

# THESIS

## The applicability of FSC on community forests in Cameroon



An evaluation of the FSC standard for community forests of Cameroon

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## SUMMARY

Ever since the development of forest certification systems, the certification of community forests has received great attention. Although certified community forests exist spread over the world, no community forest has been certified in the Congo Basin, one of the major tropical forest areas of the world. Part of the Congo Basin is located in Cameroon, which has an important share of the international market in tropical timber. Cameroon has developed a new Forest Law in 1994, which aims to encourage communities to participate in forest management by integrating Community Forests in the law. FSC has developed a regional FSC standard for Small and Low Intensity Managed Forests (SLIMFs) in Cameroon, destined for Community Forests, but it has never been used. Multiple studies have focussed on the obstacles for community forest certification. This study looked at the possibilities to work towards FSC certification for Community Forests from the FSC side as well as the community and governance side. The objective was to identify the obstacles to FSC certification for Community Forest Organisations (CFOs) in Cameroon, and investigate possible adaptations to work towards certified Community Forests. The SLIMF standard of Cameroon was assessed on its relevance, and on the plausibility that CFOs could meet the different indicators of the standard. Additionally, the current situation in five CFOs was checked, and another five visited CFOs served as substituting information. Data was collected through a combination of community visits, interviews with community and FSC experts, and literature review.

Of the 180 indicators that comprise the SLIMF standard, 33 were found to be irrelevant, the reasons being that they were either 1) double indicators, 2) too much effort for the expected impact, 3) unnecessary restrictive, or 4) the same for all community forests in Cameroon. Sixty-three of the 180 indicators were assessed to be difficult to meet for CFOs, because either 1) it requires more organisational capacity, 2) knowledge is lacking, 3) the CFOs are dependant on stakeholders for the compliance, or 4) it is too costly. The majority of the indicators, 84, were assessed to be both relevant and realistic to meet for CFOs.

Although most indicators were found to be relevant, and the standard might seem well adapted to the community situation the SLIMF standard in itself is arguably less suitable. The scientific approach of FSC, regarding conservation, monitoring and research, conflict with the educational level of CFOs and creates dependency on external organisations. Also, the reliability of FSC is based on documentation while communities are based on social coherence and trust, and the structure with the principles is adjusted to industrial ran organisations, not communities. A simplified structure that is based on the practical implication for CFOs would be shorter and more accessible for CFOs. Six topics that partly correspond with the FSC principles were identified that could form the basis of this structure: 1) Laws and regulations, 2) Knowledge and education, 3) Financial matters, 4) Environmental impact, 5) Documentation, and 6) Communication and community involvement. Even though certification of NTFPs is an important factor for FSC, the impacts of commercial NTFP production are not yet fully understood.

None of the five CFOs complied with any of the nine FSC principles of the SLIMF standard. The FSC requirements that do not overlap with the legal requirements are least complied with. The largest obstacle that has to be overcome is the insufficient organisational capacity. CFOs are dependant on external actors to reach the level of organisation required by FSC. It is advised to adjust the organisational requirements of FSC in combination with capacity building. Because the success of a CFO is related to the level of community involvement, it is also recommended for FSC to pay extra attention on community involvement. Even though CFOs in general are not ready to get involved in certification, it is worthwhile to involve the individual exceptional well organised CFO in the development of a revised SLIMF standard.



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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CB	Certification Body
CBP	Congo Basin Program
CF	Community Forest
CFO	Community Forest Organisation
CIG	Common Initiative Group
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EN	Environmental Notice
EU	European Union
FM	Forest Manager
FMO	Forest Management Officer
FMU	Forest Management Unit
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
FTT	Fair Tropical Timber BV
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GFA	GFA Consultancy group Hamburg
HCVF	High Conservation Value Forest
IDH	IDH Sustainable Trade Initiative
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organization
MINEF	Ministry of Environment and Forestry
MINFOF	Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife
NTFP	Non Timber Forest Product
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SLIMF	Small or Low Intensity Managed Forest
SMP	Simple Management Plan
SNV	Netherland Development Organisation
SWR	South West Region
TBI	Tropenbos International
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

# 1. INTRODUCTION.

Certification of community forests has received great attention ever since the first initiatives for forest certification in the early nineties. The interest in forest certification arose in the late eighties and early nineties, when the increasing pressure on natural resources, especially those in the tropical regions, started to receive international attention (Synnott, 2005). Similarly, the concept of community forestry developed in the mid-seventies in response to the increasing pressure on forest resources for local livelihoods, in order to secure the access to these resources (Arnold, 2001). From the early start, several certification projects fully focussed on community forestry, such as the Salomon Western Islands Fairtrade Program, which was even initiated by the community itself (Quist, 2014). Also in other parts of the world, community forestry certification initiatives arose, and today 102 community managed forests across the world are certified under a SLIMF standard (Small or Low Intensity Managed Forest) of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), the first and up to today a major forest certification organisation, accounting for 8% of all the FSC certificates (FSC, 2014a). As one of the three major tropical forest areas in the world, the Congo Basin in central Africa is an important source for timber worldwide. Although certified industrial logging operations exist in the area, certified community forests are non-existent.

Cameroon, located within the Congo Basin, is a major player on the international timber market, especially the European market (Brown, 2010). Not only the international market is interested in these forests' resources, the local livelihoods also largely depend on it. The government of Cameroon wanted to encourage communities to participate in forest management, and implemented a new Forestry Law. The new Forestry Law, from 1994 allowed rural populations to establish a Community Forest: a part of the national forest that a community manages, preserves and exploits in its own interest (Republic of Cameroon, 1995). The objective of the government was threefold (MINFOF, 2009):

1. Encourage communities to participate in forest management;
2. Forest conservation; and
3. Poverty alleviation.

Since the implementation of this new Forestry Law, nearly 400 Community Forests (CFs) have been established (World Resources Institute, 2013).

Not all CFs are equally successful, although having a Community Forest does enhance rural livelihoods and sustainable resources management, compared to a situation without a CF (Beauchamp, 2011). Community participation in the forest operation is often a limiting factor in successfully organising a forest operation, and can cause both internal and external conflicts related to corruption. The limited participation presents itself in i) the limited number of community members that control the Community Forest Operation (CFO), ii) the marginal involvement in the making of the management plan, and iii) the lack of internal and external monitoring (Cuny, 2011). Other constraining factors are the limited access to financial means and market information, and limited organisational capacities. Both communities with and without a CF are often surrounded by forests managed by industrial operators, some of them in the possession of an FSC certificate. Companies with an FSC certificate positively influence the social impact of the operation on the communities compared to companies that are not FSC certified (Cerutti, 2014). As both FSC and Community Forests can have positive impact on communities, the possibilities for FSC certification of CFs can certainly benefit the communities. Schneemann and van Bentum investigated the extent to which communities are ready for FSC certification, and concluded that for many Community Forest Enterprises FSC certification is not a feasible next step because it is costly, they lack FSC markets and

they lack capacities to satisfy market requirements (Schneemann, 2012). With most studies the focus lays with the community. This study focusses on both sides of the story, looking at the possibilities within communities as well as the possibilities on FSC level to improve the chances for certified community forest management in Cameroon.

### 1.1 JUSTIFICATION.

There have been a number of studies on the obstacles for community certification from the side of communities and government. While taking into account these considerations, this study emphasizes the possibilities for adaptations from the side of the certification body, FSC. This study is conducted as part of a project of the Dutch timber trade company Fair Tropical Timber BV (FTT). By importing tropical timber from community forests in Cameroon, FTT wants to offer access to the export markets and trade opportunities for small communities, cooperatives and small-scale community based forest enterprises as a way to generate income for local communities (Fair Tropical Timber BV, 2014). In 2012, Form International, a Dutch forestry consulting firm, asked FTT to write a project proposal for the implementation of group certification in the Congo Basin (Sprik, 2012). The objective of the resulting project was to create a legal chain for the export of community forest timber to Europe. The project is part of the Congo Basin Program of the IDH Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH). IDH aims for large scale transformation to a sustainable trade market. The Congo Basin Program has the ambition to increase the area of certified natural forest in the Congo Basin with 4 million ha between 2011 and 2015, with special emphasis on Community Forests (IDH). Since multiple studies point out that community forest certification is currently not feasible, there is need for a review on the applicability of the FSC criteria on the community situation in Cameroon.

### 1.2 OBJECTIVE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS.

The objective was to identify the obstacles to FSC certification for Community Forest Organisations (CFOs) in Cameroon, and investigate possible adaptations to work towards certified Community Forests. The main question of this study is:

#### **To what extent is the FSC SLIMF standard for Cameroon applicable to Community Forest Organisations in Cameroon?**

The sub-questions are:

1. How does the FSC standard overlap with the legal requirements for Community Forest Organisations?
2. What is the relevance of each indicator of the FSC standard regarding Community Forest Organisations?
3. To what extent do Community Forest Organisations currently comply with the FSC standard?

The relevance of the standard mentioned in sub-question 2 is defined as: is the indicator essential to ensure that CFOs comply with the FSC objective.

The projected outcome of this study was twofold, the first being an analysis of the indicators of the FSC SLIMF standard, with the indicators divided in three classes:

- (1) Indicator is relevant, CFOs can meet it without much difficulty;
- (2) Indicator is relevant, CFOs will have difficulty in meeting indicator;
- (3) Indicator is not relevant.

The second projected outcome were recommendations for a different approach for FSC certification of community forests.

## 2. BACKGROUND.

This chapter gives an overview of the situation in Cameroon regarding community forestry and FSC certification. First the forestry sector in Cameroon is described, then paragraph 2.2 elaborates on the history and current situation of community forestry. Paragraph 2.3 provides the necessary background information on FSC, and the last paragraph elaborates on the attempts for certification of community-based forest management.

### 2.1 FORESTRY IN CAMEROON.

The forests of Cameroon are used by a wide variety of stakeholders. With an estimated 22.5 million hectares, nearly half the surface of Cameroon is covered with forest. About 16.5 million ha of this is dense humid forest located in southern Cameroon, and has a high potential for logging (MINFOF, 2005). The national forest domain is divided in permanent and non-permanent forest, which can both be subject to timber exploitation. The areas falling under non-permanent forest can be converted to other land use types by the rightful user or when the government needs the area. Within both types of forest domain, the state recognises different forest exploitation titles, of which the Forest Management Unit (FMU), Council Forest, Community Forest and Sales of standing volume are the four most common (Eba'a Atyi, 2009), of which table 1 gives an overview. Next to exploitation, parts of the national forest domain have a protected status.

*Table 1 Most common land use allocations within the national forest domain. Info derived from WRI (World Resources Institute, 2013) and ITTO (Eba'a Atyi, 2009).*

Title	Forest domain type	Duration (year)	Maximum size	Total area (km <sup>2</sup> )
FMU	Permanent	15	200,000 ha	71,131
Council forest	Permanent	15	Not defined	9,340
Community Forest	Non-permanent	25	5,000 ha	12,969
Sales of standing volume	Non-permanent	1	2,500 ha	1,470
Forest reserves	Permanent	-	-	8,500
Protected areas	Permanent	-	-	45,703

Over 7 million ha of the national forest is allocated to logging companies in the form of a Forest Management Unit (FMU), while circa 5 million ha has a protected status, and 1.3 million ha falls under Community Forests (World Resources Institute, 2013). Overlapping with all different land use allocations the government allocated hunting zones and mining permits (World Resources Institute, 2013). Cameroons forest sector plays a major role in the European timber import industry, and is important for the country's own economy. The forest sector accounts for about 10% of the country's GDP, and 12% of the export (Amariei, 2005). While the main export destination is Europe, it is also closely involved in the forest operation itself: several European industrial logging operators together manage the majority of the FMUs in Cameroon, as well as the sales of standing volume (Wit, 2012).

Besides logging activities, the forested area of Cameroon is also used for other purposes. Local livelihoods inhabit the forests, and live from shifting cultivation agriculture, collection of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs), and hunting. Furthermore, mining permits are given for large parts of the forested area, and hunting zones are appointed (World Resources Institute, 2013).

The forest sector endures criticism. Forest practices in Cameroon are heavily criticized by environmental organisations such as WWF, Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace on occurring illegal forest activities (Greenpeace, 2014; van Ooijen, 2007; WWF, 2008). The quantity of illegally exported

timber to the EU from Cameroon is estimated to be the highest of all countries (WWF, 2008; Cerutti, 2006). In response to the criticism, the EU and Cameroon are working on regulation of illegal market. The government has been working with the European Union from 2005 onwards on VPA-FLEGT, a voluntary partnership agreement on legality, governance and trade of timber (EU, Republique de Cameroun, 2013). Next to the governmental actions, international logging companies have responded by improving their practices. In 2006, the Wijma Cameroun SA received the first FSC certificate of the Congo Basin (FSC, 2011).

Illegal activities are not only restricted to timber for the international market, it also widely occurs on the national market. The informal logging sector for the domestic market is even larger than the export share (Controlling illegal logging in domestic and international markets by harnessing multi-level governance opportunities, 2012). Promotion of community forestry and legal trade is a way to counter the tendency for illegal forestry activities.

## 2.2 COMMUNITY FORESTRY IN CAMEROON.

As a response to increasing pressure on the forests' resources and to protect the tenure and land use rights of local livelihoods, the concept of community forestry was developed in the late seventies (Arnold, 2001). In Cameroon, the current model of Community Forests was legally established in the new Forest Law of 1994. Since 2000, community forestry has become increasingly popular. While only ten communities had obtained a CF in 2001 (Djeumo, 2001), there were 375 CFs by 2013, covering 1.3 million ha of the 18.2 million ha national forest estate in Cameroon (World Resources Institute, 2013). Community forests in Cameroon form part of the non-permanent forest estate. A community forest is maximum 5,000 ha, and the community that applied for the CF is responsible for the management. A community can consist of one or more villages neighbouring the CF. The management is organised by a board of community members, in this report referred to as Community Forest Organisation (CFO). The local government is obliged to offer free technical assistance through the Forestry Administration.

A community that wants to establish and manage a CF has to pass several stages, fixed in the "Manual of procedures for the attribution and norms for the management of community forest" (MINFOF, 2009):

1. Information and awareness raising activities within the community to reach consensus on the legal entity type and objectives.
2. Consultation meeting, where the executive members of the legal entity are chosen;
3. Preparation and submission of application files
4. Preparation and submission of a Simple Management Plan (SMP) and a Final Management Agreement;
5. Implementation of the SMP and the Final Management Agreement.

A community can choose between one of four legal entity types: Association, Cooperative, Common Initiative Group (CIG), Economic Initiative Group. Associations and CIGs are most common. The manual of procedure requires the community to set priority objectives, typically production or protection (MINFOF, 2009). The mentioned management agreement is defined as "*a contract whereby the Forests Administration entrusts part of the national forest to a community with a view to its management, conservation and use for the benefit of that community. The management agreement is accompanied by a basic management plan which sets out the activities to be undertaken.*" (Republic of Cameroon, 1995). The process for establishment of a CF takes a couple of years, on average four years (Ezinne de Blas, 2008). Although the objectives for a CF may vary, most applicants choose for timber exploitation. Since the majority of applicants are located in the tropical

humid forest region, where commercial tree species are abundant, this is an obvious choice (Ezinne de Blas, 2008).

