



EAGLE

# Wildlife Law

# Enforcement Briefing

- ✓ **34 wildlife and forest criminals were arrested this month in 5 countries**
- ✓ **4 significant ape traffickers arrested in Guinea and 2 chimp babies rescued**
- ✓ **3 ivory traffickers arrested in Gabon with 6 tusks**
- ✓ **4 leopard skin traffickers arrested in Gabon**
- ✓ **8 forest criminals arrested in Gabon in continuing crack down operations against illegal logging**
- ✓ **2 pangolin scales traffickers arrested in Cameroon, one in the entrance of the airport with a 100 kg.**
- ✓ **An ape trafficker arrested in Cameroon with 18 primate skulls**
- ✓ **5 traffickers arrested in Uganda, with 35 kg of pangolin scales, an elephant trunk and colobus monkey skins**
- ✓ **4 forest criminals arrested in Togo for illegal logging**
- ✓ **The EAGLE Network was mentioned by the Secretary General of CITES in his opening speech to the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention Against Corruption**

## Summary

4 ape traffickers were arrested and 2 baby chimps rescued in Guinea after several months of intensive investigation, building up to another crackdown on illegal trade in apes. The hard work of the entire GALF team led to the uncovering a large ape trafficking network with links to Chinese traffickers, and enabled 3 operations. The action was filmed by a TV crew of the TF1 French TV station.

The unprecedented crackdown operation against illegal logging and corruption in Gabon continued this month arresting additional 8 forest criminals. Since October, the total number of people arrested by the Gabonese authorities exceeded 30 including high officials of the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife, the Director of Cabinet, the Director General of Forests and the Director General of Industries, 2 Provincial Directors, the Head of Ovan Province and more provincial officers. These results have been achieved by



*A baby chimp rescued in operation in Guinea*

authorities in a big push in the fight against corruption. It is a strong message to illegal loggers and a great example to follow by other countries to fight illegal logging.

A primate trafficker, was arrested with 18 primate skulls including gorillas and chimpanzee in Cameroon. 2 giant pangolin scale traffickers with 114 kg of pangolin scales were arrested in Cameroon, where an important ring of traffickers was discovered.

2 ivory traffickers were arrested in Uganda, one with 35

kg of ivory and the other one with a fresh elephant trunk. The EAGLE Network was mentioned by the Secretary General of CITES in his opening speech to the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention Against Corruption. Conservation Justice was awarded the Medal of Recognition by the Gabonese National Police Forces as an appreciation of its significant contribution to combating illegal logging and corruption. The Steering group of EAGLE Network met in Nairobi to discuss future development of the network.

## Cameroon – LAGA

- A trafficker arrested with 100 kg of giant pangolin scales in the Centre Region close to the entrance to the Nsimalen international airport. The trafficker, a commercial bus driver with a travelling agency that ferries passengers from Ebolowa to Yaounde and back, had hidden the bag of scales among passenger luggage. When the bus he was driving was stopped and checked by wildlife officials from the Nsimalen airport, the contraband was found. The operation uncovered the links of supply and export highlighting the airport as a place of transaction before export.
- Two weeks later another giant pangolin scales trafficker was arrested with 14 kg of scales as he attempted to sell the contraband. He belongs to a wildlife trafficking ring that buys giant pangolin scales from poachers, killing the pangolins in the Deng Deng National Park.
- A primate trafficker was arrested and 18 primate skulls including gorillas and chimpanzee skulls recovered from him. Shortly before his arrest he

had sold about 55 skulls to another trafficker and this enabled the unleashing of an investigation that culminated into his arrest. He has been notoriously selling primate skulls to traditional healers.

- An investigator from Benin and a legal adviser from Senegal undertook extensive training in the country within the framework of the EAGLE Exchange Programme.
- The head of investigations travelled to Guinea to provide operation assistance to the GALF project during an operation that led to the arrest of 4 chimp traffickers and the rescuing 2 young chimpanzees.



*Primate skulls seized from ape trafficker*



*Trafficker arrested at the airport with 100 kg of giant pangolin scales*



# Congo – PALF

- PALF team is undergoing structural changes, new coordinator will be appointed.
- The team followed up the case of authorities,

which were reported to be involved in the ivory trade in southern Congo.

# Gabon – AALF & ALEFI

- 3 ivory traffickers arrested with 6 tusks, in an operation carried out in cooperation with intelligence services, officers of the Water and Forest Department and AALF team of Conservation Justice. The three men were followed for several days and finally they were arrested when they tried to sell the ivory.



3 ivory traffickers arrested with 6 tusks

- 2 traffickers arrested with 2 tusks and a leopard skin by police and AALF team. The traffickers were arrested red handed during an attempt to sell the leopard skin, claws and teeth and the ivory. They hoped to get about 1,000 USD for the contraband, instead they spend their time behind bars.

- 2 traffickers arrested with a leopard skin in a third of the back-to-back three operations run by AALF team. The traffickers were arrested in the act during an attempt to sell the skin.

