

The Last Great Ape Organization - LAGA

November 2008 Report



Highlights

- A **major illegal chimp and bush meat trade network busted** at Ntui – Center Region. 3 female dealers arrested.
- LAGA participates in the 9th COP Conference of Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species in Rome.
- The **Ambassador of the Republic of Congo** reacts positively to the replication of LAGA activities and operations in his country.

General

This month was marked by the crackdown on a network resulting in the arrest of 3 female stable and regular dealers in bush meat of protected species.

A **network of 4 suspects** dealing in large-scale bush meat trade and pet trade especially chimps was **busted** at Ntui – Centre Province. 3 female dealers were arrested for illegally being in possession of a chimp and trying to trade in the animal at Ntui, Mbam et Kim Division of the Central Region of Cameroon. They have a network with links to other parts of the Central Region, and sell in big cities such as Yaounde and Douala. They own guns used in poaching and were fully aware about the illegality of their activities.

As part of the process instituted by the LAGA Director in which other members of the LAGA family are given the opportunity to take part in International forums, the Head of Department of Media and External Relations Mr. Vincent Nfonfu represented LAGA and participated at the first meeting of parties to the CMS Gorilla Agreement and the 9th COP Conference of Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species, and the launch of the Gorilla Year 2009 at the FAO Headquarters in Rome from November 28 to December 2, 2008.

The Ambassador of the Republic of Congo in Yaounde, His Excellency Eric Epeny Obondzo says wildlife crime in the Central African sub-region is doing harm to totally protected wildlife species, especially apes and elephants. The Ambassador was reacting to some 6 operations on tracking illegal wildlife traders carried out in Brazzaville recently resulting in the arrest of 7 dealers in protected wildlife species. The operations were carried out by the Congolese Ministry of Forestry Economy with the support of their Forces of Law and Order, the Judiciary, the RALF Project technically assisted by LAGA, the World Conservation Society – Congo. He said the operations were part of a strategy put in place by their government to fight illegal trade in wildlife species, which is rooted in corruption. The Republic of Congo is the first country in the sub-region in which Cameroon's widely acclaimed experience in wildlife law enforcement is being replicated.

Investigations

- **31 investigations** of varying lengths were carried out in **6 provinces** including - North West, South West, West, East, Littoral and Center.
- **Field Investigations led to a successful operation** after targeting dealers at Ntui – Centre Province. A live baby chimpanzee was rescued.
- Internet Investigations identified and initiated communication with 2 wildlife Internet scammers with the collaboration of a LAGA activist in Belgium.
- Field tests continue for new candidates with encouraging results.

Operations

An operation was carried out this month with MINFOF against **3 subjects, all women**.

- **29/11/08** - A **network of 4 suspects** dealing in large-scale bush meat trade and pet trade especially chimps was **busted** at Ntui – Centre Province. 3 female dealers were arrested for illegally being in possession of a chimp and trying to trade in the animal at Ntui, Mbam et Kim Division of the Central Region of Cameroon. They have a network with links to other parts of the Central Region, and sell in big cities such as Yaounde and Douala. They own guns used in hunting and were fully aware about the illegality of their activities.

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **13 missions** out of the Central Region: 2 in Bertoua (East) 1 in Edea (Littoral), 2 in Buea (South West), 2 in Limbe (South West), 2 in Mamfe (South West), 2 in Ntui (Center), 1 in Bamenda (North West), 1 in Douala (Littoral).
- There are **8 dealers behind bars during this month**: 1 in East Region, 2 in the West Region, 1 in South West Region, and 4 in Central Region.
- **21 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **18 cases** are scheduled and being trailed in the court this month.

