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SYSTEMATIZATION OF CORRUPTION IN THE FORESTS AND WILDLIFE SECTOR IN CAMEROON:

**Failed effort to
promote good
governance?**



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Marius **Talla** (Cabinet CMR)

Laurence **Wete Soh** (FODER)

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Table of contents

Table of contents	3
List of boxes	3
Acronyms	4
Introduction	5 - 6
I. DINDICATORS OF THE LIMITATIONS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE INITIATIVES IN THE FORESTS AND WILDLIFE SECTOR	7
1. Detrimental perpetuation of corruption practices	7
2. Low level of transparency.....	8
3. Constant impunity	8
4. Withdrawal of the main development partners from the fight against corruption in the sector.....	10
II. HARMFUL CONSEQUENCES OF RETURNING TO THE SYSTEMATIZATION OF CORRUPTION IN THE FORESTS AND WILDLIFE SECTOR	11
1. Important revenue deficit for the State and for the most vulnerable stakeholders in the sector	12
2. Progressive normalisation of illegality in the forests and wildlife sector, and threats on the biodiversity	13
CONCLUSION : AN IMMEDIATE NEED OF A PRACTIVE, INCLUSIVE,STRUC- TURED AND SUSTAINABLE APPROACH	14

References17

A. Studies, Reports and Strategy documents	17
B. Regulatory instruments	17
C. Press articles	17

List of boxes

Box1: ACPI Methodology	5
Box 2: Best practices in forests and wildlife control	9
Box 3: Impact of corruption on international policies and processes: The case of the FLEGT process	11
Box 4: Resistance to authority and loss of state Influence.....	12

Acronyms

ACPI:	Assessment of the Corruption Perceptions Index
ACU	Anti-Corruption Unit
CPI	Corruption Perceptions Index
CONAC:	Commission Nationale Anticorruption du Cameroun
CV4C (Project) :	Citizen Voices for Change: Congo Basin Forest Monitoring Project
DGSN:	General Delegation for National Security
EITI:	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
EU:	European Union
FODER:	Forêts et Développement Rural
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
ITIE :	Initiative de Transparence dans les Industries Extractives
MINFOF :	Ministry of Forests and Wildlife
NACC:	Cameroon National Anti-Corruption Committee
NACS:	National Anti-Corruption Strategy
NDC :	Nationally Determined Contribution
PFs ::	Police Forces
REDD+:	Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks through conservation and sustainable management of forests
SSD:	Secretary of State for Defence
VPA FLEGT	Voluntary Partnership Agreement on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance, and Trade

Introduction

For more than 10 years, the key governance indicators show that Cameroon is among the worst countries when it comes to this area. For example, the Transparency International's ranking shows that since 1998, Cameroon has never been among the 100 least corrupted countries. This also has an impact on the forest and wildlife sector.

As a matter of fact, the 2010 situational analysis of corruption which was referred to in the National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS) indicated that this sector was one of the most affected by the corruption phenomenon. Yet, the forests and wildlife sector is one of the priority sectors for the economic growth and the development of the country in terms of its economic, social and ecological potentials. It contributes significantly to the country's economic aggregates.

In fact, the added value of the forest sector consistently accounted for 2.76% of the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) between 2008 and 2010 while the share of hunting was around 0.25% of the GDP (Eba'a Atyi and al. 2013). The forests and wildlife sector also provides an important ecotouristic potential and environmental services, especially to fight against climate change, through the process of reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks through conservation and sustainable management of forests (REDD+) on one side, and the nationally determined contribution (NDC) of Cameroon as part of the Paris Agreement on the other side. Forests account for 9% out of the 32% reduction of emissions projected by Cameroon.