- The unprecedented crackdown operation against illegal logging and corruption in Gabon continued this month arresting additional 8 forest criminals. Since October, the total number of people arrested by the Gabonese authorities exceeded 30 including high officials of the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife, the Director of Cabinet, the Director General of Forests and the Director General of Industries, 2 Provincial Directors, the Head of Ovan Province and more provincial officers. These results have been achieved by authorities in a big push in the fight against corruption. It is a strong message to illegal loggers and a great example to follow by other countries to fight illegal logging.

- Conservation Justice was awarded the Medal of Recognition by the Gabonese National Police Forces as an appreciation of its significant contribution to combating illegal logging and corruption.

- Conservation Justice signed a protocol with the Ministry in charge of Forests, ANPN (Agence Nationale des Parcs Nationaux) and AGEOS (Agence Gabonaise d'Etudes et d'Observations Spatiales) on the fight against illegal logging.



- Several meetings and discussions were held during this month with the Minister and deputy Minister of Forestry, Environment and Protection of Natural Resources and their chiefs of staff, the Secretary General of Waters and Forests, the Director General of Forestry and General Director of Wildlife and Protected Areas.
- Training was held in Port-Gentil for 50 police officers, gendarmes and forestry officers on wildlife law enforcement.

*Conservation Justice was awarded the Medal of Recognition by the Gabonese National Police Forces*

## Guinea – Conakry – GALF

- 4 ape traffickers were arrested with 2 chimpanzee babies after several months of intensive investigation building up to another crackdown on illegal trade in apes. Hard work of the entire GALF team led to uncovering a large ape trafficking network with links to Chinese traffickers, and enabled 3 operations. The action was filmed by a TV crew of the TF1 French TV station
- 2 traffickers kept a little female in a small village 75 km from Boké, the town, where they wanted to sell it. Then they brought her into a hotel, where the team was already waiting.
- Their accomplice was arrested in the evening of the same day. The three traffickers remain behind bars in their place in prison.
- Another significant ape trafficker was arrested few days later. He was playing a major role in large ape trafficking network in the region of Boke., He was arrested at his home in the evening in the presence of deputy public prosecutor.
- Both the chimps were transferred to the Chimpanzee Conservation Center in the Upper Niger National Park, where their care givers give them round the clock care. They will stay there for about 10 years before being released back to the wild, where they belong.
- The Head of the Investigation department of LAGA came from Cameroon to support the operations.
- A documentary film about Charlotte Houpline, the director of WARA, fighting the trafficking of apes in Guinea was recorded by the French TV channel TF1. It is planned to air on February next year.
- GALF team held a meeting with the Minister of

Justice to strengthen cooperation between GALF and the judiciary and fight against corruption.

- More meetings were held with the Policy Adviser to the US Embassy in Conakry and with authorities of the Ministry of Interior and central office of Interpol, with the judicial authorities of the court of the first instance in Kaloum during the preparation of the arrest operations.
- Several coordination meetings were held with the Prosecutor of the Republic, the deputy Prosecutor (focal point for the wildlife crime of the Ministry of Justice) and the



*2 ape traffickers arrested with a chimp baby*



GALF team. The first objective was to settle the procedural problems concerning the operation and second to obtain the opinion of the prosecutor and judges about fighting corruption in the country and about law enforcement.

- GALF participated in a CITES meeting that included all actors involved in the implementation of CITES in Guinea. Hard debates surrounded the development of the implementation of the recom-

mendations made by CITES secretariat in 2011. The crisis action plan for the survey of the penalty imposed by the CITES secretariat in March 2013 was presented and discussed.

- Legal follow up of the case of Ansoumane Doumbouya, the former head of the CITES Department and his accomplice Thierno Barry, who are still behind bars, continued.



After arresting the former wildlife head and the CITES authority of Guinea - Ansoumane Doumbouya in August this year, Guinean authorities made another important step in fighting ape trafficking and at the same time improving the country's reputation as an international hub in the illegal trade in chimpanzees and other animals.

During three operations carried out within few days 4 traffickers were arrested and 2 baby chimps rescued. The first 2 traffickers were arrested with a baby chimpanzee as they tried to sell her in a hotel. The one and half year old female was malnourished after suffering one month of abuse by the traffickers. An accomplice of the traffickers was arrested in the evening of the same day. Another significant ape trafficker, who was playing a major role in large ape trafficking network in the region of Boke, was arrested two days later at his home in the evening in the presence of deputy public prosecutor, who contained the trafficker's resistance to the arrest. The 4 months old male chimp named Kanda was in very poor condition and he was literary rescued at the last minute.

## Togo – TALFF

- 4 illegal loggers were arrested in a joint operation of the eco-guards of Franz Weber Foundation and TALF in the Fazao-Malfakassa National Park.
- Despite all the efforts of the Franz Weber Foundation, who manages the park for twenty-five years, and collaboration with the ANCE / TALFF project, the degradation of the forest in the national park continues due to increased illegal logging. The

traffickers exploit the forest not only without any timber license and technical documents or planning process, but on top of that in a strictly protected area. Such fraudulent practices will be a subject to the court process.

