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STANDARDIZED EXTERNAL INDEPENDENT MONITORING SYSTEM (SNOIE)

SYNTHESIS OF INDEPENDENT FOREST MONITORING REPORTS - CAMEROON

[Reports produced from March to April 2020]

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Unauthorized logging in a communal forest, non-compliance with forest intervention standards in the Nnanga-Eboko communal forest; logging without authorization in the national forests Estate (NEF) are the main infringements of the law, which were identified during three independent forest monitoring field missions (IFM). Three (03) field missions were carried out in the Central, South and East regions within the framework of the Standardized External Independent Monitoring System (SNOIE), certified ISO 9001: 2015. Amongst those 3 missions, two were initiated following "ForestLink"¹ system alerts sent by the community monitors and one by an individual.

Denunciation reports of these cases of alleged offenses were transmitted in May to the Minister in charge of Forests and Wildlife (MINFOF), and to his regional representation offices in the Center, South and East. The fact-finding missions which led to the production of those denunciation reports were carried out respectively by two SNOIE organization members: Ecosysteme et Développement (ECODEV), Projet d'Appui à l'élevage et de Préservation de la biodiversité en périphérie des aires protégées au Cameroun (PAPEL) and Centre pour l'Environnement et le Développement Local et Alternatif (CeDLA). Resources necessary for those missions were mobilized thanks to the "Independent monitoring of wood supply chains and amplification of information from independent forest observation (Relai-OI Project) and "Citizen voices for change: forest monitoring in the Congo Basin" (CV4C project) projects².

The investigations were carried out in the national forests Estate and the forest titles allocated in the villages³ Guervoum, Mankim and Mengoëng (Yoko Sud-division, Department of Mbam and Kim, Center Region - Cameroon), Djira (Batouri sub-division, Department of Kadey, East Region) and Lolabé and its surroundings (Kribi 1er sub-division, Department of the ocean, South Region). The investigations carried out in these localities, found out that the alleged offenders operate in collusion with some communities' members and some stakeholders at the local level.

Some of the species exploited during these alleged illegal logging activities are: Ayous (*Triplochytoscleroxylon*), Tali (*Erythrophleum ivorense*), Doussié white (*Afzeliapachyloba*), Iroko (*Milicia excelsa*) Red padouk (*Pterocarpus soyauxii*); Bilinga (*Nauclea diderichii*), Iroko (*Milicia excelsa*), Tali (*Erythrophleum ivorense*), Azobe (*Lophira alata*), Ovengkol (*Guibourtia ehie*).

The Synthesis of all these IFM reports produced via the SNOIE procedures below.

1. SUMMARY REPORT OF THE INDEPENDANT FOREST MONITORING MISSION OF ILLEGAL FOREST HARVESTING ALLEGATIONS CARRIED OUT IN CARRIED OUT IN THE VILLAGES GUERVOUM, MANKIM AND MENGOËNG (Yoko Sub-division, Mbam and Kim Department, Center Region - Cameroon)

Alleged Facts: Three alleged facts of illegality were monitored during the field mission: (1) unauthorized logging in a communal forest which is reportedly under suspension since October 21, 2019; (2) non-compliance with forest intervention standards in the Nnanga-Eboko communal forest; (3) logging without authorization in the

¹ ForestLink is a system created to allow communities, wherever they are in the world, to record and transmit in real time geo-referenced information on suspected illegal activities in the forests around them. Alerts are sent to a platform (<https://cameroon.forestlink.org>) through a smartphone application for data collection and transmission called "Collecteur"

² Relai-OI and CV4C are implemented respectively with the financial support from the FAO EU FLEGT program, the European Union (EU) and partners.

³ Gervoum, Mankim; Mengoëng and Djira are four communities followed by the project "Real-time community monitoring of forests to maintain livelihoods and forests in Central and West Africa"; the Forestlink system is deployed in Cameroon within the framework of this project.



forests of the national estates forests. These facts are respectively repressed by articles 15⁴ (4th chapter of the intervention standards in forest environment (NIMF)); article 128⁵ of law N ° 81/013 of November 27, 1981; as well as articles 155 and 158⁶ of the Law 94/01 of January 20 on the forestry, wildlife and fishing regime.

Alleged infringer (s): An unidentified logger.

Locality : Guervoum, Mankim et Mengoëng Villages (Yoko Sub-division, Mbam et Kim Department, Centre Region – Cameroon)

Submission date / Recipient (s): 05 May 2020, the Regional Delegation of Forests and Wildlife in the Centre (DRFoF-Centre)

Recommendations: At the end of the mission, ECODEV recommends to the Minister of Forests and Wildlife (MINFOF) to initiate a forest control mission in the communal forest of Nnanga-Eboko, and in the lands of the Mankim and Mengoëng villages with a view to:

- To verify the veracity of the facts presented in this report;
- Identify and punish the various people responsible for these facts.