Bearing this in mind, authorities took strategic, technical and

Box 1: ACPI Methodology

The Evaluation of the CPI was based on a methodology for collection and analysis of data from various documents and publications on forests governance, and primary data from interviews conducted in ten regions of Cameroon. 405 stakeholders of the sector, among which 32 from the forests and wildlife administration, 17 from justice, 23 from Police Forces, 156 from private sector, 26 from civil society, 90 from communities, 14 local elected representatives and regional and local authorities, and 27 other stakeholders. Meanwhile, 12 stakeholders have not specified their institutional filiation. The main steps of this methodology were to :

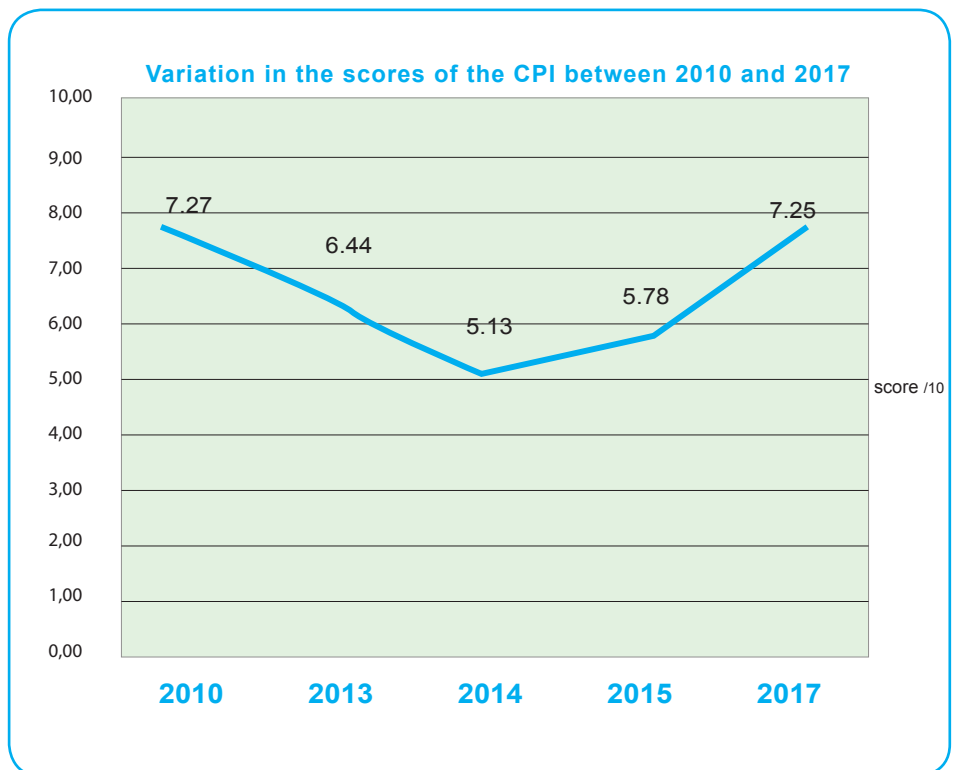
- Define the specific groups of stakeholders involved in the forests and wildlife sector, whose opinions matter and are relevant;
- Give a specific weight to each group of stakeholders in relation to the nature of their role and their level of intervention in the sector;
- Set up the size of the sample to be monitored for each group of stakeholders, which size will ensure the reliability of the projections;
- Obtain for each surveyed stakeholder a score indicating their perception of the intensity of corruption in the forests and wildlife sector (this score is reported on a scale from 0 to 10);
- Calculate the average score obtained in each group of stakeholders made by simple arithmetic aggregation;
- Scale up the evaluation score to all the groups of stakeholders while using the agreed weighing scheme, to get the overall CPI at the national level.

institutional actions to restraint the impact of corruption in this sector which is crucial for the country's economic growth. Actions include, in the forest and natural resources sector in general, the National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS) complemented by many processes. One of the objectives here is to improve the governance of the sector. The various processes include Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) and REDD+ as well as the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) among others. Since 2012, among other activities implemented with the prospect of monitoring these various processes, an assessment of the Corruption Perceptions Index is regularly conducted in the forests and wildlife sector. The aim is to assess through the perception of the main stakeholders whether anti-corruption initiatives (NACS) and initiatives to promote good governance (FLEGT VPA, REDD+, EITI, etc.) in that sector are effective.

