



**INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL
TIMBER ORGANIZATION**

Distr.
GENERAL

ITTC(XLV)/10
9 October 2009

ENGLISH
Original : FRENCH

FORTY-FIFTH SESSION
9 – 14 November 2009
Yokohama (Japan)

**Achieving ITTO Objective 2000 and
Sustainable Forest Management
Diagnostic Mission Report on Cameroon**

[Item 16 of Provisional Agenda]

Executive Summary

**Of the Diagnostic Mission in Cameroon
8 – 20 September 2008**

Team Leader: **Kouami KOKOU**
Members of the Team:
Karl-Hermann SCHMINCKE
John T. WOODS
Samuel EBAMANE NKOUMBA
John PALMER

List of Acronyms

AFD	Agence Française de Développement (French international development agency)
AFLEGT	Application des Législations Forestières et Gouvernance en Afrique (Africa Forest Law Enforcement and Governance)
ANAFOR	Agence Nationale d'Appui au développement Forestier (National Forest Development Supporting Agency)
ANTAV	Association Nationale de Transformateurs Artisanaux et Vendeurs du bois débité au Cameroun (National Association of Artisanal Timber Processors and Lumber Traders in Cameroon)
ATO	African Timber Organization
BAfD/AfDB	Banque Africaine de Développement (African Development Bank)
CBFP/PFBC	Congo Basin Forest Partnership
CCPM	Cercle de Concertation des Partenaires du MINFOF (Club for MINFOF Partners Consultations)
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism
CEFDHAC	Conférence sur les Ecosystèmes des Forêts Denses Humides d'Afrique Centrale ("The Brazzaville Process")
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CILS	Comité Inter Etats de Lutte contre la Sécheresse (Inter-state Committee on Drought Control)
COMIFAC	Commission des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale (Central African Forest Commission)
CNDD	Comité National pour le Développement Durable (National Committee for Sustainable Development)
CRESA	Centre Régional des Etudes et des Sciences Agronomiques (Regional Centre for Agricultural Sciences and Studies)
DAG	Direction des affaires générales (General Affairs Directorate)
DFID	Department for International Development (British Cooperation)
DFP	Domaine Forestier Permanent (Permanent Forest Estate)
DFNP	Domaine Forestier Non Permanent (Non-Permanent Forest Estate)
DME/MGL	Minimum Girth Limit
ECOFAC	Programme de Conservation et Utilisation Rationnelle des Ecosystèmes Forestiers d'Afrique centrale (Programme for the Conservation and Rational Use of Forest Ecosystems in Central Africa)
ENEF	Ecole Nationale des Eaux et Forêts (College of Forestry)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FCFA	Franc of the Francophone Community of African States
FGW	Forest Global Watch
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade
FMU	Forest Management Unit
FSDF	Fonds Spécial de Développement Forestier (Special Forest Development Fund)
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNT	Groupe National de Travail (National Working Group – C&I Process)
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (German Cooperation)
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
ICRAF	International Centre For Research in Agroforestry
IITA	Institut International d'Agriculture Tropicale (International Institute for Tropical Agriculture)
IRAD	Institut de Recherche Agricole pour le Développement (Institute of Agricultural Research for Development)
IO	Independent Observer
IT	International Transparency
ITTC	International Tropical Timber Council
ITTO	Internationale Tropical Timber Organization
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
MINADER	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MINEF	Ministry of Environment and Forestry
MINEPIA	Ministry of Animal Husbandry, Fisheries and Livestock Industries

MINEP	Ministry of Environment and Conservation
MINFI	Ministry of Finances
MINFOF	Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife
OFSA	Organisation pour la faune sauvage en Afrique centrale (Organization for Wildlife Management in Central Africa)
ONADEF	Office National de Développement des Forêts (former national forest management agency of Cameroon)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
PCI	Principles, Criteria and Indicators
NTFPs	Non-Timber Forest Products
PROFOR	Program on Forests (a multi-donor trust fund)
PSFE	Programme sectoriel Forêt et Environnement (Forest and Environment Sectoral Programme)
RAPAC	Réseau des aires protégées d'Afrique centrale (Network of Protection Areas in Central Africa)
REDD	Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation
RFA	Redevance Forestière Annuelle (Annual Forest Royalty)
RIGC	Renforcement des initiatives de gestion communautaire des ressources forestières et fauniques (Strengthening Community Management Initiatives for Forest and Wildlife Resources)
SEPBC	Société d'exploitation des parcs à bois du Cameroun (a log yard operations company)
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SGS	Société Générale de Surveillance (a standard and procedure monitoring and audit firm)
SIGIF	Système Informatisé de Gestion de l'Information Forestière (Computerized Forest Information Management System)
SME	Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises
SNV	Netherlands Development Agency
TIAMA	Traitement Informatique Applicable à la Modélisation des Aménagements (Applied Digital Processing for Forest Management Works Modelling)
VAP	Voluntary Agreement Partnership (EU FLEGT Process)
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WRI	World Resources Institute
WWF	World Wild Fund for nature

Origin and objectives of the Mission

At the 29th Session of the International Tropical Timber Council (ITTC) in November 2000 in Yokohama, Decision 2 (XXIX) entitled "ITTO Objective 2000" was adopted. Under this Decision the Executive Director was authorized to provide assistance to producer member countries, upon request, to identify in each country, factors that constrain progress towards the ITTO 2000 Objective and Sustainable Forest Management (SFM). Thus the government of Cameroon has introduced a letter Ref: V / R No. F. 08-0004 dated 04 January 2008 authorizing ITTO to undertake a diagnostic mission to identify the major factors that hinder progress towards the "ITTO Objective 2000" in Cameroon.

