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CABINET DU MINISTRE
UNITE CENTRAL DE CONTROLE

REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON
Peace- Work – Fatherland
MINISTRY OF
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTRY
MINISTER'S OFFICE
CENTRAL UNIT OF CONTROL

PARTIAL REPORT OF A MISSION TO CONTROL LOGGING OPERATIONS IN
THE CENTRE AND SOUTH PROVINCES, DEPARTMENTS OF DJA AND
LOBO AND MVILA

FROM 16 TO 29 JULY 2001

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1. **INTRODUCTION**

Memorandum No. 2336/NS/MINEF/CAB/UCC of 5th July 2001 established a mission to control logging operations in the Centre and South Provinces.

This partial report focuses on the Departments of Dja and Lobo and Mvila, South Province. The team comprised:

- **Mr ENGBWANG Emile, Team Leader;**
- **Mrs ONDOA née BEYEKENI, Member;**
- **The Global Witness team, Members.**

Within their respective areas of responsibility, the Head of the South Province Control Brigade, the Head of the Djoum Forestry Post and the Forest Section Heads of Dja and Lobo and Mvila also joined the team. The aims of the mission were:

1. To check for illegal logging activity;
2. To note and take criminal proceedings against cases of illegal activity;
3. To monitor the forest area en route.

This report is divided into five sections:

- resources used
- control and evaluation of sites
- summary table of proposed sanctions
- recommendations and
- annexes.

2. **RESOURCES USED**

Human Resources

Apart from the members noted above, the team drew on the local heads of forestry administration, along with the administrative authorities, for further information useful to the success of the mission.

Technical Resources

- Maps showing the position of the titles, obtained from the Central Unit of Forestry Cartography (UCECAF) of the Forestry Department and geographical maps of the regions of Cameroon visited, on a scale of 1/200,000.
- Three (3) Garmin-brand Global Positioning Systems (GPS), in order to verify that the position of the titles on the map complied with their actual positioning on the ground.
- Rulers
- Two cameras
- One compass
- One video camera (Global Witness)

Logistical Resources

- One vehicle from the Forestry Department
- One vehicle from Global Witness

3. CONTROL AND EVALUATION OF LOGGING SITES

DEPARTMENT OF DJA AND LOBO

Situation of SIBM (Sale by auction)

Date of visit: 19/7/2001

Beneficiary: SIBM

Findings on the ground:

SIBM is the holder of an authorisation to remove wood following sale by public auction, in accordance with Public Notice No. 368 of 27/4/2001, and has paid its obligations (payment of 11,000,000 CFA to the Public Treasury and corresponding 13%). This Company is, however, opposed by Mr. NDO Alain, head of COFEQ, which was awarded Rural Road Development Authorisation No. 1597/L/MINEF/DF on 8th May 2001 in the same area.

In order to prevent law and order problems, the sub-Prefect of Sangmelima issued a notice to stop the works (cf. copy of message attached) and intends to enter into mediation.

Along the length of track opened up by SIBM, the mission noted a single specimen of *Triplochiton scleroxylon* and a single specimen of *Distemonanthus benthamianus* felled over a year ago on the following GPS points respectively:

N: 03°03,473'	and	N: 03°03,701'
E: 012°00,433'		E: 012°00,304'

It should be noted that this case can be explained by the issuing of a rural road development authorisation to COFEQ without specifying the route to be developed or opened.

The mission suggests:

That the authorisations for rural road development stipulate the route and right of way of tracks in order to avoid any illegal felling in relation to this document.

COFEQ holds a road development authorisation that cannot be considered as a valid logging title.

SIBM is the company that has illicitly logged in the Nkolebom forest.

An official inventory has not been undertaken.

The mission suggests that:

- SIBM be penalised for having logged without a title in the Nkolebom forest, see violation of law report (*procès-verbal*) of DJA and LOBO DDEF.
- A second inventory should be undertaken
- The sale by auction should be re-assessed (quantity/volume and quality) and SIBM pay the surplus or be returned the excess.
- COFEQ must be officially informed that it does not own a valid logging title in the area of Nkolebom and the sub-Prefect of Sangmelima must be copied this note.

UFA 09-006

Date of visit: 21/7/2001
Title holder: FANGA
Partner: SOFAC
Assiette de coupe: No. 04

Findings on the ground

The activities of this site began in March 2001. The following GPS points show that the logging was undertaken within the *Assiette de coupe*:

N: 02°43,697' and N: 02°45,148'
E: 012°59,128' and E: 012°59,780'

A check of waybill records shows the transportation of wood beyond the period agreed (30/6/2001).

