



IVORY COAST

LAND USE, LAND-USE CHANGE AND FORESTRY
(LULUCF)

Ivory Coast winning back its forests

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Ivory Coast winning back its forests

In the country's Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC), submitted in preparation for the COP 21 in 2015, Côte d'Ivoire signaled its intention to reduce gross GHG emissions by 28% by 2030 compared to 2012 levels. Due to the lack of precise data and measurement difficulties, emissions from land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) were not specifically included in the low carbon scenario, but have since become the subject of greater attention at the national and international levels. The interest in this issue is due to the fact that Côte d'Ivoire based its development on agricultural expansion, which is the primary factor behind the loss of 3/4 of the country's forests: in 2015, the country had 3,401,146 hectares of forests, down from 16 million hectares in 1900. Forest recovery is a priority for the country, not only in order to meet its international commitments in terms of reducing GHG emissions, but also to preserve local socio-economic and environmental conditions. Furthermore, building and adhering to sustainable strategies is now seen as essential for this developing country, which hopes to continue its strong growth record. NGOs, companies and local communities working in partnership with state bodies are undertaking to help alleviate the catastrophic decline of Ivorian forests. This study on emissions from Côte d'Ivoire's LULUCF sector provides an overview of the trends and causes, while also highlighting the various operators being mobilized to recover the country's forests

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1 • CLIMATE CRISIS AND MAJOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC ISSUES

Climate change is a major issue for Ivory Coast: according to the World Bank's recent 2018 report on the country, its vulnerability index is among the highest in the world (147th out of 178). The economic impact of climate change on the country is estimated at a loss of between 380 - 770 billion CFA Francs by 2040 (in constant 2017 value). Although the average Ivorian citizen emits 10 times less atmospheric CO₂ than the global average, mitigation and adaptation remain key priorities for the country.

Several changes have already been observed in the national climate, notably including lower and more irregular rainfall, shorter rainy seasons, and a temperature rise of 0.5°C since the 1980s (Djé, 2014). In addition, an average temperature increase of 2°C is forecast for the entire country by 2050, along with rainfall variations and a sea level rise of 30cm along the country's coastline (World Bank, 2018).

The LULUCF sector has strong socio-economic influence, as it depends on one of the country's primary natural resources: its forests. This resource has enabled national growth via wood exports and soaring agricultural development, on which 2/3 of working-age Ivorians depend for their livelihood. The country's forests sustain many rural families through harvesting-gathering, sale of non-timber forestry products, hunting, medicinal and pharmaceutical products and casual work (MINSEDD, 2017). In a country whose poverty rate was 46.3% in 2014 (10,497,000 individuals living below the poverty line, 6 million of whom live in rural areas), any discussion of the LULUCF sector requires climate concerns to be addressed in tandem with underlying social and economic issues.

2 • REDUCTION OF EMISSIONS IN THE LULUCF SECTOR

The LULUCF sector was the main source of emissions over the 1990-1995 period, representing 49% and 61% respectively of net national emissions (Graph 1). Over the 2000-2012 period, the sector became a carbon sink, absorbing more CO₂ than it emitted (with the exception of 2011, during which it accounted for 15% of net national emissions). Given that the most recent data for the country dates from 2012, it has not been possible to provide a more up-to-date assessment.

