



global witness

Cameroon

Project of Independent Observation in Support of
Forest Law Enforcement in Cameroon

**Approved by the Ministry of
the Environment and Forests**

Report No. 016 En

Joint mission: Central Control Unit – Independent Observer

Title: No title

Location: Central Province

Mission date: 16th July, 2002

Company: EFAP

Independent Observer (Global Witness):

Mr. Albert K. Barume, Deputy Director

Mr. Serge C. Moukouri, Forester

Mr. Tangye C. Celestine, Driver

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. SUMMARY	1
2. RESOURCES USED	1
3. COMPOSITION OF THE MISSION.....	1
4. RESULTS OF THE MISSION	2
4.1 Summary of the complaint and the facts.....	2
4.2 Meeting with Mr. Bessala, Chief of Ndzandouang Village	2
4.3 Observations of the Independent Observer	2
4.4 Notes of the Independent Observer	5
5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	5
Appendices	7
Appendix 1	7

1. SUMMARY

On the 16th July, 2002, and accompanied by the Independent Observer (Global Witness), The Central Control¹ Unit (CCU) of the Ministry of the Environment and Forests (MINEF) undertook a mission in Dzeng (Department of Nyong et So'o, Central Province). The aim of this mission was to investigate allegations of illegal logging in an area of the Ndzandouang forest, Dzeng.

The Independent Observer, having noted signs of unauthorised logging in the Ndzandouang forest, consequently confirmed the allegations in a radio message sent by the brigade of the Dzeng Gendarmerie. However, the mission was not able to identify the perpetrator of this illegal logging. Nonetheless, local people consider EFAP (*Exploitation Forestière Amougou Pierre*) to be responsible for this illegal logging activity.

In view of the above, **the Independent Observer recommends:**

- That, in the presence of the Independent Observer, an official report is issued to EFAP in relation to the accusations made against it by the local people of Ndzandouang.
- That a mission be urgently dispatched by the Departmental Delegation for the Environment and Forests of Nyong et So'o, with the aim of drawing up an inventory of all wood illegally cut and abandoned, with a view to calculating the damages and interest suffered;
- That a copy of the inventory report be sent to the Independent Observer.

2. RESOURCES USED

- 1 4x4 pick-up truck
- 1 laptop computer
- 1 GPS
- 1 video camera

3. COMPOSITION OF THE MISSION

Two members of the CCU and two representatives of the Independent Observer, along with the Nyong and So'o Departmental Delegate for the Environment and Forests, took part in the mission.

¹ "Control" in the context of this report means "Law Enforcement" or to "check compliance with law".

4. RESULTS OF THE MISSION

4.1 Summary of the complaint and the facts

On the 14th June, 2002, the forest law enforcement Provincial Brigade of the Dzeng Gendarmerie sent a radio message to the Minister of the Environment stating that “illegal logging in an area of Ndzandouang forest” was being undertaken and alleging “that an individual named Ella Amougou Etienne was felling a mixture of species of at least two hundred trees with a view to a possible Timber Recovery Permit...” (see Appendix 1).

On the 10th July, 2002, by means of memorandum N° 0037/NS/MINEF/CAB/UCC, the Minister of Environment established a control mission with responsibility for investigating the truth about this illegal logging in Ndzandouang.

4.2 Meeting with Mr. Bessala, Chief of Ndzandouang Village

The Departmental Delegate for the Environment and Forests of Nyong et So'o introduced the mission to the chief of Ndzandouang village.

The village chief acknowledged having received people claiming to be from EFAP (*Exploitation Forestière Amougou Pierre*). These people showed him a receipt for the submission of a logging file with the Ministry of the Environment and Forests. The village chief's contacts then shared with him their intention to start logging work before the result of the submission was known. For, they apparently said, they were sure of a positive response from the Ministry.

On the 3rd April, 2002, the same people returned to the village for discussions with the population. They brought with them food supplies and drinks for the village people. During the discussions, the representatives of EFAP (*Exploitation Forestière Amougou Pierre*) apparently promised to build six wells, a medical post and three classrooms. No member of the local administration was present at this meeting. Mr. Ella Amougou Etienne was the main representative of the logging company.

