

The Last Great Ape Organization – LAGA

May 2020 Report



Highlights

- **The LAGA team continued working hard and producing results amid the Covid-19 pandemic with 7 people arrested for wildlife trafficking and human bones trafficking**
- **4 human bones traffickers were arrested with a human body in Foubot, in the West Region. The bones still had some dried up flesh and human hair on the skull**
- **3 traffickers arrested with ivory tusks in the trafficking hotspot of Douala, Littoral Region.**

General

Covid-19 pandemic continues but the LAGA team keep pushing forward. The month was marked by the **arrest of 7 traffickers with 2 ivory tusks and human bones.**

During investigations into wildlife trafficking in the West Region, leads were found into human bones trafficking and this resulted in the arrest of 4 traffickers with an almost complete human skeleton that still had dried up flesh on the bones and a human skull with hair on it. Further investigation by the gendarmerie led to the arrest of a 4th trafficker. The 4 belong to a larger network that was specialized in trafficking human bones. They had connections to other countries of the sub region and seem to be able to supply dozens of human bones. Often investigations of wildlife traffickers lead to other connected crimes.

3 traffickers operating as a small group trafficking ivory were arrested with 2 ivory tusks weighing 26kg. The 3 including two men and a woman were very cautious in their dealings and transactions but were arrested as they attempted to sell the ivory.

Investigations

- **16 investigation missions** were carried out in **6 regions** out of the 10 regions of Cameroon including Centre, East, South, littoral, West and Adamawa Regions.
- Investigations in Douala led to the arrest of 3 traffickers with 2 elephant tusks in Douala.
- Good ivory investigation in Foumban led to the discovery and arrest of 4 human bones traffickers in Foubot.

Investigations Table

<i>Investigation Missions</i>	<i>Regions</i>	<i>No. of Operations</i>	<i>No of traffickers arrested</i>
16	6	2	7

Operation

4 operations carried out this month with MINFOF **arresting 8 traffickers**.

8/5/2020 – 3 traffickers arrested in Douala, Littoral Region with two ivory tusks weighing 26kg. The 3 ran a small ivory trafficking group that was very cautious in their dealings but at the end the operation succeeded in ensuring all were arrested.

20/5/2020 – 4 traffickers were arrested in Foubot in the West Region with human bones, following a wildlife crime investigation. 3 of them were arrested with an almost complete human skeleton that still had dried up flesh on the bones and a human skull with hair on it. Further investigation by the gendarmerie led to the arrest of a 4th trafficker. The 4 belong to a larger network that was specialized in trafficking human bones and had connections to other countries of the sub region. Investigations show they seem to be able to supply dozens of human bones. The corpse of the deceased young lady was dug out from Kouoptamo in the West Region. They operated an organized network with each having a specific role to play; those who dug out the corpses; those who did the marketing, searching for customers and the lady who was the 4th to be arrested kept the human remains at her residence.

Operations Table

<i>No of Operations</i>	<i>Regions</i>	<i>No of Traffickers Arrested</i>	<i>Contraband</i>
2	2	7	2 ivory tusks, an almost complete human skeleton

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **8 missions** out of Yaounde - Centre Region: 1 in Kribi (South), 2 in Abong-Mbang (East), 1 in Bertoua (East), 2 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Foubot (West) and 1 in Mfou (Centre).
- There are **11 traffickers behind bars this month**: 3 in East region, 3 in Littoral region and 4 in West region.
- **31 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **28 cases** were scheduled in court this month.
- **No trafficker** was convicted this month

Legal Table

<i>No of Missions (Out of Centre Region)</i>	<i>No of Court Judgements</i>	<i>No of Traffickers Given Prison Sentence</i>	<i>Prison term (in months)</i>	<i>No of Traffickers Sanctioned (No prison sentence)</i>	<i>No of Appeals lodged</i>	<i>No of Cases Tried in Courts</i>
8	0	0	0	0	0	28

Media

- **43 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to written press, internet, radio, and television including; 17 written press materials (10 in English and 7 in French), 9 internet publications (6 in French and 3 in English), 11 radio news flashes (6 in French and 5 in English), and 6 TV news flashes (2 in English and 4 in French).
- Interviewee: The Gendarmerie Commander of Fouban.
- Subjects focused this month on wildlife law enforcement including the Douala arrest of 3 ivory traffickers, and Foubot arrest of human bones traffickers.
- 23 media pieces in French language and 20 in English language making a percentage of 53.4% in French and 46.6% in English.

Media table

<i>No of media pieces</i>	<i>TV</i>	<i>Radio</i>	<i>Newspapers</i>	<i>Internet</i>
43	6	11	17	9

External Relations and Policy

- The Head of Department had meetings with the State Counsels at the Douala Ndokoti Court of First Instance and the Foubot Court of First Instance. to discuss strategies on matters brought to them. Two legal advisers met the State Counsel at the Abong Mbang Court of First Instance for the same purpose and one of them held a meeting with the State Counsel in Mfou to discuss legal strategies on a matter pending at his court. A third legal adviser held a meeting with the Attorney General at the Bertoua Court of Appeal to discuss a matter pending at the court
- Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, external relations activities were limited to the barest minimum and only on issues of absolute necessity, this in line with government's guidelines on social distancing and limited physical contacts.

Management

- Despite guidelines to work from home, LAGA members kept arriving to office in different times and continued to push in office and the field for operations with remarkable success, courage and activism. Management continued to place emphasis on the conscientious application of prescribed measures. The measures included governments instructions to preventing Covid-19 in the country and supplementary directives developed by the organization to fully reinforce and protect the health of every LAGA member. Management coordinated field activity and ensured financial activities were efficiently carried out despite the difficulties presented by the situation.

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: No presentations were done this month.

Finance

In preparation and would be made available soon as possible on the LAGA website www.laga-enforcement.org .

Link of the month

The online news site Camer.be focused this month on the arrest of human bones traffickers in Foubot. The news site exposes the fact that it was an investigation on illegal wildlife trafficking that led to the arrest.

<https://www.camer.be/mobile/80579/11:1/cameroun-gendarmes-arrest-three-with-full-human-skeleton-cameroon.html>

get youtube links of TV broadcasts here, for pictures I think that unlike social media in activity report you can put the photos of the dead body

This Month in Pictures



Gendarmes arrest human bones trafficker in the West Region



Two of the human bones traffickers after their arrest, the woman kept the bones at her residence



Two arrested in Douala for ivory trafficking (left), Wildlife officials measure ivory weighing over 26kg seized from traffickers at their Bonanjo office in Douala

