

# The Last Great Ape Organization – LAGA

## September 2017 Report



### Highlights

- **7 traffickers arrested during 3 different operations, 2 chimps and a mandrill seized during the operations.**
- **2 baby chimpanzees rescued; 5 ape traffickers arrested during 2 operations in Djoum and Manjo.**
- **Baby mandrill rescued and a couple, who also had pangolin scales, arrested in Yaounde**
- **Super volunteer begins month-long training following his arrival from Kenya.**
- **Assistant Head of the Media Department, travelled to the US to participate in the Jackson hole film festival as a volunteer.**

### General

This month was marked by the arrest of **7 traffickers and the rescuing of 3 primates including 2 chimps and a mandrill.**

**A trafficker arrested with a baby chimpanzee in Djoum, South region.** He travelled from Meyos III to Djoum with the chimp hidden inside a small bag and had been actively searching for clients for the baby. He had shot and killed the mother of the baby, cut the body into pieces of meat which he sold and ate some. He then kept the baby to sell as a pet. The little baby chimpanzee was rushed to the Mefou National Park where caregivers of the Ape Action Africa, immediately set to provide appropriate treatment and care.

During the second operation of the month, **2 traffickers, a man and a woman, were arrested in Elig Edzoa neighbourhood in Yaounde, Centre region with a baby mandrill and 41kg of pangolins scales.** The baby mandrill was hidden inside a travelling bag and a rope tied to its waist to prevent her from escaping. The couple had travelled all the way from the South Region with the wildlife and to sell in the capital.

**4 ape traffickers arrested with a baby chimpanzee in Manjo, Littoral region.** They had bought the animal from a poacher. The chimp was taken to the Limbe Wildlife Centre but unfortunately passed away after efforts to provide first aid assistance and treatment failed. He had been badly treated and malnourished during his unfortunate stay with the traffickers

Jean Claude Vignoli, a super volunteer, arrived the country and started a month-long training that shall involve all departments of the organization.

The Assistant Head of the Media Department travelled to the US to take part in a wildlife film festival as a volunteer.

## Investigations

- **28 investigation missions** of varying lengths were carried out in **6 regions** of Cameroon-Littoral, Centre, South, East, Southwest and North regions.
- Good investigations in Meyos led to the arrest of one a trafficker with a live baby chimpanzee in Djoum.
- Good investigations in Mintom led to the arrest of **2 traffickers** with a baby mandrill and 41kg of pangolin scales in **Yaounde**.
- Good investigations in Manjo led to the arrest of **4 traffickers** with a live baby chimpanzee in **Manjo**.
- The investigation department was the first to start work with Jean-Claude who was trained on various investigation procedures, reporting and activities including field work,

*Investigations Table*

Investigation Missions	Regions	No. of Operations	No of traffickers arrested
28	6	3	7

## Operation

**3 operations** carried out with MINFOF this month **arresting 7 traffickers**.

**8/9/2017 – An ape trafficker arrested in Djoum, South Region with a baby chimp which he had concealed in a bag.** He travelled from Meyos III to Djoum to sell the little baby. He had shot and killed the mother of the baby, cut the body into pieces of meat which he sold and ate some. He then tried to sell the baby shortly before his arrest. He went around searching for clients and this provided enough information for an investigation and operation. He is also known to deal in several other primate species in the area. The chimp was taken to the Mefou National Park where it is receiving lifetime support and care.

**12/9/2017 - During the second operation, a young couple (a man and woman) were arrested with a baby mandrill and 41kg of pangolin scales in the Elig Edzoa neighbourhood, a few dozen of metres from where a clandestine illegal sale of bushmeat usually takes place in Yaounde, Centre region.** They had travelled from the South to the capital with the wildlife to sell. A rope was tied around the waist of the little baby mandrill which was then put into a tiny bag to conceal it from curious eyes. Once again the baby was taken to the Mefou National Park.

**18/9/2017 - Four people were arrested with a baby chimpanzee in Manjo, Littoral region.** They had bought the baby from a poacher. This was a regular activity of the traffickers who were very opportunistic wildlife traffickers dealing in various wildlife, dead or alive. The chimp was taken the Limbe Wildlife Centre but unfortunately passed away after efforts to provide first aid assistance and treatment failed. He had been badly treated and malnourished during his unfortunate stay with the traffickers.

### *Operations Table*

No of Operations	Regions	No of Traffickers Arrested	Contraband
3	3	7	Two baby chimps One live mandrill 41kg of pangolins scales

### Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried **8 missions** out of Yaounde-Centre Region: 1 in Ntui (Centre), 1 in Douala (Littoral), 2 in Nkongsamba (Littoral), 1 in Ebolowa (South), 1 in Djoum (South), 1 in Sangmelima (Djoum) and 1 in Meïganga (Adamaoua).
- There are **23 dealers behind bars this month**: 4 in East region, 3 in Adamaoua region, 2 in Northwest region, 3 in Centre region, 3 in Southwest region, 3 in West region and 5 in South region.
- **26 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **23 cases** were scheduled and being tried in court this month.
- **1 trafficker** was convicted this month.
- **Prosecution**: We had 1 judgment this month.
  - **05/09/2017**: The Ntui Court of First Instance – Centre, found the accused **BATOURE WADJIRI Noel** guilty of illegal possession, circulation and commercialization of trophies of totally protected species. He was sentenced to: **3 months imprisonment; ordered to pay 360.000 F CFA as civil damages, 50.000 F CFA as fines and 29.650 as court fees.** He was arrested in Yoko for illegal possession, and commercialization of 2 ivory tusks.