The 2017 Assessment of Corruption Perceptions Index (ACPI) is carried out for the fourth time by Forêts et Développement Rural (FODER), this time within the framework of the "Citizen Voices for Change: forest monitoring in Congo Basin" project (CV4C). The findings of this study are convincing and have enabled to notice that: there is a real improvement in the way the intensity of corruption was perceived among the stakeholders of the sector between 2010 and 2014, from 7.27/10 in 2010 to 5.13/10 in 2014. This perception has significantly decreased since 2015 from 5.78/10

to 7.25/10 in 2017, which is nearly the level recorded during the initial assessment conducted in 2010 by the NACC. Practically, after seven years fighting against corruption, this scourge level would have returned to the initial level where it was seen as systemic in the forests and wildlife sector. Hence the issue is to find out whether initiatives to promote good governance in the sector are effective. In other words, could it mean that returning to corruption systematization in the forests and wildlife sector implies the failure of various initiatives to promote good governance in this sector? Moreover, which actions could be taken to reduce the level of corruption in the forests and wildlife sector?

This document summarizes the results of the 2017 ACPI, highlighting indicators of possible failure to promote good governance, but also negative consequences that can be noted in the sector on the economic and ecological plans because of corruption. In addition, recommendations are made in an attempt to improve on the situation..



I. INDICATORS OF THE LIMITATIONS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE INITIATIVES IN THE FORESTS AND WILDLIFE SECTOR

There are many signs which show that efforts to promote good governance in the forests and wildlife sector are far from having yielded the expected results.

1. Detrimental perpetuation of corruption practices

Corruption is the misuse of public authority for private purposes (Transparency International:

2008). As such, corruption is an on-going practice, common to the forests and wildlife sector in Cameroon. It takes various forms depending on the status of the involved stakeholder of the sector (Talla et al. 2017). Most of these forms were already mentioned in the NACS in 2010. More specifically, in the forests and wildlife sector, the phenomenon may refer to organised thefts by some of the State authorities, frauds of any kind and various misuses of the State power for private purposes.

According to the results of the 2017 ACPI, corruption is a widespread phenomenon which constantly occurs in the forests and wildlife sector. More than 50% of the stakeholders surveyed ranged the score of the corruption perceptions index between 8/10 and 10/10, while around 6.5% ranged it between 0/10 and 4/10. The perceptions index is above average (5/10) in 9 regions. In addition, all the categories of the stakeholders surveyed, apart from those of MINFOF, have a corruption perceptions index above average. These facts also lead to conclude that the sector is corrupt. Per Region and per category of stakeholders,

mode and median averages show that the highest average index (8.36) was obtained in the Far North and the lowest in the West.

The results of the 2017 ACPI have also shown that the victims of corruption come mostly the stakeholders families involved in the forests and wildlife sector. However, the most exposed to the phenomenon are local and indigenous communities (31.1%), and stakeholders from the private sector (20.75%).

The main authors of corruption practices in the forests and wildlife sector are the holder of a part of the State authority. On this matter, officials from MINFOF (namely those posted at forest check points), other administrations such as councils, as well as gendarmes/policemen were regularly referred to. This has not really changed. In 2012, forests and wildlife stakeholders denounced the involvement of gendarmes in forest control. After many complaints to the Anti-Corruption Unit (ACU) of MINFOF, joint initiatives were taken by the ACU and the National Anti-Corruption Commission (NACC). These initiatives led to an instruction from the Secretary General of the Presidency of the Republic to the State Secretary for Defence (SSD) and the General Delegate for National Security (DGSN) requesting them to require from gendarmes and policemen not to carry out road control. The findings of the 2017 ACPI show that the instruction is no more respected.

Therefore, anti-corruption initiatives might be inadequate and ineffective. Indeed, Rapid

Results Initiatives (RRIs) from MINFOF and CONAC have never been extended to other “corruptogenic” areas of the Ministry, and the progressive scale up of the implementation to the spheres of authority as provided for in the related methodology has never been effective. So is the case for the initiatives implemented by the civil society which did not succeed in reducing the impact of this phenomenon on a sustainable way according to people surveyed within the framework of the 2017 ACPI. This is mostly due to the non-compulsory, but mainly consultative and ad hoc nature of actions to promote good governance, initiated by these non institutional stakeholders.