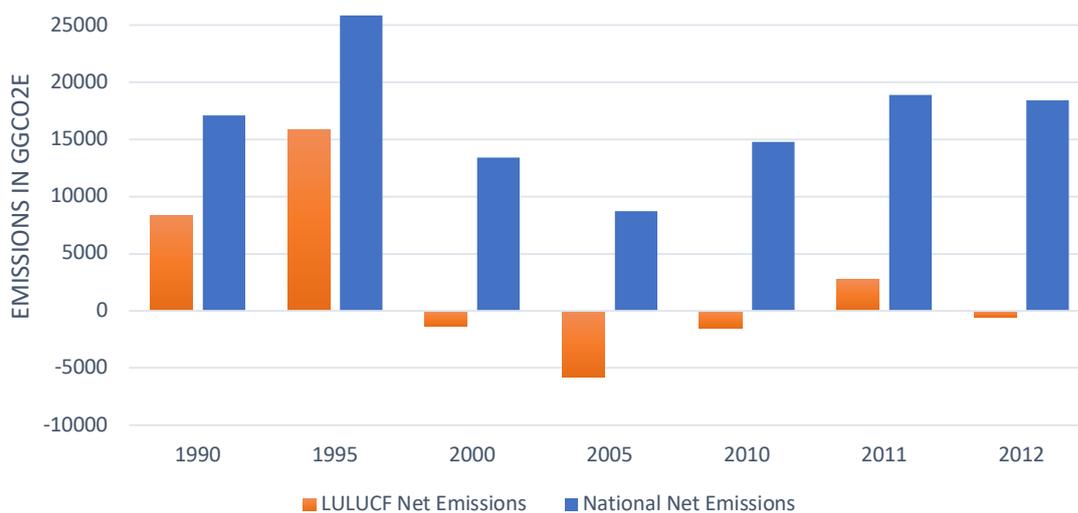


FIGURE 1. EVOLUTION OF LULUCF EMISSIONS

Data source: MINSEDD, 2017

The contribution of the LULUCF sector to net national emissions has waned over time due to its high absorption levels. Emissions from the LULUCF sector stood at 8,402.77 GgCO₂e in 1990, compared to -548.29 GgCO₂e in 2012, while national net emissions were 17,077.59 GgCO₂e in 1990

and 18,409.02 GgCO₂eq in 2012. In 2012, the main emissions sectors were (in order of significance): Energy, Agriculture, Waste, Industrial processes and product uses, and finally LULUCF.

3 • DIVERSITY OF CAUSES AND PREDOMINANCE OF AGRICULTURE

• **DEFORESTATION IN FIGURES** • Deforestation, which is the principle cause of emissions in the LULUCF sector, has taken place at such a frantic pace in Ivory Coast that forests have become a much rarer resource. Estimated at 16 million hectares in 1900, the forest cover had fallen to 7,850,864 ha in 1986 and 3,401,146 ha in 2015 (Graph 2).

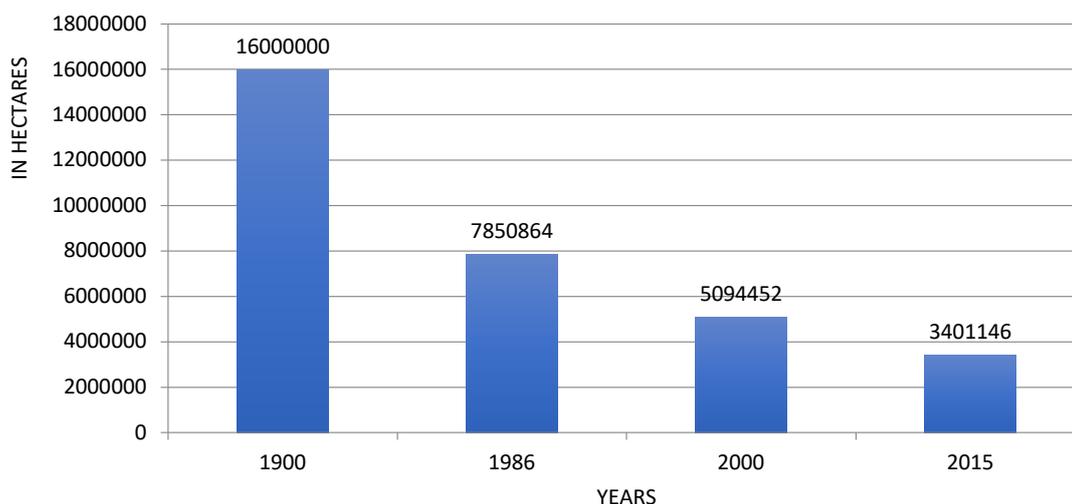


FIGURE 2. EVOLUTION OF FORESTED SURFACE AREA IN IVORY COAST
Data Sources: SEP-REDD+ Côte d'Ivoire (2017) and REDD+ Côte d'Ivoire (2017)

The pace of deforestation has decreased over the years: 183,760.78 hectares of forests were converted into other types of land use each year over the 1986-2000 period, compared to 112,887.05 hectares per year over the 2000-2015 period (SEP-REDD+ Côte d'Ivoire, 2017). One of the causes of this slowdown is the increasingly rarefied nature of forestry resources as forest clearance proceeded. In total, the country has lost 78% of its plant cover. Consequently, this loss of forested land has largely contributed to the LULUCF sector's lower contribution to national emissions over the 2000-2012 period (Graph 1).

