



SIMPLIFIED EXTERNAL FOREST MONITORING GUIDE FOR THE USE OF COMMUNITIES



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Presentation of guide:

This guide is a simplified document for the use of forest communities. It aims at:

- Informing and educating on the merits of forest monitoring by communities;
- Presenting the main steps and tools necessary to ensure proper monitoring of the forest.

In short, it is to provide communities the first tools to identify and effectively denounce, illegal logging activities taking place around them.



The objective of this guide is thus to:

Facilitate the understanding and practice of external monitoring of forests by communities.

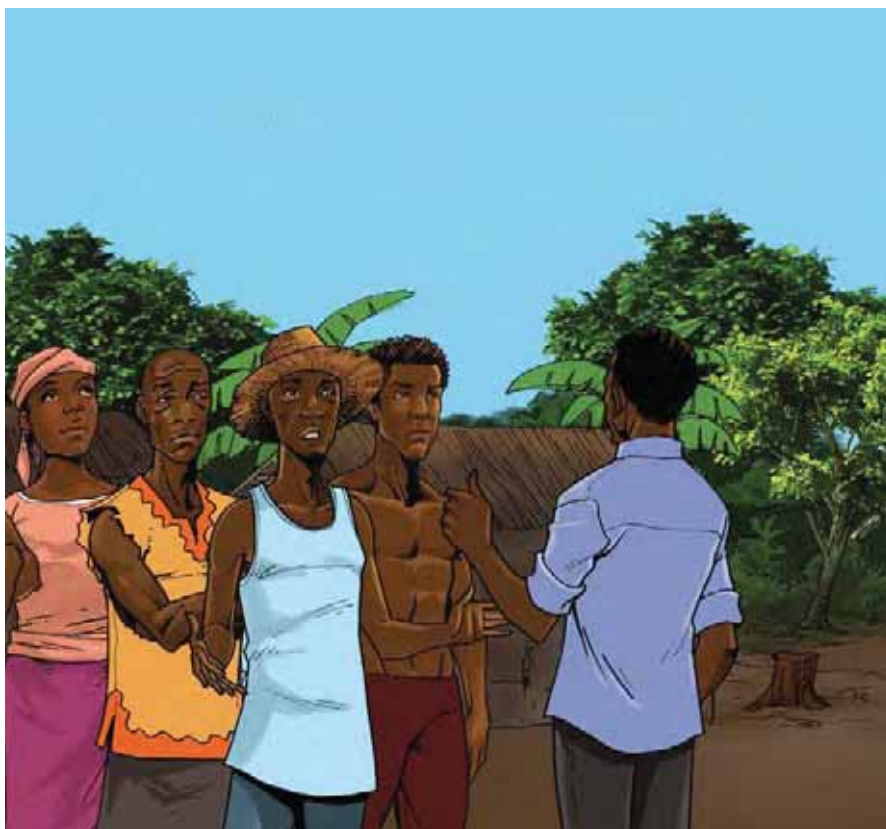
The main issues to be addressed in the guide are:



1. Why this guide?
2. To whom is this guide destined?
3. What does the external monitoring of forests mean?
4. What do we stand to gain when we carry out independent forest monitoring?
5. What is legal timber and illegal timber?
6. How is external forest monitoring done?
7. To whom can one turn to denounce?
 - 7.1. We must distinguish illegality evidence indices
 - 7.2. To whom should a denunciation be sent when there is either evidence of illegality or indices of illegality?
8. How can we have a written denunciation?
9. What should be done to monitor denunciations properly?
10. What are the precautions to take when external monitoring of forests is done?

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Why this guide?



- For communities to know the easy ways to participate in monitoring their forest.

- For communities to become real actors in monitoring forest management.

- To get the authorities and loggers to better play their role and to stop abuse.

- Because illegal logging is bad for the State, communities and the environment:

— Non-payment of taxes to the State, thus reducing the budget of the State which is unable to perform social work for the welfare of everyone (school construction, access to drinking water, etc.)