2. Low level of transparency

Transparency is considered as one of the indicators of good governance. This concept derives from the principle of participation as referred in Section 9 of Law No. 96/12 of 5 August 1996 on the Framework - Law relating to environment management. Transparency refers to the sharing of and access to information by all the interested stakeholders. As such defined, transparency is not yet effective in the forests and wildlife sector in Cameroon. This is based on the analysis of responses given by 405 stakeholders of the sector as part of the assessment of the corruption perceptions index in that sector in 2017.

The results of the 2017 assessment of the CPI show that a very important part of the stakeholders involved in the forests and wildlife sector do not know which information is mentioned on the official documents required to carry out their activities, nor the procedures related to their issuance. These same results show that anti-corruption initiatives are not known enough by all stakeholders, especially the most vulnerable for whom these initiatives are supposed to be implemented. So, the main victims of corruption in the forests and wildlife sector cannot benefit from

the existing mechanisms to fight against the bad practices observed in the sector. This confirms that the implementation of all the requirements for the publication of forest information set forth in Annex 7 of the VPA - FLEGT is important to enhance transparency in the forest sector.

All this ignorance (of procedures for obtaining official documents as well as anti-corruption initiatives) and the low level of access to information in the sector foster the vulnerability of some stakeholders, significantly reducing their capacity to resist corruption. The vulnerability of these stakeholders serves the interests of bad stakeholders in the forests and wildlife sector. In addition, opacity is used by some institutional and non institutional stakeholders to create opportunities for corruption.

3. Constant impunity

Impunity refers to a situation where wrongdoers are not sanctioned. Within the framework of this study, it refers to a situation where a State official may not be blamed for the wrongdoings he did when fulfilling his duties, or will escape any investigation that could have him be accused, arrested or suspended, judged or dismissed if he was found guilty.

Even though rich people from the forests and wildlife sector may sometimes bring a case of corruption to trial (Lore Souhe: 2016), it is generally acknowledged that impunity is among the main causes of the persistence of this phenomenon in this sector. Many facts based on the strategic choices made in the sector and on the analysis of the 2017 ACPI results confirm this. First, impunity was pointed out again in 2016 as the main cause of corruption in the forests and wildlife sector during the review of the Cameroon’s NACS. This was done at the initiative of the NACC after consultation of a well-representative sample

of stakeholders involved in the forests and wildlife sector. Next, people surveyed within the framework of ACPI, even though in a low proportion (3.2% of people surveyed) think that the impunity and passivity of the Government are among the causes of the ineffectiveness of anti-corruption initiatives. For them, because they are sure to be protected by negative network sponsors of the forests and wildlife sector, the authors of corruption have no reason to worry about anti-corruption initiatives carried out in the sector.

Impunity is fostered by low operational mechanisms (bodies and tools) which should ensure accountability of State officials involved in the forests and wildlife sector. Accountability refers to the fact of giving accounts of actions carried out when fulfilling one's duties. This other principle is determining in the implementation of the idea of good governance. The issue of accountability is not clearly shown in the results of the 2017 ACPI. However, the analysis of some data like the perception of the will of stakeholders to fight against corruption enables to conclude that accountability is still low and even not existing in the sector.

In the forests and wildlife sector, there are mechanisms designed for controlling the action of officials in charge of forests and wildlife resources, and which should therefore be a solution for people of the sector against those officials' wrongdoings. These mechanisms are both internal (ACU and General Inspectorate) and external (NACC and courts) to MINFOF. The analysis of the effectiveness of these bodies shows that they do not meet (any more for the ACU of MINFOF) the expectations of those involved in the forests and wildlife sector regarding the fight against corruption. In fact, the achievements of the ACU of MINFOF in respect of effectiveness during years 2012-2014 have significantly declined. Users

Box 2: Best practices in forests and wildlife control (Circular Letter No.0170/LC/MINFOF/P. CLCC/M.CLCC)

1. Wearing the green uniform is mandatory for officials in charge of control;
2. Wearing a legible badge by the official in charge of control with his last and first names and the attached service;
3. Holding a mission order duly signed by the relevant authority;
4. Displaying to general public the service note making the mission order official;
5. Displaying at the MINFOF checking points a toll free number to denounce corruption
6. Not using voluntaries at the control points
7. Controlling only the transport letter, the origin certificate or the auction file
8. Respecting the maximum duration of 20mns for controls
9. Recording in the controlled documents, the identity of the control official, the place of control as well as the control start and end time
10. Writing on a register, the forest information mentioned in the controlled documents for statistical purposes.

complained more and more about the lack of response from this unit which greatly contributed to reduce corruption practices in the sector by ensuring the implementation

of control-related best practices at forest check points. The issue of re-occurrence of corruption on roads is also raised, which corruption was denounced before 2012 and led to the implementation of the NACS in this sector.

