atibt

THE LEADING AUTHORITY ON TROPICAL TIMBER

ACTIVITY REPORT 2016

www.atibt.org

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EDITORIAL

ROBERT HUNINK - PRESIDENT

This 2016 activity report contains a wide range of articles: a presentation of our organisation, the status of forest management in the countries where many members are active, the very important marketing project ATIBT has launched, the future of the forests and its population in the Congo Basin, etc. I am sure you will find the articles worthwhile reading.

Over the years ATIBT has gained considerable expertise with project implementation and a wealth of information is therefore available for its members, stakeholders and interested parties. Projects that are covering, for instance, forest dynamics, management plans, the REDD+ mechanism, certification, FLEGT, etc.

However, all these projects would be impossible to realize without the assistance of certain key donors. ATIBT would therefore like to thank the following donors for their ongoing support : AFD (Agence Française de Développement), European Community; FFEM (Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial), KfW (German Development Bank), through the PPECF program managed by COMIFAC, and FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization).

We are very pleased to be able to introduce in this report our new members, including a brief profile of their activities.

> ***"I would like to welcome our new members into our organisation and hope ATIBT membership will meet their expectations to the fullest."***

As regards this year's Forum, we believe that we have managed to put together an interesting agenda. The Forum, with as theme «Tropical Forests, timber and so much more», is covering the very topics our industry is faced with today, but also will be facing tomorrow !

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EDITORIAL

BENOIT JOBBÉ DUVAL - GENERAL MANAGER

The year 2016 made it possible to highlight a few significant changes that have taken place within the association. In fact, ATIBT has reinvented itself and reinforced its teams. It is ready to take on many new challenges, enthusiastically manage the projects entrusted by its donors and continue fulfilling its everyday role for its members.

> ***In order for the tropical forest management model to be sustainable, it must above all be economically viable.***

The steady increase in our membership numbers in 2016 and continuing into in 2017 is a good indicator of our momentum. It is also proof that ATIBT's role and its various forest management, certification and tropical timber promotion services are genuinely appreciated by its members.

Today, many players involved in the environment and in social and economic development are convinced that best practices must be valued, and that a genuine timber industry in the Congo Basin countries must be established, by combining both know-how and the resources of international foresters and local players.

Such management - which should always strive to continually improve - aims to highlight the full value of the forest, its production and the activities it hosts. Diversifying the timber and forestry trades, which coexist or could coexist within durably managed spaces, is therefore a huge challenge. Along with such diversification, the improvement of timber processing activities and the valuation of related products remain priorities, among other things. The year 2017 will inevitably be marked by debates on all of these issues, as well as many others, including the difficult assessment of Intact Forest Landscapes (IFL). One must not lose sight of the fact that in order to be sustainable, the management model of African tropical forests must above all be economically viable.

2 PRESENTATION

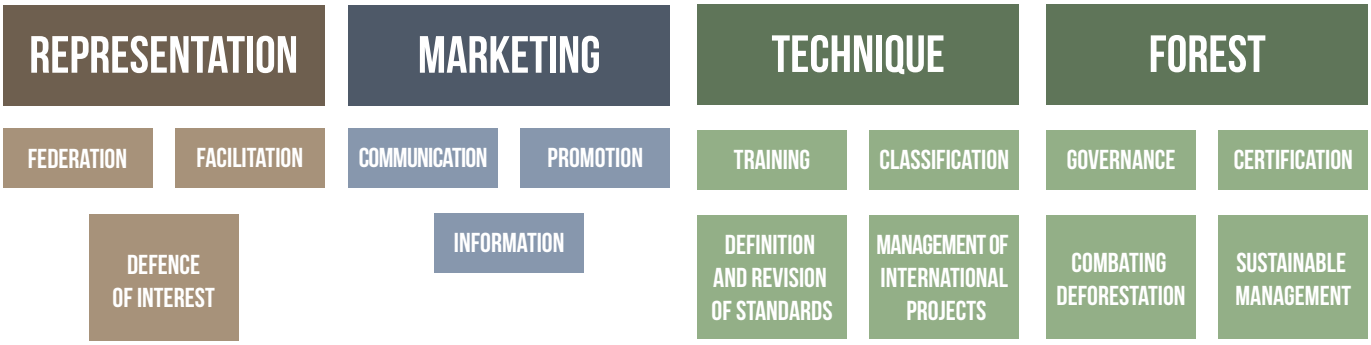
INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER TECHNICAL ASSOCIATION

> **ATIBT's vocation is to serve the tropical timber industry, from the forests to the end user. It plays a leading role in the implementation of international projects dedicated to the sustainable and responsible management of tropical forests.**

ATIBT defines itself as :

- a leading technical and scientific authority in terms of tropical timber resources, a key partner for industry professionals and their representative when dealing with various stakeholders (governments, international organizations, NGOs, etc.),
- a manager of international programs that support tropical forests.

The main working vectors of the ATIBT are :



ATIBT actively collaborates with countries, international organisations and research centres that are working towards the legality and sustainability of the sector

It promotes the sustainable, ethical and legal trade of tropical timber as a natural and renewable resource. This activity is key for the socio-economic development of producing countries, and for consuming countries it is a valuable source of raw materials that are destined for various industrial uses.

Working with ATIBT means sharing its mission: contributing to the sustainable development of a responsible tropical timber-forest sector, from the forests to the market, a mission that simultaneously ensures economic viability, social fairness and the preservation of forest ecosystems.

The ATIBT statutes are available online on the website www.atibt.org/en in the section: about us/governance/statutes/

The ATIBT interacts with wide-ranging stakeholders:

FORESTRY & PROCESSORS | STATES & COMMUNITIES | DONORS | CERTIFICATION OFFICE | RESEARCH & FORMATION | ASSOCIATIONS & UNIONS | SUPPLIERS & SUBCONTRACTORS | NGOS, PRESS MEDIA | CONSULTANCY FIRMS

ATIBT ensures improved knowledge of the raw material - wood - in terms of its use, industrialisation, consumption and promotion. It supports national and international forest certification systems in order to enhance their transparency and credibility.

The association consists of approximately 120 members from around 20 countries that produce and consume tropical timber. It therefore represents the interests of several thousand individuals who are involved in the management, processing and trade of tropical timber. ATIBT intervenes in several areas: forest management, the timber industry, standards and uses. The scientific and technical committee performs a dual role, that of advisor and ethical benchmark.

Thanks to its technical experts, ATIBT is able to develop and promote various standards and tools for the industry:

- The *Tropical Timber Atlas*
- *General classification of tropical timber*, which establishes international pilot names
- Internationally recognised rules of classification and measurement for tropical sawn-timber, round timber and timber trunks
- *The User Guide for African timber that are eco-certified in Europe*
- A practical guide aimed at public buyers: *Developing and implementing a responsible timber purchasing policy*

ATIBT actively participates in international dialogue and intervenes in both national and international forest policy decision-making, acting as a facilitator through practical collaboration with national ministries and international organisations such as the FAO, the European Union, the AFD, COMIFAC, the FFEM, the KFW, the OIBT, the UICN, the STTC, the WWF, the WCS , the FSC and the PPEFC. This cooperation is vital in order to find realistic collective solutions to the problems and challenges that tropical timber and forests face.

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3 GOVERNANCE

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TRAINEE

Elise Héral
An ENSTIB engineer,
supporting the ATIBT forum
as well as the less known
timber species project

THEY EMBARKED ON A NEW PROFESSIONAL ADVENTURE IN 2016

Bérénice Castadot
Project director

Camille Renard
Financial and
administrative manager

JOINED THE ATIBT TEAM IN 2017

Caroline Duhesme
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FLEGT-REDD projects
caroline.duhesme@atibt.org

* working in 2017 jointly with the ONFI and ATIBT on an agroforestry project

5 MEMBERS

In 2016, the ATIBT has increased its membership by 30%, bringing its total membership to more than 100. This continued growth of its members, coming from all backgrounds, activities and regions of the world, is a good indicator of dynamism. It is also proof that the role of the ATIBT and its various actions in favour of forest management, certification and promotion of tropical timber are truly esteemed by its members.

WHY THEY CHOSE TO JOIN US IN 2016

SENBCI

"We decided to come back to ATIBT because it's a platform for exchange where our members can conduct business with other ATIBT members while keeping abreast at all times about the general state of the timber trade."

IVORY COAST

"Through its membership in ATIBT, Nature+ wishes to join a platform where tropical timber professionals can get together and exchange with each other. Through the growth of its activities, Nature+ shares information, conducts training courses and provides technical and scientific assistance, thereby encouraging best practices in forest ecosystem management."

BELGIUM — **www.natureplus.be**

"As a manufacturer of outdoor power equipment, STIHL is dependent on a sustainable forest management. Since the ATIBT stands for a sustainable management of tropical forests, we share the same vision and we have a mutual interest in the rainforest. We also believe that we can contribute to the ATIBT's goals by offering education and training on the safe use of outdoor power equipment in the tropical rainforest. Furthermore, we are looking forward to the exchange and networking between the other members of the association."

GERMANY — **www.stihl.fr**

"We wanted to join ATIBT because we want to secure our sourcing of tropical timber both qualitatively and quantitatively, as well as legally and sustainably. We wish to benefit from ATIBT's knowledge regarding the players that are active in terms of sustainable forest management. And with the assistance of ATIBT (and LCB), we would like to establish a due diligence system. In addition, we would like to collaborate with ATIBT to expand the range of tropical timber species we use to make railway sleepers. Lastly, we are counting on ATIBT to help us communicate on the durability of tropical timber."

FRANCE — **www.sncf-reseau.fr**

"*Having discovered ATIBT following a collaboration with one of its members, we wish to participate in the local development of tropical timber through the production of renewable energies, within the context of sustainable management that delivers added value to producer countries.*"

FRANCE — **www.cabinet-merlin.fr**

"*From the beginning of our business in 1948 our credo "Wood is our World" has been our firm belief. Today the JAF Group is a player in the international timber trade and therefore recognizes its important role in promoting sustainable forest management practices. With joining ATIBT we want to contribute to maintaining and enhancing the world`s forest resources.*"

AUSTRIA — **www.jaf-group.com**

"*We decided to work with ATIBT because first of all our very good relationship with Benoît [BenoîtJobbé-Duval, Managing Director of ATIBT] who we know for a very long time doing business in Spain. Second this gives us a great opportunity to get in contact with new companies and officials in West African countries where we are not active yet. We have the opportunity to help develop these countries together with ATIBT to treat their timber and help preserve their environment and sustainability for their timber industry.*"

UNITED KINGDOM — **www.lonzawoodprotection.com**

"*An ATIBT member since its origin, CABD had interrupted its participation, as it believed that the association's activities had become more political than professional.*"

FRANCE — **www.cabd.fr**

"*Rainforest Alliance considers ATIBT to be a solid and reliable partner that will help it achieve its objectives in terms of sustainable natural resource management.*"

UNITED STATES — **www.rainforest-alliance.org**

"*CCB fully adheres to the values promoted by ATIBT and, as such, it wants to join its network. ATIBT indeed appears to be a network that consists of key players in the tropical timber industry that share the same ethical values.*"

BELGIUM — **www.ccb-bruxelles.be**

CHRISTIAN MORASSO

"*My father was a broker for large foresters and tropical sawmills; as a youngster, I became fascinated by the hundreds of varieties and their various uses, and so I began to follow the evolving methods of production and the rules implemented in many countries. Tropical timber became a family affair. Introducing a new tropical species to a user is the greatest satisfaction that a broker or expert can experience, not just for the added value that the buyer gets, but especially for the progress that the producer country will benefit from: the ATIBT represents all of these stakes at the same time, and that is why it is so beneficial to be a member.*"

ITALY — **www.woodinspector.com**

Richard FAYS : *"As I've never lost touch with this organisation – which remains dear to my heart and whose survival is a major concern to me – I am rejoining it as an individual member."*

FRANCE — **www.fayswood.com**

"We became a member of ATIBT because we believe in - and invest in - the sustainable management of forests. Because the future of our forests can only be guaranteed as long as timber retains its commercial value. With ATIBT, we have a true ally."

BELGIUM — **www.vandecasteele.be**

"The Cema-Bois de l'Atlas company has joined ATIBT because the association plays a leading role in the implementation of international programmes related to the sustainable management of tropical forests and the responsible development of the timber sector."

MAROCCO — **www.cema-atlas.com**

PIERRE-YVES LE FLECHER

"As I come from a generation of sawyers and have extensive industry experience, I would like my skills to benefit companies that work with ATIBT, an association that is strongly involved in terms of its presence in the African timber sector. The areas of intervention that I propose are fully aligned with the field's genuine expectations and needs. Indeed, the sawing process and the mastery of cutting tools are key elements that determine the success of each installation, both in terms of productivity as well as output performance."

FRANCE

Clément CHEVIGNON : *"As I've always been aware of ATIBT in my professional environment, I learned of the Association from the inside, as an interim Project Manager in 2015 and in collaboration with its current missions. As I share the Association's vision and values, becoming a member seemed like the next logical step.*

FRANCE

"Gabon Special Economic Zone (GSEZ) SA wanted to join ATIBT to share information about the tropical timber resources available in Gabon with stakeholders across the globe through various platforms of ATIBT to accelerate the development of timber processing industries in the country and entice foreign investment in this sector.

