

The Last Great Ape Organization - LAGA

October 2008 Report



Highlights

- **New MoU** signed between LAGA and MINFOF with **more focus on the fight against corruption.**
- **A dealer in live chimps arrested** in Bertoua – East Province.
- **A wildlife dealer is sentenced** for illegally trading in **lion and leopard skins.**

General

This month was marked by the signing of a new MoU between LAGA and MINFOF with more focus on the fight against corruption.

Following a meeting held between the Director of LAGA and the Minister of Forestry and Wildlife, a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between LAGA and MINFOF was signed. The MoU precises the collaboration between LAGA and MINFOF in the **fight against wildlife crimes** regarding protected wildlife species covering the national territory and more **focus on the fight against corruption** for more efficient results.

An operation was carried out this month against a wildlife dealer in Bertoua – East Province. He is a regular dealer with a network of suppliers and has been arrested for illegally trading in live chimps. **He is well known and quite close to some MINFOF officials in the Delegation of the East Province.** The operation was carried out with the collaboration of the forces of law and order and MINFOF East provincial Delegation. The dealer is now behind bars.

1 case was prosecuted this month. The Court of First Instance of Bertoua – East Province **convicts** a wildlife dealer to **6 months imprisonment** with 3 years suspended sentence and to pay **101 900 Frs. as fine and 400 000 Frs. as damages.** He was arrested for illegally trading in 2 leopard skins, 1 young lion skin and 1 skin of a jackal.

Investigations

- **24 investigations** of varying lengths were carried out in **6 Provinces** – South West, West, Littoral, East, North West and Center.
- Recruitment of field investigators and field test continued. 5 new investigators were sent to the field with encouraging results.
- Investigations targeted one dealer in Bertoua – East Province resulting into a successful operation.
- Following a meeting by the Head of Media Department, Head of Legal Department, Chief Investigator and one Media Assistant regarding the Investigations Department, recommendations were made and decisions taken by the LAGA Director as an experiment to improve results in the Investigations Department, some of which are:
 - Recruitment of 3 or four permanent investigators.
 - Trial period for investigators should be terminated after 9 missions.
 - 2 Investigators should be recruited, put on a salary on the condition that if they do not carry out any operation within the month, half of their salary is not paid.
 - A former suspended investigator was given another chance.

Operations

An operation was carried out against a dealer trading in live chimpanzees.

- **23/10** - A regular dealer with a network of suppliers has been arrested in Bertoua – East province for illegally trading in live chimps. **He is well known and quite close to some MINFOF officials in the Delegation of the East Province.** The operation was carried out with the collaboration of the forces of law and order and MINFOF East provincial Delegation. The dealer is now behind bars.

Legal

- LAGA legal department carried out **20 missions** out of Yaounde – Center Province: 1 in Nanga-Eboko (Center), 4 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Mbouda (West), 1 in Foumban (West), 3 in Buea (South West), 1 in Dschang (West), 3 in Bertoua (East), 1 in Bamenda (North West), 1 in Limbe (South West), 2 in Mamfe (South West), 1 in Abong-Mbang (East) and 1 in Kumba (South West).
- There are **6 dealers behind bars during this month**: 2 in East Province, 2 in the West Province, 1 in the South West Province, and 1 in the Center province.
- **29 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- 22 cases are scheduled and being tried in the court this month.
- **Prosecutions**: 1 case was sentenced this month
- 29/10: The Court of First Instance of Bertoua – East Province convicts Matoni Lotema to 6 months imprisonment with 3 years suspended sentence and to pay 101 900 Frs. as fine and 400 000 Frs. as damages. He was arrested for illegally trading in 2 leopard skins, 1 young lion skin and 1 skin of a jackal.
- 1 appeal was registered this month, in the case of Matoni Lotema in Bertoua – East Province.

