Brochures on the concept of Independent FLEG Observation and understanding the elements of the FLEGT action plan

Brochures sur la notion de l’Observation Indépendante FLEG et de compréhension des éléments du plan d’action FLEGT

Mitziquoise Dynamics The Independent Observer does not substitute in any way for the sovereign prerogatives of control "Observe, report and publish information gathered during field inspections concerning the private sector" What is Independent FLEG Observation? photo DR

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What is Independent FLEG Observation? Gabonese forests cover 85% of the national territory and represent a very important potential for economic, social, and environmental development. They represent a source of employment, of income for both the population and the State. The costs of illegal logging are considerable for timber-producing countries and constitute a significant loss of revenue for the concerned governments. The OI-FLEG contributes to solving the problem of illegal logging by providing specific recommendations based on reliable information from field surveys. The OI is an approach that involves gathering credible and verifiable information on the application of forestry laws and issues specifically related to governance, and using this information to encourage governments to take measures that directly address the identified problems. There are two types of Independent Observation of the enforcement of forestry law and governance (OI-FLEG) 1. External Independent Observation (EIO): without a memorandum of understanding with the government, it does not guarantee the observer access to physical sites or documents. 2. Officially mandated OI-FLEG (OM): with a negotiated memorandum of understanding with the government that ensures OI-FLEG physical access to sites (worksites, factories, ports, ministerial structures, etc.) and to information/ documents (authorizations, contracts, proof of tax/fine payments, PV registers, etc.). Often, international initiatives to encourage good governance, such as FLEGT, provide a motivation for governments to adhere to an OI-FLEG. What is an independent observer? The Independent Observer does not substitute in any way for the sovereign prerogatives of control. In order to promote the sustainable management of forest resources and combat illegal logging, its mission is: - To observe, report, and publish information gathered during field inspections concerning the private sector; - To formulate recommendations aimed at increasing the effectiveness of the state control system of logging; - To promote the transparency of information describing the actual situation on the ground and at the administrative level. ANALYSES are conducted with a view to concrete proposals aimed not at stigmatizing the State, but at supporting good governance in its forestry sector. The IM-FLEG approach is therefore not activist and is more akin to an audit system. It allows for proposing constructive solutions to institutionalize the progress made in the application of forestry law at the government level, and the functioning of the Ministries in charge of forests. The published results of the IM-FLEG can be interpreted and used by governments, donors, timber buyers, local and international NGOs, and timber operators concerned with improving governance, logging practices, and the enforcement of the law. photo DR

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Mitziquoise Dynamics Assimilation and popularization of the elements of the FLEGT Action Plan by Gabonese civil society, for its qualitative participation in the negotiation and implementation

of the APV "...to establish among the Gabonese civil society, a sustained understanding of the elements of the FLEGT action plan so that it can better participate in negotiations related to the APV." photo DR

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I- The project of Assimilation and popularization of the elements of the FLEGT action plan by Gabonese civil society, for its qualitative participation in the negotiation and implementation of the APV is a series of actions aimed at strengthening the capacities of Gabonese civil society to better understand, structure itself, participate, and interact with the negotiation of the FLEGT APV, whose key actors are: - Brainforest NGO: very active on issues related to the sustainable management of natural resources, governance, and social advocacy, responsible for the project; - FERn NGO based in Brussels, which works to support EU policies on sustainable development; - Gabonese Association for the United Nations, a local structure active on governance issues; - DIBUMBU Network, an environmental advocacy organization; - Nyanga-Tour, a civil society organization based in southern Gabon and active in defending the forest masses present in protected areas and buffer zones of national parks. II- The project originates from the findings and recommendations established at the end: - of the project with FERn NGO, to set up a coalition of civil society to support the discussions FLEGT/APV that were to open between Gabon and the European Union; - of the action supported by the ACP-FLEGT program of FAO to analyze the texts of the Gabonese forestry sector, in order to grasp their applicability in a context of promoting good governance; - of the observation not only of a relative knowledge of the contents of the FLEGT action plan by civil society, but also of the decreasing nature of this knowledge as one moves from a few civil society organizations present in Libreville to those located in the interior of the country near the forest masses in exploitation. III - The general objective of this project is to establish among Gabonese civil society a sustained understanding of the elements of the FLEGT action plan so that it can better participate in negotiations related to the APV. To achieve this, the project defines a number of specific actions, namely: - to organize training on the different elements of the FLEGT action plan; - to popularize the contents, objectives, and stakes of FLEGT and the APV; - to set up monitoring cells for forestry activities and dissemination of FLEGT information. V - This project adds value to the national context of promoting good governance and sustainable management of forest resources. Through strengthening the capacities of civil society and operationalizing the monitoring cells for forestry activities, it will contribute to enhancing the effectiveness of the legality verification system (SVL) to be built within the framework of the FLEGT APV. V - The collaboration between civil society and other stakeholders to combat illegal practices in the forestry sector can only be strengthened by the conviction of these stakeholders that they have in Gabonese civil society reliable partners and intermediaries to extend on the ground the policy orientations related to improving governance and sustainable management of forests. :

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