

INDEPENDENT FOREST MONITORING (IFM) IN THE REPUBLIC OF CONGO (CONGO-BRAZZAVILLE)

TREE meeting
FAO, Rome
6 April 2017

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INTRODUCTION

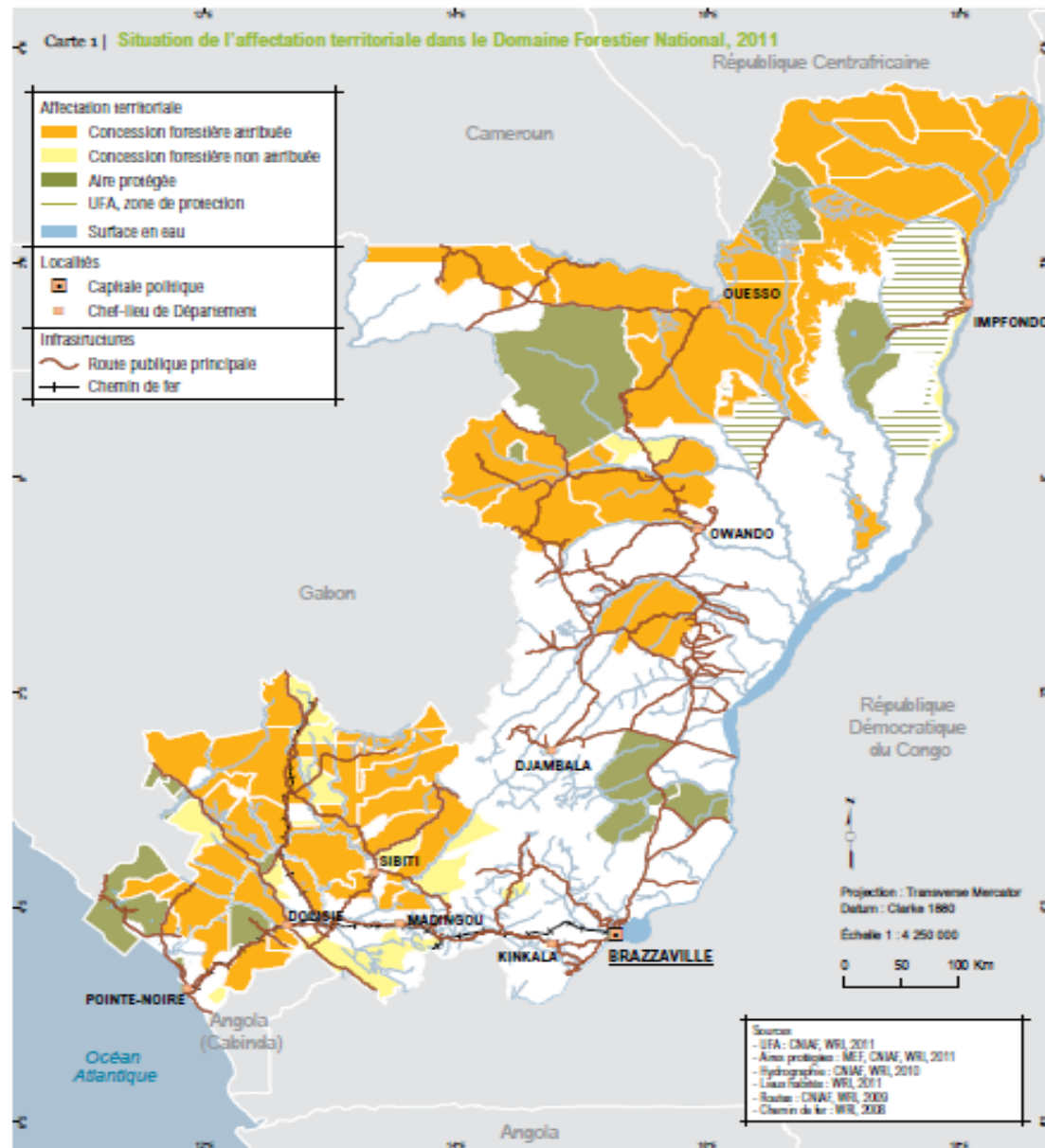
- 2006-2009 (prior to the VPA and legislative reforms): Former Forestry Minister H. Djombo invited UK-based NGOs **Resource Extraction Monitoring (REM)** and **Forest Monitor (FM)** to launch and carry out IM
- 2010-2013: Official partnership between REM/FM and **Cercle d'Appui à la Gestion Durable des Forêts (CAGDF)**, a Congolese NGO
- Since 2013: CAGDF becomes the official civil society structure in charge of carrying out IFM