The implementation of the principle of accountability by the external bodies to MINFOF is no longer effective according to the most vulnerable stakeholders of the forests and wildlife sector. Taking the NACC for instance, it is difficult for the most vulnerable stakeholders of the sector (sawyers, carriers and timber retailers) to refer to this body. Indeed, due to their low intellectual capacities, and mostly (for the vast majority) because of the distance (The NACC is located only in Yaounde), they cannot easily resort to the NACC. For those who could complain to the NACC, they say that this entity transferred their complaint to the MINFOF without satisfactory results. Processing a complaint takes more time for uncertain results within a context where it would be better to promptly reduce damages suffered by the claimer. Same is the case for courts, as the most vulnerable stakeholders do not always have the necessary financial resources to sue a case. Added to this is the issue of time to process files; many years can be spent from the decision in the first court until the final judgement, and the physical distance between the ordinary litigant and courts are other barriers for the victims of corruption in the forests and wildlife sector.

4. Withdrawal of the main development partners from the fight against corruption in the sector

It is noticed that the fight against corruption is no longer a priority for international donors in Cameroon, including those involved in the forests and wildlife sector. This can be viewed through the withdrawal of many international partners from the area of the fight against corruption.

Donors have progressively withdrawn from the fight against corruption in Cameroon since ending 2013, especially in the forest and wildlife sector. Priority is further given to preservation programmes and to initiatives to promote good governance in general, to which should be added timely actions for the promotion of integrity which cannot address issues related to corruption in a subsequent and sustainable way.

This withdrawal brings about many consequences, mainly the reduction of financings allocated to anti-corruption initiatives, which limit interventions in the area, as well as advocacy and/or relaying activities at the level of decision-makers during strategic meetings with technical and financial partners.

This lack of interest from technical and financial partners (TFP) has surely contributed to increase the score related to the perception of corruption intensity. Yet, the return widespread corruption in the sector is fraught with consequences.

Box 3: Impact of corruption on international policies and processes: The case of the FLEGT process

The aim of FLEGT is mostly to ensure that only legal timber is marketed, based on key elements like law enforcement, good governance, fight against deforestation due to illegal exploitation.

By viewing this aim through the results of the 2017 ACPI and other studies, it is clearly noted that corruption impacts this goal in a significant way. Besides losing part of resources invested in the FLEGT process due to corruption, all the signatory countries and all those negotiating a VPA - FLEGT with the EU are among the most corrupt in the Transparency International ranking. Yet, it is acknowledged that illegal logging is enhanced by corruption. So, not addressing effectively and efficiently the issue means to undermine efforts to fight against illegality, deforestation and related trade; and therefore, undermine the credibility of the FLEGT process. Moreover, as forests are found in the international agenda of the fight against climate change, through the REDD+ process, risk that the objectives of reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation will be compromised because of corruption is to be seriously considered. Hence, the importance for donors to invest more in anti-corruption initiatives..

II. HARMFUL CONSEQUENCES OF RETURNING TO THE SYSTEMATIZATION OF CORRUPTION IN THE FORESTS AND WILDLIFE SECTOR

The drop of score in the perception of corruption intensity in the forests and wildlife sector affects the image of the sector both at the national and international level. Indeed, forests and wildlife resources in Cameroon are among the main products of the country designed for the international market. While the Government signing of the VPA - FLEGT has improved the image of Cameroon's timber designed for the European market, the persistence of such a score and especially of the factors justifying it could affect the achievements made

at that level. Moreover, the forests and wildlife sector, in a country like Cameroon, located at the heart of the Congo basin, with proven ecological importance, is among the sectors contributing to promote the image of the country at the international level. From that standpoint, a bad perception of this sector affects the image of the country as a whole. Beyond these, there are other consequences, which are more tangible and appreciable on the economic and ecological aspects.