The lack of a DF10 with the Site Manager must be noted.

Consequence

Evacuation of logs beyond the authorised period

Measures taken:

- A violation of law report noting the evacuation of logs beyond the authorised period was issued against the SOFAC Company, represented by its Site Manager..., who stated his identity and recognised what he was being reprimanded for;
- A notification of site stoppage was sent to this Company.

Proposed sanctions:

In application of the provisions of article No. 158 of the law, a fine of 5,000,000 F CFA must be imposed on this Company.

The company must be penalised for failure to present DF10s.

UFA 09-003

Date of visit: 21/7/2001

Title holder: LOREMA

Partner: SFID

Assiette de coupe: No. 02

Findings on the ground

The logging operation, which began on 12/7/2001, is still in its preparatory phase at this site, with the opening of a track and the felling of a number of species.

The waybills issued by the DDEF did not include the No. of the *Assiette de coupe* (No. 02).

Conclusion:

This mission noted no offences committed by this Company.

DEPARTMENT OF MVILA

A meeting granted to the team by the Prefect of Mvila highlighted a number of problems at the level of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry's administration in the department.

This stems from the vacant post of Departmental Delegate for the Environment and Forestry. The Head of Wildlife Section appointed by the Provincial Delegate of South Province as representative of the Departmental Delegate, turned down the post. The Provincial Delegate is more or less paralysing the functioning of the Departmental Delegation by calling back all staff to the Provincial Delegation (see Memorandum attached). He is also in collusion with the majority of economic operators, by asking these latter to demand travel orders signed only by him for all monitoring on the part of the Head of Forestry Section. In addition, he is involved in transportation of the wood illegally logged within the Province.

SALE OF STANDING VOLUME 09-04-127

Date of visit: 25/7/2001

Title holder: Ingénierie Forestière

Findings on the ground

GPS readings on the different boundaries enabled it to be concluded that Sale of Standing Volume No 90-41-127 was clearly marked.

Nonetheless, the team noted the following offences:

- Felling of undersized *Chlorophora excelsa* logs;
- ~~Bad marking of stumps~~-(Failure to mark some stumps)
- Failure to register DF10s
- Transportation of undressed timber with incorrectly numbered waybills
29302/29301

Consequence

Failure to respect logging regulations on the part of the Company.

Measures taken:

A violation of law report (*procès-verbal*) was sent to the Ingénierie Forestière Company, represented by Mr. MESSA Emmanuel, its Site Manager, for failure to respect logging regulations (felling of undersized logs, failure to mark stumps, inappropriate use of waybills).

Proposed sanctions:

Principle fine???

SALE OF STANDING VOLUME 09-02-132

Date of visit: 26/7/2001

Title holder: WIJMA

Findings on the ground

At the level of the vehicle fleet, the mission noted that there had been a halt in logging operations on this site since 25/6/2001.

Consequence:

The team did not return to the logging site and consequently noted no offences on the part of this Company.

ARB 511

Date of visit: 26/7/2001

Title holder: SOFOPETRA

The sub-Prefect of Mvangan, in the presence of the Special Commissioner, the Brigade Commander and the Head of the Mvangan Forestry Post were surprised by the aim of the team's visit as they had all been expecting an awareness raising visit on the ground prior to any control activities. They were anxious to draw the team's attention to the tense social situation in the region, in relation to the logging operations being undertaken by the Sofopetra company.

An awareness raising campaign was organised by a certain BENGONO Michel, Teacher at the Sangmelima Lycée, accompanied by a soldier from the Presidential Guard. This campaign preceded the arrival of the team and mobilised the Sofopetra workers, who were on technical leave, and who said they wanted to do battle with the control mission and forest authorities once and for all.

The Administrative authorities also had some reservations with regard the safety of the team members, given the prevailing tension and, particularly, the very limited number of law enforcement agents (2 gendarmes in post and available in the area) plus the long process of obtaining a permit to fire.

In order to avoid any regrettable incident from occurring in this case, it would be advisable for an awareness raising mission to precede that of control.

Recommendations

The team recommends that:

For the Sofopetra situation, that an awareness raising mission precedes that of control in order to avoid MINEF officials being held responsible for the closure of the above named company.

That a Sofopetra representative be co-opted in the town to accompany the control mission on the ground, if it is not possible to involve him in the context of preparing the control mission.

List of Annexes:

- Message from the sub-Prefect of Sangmelima to SIBM
- DDEF violation of law report regarding the 'ticketing' of SIBM
- Provincial Delegate of South Province's memorandum on staff allocation.