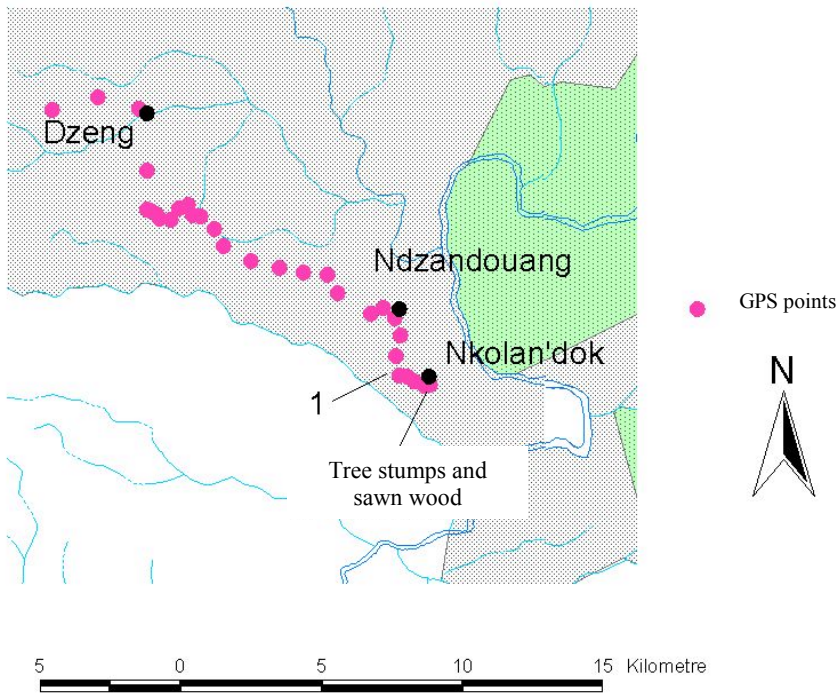
From April to June 2002, this company apparently continued to prospect and fell trees. It used three chain saws, trackers and fellers. During May 2002, the local forest law enforcement official visited the village and ordered EFAP to stop its logging work, stating that no decision had yet been taken on its application to MINEF.

4.3 Observations of the Independent Observer

Following the interview with the village chief, the mission went into the field, where it made the following observations:

At GPS point 1, the mission entered a logging track (see map below).

Exploitation at Ndandouang



The stumps throughout the forest, the GPS points taken and indicated on the above map and the photos taken by the Independent Observer during the mission (photos 1 and 2 below), show that there has been felling of trees in the Ndandouang forest.



Photo 1: Stump of a tree felled in the Dzandouang zone and bearing no markings.



Photo 2: Stump of a tree felled in the Dzandouang zone and bearing no markings.

Photo 3 shows that there has also been wood abandoned in the Ndzandouang forest:



Photo 3: Tree felled in the Dzandouang zone and bearing no markings.

4.4 Notes of the Independent Observer

In view of the above, the Independent Observer is of the opinion that unauthorised logging in national forest estate has been taking place. Those responsible for these acts could incur criminal, civil and administrative penalties.

From a criminal point of view, the perpetrator could incur the sanctions provided by article 156 of the law of the 20th January, 1994, which provide for a fine of 200,000 to 1,000,000 francs CFA and/or a prison sentence of one to six months for any unauthorised logging in a national forest state.

From a civil point of view, the perpetrator could be liable for the sanctions provided by article 159 of the law of the 20th January, 1994, providing for damages relating to wood fraudulently logged. These damages must be calculated on the basis of the entire current market value for the species in question.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Independent Observer concludes that the allegations brought to the attention of the Minister have been proven correct in the case of the illegal logging of the Ndzandouang forest.

Consequently, the Independent Observer recommends:

- That EFAP be summoned for a hearing in relation to the accusations made against it by the local people of Ndzandouang. The Independent Observer will need to be present at this legal notification;
- That a mission be urgently dispatched by the Departmental Delegation for the Environment and Forests of Nyong et So'o, with the aim of drawing up an inventory of all wood illegally cut and abandoned, with a view to calculating damages;
- That a copy of the inventory report be sent to the Independent Observer.

Appendices

Appendix 1

MESSAGE RADIO PORTE

URGENT 14 08 00 JUIN 2002 A.

sur les lieux 14/06
hcc
24/6
() R I G I N E : COBRIGADE DZENG.

(/) ESTINATAIRE: M I N E F (DIRECTION DES FORETS).

- DELEGUE DEPARTEMENTAL MINEF MBALMAYO.

- BANQUE MONDIALE (MINEF).

I N F O : - COCOMPEND MBALMAYO.

- SOUS/PREFET DZENG.

T E X T E : ___/7° 029 /2-TO DU 14/06/2002 XX OBJET XX
EXPLOITATION ILLEGALE D'UNE PARCELLE DE FORET A NDZANDOUANGNM
DZENG XX UN INDIVIDU NOMME ELLA AHOUGOU ETIENNE XX EN VUE E-
VENTUELLE AUTORISATION DE RECUPERATION XX EST ENTRAIN DE FAIRE
RE ABATTRE DES ARBRES XX AU MOINS DEUX CENT PIEDS TOUTES ES-
SENCES CONFONDUES POUR L'HEURE XX CETTE MACABREUSE EXPLOITA-
TION SE POURSUIT DANS UNE VENTE DE COUPE EN COURS DE SCUMISSI-
ON XX INTERESSE DECLARE BENEFICIER SOUTIEN NIVEAU DE YAOUNDE
XX DEMANDONS CONDUITE A TENIR XX URGENCE HAUTEMENT SIGNALERXX
ET FIN ./-

