

The Last Great Ape Organization – LA GA

July 2012 Report



Highlights

- **4 dealers arrested in 3 different operations within 1 week in 3 different Regions.**
- **3 cases** were sentenced this month against **5 dealers with a major dealer sentenced to 2 years imprisonment** in Abong Mbang – East.
- **LAGA Director trains wildlife, police and judicial officials in South Sudan.**
- **The first semester report completed and available on the LAGA website.**
- **The 8th Edition of the Wildlife Justice Magazine** published and being distributed.

General

This month was marked by good operations in Cameroon and training carried out in South Sudan

3 operations were carried out against **4 dealers. 2 major dealers arrested for trying to trade in a live mandrill in Ambam - South.** They initially resisted arrest, arguing and fighting with the operations team. They claim to have sold many live primates before and that they have been in the trade for long. **A military man arrested with 2 elephant tusks** and teeth while trying to illegally trade in them **in Douala - Littoral.** Because of his job, it is suspected that he uses this means to trade in ivory internationally; this is still being investigated. Another **well known ivory trafficker arrested with 6 elephant tusks in Yaounde – Center.** He travelled all the way from Sangmelima - South with the ivory for his client in Yaounde. He proposed **500.000 FCFA (about \$1000)** to the arresting team for his release, an act that was immediately squelched by the LAGA team in place.

In another operation, **2 well known, well connected and wealthy ivory traffickers were arrested for trafficking 24 elephant tusks in Sangmelima – South** which they hid in their car. **Investigation information shows that he gets ivory from Congo and Gabon and has buyers as far as Nigeria.** LAGA has been tracking him for the past 3 years. The operation was initiated by MINFOF with LAGA coordinating, controlling legal procedure and follow-up in court.

3 cases were sentenced this month against 5 dealers. The Court of First Instance of Abong Mbang – East sentenced a major dealer to **2 years imprisonment** and his 2 accomplices to **5 months imprisonment** each; they are to pay jointly **3.029.000 FCFA (about \$6000)** as damages and fines. They were arrested in Messok - East for killing of elephants. In another case in Abong Mbang, a dealer in elephant tails was sentenced to **5 months of prison term** and to pay a sum **2.780.000 FCFA (about \$5600)** as damages and fines. The Court of First Instance of Djoum - South sentenced another dealer to **1 year imprisonment** and to pay a sum **3.178.000 FCFA (about \$6300)** as damages and fines; he was arrested in Mintom - South with 8 elephant tails.

The 8th edition of *Wildlife Justice Magazine* has been published **under the theme African Traditions and Wildlife Conservation.** This edition gives an in depth analysis of African traditions as they were built to function in harmony with nature comparing the Western use of wildlife and the traditions of the Africans. The Magazine is being distributed to wildlife conservation and enforcement professionals including judges, lawyers, prosecutors, jurists, policemen and gendarmes, conservationists, researchers, police makers, government officials etc.

The LAGA Director was invited to South Sudan by WCS to train wildlife officers, the police and judiciary. He gave 9 different presentations to 50 people on Intelligence led enforcement model, Sources of information, Undercover investigation principles, Classification of information, Cooperation and Enforcement arrest operations, Interrogation and establishing a case file, Fighting corruption and wildlife law enforcement, and case studies on Guinea – Conakry and Criminal ivory syndicates.

Investigations

- **29 investigations** of varying lengths were carried out in **7 Regions** of Cameroon- South West, North West, West, South, East, Littoral and Center.
- Good investigations identified 4 major dealers all of whom were arrested. One of the arrests was as a result of a new Investigator identifying a dealer in Douala. Another Investigator is being tested with encouraging results.
- The distribution of flyers for the hotline that was produced continued this month. 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 and RALF-RCA on Investigations and Operation Procedures.

Operations

3 operations were carried out this month against **4 subjects**.

- **05/07/12 - 2 major dealers arrested for trying to trade in a live mandrill in Ambam - South.** They initially resisted arrest, arguing and fighting with the operations team. They claim to have sold many live primates before and that they have been in the trade for long. The mandrill was rescued and taken to the Mvog-Betsi Zoo in Yaounde for proper upkeep.
- **11/07/12- A military man arrested with 2 elephant tusks and elephant teeth** while trying to illegally trade in them **in Douala - Littoral**. He was arrested with the products in his car which he uses to carry out the trade. Because of his job, it is suspected that he uses this means to trade in ivory internationally; this is still being investigated.
- **12/07/12 - Another well known ivory trafficker arrested with 6 elephant tusks in Yaounde - Center** while trying to illegally trade in them in a well known hotel. He travelled all the way from Sangmelima - South with the ivory for his client in Yaounde. He proposed **500.000 FCFA** to the arresting team for his release, an act that was immediately squelched by the LAGA team in place.

