Formalization of chainsaw milling in Central Africa: Preliminary insights

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What’s domestic timber? Who is concerned?

- **Lumber (sawing, logs)**

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<th>National Production</th>
<th>Imports</th>
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<td>Industrial</td>
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<td>Consumption</td>
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- **Different sources:**
  - Industrial scraps (not processed with chainsaw)
  - Small-scale exploited timber (chainsaw, mobile saws,...) but with legal permits
  - Informal small-scale exploited timber

- **Different groups of stakeholders:**
  - At the local level: customary owners, chainsaw millers and their teams, administrations, local governments
  - Along the chain (« on the road »): road hauliers, « corps habillés »
  - At the market level: traders, buyers, administrations, local governments
Domestic sawn timber: Volumes assessment

(Source: ETFRN News 52, December 2010)
Necessary step for formalisation: A complete and adapted legal framework

- No regulation in CAR and DRC
- Suspended regulation in Gabon & Congo
- Complicated regulation in Cameroon

- Legal (or economic) impossibility to get an official small-scale logging permit
- Forestry laws under revision
- Influence of the VPA-FLEGT process
Necessary step for formalisation: Putting individual sawyers together?

- An often proposed solution: facilitating access to permits, funds and resources to formal groups of chainsaw millers
- Small-scale permits are individual by law
- Small-scale milling is an individual activity
- Little success of collective management of forest lands or revenues in Central Africa
- Maintain the option of individual permit, with easily controlled rules
Necessary step for formalisation: Reforming forest tenure?

- State remains the official owner of natural resources (especially when they are traded)
- Access to timber through informal arrangements with customary owners
- No incentive to sustainably manage timber stocks
- Need to recognize customary forest tenure (outside permanent forest domain) to:
  - Involve local population
  - Increase economic revenues
  - Improve control on small-scale logging
Necessary step for formalisation: How much to get legalised?

- One financial constraint: the future cost of legalisation is equal or under the present cost of remaining informal.
- Simplify as much as possible the legalisation procedure, with very low level of tax.
- Ensure that possessing a legal small-scale permit significantly lowers the para-taxation level.
- An anti-corruption campaign that goes beyond the forest services and includes major public authorities (police,...)
Legalising chainsaw milling in Central Africa: Major challenges

- Revision of the forest laws and regulations
  - Facilitate access of chainsaw millers to small-scale logging permits
  - Promote partnership between industrial (legal, certified) companies and small-scale loggers
- Revision of the official land tenure
- Improve the concrete enforcement of the forest law
  - Discussion and negotiation platforms at the national scale
  - Real sanctions against corrupted officers at all level
  - Economic incentives: financial compensation for the stopping of corruption (performance-based payment)
The Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) is one of the 15 centres supported by the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)

Merci de votre attention

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