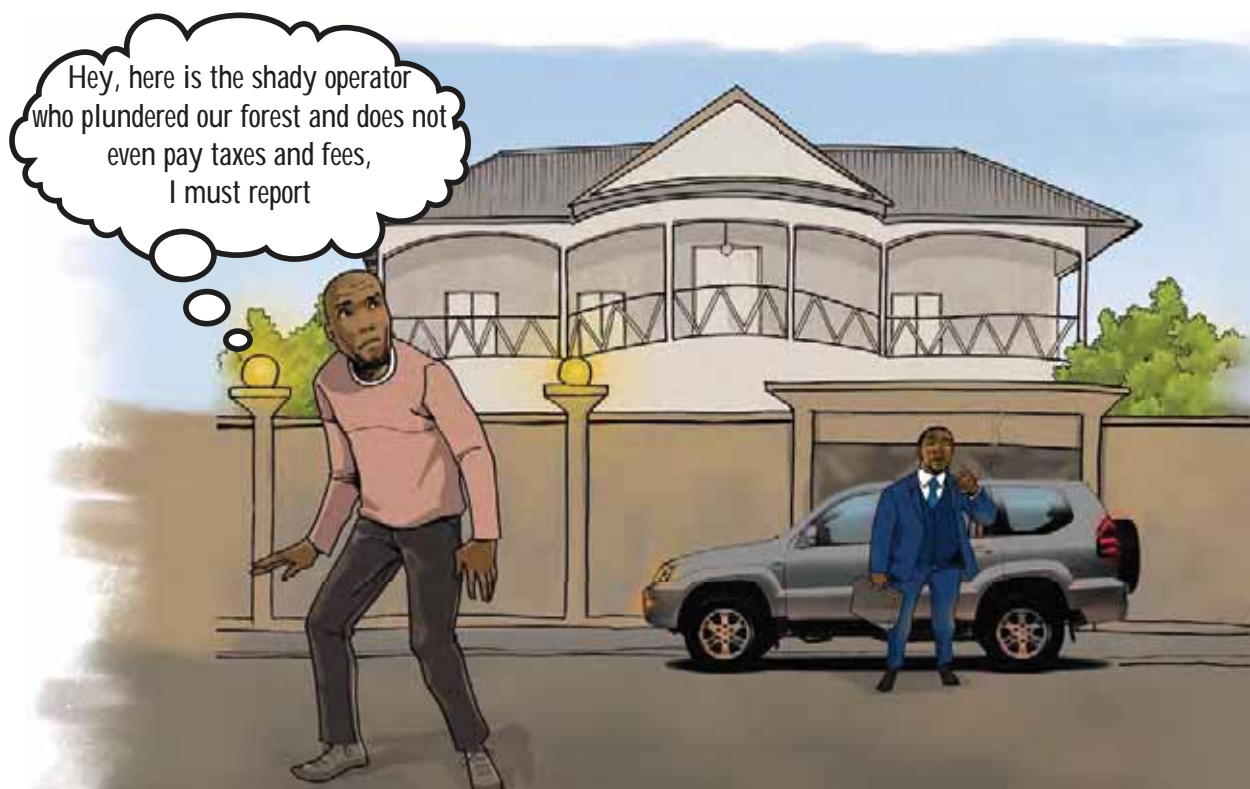
- Increasing poverty in areas of illegal logging;



- Degradation of forests and forest resources that disappear;
- Etc.



- Illicit enrichment of illegal operators through resources that are fraudulently exploited because they do not pay the appropriate taxes and do not respect the rights of communities;



2 To whom is this guide destined?

- Any member of a local community or indigenous person wishing to participate in the monitoring of the forest;
- Any community-based organisation;
- Committees of peasant-forests and other village committees (vigilance committees, COVAREF, etc.);
- Other civil society organisations (CSOs)
- Local authorities (mayor, sub divisional officer) and local MINFOF agents



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What does the external monitoring of forests mean?

This is the monitoring of logging activities by individuals or organisations that do not have a formal contract with the State.