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **26 missions** out of Yaounde - Centre Region: 5 in Douala (Littoral), 2 in Bamenda (North West), 1 in Bertoua (East), 1 in Mindourou (East), 2 in Abong-Mbang (East), 1 in Kribi (South), 1 in Sangmelima (South), 4 in Djoum (South), 2 in Ambam (South), 1 in Ebolowa (South), 1 in Mamfe (South West), 1 in Buea (South West), 1 in Dschang (West) and 2 in Bangangte (West).
- There are **36 dealers behind bars during this month**: 19 in the East Region, 1 in the South West Region, 1 in North West region, 11 in South Region and 4 in West Region.
- **35 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **33 cases** are scheduled and being trailed in the court this month.
- **Prosecutions**: 3 cases were sentenced and a decision given in 1 case this month.
 - **02/07/2012**: The Buea Court of First Instance in the matter Dampullo Baba against the South-West Regional Delegation and the conservator of Limbe Wildlife Center dismissed the matter on the grounds that, the same matter has been tried by Limbe Court of First Instance having the same judicial power as Buea court as such, and by law the same matter cannot be tried by a different court having the same judicial power. Dampullo Baba filed a motion for the liberation of 8 ostriches that were seized by the defendant.
 - **10/07/2012**: The Court of First Instance of Abong-Mbang sentenced NDASSA Abdou **2 year of prison**; NKAH Arsène and ANGOULA Roland to **5 months** each. They

were also sentenced to pay jointly **3.000.000 FCFA** as damages and **29.450 FCFA** as court fees. They were arrested in Messok - East for killing of elephants.

- **10/07/2012:** The Court of First Instance of Abong-Mbang sentenced PA'A Boba to **5 months of prison** and to pay a sum **2.756.000 CFA Francs as damages and 27.450 CFA Francs** as court fees. He was arrested in Lomie - East for illegal detention of 5 elephant tails.
- **31/07/2012:** The Court of First Instance of Djoum sentenced MAYA Samuel to **1 year of prison** and to pay a sum **3.000.000 CFA Francs as damages and 178.450 CFA Francs** as court fees. He was arrested in Mintom – South for illegal detention of 8 elephant tails.

Media front

- **43 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to radio, TV, and written press including: 2 TV news features (1 in English and 1 in French), 27 written press materials (16 in English and 11 in French), 3 radio talk shows in English, 2 news features in French and 9 news flashes (4 in English and 5 in French).
- Guests include: National Coordinator of the Central Africa Regional programme for the environment (CARPE), Director of conservation at WWF Cameroon and Regional delegate of MINFOF North West.
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including: Gabon burn its ivory stockpile, arrest of mandrill in Ambam, Ambam arrest of 7 elephant tails trafficker court hearing, military officer arrested with ivory in Douala, big ivory trafficker arrested in Yaounde, Yaounde elephant dealer arrest, and the publication of the 8th edition of Wildlife Justice.
- 24 media pieces in English, 19 in French making a percentage of 55.8% in English and 44.2% in French.
- **The 8th edition of *Wildlife Justice Magazine*** has been published **under the theme African Traditions and Wildlife Conservation**. *Wildlife Justice Magazine* is a specialised journal that treats issues of wildlife conservation and more particularly wildlife law enforcement. This edition gives an in depth analysis of African traditions as they were built to function in harmony with nature comparing the Western use of wildlife and the traditions of the Africans. The Magazine is being distributed to wildlife conservation and enforcement professionals including judges, lawyers, prosecutors, jurists, policemen and gendarmes, conservationists, researchers, police makers and government officials amongst others.

External Relations and Policy

- LAGA Director met with Dirk Byler of US Fish and Wildlife Service on wildlife law enforcement challenges.
- Meeting with new ZSL country coordinator discussing wildlife law enforcement, corruption and challenges concerning logging and mining companies.
- Meeting with Ape Action Africa and I defence of Animals – Africa concerning possible rehabilitation of orphaned apes.
- Meeting with the Anti-Corruption inspector in the presidency concerning collaboration in the fight against corruption.
- LAGA Director met with the Minister of Forestry and Wildlife concerning difficulties brought from certain officials on the LAGA-MINFOF collaboration.
- Meeting with World Bank environmental program coordinator on wildlife law enforcement.
- Meeting with ZSL Equatorial Guinea coordinator on the potential for revision of the country's wildlife law and prospects for a LAGA replication.
- The LAGA Director was invited to South Sudan to train wildlife officers, the police and judiciary. He gave 9 different presentations to 50 people on Intelligence led enforcement model, Sources of information, Undercover investigation principles, Classification of

information, Cooperation and Enforcement arrest operations, Interrogation and establishing a case file, Fighting corruption and wildlife law enforcement, and case studies on Guinea – Conakry and Criminal ivory syndicates.

