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EXTERNAL INDEPENDENT MONITORING

Summary of the monitoring report on illegal logging claims in Ngwei 1, Mapoubi and Ebombe villages, Ngwei Sub-Divisions, Sanaga Maritime Division, Littoral Region– Cameroon

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Following the report from Mapoubi village community, a team of FODER (Forêts et Développement Rural) conducted an external independent monitoring mission from the 12th to the 14th of February 2016 to document alleged illegal logging activities in Ngwei 1, Mapoubi and d’Ebombe villages.

At the end of the mission conducted at the felling site in the forest, individual and group interviews as well as triangulation led to the following results:

- Fourteen (14) unmarked stumps distributed in three villages ; five (05) in Mapoubi, six (06) in Ngwei 1 and three (03) in Ebombe ;
- Seven (07) timber yards of which six (06) with about 64 logs with an overall timber volume of **1302,32m³**, and an old yard with logs cut using a chainsaw, were found in the NFE near Ngwei 1, Mapoubi and Ebombe villages;



Stumps of EkopBeli (Coordinates: X:654663; Y:424595)



Timber yard with Tali and EkopBeli timber bearing the marks of GSE and of the marking hammer of the Head of forest and chase control post. Coordinates: X : 650498 ; Y : 418949.

- It was noted that a stream called Itanda was obstructed after the felling of two EkopBeli at less than ten metres. This fact falls under then on compliance with Operating Inventory Standards in forest areas.

Marks (**GSE, CVEPB0705210, 25-11-15**) on Tali and EkopBeli timber in a timber yard (coordinates **UTM X: 650498;Y:418949**) located in the NFE near Ebombe village confirm the testimonies of the local communities that the various logging activities are done by Les Ets Grandes Scieries d’Edea. The logs also bore the marks of the marking hammer of the Head of Makondo forest and chase control post. These marks : CVEPB (Convention on wood public auction -in french Convention de Vente aux Enchères Publics de Bois –) show that Les Ets GSE, holder of a permit to extract timber, restricted to the timber already felled, abandoned and stored since 2011 in the old timber yards of COMOCA company, is rather taking away timber felled much more recently. In effect, dates mentioned on some timber as noted by the team on mission indicate that they were felled in the months of November 2015 and January 2016. The company “**Les Ets GSE**” would be taking advantage of its AEB to undertake new logging activities in the NFE without prior authorization.



This work is being done in contravention of Section 12 paragraph 1 of Law No. 94/01, which stipulates that: *“The genetic resources of the national heritage shall belong to the State of Cameroon. No person may use them for scientific, commercial or cultural purposes without prior authorization”*. In addition to this, unauthorized logging in the national forest estate is sanctioned by Section 158 of Law No. 94/01 which stipulates that: *“A fine of/from 3,000,000 to 10,000,000 CFA francs or imprisonment for one (01) to three (03) years or both such fine and imprisonment shall be imposed on whoever commits any of the following offences...exploitation beyond the boundary of forestry concession and/or the volume and period granted,...”*.

At the end of this mission, FODER had recommended that the Minister of Forestry and Wildlife (MINFOF) should send a team for investigations in Ngwei Sub-division, mostly in Ngwei 1, Mapoubi

and Ebombe villages so as to unravel the issue of unauthorized logging activities in the NFE. On the 1st of April 2016, SNOIE coordination was notified by MINFOF through a letter that after the end of a verification mission conducted by BNC agents, the above-mentioned report turned to be true; and logs were seized and sold on auction. In addition to this, a case was filed against Les Grandes Scieries d'Edea, where evidence of illegally felled trees was found, a case which is unsolved to date.