EUROPEAN UNION TROPICAL FORESTRY PAPER 2

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE OF FOREST CO-MANAGEMENT: EVIDENCE FROM WEST-CENTRAL AFRICA

David Brown

Overseas Development Institute
London

European Commission
Brussels

1999

LIST OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF BOXES:

SUMMARY

The principle of co-management - the involvement of local communities as well as the state in forest management - is now a major component of most internationally-supported programmes of forest sector development in the tropics, and a significant feature of forest policy and practice on a global scale. The arguments in favour of community involvement are numerous and compelling, ranging from the positive aspects of local participation (in terms of indigenous capacity and proximity to the resource) to the negative features of the alternatives (the inefficiencies of existing systems of single-purpose industrial management and the need for improved discipline in the sector).

The main agenda of development assistance to forestry over the last twenty years has been to put participation firmly at the centre of tropical forest management, and this has now been achieved in very large measure. Increasingly, however, doubts are arising as to justification of the endeavour from the point of view of its likely impacts on both the livelihoods of the poor and the conservation of the forest resource. This paper reflects on some of the difficulties which the movement presently confronts, and seeks to identify pointers to improve the design of development assistance interventions.

The main focus of interest is on attempts to promote community involvement in forest management in tropical moist forest areas of sub-Saharan Africa. In such societies, there are likely to be significant imbalances in power between industrial and non-industrial users, and questionable levels of political will in the key state agencies. Both of these present significant barriers to meaningful community participation. Attempting to change systems of land tenure to favour sustainable forest management may also be hazardous in such contexts, and offers no guarantee of improved access to the poor. An additional difficulty is that the assumptions made in the classical model of forest co-management about community identities and relationships may well not apply in the conditions which pertain today in many areas of tropical high forest. In the modern world of global integration, monetization of economies, growing social complexity and increasing pressure on natural resources, such areas are often highly unstable in social terms, and their population dynamics are not necessarily conducive to community solidarity and joint action.

Using case studies from the high forest zones of Ghana and Cameroon, the paper reviews the ambiguities in the classical model of forest co-management, and the difficulties which arise when attempts are made to apply the model to specific national contexts. Consideration is given to some of the solutions which have been offered to address these problems of local adaptation. The paper is particularly sceptical of attempts to recreate traditional resource management systems. These tend to assume the existence of effective 'traditional' leadership roles, with a basic commonality of purpose between leaders and followers. In neither case study situation are such assumptions upheld with confidence. In Ghana, the interests which divide traditional leaders from their followers may be at least as important as those which bind them together. In many parts of Cameroon, the very notion of meaningful traditional leadership is in doubt. Varying levels of social heterogeneity in the two contexts (with increasing immigration and admixing of populations) also militate against the coalescence of community forces around traditional leadership, particularly where this has an important ethnic or tribal component. In Ghana, rural populations have been highly fluid for centuries, and the typical rural community is nowadays marked by a wide variety of social statuses, reflecting a hierarchy of levels of control over, and ownership of, natural resources. Rural social structure in Cameroon is more variable, though growing in complexity.

Where geographical and social communities lack congruence, then it could be argued that resource control should be placed in the hands of territorial government rather than cultural authorities or communities, socially defined. There are arguments in favour of this approach in both case study situations, although there are also counter-arguments. Local government authorities in high forest areas tend to cover large areas and populations (weakening their ability to provide administrative incentives to forest conservation), and where electoral systems bind local government representatives firmly to central politics (as in the case of Cameroon), there is no certainty that decision-making will represent long-term local interests, let alone contribute to the conservation of local natural resources.

In contexts such as these, development assistance projects are likely to face a number of difficulties. The problems of resource allocation which they confront are unlikely to be resolvable purely in local terms, and the types of approach which are currently favoured - for example, using rapid and participatory methods to identify the key stakeholder groups - may fail to comprehend the historical dimensions of existing management systems, and may not be able to address the wider implications at cross-sectoral and societal levels. While the growing policy orientation of community forestry projects is to be welcomed, the policy issues raised are often not sector-specific, and project staff may thus find themselves confronting problems which they have no mandate to address.

The major conclusion of the paper is that the fundamental challenges facing the movement concern broad questions of land use management with important inter-sectoral dimensions, not amenable to resolution solely within the forest sector. The implications for donor interventions are various. From the project perspective, issues include the balance of interest between field level and policy initiatives; the nature, function and scheduling of pilot

activities; and the need for overarching institutions to relate local experience to national policy. In programme terms, questions are raised about the relative merits of sector and cross-sectoral approaches, the limits to devolution of governmental powers, the role of multi-sectoral planning bodies and stakeholder fora, the role of rights-based approaches and the nature of cross-national learning processes. All this calls for greater coordination between governments and their donors (as well as within the donor community), and the union of different skills and perspectives in a wide variety of social and natural sciences.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CFM	collaborative forest management
CFU	Community Forestry Unit – Ministry of Environment and Forests, Republic of Cameroon
CPR	Common property resource
FD	Forestry Department – Ministry of Lands and Forests, Ghana
FOB	Free on board
GDP	Gross domestic product
GIC	*Groupe d'initiative commune* (Cameroon)
GIE	*Groupe d'intérêt économique* (Cameroon)
GFS	Ghana Forest Service (the semi-autonomous public sector body to be created out of the Forestry Department)
HFZ	High forest zone
IUCN	World Conservation Union
MINEF	Ministry of Environment and Forests, Republic of Cameroon
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NPFE	Non-permanent forest estate (Cameroon)
NTFP	Non-timber forest product
PA	Protected Area
PFE	Permanent forest estate (Cameroon)
PFM	Participatory forest management
TUC	Timber utilisation contract (Ghana)
UFA	*Unité forestière d'aménagement* (Cameroon)
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature (NGO)

1.   INTRODUCTION

The principle of co-management, as embodied in concepts of 'participatory forest management', 'collaborative forest management', 'joint forest management' and the like, is now a major component of most internationally-supported programmes of forest sector development in the tropics, and a significant part of forest policy and practice on a global scale. In terms of donor commitments, total investments are substantial, probably in excess of two hundred million dollars annually.[1]

Co-management can be defined as "working partnerships between the key stakeholders in the management of a given forest". (Carter, 1999:1) As the term is conventionally used, emphasis is placed on the crucial (though partial) contribution of communities in those partnerships.

While critics would argue that communities have been involved in forest management for millennia, their general right of involvement as a question of public policy has, with only a few exceptions, come about within the last 20 years. It has been a late development in the policies of the colonial and post-colonial state, though of steadily growing importance in aid strategies. Our concern here is primarily with co-management initiatives supported by development assistance interventions, and not with indigenous forms of co-management.

The rationale for community involvement in forest management is multiple (see Box 1).

This growth of interest has not occurred in a vacuum. It has been linked to, and supports, other aspects of international political change more or less all connected with economic adjustment - the retraction of the state, the freeing up of previously overly-bureaucratic control structures and their transformation into semi-independent service agencies, the rise of populist approaches in development, and so on. It has also fitted in very well with shifts in aid financing. Initiatives targeted at the community level are clearly highly compatible with NGO capabilities and philosophies, and complement well official donor initiatives at the higher policy levels. An important and vocal constituency is developing with an instrumental interest in seeing the approach take root and prosper.

The nature and value of forest resources vary very greatly from context to context, and thus the implications of this shift in popular rights likewise has varied implications.

But if, as Hobley argues, the heart of the debate is about the "battle for the ownership of forest lands" (1996: 7) then - in the typical context of the post-colonial state - we are clearly talking about a political change of potentially very significant proportions.

The main agenda of development assistance to forestry over the last twenty years has been to put participation firmly at the centre of tropical forest management, and this has surely been achieved in very large measure. Since the late 1980s, moreover, there has been a shift in focus towards a concept of collaborative management as a real sharing of decision-making and access rights, underwritten by a growing appreciation of the radicalism of the venture and the centrality of policy and legislative innovations to the success of the project approach.

Given the prominence of the movement, and also the mutually reinforcing nature of its links to the major pillars of economic policy and international aid strategies, one might assume that its future is assured, and that we can strike a triumphalist note in our discussion of the immediate prospect. Yet this would not represent well the realities of the situation, whether one is talking of development assistance agencies or (more importantly) their many partners in the developing world. If one had to report on the present tone of the movement internationally then it would surely be one of growing doubt, hesitation on the part of the implementing governments and a general uncertainty as to where to go from here. The movement may not be in crisis, but nevertheless, there is a sense that it is at - or not far from reaching - an important cross-roads, and that it is not entirely clear which road it ought to take - nor even, where it should be seeking to go.

What are the origins of this situation, and what pointers are there to the way forward?

2.   THE SPECTRUM OF INTERESTS

Forests are not, of course, one thing, and this is particularly true of tropical forests. In looking at the issues, we have to take account of a number of variables:

1.   The nature and value of the forest resources;
2.   The range and power of the stakeholders with an interest in them (particularly the wood industry);
3.   The interest of the state in the forest resources, and the power of the institutions of the state; the capacity of the state to manage the forests;
4.   The nature and interests of the local communities, and their management capacities.

Clearly, one is talking about two quite different situations when one compares, say, upland, low commercial but high livelihood value forest resources in an isolated hill district in the Himalayas, beyond the effective reach of the

---

[1] Total forestry ODA is currently US$1-1.5 billion (Madhvani, 1999). Not all of this is projectized (the main donors in the sector are the World Bank and Japan). The estimate for co-management expenditure given in the text (above) assumes that community forestry represents about 20% of the overall investment, which may well be an underestimate. Allowing for certain ambiguities of classification, World Bank investments in joint forest management in India alone may be upwards of US $70 million per annum.

Box 1: The Rationale Behind Community Involvement in Forest Management

1. **Proximity:** The local populations are the immediate custodians of the forest. They are the stakeholders in closest touch with the forest, and dependent on it in a wide variety of ways. Hence they are best placed to ensure its effective husbandry.

2. **Impact:** Their livelihood activities likewise have a very direct effect on the condition of the forest; thus, their involvement in its management makes sound practical sense.

3. **Equity:** There may be important considerations of equity and social justice in the exploitation of forests. Community-based forest management may be expected to increase the resource flows to rural populations, leading to important effects on poverty alleviation and income distribution.

4. **Livelihoods:** Local needs and interests should likewise not be ignored, particularly where forest products provide key elements of livelihoods or - as is often the case with non-timber forest products (NTFPs) - important safety nets. There is evidence that the development of the forest sector for single-purpose industrial usage damages livelihood interests, shifts benefits away from the poor, and disadvantages important categories of forest users (such as women). Community involvement in forest management, where forests play important roles in rural livelihoods, is likely to lead to substantial changes in the ways forests are managed, ensuring the safeguarding and/or diversification of their multiple benefits. The social security component of community forest management may thus be significant.

5. **Capacity:** In recent years, the management capacity of forest-dwellers has been strongly promoted in the social science literature, while that of governments has increasingly been questioned. Community roles in forest management have been well documented in the past; equally, there is evidence from recent experience of community involvement, that this can substantially improve the quality and condition of the forest, over and above the levels which governments are able to establish independently (see, for example, Soussan et al., 1998).

6. **Biodiversity:** Because of their interests in multiple purpose management, local users are likely to be much better conservers of biodiversity than either single-interest industrial concerns or the interests that serve them. Despite frequent assumptions to the contrary, biodiversity may well be enriched, instead of diminished, by the activities of forest dwellers.

7. **Cost-effectiveness:** In relation to efficiency considerations, there may often be little alternative but to involve communities in forest management. In many instances in the developing world, there is very limited capacity for effective management of the forest resource by the public sector. Even where public sector management is feasible, the costs of exclusive direct management by the state may be prohibitively high, and local management may be an important way of cutting costs.

8. **Adaptation:** Growing recognition of cultural and livelihoods diversity encourages an approach centred on local participation and contextual adaptation. Almost by definition, flexible and adaptive management cannot be delivered centrally, and local pressures and interests must be brought to bear.

9. **Governance:** Involving communities and community institutions in forest management (a sector often noticeably lacking in 'good governance') may help to introduce discipline into the management of the sector and offer significant checks and balances on otherwise unregulated public services. Several writers have emphasised the important roles which civil society organisations can play in augmenting public 'voice' and acting as 'voice surrogates' (see, for example, Paul 1991); the forest sector, because of the way it impinges on many aspects of local life, may be an important arena for the exercise of such public voice.

10. **Development philosophy:** CFM is likely to fit in well with the wider development assistance strategies of the international community. These give high priority to principles of local participation, decentralisation and 'subsidiarity' (the view that decisions should be taken as close as possible to the affected citizens), as well as to the promotion of civil society, all of which are potential benefits of CFM.

agencies of the state, with tropical moist forests of Central Africa, where the interests of one stakeholder - the logging industry - far outweigh those of any other party. The strength of the alliance between the industry and the elite in this latter case introduces a fundamental imbalance into the management of the resource, such that very little value is likely to be perceived by the central authorities in sharing benefits with local communities. Likewise, when one compares the power of a major and well-endowed forestry institution keen to preserve its own considerable power-base (eg. the Indian Forest Service) with a weak and cash-strapped extension agency in, say, a country of the Sahel, which has no choice but to make compromises and share the future burden of power with the primary user groups, and which may even welcome the prospect of community support. Even within one society, the relationships between state, rural peoples and the forest may not be a constant, and the interest of both sets of partners may vary over time according to the other options which the economy has to offer.

There are also likely to be major variations in the way in which problems of public participation in forest conservation are addressed, according to the context in question. Participation as an issue of biodiversity preservation in a low-population density area of a country with low tourist potential is likely to have quite a different meaning from that where both population densities and tourist potential are high. There are a number of aspects of the former situation which make it particularly challenging. The issue of site selection is one of these; low population density areas are often unpromising for participatory development in that the opportunity costs of managing the resource are likely to far outweigh the likely benefits in terms of its improved condition and sustainability and, particularly, the short-term local benefits. Likewise, there is the fact that the local economy in such areas tends to depend not on preserving but on converting natural habitats. Interestingly, the highest levels of biodiversity and natural habitat conversion tend to occur in the same environments (Blaikie & Jeanrenaud, 1996). This has challenged conventional models of participatory biodiversity conservation, making it difficult for donors (particularly conservation agencies) to reconcile their claimed commitment to the primacy of community interests with their conservation principles. All too often, donor approaches to community participation in protected area management have been hampered by a failure to recognise the very significant differences which exist where forests are well-integrated into rural livelihoods, and biodiversity conservation is primarily concerned with resource biodiversity, with the western situation in which protected area (PA) designation is very often a matter only of limiting industrial usage in the interests of the recreational and conservation lobbies. Moving the agenda away from the attempt to divert populations from their existing livelihood systems (an attempt which relies on the often highly contentious claim that it is they who are primarily responsible for forest degradation) towards a constructive engagement with the existing economy is likely to be an important first step in this process in many developing countries (Brown, 1998).

At the same time, there may be major differences in the ways in which the various parties perceive the aims of co-management, in particular the balance of concern between questions of efficiency and equity. It is no doubt the case that many of the governments which donors have encouraged to embrace co-management have more restricted aims than the donor agencies themselves, and that the NGO partners see things in very different terms. There are some important questions of ownership and sovereignty to be addressed in deciding which interests should prevail. The atmosphere of crisis management which pervades much international concern with tropical forests as an environmental issue has tended to close down, rather than enlarge the alternatives and has all too often been used to justify retrograde movements which deny local options for the claimed benefit of global interests (Roe, 1997; Fairhead & Leach, 1998). To the extent that co-management initiatives are able to build up a corpus of 'case law' to challenge such perceptions, then their influence on the environmental movement may be profound.

3. THE BUILDING BLOCKS

3.1 The aims of the movement

We can take PFM/CFM to be a series of policy changes aiming to increase both the efficiency and equity of forest management, through various legislative and managerial measures. These are likely to involve the decentralisation of forest management, the promotion of appropriate institutional reforms, increases in resource flows to forest-dependent populations, and the creation of new partnerships involving changes in ownership and access. The latter are intended to provide a set of benefits to hitherto more or less disenfranchised local populations: these include increases in the security of tenure and in incomes, and rights of participation in land use decisions. CFM is not the only means at the disposal of governments and their international partners to improve the quality of forest conservation, management and equity,[2] but it is an important one and often a central element in the package of institutional reform.

The mix in different programmes varies, and questions as to the most effective combination of elements and their potential for replicability cross-culturally are important issues about which there is still considerable debate (ODA, 1996; DFID,1999).

---

[2] Other means include varying combinations of (for example): improved industrial management of the forest, reduced impact logging methods and other technological changes in the forest industry, incentives to local processing, market-based incentives such as forest certification and ecolabelling, measures to address inappropriate policy incentives, agricultural intensification, and other forms of institutional strengthening and legal reform at national level.