GSEZ SA trust that :
- ATIBT resources will help in responsible forest management and sustainable development of timber industries in Gabon.
- ATIBT will provide firm platform to disseminate the information about the timber sector business opportunities in Gabon to all interested stakeholders."

REPUBLIC OF GABON — **www.fr.gsez.com**

"We decided to join ATIBT to showcase to tropical timber sawyers that Forézienne is a dynamic company that provides its clients with band saw blades and circular saw blades, as well as customised blade sharpening solutions. On the occasion of the upcoming Dubai forum in Dubai, we wish to promote our technical expertise as well as our new training offer."

FRANCE — **www.forezienne.com/fr**

"*We are re-joining ATIBT as we do not see another organization that better represents our African partner sawmills in the industry. With legality and sustainability at the forefront of everything we do and stand for, it is now more important than ever for our knowledge of African timber production to be the very best and for our relationships with our suppliers as strong as possible, we believe ATIBT will be a great asset for accomplishing these goals.*"

UNITED STATES — **www.baillie.com**

"*The integration and respectively consideration of the African continent has become one of the major challenges for the international economy system. In this regard our company is anxious to contribute to this challenge on both, an economical and a social, level to fulfill our social responsibility within a global perspective. ATIBT will help us in this challenge.*"

GERMANY — **www.bocs.de**

"*By joining ATIBT, we wish to join a federating network of tropical timber industry professionals and experts. Our ATIBT membership should enable us to benefit from market information and news that is useful for our business. It also aims to enhance the industrialisation of timber supply chains in accordance with international standards.*"

FRANCE — **www.bollore-transport-logistics.com**

"*Penrod decided to join ATIBT because we identified ATIBT as an association of like-stakeholders and other interests all working to broaden world supply and trade in a variety of tropical species. ATIBT stood out as an entity that meshed well with Penrod's values. Their work is important to our company and our industry and we wanted to be a part of that.*"

UNITED STATES — **www.thepenrodcompany.com**

"*Hotim has always been a pioneer in engineering and processing lesser-known species. Therefore getting and providing technical support is essential. The large network of ATIBT can support this with not only the experience of sawmills and traders but also sub-suppliers are participating with their problem-solving way of thinking. Hotim also believes the dialogue with the member-NGO's is essential for preserving the world's forests and encouraging sustainable forest management.*"

THE NETHERLANDS — **www.hotim.nl**

"*The maritime logistics of logs in Central Africa is part of the Necotrans group's genesis, and includes the launch of Necoship, which is dedicated to the maritime consignment of logging ships, as well as the first Getma agencies in both Cameroon and Gabon. Today, the group revisits its traditional businesses via its implantations on the Brazzaville river terminal and the Kribi multipurpose terminal (Cameroon). Necotrans aims to become a strategic partner of Central Africa's forestry companies.*"

FRANCE — **www.necotrans.com**

"*We decided to join ATIBT to keep informed with current business trends in Africa, meet suppliers and be updated with environmental issues and concerns.*"

UNITED STATES — **www.hardwoods-inc.com**

LIST OF ATIBT MEMBERS

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AFD
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EUROPEAN COMMISSION
François BUSSON
FAO
Robert SIMPSON
OIBT
Marcellin NZIENGUI

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Grégoire NKEOUA
REPUBLIC OF IVORY COAST
Claude SORO DOPLÉ
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC
Yves YALIBANDA

HONORARY MEMBERS

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Franck CRETI
EX-PRÉSIDENT
Willy DELVINGT
EX-PRÉSIDENT CONSULTLAND
Jean-Jacques LANDROT
EX-PRÉSIDENT
Henri MONTCERISIER

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BOCS
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CABINET MERLIN
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DWS DUBAI WOOD SHOW
Walid FARGHAL
FOREZIENNE MFLS
Sébastien VALOIS
FORM INTERNATIONAL
Paul HOL
FRM
Bernard CASSAGNE
GSEZ
Nitin MISRA
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Antoine DE TOUCHET
NÉCOTRANS
Arnaud TISSEAU
OREADE BRECHE
Stéphane RIVAIN
ONF INTERNATIONAL
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RAINFOREST ALLIANCE
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SNCF RÉSEAU
Patrizia GREGORI
STIHL
Johannes WETZEL
TEREA
Benoît DEMARQUEZ
TERMOLEGNO
Ilaria FORNASIER

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6 BUDGET

INCOME STATEMENT		
	2015	2016
Operating income	1 195 139	1 317 197
Operating expenses	1 150 514	1 339 478
Trading profit	44 625	-22 280
Financial income	1 252	-
Financial expenses	2 166	-
Financial result	-914	-
Pretax profit	43 711	-22 280
Extraordinary income	67	81 841
Exceptional expenses	4 318	-
Extraordinary result	-4 251	81 841
Income	1 196 458	1 399 039
Expenses	1 156 998	1 339 478
Net profit	39 460	59 561

CASH FLOW 2016		
At first of January 2016		469 023
Contributions		103 785
GMBH : training, expertise and sale of publications		50 000
AFD : marketing (disbursement) at 09/16/2016	at 16/09/2016	450 000
FFEM : FLEGT REDD (disbursement) at 09/07/2016	at 07/09/2016	295 611
DEVCO C.E. : FLEGT IP (disbursement) at 11/22/2016	at 22/11/2016	267 720
Annual inflows		1 167 116
Annual output		1 145 375
At 31th of December 2016		490 764

7 SECTOR OVERVIEW

These pages present an overview of the forest timber sector, focusing on ATIBT's intervention zones: Central and West Africa (Ivory Coast)

FOREST AND TIMBER SECTOR MANAGEMENT IN CENTRAL AFRICA

Source OFAC
www.observatoire-comifac.net/pages/africa/forest_management.php

Over the last twenty years, forest concessions have undergone major changes in the Congo Basin. They have made undeniable contributions to the sustainable management of forest massifs and have made it possible to overcome the states' limited management capabilities. They have also ensured that the timber sector remains sustainable and increases its contributions to economies and to local growth.

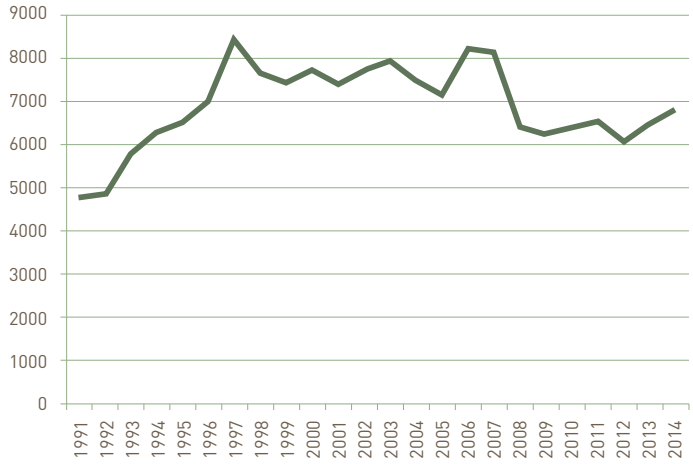
Some key figures :

- 50 million hectares in concessions (2016), stable since 2006, representing a dense rainforest surface of 171 million ha
- 371 concessions, representing an average surface of 133,000 ha per concession
- 24 million hectares with a 2016 development plan = half of the concession surfaces
- 8.8 million certified hectares, 5.6 million of which are FSC-certified

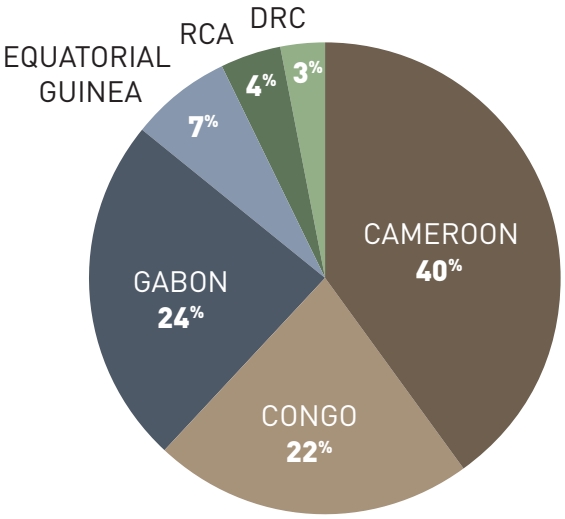
	Allocated forest concessions			Managed concessions		Certified concessions	
	Surface (ha)	Number	Average surface (ha)	Surface (ha)	%	Surface (ha)	%
Cameroon	6 281 212	105	59 821	5 522 682	88%	3 609 931	57%
Congo	13 913 699	50	278 274	5 555 629	40%	3 211 003	23%
North-Congo	8 891 773	19	467 988	4 410 557	50%	3 211 003	36%
South-Congo	5 021 926	31	161 998	1 145 072	23%	0	0%
Gabon	14 197 038	97	146 361	9 469 504	67%	2 033 627	14%
Equatorial Guinea	740 122	48	15 419	0	0%	0	0%
RCA	3 698 531	14	264 181	3 023 880	82%	0	0%
DRC	10 762 055	57	188 808	775 713	7%	0	0%
Total	**49 592 657**	**371**	**247 063**	**24 347 408**	**49%**	**8 854 561**	**18%**

PRODUCTION OF LOGS IN THE CONGO BASIN BY THE INDUSTRIAL SECTOR

The industrial forestry sector operates mainly in Central African forest concessions.
Following a period of slow growth, Central Africa's industrial forestry sector produced about 8 million m^3 of logs annually between 1997 and 2007.



Log production (1000 m^3/year)



Annual log production by country (2014)

Production in Cameroon and Congo has remained relatively stable over the last ten years, while that of the DRC - already at a very low level given its forest surface - still tends to decline. CAR seems to have gotten back to the levels observed prior to the 2013 armed conflict.

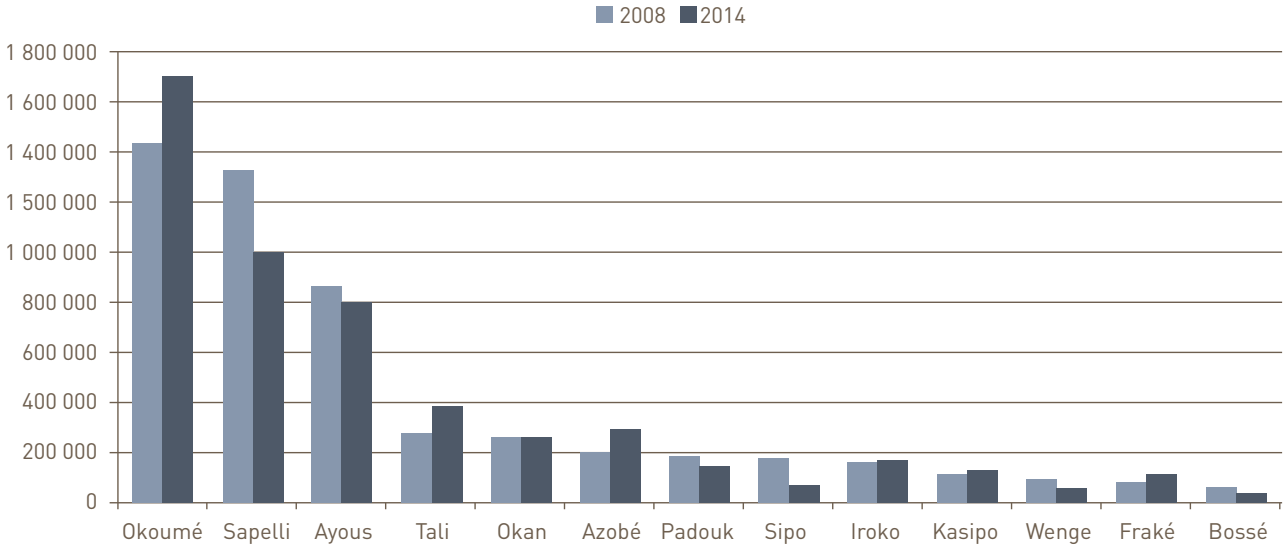
SPECIES HARVESTED

Production is dominated by a few species, with the three most harvested species representing 54% of the sector's production figures.

With 1.7 million m^3 of logs produced in 2014, Okoumé remains the leading species harvested in Central Africa. The Sapelli comes in second, with 1 million m^3, with production covering the whole of Central Africa (Congo and Cameroon are the main producers). Ayous is the third most harvested species, with about 800,000 m^3, mainly from Cameroon.

The overall share of other species has not increased in recent years.
The reasons for this vary: some species have limited potential, which is already fully exploited (such as the Sipo or the Iroko) due to their dispersal in the forests, even though they are present on a significant portion of the forest massif. Other species have a localised presence (or abundance), such as the Wengé, which is predominantly present in the DRC and the Congo. Other species are not fully exploited, due to a niche market and/or prices that do not guarantee profitability, particularly for concessions that are far from the ports, as cost prices are greatly impacted by transport costs.