The terms of reference of the consultants (four international consultants and one national consultant selected by ITTO) was to review the status of sustainable forest ecosystem management, that is to say, identifying factors that hinder the progress of sustainable forest management in Cameroon, their sequencing and articulation, and to recommend appropriate actions to overcome these constraints. More specifically, the assigned tasks included:

1. Identifying the most critical factors preventing sustainable forest management in the country;
2. Prioritizing these constraints;
3. Recommending a sequence of actions to remove them and estimating their costs whenever possible.

Implementation of the mission

The mission was mainly focused on the issue of sustainable forest management in the moist and sub-moist natural forests of southern Cameroon. The mission commenced with preliminary visits to Government officials in Yaoundé (Ministers and officials, Government departments' representatives, including those of the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife), research and training institutions, technical and financial partners, the "Independent Observer" in support of Forest Law Enforcement, trade associations of the timber industry and representatives of a few NGOs. Mission members then undertook field trips to the departmental structures of the Ministries of Forestry, the National School of Forestry in Mbalmayo (ENEF), logging companies in Yaoundé, Mbalmayo, Douala, Bertoua (IBC, ECAM-placages and PALLISCO), the Monitoring, Supervision and Certification institutions (Customs Department, SEPBC, SGS, FSC). They visited indigenous communities (Pygmies), timber sellers in Yaoundé Messa and some forest management projects. The mission also met and held discussions with parliamentarians and members of the Judiciary.

Following these visits, a dissemination workshop was held at Hotel Riviera in Yaounde on September 19, 2008 to discuss diagnostic data and draft recommendations to be issued by the Mission. Participants to this workshop were the government officials and stakeholders' representatives who had been visited during the mission and others who have an interest in the sustainable management of forest resources in Cameroon. The discussions were organized in plenary and working groups on key topics addressed by the Mission, including: forest policy, the institutional and legal framework, social and environmental aspects, the development and implementation of forest and land management plans, timber production and forest industries. Participants made recommendations for improving the diagnostic and future actions.

Cameroon's forest sector and the status of progress in sustainable forest management

Availability of forest resources

Based on data from the national inventory conducted in 2004 with FAO support, the total forest area of Cameroon is estimated to cover 21,236,475 ha. Cameroon has gazetted a total of 7,537,239 ha of its territory as conservation areas, i.e. 15.87 % of the country land area. The existence and creation of transboundary conservation areas are part of the policy effort to stymie fragmentation of natural ecosystems. In addition, there is a Network of Conservation Areas in Central Africa (RAPAC), created in May 2000 in Yaoundé, through the institutionalization of the ECOFAC Programme.

Stakeholders and institutions involved in forest management

➤ Public Sector Stakeholders

The Ministry of Forests and Wildlife (MINFOF) is responsible for developing and implementing forest and wildlife policies, enforcing international conventions ratified by Cameroon, controlling compliance with logging regulations and enforcing penalties and sanctions. To address the challenges of balanced rural sector development, other government departments involved in natural resource management alongside of MINFOF are the Ministries of Agriculture and Rural Development (MINADER), Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industries (MINEPIA), Environment and Nature Protection (MINEP) MINPADT and MINDAF.

Cameroon has established a number of national fora for discussion and information sharing on forestry, including CNDD, the various committees to implement the programmes of FESP PROFOR/Cameroon, CEFDHAC, the Interministerial Committee for the Environment, The National Committee to Control Poaching, the Committee to Approve Programmes Submitted for Funding to the Special Fund for Forestry Development and the Special Fund for Wildlife, the National Working Group and the National Mutual Consultation Network for NTFPs (*Réseau national de concertation pour les PFNL*).

At the regional level, Cameroon is a member of COMIFAC, CEFDHAC, OFSAA, ATO, CILS, etc.

At the international level, Cameroon is an ITTO member country; it is also a member of the fora on emerging issues (Forum on Desertification, Framework Convention on Climate Change, United Nations Forum on Forests).

In Cameroon, forestry research is in the remit of several institutions including IRAD, ICRAF, IITA, etc. . Several centres and institutes provide forestry training and retraining of management staff and technicians: University of Dschang, University of Yaoundé, the National Forestry School in Mbalmayo (*École des Eaux et Forêts de Mbalmayo*), the School of Wildlife Management in Garoua and the Regional Centre for Agricultural Sciences and Studies (CRESA).

➤ Major non-governmental stakeholders involved in the forestry sector

The forest policy of Cameroon promotes the involvement of local communities in forest resources management. The community forest concept has been developed within the Forest Law for this purpose. And the concept has turned into reality. The economic operators involved in forest product harvesting and management operations pool their resources and capacities into "joint-interest groups" (*groupes d'intérêt commun*).

NGOs and both international (IUCN, WWF, WCS, VNS, WRI and FGW) and national organizations are very active in the forestry sector in Cameroon. International NGOs directly involved in the forestry sector through the multifaceted support they provide, especially to the civil society, are SNV, WWF, IUCN and FGW.

Development partners supporting MINFOF are subdivided into:

- Bilateral partners (GTZ, CIDA, AFD, DFID). These partners coordinate their actions to finance the PSFE (Forest/Environment Sectoral Programme) and meet in the "Club for MINFOF Partners Consultations" (*Cercle de Concertation des Partenaires du MINFOF*);
- Multilateral partners: the European Commission, World Bank, ADB, FAO and the PFBC.

Policy, regulatory and legal frameworks

The commitments of Cameroon to the sustainable management of forest resources were made at the international level through the ratification of most existing treaties on sustainable management of forest ecosystems. Under the FLEGT/AFLEGT Process, Cameroon is engaged in negotiations leading to the signing of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement with the European Union. At regional level, Cameroon is a member of ATO and CILS. At sub-regional level, Cameroon has signed the "Yaoundé Declaration" and the COMIFAC Treaty. At national level, Cameroon has implemented a reform of its forestry sector to maximise its contribution to the national economy. Since 1993, Cameroon has a forest policy implemented under the PSFE – a programme supported by donors.