Since its development in 1994, involved parties have been divided about the effects a Community Forest can have on livelihoods and environment. While on one hand CFs are argued to be economically and environmentally profitable (Beauchamp, 2011), others put emphasis on the problems still existing on both socio-economic and environmental level: poverty and unemployment remain high, community rights are often not properly enforced, and executive members abuse their newly obtained power (Alemagi, 2011). The obstacles to overcome such problems are analysed. The Community Forestry Development Project grouped the main obstacles (Djeumo, 2001):

1. **Process of obtaining a CF:** application process is too long, and certain field staff of the responsible ministry lacks responsibility;
2. **Funding the process:** costs of the SMP, of meetings, and of preparing the application, absence of NGOs, and funding participation of other administrative services involved;
3. **Technical capacity:** lack of training, inappropriate SMPs, inexperience of the ministry in preparing applications, and non-compliance with the SMPs by logging companies;
4. **Internal organisation of community:** conflicts between board members, absence of young people and limited participation of women in the organisation, replacement of board members without consensus, and non-compliance with recommendations made by technical authorities; and
5. **Other problems:** takeover attempts and propaganda disparaging CFs by those involved in politics, uncontrolled bushfires, illegal exploitation by logging companies, destruction of the CF boundaries by animals, and refusal by forest product users to work with the organisation.

The inadequate technical capacity and internal organisation is reflected in the challenges that Schneemann identified with regard to the deliverance of timber to the customer: 1) the communication between the community and the customer, 2) the reliability of the community to deliver products in accordance with the conditions set in the contract, 3) the ability to meet the quality of timber agreed upon in the contract, 4) the ability to deliver the demanded quality over a longer period, and 5) the possibility to have a long term relationship. Those themes restrict CFOs in operating for the international, specifically European market, because of the high demands from the European side (Schneemann, 2012). If these challenges could be overcome and CFs would sell on the international market, CFs could make substantial benefits (*Séduisante théorie, douloureuse pratique: la foresterie communautaire camerounnaise en butte à sa propre légalisation*, 2007).

Many local livelihoods directly depend on forest resources for food, medicine, construction materials and energy requirements. Communities use CFs both for subsistence needs and for commercial exploitation. Those with commercial objectives exploit both Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) and timber, although communities often focus on timber (Eijnatten, 2013). While most CF derived timber products are sold on the national, African, and Chinese market, often the present species in the forests suit the European market as well. Forest products that are sold on the European market generally receive higher prices than those on the national, African or Chinese market. Consequently, access to the European market could stimulate the economic development of communities.

### 2.3 THE FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL.

The first globally acknowledged forest certification organisation came to existence in 1994: the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). In twenty years time it has certified over 182 million ha of forest worldwide, of which 19 million ha in the (sub) tropical region, and FSC is one of the leading organizations engaged in forest certification (FSC, 2014a). Cameroon counts five FSC certificates that together cover 1 million ha of forest (World Resources Institute, 2014).

When a party wants to become FSC certified, it has to approach a Certification Body (CB). CBs are independent organisations that carry out the necessary audits, and when the party complies with the FSC standard, the CB issues the certificate. The CBs that have issued certificates in Cameroon are Bureau Veritas, Smartwood, and SGS (World Resources Institute, 2014). Smartwood gives special attention to smallholders, and has also been engaged in the development of the FSC standard smallholders for Cameroon (Nzoyem, 2014).

FSC certification comprises two compounds: Forest Management certification, which ensures responsible and long-term forest management, and Chain of Custody certification, which allows tracking of forest products all through the value chain. This study looks at forest management certification. A forestry organisation can obtain a Forest Management certificate when it complies with a set of principles that are specified in criteria and indicators. The 10 principles (see table 2) and its accompanying criteria are identical worldwide. The indicators are adapted to the legal, social and geographical conditions per country or region, that National Standards Development Groups can develop, and FSC International has to approve (FSC, 2014b).

Standards exist for different kinds of concession holders: for natural forests and plantations, for small and low intensity managed forests. They can be for different purposes: timber exploitation, nature conservation, or other forest uses. Certificates can count for groups or individual holders (FSC, 2014a; Mbolo, 2014). Cameroon counts three standards: a standard for the Congo Basin region, a national standard for natural forests and plantations, and a standard for Small and Low Intensity Managed Forests (SLIMFs).

FSC has approved the SLIMF standard of Cameroon in 2010 (FSC, 2010). A forest qualifies for SLIMF if it is:

- a) Small: not exceeding 100 ha unless specifically classed as SLIMF larger than 100 ha; or
- b) Low intensity managed:
  - a. The rate of harvesting is less than 20% of the mean annual increment within the total production forest area of the unit, AND
  - b. EITHER the annual harvest from the total production forest area is less than 5000m<sup>3</sup>,
  - c. OR the average annual harvest from the total production forest is less than 5000m<sup>3</sup>/year during the period of validity of the certificate as verified by harvest reports and surveillance audits (FSC, 2004)

CFs in Cameroon qualify with the 'low intensity' criteria, and the SLIMF standard for Cameroon explicitly mentions and focusses on Community Forests. Only one CF in Cameroon is smaller than 100ha, and the average size is approximately 3500ha (World Resources Institute, 2014), thus CFs exceed the qualifications for 'small'. The SLIMF standard for Cameroon is the best applicable for CFs and therefore for this study (Fanzo, 2014).

*Table 2. The ten FSC principles, which apply for all unique regional FSC standards worldwide.*

Principle	Description
<b>1. Compliance with laws and FSC principles.</b>	Forest management shall respect all applicable laws of the country in which they occur, and international treaties and agreements to which

	the country is a signatory, and comply with all FSC Principles and Criteria.
<b>2. Tenure and use rights and responsibilities.</b>	Long-term tenure and use rights to the land and forest resources shall be clearly defined, documented and legally established.
<b>3. Indigenous peoples' rights.</b>	The legal and customary rights of indigenous peoples to own, use and manage their lands, territories, and resources shall be recognized and respected.
<b>4. Community relations and workers' rights.</b>	Forest management operations shall maintain or enhance the long-term social and economic well-being of forest workers and local communities.
<b>5. Benefits from the forest.</b>	Forest management operations shall encourage the efficient use of the forest's multiple products and services to ensure economic viability and a wide range of environmental and social benefits.
<b>6. Environmental impact.</b>	Forest management shall conserve biological diversity and its associated values, water resources, soils, and unique and fragile ecosystems and landscapes, and, by so doing, maintain the ecological functions and the integrity of the forest.
<b>7. Management plan</b>	A management plan -appropriate to the scale and intensity of the operations- shall be written, implemented, and kept up to date. The long term objectives of management, and the means of achieving them, shall be clearly stated.
<b>8. Monitoring and assessment</b>	Monitoring shall be conducted -appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management- to assess the condition of the forest, yields of forest products, chain of custody, management activities and their social and environmental impacts.
<b>9. Maintenance of high conservation value forests</b>	Management activities in high conservation value forests shall maintain or enhance the attributes which define such forests. Decisions regarding high conservation value forests shall always be considered in the context of a precautionary approach.
<b>10. Plantations</b>	Plantations shall be planned and managed in accordance with Principles and Criteria 1 - 9 and Principle 10 and its Criteria. While plantations can provide an array of social and economic benefits, and can contribute to satisfying the world's needs for forest products, they should complement the management of, reduce pressures on, and promote the restoration and conservation of natural forests.

## 2.4 FSC CERTIFICATION FOR COMMUNITY FOREST ORGANISATIONS.

FSC certification in CFOs has been subject to multiple studies and experimenting. Already in 1996, a community in the Salomon Islands received an FSC certificate (Quist, 2014). In 2004, the SLIMF standard came into force after two years of development, and currently worldwide a 102 community-based forest organisations have a FSC certificate (FSC, 2014a; FSC, 2014c). A wide variety exists among certified organisations. While in Chili a group of small forest owners has obtained a SLIMF certificate in order to form a commercial venture (FSC, 2013), a case in Honduras describes a furniture cooperative that manages a group certificate of community-based forest owners (FSC, 2011). In Bolivia it is a indigenous peoples that achieved FSC certification, in Tanzania the SLIMF certification was initiated by Sound and Fair, to create certified music instruments from the African blackwood tree, and in Nepal communities achieved a group certificate for NTFP products (FSC, 2011).

No SLIMF certificate has reached the Congo Basin as yet, although especially in Cameroon it has received greatest attention. Certification of CFOs in Cameroon can become feasible if certain conditions are met: regular production with sufficient high selling prices, increased technical and

organisational capacities, a long-term relationship with buyers from the high-end market, group formation, and decrease of certification costs (Schneemann, 2012). The gap between the FSC criteria and the situation in the CFOs is found to be too high, and CFOs neither have the technical nor the financial means to be engaged in the certification process (Nzoyem, 2008).

### 3. METHODOLOGY.

The main methods used for collecting data were: (a) interviews with key-informants, (b) community visits, and (c) literature review. The community visits included interview with key-informants, different focus group interviews, and forest walks. The data collection took place in the Netherlands and Germany in March 2014, and in Cameroon between April until June 2014.

#### 3.1 DATA COLLECTION.

The three methods used for data collection are described below.

##### **i) Interviews with key-informants**

Interviews with professionals involved in certification and/or community forestry were carried out in order to provide information on the current status of and points of view on CF certification. In total 16 experts were interviewed. A list of interviewees is added in appendix 1. All the interviews were semi-structured. The interviews can be divided in four groups:

1. Preparatory interviews with international experts in Europe
2. Interviews with professionals working at community supporting organisations in Cameroon
3. Interviews with authorities from the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife
4. Interviews with FSC experts in Cameroon

Although the specific questions differed per interviewee depending on his or her expertise, the following topics were discussed:

- Background information on the project(s) the interviewee is or has been involved with;
- Experiences with community forests with regard to certification issues;
- Recommendations regarding certification and community forestry

Although most of the information derived from the interviews is processed in the results, some interviews are referred to as an information source throughout the report.

##### **ii) Community visits**

In total, ten CFOs were visited during the study. These communities were selected on basis of accessibility, FSC involvement and availability. Communities in which FTT had interest to cooperate with were selected as well (see table 3).

The CFOs were located in three different regions (see figure 1), and the method and amount of data collection differed between some CFOs. In five of the ten CFOs, a full survey took place, while only a part of the full survey took place in the other communities.

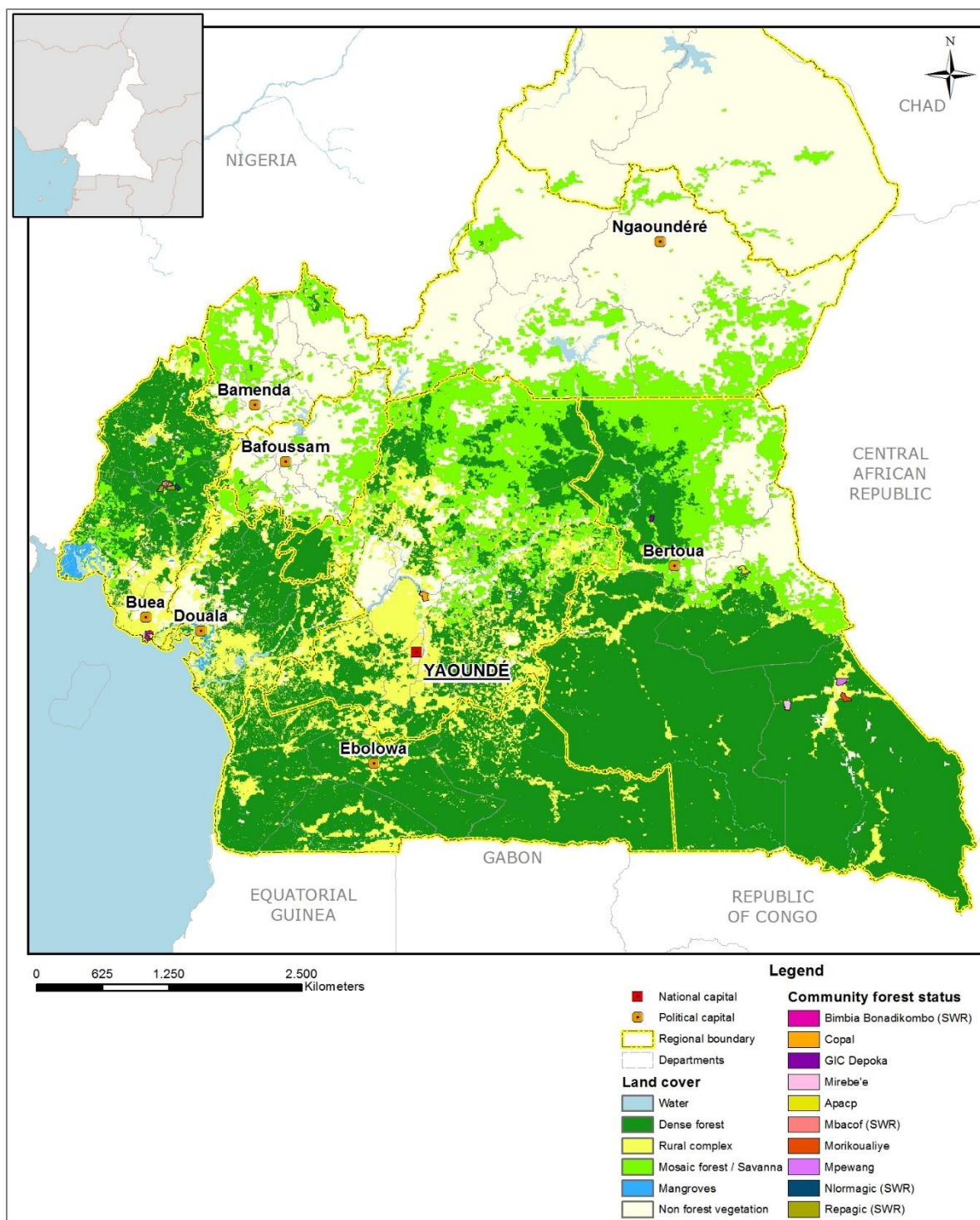


Figure 1. Locations of the ten visited CFOs, and the land cover of southern Cameroon..

Table 3. The ten visited CFOs, visited spread over three regions.

CFO	Region	Type of visit	Selection criterion	Visit date
GIC MOBI & GIC DEPOKA	East	Interview with CFO member	Available in town	25-04-2014
Mirebe	East	Full survey	Interest from FTT	29-04-2014 – 02-05-2014
Morikouali-ye	East	Full survey	Accessibility	03-05-2014 – 04-05-2014
Pewang	East	Interview with CFO member Forest visit	Accessibility	05-05-2014
Apacp	East	Interview with CF member Forest visit Group meeting in 1 village	Accessibility	06-05-2014 & 16-05-2014
Copal	Centre	Interview with CFO member Forest visit	FSC involvement	06-06-2014
REPACIG	South-West	Full survey	Interest from FTT	18-06-2014 – 20-06-2014
MBACOF	South-West	Full survey	Interest from FTT	21-06-2014
NLORMAC	South-West	Full survey	Interest from FTT	23-06-2014 – 26-06-2014
Bimbia-Bonadikombo	South-West	Interview with CFO member	FSC involvement	16-06-2014

The basic characteristics of the five full survey communities are given in table 4. All five CFOs have received external support for community development and sustainable forest management. SNV provided technical assistance in sustainable forest management, emphasizing on NTFP regeneration activities and market access. GFA provides technical assistance in sustainable forest management within the Program for the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (PSMNR), which has the objective to preserve vulnerable ecosystems in the area by amongst others involving communities in nature conservation.

