

# REPUBLIQUE DE GUINEE

Travail Justice Solidarité



*MINISTRE DE L'AGRICULTURE, DE L'ELEVAGE, DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT, DES  
EAUX ET FORETS*

SUB REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON THE SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF THE WEST  
AFRICAN FORESTS RESOURCES

November 12-20th, 2007

**FINAL REPORT**



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Labé, November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2007

In the framework of the sub-regional cooperation as well as for sharing experience in sustainable management of the West African forests, the Ministry in charge of Agriculture, Husbandry, Environment, Water and Forests (MAEEEF), organized a sub-regional workshop in 2007 from November 12 through the 20<sup>th</sup>, inclusive, in Conakry, Mamou and Labé

### I. Opening Ceremony

The opening ceremony was chaired over by Mr. Fassou Elie Damey secretary general of the ministry representing his Excellency the Minister.

The National Director of Water and Forests (DNEF) was first to speak. In her speech, she emphasized that the West African region, despite its huge forest potentials and considerable experience in matter of forest management, still does not have a forum for dialog among the neighboring countries to promote better integration and collaboration. She also suggested that it was time for ECOWAS to create an internal regional body for reflection and coordination of West Africa's sustainable forest management practices in the image of COMIFAC (Committee for Central African Forests).

This speech was followed by James COGSWELL, the national representative of the United States Forest Service (USFS) and the technical adviser to the DNEF in Guinea, who emphasized the efforts engaged by many of the West African countries in order to improve local governance in matter of durable management of the natural resources. Mr. Cogswell added that momentum was building on the regional level to combine and reinforce efforts in sustainable forest management and that the potential for reversing trends of degradation, reinforcing ecological stability of the sub-region's forest ecosystems and achieving long-term economic growth based on the rational utilization of the natural resources lay in sub-regional dialog and cooperation. In closing, he reassured the participating countries of the willingness and full commitment from the USFS to support collaborative initiatives.

The National FAO Representative then declared his satisfaction of this initiative from Guinea DNEF and USAID, which will make things easier for the sub-regional dialog on the forest resources management and putting in place a consultative body at the image of COMIFAC.

The US Ambassador to Guinea then took the opportunity to insist on the fact that democratic governance in natural resources management requires full participation of all players in decision making for the formulation of policies. He then challenged the participants to reflect on a few key questions during the workshop, namely:

- What would it take to increase the *scale and impact* of our co-forest management activities—locally, nationally, and regionally?
- Is the key simply to link communities to local and regional economic markets? Or are there cultural, social, or institutional constraints that are preventing Guinea and the sub-region from scaling up sustainable forest management?
- What is needed to increase the demand for DNEF services by communities in order to create a critical mass of productive and sustainable managed forests?
- How can we use the experience we've gained over the past twenty years in West Africa to scale-up sustainable co-forest management throughout the Mano River region and beyond?
- Is there an unmet demand for forest and non-forest products within the region?
- Where are the key forest areas that need immediate attention?
- What would success on a regional-level look like and how will success be measured?

In the keynote, the Secretary General of the MAEEEF stressed that the threats to the sub-region's forest resources are primarily from human activities. These problems, as he said, cannot be solved by any one country acting independently because the environmental issues outpace individual actions and are particularly intense and complex along trans-national borders between countries where open communication, respect and mutual action is needed.

Therefore he expressed his hope that, as a result of this workshop, we will have a common vision that considers previous meetings and declarations on the one hand and COMIFAC on the other.

The Moderator then proceeded to create a steering committee of the meeting, composed as of:

- Chairman: Ms KOUROUMA Christine Sagno, Guinea National Director of water and forest;
- Reporters : Marichatou AMADOU of Niger ; Alimou Kola DIALLO of Guinée; Sia COULIBALY of Burkina Faso.
- Facilitator: Alkaly BANGOURA of Guinea.

## II. Workshop Organization

Work was carried out in plenary sessions as well as in groups that were intermixed with field visits, which inspired participants and stimulated discussion of some of the practical aspects of the sustainable management of forests resources in Guinea. Each country was given the opportunity to present their experiences in forest management within their own countries while other topics were presented by participating NGO's. Each presentation was subject to debates and discussion, for more detailed clarification as well as contributions. As for group work, they were essentially focused on the support and promotion of a sub-regional dialog for durable management of the forest resources.

