



# **Workshop on Tracking Technologies for Forest Governance**

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia 15-17 May 2012

**PRESENTATION ON:**

## **ATTEMPT TO IMPLEMENT TRACKING TECHNOLOGIES FOR AN IMPROVED FOREST GOVERNANCE IN GABON**

**PREPARED BY:**

**Joachim BILE ALLOGHO,  
FOREST ENGINEER,  
MASTER OF FORESTRY**

# **PLAN OF THE PRESENTATION**

## **Introduction**

**1 – Forest Management in Gabon**

**2 – The SFM Process in Gabon**

**3 – The EU/GABON FLEGT Partnership Agreement**

**4 – Case Study on the Development of a Timber  
Tracking System in Gabon**

## **Conclusion**

# Introduction

In pursuance of Agenda 21 from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 1992 and the Year 2000 Objective of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), during the past two decades, Gabon has undertaken to implement SFM in her forests.

The forests of Gabon cover some 23 millions hectares, which is over 85% the total surface area of the national territory.

Gabon is a member country of Central African Forest Commission (COMIFAC) and is included in the Congo Basin – the world's second largest tropical forest basin after the Amazon.

# Introduction (cont'd 1 )

In Gabon, the forest sector is still ranked the second largest after the oil sector in the GDP (8%) and it provides some 20,000 direct and indirect jobs.

Annual forest production, once amounting 3.5 million cc. m, decreased by 50% since the decision to ban log exports came into force in January 2010.

To sustain the level of forest resources and derive better benefits from the trade in timber products, Gabon has endeavoured to develop appropriate tracking tools for forest product, from logging operations to timber processing operations and final timber-product marketing activities.

## **Introduction (cont'd 2)**

The aim of this presentation is to report on the efforts by Gabon to combat illegal logging and timber trade to ensure a sound forest governance

# 1 – Forest Management in Gabon

- The Gabonese forest is rich in biodiversity values, with over 8,000 plant species including 400 commercial timber species. The Okoume species (*Aucoumea klaineana*) comprises one third of all standing commercial timber volume;
- Gabon has signed several international conventions on issues relating to biodiversity and the sustainable management of forest ecosystems. The Rio conference in 1992 was the real trigger for the sustainable management of its forests ;
- A ground-breaking legal and regulatory framework was developed through Law 16/01 providing the Forest Law and endorsing sustainable forest management as unique approach to the management of production forests.

## **1 – Forest Management in Gabon (cont'd 1)**

- Log production was reduced from 3.5 million cc. m. to 1.6 million cc. m. due to the logging ban mentioned above ;
- Meanwhile the volume of locally processed timber increased from 450,000 cc.m. to over 800,000 cc.m. in exports volume, i.e. a 39% increase ;
- The main importers are: Europe, including France (42%), Asia including China (36.36%) , Africa and others (21.6%);

## 2- The SFM Process in Gabon

The National Forest Estate (NFE) is divided into two segments:

- The Permanent Forest Estate (PFE) including gazetted forests (protected areas) (4 million hectares i.e. 18% of the NFE) and the Production Forest Estate (14.5 million hectares i.e. 62% of NFE) ;
- The Rural Forest Estate (4.5 million hectares i.e. 20% of NFE).



## **2- The SFM Process in Gabon** (Cont'd 2)

Out of the 14.5 million hectares of the Production Forest Estate, 93% of timber concessions are engaged in the SFM process and only 7% operate without SFM plans.

The objective of the Ministry of Forestry is to have integrated all timber concessions into the SFM process by late 2012 and have them comply with the Forest Law in force.

It should be noted that more than 1.8 million hectares of forest are FSC certified (Forest Stewardship Council)

## 2- The SFM Process in Gabon (Cont'd 3)

Gabon, in order to ensure the sound governance of its forests, has adhered to the International Tropical Timber Agreement, 2006 of the ITTO and currently negotiates a FLEGT agreement with the European Union (EU) relating to forest law enforcement, governance and trade

### **3 – The EU/GABON FLEGT Partnership Agreement**

The EU FLEGT Action Plan sets out measures that aim to combat the problem of illegal logging and the associated, it covers seven (7) major areas:

1. Support to timber exporting countries;
2. Activities to promote trade in legal timber;
3. Promoting public procurement policies;
4. Support for private sector initiatives;
5. Safeguards for financing and investment;
6. Use of existing legislative instruments or adaption of new legislation to support the Plan
7. Addressing the problem of conflict timber.