Actions de l'autorité/entreprise : Aucune connue au moment de la publication

Undertaken Actions by the competent authority: Not known at time of the publication

Report author (s) : Ecosystèmes et Développement (ECODEV)

Ref. of the rapport: Réf: 007/RO-SNOIE/ECODEV/032020

Summary of the report: On February 20, 2020, Ecosystèmes et Développement (ECODEV) received, via the SNOIE coordination, an email relaying "ForestLink" alerts sent by community observers (OC) Guervoum, Mankim and Mengoëng villages in the Yoko district. The pre-verification of the data received by projection on the forest map of the area and the exchange of information carried out with the communities' observers;

⁴ Article 15: "The holder of a logging permit must keep intact a wooded edge 30 m wide, measured from the natural high water mark, by the sea, a river, a lake, stream or swamp

Note: This measure protects the banks from erosion and prevents sediment from entering the water. It protects mangroves, gallery forests in humid savannah areas and riparian forests or riparian ecotones in Sudano-Sahelian zones from degradation".

⁵ Article 128: "is punished with a fine of 500,000 francs to 2,000,000 francs and imprisonment for 3 months to 2 years or one of these two penalties only, whoever: (...) fraudulent logging

Is punished with a fine of 50 00 to 200 00 CFA francs and imprisonment of twenty (20) days to two (2) months or one of these penalties only, the perpetrator of one of the offenses following: -exploitation by permit, in a forest of the national domain, of unauthorized forest products, or beyond the limits of the allocated volume and / or the period granted, in violation of Article 56 above, without prejudice to damages for timber exploited as provided for in Article 159 below; -the transfer or assignment of an operating license, in violation of Articles 42 (2) and 60 above; -the violation of Article 42 above by a beneficiary of an exploitation permit which hinders the exploitation of products not mentioned in his exploitation permit; -the unauthorized felling of protected trees, in violation of Article 43 above, without prejudice to the damages of the timber exploited, as provided for in Article 159 above;

⁶ Article 158.- *Is punished with a fine of 3,000,000 to 10,000,000 CFA francs and imprisonment of one (1) year to three (3) years or one of these penalties only one of the following offenses: - unauthorized logging in state or municipal forests, in violation of articles 45 (1) and 46 (2) above, without prejudice to damages on the timber harvested, as provided for in Article 159 below*



revealed the relevance of the alerts sent via the "Collectaur" application installed in the smartphones of the RTM2 project. It is with this in mind that an OIE mission was carried out from 07 to 11 March 2020, precisely in the communal forest of Nnanga-Eboko² and in the forests of the national estate forest. The purpose of this mission was to verify and document the said alerts and make recommendations to the Ministry of Forests and Wildlife (MINFOF).

At the end of the investigations, the following facts were monitored:

➤ **In the terroir of the Guervoum village and the municipal forest of Nnanga-Eboko :**

- Sixty-five (65) strains: 10 marked and 55 unmarked belonging to various exploitable species. They were identified both in the communal forest of Nnanga-Eboko (55) and in the forests of the national estate forest (10);
- Thirty-nine (39) unmarked crowns of various species, some of were located in the stream known as Ndjieké;
- Four (04) wood parks, containing a total of thirty-two (32) logs, of which: (08) are marked (CR-NE; UFA 1482; AAC1-2; 00352134; 24/2; 02.02.20; Z2) for a total weight of 49.9039 m3 and (24) unmarked with for a total weight of 141.6057 m3;
- The inscriptions (with paint and hammer of the operator) identified on the logs, were: CR-NE; UFA 1482; AAC 1-2; DF10: 00332134; Z2; 24/2; 02.02.20;
- Three (03) strains of Bilinga identified, including 01 unmarked and 02 marked (00358330 / 26.13.19);
- The obstruction of a river called Ndjieké;
- Cutting several trees of white Doussie in a temporarily flooded swamp (MIT in french);

➤ **In the national forests estate of the terroirs of the Mankim and Guervoum villages:**

- Twenty-three (23) unmarked strains of various species;
- Fourteen (14) unmarked crowns of various species;
- Two (02) wood parks containing 18 logs in total including 9 unmarked (47.1047 m3) and 09 with inscriptions (SFB; UFA 08006; AAC3-3; DF10: 00180485; 14/2; Z2; 12.10.19) for 20.4262 m3 weight.

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https://oiecameroun.org/images/documents/007_RO-SNOIE_ECODEV_Guervoum-Mankim-Mengoeng_Post-CTE.pdf

2. SUMMARY REPORT OF THE INDEPENDANT FOREST MONITORING MISSION OF ILLEGAL FOREST HARVESTING ALLEGATIONS CARRIED IN THE VILLAGE AROUND THE DJIRA VILLAGE (Batouri Sud-division, Kadey Department, Eastern Region)

Alleged Facts: Unauthorized exploitation in the national forest estate in violation of the provisions of article 53 (1) 2 of the forestry law of January 20, 1994. This case is punished by article 156 (3)⁷ of the same law.