However, some species of hardwood have seen an increase in their harvesting rates. This is the case with the Tali and the Azobe (since 2008), and with the Okan as well (prior to 2008).



Annual estimated species production in 2008 and 2014 in the Congo Basin (m^3/year)
Source: OFAC

INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION

Legitimately, countries are becoming increasingly demanding with sector operators, requiring them to process more of the logs extracted from forests locally. To date, the minimum legal processing rates for each forestry operator are as follows:

- In Congo, 85%, logs exported beyond the 15% quota have been charged duties since 2016
- In Gabon, 100% since the end of 2009
- In Cameroon, 100% with possible exemptions for species of lower value
- In CAR, 70% since 2008
- In the DRC: at least 70% for 10 years for holders of processing units and national operators
- In Equatorial Guinea: no information available

The level of processing of timber that is to be exported has risen sharply, largely due to the measure implemented in Gabon in 2009 which bans the export of logs.

	1993-1999	2005-2008	2010 - 2014
Cameroun	57%	88%	ND
Congo	42%	57%	56%
Gabon	15%	37%	100%
Guinée Equatoriale		11%	10%
RCA	77%	59%	48%
RDC	69%	39%	ND
Afrique Centrale	42%	54%	66%

Central Africa's main processed product is one resulting from primary processing, the sawmill, and represents 1.3 million m^3 exported by Central Africa (2014 estimate). Now, most of what is produced for export is artificially dried. In recent years, a few secondary processing units have appeared, specialising in planed sawn timber, but they are still marginal (around 5% of sawmill production).

EXPORTS

Timber produced by the industrial sector is mainly exported. Currently, the local market is currently primarily supplied by the artisanal sector. Industrial operators merely have a marginal role in the domestic markets. The regional market, both in Central Africa and the rest of the continent, is still highly underdeveloped. The main export destinations are the European Union and Asia.
Asia's share has increased sharply over the period spanning 2005-2008, with approximately 60% of all exported volumes. In 2014, this figure reached 66%.

FOREST CERTIFICATION

Thanks to an awareness campaign and major international debates, distributors (and to a lesser extent consumers) and certain importing States (for their public procurement) are now concerned about the origin of the timber they buy and the conditions under which this timber was produced. In order to ensure that producers are adhering to a legal and sustainable management approach, independent certification systems attesting to proper forest management and legality have been implemented.
Due to concerns about good state governance, certification also ensures the proper implementation of validated management plans as well as compliance with laws and regulations.

Various forest management certification systems are currently used in Central Africa:

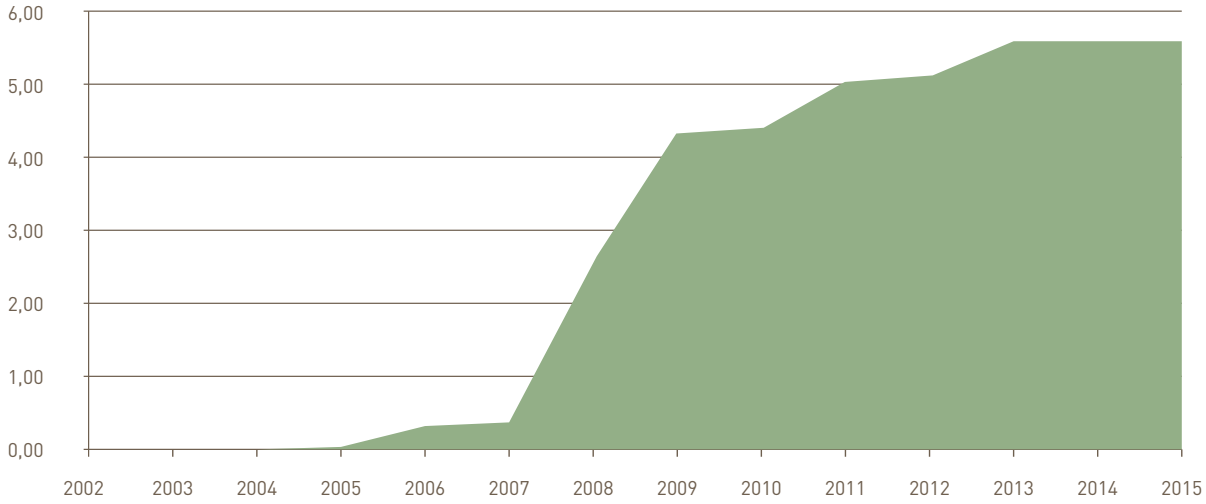
		Certified surfaces (2016)
FSC	*Forest Stewardhip Council*, the forest management certificate that is considered to be the most demanding	5 473 393 ha
OLB	*Origine Légale des Bois* (Legal Origin of Timber), certificate of legality developed by Bureau Veritas	2 549 430 ha
VLC	*Verification of Legal Compliance*, developed by the Rainforest Alliance	2 392 708 ha
All certificates		8 728 379 ha

(Please note that some concessions are certified according to 2 different systems)

There are two types of certification:

• Certification that attests to the timber's legal origin: OLB and VLC. The SGS office has terminated its TLTV (Timber Legality & Traceability Verification) programme, whose last certificate in Central Africa expired at the end of 2015.

• Certification that attests to sustainable management: the only one that is operational in Central Africa is FSC. After a strong period of growth in terms of FSC-certified areas between 2005 and 2013, which contributed to a significant advance in Central Africa compared to the Amazonian basin, certified areas have been stagnating in recent years.

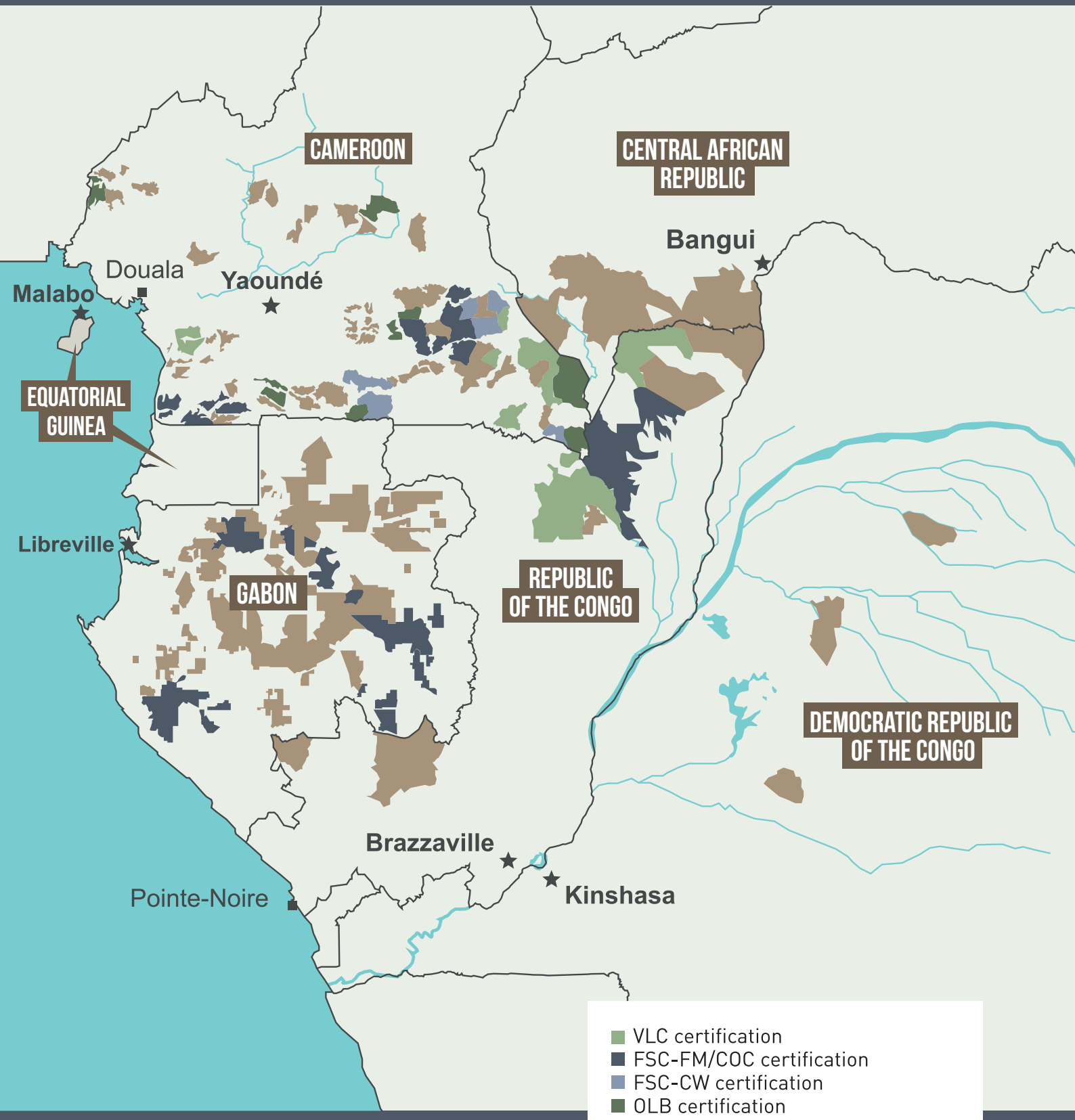


Evolution of FSC-certified surfaces (million ha)

The PEFC system (300 million hectares certified worldwide in June 2016) aims to develop itself across Central Africa by acknowledging national certification schemes. PAFC Gabon and PAFC Cameroon are now members of PEFC, as the Gabonese scheme has been elaborated and recognised by the PEFC Council and the Cameroonian scheme is currently in the submission process. A feasibility study has been carried out in Congo. To date, no forest unit has yet been PEFC-certified in Central Africa.

	Certified areas (FSC, OLB, VLC)
Cameroon	3 609 931 ha
Congo	3 064 943 ha
Gabon	2 053 505 ha
Equatorial Guinea	0 ha
RCA	0 ha
DRC	0 ha
Central Africa	8 728 379 ha

MAP OF THE CONGO BASIN'S FOREST CONCESSIONS



Source : Comifac observatory
Situation in June 2016

FOREST GOVERNANCE: FLEGT, DUE DILIGENCE, LACEY ACT

FLEGT action plan

As early as 2003, the European Union developed the FLEGT (Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade) action plan, which provides for a set of measures to exclude timber and timber products that are illegally sourced from the European market, to improve the supply of timber from legal harvesting and to increase the demand for legal products.

This action plan consists of two main components: the Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPA), and the European Union Timber Regulation (EUTR). The FLEGT action plan was subject to an evaluation commissioned by the European Union that was completed in 2016.

Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs)

The Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs) are trade agreements that are concluded between the European Union's exporting countries and that aim to establish a system ensuring of the legal harvesting of timber in the signatory countries.
To date, 5 countries in Central and Western Africa have signed a VPA with the European Union (EU):

- Cameroon: VPA in effect since 2011
- Central African Republic: VPA in effect since 2012
- Republic of Congo: VPA in effect since 2013
- Ghana: VPA in effect since 2009
- Liberia: VPA in effect since 2013.

Gabon and the Democratic Republic of Congo have started negotiations with the EU to sign a VPA.
The VPAs aim to improve the governance of producer States, through the use of various tools:

- a legality verification system
- a traceability system
- independent auditors
- independent observers (optional)

Ultimately, FLEGT permits will be issued for timber. At the end of 2016, no Congo basin signatory country was in a position to issue FLEGT licenses. Indonesia is currently the only country that has issued FLEGT licenses since November 2016.

European Union Timber Regulation (EUTR)

This regulation requires market makers to apply «due diligence» and to be able to prove its implementation. This due diligence consists in the application of a system of measures and procedures that aim to reduce as much as possible the risk of marketing timber or timber products derived from illegal harvests.

Other initiatives to combat illegal timber trade

Like the European Union, other timber-using countries have chosen to legislate against the illegal timber trade: the US since May 2008 with the *Lacey Act*, and Australia has just adopted the *Illegal Logging Prohibition Act*, which went into effect at the end of 2014. Like the EUTR, these laws prohibit the marketing of illegal timber harvested in violation of the laws of the relevant country. The *Lacey Act* imposes a broad prohibition that ranges from sale to trade, and even possession of illegally harvested timber. However, the *Lacey Act* does not impose an obligation in terms of means, even though the administration encourages «due care» (vigilance) as a means of effectively addressing these regulatory obligations. All timber products, from logs to paper, are concerned by the *Lacey Act*.

Australia's *Illegal Logging Prohibition Act* adopts an approach that is similar to the EUTR, namely a prohibition in terms of sale and the use of due diligence. A list of «regulated» products - the only ones that are affected by the due diligence obligation - has been established.

OFAC

The OFAC, COMIFAC's technical and scientific branch, is based in the ten member countries via National Groups led by a Senior Correspondent, the COMIFAC National Coordinator. These national groups are responsible for the collection of national reference data. The other data comes from the private sector (i.e., loggers), NGOs, managers of protected areas and all members of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership. It this enables all the COMIFAC countries and their partners to have the essential tools for steering and sharing knowledge for better governance and sustainable management of forest ecosystems.