Table 4. Characteristics of the CFOs where a full survey has taken place.

Characteristic	Repacig	Nlormac	Mbacof	Morikouali-ye	Mirebe
<b>Legal entity type</b>	CIG	CIG	CIG	Association	CIG
<b>Year of formation</b>	2002	2003	2005	2002	1999
<b>Signing of SMP</b>	2005	2013	2010	2008	2009
<b>Years of exploitation</b>	'08, '09, '12, '14	none	none	'07, '13	'10, '11, '13
<b>Priority uses of CF as stated in SMP</b>	- production - conservation regeneration & protection of wildlife	- timber and NTFP exploitation - regeneration - protection of environment	- sustainable harvesting of medicinal plants - sustainable production of wood and non-wood products - sustainable hunting and any other purposes specified in SMP	- sustainable harvesting of medicinal plants - sustainable production of wood and non-wood products - sustainable hunting	- timber and NTFP exploitation - natural resource management & conservation - agroforestry, pisciculture, agriculture & livestock - hunting and fishing
<b>Area (ha)</b>	5000	2191	3155	5000	5000
<b>No. of villages</b>	4	1	4	8	4
<b>Type of exploitation</b>	Sub-contracting	(planning) sub-contracting	(planning) sub-contracting	Sub-contracting	Self-organised
<b>Supported by</b>	GFA (2006-2016)	GFA (2006-2016)	GFA (2006-2016)	SNV (2010-2014)	SNV (2010-2014)

Three types of surveys could be carried out in the CFOs. A full survey comprised all three types. The three types of surveys that encompassed a full survey were:

1. Semi-structured interview with the forest management officer (FMO);
2. Forest walk with the responsible for the FMO;
3. Focus groups with the following distinctive groups:
  - The board of the CF,
  - The (young) men involved in exploitation activities,
  - Women who collect NTFPs and work on the agricultural land ,
  - If present, forest dwelling Baka pygmies.

The interview and forest walk with the FMO, and the focus group with the board were meant to collect information on the following topics:

- Forest management (logging practices, protection, waste management, forest conversion)
- Available knowledge (on environmental impact, economic value of forest products, awareness of content of SMP)
- Community involvement (in exploitation activities, forest management, decision taking, trust)
- Communication (between CFO and community members, MINFOF, and supporting organisations)
- Organisational structure (exploitation plan, legal entity type, board membership, external support)
- Planned and achieved results
- Perceived and occurred difficulties and solutions

The purpose of the forest walk with the FMO was to observe the actual forest situation and to cross-check the integrity of the interviews of the CFO. The focus groups with the workers, women and Pygmies served to check the involvement with the CFO and the level of trust towards the board of the community members.

As the situation differed per community, the surveys that could actually be carried out differed from the planned situation, and adjustments to the surveys were made according to the situation in the each of the five 'full survey' CFOs (see table 5).

Table 5. The type of surveys carried out in the five 'full survey' CFOs.

Survey type	Repacig	Nlormac	Mbacof	Morikouali-ye	Mirebe
<b>Interview FMO</b>	No FMO exists		Only FMO	Delegate, FMO	Only FMO
<b>Forest walk</b>	2 workers	FMO	FMO, 2 forest guards	FMO, Pygmy	FMO
<b>Focus group board</b>	Secretary-General, 10 members, treasurer, finance secretary	Secretary-General, 2 members	Delegate	Delegate, FMO	Delegate, treasurer, FMO, <i>Chargeur de vente</i>
<b>Women</b>	No specific group 2 women at focus group board	3 women	2 women at each of 3 villages	Focus group: 3-10 women (differed) FMO as translator	Focus group: 6 women, (4 from community) FMO, 8 men
<b>Workers</b>	2 workers at forest walk	(no workers exist) 3 young men in village	(no workers exist) 1, 2, and 4 young men at village 1, 2, and 3 resp.	Focus group: 5 men	Focus group: 11 men
<b>Pygmies</b>	-	-	-	1 talk during the forest walk	No respondents

### iii) Literature review

Prior to the community visits, an initial review of the FSC standard was executed in collaboration with timber specialist R. Wijers. The standard used was: FSC Standard for Community Forestry and SLIMFS in Cameroon APPROVED by FSC IC 01/12/10. The literature used for the overlap between FSC and the legal requirements is mentioned in paragraph 3.2. For the part of the research focussing on the situation in the community, the Simple Management Plans of the five communities were used.

## 3.2 DATA ANALYSIS.

### i) Correspondence with legal requirements

For the part of the research focussing on the relevance of the FSC standard, all indicators of the used FSC standard were assessed on the compatibility with the governmental requirements to acquire and maintain a CF. The following documents were used:

- 1- FSC Standard for Community Forestry and SLIMFS in Cameroon APPROVED by FSC IC 01/12/10 (hereafter referred to as 'SLIMF standard')
- 2- Manual of procedures for the attribution and norms for the management of community forests
- 3- The Forest Operation Standard
- 4- Laws and decrees:
  - Loi N° 94/01 du janvier 1994 Portant régime des forêts, de la faune et de la pêche ;
  - Loi N° 96/12 du 5 août 1996 portant loi-cadre relative à la gestion de l'environnement ;
  - Decree no 95/531/PM of August 1995 laying down the procedure for implementing the forest system;
  - Arrêté N° 0518/MINEF/CAB fixant les modalités d'attribution en priorités aux communautés villageoises riveraines de toute forêt susceptible d'être érigée en forêt communautaire ;
  - Décret N° 2011/2584/PM du 23 août 2011 fixant les modalités de protection des sols et du sous-sol.

The indicators that overlapped with legal requirements were categorized in different subjects.

## ii) Relevance of the SLIMF standard

Based on the interviews with key-informants and critical review of the standard, all indicators were judged to be either relevant or irrelevant. An indicator was judged to be irrelevant if it complied with one of four criteria, each reflecting one of the categories in which the indicators were subdivided. Table 6 shows the criteria and the corresponding categories.

Table 6. The criteria for the judgement of irrelevant indicators.

Criterion	Category
The indicator contains overlapping information with one or more other indicators;	Double indicator
The efforts to fulfil with the indicator would be too much for expected impact on the sustainability of the operation.	Too much effort for expected impact
The indicator restricts the possibilities for CFOs while it has little or no impact on the sustainability of the operation;	Unnecessary restrictive
The indicator would be the exact same or similar work for all CFOs in Cameroon;	Beyond control of CFOs

All indicators that were not judged to be irrelevant were automatically judged as relevant.

## iii) Compliance of CFOs with the SLIMF standard

The analysis for the compliance of the CFOs with the FSC standard comprised of two steps:

- 1) Description of the situation in the CFOs per principle, and
- 2) Identification of the obstacles to meet each relevant indicator.

For step 1, the most pressing issues were discussed according to the findings of the community visits and key-informant interviews. For step 2, all indicators that were marked as relevant in sub-question 2 were assessed to be either difficult to meet for CFOs or not. An indicator was judged as difficult to meet if it complied with one of five criteria, each reflecting one of the categories in which the indicators were subdivided. The criteria and corresponding categories are:

1. Requires organisational capacity
2. Lack of knowledge
3. Dependant on stakeholders
4. Too costly

Although most of the indicators were assessed based on key-informant interviews, a selection of indicators was specifically checked in the five 'full survey' CFOs. Those indicators were assessed based on both the key-informant interviews and the situation in the five CFOs. In total, 61 indicators were checked in the CFOs. The specific selection of indicators was based on: (a) whether it is possible to collect the required data within the available time, and (b) whether all involved stakeholders were available to interview.

## 4. RESULTS.

### 4.1 CORRESPONDENCE WITH LEGAL REQUIREMENTS.

A number of subjects in the SLIMF standard were also covered in the legal compliance requirements. The topics in FSC principles 1 (compliance with laws), 2 (tenure rights), 3 (community relations and workers' rights), 5 (benefits), and 7 (management plan) were thoroughly covered in the 'Manual of procedures for the attribution and norms for the management of community forests'. The subjects dealt with in this manual are:

- Timber and NTFP inventories
- Maps
- Objectives
- A five-year action plan
- An environmental impact assessment (EIA)
- A periodical revision of the SMP
- A social assessment
- Product labelling
- Sylvicultural measures (no specific measures)
- Buffer zones around water ways
- Logging certificate that specifies the number of trees
- Local processing of forest products
- Training of community members (not specified)
- User rights described in SMP

Box 1 gives two examples of indicators that correspond with legal requirements.

For other subjects, the SLIMF standard deeply elaborates on it, while the state merely or does not clearly mentions it. The following topics are important in the SLIMF standard and not covered by the legal requirements:

- Monitoring
- HCVFs or other conservation areas
- Indigenous peoples
- Communication and dispute settlement with stakeholders and community members
- Diversification of income sources
- Specific requirements for sustainable management such as
  - o Minimizing soil impact
  - o Maintaining or enhancing native plant population
  - o Use of chemicals
  - o Introduction of exotic species
  - o Land conversion

Even though especially the first two topics, monitoring and HCVFs, receive attention in the FSC SLIMF standard, the information in the Manual of Procedures is marginal. It solemnly mentions that monitoring should be carried out at least once a year, and conservation areas are not mentioned at all. Concurrently, principle 8 (Monitoring) and 9 (Maintenance of High Conservation Value Forests)

#### **Example 1. Obvious overlap**

*Indicator 7.2.2:* The Streamlined Management Plan shall be revised periodically and the updated version shall be approved by the forest administration.

The state requires that the CFOs revise the SMP every five years.

#### **Example 2. Subtle overlap**

*Indicator 6.3.1:* The Community Forest management shall maintain or enhance native plant population.

**Means of Verification:** Sylvicultural programme aiming at: planting more local plants species in vegetation gaps and fallows; planting local species; creating nurseries; respecting AMD; protecting young stems; protecting seedlings of harvested species; NTFP domestication programme; Field observations

The overlap is less obvious here. The legal requirements state that sylviculture and/or reforestation are compulsory in timber production CFs. The means of verification point to a sylvicultural programme aiming at planting local species, creating nurseries, and protecting young stems and seedlings.

*Box 1. Two examples of SLIMF indicators that overlap with legal requirements.*

are barely covered in the legal requirements. Likewise, indigenous peoples' rights receive considerable attention in the SLIMF standard (principle 3), while the Manual of Procedures makes no reference to the inclusion of indigenous people in the management of CFs. Indigenous peoples' rights are covered in national and international laws and decrees, but those do not focus on the specific situation in communities, where not only the indigenous people use the forest for their subsistence, but also the other members of the community. Just as indigenous peoples' rights, environmental specifications (principle 6) are also covered in national and international laws and decrees but do not focus on the community situation.

#### 4.2 RELEVANCE OF THE FSC STANDARD.

The SLIMF standard takes into account principle 1 to 9, principle 10 (plantations) is left out. The nine principles entail the same 47 criteria as found in other FSC standards. The standard counts 180 indicators divided over these criteria. The development of the SLIMF standard took place within the framework of a GEF project. GEF's project, named *Improved Certification Schemes for Sustainable Tropical Forest Management*, aimed to learn if it would be possible to certify not only timber, but also NTFPs and environmental services and biodiversity. For this reason, the creation of High Conservation Value forests (HCVFs) gained special attention during the development. Of the 180 indicators, 147 were assessed to be relevant, of which 63 would be difficult to meet, and 33 were assessed to be irrelevant. The complete assessment of the indicators, and of the overlap between the standard and the legal requirements is added in appendix 2.

The indicators that were assessed to be irrelevant were subdivided in four categories. Table 7 shows the categories and the number of indicators per category.

*Table 7. The occurrence of the four categories of irrelevant indicators.*

Category	Count
i) Double indicator	11
ii) Too much effort for expected impact	11
iii) Unnecessary restrictive	6
iv) Beyond control of CFOs	5

All categories are elaborated on below.

##### **i) Double indicators**

Eleven indicators cover the same subject as another indicator. With some, the content corresponds evidently, for example criteria 5.3.1, 5.6.2, and 5.6.3:

**Indicator 5.3.1:** Logging and processing techniques used shall avoid resource losses and wastes.

**Indicator 5.6.2:** Logging techniques shall optimize the timber usable volume.

**Indicator 5.6.3:** The greatest portion of the felled tree shall be extracted.

These indicators make clear the same requirement three times, using different words. In other cases, two sides of one subject are dealt with in two indicators:

**Indicator 6.6.2:** The forest operation shall seek to minimize the use of all chemicals such as pesticides, wood preservatives, and herbicides, etc.

**Indicator 5.5.2:** Procedures/guidelines that ban or regulate the use of chemicals in logging sites shall be drafted and implemented.

Indicator 6.6.2 touches the practical aspect of the minimization of chemicals, while indicator 5.5.2 deals with the documenting side of it.

## ii) Too much effort for the expected impact

Eight indicators deal with subjects that ask a lot of effort from the CFO, while the impact is not evident. Most of these indicators are related to monitoring. Logging companies often work with a special monitoring team, because monitoring requires precise and consequent data collection, for which the forest managers need extensive knowledge and documenting skills. The time, financial means, and technical knowledge required for data collection exceed the communities' capacity. Indicator 8.2.9 is a good example:

**Indicator 8.2.9:** Participative and/or classical maps or updated data on the distribution of threatened, rare or endemic animal species shall be available.

Compliance with this indicator would require periodical data collection throughout the forest that demands time, training and technological equipment from the community. Thereby, the availability of this data does not directly affect the situation in the forest but is merely a tool for checking the effect of the forest management methods. Therefore, high input demanding monitoring in every community could be replaced by more streamlined management methods for all communities that want to become certified, emphasizing on the management itself instead of the checking.

## iii) Unnecessary restrictive

The indicators that are marked as unnecessary restrictive include Indicator 4.2.2 is a good example for an indicator that restricts the community:

**Indicator 4.2.2:** Incomes from CF management shall be used to improve community healthcare infrastructure.

This obliges communities to invest in healthcare while they might wish to improve education or invest in another development project. Visited communities have indeed used their benefits for educational purposes.

## iv) Beyond control of CFOs

A few indicators would have a similar result for all CFOs over the country, such as indicator 1.4.1:

**Indicator 1.4.1:** The Forest manager, in partnership with stakeholders, shall identify conflicts between FSC Principles and Criteria, on the one hand, and treaties, international conventions and national laws on the other hand.

The conflicts mentioned in the indicator will be the same for all organisations in Cameroon that apply for FSC, because the principles and criteria for FMUs are identical to the ones for SLIMFs, only the indicators differ.