### **3 – The EU/GABON FLEGT Partnership Agreement**

**(Cont'd 1)**

Negotiations of the EU/Gabon FLEGT Agreement should reach their conclusion in 2013, however a meaningful progress has been achieved in the development of the legality matrix by principles and criteria.

Each criterion has been associated with relevant indicators, verifiers, legal references, a timber supply source, chief inspector/auditor and enforceable legislations for cases of non-compliance.

## 4 – Case Study on the Development of a Timber Tracking System in Gabon

This case study is derived from the results of PD 15/98 Rev.2 (M) funded by ITTO and titled : “*Development and Installation of a Computer Management System for the Control of Forest Production in Gabon*”. This project titled EXFOR (for *Exploitation Forestière / Logging Industry*) has set up a computer system for real-time strict control of forest production through direct, field-level data collection using electronic notebooks and/or PDAs.

## **4 – Case Study on the Development of a Timber Tracking System in Gabon (Cont'd 1)**

It was designed to effectively reduce the risk of fraud. Specific modules were developed including those related to « forest road opening », « tree felling » , « yarding », « skidding », « cross-cutting » and « transportation ».

EXFOR development objectives were as follows:

- To develop a demonstration prototype;
- To Establish a management information system;
- To control forest production;
- To have available and updated information.

## 4.1. TECHNICAL AND MANAGEMENT ASPECTS



### **ACTIVITIES**

- 1. FOREST AND WATER RESSOURCES DEPT.**  
Prepares plates/labels
- 2. LOGGING INDUSTRY**  
Tracking/Tree spotting  
Tree felling  
Log cross-cutting / Volume tables  
Transportation
- 3. FOREST AND WATER RESSOURCES DEPT.**  
Specifications
- 4. *SOCIÉTÉ NATIONALE DES BOIS DU GABON (SNBG)***  
Log/Timber Yard Management

## 4.2. PROBLEM TO ADDRESS

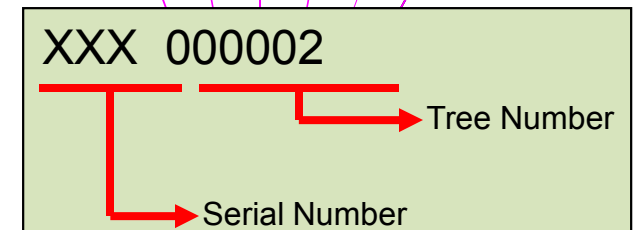
- **Regarding forest production**
  - Keeping logging site records
  - Log rejects and log trimming operations
  - Calculation errors
  - Reconciling figures from SNBG and *Statistiques Forestières* , etc.
- **Regarding timber concessions / logging permits**
  - Listing all currently valid and active concession / logging titles
  - Monitoring the process of application files
  - Monitoring expiry dates and status of active logging titles, etc
- **Regarding forest**
  - Acreage-based taxation (forest royalties, etc.)
  - Felling tax (stumping fees, etc.)
- **Regarding log transportation**
  - Weight of logging truck loads, log train convoys, etc.



## 4.3. BAR CODE GENERATION

### STATISTIQUES FORESTIERES

- ✓ Plate/label numbers
- ✓ Name of concession holder
- ✓ Year of production
- ✓ Province
- ✓ The contractor's number
- ✓ Date of expiry
- ✓ The applicable rate of acreage tax
- ✓ The rate (%) of forest concession royalties



## 4.4. TRACKING



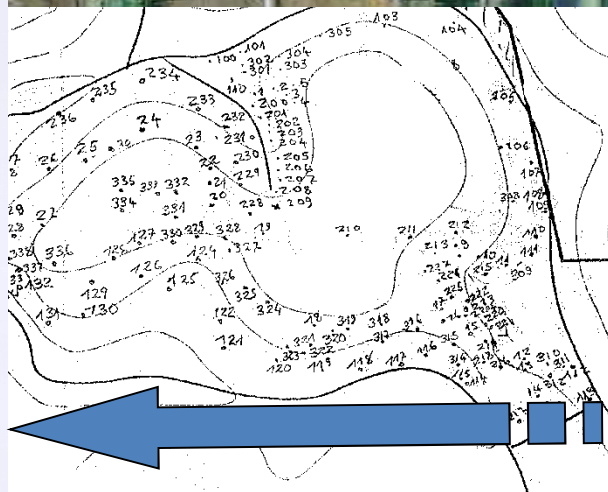
Date 26-03-2000  
Chercheur CAMEROON  
N° parcelle  
N° point 1

