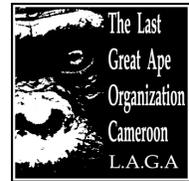


The Last Great Ape Organization – LAGA

September 2018 Report



Highlights

- **4 traffickers arrested in Yaounde, dismantling of a network activating several low level pangolin scales traffickers and poachers in the South.**
- **A policeman was among the four arrested who admitted to bribing at a gendarmerie control post**
- **Corruption charges were brought against the traffickers that admitted to have bribed gendarmerie control post with 400 000 FCFA.**
- **The Deputy Director participated in meetings at the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife and at the US Embassy.**

General

This month was marked by the arrest of **two traffickers**.

4 traffickers including a policeman were arrested with 207kg of pangolin scales in the capital city. Three travelled from the South with the pangolin scales concealed in several corners of a car, in suitcases and knack-sacks They were stopped at a control post but bribed 400 000 FCFA to be allowed to continue their journey. They have been charged with corruption as well. The well-organized ring was activating the illegal pangolin scales trade with a network of lower level traffickers and poachers.

The Deputy Director participated in two meetings at the US Embassy to discuss steps and actions needed to enable a smooth prosecution of wildlife law defaulters and on the invitation of the Minister, he participated in a meeting of partners of the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife.

Investigations

- **20 investigation missions** of varying lengths were carried out in **4 Regions** of Cameroon and viz: Littoral, Center, South and East Regions.
- Good investigation in Doom led to the arrest in Yaounde of 4 pangolin scales traffickers including a 2nd grade police constable with 207kg of pangolin scales.

Investigations Table

Investigation Missions	Regions	No. of Operations	No of traffickers arrested
20	4	1	4

Operation

An operation carried out with MINFOF this month **arresting four traffickers**.

20/09/2018 – Four traffickers were arrested with 207kg of pangolin scales in Yaounde. One of the traffickers is a policeman who guarded and protected the traffickers as they proceeded to sell the pangolin scales in Yaounde. They bribed 400 000 FCFA at the Meyomessi control post where they were stopped and the pangolin scales that was hidden in several corners of the car, even under the car carpet, in knack sacks and suitcases were discovered by law enforcement officials from the gendarmerie, the police and the wildlife office. The traffickers were allowed to continue with the illegal cargo to Yaoundé after the bribing. They ran a network of low level traffickers and poachers in the South region precisely in Meyomessi, Mintom and Lele.

Operations Table

No of Operations	Regions	No of Traffickers Arrested	Contraband
1	1	4	207kg pangolin scales

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried **9 missions** out of Yaounde-Centre Region: 1 in Mfou (Centre), 2 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Ambam (South), 1 in Djoum (South), 1 in Bertoua (East), 2 in Abong-Mbang (East) and 1 in Bangangté (West).

- There are **13 traffickers behind bars this month**: 3 in East region, 1 in South West region, 3 in Centre Region and 6 in South region.
- **36 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **34 cases** were scheduled and being tried in court this month.
- **4 traffickers** were convicted this month.
- **Prosecutions**: There were two court rulings this month.
 - **19/09/2018**: The Bertoua Court of First Instance found the accused **MOUSSA ADAMOU** guilty as charged and sentenced him to **3 years’ imprisonment and to pay 3.000.000 FCFA as fines, 858,840 FCFA as court fees and 17.000.000 FCFA as damages**. He was arrested in Bertoua on the 23/05/2018 for illegal possession, circulation and commercialization of 4 ivory tusks and 3 hippopotamus teeth.
 - **25/09/2018**: The Abong-Mbang Court of First Instance found the accused **NDJANGA METSINDA Stéphane, MESSI MBANE Stéphane and DANWE DJANGA Serge** guilty as charged and sentenced them as follows:
DANWE DJANGA Serge 10 months’ imprisonment and to pay 200.000 FCFA as fines; MESSI MBANE Stéphane 3 months’ imprisonment and to pay 50.000 FCFA as fines and NDJANGA METSINDA Stéphane 2 years suspended sentences during 3 years and to pay 50.000 FCFA as fines.

They were also ordered to pay **1.166.000 FCFA jointly as damages**. They were arrested in Doume on the 30/05/2018 for the illegal possession, circulation and commercialization of 35 Kg of pangolin scales.
- The head of department took part in a workshop in Ebolowa on the “Evaluation of the National Ivory Action Plan”. Within the course of the workshop, he did a presentation entitled: LAGA support to the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife.

