

# The Last Great Ape Organization – LA GA

## November 2012 Report



### Highlights

- **4 dealers arrested in 3 different operations rescuing 4 primates including a chimp, drill and mangabey.**
- **2 operations carried out on the same day in Tonga – West arresting 2 dealers.**
- **LAGA Director makes a presentation during GRASP conference in Paris.**
- **Replication assessment mission carried out in Togo.**
- **As a result of LAGA's achievements, the LAGA Director receives the Condé Nast Traveller Environmental Award.**

### General

This month was marked by the rescue of 4 primates in 3 different operations, 2 of the operations taking place on the same day and in the same town of Tonga – West; and the winning of an award.

3 operations this month led to the arrest of 4 dealers. **2 of the operations were carried out one after another on the same day in Tonga – West arresting 2 dealers in live primates.** One of them is **a retired sub-officer of the Cameroon Gendarmerie arrested with a live drill.** He uses his connections to trade in protected wildlife species. **The other was arrested with a chimp and a mangabey.** He has a network of suppliers in the West and Center Regions.

In the other operation, **2 dealers were arrested in Yaounde arriving from Ngoumou – Center** with a live primate while illegally trying to trade in it. They keep live animals in Ngoumou and supply customers in Yaounde. The animals were all rescued and taken to the Mvog-Betsi Zoo in Yaounde for proper care.

LAGA Director attended the GRASP conference in Paris – France. Many NGOs and Governments were present and they all showed great appreciation to LAGA. LAGA work drew attention because they all talked about enforcement being the number one solution and so many people referred to LAGA when they spoke. LAGA Director also made a very strong presentation right after the Secretary General of CITES which prompted someone when questions were answered in a panel to ask the Secretary General how come LAGA does so much and CITES so little. More NGOs expressed their wish to replicate LAGA model.

The LAGA Director and Coordinator of Conservation Justice – Gabon travelled to Togo to start the ground work for a replication project in that country named TALFF (Togo Application des Lois sur la Faune et la Flore). The project aims to protect threatened species in Togo and its region from illegal hunting and wildlife trade by increasing the level of wildlife law enforcement nationwide and deterring potential ape and elephant poachers and wildlife traffickers from conducting these activities. The replication assessment mission in Togo is mainly due to leads on major ivory trafficking with more than a hundred Kg of ivory on display, but also other several of our investigations pointing to Togo on shark fins trade, and apes. In September a Togolese was arrested in Hanoi with rhino horn and ivory tusks. Togo has the only deep sea port in West Africa and one of the busiest airports around. It also has the biggest black magic market of Africa.

**As a result of LAGA's achievements, the LAGA Director receives the Condé Nast Traveller Environmental Award** given to one recipient every year. He is the 23rd recipient. The award is given to those who go to extraordinary lengths to protect the environment and better the lives of their communities. It is the seventh in connection to LAGA's work.

## Investigations

- **25 investigations** of varying lengths were carried out in **9 Regions** of Cameroon- South West, West, South, East, Littoral, North West, Far North, Adamawa and Center.
- Good investigations identified 4 major dealers in live primates leading to 3 arrest operations. Despite these, more operations focused investigations are required especially towards the end of the year.
- Special investigation missions were carried out in the Northern part of Cameroon. This part of the country has been neglected for long and focus here will continue within the forthcoming weeks.
- The distribution of flyers in both English and French continued. 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 **4 subjects**.

- **06/11/12 – 2 dealers were arrested in Yaounde arriving from Ngoumou** – Center with a live primate while illegally trying to trade in it. They keep live animals in Ngoumou and supply customers in Yaounde. They are aware of the illegality of the trade and claim to be friends with wildlife and law enforcement authorities so as to conveniently carryout the illegal trade in wildlife.
- **28/11/12 – 2 operations were carried out one after another on the same day in Tonga – West arresting 2 dealers in live primates.** One of them is **a retired sub-officer of the Cameroon Gendarmerie arrested with a live mandrill.** He uses his connections to trade in protected wildlife species. **The other was arrested with a chimp and a mangabey.** He has a network of suppliers in the West and Center Regions. The animals were all rescued and taken to the Mvog-Betsi Zoo in Yaounde for proper care.

## Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **17 missions** out of Yaounde - Centre Region: 3 in Douala (Littoral), 3 in Bertoua (East), 2 in Abong-Mbang (East), 1 in Kribi (South), 1 in Djoum (South), 3 in Ebolowa (South), 1 in Mamfe (South West), 1 in Dschang (West), 1 in Tonga (West) and 1 in Bangangte (West).
- There are **35 dealers behind bars during this month:** 17 in the East, 1 in the South West, 1 in Centre, 1 in North West, 11 in South and 4 in West Region.
- **27 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **20 cases** are scheduled and being trailed in the court this month.
- **Prosecutions:** 1 dealer was sentenced this month.
  - **02/11/2012:** The Court of First Instance of Douala-Ndokoti sentenced TAMBA Raymond to **6 months of prison suspended sentence during 3 years** and to pay a sum of **2.000.000 FCFA as damages.** He was arrested in Douala for illegal detention of 2 elephant tusks.

## Media front

- **24 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to radio, TV and written press including: 8 written press materials (1 in English and 7 in French), 3 radio talk shows in English, 6 radio news feature (2 in French and 4 in English), 4 TV news feature (2 in English and 2 in French) and 3 news flashes (1 in English and 2 in French).

- Guests include: MINFOF North West regional delegate, MINFOF official of North West regional control post, traditional ruler of Nsem village – Bafut, veterinary doctor at the Limbe wildlife centre, LAGA director, LAGA deputy director and head of LAGA media.
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including; review of the massacre of elephants in the Bouba Ndjidda national park, LAGA receives the Duke of Edinburgh conservation award, a Bafut chief hand over baboon to wildlife authority, military officer arrested for illegal wildlife trade in Congo and Thailand national sentence to 40 years in South African.
- 10 media pieces in English, 14 in French making a percentage of 41.7% in English and 58.3% in French.

## **External Relations and Policy**

- LAGA Director attended the GRASP conference in Paris – France. Many NGOs and Governments were present and they all showed great appreciation to LAGA. LAGA was at the center of attention because they all talked about enforcement being the number one solution and so many people referred to LAGA when they spoke. LAGA Director also made a very strong presentation right after the Secretary General of CITES which prompted someone when questions were answered in a panel to ask the Secretary General how come LAGA does so much and CITES so little. More NGOs want to replicate LAGA.
- Meeting in London with journalists interested in mobilizing people around the world for elephants and to influence CITES to get better protection of elephants and burn all ivory stock.
- The LAGA Director and Coordinator of Conservation Justice – Gabon travelled to Togo to start the ground work for a replication project in that country named TALFF (Togo Application des Lois sur la Faune et la Flore). The project aims to protect chimpanzees in addition to other threatened species in Togo and its region from illegal hunting and wildlife trade by increasing the level of wildlife law enforcement nationwide and deterring potential ape and elephant poachers and wildlife traffickers from conducting these activities.
- LAGA director presents to a group of 60 Peace Corps volunteers on activism and bringing about a change in Africa.
- Meeting with ZSL regional coordinator on getting logging companies to meet their legal responsibilities and illuminate their complicity in the illegal wildlife trade.
- LAGA director participated in meetings on access to information and the TAIGO award for media, citizens and NGOs fighting for access to information.
- Meeting with CED and RELUFA on land grabbing issues.
- Meeting with the French Embassy's SCAC program on various issues including the fight against corruption, the fight against wildlife trafficking and governance problems in the forest sector.
- Meeting with WCS and WWF regional directors on promoting wildlife law enforcement in the region.
- Meeting with US Embassy political officer on issues of the fight against corruption and the fight against wildlife crime.
- Meeting with Interpol officer Guinea Conakry, on his visit in Yaounde, on continued enforcement in Guinea.
- Meeting with COSADER on the disabling environment to civil society and monitoring the shrinking space for Civil Society Organizations.

## **Management**

- As a result of LAGA's achievements, the LAGA Director receives the Condé Nast Traveller Environmental Award given to one recipient every year. He is the 23rd recipient. The award is given to those who go to extraordinary lengths to protect the environment and better the lives of their communities. It is the seventh in connection to LAGA's work.

- One Jurist was let go this month because of lack of sufficient results and did not meet up with the LAGA standards.

