



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 No. 048En

Joint mission: Central Control Unit – Independent Observer

Title	FMU 10 013
Location	Boumba and Ngoko Department
Mission date	17 th March, 2003
Company	CFE

Independent Observer (Global Witness):

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1. SUMMARY

The Central Control¹ Unit (CCU), accompanied by the Independent Observer (Global Witness), carried out a mission within Forest Management Unit (FMU) 10 013 on the 19th of March 2003. The mission was part of a routine control programme started on the 14th of March 2003.

The company CFE (*Compagnie Forestière de l'Est*)² is the beneficiary of this FMU, whose Annual Cutting Permit (ACP) Certificate is valid until the 31st of December 2003.

After an almost complete trip around ACP No. 1 currently being exploited, the mission noted cases of false declaration in the field books and transport permits. Certain log segments carried the mark of “second segment”, without the remaining of the book mentioning the first corresponding segment. This practice could disguise cases of under-diameter exploitation, through the company implying the existence of a first segment with the requested diameter.

The mission also noted cases where the characteristics of certain logs found in the log ponds did not correspond to the data registered in the transport permits.

The CCU established an official report on these infractions against CFE.

The Independent Observer recommends the proceeding of the litigation started against CFE and a mission within this FMU at the end of the operating year.

2. RESOURCES USED

- 1 4x4 pick-up truck
- 1 Camera
- 1 Digital Camera
- 2 GPS
- 1 Laptop

3. COMPOSITION OF THE MISSION

The mission was composed of Mrs. Essono Danièle and Mr. Mamene Pierre Marcel, CCU controllers; Mr. Afene Obam James, civil servant of the Direction of Forests; the Head of the forest law enforcement East Province Brigade, The Head of the Yokadouma forest section and two members of the Independent Observer technical team.

4. CONSTRAINTS

Fourteen days proved insufficient to cover all the titles currently being exploited in the East Province. The seizure of the Independent Observer's videotape by Ingénierie Forestière (see Independent Observer report No. 055En) has seriously reduced the capacity for action of the Independent Observer.

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

5. RESULTS OF THE MISSION

5.1 Summary of the case

CFE is the beneficiary of FMU 10 013. On the 17th of January, the company obtained an Annual Cutting Permit (ACP) No. 1 certificate, valid until the 31st of December 2003. The company was indeed in its second month of activity when the mission took place.

5.2 False declarations in the field books and DF10²

Article 125 of the 23rd of August 1995 Decree stipulates that all logs must be registered in a field book. Among other data, the log diameter and its species must be specified in the field book. The inscriptions which need to be marked on each log must correspond to those reproduced in the field book.

Contrary to this legal provision, in some CFE log ponds, the mission found logs whose numbers and species did not correspond to the ones inscribed in the field book.

Besides, the mission noted cases where logged inscribed in the field book as second log segments did not have the corresponding first segments. Some trees are indeed long enough to produce two segments. In such a case, the law specifies that the first segment carries number 1 and the second one carries number 2. Only the first segment is submitted for verification of minimum diameter of exploitability. A forest company having felled an under-diameter tree can disguise it by mentioning it in the field book as the second segment. It is thus necessary that a control team be meticulous enough to verify if every second segment has a corresponding first segment.

In the case examined here, it was acknowledged that the second segments inscribed in CFE field books did not have the first correspondent segments. Consequently, an official report of this infraction was established against CFE by the CCU.

N.B. The Independent Observer gathered visual evidence in order to avoid any future questioning of the facts by the offender. Unfortunately, this evidence was contained in the Independent Observer videocassette seized by the company Ingénierie Forestière (*see Independent Observer report No. 055En*).

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion of the mission, cases of false declaration in CFE's field books and transport permits were found.

Certain logs carried the marking of second segment, without the remaining of the field book mentioning the first correspondent segment.

² Document detailing volume of wood extracted from the forest for a valid title

The mission also noted cases where the characteristics of certain logs found in the log ponds did not correspond to the data registered in the transport permits.

The CCU established an official report against CFE noting this infractions.

In view of the above, **the Independent Observer recommends** the proceeding of the litigation opened against CFE and a mission within this FMU at the end of the operating year.