N.B.: This is not to replace the forest administration which is responsible for forest control (investigations and sanctions) or the official monitor who supports forest management in the investigation and proposes sanctions that the administration may apply: the official observer (Independent monitor) has an agreement with the State to do this work. But it is more a question of accompanying forest administration and the official monitor by participating as a proximity actor to forest monitoring by denouncing illegal practices



This means that at the village level:

- If someone commits acts in the forest that do not seem normal, we must quickly talk to those who can control and punish
- We take our responsibilities as residents of the village to defend our forests against people who want to destroy it.
- We monitor what is happening in our forest and if it is not well, we talk to “the ngomna” or NGOs.

What do we stand to gain when we carry out external forest monitoring?



Why carry out forest monitoring?

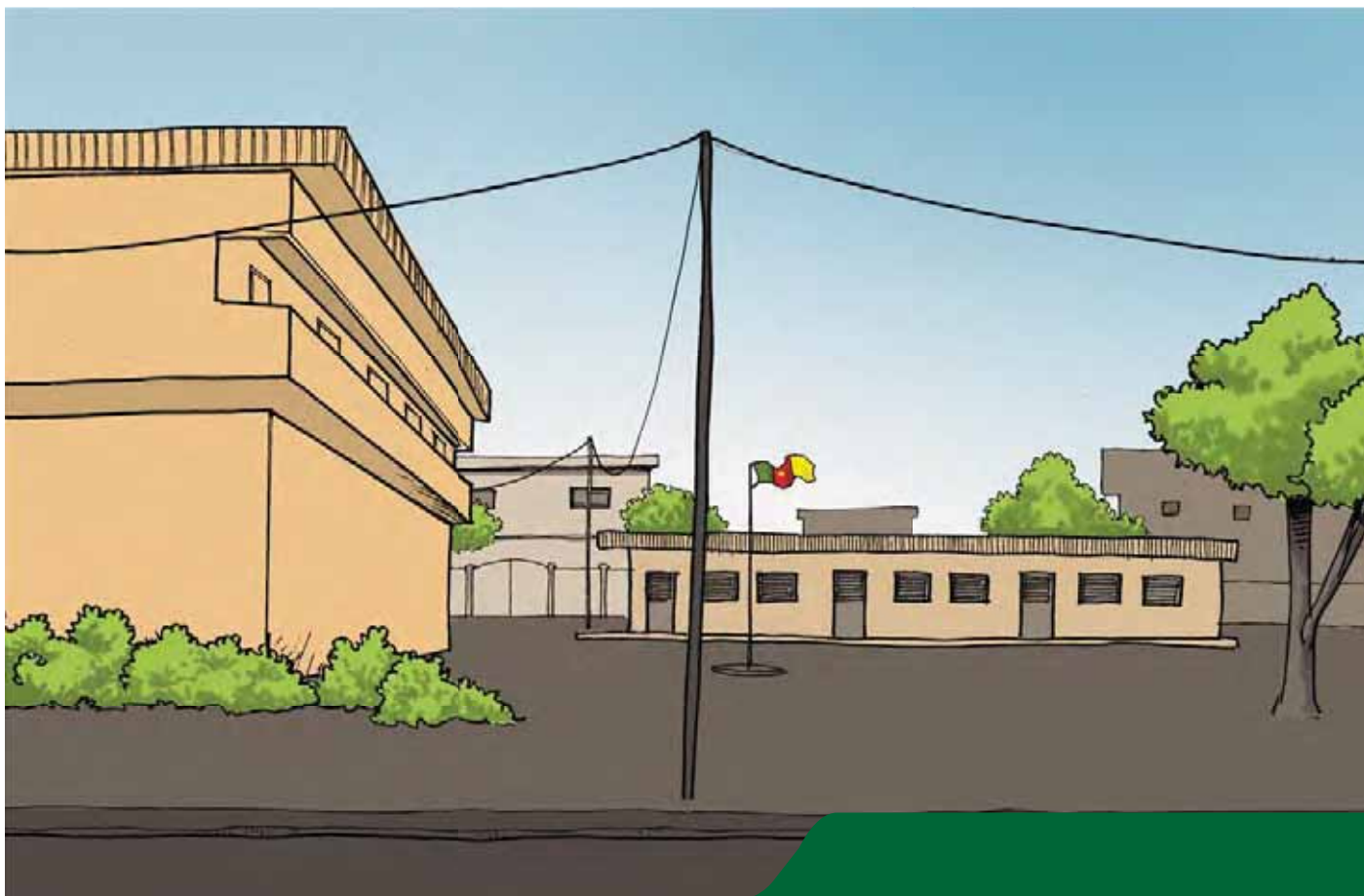
- We will get more benefits from the exploitation of our forests. With this money, we can carry out development projects in the village;