### *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
8	1	1	3	0	0	26

## Media

- **52 media pieces** were produced and pushed through to written press, radio and internet, including; 23 written press material (13 in English and 10 in French), 20 radio news flashes (11 in French and 9 in English) and 9 internet publications (6 in French and 3 in English) .
- Interviewee: Jean Ngnondete, Forestry Controller at the Regional Delegation
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including: the Ebolowa arrest of an ape trafficker and the rescue of a baby chimp, the Djoum arrest of another ape trafficker and the rescue of a second baby chimp, the arrest in Yaounde of two traffickers in pangolins scales and a baby mandrill, the arrest of four ape traffickers and the rescue of a third baby chimp and the court trial of mandrill traffickers arrested in Yaounde.
- 27 media pieces in French and 25 in English making a percentage of 51.9% in French and 48.1% in English.

*Media Table*

No of Media Pieces	TV	Radio	Newspapers	Internet
52	0	15	5	0

## External Relations and Policy

- The Deputy Director travelled to Gaborone, Botswana he trained customs and wildlife officials on the at the International Law Enforcement Academy on the fight against corruption.
- The Head of the Legal Department and legal advisers of the department held meetings, variously with state counsels of Djoum, Yaounde and Nkongsamba to discuss impending operations within their area of competence while they equally held meetings with the state counsels of Bonanajo – Douala and Sangmelima to discuss some wildlife cases in courts.
- The Assistant Head of the Media Department travelled to the US where she attended the Jackson Hole Wildlife Summit and Wildlife Film Festival, an event that brought together over 750 people including conservationists, explorers, scientists, media practitioners, film producers and directors, to share experiences on species conservation. Issues discussed included the present state of the big cats and its impact and survival among others. The successful wildlife law enforcement model in Cameroon was explained by her who expounded on the successes recorded so far and its replication in other countries.

## Management

- Jean Claude Vignoli, a super volunteer, arrived the country and started a full month training programme that shall involve all the departments Several recruitment interviews for the legal and investigations department were carried out and three people were put on test in the investigation department.
- Three investigators continued their volunteering that started last month.  
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## Activism Front:

Power point presentation: The Form of a State: Federation and Unitary State

Against a backdrop of mounting tensions amidst secessionist and federalist tendencies in Anglophone Cameroon, the presentation takes us through two forms of state; the unitary and federal

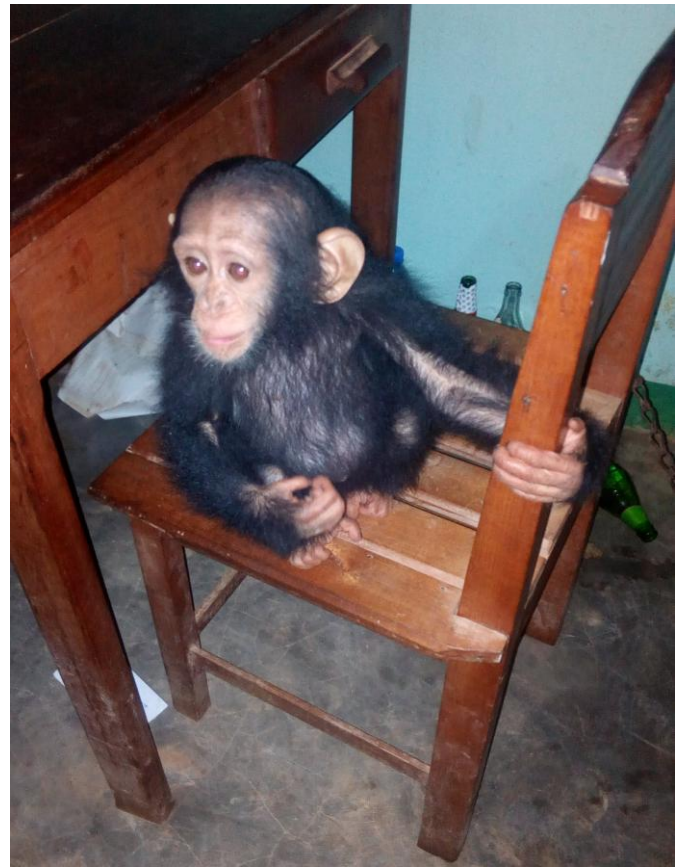
state. As a measure to avoid controversies and potentially heated tensions and arguments, the presenter limits himself to just technicalities, defining, describing and delimiting the various forms, explaining their characteristics while avoiding polemical political verbiage and disputations. Presentation helps us understand the major differences between the two forms. The debates focused on the history and trends of the two forms and their advantages and disadvantages for their citizens.

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>.

### **Finance**

Please check LAGA website [www.laga-enforcement.org](http://www.laga-enforcement.org) for monthly financial reports.

**This Month in Pictures**



*He was seized from a trafficker who had shot, killed and eaten her mother while selling parts of her body to the bushmeat trade, he was too was heading for trafficking (above)*

*A baby mandrill hidden inside a bag and handing to be sold as a pet was rescued from two traffickers who travelled with the baby inside this little bag*



*Two arrested traffickers at police station shortly before drafting of writing of complaint reports (above). He awaits prosecutorial process to begin after his arrested with a baby chimpanzee in Djoum (right)*