FUNCTIONING OF IFM

Memorandum of Understanding and Permanent Mission Order

- MoU signed between Forestry Ministry and CAGDF
- Permanent Mission Order signed by the Minister to allow IFM to conduct inspections **throughout the national territory** and with respect to **all departments involved in forest management** and **all forestry companies** (national mandate)
- The scope of IM is monitoring the application of the forest law and regulations. Activities range from inspecting procedures for **granting of concessions or permits** to timber export (whole supply chain)

FOREST COVER



FUNCTIONING OF IFM

Data collection from forestry administration and companies – Desk-based and field missions

Information collected	Forestry administration	Forest companies
Concessions attribution file	X	
Annual harvest documentation (permit)	X	X
Harvest monitoring	X	X
Forestry taxes file	X	X
Forest-related penalties file	X	X
Monitoring of the forest management plan	X	x
Benefit sharing agreement	X	X
Harvesting areas		X

FUNCTIONING OF IFM

Data analysis, field mission report drafting and validation

- Information collected is analysed and compiled in either a **field mission report or an analytical/thematic brief**
- **Mission reports** are periodical. They contain a summary of the application of the law by forest companies and the forestry administration at a specific time.
- Prior to publication, the mission report is reviewed and validated by a reading committee comprised of representatives of the Forestry Ministry, IFM, civil society, and international donors
- In case of disagreement, the forestry administration can add its comments/observations to the report, shown in a separate box

FUNCTIONING OF IFM

Data analysis, analytical/thematic briefs drafting and validation

- **Analytical and thematic briefs** (*notes d'analyse*) are published in a particular case or for a specific thematic e.g. the attribution of conversion permits, a special situation with export permits
- They are submitted to the forestry administration for written comments or observations 20 days before publication. If no observations are made, the brief is published.

FUNCTIONING OF IFM

- CAGDF collects, **once a year**, all relevant information from all administration departments involved in forest management. This general collection is organized before the launch of field missions or visits to timber harvesting sites
- Timber harvesting sites are visited periodically. The **majority of forest concessions** in the country are covered.

A FEW RESULTS

Since 2013, CAGDF:

- Visited **8 of the 10 regions** with active forest concessions, with approx 83% of all forest concessions, as well as 13 holders of various timber exploitation permits
- Noticed a positive evolution in the level of **integration of its recommendations** by the administration e.g. the recovery of 3 243 480 €
- published **14 reports and 10 analytical/thematic briefs**

MAJOR OBSERVATIONS

Administration	Companies
Recent attribution of 6 forest concessions (Mimbeli-Ibenga, Karagoua, Lebama, Loumoungo, Kola, Nkola) in contravention to the procedure laid out in the legislation	Improvement of the level of compliance of timber exploitation obligations
Attribution of 25 felling and deforestation permits without due process	Persistence of illegal timber felling and fraudulent practices
Granting of logs export permit over the 15% required by law	Low access to documentation (46%)
Low level of control by the forestry administration – 25% of investigations were carried out between 2013 and 2016	Progress in the number of sustainable forest management plans carried out - currently at 75% of the concessions area
Low percentage of forest penalties recovered (9,6%)	
Low percentage of concession area tax (46%) and deforestation tax (44%) recovered	

CHALLENGES

- Considerable delays in the publication of reports

Report number	Region in Congo	Nb days between report submission and reading committee	Nb days between reading committee validation and administrative confirmation
1	Sangha	19	49
4	Cuvette-Ouest	41	94
8	Cuvette	85	128
9	Niari	149	42
12	Sangha	92	40

- Challenges with finding sustainable sources of funding to continue carrying out IM missions
- Lack of access to information on the ground - Obstruction of work by certain enterprises (SICOFOR and Asia Congo)
- Recent armed robbery of CAGDF offices
- Lack of joint mission with the forestry administration

Thank you!