- We will continue to benefit from the forest for our needs (food, water, house, drugs ...). We will continue to collect goods for sale (wild mangoes, other NTFPs, etc.). and send our children to school or buy soap for the house;

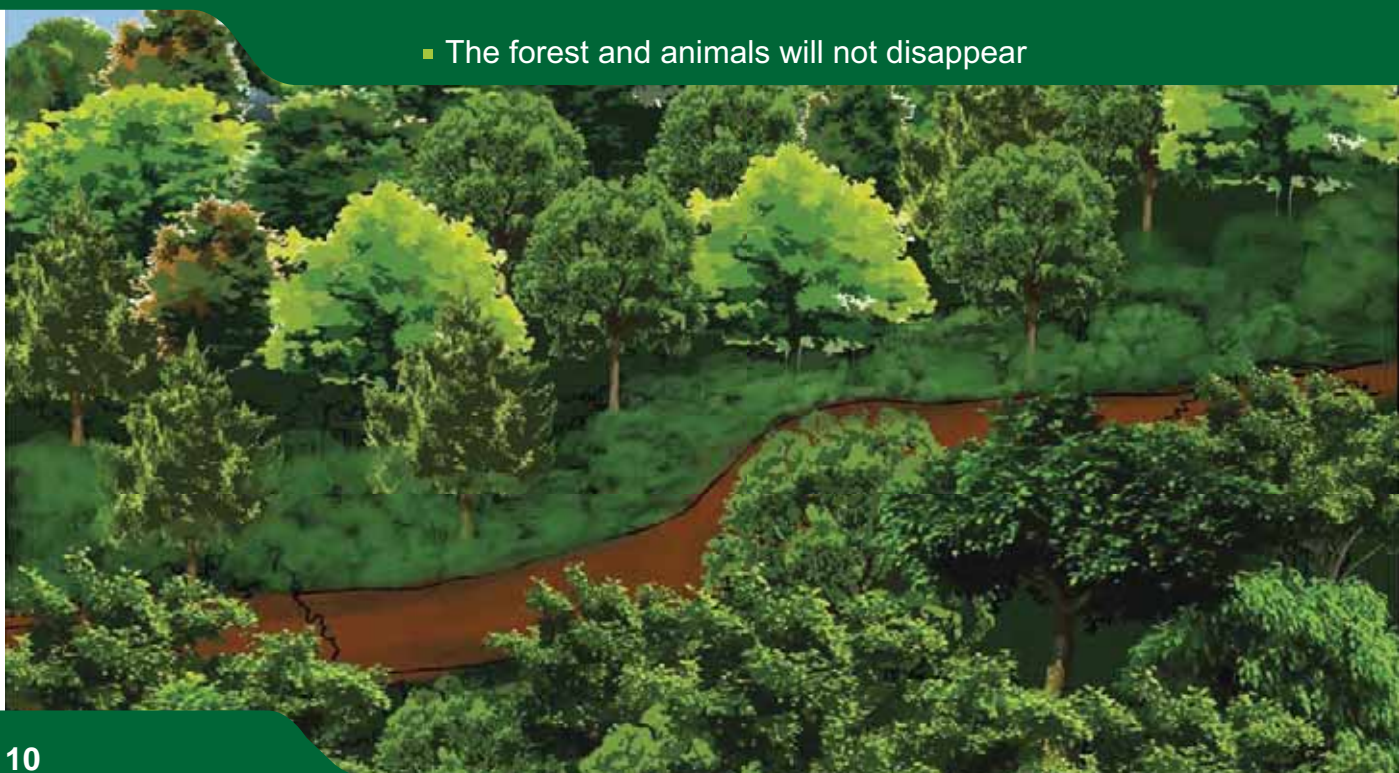
- Our children shall continue to enjoy the forest in the future

- Forest management is beneficial for the State, communities, the environment and generations to come;





- The State may have more money to improve the development of our country;
- The environment shall be better protected:
- The climate will be less disturbed and seasons will be less volatile, which will facilitate agriculture in the village;
- Water will not be polluted and destroyed;
- The forest and animals will not disappear



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What is “legal” timber and “illegal” timber?