3.2   Forests as a resource

While subject to considerable local variation, tropical moist forest resources are likely to be of high and multiple values; to cover large areas; to demand long-time frames for exploitation; to be very vulnerable to extra-sectoral influences; and to offer uncertain, but potentially substantial future benefits. Their management is subject to a series of market and policy failures. Among the market failures is the fact that many forest products do not enter the market, are not monetised, and are difficult to evaluate by any common *numeraire*; these include both local non-marketed goods and uncompensated public goods (environmental services) of national and international value. Among the policy failures is the fact that the resource is often severely undervalued by governments, and its valuation fails to take account of its long-term benefits and the costs of its replacement. Management capacity is weakened by the tenurial insecurities of those who live in closest proximity to the forest, and by the fact that, unlike with agricultural commodities, the small producer is not significantly empowered by the process of production; the longer and less constraining time-frame for exploitation is a critical consideration here (Gregerson et al., 1993).

All in all, tropical forests are a complex environment for collective management and the higher the value of these variables and the greater the levels of market and policy failures, the more difficult their co-management by local communities is likely to be. The fact that moist forests tend to be characterised by rather lower population densities than contiguous areas of dry land forest, means that they are also likely to be relatively less subject to major pressures on the resource. Again this may diminish the level of state interest in a participatory approach in such environments.

3.3   The variable place of forests in livelihoods systems

To understand the potential for CFM, account must also be taken of the variable relationship between forest dwellers and their forests, relationships which are themselves an expression of differences in population densities, type and extent of forest cover, market penetration and social differentiation. An appreciation of the varying nature of the human relationship with the resource is a fundamental requirement for adaptive CFM, and in this reference Byron and Arnold's 4-fold indicative classification is an instructive one (Table 1). This identifies the key variables that must be taken into account when appraising the main stakeholders and livelihood systems within each regime and the policy options to improve their lot. What is clear from this classification is that the potential for collective action is not evenly distributed, and that, even from the point of view of natural resource issues alone, some kinds of forest usage are inherently more amenable to co-management than others. In Byron and Arnold's typology, classes 1 and 4 appear as likely arenas for co-management regimes.

3.4   The model of collaborative management

The 'classical' (ideal-typical) model of CFM rests upon some notion of a 'forest-dependent community' which is also (to a greater or lesser extent) a physical community. There is also assumed to be (again, to a greater or lesser extent) congruence between the proximity to the resource, the extent of livelihood dependence on it and the fundamental legitimacy of claims to ownership of - or at least access to - it. Like all ideal-types, this is an oversimplification, although to the extent that these connections not hold true, then there are likely to be particular difficulties in applying the model.

Much of the discussion which follows is concerned with a closer examination of this model, exploring its validity while recognising its limitations as a representation of the full reality of CFM. The argument which will be presented here is that the difficulties which many CFM projects now face can be related to the very major challenges which operationalising this model poses in today's world of global integration, monetisation of economies, growing social complexity and increasing pressure on natural resources.

4.   APPLYING THE MODEL OF CFM

The current state of play among the donors is generally what Hobley has characterised as a movement from the initial promotional phase of CFM to a more sceptical and analytical consolidation phase (1996: 254-5). The initial enthusiasm for collaborative forest management is giving way to growing willingness to confront its limitations. The classical model is seen as increasingly difficult to apply, and compromises are having to be made which were unanticipated and which may influence the underlying aims.

4.1   Questions of political will

These difficulties in part reflect concerns as to the level of national political will, particularly where forests have high commercial value for their timber and timber products, values which governments (or their representatives) are often unwilling to surrender. The decision to differentiate high value forests in good condition from 'wastelands' and degraded forests, and to apply different concepts of participation in each case, is an increasingly common outcome of this situation, although it raises questions as to the underlying viability of CFM. At the same time, if communities are to be granted custodianship only of seriously degraded and marginal forests, then the claim that CFM may contribute significantly to sustainable forest management is also likely to be in doubt.

The problem here is not only the power of the industry to influence the agenda at the political centre but also some legitimate concerns as to the fundamental ethics of the transfer. A concern for equity may be at the centre of the

Table 1: Key Features of Different Kinds of Forest and Livelihood Linkage

Relationship to forest	Typical resource base	Stakeholder groups	Livelihood potentials	Policy implications
1. Forests managed by users as common property:	Principally hunter-gatherer/shifting cultivation populations living in a forested environment	Homogeneous communities, with shared attitudes to resource use.	Forests are central to the livelihood system. Historically stable, but often difficult to sustain in the face of outside pressures (e.g. logging, wage & market opportunities)	Continued collective systems of forest management/ control need government recognition of/ support to local user group rights (e.g. against forest industry, & encroachment by other populations); & avoidance of other sector policies, such as settlement, that undermine them
2. Forests used by multiple stakeholders with different interests:	Mixed agriculture & forest, productive & conservation objectives for forests, & industrial, state & local users	Multiple user groups likely to have overlapping/competing claims on the forests - both between local & other users, & among different categories of local user. Consequent lack of shared attitudes to resource use, & potential for conflict.	Forests of continuing importance in coping strategies of the poor in stagnant economic conditions. With growth, the poor risk losing access to the resource because it passes into the control of wealthier or more powerful elements who are better able to exploit market opportunities, or to privatise forest land & put it to non-forest uses.	Fragmented, internally differentiated, communities likely to lack capacity to manage competing users unaided. Further work needed to develop & support appropriate pluralistic management approaches. Incentives to local participation need to be matched to changing role of forest products. Policy-based impediments may include tenurial change that threatens existing rights, & restrictions on private harvesting & trading of forest products
3. Forest products supplied primarily from agroforestry sources:	Declining supplies from forest sources, & changing demand & on-farm factor availability & allocation, favour tree crops.	Only available to those with access to land that they can farm; tree growing may not be possible for sharecroppers & other farmers with tenurial constraints.	Provides poor farmers with a low cost means of enhancing site productivity, diversifying to reduce exposure to risk, & meeting household needs with lower labour inputs. Commercial production of tree crops is more likely to be suited to farmers who do not rely on the l& for food, &/or who have other sources of income	Tenurial conditions that constrain constrain tree growing may need to be clarified/ modified. Policy should focus more on matching supply with demand. Impediments restricting farmer access to markets, & depress prices for their forest/tree products, need attention (e.g. poorly functioning trading systems/ competition from subsidised supplies from State forests/ plantations).
4. Forest product activities are important as a source of employment & income:	Ease of access to the resource, low thresholds of entry, & rural demand for forest products can make these activities a major source of non-farm rural income.	Available to the landless as well as those with access to the land, & to women as well as men.	Often an important component of coping strategies of those with few other income earning opportunities. However, often provides low returns & declining future market or competitive prospects. More remunerative growing activities often require skills & inputs available only to the wealthier & more skilled.	Remove/ameliorate regulatory & other biases which favour of competing industrial & State producers. Focus on improving profitability of rural producers/traders, & sustainable activities/market opportunities. Different target groups have different needs (credit, training, etc.). May be better to help people faced with declining prospects to move into more rewarding options.

Source: adapted from the framework of Arnold (1999) after Byron & Arnold (1997)

drive for CFM, but it does not necessarily follow that increased equity will be its consequence. Why should it be, critics argue, that accidents of history mean that those who live in closest proximity to the forests should derive the most benefit from their exploitation, while those who live in less-forested areas should be denied these benefits? This dilemma is highlighted by the fact that there is often an inverse relationship between population density and extent of forest cover; thus the areas of the highest population density are likely to be those where poverty levels and hence public needs are greatest, but the forest revenues least.

On this argument, forests are a national resource, and their exploitation should serve national interests. The fact that existing taxation systems are either inoperative or subject to abuse is not in itself an argument for abandoning the attempt to redistribute wealth to the common benefit. The equity debate has a national as well as local dimension, which the efficiency argument (that local populations are better placed to manage the resource) goes only some way to counteract.

4.2   Institutional commitment

Low political will has been widely held also to lead to a lack of institutional commitment - to half-hearted attempts to introduce the institutional innovations necessary to reform forest departments into genuine 'service agencies'. Much of the recent literature on institutional change in public sector forestry has been concerned with the implementation of these public sector reforms (see Bass et al., 1998). Changes in revenue-generating arrangements will certainly go some way to enforce a change of heart. At the same time, where forest revenues are substantial and the logging industry retains a disproportionate share of the power, there is no guarantee that the creation of a self-funding agencies will lead to increased responsiveness to the public interest - indeed it could lessen it.

Ensuring the effectiveness of the reform process is a central item on the CFM agenda, though there is a danger that excessive preoccupation with managerial issues will disguise some of the underlying implementation problems, and there is also a danger that the resulting focus

on questions of organisational culture ('shared vision', 'unfreezing of institutions' and seeing through the 'paradigm shifts' needed to overcome 'institutional inertia') will, in the context of 'down-sizing' and 'redeployment', serve to create just the sorts of conformism and the coercive environment that the innovations were intended to overcome.

4.3 Tenurial issues

We should also not underestimate the difficulty of changing systems of land and tree tenure in favour of sustainable forest management in situations where existing systems are largely communitarian in their operations - systems which, whatever their faults, do tend to guarantee a minimum level of well-being to the poor and marginal. Evidence suggests that security of access may be more important in smallholder decision-making than full ownership, although ownership is in many situations the most reliable way to secure those access rights (ODA, 1996).

Major questions of implementation strategy are posed in relation to the issue of tenurial change, even where the political will exists for positive reform. For example, in many parts of the African forest lands have been traditionally held under communal ownership, but are transferred into individual tenure (on a more or less temporary basis) by the act of conversion to agriculture (the Francophone concept of *'mettre en valeur'*). Where governments have intervened to impose new tenurial arrangements, this has often had two negative effects: lessening security of tenure of farmland on the part of the small farmer (often through *de jure* if not necessarily *de facto* expropriation by the state), while simultaneously transferring control over commercial tree resources fully to the state. The latter may be accompanied by a reinforcement of the distinction between natural and planted trees. The effect of these changes tends to be a weakening of farmers' commitment to forest conservation, one facet of which is an unwillingness to take steps to nurture the growth of natural trees on farmland to maturity.[3] What is required is a change in tenurial rules to encourage the small cultivator to conserve the natural seedling or sapling as much as the full-grown tree, while at the same time, maximizing their own conservation activities.

This may be easier said than done. Providing security to some farmers may serve to lessen the tenurial security of others (especially the poor), as is particularly likely to occur where the poor are in tenancy arrangements with traditional resource owners. Despite a common view to the

contrary, historical experience provides little to suggest that tenurial change is easily reconciled with a pro-poor agenda, and indeed the evidence is overwhelmingly in the reverse direction.

4.4 Applying the model of Community Forest Management

A fourth area of concern relates to the question of how far a general model of CFM is possible. Building up a dynamic movement in favour of a popular-based forest sector reform inevitably requires the generation of a powerful 'narrative' of local development and some simplification of the approach, so as to mobilise diverse constituencies. But there is a danger that the narrative takes over and that the limitations of the model are disguised by the strength of the crusading zeal (Roe, 1991). Projects and ministries are increasingly coming up against very significant problems of local adaptation in trying to apply the classical model of CFM - problems which need urgently to be addressed if the approach is to contribute significantly to the creation of forest management systems which are socially as well as technically sustainable.

A central issue here is the ambiguities which exist in the definition of the key partnership categories. While development theorists and practitioners now have good understandings of many of these ambiguities, it needs to be remembered that improved knowledge is only one element of the situation, and that there exists a level of power relationships which is fairly impervious to changes in levels of observer knowledge, particularly where the observers in question are working in externally-funded project contexts where the extent of local ownership is already in some doubt.

5. AMBIGUITIES IN THE MODEL

5.1 Indigenous and other local communities

A major statement of the participatory principle is that contained in Principle 22 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development. This states:

"Indigenous people and their communities, and other local communities, have a vital role in environmental management and development because of their knowledge and traditional practices, States should recognize and duly support their identity, culture and interest and enable their effective participation in the achievement of sustainable development."

There are few who would disagree with this as a general statement of principle, although its operationalisation is quite another matter. The concept of 'indigenous people', for example, while valid in much of Latin America, is not universally relevant and where there has been no recent history of conquest with a clear ethnic dimension, it may

---

[3] Perversely the view of the small farmer as a destroyer of the 'natural environment' tends to be reinforced in such situations, being underwritten by notions such as the existence of a 'forest frontier' and the dichotomy between 'forest and farm' - concepts which have questionable validity in many forest fallow systems, and which may only serve to entrench the stigma which attaches to the peasant cultivator (Fairhead & Leach, 1998: 186-7).

have little practical meaning. At the same time, linking rights of community participation only to issues of knowledge and traditional practices introduces an element of restriction - that participation is justified by knowledge and capacity, not democratic principles - which, while it may well be valid in some circumstances, is a dangerous notion if applied indiscriminately (cf. Brown, 1998b). Where we try and put into effect a notion of "indigenous... *and other* local communities" we come up against some major difficulties. These are of an inherently political nature, unamenable to resolution in written principles. Attempting to resolve these difficulties by re-defining the partner categories as 'traditional owners', 'traditional resource users', 'forest user groups', 'forest-dependent peoples' - or just as 'local people' or 'villagers' - does little to address the underlying concerns.

It is the apoliticism of such notions which is at the root of the difficulty. Applying them in socially complex situations in the JFM heartland of India was always going to be difficult, and so it has proven. However, transferring them to seemingly less sociologically complex situations in Africa and elsewhere has proven no less challenging. Paradoxically, it is in precisely those situations where population pressures build up to the point where co-management becomes both necessary (to protect the condition of valued resources under threat) and feasible (in that populations have reached the point where it becomes cost-effective for them to actively manage their resources) that the complexities of social structure start to present some major challenges. The more diverse the benefits that forests provide, and the wider the livelihood opportunities with which they are associated, then the less likely it is that the simple notion of 'community' will serve to define the bases of meaningful collective action (cf. Blench, 1998). This is particularly the case where some of the benefits are of high value and enter into central political debates. In such situations it is asking a lot of short-term development interventions to create or sustain community solidarities which can transcend the gains available to interest groups by refusing to recognise the public interest, and, through ransacking the past or other means, establishing their own superior rights of access and ownership.[4]

---

[4] Recourse to the language of consensus and community is not merely a reflection of sentiment. Depoliticization of concepts and terminology also serves useful political and administrative functions, and is particularly attractive in mobilising social forces in the context of development interventions in cross-disciplinary areas. Foucault uses the term 'technology of politics' to describe the way in which policy is removed from the realm of political discourse and recast in the neutral language of science (1972). In this way it can be represented as objective, 'scientific' and value-free, and made safe for use in arenas where the political needs to be masked under the cloak of neutrality. At the same time, there is also a tendency for cross-disciplinary enterprises which bring together the technical and the social (in the present instance, forestry and sociology) to find common ground in a neutral language which is 'safe' for both disciplines and serves to reconcile them. But what is feasible for agencies working within a political agenda may become problematic for the development workers required to confront realities in the field.

By and large, the problem here has not been the lack of sociological awareness on the part of CFM activists. So general is the theoretical debate about social marginality that there must by now be very few individuals working in the CFM field who do not recognise the problems which these ambiguities entail, and do not attempt to disaggregate the terminology. The need to differentiate geographical communities from communities defined by their interest in the forest resource has become a truism of participatory management (Savenije & Huijsman, 1991:26). The point at issue is not, therefore, the recognition of these ambiguities but their practical resolution. The underlying difficulty is that the political language of CFM is the language of consensus (even if dressed up as 'conflict resolution') and of participation in its softest sense. Unfortunately, acknowledging hierarchy is not the same as resolving the problems associated with it, and the development project is usually a rather poor instrument for the attempt.

5.2   The roles of the state

In any situation, such consensual resolution is unlikely to meaningfully come about without being underscored by a national agency with powers of arbitration and claims to national legitimacy. The only potential candidate for this role is the state. There are contexts in which the state can continue to exercise this role, even if imperfectly (a notable case being India). All too often, however, the state is not an organic one but exhibits, to a greater or lesser degree, the characteristics of the *rentier state* (Yates, 1996).

Rentier states are states which depend very heavily on external economic rents, and in which only a small proportion of the work force is engaged in generating the external rent while the majority depend, to varying extents, upon its distribution and consumption. The classical rentier state is the petroleum economy (Yates uses the case of Gabon to illustrate the class), where the majority of income comes from an enclave with few organic links into the domestic economy. However, many African States have rentier state characteristics in that the organs of the state stand in a rentier relationship to the production process, living off the rents which derive from their ownership of internationally valued assets (including 'mined' products such as timber), rather than the fruits of their own economic activity, in a situation in which the levels of reward are unrelated to the level of effort expended within the domestic economy. Only to a very limited extent in such cases is there pressure on the *rentier* government to create a healthy and organic economic environment to the mutual benefit of both themselves and their resident populations, and to nurture structures of representations which reflect the democratic will. To the (often limited) extent that citizens receive services from the state, they do so without direct counterpart; because they don't have to pay for these services (at least not directly, in any earmarked sense) they have little leverage over their governments. Yates argues that development projects tend to fail in these environments because

governments don't need them to succeed. Representation is not inherent in the social structure and has little association with accountability (Yates, 1996; Wilkie, 1998).

