



global witness

Cameroon

# Project of Independent Observer in Support of Forest Law Enforcement in Cameroon

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

## **Report of the Independent Observer**

**No. 040En**

*Central Control Unit – Independent Observer Joint Mission*

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<b>Title</b>	None
<b>Location</b>	Ngambé Tikar, Mbam and Kim Division, Central Province
<b>Mission date</b>	21 March 2003
<b>Company</b>	SFH-SNT (sawmill)

### **Independent Observer Team (Global Witness):**

*Mr Reiner Tegtmeyer, Project Director*

*Mr Serge C. Moukouri, Technical Assistant*

*Mr Albert Mballa Mbarga, Driver*

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Central Control Unit (CCU), accompanied by the Independent Observer (Global Witness), carried out a mission on 21 March 2003 within the timber-processing unit of the company Société Forestière Hazim Scierie Ngambé Tikar (SFH-SNT), located at Ngambe Tikar, in the Mbam and Kim Division. This mission was part of a CCU routine programme from 17 March to 05 April 2003.

The mission observed the SFH-SNT sawmill operating, albeit well below full capacity. The mission held discussions with the general manager of SFH-SNT before embarking on an inspection of the timber-yard belonging to this sawmill.

The Independent Observer made the following major observations:

- o Most of the timber stocked in the timber-yard of the SFH-SNT sawmill is logged from two Community Forests (CF), namely those of the Common Initiative Groups (CIG) CODENTI and CIG LAN MBOUANG;
- o These two community forests obtained a special Timber Recovery Special Authorisation (TRSA) from the Ministry of the Environment and Forests valid from May to December 2002;
- o These two authorisations contravened the guidelines of the Simple Management Plans set aside for managing these Community Forests (Article 37 of the 1994 Forestry Law).

Having considered the observations made in the field, the **Independent Observer recommends:**

- o The dispatch of an urgent control mission to the Community Forests to verify whether ongoing logging operations are in compliance with the respective Simple Management Plans;
- o Full compliance with the Simple Management Plans of the CIG CODENTI and CIG LAN MBOUANG Community Forests.

## **2. RESOURCES USED**

- 1 Toyota Land Cruiser
- 1 Yamaha 100 Motorcycle
- 3 Garmin GPS
- 1 Digital camera
- 1 Sony Laptop

## **3. COMPOSITION OF THE MISSION**

The mission was made up of Mr. Djibrilla Hessana of the CCU, the Divisional Delegate of Mbam and Kim and Messrs. Reiner Tegtmeier and Serge Moukouri of the Independent Observer.

## **4. CONSTRAINTS**

This mission would have been more successful had it visited the two community forests from where the logs found in the timber-yard of the SFH-SNT sawmill originated

## **5. MISSION FINDINGS**

### **5.1 Case Summary**

The SFH-SNT sawmill considered to belong to the Groupe Hazim, has in the past been used to process timber logged under various logging permits granted to Société Hazim et Cie, a company presently involved in a lawsuit against the Government of Cameroon.

### **5.2 Mission's Observations**

The logs found in the timber yard of the SFH-SNT sawmill are alleged to originate from logging operations within two community forests, notably those of the CIG CODENTI and CIG LAN MBOUANG (see photo below). While in the field, the mission also noted the existence of a Timber Recovery Special Authorisation (TSRA) issued by the Minister of the Environment and Forests.

In the case of the CIG CODENTI Community Forest, the terms of the special TSRA specifies that the logging activities must conform to the provisions outlined in the Annual Plan of Operation (year 2002), that the limits of the concerned CF sector must be specified, and that an operational inventory must be made prior to the beginning of operations (see Appendix 1).

The TRSA issued by the Minister of the Environment and Forests contravenes the provisions of the 1994 Forestry Law and the Decision setting up practical modalities for timber extraction in community forests. In fact, these two texts stipulate that the Simple Management Plan (SMP) constitutes the only standard legal framework by which logging operations within community forests are to be governed.

