report



### Highlights

- **A trafficker arrested in a follow up to a live mandrill rescue and trafficker arrest in Douala, in April.**
- **3 long serving LAGA members were decorated with labour medals by the Assistant Divisional Officer of Yaounde 1 Sub Division in recognition for their contribution to the fight against wildlife crime.**
- **The Deputy Director held a meeting at the US Embassy in Yaounde with officials of the Regional Environment Office of the US Embassy in Accra, Ghana.**
- **The Deputy Director held a meeting with visiting officials of the US Department of Justice who were trainers at a workshop on fighting illegal logging.**

### General

This month was marked by the arrest of a **trafficker as a follow up of an arrest in April when a mandrill was rescued.**

The trafficker was arrested in a follow up to a live mandrill rescue and arrest operation that took place in Douala last April. A trafficker who kept a mandrill at his residence was arrested as he attempted to sell it. During his interrogation he exposed another trafficker who was the brains and money behind the trafficking, but the second trafficker could not be immediately arrested because he had disappeared and stayed away from his Douala residence to avoid arrest. He was arrested when he finally returned to Douala.

The Deputy Director held a meeting at the US Embassy in Yaounde with officials of the Regional Environment Office of the US Embassy in Accra, Ghana. Discussions focused on several conservation initiatives including wildlife law enforcement.

## Investigations

- **14 investigation missions** out in **5 Regions** out of 10 of Cameroon including: Littoral, West, Centre, Adamawa and East Regions.
- Good investigation **Douala** led to the arrest of a **primate trafficker** in Douala, He was on the run due to his involvement in an earlier operation that saw the seizure of a live mandrill in the month of April.
- An investigator from another EAGLE country arrived the country for a month-long investigation support and experience sharing mission.

*Investigations Table*

<b>Investigation Missions</b>	<b>Regions</b>	<b>No. of Operations</b>	<b>No of traffickers arrested</b>
14	5	1	1

## Operation

**1 operation** carried out this month with MINFOF **arresting a trafficker**.

**31/5/2022 – A trafficker arrested in Douala, Littoral Region during a follow up operation after a mandrill was seized and a trafficker arrested in April.** The trafficker was arrested in a follow up to a live mandrill rescue and arrest operation that took place in Douala last April. A trafficker who kept a mandrill at his residence was arrested as he attempted to sell it. During his interrogation he exposed the another trafficker who was the brains and money behind the trafficking, but the second trafficker could not be immediately arrested because he had disappeared and stayed away from his Douala residence to avoid arrest. A different strategy was put in place and one of his “girlfriends” lured him to a bar where he was arrested. The arrest put an end to the primate trafficking network that had links to the south of the country.

*Operations Table*

<b><i>No of Operations</i></b>	<b><i>Regions</i></b>	<b><i>No of Traffickers Arrested</i></b>	<b><i>Contraband</i></b>
1	1	1	A live mandrill

## Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **12 missions** out of Yaounde - Centre Region: 2 in Ebolowa (South), 1 in Ambam (South), 1 in Djoum (South), 1 in Sangmelima (South), 2 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Nkongsamba (Littoral), 2 in Akonolinga (Centre), 1 in Nsimalen (Centre), and 1 in Bafang (West).
- There are **20 traffickers behind bars this month**: 4 in East Region, 5 in South Region, 2 in Centre, 3 in Littoral Region and 6 in West Region.
- **45 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **39 cases** were scheduled in court this month.
- **7 traffickers** were convicted this month.
- **Prosecutions**: There was 4 court ruling this month.
  - **09/05/2022**: The Douala - Bonaberi Court of First Instance found the accused **LANGMIA Barry DINGA guilty and sentenced him 2 months in prison and to pay 200,000 FCFA as fines and 389,000 as court fees. He was also sentenced to pay 7,570,00 FCFA as damages.** He was arrested in Douala on the 05/04/2022 for the illegal possession of a chimpanzee skull, 2 gorilla skulls and 5 monkey skulls.
  - **16/05/2022**: The Bafang Court of First Instance found the accused **TANTOH Divine, Samuel SUH and NGONG Elvis NDANG guilty and ordered them to pay 500,000 FCFA each as fines and 11,900 FCFA each as court fees and 400,000 FCFA jointly as damages.** They were arrested in Bafang on the 04/11/2021 for the illegal possession of a mandrill.
  - **17/05/2022**: The Djoum Court of First Instance found the accused **NDONGO NDONGO Léonard guilty and sentenced him to 15 days suspended sentence during 2 years, and to pay 25,000 FCFA as fines and 35,800 FCFA as court fees.** He was arrested in Djoum on the 14/07/2021 for the illegal possession of a mandrill.
  - **19/05/2022**: The Ambam Court of First Instance found the accused **ABAGHA ABAGHA MESSA Albert and AMINOUM Mamadou guilty and sentenced them to 8 months in jail and to pay 1,000,000 FCFA each as fines, 1,910,030 FCFA jointly as court fees and 37,000,627 FCFA jointly as damages.** They were arrested in Ambam on the 06/11/2021 for the illegal possession of 9 ivory tusks.