## **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>. This month's activism front was on:

-A presentation on Emerging Trends in land-use conflicts in Cameroon  
By Brendan Schwartz – activist

Emerging trends in land - use conflicts, presents facts on conflicting distribution of permits and contracts offered by the government of Cameroon to investors in oil and mining that may cause serious problems. This problem lies in the overcrowded nature of projects allocated to investors by the government of Cameroon on the same land at a given time which could result to severe conflicts between ministries, the government and investors, indigenes and investor.

### Questions:

1. What is the objective of this power point presentation?
2. What is the faith of communities in the emerging trends in land use?
3. What can be done to stop a foreseen land use conflict?

-Presentation on Migration in Cameroon  
By Alain Ononino

The presenter depicts the state of migration in Cameroon and the reasons why Cameroonian travel abroad. He equally shows the rate of Cameroon travelers or emigrants to various countries, Europe, U.S and neighbouring Gabon happen to be the preferred destination of Cameroon emigrants. Positive and negative consequences of migration were also discussed in the presentation.

### Questions:

Have ever had plans to travel out of your country?

1. If yes what were your reasons?
2. What do you think is the reason for Cameroonians to travel to another country?
3. What makes it difficult for Cameroonian emigrants not to return to their country?

## **Replication**

During this month, LAGA worked with other replication projects in planning investigations, operation procedures; advice on following up court cases and the production of media pieces.

The LAGA Director and Coordinator of Conservation Justice – Gabon travelled to Togo to start the ground work for a replication project in that country named TALFF (Togo Application des Lois sur la Faune et la Flore).

Another special mission was carried out in Chad by a Jurist sent by LAGA. He met the lawyer hired by LAGA on the follow-up of some cases in Amtiman, met the Director of wildlife and the NGO APROCOFF on the elaboration of strategies aimed at pushing for the start of replication; and some investigation work that confirmed the high level trans-border wildlife trafficking between Chad and other countries notably Nigeria, Sudan, CAR and Cameroon.

## **Finance**

**In preparation, will be made available shortly.**

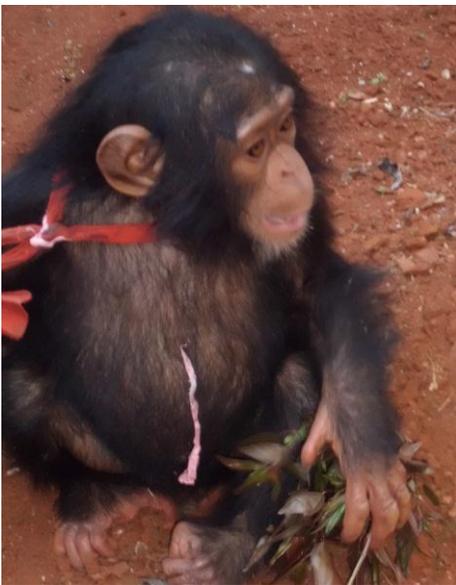
## THIS MONTH IN PICTURES



A retired sub-officer of the Cameroon Gendarmerie arrested with a live drill (in Tonga – West Region. while trying to illegally trade in it. He uses connections to facilitate his trade in protected wildlife species.

Another dealer in live primates arrested with a chimp and a mangabey in Tonga. He has a network of suppliers in the West and Center Regions and claims to have been trading in live protected animals for a very long time.

Ape skulls openly displayed in a market in Togo. This image amongst others shows the magnitude of trade in apes and other threatened wildlife species that country, bringing out the need to urgently put in place enforcement activities to fight it. Togo has the only deep sea port in West Africa and one of the busiest airports around, it also has the biggest black magic market of Africa.



The 3 live primates (from left to right – chimp, drill and mangabey) rescued following the 2 operations that took place within hours in the small town of Tonga – Western Region. The animals were all taken to the Mvog Betsi Zoo in Yaounde – Center for proper care and upkeep.

## **Links of this month**

- Traditional Ruler contributes to wildlife conservation – Cameroon National Television - CRTV News broadcast the rescued of baboon to the Mvog Betsi zoological garden. A traditional ruler in a village called Nsem in Bafut in the North West region handed baboon to officials of Forestry and Wildlife. The animal is sojourning in the Mvog Betsi zoological garden while waiting for a final transfer to the Limbe wildlife centre. The regional control brigade of North West, chief of forestry and wildlife control post Bafut and LAGA took part in the operation.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2rKcau0ekn4>