5.3 Participatory development

In such situations, grafting on the language of participatory development - and participatory resource allocation - to economic and political systems which offer only the most limited forms of representation to their populations is clearly problematic. The rhetoric of participatory management sits uncomfortably with the realities of rentier states. It will be most problematic where the interests of the state are clearly antagonistic to those of the local populations - as when, for example, the extractive industry has no counterbalancing force in local processing[5]. But the notion of 'participation' in general is a distinctly 'soft' one, with a disturbingly 'discretionary' and non-obligatory emphasis.

Ribot has written provocatively on this theme (1995a, 1995b). Citing the case of Senegal, he questions the extent to which the country's new 'participatory' forest code (1992) has led to increased equity. In some ways, he contends, it may actually have increased the extent of central control over villagers (for example, regarding village labour inputs into forest management). The central issue thus becomes not just the imposition of local control but the creation of structures of control which involve accountability. The present system falls some way short of true representation, and risks both exploiting village labour and encouraging villagers (now freed from the constraint of commercial exclusion) to over-exploit the resource.

5.4 Geographical and social communities

At the same time, the typical rural community nowadays is one marked not by any natural congruence between geographical location, social identity and economic interest, but rather by high levels of population mobility, social hierarchies which differentiate rights over natural resources according to complex - and often contested - societal histories, continuing power struggles between claimants, varying forms of land rights in addition to ownership, including agricultural tenancies of varying lengths and stability, free migrant labour (again, with varying cycles dependent on the context), elite 'home town' allegiances, and various forms of clientage, all overlaid with the types of incipient and actual social class divisions which come from integration within the industrial economy, and which greatly increase the danger of elite capture of the resource. As Wade observes of the Indian case, "territorially defined groups like villages are not a focus for (Indian villagers') identity and needs. Indeed, the strength of attachment to non-territorial groups like the sub-caste is said to obstruct emotional attachment to the village" (1988, quoted in Hobley, 1996:141). Similar remarks might be made of most other predominantly rural societies, in Africa and elsewhere.

Ascher notes that where rights of control are held by groups which have a strong traditional identity, independent of geography, then use rights tend to be relatively easy to secure. Where, however, the 'community' is identified in geographical terms, then resource management is more likely to reside either with those with the greatest political power or with local government (Ascher, 1995: 38-39). In the latter instance, important issues are raised as to the level of local accountability. The usual situation is for local government to reflect local power structures, to the disadvantage of socially marginal groups of resource users. In rentier states, securing the rights of the more marginal groups is especially difficult. In such a context, it is tempting for donors' representatives to assume responsibility for the arbitration between competing claims, pre-empting any capture of the resource by those with power in society. Quite apart from the moral issues here, questions are obviously raised as to the long-term sustainability of the systems which externally-driven interventions create.

6. STRATEGIES OF LOCAL ADAPTATION

A number of solutions have been offered to address these difficulties of adaptation. We will review three of them, and then consider two case studies which illustrate some of the issues raised:

6.1 Re-create the traditional resource management systems

It is evidently the case that effective resource management systems existed in the past, and the attempt to build on indigenous systems has much to commend it. While not universal, indigenous institutions were undoubtedly widespread (Shepherd, 1997). Attempts to reinvigorate such systems have considerable appeal to aid-funded programmes, given the problems they face in arbitrating between competing claims to resources. The ready legitimacy which can be accorded to apparently static and timeless 'traditional authority' also helps circumvent the need for the donor to stray into the sphere of the 'political' (an area ostensibly out of bounds to most such initiatives). It is also the case that the sanction of traditional authority, to the extent that it is still valid, can often be a powerful one.

There may be situations in which the recreation of traditional management systems is a feasible option, and, where it is, then there is much to be said for the attempt. One must be sceptical, however, of the frequency with which this approach is likely to resolve the problems under present discussion. The fact of the matter is that the societies in which such management systems operated are

---

[5] An important proviso here is that the processing industry is itself run on competitive lines, and under pressure to perform efficiently, without excessive protection or state subsidy (JEM Arnold *pers.com.*).

no longer those which existed formerly, and there are new challenges (market penetration and access, monetisation and resource mobility, polarisation of wealth and assets, as well as social structural changes in fields such as gender relations) which cannot be accommodated within the traditional model of management. While there may be arguments in favour of adapting some indigenous systems to new purposes, questions need also to be asked as to the purposes which those systems fulfilled in their traditional form. It cannot be assumed that the traditional institutions fulfilled functions which are compatible with the new mandate, nor that an institution which performed effectively in support of one set of interests will continue to do so in support of others.

A particular area of concern is with the roles of traditional leadership roles. Where traditional chiefs and other leaders have performed representative roles in the recent past, then they may be well-placed to continue to do so. One notes, however, that the nature of traditional roles has often been misunderstood, and that representation was often a dimension of personal entrepreneurship, rather than a truly independent managerial function, even in the most supposedly egalitarian and acephalous (stateless) societies (Brown, 1984). In attempting to resurrect such arrangements, one needs to ask whether the other conditioning influences still apply. Equally, not all 'traditional' leadership roles have claims to traditional legitimacy. Social structures which now appear timeless and 'traditional' may well be artificial constructs imposed upon local populations only relatively recently. Colonial history offers many instances of attempts to create 'traditional authority' for purposes quite unconnected with the expression of the local will (see, for example, Geschiere, 1993:152). There are some disturbing parallels between the efforts of colonial administrators to create 'traditional systems' and recent attempts by development assistance agencies to mobilise similar imagery to redirect the economy (Fairhead and Leach, 1998; Geschiere, 1993). Such instances warn of the dangers of beguiling terminology. Like languages themselves, traditional systems do not 'originate' in the sense of having defined origins or of reaching stable states; what appears 'traditional' at any one moment is a reflection of the balance of power in the society, and when the balance changes so do traditions evolve.

Another area of controversy cited by Geschiere concerns the extent to which the traditional leaders have been "co-opted in the dominant elite crystallising around the State" (1993:152). In many societies access to traditional authority has conditioned personal access to resources (or vice-versa) such that traditional leaders now stand in quite different relationships to the forest resource than the majority of their followers. Two opposing scenarios are probable, both likely to imply a reduction in the leaders' commitment to the long-term husbandry of the resource. Either the leaders do not depend directly on forest use, unlike their followers (Ascher, 1993:40), or the leaders' forest-based wealth modifies their interest, encouraging a more exploitative approach. In many societies, traditional leadership tends to go hand in hand with entrepreneurship in multiple enterprise, lowering the level of dependence on any single income source, and the commitment to its sustainable management. As a result, those with "higher economic and political assets (may not be) similarly affected by a current pattern of use" (Ostrom, 1999:4).

In short, while there are arguments in favour of supporting traditional resource management regimes, a key question is whether the basic commonality of purpose now exists to manage a complex entity like a forest estate. There are grounds to fear that the attempt to reinvigorate traditional systems will, all too often, foster new forms of injustice, deprivation and privilege, perhaps with unpalatable social (and perhaps, ethnic) dimensions.

CPR theory also leads us to question the validity of this approach. Ostrom's seminal work warns that CPR regimes are unlikely to be effective in the types of situations which are increasingly typical of rural societies: with contested boundaries (resource users who are not clearly defined and accepted by all as equally legitimate) and unequal rights of participation in collective choice arrangements (see Table 3). One must be sceptical of the potential for CFM in situations where the effectiveness of any sort of independent CPR regimes would anyway be in doubt (Ostrom, 1999, 1990; Arnold, 1998a).

6.2 Apply the law to exclude illegal users

A second commonly-held view (particularly in conservation circles) is that many of the problems of resource access are the result of illegality, and that the solution must thus lie in the rigorous application of the law. In African conditions, co-management arrangements tend to occur at the periphery of protected areas, as complementary facets of a single system of forest use. Where the state retains a major interest in the resource, then the temptation is to use exclusion strategies as a tool to resolve competing claims of local ownership and, coincidentally, to reassert the state's own rights.

Where laws have been promulgated and are accepted as legitimate by the democratic majority, their validity must be assumed, and it would hardly do for donors or project staff to intervene to contest national sovereignty. All too often, however, resource allocations are not accepted as legitimate by the users, and are strongly contested by them and have long been so. At the same time, the authority of the state may well be very much in doubt. The fact that villagers would appear to have acquiesced to exclusion of resource sharing arrangements may be less an indication of their active support than of a realisation that, where the government lacks implementation capacity, it is often wiser to trade with the system and pay off its agents than to actively contest it. While governments may see this as tacit admission of the fundamental integrity of the protected area - reinforcing middle-class preconceptions

as to the pristine nature of the resource, and the threat posed by the steadily encroaching rural population - the local perception may be something quite different (Fairhead and Leach, 1998).

Attempts to restrict access of forest dwellers sit rather uneasily with the professed commitment of many community forestry projects to local participation, and to their ostensible livelihood aims. A culture of exclusion is difficult to reconcile with the participatory and actively 'managerial' philosophy, and is easily systematised to include blanket bans on activities which are often central to local livelihoods and well-being, such as chainsaw lumber production and bushmeat hunting. Stigmatising and criminalizing such activities create an atmosphere which is unconducive to local participation and may do little to help control their negative effects; at the same time, they may well widen the scope for rent-seeking behaviour by officials, with no aggregate benefit to society.

As a matter of principle, adapting licencing regulations to accommodate local interests would seem the more profitable approach in appropriate circumstances. This may be particularly attractive where local opportunity costs in relation to existing licencing arrangements are excessively high (as when, for example, poor villagers living in remote areas are expected to visit the capital city to apply for costly licences to cover the collection of small quantities of NTFPs, mostly for home consumption). This is not necessarily a straightforward matter, however. Knowledge of the biology of the resources in question is often very limited, and innovative regulatory mechanisms may inadvertently harm the interests they are intended to serve. For example, attempts to differentiate harvesting arrangements for NTFPs and bushmeat according to whether the item in question is to be used for home consumption (deemed legitimate) or for sale (deemed illegitimate) may well fail to acknowledge the extent to which those who depend most upon them rely on both consumption and sale. Likewise, restricting harvesting to small quantities intended for home consumption may play into the hands of traders who are only too happy to deal with congeries of hapless small suppliers operating in a highly competitive environment and at the boundaries of legitimacy. It may also be the case that forest access for NTFP collection reflects the marginality of the resource in relation to the market, and that attempts to formalise such access risk raising opportunity costs in terms of labour inputs in ways that the potential of the resource does not justify (Arnold and Townson, 1998).

6.3 Validate resource sharing arrangements using participatory methods

Increasingly, the way in which development interventions seek to cope with the politics of hierarchy and varying interests in the resource is to focus activities on the community level, and use participatory methods first to identify and then to try and build consensus with the variety of user groups involved (see, for example, Gardner et al., 1997). Adapting management practice to

Table 2: Design Principles of Robust CPR Organisations

	Design Principle	Implications
1.	Clearly-defined resource boundaries	Individual and household users, as well as the CPR, must be clearly defined.
2.	Congruence in management rules	- Clear relationship between the rules and the nature of the resource, such that the distribution of benefits from appropriation rules is roughly proportional to the costs imposed by the provision rules; - Conditions of appropriation (ref, time, place, technology, quantity) reflect the level of access to the resource.
3.	Collective choice arrangements	Most individuals affected by the operational rules can participate in modifying them.
4.	Monitoring	Monitors, auditing the behaviour of the appropriators and the condition of the CPR, are accountable to those appropriating the resource.
5.	Graduated sanctions	Graduated sanctions are applicable and are applied to those who violate operational rules.
6.	Conflict resolution mechanisms	Appropriators must have access to rapid and low-cost mechanisms to resolve conflicts.
7.	Right to organise	The appropriators' right to organise is not challenged by external authorities.
8.	(For common-pool resources, such as many forests, that are part of larger systems) nested enterprises	Appropriate, provision, monitoring, enforcement, conflict resolution, etc. are organised in multiple layers of nested enterprises, so that externalities between groups can be addressed in larger organisations that are recognised as legitimate.

Source: Ostrom, 1999:7

local circumstances by methods which allow their site-specific nature to be recognised and taken on board is an established tenet of CPR management, and where the dominant resource issues are largely localised, the approach has much to commend it. However, problems arise in the application of participatory methods to complex issues of resource allocation which are not locality-specific and which are not amenable to purely local resolution. Such methods are likely to give results which are both superficial and misleading when applied to intercommunity, interregional and inter-class inequalities with deep historical roots. Donors have rarely had much success in countering historical trends which are well-rooted in the target society, and ignoring complex political histories does not strongly commend itself as a means to the same ends. The evangelical atmosphere which brings together community forestry and the PRA philosophy has arguably served only to disguise these difficulties, and to present important questions of political direction as issues of personal faith.

In addition, the use of participatory techniques (such as PRA) which are prone to privilege the vocal and the powerful is hazardous where the targets are the non-vocal and the marginal. PRA techniques also tend to privilege the view that the underlying problems are knowledge-rather than power-related (Farrington & Bebbington, 1993; Sellamna, 1998), and again, knowing that different groups in society have different perceptions of key issues as a result of their varying access to power does not, of itself, address those underlying power differentials. The application of 'conflict-resolution mechanisms' is likewise often promoted as the way to solve local resource conflicts, although it needs to be asked if sanctions are available at this level to enforce the terms under which the conflicts are to be 'resolved', and whether the outcomes are likely to be imbued with any long-term public legitimacy. Where significant power differentials exist between different categories of resource user (as between, for example, logging companies and peasant users), the very concept of 'conflict-resolution' may be a suspect one. In such circumstances, it might be as well to acknowledge this fact, and to accept that what is at issue is not conflict resolution but accommodating fundamental differences (Anderson, 1998).

6.4   The limits of the sectoral approach

In all three instances above, a central problem is that it tends to be left to field-based government forestry staff, acting in association with the (hypothetical) totality of local residents, resource users and leaders, to arbitrate on issues of land use and natural resource allocation which are not forest-sector delimited, which have (often major) cross-sectoral implications, and which require access to the sanctions of the state. The difficulties which CFM now faces are all too often a product of this dilemma, and of the inability of sector staff to resolve conflicts which transcend their own domain. Attempting to resolve these issues on a sectoral basis runs a number of dangers. Should the Forest Department or CFM Project Staff attempt to

address them independently, then the danger is that they draw the service into conflicts and debates where it lacks a mandate and which serve ultimately to discredit it. Forest Departments usually lack the political weight to intervene at higher levels of government, and calls for such intervention may well fall on deaf ears. Alternatively, where local solutions appear to be offered, there must often be doubts as to their long-term sustainability.

There are clearly dangers in overloading community forestry with the responsibility to resolve all of society's problems, and experience with the TFAP process warns of the dangers of assuming such a mandate when this factually does not exist (Winterbottom, 1990). Experience with integrated rural development projects in the tropics likewise warns of the dangers of placing excessive faith in inter-sectoral coordination structures where these lack any basis in the political hierarchies. The conclusion of the above discussion, however, is that inter-sectoral and multi-disciplinary action will be necessary if these questions of land use and resource conflicts are to be addressed in ways which allow the concept of co-management to be applied to national realities.

7.   CASE STUDIES OF DILEMMAS IN COMMUNITY FORESTRY PROMOTION

7.1   Introduction

We now turn to two case studies dealing with recent attempts to build community participation into the management of the forest sector in countries of West-Central Africa. While both programmes are relatively recent (and thus the analyses offered here must be considered as only tentative), they do highlight some of the difficulties which are likely to be encountered in the promotion of co-management in areas in which the timber industry has long held a dominant position and in which community identities are in a state of considerable flux.

The case studies concern Ghana and Cameroon. There are a number of similarities between the two. Geographically, both countries are split between a southern moist forest and northern savanna (though Cameroon is by far the more biodiverse, and includes all four of the dominant African biotopes). The ecology of the high forest zone is by no means identical in the two cases, though there are some similarities between them in terms of forest structure, species types, and traditional modes of forest exploitation.

Both countries have historically shown high dependence on the forest sector as a source of revenue and employment. In both cases, deficient royalty systems have meant that trees have been priced at far below their economic value, and this, combined with factors such as ineffective sectoral institutions, poor inter-agency coordination, inefficiencies in the extraction and processing industries and weak public governance, have

led to low standards of management and poor sectoral planning.

In both cases, there has long been a major imbalance in power and influence over the forest in favour of a single stakeholder - the logging industry - to the detriment of forest-dwelling populations. While this imbalance has its roots in the colonial period, it has arguably only increased in recent years, being particularly accentuated during periods of totalitarian rule. Both countries have had checkered political and economic histories since independence, and the forest sector has played a part in those histories, and has figured, to a greater or lesser degree, in underwriting the particular class relationships which have developed in each society. Both countries now operate democratic systems of government (though with interesting differences in styles of application). It would be surprising if the forest sector did not continue to play a role in the development of each society, and in the playing out of the different political interests which converge on the forest resource.