Timber is **legal** when before, during and after cutting the timber, the operator complies with all the conditions prescribed by law, and complies with his commitments vis-à-vis the State and the community. This means for example, that he cuts the timber within the limits of his title, that he does not destroy the farms of the villagers without permission and without compensating the owners; he meets the terms used in the specifications, etc.

Timber is **illegal** when it is cut without respecting the law.

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How is external forest monitoring done?

The villagers are best placed to know what is happening in their forest: they often travel to go to the farm or hunting, and are the first to know about any unusual presence in the forest. Often, employees of companies that illegally harvest timber live in the village, and talk about their activities to their friends. Communities in their daily activities in the forest can therefore easily carry out external observation and participate in monitoring their forest.

External monitoring can be done before, during and after logging activities. It is important to note what we see when we do the monitoring of the forest.

N.B.: First you should know that the types of securities and logging permits are provided as follows:

- Forest concessions (Forest Management Units-UFA)
- Council forests
- Sales of standing volume
- Community forests

- Permits for recovery of wood (ARB), authorisations for removal of timber (AEB) and the personal timber licenses
- the exploitation of timber licenses (PEBO), the operating permits for special forest products (such as ebony), operating license of firewood and poles

The Ministry of Forestry publishes an annual list of titles that are valid. This is an essential document which must be obtained



■ What should the community check before the start of logging?

A Normally, the operator must be presented to the community by the authorities and the local forestry administration: this is called “briefing”. During this briefing, the community must request the following documents:

- Map of the forest that the operator will use (location map of the title assigned)
- Title number assigned (number of the forest given to the operator)
- Authorisation for logging
- The attestation of hard boundaries (which proves that we drew the boundary between forest exploitation and the place that the village can continue to be used for farms)

After the briefing, the community must also request a copy of the minutes of the meeting.

B

If there was no briefing and an operator enters into the forest, it is necessary to approach the chief of the forestry post, the divisional delegate or sub divisional officer and even the operator to request documents (Documents of the Ministry of Forestry attributing the operating title, location map, title number, approval for logging, notification of commencement of activities). NGOs should also be informed of the presence of this dubious operation.

**C**

Check if the operation is defined and materialised with paint on trees.

■ What should the community check during and after the conduct of logging?

A

Whatever the type of exploitation (forest concessions - Forest Management Units -. Sales of Standing Volume, Council Forest, Community Forest, etc.), each can monitor the following cases:

- If the stem of harvested trees are labelled (name of logging forestry company, name of the title number, number of worksite (DF10), felling number and date of felling): you have to watch if all this information is present on the strain.
- If the felled trees (logs) are marked and hammered ;

Unmarked stems



Unmarked and un-hammered log



Marked log



a, Concession No. (ex. 1115) ;

b, Number of operating license ex. UFA 10 009;

c, Number of cutting plate (ex. AC 2-1);

d, Name of operator (ex. BFC);

e, DF No.-10 (ex. 0124626) ;

f, Number of the log (ex. 06 on 2 Sixth foot felled and second upper log) ;

g, Operating area (ex. Z2) ;

h, Date of felling (ex. 03 08 13)

- If the company does not cut below diameters allowed: You can check if small trees are cut; you can also approach the police chief or authorised representative to verify the authorised diameters or contact NGOs working on illegal exploitation to have this information ;
- If the title number used is the same as that presented to the village during the briefing ;
- If the workers of the company practice poaching and/or if the company vehicles facilitate the practice of poaching (transport of bush meat) ;



- If the company exploits trees within 30m of a water body (e.g. river, lake, river, stream, river, wetland),



- If the logging company or workers clean, wash machines or manipulate fuel or lubricants or within 60m of a water body (e.g. river, lake, river, stream, river, wetland)
- If the forest hammer is held by the forester operator who hammers wood in the forest himself ;
- If the wood from a questionable operation is hammered ;
- If the logger buries logs in the forest to escape the control of the forest administration: you should check if there are logs that are hidden in the ground, grass or other small trees ;



- Check that the wood that comes out of the forest is marked: We must see if the logs carried on each truck carry the following information: name of the logging forestry company, name of the title number, number of worksite (DF10), felling number and date of felling. .