The legal and regulatory framework governing the sustainable management of Cameroon's forest ecosystems contains several legislations, orders and decrees. An extensive list of forest management

standards has been added to these legal instruments. The Forest Act of 1994 and related enactments identify two classes of forest estates, the Permanent Forest Estate (PFE) and Non-Permanent Forest Estate (DFNP). It provides clear definitions and the tenure status of the State forests, municipal forests, community forests and privately-owned forests.

Forest Industry

Logging activities in Cameroon are conducted either through logging concessions, or the sales of standing timber (*ventes de coupe*) or through direct government-controlled operations in the Permanent Forest Estate, and through sales of standing timber, logging licenses and authorisations in the Non-Permanent Forest Estate. Domestic timber production outputs have increased from 1,937,779 m³ to 2,289,416 m³ between 1998 and 2006.

The forest sector's contribution to economic activity is about 11% of GDP. The forest sector generates nearly 45,000 jobs, half of them in the informal sector; but it also generates a significant number of indirect economic activities, in particular those linked to various forms of transportation, equipment maintenance, the service industry and agricultural or pastoral micro-projects.

Critical analysis of the progress made by Cameroon towards sustainable forest management

Adverse conditions affecting SFM

National reforms to promote sustainable management of forest ecosystems in Cameroon have been undertaken in context marred by the economic crisis and Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) conditionalities imposed by donors to release the funds needed for reviving the national economy. The economic crisis and rampant poverty imposed some forced alternatives which have not always been consistent with sustainable management.

Cameroon has no nationwide land-use plan. However, under the leadership of the Ministry of Forests, there is an indicative framework for land use in the southern part of the country. The management of the forestry/agriculture or forestry/animal husbandry, forestry/mining interfaces is a major challenge for SFM.

The list of industrial standards in Cameroon is a commendable one, including those applicable to environmental impact studies required by law, or the PC&Is. However, the procedures for implementing these standards are slow to get fully established for all public and private operators concerned.

Government Order No. 222/A/MINEF of May 25, 2001 is the act whereby MINFOF transferred all activities related to forest management to private operators. Indeed the evaluation of the implementation of management plans provided for in this Act and referred to forest concession holders is normally a prerogative of the State as much as any control and monitoring activities. GTZ published a report in 2006 – whose findings are being challenged by MINFOF officials – indicating that more than half of the management plans do not reach the mark of 60% when assessed solely in reference to legal criteria. Many experts believe that the TIAMA software used for processing inventory data and preparing of development plans is inadequate. Furthermore, Government Order 222 does not prescribe any post-logging inventory, yet a critical step for monitoring forest management plans.

MINFOF's institutional capacity for steering activities in the forestry sector is insufficient. The structures responsible for the management of forest resources have been reduced, severely limiting their ability for steering, monitoring and controlling forest resources. The situation is such that MINFOF cannot be proactive in conducting its programs and neither can they fulfil their commitments made under the implementation of PSFE. Positions have been scrapped in MINFOF Technical Directorates. In addition to this, there are conflicts of jurisdiction between MINFOF and MINEP. In human resources, staffing remains inadequate despite recent hires. And this staffing problem is compounded by the lack of training. Executives specializing in a particular activity can be found engaged in tasks for which they had not developed any prior expertise.

Training in the School of Forestry in Mbalmayo has many deficiencies. Through a lack of capacities to develop field-level educational and training activities, while operating without any proper links with MINFOF structures and relying on demotivated teaching staff badly in need of re-training, ENEF Mbalmayo churns out graduates who enter the job market with little operational capacities in any areas of the forest sector.

The forest policy of Cameroon gives prime of place to the involvement of local communities. These rural populations living on forest lands are largely dependent on forest resources. The non-timber forest products (NTFP) sector is the one most accessible to these rural populations. These products are *Pygeum africanum*, *Griffonia simplicifolia*, *Taberna iboga*, *Cinchona sp.*, *Strophantus*, *Voacanga africana*, *Rauwofia vomitoria*, *Paunsinvstalia yohimbe*, *Gnetum africanum*, *Cola spp.* *Garcinia kola*, etc. . Some are exported, as *Gnetum africanum*. Others are used in the manufacturing of medicinal products such as *Pygeum africanum* and *Paunsinvstalia yohimbe*. But conflicts of interest exist between people and forest concession holders to access and use certain NTFP. This is particularly the case with Moabi (*Baillonnela toxisperma*) and Sapelli (*Sapele*).

Forest Resources Security

The Government and local communities do not share the same understanding of community forestry. The communities see an opportunity to reclaim ownership of land the Government took away from them through land tenure legislations. Community forest management also faces the challenges of weak technical and managerial capacities of the legal entities that represent these communities. These organizations also face financial difficulties when conducting inventory activities, developing management plans and handling governmental administrative procedures.

Data currently available at the Forest Department show that out of the 113 identified FMUs (covering 7,290,082 ha), 98 were awarded of which 69 have management plans approved and implemented, 47 FMUs are gazetted and managed on clearly delineated forest areas. Six management plans have been under implementation for more than five years and should already be evaluated. In addition, production state forests could experience significant changes due to a large number of FMUs located in the Eastern Province which can be open for mining. Community/municipal forests cover around 140,000 ha. Of the six community forests allocated five have been provided with a management plan. The development of these forests faces the same challenges as any state-owned forests due to red tape and the high cost of land title transfer procedures.

The national forest estate and particularly the non-permanent forest estate is subject to rapid deforestation; 200,000 ha of forest are lost each year. FAO estimates that 9.5 million m³ of timber are harvested annually in Cameroon (MINFOF estimated this figure to 12 million m³). Illegal logging practices tend to spread through small logging rights allocated through less-than-transparent procedures and in community forests. The proposed sanctions following controls are not always commensurate with the damage done to the resource base and the national economy.