## 4.3 COMPLIANCE OF CFOs WITH THE SLIMF STANDARD.

### i) Current situation in the CFOs per FSC principle

None of the CFOs complies with any of the nine principles. Although it varies between the CFOs with which topics they comply, Mirebe complies best with the principles. The largest gaps between the current situation and the FSC requirements are found in principle 8 and 9 (Monitoring and HCVFs).

**Principle 1: Compliance with laws and FSC principles.** Forest management shall respect all applicable laws of the country in which they occur, and international treaties and agreements to which the country is a signatory, and comply with all FSC Principles and Criteria.

The only CFO where no practices contradicting the law have been observed is Mirebe. In the other CFOs, either illegal logging or forest conversion (while not mentioned as an objective in the official documents) has taken place.

**Principle 2: Tenure and use rights and responsibilities.** Long-term tenure and use rights to the land and forest resources shall be clearly defined, documented and legally established.

All CFOs are legally registered entities, have user rights for 25 years from the establishment of the CFO, and have specified the land use rights for community members in the SMP. As for the user rights, community members use the land for three major activities: agriculture, NTFP collection and hunting. Community members are allowed to collect NTFPs in the CF in all CFOs. Hunting, however, is not mentioned in the SMP while it does occur in all CFs. The executive boards of Mbacof and Repacig declared that hunting is illegal in their CF. In the areas where agriculture occurs, the land is divided according to traditional rights based on inheritance. CFO Nlormac is an exception in this, where the community accepts the CF as communal land, where young farmers have rights to establish an agriculture plot. This agreement is not specified in the SMP. In two of the five CFOs, no conformity exists between the community members and the board of the CFO about land use and benefit sharing. None of the CFOs have written procedures for conflict settlement, and solve (or plan to solve future) conflicts by discussing the issue with the ones involved. One of the key-informants relates this to the strong social coherence in the communities, making it hard to sanction fellow community members.

**Principle 3: Indigenous peoples' rights.** The legal and customary rights of indigenous peoples to own, use and manage their lands, territories, and resources shall be recognized and respected.

As the Pygmies are the only peoples in Cameroon officially acknowledged as indigenous, principle 3 only accounts for Morikouali-ye and Mirebe, where Baka Pygmies both inhabit the forest and have settled in the villages. Pygmies are not specifically mentioned in the SMPs and have no role in the organisational aspect of the CFOs. In both CFOs they have been working during the exploitation for jobs like carrying wood and cutting lines. In Morikouali-ye a special Pygmy school has existed, although it has stopped because the Pygmies moved. According to the delegate, the Pygmies have taken care of the tree nursery with NTFP species, and later of the saplings in the forest. Interviews with key-informants indicate that Baka Pygmies are generally not included in the CF management and receive no special attention.

**Principle 4: Community relations and workers' rights.** Forest management operations shall maintain or enhance the long-term social and economic well-being of forest workers and local communities.

All respondents in the operating CFOs perceived that community members have enough opportunities for work during exploitation. The tasks of carrying logs and cutting lines and paths are executed by community members in all the CFOs, mostly by young men. As for the other tasks connected to the operation, Mirebe is the only CFO where practically all workers come from within the community, and according to the FMO only the technician who operates the portable sawmill comes from outside the community. The other CFOs work by sub-contracting and operators come with their own sawing team. The workers' rights in the CFOs are limited: none of the workers sign a written contract or have protective equipment to work, and in Morikouali-ye, workers find that their salaries are too low. Key-informant interviews made clear that community forest operations do not work with permanent employees. They harvest when there is an order, so they work when there is an order. This makes it hard to define the workers and their rights. Although none of the CFOs have used the benefits for healthcare, as one indicator specifies, Mirebe and Repacig have used the benefits for community development, both for educational purposes. The largest share of the income, however, is used for arranging the administrative requirements for the exploitation. The communication about expenditures between the board and community members is not evident. In all communities, the members think that the executive board keeps money for themselves. Board members on the other hand find it difficult to involve community members in the organisation.

**Principle 5: Benefits from the forest.** Forest management operations shall encourage the efficient use of the forest's multiple products and services to ensure economic viability and a wide range of environmental and social benefits.

The major topics dealt with in principle 5 are active search for partners, diversification of income, and efficient use of resources. An active searching attitude was only clearly present in CFO Apacp. The common attitude in communities is to wait, for external support and for partners to approach the community. As for diversification of income, the use of multiple forest products is important. For NTFPs and other activities that aid income diversification, SNV has carried out NTFP sensitization activities in Mirebe and Morikouali-ye, and community members show interest in commercialisation of the NTFPs. However, the NTFPs are collected on an individual basis and are therefore neither registered nor meant for collective community development projects. Morikouali-ye has included ecotourism in the SMP, however, they have not yet initiated any activities, and the delegate, the principle person in the CFO of Morikouali-ye, did not know of the planned tourism activities. Indicators that refer to the efficient use of resources are best respected in Mirebe, where community members utilize the left-over timber for construction purposes. In Morikouali-ye and Repacig, left over sawn wood was observed in the forest. The only CFO that actively tries to reach the annual cutting limit is Apacp, where they harvest the annual allowed volume for one species. In the other CFOs, the harvest rates are below the annual limits. Knowledge on values of forest products is very limited. The existent knowledge comes from awareness activities by supporting NGOs. One of the supporting NGOs actively assists CFOs with price negotiations, but potential buyers avoid interference by rejecting the offer when he is present, and returning to the community later to sign a contract with which the buyer is better off. Apart from all this, in all CFOs, the benefits from timber exploitation have been marginal. In Repacig and Mirebe the benefits were used for educational purposes: to build a school building and to buy computers respectively. The benefits were not sufficient to finish the school building. In the other CFOs, the benefits were just or not sufficient to cover the costs of exploitation.

**Principle 6: Environmental impact.** Forest management shall conserve biological diversity and its associated values, water resources, soils, and unique and fragile ecosystems and landscapes, and, by so doing, maintain the ecological functions and the integrity of the forest.

The principal way of verification for principle 6 is documentation and monitoring. Eleven different procedures, schemes and protocols for the minimization of environmental impact are required, amongst others an EIA, silvicultural program, and lists of introduced exotic species and of species considered to be rare, threatened, vulnerable or endangered at national and regional levels. In general, the government tolerates that CFOs do not execute an EIA because it is financially not feasible. The three operating CFOs documented harvest inventories and felling records, and all practised directional felling and used a mobile sawmill (a Lucas Mill). As for the other CFOs, Apacp showed little awareness of environmental impact. The FMO was not aware of reduced impact logging techniques, and field observations showed that trees are not labelled, logging on steep slopes occurs, waste is left in the forest, and the log is not efficiently used. All FMOs of the five CFOs were aware of the required 30m buffer zone around waterways. However, both in Repacig as in Morikouali-ye, the forest walks revealed violation of this rule. As for forest conversion, Mirebe and Morikouali-ye have appointed specific zones where farming may take place. It happens in all CFOs, and in Morikouali-ye also in other zones than the ones specified. In Mbacof, the protection of the waterways receives special attention: traditional fishing by poisoning the water is strictly forbidden and inspected. The CFO also has a special team of 12 forest guards that patrols the forest regularly.

**Principle 7: Management plan.** A management plan --appropriate to the scale and intensity of the operations --shall be written, implemented, and kept up to date. The long term objectives of management, and the means of achieving them, shall be clearly stated.

All the SMPs comply with the indicators that overlap with the legal requirements (see paragraph 4.2). Regarding principle 7, plans for protection of the environment and notable species are missing, even as procedures for monitoring and planned harvesting techniques. The development of all SMPs was executed by external organisations, and all CFO members lack knowledge on the content of the SMP except for the FMO of Mirebe.

**Principle 8: Monitoring.** Monitoring shall be conducted --appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management --to assess the condition of the forest, yields of forest products, chain of custody, management activities and their social and environmental impacts.

The five CFOs are all similar in Principle 8: no clear monitoring protocols exist. Key-informant interviews indicate that trees logged for home-consumption are not registered, and therefore not counted in the annual allowed logging volume. The three operating CFOs all label the harvested trees and say to take records of those, and have executed the legal required pre-harvest inventories. Only Nlormac has not yet executed an inventory because it is still in the process. As for the other CFOs, the harvested trees were not labelled in Pewang as well as Apacp.

**Principle 9: Maintenance of high conservation value forests.** Management activities in high conservation value forests shall maintain or enhance the attributes which define such forests. Decisions regarding high conservation value forests shall always be considered in the context of a precautionary approach.

None of the five CFOs comply with principle 9, because they have not appointed high conservation value areas. Concurrently, the CFOs do not comply with any of the indicators. However, Mirebe and Morikouali-ye have appointed protection areas on the maps in their SMP, and all CFO state that they do not log in swamps. The executive board of Mirebe is aware of the status and location of this area, while that of Morikouali-ye did not express any familiarity with the existence of a protected zone in their forest. The CFO Copal was the only one that has HCVFs, because it was involved in the development of the SLIMF standard. The in total ten HCVFs have different conservation values: hill, swamp, rock with snakes, scientific research area, and former sacred area.

Summarizing, the CFOs tend to comply with the legal requirements, while the extra requirements that distinguish the SLIMF standard from the legal requirements are not complied with.

## ii) Indicators difficult to meet for CFOs

Sixty-three out of 180 indicators were assessed to be difficult to meet. Table 8 shows the number of indicators per category.

*Table 8. The occurrence of the four categories of indicators difficult to meet.*

Category	Count
Requires organisational capacity	33
Lack of knowledge	13
Dependant on stakeholders	11
Too costly	6

The largest category has to do with the **organisational capacity**. Several supporting organisations emphasize on increasing the organisational capacity of CFOs, and key-informants agree that the organisational capacity in CFOs needs to increase. The topics from the SLIMF standard grouped under this category are administrative topics, long-term planning and the multidimensional approach of the SLIMF standard. As for administration, the SLIMF standard requires many different procedures,

lists and schemes. CFOs already have difficulties with the quantity of administration required for legal exploitation. The development of measures for issues such as conflict settlement, monitoring and training would be extra administrative work. Besides, these matters require a long-term vision, while traditionally communities arrange issues, especially regarding conflict settlement, on a case-by-case basis, so they are not habituated to frame procedures. As for the multidimensional approach, the standard requires diversification of activities such as collection and marketing of NTFPs, ecotourism, and animal husbandry. Key-informants agreed that promoting NTFP diversification and marketing is very important. However, the organisation of the timber exploitation alone already presents challenges for CFOs. Diversification of activities within the CFO would mean a more complex organisational structure.

**Lack of knowledge** is the second biggest obstacle. The majority of the indicators in this category have to do with knowledge on environmental impact, rights and regulations, and economic value of labour and products. Communities are often in isolated areas, in some cases without access to electricity or a telephone network. Therefore it is hard to let information reach the communities. Furthermore, CFOs are required to be knowledgeable on the content of the SMP. SMPs are mostly produced with external support: amongst others WWF has been active in supporting the development of SMPs, just as the governments with its RIGC project (Renforcement des Initiatives pour la Gestion Communautaire des Ressources Forestières et Fauniques). During the development of the SMP, community members are inquired but not involved in the decision-taking and writing. As a result, the communities' knowledge on the SMP is poor.

For the indicators marked as **dependant on stakeholders**, other stakeholders than the community are involved. In order to comply with the SLIMF standard, CFOs are partly dependant on the choices of their business partners. Because they are limited in their choice of partners, it is difficult to take into account whether a partner complies with all laws or not. Communities are also dependant on external parties for the trainings and knowledge required by FSC. Box 2 gives two examples of indicators that imply dependency.

The least frequent appearing obstacle, **too costly**, demand a lot of financial input. The most pressing issue here is the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), required by both FSC and the government. Key-informants agree that the required EIA greatly exceeds the communities' budget, and the regulations around the EIA need to change. CFOs are legally required to execute a 'summary EIA', which is a simple version of the 'detailed EIA'. A summary EIA is estimated to cost around €10.000. A less complicated version of the summary EIA exists, the 'Environmental Notice' (EN), and it is suggested that this would be more appropriate for the CFO situation. An EN would cost around €200. The government would have to change this by law before FSC changes its requirements.

#### **Example 1.**

*Indicator 1.1.2:* The Forest manager, contractors, suppliers (to be defined in the glossary) shall comply and implement laws and regulations governing community forests. Communities are limited in their choice of partners, so the influence on the legal compliance of the partners is also small.

#### **Example 2.**

*Indicator 6.9.7:* Local populations shall be trained and sensitized about the consequences of the introduction of exotic wildlife and plant species. The required knowledge is not evidently present in communities, so for trainings they will be dependant on external experts.

*Box 2. Two examples of indicators difficult to meet for which CFOs are dependant on stakeholders.*

## 5. DISCUSSION.

### 5.1 LIMITATIONS TO THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.

The method of collecting data brought a few limitations to the research. Firstly, while the results should represent the view on the situation of the entire community, it may be biased towards a more positive look on the CFO, because members of the CFO board itself took care of arranging the attendants for the focus groups and interviews. Also, the choice of CFOs as well as the meeting attendants was dependant on the willingness to participate. Secondly, the methods used in the different communities were not exactly the same, because this was dependant on the willingness and organisation of the communities. Consequently, it is possible that the current situation in the communities was assessed more positive than it is in reality. Lastly, the limited time span prevented to improve the interviewer's skills in French, and it restricted the time to spend in the communities. This may have had effect on the comprehension of the conversations and the extent to which it was possible to elaborate on subjects, and consequently resulted in a simplification of the situation.

The data analysis also presented some drawbacks. The indicators have been divided in three classes, based on its relevance and on the difficulty of realisation. Although the assessment is substantiated by the results of the community visits and the key-informant interviews, the final judgement reflects a personal opinion and interpretation of the content of the indicators. Therefore, the assessment cannot be entirely objective.

### 5.2 APPLICABILITY OF THE SLIMF STANDARD.

The SLIMF standard of Cameroon has been developed to be applicable specifically for Community Forest Organisations in Cameroon, and both FSC developers and auditors approve on the standard. The results show that of all 180 indicators, almost half (84) were found to be relevant and not difficult to meet for CFOs, 63 indicators were assessed to be relevant though difficult to meet, and 33 of the indicators were found to be irrelevant. Based on these numbers, it might be tempting to conclude that the SLIMF standard is well adapted to the community situation. However, it is questionable if the FSC structure in itself, apart from the individual indicators, is suitable for the community situation, because even though the indicators of the standard have been adapted to the community situation, the structure has been left unchanged.

#### **Structure of FSC standard.**

The structure of the FSC standard is doubtful to suit the community situation because of multiple reasons. First of all, implementation of the FSC standard has a scientific approach with research, precise monitoring and conservation regulations. However, community members have often only finished primary or secondary school, and are therefore dependant on external organisations. While certified industrial forestry companies in Cameroon can afford to work with specific management units that have expertise in the different aspects of the operation, such as monitoring (Mekembom, 2010), communities have little opportunity for training in aspects that require expertise, for example producing lists of introduced exotic species or establishing sampling plots. Therefore, compliance with the scientific aspects of the SLIMF standard is inherent to dependency on external organisations, which can execute the conservation, research and monitoring facets.