Today, the remaining forestry resources are largely contained within protected areas. In 2015, 64% of Ivorian forests were located within protected zones and listed forests. However, current deforestation hotspots are localized within listed forests, where the annual rate of deforestation was 3% over the 1990-2000 period and 4.2% over the 2000-2015 period. In 2015, 844,938 hectares of listed forests remained, compared to 1,585,626 hectares in 2000 and 2,129,729 hectares in 1990. The surface area of protected zones fell from 1,406,676 hectares in 1990 to 1,323,685 hectares in 2015. (REDD+ Côte d'Ivoire, 2017; Koné, 2018).



• **DISPARITY OF INVOLVEMENT LEVELS AND DEFORESTATION STAKEHOLDERS** • Compiled by the NGO Etc Terra as part of the REDD+ program, the report of the Qualitative analysis of deforestation and forest deterioration factors in Ivory Coast helped identify the main factors in deforestation and forest deterioration, based on a survey of 394 individuals. These factors are organized into two categories: direct factors (Table 1) and indirect factors.

Direct factors in deforestation	Proportion %	Evolution over the 1986-2015 period:
Agriculture	62	↗
Cacao farming	38	↗
Natural rubber farming	23	↗
Palm farming	11	↗
Cashew plantations	7	↗
Food crops	6	↗
Rice farming	5	↗
Coffee farming	5	↘
Other cash crops	4	→
Logging	18	
Clear-cut logging > 1000m²	64	→
Production of charcoal	36	↗
Infrastructures	10	
Habitat (rural, urban)	94	↗
Transport	6	↘
Mining	8	↗
Artisan gold panning	80	↗
Industrial gold panning	20	↗
Bush fires	3	→

TABLE 1. DIRECT FACTORS IN DEFORESTATION IN IVORY COAST

Data sources: Etc, Terra & Al. (2016); SEP-REDD+Côte d'Ivoire (2017)

Government, multinationals and farming

Agricultural activity was identified as the main cause of deforestation in Ivory Coast (responsible for 62%). Table 1 highlights the critical role played by agricultural exports, represented by key products such as cacao, rubber, palm oil and cashews. This role is not surprising given the country's economic policy and the characteristics of Ivorian agriculture.

Indeed, Ivory Coast's economic development policy has long been focused on its agricultural sector, and more precisely on agricultural exports. Between 1960 and 1978, the period of the "Ivorian

economic miracle”, economic growth was strongly linked to the boom in coffee, cacao and wood exports (Cogneau & Mesplé-Somps, 2002). It was during this period that Ivory Coast became a middle-income country. Forests were cleared away in order to make room for export crops. Coffee, cacao and wood made up 82% of exports in 1965, and 74% in 1972 (Cogneau & Mesplé-Somps, 2002). Although agricultural products now account for a smaller portion of national exports, overall export volumes are rising. In 2017, agricultural exports still accounted for 9.2% of Ivorian GDP (Ministry of Economy and Finances, 2017). Ivory Coast is the world’s largest producer/exporter of cacao (40% of global export volumes), cashew nuts and cola, and is also the largest African exporter and seventh-largest global exporter of natural rubber. It is the largest African producer/exporter of dessert bananas, the second-largest African producer (ninth-largest global producer) of palm oil, and the third-largest African producer of cotton and coffee. Agricultural exports and an agricultural model still largely based on extensive farming are therefore implicated: the area covered by cacao plantations, for example, rose from 1,566,500 hectares in 1990 to 2,693,904 hectares in 2012 (FAO, 2018; Koné 2018). However, the environmental impact of deforestation presented in these figures must also be put into perspective, since the expansion of agricultural areas does not mean plant eradication, but rather reconversion.

The private sector plays a decisive role in Ivory Coast’s agricultural success. However, it has been criticized for its role in deforestation, as evidenced by the frequent controversies surrounding chocolate (text box 1) and palm oil (text box 2).

