

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

**Validated by the Reading  
Committee**

**Report of the Independent Observer**

**No. 108En**

*Central Control Unit – Independent Observer Joint Mission*

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**Title** Kong Community Forest  
**Localisation** Kong, Ngambé Tikar Sub-Divison,  
Mbam and Kim Division, Central  
Province  
**Mission date** 03 August 2004  
**Company** CIG of the Kong Farmers

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

*Mr Serge C. Moukouri, Technical Assistant*

*Mr Emmanuel Tamounang, Driver*

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Community Forest (CF) of the Common Initiative Group (CIG) of the Kong Farmers (GAK) was the subject of an inspection mission carried out on 3 August 2004 by the Central Control Unit (CCU) with the participation of the Independent Observer (Global Witness). This mission formed part of the routine control programme that commenced on 28 July 2004. The objectives of the mission were to monitor logging activities and to investigate, note and take action against possible cases of illegal logging.

The Kong community is the beneficiary of the Community Forest of the GAK CIG, whose Simple Management Plan (SMP) was approved by MINEF and the management agreement signed in November 2002.

Before leaving for the Community Forest, the mission had already noted that roughly hewn or barked logs bearing the marks of the aforementioned forest were being transported with bills of lading for the transport of sawn timber. These were bills of lading whose validity had expired with the year that ended in June 2003 but on which appeared stamps extending their validity until June 2004. These stamps indicated that the Community Forestry Unit of MINEF was the author. The logs and bills of lading in question were impounded by the CCU.

On the ground, the observations made on site indicated that the activities taking place in this Community Forest did not comply with the regulations in force with regard to the logging of community forests. The mission noted that the GAK has, through its partner, the company CAMSAW, embarked on industrial-scale logging, with the opening of roads and tracks, the establishment of wood depots and evacuation of the wood in the form of rough timber. Close to 100 logs of various species were discovered by the mission in the different wood depots in this forest. For year 2, which relates to the current year, the Simple Management Plan for this forest provides for the extraction of lumber over 300 ha in sector 2. However, on site, activities were taking place in sector 1.

Following a failure to present the technical documents related to logging in the Community Forest, the CCU closed the site and impounded, as a protective measure, the wood and the equipment involved.

On its return to Yaoundé, the mission consulted the Community Forestry Unit of MINEF in order to ascertain the authenticity of the stamps extending the period of validity of the GAK bills of lading. The Unit declared that it was not the author.

Consequently, **the Independent Observer recommends** as follows:

- The summoning of GAK officials to a hearing with regard to:
  - Non compliance with the provisions of the Simple Management Plan;
  - Non compliance with logging regulations;
  - Falsification of transport documents, with the possibility of legal action being taken.
- The summoning of GAK officials to a hearing with regard to the origin of logs being transported with fraudulent documents, with the possibility of legal action being taken.

**The Reading Committee recommends** the sale by public auction of the impounded wood.

## 2. RESOURCES USED

- 1 Nissan Pick-up
- 1 Digital camera
- 1 GPS
- 1 Laptop

## 3. COMPOSITION OF THE MISSION

The following took part in this mission: Ms Marie Mahouli, Messrs Jean Avit Kongapé and Samson Neckmen of the CCU; Mr Romuald Bikié of the Data Processing Unit of MINEF; Mr Nonga, Mbam and Kim Divisional Delegate for the Environment and Forests, and Mr Nkoa, Head of the Yoko Forestry Post, along with Mr Moukouri of the Independent Observer team.

## 4. CONSTRAINTS

No difficulties were encountered in carrying out this mission.

## 5. MISSION'S FINDINGS

### 5.1 Summary of the facts

The Common Initiative Group (CIG) of the Kong Farmers (GAK) holds the concession to the Community Forest (FC) in Kong village. The Simple Management Plan (SMP) and the management agreement for this forest were approved and signed in September and December 2002 respectively. The former provides for the division of the Community Forest into three sectors. The Annual Operation Plan (AOP), for its part, stipulates that the logging of lumber for the current year must be carried out only in sector 2. For activities in this forest, GAK signed a partnership agreement with the company CAMSAW. On the basis of this partnership, the company commenced logging operations in the GAK CF.

On its way to Yoko on 2 August 2004, the mission intercepted 4 timber trucks transporting roughly hewn or merely barked logs (see photos below).