Forest product flows

Describing the flow of forest products is a relatively complex task in Cameroon. All overland transportation of timber in Cameroon must come with its waybill attached certifying that the goods in consignment come, in theory from legal operations. Therefore, waybills contribute to establish how compliant the products are during roadside inspections and at final destination. Waybills are required for timber from forest concessions, from sales of standing timber, municipal forests, community forests, and timber from small logging licences for logs transport and trading, and finally for sawn wood. Although a number of organizational arrangements have been taken, loopholes exist at all levels of these procedures, leading to fraud.

Biodiversity

In forest concession areas biodiversity resources are threatened for various reasons, including:

- Reduced impact logging techniques are still based on purely technological considerations;
- The knowledge of species behavior is inadequate and should be improved and integrated into the practices;
- Minimum girth limits should be reviewed;
- The opening of the canopy is not optimal and cannot ensure the conservation of plant diversity;
- Unsustainable hunting practices associated with logging operations are a problem not addressed realistically and pragmatically.

Soil, Water and Carbon

Cameroonian forests are part of the Congo Basin forest complex, which acts as a regulating mechanism on the regional and local climate. This forest provides services such as water recycling; over 50% of rainfalls reaching the Congo Basin come from local evaporation and evapotranspiration. This ecological function of forests is no longer possible under the current pace of degradation affecting the vegetation cover. Through its sheer size, the forest of the Congo basin constitutes a carbon reserve of global significance for controlling the main greenhouse gas emissions – carbon dioxide. The current development of carbon trading facilities and associated mechanisms (CDM, REDD) could offer better opportunities for the long-term recovery of Cameroon's natural forests. But the level of involvement by the Cameroonian government in ongoing international negotiations seems too low.

Economic, social and cultural aspects

The market is supplied primarily by timber from the non-permanent forest estate; this production amounting to one million m³ is often from illegal sources and has a negative impact on the sustainability of forests in Cameroon. This informal and unregulated market also exports timber to neighbouring countries including Nigeria, Chad and Sudan. The Government loses significant revenues every year through this activity. Approximately 150 to 200 imported Lucas mobile saws, with a combined processing capacity reaching 150,000 m³ / year of logs, are operated in Cameroon and hundreds of chainsaws are in circulation in the forests of Cameroon.

The forest of Cameroon welcomes people who have maintained a more or less nomadic hunter-gatherer lifestyle. These are the Pygmies, although they are now becoming more settled as communities, the forest environment is for them a place of initiation rites for their secret societies, including induction ceremonies; they also provide burial grounds for their traditional leaders - for the Jengi group of Pygmies in the Eastern part of the countries and the Bamileke group – and are a source of materials for making dugouts, manufacturing musical instruments and fishing gear.

Logging companies (WIJMA, SEFAC, TRC, PALLISCO) are involved in the certification process and have increased their contribution to socioeconomic development through the construction and maintenance of roads and/or the development of health infrastructure and educational facilities directly associated with forest concessions.

Constraints to the implementation of sustainable forest management in Cameroon

Political, legal, regulatory and governance constraints [Constraints Group I]

➤ International legal instruments

(1) Cameroon, like most developing countries, is characterized by a deficient implementation of international conventions to which the country is a party.

➤ National forestry goals involving production, conservation, protection and investment

(2) Cameroon has adopted ambitious policy and program for the forest/environment sector; but the level of financial, material and human resources being marshalled to meet this ambition is inadequate;

(3) The philosophy underpinning Forest Act enactments is that a concession holder shall assume the combined roles of logging operator, forest technician, forest manager and timber industrialist and this approach is incompatible with the concept of SFM. This has caused strong pressure on the forest and probably is the cause of illegal logging operations taking place both within and without FMUs.

(4) Cameroon finds it a challenge to manage its production forests. Out of the the 98 FMUs allocated and under logging, 69 have a management plan approved and implemented, 47 have been gazetted and are managed within clearly delineated areas. Six management plans have been implemented for over five years without any evaluation and review.

(5) There is no real resource renewal policy in force; ANAFOR is tackling the issue through reviews and studies aimed at establishing the basic structures (land tenure policy, production of higher quality planting

material, funding facilities). It has also signed *ad hoc* reforestation agreements with companies but these efforts are not derived from any overall consistent policy.

➤ **Forest Security**

(6) The area size of the production forest estate could experience significant changes if the Government agrees to sacrifice a great number of FMUs located in the Eastern Region to mining interests.

➤ **Land tenure and property rights in relation to forest**

(7) Law No. 94-01 of January 20, 1994 providing the Forest Regime was developed and adopted based on the land tenure system and state-owned land status currently in force in Cameroon; it grants the communities the ownership of neither the land parcels they traditionally occupy nor the natural resources therein. This situation gives rise to long-standing conflicts adverse to a secure forest estate.

(8) Access to land tenure is an important prerequisite for the implementation of a forest policy and remains a major concern for the sustainable management of forest resources. The sustainability of community forest management is hampered by the ownership status of land on which these forests are located. Finally, the absence of a clearly expressed and codified policy planning process is a serious handicap.

➤ **Participation of local communities and other stakeholders in forest management**

(9) The zoning plan does not sufficiently take into account the socioeconomic aspects. This situation is reflected in the forest concession gazetting process – most of these concessions have seen their area reduced in response to demands from the local communities.

(10) The management of community production forest is made difficult because of cumbersome bureaucratic procedures. The management of these forests stumbles upon problems akin to those of State-owned forests. Implementation faces challenges such as red tape and the high cost of land title issuing procedures.

(11) Legislations and their relevant enactments do not address conflicts of interest between logging operators and the communities in forest areas assigned for harvesting operations, including communities' access to non-timber forest products which is a source of food, pharmacopoeia and income for the communities.

(12) In response to market constraints, forest concessionaires have engaged in the process of sustainable management, yet some continue to develop practices contrary to sustainable management – deliberate extension of interim agreements, instigation of illegal logging operations in the non-permanent forest estate, alteration of findings from forests inventories they had contracted to government-approved firms. Such illegal logging operations are especially common among many small concessionaires who have the support of a parent company in Europe.