Deforestation and the chocolate industry in Ivory Coast

In its report entitled *Chocolate’s Dark Secret*, released in 2017, the NGO Mighty Earth denounced the chocolate industry for its role in causing deforestation in Ivory Coast, notably in the clearing of protected zones and national parks. A study cited in the report, carried out by the University of Ohio along with Ivorian researchers, concluded that of 23 protected zones, 7 had been almost entirely converted into cacao cultivation areas. As a result, according to SODEFOR, 40% of Ivory Coast’s cacao production comes from protected areas. The inquiry accuses the major cacao traders (Olam, Cargill and Barry Callebaut, which account for almost half of the global market) of buying cacao sourced from these protected areas, before selling it on to the major multinational

chocolate producers and distributors (Mars, Ferrero, Nestlé, Mondelez, etc.). The supply chain begins when farmers illegally set up operations in these protected areas, clearing the forest and planting cacao crops, before selling their produce to traders who go on to sell to chocolate companies. The traders and chocolate companies admitted to the researchers that they were aware that some of their cacao was sourced from protected zones. The report’s findings support the ambition demonstrated in the Collective Statement of Intent drafted by the sector in March 2017 at the initiative of the Prince of Wales Foundation, followed by the implementation of a framework for action in November 2017 (cf. section 4.3) in order to end deforestation and forest deterioration.

TEXT BOX 1



Deforestation and palm oil in Ivory Coast

Palm oil is the most productive oil crop in the world, producing around 35% of the world's vegetable oil despite occupying less than 10% of land allocated to oil crops. The palm oil industry has been the target of international criticism, causing repercussions within Ivory Coast. According to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN, 2018), on a global scale palm oil crops are responsible for less than 0.5% of deforestation, but in certain areas of the tropics this figure can rise to 50%. While most of the debate surrounding deforestation caused by palm oil is focused on Asia, as the 9th-largest global producer and 2nd-largest African producer of palm oil, Ivory Coast is very much involved in this issue. In Ivory Coast, 60 - 65% of production comes from small farms, occupying some 175,000 hectares (Commodafrica, 2017). Industrial plantations are therefore not the majority producers in the country. According to the figures for direct factors in deforestation, oil palm plantations are the third-biggest cause of agricultural deforestation (11%), some way behind cacao plantations (38%) and rubber (23%).

TEXT BOX 2

The role of small producers in deforestation is highlighted in text boxes 1 and 2: they are the foundation of the supply chain. The analysis of indirect drivers of deforestation in the country underlines the role of economic factors (36%), political and institutional factors (35%, and 53% for forest deterioration), as well as demographic (24%), technological (4%) and cultural factors (1%) (Etc Terra, 2016). Accordingly, aside from the scandals and industrial groups targeted, it is a combination of the economic attractiveness of crops (higher revenues and more regular earnings, etc.) in a context of high poverty rates (46.3%), rampant demographic growth (2.55% per year), inefficient application of the law (due or not to political crises), and a low level of technical control that leads producers to convert forests into new plantations.

Among the institutional and political factors behind deforestation (35%), war and economic crises (34%) as well as ineffective or non-application of laws (28%) seem to provide the most fertile ground for the proliferation of illegal activities, including by agents of the State. "Corruption/ complicity" on the part of State departments, the Ministry of Waterways and Forests, or local political leaders was cited by 15.9% of respondents as an indirect factor in forest deterioration, and by 5.2% in deforestation (Etc Terra, 2016). While local media coverage of these cases tends to be erratic and unequal, in August 2018 the Ivorian government ensured widespread media coverage of the suspension of 5 agents, via ministerial order, from the Regional Directorate of Waterways and Forests in the Gbêkê region for the offences of wood trafficking and clandestine gold panning activities.