**Photos 1 and 2:** Trucks transporting squared or merely barked logs



**Photos 3 and 4:** Trucks transporting “sawn timber” according to the transporters of these products



These logs bore the marks of the GAK CF and were being transported using bills of lading (BL) for the transport of sawn timber. These BL, which were only valid for the year ending in June 2003, bore the stamps of the Community Forestry Unit of MINEF, extending their validity until June 2004 (see Appendix). The logs and BL concerned were impounded by the CCU, in order to seek clarification of the situation.

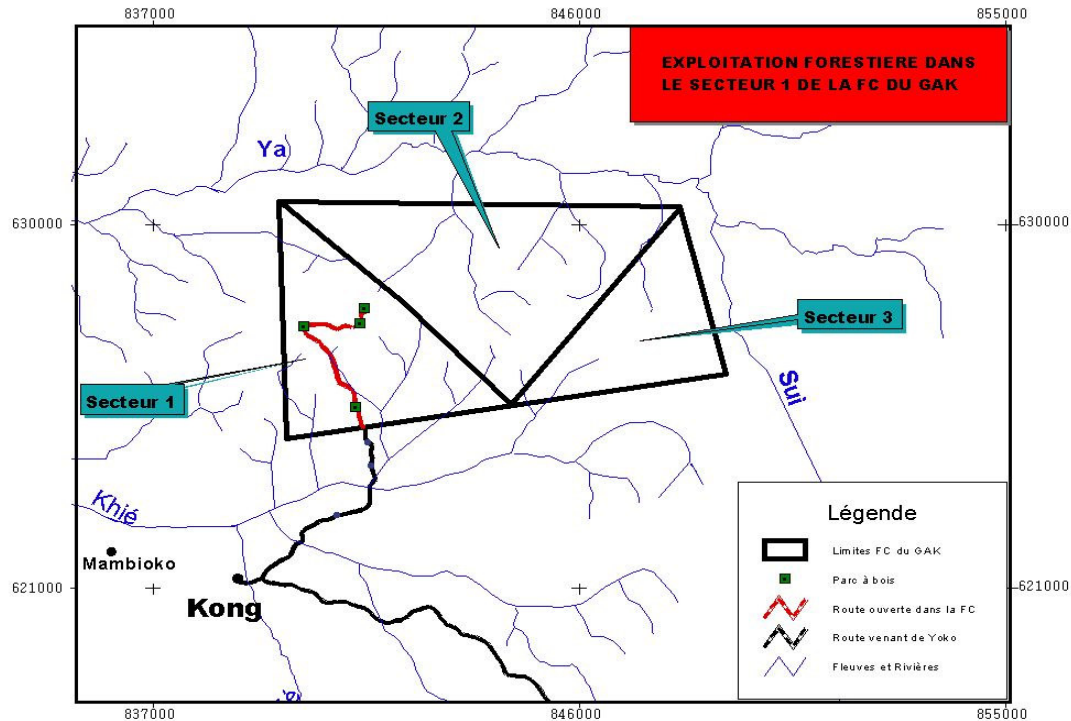
## **5.2 Observations of the Independent Observer**

The visit to the Community Forest site revealed the presence of a Caterpillar D6 engine and the existence of a road, tracks and a network of hauling tracks in this forest. The mission also discovered about one hundred logs of various species in a number of wood depots. It further noticed some minor *in situ* sawing of felled trees. In addition, the transfer of the GPS (Global Positioning System) points taken during the mission onto a map showing the boundaries of the Community Forest and of its sectors shows that logging is still continuing in sector 1 (see map below).

## **5.3 Analysis of the Independent Observer**

### **a) Concerning the violation of CF logging regulations**

Although *in situ* processing of felled trees is taking place on the ground, logging operations in this CF are not complying with the regulations governing the logging of community forests. Decision No. 1985/D/MINEF/SG/DF/CCF establishing the terms and conditions of logging in community forests provides, in Article 2, Paragraph 4, for artisanal logging. Small-scale logging, its *in situ* processing via use of simple equipment, and a ban on the of evacuation of unsawn logs are all criteria of this type of logging. These criteria were not complied with in the context of the logging activities in the GAK CF. The presence on site of a caterpillar engine, the existence of a network of access roads and hauling tracks and the evacuation of barked logs are rather indicators of logging on an industrial scale. The stock of a hundred logs in this forest's wood depot is another factor that enables the Independent Observer to conclude that logging in this forest is being undertaken on an industrial scale. By acting in this way, GAK and CAMSAW have violated the current regulations specifying the type of logging to be carried out in the Community Forest.