➤ **Control of illegal activities in forest areas**

(13) One impact of the lack of an efficient policy to organize the forestry sector is the development of the informal sector. Timber processing capacities exceed available supply: 76 plants, 70 sawmills, 4 veneer peeling units, slicing unit and a matchstick factory make a processing capacity estimated at 2.7 million m³. A volume of approximately 250,000 to 300,000 m³ of logs is exported annually together with 400,000 to 500,000 m³ of sawnwood and veneer. Some manufacturers resort to the informal sector whose production is about one million m³ and in general operating illegally.

(14) Enforcement brigades (national, regional and departmental) are affected by a chronic manpower shortage and cannot control all hunting and logging activities or exercise any effective control on the implementation of forest management plans.

(15) Trees are not marked prior to logging. Government Order 222 setting forth the conditions for the development, approval and implementation of management plans leaves concessionaires the discretion to exempt key timber species from the constraints and restrictions of the management plan and harvest them accordingly, and these species are generally found listed under Group II of main complementary timber species not subject to higher-level minimum girth limit regulations.

(16) Interim agreements are binding instruments for both concessionaire and the Government but their statutory provisions are not abided by. During the 3-year interim period, the concessionaire must have the management plan approved and be able to evidence his ownership of a processing plant. Pending such approval, the concessionaire may be given an annual base cut (*assiette de coupe*) of 2 500 ha. But this statutory period is generally not enforced.

(17) Governance and transparency are deficient in the activities of MINFOF who fails to publish annually the annual allowable cuts in the permanent forest estate open to logging. The SIGIF could have been a great value had it functioned normally. Regrettably, this structure does not receive all the information data needed but only those provided by the various technical directorates.

(18) The proposed sanctions are not always commensurate with the damage done to the resource base and the national economy, and they do not deter offenders. The consequence of this situation is widespread illegal logging activities, especially in "small-hold titles".

(19) The system is characterized by evidences of influence peddling and corruption. A report by Transparency International (TI) describes the same findings, even at the highest level of the forest administration. Unreported logging operations in the non-permanent forest estate are often conducted in connivance with forest officials. To remedy this situation, MINFOF has pledged to conduct a baseline study on the current standard of governance in the forest sector and implement the findings of the study.

➤ **Forest Management Monitoring**

(20) The renewal of FMUs' timber resources through reforestation or enrichment planting activities is still in infancy, with most development plans still based on resource renewal through the natural regeneration process, even though this process has not been assessed.

(21) Cameroon has developed PCIs to provide guidance to FMU management; and the field-level operations manual for these guides has just been validated.

(22) The provisions to develop environmental impact studies before the implementation of management plans are not complied with. A moratorium has been granted to companies reluctant to comply with the regulations in force.

(23) The regulation laying down procedures for the preparation, approval, monitoring and control of the implementation of forest management plans (222/A/MINEF Order of May 25, 2001) is fraught with inconsistencies. The evaluation of the implementation of management plans provided for in this order is left at the discretion of concessionaires even though it is a prerogative of the State as much as are control and monitoring operations.

(24) A review of forest management plans submitted to MINFOF for approval reveals serious weaknesses regarding compliance with both inventory and management plan development standards.

(25) The granting of logging permits to government-approved companies is based on a formula combining the technical bid and financial bid (Order No. 02936/MINEF of March 21, 2000). But the financial bid takes precedence over the technical bid, resulting in the prevalence of sawmilling industries having low recovery rates, often with operational standards and capacities inadequate to the quality of the forest.

(26) The FMU gazettement processes, which govern final boundaries and surface area delineation in management plans, are experiencing delays mainly due to a lack of resources. But all management plans have been approved based on provisional boundaries and surface areas identified prior to the results of the FMU gazettement processes.

(27) Post-harvesting inventories are important for the monitoring of development plans but are not prescribed. Moreover, there are no standards for multi-resource inventories, no standards for mangrove forest inventories either and we noted the absence in the forest legislation and related enactments of specific provisions to promote the NTFP sector.

(28) The control and monitoring of sustainable management activities mainly apply to logging and overlook other implementation activities derived from management plans.

➤ **Health and safety of forest workers**

(29) Only those concessionaires involved in the certification process take sufficient account of the socio-economic aspects of the forest management process to be implemented.

Economic constraints [Constraints Group III]

➤ **Amount allocated to forest management, administration, research and development on human resources**

Government Sources

(30) SFM in Cameroon is compromised by the lack of financial capacities. Under the PSFE, and in relation to existing regulations, each year MINFI should allocate MINFOF 45% of revenues derived from the Annual Forest Royalty (*Redevance forestière annuelle*, RFA) (assessed based on the forest area under logging), the felling tax, the proceeds from forest product sales and the transfer tax. This revenue amounted to FCFA 21 billion in 2001, FCFA 33 billion in 2002 and FCFA 40 billion in 2003; yet during that period and till now, annual payments from MINFI to MINFOF under this regulation have hardly ever reached FCFA 1 billion. Through the lack of financial means, enforcement teams fail to implement their relevant missions.

(31) The State has established the Special Fund for Forestry Development (FSDF) but the fund is inefficient. Mobilising this fund at the level of the National Treasury is a challenge, and it only channels a small fraction of all anticipated financial resources.

 **Development Partners**

(32) Some partners limit MINFOF's actions within a project-oriented approach, whilst the PSFE calls for a programme-oriented approach. Such is the case with ITTO and FAO which continue to fund individual projects while the donor community continues supporting the PSFE through the CFC. The impact of these projects is not always assessed.

Private sources

✓ **Local sources**

(33) The Forest Industry Solidarity Fund (*Fonds de solidarité interprofessionnelle*) provided for in the Forest Act, which should help Cameroonian nationals to install their own industries, has not yet been established, which drives many of them to operate outside the law.

(34) Local banks do not finance logging activity; they require substantial guarantees (25 to 30%) that nationals cannot provide.