Media front

- **31 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to radio, TV and written press including: 5 written press materials 3 in English and 2 in French, 4 radio talk shows (all in English), 21 radio news flashes (11 in English, 10 in French), 1 TV news features (in English).
- **Guests include:** Minister of Forestry and Wildlife, LAGA Legal Unit, Information Officer of US Embassy, Ambassador of the Republic of Congo, Director of Wildlife and Protected areas, Consultant of the Great Ape Survival Project, and Director of “In Defence of Animals”-Africa.
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including; Ape dealer arrest in Bertoua, Ntui arrest of chimp dealer, Congo pilot project, Gorilla treaty.
- 19 media pieces in English, 12 in French making a percentage 61.3% in English and 38.7% in French.
- Online sensitisation stood at **395 visits** to the LAGA website in the month of November.

External Relations and Policy

- Meeting held between the Director of LAGA and the Director of Environment and Rural Development Foundation to discuss the possibility of information provision on illegal trade in protected wildlife species within areas in which ERUDEF operate.
- Anthropology PHD student met with the Director of LAGA to discuss issues on bush meat research.
- Meeting between the Minister of Forestry and Wildlife, Director of LAGA and Director of Pro-wildlife to explore possibilities of further investment in the problem of Pongo Songo Ape welfare. The death of the baby chimp during Bertoua operation due to the failure of the authorities to bring the chimp to a proper shelter in time was also discussed.
- Meeting between LAGA and the His Royal Highness, the Fon of Bali Nyonga soliciting the Fon’s assistance to have other traditional authorities in the North West province to jump into the bandwagon of wildlife law enforcement crusade.
- Vincent Gudmia at the Department of Media and External Relations met with the Director of Wildlife and protected area toward preparation at the 1st meeting of Parties to the CMS Gorilla Agreement.
- Participation by Vincent in the company of the Director of protected Areas at the first meeting of parties to the CMS Gorilla Agreement and the 9th COP Conference of Parties to

the Convention on Migratory Species, and the launch of the Gorilla Year 2009 at the FAO Headquarters in Rome from November 28 to December 2, 2008.

Management

- As part of the process instituted by the LAGA Director in which other members of the LAGA family are given the opportunity to take part in International forums, the Head of Department of Media and External Relations Mr. Vincent Nfonfu represented LAGA and participated at the first meeting of parties to the CMS Gorilla Agreement and the 9th COP Conference of Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species, and the launch of the Gorilla Year 2009 at the FAO Headquarters in Rome from November 28 to December 2, 2008.

Finance

LAGA Expenditure by budget line for November 08

Amount CFA	Budget line	Details	Amount USD
1,965,105	Investigations	31 inv, 6 provinces	\$3,853
619,200	Operations	1 Operation, against 3 dealers	\$1,214
3,031,900	legal	follow up 21 cases 8 locked subjects	\$5,945
1,321,745	Media	31 media pieces	\$2,592
1,177,533	Policy & External Relations	Congo/ Gorilla Agreement Meeting of parties	\$2,309
991,100	Management	Coordination	\$1,943
1,063,821	Office		\$2,086
10,170,404	TOTAL EXPENDITURE NOVEMBER		\$19,942

LAGA Expenditure by donor for November 08

Amount CFA	Donor	Amount USD
1,527,528	Born Free	\$2,995.2
4,009,688	FWS	\$7,862.1
2,547,660	Rufford Foundation	\$4,995.4
235,828	WSPA	\$462.4
1,603,300	Arcus	\$3,143.7
250,400	SFS France	\$491.0
10,174,404	TOTAL	\$19,950

THIS MONTH IN PICTURES



Chimp rescued during operation at Ntui – Central Region. 3 female dealers were arrested for illegally being in possession of the chimp and trying to trade in the animal. They have a network with links to other parts of the Central Region, and sell in big cities such as Yaounde and Douala. They own guns used in poaching and were fully aware about the illegality of their activities. The animal later died because of maltreatment by the dealers.



The animal is in a cardboard box in which it was transported.

Links of this month

A wildlife dealer arrested in Bertoua – East Region – Cameroon National Television Broadcast – Hello Cameroon. 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 wildlife dealer in apes was arrested in Bertoua in the East Province. He was arrested trying to illegally sell a live baby chimp.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I9NQTfqWTgA>