

An Overview of Community Mapping with FPP in Cameroon

Working document



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**Forest Peoples
Programme**



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Cover photograph: Baka document their customary forest use in forest overlapped by national park, Nki Forest, 2005

Photo credits: All photos by John Nelson except mapping training in Dja 2004 (CED)

Map credits: Community resource maps by CED and with communities concerned

Map extract of Ocean Department from the *Interactive Forestry Atlas* by Global Forest Watch/WRI

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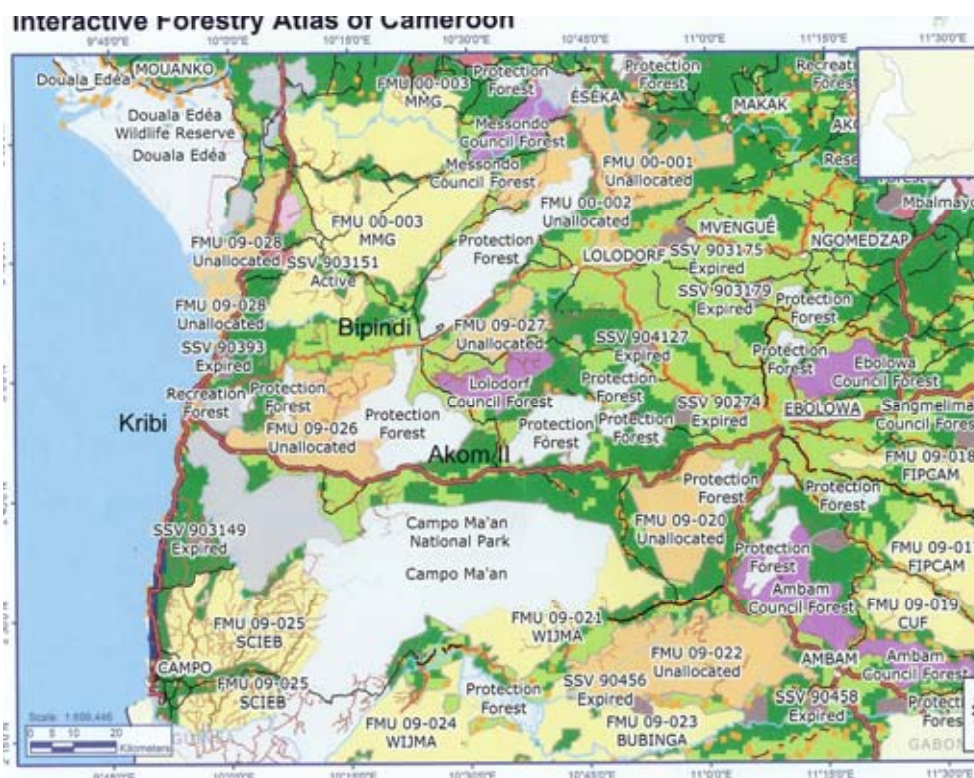
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Acronyms

CAR	Central African Republic
CED	Centre for Environment and Development
CIB	Conglaise Industrielle des Bois
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
FPP	Forest Peoples Programme
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
PNCM	Campo Ma'an National Park
PSEDD	Planet Survey – Environnement et Développement Durable
RoC	Republic of Congo
UNEP GRASP	United Nations Environment Programme: Great Apes Survival Project

People overlapped by pipelines, parks . . .

In 2001 FPP commissioned a series of 10 case studies by local communities and their support organisations in 7 African countries: Rwanda, DRC, Cameroon, South Africa, Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda to examine the application of international guidelines protecting indigenous rights in protected areas. The case studies that were presented at a conference in Kigali in late 2001¹ highlighted a general failure to implement the international guidelines protecting indigenous rights and everywhere they were being undermined by local conservation projects.



Ocean Département, Cameroon

After the conference FPP supported a series of follow-up actions in each of the case study areas to enable improved documentation, and dialogue between indigenous communities and local protected area authorities. The results of this process are documented in Nelson and Hossack (2003).² Three of the case studies concerned protected areas in Cameroon: the Dja Wildlife Reserve,³ Boumba Bek National Park,⁴ and Campo Ma'an National Park (PNCM).⁵

¹ FPP (2002) 'Indigenous Peoples and Protected Areas in Africa: from principles to practice'. Kigali conference proceedings. FPP, Moreton-in-Marsh.