Media front

- **21 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to radio, and written press including: 3 written press materials (2 in English and 1 in French), 5 radio talk shows (all in English), 13 radio news flashes (7 in English, 6 in French).
- **Guests include**: Minister of Forestry and Wildlife, The Director of Wildlife and Protected Areas, Information Officer at the US Embassy, SW provincial Delegate of Forestry and Wildlife, MINFOF Wildlife Prosecution Lawyer, Senior Official of the General Secretariat at the Presidency of the Republic of Cameroon, Senior Official of the Great Apes Survival Project, Social Anthropology Lecturer in the University of Yaounde 1.
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including; pilot project Congo, South West ivory seizure and the arrest of a dealer in live chimp in Bertoua – East province.
- 14 media pieces in English, 7 in French making a percentage 66.7% in English and 33.3% in French.
- Online sensitisation still stood at more than 318 visits to the LAGA website in the month of October 2008.

External Relations and Policy

- The Director of LAGA held a meeting with Tad Brown at the US Embassy and issues discussed were focused on corruption inside NGO sectors, wildlife law enforcement and the success of the signing of the new Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife.

- The staff of Media and External Relation Department of LAGA held meeting with the Consul at the Embassy of the Republic of Congo to appraise the success of wildlife law enforcement in Congo and to negotiate an interview with the Ambassador on the matter.
- Meeting between the Media and External Relations Department of LAGA and the Control Brigade of the Anti-Poaching Unit in Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife to discuss the renewed collaboration with MINFOF based on the revised Memorandum of Understanding.
- The crew of Media and External Relations Department of LAGA met with Provincial Delegates of the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife at a meeting in Yaounde organised by the minister of the ministry to discuss the content of the revised Memorandum of Understanding as concerns field activities in the area of effective wildlife law enforcement.
- Media and External Relations Department of LAGA met with Directors of Cameroon Radio and Television (Radio) to explain the significance of the revised Memorandum of Understanding.
- Media and External Relations Department of LAGA also held meeting with the Director of the Garoua Wildlife School and President of the Ex-students of the School to discuss issues related to the raising of awareness in secondary schools on protection of wildlife and wildlife law enforcement.
- Meeting between the Executive Secretary of Biodiversity Development Community Project Cameroon (BDCP-C) and Director of LAGA to discuss on corruption within and in development project, guidelines for anti-corruption measures for NGO, access to information regarding development projects and the wildlife law enforcement in Idenau.

Management

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Finance

LAGA Expenditure by budget line for October 08

Amount CFA	Budget line	Details	Amount USD
1,901,755	Investigations	25 inv, 6 provinces	\$3,804
932,300	Operations	1 Operation	\$1,865
2,485,450	legal	follow up 29 cases 6 locked subjects	\$4,971
1,579,150	Media	21 media pieces	\$3,158
495,260	Policy & External Relations	Congo Replication	\$991
990,950	Management	Coordination	\$1,982
1,533,531	Office		\$3,067
9,918,396	TOTAL EXPENDITURE OCTOBER		\$19,837

LAGA Expenditure by donor for October 08

Amount CFA	Donor	Amount USD
1,343,271	Born Free	\$2,686.5
3,986,925	FWS	\$7,973.9
2,731,850	Rufford Foundation	\$5,463.7
270,000	WSPA	\$540.0
166,150	ProWildlife	\$332.3
1,420,200	Arcus	\$2,840.4
9,918,396	TOTAL	\$19,837

THIS MONTH IN PICTURES



The ape dealer (in between) gendarme officials and MINFOF wildlife officials, holding a bag in his right hand that contains a baby Chimp he was about to sell before his arrest in Bertoua, East province of Cameroon.



The wildlife trafficker (middle), with chimp in front of him surrounded by wildlife officials and forces of law and order. The chimp was maltreated and later died because of injuries from boiled water that was thrown on the animal.

Links of this month

A wildlife dealer arrested in Bertoua – East Province – Cameroon National Radio (CRTV) Broadcast. It was within the framework of the new wildlife strategy put in place by the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife placing more emphasis on fighting wildlife crimes and corruption in the sector that a dealer in great apes was arrested in Bertoua in the East Province. He was arrested trying to illegally sell a live baby chimp.

<http://www.zshare.net/audio/508810540f3f3728/>