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Humanos*



**global witness**

## **Independent Forest Monitoring Pilot Project Honduras**

### **Mission Report No. 004**

*Joint Mission AFE-COHDEFOR –Independent Monitor*

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#### **Monitoring the transport of timber**

<b>Vehicle:</b>	Oshkosh
<b>Plate No.:</b>	M13
<b>Transport Permit No.:</b>	J-136672
<b>Company:</b>	Industrialización y Comercialización de Madera, S.A. de C.V. (INCOMSA)
<b>Location:</b>	San Esteban, Olancho

**Mission dates: 15 and 17 June 2005**

**Report date: 5 July 2005**

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of the independent monitoring activities, on 15 June 2005 a joint mission AFE-COHDEFOR<sup>1</sup> – Independent Monitor verified the documentation of a timber truck, an Oshkosh vehicle with plate no. M13, which was carrying logs to San Esteban, Olancho.

This activity was carried out as part of the *Independent Forest Monitoring Pilot Project* that is currently being implemented in the country. There were no reported problems or obstacles for the development of the mission.

During this inspection, two irregularities were found out in transport permit no. J-136672, belonging to the company INCOMSA<sup>2</sup>, that gave details about the transport of the timber:

- 1) Instead of the correct date, 15 June 2005, the date in the permit was the previous day, that is, 14 June 2005.
- 2) The truck was carrying two logs more than indicated in the permit, that is, 29 logs instead of 27, which add up to 2.23 m<sup>3</sup> of timber not reported.<sup>3</sup>

These irregularities clearly represent minor cases of breaching the law. However, there are two aspects worth mentioning:

- 1) Firstly, INCOMSA did not pay any sanctions for the excess volume loaded on the truck.
- 2) Secondly, the fine imposed for the mistake in the date of the transport permit was only Lps. 500.00 (approx. US\$26.50).

It is particularly this second aspect that requires some attention. It is evident that a 'mistake' in the date of the transport permit allows two trips with one permit, especially when the sawmill is located relatively near the exploitation site, as is the case here.

There is no intention to accuse INCOMSA of having made two trips with the transport permit in question, as there is no evidence of this being the case. What is interesting to highlight is that such a low fine is not strong enough a disincentive for anyone who would choose to exploit this possibility. Quite the opposite: it could act as a perverse incentive to illegality.

Considering these facts, the Independent Monitor recommends that the fines for the illicit use of transport permits to carry logs be reassessed and revised.

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

<sup>2</sup> Industrialización y Comercialización de Madera, S.A. de C.V.

<sup>3</sup> In this report all units in cubic meters refer to round square meters.

## **2. RESOURCES USED**

- 1 four-wheel drive
- 1 photo camera
- 1 GPS
- 1 tape measure

## **3. COMPOSITION OF THE MISSION**

- Mr. Santiago Ramírez, Head of San Esteban UEP<sup>4</sup>, AFE-COHDEFOR
- Mr. Onil Cerrato, forester at San Esteban UEP, AFE-COHDEFOR
- Mr. Fausto Mejía Zelaya, Independent Monitoring Team, CONADEH<sup>5</sup>
- Mr. Filippo Del Gatto, Independent Monitoring Team, Global Witness

## **4. CONSTATINTS**

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

## **5. RESULTS OF THE MISSION**

### **5.1 Summary of the mission**

As part of the independent monitoring activities, on 15 June 2005 a joint mission AFE-COHDEFOR – Independent Monitor verified the documentation of a timber truck, an Oshkosh vehicle with plate no. M13, which was carrying logs to San Esteban, Olancho (Picture 1). Two days later, on 17 July 2005, at INCOMSA's premises, the truck was unloaded and each log was measured.

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<sup>4</sup> Projects Implementation Unit (*Unidad Ejecutora de Proyectos*).

<sup>5</sup> National Commission for Human Rights (*Comisionado Nacional de Derechos Humanos*).

**Picture 1. Members of the joint mission AFE-COHDEFOR – Independent Monitor check transport permit no. J-136672.**



## **5.2 Main findings**

### **a) *Mistake in the date of the transport permit***

The load of the truck was specified in transport permit no. J-136672, belonging to INCOMSA. However, instead of carrying the date of 15 June 2005, when the timber was being transported, it had 14 June 2005 written on it (see Figure 1). For this reason, the Head of UEP, Mr. Santiago Ramírez, impounded the transport permit and the truck, which was driven by its driver to AFE-COHDEFOR's premises in San Esteban.

### **b) *Withdrawal of the truck***

The following day, that is, on 16 July 2005, the company INCOMSA moved the truck from AFE-COHDEFOR's premises to its own at San Esteban. This happened before the official denunciation had been issued, therefore before the sanction was paid and before AFE-COHDEFOR authorised the truck to be taken away.