² Nelson, J and L Hossack (eds.) (2003) *Indigenous peoples and protected areas in Africa - From principles to practice*. FPP, Moreton-in-Marsh.
http://www.forestpeoples.org/documents/conservation/bases/p_to_p_project_base.shtml#book

³ Nguiffo, S 'One Forest and Two Dreams: the constraints imposed on the Baka in Miatta by the Dja Wildlife Reserve' IN Nelson, J and L Hossack (2003) op. cit footnote 2, p 195.
http://www.forestpeoples.org/documents/africa/cameroon_dja_eng.pdf

⁴ Ndameu, B 'Protected areas and indigenous peoples: the paradox of conservation and survival of the Baka in Moloundou region (south-east Cameroon)', IN Nelson, J. and L. Hossack (2003) op. cit footnote 2, p 215.
http://www.forestpeoples.org/documents/africa/cameroon_b_bek_eng.pdf

Around the same time FPP was commissioned by the UK Department for International Development to carry out a consultation with Bagyéli communities around Bipindi in the Chad-Cameroon Pipeline Zone, which is located in the same *Département* (county) as the PNCM, which became one of the environmental offsets of the pipeline project itself.

The findings of this consultation⁶ led to the development of an FPP project implemented jointly with the Centre for Environment and Development in Cameroon (CED) along with Planet Survey – Environnement et Développement Durable (PSEDD). The project was based upon a combination of training, dialogue and participatory resource mapping organised to support local Bagyéli become informed and better skilled, and to secure their land rights. A summary of this project including some example maps is now available.⁷

Communities document themselves



Mapping training with Baka in Dja, 2004

At the beginning of the pipeline zone project FPP supported training for CED to build its mapping capacity. As part of our hands-on training, and before formal mapping processes commenced with communities in the oil pipeline zone, in 2003 it was decided to test the FPP/CED methodology and technology with Bagyéli communities from around Akom II and the PNCM (see map below), where many problems had been identified through the case study originally presented by Bagyéli⁸ at the 2001 Kigali conference.

⁵ Owono, J C 'The extent of involvement of Bagyéli Pygmies in the management and development plan of the UTO Campo Ma'an, Cameroon' IN Nelson, J. and L. Hossack (2003) op. cit footnote 2, p 243.
http://www.forestpeoples.org/documents/africa/cameroon_campo_maan_eng.pdf

⁶ Nelson, J with J Kenrick and D Jackson (2001) 'Report on a Consultation with Bagyéli Pygmy communities impacted by the Chad-Cameroon oil pipeline project'. FPP, Moreton-in-Marsh.
http://www.forestpeoples.org/documents/ifi_igo/ccp_bagyeli_consult_may01_eng.shtml

⁷ Nelson, J (2007) 'Securing Indigenous Land Rights in the Cameroon Oil Pipeline Zone'. FPP, Moreton-in-Marsh.
http://www.forestpeoples.org/documents/africa/cameroon_pipeline_jul07_eng.pdf

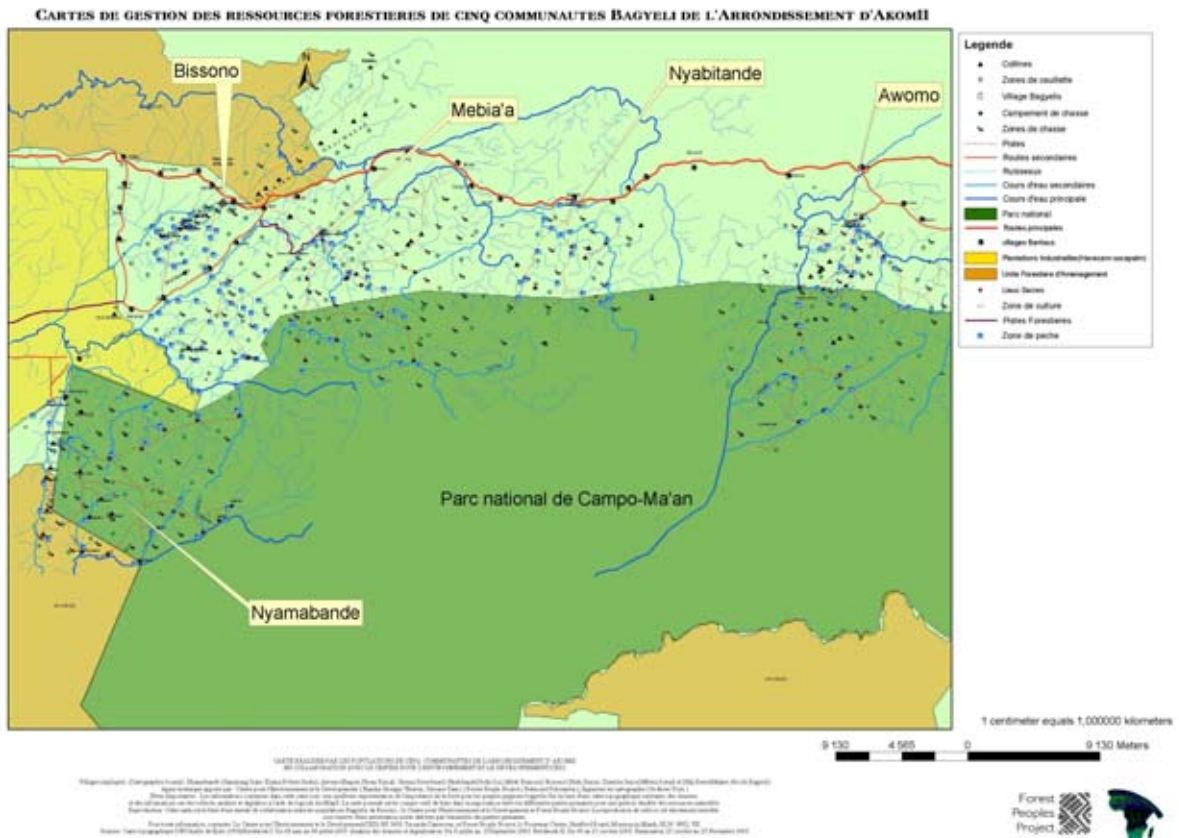
⁸ Owono, J C, op. cit footnote 5.