### b) Concerning non-compliance with prescriptions of the SMP and AOP

The provisions of the Simple Management Plan were not respected when carrying out logging operations. The transfer of GPS points taken during the mission onto a map giving the boundaries of the CF and its sectors shows that logging activities are not taking place in sector 2, which is open for timber extraction during the second year of activity, but rather in sector 1.

Failure to comply with the provisions of the SMP for a community forest constitutes a breach of the management agreement signed between GAK and MINEF. The 1994 forest law stipulates in Article 37(2) that any activity in a community forest must, in all cases, be in line with its management plan. The provisions of Article 38(2) of the same law specify that the violation of the clauses of a management agreement for a community forest may legally lead to the suspension or annulment thereof. As a matter of fact, the SMP forms an integral part of the management agreement.

### c) Concerning the illegal transportation of logs

The illegality of this transportation arises out of two elements, namely the lack of conformity between the bills of lading and the products being transported, and the authenticity of the extension stamp. The lack of conformity between the document and the transported products stems from the fact that the transported products are not all sawn timber. Sawn timber is the product of the division of a log by sawing or splitting it longitudinally, i.e. along its central axis. A barked log cannot be described as sawn timber (see photo below).

**Photo 5:** Barked logs



As for the extension stamp, its lack of authenticity was confirmed by the Community Forestry Unit, justifying the seizure of three of the four bills of lading by the CCU.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

It emerges from an analysis of the various observations made in the field that the CIG of Kong Farmers (GAK) has, through its partner CAMSAW, committed several violations of the regulations with regard to community forest logging. In addition, the fact that the person in charge of forestry activities within the GAK did not denounce these violations constitutes complicity in this. Consequently, GAK and CAMSAW are liable to the sanctions provided for by the current regulations.

In the light of the above, **the Independent Observer recommends** as follows:

- The summoning of GAK officials to a hearing with regard to:
  - Non-compliance with the provisions of the Simple Management Plan;
  - Non-compliance with logging regulations;
  - Falsification of transport documents, with the possibility of legal action being taken.
- The summoning of GAK officials to a hearing with regard to the origin of logs being transported with fraudulent documents, with the possibility of legal action being taken.

**The Reading Committee recommends** the sale by public auction of the impounded logs.

## **APPENDIX**



## Appendix

LETTRE DE VOITURE POUR LE TRANSPORT DES BOIS DEBITES

EXERCICE : (2003) Du 1er Juillet au 31 Décembre 2003 LVD / FC N° 110774

Détenteur de la forêt : **GIC DES AGRICULTEURS DE KONG**  
 Nom de la Forêt : **GIC DES AGRICULTEURS DE KONG**  
 N° certificat d'inscription : CE/ET/01/197/3222 N° convention de gestion : 0629  
 Nom du transporteur : CAM-SAW Son N° contribuable (NIU) 8/4/01/10/010/6/0/10  
 Immatriculation du camion : CETR 00 12B  
 Destination du bois ( usine, port, autre) : Idé

N° de colis	Nature des produits	Essence	Epaisseur	Largeur	Longueur	Nombre de pièces	Cubage (m³)	Réf. Code à barres
525		AYUS	60	60	10,00	1	3,636	
444		- 11 -	100	100	10,20	1	10,200	
326		- 11 -	57	52	10,00	1	2,964	
447		FRAKE	75	58	10,20	1	5,202	
04						04	22,000 m³	

Observations :

29/06/04

20/01/04  
10432  
FD69  
0009  
046712  
TIMBRE FISCAL-FISCAL STAMP  
FCFA  
DIRECTION DES IMPORTS  
MINISTRE DES FINANCES ET DU BUDGET  
REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN-REPUBLIC OF CAMEROUN

DIRECTION DE LA TRANSFORMATION

Nom et signature du conducteur  
Bello

Signature à l'arrivée

DIRECTION DES FORETS  
VALABLE JUSQU'AU  
30 JUIN 2004  
VISA CELLULE DE LA  
FORESTERIE COMMUNAUTAIRE