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LOGGING IN THE REPUBLIC OF THE IVORY COAST

The natural forest surface in Ivory Coast was estimated at 16 million hectares in 1960 and under 2 million hectares at the beginning of the 21st century. This represents an annual deforestation rate of 300,000 hectares (Lanly 1969; FAO 2003; FAO 2005).

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Most logging activities take place in the rural domain, which generates 90% of the timber harvested by industries (Kadio 2009). In 1994, Ivory Coast adopted regulations aimed at laying the foundations for further industrialisation and the sustained management of the rural domain via a reform of the forest sector that was inspired by the world bank (Verdeaux 1997). Temporary logging permits that previously structured logging in the rural area were replaced by PEFs (périmètres d'exploitation forestière - forestry exploitation perimeters) with a minimum area of 25,000 ha (along with a requirement for a management plan) and a duration lasting between 10 and 20 years. In August 2014, Ivory Coast promulgated a new Forest Code (Law no. 2014-427), whose main change resides in the fact that ownership of the tree is reassigned to the owner of the land, ending the allocation of the PEFs.

PRODUCTION AND EXPLOITED SPECIES

© Shutterstock - Ceiba pentandra

Total processed volumes amounted to 630,159 m^3 in 2011 (compared with 1,698,926 m^3 in 2004), all natural forests and plantations combined. The most exploited species during the year was the Fromager (Ceiba pentandra), representing 260,706 m^3 or 41.4% of the harvested volume. Next was the Samba (Triplochiton scleroxylon) with 65,909 m^3 harvested, representing 10.5% of the total harvest (DIPF, 2011).

INDUSTRY AND EXPORT

From the early 1960s, national forestry production was mainly destined for exportation to the European market. Currently, 90% of the industrial production of timber is exported (RDCM 2013). Sawm timber constitutes the bulk of the products marketed abroad, since logs were banned from export in 1995 (by decree no. 95-682 issued on 6 September 1995, banning the export of raw and squared timber and timber blocks). In 2012, the country exported 408,028 m^3 of sawn timber; volumes decreased slightly in 2013 (MINEF 2012). Over half of exports go to Europe.
Plywood rotary cutting and manufacturing units have also been established, in order to meet both local and global demand. In addition, following the ban on log exports, many sawmills have shifted to secondary and tertiary processing. Faced with the scarcity of resources and thanks to the strength of its broad industrial network, the stakes of processing in the Ivory Coast entail the ability to achieve even more advanced processing, such as joinery, tertiary processing that involves chairs, doors, etc.

FOREST MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION

Forest certification has begun to develop in Ivory Coast, notably through legality certification, which first started in 2013. Three logging and processing companies are OLB-certified. The FSC-certification approach has not yet been implemented.

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THE COMMITMENT TO GOOD FOREST GOVERNANCE PROCESSES

FLEGT VPA

Like other African countries such as Congo, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Ghana and Liberia, which have already signed a FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreement, the Ivory Coast also wants to commit to the FLEGT process.
In 2013, the Ivory Coast government began negotiations with the European Union for the signing of a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) by 2017.

REDD+

In light of the very real short-term threat of extinction of the Ivorian forest due to agricultural expansion, the government has expressed a strong commitment to the REDD+ system since 2011. The country's forestry investment plan includes the protection of the last forests from infiltration by agricultural activities, as well as an extensive programme to restore the forest cover through plantations. The development of agroforestry projects is also a focal point of the national strategic plan against deforestation.

8 MARKETING PROGRAMME

2016: FAIR & PRECIOUS TAKES OFF

Carried out in 2015, the marketing study for the promotion of certified African timber products made it possible to:

- understand the buying environment of certified African timber,
- define the 10 key points* associated with an appropriation of the organisation and the sector's stakes,
- develop communication hypotheses,
- carry out tests to verify these hypotheses in France, Germany, Italy and Great Britain,
- draft a communication strategy plan.

This strategy was praised by professionals and the communication objectives were validated at the ATIBT forum in Milan in October 2015.
All of this work has enabled stakeholders to build competence in terms of the sector's stakes and to become proactive in their approach. Since the spring of 2016, the implementation of the marketing programme's communication component favouring the promotion of certified African timber has been in effect and it has provided ATIBT with a number of fundamental tools designed to reposition the Association within its professional environment:

- the renewal of its identity and its graphic charter,
- a presentation brochure,
- a website,
- a collaborative platform.

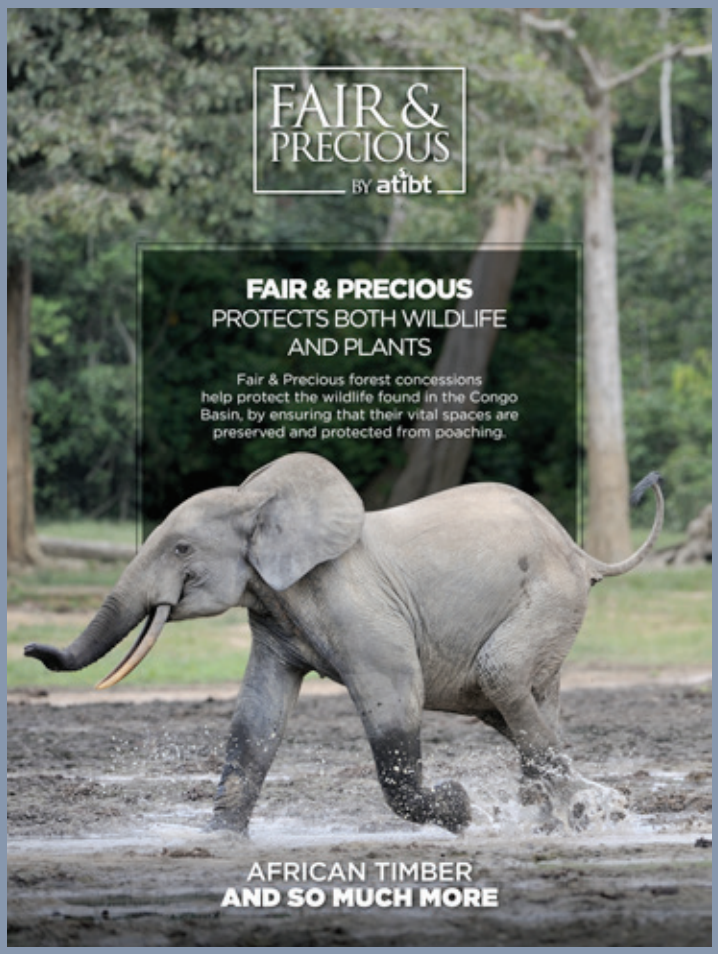
In parallel to this work, the launch of the «Fair & Precious» brand is under way:

- registration of the trademark at the INPI patent office and at the French and European level,
- drafting of a usage guide for those who will carry and promote the brand,
- drafting of the semantic and iconographic charters,
- drafting of a usage guide governing the use of the collective brand,
- creation and adaptation of the «African timber: much more than wood» campaign,
- creation and development of the «Fair & Precious International» website.

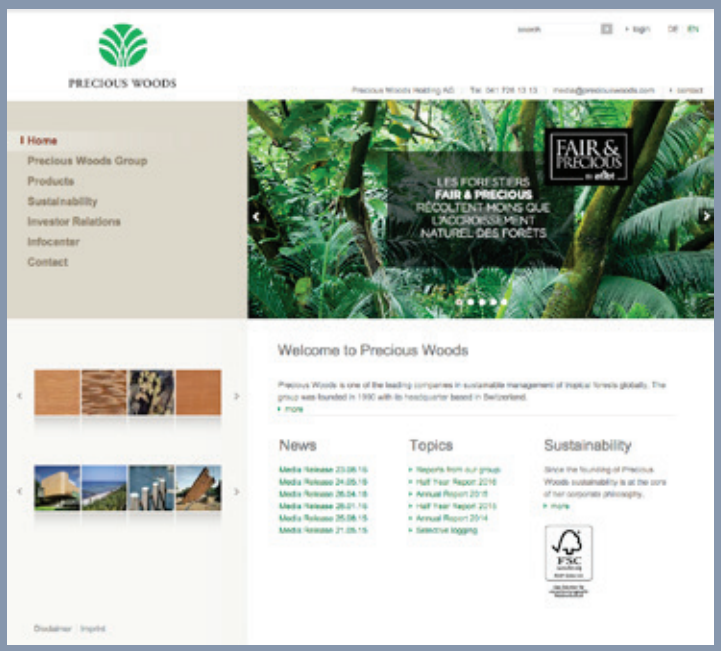
The Dubai forum in March 2017 is a unique opportunity to launch «Fair & Precious», as it will give the brand international visibility. Significant work will be implemented in Africa involving trade unions, local media, employees and the people who depend on forest concessions. The legitimacy of «Fair & Precious», and that of the profession, is taking off in Africa.

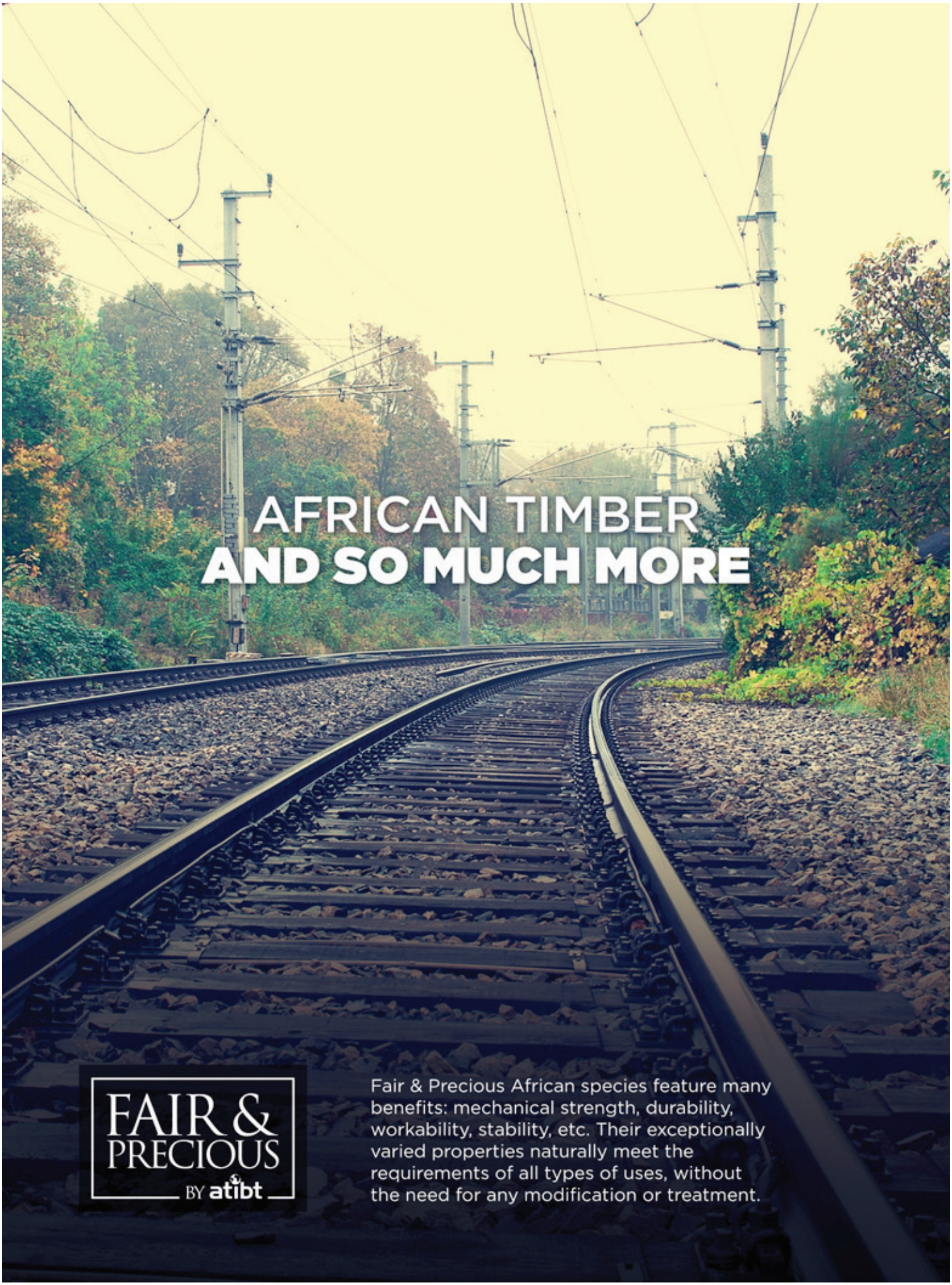
* *1. The timber species falling within the scope of the study / 2. a production history / 3. certifications / 4. regulations / 5. key figures / 6. processing stages / 7. finished products / 8. the sector's players / 9. how tropical timber is perceived / 10. sustainable development and value enhancement*

POSTER CAMPAIN “AFRICAN TIMBER, AND SO MUCH MORE“



BRAND INTEGRATION ON MEMBER'S WEBSITES




AFRICAN TIMBER
AND SO MUCH MORE
FAIR & PRECIOUS
BY atibt
Fair & Precious African species feature many benefits: mechanical strength, durability, workability, stability, etc. Their exceptionally varied properties naturally meet the requirements of all types of uses, without the need for any modification or treatment.