1. Important revenue deficit for the State and for the most vulnerable stakeholders in the sector

Corruption in the forests and wildlife sector significantly affects the State revenues on taxes and the payment for various services, documents, fines, and other payments. Indeed, resources which should benefit to the economic growth of the country are embezzled through corruption and mechanisms implemented by stakeholders (corrupters and corrupt people) for personal interests.

The study on the 2017 ACPI shows that 82% of stakeholders in the sector are involved in corruption, and that more than 52% of them spend at least FCFA 10 000 per week in corruption practices (Talla et al.2017). It can be noted through simulations that the shortfall for the State is nearly equal to FCFA 797 040 000 per year, considering only people surveyed within the framework of the 2017 ACPI, while he needs these resources to continue the development of the country and thus improve the living conditions of the population

This updates the findings of the study on the situational analysis of corruption practices in the forests and wildlife sector performed in 2012 by Binam et al. From situations like those found in the 2017 ACPI and from some simulations, they clearly indicated the losses the State recorded due to corruption, valued at FCFA 1 080 000 000 on small licences and FCFA 1 152 000 000 on illicit controls (Binam Bikoï: 2012); which account for annual losses of about FCFA 2 232 000.000 (Two billion two hundred and thirty-two million) only for those two components. It is likely to have the losses tripled if all segments of the wood supply chain were to be considered, from the issuance of the various permits to marketing through the transformation and transport of the various forest species.

In the same vein, the 2014 progress report of a project to fight corruption through the Rapid Result Initiatives (RRI) approach, made by the Anti-Corruption Unit of MINFOF, shows a corruption cost valued at 30% of the actual cost of a timber legally logged in some community forests of the South Region to supply the town of Douala; or in absolute value, FCFA 1500 paid through corruption for an Iroko plank of 5cmx40cmx220cm bought at FCFA 5000 on the local market (Anti-Corruption Unit of MINFOF : 2014). Furthermore, some authors also estimated that corruption would make lose between FCFA 12 and 15 billion of forest revenues per year to the forest and wildlife sector in Cameroon (Djouokep: 2015). This amount accounts for more than half of the annual budget of this Ministry, which in 2017 was about FCFA 20 billion (2017 Finance Law).

Finally, corruption also impacts small-scale business operators' income in the forests and wildlife sector; 88.7% of the people surveyed acknowledge that the practice seriously reduces their income. 20.80%

Box 4: Resistance to authority and loss of State influence

Despite formal prohibition from Circular No.0059/C/MINFOF/CAB of 21 April 2016 on the exploitation of logs in the national estate, some people who were questioned (holders of timber depots, artisanal loggers) say that the practice is carried on without real constraint, in exchange of payment of fees to enter forests, to the competent Head of forest post. The amounts of FCFA 50 000 per year and FCFA 10 000 to FCFA 20 000 depending on the volume of the truck used are due as illicit payments for the running of this illegal activity.

acknowledge that they pay less than FCFA 5 000 per day in illegal fees. This percentage is 26.16 % for those who have already paid at least FCFA 5 000 per day; 26.52 % for those who pay between FCFA 10 000 and FCFA 15 000; and 26.52% for those who pay more than FCFA 15 000 per day

2. Progressive normalisation of illegality in the forests and wildlife sector, and threats on the biodiversity.

UA review of the report of the study on the 2017 ACPI, and discussions with various stakeholders met during data collection, helped identify a progressive normalisation of illegality in the forest and wildlife sector. This can be viewed through bad citizenship behaviour of some stakeholders. Bad citizenship behaviour refers to a citizen who does not fulfil the actions required to respect the Res Publica (public affairs). More specifically, this is acting contrarily to the rules and regulations in force. Bad citizenship behaviour can be viewed at three levels.

The first level is the payment of fees required to run some activities in the sector. Many stakeholders carry out activities linked to the exploitation of forests and wildlife resources without the required official authorizations and documents. This situation is fostered by the corruption of the actors in the control chain, who allow those individuals to illegally exploit the country forests and wildlife resources. It appears therefore that nearly 50% of small-scale operators involved in the exploitation of these resources, who agreed to inform the ACPI, carry out their activities in an illegal manner. According to the findings of the 2017 ACPI, 50% of them do not know the procedure required to obtain the required documents. This ignorance shows how little these documents are important in running

their activities; yet they are required by the rules and regulations in force. Moreover, the study shows that more than 16% of these stakeholders really think that these documents are not necessary when you can afford to give money to the officials in charge of control.