Unmarked logs



Unmarked sawn timber



Marked logs



– If the ebony forest operator has a permit signed by the Minister of Forestry and Wildlife, with a clear indication of quantities to reap and harvest areas (1); and if he does not cut ebony less than 60cm (2) ;

B

For the specific case of AEBS and ARBs:

- Require the operator to provide you with the documents relating to the implementation of the project (the Project purpose, map, notification of start-up operations this project with the No. of the title in question) ;
- if it is an agricultural project, it must have signed authorisation by the Ministry of Agriculture as well as permission to cut timber
- if it is a project of opening up roads, it must have documents signed by the Minister for Public Works
- Check before the start of operations of this title that it is normally defined ;
- Ask the operator to provide you with the attestation of hard limits ;
- Check if the logs that are used in the forest carry the title number in question ;
- Check if the opening project set up does not take place on a road already maintained by Public Works ;

- Check if the trees are actually taken from the right of way (10m either side of the centreline of the road) ;
- As part of ARB, verify that the project that was to be carried out (palm grove, banana plantation, etc.). is effectively put in place ;

C For the case of a personal logging authorisation

- Verify that the person concerned has the licence in question and that the period does not go beyond three months ;
- Verify that the person concerned uses wood for construction or heating and not for sale ;
- Verify that huge volumes of wood are not felled (the law only authorises a maximum of 30 m3).

N.B. If you can take pictures and if possible, GPS points of the observed indices, it will make your report more credible. You can seek help from CSOs working in your locality.



7.1. We must distinguish illegality evidence indices

It is important to know the difference between indices and proof of illegality.

Indices are the signs or elements which help to suspect that one is in the presence of an illegal exploitation of wood. Proofs are elements which certify that there has been violation of the law). The table below tries to classify into indices or **proofs**, what you can observe during the monitoring of the forest: this is not exhaustive

Table 1. Some cases of indices and proofs of illegal forest exploitation

Illegality indices (Suspicion of violation of the law)	Proofs of illegality (Serious violation of a legal or regulatory disposition)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exploitation of trees with small diameters - Detention of forest hammer by the logger - Timber from a questionable site are hammered - Logs buried in the site - Site not closed after exploitation - Evacuation of logs at night or by a much longer route that avoids moving in the villages - The title number used is different from that presented to the village during the briefing - The company has exploited trees near a water body (e.g. river, lake, river, stream, wetland) - The logging company or workers clean, wash machines or manipulate fuel or lubricants next to a water body - In the case of a plan to open a road where ARB was awarded: the trees are exploited far in the forest - A lot of wood is felled within a personal authorisation to fell 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No briefing before exploitation - The operator does not have the authorisation or documentation (approval for the exploitation, location map, attestation of hard limits, minutes of briefing, the title used by the operator is not included in the annual list of titles that are valid, published by the Ministry of Forestry) - Non materialisation of limits - Unmarked stems, or having different marks while they are in the same exploitation site (e.g., number of title different, date and especially year of felling different) - Unmarked and un-hammered logs, or having different marks meanwhile they are in the same exploitation site (e.g., number of title different, date and especially year of felling different) - Transportation of logs (on the truck) unmarked and not hammered - Exploiting trees below their authorised diameters: Minimum Operating diameters (MFD-M) and/or Minimum Felling Diameters (MFD) - Ebony logging below its MFD (60 cm) - Workers are engaged in poaching - Company vehicles facilitate the practice of poaching (transport of bush meat) - Exploitation (cutting wood) beyond the limits of the title - The company exploits trees within 30m of a water body (e.g. river, lake, river, stream, river, wetland) - The logging company or workers clean, wash machines or manipulate fuel or lubricants within 60m to a water body - In the case of the project to open a road where ARB was assigned: Exploitation of trees beyond 10m on either side of the axis of the road (right of way) - The period on personal authorisation to cut exceeds three months - The wood of personal authorisation to fell is sold - Over 30m³ of wood is felled within a personal authorisation to fell