FAIR & PRECIOUS
A CATALYST FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
Fair & Precious companies contribute to the well-being of families by providing them with access to a wide range of services, such as education, medical care and housing.
FAIR & PRECIOUS BY atibt
AFRICAN TIMBER
AND SO MUCH MORE

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AFRICAN TIMBER
AND SO MUCH MORE

FAIR & PRECIOUS BY atibt
FAIR & PRECIOUS
PROTECTS BOTH WILDLIFE AND PLANTS
Fair & Precious forest concessions help protect the wildlife found in the Congo Basin, by ensuring that their vital spaces are preserved and protected from poaching.
AFRICAN TIMBER
AND SO MUCH MORE

Poster campaign,
"african timber, and so much more".

ENHANCING THE IMAGE OF LOGGING COMPANIES IN PRODUCING COUNTRIES

In 2017, the marketing programme will dedicate part of its efforts to enhancing the image of logging companies in producing countries. In fact, the role that they play - from an economic and social standpoint - must be highlighted and relayed by the local players as well. For this reason, field work will be carried out to directly reach out to associations, trade unions and companies. It is important that we understand their perception of logging companies, so that we can implement local communication actions aimed at raising awareness of the role of logging and processing companies. The objective is to demonstrate that it is the stakeholders of producer countries that want a strong timber industry, in which they are directly involved in terms of economic and social considerations. They need to speak out.

Beyond the expected local impact, this background work must make it possible to demonstrate that the obstruction of the production, processing and export of certified timber to Europe is an irresponsible act. It is also a way of responding to the frequent attacks that logging companies are subject to.

PROMOTING THE VALUES AND VIRTUES OF TROPICAL TIMBER IN EUROPE

The beginning of 2017 will allow us to proceed with the launch of the Fair & Precious brand. A communication campaign will successively highlight its social, economic and environmental aspects, in order to promote the values supported by the sector. It will also gradually place African timber at the heart of the campaign so as to showcase the qualities of this material. The slogan: «*African timber, much more than wood*» allows us to preserve both unity and consistency. This campaign will officially be presented at the ATIBT forum on 5 and 6 March and will be promoted:

- via press relations (press conference and press releases),
- on the «fairandprecious.org» website,
- on the websites of those who carry and promote the brand, in the magazine press (interior design, DIY, architecture, etc.),
- advertising and point-of-sale information (in-store displays and info points) among the brand's promoters,
- on the ATIBT stand at the Dubai WoodShow,
- on social networks.

Upon returning from Dubai, targeted e-mailing actions will be implemented in the European countries, aimed at:

- prescribers, public and private buyers,
- distributors,
- construction and public works companies,
- major contractors,
- the specialised press (press releases),
- NGOs and influencers.

The second half of 2017, as well as the years 2018-2019, will mainly consist in ensuring that the brand is increasingly visible to these various audiences. We will proceed as follows:

- deploying the Fair & Precious brand's «professional and scientific» components,
- implementing SEO actions and purchasing digital exposure,
- conducting media campaigns at the European level,
- implementing targeted direct marketing actions,
- conducting merchandising operations at the European level,
- ongoing searches for partnerships and new members,
- seeking partnerships with European television channels such as Ushuaïa TV,
- developing an events strategy via participation in Europe's main trade fairs.

AFRICAN TIMBER
AND SO MUCH MORE
Fair & Precious African species offer a wide range of intense colours that cannot be found among European species. This provides them with a genuine uniqueness and aesthetic qualities that are highly sought, which contributeto their reputation in sectors such as furniture, carpentry, cabinetmaking and decorations.
FAIR & PRECIOUS
BY atibt

AFRICAN TIMBER
AND SO MUCH MORE
As Fair & Precious
African timber is naturally resistant
to external, aesthetic and ecological
aggressions, it stand out as
an ideal solution for the construction
of decks, pool areas and
outdoor facilities.
FAIR &
PRECIOUS
BY atibt

8 WIDE ANGLE

THE FUTURE OF THE TROPICAL FOREST AND ITS POPULATION THE CONGO BASIN

ROLAND POURTIER
Professor Emeritus of Geography, University Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne

CENTRAL AFRICA IS NEITHER BORNEO NOR THE AMAZON

The second largest tropical forest massif in the world after the Amazon (170 million ha of dense rainforests, 116 million ha of dry forests, clear forests, wooded savannas), the forests of the Congo Basin stand apart from other tropical forests thanks to their low deforestation rate, particularly in terms of humid dense forests: 0.14% per year between 2000 and 2010. According to the COMIFAC[1], this rate is in fact even lower than during the 1990-2000 decade (0.19% per year). Recent Global Forest Watch (GFW) data, however, indicates that deforestation has significantly increased in the DRC during the past few years: the changes are not uniform throughout the vast Congo Basin, they vary across space and time, directly impacting demographic dynamics. Another specificity of the Congo Basin's forests: the carbon losses from logging are clearly lower than those of most other tropical forests: according to a recent study[2], the carbon stock maintained after a primary harvest ranges between 92 and 97%, compared with an average of 76% for all tropical forests. Harvesting causes less fragmentation than elsewhere; it causes relatively limited losses of biodiversity. This basic data highlights the originality of the Congo Basin forests, which helps to put things into perspective regarding all of this catastrophic talk of tropical deforestation: Central Africa is neither Borneo nor the Amazon. It is, however, exposed to common challenges: how to reconcile timber harvesting and the preservation of exceptionally rich ecosystems while respecting the rights and practices of indigenous populations.

SATELLITES : A VALUABLE AUXILIARY

The forests of the Congo Basin have been the subject of countless studies since the pioneering work of the colonial forest services. Modern remote sensing techniques now provide accurate images of the condition and evolution of the plant cover. Satellites are now a valuable auxiliary for both knowledge and forest management. A considerable number of public, private, national, regional and international organisations are contributing to the production of knowledge on forests. Among them, NGOs that are striving to protect nature play a crucial role in preserving exceptional forests. As for the forestry companies, they are increasingly adhering to responsible logging principles, which are in line with sustainable development objectives. Their practices and the many expertises which they are the subject of renew the perception of logging in a positive manner, even though certain clichés persist - due to a hysteresis effect - regarding the «plundering» of forests. However, vigilance is still necessary because bad practices always tend to chase away the good ones when governance is weak.

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MAJOR PLANETARY STAKES

Research topics have continued to diversify, by expanding from botanical inventories and the technical and economic aspects of logging to environmental, social and political considerations[3]. Tropical forests have catalysed the passions of those ecological movements that aim to protect biodiversity and defend indigenous peoples. They are now being used to offset excess greenhouse gas emissions from northern countries. All of the systems imagined to make this compensation work (from prevented deforestation to REDD +) represent major planetary stakes.

Questions relating to tropical forests, their preservation as well as the legal and technical framework of their exploitation didn't wait for the Rio conference to be raised and debated, but it is true that the last one - a genuine sounding board - enhanced their legitimacy. New concepts such as I**ntact Forest Landscapes (IFL),** new assessment tools and new certification instruments, including the **Forest Stewardship Council (FSC),** are changing how we approach forests and are promoting the acceptability of timber logging. The complexity of forest dynamics is now taken into account, casting aside reductive talk that has more to do with ideology than science.

DYNAMIC ECO-ANTHROPOSYSTEMS

The broadening of knowledge, feedback, mounting pressure from ecological movements and the awakening of opinions in northern countries have changed the perception of tropical forest environments. Once a sectorial approach, it has become holistic, including the entire spectrum of sciences involved in the study of forests, from botany to anthropology. Forests are not and have never been, except perhaps in a forgotten time, singular entities that fall outside the anthroposphere. They are dynamic eco-anthroposystems, even where the presence of man initially appears to be non-existent. In contrast to mineral deserts, the equatorial forest, a place of intense biological activity, digests human traces, covering them with an invisible shroud of oblivion. It seems to have no memory. However, should we search, we will find proof of human presence in forest formations once considered virgin forests. Forests do not facilitate palaeontological, prehistoric or archaeological research, which is more at ease in savannas and arid environments where the gathering of lithic objects is all the rage. It has not revealed all of its secrets, but the clues of an ancient human presence (charcoal, traces of metallurgy, fragments of pottery, etc.) are sufficient to testify to **an ancient symbiotic dynamic between forest formations and human activity.**

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1. Les forêts du bassin du Congo. Forêts et changement climatique (Forests of the Congo Basin. Forests and climate change), COMIFAC 2015
2. Francis E. Putz et all, Sustaining conservation values in selectively logged tropical forests: the attained and the attainable, Southern Cross University, ePublications, 2012.
3. Marie-Claude Smouts, Forêts tropicales, jungle internationale. Les revers de l'écopolitique mondiale (Tropical forests, international jungle. The other side of global eco-politics), Sciences Po Presses, 2001.

THE LOCAL SCALE: INHABITANTS OF THE FOREST

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The Bantu say they are indebted to the Pygmies for having initiated them to the forest, to have taught them how to read this universe where one quickly loses one's bearings. Thanks to them, they were able to build their space on a plot of land and tracks, the first stage of anthropization. Unlike the Pygmies, and although they also practice hunting, gathering and fishing, the Bantu transform the forest by opening up cultivation clearings by fire. After a year or two, the field - rapidly overcome by weeds - is abandoned to forest fallow land. Along with pioneering species such as the African corkwood tree (Musanga cecropioides), or other heliophilous species, including okoumé in the western part of the forest massif, there are others that give rise to a secondary forest. **With the Bantu farmers, the forest enters a cycle of destruction/recomposition.** In 20 or 30 years, a biomass that is ready to be burned again is reconstituted, forest fallows being an essential land marker[4], thanks to which the forest emerges from a lack of differentiation. A precise mapping of the cultivation clearings («plantation») and fallows at the different stages of forest replenishment makes it possible to measure the spatial impact of what Pierre Gourou called a «tropical clearing». Maps at 1:50,000 scale of the vegetation of eastern Gabon developed by photo-interpretation in 1974 showed the limited role of plantations and fallows and their concentration along scarce communication routes[5]. Recent mappings from satellite images result in comparable configurations. During the last half-century, following a major rural exodus and in a context of moderate population growth, the size of rural populations in Gabon has remained roughly stable at around 300,000 inhabitants. Given the small size of village farms, and considering a 20 to 30-year rotation, the land availability required for this system to operate can be estimated at between 500,000 and 1 million hectares, broadly speaking, or around 2-4% of the national territory. Village agriculture, whose agricultural lands are increasingly stabilised, exerts only discreet pressure on the forest. The transition from extensive systems to a fixed agriculture that saves space is only necessary in the vicinity of cities when forest areas become scarce, making the cultivation/long fallow cycle impossible.

The slash-and-burn practice has caused quite a stir. It was decried from the start of colonisation, especially by water and forest agents and loggers who saw it as a waste of woody material. Up to the beginning of the 20th century, it became known as «Raubwirtschaft», a rapine economy that destroyed the natural environment. Judgments are not as definite today, but this form of agriculture is often still regarded as economically archaic and ecologically destructive. It is in fact a production technique that is labour-saving and well suited to populations that only have rudimentary tools and operate in low-density environments where land availability is not

counted[6]. The village economy, however, is not limited to the food production spaces. It is part of the wider sphere of hunting and gathering spaces, which can be expanded over relatively large distances but which are very difficult to map because they are often lost within the shifting confines of spatial uncertainty.

Village agriculture enters into symbiosis with the forest's dynamics. The case of the okoumé is exemplary in this respect; a heliophilic species, Gabon's flagship tree benefits from clearings. It finds its home in abandoned agricultural clearings, alongside roads, on the edges of savannas. Its dissemination was thus favoured by the farmers, as Aubréville summarised by this phrase: «The okoumé is the son of manioc»[7], a description which, in its conciseness, emphasises the importance of the **dynamic relationships between humans and the forest.** Several forest characteristics result from anthropogenic degradation, an example being the population of limba (Terminalia superba), which are abundant in certain areas of the Mayombe. The limbali populations (Gilbertiodendron dewevrei), whose homogeneity contrasts with the great diversity of species that are characteristic of humid dense forests, are rather relict formations of paleoclimates. The debate on the natural or anthropogenic causality of forest environment changes is still open.