⁷ *Is punished with a fine of 3,000,000 to 10,000,000 CFA francs and imprisonment from one (1) year to three (3) years or one of these penalties only. following offenses: (...) unauthorized logging in a forest in the national or community domain, in violation of Articles 52, 53 and 54, without prejudice to damages on the timber harvested, as provided for in Article 159*



Alleged infringer (s): Residents of the city of Batouri in collusion with the community of the village Djira. The destination of these fraudulently harvested woods cannot be ignored by these populations and even by officials in charge of forest control of the same locality. City residents are said to be haggling with poor farmers to supply the local illegal timber market. These acts of complicity are defined and punished by the provisions of articles 97 (1)⁸ and 98 (1)⁹ of the penal code law N ° 2016/007 of July 12, 2016.

Locality: Dira Village (Batouri sub-division, Kadey Department, East Region – Cameroon)

Submission date / Recipient (s): 05 May 2020, the Regional Delegation of Forests and Wildlife in the East (DRFoF-East)

Recommendations: Based on the facts monitored during this IFM mission, PAPEL recommends to the Minister in charge of forests and wildlife to:

- Initiate a control mission in the forest of the national domain and particularly in the customary soil of the villages Djira and Ambana;
- Initiate a survey with the holders of small timber traders of lumber in Batouri to identify their sources of wood supply and take the necessary measures;
- To instruct the Departmental Delegation of MINFOF and the Municipality of Batouri, the establishment of dialogue structures and community representative's units such as Committee for Forests and Income Management Committee (CPF and CRG in French) for all matters relate to the environment in general and forests in particular.

Undertaken Actions by the competent authority: Not known at time of the publication

Report author (s) : « Projet d'Appui à l'élevage et de Préservation de la biodiversité en périphérie des aires protégées au Cameroun » (PAPEL),

Réf. du rapport : Réf : 020/RO-SNOIE/PAPEL/032020

Summary of the report: The Standardized Independent External Observation System (SNOIE) uses new information and communication technologies (NTIC) as reliable sources of information to trigger observation and / or verification missions. On February 28, 2020, PAPEL received from the SNOIE coordination, ForestLink alerts on the existence of presumed illegal logging activities in the forests of the national domain in the terroir of the DJIRA village in the Batouri sud-division, department of Kadey, East-Cameroon. To verify these allegations, PAPEL carried out a verification mission in this locality from 17 to 21 March, 2020.

This mission revealed the following facts in the forest of the national domain:

- The existence of thirty-two (32) unmarked strains among which 31 strains of Ayous (*Triplchyton scleroxylon*) and one (01) strain of Iroko (*Milicia excelsa*);
- The existence of eight (08) stocks of lumber including 2016 pieces of Ayous, weighting 73.60 m3 and five (05) pieces of Iroko, weighting 0.06 m3;

below 7 Is accomplice to an offense, crime or misdemeanor: a) Who causes, in any way whatsoever, the commission of the offense or gives the instructions to commit it; b) Anyone who helps or facilitates the preparation (...) of the offense

⁸ *Is an accomplice in an offense, crime or misdemeanor: a) Who causes, in any way whatsoever, the commission of the offense or gives the instructions to commit it; b) Anyone who helps or facilitates the preparation (...) of the offense*

⁹ *Co-authors and accomplices are liable to the same penalty as the main perpetrator except where the law provides otherwise*



- (03) Skidding tracks carefully laid out with cutlass and an encampment which would have sheltered the sawyers.

According to testimonies obtained during interviews with some local officials, these woods fraudulently harvested would supply many lumber traders in Batouri. The identity of the alleged owner of the lumber shops is well known by the community of the Djira village involved in this illegal activity. The authors or accomplices expose themselves to the provisions of article 98 of the law n ° 2016/007 of July 12, 2016 relating to the penal code. In addition, the copy of the letter denouncing the illegal practices of bush fires in the communal forest surroundings to the area concerned and the declarations received during our investigations is not good for the participatory management of forest resources supported in the forest policy.

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https://oiecameroun.org/images/documents/020_RO_SNOIE_PAPEL_-DJIRA_Revu_CTE.pdf

3. SUMMARY REPORT OF THE INDEPENDANT FOREST MONITORING MISSION OF ILLEGAL FOREST HARVESTING ALLEGATIONS CARRIED IN THE LOLABÉ VILLAGE AND SURROUNDING AREA (Kribi 1er Sub-division, Ocean Department, South Region)

Alleged Facts: Unauthorized logging in the National Forest Estate, in violation of article 53 (1)¹⁰ of law 94/01 of 20 January 1994 regulating wildlife and fishing forests, punished by the provisions of article 156 (4)¹¹ of the same law and of article 128 (6)¹² of law 81/013 of November 27, 1981 on the regime of wildlife forests and fishing on the one hand; and Complicity of these same facts, repressed by the provisions of articles 97 (1)¹³ (a) (b) and 98 (1)¹⁴ of law N0 2016/007 of July 12, 2016 on the other hand criminal code. **Alleged infringer (s):** A member of the community could be at the origin of this alleged illegal logging to the extent that he is the direct seller / facilitator for this activity.