(35) Community forest entities experience financial difficulties to conduct required inventory activities, develop management plans and prepare application files and follow other administrative procedures. The cost of developing a simplified management plan with communities amounts to FCFA 5 million – a sum not all communities can pay. The Ministry has developed the RIGC to address this constraint, but it is hardly efficient.

(36) Funds from the RFA, which are allocated to municipalities (40%) and local communities (10%), are not used to promote development programs that could offer alternatives. Money intended for the communities often vanishes without a trace.

✓ **International Sources**

(37) The timber economy in Cameroon does not rely on domestic capital, 99% of industries are foreign-owned.

(38) Cameroon has about 300 potentially marketable timber species, 50 are currently used and 3 (Azobé, Sapele and Ayous) account for 60% of exports. This situation reflects the current status of demand on the international market; it does not lead to any significant increase in forest revenues and does not promote any balanced or sustainable management of forests.

➤ **Existence and implementation of economic instruments and other incentives to encourage SFM**

(39) Cameroon is under a Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) regulating all economic areas of the country.

(40) Recommendations from studies conducted through the Mutual Fund (i. e. the common fund contributed to by DEFI, Canada and France and jointly managed by GTZ and DAG) as part of PSFE have not been implemented.

(41) Red tape and the lack of evaluation do not encourage donors to put money in the Mutual Fund.

(42) The latest global financial crisis has heavily impacted the forest sector – 30% of U.S. and European orders were canceled for the timber sector in Cameroon, causing the timber trade association to apply for tax exemptions, when taxes and levies make up around 40 % of their expenses.

Institutional constraints [Constraints Group III]

➤ **Structure and personnel in charge of SFM**

The Ministry in charge of SFM

(43) Institutional instability could also explain why the Ministry in charge of forests -- MINFOF -- has remained unable to establish SFM. The instability of the ministry is linked to staff policies. The Forest Service has been operating for very many years without a career plan and without regard to seniority and expertise. Sometimes the staff replacement process is expedited – a newcomer may not know anything that happened before and he/she does not always have the documentation to continue the activities of predecessors. However, SFM must be expressed in terms of sustainability for both field and office staff.

(44) The multiplicity of departments and/or competition between departments in charge of rural development policy act as an impediment to SFM development. MINEP and MINFOF wage a "silent war" over the respective responsibilities for PSFE components.

(45) Basic infrastructures that existed and which were inherited from the former ONADEF have deteriorated, not enabling ANAFOR to implement the reforestation policy. This institution does not ensure plant material production any longer. ANAFOR is in dire need of staff. Due to the conditionality arising from the implementation of economic programs, ANAFOR staff established has been reduced to 110 out of the 800 employees of the late ONADEF.

(46) The departments responsible for implementation and monitoring of forest management plans need to be strengthened. In its present configuration, the Sub-Directorate of inventories and development of the Forest Directorate is not equipped to control inventory and monitor the implementation of development plans at field level, let alone making an evaluation of their implementation.

(47) The use of human resources leaves considerable room for improvement. Many routine meetings hold up other activities by the various managers within MINFOF and they do not have time to devote to the essentials. These officials are often selected based on considerations other than expertise. Managers and supervisors with knowledge and capacities in one field of activity can be found engaged in tasks for which they have no expertise.

(48) MINFOF does not apply any skill assessment procedures. The assessment of training needs has been made but not implemented. Very few managers and supervisors have attended refresher and/or retraining courses in the areas where they operate. This is a significant constraint and lead to subsidence and erosion of expertise in place.

(49) Some issues are subject to substantial delays detrimental to sustainable management; those include issues relating to the gazetting of concessions which define final concession boundaries. Further examples are the signing of deeds of final concession awards.

➤ **Other institutions involved in forest management**

✚ **NGOs and the national civil society**

(50) Some national organizations supposed to facilitate the forest dialogue are not operational. Such is the case of the National Committee for Sustainable Development, the National Consultative Forum on Forests and Environment of PROFOR/Cameroon, the National Network for NTFP and the National Working Group who have never operated.

(51) While listed among the options put forward by the forestry policy in force, the involvement of other stakeholders (national NGOs, associations) in conducting the forest sector remains weak.

✚ **Local Communities**

(52) The Forest Administration has pledged technical assistance to local communities for the implementation of simplified management plans. The RIGC has been established for this purpose on HIPC funding but follow-up activities remain dependent on the availability of new funding.

(53) There is a lack of awareness and information for local communities on SFM issues and lack of organization of these into viable entities on which capacity-building programmes could be based. Sustainable management is a concept that comes from elsewhere; Cameroonians and especially local communities are not proactively engaged. As a consequence, the concepts of SFM, biodiversity, bioenergy, carbon, legality, certification, etc. are foreign to many Cameroonians.

➤ **Number of professional and technical personnel at all levels of forest management implementation**

Training institutions

(54) Training institutions whose role is to support the ministries in charge of SFM lack modern teaching materials in the various fields of forestry (such as spatial orientation in forest, forest biometrics, photo interpretation, remote sensing, digital mapping technologies and computerized data processing). Training centers under MINFOF supervision (ENEF, Wildlife Management School in Garoua) did not receive their regular operating budget. There is also little, if any, incentive provided to teachers who have no career plan available to them. As a result, graduate forest technicians approach the job market while being hardly operational in the various fields of forestry.

(55) The Directorate of Forestry and MINFOF has little influence over the technical aspects of training centers' operations and have no say in the definition of training modules which should normally be tailored to their needs. MINFOF experts are not involved at all in the training of the future managers of their institution.

(56) There is a lack of training modules tailored to the requirements of sustainable forest resource management (retraining and refresher courses).

(57) CRESA training staff has stated there is no relationship between them and MINFOF. Therefore, collaboration is informal. The PSFE is supposed to finance the activities of all stakeholders in the sector however the financial resources made available to it are not even enough to cover its own activities.