Multiple use management has long been problematic in both cases, particularly in Cameroon, where lack of perceived pressure on the forest does little to instill a long time-frame in forest management, and where the primacy of the industrial interest has only helped to marginalise the concerns of the forest-dwelling populations.

In both cases, a complicating factor in the drive for enhanced forest management has been the fact that to the rural population at large, 'development' has not necessarily been synonymous with forest conservation; rather, it is the conversion of the forest to agriculture, and the services and infrastructure which this draws in, which are often the desired goals, not the maintenance of a pristine forest estate (Sharpe, 1998).

The similarities between the two cases are thus significant. However, the differences are also marked. Most notably, Ghana possesses a much more powerful set of traditional institutions in the forest zone, particularly in the Akan-speaking areas of the Ashanti, Central and Western Regions. The Ghanaian 'traditional authorities' have long exerted a much stronger presence in the forest than those of Cameroon. This contrast can be related in part to the different colonial histories of the two countries, Ghana having been subject to indirect colonial rule under the British, Cameroon having, in different zones, been a British and a French (and previously, German) colony, although, administratively, the French influence now dominates. At the same time, other interests have also shaped the two societies. The social structure of the high forest zone of what is now Ghana has been dominated by centralized polities for many centuries, while important areas of in what is now Cameroon historically lacked the institutions of the state. The strength of indirect rule in the Gold Coast (now Ghana) was arguably not just a product of its British associations, but related to the rapid growth of cocoa production, commencing at the end of the last century, which encouraged a hands-off attitude to indigenous society (Phillips, 1986). The strikingly high level of public support for Ghana's long-established forest reservation policy has also been connected with the centrality of this industry, and, with few exceptions, Ghana's forest reserves have been and remain well respected by forest-dwelling communities.[6] Cameroon's economic development has generally come rather later, and has been proportionately more dependent on the petroleum sector, and less dependent on the agricultural economy. Cameroon has many more of the characteristics of the rentier state than does Ghana. Its forest resources are also far more extensive, and its forest zone is notably less heavily populated. Perhaps as a result, there has not been much support for the forest reservation policy, outside of government and its international partners, and most of Cameroon's forest reserves are extensively encroached.

Although Ghana has depended heavily on the forest sector, the more rapid depletion of its forest resources (at least in terms of timber values), under the influence of both an under-regulated logging industry and an expanding farming population, and its larger and more vocal processing industry have meant that the high forest zone (HFZ) is now much more heavily degraded than that of Cameroon. While Cameroon's climax forests are still substantial, those of Ghana are nearing the limits of their economic life, and are being massively over-served by the extractive industry such that convalescence is problematic on about half the production area. One recent study suggests that the on-reserve resource could be sustainably exploited by five medium-sized contractors, instead of the 120 or more currently operating (Hobley & Everts, 1997). This has helped to create an internal constituency for sustainable forest management in Ghana which is still largely lacking in Cameroon.

Different pre-colonial and colonial histories have also been associated with differing rules as regards both land and tree tenure. Land in the HFZ of Ghana is largely owned by the traditional authorities, the 'stool' chieftaincies, and even reserved areas of forest are owned by the stools though managed by the State. In Cameroon, ownership of both reserved and unreserved forest resides absolutely in the State. In both cases, tree tenure has been deficient ever since colonial times, from a conservation perspective. In Cameroon, ownership resides in the state. In Ghana, tree tenure is vested in the President in trust for the landowning communities, although the effects of this are not dissimilar.[7] Absence of tenurial rights diminishes the incentives to farmers to preserve both trees and wildlings on their land, particularly species which are competitive with agricultural crops, as regards shade and nutrients.

---

[6] The exceptions are the former 'protected timber lands' in the Western Region which were heavily encroached in the 1970s and are now subject to a mass eviction campaign known as 'Operation Halt'. However, these areas have a complex history, having been transferred into government ownership by the now discredited Acheampong regime by a piece of sleight of hand, and this affair does not indicate any lessening of respect for the forest reservation policy, where this was properly agreed between state and community (see Kotey et al., 1998).

Table 3: Ghana and Cameroon Compared

		Ghana		Cameroon
1. Strategy of Sector Reform	1.1	Institutional reform of Forest Department, to become a self-funding agency of state	1.1	Major legislative change (1994 Forest Law), including promotion of community forestry
	1.2	Increase in timber revenues/ use of FOB lumber prices	1.2	Increase in timber revenues
	1.3	Admin. allocation retained - TUCS on-reserve, licensing off-reserve	1.3	Auction to replace administrative allocation of concessions; UFAs in PFE, ventes de coupe/community forests in NPFE.
	1.4	Absolute increases in revenues to rural populations through increased taxes and improved efficiency	1.4	Log export ban (1999)
2. Rationale of reform		Economic, livelihood and conservation benefits. Sustainable management to be promoted by:		Economic, livelihood and conservation benefits. Sustainable management to be promoted by:
	2.1	Increased resource flows to traditional owners	2.1	More rational management of industry
	2.2	More responsive extension agency	2.2	Involvement of rural communities in forest management through community forests and increased revenues
	2.3	More efficient timber industry	2.3	Increased timber prices
	2.4	Increased timber prices		
3. Centrality of co-management to process of change	3.1	Active co-management a limited component, change led by institutional reform of Forest Department	3.1	Community forestry a central component of 1994 Law, strongly supported by donors
4. Ownership of change process	4.1	National constituency for change, supported by range of bilateral and multilateral donors	4.1	Limited national constituency for change, change forced through by donors, particularly World Bank.
5. Land owners (public lands)	5.1	The traditional landowners through the agency of the stool (chieftaincies)	5.1	The state
6. Tree tenure	6.1	Ownership of natural trees vested in the President in trust for the traditional landowners	6.1	Natural trees owned by the state
7. Timber industry	7.1	In decline	7.1	Growing
	7.2	Oversupplied	7.2	Under-developed processing industry
	7.3	Powerful processing industry		
8. Rural communities	8.1	Long history of rural migration	8.1	Rural migration more localised, though increasing in extent.
	8.2	Universally complex, high labour migration, share-cropping and tenancy arrangements		
9. Land pressures	9.1	High in most rural areas	9.1	Low in most forest areas, particularly in South
	9.2	Almost all rural land effectively 'owned'	9.2	Forest land still in surplus (though may be subject to ownership claims)
10. Forest reserves	10.1	Extensive, generally secured.	10.1	Extensive though unsecured.

Different paths have also been adopted for the reform of the forest sector - the Cameroon case being very dependent on donor-led legislative change, with an important and symbolic community forestry component, while in the Ghana case, institutional reform has figured more strongly, with a much higher level of national ownership. These differences have had a crucial influence on the course of events.

Some of the similarities and differences between the two societies, as regards the strategy of forest sector reform, are summarised in Table 3.

We will now consider the two cases in turn.

[7] Ownership of natural trees is effectively vested in the state, the landowners' interest being manifest in the revenue sharing arrangements (see the Ghana case study). In practice this applies mainly to timber trees; on-farm tree cutting for agricultural purposes is largely unrestricted.

7.2   Ghana Case Study

In Ghana, the strategy of forest sector reform has focussed on changes in revenue policy (to increase the price of timber, raise rents and fees and encourage efficiencies in the industry), and institutional reform of the main sector institution, the Forestry Department. This is intended to become the Ghana Forest Service, a self-funding, service-oriented (rather than control-oriented) agency, freed to a large extent from the constraints of public sector management. A new long-term area-based concession arrangement, the 'Timber Utilisation Contract' has been introduced to cover natural timber exploitation both on-reserve and off-reserve. Unlike in Cameroon (to be discussed below), there has been no single legislative or tenurial change to fuel the process of community involvement in forest management. Rather, a range of measures has been adopted or refined to increase the flow of benefits to traditional authorities and forest-dwelling populations. Community forestry can thus be considered as, in some senses, a subsidiary component of the wider reforms. In the area of co-management, relevant measures have included:

- *Social responsibility agreements*, under which a maximum of 5% of the annual royalty accruing from the operations of the logging companies (concession agreements now known as 'timber utilisation contracts') is to be used for the provision of social amenities to the populations of the contract areas; while the sums in question are modest (a maximum of £300,000 nationally, in 1998), they do mark out the rural communities' right of influence.
- *Interim measures*, a set of felling procedures introduced in 1995 which required the participation of both forestry authorities and affected local populations in pre- and post- felling operations off-reserve, as well as the payment of compensation to the affected farmer for the destruction to property and farm crops.
- *Pilot activities* in areas such as NTFP harvesting (including changes to the permit system to lower the transaction costs for the rural poor and domestic user); NTFP domestication; community participation in boundary maintenance; introduction of a programme of modified *taungya* for the rehabilitation of degraded reserves under which local residents gain access to farm plots on-reserve for a period of three years, in return for nurturing seedlings of timber species; etc.

Box 2: Basic Forest Statistics - Ghana

Total land area	22,754,000 ha
Total forest area	9,022,000 ha (1995) of which:
Natural forest area	8,969,000 ha
Protected areas (IUCN categories I-IV)	4.8% of total land area
Forest reserve area in HFZ	1,634,100 ha
Off-reserve forests in HFZ	300-400,000 ha (1995)
Average annual change in forest cover, 1980-95	1.3 %
Change in forest cover this century	7 mn. ha
(Fairhead & Leach estimate[1998]3.9 mn. ha)	
Total population	18,857,000 (1998)
Average annual population change	+3.1% (1985-90)
Agricultural contribution to GDP	46%
Forest sector contribution to GDP	11.5% (estimate)

(HFZ generates about US $14.1 m. in public revenues from forestry (est. 2% of total fiscal revenue), of which about one quarter is transferred to local authorities)

Average roundwood production (1993-5)	25,990,000 m³ (+59% since 1983-5)
Average sawnwood production (1993-5)	727,000 m³ (+141% since 1983-5)
Average net trade in roundwood (1993-5)	
(ie: imports/exports)	447,000 m³(+413% since 1983-5)

(Wood products rank fourth in exports, after gold, cocoa and tourism)

Forest industry structure	
number of enterprises	411
total employment	100,000 (MLF, 1997/9)

The 1992 Ghana Constitution governs the allocation of royalty shares from forest concessions, both on and off - reserve. Article 272 (6) states:

"10% of the revenues accruing from stool lands shall be paid to the office of the Administrator of Stool Lands to cover administrative expenses; and the remaining revenue shall be disbursed in the following proportions:

(a) 25% to the stool through the traditional authority for the maintenance of the stool in keeping with its status;
(b) 20% to the traditional authority;
(c) 55% to the District Assembly, within the area of authority of which the stool land is situated."

These allocations are made net of the management costs of the FD, which in recent years have been 70% on-reserve and 10% off-reserve[8] .

The effects of the total package are yet to be felt, and there is some uncertainty as to their potential social and political effects. The increase in royalty rates, for example, may well occasion stiff resistance from the indigenous logging industry (particularly those sections which do not market internationally and/or lack vertical integration with the milling industry), while the reform of the forest service, in favour of self-financing, runs the risk of allying the agency even further with the industry on which it depends for most of its income. There is something of a structural conflict between the planned role of the GFS as the main conservator of Ghana's forests, and its financial dependence on the harvest from those forests. At the same time, the drive to self-financing also risks creating a situation in which social outreach activities (including community forestry) come to be seen as 'loss-making enterprises', and vulnerable to marginalisation as the private sector ethos takes hold. Neither has the Forestry Department completely abandoned its commitment to the philosophy of control. It is seeking, for example, to impose a complete ban on chainsaw logging in the informal sector, despite the effects that this is likely to have on rural livelihoods. This approach may decrease support within the rural areas for the FD/GFS (particularly if rigorously applied), and there may be pressure on both sides to scale down its outreach activities. Against these dangers must be set the fact that, in its present style of operations, the sector is widely regarded as both poorly managed and vulnerable to corrupt practice, and urgently in need for reform if it is not to continue its downward spiral.

In the present instance, the particular interest lies in the way the Ghana case illustrates the use of a traditional resource management system as a basis for the attempt to control and develop the forest resource, drawing on a particular concept of the 'rural community'. The strength of the Ghana model lies in its clear embedding in the traditional system of land tenure. Paradoxically, the weaknesses of the system may lie in precisely the same area.

Promotion of community forestry in Ghana poses a number of challenges. The stated aim of the Forest Department's Planning Branch[9], as regards collaborative management, is to seek to increase the resource flows to the traditional owners and forest dependent communities, so as to reinforce the linkage between forest revenues and forest conservation. The priority clients are the traditional landowners.

At first sight, the fact that rural lands throughout Ghana's high forest zone (unlike those of most of its neighbours) are owned not by the state but the indigenous landowning communities would appear to simplify this connection, and increase the chances of its application to the benefit of the forest. In practice, however, the relationship between the structure of land ownership and the day-to-day management of both land and trees is extremely complex, and it cannot be assumed that increasing the stream of benefits to the resource owners (effectively, the Stool authorities) will *necessarily* lead either to improved forest conservation or increased equity.

In order to understand the potential of the present structure of community representation (most notably the traditional chieftaincy system) to marshal the resource, we need to know more about two aspects of its use, one historical the other contemporary:

(a)   the first concerns the development of the chieftaincy system, and the historical roles which this has served; whilst the past does not necessarily entirely subsume the present (so that institutions which developed for one cluster of purposes might well come to serve another quite effectively), there are grounds for arguing that there must be some basic element of congruence in these purposes;

(b)   the second concerns the present-day make-up of the rural communities which inhabit the hinterland of Ghana's HFZ. To what extent do these reflect and support the traditional structures through which resource control is to be channelled?

These two issues are not independent, as will be discussed below.

---

[8] A new formula has recently been approved whereby the management fee both off- and on-reserve is to be harmonized at 60%; however, this is still to be applied.

[9] Soon to become the GFS Forest Management Support Centre [FMSC].

The social history of forest settlement in Ghana

On the face of it, the fact that rural land in the HFZ is under a clear pattern of traditional ownership suggests that there exists an effective, even if dormant, vehicle for forest conservation waiting to be revived. This may be the case, but account needs also to be taken of the historical role that these traditional institutions have played in opening up the forest, rather than conserving it, and in mediating relations between the indigenous land owning populations and the migrant labourers and farmers who have - in some instances, for a period of centuries - been a primary agency for agricultural development. Indeed, many of the more unusual and perplexing aspects of the cultures of the forest peoples of Ghana can be explained primarily in terms of their role in forest conversion, not in forest conservation. Matrilineality is a case in point. Wilks (1977) puts forward the thesis that several distinctive features of the matrilineal inheritance system of the Asante developed as a vehicle to open up the HFZ in the period of the 'great clearances' of the 15-18th Centuries - for which the labour supplies were largely drawn from outside Asante, financed by the lucrative trade in gold bullion. The decline in the importance of aspects of the matrilineal system in the 19th and 20th Centuries - for example, the matriclans which are unique to the Akans of the high forest zone (the 'expansionary group') - can be explained in terms of their functional characteristics supporting the expansion and facilitating the organisation of labour which this required - but tending to decline into what Wilks describes as its present 'vestigial' state in the modern era.[10]

Throughout this period, immigrant labour was a central element in the expansion, though changing somewhat in origins, the bulk initially being provided by captives, with a market for migrant labour developing only later. Thus:

"Geographically peripheral to the major centres of world commerce, the Akan were nevertheless drawn into the world economy in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Gold produced for the world bullion market was traded, both at the northern ... and southern outlets, for unfree labourers drawn in part from regions as distant as Benin and beyond. The influx of labour made possible massive forest clearances, such that a society in which the dominant mode of production was hunting and gathering transformed itself into one in which the dominant mode was food crop production." (Wilks, 1977:p.520)

An essential fluidity of social organisation continues to characterise the agrarian order within the HFZ, with two categories of migrant playing a central role in both the agricultural economy and, in some areas, in opening up the forest to further settlement. These are:

(a) migrant labourers, often share-croppers, usually originating from outside Akan society; Northerners, in particular, are often taken on as share-croppers under the *abusa* (sharing of 'thirds' of the harvest, between owner and labourer)[11] or, less commonly, *abunu* (1:1 sharing) arrangements.

(b) southern migrant farmers who obtain land for agricultural production, often intending to plant cocoa. In the Akan areas, such migrants are usually tenant farmers (even though the land-owners often speak of 'selling' their land to the migrants). Outside the Akan area (particularly in the Eastern Region), there is a long history of true land sales into freehold ownership. The Southern migrants may engage in contracts of the *abusa* and *abunu* types, though they may also come to other arrangements with the land owners (generally more favourable to themselves).