## III. Themes debated and Results

During workshop debates were focused on:

- The experiences on participatory management of the West African forest resources;*
- The management of trans-boundary forests resources in West Africa;*
- Refugee movements and natural resource use*
- Monitoring and evaluation and GIS tools*

*·Climate change and the local environment (the Fouta Djallon)*  
*·The Sub-regional dialog on the durable management of forests resources.*

### 3.1.Experiences in participatory management of the West African Forests

Experiences were presented by:

- Guinea through the forest administration/DNEF, the National department of Meteorology, the LAMIL project, the farmers' federation of Fouta as well as Fouta Trekking Adventure Association; followed by
- Niger ;
- Burkina Faso ;
- Senegal through the forest Administration and Wula Nafaa NGO;
- Sierra Leone ;
- Liberia ;
- Côte d'Ivoire

Presentation by the Guinea forest Administration was centered on the national forestry policy and regional planning in Guinea, as well as on the trilogy-Nature-Wealth and Power. The first presentation focused on the Guinea's policy's vision, the impact of decentralization on the local management of the resources, the strategy to mobilize resources for policy implementation, the administration, surveillance and protection of the forest resources.

The second presentation identified emerging best practices for the revitalization of rural Africa and further defined links among Nature-Wealth and Power. The presenter also insisted on the principles that may provide guidance for the investment in managing the natural resources in Africa, he went on to highlight the necessity to undertake political land reforms, to reinforce capacities as well as to consider local experiences and to develop various forms of associations to further guarantee the conservation and sustainable use of the forest resources.

Based on, The third communication was focused on a case study of the 'Dèya' forest group of in Kissidougou prefecture. The presenter emphasized the management methods used by the village to protect its forests as well as achieve social and economic benefits before continuing to show the link between nature, wealth and power in managing forests (good governance, revenue enhancement, better protection of resources). Despite those benefits, the presentation also showed some constraints that may limit the village-level actions, including illiteracy which limits the use of working documents (minutes, ledger books and technical documents and policy guides, etc.).

Guinea's National Department of Meteorology presented the topic of « monitoring of land usage and occupation trends in Guinea». It highlighted work carried out as part of a sub-regional project called « Land Use / Land Cover » under the technical guidance of AGRHYMET centre and the US Geological Society (USGS), with the aim to not only document land use/land cover changes but to evaluate the level of degradation or improvement in the state of the land resources of West Africa. Results obtained in Guinea indicate that all the countries ecological units were being degraded at an increasing rate and require appropriate rehabilitation measures in order to reverse the trend. He also made it clear that the Meteorology Department has satellite images covering the hole country for the period of 1972-2000 which he can make available to those who could use them.

The LAMIL project of Guinea, implemented by ICRAF/CIFOR with financial assistance from

USAID, presented a « Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and the monitoring of natural resources management activities ». After reviewing the background of the GIS, the presenter proceeded to describe of various elements of GIS as well as its role in the monitoring process. He insisted on the importance of the GIS tools in monitoring fauna and other forest resources. Lastly he showed some of the “GIS” products and results obtained while building the capacity of farmers and forest staff on the usage of the tool.

In addition, the project presented a second communication on « Landscape Management for Improved livelihoods approach, with the aim of creating an enabling environment for the betterment of the economic situation of the populations living next to forest areas, in order to better manage the forest. The presenter mentioned the importance of a solid collaborative relationship between the various players including administration, NGOs, the populations and private entrepreneurs.

The *Fédération des Paysans du Fouta* (the Fouta Djallon Peasant Federation) presented the topic of « Deforestation and climate change in Fouta Djallon ». The representative insisted on the serious threats faced by the zone of Fouta, which is considered as the water tower of the West African region, as well as on the necessity to take urgent actions to reverse the trends observed.

The Fouta Trekking Association discussed the ecotourism potentials of the Fouta Djallon zone as well as its potential contribution to poverty alleviation through the distribution of benefits generated from ecotourism and adding value to the environment preservation by developing sites for tourism.

The representative from Niger, presented a communication on the decentralized management of the forest resources in his country. He insisted on the importance of a high level of responsibility from organized communities, He went on to site some specific results obtained in their implementation of the new orientations. These results illustrated a decrease in the rate of the creation of new agricultural lands while showing an increase in the productivity of the forest groups’ revenues generated by population and capacity building. Furthermore, he noted insufficiencies in operation and management structures of the rural forest products market as well as in other sectors (forestry service, territorial collectivities, wood traders and transporters).