However, it is important to note that the company did not download the logs in its premises, but waited to until the following day to download and measure the

timber in the presence of AFE-COHDEFOR's technicians and the Independent Monitor.

In addition, in the following days INCOMSA paid the administrative sanction of Lps. 500.00 (aprox. US\$26.50) established by AFE-COHDEFOR for the mistake in the transport permit's date.

**c) *Discrepancies between the transported logs and the logs documented in the transport permit***

By measuring the timber on 17 July 2005 at INCOMSA's premises, it was possible to detect that the truck was carrying two more logs than indicated in the transport permit, that is, 29 logs instead of 27 (Figure 1).

Table 1 specifies the dimension and volume of the two logs not included in the transport permit.

**Table 1. Dimension and volume of the two logs not included in the transport permit.**

<b>Log number</b>	<b>Diameter (inches)</b>	<b>Length (feet)</b>	<b>Volume (m<sup>3</sup>)</b>
1	8	52	0.93
2	10	52	1.30
<b>Total</b>			<b>2.23</b>

Figure 1: Photocopy of transport permit no. J-136672, with the main irregularities highlighted in red.

**ADMINISTRACION FORESTAL DEL ESTADO  
(AEE - COHDEFOR)**  
REGION FORESTAL DE OLANCHO  
FACTURA PARA MADERA EN ROLLO Y LABRADA  
DATOS GENERALES **FACTURA No. J-136672**

Unidad de Manejo: **San Esteban**      Compartimiento N°: **ue4**

Sitio: **Boqueron**      Municipio: **Couglaco**      Departamento: **Olancho**

**TENENCIA**      Usuario del Sitio

Nacional      Privado      Ejidal      Indígena

Contrato: **D-1049/04**      Venta Local      Contratista: **ENCOMSA**      Sub-Contratista

Industria Consignataria: **ENCOMSA**      PRODUCTO A ELABORAR:  Aserrío  Plywood  Palillos  Postes  Otros (Indicar)

N° TROZA	ESPECIE	Promedio de los Diámetros en Pulgadas de la Cara Menor	LARGO (Pies)	Pies Doyle o Carga Opción Aserradero	3		N° TROZA	Promedio de los Diámetros en Pulgadas de la Cara Menor	LARGO (Pies)	Pies Doyle o Carga Opción Aserradero	3	
					P	M					P	M
1	Pino	12	44	54			26	8	26			14
2		8	46	32			27	11	32			30
3		6	52	27			28					
4		8	54	41			29					
5		7	44	25			30					
6		6	40	24			31					
7		8	50	36			32					
8		10	50	50			33					
9		19	32	78			34					
10		11	16	13			35					
11		7	18	2			36					
12		21	32	43			37					
13		8	44	30			38					
14		6	18	5			39					
15		6	52	27			40					
16		6	46	22			41					
17		8	52	27			42					
18		15	32	51			43					
19		10	28	22			44					
20		9	32	22			45					
21		13	28	32			46					
22		11	28	25			47					
23		8	52	39			48					
24		16	32	57			49					
25		17	28	54			50					

Nombre Motorista: **Roy Romero**      Marca Vehículo: **Cash**      Placa Vehículo: **M/13**      Nombre Despachador: **Fausto Marillo Flores**

Lugar y Fecha: **Boqueron a las 13 de Junio del Dos mil cinco**

ORIGINAL: Aserradero; COPIA VERDE: Región Forestal;  
COPIA AMARILLA: Transportista; COPIA AZUL: Unidad de Manejo  
COPIA ROSA: Para la Caseta de Control  
TALONARIO: **2134**

ART N° 206: Esta factura podrá ser revisada por la Autoridad Policial y Funcionarios de COHDEFOR cuando así lo requieran para el control de la procedencia de la Madera Transportada, debiendo el transportista prestar la colaboración necesaria para su cumplimiento

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

The irregularities reported here clearly represent minor cases of breaching the law. However, there are two aspects worth mentioning:

- 3) Firstly, INCOMSA did not pay any sanctions for the excess volume loaded on the truck.
- 4) Secondly, the fine imposed for the mistake in the date of the transport permit was only Lps. 500.00 (approx. US\$26.50).

It is particularly this second aspect that requires some attention. It is evident that a 'mistake' in the date of the transport permit allows two trips with one permit, especially when the sawmill is located relatively near the exploitation site, as is the case here.

There is no intention to accuse INCOMSA of having made two trips with the transport permit in question, as there is no evidence of this being the case. What is interesting to highlight is that such a low fine is not strong enough a disincentive for anyone who would choose to exploit this possibility. Quite the opposite: it could act as a perverse incentive to illegality.

Considering these facts, the Independent Monitor recommends that the fines for the illicit use of transport permits to carry logs be reassessed and revised.