Secondly, while the reliability of FSC is largely based on documentation, the community structure is based on social coherence and trust (Sonne, 2014). The organisational structure is different, and even within communities, distinct socio-economic groups such as women and Pygmies organise themselves differently (Cuny, 2011; Institutional choice and local legitimacy in community-based

forest management: lessons from Cameroon, 2010). Therefore, the organisational structure that is legally required hardly relates to the community structure.

Also, it was observed that some principles within the standard contain indicators that fit better with other principles. Indicator 5.5.1 illustrates this observation:

**Indicator 5.5.1:** Standards for forest operations shall be complied with.

Even though compliance with the forest operation standard is legally based, this indicator is placed under principle 5, Benefits from the forest. It would be more consistent to place it with other legal requirements in principle 1, Compliance with laws and FSC requirements.

Finally yet importantly, the design with the ten principles is well adapted to a business approach and industrial ran forestry organisation, but has not been designed for the community situation. Very illustrative is the exclusion of principle 10 (Plantations), indicating that not all principles suit the community situation. Furthermore, in an interview with forestry and FSC expert mr. Abakar, the structure was questioned, and mr. Abakar suggested to combine several principles in order to simplify the standard and let it suit better to CFOs: principle 2 and 3, 4 and 5, and 6 and 9 can be combined, and 1, 7 and 8 should be simplified.

#### Non-timber Forest Products in the standard.

During the development of the SLIMF standard certification of NTFPs received special attention (Mbolo, 2014). Certification of both timber products and NTFPs are perceived to be important for achieving sustainable forest management (Ndoye, 2004). However, the market for NTFPs does not correspond with the market for certified products. While the most significant value of NTFPs lies in subsistence use and the local market (Shanley, 2008), the most significant value of certification is found on the international market (Pierce, 2003). Next to this, in order to let NTFPs provide a significant share in the economic development of communities, cultivation would be necessary to keep managing the forest sustainably (Ingram, 2014). This emphasises that the impacts of commercial NTFP production are not yet fully understood.

#### Implementation of the standard.

The applicability of the FSC SLIMF standard does not only depend on the structure and content of the standard, it is also dependant on the chance of success for implementation. This is very important, since the largest obstacle identified for certification is the insufficient organisational capacity. It is essential to increase the capacity to organise timber exploitation in communities, and to increase the capacity of supporting actors (Cuny, 2011). Capacity building in communities is often part of development projects and programs (Ebale, 2014; Mougou, 2014), however, when external organisations provide support, it tends only to be effective when level of commitment of the supporting organisation is sufficient (Ezinne de Blas, 2008). Currently the tendency is that communities do not to continue with the learned practices after a project has ended (Nkodo, 2014),

#### Successes in FSC smallholder certification

FSC International has described the process of FSC certification for several successful cases across the world. A few examples:

**In Indonesia**, a group of teak agroforestry plot holders received a group certificate in 2005 and since then expanded to 744 families that together own 750 ha.

Cooperation with a local NGO and with a network of buyers was vital to the success of the operation (FSC, 2013c).

**In Portugal**, 338 private forest owners are united in an association and together own 199,640 ha of certified forest that produces mainly cork, round wood and pine nuts. Close collaboration with WWF has been fundamental in clarifying conservation and protection concepts, and in biodiversity identification in the FMUs (FSC, 2013a).

**In Chili**, the initiative for certification came from an international certification consultancy group and timber producer that was in search for Chilean certified timber, and now works together with small forest owners. Close collaboration with the local forest administration was found to be essential (FSC, 2013b).

*Box 3. These three examples of success stories according to FSC emphasize the necessity of external support.*

which seems to implicate insufficient supporting capacity. Communities that have obtained a Community Forest without support tend to have a better integration (Ezinne de Blas, 2008) and thus likely a better foundation for sound management. However, support is essential for FSC certification, as the ever-present external support with success stories of smallholder FSC certification illustrate (see box...).

The relative novelty of the CF concept presents a few obstacles. The required long-term commitment to the FSC requirements is hard to verify because the first CFs were established a mere 15 years ago in 2000, so no successful examples of long-term CFOs exist yet. Besides, CFs are located in non-permanent forest estate, and the management agreement stretches only 25 years. After this period, the government is in charge of what will happen to the area.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

The objective of this study was to identify the obstacles to FSC certification for Community Forest Organisations in Cameroon, and investigate possible adaptations to work towards certified Community Forests. In order to make FSC certification in CFOs feasible, efforts need to come from all involved parties.

### FSC

As for FSC, further simplification and a more practical and clearly structured approach of the topics covered in the standard would be desirable. Simplification can first of all be reached by taking out the indicators that have been assessed as not relevant, and to set standard protocols for criteria that are the same or similar in the majority of CFs (such as international agreements, protected species, etc.).

Furthermore, a clearer structure, achieved by rearranging principles, could be the basis for a standard that is more approachable for communities. The SLIMF standard is very elaborate with its 180 indicators. Principles 2, 3 and 4 are all related to community involvement. Because the three groups, land users (principle 2), indigenous peoples (principle 3) and workers (principle 4), are often not distinct, especially in well-functioning communities, it would be recommended to rearrange and combine these principles. Likewise, principles 6, 9, and specific topics of principle 5, covering environmental impact topics, could be combined. In total, six topics were identified within the SLIMF standard in which all indicators suit (see table 9).

*Table 9. Identified topics of the SLIMF standard and its correspondence with the FSC principles.*

Identified topic	Main FSC principle
1. Laws and regulations	1
2. Knowledge and education	All
3. Financial matters	5
4. Environmental impact	6, 9
5. Documentation	7, 8
6. Communication and community involvement	2, 3, 4

The division in the six topics is shorter than the regular division of the FSC standard, and organised according to practical implications for the CFOs. The first topic, **Laws and regulations**, would comprise the content of principle 1 plus the indicators of other principles that are covered in legal requirements. The second topic, **Knowledge and education**, includes all requirements related to trainings and expected knowledge. **Financial matters** covers aspects from principle 5 (Benefits from the forest), but should also include other conditions for a healthy economic situation, and the social and environmental benefits that are included in principle 5 are more appropriately arranged under topic 6 and 4 respectively. **Environmental impact** presents all the required measures to protect the environment. Topic 5, **Documentation**, comprises all the required paperwork, including the management plan, and should be reduced to a minimum. The last topic, **Communication and community development**, is grossly a combination of principle 2, 3 and 4, but with extra emphasis on community involvement.

With a more practical approach to conservation, research and monitoring criteria, communities can work independently from external organisations. With the current requirements, CFOs are dependant on external stakeholders and institutions for the knowledge required for FSC certification (such as international regulations, organisational capacity building, pricing of forest products, environmental impact, environmental-friendly management techniques, monitoring skills, and training for local population). Community members have often only finished primary or secondary

school, while the SLIMF standard requires a scientific approach. It would, for instance, be worthwhile to investigate the effects of leaving out all criteria that deal with specific conservation topics (sampling plots, lists of introduced exotic species, etc.), and merely require conservation areas or HCVPs. Another simplification would be to replace the EIA for the less stringent and less costly Environmental Notice, although that is dependant on governmental decisions.

It is also recommended to pay extra attention to community involvement and the existing social structure in communities within the SLIMF standard. Although especially developed for CFOs the SLIMF standard of Cameroon is still too much derived from the typical FSC standard used by industrial forestry organisations. While the FSC standards are based on a business approach with expertise and protocols, communities are based on social coherence and trust, and so the success of a CFO is dependant on the level of community involvement. Also, the organisation of a community forest is often led by one key person from within the community. This creates a risk for the stability and therefore long-term planning of the CFO. Since additionally the original aim of community forestry was to include local livelihoods in and let them benefit from forestry activities.

Independent from the above mentioned possible adaptations of the SLIMF standard, CFOs have a long way to go before complying with the basics of FSC. CFOs are thus far unable to fulfil legal requirements independently, and external support is required for successful management of a CF. Communities are not yet able to prove their long-term commitment to the management of the forest because Community Forestry merely exists 20 years, and often CFOs have been exploiting not at all or only a few years. Workers have neither contracts nor a position to negotiate their rights, and the communication about the benefits as well as the planning of benefit spending are limited. Expertise on sustainable forest management is generally only present when trainings have been provided by supporting organisations, and although CFOs usually have sound management plans, few community members are aware of the contents. Apart from labelling, monitoring activities are scarce, and conservation practices even scarcer.

However, the differences between CFOs are large. Even though in general it can be concluded that Community Forest Operations in Cameroon are not ready to get involved in a certification process, the prospects for sustainable and legal forest management of specific CFOs, such as Mirebe, are hopeful. It is recommended to focus on those CFOs that have no internal conflicts in the community, and an established exploitation of forest products, as a proof of good functioning. If those well-functioning CFOs participate in the development of a revised FSC SLIMF standard for Cameroon,

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## APPENDICES

Appendix 1. List of interviewees

Appendix 2. Reviewed SLIMF standard of Cameroon

## APPENDIX 1. LIST OF INTERVIEWEES.

No.	Name	Function	Organisation	Expertise	Date
1	<b>Willem Quist</b>	Coordinator certification project on Solomon Islands, 1996	ICCO	Certification	23 March 2014
2	<b>Jochem Schneemann</b>	Consultant market and value chain development (for Congo Basin Project)	FSAS	Community forestry	24 March 2014
3	<b>Chris van der Goot</b>	Director of Ekohout	Ekohout	Certification	24 March 2014
4	<b>Gordian Fanso</b>	Policy and Standards Manager of National Standards	FSC International	Certification	25 March 2014
5	<b>Peguy Tchouto</b>	Coordinator of sustainable resource management project	GFA Consulting Group	Community forestry	7 April 2014
6	<b>Joseph Mougou</b>	Juridical community forestry expert	SNV	Community forestry	16 April 2014
7	<b>Nadège Nzoyem</b>	FSC and community forestry expert	SNV	Community forestry Certification	17 April 2014
8	<b>Oumar Abakar</b>	Forest expert; Former FSC-manager at forestry company	FSC NI / CTFC	Certification Community forestry	26 April 2014
9	<b>Julien Ebale</b>	Field coordinator of community forestry project	CRS	Community forestry	5 May 2014
10	<b>Guy Merlin</b>	Regional coordinator rural development program (PADDL)	GIZ East region	Community forestry	16 May 2014
11	<b>Norbert Sonne</b>	Coordinator of forest program	WWF CARPO	Community forestry	2 June 2014
12	<b>Marie Mbolo</b>	Coordinator of FSC standard development group for the SLIMF standard of Cameroon	FSC National Initiative	Certification	3 June 2014
13	<b>Arielle Nkodo</b>	Regional field coordinator of community forestry project	Nature+ (now at GIZ)	Community forestry	4 June 2014
14	<b>Jervais Nkoulou</b>	Auditor	Rainforest Alliance	Certification	4 June 2014
15	<b>Niasan Moise</b>	Sub-director forestry	MINFOF (national)	Community forestry	5 June 2014
16	<b>Tayo Beltus</b>	Economic operator Forestry	EFCO (timber company)	Community forestry	23 June 2014

## APPENDIX 2. REVIEWED SLIMF STANDARD OF CAMEROON

Legend for the colours used in the table:

	Indicator is relevant, CFOs can meet it without much difficulty
	Indicator is relevant, CFOs will have difficulty in meeting indicator
	Indicator is not relevant
	Indicator is checked in the CF

Accompanying notes:

1. The numbers in the column 'Legal overlap' refer to the Manual of procedures for the attribution and norms for the management of community forests (MINFOF, 2009), unless specifically mentioned to refer to a law or decree, in that case it refers to a law or decree of Cameroon mentioned in Chapter 2. In case the cell behind a criterion contains one or more numbers, the criterion is covered but the indicators not necessarily.
2. The columns under 'CFOs' show the results of the selected indicators that were checked in the CFOs. each CFO was marked as:
  - Y: CFO complies with indicator,
  - N: CFO does not comply with indicator,
  - U: unknown if CFO complies with indicator, or
  - NA, indicator not applicable on CFO.

				CFOs				
Assessment	Criterion		Legal overlap	Repacig	Nlormac	Mbacof	Morikouali-ye	Mirebe

<b>PRINCIPLE #1: COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS AND FSC PRINCIPLES</b>								
Forest management shall respect all applicable laws of the country in which they occur, and international treaties and agreements to which the country is a signatory, and comply with all FSC Principles and Criteria.								
<b>1.1 Forest management shall respect all national and local laws and administrative requirements.</b>								
<b>1.1.1:</b> The forest manager shall have all laws and regulations to govern community forestry.		Regulations	N					
<b>1.1.2:</b> The Forest manager, contractors, suppliers (to be defined in the glossary) shall comply and implement laws and regulations governing community forests.	dependant on stakeholders (contractors, suppliers)	Regulations	N					
<b>1.2 All applicable and legally prescribed fees, royalties, taxes and other charges shall be paid.</b>								
<b>1.2.1.</b> When there is a commercial use of resources by third parties in a community forest, he/she shall procure the goods based on sale prices set up by applicable regulations.	dependant on stakeholder (local buyers do not contract)	Regulations	7.22					
<b>1.2.2</b> In case there is an agreement for progressive increase of prices, there shall be a formal document providing for mandatory requirements.		Financial matters	N					
<b>1.2.3.</b> CF Forest manager shall contribute to the operation of health care units.	too costly, responsibility of forest operator	Regulations	N	N	N	N	N	N
<b>1.3 In signatory countries, the provisions of all binding international agreements such as CITES, ILO Conventions, ITTA, and Convention on Biological Diversity, shall be respected.</b>								
<b>1.3.1:</b> The forest manager shall possess an updated list of all binding international agreements and nominate a responsible for its updating.	dependant on stakeholders	Documentation	N					
<b>1.3.2:</b> all binding international agreements identified in indicator 1.3.1 shall be applied by the forest manager.	lack of knowledge	Regulations	N					
<b>1.3.3:</b> The forest manager shall possess a list of all locally occurring species that are listed by CITES		Knowledge	N					
<b>1.3.4.</b> The forest manager shall have copies of national legislation and/or an administrative requirement relating to the implementation of CITES,	footnote: provided that it's a list of	Knowledge	N					