The representative of Burkina Faso presented an overview of the forest resources and threats including uncontrolled logging, bush fire, carbonization, uncontrolled bush clearing, etc. He then listed their national forests policy objectives and cited some principles guiding the sustainable management of forests in Burkina Faso. He stated that the government is the institutional guarantee for the sustainable management of their forests, the transfer of responsibility to the population through participative approaches, and to add value to forest resources for poverty alleviation as well as the ongoing decentralization process in the country. As a benefit, he cited the escalating participation of the populations to actions undertaken, the participatory development of over 700,000 hectares of forest in Burkina Faso and the ongoing reorganization of charcoal production and revenues generation for the population. In conclusion, he stressed the importance of the regional communication process that began in Burkina Faso in 2006 as well as the development of Eco-citizenship represented opportunities which contributed to the positive development of the forest sector in his country.

Senegal contribution made two presentations, the first was presented by the forest administration of Senegal entitled “forest development, a mode participatory and integrated governance of natural resources”. According to the presenter, the Republic of Senegal has a longstanding experience in managing natural forests, since its colonial period, which was originally oriented towards meeting requirements for wood products and charcoal for trains and ships. The process of participatory management of forests resources began in 1944 with:

- The involvement and the sharing of responsibility among the populations based on a participatory approach;
- The integration of the forestry in rural development by taking into account the extended landscape as a whole;
- The regionalization and decentralization of the forestry planning based on increased responsibility of regional services in specific ecological, economic and social contexts.

This new method of governance has changed relationships among players, in particular women, local collectivities and the national forest service. Participation of the populations in the management of forest resources is done through the development and implementation of local conventions.

Senegal’s second communication was a case study in sustainable management of the natural resources, presented by the project “Wula Nafaa.” The project is a part of poverty alleviation scheme with the aim of increasing the number of rural producers within local communities through increased responsibility of the local authorities and promotion of participatory and a decentralized and integrated management of resources. The project team is working closely with a great number of partners from both public and private sectors in order to promote interventions and synergy. During project implementation, considerable results were achieved, especially in the promotion of revenues generating activities where 984 natural resources management companies have seen their revenues increase on average by roughly 90%, as well as their overall capacity reinforced while promoting good governance.

The communication by Liberia centered on the situation of the forest as well as on the ongoing reforms undertaken within that country. Their forests cover nearly 4.3 million hectares or 45 % of the country’s total surface area. But, similar to other countries in the sub-region, those resources were subject to anthropological pressures, especially during the period of 1990-2003. The annual deforestation rate is currently 0.3 % per year, a slight increase when compared to the situation before war. It was also noted that the resources generated from operation and commercialization of some of the forest product were used to support the civil war which caused the International Community to impose sanctions which, in turn , resulted in reforms within the forest sector after war. These reforms resulted in the reorganization of the forest administration, increased transparency in operating and commercializing the forest products which ensure their effective contribution to the country’s

development. He ended by listing the benefits obtained in the area of national capacity building and the participation of the population in the sustainable management of the forests of Liberia.

The representative of Sierra Leone recalled the importance of his country’s forest resources with its vegetal coverage rate of almost 86% of the national territory. He also talked about their experience in the sustainable management of the Gola forest, which is covering 75 000 ha and contains considerable fauna and forest resources. The strategy developed by the Forest

Administration aims to preserve and develop the forest cover with the support of partner NGOs and conservation companies. In memorandum of understandings signed between government and partners, a benefit distribution key is planned that will detail the sharing of generated benefits between government and communities, forest being the government property. This approach has the advantage to ensure enhancement and sustainability of the benefit generated while preserving the biological diversity of the forests. It should be noted that this management method is based on new rules in addition to an efficient control of the resources and has the potential to considerably impact the revenues of the surrounding populations which were previously depending on fraudulent operations for their livelihood.

The representative of Côte d'Ivoire detailed information on the huge forests potentials of his country and went on presenting the reforms engaged by Côte d'Ivoire between 1998 and 1999 in the forest sector before talking about results obtained including: the maintenance of the machinery for the processing of industrial wood, institutionalization of partnerships in managing classified forests, the progressive appropriation of sustainable management of the forest resources as well as the improvements in the institutional and legal framework. An action plan for 2007 – 2015 was prepared to reinforce the benefits and improve the expected environmental, socio-economic and political benefits.