Timber industries, illegal operators and urban households

Logging represents around 18% of all deforestation (table 1), a large proportion of which involves clear-cutting. Despite the increasing rarity of quality timber, leading to a drop in exports and factory closures, the timber industry still exerts pressure on forests, leading industrial groups to work with lower-quality wood and therefore trees with smaller diameters. Companies operating legally in the timber sector are also competing with illegal operators. Illegal timber production, which relies on small-scale processing techniques to transform raw wood into semi-finished products, using chainsaws, portable sawmills or other similar materials at a cutting site, bypasses the legal timber industry. This informal sector consumes, for example, 3 million m³ of logs per year (2011), or triple the amount used by the industrial export sector. (Louppe, 2013; REDD+ Côte d'Ivoire, 2017)

The amount of wood attributed to the production of charcoal is lower, but on the rise. The production of wood charcoal rose from 400,850 tonnes in 2003 to 488,128 tonnes in 2012, in order to

satisfy demand from a growing and increasingly urbanized population. Indeed, charcoal is one of the main domestic energy sources in Ivory Coast, particularly in urban areas where it is used by 47% of households (compared to 35% for wood burners and 18% for butane gas). In rural areas, it is used by only 4% of households (95% use wood burners and 1% butane gas) (PNUD, 2015). This consumption of wood energy, particularly charcoal, leads to pressure on forestry resources and represents a threat to the country's remaining forests, especially given the rate of demographic growth (MINSEDD, 2017).

Mining industries and traditional gold panning

Mining operations are the cause of 8% of deforestation in Ivory Coast, and this rate is increasing. Traditional placer mining is the main cause of this type of deforestation; it is estimated to cause 80% of mining-related deforestation compared to 20% for industrial gold mining.

According to the Ministry of Planning and Development (2016), two industrial companies currently mine for gold and two others for manganese. Industrial production reached 18.4 tonnes of gold and 308,401.78 tonnes of manganese in 2014, up from 12.4 tonnes of gold and 50,000 tonnes of manganese in 2011. According to REDD+ Côte d'Ivoire (2017), 140 mining research permits were issued in 2015, of which eight were for gold and three for manganese, and many of which involved prospecting in listed forests. In addition, industrial mining operations contribute to deforestation via the use of surface mining (open cast) techniques. This situation is often exacerbated by the failure to reforest areas used for mining. In addition to industrial operations, unsanctioned small-scale extraction is also on the rise for gold and diamonds (traditional placer mining), which saw a significant uptake and extension into national parks and listed forests during the Ivorian socio-political crisis of 2002-2011. In 2016, around 22 tonnes of gold were illegally exported (Abié, 2018).

Bush fires

Bush fires account for 3% of deforestation in Ivory Coast (table 1). While climate conditions - especially the prolonged and harsh dry season - are a primary factor in the scale of these fires, their causes and origins remain largely man-made: most fires originate from the practice of shifting cultivation by rural farmers, in order to prepare their lands for crops and hunting (Durrieu de Madron, Gballet and Balou Bi, 2015). In 2016, bush fires killed 17 people, destroyed 10 villages, decimated 1,100 ha of forests, destroyed 15,000 ha of crops, and caused major material damage estimated at over 204 bn FCFA, or €365 m (official government portal, 2018).

4 • ACTIONS TO REDUCE EMISSIONS FROM THE LULUCF SECTOR

• **THE LULUCF SECTOR AT THE HEART OF NATIONAL POLICY** • Ivory Coast has been a member of the REDD+ international organisation since 2011. In concrete terms, REDD+ in Côte d'Ivoire aims to reduce deforestation and deterioration of listed forests, and to win back 80% of protected zones compared to 2015 levels, which equals a reduction of 74,400 ha per year. REDD+ is also seeking to reconstitute the country's forest cover through agroforestry practices, by planting 5,000,000 hectares by 2030 (REDD+ Côte d'Ivoire, 2017). The country also entered into a Voluntary Partnership Agreement for Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (VPA-FLEGT) with the European Union in 2013, with the objective of effectively combating illegal logging and timber production and associated trading operations. In 2014, Ivory Coast signed up to the New York Declaration on Forests (NYDF), which aims to end deforestation by 2030. The objectives of the NYDF include the ambition to eliminate deforestation caused by supply chains in the agricultural industry and other economic sectors. During the 2014 World Climate Summit at the UN, Ivory Coast committed to transitioning towards zero-deforestation agriculture from 2017 onwards. This type of agriculture is more productive in terms of rural real estate, preserving parks and reserves, listed forests, and forests with special characteristics, as well as contributing to the restoration of forest cover in



order to partially compensate for previous deforestation. It is also more resilient to the impacts of climate change, and respects the rights of local communities while also improving their sources of livelihood.