7.2. To whom should a denunciation be sent when there is either evidence of illegality or indices of illegality?

Once you have collected and documented indices or evidence of illegality, you can make a direct complaint with administrative authorities or an indirect denunciation with other actors who can send your denunciation to the authorities. The choice between direct or indirect reporting will also depend on the circumstances :

- If you have solid evidence, it must be a direct reporting ;
- If you want to remain anonymous, if you feel that the evidence is not strong, and if you suspect that local authorities are involved in the actions you want to report, it is preferable to use indirect denunciation ;



Administrative authorities or organisation to which you can send a direct reporting are :

- Head of local forest station and even the sub-divisional officer and/or the Mayor
- The Divisional Delegate of the Ministry of Forestry and even the Divisional Officer
- The Regional Delegate of the Ministry of Forestry
- The Minister of Forestry
- The independent observatory



NB. Denunciation shall be made in writing or verbally but it is better to make a direct denunciation in writing

When you just have clues (suspicion) to be in the presence of illegal logging, you must do an indirect reporting (verbal or written), Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) active in monitoring illegal or development partners of the State (see attached list)

How can we have a written denunciation?

You do not need to have gone to school to know how to write a good letter of denunciation. When you write simply, showing only the facts (what happened, without exaggerating), it is easier for everyone to understand. For the letter is complete, we put:

- The date,
- The information on the title, the place and the owner of the title,
- Details on what we have seen in the area of operation which is irregular or contrary to law,
- Difficulties encountered preventing a thorough investigation,
- Recommendations.

See Appendix for sample form letter of denunciation



9

What should be done to monitor denunciations properly?

Usually it is not enough that we file information for a questionable logging to stop and the operator to be punished. We must take the pains to follow the case at two levels:

a) - Locally (the community + CSO).

We should:

- Ensure that on the field there is no suspicious activity denounced is continued, or that abuses denounced have found solutions
- Observe on the field if MINFOF agents have seized illegal timber and prepared a report of findings of offence against the illegal operator

b) - In the capital:

- CSOs can observe if the operator in question was sanctioned
- Check after the publication of reports of IM if the information submitted by the community was taken into account
- CSOs can help you check later if the operator is in the list of people or companies who have been punished: This list is called list of infractions

10

What are the precautions to take when external monitoring of forests is done?

The external observation is not an easy activity and without risk, anyone wanting to exercise will take at least the following precautions:

- Do not expose yourself, and feel safe
- Anonymity when we notice that the elites and the local administrative authorities are involved
- Be sure you have solid evidence that cannot question our denunciation and not exposing us to lawsuits
- Avoid facing the operator or the workmen of an illegal logging site to avoid getting beat up or be killed

Appendix 1: EXAMPLE OF A DENUNCIATION FORM TO BE FILLED OUT BY THE COMMUNITIES

DENUNCIATION FORM

To

Name of the person/community which is laying the problem:.....

Nameand/ornumberoftheoperationlicenceconcerned:.....

Name of operator/company involved :.....

Place where the problem occurred:.....

Problem laid:.....

What makes you think that this is an illegal operation :.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

What are the other things you have to support your reporting?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Conclusions/recommandations :.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Done inon.....

Cc :.....

Signature

Appendix 2: EXAMPLE OF A DENUNCIATION REPORT FILLED BY A COMMUNITY

DENUNCIATION REPORT

TO The Minister of Forestry and wildlife

Name of the person/community which is laying the problem :Community of Biba village, anonymity, phone, Jean Mboma, etc.