Forest dynamics are strongly conditioned **by population density, which is an essential parameter in terms of regulations and the disruption of relations between societies and their environment**[8]. Although not entire free of a human presence, the Congo Basin's forests offer vast spaces that are uninhabited or barely scarred by scattered populations whose impact on the forest environment is firmly kept in check. One need only fly over the region to be convinced of this. Although most of the forest areas have probably been explored in recent centuries, populations have not grown much and, moreover, they suffered a demographic haemorrhage at the time of the colonial contact. Until recently, the Congo Basin's populations exhibited a situation of abnormal hypo-fertility in terms of the African context, an anomaly that had intrigued administrators and colonial doctors. Medical and anthropo

4. Suzanne Jean, Les jachères en Afrique tropicale. Interprétation technique et foncière (Fallow land in tropical Africa. Technical and land interpretation), memoir of the Institute of Ethnology, Musée de l'Homme, 1975.
5. 1/50,000 map of eastern Gabon's vegetation, PNUD, CTFT, 1974.
6. Roland Pourtier, «La femme et le feu. Agriculture sur brûlis, production sociale et territoire en Afrique centrale forestière» (Woman and fire. Slash-and-burn agriculture, social production and land use in Central African forests), in Organisation spatiale et gestion des ressources et des territoires ruraux (Spatial organisation and management of rural resources and territories), ULMR Sagert, CIRAD, CNEARC, Engref, Proceedings of the Montpellier colloquium 25-27 February 2003, pgs. 69-75.
7. André Aubréville, Etude sur les forêts de l'Afrique équatoriale française et du Cameroun (Study on the forests of equatorial Africa and Cameroon), technical section of tropical agriculture. Bull. Scient. no. 2, May 1948.
8. Roland Pourtier, «La dialectique du vide. Densité de population et pratiques foncières en Afrique centrale forestière» (The dialectic of emptiness. Population density and land practices in Central African forestry), 1986, Politique africaine (African policies) no. 21, pgs. 10-21.

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logical research, especially among the CAR's Nzakara, have provided useful elements of understanding[9]. Thanks to the work carried out since 1979 within the framework of the CIRMF (International Centre for Medical Research in Franceville), and thanks to improved health care and urbanisation, perhaps even to psycho-sociological changes resulting from independence, fertility levels have nearly returned to Africa's average levels. However, mortality rates - in particular among infants - remain high. The equatorial forest is a reservoir of viruses, as evidenced by the drastic epidemics of haemorrhagic fevers such as Ebola. Above all, endemic diseases, most notably malaria (of the falciparum type, the worst kind), slow population growth. In a sanitary context that weakens the forest's inhabitants, logging camps often offer the only access to primary care.

The geographical distribution of populations is not without consequences on human/forest relationships. The policies of regrouping villages along a few transport routes, initiated by the colonial administration (both French and Belgian) and pursued by the independent states, have loosened the already loose network of human occupation. **The substitution of a linear space for a meshed space has accentuated the emptiness of highly extensive territories.** The comparison of maps drawn up at the beginning of the 20th century with the current situation is quite revealing in this respect. Accelerated urbanisation since the middle of the 20th century, particularly in the Congo and especially in Gabon (80% of the population lives in urban areas), has had a stabilising effect on village population: average rural densities range between 1-2 inhabitants/km^2. In the DRC, on the

other hand, due to very high population growth (3% per year) and an urbanisation rate still below 50%, the rural population continues to grow. This results in locally significant deforestation, especially near the Congo River (the regions of Lisala and Bumba, for example). Demographic situations are obviously not homogeneous across the Congolese basin. In Gabon, according to the new Gabonese Agency for Space Studies and Observations (AGEOS), the decrease in the forest cover was only 0.25% between 2010 and 2015. In the DRC, land clearing following population increases lead to significantly higher losses. Overall, however, the densities of most areas of the Congolese basin covered by dense forest are in the low range (a few inhabitants/km^2). The weakness of human influence is an essential factor in the guiding of management policies for the forest massif[10].

For the Pygmies as for the Bantu, the forest is not reduced to its productive function. The men who live in its midst have elevated its status to that of an **immaterial good**. They have populated it with geniuses, occult forces, they have civilised it by distinguishing between - amidst the apparent disorder of vegetal confusion - prophetic and evil sites, sacred and forbidden areas and, lastly, places of initiation and of secret society meetings. Culture and nature intermingle in these remarkable environments, not just due to their biodiversity, but their ethno-diversity as well. **Conflicts may have arisen due to ignorance regarding this invisible geography.**

THE NATIONAL SCALE: THE SOURCE OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE

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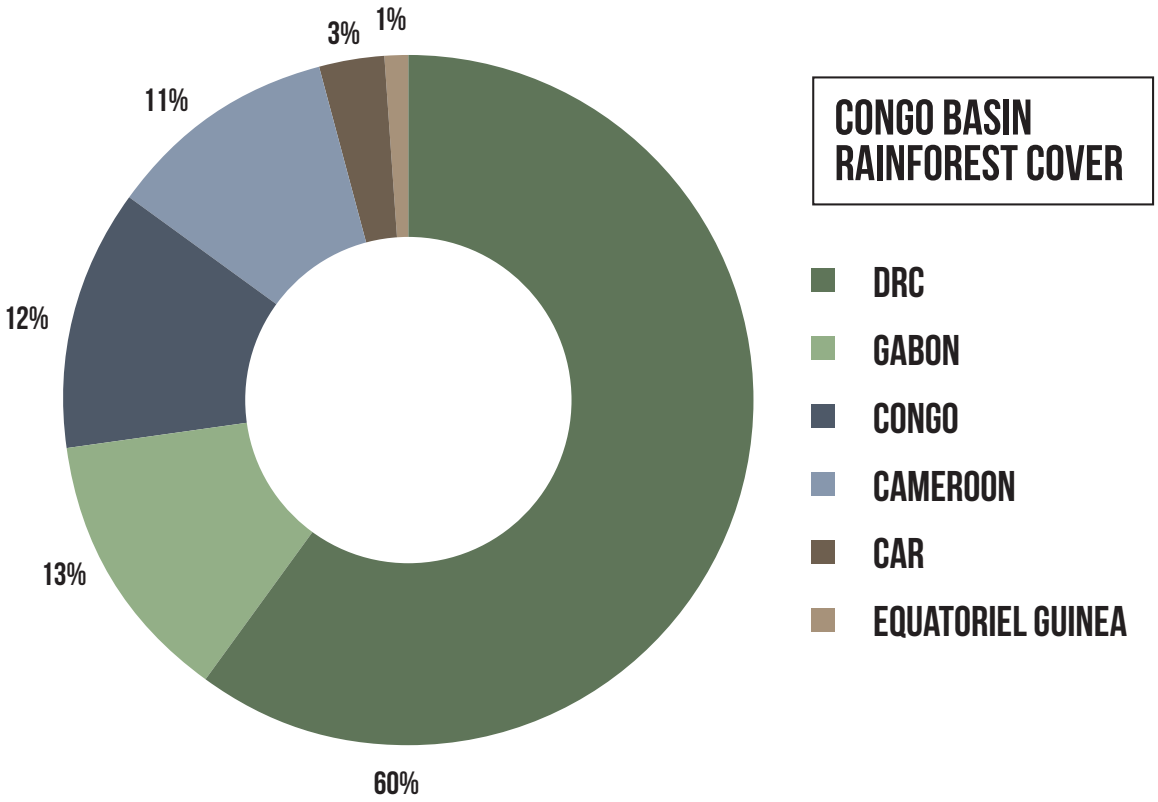
No Central African country is immune to fraudulent practices, despite the fact that a growing number of forestry companies are adhering to the philosophy and practices of environmentally sound logging. The arrival of a new generation of loggers - mainly Asian - has resulted in a return of unscrupulous behaviour. The newcomers are less constrained by eco-certifications than Europeans, who are subject to the vigilance of ecologist movements that are highly aware of tropical timber issues. Logging therefore features two sides: while some companies are virtuous, others perpetuate methods that are not concerned with the sustainability of the resource, with the complicity of local authorities. This is the case, for example, with the illegal exploitation of the kevazingo (Guibourtia demeusei) in north-west Gabon, part of which is fraudulently exported via Equatorial Guinea. These

9. Anne Retel-Laurentin, L'infécondité en Afrique noire. Maladies et conséquences sociales (Infertility in Black Africa. Diseases and social consequences), Masson, 1974.
10.Unfortunately, demographic data is both fragmentary and uncertain. In Gabon, census results have long been inflated for political reasons. In the DRC, the last census was conducted in 1984; since then, only localised surveys and dubious extrapolations are available.

practices, which we hoped were long gone, are denounced by NGOs, notably Conservation Justice. These practices are sometimes subject to legal action, but they nevertheless tarnish the image of logging.

For a long time, governments were happy to just levy taxes on logging and timber exports. In Gabon, throughout the colonial period, okoumé represented French Equatorial Africa's main budget source, of which Brazzaville was the main beneficiary. The impression of having been the «cash cow» is one of the foundations of the Gabonese identity[11]. With its independence, entry into an oil and mining cycle has minimised timber's contribution to the national economy. Until recently, the forestry sector has not emerged from its annuitant model based on the export of primary products. Even though a few timber processing companies have emerged, including the CFG plywood factory in Port Gentil, it was as recently as 2010 that loggers were obligated to carry out primary processing (sawing, production of plywood) prior to exportation. A new step in the development process, the furniture industry, is slowly taking off. Spurred by public authorities, the timber industry may at last develop an emblematic national resource after it has been exporting logs in their raw state for over a century. The other CEMAC countries have for some time been taking steps in the same direction, in order to make better use of the value chain derived from timber logging.

The action of the State also manifests itself in the creation of **protected areas,** initiated by the colonial administrations. In the DRC, the Albert Park, now the Virunga Park, created in 1925, was a pioneer of



sorts in Central Africa. Unfortunately, it is threatened by poaching in the face of insecurity and by pressure from petroleum companies (especially Soco International) that want to carry out prospecting. In the former French colonies, different categories of protected areas, wildlife reserves, prefigured the creation of national parks. The heritage function of these exceptional spaces articulates both the national and world scales. It is significant in this regard that it is a British man - now a Gabonese national - Lee White, who has control over Gabon's 13 national parks, which now cover 10% of the country's surface.

THE GLOBAL SCALE: THE FUTURE OF THE PLANET

At the global level, the importance of the Congo Basin's forests is attributed to the richness of their biodiversity and their carbon storage capacity: sub-Saharan African forests contain 10-20% of the world's plant carbon stock, the greater proportion belonging to the forests of Central Africa[12]. Researchers and environmental NGOs are increasingly concerned about the consequences of global warming and the policies needed to promote adaptation and mitigation. Humid dense forests are at the forefront of global strategies aiming to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. They constitute a reservoir of animal and plant species. The powerful international NGOs (IUCN, WWF, WCS, Greenpeace, etc.), supported by many local NGOs, are now key players in forest management. European environmental movements have demonstrated their ability to boycott tropical timber from loggers that do not meet the eco-certification requirements. Initial distrust of farmers towards «ecologists» tends to be substituted by a new trend that favours collaboration (Rougier/WWF), with some companies opting for partnerships with research centres (Precious Woods/Gembloux). The opposition between those who harvest the forest and those who advocate for its protection and/or for the rights of the people who live there has led to an impasse. The best way to resolve the contradictions is to seek a compromise between the economic, environmental and social components that will favour sustainable development[13].

The artificial preservation of «museumified» fractions of nature has proven to be impossible and shows the limits of utopias dreaming of nature that is rid of man. This does not in any way call into question the legitimacy of protected areas, but it does renew their design. **Intact forest landscapes** somewhat replace the former blurred concept of «virgin forests». The definition of IFLs as non-fragmented forest areas of at least 500 km^2 that are barely disturbed by socio-economic activities raises this question: what is meant by «barely»? Is this limited to indigenous peoples who are considered part of the ecosystem and who do not change their balance? But what about shifting culti

11. Roland Pourtier, Le Gabon, tome 1 Espace, histoire, société (Gabon, vol. 1 Space, history, society); tome 2 État et développement (Vol. 2 State and Development), L'Harmattan, 1989.
12. COMIFAC, op. cit.
13. In this regard, we should mention the HCS (High Carbon Stocks) approach in Indonesia resulting from a partnership between the GAR (Golden Agri Resources) multinational and Greenpeace, with a view to a «zero deforestation» commitment.

vators? Thresholds are always difficult to establish. Furthermore, IFLs refer to an insufficiently differentiated view of «forests». It is important that one be able to distinguish dynamic and resilient forests from fragile forests where regeneration is an issue.

Northern societies have elevated tropical forests to world heritage status, valuing their exceptional biodiversity and their regulatory climate function. The fight against greenhouse gases has created a carbon market (derived in the form of «pollution rights»), promoted all forms of «avoided deforestation», and, lastly, lead to the creation of systems for Reduced Emissions linked to Deforestation and Degradation (REDD, then REDD+). The complexity of these systems is such that their implementation is slow to materialise in the Congo Basin, especially as financial stakes interfere with the objectives that are pursued. These top-down initiatives, which are hardly of concern to the local populations, are sometimes perceived as interference from the northern countries - a way of discounting their responsibility as leading polluters - and even as an avatar of imperialism, a form of «green colonialism». In any case, they are struggling to appropriate these initiatives because they are almost exclusively steered by northern players, including the many experts who are able to capture a substantial part of the funding.

