

COMMUNITY FOREST MODEL IN CAMEROON

PRESENTED BY

DIEUDONNE ALEMAGI, Ph.D
(SSHRC POSTDOC FELLOW)

FACULTY OF FORESTRY
UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

OUTLINE OF THE PRESENTATION

- **OVERVIEW OF CAMEROON**
- **HISTORY OF COMMUNITY FOREST IN CAMEROON**
- **LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR COMMUNITY FOREST**
- **OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES**
- **CONCLUSIVE DISCUSSION**

1. OVERVIEW OF CAMEROON



MAP OF CAMEROON

- Human population of 18,467,692
- Surface Area of 475,440 sq km
- 469,440 sq Km is Land and 6,000 sq km is Water
- It is a member state of ITTO and 45.6% of land is covered with dense tropical rain forest
- Community forests occupy about 1.9% of the total forest area

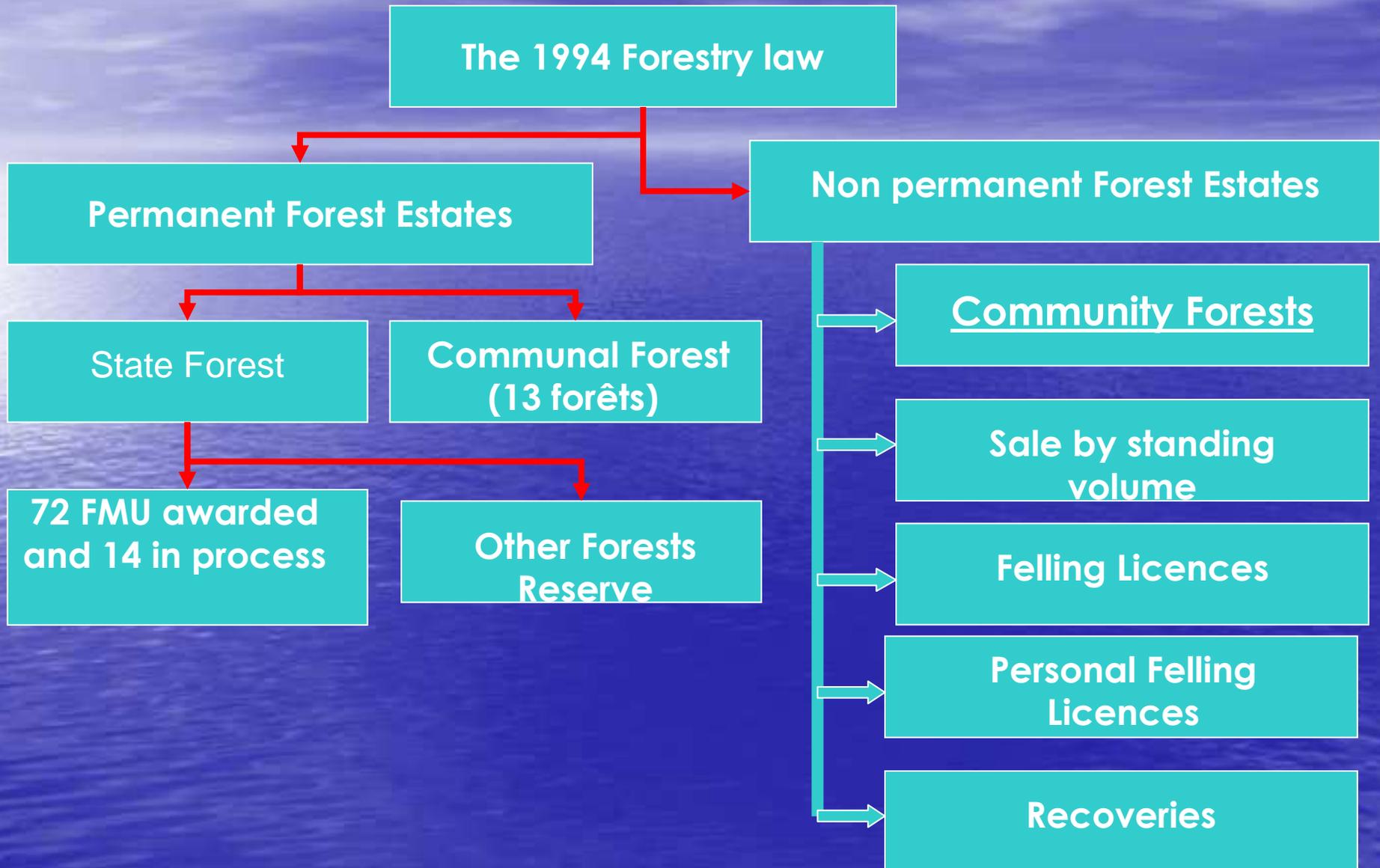


Example of Cameroon's Tropical Rain Forest

2. BRIEF HISTORY OF COMMUNITY FOREST IN CAMEROON

- Prior to the implementation of 1994 forestry law the development of post colonial forest model was a priority of the government
- In the mid 1990s due to pressure from NGOs and World bank and to facilitate forest demarcation to logging companies
- Community Forest Licence was created in 1994 as part of the new forestry law.
- New forestry Law: N0. 94/01 of 20th Jan. 1994

3. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR COMMUNITY FOREST IN CAMEROON



Major Provisions of 1994 Forestry law vis-a-vis community Forests include:

- ✓ The services in charge of forest shall, in order to promote management of forests resources by village communities which so desire, give them assistance
- ✓ Community forest shall have single management plans approved by the services in charge of forest. Such Plans shall be drawn up by the communities in accordance with conditions laid down by a decree
- ✓ All activities in a community forest shall comply with its management plan. Forest products of all kinds resulting in the management of community forest shall belong to the village communities concerned.

Implementing Decree of the 1994 forestry law was Decree No. 95-531 of 1995. Major provisions were:

- ✓ **Forests which may be the subject of a community forest management agreement shall be those situated near or on the edge of one or more communities, where those communities carry on activities**
- ✓ **To obtain a community forest, the community must have the status of a corporate body in the form of a relevant legal entity like Co-operatives, Associations, CIGs**
- ✓ **The surface area of a community forest may not exceed 5000 hectares and the area must not be covered by any forest operating licences. The tenure duration shall be 25 years (renewable after 5 years). Annual cut shall not exceed 500 CM³**

4. OPPORTUNITIES ASCRIBED TO COMMUNITY FOREST IN CAMEROON

- ✓ Traditional user rights referring to traditional hunting, fishing and collection of NTFPs is promoted
