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

### **Mission Report No. 005**

*Joint mission AFE-COHDEFOR – Independent Monitor*

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#### **Local Sale of plagued timber at a National Forest**

<b>Local Sale No.:</b>	J-163/2005
<b>Location:</b>	La Tincuta, San Esteban
<b>Outbreak No.:</b>	San Esteban-027/2005
<b>Permit Holder:</b>	Pedro Braulio Carias
<b>Company:</b>	Pine Floors

**Mission dates: 28 and 30 June 2005**

**Report date: 6 July 2005**

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On 28 and 30 June 2005, AFE-COHDEFOR<sup>1</sup> staff of San Esteban UEP<sup>2</sup> and the independent monitoring team jointly inspected the site concerned in local sale no. J-163/2005, allocated on 30 April 2005 to Mr. Pedro Braulio Carias, for the treatment of an outbreak of *Dendroctonus frontalis* at the site known as La Tincuta, on national land, located in San Esteban Municipality.

The inspections 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.

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

- 1) The technical assessment of the outbreak no. San Esteban-027/2005 was wrongly written by the person responsible for it, Mr. Bernabé Batiz Suazo, with a significant discrepancy between the diagram of the outbreak area on the document and the actual area marked on the ground.
- 2) The company Pine Floors has harvested around 6.04 ha, despite the local sale establishing an area of 4.79 ha and the area marked on the ground being only 3.25 ha.
- 3) Considering that the overlap between the harvested area and the marked area on the ground is only 0.9 ha, it can be concluded that there has been an unauthorised exploitation of approximately 5.14 ha.

Considering these conclusions, the Independent Monitor recommends:

- 1) That AFE-COHDEFOR notifies Mr. Bernabé Batiz Suazo about the anomalies found in the technical assessment of the outbreak, requests from him more attention in the implementation of his professional services and, moreover, that it closely supervises any piece of work submitted by him.
- 2) That AFE-COHDEFOR notifies Mr. Pedro Braulio Carias and the company Pine Floors about the irregularities found in the harvesting site, and issues the relevant denunciation according to the current legal provisions.
- 3) In order to estimate the damage caused by the company Pine Floors, it is advisable to carry out an inventory of stumps in the area harvested without authorisation (5.14 ha).

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

## **2. RESOURCES USED**

First day (28 June 2005):

- 1 four-wheel drive
- 1 photo camera
- 3 GPS

Second day (30 June 2005):

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

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

First day (28 June 2005):

- Mr. Santiago Ramírez, Head of San Esteban UEP, AFE-COHDEFOR
- Mr. Onil Cerrato, forester at San Esteban UEP, AFE-COHDEFOR
- Mr. Fausto Mejía Zelaya, Independent Monitoring Team, CONADEH<sup>3</sup>
- Mr. Filippo Del Gatto, Independent Monitoring Team, Global Witness

Second day (30 June 2005):

- Mr. Santiago Ramírez, Head of San Esteban UEP, AFE-COHDEFOR
- Mr. Napoleón Antúnez, promoter PBPR, AFE-COHDEFOR
- 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-163/2005 was allocated on 30 April 2005 to Mr. Pedro Braulio Carias to treat an outbreak of *Dendroctonus frontalis* at the site known as La Tincuta, on national land, located in San Esteban Municipality.

According to the technical assessment attached to the local sale, outbreak no. San Esteban-027/2005 concerned an area of 4.79 ha, with 357 trees to be cut, with a total estimated net volume of 482.5 m<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> National Commission for Human Rights (*Comisionado Nacional de Derechos Humanos*).

The sale dossier also notes that the harvesting will be carried out by the company Pine Floors (formerly company Tucán), whose owner and manager is Mr. Levy Cooper.

## **5.2 Main findings**

### **a) *Differences between the original diagram of the outbreak and the area marked on the ground***

As Figure 1 shows, the area of the outbreak drawn in the original diagram does not correspond to the area marked on the ground. The distance between these two areas is approximately 500 meters. The area of the original diagram was healthy when the inspection was carried out, and there were no signs of an outbreak of *Dendroctonus frontalis*, whereas there is clear evidence that the area marked on the ground was plagued.

These discrepancies indicate a poor preparation of the technical assessment from the consultant responsible of it, Mr. Bernabé Batiz Suazo, especially regarding fieldwork and/or cartographic work.