Legal Table

No of Missions (Out of Centre Region)	No of Court Judgements	No of Traffickers Given Prison Sentence	Prison term (in months)	No of Traffickers Sanctioned (No prison sentence)	No of Appeals lodged	No of Cases Tried in Courts
9	2	3	49	1	0	31

Media

- **36 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to written press, TV, radio, and internet including; 16 written press materials (10 in English and 6 in French), 3 TV productions (2 in French and 1 in English), 11 radio news flashes (6 in French and 5 in English) and 6 internet publications (4 in French and 2 in English).

- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement activities including the Douala crackdown on a pangolin scale trafficking syndicate, the poor court judgement in Congo Brazzaville against a Cameroonian ivory trafficker, the Yaounde arrest of a policeman and 3 others for pangolin scales trafficking as well as the legal assistance provided to wildlife officials against four arrested for pangolin scales trafficking in Douala.
- 18 media pieces in French as well as in English making a percentage of 50% for each language.

A legal adviser took part in two prerecorded radio talk shows dealing with wildlife crime at the local and national levels at the CRTV Littoral Regional Radio Station.

Media Table

No of Media Pieces	TV	Radio	Newspapers	Internet
36	3	11	16	6

External Relations and Policy

- The Deputy Director participated in two meetings at the US Embassy to discuss steps and actions needed to enabling a successful prosecution of wildlife crime defaulters. Two other diplomatic missions and three international NGOs besides LAGA were present.
- The Deputy Director attended a meeting called by the Minister of Forestry and Wildlife that focused on streamlining the activities of conservation partners to fall in line with the ministry's objectives and procedures.
- He equally held a meeting with a UN researcher to discuss issues related to the illegal pangolin scales trade in the country and the sub region.
- The media officer assisted at the handover service of the newly appointed East Regional Delegate of Forestry and Wildlife.
- The head of department had a meeting with the state counsel in Djoum, to discuss issues on the matter pending before the court and another meeting with the state counsel at Yaounde – Centre Administratif court to discuss strategies before and after the pangolin scales operation in Yaounde
- Two legal advisers equally held a meeting with the state counsels in Douala – Bonanjo to discuss legal strategies after a pangolin scales operation there and a volunteer held meetings with the state counsels in Bangangte and Abong Abang to discuss on matters pending in the courts.

Management

- The testing of a new volunteer at the media department continued.
- LAGA continued search for a new office.

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/Actiwithvism/tabid/77/Default.aspx>.

Presentation: Fear

The presenter takes on an unusual term, rarely discussed and addressed, whereas it is part of what everyone grapples with. Fear has its negative and positive consequences. He starts by giving us a definition, description and a list of types of fear including among others the fear of unemployment, of the unknown, of the future, of diseases etc. He proceeds to tell us why we fear and among some of the reasons he gives are inadequate preparation, insecurity, unemployment, lack of self-confidence – something that had been presented in the past during a Ted talk, nightmares and of course our very own African thing – witchcraft - that terrifies so many of us. The presentation tells us how fear is manifested, the consequences and ends by showing us how to combat it. He says to combat it you need to face it squarely on, socializing, building self-confidence and optimism, searching for the cause and dealing with it etc. Discussions highlighted the fact that fear is both a necessity for our own survival and a challenge when it stops or hampers our self-assertion and progress. The various contributions during discussions tried to grapple as well with this enigma, fear, as it was further described and avenues for mitigating it in various contexts explained.

Link of the month

6 persons were arrested in Douala on a crackdown operation as they tried to smuggle 718 kg of pangolin scales. They were arrested by wildlife officials of Wouri Divisional Delegation of Forestry and Wildlife in collaboration with Littoral Judicial Police and an upcoming private TV in Yaounde 7 News, carried the story.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IUeDtdtRWsU>

YouTube Statistics:

2605 views within 2 weeks

Finance

Please check LAGA website www.laga-enforcement.org for monthly financial reports.

This Month in Pictures



Three members of a syndicate of pangolin scales trafficking shortly after their arrest. At the premises of police station waiting for commencement of interrogation. A policeman was also arrested alongside these three.



207kg of seized pangolin scales in Yaounde



Traffickers concealed scales in every corner of car, in suitcases, knock sacks and grain bags



Participants at US Embassy meeting



Legal adviser at CRTV radio station Douala on wildlife crime