- To establish relations with the authorities and in order to keep track of these activities, the legal department held several meetings, namely with the

second Deputy Prosecutor at the Court of Lomé, the judge of the Lomé court, the new representative of the administration court in wildlife matters

(National Agency for Environmental Management: ANGEL), the Delegation of the European Union in Togo and others.

## SENEGAL - SALF

- 3 bird traffickers were arrested with 4 threatened Timneh parrots, 2 white pelicans and 10 turtles. Surprisingly, the 4 parrots appeared to be some of the 109 birds, which were seized during the operation in September when a significant international bird trafficker Aziz Sall was arrested. The birds were recovering in WPT sanctuary, but 30 of them were stolen. SALF team could identify the parrots thanks the metal rings on the birds' legs. These rings are stamped with specific information making it easy to prove that the birds were the same that were stolen.
- The court sentenced the 3 traffickers to 6 months behind bars and each 11,500 USD in damages.
- The SALF coordinator travelled to Guinea to support GALF team during several operations and to bring the documentary for TF1 on wildlife crime to Guinea. Cecile Bloch, the assistant coordinator, was in charge of the successful operation while Charlotte was gone.
- A legal adviser undertook extensive training in Cameroon within the framework of the EAGLE Exchange Programme.
- Meetings were held to discuss wildlife law enforcement and corruption with the President of Judges of the Dakar court, the Prosecutor of Dakar court - the focal point for SALF, the Director of the Water

and Forest department - the CITES focal point, the coordinator of the Global Project on fight against the Wildlife Crime in West Africa of UNODC and others.



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## Benin – AALF-B

- An investigator undertook extensive training in Cameroon within the framework of the EAGLE Exchange Programme.
- Meetings were held with the prosecutor of Porto Novo and with partners from forest authorities on

sea turtle shells trafficking case. Many meetings and discussions were held with police authorities handling ivory traffickers and shells of sea turtles.

## Uganda - EAGLE Uganda

- 2 ivory traffickers arrested with 35 kg of ivory in an operation carried out by police and EAGLE Uganda. They are known as notorious traffickers, offering for sale 100 kg of ivory, both of them remain behind bars.
- 2 ivory traffickers arrested with a fresh elephant trunk. They belong to a gang which is famous for attempts to rob the buyers, who arrive with money to buy ivory. Also in this case they tried the trick of promising a large amount of ivory, although they arrived only with the trunk. During the negotiation another group stormed the place in order to grab the money but EAGLE Uganda team and the police managed to keep the 2 traffickers arrested. Elephants are poached intensively in Uganda as well as in neighbouring countries mostly for ivory, but also for other trophies and bushmeat. A trunk of a mature elephant can measure between 1.8 - 2 m and is worth hundreds of dollars. Locally it is used in traditional medicine, and it is also sold as a trophy.
- A trafficker arrested with 3 skins of totally protected colobus monkeys. The trafficker, a motorbike rider, who often activated poachers' groups in his

district, arrived to Nabingola trading centre, where he waited along the road for almost 4 hours for the transaction to take place. When he tried to sell the skins, he was immediately arrested and taken to police custody, where he remains behind bars.

- The team intensified its effort in external relations and held a meeting with German Embassy. More meetings will follow as a result of direct focus on external relations.

*A trafficker arrested with 3 skins of totally protected colobus monkeys.*



*2 ivory traffickers arrested with 35 kg of ivory*



*2 ivory traffickers arrested with a fresh elephant trunk.*

# Headquarters

- The members of the Steering group, Ofir Drori, Luc Mathot and Naftali Honing met for several days in Nairobi to discuss the future development of the network, the transition of the PALF team and possible replications in other countries. They also met with the Central Coordination Unit.
- The recruitment process for the Network Financial Officer was finished and new team member will strengthen the CCU at the beginning of December.
- The EAGLE Network was mentioned by the Secretary General of CITES John Scanlon in his opening speech to the 6th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention Against Corruption

# International Media Coverage

- EAGLE Network was mentioned by the Secretary General of CITES John Scanlon in his opening speech to the 6th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention Against Corruption:  
[Link to the speech](#)
- Article in Jeune Afrique about the series of arrest of forest criminals in Gabon (in French):  
[Link to Jeune Afrique](#)
- Article in RFI Afrique about the series of arrest of forest criminals in Gabon (in French):  
[Link to RFI Afrique](#)

## THE EAGLE Network

EAGLE: Eco Activists for Governance and Law Enforcement, is a network of members across Africa, who are replicating effectively a program and operational model to undertake wildlife law enforcement, which is based on the LAGA-Cameroon model, trailed, practiced and tested since 2003. The EAGLE Network currently operates in eight African countries and keeps expanding.

The over-arching objective of the EAGLE Network is: *Developing civic activism and collaborating with governments and civil society to improve the application of national and international environmental legislation, through a program of activities: investi-*

*gations, arrests, prosecutions and publicity. Through this, EAGLE aims to generate a strong deterrent against the illegal trade in wildlife, timber and related criminal activities, including corruption.*

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