

The Last Great Ape Organization – LAGA

September 2022 Report



Highlights

- **11 traffickers arrested during 4 operations with 2 human skeletons, 154. kg of ivory seized and a young mandrill rescued**
- **3 traffickers arrested in Yaounde, Centre Region, with 98 kg of ivory in a crackdown on a Nigerian ivory gang**
- **4 traffickers arrested with 2 human skeletons in Douala, Littoral Region.**
- **2 traffickers arrested in Cameroon with 10 elephant tusks weighing 56 kg, in a crackdown on an ivory network that operates in the sub region**
- **A live mandrill rescued and 2 traffickers arrested in Yaounde**
- **The Head of the Media Department travelled to Austria where she participated at the Jackson Wild Summit 2022.**

General

The month was marked by the **arrest of 11 traffickers with 2 human skeletons, 154kg of ivory seized and a young mandrill rescued**

3 traffickers arrested in Douala, Littoral Region with 98kg of ivory in a crackdown on a Nigerian ivory gang. The ring controlled trafficking lines to Nigeria and to Cote d'Ivoire and moved ivory from as far as Congo. One of them claimed to have been smuggling ivory for over 35 years.

4 traffickers arrested with 2 human skeletons in Douala, Littoral Region. Their arrest is a result of an investigation into the illegal online trade in pangolin scales and leopard skins to India. LAGA and the entire EAGLE Network, as activists, do our best to fight injustice. Human sacrifice and the illegal trade in human bones for black magic and rituals is one of such horrible crimes.

2 traffickers arrested in Cameroon with 10 elephant tusks weighing 56 kg. The traffickers are linked to Abdoul Salami, arrested in 2021 with 2 tons of pangolin scales and leopard skins. The ring operates in Congo, Gabon, Nigeria and beyond.

2 traffickers arrested and a mandrill rescued in Yaounde. The mandrill was forcefully pushed into a sack and transported to be traded illegally. The animal was brought by a worker in a logging company near the Congolese border.

Investigations

- **22 investigation missions** out in **5 Regions** out of 10 of Cameroon including Littoral, West, Centre, South and East Regions.
- Good investigation in Kye ossi led to the arrest of 2 ivory traffickers with 13 pieces of elephant tusks weighing 56kg in Yaounde
- Credible information from a sympathizer denouncing a pangolin scales trafficking network led to the arrest of human bones traffickers with 2 complete human skeletons in Douala.
- Good investigation in Douala led to the arrest of 3 ivory traffickers with 26 pieces of elephant tusks reconstituted to 10 tusks and weighing 98.66kg in Douala.
- Good information from a sympathizer led to the arrest of 2 primate traffickers with a live mandrill in Mbankomo.
- Recruitment was intensified and a candidate put on test for investigations.

Investigations Table

Investigation Missions	Regions	No. of Operations	No of traffickers arrested
22	5	4	11

Operation

3 operations carried out this month with MINFOFarresting**7 traffickers**.

3/9/2022 – 2 traffickers arrested in Cameroon with 10 elephant tusks weighing 56 kg. They concealed the tusks in a suitcase and transported it on a motorcycle to a residence where they were expected to carry out the transaction. Soon after they arrived, they were arrested during attempts to sell the ivory. The contraband was concealed in the notorious Briqueterie neighbourhood in Yaounde. The traffickers belong to a trafficking ring operating in major ivory trafficking hotspots and especially in a Kye-ossi. The traffickers are linked to Abdoul Salami, arrested in 2021 with 2 tons of pangolin scales and leopard skins. The ring operates in Congo, Gabon, Nigeria and beyond. Close relatives attempted to free the traffickers by applying pressure on wildlife officials but the attempts were aborted

19/09/2022 - 4 traffickers arrested with 2 human skeletons in Douala, Littoral Region. They transported the skeletons concealed inside a big plastic bag from their base in the South West

Region to Douala where they lodged in a luxury hotel. Later, they moved to another hotel to sell the skeletons where they were arrested. Their arrest is a result of an investigation into the illegal online trade in pangolin scales and leopard skins to India. LAGA and the entire EAGLE Network, as activists, do our best to fight injustice. Human sacrifice and the illegal trade in human bones for black magic and rituals is one of such horrible crimes.

20/9/2022 – 3 traffickers arrested in Douala, Littoral Region with 98kg of ivory in a crackdown on a Nigerian ivory gang. They were arrested in Douala’s notorious New Bell neighbourhood. The traffickers blocked the entrance to their residence, hid inside different rooms but were found one after the other and arrested. The ivory was concealed in two suitcases and hidden in one of the rooms. The ring controlled trafficking lines to Nigeria and to Cote d’Ivoire and moved ivory from as far as Congo. One of them claimed to have been smuggling ivory for over 35 years.

27/9/2022- 2 traffickers arrested and a mandrill rescued in Yaounde, Center Region. The mandrill was forcefully pushed into a sack and transported to be traded illegally. The animal was brought by a worker in a logging company near the Congolese border. The mandrill lived chained to a tree. When rescued it moved nervously and frantically inside the bag as wildlife officials tried to free him. He was taken to Mvogbetsi zoo for care and support.