				CFOs				
Assessment	Criterion		Legal overlap	Repacig	Nlormac	Mbacof	Morikouali-ye	Mirebe
obligations at the national level, and ensures that these requirements are implemented within his FMU.	possible occurring species							
<b>1.4 Conflicts between laws, regulations and the FSC Principles and Criteria shall be evaluated for the purposes of certification, on a case by case basis, by the certifiers and the involved or affected parties.</b>								
<b>1.4.1:</b> The Forest manager, in partnership with stakeholders, shall identify conflicts between FSC Principles and Criteria, on the one hand, and treaties, international conventions and national laws on the other hand.	beyond control of CFOs	Regulations	NA					
<b>1.4.2:</b> The forest administration and FSC National Initiative shall be informed by the Forest manager, if need be, to address the bones of contention.	beyond control of CFOs	Communication and community involvement	NA					
<b>1.5: Forest management areas should be protected from illegal harvesting, settlement and other unauthorized activities.</b>								
<b>1.5.1</b> Activities carried out shall solely be those provided for by the management instruments (SMP and AOP) of CF.		Regulations	Y	N (illegal logging)	U	N (farming)	N (illegal logging)	Y
<b>1.5.2</b> There is a monitoring and control plan for activities carried out within the CF by community members partnership with stakeholders.	requires organisational capacity	Documentation	?	N	N	N	N	N
<b>1.6 Forest managers shall demonstrate a long-term commitment to adhere to the FSC Principles and Criteria.</b>								
<b>1.6.1:</b> The Forest manager shall state by writing the CF long term commitment to FSC Principles and Criteria and implement FSC PCs.		Documentation	NA					
<b>1.6.2.</b> All stakeholders, including contractors and entrepreneurs, shall be informed about the CF commitment to the FSC Principles and Criteria.		Communication and community involvement	NA					
<b>PRINCIPLE #2: TENURE AND USE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES</b>								
<b>Long-term tenure and use rights to the land and forest resources shall be clearly defined, documented and legally established.</b>								
<b>2.1: Clear evidence of long term use rights to the land (e.g. land title, customary rights, or lease agreements) shall be demonstrated.</b>								

				CFOs				
Assessment	Criterion		Legal overlap	Repacig	Nlormac	Mbacof	Morikouali-ye	Mirebe
<b>2.1.1:</b> The CF boundaries shall be known and acknowledged to local populations and other stakeholders.		Communication and community involvement	Y	N (not acknowledged by villagers)	U	N (not acknowledged by neighbours)	U	Y
<b>2.1.2:</b> The legal entity in charge of managing the Community Forest shall be legally recognized.		Regulations	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>2.1.3:</b> The CF shall hold a legal title for the long term management, issued by the relevant administration.		Regulations	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>2.2: Local communities with legal or customary tenure or use rights shall maintain control, to the extent necessary to protect their rights or resources, over forest operations unless they delegate with free and informed consent to other agencies.</b>								
<b>2.2.1:</b> The Forest manager shall have carried out a multi-resource inventory or commissioned a third party to do it, which shall be updated regularly and in compliance with applicable standards.	too costly to 'regularly update' multi-resource inventory	Regulations	6.1.2-6, annex 7	Y	Y	Y	Y (by RIGC)	Y (by WWF)
<b>2.2.2:</b> Various stakeholders shall be informed about the results of the multi-resource inventory		Communication and community involvement	N					
<b>2.2.3:</b> Populations' use rights shall be discussed during negotiation meetings and integrated in the simplified management plan.		Communication and community involvement	N					
<b>2.2.4:</b> Rights and access conditions of populations to natural resources shall be clearly defined, documented and complied with by everybody.		Documentation	6.1.2-7.6	N (not complied with)	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>2.2.5:</b> Local communities and all other stakeholders shall be informed about all the management activities of the Community Forest.	requires organisational capacity (to collect all stakeholders)	Communication and community involvement	N?	N	Y	N	N	Y

				CFOs				
Assessment	Criterion		Legal overlap	Repacig	Nlormac	Mbacof	Morikouali-ye	Mirebe
<b>2.2.6:</b> Mechanisms for adequate monitoring and assessment for all management activities shall be drafted and implemented by the CF Forest manager in partnership with stakeholders.	requires organisational capacity	Regulations	N?	N	N	N	N	N
<b>2.2.7:</b> Local communities shall take part in the monitoring and assessment of natural resources based on a scheme endorsed by all stakeholders.	requires organisational capacity (to collect all stakeholders)	Communication and community involvement	N	N	N	N	N	N
<b>2.3:</b> Appropriate mechanism shall be employed to resolve disputes over tenure claims and use rights. The circumstances and status of any outstanding disputes will be explicitly considered in the certification evaluation. Disputes of substantial magnitude involving a significant number of interests will normally disqualify an operation from being certified			8.2.2.4 6.3.1 7.1.1 7.1.2 6.1.2-7.6 annex1 8.2.1 7.2.6 7.2.9					
<b>2.3.1:</b> Forest manager shall favour the establishment of permanent discussion and negotiation frameworks in partnership with relevant administrations.	double indicator (4.5)	Communication and community involvement	N					
<b>2.3.2:</b> The Forest manager shall identify disputes related to the CF management and table them before the relevant established permanent organs/frameworks.		Communication and community involvement	N?					
<b>2.3.3:</b> Schemes for dialogue and conflict settlement between stakeholders shall be operational and documented.	requires organisational capacity, too little experience with these kind of disputes	Communication and community involvement	N	N	N	N	N	N
<b>PRINCIPLE #3: INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' RIGHTS</b>								
The legal and customary rights of indigenous peoples to own, use and manage their lands, territories, and resources shall be recognized and respected.								

				CFOs				
Assessment	Criterion		Legal overlap	Repacig	Nlormac	Mbacof	Morikouali-ye	Mirebe
<b>3.1. Indigenous peoples shall control forest management on their lands and territories unless they delegate control with free and informed consent to other agencies.</b>								
<b>3.1.1.</b> Pygmy indigenous peoples with customary and legal rights to the CF shall be identified and registered.	dependant on stakeholders (Pygmy indigenous people have to be willing to cooperate)	Regulations	N					
<b>3.1.2:</b> Pygmy indigenous peoples shall nominate and/or elect their representatives within the CF Forest manager and various discussion organs established in accordance with 2.3.	unnecessary restrictive (obligation for Pygmy indigenous people, no voluntary basis)	Communication and community involvement	N					
<b>3.1.3:</b> Pygmy indigenous peoples shall take part in the discussion meetings and decision making organs for the CF management.	unnecessary restrictive (obligation for Pygmy indigenous people, no voluntary basis)	Communication and community involvement	N					
<b>3.1.4 :</b> Pygmy indigenous people shall be involved in the CF management activities: planning, implementation and monitoring-assessment	unnecessary restrictive (obligation for Pygmy indigenous people, no voluntary basis)	Communication and community involvement	N					
<b>3.1.5:</b> Pygmy Indigenous Peoples shall control the management of their land and resources within the FMU. If Pygmy Indigenous People have delegated this control to other indigenous groups, an evidence of this transfer/delegation shall exist.	requires organisational capacity	Forest impact	N	NA	NA	NA	Y/N (some pygmies work as carriers)	N/U
<b>3.1.6:</b> It shall be set down in writing that the Indigenous Peoples have control of the management of their own territory. If the Indigenous People have delegated this control to other groups, the enterprise shall demonstrate that	double indicator (3.1.5)	Documentation	N					

				CFOs				
Assessment	Criterion		Legal overlap	Repacig	Nlormac	Mbacof	Morikouali-ye	Mirebe
the Indigenous People concerned have delegated such control with free and prior informed consent.								
<b>3.2 Forest management shall not threaten or diminish, either directly or indirectly, the resources or tenure rights of indigenous peoples.</b>								
<b>3.2.1:</b> Pygmy indigenous peoples' rights shall be clearly identified, documented and complied with by all stakeholders.	lack of knowledge (of national law regarding pygmies)	Communication and community involvement	N					
<b>3.3 Sites of special cultural, ecological, economic or religious significance to indigenous peoples shall be clearly identified in cooperation with such peoples, and recognized and protected by forest managers.</b>			annex 4 'in the field 3'					
<b>3.3.1:</b> Sites with significance for Pygmy indigenous people shall be identified and mapped in a participative manner.	requires organisational capacity (hard to also include forest dwelling pygmies (e.g. school project failed))	Communication and community involvement	N	NA	NA	NA	N	N
<b>3.3.2:</b> Sites with significance for Pygmy indigenous people shall be marked up on the filed.		Communication and community involvement	N					
<b>3.3.3:</b> Specific measures shall be proposed in the management plan for the protection of sites of great significance for Pygmy indigenous people; if need be, management plan for identified sites shall be elaborated.	requires organisational capacity	Communication and community involvement	N	NA	NA	NA	N	N
<b>3.3.4:</b> Practical measures shall be implemented to protect the sites which bear significance for the Pygmy indigenous peoples.		Communication and community involvement	N					
<b>3.4 Indigenous peoples shall be compensated for the application of their traditional knowledge regarding the use of forest species or management systems in forest operations. This compensation shall be formally agreed upon with their free and informed consent before forest operations commence.</b>								

				CFOs				
Assessment	Criterion		Legal overlap	Repacig	Nlormac	Mbacof	Morikouali-ye	Mirebe
3.4.1: The Forest manager shall identify and document all knowledge held by the Pygmies indigenous peoples on forest management in partnership with other stakeholders.	too much effort for expected impact (not evident that/if anyone/anything is helped with this)	Documentation	N					
3.4.2: Pygmies indigenous peoples shall receive fair compensation for the use of their traditional knowledge proportionate to their contribution.	requires organisational capacity (pygmies not organised and included in community life, so hard to check)	Communication and community involvement	N					
<b>PRINCIPLE #4: COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND WORKERS' RIGHTS</b>								
<b>Forest management operations shall maintain or enhance the long-term social and economic well-being of forest workers and local communities.</b>								
<b>4.1 The communities within, or adjacent to, the forest management area should be given opportunities for employment, training, and other services</b>								
4.1.1: The Forest manager shall ensure, basing on equal skills, that members of the local community shall have priority in carrying out the actions scheduled in the SMP.		Communication and community involvement	5.4 7.4					
4.1.2: The Forest manager shall hold trainings to build the capacities of community members in order to ensure responsible management of the community forest.		Knowledge	N	N	Y/N (community members know of impacts)	Y (forest guards)	U	Y/N (not the FM but SNV hold effective trainings)
4.1.3: Wherein no agreement exist between the community and the contractor, community members shall have priority to employment and trainings, basing on equal skills.		Communication and community involvement	1.6.1 6.1.2-7.4 6.3.6					

				CFOs				
Assessment	Criterion		Legal overlap	Repacig	Nlormac	Mbacof	Morikouali-ye	Mirebe
<b>4.1.4:</b> Basing on equal skills, sub-contracting opportunities and activities shall be awarded in priority to community members.		Communication and community involvement	N					
<b>4.1.5:</b> Any agreement signed between the legal entity and the manager shall be discussed with communities before its signature.	Footnote: entities not always legal	Communication and community involvement	N	Y	NA	NA	N	Y
<b>4.2 Forest management should meet or exceed all applicable laws and/or regulations covering health and safety of employees and their families.</b>				N				
<b>4.2.1:</b> Community members involved in carrying out forest operations on the field shall have personal protective equipments (PPEs) in accordance with the guidelines of the International Labour Bureau.	too costly, also dependant on stakeholders	Communication and community involvement	N	Y/N (EO works with PPEs)	NA	NA	N	N
<b>4.2.2:</b> Incomes from CF management shall be used to improve community healthcare infrastructure.	unnecessary restrictive (CFs may have own list of priorities to improve community situation)	Communication and community involvement	N	N	N	N	N	N
<b>4.3 The rights of workers to organize and voluntarily negotiate with their employers shall be guaranteed as outlined in Conventions 87 and 98 of the International Labour Organisation (ILO).</b>				N				
<b>4.3.1:</b> Community members hired by the third party freely negotiate with their employer as per requirements of 87 and 98 ILO conventions.	lack of knowledge on prices	Regulations	N	U	NA	NA	N	N
<b>4.4 Management planning and operations shall incorporate the results of evaluations of social impact. Consultations shall be maintained with people and groups directly affected by management operations.</b>			6.1.2-5	N				
<b>4.4.1:</b> The drafting of the Streamlined Management Plan shall take into account the results of the social assessment.		Regulations	decree no. 0070	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>4.4.2:</b> Social impacts identified by communities and other stakeholders shall be taken into account in the Streamlined Management Plan and operational plans.		Communication and community involvement	6.2.1-5					

				CFOs				
Assessment	Criterion		Legal overlap	Repacig	Nlormac	Mbacof	Morikouali-ye	Mirebe
<b>4.4.3:</b> Discussion meetings between all stakeholders prior to the development of the Streamlined Management Plan and during implementation shall be held.		Communication and community involvement	2, 2.4					
<b>4.4.4:</b> The Streamlined Management Plan shall include the recommendations of discussion meetings.		Communication and community involvement	N					
<b>4.4.5:</b> A permanent monitoring scheme for SMP provisions shall be established and operational.	requires organisational capacity	Documentation	N	N	N	N	N	N
<b>4.5 Appropriate mechanisms shall be employed for resolving grievances and for providing fair compensation in the case of loss or damage affecting the legal or customary rights, property, resources, or livelihoods of local peoples. Measures shall be taken to avoid such loss or damage.</b>				N				
<b>4.5.1:</b> The by-laws shall provide for operational schemes for addressing disputes between community members on the management of the Community Forest.	requires organisational capacity	Regulations						
<b>4.5.2:</b> Permanent discussion and negotiation organs between stakeholders established as per requirement 2.3 shall be used to address conflicts and damages impacting on the legal and/or traditional rights of community members.	requires organisational capacity	Communication and community involvement	N					
<b>4.5.3:</b> Compensations shall be negotiated and agreed upon in favour of the interests of community members, using the legal compensation scheme as floor.	requires organisational capacity	Communication and community involvement	N					
<b>4.5.4:</b> All conflicts between stakeholders shall be settled in a commonly agreed manner.		Communication and community involvement	N	N	NA	U	U	Y
<b>PRINCIPLE #5: BENEFITS FROM THE FOREST</b>					annex 12 sect. 6 2b, e, f, g			
<b>Forest management operations shall encourage the efficient use of the forest's multiple products and services to ensure economic viability and a wide range of environmental and social benefits.</b>								

				CFOs				
Assessment	Criterion		Legal overlap	Repacig	Nlormac	Mbacof	Morikouali-ye	Mirebe
<b>5.1 Forest management should strive toward economic viability, while taking into account the full environmental, social, and operational costs of production, and ensuring the investments necessary to maintain the ecological productivity of the forest.</b>								
<b>5.1.1:</b> Yearly programming and budgeting shall include all products sourced from the forest (timber, NTFPs, environmental services)	requires organisational capacity	Financial matters	N	N	N	N	N	N
<b>5.1.2:</b> Expected incomes shall be based on realist assumptions.	dependant on stakeholders ((local) market fluctuates and not very predictable)	Financial matters	N					
<b>5.1.3:</b> The operation shall be carried out in accordance with provisions of the Streamlined Management Plan.	lack of knowledge	Regulations	Y					
<b>5.2 Forest management and marketing operations should encourage the optimal use and local processing of the forest's diversity of products.</b>								
<b>5.2.1:</b> Timber products (timber, firewood, building materials, sawn timber, charcoal, etc.) shall be valued.		Financial matters	N					
<b>5.2.2:</b> NTFPs shall be identified, their domestication as well as their value adding process shall be taken into account in the Streamlined Management Plan.	lack of knowledge (on value adding process)	Knowledge	6.1.2-6 annex 7	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>5.2.3:</b> Community members shall be sensitized about the NTFP value and the legal conditions for their trade.	lack of knowledge about NTFP value, dependant on external support	Knowledge	N	N	N	N	Y (by SNV)	Y (by SNV)
<b>5.2.4:</b> Forest products (timber and non timber) shall be processed locally.		Forest impact	7.3.1	Y	NA	NA	Y	Y
<b>5.3 Forest management should minimize waste associated with harvesting and on-site processing operations and avoid damage to other forest resources.</b>								
<b>5.3.1:</b> Logging and processing techniques used shall avoid resource losses and wastes.		Forest impact	?	N	NA	NA	Y	Y
<b>5.3.2:</b> Measures shall be taken to minimize adverse impacts of timber logging on forest resources (young stems, NTFPs, environmental services, and others).		Forest impact	?	Y	NA	NA	Y	Y

