



Analog forestry: pathway for biodiversity conservation and agro-enterprise development

Setting the ground for stakeholders to live and work together

...It is important to find a solution so that all the groups in this region can live and work together and situations as occurred in the forest will not happen again...

Advice from Turing Foundation delegation when they visited some of our project sites in February 2012

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In 2011 we initiated analog forestry activities in three communities in the Bafut Fandom. At the end of the project, our achievements were threatened by a conflict that arose over ownership of one of the watersheds we were assisting the community to protect. On January 18, 2012, the Rufford Small Grants Foundation agreed with our new action plan to take the work we had started ahead. As such they gave us financial support to continue work with the Bafut community for another one year. This was welcome news in the community.

Since February 2012, we have been working with one of our partners, Forest and Agroforestry Promoters (FAP), a local NGO with good knowledge on conflict management, cautiously identifying and analyzing the causes of the conflicts in the community. We held a series of sensitization/stakeholder identification meetings and conducted two workshops aimed at resolving the conflicts.



Workshop Participants (AKOFUNGUBA water dialogue platform committee)

Participants for the workshop were representatives of the main groups of stakeholders drawn from the different villages that make up the disputed watershed at Akofungubah village. We invited twenty four participants for the problem identification workshop from the different villages. These participants equally represented the four main stakeholder groups notably farmers, grazers, hunters and authorities (traditional and the municipal council), and specific efforts were put to involve youth and women.

The participants at this workshop were charged with the creation of a watershed management structure. During the workshop, they reviewed the problems and difficulties faced in accessing, managing and conserving the watershed, and proposed solutions to these problems. These solutions were then developed into an action plan. The action plan had the holding of a conflict resolution workshop as its main focus. Other activities included training on bee keeping, improved farming practices and reinforcement of fences around water catchment areas.

From the watershed management structure was created the Akofungubah Water management dialogue platform. This platform is responsible for the execution of the action points that were decided during the workshop. The dialogue platform also came up with an action plan which consisted in visiting each of the villages in the community to identify other land related conflicts. They would then resolve the most important ones through dialogue.

They will also legalize the platform. After the training on bee keeping CENDEP would support the platform with bee hives. The income obtained from the sales of honey and its by products will be used to run the activities of the dialogue platform. These hives would be installed in the watershed/catchment areas.

A second workshop was held to inform committee members on the laws related to Land and pastoral resource management, conflict management and development of farming alliances in Akofunguba community. Participants for this workshop were members of follow up committee or dialogue platform, traditional authorities and councillors in the Akofunguba community.

At the end of this workshop, participants expressed the willingness to continue the mediation process and agreed to identify non Bororo grazers (another category of grazers) and to invite them for the upcoming workshop on bee keeping.

The traditional authorities and notables were made to understand that they are by law members of the commissions and should not in any case stay away from any meeting called by the by the chairperson of the committee.

Participants were very happy with the training and handouts they received saying the handouts will serve as a working tool for them. In the past they had tried to mediate in conflicts without proper knowledge.

The main recommendations from the workshop were that:

- a. CENDEP should assist platform members to carry out sensitization where there was conflict.
- b. Alliances especially farming alliance should be encouraged amongst farmers and grazers in this area

Activities directly geared towards analog forestry promotion included baseline studies with more than 60 farmers who are willing to create their own private/individual analog forest.

Thirty of these farmers established private tree nurseries. The analog forest options chosen included conservation, fruits, bee keeping and vegetable production. These farmers were supported with rare exotic fruit tree seeds from our friend Mr Troy. Local species were supplied by our partner Forest and Agro-forestry Promoters in Cameroon (FAP).

Ring weeding and mulching was carried out around young trees that were planted during the first phase of this project in 2011. The dead ones were replaced. As in Mbiame, many of the young trees were destroyed by cattle, sheep and goat as well as bush fires that resulted from slash and burn agriculture. Steps were taken in the dialogue action plan to stop these occurrences.

Project visibility

We produced a video titled “Making Communal Watershed Management Work”. This video highlighted the successes and challenges of analog forestry with rural communities in Cameroon and was distributed to participants at the workshop on “Climate Change Mitigation with Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples: Practices, Lessons Learned, and Prospects” that held in Cairns-Australia in February 2012. One of CENDEP staff made a presentation at the workshop titled: “Analog forestry: pathway for climate change mitigation and livelihood improvement in North Western Cameroon”. This presentation is available online at http://www.unutki.org/downloads/File/E-2_FONDZENYUY_Wirsiy.pdf

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