Operations Table

<i>No of Operations</i>	<i>Regions</i>	<i>No of Traffickers Arrested</i>	<i>Contraband</i>
4	2	11	56kg ivory, 2 human skeletons, 98.1kg ivory, a live mandrill

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **6 missions** out of Yaounde - Centre Region: 1 in Sangmelima (South), 1 in Ayos (Centre), 1 in Akonolinga (Centre) and 3 in Douala (Littoral).
- There are **21 traffickers behind bars this month**: 2 in East region, 2 in South region, 4 in Centre, 7 in Littoral Region and 6 in West Region.
- **40 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **37 cases** were scheduled in court this month.
- **No traffickers** were convicted this month.
- **Prosecutions**: There were no court rulings 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>
6	0	0	0	0	0	37

Media

- **53** media pieces were produced and pushed to the media including: written press, TV, radio and internet. That is 12 written press (8 in English and 4 in French), 8 TV production (3 in English, 3 French, and 2 Pidgin English), 30 radio broadcast (19 in French, 10 in English and 1 in pidgin English) and 3 internet publication all in French.
- Giving a total of 29 media pieces produced in the French language, 21 in English and 3 in Pidgin English making 54.7% in French, 39.6% in English and 5.7% in Pidgin English.
- Interviews and quotes were from: The Littoral Regional Delegate of Forestry and Wildlife, IUCN Director General, and the Founding Director of EAGLE.
- Subjects focused on wildlife law enforcement including: the arrest of 2 traffickers with 56kg of ivory in Yaounde, 3 traffickers arrested in Douala with 100kg of ivory tusks and the court hearing of the 2 ivory traffickers arrested in Yaounde with 56kg of elephant tusks.
- The Head of the Media Department travelled to Austria where she participated at the Jackson Wild Summit 2022. She held several meetings with film makers, producers, media and NGO officials on possible areas of media collaboration in the fight against wildlife crime.

Media table

<i>No of media pieces</i>	TV	Radio	Newspapers	Internet
53	8	30	12	3

External Relations and Policy

- The Deputy Director held a meeting with the Sub Director of Development and Wildlife Exploitation to discuss issues related to the signing of a new Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife and lawyers' representation in wildlife cases in court.

- The Deputy Director held a meeting with the Centre Regional Delegate of Forestry and Wildlife to discuss the fight against wildlife crime and strengthen collaboration.
- The Head of the Legal Department held a meeting with the State Counsel in Douala - Bonanjo to discuss legal strategies after an operation.
- A legal had a meeting with the State Counsel of Sangmelima to discuss legal strategies concerning a matter pending before the court.
- A second legal adviser held a meeting with the State Counsel of Akonolinga to discuss the legal strategies after carrying out the operation.
- A third legal adviser held a meeting with the Attorney General of Douala to discuss legal strategies concerning matters pending before the Appeal Court.

Management

- Preparations for the reception of a legal adviser from Cote d'Ivoire were carried and he is expected to be with the legal department next month.
- Management collaborated with the auditing firm Moore Stephens that carried out and completed the yearly audit of the organization.

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>.

Finance

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

Link of the month

Camer be, an online news site this month published the story of two traffickers arrested with 56kg of elephant tusks in Yaounde.

<https://www.camer.be/mobile/92390/11:1/cameroun-trafiquants-arretes-a-yaounde-cameroon.html>

This Month in Pictures



Arrested for trafficking 100kg of ivory, traffickers at wildlife office



Wildlife official with seized ivory



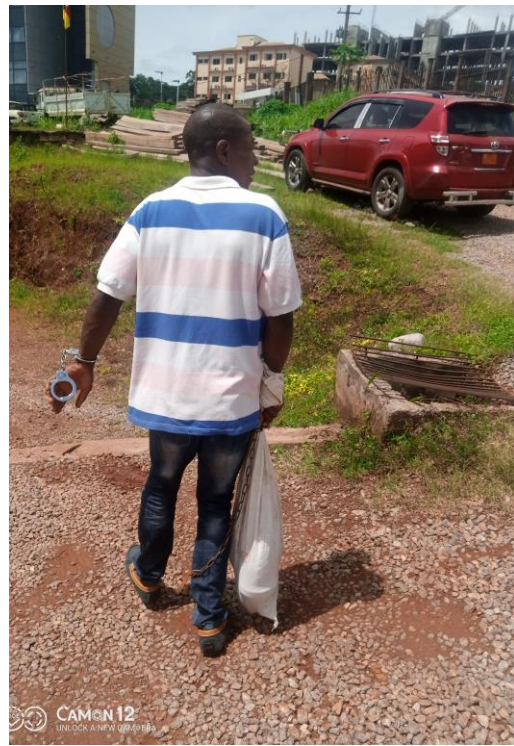
Arrested with 56kg of ivory, traffickers at police station shortly before offense statements are written



Ivory was concealed in a suitcase



He was rescued from traffickers, at wildlife office



The mandrill was transported inside a bag to be traded illegally



Human bones seized from traffickers in Douala