### *Legal Table*

<i>No of Missions (Out of Centre Region)</i>	<i>No of Court Judgements</i>	<i>No of Traffickers Given Prison Sentence</i>	<i>Prison term (in months)</i>	<i>No of Traffickers Sanctioned (No prison sentence)</i>	<i>No of Appeals lodged</i>	<i>No of Cases Tried in Courts</i>
12	4	4	2 months, ½ month, 8 months	3	0	39

### Media

- 36 media pieces were produced and pushed to the media including: written press, radio, and internet. That is 16 written press (10 in English language and 6 in French language), 16 radio news flashes (10 in English language, 6 in French language), and 4 internet publications (3 in French and 1 in English).
- Giving a total of 21 media pieces produced in the English language and 15 in the French making 58.3% in English, and 41.7% French.
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including: the arrest of a man with a mandrill in Douala, the arrest of 4 traffickers with 90kg of pangolin scales in Akonolinga, the Yaounde arrest and court hearings of a traditional ruler with 2 baby chimpanzees, as well as the arrest of 3 traffickers with 386kg of pangolin scales in Yaounde.

### *Media Table*

<i>No of media pieces</i>	<b>TV</b>	<b>Radio</b>	<b>Newspapers</b>	<b>Internet</b>
<b>36</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>

- The Deputy Director participated in the filming of the series dubbed *Unsung Heroes* by Wildaid. The series seek to shade light on conservationists for their contribution in protecting wildlife

### External Relations and Policy

- The Deputy Director held a meeting at the US Embassy in Yaounde with officials of the Regional Environment Office of the US Embassy in Accra, Ghana. Discussions focused on several conservation initiatives including wildlife law enforcement.

- The Deputy Director held a meeting with officials of the US Department of Justice who were trainers at workshop on fighting illegal logging. He held another meeting with Elinor Corlburn a senior counsel of the Justice Department.
- The Head of Department held a meeting the MINFOF Littoral Chief of Brigade and discussions focused on an arrest operation. He held another meeting with the Douala – Bonaberie State Counsel on strategies on a matter pending at the court.
- A legal adviser held meetings with the State Counsels of Yaounde – Ekounou, Ambam and Ebolowa respectively to discuss legal strategies on ongoing cases at their various courts.
- Another legal adviser held meetings with State Counsels of Nkongsamba, Djoum and Akonolinga respectively to discuss legal strategies on ongoing cases at their various courts.
- A third legal adviser held meetings with the State Counsels of Bafang, Akonolinga and Sangmelima respectively to discuss legal strategies on ongoing cases at their various courts.

### **Management**

- Preparations and hosting of an investigator from another EAGLE country was done and financial reports were prepared.

### **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**

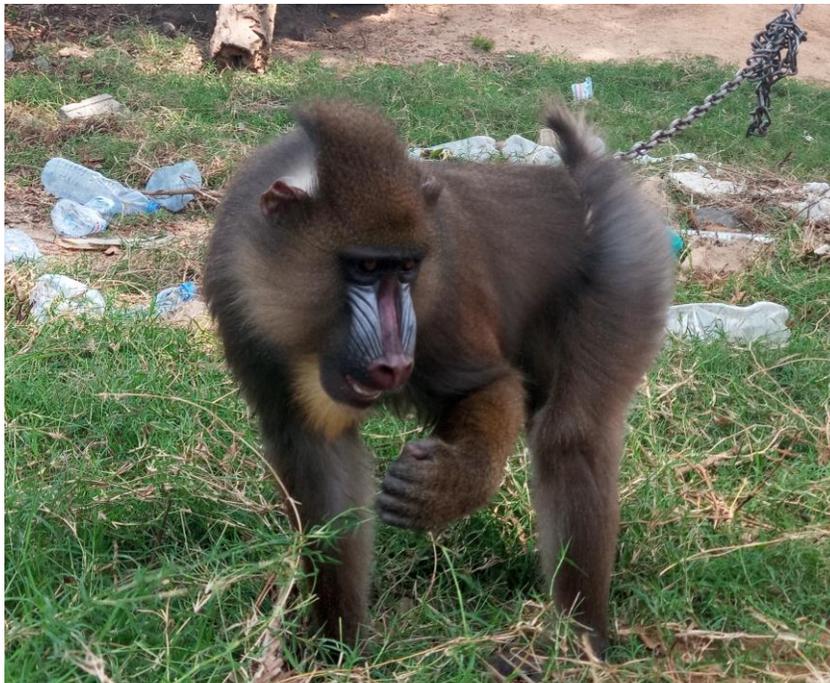
Camer be, an online news site this month published the story of a man arrested with a mandrill at his home in Douala. The mandrill was transported to the Mvogbetsi zoological garden.

<https://www.camer.be/91031/11:1/cameroun-a-man-has-been-arrested-in-douala-for-the-illegal-possession-of-a-mandrill-cameroon.html>

**This Month in Pictures**



*Arrested in Douala in connection with the trafficking of a live mandrill*



*Mandrill at the residence of a trafficker in Douala, rescued in May and the brains of the network arrested in May.*