In all these commitments, a major focus has been the necessity of improving forest governance in Ivory Coast, as thus far none of the country's existing forest policies have been correctly applied. In 1988, the Ivorian government adopted a Forestry Master Plan (PDF) for the 1988-2015 period. Observing that the plan was failing, in 1999 the government adopted the Forest Policy Declaration, which was not applied due to the sociopolitical crisis (REDD+ Côte d'Ivoire, 2017). In 2014, a new forestry code was adopted, but so far this has also not been applied (APA, 2018). Given the catastrophic effect these failings have had on the nation's forest cover, a new national policy for the preservation, recovery and extension of forests was introduced by the government in May 2018. Based around realistic voluntary commitments, it has four objectives: preservation of biodiversity, preservation and reconstitution of a national climate favourable to agricultural activity and living spaces; compliance with international commitments, and economic and social development. In this new forestry policy, four of the six key strategic topics involve listed forests. They also introduce the concept of Agro-forests, which refers to listed forest zones in which agroforestry may be practiced (Ministry of Waterways and Forests, 2018). Finally, in July 2018, the Minister of Waterways and Forests, Alain-Richard Donwahi, also announced an investment plan worth 616 bn FCFA (€940 m) over 10 years, in the form of public-private partnerships aiming to achieve a commitment to restore 20% of the country's forest cover.

• THE CENTRAL ROLE OF REDD+ • The REDD+ organisation plays a central role in the implementation of the national strategy to combat climate change in Ivory Coast. In Ivory Coast, its ambition is to stabilize and sustainably reverse the trend of natural forest disappearance from 2017 onwards, and to simultaneously restore 20% of forest cover by 2030. The next stage involves managing these forests in a sustainable fashion, while also achieving its goals in terms of poverty reduction, human and social development in local communities (social equality), culture and gender equality. Following the completion of the preparatory phase, during which the country developed its REDD+ strategy in partnership with public bodies, the private sector and organisations from civil society, REDD+ Côte d'Ivoire is now in its second phase: strategy implementation. According to REDD+ Côte d'Ivoire (2017), this strategy is based on an approach that is integrated, landscape-orientated, multi-sectoral, transparent, robust, participative and inclusive, in order to make the strategy as efficient as possible. As a result, non-governmental stakeholders will play a significant role in the implementation of this national strategy (Table 2).

	Direct factors in deforestation					Indirect factors and obstacles		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Strategic options	Zero-deforestation agriculture via public-private partnerships	Sustainable domestic energy, with monetization of agricultural biomass	Sustainable management of listed forests, and conservation of protected zones and sacred forests	Wooding / reforestation, restoration of forests and damaged landscapes	Environmentally-friendly mining operations	Incentive schemes such as Payment for Environmental Services (PSE)	Regional development and land security	National planning and structural reforms for the transition to a green economy

TABLE 2. APPROACHES AND STRATEGIC OPTIONS FOR REDD+ IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Source: REDD+ Côte d'Ivoire (2017)

• EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES IN CIVIL SOCIETY, THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES • Several non-governmental bodies are involved in the fight against deforestation: Local and international NGOs, multinationals, local communities, etc. These groups carry out

studies on deforestation (such as the previously-cited Mighty Earth report or the Etc Terra study), and actively participate in the fight against bush fires (text box 3).

Progress of knowledge

Scientific research has for long looked into deforestation in Ivory Coast. If several scientific articles have made possible to establish a global picture, NGOs also are also taking part in extending knowledge on deforestation in Ivory Coast. With financial support of FAO within the frame of ONU-REDD and in collaboration with REDD+ and other State actors and civil society, the NGO Nitidæ (merging of

the NGOs Etc Terra and Rongead) carried out in 2016 a qualitative analysis of the factors of deforestation and degradation of forests in Ivory Coast. The results of this landmark study, largely quoted in most of national and international reports have improved the understanding of the drivers of deforestation. (Etc Terra, 2016)

TEXT BOX 3

Preventing bush fires

The fight against bush fires is also a hobby horse for local communities. Over 1000 committees have been set up to prevent bush fires, such as Boman Gouli in Oumé or Ebo Agnan Iti in Abengourou; these organisations are made up of local villagers, and are supported by the SODEFOR and the International Tropical Timber Association (ITTO) (AIP, 2018). These committees have been set up in villages to increase awareness of the dangers of bush fires, to prevent fires from being started, limit their spread and make containment efforts more effective.