The historical pattern and extent of migration into the HFZ has been extensively documented (MacMillan, 1940; Hill, 1963; Robertson, 1987; Amanor, 1994, 1996). Robertson has argued that the prominence of sharecropping arrangements can be linked to three principal constraints: the land owners' limited capacity to directly supervise labour in the field; their lack of operating capital; and (in the present century) the fairly high technical requirements of cocoa production, creating a willingness on the part of migrants to enter into relatively unremunerative, but knowledge-intensive, 'apprenticeship' relationships. At the same time, sharecropping under Ghana conditions has operated in a highly flexible way; Robertson, for example, notes an evolution in *abusa* arrangements such that they have increasingly taken on the characteristics of a form of paid labour, remunerated in kind. This he relates to the changing balance in the availability of land and labour, with the former becoming increasingly scarce in the HFZ (1987: 55).

The various classes of migrant labour found in S.Ghana (in addition to those described above, there are also other variants, such as casual hired labour and annual contract workers [Hill, 1963: 189; Robertson, 1987: 66-67]) have tended to maintain the traditional distinctions between land ownership and labour[12]. Though data is not available to substantiate the claim, a spatial mapping of the forest would almost certainly concentrate the more recent migrants in the more forested areas, with the indigenes clustered in central place settlements where services are

---

[10] Wilks' views have been contested, but more in terms of dates than processes (for a review of this literature, see Fairhead & Leach, 1998 Chapter 4).

[11] The exact proportions depend on the crop, the timing of its growth cycle, the extent of inputs supplied and the relative availability of labour and land. Cocoa is normally shared 2:1 between owner and tenant, while food crops such as maize are often shared 1:2 (see Hill, 1963; Robertson, 1988, Chapter 3).

[12] 'Ownership' may be a somewhat misleading term in this context, given the varying degrees of alienability of land (Hill, 1964).

Table 4: Area of Forest Reserves in Ghana, by Region

	Area (sq. miles.)	% of total FR cover
Western Region	2884	40
Ashanti Region	1515	21
Brong-Ahafo Region	1196	17
Eastern Region	677	10
Central Region	578	8
Volta Region	277	4
Total	7130	100

Source: Ghana Forestry Department

likely to be found. Gaining access to forest soils often requires the migrants to make the largest sacrifices, while the landowners enjoy the benefits that their heightened resource claims provide to them.

So widespread are migrants throughout the forest zone, that landowners no longer comprise the majority of the village population in many situations.[13] Statistics for village composition are not always reliable, but the migrant populations may be substantial. Many of the villages in the Eastern Region now comprise migrants almost exclusively. The land purchases made by the Manya Krobo in the Eastern Region, for example, were mostly concluded by the mid nineteenth century [Amanor, 1994:]. In areas such as the Western Region, immigration has been more recent, though even here migrant farmers now often dominate the local economy. The latest official figures for registered migrants in Sefwi-Wiawso District indicate 3,874 family heads (about 20,000 plus family members) - this is in a district with an overall population of 69,387 (1984) although the actual figures in both cases are almost certainly much higher than this. The District Chief Executive of the neighbouring Juabeso District estimates that migrants comprise about 45% of the resident population, in a district for which the total registered population is 129,101 (1984) and which depends 60-70% on the forest sector for its revenues (*pers.comm*, October, 1998). The Western Region is also the area with the greatest concentration of forest reserves (see Table 4), and hence a particularly lucrative region for the traditional authorities.

Migrant labourers are widespread in all areas of the HFZ, often coming from the more impoverished areas of the North and East. These migrants tend to be particularly dependent on the forest for their livelihoods. This dependence derives from a number of sources: their roles in forest clearance and hence their close contact with the forest and its products; their poverty - which increases their dependence on minor forest products (for example, collection of *Marantaceae* leaves - which are used to wrap cooked foodstuffs [Agyemang, 1997]); and their vulnerability, with NTFPs providing important safety-nets in times of stress and when labouring work is in short supply.[14]

The stool chiefs have played a major role in managing the migrant process, often itself a cause of some conflict within the landowning community, as most of the income from migrant settlement has accrued to the chiefs themselves.[15] This has led to considerable social tension in many areas, with resentment of sections of the indigenous population focussed on both the inequitable distribution of the revenues and the low levels of the rents paid over. Such tension has often had an intergenerational aspect, the younger generations resenting what they see as their elders' willingness to 'sell' their birthright - accusations which are likely only to grow as the older generations die off, and as pressures on the land increase.

In addition to their contemporary roles in land distribution, account must be taken of the fact that chiefs are often themselves important rural entrepreneurs, with significant estates of cocoa, coffee, oil palm and food crops, as well as interests in timber operations, transport and milling. Ghana is a relatively wealthy society, and such individuals may well be important figures in the local economy.

[13] Field (1948) records an old Akan proverb "strangers make a town prosper" (quoted in Robertson, 1987: 63).

[14] The returns to labour invested in NTFP activities are often very low, and hence, such work is most popular among those with the fewest alternatives - people for whom, in situations of stress, any level of return may be better than none. These are predominantly the migrants, particularly those from the North.

[15] Similar roles in the regulation of access to land and labour in the expanding agricultural economy have been played by the chieftaincies in neighbouring areas, such as the Krobo polity in the present-day Eastern Region (Amanor, 1994: 58-60).

Table 5: Size of Holdings Owned by Men and Women (% of Farmers)

Holdings:	Asankrangwa (Western Region)		Akyem Oda (Central Region)		Begoro (Eastern Region)		Mampong (Ashanti Region)	
	women	men	women	men	women	men	women	men
none	2	0	15	18	48	28	12	29
5 acres & less	26	7	56	41	25	28	37	9
5-15 acres	43	51	23	25	25	37	40	32
15-40 acres	29	33	6	12	2	6	7	18
> 40 acres	0	9	0	4	0	1	4	12
no. of farmers sampled	48	97	79	79	64	80	57	84

Source: Amanor, 1996: 34

Rural society in Ghana is socially highly differentiated, by the standards of West Africa, and land holdings are polarised, as Amanor's data illustrate (Tables 5 and 6).

What is striking about these figures is the broad range of holdings (0-40 acres or more), the fairly even distribution right across the range, the variety of land access arrangements and the not insignificant (though still minority) holdings of women.

In summary, social structure in Ghana's HFZ is one of quite marked social differentiation, exceptionally so by the standards of West-Central Africa, with the forest dwelling populations being stratified both socially and economically into a number of fairly well-bounded interest groups. The implications of this for community forestry are reviewed below.

Traditional land owners and other forest dwellers

As regards the possibilities which such a system creates for an equitable and sustainable system of forest management, the picture is mixed. On the one hand, the fact that the forest is under indigenous ownership and has not been entirely surrendered to the state is in many ways a positive influence; the existence of a structure of indigenous institutions with an interest in the forest and an investment in its sound management is also encouraging. On the other hand, there are a number of aspects of the present situation which suggest that converting increased local benefits into sustainable forest management may not be a straightforward task. In particular, there is the fact that those in closest contact with the forest and most dependent on its products often have the least investment in its long-term husbandry and the lowest levels of personal 'ownership', while one of the dominant historical roles of those with the greatest claims to ownership - the offices of the stool - has concerned the opening up of the forest to agriculture, not forest conservation. To this function have more recently been added various entrepreneurial roles, including timber exploitation - without, it would sometimes seem, much regard for long-term husbandry.

Table 6: Source of Land Farmed in 1994 - Women and Men (% of Farm Plots)

Source of land:	Asankrangwa (Western Region)		Akyem Oda (Central Region)		Begoro (Eastern Region		Mampong (Ashanti Region)	
	women	men	women	men	women	men	women*	men
own land	54	83	71	60	36	55	73	62
spouse	29	1	9	7	11	1	12	1
hired	2	2	8	15	15	18	10	31
sharecrop	16	15	11	18	36	22	0	3
no. farm plots sampled	63	153	125	123	115	174	178	347

Source: Amanor, 1996: 34; deviations from 100% in the aggregated figures, by column, relate to rounding up/down, except in one instance (*) where data was lacking for 5% of the women in the sample.

It cannot be argued, of course, that increasing the flow of benefits to the traditional landowning authorities will not have any beneficial effects at all. But what is apparent is that the chiefs don't have a full commonality of purpose with their ostensible followers, who are in turn likely to be quite highly differentiated themselves. In line with Ascher's arguments (1995: 40), the fact that these leaders are likely to rely on the exploitation of the resource for their own incomes in such a variety of ways must surely affect the potential for the emergence of a communal strategy on forest conservation. As with the chiefs, so with other forest dwellers.

Numerous interests thus converge in the forest and may well be represented in aid-funded community forestry activities, but it does not follow that all of these interests necessarily support the conservation goal. The northern labour migrant's interest may well be in the opportunity that *taungya* presents to gain temporary access to land, on non-share-cropping terms[16]. The migrant cocoa farmer's interest is likely to lie in the safeguarding of their landholding rights. The Chiefs' main interest is in the improvements in their revenue shares. The Administrator of Stool Land's interest is in the improved collection of the 10% revenue charge from various sources, including both the wood industry and agricultural tenancies; and so on. There is no guarantee that one can derive a simple model of indigenous conservation from this complex social arena, and the notion that, left to themselves and assured increased benefits from forest resources, these diverse interests will somehow coalesce around the single goal of forest conservation, is surely questionable.

The role of local government

The fact that the relevant 'community' is defined more in geographical than in social terms, might suggest that the way forward lies with the territorial government (the District Assemblies) rather than the traditional cultural authorities (the stool chieftaincies). Unlike the traditional authorities, the District Assemblies are specifically mandated to "identify the economic resources/potentials of the district...identify opportunities and constraints for the exploitation of these resources (and) prepare exploitation and phasing plans and strategies". By contrast, the Stool is only required to use its royalty share for "the maintenance of the stool in keeping with its status".

Local government in Ghana, at the structural level at least, is a notably democratic system, and freed from many of the external influences that Ribot (1995a, 1995b) regards as indicative of flawed democracy. District Assembly members in Ghana are elected on an independent and purely local ticket, and are prevented by law from allying themselves with national political parties. Individuals are free to register as voters in the district of their choice so that there is no structural barrier to migrants or stranger farmers exerting their democratic will in their areas of present residence. 55% of the local royalty share accrues to the Assemblies, and it can be conjectured that Assembly members would view the targeting of forest revenues on those who bear the consequences of forest exploitation as a useful way to gain public approval. The GFS is examining the possibilities here, and is seeking to increase awareness of the linkages between forest revenues, local government expenditure and forest conservation.

Against these arguments must be set the fact that the districts are often large areas (sometimes in excess of 5,000 sq. kms.) with large populations (in the rural areas of the HFZ, district populations of c.50,000-150,000 are routine). Their management is often physically and socially fairly far removed from the needs of forest dwellers[17]; the District expenditures are mostly on health and education; expenditures are concentrated in urban areas far from the forest (and the urban bias in education tends to be ideological as well as physical); expenditure patterns may favour indigenes over migrants[18]; and so on. The local level 'Unit Committees' which are much closer to the forest may provide a useful channel for linking revenue to local benefits, and thence to forest conservation. However, these have only recently been introduced (the first elections were held in September 1998).

A related area of interest concerns the roles of the Administrator of Stool Lands. The 1992 Constitution states that the "Administrator of Stool Lands and the Regional Lands Commission shall consult with the stools and other traditional authorities in all matters relating to the administration and development of stool land and shall make available to them all relevant information and data. (....) The Lands Commission and the Administrator of Stool Lands shall co-ordinate with all relevant public agencies and traditional authorities and stools in preparing a policy framework for the rational and productive development and management of stool lands" (Article 267). There may thus be potential for the Administrator of Stool Lands to contribute usefully to the co-management process.

Tenurial change

Tenure change has not been seen as a promising route to forest conservation in Ghana, at least at the level of the project, and there is much justification for this view. The

---

[16] In the modified *taungya* system presently practised by the Forest Department, participants are allowed to keep all the income from their plots (not just the *abusa* share), provided they plant and nurture the trees that the Department issues to them, though they are not allowed to plant any cassava because of its negative effects on the soil.

[17] Stone and D'Andrea have argued that strengthening local branches of national political units that represent all people in a region cannot be expected to benefit forests or traditional forest users, or to be sensitive to forest priorities (1997).

[18] There has been some evidence of this with regard to the targeting of some donor infrastructural expenditures, for example.

danger is that increasing the tenurial security of the landowners - most obviously, by granting them full tenurial rights over timber trees - would seriously weaken the position of tenant farmers. On the other hand, without some strengthening of the farmers' claims to the revenue that natural trees generate, it is difficult to see how they can be pressured to conserve trees on their farms. What is needed is a national policy to assert the landowners' claims, but one which also ensures that sitting tenants cannot be evicted solely to allow the owners to liquidate the assets on their lands. Given the informal nature of many rural tenancies and labour contracts, the legislative challenge may be formidable.

Exclusion policies

Ghana's record on protection and production reserves has (in the main) been a good one, indeed there are arguments in favour of diminishing the area set aside, not of enlarging it. The present policy is likely to come under pressure in the coming years, particularly should population pressures in the rural areas continue to increase. The introduction of new light-tolerant cocoa strains to replace the established shade-dependent *Tetteh Quarshie* varieties also represents a considerable threat, and has already altered the landscape in many areas. The keys to future conservation are likely to lie primarily in the successful implementation of the types of policies already in train - improved discipline in the wood industry, improved revenue shares to forest dwellers (and in a manner which reinforces the conservation-welfare link) and improved livelihoods from forest resources through a combination of increased access and improved management.

The role of exclusion measures - such as the proposed ban on artisanal chainsaw operation - is debatable. On the one hand, welfare considerations would suggest that a blanket ban is an inferior instrument to more positive measures such as the formalisation of farmers' rights and legal measures to ensure that farmers are consulted before any trees are cut. Where the land is farmed by tenants the evidence is that most chainsaw operators come to an agreement with both the tenant and the landowner, to their mutual benefit, and this provides further support for active management measures in line with the 'use it or lose it' philosophy. The fact that the interdiction will have to be enforced by the new GFS whilst it is attempting to establish itself as a service-oriented agency adds further weight in favour of an accommodation with local livelihoods.

Against these arguments is the fact that the artisanal chainsaw operators are said to be not entirely independent of the forest industry (the industrials are alleged to use the artisanals as sub-contractors in sensitive areas, so as to protect their own licences and interests). At the same time, past experience suggests that farmers may well want to remove the timber trees from their farms, particularly where these compete with much more lucrative crops such as cocoa and coffee, and thus the logic of the conservation argument - that giving value to trees will encourage farmers to conserve them - may well not apply until policy or scarcity pushes timber prices very much higher than they are today. Nevertheless, merely imposing a ban of this type is unlikely, of itself, to safeguard the resource - at least not while the incentive structure so strongly favours the beverage crops, surveillance capacity is so limited, and small farmers lack comparable access to alternative supplies.

Ghana case study - review

The evidence is therefore of a situation in which the attempt to heighten community involvement in forest conservation must confront complex issues of land management with deep historical roots, which transcend the forest sector and require involvement of wide cross-sectoral interests. Developing a capacity to understand these issues will require GFS staff to contextualise their interventions, and this in turn will require them to develop skills in social appraisal such as are generally lacking at the present time. But these skills and abilities are unlikely to suffice, on their own, to master the environment. The issues transcend the local level, and impinge on national and sub-national issues of natural resource policy. Attempts to address such questions only at the local level not only risk proving ineffective in the short term, but also of establishing agreements which are highly unlikely to be respected in the longer term. To a significant extent, the underlying resource allocation issues (because they affect the population at large) can only be addressed by an institution with national legitimacy - in other words, the agencies of the state. Bringing together different ministries and departments in support of the conservation goal represents a major challenge not only for the GFS but also for the government.

7.3   Cameroon Case Study

Box 3:   Basic Forest Statistics - Cameroon

Total land area:	46,540,000 ha (1995)
Total forest area:	19,598,000 ha, of which:
Natural forest area:	19,582,000 ha
Permanent forest estate (*plan de zonage*)	64% of forest area
(Of which 43% are production forests)	
Non-permanent forests (*plan de zonage*)	31.5% of forest area
Protected areas (IUCN categories I-IV)	4.5% of total land area
Average annual change in forest cover,	
1980-95	-0.6%
Total population:	14,540,000
Average annual population change:	+2.8%
Agricultural contribution to GDP	39%
Forest sector contribution to GDP	4 ~ 7%
(Forest fiscal revenue CFA 19 billion,	
6% of total revenue)	
Average roundwood production (1993-5)	15,263,000 m^3 (+30% since 1983-5)
Average sawnwood production (1993-5)	1,088,000 m^3 (+136% since 1983-5)
Average net trade in roundwood (1993-5)	
[i.e imports/exports]	(991,000 m^3) (+82% since 1983-5)
(Third in rank after petroleum,	
agricultural commodities [coffee, cocoa & cotton])	
Forest industry structure:	
number of enterprises	414
total employment	19,235

Cameroon provides an interesting contrast with Ghana for here the route has been to opt for a radical overhaul of the legislative framework as a means both of increasing the efficiency of the industry and promoting community participation in forest management. While this creates a powerful vehicle for change, it is a high risk strategy politically, particularly where (as is the case in Cameroon) levels of national ownership of the legislation are relatively weak, and the local constituency poorly developed.

