

September 2006 Report

Highlights -

- **Adjusting to a new Minister in charge of wildlife**
- **Hitting Congolese connection in trade in skins, and related ivory dealer with 7 tusks**
- **Operation against an American dealer**
- **Hitting train station dealers' hidden storage room**
- **A climb in the professional level of the investigation unit**
- **Meeting with former Prime Minister**

General

September month has been very successful politically and operationally. It presented the challenge of continuity through changes in Government, as a new Minister of Wildlife and Forestry was appointed. LAGA pushed to be one of the first to meet with the new minister and assured full collaboration and continuity.

Another political highlight was the meeting with the former Prime Minister who assisted in a LAGA operation; the event was extensively covered by local media. The operations carried out this month proved a climb in the professional level of the investigation unit. Underground infrastructure located professionally and investigation carried successfully against a foreign national. Managing to deliver a second target from the same ring a week after the first operation shows high control over target. The procedure in two of the cases was interrupted by the delegate of the Central Province as it was his last day and the day of Ministers' replacement and the offenders took advantage of this. LAGA will do its best to correct this and insure the case follows normal procedure. As LAGA targets dealers that are higher in the trade chain the challenge is growing, of fighting corruption. The case of the American dealer is a good example for this.

Investigations

- **22 investigations were held in 7 provinces**, including-Littoral, North West, Centre, South, West and East provinces.
- The operations carried out this month proved **a climb in the professional level** of the investigation unit. Underground infrastructure located professionally and investigation carried successfully against a foreign national. Managing to deliver a second target from the same ring a week after the first operation shows high control over target.

Operations

- 4 operations were carried out against high level targets:
- **19/9-Congolese connection in trade in skins.** A Congolese (DRC) arrested in a leopard skins operation in Douala with MINFOF Littoral delegation. This is important in starting to map trade in leopard and lion skins. The skins are coming from Congo by route transport to Cameroon and the arrested dealer is in charge of selling it in Douala.
- **22/9- American trafficking wildlife at an international level arrested possessing illegally live mandrill, live baboon and 9 others protected monkeys** in Yaounde. He used to send animals to USA through Douala. Had a chimpanzee in the past in his house. He has a hand gun with a fake

authorisation permit. He is not behind bars, complaint report not yet transmitted to court. He resisted violently threatening to use his gun. The American Embassy was kept informed and present during the operation. Live animals are taken care of by CWF.

- 22/9- Operation against **train station hidden storage room- involving the hand of a chimpanzee**. This operation is a part of LAGA work as an Independent Monitor of Wildlife Crime in a contract by the World Bank on the project focusing on bushmeat transportation in Camrail – the national train.. This operation aims at exposing the new ways dealers are using to still carry on their illegal activities. The raided hidden storage room contains 6 refrigerators serving at least 3 different dealers in protected species.
- The procedure in the last two cases was interrupted by the delegate of the Central Province as it was his last day and the day of Ministers' replacement and the offenders took advantage of this. LAGA will do its best to correct this and insure the case follows normal procedure.
- 25/9- **Ivory dealer arrested with 7 raw tusks** in Douala in collaboration with MINFOF Littoral Delegation. This dealer actually was acting as middleman in the operation against the Congolese skins dealer. Since his illegal dealings involve also the ivory trade, LAGA waited for an opportunity of arrest with a large quantity of ivory.

Legal

- There are **21 dealers behind bars**: 2 in the West province; 6 in the South province; 8 in the Littoral; 1 in the North, 4 in the North west.
- 4 cases are already scheduled and being trailed in the court this month. (This is vacancy period for magistrates).
- 9 cases waiting for the process to reach the court of appeal. 1 case of appeal rejected in Bamenda court, because the MINFOF was not registered as a civil party in the process in the legal department.
- 9 cases waiting for a date of trial (on process in front of the state attorney or the MINFOF).
- 9 cases on execution process.

Media front

- **29 media pieces** were produced and pushed to radio and written press; 4 written press materials (all in English), 3 radio talk shows (all in French), 2 radio news features (1French, 1English), 20 radio newsflashes (11 French, 9 English).
- Guests include: **Former Prime Minister** (Hon. Achidi Achu), North West MINFOF Delegate, Chief of North West Control Brigade, Director of Living Earth Project.
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including: **Former Prime Minister spearhead wildlife law Enforcement**, ivory and chimp dealer arrest/prosecution Mezam, prosecution ivory dealer Fouban, Taiping 4, prosecution lion skin dealer/north, prosecution/ Sangmelima,, Leopard skin dealer prosecution Douala.

- All of this month's operations were documented by a **foreign TV crew**. – Cicada Productions working on a series documenting Wildlife Law Enforcement.
- All media pieces are recorded and compiled in LAGA's computerized media archive.

External Relations and Policy

- A sudden Ministerial reshuffle resulted in the surprising change of Minister of Forestry and Wildlife. The day in which it has been announced was characterized in instability badly effecting two operations LAGA carried on the same day. LAGA adjusted fast and pushed to be one of the first to meet the newly appointed Minister. The meeting was long and positive in which the new Minister expressed his high appreciation to LAGA work and commitment to take a strong stand in the fight against wildlife crime.
- Meeting with Former Prime Minister and Head of Government by LAGA accompanied by the MINFOF Delegate of North West Province in appreciation of his moral and political supports in the latest LAGA operation.
- LAGA participated in an Inter-ministerial meeting concerning the Taiping Four, and a mission with MINFOF to the Limbe Wildlife Center in preparations for their return.
- Meeting with the newly appointed Inspector General of Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife (MINFOF).
- Participation of LAGA at a political meeting of the Multi-stakeholders Support Group for the Caucus of parliamentarians on environmental protection in preparation for the regional conference to be held the following month.

Management

- Improving procedures of reporting from departments.
- A semester report is compiled for January - June 06, to assess the first half of the year.

Finance

LAGA Expenditure for September 06

Amount CFA	Budget line	Details		Amount L
2,065,800	Investigations	22 investigations, 7 provinces	-2,065,800	\$4,011
810,400	Operations	4 operations+Ivory storage room	-2,876,200	\$1,574
1,164,475	legal	follow up 23cases 21 locked su	-4,040,675	\$2,261
822,250	Media	29 media pieces	-4,862,925	\$1,597
765,503	Policy and External Relations		-5,628,428	\$1,486
1,566,700	Management	Coordination	-7,195,128	\$3,042
705,612	Office		-7,900,740	\$1,370
0	LAGA Family - Investing in team spirit and pro		-7,900,740	\$0
7,900,740	TOTAL EXPENDITURE SEPTEMBER		0	\$15,341

AmountCFA	Donor					Amount U
3,257,815	Born Free	Used	September			\$6,325.9
0	World Bank	Used	September			\$0.0
1,537,250	BHC	Used	September			\$2,985.0
1,419,475	FWS	Used	September			\$2,756.3
1,110,400	Arcus	Used	September			\$2,156.1
575,800	IFAW	Used	September			\$1,118.1
7,900,740	TOTAL					\$15,341.2

Ofir Drori
 Director
 The Last Great Ape Organization

THIS MONTH IN PICTURES



American trafficking wildlife at an international level arrested possessing illegally live mandrill, live baboon and 9 others protected monkeys



Operation against train station hidden storage room- involving the hand of a chimpanzee. This operation is a part of LAGA work as an Independent Monitor of Wildlife Crime in a contract by the World Bank





**LAGA's head of Media dept. & Provincial Delegate
In a meeting with the Former Prime Minister**