TEXT BOX 4

Chasing farmers, placer miners and loggers off protected forest lands is a sensitive issue for the Ivorian government. In certain places, these protected areas have become functioning villages with their own infrastructures: schools, hospitals, water and electricity systems, etc. For this reason, several NGOs are involved in the upstream and downstream phases of these operations (text box 4). Ivory Coast has 234 listed forests (SODEFOR, 2018). These forests have long been illegally infiltrated following migration into forested areas: 80,404 people settled in forests between 1996 and 1999 (CEDEAO, 2015). These occupations were exacerbated by the period of socio-political crisis between 1999 and 2010: almost 229,560 heads of families are now settled in the forests, and depend on them for their survival (REDD+ Côte d'Ivoire, 2017). These forests are often the subject of land disputes, as was the case for Goin-Débé in the west of the country. Clearing human settlements from these areas is a necessity in order to meet the commitments the government has entered into. Around 9,000 people have been removed from the Mount Peko national park (OCHA, 2013) and over 10,000 people have been removed from the Niégré listed forest (Léonard & Ibo, n.d.).

Combating the illegal occupation of listed forests and protected zones

For several years now NGOs have been raising awareness among the population of the benefits of preserving listed forests and protected zones. For example, in 2017 the wild chimpanzee foundation (WCF) initiated an awareness drive in villages around the listed forest of Cavally, using a theatrical



production to spread their message. The play showed viewers what kinds of things were happening in listed forests: people entering illegally, armed gangs bringing in and extorting illegal occupants, who clear the land to make way for cacao plantations - all with the complicity of certain local officials who encourage these practices and contribute to the destruction of the forest. This awareness campaign was designed to support the emergency plan implemented by the SODEFOR (a government agency), which enables surveillance operations to be carried out each month in listed forests, including the destruction of shelters and plantations in the Cavally forest, and the arrest of clandestine occupants. Several local NGOs such as Nofna, Oprft, and IDEF are also working with government authorities and international NGOs to raise awareness amongst the population. (Diédri, 2017)

These clearances often attract fierce criticism, as one of the immediate consequences is the overpopulation of neighbouring villages and the various issues this causes. The government's lack of support measures for these cleared populations (and slowness in providing them) are also criticized. As a result, these populations are often tempted to resettle back in the forests. In a recent incident report, the Ivorian Association of Human Rights Bodies (RAIDH, 2017) revisited these points, reiterating the rights of these occupants during evacuations, and called upon the government to recognize the necessity of improving support measures in order to facilitate the re-integration of these populations. The challenge therefore lies in retaking control of these protected areas and listed forests while also taking into account the social and economic impact of settlement clearances.

TEXT BOX 5

In response, the new forest policy transforms the government's method of intervention in these areas. The policy suggests redeveloping forests having suffered deterioration levels of over 75% into agro-forests. In these listed forests, environmentally-friendly agricultural activities will be permitted (under clear and strict conditions), as will other controlled economic activities and human settlements. Development plans will be implemented in order to preserve and re-wood existing forests. For forests that have experienced lower levels of deterioration, settlement clearances will be carried out in adherence with human rights regulations. (Ministry of Waterways and Forests, 2018).

Within the strategy implementation framework, REDD+Côte d'Ivoire has established several pilot projects, which are being managed by NGOs (text box 5). The private sector is also involved in one of these projects. Elsewhere, civil society organisations and private bodies have created a coalition to push forward the application of the new forestry code (text box 6).