The main vehicle for changes in forest management practice in Cameroon is provided by the 1994 Forest Law, which makes numerous provisions in addition to community forestry, though the latter is a central feature of it. In order to understand the potential for community forest management in Cameroon, it is necessary first to clarify the provisions of the new law.

Under Cameroonian legislation, all land which has not been sold into freehold is the property of the State. This reflects Cameroon's mainly French colonial inheritance. Under both Cameroonian and the preceding French legislation, all *'terre vacante et sans maître'* is state land. Whilst in traditional tenure, conversion *(mise en valeur)*

of forest grants a person the status of 'landowner', this is not recognised under national legislation, particularly as regards any standing timber trees. In practice, state legislation is not always enforced, and land 'sales' are widespread, but the principle exists, and this acts to weaken tenurial security. Nevertheless, for most small farmers with low purchasing power, the only way to gain access to land other than by inheritance is to convert forest to farm. As in the case of Ghana (though arguably to a heightened degree), the incentives to the small farmer are predominantly in favour of 'deforestation' (at least in a certain sense of the term - most farms are not treeless), not of forest conservation.

Coinciding with the process of legislative change, a new land classification system has been introduced - which makes a central distinction between the permanent and non-permanent forest estates. This distinction indicates whether or not the forest in question is available for conversion to other usages, not necessarily the permanence of any particular trees (Box 3). The first stage of the new classification involved the drawing up of a *plan de zonage* for the southern half of the country (the forested areas south of the Sanaga River) in 1993 by the Department of Forests using the technical expertise of

---

Box 4: Classification and Exploitation of Forests under the 1994 Law

Classification of forests:
Under the 1994 Law, forests in Cameroon are classed into two types:

A. *Permanent* or *classified forests* (*forêts permanentes*) - which are to be used only for forestry or as wildlife habitats;

B. *Non-permanent* (unclassified, though not necessarily 'temporary') *forests* - which comprise forest lands that can be used for purposes other than those indicated in (A).

A. *Permanent forests* comprise two types:
1. State forests (*forêts domaniales*) - to include areas protected for wildlife (national parks, game reserves, etc.) and production forest reserves.
2. Council forests (*forêts communales*) - to be managed by elected local councils, on the basis of management plans approved by the Ministry.

B. *Non-permanent forests:*
3. Community forests (forêts communautaires)
4. Private forests (forêts privées) - *belonging to private individuals*
5. Communal forests (forêts du domaine nationale - *not to be confused with class A-2, above) - a residual class which includes all forests which are not included in class A or class B-4 (thus, class B-3 is technically a sub-class of B-5, but is usually treated separately).*

The area of the forest designated as 'non-permanent' represents only 31.5% of the total forest estate - as against 64% for permanent forest (of which 43% is production forest).

Exploitation of forests:
There are two major types of logging rights, controlled by MINEF:

1   *Concessions*. As from 1996, these have become known as *unités forestières d'aménagement (UFA)*, which are to function as the dominant class of cutting rights in state forests (ie. class A-1). They may be up to 200,000 ha. in area. UFA replace the former logging licences, being differentiated from them by the fact that they require management plans to be formulated in advance of the exploitation of the concession areas. These plans will be required to state the subdivisions of the UFA which will be exploited annually (following established usage, these smaller units are called *assiettes de coupe*).

2   *Sales of standing volume* (*ventes de coupe)* can be granted both in and outside of the permanent forest estate, and may be for either small areas (up to 2,500 ha) or a given volume of standing timber (Eba'a Atyi,1997).. In the latter case, rights are of two main types, *permis de coupe* (up to 500 m^3) and *autorisation personnnelle* (up to 30 m^3). The area-based sales and the *permis de coupe* need to involve an *exploitant agréé de la profession* (ie. a licenced timber operator), while a personal authorisation can be given directly to a non-professional (eg. a villager), and is for non-commercial use only. *Ventes de Coupe* do not, of themselves, require management plans, though they are (at least theoretically) subject to limitations as to the levels and type of offtake permitted.

ONADEF, a department of the Ministry of Environment and Forests. ONADEF was aided by a Canadian consultancy firm, TECSULT International, an affiliate of Poulin-Thériault, which also provided some technical support to the Government over the drafting of the 1994 Law. This plan de zonage is not uncontroversial, as will be discussed below.

Under the land classification system, extractive uses of forests are permitted under a number of possible management regimes (see Box 3*).*

Each of these classes is subject to a different time frame for its exploitation. Community forests are for a minimum

25 year term, reviewed every 5 years, while UFA are for renewable periods of 15 years.[19]

---

[19] Under strong donor pressure (particularly from the World Bank), the initial wording of the 1994 Forest Law allowed for a thirty-year term of exploitation for the UFA. The Cameroon legislature, however, reduced this to a renewable term of 15 years, subject to three yearly review, arguing that the longer time period would compromise national sovereignty (many of the big loggers are expatriate), and would also disadvantage local logging companies which lacked the capital base for such long-term planning. Whatever the merits of this as a sovereignty issue, its effect is to reduce the planning frame excessively, in terms of the established parameters of tropical forest management, and it could thus be argued that a significant opportunity has been lost to commit Cameroon's forests to the requirements of sustainable forest management.

The new law also imposed a ban on the export of raw logs, to be applied 5 years after the enactment of the law (from July 1999). Against many predictions (given the low processing capacity in the country and the hostility of the logging industry), this is being brought into effect on time, though with numerous exceptions which may diminish its impact.

The enactment of the new law in 1994 was followed over the next 3 years by various changes in the procedures for allocation of logging concessions and in the level of forest taxes. These changes were strongly promoted by the World Bank and IMF as part of the on-going process of dialogue on the forest sector relating to discussions around Cameroon's enhanced structural adjustment facility. These included:

• allocation of concessions by competitive bidding (sealed bid auction) rather than administrative allocation;[20]
• progressive changes to the tax regime, involving considerable simplification of the system and including the use of FOB prices as the taxable base, not the *valeurs mercurials*[21], and considerably increasing the relative importance of area-based (as opposed to species-based) taxation.

Tax rates for logs and processed wood exports were also reviewed in 1997. Included in this category was a progressive tax on log exports, to penalise companies exporting raw logs above the 30% agreed ceiling for the transition period before application of the log export ban. All of these changes in the taxation system were supported by continued improvements in the mechanisms for independent surveillance and inspection, involving forest management companies such as SGS Forestry.

Implementation

Many of the changes represent, potentially at least, significant improvements in the management of the industry. In line with the earlier discussion, both the new law and the associated procedural innovations stand to increase transparency in areas where this is presently conspicuously low. There are two major areas of concern: questions of political will, and the appropriateness of the changes to the needs of the rural majority.

Questions of will are intimately concerned with issues of national ownership, and in this reference serious questions are raised about the ability of the aid delivery system to foster true ownership of the new legislation in Cameroon. There is no doubt that the driving force behind

this legislation was to be found not in Cameroon but in the donor community, particularly the World Bank. Furthermore, it would be difficult to argue that the terms under which the new legislation was developed acted to increase this ownership, for much of the crucial support work with regard to the demarcation of the *plan de zonage* was in the hands of the Canadian consultancy firm. (Ekoko, 1997) An unusual and superficially attractive - though, in the event, almost certainly retrograde - innovation in the management of the consultancy contract was its payment purely on the basis of the outputs achieved. This was arguably unconducive to national ownership - to the extent that it encouraged a tendency to discount national participation, as un-cost effective, in favour of an approach which delivered the results sought primarily in terms of the requirements of the donor and not the recipient society. The *plan de zonage* bears little relationship to the systems of land usage actually practised in Cameroon, and prejudices the 1994 Law accordingly (Penelon, 1996; Sharpe, 1998).[22]

In any donor-led intervention, genuine national ownership is likely to be a fundamental requirement for success, but this is particularly the case where major changes of legislation are envisaged which challenge the existing distribution of power and resources between state and society. The fact that the forest industry is of such disproportionate influence in Cameroon is clearly a complicating factor. The risk is that the financial muscle of this industry will be brought to bear to co-opt elements of the administration to support its own partisan interests. This danger is only heightened and encouraged by the fact that Cameroonian law is based on that of France, so that it is enacted law, not precedent, which provides the standard for any proposed action under the law. Such a situation provides ample scope for anyone ill-disposed to the changes to thwart them by a meticulous application of the letter of the law to block any activity not explicitly endorsed and so it has proven in the early years.[23]

To some extent, the local institutional issues involved in operationalizing community-based management in Cameroon parallel those in Ghana. Unlike the latter, however, the introduction of local participation into forest management in Cameroon does not seek to build

---

[20] Experience of the first round of ostensibly competitive allocations does not instill much confidence that the system will be properly applied. Less than one third of the bids allocated in the first round went to the highest bidder, and the shortfall in revenue to the state was of the order of US$3mn.
[21] These are values fixed by the government, which are intended to represent the current values of the timber, but in practice have tended not to respond adequately to inflation and changes in market conditions.

[22] That they have not been more strongly opposed by environmental NGOs operating in the country is of itself a cause for concern. For the indications are of a growing alliance between the conservation agencies and the logging industry in favour of a clear division between 'permanent forests' (the vast majority of the remaining high forest area) and the 'non-permanent forests' (generally rather degraded and residual secondary bush areas into which the rural population are likely to find themselves increasingly consigned).

[23] At the same time, there exist a number of loopholes in the law which can also be used to permit its abuse. It is reported, for example, that promiscuous allocation of *ventes de coupe* is being used to subvert the intentions of the new concession management policy, and that a residual sub-class of licence, *ventes de recuperation* (ie. salvage sales) - intended only to mop up timber patches on areas designated for other purposes (eg. plantations or housing) - is now being used clandestinely to allocate logging rights.

primarily on an existing well-formed community institution. Indeed, nowhere in the Cameroon legislation is there any attempt to define the nature of the 'community' into whose hands the management of a *forêt communautaire* is to be placed. Questions are thus raised as to whether the term 'community' is a meaningful abstraction in the Cameroon context, and also regarding the mechanisms through which the notion of 'community' (however defined) can become an operator in forest management.

The notion of 'community'

The problems to which the absence of a clear notion of community gives rise are several. In Cameroon, community identities are important ones, though not necessarily qualitatively superior to other forms of social affiliation based on considerations of tribe, kinship and clientage. Likewise, while 'tribe' does provide an important point of reference, tribal institutions have in the main been historically rather weak. There is little in Cameroon's history to suggest that such tribal institutions as do exist posses the robustness needed to act as the primary vehicle for community management (Hobley & Shah, 1997). The important point has been made by Geschiere that what now pass as traditional offices in Southern Cameroon are often "essentially 'modern' positions of power (which) colonialists and chiefs alike .. have made consistent efforts to ... 'traditionalise'" - though often with rather little success and limited acceptance by the supposed subject populations (1993:152).

Many parts of Cameroon are ethnically quite diverse. In the south of the country, for example, populations of Bulu, Beti and Fang tribal groups inhabit the same or neighbouring localities. Not all such social divisions are indicative of systematic social conflicts, and in many cases, the different groups have long co-existed harmoniously (Djeumo, 1998:12).[24] In other cases divisions based on social origins and economic interests may overlap, and may inhibit the coalescence of interests on a residential basis. This is particularly likely where resources are either in short supply and competition for access severe (as in parts of the South West), or where differences of livelihood strategies are likely (in the context of the recent legislative changes) to lead to differences of long-term interest in the forest. An example of the latter is the relationship between the settled agricultural Bantu and hunter-gatherer *Baka* pygmies in areas of the south.

The extent of population mobility has not been well documented in Cameroon, though overall, it is likely to be rather less than in Ghana but with notable local variations. In some areas there has been major admixing of population through immigration on a long historical time scale, and the divisions within the community may now be particularly strong. A case in point is the South West

Province of former Anglophone Cameroon, where the establishment of rubber, oil palm and fruit plantations starting in the early years of the century under German rule, led to a massive influx of migrant workers. By the 1950s, settlers outnumbered the indigenous Bakweri 16:1 in the vicinity of the CDC plantations close to Mount Cameroon (Ardener et al., 1960), and the ratio is probably still at least as high.[25] Under the British administration, conflicts centred on the colonial 'Native Authorities' which were tribally based and specifically excluded 'strangers' from the exercise of political functions (Sharpe, 1998: 33). Tensions between Bakweri indigenes and the immigrants remain significant to this day (Geschiere, 1993; Sharpe, 1998). Sharpe (1998:39-40) has been particularly critical of the failure of recent development interventions to acknowledge and accommodate these long standing political conflicts. Among the causes for this failure, he cites the way in which over-emphasis on rapid survey methods and PRA techniques as methods of action research (to the detriment of long-term ethnographic research) "has led such projects to discount the complex historical processes which underpin such relationships" (ibid).

The locality of Mount Cameroon is likely to be exceptional, to a greater or lesser degree, because of its long history of plantation agriculture. Elsewhere, immigration rates are often rather lower, though they may well be growing significantly. For example, Sunderlin and Pokam, in a recent survey of 38 villages in the south, found that 46% of all household members (11,328 out of 24,565 persons in the sample) were born outside of their village of present residence (Sunderlin, 1998, *pers. comm.*).[26] By contrast, Franqueville's study of the same sample villages in 1974-5 indicated approximate figures of 5-15% of then resident villagers born elsewhere. These figures are not necessarily accurate indications of immigrant status in the proper sense of the term (in that indigenes may be born outside their home areas), but they do suggest that admixing of population is growing, and may now be significant, even in the lower population density areas of the HFZ.

Lack of congruence between social and geographical communities has other implications in the present context. For example, Cameroon elites, like those throughout West-Central Africa, are likely to reside outside of their natal villages, but still retain an identification with them,

---

[24] In general, resource conflicts with ethnic dimensions seem less severe in the forested areas than in the (generally more heavily populated) grasslands and savanna zones (cf. Bouttier, 1996).

[25] Ardener and Ardener give the following ethnic breakdown for the labour force on the CDC plantations, as of 1955-6 [modern administrative boundaries added *ex-post* by David Brown]: South West Province - 28.1% (of which 5.4% from the host sub-Division; North West Province - 32.8%; elsewhere in ('French') Cameroon - 6.9%; Nigeria - 31/5%; others - 0.5% (Ardener et al., 1960:28)). The same authors indicate that there were persons from 36 identifiable tribes in British Cameroons (ie. the present SW and NW Provinces) on the books of the CDC in 1955 (1960:23).

[26] With all 31,104 persons in the sample (including sons and daughters of household heads interviewed, not presently resident in the villages), the percentage of people born outside of the villages drops to 37% (Sunderlin, *pers.comm.*).

Table 7: **Allocation of Contracts for Forest Exploitation - by Nationality, 1991-6 (Cameroon)**

Fiscal Year	Ventes de coupe			Assiettes de coupe (licenced concessions)		
	Domestic	Foreign	Total	Domestic	Foreign	Total
1991/2	48	17	65	na	na	
1992/3	100	33	133	na	na	
1993/4	127	44	171	76	170	246
1994/5	115	53	168	95	138	233
1995/6	127	46	173	141	157	298
Total:	**517**	**193**	**710**	**312**	**465**	**777**

Source: Eba'a Atyi, 1998:19

an affiliation which provides an important asset to a bureaucratic or political career. Whilst it is easy to stigmatise these elites, and present them as parasites on the local 'community', their role in integrating the local and national levels is well established, and by and large, regarded positively by the rural populations with which they are identified. Nevertheless, the potential certainly does exist for elite groups to use this integrative capacity - linking the community to the political centre - to 'capture' forest resources, either by fronting fictive community forests or using their insider knowledge to preempt their establishment in favour of *ventes de coupe*, in a manner to be discussed below.

The mechanisms to develop 'community forests'

The mechanisms by which communities are expected to exploit the forest are largely unspecified under the 1994 Forest Law. The most promising mechanism is for communities to sub-contract to licenced contractors (who mostly sell on from *ventes de coupe* to large operators through a system called *fermage*).[27] However, in many circumstances licenced operators are more likely to apply for *ventes de coupe* directly, rather than to sub-contract community forests.[28] This is largely because of the more relaxed regulations applying to *ventes de coupe* (there is no need for management plans, for example).[29] This class

[27] Sub-contracting to licenced operators is probably not the only way for a community to exploit a community forest for its timber. The legal situation is as yet uncertain, but it would seem that it would be open to a community, once its community forest is designated, to allow any number of villagers to cut timber themselves under *autorisations personnelles*,(each up to 30 m³) provided in each case that the intention was only to secure timber for personal use.