				CFOs				
Assessment	Criterion		Legal overlap	Repacig	Nlormac	Mbacof	Morikouali-ye	Mirebe
<b>5.3.3:</b> Waste from timber logging shall be used for other purposes.	unnecessary restrictive	Forest impact	N					
<b>5.4 Forest management should strive to strengthen and diversify the local economy, avoiding dependence on a single forest product.</b>								
<b>5.4.1:</b> The Forest manager shall actively search for markets for a range of timber and non timber products.	requires organisational capacity	Financial matters	N					
<b>5.4.2.</b> High value NTFP supply networks shall be established.	Too much effort for expected impact	Financial matters	N					
<b>5.5 Forest management operations shall recognize, maintain, and, where appropriate, enhance the value of forest services and resources such as watersheds and fisheries.</b>								
<b>5.5.1:</b> Standards for forest operations shall be complied with.		Regulations	law	N	NA	NA	N	Y
<b>5.5.2:</b> Procedures/guidelines that ban or regulate the use of chemicals in logging sites shall be drafted and implemented.	requires organisational capacity, lack of knowledge	Forest impact	?					
<b>5.5.3:</b> Sensitization programme for environment-friendly silvicultural and fish-farming techniques shall be developed and implemented.	lack of knowledge	Knowledge	N	Y (by PSMNR)	Y (by PSMNR)	Y (by PSMNR)	N	N
<b>5.5.4:</b> Forest management operations shall have no significant negative impact on the forest's services and resources (including, for example, municipal watersheds, upstream and downstream commercial and recreational fisheries, landscape quality, contributions to regional biodiversity, recreation and tourism) are recognised in the forest management plan for the enterprise).		Forest impact	law96 environm ent -ch3					
<b>5.5.5:</b> Ecotourism shall be promoted where possible.	Too much effort for expected impact	Financial matters	N					
<b>5.6 The rate of harvest of forest products shall not exceed levels which can be permanently sustained.</b>								
<b>5.6.1</b> For timber logging, the number of trees provided for by the yearly logging certificate shall be complied with.	requires organisational capacity (home	Regulations	CAE	Y (lower)	Y (lower)	Y (lower)	Y (lower)	Y (lower)

				CFOs				
Assessment	Criterion		Legal overlap	Repacig	Nlormac	Mbacof	Morikouali-ye	Mirebe
	consumption use is not registered)							
<b>5.6.2:</b> Logging techniques shall optimize the timber usable volume.	double indicator (5.3.1)	Forest impact	N					
<b>5.6.3:</b> The greatest portion of the felled tree shall be extracted.	double indicator (5.3.1)	Forest impact	N					
<b>5.6.4:</b> NTFP harvesting techniques shall favour regeneration and comply with allowed quantities/quotas.	Too much effort for expected impact	Forest impact	N					
<b>PRINCIPLE #6: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT</b>								
Forest management shall conserve biological diversity and its associated values, water resources, soils, and unique and fragile ecosystems and landscapes, and, by so doing, maintain the ecological functions and the integrity of the forest.								
<b>6.1 Assessment of environmental impacts shall be completed --appropriate to the scale, intensity of forest management and the uniqueness of the affected resources --and adequately integrated into management systems. Assessments shall include landscape level considerations as well as the impacts of on-site processing facilities. Environmental impacts shall be assessed prior to commencement of site-disturbing operations.</b>								
<b>6.1.1:</b> A brief environmental assessment of the impacts of forest operations shall be carried out in compliance with applicable rules and validated or under validation by the appropriate administration.	too costly	Forest impact	decree no. 0070					
<b>6.1.2:</b> Assessment of environmental impacts and the development of a minimization plan of adverse impacts shall be carried out in collaboration with local stakeholders.	requires organisational capacity	Communication and community involvement	N					
<b>6.1.3:</b> Identified measures and mitigation actions proposed in the EIA document shall be taken into consideration the various management documents.	footnote: documents made by external actors	Documentation	N					
<b>6.1.4:</b> The Forest manager and other involved stakeholders show evidence of having a sound knowledge of potential negative or positive impacts of their activities on the environment.	lack of knowledge	Knowledge	N	N (no FMO existent)	N	Y	N	Y
<b>6.1.5:</b> Measures provided for minimization, correction and improvement of identified impacts shall be implemented.	requires organisational capacity	Forest impact	N					

				CFOs				
Assessment	Criterion		Legal overlap	Repacig	Nlormac	Mbacof	Morikouali-ye	Mirebe
6.1.6: For group certification including a great number of members, the group representative shall demonstrate that clear guidelines on environmental impact assessment were distributed to all group members.		Communication and community involvement	N					
6.2 Safeguards shall exist which protect rare, threatened and endangered species and their habitats (e.g., nesting and feeding areas). Conservation zones and protection areas shall be established, appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management and the uniqueness of the affected resources. Inappropriate hunting, fishing, trapping and collecting shall be controlled.	footnote: just making zones is enough							
6.2.1: The Forest manager shall have collected information on lists of rare, threatened, vulnerable, and endangered species at the national/regional level, as well as their habitats.	lack of knowledge	Knowledge	N					
6.2.2: The Forest manager shall use collected information to monitor and assess the presence of registered species as well as their habitats within the community forest.	double indicator (covered in 8.2)	Documentation	N					
6.2.3: The Forest manager shall have discussed with local populations to know the types of native wildlife or plant species that shall be protected, in addition to those enlisted in national/regional lists.		Communication and community involvement	N					
6.2.4: In agreement with local populations, the Forest manager shall implement measures to protect identified species and erect their habitats as conservation areas.	footnote: identify conservation areas should be sufficient	Forest impact	N	N	N	Y (rivers)	N	N
6.2.5: In close collaboration with involved players, the Forest manager shall implement sensitization, monitoring/control, and punitive measures to prevent unsustainable hunting, fishing, trapping and collecting, and implement these measures.	requires organisational capacity	Communication and community involvement	N					
6.2.6: The Forest manager shall support husbandry of other animal species and fish farming activities, as well as bee-hiving in order to diversify sources of animal proteins.	unnecessary restrictive	Knowledge	N					
6.3 Ecological functions and values shall be maintained intact, enhanced, or restored, including: a) Forest regeneration and succession. b) Genetic, species, and ecosystem diversity. c) Natural cycles that affect the productivity of the forest ecosystem.								

				CFOs				
Assessment	Criterion		Legal overlap	Repacig	Nlormac	Mbacof	Morikouali-ye	Mirebe
<b>6.3.1:</b> The Community Forest management shall maintain or enhance native plant population.	requires organisational capacity	Forest impact	N					
<b>6.3.2:</b> Community Forest management minimises negative impacts on wildlife populations and their habitats.		Forest impact	N					
<b>6.3.3:</b> Forest operations shall have minimal or no negative impacts on the soil.	double indicator (6.5.1)	Forest impact	N					
<b>6.3.4:</b> There are protection/mitigation measures against large and high-intensity wildfire, and they are implemented by all involved stakeholders.	footnote: if in an high risk area	Forest impact	dec.95-8-2					
<b>6.3.5:</b> Buffer zones shall be maintained or restored in sensitive areas such as water courses including non-perennial streams, springs, wells, wetlands etc and steep slopes. Logging in such areas shall be restricted		Forest impact	dec.95-25	N	NA	NA	N	Y
<b>6.4 Representative samples of existing ecosystems within the landscape shall be protected in their natural state and recorded on maps, appropriate to the scale and intensity of operations and the uniqueness of the affected resources.</b>				dec.95-8-2				
<b>6.4.1:</b> In agreement with involved players, representative samples of CF unique ecosystems shall be identified, recorded on maps/sketches and excluded from the harvesting plots.	double indicator (is covered in 6.2 and pr 9)	Forest impact	dec.95-10-2 (fragile ecology)					
<b>6.5 Written guidelines shall be prepared and implemented to: control erosion; minimize forest damage during harvesting, road construction, and all other mechanical disturbances; and protect water resources.</b>								
<b>6.5.1:</b> There shall be evidence that all forest management operations are planned and implemented to minimize damage to soil (compaction, erosion).	footnote: light machines, little use of machines	Forest impact	N					
<b>6.5.2:</b> The Forest manager and those implementing forest operations shall be knowledgeable in forest operations standards.		Knowledge	N	U	U	Y	N	Y
<b>6.5.3:</b> Procedures implemented shall minimise the destruction of the forest resource.		Forest impact	1.5 sustainable					

				CFOs				
Assessment	Criterion		Legal overlap	Repacig	Nlormac	Mbacof	Morikouali-ye	Mirebe
6.6 Management systems shall promote the development and adoption of environmentally friendly non-chemical methods of pest management and strive to avoid the use of chemical pesticides. World Health Organization Type 1A and 1B and chlorinated hydrocarbon pesticides; pesticides that are persistent, toxic or whose derivatives remain biologically active and accumulate in the food chain beyond their intended use; as well as any pesticides banned by international agreement, shall be prohibited. If chemicals are used, proper equipment and training shall be provided to minimize health and environmental risks.								
6.6.1: No chemical on the list of "FSC Highly Hazardous Pesticides" shall be used, except based on FSC special derogation.		Regulations	N					
6.6.2: The forest operation shall seek to minimize the use of all chemicals such as pesticides, wood preservatives, and herbicides, etc.	double indicator (5.5.2)	Forest impact	dec.95-16					
6.6.3: Forest workers shall have proper Personal Protective Equipments (PPEs) and training in safe use of chemicals.	double indicator (4.2.1) (part about PPEs)	Regulations	N					
6.7 Chemicals, containers, liquid and solid non-organic wastes including fuel and oil shall be disposed of in an environmentally appropriate manner at offsite locations.								
6.7.1: Equipments for the collection of on-site wastes as well as their transportation from site are available.		Regulations	N					
6.7.2: The Forest manager and forest workers shall be trained and sensitized about applicable methods of collection, transport, and processing of solid and liquid organic and inorganic wastes (chemicals, containers).	dependant on stakeholders (need external trainers)	Knowledge	N					
6.8 Use of biological control agents shall be documented, minimized, monitored and strictly controlled in accordance with national laws and internationally accepted scientific protocols. Use of genetically-modified organisms shall be prohibited.								
6.8.1: Where need be, biological pest management shall be used in compliance with national and international laws.		Regulations	N					
6.8.2: The enterprise shall implement a system to minimise its use of biological control agents	requires organisational capacity	Forest impact	N					

				CFOs				
Assessment	Criterion		Legal overlap	Repacig	Nlormac	Mbacof	Morikouali-ye	Mirebe
6.8.3: If biological control agents are used, comprehensive records of use shall be maintained by the forest manager, and the impacts of such use shall be systematically monitored.	requires organisational capacity	Documentation	N					
6.8.4: The Forest manager and staff members shall be trained and sensitized about the use of biological pest management, and provided with legally-compliant personal protective equipments.	double indicator (6.8.6)	Knowledge	N					
6.8.5: Activities requiring the use of biological pest management agents shall be documented and monitored.	double indicator (6.8.3)	Documentation	N					
6.8.6: The Forest manager shall take measures to identify and promote local knowledge and know-how about biological pest management.	requires organisational capacity	Communication and community involvement	N					
6.8.7: GMOs shall not be used for production or research.		Forest impact	N					
6.9 The use of exotic species shall be carefully controlled and actively monitored to avoid adverse ecological impacts.								
6.9.1: Procedures for the voluntary introduction of exotic wildlife and plant in the CF shall be developed and implemented.	beyond control of CFOs	Documentation	N					
6.9.2: The Forest manager shall ensure that introduced species are not found in the natural forest, conservation areas, buffer areas, and other sensitive sites, etc.	too much effort for prospected effect	Forest impact	N					
6.9.3: In partnership with local populations, the Forest manager shall establish a list of introduced wildlife and plant species.	too much effort for prospected effect	Documentation	N					
6.9.4: Where exotic species are planted, the sites shall be chosen appropriately and regularly monitored to ensure that no adverse ecological impacts result.		Forest impact	N					
6.9.5: Introduction of wildlife species shall not take place without prior authorization of relevant administrations.		Communication and community involvement	N					
6.9.6: In partnership with involved players, the Forest manager shall control accidental introductions of exotic species and assess their ecological impacts.	requires organisational capacity	Forest impact	N					
6.9.7: Local populations shall be trained and sensitized about the consequences of the introduction of exotic wildlife and plant species	dependant on stakeholders (need external support)	Knowledge	N					

				CFOs				
Assessment	Criterion		Legal overlap	Repacig	Nlormac	Mbacof	Morikouali-ye	Mirebe
6.10 Forest conversion to plantations or non-forest land uses shall not occur, except in circumstances where conversion: a) entails a very limited portion of the forest management unit; and b) does not occur on high conservation value forest areas; and c) will enable clear, substantial, additional, secure, long term conservation benefits across the forest management unit.								
<b>Indicator 6.10.1</b> The forest manager shall clearly identify any parts of the FMU that are scheduled for conversion from natural or semi-natural forest to plantation or non-forest use, over the next five year period. Note: for areas previously converted, see Criterion 10.9.		Forest impact	Y	Y (not allowed)	N	N	N	Y (specific zone)
<b>Indicator 6.10.2</b> The areas scheduled for conversion: - shall not include any High Conservation Value Forest areas (see Principle 9), AND - EITHER total less than 5% of the total area of the FMU and shall enable clear, substantial, additional, secure, longterm conservation benefits across the forest management unit, - OR shall be converted in order to restore the land securely and in the long term to a pre-existing "High Conversation Value" habitat.		Forest impact	N					
<b>Indicator 6.10.3</b> The forest manager shall have all necessary approvals for the conversion, in line with national requirements.		Regulations	N					
<b>PRINCIPLE #7: MANAGEMENT PLAN</b>								
A management plan --appropriate to the scale and intensity of the operations --shall be written, implemented, and kept up to date. The long term objectives of management, and the means of achieving them, shall be clearly stated.								