✚ **Research Institutions**

(58) Demonstration plots established in FMUs to identify important forest management parameters as inputs in any revision of the development plans are not being monitored. It is hoped that recent initiatives to associate the research community to PSFE lead to joint follow-up programmes.

(59) Research findings are not implemented. The results of successfully completed projects have not been built-upon.

(60) The unemployment rate among graduates from forestry training centers in the country is high. From 1980 to 2008, ENEF trained approximately 1,000 graduates, about 300 have found work, mainly in the public service.

Technical constraints [Constraints Group IV]

➤ The FMU level

(61) The size of FMUs is sometimes too low, it varies between 15,000 ha and 149,000 ha: Eight FMUs on 97 are less than 30,000 ha and 31 FMUs less than 50,000 ha. Smaller areas are unsuitable for sustainable management in the context of natural tropical forests where yields are very low.

(62) Consulting firms licensed by the forest administration for conducting inventories are in the main technically incompetent or have no experience in management plan development techniques.

(63) The technical staff of the forestry administration is mostly engaged in administrative duties and is therefore poorly positioned to know and appraise post-harvest forest growth dynamics.

(64) The lack of capacity of the Department of Forests to monitor inventory data provided by consulting firms has been reported in interviews. A significant percentage of approved development plans are based on sub-standard inventories, according to a review conducted by GTZ in 2001. This review has also shown that only 30% of completed management inventories complied with regulatory standards, 55% were partially compliant with these standards and 15% were totally non-compliant.

(65) One of the basic shortcomings in the legal compliance of development plans is that Rule 6 of Order 222/A/MINEF of May 25, 2001, setting forth inventory management standards, states that trees to include in the inventory data must have a diameter > 20 cm. Saplings, which are regarded as future trees to be spared for the next harvest, are not to be considered. Hence it is surprising to find regeneration discussed in the management plan documents, with predictions for the future forest.

(66) The Canadian cooperation has helped the development of SIGIF – an effective monitoring tool for forest management and taxation. SIGIF was at the core of the timber chain-of-custody monitoring system but is not receiving all required information. Beyond the compilation of information, SIGIF should be proactive in analyzing the data and making them available not only to MINFOF officials but also the general public.

(67) The operation of SIGIF could have been effective had the Internet and Intranet communication system within the administration worked well and reached all central and external services.

(68) The volume tables currently applied are obsolete and in some instances those of neighbouring countries (Gabon, Congo) are used.

(69) Product quantities and quality standards are declining (lower minimum girth limits); stocks of some species such as Doussié (*Azelia bella*, *A. bipendensis*, *A. africana*), Pachy (*Azelia pachyloba*), Wengué (*Millettia laurentii*) and Bubinga (*Guibourtia tessmanii*, *G. demeusei*), are decreasing, indicating the unsustainability of demand.

(70) Without access to forest stands through the award of forest concessions or the sale of standing timber, some industries such as IBC may seek supplies from illegal sources or might close down altogether. Inadequate supply of forest products to installed processing capacities remains a threat to SFM.

➤ Municipal and community forests

(71) Low technical and managerial capacities among the legal entities that represent the people who control community forests.

Recommendations by the Mission

Recommendations to the Government of Cameroon and MINFOF

❖ Financial and socio-economic constraint: Economic development and product diversification

- To develop a formal policy and associated strategy aimed at the further processing of forest products at both artisanal and industrial scales, in order to create more added value and jobs, while keeping harvesting levels in line with annual allowable cuts.
- To improve the forest resources awarding mechanism, in consultation with stakeholders and through appropriate transparent awarding procedures, in order to increase forest revenues levels accruing to the State;
- To harmonize customs duties to minimize the number of frauds at Customs;
- A portion of revenue from taxes levied on forest products should be directly handed over to MINFOF to support SFM efforts in Cameroon.

❖ Policy constraint: Inadequate implementation of international policy and/or national planning and integrated land management policy

- To become actively involved in ongoing negotiations on climate change and associated protocols and mechanisms (CDM, REDD) to develop the value of the natural forests of Cameroon. To do this, it is necessary to update the database available on these forests;
- Provide a land tenure system that is potentially supportive of forestry development in both the permanent and non-permanent forest estates of Cameroon;
- To update the 1992 zoning plan and develop land-use master plans for subsequent land development projects;
- To develop an incentive policy for the development of small- and medium-sized forest enterprises (SMFEs) in Cameroon.

❖ Institutional constraint: limited intervention capacity of institutions involved in the forest sector

- To undertake thorough and adequate reforms within the Forest Administration of Cameroon to improve the effectiveness of its actions in the forest sector;
- To organize information-sharing and mutual consultation among all stakeholders, including with local communities, to promote the sustainable management and conservation of forest resources in Cameroon;
- To review the terms of reference of ANAFOR to enable the institution to fully assume its role in the renewal of the resource base and in inventory and forest management processes;
- To involve the national research community in the implementation of forest management plans, including the monitoring forest growth dynamics, by establishing a platform for dialogue for MINFOF, research institutes and forest concessionaires;
- To reorganize forestry training in vocational schools and colleges to meet the needs of MINFOF and other partners in the forest sector;
- To formalize the partnership associating governmental institutions, the private sector, the research community and the education sector for the promotion of lesser-known species or lesser-used forest species from Cameroonian forests.