[28] This is not to say that logging companies will never try to use the community forestry legislation as a subterfuge to obtain *ventes de coupe*. Where communities are already moving towards applications for community forests, loggers may feel pressured to intervene. Towards the end of 1998, for example, there were three instances of a logging company putting pressure on local chiefs to allocate fictive community forests to itself; this was in the area of Lomié where SNV has been working with local populations for some years. Following diplomatic intervention at a high level, the logging company withdrew its interest.

[29] The tax regime is the same for both community forests and *ventes de coupe* (Acworth, 1999).

of licence is the preferred form of exploitation for many of the indigenous (and relatively undercapitalised) Cameroonian timber contractors, as Table 7 illustrates.

It must be wondered how successful local communities will be in competing for rights over the more valuable parts of the NPFE, in opposition to much better financed independent contractors, who have better access to the centres of power and are not required to provide detailed - and costly - management plans. Only where communities show resolve in refusing to allow the loggers in are community forestry contracts likely to appear as a viable alternative to the industry, for the cost structure is otherwise largely unfavourable. The initiative of the DFID-supported Community Forestry Unit (CFU) has ensured that inventories are not required in advance of the approval of applications for allocation of community forests and this has considerably reduced the level of financial risk to those with little surplus funds. However inventories are still required before exploitation can be undertaken; depending on the level of detail required, the costs could well be US$75 per hectare or more. An additional danger is that once a community has invested in the inventory, and timber resources of high value confirmed, unscrupulous government officials might be tempted to find evidence of an *infraction* (breach of the rules) on the part of the community in question, allowing a logging company to step in and exploit the area as a conventional *vente de coupe*, benefiting from the inventory work already done at no extra cost to itself.

Even where populations seek to establish community forests in line with the spirit of the law, there are important ambiguities in the institutional context. The concept of 'community' is given practical meaning in Cameroonian law only in so far as it is associated with the formation of legal entity, for which the two primary candidates are the GIC (*groupe d'initiative commune)* and the GIE (*groupe d'intérêt économique).* The most relevant legal institution for the management of community forests is likely to be the former. Under Cameroonian law, a GIC need not comprise all members of a village community, and can

contain as few as three members. There is no necessary correspondence between the 'community' in whose name the community forest will be designated, and the 'community' which will be responsible for its management. The fear is that a small group, probably urban elites of local origin, will use their high level contacts to have a community forest approved in the name of the whole community but managed through an institution which actually represents only a small part of it. The response of the CFU has been to avoid confronting this issue, in favour of an approach which requires maximum consultation with all sections of the 'community', and this has now been written into the *Manual of Procedures for the Attribution and Norms for the Management of Community Forests* (MINEF, 1998), and validated by an order (*arrêté*) of government. In this way, the potential for 'community' to be defined so as to exclude locally important categories is at least partly avoided. On the other hand, on the negative side, the ambiguity does invite conflict, and requires any excluded group to openly challenge the procedures in an area of law which is acknowledged to be under-conceptualised. As the groups in question are likely to be among the less powerful in society and lacking in high level allies, this might not be easy to achieve.

Applications for community forest to date

To date, there have been very few attempts to establish community forests, but all of these have been problematic, and no genuine one has yet been awarded (as of early 1999). Djeumo (1998) reviews three such cases, in different localities of the high forest zone. All three have confronted serious difficulties. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, given the innovative nature of the legislation, uncertainties about the appropriate approach and hesitations to commit to a potentially costly procedure have had a negative effect on the level of community interest, as has the fact that in all the cases, the process has not only been initiated by elites, but largely managed by them, creating a sense of exclusion and distrust among many of the poorer villagers. The absence of a coherent community voice and doubts as to the meaning of 'full participation' in the local context have affected all three attempts, to varying degrees, and inter-village rivalries have been a significant blockage in one case (the WWF-supported SOLIDAMI project). Villagers have shown themselves reluctant, in some cases, to accept the restrictions on usage which designation of an area as a community forest would entail - in part, at least, because of their claims that the forests are already their own.

Other attempts to designate community forests have ended in disarray. Penelon's study of the API-DIMAKO project underlines the inordinate power of the industrial lobby, and this case reveals a worrying alliance between the industry and a donor agency (1997). A large number (in excess of 50) further depositions are presently under assessment, but these are a very diverse group, and most have not conformed to the requirements of the legal process. Given the complexities of the legal process in Cameroon, it is as yet very early days (Beng, 1998).

Alternative means of community involvement in forest management

All in all, therefore, the Cameroonian community forestry legislation is extremely challenging, and the risk of failure is significant. The fact that community forests are restricted to the non-permanent forest is indicative of their marginalisation within the system of forest exploitation,[30] and there is a strong risk that, even where they do offer significant timber resources, they will be manipulated by unscrupulous timber operators as a form of fictive *vente de coupe.* This danger is only heightened by the complexity of rural social structure, and the multiple interests which converge on any patch of forest land, both of which offer many hostages to fortune on the road to community solidarity.

Any attempt to assess the level of the risk in pursuing a co-management strategy of this type must take account of both the extent of the need for change in the quality of management of Cameroon's forests (and the need is certainly great), and also the likely success of any alternative strategies. Community forests are not the only means by which community benefits are to be provided under the new legislation, village communities also benefit from a variety of revenue sharing arrangements. These comprise the logging taxes, including the 1000FCFA/ha logging fee in areas with *ventes de coupe* and the 1500FCFA/ha area tax in the *UFA* (to be shared in the following proportions: 50% to the treasury; 40% to the regional council; and 10% to the local communities). There are concerns about the capacity of local communities to expend such tax windfalls effectively; at issue are not only the balance between community-wide benefits (as opposed to individual income gains) and the likely lack of management experience at village level, but the inappropriateness of locally committed capital expenditures with no guarantee of support from the recurrent budget of the state. And there is a view that area-based fees may be a less effective vehicle to promote sustainable forest management than taxes linked directly to community management, which require and reward the efficient exploitation of the forest estate.

An equally debatable issue is whether local populations might not benefit more from the designation of potential community forests as council forests (*forêts communales*), under the democratic control of the mayor and local council. Box 4 considers the case of Bimbia-Bonadikombo, in the South West Province, where this approach has been mooted. As in the case of Ghana, the logic would be that where interests are defined in geographical terms, rather than in relation to non-localised user groups, the most appropriate form of organisation is

---

[30] However, this is not necessarily proof of their economic non-viability for not all of this zone is degraded, by any means, and, in any case, a number of important secondary forest species, such as 'Ayous' *(triplochyton scleroxylon)* - known in Ghana as *Wawa* - and 'Fromager' *(Ceiba pentandra)* - known in Ghana as 'Silk Cotton' - are of importance on the international market.

> **Box 5: Exclusion of Non-Traditional Resource Users - The Case of Bimbia-Bonadikombo**
>
> One strategy which has been promoted to improve the management of the forest resource in socially complex areas is to exclude non-traditional resource users especially those of external origin. An interesting example of this concerns the peninsula of Bimbia-Bonadikombo, which lies just a few kilometres to the east of the port of Limbe in the South West Province of Cameroon, and is easily accessible from the town. Still relatively well-forested (thanks in part to the fact that it is covered by some dormant Cameroon Development Corporation leases), the area has become a favoured haunt of wage workers in Limbe and the neighbouring plantations, seeking to augment their low incomes through farming activities, and upwards of 1,000 persons have been found to make use of the area for part-time farming and related activities. It is also an area of exceptional biodiversity, one of the hottest of the hot spots of the African coast (Hawthorne, *pers.com.)* The peninsula forms part of the area in which the Mount Cameroon Project (supported by DFID and the Cameroon Ministry of Environment and Forests) has a mandate to conserve biodiversity. The dilemma faced by the project has been how to control access to this area without recourse to an expensive and unsustainable policing operation. Initially, the approach favoured was to support the traditional owners of the area, most of whom now work in service industries outside of the immediate locality, often in Limbe town. This group formed itself into a management committee - the 'Victoria Lands and Forest Committee' (resurrecting the existing but dormant 'Victoria Lands Committee', which took its title from the colonial name for Limbe) - with a dual remit both to preserve the biodiversity of the area and to re-establish their traditional rights of ownership. The Project provided logistic support to this group to establish vigilante patrols in the peninsula, in association with the staff of the provincial MINEF, confiscating lumber illegally harvested in the area, and restricting access by 'squatters' to farm lands. Subsequently, MINEF and the Project tried to widen membership - now renamed the Bimbia-Bonadikombo Natural Resources Management Council (BBNRMC) - to include non-indigenes, although this met with some resistance from the group. In practice, the BBNRMC is still dominated by the indigenes. While this situation may lead to the conservation the biodiversity of Bimbia-Bonadikombo, it does run the risk of furthering the claims of one section of the population in ways which, if pursued on a national scale, would create precedents that the Cameroon Government might be reluctant to accept. The dilemma is that the other available strategies would either require the handing-over of the area to the Limbe Urban District Council for possible designation as a council forest (the Council has other priorities than conservation, and the area is potentially valuable as real estate), or some more general attempt at regulation which would be difficult and expensive to police, and probably unsustainable. At the same time, there is no guarantee that the indigenous owners, if they do succeed in establishing a right of ownership, will not themselves seek to capitalize their land.

territorial, backed up by the legitimacy of democratic rule. Local councils are elected in Cameroon, although on tickets linked to national political parties, with the potential for distortion that this entails. In Cameroon, even the national level democratic process is proving a very imperfect instrument for the public voice to be heard (cf. Ribot, 1995a). There are instances, however, where such forms of democratic legitimation, whatever their imperfections, do seem to provide needed accountability, and it remains to be seen whether this form of accountability proves more acceptable to the forest dwellers than that provided by the forms of social organisation which emerge around the new 'community forests'.

Finally, some consideration should be given to the alternative to community involvement - categorical exclusion - which has been the preferred option for many conservation initiatives, and heavily supported by the donor community. While both the exclusion policy and the search for alternative livelihood strategies for communities denied access to their traditional pursuits have met with singularly little success in Cameroon in recent years

(Brown, 1998a), both approaches still meet with much favour among the environmental agencies. WWF-International, for example, is currently promoting an initiative to double the area under protection in Central Africa (including Cameroon), an approach which is supported by all the interested governments.

Given the poor record of such initiatives, these developments would be worrying even on their own terms. Despite the low levels of population throughout much of the Equatorial African forest zone, few if any such areas are devoid of traditional ownership claims (see, for example, Vermeulen, 1997) so that exclusion inevitably brings with it alienation and social conflict. However, in the context of a land use strategy which seeks to declare two-thirds of the forest zone as 'permanent forest estate' - denied to local usage more or less in perpetuity - the prospect is created of the high costs of exclusion being thrown almost immediately onto the hapless small farmers who will be confined to increasingly marginal areas of the non-permanent estate. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, the exclusion policy has met with favour not only with the environmental lobby but also with their national partners

and the logging industry (Sharpe, *pers com.*) - an alliance which is most unlikely to be in the interests of the rural majority and which must be weighed against any benefits, real or potential, which local populations are likely to derive from the opportunities provided under the new law for community forestry.

7.4   The two case studies - conclusion

Ghana and Cameroon provide interesting contrasts both as regards the overall strategy to promote sectoral reform and the different institutional context in which this has occurred.

An interesting question which arises from these case studies is whether they tell us anything about the attractiveness of 'community-based' natural resource management as population and resource pressures increase. The Ghana situation is advantaged to some extent not only by its favourable institutional environment, but also by the fact that there is an important element of local ownership of the changes, not only among the general public but - crucially - in the arenas of national decision making. This is a reflection, in part at least, of the fact that the resource is under pressure, the forest industry under threat, and the public well aware of the economic interests at stake. At the same time, resource conflicts do have a particular history in Ghana - and by and large are more complex than those in Cameroon - and it must be wondered whether the ambition to see increased benefits of forest management flow back not just to the ostensible forest owners but to 'the community' and (particularly) 'the rural poor' - does not jar with the country's history. It is certainly ambitious to hope that this can be done entirely through consensual means and on the basis of participatory management approaches, with no foundation in a struggle for power. While it may well be the case that, other things being equal, locally owned forest land represents the tenure category with the greatest potential for CFM (Carter, 1999:4), other factors have to be taken into account, including the social complexity which may well develop in contexts such as this, where resource ownership has long been in local hands.

Establishing new forms of community control over natural resources with contentious ownership is difficult in any situation of ethnic and social complexity, and this is particularly the case where those resources are highly valued by a politically influential industrial lobby with close links with the technical services, as well as, more broadly, with the political elite. The principle of community forestry is an enormously ambitious one in societies where the industrial-elite complex is powerful, and its practicality is still largely unknown. The implications of giving local populations a stake in timber management where their interests have hitherto been confined largely to NTFPs is but one aspect of this change. It cannot necessarily be assumed that traditional use practices will be sustained, and that all categories of the population will be able to guarantee the continuance of the benefits that the forest has traditionally provided them.

Over and above the issue of equity in the distribution of benefits to the community is the question of whether, even if the distribution is equitable, it results in enhanced capacity to conserve the forest, rather than merely offering the opportunity for some locals to capitalise on its conversion to other uses. This relates partly to debates about the preference (or otherwise) of the poor for consumption over capital accumulation, partly to the effects of political instability on the economic behaviour of all citizens of a country, the poor included, and partly to the technical complexity of sustainable forest management. The effects of local management on the species composition of the forest, and the preservation of its overall integrity, are as yet unknown (cf. Reid and Rice, 1997).

8.   MATTERS ARISING

8.1   Broader issues of land use management

The arguments above suggest that the fundamental issues facing forest co-management are as much broad questions of land use management, even governance, as the technical requirements for sustainable forest conservation. If CFM is to become a major component of forest management systems, the first requirement is to identify or refine the legislative and institutional mechanisms and structures through which forestry can engage with other sectors and the overall processes of governance. Situation-specific elements are relevant, but by and large they are likely to be dependent on decisions about resource allocations which transcend the local level, and which impinge on much bigger issues of political economy. Where industrial and rural interests clash, then livelihood interests become a central concern, and the debate must re-focus on the question of co-management. But as the two case studies reveal, the concept of livelihoods is insufficient, on its own, to comprehend the human dimension, and sociological and historical perspectives need to be applied to understand the diversity of interests in the resource.

In some cases, resolving issues of land use management is likely to involve confronting known resource allocation problems through already existing structures. In other instances, there may well be need for new structures and legislation to validate the claims of certain resource users against others, the distinction in rights of access and control being made with due regard to both questions of social justice and the demands of sustainable management. What tips the scales in favour of the rights of one set of claimants over another may, in the last analysis, be their superior claims to manage the resource. Existing knowledge and practices might be part of the picture here (*per* Principle 22 of the Rio Declaration cited above [Section 5]), though other factors must be taken into account, including the long-term interest and intent of the relevant categories of population. This is clearly a matter for the respective governments not for informal arbitration within the confines of donor-funded initiatives. The underlying issues are inherently political, and not

reducible to the technical requirements for sustainable management, important as these may be. It goes without saying that local ownership of the policy process is a fundamental requirement for success in such a sensitive area of change, and that without it, there is little chance of serious government and popular commitment to the complex intra-community and inter-sectoral issues involved.

8.2   The value of a sectoral approach

At the same time, recent experience suggests that progress in forestry matters is highly dependent on the creation of pressure points and dynamics for change within the sector, and not externally. Where forestry issues are absorbed within wider debates on natural resource management, the likely consequence is that they become subordinated to them to the detriment of sectoral interests. Agricultural development offers quicker, more tangible and usually higher returns in a politically highly saleable form; its justification is less dependent on the types of externalities on which forest conservation depends. Forest management is likewise prone to domination by industrial concerns to the detriment of national interests. Thus debates about forest resource allocations are easily reduced to the requirements of the industry. The challenge ahead is to find ways to engage with the wider issues of land use management, while retaining an over-riding focus on the condition of the forest resource.[31]

8.3   Revenue-sharing arrangements

The forest sector might yet provide a model for the wider society. For it may well be through the precedents which forest co-management creates for revenue sharing arrangements and co-management between state and populace that governments are forced to address wider issues of public accountability. Clarifying these revenue sharing arrangements, rendering them more transparent, and ensuring that they are organised so as to offer incentives to sustainable management, while safeguarding the interests of the poor and vulnerable, is a task of some urgency. At the same time, forest co-management offers the opportunity to bring back down to earth the severely overblown rhetoric of participation, and redefine it as an aspect of public accountability.

8.4   Conflicts between local organisations and the state

Shepherd has raised the issue of "who will be the umpire, in any post-project phase, in cases of conflict between local organisations and the state?" (1997:8). Community/state conflicts are certainly possible, though the conflicts may well go much wider than this. In the types of contexts discussed above, this is the case for at least three reasons: firstly, because historically-validated social hierarchies

provide an obvious basis to differentiate access to resources which have not hitherto been transacted publicly; secondly, because the excessive power of a single stakeholder (in this case the forest industry) is likely itself to accentuate the social divisions which exist in society, as an adjunct to its own maximisation strategies; and thirdly, because decentralisation (even the limited kinds of decentralisation discussed here), while inherently beneficial, will increase the dangers of elite capture - or perhaps more accurately, increase the forms which elite capture may take.