Lastly, in recent years, especially in the aftermath of the 2008 hunger riots, new global players have been active on the African scene. They are not concerned with the forest as such, but are attracted to Africa's agro-land potential. The Congo Basin is no exception to these desires. Land grabbing by European, American and Asian investors poses a new threat to forests, not in terms of the timber, but for land: **land and forestry are now competing against each other.** The Congo Basin's forests become the object of contradictory stakes, interests that are incompatible with each other, adding to the complexity of their management.

LOGGING AND THE FUTURE OF THE CONGO BASIN'S FORESTS

The multiplication of players in forest eco-anthroposystems leads one to a re-examination of the role of logging operations, by reversing the usual perspective:

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often considered as enemies of the forests, what if they were actually their best allies?
Protectors rather than predators?

It is worth noting that the logging of timber in the Central Africa's forests proceeds by selective removals, as the density of the trees selected for felling is very low (a few individuals per hectare at best). There is therefore no deforestation in the strict sense, but a one-off removal of biomass that will be compensated during the forest restoral cycle. Overall, and all other things being equal (the demographic burden in particular), **logging does not remove more than what farmers clear away. It can remove much less if certain conditions are met:** the implementation of management plans in concessions that are in line with sustainable management, and «reduced impact» logging effectively limit the damage done to forest ecosystems. Forestry companies engaged in responsible and sustainable logging also support the fight against poaching, thus contributing to the protection of animal biodiversity. Their support in terms of local growth can also promote the development of resources other than timber, especially non-timber forest products (NTFPs). The forests are therefore increasingly calling for global and multidimensional approaches.

In theory, one way of ensuring sustainable management of timber exploitation is with reforestation. This applies to temperate countries with relatively homogeneous forests. The export of this model to the equatorial environment has proven to be unconvincing. In Gabon, the STFO (Technical society of the Okoumé Forest) set up after the second world war a large-scale okoumé planting programme, which was extended after 1960, in the spirit of the preservation of the resource. Approximately 30,000 hectares were planted in the 1980s. However, this silviculture, in contrast with an ecosystem based on the diversity of woody species, proved economically unprofitable. The model was abandoned in favour of other interventions that focused on natural regeneration and that were supposed to be implemented within FCSMs (Forest Concessions under Sustainable Management).

According to recent COMIFAC data, forest concessions under sustainable management represented 38% of the concession areas in 2014. They are progressing from year to year. The 2013 report on the state of the forests indicates that the managed production forests amount to about 19,000,000 ha. As for certified areas, in June 2016 the FSC estimated them to represent around 5,600,000 ha. Some companies have been pioneers in their ethical conception of logging. In Gabon, in the 1970s, the CEB already implemented practices compatible with sustainable development, even before the concept was developed. Today, Precious Wood-CEB perpetuates the demanding methods of logging operations that are concerned with the integration of economic, social and environmental considerations. Rougier in Gabon and Cameroon, the CIB in the north-Congo and others are aiming to be exemplary. They are breaking with the image of shameless «pillaging» of the Congolese forest. The experience gained by these companies is valuable as they are catalysts of the multi-player system of forest usage.

FROM ZONING TO THE OVERLAPPING OF USES

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The great challenge is to find a modus vivendi between forest users whose objectives are diverging, if not contradictory. How do we reconcile indigenous peoples, loggers, ecologists, not to mention new recreational uses (safaris, ecotourism)? Spatial representations and practices are in contrast with the vision inherited from European law and that of local populations. The surveyor, who appeared when colonisation started, measured, traced lines, established boundaries and borders. Regardless of their legal status, forest concessions are thus demarcated with increasing accuracy since GPSs leave no doubt in terms of geo-referencing. The peoples of the forest instead live in a fluid space that has no linear limits, breathing at a pace defined by spatio-temporal mobility. Circular mobility marked by slash-and-burn agriculture. Seasonal mobility marked by hunting, gathering, honey harvesting and fishing. Contraction or dilation of the living space blurs the superimposed limits of use.

National administrations and international organisations have favoured zoning. The allocation of forest areas between permanent forest areas for production, protection and non-permanent forest domains, according to ITTO and FAO categorisations, as well as the definition of community forests, fall within an exclusive approach anchored in «Roman» land rights, which is credited with the creation of «reserves» of all kinds. This cadastral land survey has shown its limits: neither forest peoples nor ecologists understand it. Some current considerations, supported by a renewed interest in the «common ones», call for the superimposition of rights allowing both land security (which implies spatial precision) and overlapping usage rights, or even new forms of cooperation. In a recent article[14], Alain Karsenty developed these topics, touching upon both inclusive and exclusive rights, which may enable us to overcome the contradictions inherent in multi-use spaces. The management of FCSMs operating in 25 to 30-year cycles means that no more than 4% of the concession areas are made available on an annual basis for cutting: this leaves room for other activities, in particular gathering (non-forestry products, medicinal products, etc.), hunting and fishing under certain conditions, and forest discovery trips or safaris (ex: at the CIB in northern Congo). The recognition of the rights of the various players, and the possibility of including them, overlapping them across time and space, is a realistic objective. The rules must nevertheless be respected: the future of the forest is largely a matter of governance.

In conclusion, consideration regarding the future of the Congo Basin's forests cannot be reduced to a sectoral approach. One must integrate the complex synergy between multiple determinants. For this, it can rely on a wealth of scientific knowledge about the natural and human environment and over a century's worth

of experience in forest logging and management. They highlight the vegetation's remarkable natural regeneration capacity if timber logging respects the now proven methods of renewing the resource over the long term. They also show that compatibility is possible between uses that are more complementary than competing when the players that are involved have different aims and practices that can be superimposed without it being necessary to assign them to specific spaces. Lastly, long-term observation highlights the importance of the number of men involved in eco-anthroposystem dynamics. From this point of view, the Congo Basin's forests have the endogenous asset of low population pressure. The main threat to them - of exogenous origin - lies in the significant lack of control of companies that are driven solely by immediate profits and that reiterate the destruction occurring in other tropical forests, mainly in South-East Asia. The future of Central Africa's forests is also played out in globalisation's Monopoly game.

23 November 2016

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14. Alain Karsenty, «Du land sparing au land sharing? Vers une gestion des droits superposés dans les forêts denses humides africaines» (From land sparing to land sharing? Towards the management of superimposed rights in Africa's humid dense forests), in Etienne Le Roy, Alain Karsenty, Alain Bertrand, La sécurisation foncière en Afrique. Pour une gestion viable des ressources renouvelables (Securing land in Africa. For the sustainable management of renewable resources), Karthala 2016.

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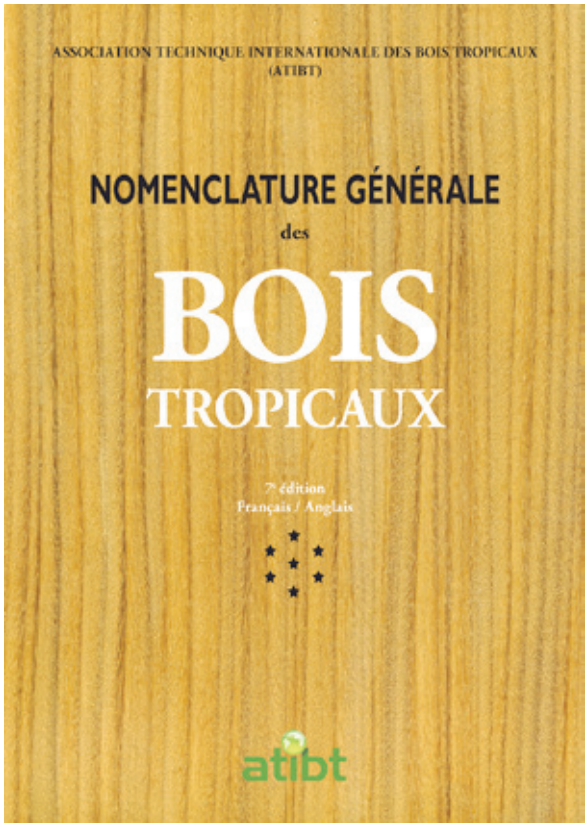
10 TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES

ATIBT oversees various activities that support its members in their daily challenges:

PRODUCTION AND DISSEMINATION OF TECHNICAL INFORMATIONS

The publication and dissemination of technical information: Professionals are always highly interested in ATIBT's technical books, such as the tropical timber Atlases, as well as the classification rules, the measurement rules, etc., which are available to them. The year 2016 was marked by the publication of two reference works: *General classification of tropical timber*, which establishes *international pilot names and the user guide of eco-certified african timber*

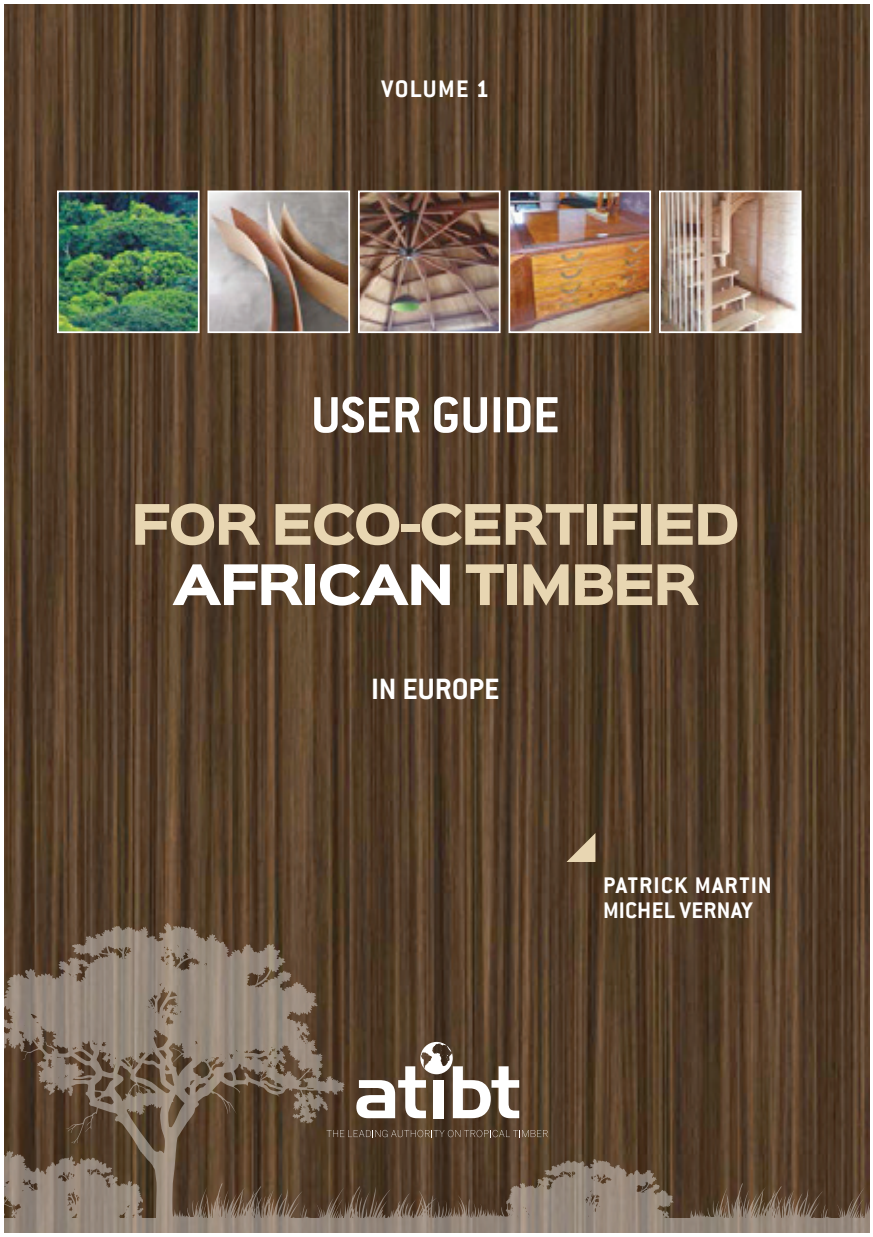
GENERAL CLASSIFICATION OF TROPICAL TIMBER
A REFERENCE DOCUMENT



For the last 60 years, the ATIBT has been updating a classification of tropical timber, establishing a correlation between each botanical species and an internationally recognized pilot name. As the most recent version dates back to 1982, it was time to update it, because among the 1,750 species that are listed, some species are no longer marketed and others that were not listed needed to be added. In the last 30+ years, taxonomic changes have also been quite numerous. This work was conducted with the financial participation of the FAO and the AFD.

It is a crucial tool for both producers and exporters in the context of contract enforcement. For importers, merchants and manufacturers, this classification system is the reference document in terms of due diligence (EUTR).

This classification system is the basis of the HS (Harmonized System) codes used by the WCO (World Customs Organization) for customs inspections.



THE USER GUIDE FOR ECO-CERTIFIED AFRICAN TIMBER
A REMARKABLE PROMOTIONAL TOOL

The user guide for Eco-certified african timber in europe is a gold mine for all professionals and users of tropical timber. In the first section, it provides technical information on the tropical timber material, highlighting its exceptional qualities, while the second section presents works for which tropical timber has proven ideal and lists the species which can be used for such concrete works. An English version is available. This guide, which was financially backed by the PPECF (Promotional Program for Certified Forestry Operations) and the AFD (French Development Agency), is an integral part of ATIBT's marketing program.

