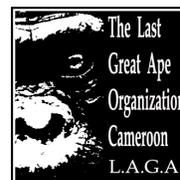


The Last Great Ape Organization – LAGA

November 2017 Report



Highlights

- **6 traffickers arrested during 2 different operations, ivory tusks and pangolin scales seized**
- **3 traffickers arrested in Sangmelima with 4 ivory tusks and 2 of the tusks trafficked from Gabon.**
- **3 traffickers arrested in Douala with over 128kg of pangolin scales from a criminal ring that operated in the East and Littoral Regions**
- **The Deputy Director held a meeting with the new British High Commissioner to Cameroon and another meeting with the Director of Wildlife and Protected Area.**

General

This month was marked by the arrest of **6 traffickers during two different operations.**

3 traffickers were arrested in Sangmelima, South Region with 4 ivory tusks and 10.5kg giant pangolin scales. One of them trafficked 2 tusks from Gabon. He used his trade with cocoa beans as cover for his criminal activity and would concealed the contraband in cocoa bags when he moved it from the South to the capital city. The second trafficker bought 2 ivory tusks from poachers in the same region. The third trafficker, a lady, was arranging the transactions to ensure that they were carried out successfully.

During the second operation of the month, **3 more traffickers were arrested in Douala, Littoral Region with over 128kg of pangolins scales; crushing a criminal ring** . They were arrested in the act - 4 bags of scales exposed on the floor in front of them. Two were based in the countryside buying the scales from smaller traffickers and poachers – while the third was based in Douala – the economic capital and port city – doing the marketing, searching for buyers, negotiating the prices and selling the contraband from their stronghold in a dangerous Douala neighbourhood.

The Deputy Director held a meeting with the new British High Commissioner on the state of wildlife law enforcement in the country and on LAGA's activities. He equally held another meeting with the Director of Wildlife and Protected Areas, following an attempt by a divisional delegate to sabotage a successful operation and on facilitating the extraction and analysis of DNA samples from the recent seizure of 158 ivory tusks in Douala by Police.

Investigations

- **44 investigation missions** of varying lengths were carried out in **7 Regions** of Cameroon: Littoral, Center, South, East, West, Adamawa and North Regions.
- Good investigations in **Oveng** led to the arrest of **3 traffickers** with 4 raw elephant tusks and 10.5kg of giant pangolin scales in Sangmelima.
- Good investigations in **Doume** led to the arrest of two **3 traffickers** with 128kg of pangolin scales in Douala.

Investigations Table

Investigation Missions	Regions	No. of Operations	No of traffickers arrested
44	7	2	6

Operation

2 operations carried out with MINFOF this month **arresting 6 traffickers**.

15/11/2017 - Three traffickers were arrested with four ivory tusks and 10.5kg of giant pangolin scales in Sangmelima, South Region. One of the traffickers bought 2 ivory tusks from a fellow Cameroonian trafficker while in Gabon and smuggled the contraband across the border. He trades in cocoa beans as a cover for his ivory trafficking and conceals wildlife products in cocoa bags when he moves the contraband from the south to the capital city. He is suspected of having good connections to some officials. The second trafficker bought 2 ivory tusks from poachers in the same region. The third trafficker, a lady, ensured their transactions were carried out successfully.

22/11/2017 – A criminal ring crushed following the arrest of three traffickers in Douala, Littoral Region with 128kg of pangolin scales. The three traffickers arrested with 128kg of pangolin scales after wildlife officials and police arrived their stronghold in a dangerous neighbourhood in the economic capital. They were arrested in the act as 4 bags of pangolin scales lay on the floor in front of them. They operated a real criminal ring with two based at the supply areas in the east of the country while the third who was at the economic capital and port city did the marketing, searching for clients, negotiating the prices and selling the products.

Operations Table

No of Operations	Regions	No of Traffickers Arrested	Contraband
2	2	6	4 ivory tusks 10.5kg of giant pangolin scales 128kg of pangolin scales

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried **15 missions** out of Yaounde-Centre Region: 3 in Douala (Littoral), 2 in Nkongsamba (Littoral), 3 in Ebolowa (South), 5 in Sangmelima (South), 1 in Garoua (Nord) and 1 in Bertoua (East).
- There are **22 traffickers behind bars this month**: 2 in East region, 2 in Adamaoua region, 2 in Northwest region, 2 in Centre region, 1 in Southwest region, 1 in West region, 6 in South region, and 4 in Littoral region.
- **38 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **29 cases** were scheduled and tried in court this month.
- **6 traffickers** were convicted this month.
- **Prosecution**: We had 4 judgments this month.
 - **06/11/2017**: The Yaounde Centre administratif Court of First Instance found the accused **ANGBWE Henri Joel** and **FEUGUE Leticia** guilty of illegal capture, possession, circulation and commercialization of trophies of totally protected species including a live mandrill and 20kg of pangolins. They were sentenced to **60 days imprisonment and to pay 24.560 FCFA as court fees and 1.000.000 FCFA as civil damages**. They were arrested in Yaoundé on the 12/09/2017.
 - **06/11/2017**: The Yaounde Centre Administratif Court of First Instance found the accused person **OUMAROU BOUKAR ABOUBAKAR** guilty as charged and sentenced him to **12 months imprisonment suspended during 3 years, and to pay 54.060 FCFA as court fees and awarded to MINFOF the amount of 600.000 FCFA as civil damages**. He was arrested in Yaoundé on the 22/05/2017 for illegal possession, circulation and commercialization of sculpted ivory pieces.
 - **27/11/2017**: The Yaounde Centre Administratif Court of First Instance found the accused person **TCHAKOUNTE YVES BERTIN** guilty as charged and sentenced him to **300.000 FCFA as fine, and to pay 174.250 FCFA as court fees and awarded to MINFOF the amount of 3.000.000 FCFA as civil damages**. He was arrested in Yaoundé on the 18/06/2014 for illegal capture, possession, circulation and commercialization of a live mandrill

