



global witness

Cameroon

Project of Independent Observation in Support
of Forest Law Enforcement in Cameroon

**Approved by the Ministry of
the Environment and Forests**

Report of the Independent Observer

No. 037 En

Joint CCU – Independent Observer Mission

Title	FC Tsongo
Location	Deuk District, Mbam and Inoubou Department, Centre Province
Mission Date	18 March 2003
Companies	Tsongo CF GCI, Ets Flamboyant

Independent Observer (Global Witness):

Mr. Reiner Tegtmeyer, Project Director

Mr. Serge C. Moukouri, Technical Assistant

Mr. Albert Mballa Mbarga, Driver

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1. SUMMARY

The Central Control Unit (CCU)¹, accompanied by the Independent Observer (Global Witness), carried out a mission to control logging activities in Deuk District, Mbam and Inoubou Department, Centre Province. The mission, which took place from 17 to 27 March 2003, was part of the CCU's routine control programme.

After a meeting with the Mbam and Inoubou Departmental Delegate, the mission decided to visit the community forest (CF) of the Tsongo GCI. The community of Tsongo had signed a partnership contract with the company Ets Le Flamboyant. However, the Tsongo GCI's FC was not being logged at the time of the mission's visit.

Nevertheless, information gathered in the field, which the mission was not able to verify, reported the use of transport permits issued to Tsongo community for the transport of illegally logged timber. The absence of the manager of the community forest made it impossible to confirm or invalidate the fraudulent use of the transport permits.

Given the above, **the Independent Observer recommends:**

To increase the investigations at the level of GCI, SIGIF and the Directorate of Forests with a view to verify the effective use of the transport permits delivered to CGI Tsongo.

¹ "Control" in the context of this report means "Law Enforcement" or to "check compliance with law".

2. RESOURCES USED

- 1 Land Cruiser
- 2 Garmin GPS units
- 1 digital camera
- 1 Sony laptop computer

3. COMPOSITION OF THE MISSION

The mission was composed of: Mr. Djibrilla Hessana and Ms. Dzana Margareth of the CCU, the Mbam and Inoubou Departmental Delegate, the Deuk local forest law enforcement officer, and Mr. Reiner Tegtmeyer and Mr. Serge Moukouri of the Independent Observer.

4. CONSTRAINTS

The main constraint encountered by the mission was due to the absence of the officers responsible for the management of the forest. Consequently, the mission did not have access to the documents relating to the title.

5. MISSION RESULTS

5.1 Summary

The Tsongo community has been attributed the community forest of the Tsongo CF GCI. The Simple Management Plan and the provisional agreement for the forest have already been signed. The Tsongo CF GCI is logging its forest in partnership with Ets Le Flamboyant. Allegations that transport permits issued to the community had been used to transport timber of doubtful or illegal origin had reached the Independent Observer.

5.2 Observations of the Independent Observer

From the meeting with the members of the community, it seems that the logging of the above-mentioned community forest has been suspended for more than two months. A visit to the site of the sawmill built by Ets Le Flamboyant to process the timber from the CF showed the mission that the log pond was empty and that no work was taking place there (see photo below) .

Photo : Ets Le Flamboyant sawmill in Deuk



It was not possible to verify the allegations that transport permits issued for this community forest had been used to transport illegally logged timber because the CF manager was not present.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Independent Observer's main conclusion is that, given the absence of the Tsongo Community Forest manager, the mission was not able to answer several questions.

Given the above, **the Independent Observer recommends:**

To increase the investigations at the level of GCI, SIGIF and the Directorate of Forests with a view to verify the effective use of the transport permits delivered to CGI Tsongo