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Independent Forest Monitoring Pilot Project Honduras

Mission Report No. 003

Joint mission AFE-COHDEFOR – Independent Monitor

Local sale of plagued timber in municipal forest

Local Sale No.:	J-238/2005
Location:	Ejidos de Jano – El Zuntul
Outbreak No.:	Jano-012/2005
Title Holder:	Francisco Irrael Zúñiga (Mayor of Jano)
Company:	INFER

Mission dates: 9 and 14 de June 2005

Report date: 20 June 2005

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On 9 June 2005, AFE-COHDEFOR¹ and the Independent Monitor jointly inspected the exploitation site of local sale no. J-238/2005, allocated to Mr. Francisco Irrael Zúniga, in his role as Mayor of Jano Municipality, to treat an outbreak of *Dendroctonus frontalis* in the site known as Ejidos de Jano, specifically at El Zuntul.

During this first inspection discrepancies between the authorised area and the area being exploited on the ground were found. For this reason, it was decided that a second inspection should take place on 14 June 2005, in this case including the forester of Jano Municipality in charge of the supervision of this harvesting site and two representatives of the company INFER.

Both visits were carried out as part of the *Independent Forest Monitoring Pilot Project*, currently being implemented in the country. There were no reported problems or obstacles for the development of the mission.

During the second day of inspection it was confirmed that:

- 1) The exploited area was 2.7 hectares, more than double the authorised area of 1.1 hectares.
- 2) 111 trees were authorised to be logged, but 184 were cut, that is, 73 trees more than authorised that add up to about 73 m³ of timber logged without authorisation.²

Considering the above, the Independent Monitor recommends following AFE-COHDEFOR's regulations and prepare the relevant official denunciation against the beneficiary of the local sale.

2. RESOURCES USED

First day (9 June 2005):

- 1 four-wheel drive
- 1 photo camera
- 2 GPS
- 1 video camera

Second day (14 June 2005):

- 2 four-wheel drive
- 1 photo camera

¹ State Forest Administration – Honduran Corporation of Forest Development (*Administración Forestal del Estado – Corporación Hondureña de Desarrollo Forestal*).

² According to the inventory, the net average volume per tree is approximately 1 m³.

- 4 GPS
- 1 video camera

3. COMPOSITION OF THE MISSION

First day (9 June 2005):

- Mr. Hector Manuel Rosa, Head of Jano UEP³, AFE-COHDEFOR
- Mr. Efraín Paguada, Environmentalist, MAO⁴
- Mr. Fausto Mejía Zelaya, Independent Monitoring Team, CONADEH⁵
- Mr. Filippo Del Gatto, Independent Monitoring Team, Global Witness

Second day (14 June 2005):

- Mr. Hector Manuel Rosa, Head of Jano UEP, AFE-COHDEFOR
- Mrs. Lidia Eloisa Borjas, forester, Jano Municipality
- Mr. Giovanni Fernández, Owner and Manager, INFER
- Mr. Adrian Pineda, Head of Logging Operations, INFER
- Mr. Fausto Mejía Zelaya, Independent Monitoring Team, CONADEH
- Mr. Filippo Del Gatto, Independent Monitoring Team, Global Witness

4. CONSTRAINTS

There were no problems or obstacles during the implementation of this mission.

5. RESULTS OF THE MISSION

5.1 General overview of the visited area

Local sale no. J-238/2005 was allocated on 4 May 2005 to Mr. Francisco Irrael Zúniga, in his role as Mayor of Jano Municipality, to treat an outbreak of *Dendroctonus frontalis* in the site known as Ejidos de Jano, specifically at El Zuntul.

According to the technical report attached to the local sale, outbreak no. Jano-012/2005 concerned an area of 1.1 hectares and included 111 trees to be cut, of which the total volume was estimated at 111.94 m³.

The technical report also establishes that the exploitation will be carried out by the Mendoza company. However, this company handed over this work to another company, INFER, which carried out the logging activities.

³ Projects Implementation Unit (*Unidad Ejecutora de Proyectos*).

⁴ Olancho Environmentalist Movement (*Movimiento Ambientalista de Olancho*).

⁵ National Commission for Human Rights (*Comisionado Nacional de Derechos Humanos*).