- **27/11/2017:** The Yaoundé Centre Administratif Court of First Instance found the accused **NLANG OKO Yoann** and **BASSIROU Yaya** guilty of illegal capture, possession, circulation and commercialization of trophies of totally protected species (2 ivory tusks). They were sentenced to **12 months imprisonment suspended during 3 years and to pay 278.850 FCFA as court fees and 5.000.000 FCFA as civil damages.** They were arrested in Yaoundé on the 27/05/2015.

Two appeals were made this month against the ruling on **OUMAROU BOUKAR ABOUBAKAR** and against **NLANG OKO Yoann** and **BASSIROU Yaya**. Both cases were tried at the Yaounde Centre Administratif Court of First Instance.

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
15	4	2	2	4	2	29

Media

- **37 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to written press, radio & internet, including; 18 written press material (12 in English and 6 in French), 10 radio news flashes (6 in French and 4 in English) and 9 internet publications (6 in French and 3 in English).
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including: the Bangangte arrest of two for leopard skin and pangolin scales trafficking, the intensification of successful wildlife operations with arrest of six persons within a month, the Sangmelima arrest of three for ivory and pangolin scales trafficking.
- 19 media pieces in English and 18 in French making a percentage of 52.1% in English and 47.9% in French.

Media Table

No of Media Pieces	TV	Radio	Newspapers	Internet
37	0	10	18	9

External Relations and Policy

- The Deputy Director attended a meeting at the residence of the new British High Commissioner to discuss the state of wildlife law enforcement in the country and to brief him on LAGA's activities as he starts his diplomatic mission in Yaounde.
- A meeting was held with the Director of Wildlife to raise issues connected with attempts by a divisional delegate to sabotage an ivory operation and to discuss extraction of samples for DNA analysis following the seizure by police of 158 ivory tusks.
- The Deputy Director held a meeting with Dr. Chris Thouless of Save the Elephnat (based in Kenya) on issues around ivory trafficking in the country, specifically on the dynamics and routes used by traffickers and on law enforcement.
- The Deputy Director held a meeting with Rachel Hogan of Ape Action Africa and Angelia Young, a pangolin conservation enthusiast on the protection and conservation of pangolins in the country.
- A legal adviser attended the anti-poaching committee meeting at the Governor's office and during the meeting he talked on the poor collaboration among wildlife law enforcement stakeholders; the poor handling of charges against wildlife traffickers by some state counsels and the poor decisions arrived at after trials. The Centre Regional Delegate of Forestry and Wildlife in presenting her law enforcement activities highlighted the fruitful collaboration with LAGA that resulted in the arrest of two with live mandrill and pangolin scales.
- The Head of the Legal Department held two meetings with the state counsel at Bonanjo, Douala to discuss wildlife cases and operations while two legal advisers held two meetings each with the state counsels in Sangmelim for the first and Ebolowa for the second, to discuss wildlife cases pending and operations to be carried out.

Management

- Jean Claude Vignoli, a super volunteer, continued his training, working with various departments of the organisation.
- Three volunteers continued their test with the investigation department.

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/Activism/tabid/77/Default.aspx>.

Link of the month

Camer.be, a renowned website reporting on mainly Cameroon news published the arrest of a traditional notable and another man in Bangangte. They were arrested over the illegal possession and commercialisation of leopard skins and pangolin scales in a town deep inside the West Region, an area known for intense leopard skins trafficking.

<http://www.camer.be/64025/11:1/cameroun-cameroon-traditional-notable-arrested-with-fresh-leopard-skin.html>

Finance

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

This Month in Pictures



A criminal ring - three arrested in Douala for trafficking in pangolin scales wait for prosecution process to begin at office of wildlife chief



Seized 128kg of pangolin scales collected in the East for illicit trade in port city Douala,



He returned to Gabon where he bought two ivory tusks and was arrested with two others in the South following the uncovering of an illicit business that ran between the two countries. 10.5kg of pangolin scales were also seized from the traffickers and taken to the wildlife office