TECHNICAL EXPERTISE FOR THE PRODUCERS AND USERS OF TROPICAL TIMBER

ATIBT has been particularly active in responding to members' requests; ATIBT can intervene in order to inspect delivered materials, as it has done for the quality control of Iroko keelblocks and the quality control and implementation of decking at the Cité de la Mode and the RER train platforms, etc.

The end user can call on ATIBT's experts to obtain an opinion on the durability of a work made of tropical timber, for example: the quality control of the installation of a wooden floor.

Lastly, in the event of a commercial transaction claim, ATIBT can also intervene to arbitrate disputes. In this case, it will establish a report that makes it possible to determine - in a factual manner - the differences in quality between the goods that were contracted and the goods that were delivered.

TRAINING

ATIBT regularly organises professional training courses for the sector. The topics are quite varied: general knowledge on tropical timber, training in sawnwood and log classification, sharpening, etc. the year 2017 will be marked by the creation of a specific committee dedicated to training. It will bring together trainers from all fields of the sector, in order to provide industrial players with the most comprehensive range possible.

REVISION AND DRAFTING OF TIMBER PROCESSING AND USAGE STANDARDS

ATIBT intervenes in standardisation committees at the European and international level. In 2016, work focused on the revision of the following standards:

- EN 350 - Natural durability of timber
- EN 14298 - Estimation of drying quality
- EN 16737 - Visual classification of structural tropical timber
- EN 1001 - Terminology for the durability of timber.

Two French standards also received particular attention from ATIBT due to the absence of an equivalent standard at the European level: NF DTU 51.4 «implementation of timber decking» and standard NF B 54 -040 «timber decking blades».

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ANSWERS TO TECHNICAL QUESTIONS

ATIBT regularly assists professionals by answering the technical questions they face. The most frequent questions relate to the properties and singularities of certain specific species of tropical timber, the terms of use in commercial transactions and requests for the contact details of professionals. ATIBT has also been asked to write letters confirming a technical fact, in order to reassure consumers.

11 PROJECTS

Les projets sur lesquels l'ATIBT travaille au quotidien, sont en résonance avec les missions qui lui sont confiées : la gouvernance forestière, l'expertise technique et la promotion des bois africains. Outre le projet marketing qui est présenté en détail à la section n°8, Nous passons en revu ici les principaux projets mise en œuvre en 2016 :

PROFOR

ATIBT conducted a study for the World Bank that seeks to identify the obstacles hindering the development of a formal domestic market. The study was conducted with the participation of the ONFI and CIFOR, who respectively researched industrial groups and small and medium-sized companies. The final report contains recommendations that aim to restore fair market conditions between industrial players and craftsmen. In addition, recommendations on domestic market growth drivers, especially the use of lesser known tropical species for construction, have been produced and will be issued by the World Bank to the Congo Basin countries.

DYNAFFOR

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To improve the sustainability of development plans, production forest management tools that are now required by the laws of Central African countries. This project – which represents a total investment of approximately €7 million – is funded by the French Facility for Global Environment and co-funded by the CIRAD, the University of Gembloux, the Central African States, the private sector, ANR, REFORCO and the GEF. It aims to better understand, via scientific studies, the dynamics of tree populations through floristic survey systems and measurements observed over time on fixed plots and forest tracts. The study, made possible thanks to support from the Rougier Group and CIB, aims to both fine-tune the sampling ratios of species that are sold according to their soil and improve the performance of forest management plans. In 2017, the P3FAC project will be launched, which will sustain DYNAFFOR's private partnerships while benefitting from new private partners. P3FAC will be made possible thanks to co-funding by FFEM, the private sector, Nature+, Gembloux and CIRAD, among others. Other donors are expected in 2017.

THE FLEGT-REDD+ AND FLEGT-IP PROJECTS

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Regional meeting between forestry and industrial unions

ATIBT is implementing two projects related to the FLEGT Action Plan and the REDD+ system (through 2019).

The first FLEGT-REDD+ project, entitled «*Integration of the Central and West African tropical timber sector into the FLEGT and REDD+ system*» launched in 2013 and is financed by the FFEM (French Facility for Global Environment). Its overall objective is to actively involve the private forest sector in the sustainable management of tropical forests and in the socio-economic development of timber-producing countries through the FLEGT (VPA and EUTR) and REDD+ systems. The role of ATIBT is to support the timber industry's private sector in Europe and five African producing countries to involve it in the APV/FLEGT and EUTR processes (through information, training, communication, fieldwork, lobbying, etc.), while capitalising on possible links to forest certification and the REDD+ process.
This project has five components:
1. REDD+: involvement of Africa's private forest sector in the REDD+ system;
2. VPA/FLEGT: raising awareness and increasing the participation of Africa's private sector in the FLEGT VPA negotiation and implementation process;
3. EUTR: harmonisation of national approaches (competent authorities) in Europe and recognition of the value of private certification for the sustainable management of forests;
4. EUTR: establishment of an information platform for European importing companies;
5. capitalisation and publication of private sector experiences.

The second FLEGT-IP project, entitled «*capacity enhancement of professional associations in Central and Western Africa's private forest sector to allow a better integration of the latter in the FLEGT action plan*», was launched in 2015, and is funded by the European Union. It aims to improve communication between private sector players in the timber sector, in order to improve participation in the VPA/FLEGT negotiation or implemention processes in a selection of Africa's producing countries. It is integrated into components 2 and 5 of the FLEGT REDD+ project.
The target producing countries for these projects are: Cameroon, Congo, Ivory Coast, Gabon and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

ECOFORAF

The main objective of the ECOFORAF project is to promote the cultivation of ligneous resources while ensuring the preservation of forests and the services that are linked to them, for the benefit of current and future populations at the local, national and global levels. This project, representing a total investment of around €3 million and funded by the French Facility for Global Environment and co-financed by the Chirac Foundation, the IFIA, the COMIFAC, TFT and the Albert of Monaco Foundation, has rallied ATIBT, TEREA, Form-International and the international ONF (National Forest Office), in a concerted effort to provide technical data and markets applicable for certified tropical timber (FSC, PEFC/PAFC, OLB, TLTV, TFT). The ECOFORAF project falls within the framework of the preservation of forest biodiversity in the Congo Basin countries (Central Africa), all of which are members of the COMIFAC.

THIS PROJECT HAS ENABLED US TO :

- carry out a market study: "*Opportunities for certified tropical timber in the European market*",
- produce datasheets on ecological, wildlife and conservation zoning topics,
- become a partner of the "*Mémento du Forestier*" (Diary of the Forest) publication,
- provide FSC with elements of consideration in order to new standards before their implementation,
- provide training:
  - Managerial practices guide,
  - Certification training,
  - Training in reduced impact logging,
- production of a film that promotes certified timber to the general public via a USB device distributed at events where ATIBT is present: "*How can we preserve tropical forests?*"

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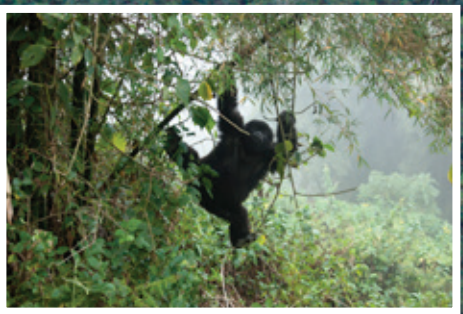

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12 HIGHLIGHTS

ATIBT FORUM - OCTOBER 2015
THE BEGINNING OF A NEW STAGE

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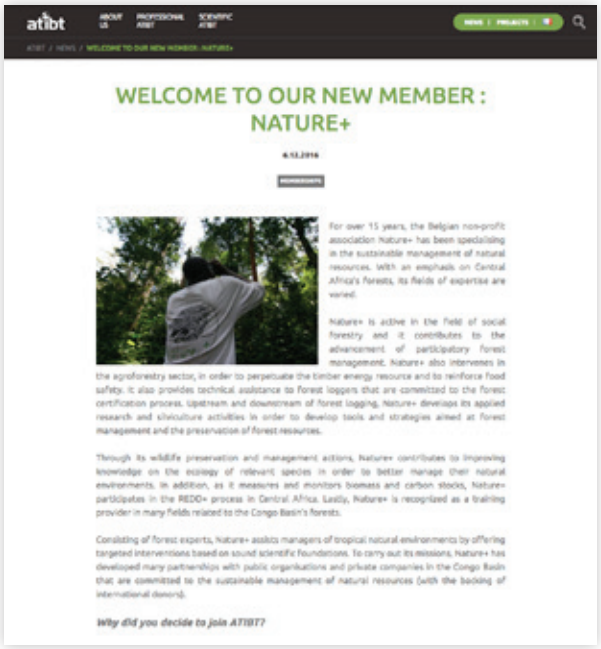
The ATIBT 2015 Forum took place at the Universal Exhibition in Milan, and aimed to raise awareness of the key role of tropical forest management and the forest product trade. This event helped to consolidate ATIBT's three main areas of work for the coming years, namely:

- facilitating market access through the marketing programme,
- promoting industrialisation in producing countries,
- supporting responsible management.

This 2015 edition will be remembered for its record participation as well as the richness and quality of the exchanges that took place.

CARREFOUR DU BOIS - JUNE 2016
ATIBT SHOWCASES ITS NEW DYNAMICS

ATIBT's presence at the Carrefour du Bois 2016 trade fair was a genuine success. The innovative, sustainable and highly functional cardboard stand was attended by visitors almost non-stop during the three days of the show. The ATIBT team responded to the many questions of visitors, who were obviously very interested in ATIBT's activities, its projects and tropical timber in general. The film "*How to preserve tropical forests*", which was screened continuously, grabbed the attention of visitors thanks to its aesthetic qualities and pedagogical virtues. Numerous books, including the brand *new Tropical Timber General Nomenclature*, were available for purchase. The event was also a good opportunity to register new contacts for future memberships, most of which went into effect throughout 2016. Lastly, this show allowed us to identify a genuine demand for training in terms of technical expertise, which ATIBT will strive to respond to.



ATIBT's new website was launched last August.
It allows us to manage information in a more dynamic manner and offers improved navigation.

ATIBT stand

FFEM video presented at the Carrefour du Bois trade fair

13 DUBAI FORUM

DUBAI MARCH 4-6, 2017

Tropical Forest : timber and so much more

20th edition

The first ATIBT Forum was held in Rome in 1982, and in various cities around the world in the following years: Manaus, Marrakech, Washington, Hong Kong, Lisbon, Valencia, Libreville, Istanbul, Rome, Brussels, Athens, Shanghai, Belém, Bologna, Ho Chi Min City, Brazzaville, Amsterdam, Milan, etc.

The ATIBT Forum - which consists of two days of debates and speeches bringing together experts from the tropical timber industry - is an opportunity for the association's members as well as tropical timber industry players to gather together to exchange relevant information among themselves. Each new edition features a different theme related to sector developments and issues, gathered between 150 and 200 participants. This year, we decided to organise it in the heart of the Middle East, in Dubai, on Sunday 5 March and Monday 6 March 2017. The theme is "*Tropical Forest: Timber and so much more*"

General Theme

"Tropical Forest: Timber and so much more"

Topics Covered

- The future of the tropical forest and its inhabitants
- Training in the wood trades
- Legality, certification and global warming
- Logistics in Dubai: challenges and opportunities
- Worldwide African timber market, especially in the Middle East

The Strategic choice of Dubai

Dubai is a strategic host setting in the Middle East: its region - whose exceptional geographical location is both a place of business and a logistics hub - is an ideal place in terms of access to the Gulf states, Iran, India, Pakistan, East Africa, etc. and for the organisation of our exchanges and the enhancement of our trade. With this in mind, ATIBT has joined forces with the Dubai WoodShow, a major international trade fair that will be held from 7 to 9 March, and that is a co-organiser of our forum.

United Arab Emirates : a major economic partner

In 2015, the dollar amount of timber imports reached just over $900 million, representing an approximate volume of 1,700,000 m^3.

Imports of timber	2013	2014	2015
in tons	1,307,168	1,704,017	1,749,406
in dollars	727,555,198	911,755,219	908,986,292

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Dubai WoodShow

The Dubai WoodShow - the Middle Eastern and North African timber industry platform that supports over 10,000 professionals - will be held from 7 to 9 March at the DubaiWorld Trade Center. Launched in 2005, this year will mark its 12th edition. It will host 264 exhibitors from over 90 countries. The previous event was attended by 8,000 visitors, %84 of which are decision makers. ATIBT and the Dubai WoodShow have decided to join forces to create synergies between the two events and mutually benefit from their collective expertise and their network. This year the ATIBT will hold a stand with its members.

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THE LEADING AUTHORITY ON TROPICAL TIMBER

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SPECIAL THANKS

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LA RÉFÉRENCE EN MATIÈRE DE BOIS TROPICAL

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