### **b) *Differences between the area actually harvested and the area marked on the ground***

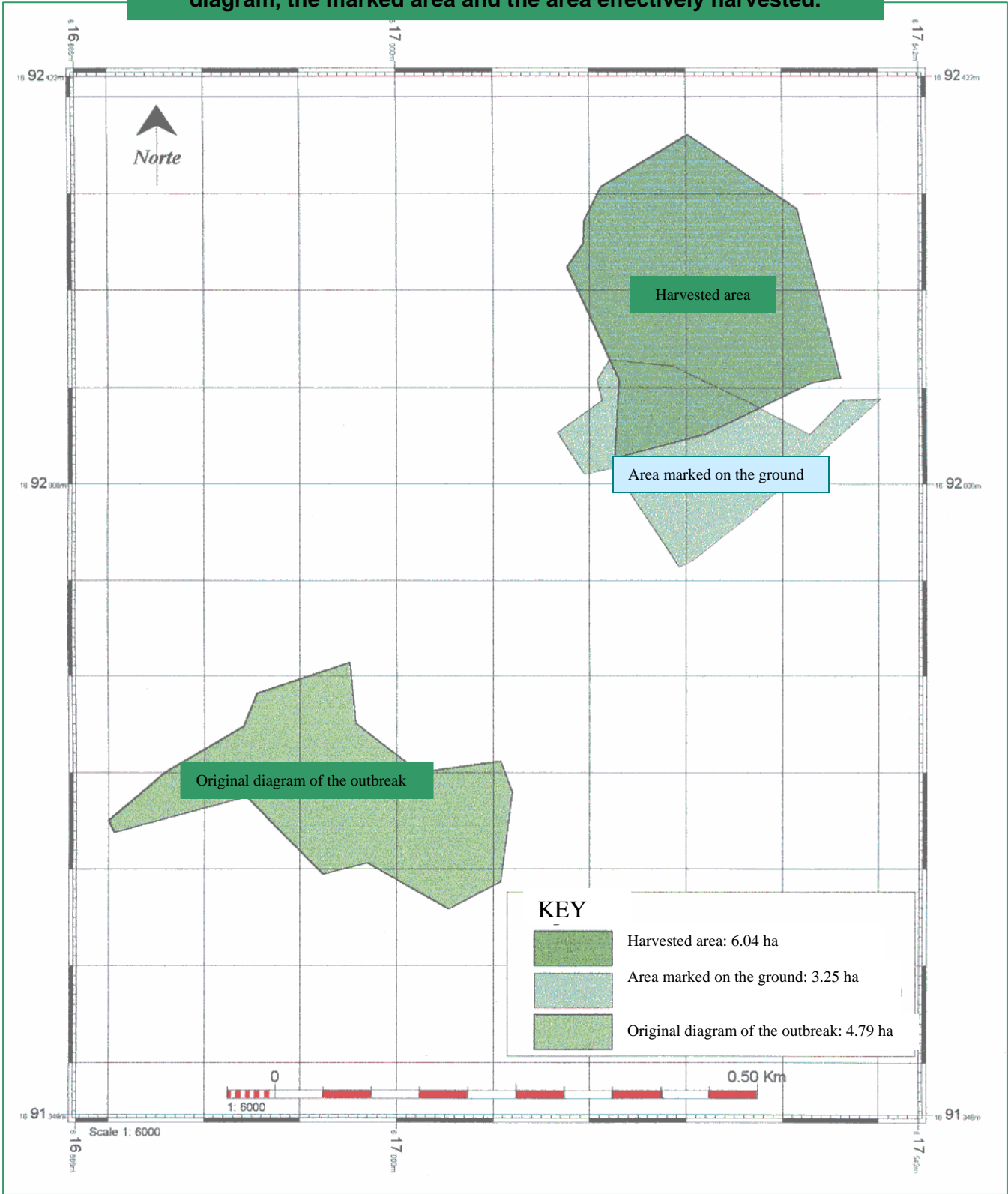
Figure 1 also shows that the harvesting has not been made according to what was authorised. There are two significant irregularities:

- 1) Firstly, approximately 6.04 ha have been harvested, while the local sale establishes an area of 4.79 ha and the area marked on the ground is just 3.25 ha.
- 2) Secondly, most of the harvesting has been made outside of the infected area marked on the ground, therefore cutting healthy trees.

Considering that the overlap between the harvested area and the area marked on the ground is only 0.9 ha, it can be concluded that there has been an unauthorised exploitation of approximately 5.14 ha.

In order to produce an accurate calculation of the damage caused, an inventory of stumps in the area harvested without authorisation (5.14 ha) should be carried out.

**Figure 1: local sale no. J-163/2005: comparison between the original diagram, the marked area and the area effectively harvested.**



## 6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- 1) The technical assessment of the outbreak no. San Estaban-027/2005 was wrongly written by the person responsible for it, Mr. Bernabé Batiz Suazo, with a significant discrepancy between the diagram of the outbreak area on the document and the actual area marked on the ground.
- 2) The company Pine Floors has harvested around 6.04 ha, despite the local sale establishing an area of 4.79 ha and the area marked on the ground being only 3.25 ha.
- 3) Considering that the overlap between the harvested area and the marked area on the ground is only 0.9 ha, it can be concluded that there has been an unauthorised exploitation of approximately 5.14 ha.

Considering these conclusions, the Independent Monitor recommends:

- 1) That AFE-COHDEFOR notifies Mr. Bernabé Batiz Suazo about the anomalies found in the technical assessment of the outbreak, requests from him more attention in the implementation of his professional services and, moreover, that it closely supervises any piece of work submitted by him.
- 2) That AFE-COHDEFOR notifies Mr. Pedro Braulio Carias and the company Pine Floors about the irregularities found in the harvesting site, and issues the relevant denunciation according to the current legal provisions.
- 3) In order to estimate the damage caused by the company Pine Floors, it is advisable to carry out an inventory of stumps in the area harvested without authorisation (5.14 ha).