Feuille N° 1/5

| N° arbre | Essence | Diamètre | Statut | (Qualité) |
|----------|---------|----------|--------|-----------|
| 1        | OKOUMÉ  | 87       | 1      | EXP       |
| 2        | "       | 80       | 2      | "         |
| 3        | "       | 80       | 2      | "         |
| 4        | "       | 79       | 1      | "         |
| 5        | OKOUMÉ  | 140      | 1      |           |
| Exp.     | OKOUMÉ  | 90       | 1      | "         |
| 7        | "       | 85       | 2      | SC.       |
| 8        | "       | 109      | 1      | EXP       |
|          | "       | 93       | 1      | "         |
|          | "       | 77       | 2      | "         |
|          | "       | 80       | 2      | "         |
|          | "       | 100      | 1      | "         |
|          | "       | 93       | 1      | "         |
|          | "       | 83       | 1      | "         |
|          | "       | 112      | 3      | SC.       |
|          | "       | 78       | 2      | EXP.      |
|          | "       | 85       | 2      | "         |
|          | "       | 77       | 2      | "         |
|          | "       | 85       | 2      | "         |
|          | "       | 93       | 2      | "         |

**EXFOR**

- ✓ Plate Number
- ✓ Block Number
- ✓ Pocket Number
- ✓ Date
- ✓ Tree Number
- ✓ Forest Tree Species
- ✓ Diametre
- ✓ Quality



## 4.5. TREE FELLING

### EXFOR

- ✓ Plate number
- ✓ Logging site
- ✓ Name of tree feller
- ✓ Date
- ✓ Forest Tree Species
- ✓ Stem diameter
- ✓ Stem length
- ✓ Stem volume
- ✓ Stem weight