FPP and CED mapping methodology is always based upon full participation by the communities concerned. Decisions to move from traditional methods of documentation to the actual mapping of customary resource use or other forest activities are made by communities after a series of meetings with FPP and our local partners to explore the different options available to communities – with whom we are talking usually because they are already expressing dissatisfaction with their situation. These meetings lead to the elaboration of a joint work programme with communities. The communities are then responsible both for collecting data in line with agreed protocols developed with our help, and for validating the maps as they are produced by CED technicians using the communities' data – along with supplementary information collected by the project team about forest classifications, logging permissions, boundaries, etc.

The mapping process is accompanied by logistical, technical and capacity-building support for communities from FPP, CED, and other partners including community groups and local NGOs.

The maps thus produced are then used by communities in their dialogues with government authorities and other stakeholders such as development agencies and conservation NGOs. While over time the technology has changed somewhat, this basic successful approach still prevails.

Below is the first map produced by FPP, CED and 5 Bagyéli communities from along the northern perimeter of Campo Ma'an National Park.

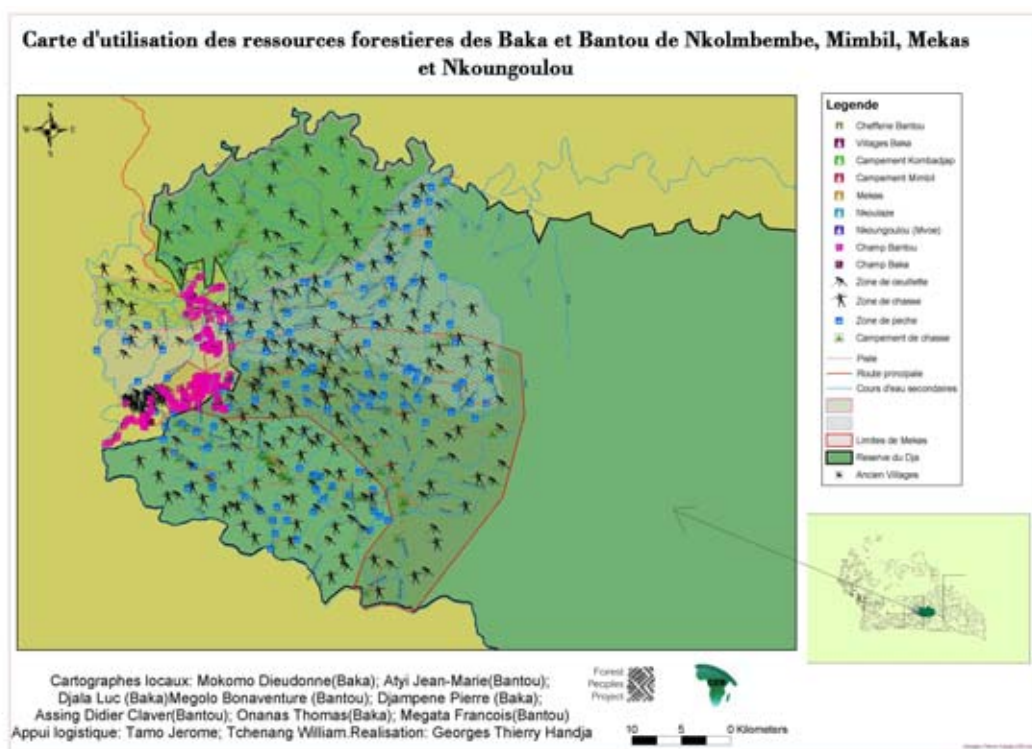


Bagyéli customary forest use inside PNCM, 2003

Community maps create change and enhance dialogue

The findings of the community mapping process around the PNCM, combined with lobbying efforts by FPP, CED and others⁹ with the World Bank and WWF, led eventually to changes to the government-approved park management plan to provide recognition and protection to Bagyéli for their access and use rights inside the park. Contrary to competing legal interpretations, this was approved by the government in 2006. It was a significant result in favour of Bagyéli communities who had previously suffered regular harassment and violence from hunting guards and other forest authorities,¹⁰ and exclusion from consultations about the park management plan.¹¹