The second level is the non-compliance to the rules and regulations in force during logging. It was noted that some stakeholders carry out activities prohibited by the rules and regulations in force through facilitations granted by corruption. For example, Circular No. 0059/C/MINFOF/CAB of 21 April 2016 prohibits the exploitation of poles in the national estate, and also logs taken from the stems of young trees of various species, at the pole and sapling growth stages in forests stands, whether at the permanent or non permanent forest real estate. However, some stakeholders of the sector do not respect this prohibition in accordance with some collaborators of the Ministry of Forests and Wildlife.

The third level is characterised by the normalisation of illegality following agreements between some MINFOF officials and corrupt business operators to break the Law. These agreements are also threats to the biodiversity. Testimonies from Ngwei inhabitants show this well-enough. In this particular case, a business operator, COMOCA, used the wood recovery permit tax (WRPT) No. 0703095 issued by the Ministry of Forestry in 2007 and valid for an area of 50ha in Ngwei 1 village only, to cut wood, between 2007 and 2011, not only in Ngwei 1 village, but also in the 07 other villages (Mapoubi, Logbii, Ebombe, Logbamal, Ikande, Somgbok et Sondong) of the same sub-division (Ngwei Sub-Division). Without authorization from local communities to take away timber cut illegally, 500 logs were allowed to rot in the area. After many denunciation campaigns and multiple communication activities carried

out by the civil society and communities to draw the attention of the MINFOF to the situation, sanctions were imposed on the company. Yet, in 2017, during an information meeting organised in Ebombe by the Sanaga Maritime Sub-Divisional Officer, and to which were invited administrative and traditional authorities from Ngwei sub-division as well as the local populations, the public was informed that the WRP No. 0703095 issued in 2007 was renewed so as to recover standing wood in all Ngwei sub-division for a volume of 8433 m³ to be taken away from August to December 2017. They were also informed that the permit gave the possibility to COMOCA, if it had not been able to exploit the volume before December 2017, to extend the validity of the permit. Yet, a WRP can be

issued only for a specific development project, limited to a well-specified area for a period not exceeding one year. Moreover, issuing WRP is prohibited since 2012 and the related WRP does not appear in the list of valid permits from 2012 to 2017. Despite the fact that SUHE association denounced these activities to the relevant authorities in August 2017, nothing has changed so far.

Such situations bring a lot of concerns as they lead automatically to the normalisation and even generalisation of illegality in the exploitation of forests and wildlife resources which are yet an important growth sector for the development of the country and the improvement of the living conditions of local communities

CONCLUSION : AN IMMEDIATE NEED OF A PROACTIVE, INCLUSIVE, STRUCTURED AND SUSTAINABLE APPROACH

Generally, the reduction of the score related to the perception of corruption intensity in the forests and wildlife sector forecasts an increase of the phenomenon. This degradation of the corruption perception in the sector can also have harmful effects both on the sector and the overall country. Hence, the necessity to take a set of measures to adjust this trend being observed since 2015. These measures, mostly proposed by the consulted stakeholders of the sector during the 2017 ACPI, consist in inclusive and structured actions to be carried out over time. They suggested, without limitation, the following actions:

To all stakeholders:

- **Strengthening cohesions between existing anti-corruption initiatives in the forests and wildlife sector:** the aim here is to enhance solidarity between various stakeholders involved in promoting transparency and integrity in the forests and wildlife sector; to coordinate their interventions and increase the visibility of the results obtained in order to get more chances of success in anti-corruption initiatives in the sector. These cohesions can be established by the MINFOF, international

NGOs and the local CSOs on issues related to the fight against *corruption, the implementation of VPA - FLEGT, etc.*

- **Advocating for the reduction of interventions in the sector:** The forests and wildlife sector is a junction of several and sometimes contradictory interests. This naturally brings in conflict of interests. The method used by the richest stakeholders is influence peddling. The authorities, including those who do not belong to the sector get involved because of one or the other interest notwithstanding normative and regulatory provisions in force in the sector. So, the role of TFPs would be to forward advocacies for the reduction of such interventions to relevant authorities.