One problem here is that the state is not necessarily an independent party in such conflicts, nor one that might be expected to 'stand above the fray'. The state may not act in such a dispassionate fashion, but actively intervene against the interests of its citizenry. In such a situation, the principle of donor intervention has both positive and negative aspects. There may be doubts as to the international community's right of intervention in questions of national sovereignty, such as pertain with forests more than most environmental goods, but there are arguments that, where democratic processes are lacking or seriously malfunctioning, the national interest does need protection against the extractive industry and its *compradores*. How this right would be exercised is a matter of some moment, for it would clearly compromise the requirement for full national ownership, the primacy of which has been asserted above. These are important and unresolved issues in a morally hazardous field, and central to any emergent 'rights-based approach' to development.

8.5   Increasing capacity for sociological enquiry

While much progress has been made in recent years in introducing social science perspectives into technical forestry, CFM is highly knowledge intensive in socio-structural terms, and thus increased capacity for sociological and historical enquiry is likely to be a continuing need in many projects and programmes. What is apparent from the two case studies is that while increased sociological knowledge is often a prerequisite for interventions in a 'learning mode', the required understandings are not necessarily ones that can be purchased cheaply or rapidly. Participatory research methods no doubt have their place, but they provide a dubious substitute for the long-term, in-depth and more penetrating studies which are required to adequately understand the historical evolution of complex systems of natural resource management.

Co-management programmes need to know where to access this kind of knowledge, and must then have the skills to use it effectively. They must be able to diagnose and prioritise resource management conflicts at a range of management levels, and distinguish those which are amenable to local resolution from those which demand intervention at a higher political level. In the latter case, it will be necessary (as noted above) to make the inter-sectoral linkages which allow for them to be addressed

---

[31] This point is also made by the UNDP Programme on Forests, which notes: "Cross-sectoral integration and maintaining a holistic and comprehensive approach to forest issues is a key challenge" (1998:p.1; their emphasis).

through the government process. Donor-funded projects are well-placed to bring together the range of actors who can help to clarify these resource conflicts, and place them on the public agenda. Multilateral and bilateral agencies (such as the European Union) are best placed to pick up these issues at the policy level, and debate them with the governments in relationships of partnership. Universities and NGOs have an important role to play, the former in providing the sociological skills, the long-term intellectual commitments and historical knowledge needed for contextual analysis, the latter in championing the interests of the non-vocal and the marginal. Ultimately, however, the decisions require the sanctions of the state, for no other actor has comparable claims to public accountability. Co-management cannot, therefore, be primarily about the transfer of control and authority away from the state (Hudson, 1997), but must focus on making its role more accountable.

8.6   The place of information

An additional area of concern is with the economic aspects of local participation. If 'participation' is to become something more than donor condescension, a clear requirement is that co-management programmes give priority to revenue sharing arrangements, and place information at the disposal of all those who have a right to a share of the revenues, and an influence over the ways in which decisions on expenditure are made. Some of the necessary information is, in forest sector terms, basic and fundamental - the stumpage value of timber, the values added in its transformation, the cost of its exploitation as against the potential benefits of its retention on community lands; the value added throughout the various stages of commercialisation of forest products; the effect of market chains in constraining the local benefits. The general public often knows very little of such issues, despite the huge expenditures invested in 'participatory management'. Such information is surely of greater importance to local communities than the sorts of ideas given currency in the conventional 'awareness creation' activities of environmental projects and NGOs. The fact that it is often treated as commercially privileged information rather than (as it surely ought to be) a major public resource only increases the opportunities for programmes of co-management to inform the public of the benefits which derive from the exploitation of the national domain. Without such information at their disposal, the participating communities are unlikely to be able to negotiate with the industry to their own advantage, and risk becoming merely a conduit for logging concessions on disguised and concessional terms.

8.7   'Communities' and the notion of participatory development

The above discussion has highlighted some of the difficulties of applying principles of participatory development in situations where the notion of 'community' is a contested one, where elites are well-positioned to capture any increases in the value of the resource and where 'participation' takes place in a context of fundamental political imbalance. These dilemmas are not, of course, unique to developing countries, nor are they forest-sector specific; they are inherent in any situation in which common residential concerns are cross-cut by hierarchies of power and economic interests. At the end of the day, concepts such as 'community' and 'participation' have to be regarded as a second-order terminology, inferior in strength and legitimacy to those of 'accountability' and 'democracy'.

The difficulties in the present context are two-fold. Firstly, that the structures of democracy in the societies in question may operate only inadequately if at all. And secondly, that democratic structures, even where they are operative, may offer no guarantee of effective forest conservation. However, the message is not a necessarily a pessimistic one. Here, as elsewhere, the conclusion to be drawn is not just of a major challenge but also of a major opportunity. In the typical context of the rentier state, CFM may provide virtually the only vehicle whereby issues both of governance and sustainable livelihoods can be meaningfully addressed. It may not be an exaggeration to say that the movement for the co-management of tropical forests has the opportunity not only to contribute to forest conservation but also to advance the processes of governance.

9.   CONCLUSION

Now that the initial rush of enthusiasm for participatory development is beginning to be tempered by experience, there is increasing realism as to the challenges that the movement must face. Early willingness to use the language of ideology to build and motivate a strong and confident constituency is giving way to a realisation that the underlying issues are often political, and that presenting them as questions of shared faith and commitment to participatory principles does little to clarify - and may well serve to obscure - these political roots. There is increasing recognition also that no one model of collaborative management can be offered which can be applied indiscriminately regardless of context. At the same time, context specificity is not reducible to specificity at the level of locality. A multiple strategy is therefore required, bringing together activities at the local level with a growing capacity to feed into, and define, policy and legislative instruments.

The implications for CFM are various. From the project perspective, issues include the balance of interest between field level and policy initiatives; the nature, function and scheduling of pilot activities; and the need for overarching institutions to relate local experience to national policy. In programme terms, questions are raised about the relative merits of sector and cross-sectoral approaches, the limits to devolution of governmental powers, the role of multi sectoral planning bodies and stakeholder fora, the role of rights-based approaches and the nature of cross-national learning processes. All this calls for greater coordination between governments and their donors (as well as within the donor community), and the union of different skills and perspectives in a wide variety of social and natural sciences.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Acworth, J., Mbani, J-M., Ekwoge, H. and Ntube, G. 'Towards Community Management of Timber Resources in the Onge-Mokoko Forest', draft, Mount Cameroon Project, Limbe, Cameroon.

Agyemang, M.M.(1998) 'The Leaf Gatherers of Kwapanin, Ghana' Forest Participation Series No. 1, IIED, London.

Amanor, K. (1994) *The New Frontier: Farmers' Response to Land Degradation - A West African Study*, UNRISD Geneva and Zed Press London.

Amanor, K. (1996) *Managing Trees in the Farming System: The Perspectives of Farmers*, Forestry Department Ghana, Forest Farming Series Nᵒ 1.

Anderson, J. (1998) 'Accommodating Multiple Interests in Local Tree and Forest Management: Some observations from a pluralistic perspective', draft, FAO Rome.

Ardener, E. (1956) *Coastal Bantu of the Cameroon*, International African Institute, London.

Ardener, E., Ardener, S. & Warmington, W.A. (1960) *Plantation and Village in the Cameroons*, Oxford University Press.

Arnold, JEM. (1998a) *Managing forests as common property*, FAO Forestry Paper, 136, ODI/FAO, London & Rome.

Arnold, JEM. (1998b) 'Forestry Entry Point Paper', DFID Natural Resource Advisers' Conference, 1998 (to be published in Carney, D [ed.] *Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: What Contribution Can We Make?,* DFID/ODI, London.

Arnold, JEM. & Townson, I. (1998) 'Assessing the potential of forest product activities to contribute to rural incomes in Africa, *ODI Natural Resource Perspectives* No.37, November, London.

Ascher, W. (1995) *Communities and Sustainable Forestry in Developing Countries*, ICS Press, San Francisco.

Bass, S. (1998) *Institutional change in public sector forestry: A review of the issues*, IIED, London.

Beng, E. (1998) 'Summary of the Community Forestry Initiatives of Projects/Organisations Working in the Area of Natural Resource Management in Cameroon', typescript, Community Forestry Unit, Yaoundé.

Blaikie, P. & Jeanrenaud, S. (1996) 'Biodiversity and human welfare' *UNRISD Discussion Paper*, No.72, Geneva.

Blench, R. (1998) 'Fragments and sentiments: Why is 'the community' the focus of development?', *AGREN Network Papers* No.81a.

Bouttier, N. (1996) 'Une terre du Cameroun si convoitée', *Grain de Sel*, No. 4, pp.12-14.

Brown, D. (1984) 'Warfare, Oracles & Iron: A Case study of Production Among the Pre-colonial Klowe' *Africa*, 54 (2), 1984,pp.29-47.

Brown, D. (1998a) 'Participatory Biodiversity Conservation: Rethinking the Strategy in the low Tourist Potential Areas of Tropical Africa. *ODI Natural Resource Perspectives* No.33, August, London.

Brown, D. (1998b) 'Professionalism, participation, and the public good: issues of arbitration in development management and the critique of the neo-populist approach' in: *Modern Public Management: Changing Ideas and Practices in Governance* ed. M.Minogue, D.Hulme & C Poldano, Edward Elgar (1998)

Brown, D. (1999) 'Globalization, decentralisation and good governance: International development assistance and public accountability in Central Africa*',* Paper presented at the CARPE Workshop on *'Environmental Governance in Central Africa'* held at Washington, DC, 26-27 April, 1999.

Byron, N. and Arnold, M. (1997) 'What Future for the People of the Tropical Forests?' *Working Paper* No. 19, CIFOR, Bogor

Carter, J. (1999) 'Recent experience in collaborative forest management approaches: a review of key issues', paper prepared for the World Bank Forest Policy Review (draft).

DFID (1999) *Shaping Forest Management: How coalitions manage forests*, London.

Djeumo, A. (1998) 'Etude des Cas de Forêts Communautaires', typescript, Community Forestry Unit, MINEF, Yaoundé.

Eba'a Atyi, R. (1997) 'La Certification des Forêts: Le Cas du Cameroun', *Bois et Forêts des Tropiques*, 253 (3), pp.62-6.

Eba'a Atyi, R. (1998) 'Cameroon's Logging Industry: Structure, Economic Importance and Effects of Devaluation', *CIFOR Occasional Paper* No. 14, CIFOR/TROPENBOS, Bogor Indonesia and Wageningen, The Netherlands.

Egbe, S. (1998) 'Forest Tenure and Access to Forest Resources in Cameroon: an overview', Forest Participation Series No. 6, IIED, London.

Ekoko, F (1997) 'The Political Economy of the 1994 Cameroon Forestry Law', CIFOR, Yaoundé.

Fairhead, J. & Leach, M. (1998) *Reframing Deforestation: Global analyses and local realities: studies in West Africa*, Routledge, London and New York.

Farrington, J. & Bebbington, A. (1993) *Reluctant Partners? Non-governmental organisations, the State and Sustainable Development*, Routledge, London and New York.

Gardner, A., Anders, S., Asanga, C. & Nkengla, J. (1997) 'Community forest management at the Kilum-Ijim Forest Project: Lessons Learned So Far', *Proceedings of the Limbe Conference*, Earthwatch/DFID/EC.

Geschiere, P. (1993) 'Chiefs and Colonial Rule in Cameroon: Inventing Chieftaincy, French and British Style', *Africa* 63 (2), pp.151-175.

Gregerson, J., Arnold, JEM., Lundgren, A., Contreras, H., de Montalembert, M.R. & Gow, D. (1993) *Assessing forestry project impacts: issues and strategies*, FAO Forestry Paper No. 114, Rome.

Hill, P. (1963) *Migrant Cocoa-Farmers of Southern Ghana*, Cambridge University Press.

Hobley, M. (1996) *Participatory Forestry: The Process of Change in India and Nepal*, ODI Rural Development Forestry Study Guide No.3, London.

Hobley, M. & Everts, B. (1997) *Technical Review of Forest Management Systems: Ghana Forest Sector Development Project*, for MLF Accra and DFID London.

Hobley, M. & Shah, K. (1996) 'What makes a local organisation robust? Evidence from India and Nepal', *ODI Natural Resource Perspectives* No. 11.

Hudson, J. (1997) 'Participatory Management', correspondence with the Editor, *Commonwealth Forestry Review,* 76 (1), Oxford

Kotey, N. A., Francois, J., Owusu, J.K.G., Yeboah, R., Amanor, K.S. & Antwi, L. (1998) *Falling into Place: Policy that works for forests and people: Ghana*, IIED London.

MacMillan, W.M. (1940) 'African Development' Part II of CK Meek, WM MacMillan and ERJ Hussey *Europe and West Africa: Some Problems and Adjustments*, Oxford University Press.

ODA (1996) *Sharing Forest Management: Key Factors, Best Practice and Ways Forward*, NRPAD, London.

Ostrom, E. (1990) *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*, Cambridge University Press.

Ostrom, E. (1999) 'Self-Governance and Forest Resources', *CIFOR Occasional Paper* No.20, Bogor, Indonesia, February.

Paul, S. (1991) 'Strengthening Public Service Accountability: A Conceptual Framework', *World Bank Discussion Paper* 136.

Penelon, A. (1996) 'Creating a Community Forest: A decentralization experiment for the management of forest resources in South Cameroon', *Le Flamboyant*, Paris, No. 36, pp.36-40.

Penelon, A. (1997) 'Community Forestry: it may indeed be a new management tool, but is it accessible?' Forest Participation Series No. 8, IIED, London.

Phillips, A. (1986) *The Enigma of Colonialism*, James Currey, London.

Reid, J. and Rice, R. (1997) 'Assessing Natural Forest Management as a Tool for Tropical Forest Conservation' *Ambio* Vol.26 No.6, September.

Ribot, J. (1996a) 'From Exclusion to participation: Turning Senegal's Forestry Policy Around?' *World Development*, 9.

Ribot, J. (1996b) 'Participation without Representation: Chiefs, Councils and Forestry law in the West African Sahel', *Cultural Survival Quarterly*.

Robertson, AF. (1987) *The Dynamics of Productive Relationships: African share contracts in comparative perspective*, Cambridge University Press.

Roe, E. (1991) 'Development narratives, or making the best of blueprint development' *World Development* 19 (4) pp.287-300

Savenije, H. & Huijsmann, A. (1991) *Making Haste Slowly: strengthening local environmental management in agricultural development,* Royal Tropical Institute. Development oriented research in agriculture, Amsterdam.

Sellamna, N. (1998) 'Relativism in agricultural R & D: is participation a post-modern concept?', ICRA, Montpellier and Wageningen.

Sharpe, B. (1998a) 'First the Forest: Conservation, 'Community' and 'Participation' in South-West Cameroon', *Africa*, 68 (1) pp.25-45.

Sharpe, B. (1998b) 'Forest people and conservation initiatives: the cultural context of rain forest conservation in West Africa' in FB Goldsmith (ed.) *Tropical Rain Forest; A Wider Perspective*, Chapman and Hall, London.

Shepherd, G. (1997) 'Trees on Farm and the People in the Forest: Social Science Perspectives in Tropical Forestry', *Commonwealth Forestry Review,* 76 (1), Oxford.

Soussan, J., Turton, C., Dev, O.P., Yadav, N.P. & Baumann, P. (1998) *Community Forestry in Nepal: Comparing Policies and Practice*, DFID FAI Research Programme, draft, April, London.

Stone, R. and D'Andrea, C. (1997) 'Community Forestry Policy: Draft Report', Sustainable Development Institute, New York.

UNDP (1998) 'Programme on Forests ('PROFOR') - Forest Management to Support Sustainable Livelihoods: Summary', Sustainable Energy and Environment Division, New York.

Vermeulen, C. (1997) 'Problématique de la Délimitation des forêts communautaires en forêt dense humide, Sud-Est Cameroun', *Proceedings of the Limbe Conference*, Earthwatch/DFID/EC.
Wilkie, D. (1998) Review of Yates' *The Rentier State in Africa*, CARPE email forum.

Wilks, I. (1975) *Asante in the nineteenth century*, Cambridge University Press.

Wilks, I. (1977) 'Land, labour, capital and the forest system of Asante: a model of early change' in Friedman and MJ Rowlands (eds.) *The Evolution of Social Systems*, Duckworth, London.

Winterbottom, R. (1990) *Taking Stock: The Tropical Forestry Action Plan After Five Years',* World Resources Institute, Washington DC.

Yates, D. A. (1996) *The Rentier State in Africa: Oil Rent Dependency and Neocolonialism in the Republic of Gabon*, Africa World Press Inc.