Meanwhile, FPP and CED continued to support communities to document their situation in the area around Boumba Bek and Nki National Parks, and to lobby WWF who was providing the main technical support to the Government of Cameroon in both locations. FPP and CED also began supporting Baka to document their customary forest use within the Dja Wildlife Reserve as part of a project to examine Cameroon's implementation of Article 10(c) of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and as further follow-up to the 2001 case study.¹² This resulted in a FPP report published in 2005,¹³ along with the production of other maps by communities illustrating their forest use in the western reaches of the Reserve.



Baka customary use inside the western Dja Wildlife Reserve, 2005

⁹ Esp, Environmental Defense.

¹⁰ Nelson, J, and S Morgan (2003) 'Indigenous Peoples and Protected Areas: From Principles to Practice. Community testimony from Cameroon'. FPP, Moreton in Marsh. CD Video of community testimony from Cameroon. http://www.forestpeoples.org/publications/p_to_p_africa_cd.shtml.

¹¹ Owono, J C, op. cit footnote 5.

¹² Nguiffo, S, op. cit footnote 3.

¹³ CED and FPP (2005) 'Protecting and Encouraging Traditional Sustainable Use in Cameroon: Customary Use of Biological Resources by Local and Indigenous Peoples in Western Dja Reserve, Cameroon. Case study on Indigenous Peoples and Protected Areas'. FPP, Moreton-in-Marsh. http://www.forestpeoples.org/documents/africa/cameroon_trad_use_aug05_eng.pdf.

In 2006 FPP and CED initiated further dialogue and mapping with Baka communities from around Boumba Bek and Nki National Parks in southeast Cameroon. Some of these communities had already participated in preparation of the 2001 case study, or had become involved in subsequent dialogues organised between 2002 and 2005 by local NGOs based in Yokadouma.¹⁴ This time, FPP and CED employed a new technology designed specifically for use by non-literate hunter-gatherers to document their traditional forest use. It is based upon ruggedized touch-screen Pocket-PCs incorporating a new software application, CI Earth.¹⁵ The software is based around a series of icon trees.

One part of the icon tree is shown below:

ICON HELVETA	TRADUCTION
	CHASSE
	Animaux de terre
	Animaux qui montent aux arbres
	Animaux des eau
	PÊCHE
	Pêche dans les clairières
	Pêche dans les marécages
	Pêche dans les petits rivières
	CEUILLETTE

The basic rule for the use of this technology is that only those who actively use forests can collect data on forest use. This means that apart from training purposes, outsiders do not work these devices – communities do. Maps are generated automatically and instantly as the data is downloaded to a laptop in the field, so communities can immediately assess the outcome of their work, and plan improvements. Our evidence, after 18 months' testing in the field with hunter-gatherer communities in Cameroon, CAR and RoC, is that it is very effective in enabling communities to quickly capture and present their customary forest use. Individuals from all sections of the community – women and men, young and old – love using such a simple, high status tool designed specifically for their use. This technology is now being employed in the Republic of Congo by Mbendjelle with the logging company CIB (Conglaise Industrielle des Bois) as part of its efforts to secure Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification.

¹⁴ CEFAID, ORADER, and AFFEBEN.

¹⁵ CI Earth by Helveta (www.helveta.com), created with technical support from FPP and LSE (John Nelson and Jerome Lewis).



Baka using new technology to document customary use in Nki forest 2005

In late 2006 FPP, CED, Baka community representatives, WWF Cameroon, and government *conservateurs* agreed to collaborate in the documenting of local and indigenous communities' traditional/customary forest use within and around Boumba Bek and Nki National Parks. The objective was the protection of Baka's ancestral territorial rights within park, safari and logging concession management areas in southeast Cameroon by means of documentation and formal protection in government approved plans. This work is still underway, and will intensify during late 2007 and 2008, with funding support from GTZ and the UNEP GRASP programme.



Baka meeting with government officials and conservation agencies to discuss outcomes of community mapping in and around Nki and Boumba Bek National Parks
Yokadouma, October 2006



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