- ✓ Enrichment planting is practiced especially after logging thus protecting the ecological integrity of the forest
- ✓ Employment opportunities have been created at the community level
- ✓ Village communities have the right of pre-emption in the event of alienation of products (e.g sand, gravel & stones) found in their community forests
- ✓ Rights and full access to timber and significant cultural sites by communities. Cultural sites are protected

CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH COMMUNITY FOREST IN CAMEROON

- ❖ Community forest can cover a maximum of 5000 ha. This compared to the size of logging concessions (25000 ha) are relatively smaller as a resource base in providing the benefits desired by the community
- ❖ Extensive time frame for obtaining community forest licence in Cameroon. Averagely it takes 18 months to procure a community forest licence
- ❖ Motorized extraction of timber from community forest is generally absent . Head-loading of sawn timber which is deleterious due to the numerous health problems it poses is very common



Head-loading of sawn timber from a community forest in Cameroon

- ❖ Inadequacy of trained personnel. Only one institution of higher learning offers forestry at the graduate level
- ❖ Lack of community forest certification
- ❖ Illegal logging in community forests to supply customers in urban areas is very common
- ❖ Difficulties arriving at a consensus during preparatory & consultation meetings for procurement of a community forest licence
- ❖ Operations involving timber processing from community forest is often rudimentary



Picture depict wood processing that is characterized with lack of appropriate equipment and poor working conditions

❖ **Poor customer relationship and pricing insecurity in the distribution channel**

	Community forest entity	Production volume (M³) Hard wood	Local price (M³) in USD	Actual or lost revenue situation in USD
1	COBANKO	239	60	14,340
2	CONVINKO I	101	32	3,232
3	APAN	23	Agreed price unknown	Not yet paid
4	ADPN	60	Agreed price unknown	Not yet paid
5	AFHAN	43	Agreed price unknown	Not yet paid
6	INFOYO	44	Agreed price unknown	Not yet paid

Timber production and revenue situation of six community forest in 2007



Undelivered timber: Sawn and extracted at great expence but not picked-up

CONCLUSIVE DISCUSSION

- Despite all the recent challenges, it is important to point that Cameroon remains the first country in Central Africa to intergrate the community forest model into its forestry law or legal framework.
- However, it is crucial that the government addresses the aforementioned barriers that impede successful community forest management.
- Thus, if the government becomes proactive in promoting strategies geared at improving community forest there is no gainsaying that community forest will continue to play a vital role as a viable alternative to the post colonial forest concession model



THANKS A LOT