				CFOs				
Assessment	Criterion		Legal overlap	Repacig	Nlormac	Mbacof	Morikouali-ye	Mirebe
<b>7.1 The management plan and supporting documents shall provide:</b> <b>a) Management objectives.</b> <b>b) Description of the forest resources to be managed, environmental limitations, land use and ownership status, socio-economic conditions, and a profile of adjacent lands.</b> <b>c) Description of silvicultural and/or other management system, based on the ecology of the forest in question and information gathered through resource inventories.</b> <b>d) Rationale for rate of annual harvest and species selection.</b> <b>e) Provisions for monitoring of forest growth and dynamics.</b> <b>f) Environmental safeguards based on environmental assessments.</b> <b>g) Plans for the identification and protection of rare, threatened and endangered species.</b> <b>h) Maps describing the forest resource base including protected areas, planned management activities and land ownership.</b> <b>i) Description and justification of harvesting techniques and equipment to be used.</b>			6.1.2-3 6.1.2 - 4 N N N N N 6.1.2 - 2.3 N					
<b>7.1.1:</b> The Streamlined Management Plan shall be developed in compliance with applicable guidelines and regulations and approved by the forest administration.		Regulations	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>7.1.2:</b> Objectives of forest management are clearly stated and described in the Streamlined Management Plan.		Documentation	6.1.2-3	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>7.1.3 :</b> The Streamlined Management Plan shall include the agreement/convention duration, the location, socioeconomic conditions, and sketch maps /maps showing forest boundaries, block divisions, protected areas (including HCVs sites etc and planned operations).		Documentation	5.1	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>7.1.4:</b> Results of forest resource inventories shall be available.		Documentation	6.1.2-6	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>7.1.5:</b> Measures for forest protection as well as penalties for trespassing shall be clearly described and implemented in partnership with relevant administration.	requires organisational capacity	Documentation	N	N	Y	Y	N	N
<b>7.1.6:</b> The Streamlined management plan and/or supporting documents shall include among others:								
<b>7.1.6.1:</b> a description of the forest resources to be managed,		Documentation	6.1.2-7.1	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

				CFOs				
Assessment	Criterion		Legal overlap	Repacig	Nlormac	Mbacof	Morikouali-ye	Mirebe
<b>7.1.6.2:</b> environmental limitations, <b>7.1.6.3:</b> Land use and ownership status, and <b>7.1.6.4:</b> a profile of adjacent lands.		Documentation	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y
		Documentation	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
		Documentation	N	N	N	N	N	N
<b>7.1.7:</b> The Streamlined management plan and/or supporting documents shall provide a clear rationale for rate of annual harvest and species selection.		Documentation	CAE	Y (2500 m <sup>3</sup> /yr)	Y	Y	N	Y
<b>7.1.8:</b> The Streamlined management plan and/or supporting documents shall describe the provisions for monitoring of forest growth and dynamics.	footnote: possible when simple	Documentation	N	N	N	N	N	N
<b>7.1.9:</b> The Streamlined management plan and/or supporting documents shall specify environmental safeguards based on environmental assessments.	footnote: possible when simple (exclusion of areas from logging)	Documentation	N	N	N	N	N	Y
<b>7.1.10:</b> The Streamlined management plan and/or supporting documents shall include plans for the identification and protection of rare, threatened, endemic and endangered species.	footnote: possible when simple (exclusion of areas from logging)	Documentation	N (6.1.2-7.5)	N	N (but mentions banned species)	N	N	N
<b>7.1.11:</b> Maps describing the forest resource base including protected areas, planned management activities, at appropriate scales for their respective purposes are available.		Documentation	Y	Y (no protect areas)	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>7.1.12:</b> The Streamlined management plan and/or supporting documents shall include specific consideration of the presence of any High Conservation Value areas within the CF, and describe the specific measures that will be taken to maintain or enhance these values within the CF.	footnote: possible when simple (exclusion of areas from logging)	Documentation	N	N	N	N	N	N
<b>7.1.13:</b> The management plan and/or supporting documents shall include a description and justification of harvesting techniques and equipment to be used.	dependant on stakeholders	Documentation	N (7.3.3)	N	N	N	N	N
<b>7.1.14:</b> Logging activities and NTFP harvesting as well as upgrading of other services shall be described in management documents.		Documentation	4.1.2 5.1f	N	Y	N	N	Y
<b>7.2:</b> The management plan shall be periodically revised to incorporate the results of monitoring or new scientific and technical information, as well as to respond to changing environmental, social and economic circumstances.				6.3.4 6.3.2				

				CFOs				
Assessment	Criterion		Legal overlap	Repacig	Nlormac	Mbacof	Morikouali-ye	Mirebe
<b>7.2.1:</b> A five-year action plan shall be developed and include new data sourced from field experience and, if possible, research results; plus the other elements listed in 7.1		Regulations	8.2.2.1 8.2.2.3 -2	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>7.2.2:</b> The Streamlined Management Plan shall be revised periodically and the updated version shall be approved by the forest administration.		Regulations	6.3.4 6.3.2	N	NA	NA	Y	Y
<b>7.3: Forest workers shall receive adequate training and supervision to ensure proper implementation of the management plan.</b>								
<b>7.3.1:</b> The five-year action plan and yearly operational plans shall include training activities.		Regulations	6.1.2-7.4	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>7.3.2:</b> The Forest Manager shall develop a policy of continuous training for each member of the community involved in the implementation the SMP a. Refresher classes, skill upgrading of community members in various positions shall be ensured. b. Community members involved in the implementation of the SMP shall be imparted with fundamental knowledge on other areas of forest management.	requires organisational capacity to organise trainings, too little knowledge	Knowledge	N					
<b>7.3.3</b> Managers and supervisors (including those employed by contractors) shall have education, training or experience to a level to ensure that they are able to plan, organize and supervise forestry operations in accordance with enterprise's plans, policies and procedures.	dependant on stakeholders (need external support)	Knowledge	N					
<b>7.3.4</b> The work of all contractors and their workers shall be supervised by the manager of the CF to ensure they implement their tasks effectively and safely. The quality of the work SHALL BE monitored by the manager.		Knowledge	N					
<b>7.3.5.</b> The manager of the CF shall implement a documented system to identify the skills and training needs of its community members (including contractors or self-employed), and provides or supports an appropriate ongoing training programme for its employees to meet these needs.	too much effort for expected impact(CF members are opportunistic, training needs may change quickly and who is involved can also change quickly)	Documentation	N					
<b>7.3.6</b> There shall be up-to-date records showing training and education records of all employees.	requires organisational capacity	Documentation	N					

				CFOs				
Assessment	Criterion		Legal overlap	Repacig	Nlormac	Mbacof	Morikouali-ye	Mirebe
<b>7.3.7:</b> Planned training sessions shall be effectively implemented.	too costly	Knowledge	NA					
<b>7.4</b> While respecting the confidentiality of information, forest managers shall make publicly available a summary of the primary elements of the management plan, including those listed in Criterion 7.1.								
<b>7.4.1:</b> All the community members shall be informed about the content of the Streamlined Management Plan.		Communication and community involvement	2.4	N	N	N	N	N
<b>7.4.2:</b> A public summary of the Streamlined management plan mentioning elements named in Criterion 7.1 shall be available for public consultation and on request.		Communication and community involvement	N					
<b>PRINCIPLE #8: MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT</b>					2.4			
Monitoring shall be conducted --appropriate to the scale and intensity of forest management --to assess the condition of the forest, yields of forest products, chain of custody, management activities and their social and environmental impacts.					N			
<b>8.1</b> The frequency and intensity of monitoring should be determined by the scale and intensity of forest management operations as well as the relative complexity and fragility of the affected environment. Monitoring procedures should be consistent and replicable over time to allow comparison of results and assessment of change.								
<b>8.1.1:</b> Monitoring protocols and planning shall be clearly defined.	requires organisational capacity	Documentation	N	N	N	N	N	N
<b>8.1.2:</b> Monitoring of impacts and harvesting intensity on timber and non timber resources (including others) shall be carried out by the Forest manager in partnership with stakeholders.	requires organisational capacity (for timber OK, for NTFPs: harvest too little centrally organised)	Documentation	N					
<b>8.2</b> Forest management should include the research and data collection needed to monitor, at a minimum, the following indicators: a) Yield of all forest products harvested. b) Growth rates, regeneration and condition of the forest.								

				CFOs				
Assessment	Criterion		Legal overlap	Repacig	Nlormac	Mbacof	Morikouali-ye	Mirebe

c) Composition and observed changes in the flora and fauna. d) Environmental and social impacts of harvesting and other operations. e) Costs, productivity, and efficiency of forest management.								
8.2.1: Harvest data shall be regularly compared with forecast made in the Streamlined Management Plan or operational plan.		Documentation	N					
8.2.2: The yearly activity report shall include the progress of the implementation of forest management and observations on the forest state.		Documentation	N (annex 10)					
8.2.3: Permanent sampling plots shall be established for the monitoring of growth and regeneration parameters. Needs indicator for (c) fauna and flora, (d) Environmental and social and (e) Costs, productivity etc. See FSC-GUI60-004 for examples.	too much effort for prospected effect	Documentation	N					
8.2.4: The forest enterprise shall collect and maintain data on the quantity of each forest product harvested within the FMU updated on at least an annual basis.	requires organisational capacity (for timber OK, for NTFPs: harvest too little centrally organised)	Documentation	N					
8.2.5: The forest manager shall keep notes of the presence of any notable species of flora or fauna, sufficient to identify significant trends over time.	too much effort for expected impact(protection areas should be sufficient)	Documentation	N					
8.2.6: The data collected during pre- and post- harvest inventory shall be sufficient to identify any significant environmental impacts of harvesting.	footnote: data collection can be sufficient, but actual identification will require more knowledge	Forest impact	NA					
8.2.7: The data collected during pre- and post- harvest inventory shall be sufficient to provide a reasonable estimate of species composition, stocking, growth rates, regeneration and presence of commercially significant pests or diseases over the FMU as a whole.	too much effort for expected impact(only harvesting data is sufficient. precautionary	Forest impact	N					

				CFOs				
Assessment	Criterion		Legal overlap	Repacig	Nlormac	Mbacof	Morikouali-ye	Mirebe
	principle should be sufficient to keep effect low)							
<b>8.2.8:</b> There shall be participative data on the distribution of harvestable, threatened, rare or endemic plant species shall be available.	too costly (only from first inventory)	Documentation	N					
<b>8.2.9:</b> Participative and/or classical maps or updated data on the distribution of threatened, rare or endemic animal species shall be available.	too much effort for expected impact(only removed trees is sufficient to monitor, others are in the protected zones)	Documentation	N					
<b>8.2.10:</b> The monitoring-assessment of basic socio-economic indicators shall be documented (population, habitat)		Documentation	6.1.2-5					
<b>8.3</b> Documentation shall be provided by the forest manager to enable monitoring and certifying organizations to trace each forest product from its origin, a process known as the "chain of custody."								
<b>8.3.1:</b> All harvested forest (timber, NTFPs and others) products within the Community Forest shall be labelled and associated with documents enabling tracking.	dependant on stakeholders (must be demand for labelled products)	Documentation	dec 95-117 (timber products registered)	Y (for timber)	NA	NA	Y (for timber)	Y (for timber)
<b>8.3.2:</b> Documents on forest products shall be signed by the forest administration.		Regulations	Y					
<b>8.4</b> The results of monitoring shall be incorporated into the implementation and revision of the management plan.								
<b>8.4.1:</b> Monitoring and research results, as well as new scientific and technical data shall be integrated in the management documents.		Documentation	N					
<b>8.5</b> While respecting the confidentiality of information, forest managers shall make publicly available a summary of the results of monitoring indicators, including those listed in Criterion 8.2.								

				CFOs				
Assessment	Criterion		Legal overlap	Repacig	Nlormac	Mbacof	Morikouali-ye	Mirebe
8.5.1: All the community members shall be informed about monitoring results.		Communication and community involvement	NA					
<b>PRINCIPLE #9: MAINTENANCE OF HIGH CONSERVATION VALUE FORESTS</b>								
Management activities in high conservation value forests shall maintain or enhance the attributes which define such forests. Decisions regarding high conservation value forests shall always be considered in the context of a precautionary approach.								
9.1 Assessment to determine the presence of the attributes consistent with High Conservation Value Forests will be completed, appropriate to scale and intensity of forest management.								
9.1.1: High Conservation Values within the Community Forest shall be identified/defined in partnership with all stakeholders	lack of knowledge	Communication and community involvement	N	N	N	N	N	N
9.1.2: Identified HCV shall be included the management documentation.		Documentation	N					
9.1.3: Forest manager shall document and file information collected and used for HCV identification/definition.		Documentation	N					
9.2 The consultative portion of the certification process must place emphasis on the identified conservation attributes, and options for the maintenance thereof.								
9.2.1: The stakeholders' consultation shall identify HCV attributes and propose strategies for minimizing threats, maintenance and improvement of these HCV attributes.	Dependant on stakeholders	Knowledge	N					
9.2.2 : Best management practices shall be identified, implemented and monitored to maintain HCVs through the consultation process	beyond control of CFOs (very simple system required (exclusion of areas from logging))	Forest impact	N					
9.3 The management plan shall include and implement specific measures that ensure the maintenance and/or enhancement of the applicable conservation attributes consistent with the precautionary approach. These measures shall be specifically included in the publicly available management plan summary.								

				CFOs				
Assessment	Criterion		Legal overlap	Repacig	Nlormac	Mbacof	Morikouali-ye	Mirebe
<b>9.3.1:</b> Each specific measure for the maintenance and improvement of HCV attributes shall be described in the management documentation.	footnote: HCV attributes must be very simple	Documentation	N					
<b>9.3.2</b> Specific measures for HCV management shall be described in the public summary of the management plan.		Communication and community involvement	N					
<b>9.3.3:</b> The stakeholders who were consulted during the HCV identification process shall endorse the plan proposed for HCV management.		Communication and community involvement	N					
<b>9.3.4:</b> Based on local conditions, resources and science, and management operations, management schemes included in the Streamlined Management Plan shall ensure short – and medium – term maintenance/improvement of identified HCVs.	lack of knowledge	Forest impact	N					
<b>9.3.5:</b> Forest workers and all those carrying out forest activities shall be informed about the HCV identification process as well as the HCV location.		Communication and community involvement	N					
<b>9.3.6:</b> Forest workers and all those who carry out forest activities shall undergo training on implementation measures for HCV maintenance.	beyond control of CFOs (HCV maintenance must be very simple: exclusion of areas. So no need for maintenance training)	Knowledge	N					
<b>9.3.7:</b> Forest workers and all those who carry out activities within the forest shall understand the significance of identified HCV and protect them.	requires organisational capacity, need training	Knowledge	N					
<b>9.4 Annual monitoring shall be conducted to assess the effectiveness of the measures employed to maintain or enhance the applicable conservation attributes.</b>								
<b>9.4.1:</b> In partnership with involved players, the Forest manager shall develop monitoring procedures for identified HCVs.	lack of knowledge	Documentation	N					

				CFOs				
Assessment	Criterion		Legal overlap	Repacig	Nlormac	Mbacof	Morikouali-ye	Mirebe
9.4.2: Monitoring procedures shall be systematically implemented, at least once a year or after forest operation.	requires organisational capacity	Regulations	N					
9.4.3: Monitoring results shall show that attributes of identified HCVs are maintained or upgraded.		Documentation	N					
9.4.4: Monitoring results shall be used for the revision of management documentation.		Documentation	N					
9.4.5: Monitoring results shall be communicated to various players, if possible, sensitized.		Communication and community involvement	N					