Locality: Lolabé village and its surroundings, Kribi 1er sub-division, Department of the Ocean, South Region.

Submission date / Recipient (s): 05 May 2020, the Regional Delegation of Forests and Wildlife in the South (DRFoF- South)

¹⁰ Article 53 (1) of Law 94/01 of January 20, 1994 on wildlife and fishing forests, which states that: - "The exploitation of forests in the national forest estate is carried out by sale of cut , by permit or by personal cutting authorization "

¹¹ Article 156 (4) which stipulates that "Is punished with a fine of 200,000 to 1,000,000 CFA francs and imprisonment from one (1) month to six (6) months or one of only these penalties the perpetrator of one of the following offenses: - the exploitation by sale of cut in a forest of the national domain beyond the limits of the demarcated cut off base and / or the period granted, in violation of articles 45 above without prejudice to damages and interest on the timber exploited as provided for by article 159 below ";

¹² Article 128 (6) of Law _81 / 013 of November 27, 1981 which provides that: "Is punished with a fine of 500,000 FCFA to 2,000,000 FCFA and imprisonment for 3 months to 2 years or 'only one of these two penalties, the one who proceeds with a fraudulent exploitation'

¹³ Article 97: "is an accomplice of an offense qualified as a felony or a misdemeanor: (a) One who causes, in any way whatsoever, the commission of the offense or gives instructions to commit it; (b) Anyone who helps or facilitates the preparation or sentencing of the offense. "

¹⁴ Article 98: "co-perpetrators and accomplices are liable to the same penalty as the main author, except where the law provides otherwise.



Recommendations: Based on the facts observed during this observation mission, CeDLA recommends that MINFOF instruct a control mission to verify the alleged illegal logging activities underway in the National forest estate at a place called Lolabé and surroundings.

Undertaken Actions by the competent authority: Not known at time of the publication

Report author (s) : Centre local pour le Développement et Alternatif (CeDLA)

Réf. du rapport : Réf : 015/RO-SNOIE/CeDLA/042020

Summary of the report: Centre local pour le Développement et Alternatif (CeDLA) received information on February 26, 2020 by telephone call from a member of the community, concerning suspected illegal logging practices around the village of Lolabé, in the Kribi 1er sub-division. In his remarks, he mentioned that a logging company based in the village Lolabé would take advantage of the intense forestry activity that takes place in this area to cut wood in the national forests estate (NFE).

After cross-checking information and examining the list of titles valid for the year 2019, it appears that this area has twenty-four (24) Cut of sales (VC in french). Only VC n ° 0903439 closest to the Lolabe village where the site the foreman lives, is active at the time of the mission. CeDLA carried out a field mission from 03 to 07 April 2020 to monitor and document these allegations.

At the end of this mission, the following facts were monitored:

- 07 (Seven) forest parks containing a total of 36 logs of various species, all bearing the imprint of the forest hammer with the words "seized", and 15 unmarked small logs of various species. Amongst them we have 02 logs of Tali, 04 of Azobé and 02 of Ovengkol, with a total weight of 17.28m3 in the 1st park; 08 Ovengkol logs weighting 59.54 m3 in the 2nd park; 01 log from Padouk, 01 from Niové 11 from Azobe, and 10 small logs from Azobe with a total weight of 67.97 m3 in the 3rd park; 05 Tali logs weighting 17.29 m3 in the 4th park; 02 Tali logs weighting 5.24 m3 in the 5th park; 06 unmarked Tali logs and 05 Tali smal logs, all weighting 34.03 m3 in the 6th park;
- A park containing 06 unmarked logs including 05 Tali and 01 Niové with a total weight of 42.66 m3, Two unmarked Tali logs cut in the forest of the national domain (FDN) cubing 4.98 m3 Eighteen strains of Tali and a strain of Niové all unmarked, cut in the national forest estate (NFE),
- The logging site continues to operate at the time of the mission, despite a field trip of a control team of the forestry administration.
- A team of prospectors and fallers was on the ground during the mission CEDLA,
- The wood was still stored there in the parks at that moment.
- The investigation opened for this purpose by the MINFOF's local head of post, with which yhe discussions reveal that a member of the community could be an accomplice of this alleged illegal logging regarding his role as a direct seller / facilitator for this activity.

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