



Special Wildlife Conservation meeting

USING TIMBER CERTIFICATION AS A TOOL FOR WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT: EXPERIENCES FROM WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

Tuesday, 30 March 2010

The Meeting Rooms, The Zoological Society of London, Regent's Park, London NW1 4RY

Chair: Dr Glyn Davies (WWF UK)

Addressing Wildlife management: the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) A third party certification scheme and its role in wildlife management

Fonvinyuh Gordian Fanso, Forest Stewardship Council

The problem of reconciling people's livelihood needs with the needs of wildlife and ensuring the persistence of suitable wildlife habitat are well documented. At the same time we recognise the interdependency between the survival of wildlife populations and their role in the provision of vital ecosystem services that the human populations of West and Central Africa rely on. The issue, therefore, is how to develop an approach that marries these two potentially conflicting interests rather than threatening wildlife on the one hand or human interests on the other.

I will give a talk on the Forest Stewardship Council's perspectives on the role that they as a certification body can play in wildlife management. Such an approach as envisaged by the FSC attempts to reconcile the environmental, social and economic factors associated with wildlife habitat loss in working forests.

By the end of my presentation, I hope to have laid the basis for discussing the role that a forest certification scheme like FSC plays or can play in achieving improved wildlife management. I will also cover how the FSC's 10 principles and 57 criteria relate to wildlife; the global impact we as an organization have and the opportunities that exist to get involved so as to better address issues related to wildlife management in production forests.

Incentives and challenges for sustainable wildlife management in timber concessions: a Ghanaian producer company's perspective

Justice Eshun, Samartex Timber & Plywood Co Ltd

Forest Certification has been developed as a market based tool to try and promote the sustainable management of the world's production forests through the use of economic incentives. Little attention to date has focused on the forests of West and Central Africa and in Ghana, the concept of forest certification is still in its infancy and is only now being applied in timber production forests there.

Samartex Timber & Plywood Company Limited is one of the first companies to seek forest certification in Ghana. To this end it has put in place measures that attempt to ensure the proper management of wildlife resources in its forest concessions which cover approximately 150,000 ha. of South Western Ghana and are part of the highly threatened Guinean Moist Forest Ecoregion.

This presentation seeks to discuss Samartex's progress towards achieving forest certification, efforts at wildlife management and highlight some of the key challenges encountered in meeting the requirements of forest certification.

What monitoring wildlife tells us about timber production forest management: forestry policies, realities, and impacts on wildlife in Ghana, West Africa

Dr Nico Dauphiné, ZSL Wildlife Wood Project Ghana

One of Africa's two major tropical lowland forest regions, the Upper Guinea forests originally covered a large area of West Africa, including southwestern Ghana. Most of these forests have been destroyed during the past 60 years, and Ghana in particular has lost an estimated minimum of 80% of its tropical forest cover to agriculture and development. The majority (~75%) of Ghana's remaining c. 15,000 km² of forest is in forest reserves allocated as logging concessions, while less than 5% is under active wildlife protection. Although international conservation organizations consider Upper Guinea forests critically important for global biodiversity, few measures to achieve forest wildlife conservation have been successfully implemented in working landscapes outside protected areas, and baseline information on the status of many wildlife taxa is lacking.

In response to the urgent need to improve wildlife conservation in West African timber production forests, the Zoological Society of London's Wildlife Wood Project (WWP) in Ghana collaborates with Ghanaian timber company partners Samartex Timber & Plywood Co. Ltd., John Bitar & Co. Ltd., and Logs and Lumber Ltd., to investigate the direct and indirect impacts of forest management on logging on wildlife in their concessions and find ways to mitigate these impacts. Direct impacts include logging and logging-related damage to forest structure and composition, whereas indirect impacts include increased access to forests provided by logging roads to Ghana's burgeoning rural population. Human impacts on Ghana's forests and wildlife have compounded in recent years to include increasing levels of illegal chainsaw logging, illegal hunting (poaching), illegal farming, and illegal commercial Non Timber Forest Product (NTFP) collecting. The combined impacts of legal logging and multiple illegal activities in Ghana's forest reserves have resulted in increasing forest degradation and declining forest wildlife populations, and raise serious questions about the future of Ghana's forests. All of these impacts must be addressed in order to manage forests responsibly and sustainably and allow the survival of forest wildlife populations.

In this presentation, I will describe the results of empirical research on the direct and indirect impacts of logging on forests and forest mammals, birds, and amphibians in Ghana, and examine their implications for forest and wildlife management. I will recommend critical steps to improve forest wildlife conservation in logging concessions in Ghana, including improved law enforcement, raising conservation awareness among rural communities, and the integrating of wildlife conservation needs into timber certification efforts.

Wildlife management in tropical timber production forests: an overview of the ZSL Wildlife Wood Project's main achievements in Cameroon

Dr Eric Arnhem, ZSL Wildlife Wood Project Cameroon

With almost half of Cameroon's forests allocated for industrial logging, the implementation of wildlife conservation actions in timber production forests has become essential if we are to complement work in protected areas and both conserve biodiversity and ensure the long-term viability of the tropical forest ecosystem. These actions come under the framework of national legislations but also of timber certification processes which can offer a legal or economic incentive to promote sustainable forest management. However, there is a lack of knowledge about how best to manage production forests for wildlife. Which species are most sensitive to the activities associated with timber production? What methodological tools should we use to monitor wildlife populations? And ultimately, do timber companies have the capacity to implement actions on the ground? ZSL has sought to address these issues and established the Wildlife Wood Project to assist timber companies build their capacity: setting up sound wildlife monitoring programmes and applying adaptive management measures in logging concessions that promote a wildlife-friendly utilisation of timber resources. Preliminary results of ZSL's research work on a range of topics will be presented including; the dependency of local communities on hunting activities, the impact of logging on wildlife and the development of cost-effective wildlife monitoring techniques as well as our recommendations to stakeholders. The Wildlife Wood Project serves as a model to show that wildlife management issues need to be addressed through effective and practical measures taken in tropical timber production forests if we are to conserve one of the most diverse ecosystems on the planet.