To the Government, namely MINFOF, NACC and other interested administrations:

- **Diagnosis of anti-corruption initiatives carried out between 2010 and 2017 in the forests and wildlife sector, followed by a proposal of a related action plan:** The aim here is, first to draw lessons from past failures and suggest mechanisms which will further meet the requirements of public policies applicable in the forests and wildlife sector; as well as the expectations of the related stakeholders. MINFOF could be the first to bear the responsibility for this, but in cooperation with the other stakeholders concerned by the issue, namely, the CSOs, the Research, the private sector, etc.
- **Publishing on a regular and timely basis all the information referred to in Annex VII of the VPA - FLEGT, as well as specifying the costs for obtaining the operational documentation. Opacity establishes and maintains**

corruption. Increased transparency would be an important step in the fight against corruption in the forests and wildlife sector. Once again, the interested administrations, led by MINFOF, CSOs and the private sector could reasonably coordinate their actions to carry out this mission.

- **Implementing as part of the fight against corruption, on a regular and holistic basis, such mechanisms established to prevent, educate and urge to fight against corruption and mostly take exemplary and deterrent sanctions against the authors of corruption.** This means that stakeholders get awareness and strong will to fight against corruption; it also means that models of integrity and probity are established and highlighted.

To the civil society:

- **Improving approaches to sensitize the stakeholders who are most corruption-prone:** The aim is to empower the most vulnerable of the forests and wildlife sector with ways to resist pressure from corrupt stakeholders of the sector. The MINFOF ACU, the NACC, NGOs, local CSOs as well as private companies may invest in this approach to promote outreach actions directly focused on the real causes of corruption.
- **Reactivating mechanisms which protect those who denounce and which ensure legal and judicial assistance to the victims of corruption:** This is how the critical mass of people resisting corruption and working to reduce the impact of the phenomenon will be increased so as to progressively reverse the current trend. To be effective, such a system should

be promoted by public authorities, the MINFOF, the CONAC, The FMO, etc. However, all stakeholders of the forests and wildlife sector should contribute to build this system, whether by making available the required expertise or by sharing experience in this matter.

- **Carrying out a study on the costs of corruption in the forests and wildlife sector:** Such a study would enable to update existing ones based on appropriate and relevant methodology.

To the technical and financial partners:

- **Integrating and recording fight against corruption as a priority objective of international environmental and climate policies, and mobilizing subsequent resources to achieve this objective.** The aim here is to help address the root cause of some current environmental issues rather than just address the effects. This recommendation is directly intended for the Government and international donors. However, international NGOs

and stakeholders of the local civil society should contribute with appropriate advocacies based on the results of real studies showing not only the impact of the phenomenon on the sector, but also their consequences on the chances for success of development initiatives (including those financed by donors).

The forests and wildlife sector has important economic and financial challenges requiring adequate developed measures and actions. Beyond the financial needs necessary to prevent and fight against corruption, it is also necessary, faced with the 2017 prevailing situation (significant increase in the perception of corruption intensity) to reconstitute, motivate and consolidate the critical mass of stakeholders who was constituted before. Therefore, efforts deployed would not only reduce the loss of forests resources, but also that of wild animals. Since actors of corruption are almost the same in the forests and wildlife sub-sectors, the impact of the actions carried out to reduce the harmful capacity of these actors would be felt in both sub-sectors.

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FODER's Working Paper represent preliminary, but important scientific thoughts on topics linked to forestry, environment, climate, mines, agriculture and trade. They are case studies and technical reports. The outcomes presented in this kind of document are not reviewed by an external committee to FODER.

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MISSION

FODER's mission is to create an enabling environment for sustainable development through actions designed to ensure justice and equity, rights and democracy transparent, participatory and sustainable management of natural resources; preservation of biodiversity and improvement of the quality of life.





Tél. : 00 237 222 005 248

Po. box : 11417 Yaoundé, Cameroon

E-mail: forest4dev@gmail.com

www.forest4dev.org

www.oie-cameroun.org