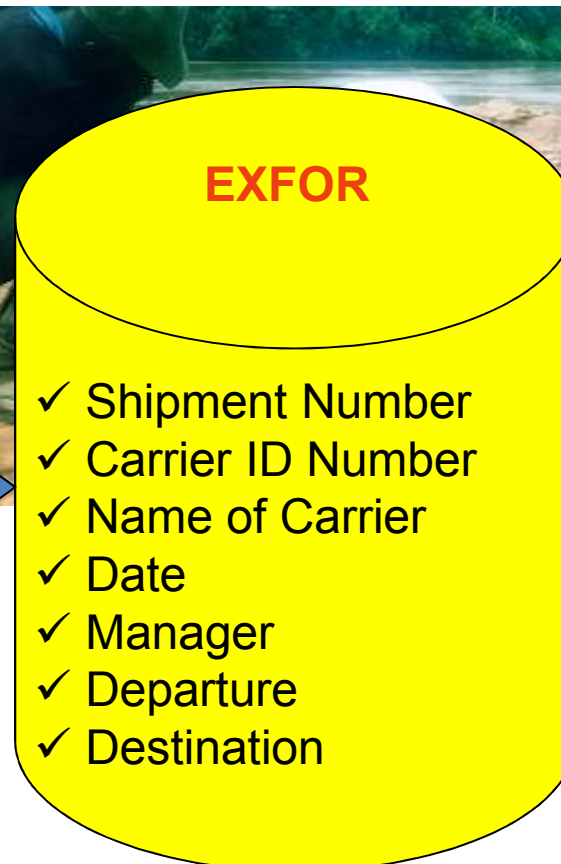




## 4.6. TRANSPORTATION



To attach a new plate about 1 metre from hook



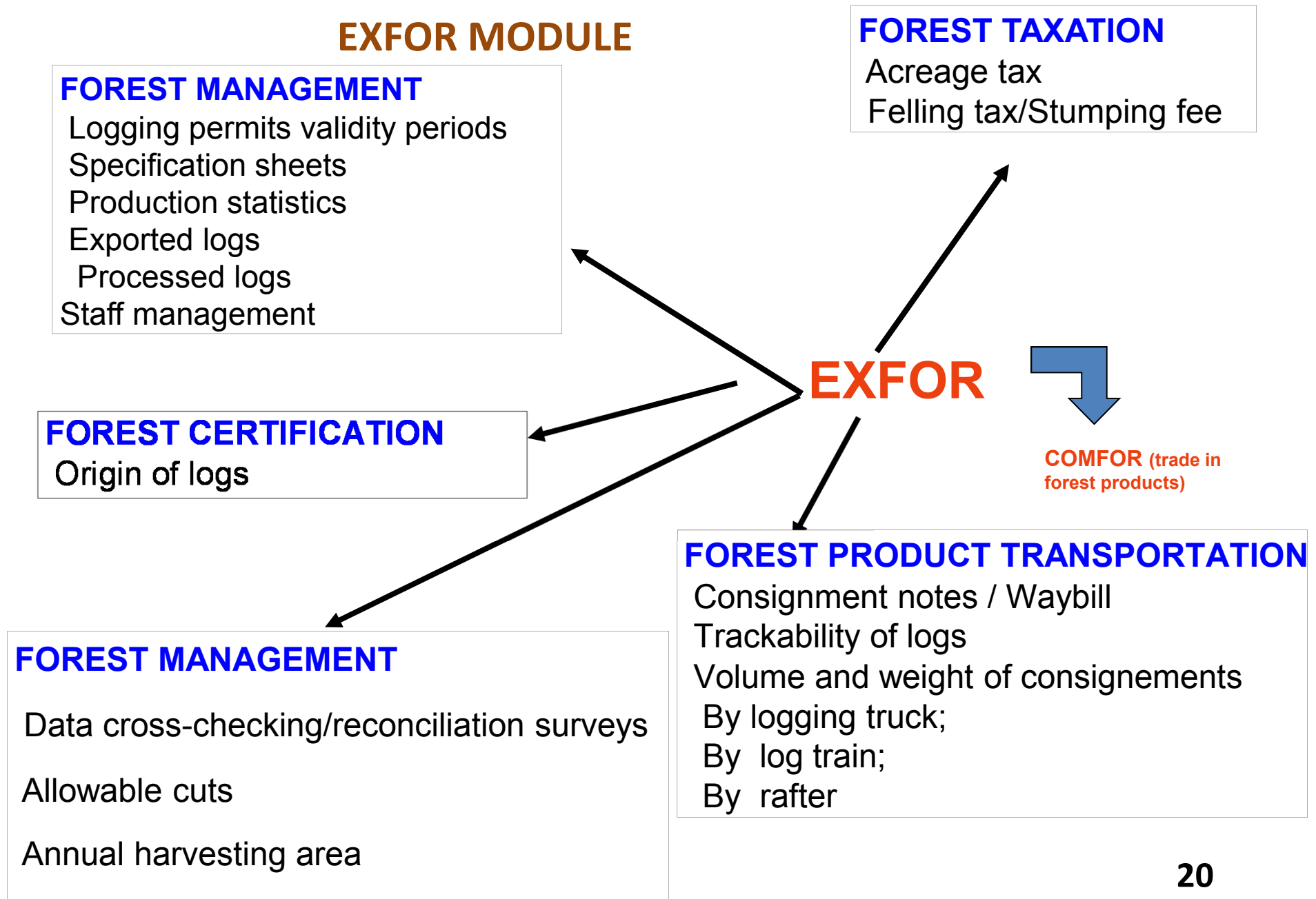
### WAY BILL

Concession holder  
Concession ID number  
Shipment ID number  
Shipment manager  
Date of transport  
Destination  
For all logs...

Bar Code Number  
Diametre  
Length  
Volume  
Weight



## 4.7. SYNTHESIS OF ACHIEVEMENTS BY THE EXFOR MODULE



## 4.8. EXPECTED BENEFITS

- Reliable, detailed, timely statistics;
- Management and internal monitoring for the logging company;
- Management and monitoring for the Ministry of Forest and Water;
- Stock management and planning for SNBG;
- Forest taxation management;
- Obtaining forest certification.

## CONCLUSION

As implied by the above, Gabon attaches a particular importance to the trackability and legality of forest products in order to continue abiding by her international commitments.

Therefore Gabon has endeavoured to focus on legality verification through multiple field-level inspections and controls to ensure that:

- a logging company has an effective existence (with formal governmental approval, registered articles of association, etc.);
- the company's legal entitlements have been regularly issued and are within their validity period;

## **CONCLUSION**

### **(cont'd 1)**

- SFM, timber harvesting and timber use standards are being complied with and so are the general industrialization standards for the timber sector;
- Contractual terms of reference / best practices for timber industries are enforced;
- Stumping fees and forest royalties are regularly paid;
- Documentation produced during control inspections comply with regulations;
- And finally, aspects of the Environment Law and Labour Law relating to safety and health requirements are duly enforced.





***Thank you for your attention***