❖ Technical constraint: Validity and assessment of forest management practices

- To improve the technical basis for forest management and update quantitative and qualitative data on forests to ensure the sustainability of the forest industry (volume tables, standards and guidelines on forest inventories and management plans, etc. .);
- To develop and improve the capacity of the parties involved in data processing, approval and monitoring of development plans, and to update the TIAMA software developed for these tasks;
- To strengthen the capacity for inventory, planning, control and monitoring services of the Forest Administration of Cameroon;
- To establish permanent monitoring plots within the main forest areas of Cameroon, in partnership with concessionaires and research institutions, for demonstration purpose and to collect data to improve management plans and the monitoring and control of forest growth patterns and dynamics;

- To improve the performance of mapping services and have them contribute effectively to forest cover control and monitoring exercises through remote sensing techniques and a geographic information system (GIS);
- ❖ **Legal and regulatory constraint: Difficulty in implementing the legislation on forest resource management and governance**
 - To update the Forest Policy of 1993, the Forestry Code of 1994 and its enactments by involving all stakeholders;
 - To reassess for amendment the 1999 Ordinance on the export of logs of certain species;
 - To simplify the procedures for developing forest management plans and to adapt these procedures to the respective formats of logging rights and/or concessions;
 - To Publish standards on NTFPs and mangrove forest inventories;
 - To bring the assessment/evaluation of forest management plans under the direct responsibility of MINFOF; this evaluation function is the role of the sovereign state as much as are control and monitoring functions;
 - Take all necessary steps to ban fraudulent inventories and the haggling over the cost of conducting impact studies, which may negatively impact the standards and reliability of findings;
 - To Involve the judiciary more fully and ensure that prosecution against forest crimes be better taken into consideration in forest management activities;
 - To report offenses perpetrated in forestry activities and immediately refer all cases to the relevant courts, as appropriate;
 - To publicly blame the companies convicted of illegal forest operations at the end of each year and order license suspensions in cases of repeated fraud;
 - To enforce legal provisions on small logging license holders to support the efforts of the artisanal sector to abandon illegal logging practices and to ensure a steady supply of the domestic market;
 - To support and encourage the Independent Observer (Observateur indépendant IO) to assume its role in reporting bad forest management practices, forest degradation, illegality and corruption;
 - To integrate a chain-of-custody verification system from original product sources (forest or border entry) to the end user;
 - To issue logging licences/permits as appropriate on the basis of an effective tree marking campaign or inventory operations so that the so-called "secure" documents can no longer provide safe-conducts to illegal timber;
 - To remove as much as possible human influence and personal appraisals of data in forest control activities carried out by the IFIS 2 computer system to improve transparency;
 - To develop a communication strategy for MINFOF allowing all users and stakeholders to be kept informed of measures taken in the forest sector, as translating laws and forest regulations in languages appropriate and accessible to all stakeholders.

Recommendation to local communities

- ❖ **Financial and socio-economic constraint: Sharing SFM revenues**
 - To invest the amounts of revenue returned to the communities in local development projects rather than surrendering these funds to local authorities.

Recommendations to the Forest Industries

- ❖ **Technical constraint: The fragile status of forest companies and concessionaires**
 - To conduct a study on investment in SFM and certification in a few forest companies over several years to reveal the cost structure and economic impact of both endeavours on the forest sector economy. Lessons learned will be used to attract more companies to engage in SFM.
- ❖ **Legal and regulatory constraint: Poor governance and the inadequate enforcement of relevant legislations are a scourge affecting the sustainable management of forest resources**
 - To adhere to the FLEGT/AFLEGT process and to progress toward certification;
 - To clean up the informal sector by getting his stakeholders to operate within the law – an undertaking repeatedly called for by the National Association of Artisanal Timber Processors and

Lumber Traders in Cameroon (*Association nationale de transformateurs artisanaux et vendeurs du bois débité au Cameroun*, ANTAV);

- To gather sawyers and sawmills in SME interest groups. The State must assign them forest areas for operation, to be selected on clearly defined criteria and these forests should be inspected and their status strictly monitored, and they should “shut down” after operations to ensure the regeneration of the resource base. Heavy equipment should be available and forest royalties secured;
- To develop a strategy to ensure legal, regulation-compliant and secure supply of raw material to the local timber market. This market should be effective, formal, transparent and legal.

Recommendation to the civil society

❖ Technical constraint: validity and assessment of forest management practices

- To acquire the power to contribute effectively to the processes of natural resources management;
- To finalize regional forest certification standards.

Recommendations to development partners

❖ Financial and socio-economic constraint: The pressure of public debt

- To remove the forest sector from the budget cuts policy required under the structural adjustment program (SAP) of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, and to allow the Government of Cameroon to increase its staff establishment in this sector.

Recommendations to ITTO

✚ Recommendations

❖ Policy constraint: Inadequate implementation of international policy and/or national planning and integrated land management policy

- To assess to what extent ITTO can integrate the programme-based approach either in its own strategy or through the Mutual Fund (contributed by DEFI, Canada, France and jointly managed by GTZ and DAG) as part of the implementation of the Forest and Environment Sector Programme (PSFE);
- To encourage and support the Government of Cameroon to seek additional sources of external funding, through the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), especially for reforestation projects.

❖ Institutional constraints: Limited intervention capacity of institutions involved in the forest sector

- To build human resource capacity at all levels of the forest sector to improve the professional performance of stakeholders in SFM: the plantation sector, nursery management, agroforestry, timber processing, such as industrial machinery, for instance electromechanical and automation;
- To initiate a project to organize and structure the timber market in Cameroon;
- To promote capacity building through experience-sharing networks (workshops, study tours) between countries of the Congo Basin subregion.

❖ Technical constraint: Validity and assessment of forest management practices

- To draw up an inventory of on-going or completed projects on forest plantations in Cameroon and to support other projects relating to renewal of the resource base, reforestation and industrial plantations of local species, especially the most intensively exploited timber species. Addressing the recommendations of the ITTO International Workshop of 2007 in Lomé on SFM experience sharing, such projects must be designed for a sufficiently long period (minimum 5 years).

Identification of ITTO priority areas for action

Following this analysis of constraints to the sustainable management and matching recommendations, the technical mission recommends three strategic areas of intervention as follows:

- Strategic Focus 1: Supporting the national forest development policy and program;

- Strategic Focus 2: Building the capacity of stakeholders involved in sustainable forest management;
- Strategic Focus 3: Providing technical support sustainable forest management practices.

* * *