Implementation of several REDD+ flagship pilot projects

The REDD+ Project in the Mé region (in the south-east of Ivory Coast) is currently being coordinated by the NGO Nitidæ (which was formed via the merger of Etc Terra and Rongead). This is the first REDD+ project in Ivory Coast. Its aim is to combat deforestation and forest deterioration on a regional scale in the Mé. The scope of this pilot project covers the listed

forests of Mabi-yaya and their surrounding buffer zone. It will benefit 7 villages, 2250 planters, 5000 hectares of plantations, 150 forest owners, 15 charcoal producers, 5 NGOs and 3 local companies. The project, which has been underway since December 2016, has already achieved significant progress, including the mapping of land use in the region, increasing awareness of land use and forestry legislation, reforestation of 58 hectares of land and the

establishment of a reference level for forests in the region. (Nitidæ, 2018)

A Payment for Environmental Services (PSE) pilot project has been implemented by the NGO Impacture since September 2017 in the region of Nawa (south-east of Ivory Coast, and part of the “cacao triangle”). The PSE, which is an incentive instrument implemented by REDD+, aims to create a collective dynamic among local communities to support the reforestation and conservation of biodiversity in the area’s remaining forests. The project has already increased awareness among 2000

producers and community members. Almost 600 producers and community members have been mobilized in agroforestry, reforestation and forest conservation, and 200 contracts have already been signed. 79% of the funding for this project was provided by the chocolate company Mondelez, which was singled out by Mighty Earth; its aim is to improve the environmental quality of this multinational chocolate company’s supply basin. (REDD+ Côte d’Ivoire, 2018).

TEXT BOX 6

At a level applying to all agricultural sectors, several actions have been carried out in pursuit of the “zero-deforestation agriculture” policy. Applying to the cacao sector, for example, in November 2017 (alongside the COP23) a group of 22 multinationals from the cacao and chocolate industries signed a “Communal Action Framework for a deforestation-free cacao value chain”. In partnership with the Ivorian government and NGOs, they will commit to working together to pursue shared objectives in order to end deforestation and forest deterioration throughout the global cacao supply chain. The Ivorian ministers of the environment, waterways and forests launched work on this action framework on January 18th 2018 in order to established a roadmap to zero-deforestation objectives for the sector.

Pushing for effective application of the new forestry code

Initiated by the NGO Impactum, a coalition of organisations from civil society and the private sector was created in August 2018 to incite the government to fully apply the new forestry code adopted in 2014. This coalition also includes the NGOs OPRFT (Observatory for the Protection and Recovery of Tropical Flora and Fauna), AMISTAD, SAFI (Save the Ivorian Rainforest), IDH, UTZ Certified and Rainforest Alliance (Kouassi, 2018). The coalition aims to promulgate the forestry code and help ensure its widespread application. The ultimate goal of this push to effectively apply the code is to encourage producers and local communities to participate in the recovery and conservation of the country’s forest cover (APA, 2018).

TEXT BOX 7

By giving companies public and symbolic recognition of their positive agricultural practices and forest preservation efforts, the Rainforest Alliance, UTZ Certified and “Fair Trade” certifications also have a role to play in making producers more responsible and increasing consumer awareness. In 2017, a total of almost 330,000 cacao producers carried the UTZ certification (UTZ, 2018), and 120,000 producers were certified as “Fair Trade” (Le Monde, 2018). According to Ouattara (2015), 206 cooperatives carried the Rainforest Alliance certification in 2013. As regards the palm oil sector, the country has joined the Africa Palm Oil Initiative (APOI) set up by the Tropical Forest Alliance 2020 (TFA2020, 2018). The sector has also committed to a sustainable production approach via the RSPO industrial standard (Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil).

CONCLUSION

This study of LULUCF emissions in Ivory Coast has demonstrated the urgent need for the country to regain its forest cover. With its forest resources practically depleted, a high level of vulnerability to climate change, social improvements needed, and the desire for economic growth, the country has a significant number of challenges to contend with. It has become clear that proper management of listed forests will be an essential factor in responding to these challenges. The LULUCF emissions sector is a multi-lateral issue: forest protection efforts are linked to the agriculture, energy and mining sectors. As such, it mobilizes significant amounts of resources and a range of stakeholders. REDD+, national and international NGOs, food manufacturing firms, producer organisations in agricultural sectors and local communities are all knuckling down to tackle the monumental task of recovering and preserving Ivory Coast's forest cover.

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