



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 of the Independent Observer

No. 038 En

Joint CCU – Independent Observer Mission

Title FC GCI AJAM
Location Ngoro, Mbam and Kim Department,
Centre Province
Mission Date 18 March 2003
Companies AJAM GCI (holder)
B.A.O. SARL (partner)

Independent Observer (Global Witness):

Mr. Reiner Tegtmeyer, Project Director

*Mr. Serge C. Moukouri, Technical
Assistant*

Mr. Albert Mballa Mbarga, Driver

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1. SUMMARY

The CCU team carried out a control¹ mission in the area around Ngoro, Mbam and Kim Department, Centre Province, on 18 March 2003. Accompanied by the Independent Observer (Global Witness), the objective of the mission was to verify information that a truck transporting timber of doubtful origin was preparing to take to the road.

The mission did intercept the truck in question. It transpired that the transporter of the litigious timber was the company B.A.O. Sarl (Bonnes Affaires de l'Ouest) of Bafoussam. During the control, the transporter presented a transport permit taken from a book of permits belonging to the AJAM Group of Common Initiative (GCI) to attest to the legality of his load.

The conclusions of the IO with respect to this mission are the following:

- o The timber transported by the vehicle concerned would seem to have come from non-authorized logging, the location of which remains to be ascertained;
- o The transporter used a transport permit issued to the AJAM CGI although, in all probability, the timber concerned did not come from that community forest;
- o The AJAM CGI would seem to be using its transport permits for the transportation of illegally logged timber.

Considering the above-mentioned conclusions, **the Independent Observer recommends:**

- o That the logging activities of the AJAM CGI be suspended;
- o That the investigation be continued in order to identify the owner, and origin, of the litigious timber;
- o That the owner of the Mercedes Benz vehicle bearing registration number LT 2784 M be summoned for hearing with a view to furthering the inquiry.

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

2. RESOURCES USED

- 1 Land Cruiser
- 1 Yamaha 100 motorbike
- 3 Garmin GPS units
- 1 digital camera
- 1 Sony laptop computer

3. COMPOSITION OF THE MISSION

The mission was composed of: Mr. Djibrilla Hessana and Ms Dzana Margareth of the CCU; Mr. Eyaane Bannister, head of the Centre Province forest law enforcement Provincial Brigade (PB) and Mr. Reiner Tegtmeier and Mr. Serge Moukouri of the Independent Observer.

4. CONSTRAINTS

The sworn officers did not call on the police to force the offenders to state their identity in order to be able to dismantle the whole network.

5. MISSION RESULTS

5.1 Summary

During a working session with some of the Ngoro local authorities on 18 March 2003, the mission was informed that a truck loaded with fraudulently felled timber would be crossing the town during the night. The same day, at around 23.00 hrs, the mission intercepted a Mercedes Benz truck transporting approximately 21m³ of sawn *iroko*. The truck bore the registration number LT 2784 M and appeared to belong to the company B.A.O. SARL, BP 837 Bafoussam (see photos below).

When requested to present the transport permit for their load of timber, one of the persons on board the intercepted vehicle presented a securised Transport Permit N° 303507 bearing the name of the AJAM (Association des Jeunes Agriculteurs de Mbembeng) Group of Common Initiative (GCI) (see Annex 1).

The place of origin and destination noted on the transport permit and the itinerary followed by the vehicle concerned raised some questions. In order to avoid any speculation, the mission proposed that the transporter of the timber should return to the place of loading on board the CCU vehicle, whilst the rest of the team waited at the Ngoro forestry checkpoint. The owner of the load refused this offer. Faced with the double refusal by the transporter, that is, his refusal to cooperate and his refusal to present his identity papers, the head of mission ordered that the truck concerned be unloaded.