Name and/or number of the operation licence concerned :VC XX XX XXX

Name of the operator/company involved: Company BOISCAM, Mr. ABANDA Luc

Place where the problem occurred : Biba village, found in the East Region, Haut-Nyong Division, Messamena sub division

Problem laid: The logging company BOISCAM carries out illegal operations in our village outside the limits of its VC XX XX XXX located in Bidjah and Engong villages that they are 5km from our village

What makes you think that this is an illegal operation? The company has crossed the limits of its sale of standing volume to exploit trees in our forest, it does not mark the stem of exploited timber, and it puts the number of this sale of standing volume on the logs exploited in our village

What are the other things you have to support your reporting? We have the letter of discharge of money for timber measurement used in our town, we can show you abandoned logs in a park outside limits in our village with the number of VC XX XXX XX BOISCAM (see also some photos attached to this denunciation).

Conclusions/recommendations : We ask that you introduce an audit of this situation which occurs with impunity before the local administrative authorities

Done in Biba, on 25 April 2013

Cc : IO, CED, European Union

Signature

**For the Biba communities,
Mr. Oyono Calvaire (Village chief or member of the community)**

Appendix 3: EXAMPLE OF LETTER OF DENUNCIATION

Biba village, 25 April 2013

To
The Minister of Forestry and wildlife
Yaoundé

PURPOSE : Denouncing of illegal logging activities
in the Messamena sub division

The Minister,

We, Biba village community, have the honour to come to your high personality to denounce illegal logging activities carried out by the company BOISCAM that uses its VC XX XX XXX to plunder the wood in the forest near our village, Biba.

Mr. Minister, please find attached to this letter, a report of denunciation which details the above-mentioned facts.

Hoping that you take steps to ensure compliance with the Forestry Law, please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Attached document:

- DENUNCIATION REPORT

Exemplifications:

- Independent observer (IO)
- European Union

For the Biba communities,

Signature here
Mr. Oyono Calvaire
(Village chief or member of the community)

Appendix 4: DIRECTORY OF SOME CSOs WORKING ON MONITORING OF THE ILLEGAL

ORGANISATION	LOCALITY	CONTACT
ASBAK	Lomié	AKPAKOUA Valère / 99 09 68 74 / asbaklomie@yahoo.fr
APED	Kribi	Victorien MBA / 94 08 47 26 / victorienmba@yahoo.fr
ASTRADHE	Lomié	Brigitte ANZIOM / brigitteanziom@yahoo.fr / 96244976
CAFER	Yaoundé	TCHOULACK Albertine / 22 00 18 54/ 77 00 30 29 cafer@camnet.cm
CAJAD	Limbe	TCHEPNANG Barthelemy / 99 92 19 71 / 77 63 19 19 cajadlimbe@yahoo.fr
Cameroon Ecology	Edéa	Cécile DJEBET / 99 90 88 75 / camerooneco@yahoo.fr
CED	Yaoundé	Samuel NGUIFFO / 99 95 28 49 / snguiffo@cedcameroun.org
CEFAID	Yokadouma	AMOUGOU AMOUGOU Victor / 99 29 02 12/ 75 52 40 88 cefaid@yahoo.fr
FCTV	Yaoundé	MOUAMFON MAMA / 99 66 43 59 / 22 70 69 75 mouamfon_m@yahoo.fr
FODER	Yaoundé	NGONZO Rodrigue / 77 46 19 32 r.ngonzo@forets-developpement.com
Greener Pastures(GP)	Kumba	EKOKO Stanley / 33 07 45 56 / 75 80 46 85 kumbacomfor@yahoo.com
OAPIDE	Mindourou	Honoré BISSACK / 99 66 98 43 / 70 56 60 12 Oapide_1997@yahoo.fr
PERAD	Lomié	Angèle ANKOH / 99 08 10 80 / perad_ong@yahoo.fr
ROLD	Lomié	Elias DJOH / 95 23 52 94 / eliasdjoh@gmail.com
ROCAME	Kribi	ONDO'O ZO'O Bernard / 99 39 30 09 / rocamegdrn@yahoo.fr
RUDEC	Kumba	BOTAME Augustine / 77 95 35 86 / ruraldevcen@yahoo.com
PAPEL-Cameroun	Messamena	Henry MEVA'AH / 76 34 25 87 / 99 07 36 93 ong_papel@yahoo.fr



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