**Photo:** Logs of the CIG CODENTI and CIG LAN MBOUANG Community Forests in the timber-yard of the SFH-SNT sawmill



Article 37(2) of the 1994 Forestry Law stipulates, “any *activity within a community forest must, in all circumstances, conform to its Simple Management Plan*”. Article 2(2) of the Decision of 26 June 2002 by the Minister on the “*modalities of logging under State control as part of the implementation of Simple Management Plans for community forests*”, completes the 1994 Forestry Law by stating that logging operations within a community forest must be undertaken “*in strict respect of prescriptions of the Simple Management Plan and of the Annual Plan of Operations so as to ensure sustainable management of the forest*”.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Independent Observer made the following main observations:

- o Most of the timber stocked in the timber-yard of the SFH-SNT sawmill is logged from two Community Forests (CF), namely those of the Common Initiative Groups (CIG) CODENTI and CIG LAN MBOUANG;
- o These two community forests obtained a special Timber Recovery Special Authorisation (TRSA) from the Ministry of the Environment and Forests valid from May to December 2002;
- o These two authorisations contravened the guidelines of the Simple Management Plans set aside for managing these Community Forests (Article 37 of the 1994 Forestry Law).

Having considered the observations made in the field, the **Independent Observer recommends:**

- o The dispatch of an urgent control mission to the Community Forests to verify whether ongoing logging operations are in compliance with the respective Simple Management Plans;
- o Full compliance with the Simple Management Plans of the CIG CODENTI and CIG LAN MBOUANG Community Forests.

## **APPENDICES**

## Appendix 1

MINISTRE DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT  
ET DES FORETS

DIRECTION DES FORETS

FORESTRY DEPARTMENT

CELLULE DE LA FORESTERIE  
COMMUNAUTAIRE

COMMUNITY FORESTRY UNIT

REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN  
PAIX-TRAVAIL-PATRIE

REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON

Yaoundé Le 10 MAI 2002

N° 6540 / MINEEF/SG/DF/CFC

LE MINISTRE

Réf: - V/L du 23 Février 2002

A MONSIEUR RENE SADI, CONSEILLER  
DIPLOMATIQUE DU PRESIDENT DE LA REPUBLIQUE

Objet : Forêts Communautaires  
De Ngambé/Tikar

Monsieur Le Conseiller,

Vous avez sollicité, par votre lettre citée en référence, une autorisation spéciale pour qu'à côté de l'exploitation en régie, les communautés villageoises regroupées au sein des GIC "Comité de Développement de l'Arrondissement de Ngambé/Tikar (GIC CODENTI) et du GIC LAN-MBOUANG puissent ravitailler en grumes la scierie de Ngambé/Tikar pour entre autres renforcer la lutte contre la pauvreté dans le Département du Mbam et Kim en sauvegardant ou en créant des emplois. Bien que l'article 95 du Décret N° 95-531-PM du 23 Août 1995 fixant application du régime des forêts donne droit aux communautés d'exploiter leur forêt de façon industrielle, l'exploitation des forêts en régie (par les communautés elles-mêmes) est fortement conseillée car cette forme d'exploitation met les communautés à l'abri des exactions dont elles sont souvent victimes de la part de certains opérateurs économiques. Compte tenu des problèmes liés à l'enclavement, au chômage et à la pauvreté que vous avez pu relever à Ngambé/Tikar au cours de votre tournée politique et dont vous faites mention dans votre lettre de référence,

J'ai l'honneur de porter à votre connaissance que j'autorise, dans les conditions suivantes, les communautés rassemblées au sein du GIC CODENTI et du GIC LAN-MBOUANG à faire transformer une partie de la production de bois issu de l'exploitation de leur forêt exclusivement à la scierie de Ngambé/Tikar:

1. Toute activité menée dans la forêt communautaire doit se faire dans le strict respect des prescriptions de son Plan Simple de Gestion; pour le cas d'espèce, toute activité entreprise dans la forêt communautaire doit être conforme au Plan des Opérations Annuelles (année 2002);
2. Une partie de la production de bois doit être transformée *in situ* par la communauté elle-même;



3. Toutes les limites du secteur programmé en exploitation doivent être matérialisées;
4. Un Inventaire à 100 % des ressources du secteur programmé en exploitation doit être fait.

En vous faisant parvenir ci-joint les lettres adressées au GIC CODENTI et LAN-MBOUANG au sujet de l'exploitation de leur forêt, je vous prie de croire, Monsieur le Conseillé, à l'expression de ma parfaite considération.



Ampliations :

- DPEF/Centre
- DDEF/Mbam et Kim
- Chef de Poste Forestier Ngambé/Tikar
- Chrono