Photos : Truck loaded with fraudulently felled timber

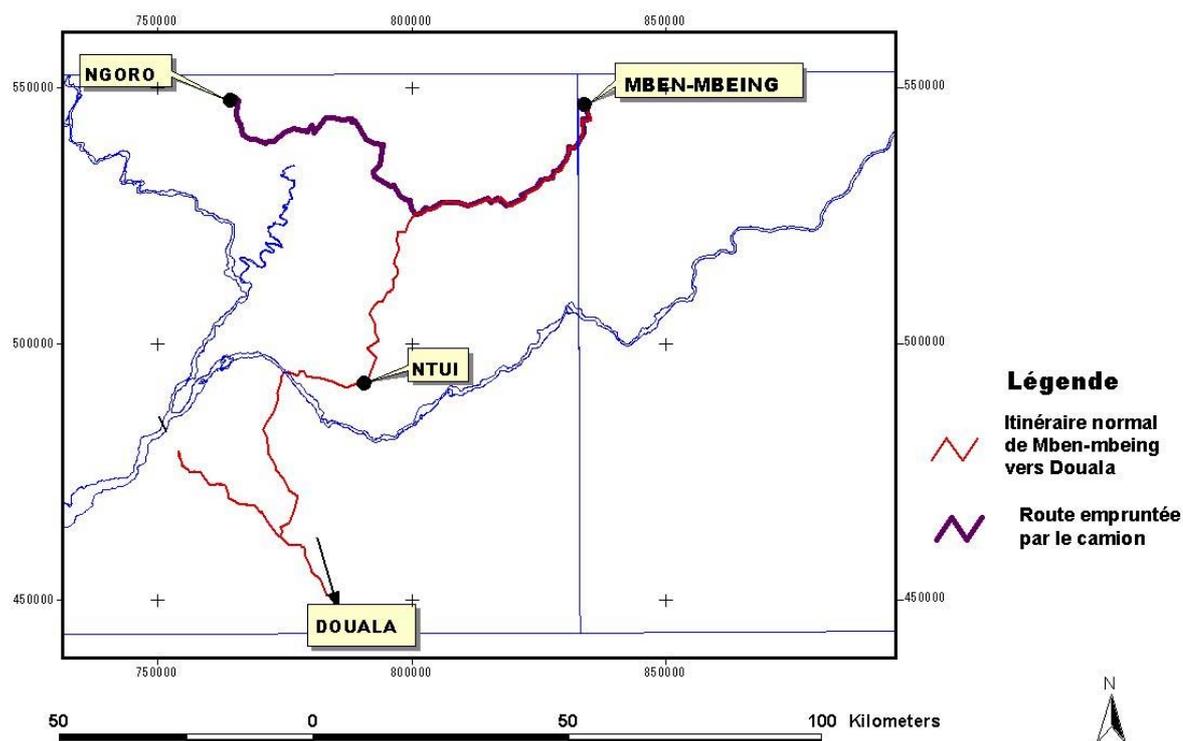


5.2 Conclusions of the Independent Observer

a. Doubtful origin of the timber concerned and fraudulent use of a transport permit

An analysis of the geographical data gives reason to believe that the timber described in this mission report did not come from the place noted on the transport permit found in the possession of the transporter. The transport permit indicates that the timber came from Mbembeng, to the north of Ntui. The same transport permit mentions Douala as the destination of the timber concerned. If the timber did indeed come from Mbembeng and was being taken to Douala, the truck would not go through Ngoro, which is situated in West Province (see map below). Particularly since the north-south road is practicable.

Map: Route followed by the truck and normal itinerary to Douala.



It should be noted that, during a meeting between the Independent Observer and the managers of the AJAM GCI community forest, the latter confirmed that all the timber produced from this forest is sold exclusively to their partner, the company TIB (Transformation Intégrée du Bois) (see Report No. 042En).

These elements taken together could prove that the 21m³ of *iroko* in question did not come from the AJAM GCI community forest.

The transportation of timber with fraudulent papers is an act disallowed by article 158 of the law of 20 January 1994. This case could also lead to non-authorized logging of timber if it were established that the timber concerned had been logged without title or rights.

b. Knowledge by the AJAM CGI of the use of one of its transport permits in the case in question?

As was said in the summary, the transport permit in the possession of the transporter of the timber concerned bore the name of the AJAM GCI. The Independent Observer obtained from the Directorate of Forestry a copy of the receipt signed by the AJAM GCI when the books of transport permits were collected (see Annex 2). From an analysis of this item from the archives of the Directorate of Forestry, it appears that the book of transport permits containing the transport permit No. 3033507 was indeed signed for by the AJAM GCI officers. The question is thus whether the GCI officers were aware of the fraudulent use of one of their transport permits by the transporter of the timber in question in this report.

The 1994 forestry law, in article 38, provides for community forests to be logged in strict respect for the simple management plan and the norms governing the forestry

sector in Cameroon. Where this is not the case, the law specifies that the Agreement between the MINEF and the communities concerned may be rescinded.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusions of the IO with respect to this mission are the following:

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ANNEXES

Annexe 1

MINISTRE DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DES FORETS
 Ministry of Environment and Forestry
DIRECTION DES FORETS
 Département of Forestry

REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN
 Paix - Travail - Patrie
REPUBLIC OF CAMEROUN
 Peace - Work - Fatherland

LETTRE DE VOITURE POUR LE TRANSPORT DES BOIS DEBITES
 WAYBILL FOR THE TRANSPORTATION OF SAWN WOOD

EXERCICE (2003) du 1^{er} Janvier au 30 Juin 2003
NR 303507

Fiscal Year
 Nom ou raison sociale de l'industriel **AJAM**
 Company Name

N° contribuable (NIU) **Forêt Communale** N° enregistrement MINEF **D762/FR**
 Taxpayer identification N° MINEF Registration N°

Nom du transporteur **Parone Affaire de** N° contribuable (NIU)
 Transporter's Name His Taxpayer identification N°

Immatriculation du camion **LT 2784 M**
 Truck Registration N°

Destination du bois (usine, port, autre) **BOUALA**
 Wood Destination

N° de colis	Nature des produits	Essence	Epaisseur (mm)	Largeur (cm)	Longueur (m)	Nombre de pièces	Cubage (m³)	Ref. Code à barres	
	Nature of the Products		Thickness	Width	Length		Cubage (m³)	Code barre reference	
01	B D P 3 DEBITE	IROKO	80	16	3.85	47	2.84		
02			80				2.84		
03			80				2.84		
04			80	16	3.35	100	2.64		
05			80				86	1.65	
06			80	8	3.10	86	1.65		
07			80	8	3.10	86	1.65		
08			80	8	3.10	86	1.65		
09			80	8	3.10	86	1.65		
10			80	8	3.10	86	1.65		

Annexe 2

REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN
 PAIX - TRAVAIL - PATRIE

 MINISTERE DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT
 ET DES FORETS

 DIRECTION DES FORETS/FONDS SPECIAL
 DE DEVELOPPEMENT FORESTIER

REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON
 PEACE - WORK - FATHERLAND

 MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT
 AND FORESTRY

Quit N° 0372 du 29-01-03

RECU
 N° d'Ordre..... 168 Date..... 29-01-2003.
 Nom du Contribuable..... GIC AJAM

Nature	Quantité	N° Carnet	Prix à l'Unité	Prix total
DF10	5	421276-421400	4500	22500
L VG	5	507051-507175	4500	22500
L VD	5	303401-303525	4500	22500
Total Général				Soixante sept-mille cinq cents francs 67500

Signature du Régisseur


Signature du Contribuable