

The Last Great Ape Organization – LAGA

July 2024 Report



Highlights

- **A significantly notorious trafficker arrested in Kye Ossin in connection with ivory trafficking cases in West and Central Africa**
- **The Deputy Director did a presentation on wildlife crime at a workshop on ivory stock management in Douala.**
- **Legal advisers held several meetings with State Counsels on ongoing wildlife cases and the strengthening of collaboration in the fight against wildlife crime.**

General

This month was marked by the arrest of **a trafficker linked to ivory trafficking cases in West and Central Africa.**

He was recently arrested in Nigeria but he used corruption to negotiate his release from police custody He was arrested by Nigeria customs in February at a border town with a handgun and 200 kg of ivory tusks he trafficked from Cameroon.

The Deputy Director did a presentation on wildlife crime, its causes, trends and impact during a workshop on ivory stock management in Douala that brought together officials from several ministries.

The legal advisers held several meetings with State Counsels on ongoing wildlife cases and the strengthening of collaboration in the fight against wildlife crime.

Investigations

- **11 investigation missions** were carried out in **4 Regions** out of 10 of Cameroon including the Littoral, Centre, West and South.
- Good investigation in **Nkoteng** led to the arrest of **2 pangolin scales traffickers** with 47kg of giant pangolin scales in **Nkoteng**

Investigations Table

Investigation Missions	Regions	No. of Operations	No of traffickers arrested
11	4	1	1

Operation

A notorious wildlife trafficker was arrested this month by security forces in Ambam

21/07/2024 – 1 trafficker arrested in Kye Ossi, South Region in connection with the trafficking of several hundreds of kgs of ivory and double identity. Using corruption he negotiated his release from police custody in Nigeria. He was arrested by Nigeria customs in February at a border town with aa handgun and 200 kg of ivory tusks he trafficked from Cameroon. He was also under investigations for his connection to the seizure of 120 elephant tusks in August last year and the arrest of 9 traffickers in Gabon. The ivory tusks were hidden deep inside a truck that was on the way to Nigeria via Cameroon. The truck had to be pulled open and parts removed to find the ivory. He had earlier been arrested in October 2020 in Cameroon, sentenced and served a jail term of only 4 months. He was found guilty of illegal possession of 626kg of elephant tusks that were seized by Cameroon customs at a border town close to Gabon. The elephant tusks were trafficked from Gabon. He is part of a transnational criminal syndicate that uses corruption to facilitate the smuggling of ivory tusks across the sub region and beyond. He was found to have a fake identify and made a set of new identification documents with the fake identity.

Operations Table

No of Operations	Regions	No of Traffickers Arrested	Contraband
1	1	1	In connection to trafficking several hundreds of kg of ivory

Legal

- LAGA Legal Department carried out **5 missions** out of Yaounde - Centre Region: 1 in Ebolowa (South), 1 in Djoum (South), 1 in Ambam (South) and 2 in Kribi (South).
- There are **12 traffickers behind bars this month**: 2 in Centre, 3 in Littoral region and 6 in West region.
- **16 cases** were followed up by the Legal Department this month.
- **12 cases** were scheduled in court this month.
- **2 traffickers** were convicted this month.
- **Prosecutions**: There were 2 court ruling this month.
 - **04/06/2024**: The Ebolowa Court of First Instance found the accused **SOUA 2 Ulrich** guilty and sentenced him to **4 months in prison and to pay 300.000 FCFA as fine and 3.00.000 FCFA as damages**. He was arrested in Ebolowa on the 18/08/2023 for the illegal possession of live mandrill.
 - **04/06/2024**: The Ebolowa Court of First Instance found the accused **Louck John** guilty and sentenced him to **2 months in prison and to pay 300.000 FCFA as fine and 1.00.000 FCFA as damages**. He was arrested in Ebolowa on the 18/08/2023 for the illegal possession of live chimpanzee.

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 court audiences per trafficker</i>
10	2	2	4 months, 2 months	0	0	12

Media

- **1 media piece** was produced and pushed to the media including: 1 written press in English.
- Interviewee: none
- The media piece was focused on the arrest of 2 traffickers arrested in Doume with gorilla and chimp parts.

Media Table

<i>No of media pieces</i>	TV	Radio	Newspapers	Internet
1	0	0	1	0

Media highlight

- The Head of the Media Department held a meeting with a Cameroon award winning film maker, Ashunganya Precious, to discuss on wildlife law enforcement, the activities of LAGA and a possible collaboration for future productions of a wildlife documentary in the sub region.

External Relations and Policy

- The Deputy Director participated at a workshop in Douala that wound up a two-year project of TRAFFIC on Ivory Stock Management. He did presentation on wildlife crime focusing on the causes, trends and impact. Participants included wildlife officials, the police, customs, justice and territorial administration officials.
- The Head of Department and a legal adviser held a meeting with the State Counsel in Ambam on the arrest of a notorious wildlife trafficker.
- He and the legal adviser held a meeting at the INTERPOL National Central Burea in Yaounde on the same matter.
- A legal adviser held meetings with the State Counsels of Djoum, to discuss legal strategies on ongoing cases.
- Another legal adviser held meetings with State Counsels of Ebolowa to discuss legal strategies on a matter in court.
- He also held a meeting with the Chief of Brigade of the South Regional Delegation of Forestry and Wildlife to discuss an ongoing matter and strengthen collaboration.
- The above two legal advisers held am a meeting with Akonolinga to discuss legal strategies concerning a matter pending before the court.

Management

- Preparations were carried out for the reception of an investigator who is to travel next month to Cameroon. .
- Monthly activity and financial reports of June 2023 were prepared and published online.

Finance

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