These presentations were followed by site visits, which enabled participants to visit a pine tree plantation Sébhory in the Dalaba and see participative forest management being implemented in and around the classified forest of Nialama in Lélouma. At Sébhory, the participants followed with interest, a presentation on the experience of participative management between forest administration and the local population on a 486 ha pine tree plantation which includes 300 ha of protected forest. Activities carried out by the village committee throughout the plantation surveillance zone include fire prevention and control of illicit cutting, maintenance of the plantations and logging operations. Revenues generated are divided as follows:

- Village committee:	25 %
- Rural Development Collectivity (CRD):	10 %
- Prefecture:	5 %
- National Forestry funds:	20 %
- Development funds:	40 %.

Attendees also noted the insignificant part of collections allocated to the village communities on the one hand and on the other hand the possible difficulties in accessing development and forestry funds, which are kept national at the national level.

Further the various presentations and site visits lead to debates related to the following aspects:

- *Level of responsibility of the population;*
- *The distribution key for the sharing of generated benefits;*
- *Development funds: the means of access and management;*
- *National forest funds in Senegal and Guinea: its accessibility to various beneficiaries, the forest service, decentralized collectivity and prefectures in particular;*
- *Land tenure issues;*
- *Charcoaling issues: its management and consequences;*
- *The under-laying issue of the forest sector's contribution to the national wealth;*
- *The issue of insufficient statistical data on resource availability, mainly the forest cover,*

*productivity and volume of available timber resources, etc.*

- *The capacity building of the population in terms of improving utilization of sustainable management tools in forests resource management;*
- *Reforestation opportunities related to the Real Development Mechanism (MDP);*
- *The contribution of NGOs and farmers' organization in the sustainable management of natural resources;*
- *The peculiar approach developed by Côte d'Ivoire regarding the management of classified forests;*
- *Cooperation on elephant conservation between Guinean and Ivorian forests Administrations;*
- *The lack of information sharing and the availability of tools related to satellite data at the National Department of Meteorology of Guinea;*
- *Consolidation of LAMIL Project achievements at the end of financing.*

Appropriate clarifications were provided to the above listed concerns. Participants noticed significant progress in the framework of population responsibility as regards to the sustainable management of West African forests resources. In fact, in countries represented at the workshop, populations manage the natural and financial resources themselves based upon technical rules set by the various Forest Services or as dictated by traditional practices. The decentralization institutionalized in many of the participating countries contributed to the political will to transfer the management of forest resources to the community and the local population.

The participants also made recommendations on the following:

- 1) The issue of environmental degradation in the 'massif du Fouta Djallon';
- 2) Damage caused on forests by charcoal production;
- 3) The implementation of an open dialog process on the forest resource management of West African.

### 3.2. Management of trans-boundary forests resources in West Africa.

This issue was the subject of an interactive debate centered on the issue of cross border resources management. The debate identified three potential difficulties related to the management of shared resources. They are the following:

- Refugees settlement in neighboring countries: The Representative of the World Food Program (WFP) in Guinea gave a presentation on this issue. In his presentation, he talked about the huge environmental damage caused by refugees as result of firewood collection and other forest resource needs such as the sale of forest products and development of agricultural lands, the latter was considered a main source tension among refugees and local population. The principal actions to restore environmental damage, undertaken by the WFP, are the development of improved fuel stoves, tree production and the creation of plantation, gardens in schools and lowlands cultivation for women farmers. Often refugees leave behind completely degraded areas and host countries face considerable difficulties rehabilitating these areas;
- The illegal exploitation of shared forests resources: Various presentations illustrated that often illegal traders operate just beyond their countries borders to illicitly exploit forest products of the neighboring countries, either alone or in collaboration with the local population. Sometimes those

criminals hold licenses for exploitation issued by the forest administration themselves. This escalating situation is due to insufficient synergy and communication among forests services in the various countries on one hand and corruption at international border control points on the other hand. There is also a lack of monitoring services by the forest services within the sub-region.

The illegal movement of forest products found in some neighboring countries' markets are most often for the local consumption yet still in violation of international regulations. This situation undermines the demand for product and results in price increases. Also sometimes products are traded without official documents which could be in violation of international trade standards.