5.2 Main findings

a) *Differences between the authorised exploitation and the actual exploitation on the ground*

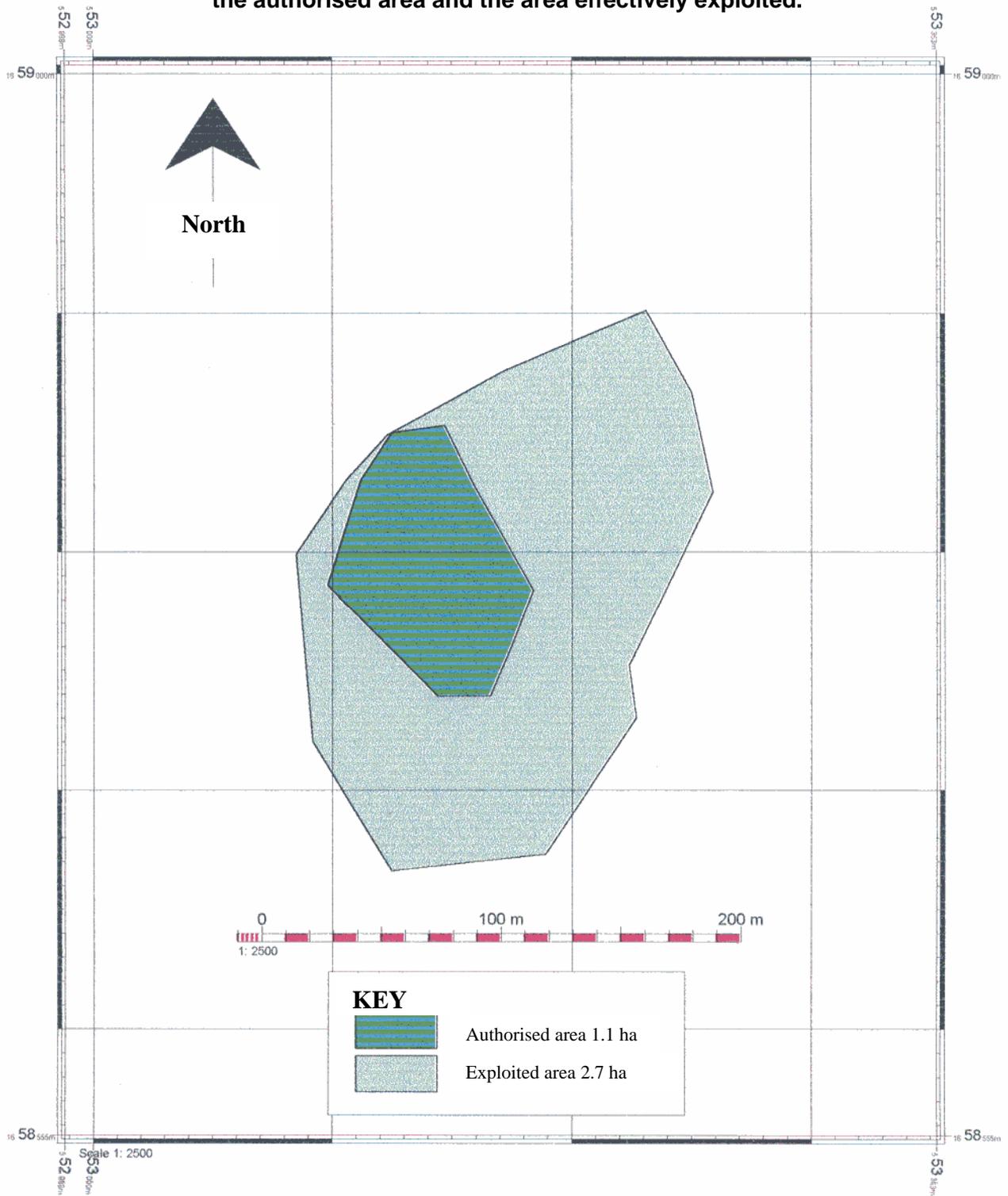
As noted above, according to the local sale the area to be exploited was 1.1 hectares. However, the area effectively exploited was 2.7 hectares, more than double the area originally authorised (see Figure 1).

Similarly, there has also been an increase in the number of trees cut. Using an inventory of stumps it was confirmed that instead of the 111 trees authorised, 184 trees were effectively cut, that is, 73 trees more than authorised.⁶ Considering that the 111 marked trees had an average net volume of approximately 1 m³ each, it can be concluded that approximately 73 m³ of timber was exploited without authorisation.

These irregularities were recognised by the Owner and Manager of the company INFER, Mr. Giovanni Fernández. When the inspection finished, he explained to the joint mission AFE-COHDEFOR – Independent Monitor that during the operations in this area the boundaries were expanded because another area had not produced the expected amount of timber and they wanted to use the three transport permits unused in this other area for the area subject of this mission.

⁶ It should also be noted that the in area of the outbreak about 15 small marked trees were left standing. Considering that 184 stumps were counted, it can be deduced that the actual number of trees cut without authorisation is higher than 73, that is, at least 88 (73 + 15).

Figure 1. Local sale no. J-238/2005: comparison between the authorised area and the area effectively exploited.



6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusions of the Independent Monitor regarding this mission are as follows:

- 3) Local sale no. J-238/2005 authorised the logging of 111 trees in an area of 1.1 hectares
- 4) However, the area exploited was 2.7 hectares, in which 184 were cut, that is, 73 trees more than authorised that add up to about 73 m³ of timber logged without authorisation.

Considering the above, the Independent Monitor recommends following AFE-COHDEFOR's regulations and prepare the relevant official denunciation against the beneficiary of the local sale.