Management

- The LAGA first semester report was completed and printed; the electronic version is on the LAGA website – www.laga-enforcement.org. The report which covers the period of January to June 2012 is on all aspects of LAGA’s collaboration with MINFOF; activities including investigation, arrests, prosecution, media exposure, government relations, replication, activism, strategy, award etc. More focus was on the fight against corruption, wildlife trade especially networks of ivory traffickers and dealers in primates. 24 dealers were arrested during this period.
- This month saw the Alain Ononino, LAGA’s Deputy Director getting married. The LAGA family comprising of a strong delegation actively took part in the marriage and the newly wedded couple was assisted materially, morally and financially showing that the family as a unit is always there not only for work but for happy and sad moments. The LAGA family wishes the newly wedded couple the best of luck in their matrimony.

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>.

The education activity for this month was on women and politics in Cameroon.

The participation of Women in Politics in Cameroon – A presentation that takes a look at the role that was hitherto reserved for women, mainly as a housewife and for the bearing of children. However, with the engagement of women in movements for equality such as the Beijing Conference in 1995 and the creation of a Ministry for Women and the Family in Cameroon, noticeable change has been observed with women being more fully involved in decision making in Cameroon. Despite this change, there are still barrier that hinder the integral participation of women in politics; these barriers may be socio-cultural, political, economic, ideological etc. However, it is hoped that the government will be more committed and the women themselves should be well organized to form a powerful block to see to it that their participation in politics in Cameroon is not limited to animation but to decision making.

Presentation done by Nzontcha Nadege – Legal Department

Replication

During this month, LAGA helped other replication projects in planning investigations and operations, following up court cases and the production of media pieces.

The LAGA first semester report that was completed and available on www.laga-enforcement.org includes Regional wildlife law enforcement which became more effective with good operations and prosecutions. Replication concretized in Guinea-Conakry with good operations and GALF becomes the newest member of our Regional Wildlife Law Enforcement Network. It also covers activities of AALF – Gabon, PALF – Republic of Congo, RALF – Central African Republic, Chad; the training of wildlife officers on wildlife law enforcement, corruption and ethics by the LAGA Director following another invitation by ILEA (International Law Enforcement Academy etc).

The LAGA Director was invited to South Sudan to train wildlife officers, the police and judiciary. He gave 9 different presentations to 50 people that centered on investigations principles and getting information; wildlife law enforcement and fighting corruption

LAGA assisted PALF in planning and coordinating investigations missions and operations; and is pushing RALF to be more engaging and to start producing more arrest operations again.

Finance

LAGA Expenditure by budget line for July 2012

Amount CFA			Amount USD
2,026,000	Investigations	33 inv, 7 Regions	\$3,787
818,200	Operations	3 Operations 4 arreted	\$1,529
3,489,740	Legal	follow up 35 cases 36 locked subjects	\$6,523
1,937,850	Media	43 Media pieces	\$3,622
599,073	Policy & External Relations	Sudan mission/Congo/Gabon/Chad/Guinea/Israel/Kenya/UK	\$1,120
914,300	Management	Coordination	\$1,709
1,756,406	Office		\$3,283
11,541,569	TOTAL EXPENDITURE JULY		\$21,573

LAGA Expenditure by Donor for July 2012

AmountCFA	Donor	Amount USD
2,894,380	FWS	\$5,410.1
246,374	FWS-Replication	\$460.5
1,087,326	BornFree UK	\$2,032.4
1,209,140	Rufford	\$2,260.1
0	IFAW	\$0.0
0	IPPL	\$0.0
0	Marsh Christian Trust	\$0.0
1,248,350	BornFree USA	\$2,333.4
4,855,999	ARCUS Foundation	\$9,076.6
11,541,569	TOTAL	\$21,573.0

THIS MONTH IN PICTURES



Military man arrested (left – during the writing of the statement of offence) with 2 elephant tusks and elephant teeth (right) in Douala - Littoral. He was arrested with the products in his car which he uses to carry out the trade. Because of his job, it is suspected that he uses this means to trade in ivory internationally; this is still being investigated.



One of the 2 major dealers arrested with a live mandrill in Ambam - South. They initially resisted arrest, arguing and fighting with the operations team. They claim to have sold many live primates before and that they have been in the trade for long. The mandrill was rescued and taken to the Mvog-Betsi Zoo in Yaounde for proper upkeep.



Another ivory trafficker (ivory and weighing machine behind him) arrested with 6 elephant tusks in Yaounde – Center. He travelled all the way from Sangmelima - South with the ivory for his client in Yaounde. He proposed 500.000 FCFA to the arresting team for his release, an act that was immediately squelched by the LAGA team in place.

Links of this month

- Dealer in elephant tusks arrested in Yaounde: Cameroon National Television Broad cast – “Hello Cameroon” programme. The trafficker left Sangmelima to Yaounde to sell the ivory tusk where he was caught by officials of Forestry and Wildlife and the forces of law and order with 6 elephant tusks.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DqJ2A33Y71s>