In response to these recurrent problems of cross border resource management, some actions have been initiated by the various forest services. Pertaining to this, the Kolda declaration (Senegal), which directly addresses cross border trade issues and the decentralization of forest resources management, was presented to the participants of the workshop. The declaration recommends the implementation of the sub-regional programs of coordinated management of resources, capacity building and the implementation of an information exchange system as well as a communication mechanism among forests services. Evidence, however, have shown that this declaration has had little effect, which partly explains why the problem of cross border resources management in this zone remains a problem. To address this, participants recommended the following:

- *To re-launch or reinforce meetings, on periodic basis, among forests services in the border regions;*
- *To plan meetings of cross-border authorities;*
- *To implement and monitor joint measures taken.*

### 3.3. Sub-regional dialog for a sustainable Management of forests resources

This issue was the subject of two (2) presentations:

- *A meeting on the report of the meeting on West African forests held in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), on July 3rd and 4th, 2006;*
- *A report of the meeting of West African Ministers in charge of Environment held in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) on April 24th ,2007.*

The first meeting addressed the huge forests resources of the sub-region which play a central role as a source of livelihood for the local populations. Despite the relationship between man and forest, the contribution of forests to the wealth and economy of many countries remains relatively limited, disregarded and/or under-evaluated. Due to this situation, many countries have put in place policies and programs to better manage and use data related to the forest resources in order to assure the preservation of these resources and their sustainable usage. But results to date have shown that expectations are not yet met. This is due primarily to the fact that forests management initiatives are most often undertaken on an independent and sporadic basis, resulting in the lack of participative planning between States on the one hand, and an insufficiency of cooperation between neighboring countries on the other.

The initiation of a consultation framework, or dialog, on forest management in West Africa is necessary and represents a critical element towards a sustainable solution. This realization is what

lead the meeting to recommend the establishment of a “dialog on forest management in West Africa”. In addition to this, the meeting requested that the Minister of Environment of Burkina Faso kindly support the process of forest consultation policy by appropriately informing his Peers about the said consultation, especially those of Nigeria and Ghana.

A second meeting on the consideration of a proposal related to the implementation of a consultation on the forests in West Africa was initiated jointly with ECOWAS, UEMOA and the Burkinabe Ministry of Environment, on the occasion of a ministerial conference on the Program of Strategic Investment on the Sustainable Management of Farmers’ Lands in West Africa (TERRAFRICA/FEM). Participants of the meeting appreciated this initiative, as it meets requirements. They also adopted a road map dealing with the following issues:

- To analyze, in regards to the sustainable management of forests, the current situation related to problems and concerns of the countries involved;
- The elaboration of terms of reference for a regional consultation body;
- The elaboration of a working document that will be submitted to all parties involved. Moreover, the ECOWAS and the UEMOA will organize a regional meeting on the issue.

In addition to those presentations, debates enabled participants to insist on the necessity of cooperation among the forests authorities of the sub-region, especially in the trans-boundary areas. This cooperation is extremely important, as it enables to avoid disputes related exploitation and trading of resources, and to reinforce the efficiency of measures of the sustainable resources management in the States. The workshop agreed, as its global object, *to contribute to the reinforcement of the dialog on the sustainable management of forests in West Africa*. The action plan adopted by the participants focuses on the following specific goals along with an intervention list that follows:

**1. To put in place an Information, Education and Communication system (I.E.C.) on sustainable management of forests in West Africa** and focus on the following activities:

- *Creation of database for sharing expertise on forest resources;*
- *Creation of a coordination and monitoring committee to oversee the activities of the national representatives or Point persons for the dialog on the sustainable management of forests in West Africa;*
- *To keep the sub-region countries up to date on current initiatives and the evolution of the process of dialog on the management of forest resources in West Africa.*

**2. Develop synergy for the sustainable management of shared forests resources in West Africa** through the following activities:

- *Study trips;*
- *Exchange/technical meetings among various actors;*
- *Identify common points within the forest management regulatory and legal texts of neighboring West African countries.*

**3. Promote a political commitment of West African decision makers for dialog on the sustainable management of forest** by:

- *The implementation of supporting mechanisms on the operation of coordination body and the monitoring of consultation on the sustainable management of forests through deduction from tax and forests fees;*
- *The promotion of better sustainable management practices and dialog on the forests resources for a socio-economic and cultural development of the countries.*

Beyond this proposed action plan for the reinforcement of cooperation among forests administrations, the workshop request that the Minister of Agriculture, Husbandry, Environment, Water and Forests of Guinea, to intercede with his peer of Burkina Faso for the re-launch of the sub-regional dialog for the sustainable management of forests resources in West Africa.

Labé, November 20th, 2007

# ATELIER SOUS REGIONAL SUR LA GESTION DES RESSOURCES FORESTIERES EN AFRIQUE DE L'OUEST

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