

The Last Great Ape Organization – LAGA July 2019 Report



Highlights

- **3 major traffickers arrested during the month with 4 leopard skins**
- **The Deputy Director held a meeting with a team of USAID officials who were visiting the country to discuss the wildlife law enforcement process and governance issues in the country.**

General

This month was marked by the arrest of **3 traffickers with 4 leopard skins**.

The traffickers were arrested in the Littoral Region with the 4 leopard skins as they arrived to the place of transaction under torrential rain. One of them attempted to escape when he realized that they were to be arrested but law enforcement officials moved swiftly and stopped him. They are regular suppliers of illicit leopard skins in an area that is notorious for leopard skins trafficking.

LAGA took part in a workshop that focused on a law enforcement curriculum for the Garoua Wildlife School

The Deputy Director held a meeting with a team of USAID officials.

Investigations

- **16 investigation missions** of varying lengths were carried out in **4 Regions** of Cameroon including Littoral, East, South and Centre Regions.
- Good investigation in Loum led to the arrest of 3 leopard skin traffickers with 4 leopard skins in Loum.

Investigations Table

Investigation Missions	Regions	No. of Operations	No of traffickers arrested
16	4	1	3

Operation

An operation carried out this month with MINFOF **arresting 3 traffickers**.

24/7/2019 – 3 traffickers arrested with 4 leopard skins in Loum, Littoral Region. On a bike, they arrived to the place of transaction under torrential rains and were arrested during an attempt to sell the skins. One of them attempted to escape when he realized that they were to be arrested but law officials moved swiftly and stopped him. They are regular suppliers of illicit leopard skins in an area that is notorious for leopard skins trafficking. They also took advantage of an easy and flexible transport mood - a motorbike.

Operations Table

No of Operations	Regions	No of Traffickers Arrested	Contraband
1	1	3	4 leopard skins

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **10 missions** out of Yaounde-Centre Region: 3 in Douala (Littoral), 1 in Loum (Littoral), 1 Bertoua (East), 1 in Kribi (South), 1 in Djoum (South), 1 in Sangmelima (South), 1 in Meiganga (Adamaoua), and 1 in Bangangte (West).
- There are **15 traffickers behind bars this month**: 3 in East region, 5 in South region, 1 in Centre region and 6 in Littoral region.

- **28 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **22 cases** were scheduled in court this month.
- **5 traffickers** were convicted this month.
- **Prosecutions:** There were 4 court rulings this month.
 - **02/07/2019:** The Djoum Court of First Instance found the accused **AKO’O MENDO Gervais guilty and sentenced him to 3 months suspended sentence for 3 years and to pay 25.000 FCFA as fine and 490.000 as damages.**

He was arrested in Djoum on the 08/09/2017 for illegal possession of a baby chimpanzee.

- **16/07/2019:** The Meïganga Court of First Instance found the accused **ABOUBAKAR guilty and sentenced him to a 2-month prison term and to pay 379.000 FCFA as fines and 5.200.000 FCFA as damages.**

He was arrested in Meïganga on the 12/04/2019 for illegal possession and circulation of 25kg of ivory tusks and 12kg of pangolins scales.

- **16/07/2019:** The Douala – Ndokoti Court of First Instance found the accused **ABDOUL NASSIR Sali guilty and sentenced him to a 20-day prison term and to pay 54.000 FCFA as fines and 1.042.000 FCFA as damages.**

He was arrested in Douala on the 20/06/2019 for illegal possession, circulation and commercialization of 95kg of pangolin scales

- The Douala – Bonanjo Court of First Instance found the accused **NSANGOUE NFOYA Oumarou none guilty, MOUNCHIKPOU Aboubakar and NJIKAM Amidou guilty and sentenced them to a 1-year prison term and to pay 546.000 FCFA as fines and 10.380.000 FCFA as damages.**

They were arrested in Douala on the 21/11/2017 for illegal possession, circulation and commercialization of 128kg of pangolin scales.

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
10	4	5	15	1	0	28

Media

- **21 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to written press, radio, and internet including; 18 written press materials (12 in English and 6 in French), 2 radio news flashes (2 in English) and 1 internet publications in French.
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including, the travel ban against a Gendarmerie colonel and the Loum arrest of three traffickers with 4 leopard skin.
- 13 media pieces in English and 8 in French making a percentage of 61.9% in English and 38.1% in French.

Media table

<i>No of media pieces</i>	<i>TV</i>	<i>Radio</i>	<i>Newspaper</i>	<i>Internet</i>
21	0	2	18	1

External Relations and Policy

- The Deputy Director held a meeting with a team of USAID officials who were visiting the country and had a discussion with them on the wildlife law enforcement process and governance issues.
- He was one of several invitees who joined the French to celebrate their National Day at the Residence of the French Ambassador.
- The Deputy Director held a meeting with the Ghana-based US Regional Environment team for West and Central Africa and later held another meeting the following day with the same team with several other NGOs present. Discussions focused on challenges to effective wildlife conservation initiatives.
- The Head of Legal Department, accompanied by a legal adviser, held a meeting with the state counsel in Mbanga to discuss operation procedures. A legal adviser held a meeting with the state counsel in Bangangte while another held a meeting with the state counsel in Douala – Ndokoti and a third held another meeting with the state counsel at the Meiganga Court of First Instance to discuss legal strategies in matters pending at the various courts.
- The department head participated at a workshop in Douala that focused on the Evaluation an of the Training Modules on Combatting Illegal Wildlife Trade for the Garoua Wildlife School.
- A legal adviser participated at the forum of actors involved in the protection of the Dja Biosphere Reserve.

Management

- Modalities and discussions on the implementation of the EU grant were held with the various instances.

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: The Rwandan War and Genocide

Cameroon is going through an unprecedented crisis that has seen the country succumb to violence in the Anglophone section while political upheavals following the 2018 presidential elections have resulted in a rise in violent and tribal rhetoric which are similar to what happened in Rwanda. The presentation takes us down memory lane to look at the history of the damaging civil war and genocide that took place in the early nineties in Rwanda. The presenter tells the history of the war and explains how it gradually slipped into a genocide while looking at the lessons that could be learnt from the tragedy. This lessons, the presenter says, are very important to preempt and forestall the same fate for Cameroon. Questions focused on the post genocide era and how Rwanda is faring today and an analysis of the lessons.

Finance

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

Link of the month

A website reporting on news in Cameroon takes up the story of the travel ban imposed on a gendarmerie colonel by the US State Department. The colonel is expected to appear in court in connection with an ivory trafficking case.

https://www.alwihdainfo.com/Cameroun-Un-colonel-au-tribunal-pour-criminalite-faunique_a75030.html

This Month in Pictures



Leopard skins seized from three traffickers



A bike they used for committing the offence as with wildlife officials and gendarmes swooped in



Leopard skin traffickers shortly after their arrest