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**INTEGRATING CUSTOMARY AND STATUTORY SYSTEMS:
HOW USERS RIGHT IN PRATICE COULD LEAT TO THE
ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF COMMUNITY BASED
ORGANISATIONS, THE CASE OF MOUNT CAMEROON
PRUNUS MANAGEMENT (MOCAP) IN THE SOUTH-WEST
REGION OF CAMEROON.**

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OUTLINE OF THE PRESENTATION

1. INTRODUCTION
2. OBJECTIVES
3. METHODOLOGY
4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS
5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS



1. INTRODUCTION

Prunus africana is an indigenous forest tree of tropical mountain areas of Africa and Madagascar.

In Cameroon the species occurs in the mountains of six administrative regions.

Prunus bark is a well known medicinal plant in international trade.

Its bark is the raw material in health supplements and drugs used to treat prostate problems.

It is a major income source for forest based communities and enterprises.

The unsustainable exploitation of its bark from the wild has led to international trade being restricted between 1995-2010.

Prunus africana management is governed by customary and statutory laws.

The 1994 forestry law and its decree of August 1995 have emphasized the notions of ownership over the resource, the users' right and community forest.

The communities involved in **Prunus africana** activities are earning much needed income from their participation in the trade.

The Mount Cameroon **Prunus** management (**MOCAP**) is getting more involved in sustainable bark harvesting activities in general and the production to marketing in particular.

MOCAP through users' right is the exclusive **Prunus** bark harvester in the Mount Cameroon National Park.

2. OBJECTIVES



Review the existing framework for *Prunus* exploitation in Cameroon



To assess the development with community Based Organisations (CBOs) adoption of sustainable exploitation and trade of *Prunus africana*.

To identify possible directions in the development of equitable and fair trade of *Prunus*.



3. METHODOLOGY

Consultation of research reports and books on *Prunus africana* management: inventory, processing, regeneration, domestication harvesting, trade, policy and legal framework from libraries of individuals, NGOs, CIGs, world Botanical Exchange and Services (WBES), forest resources and people (FOREP), CIFOR, ICRAF, IRAD. Etc..

Structured questionnaires were further applied to some categories of people and institutions.

Informal discussions were held in areas where the people are not welcoming or comfortable with questionnaire

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Prunus africana is mainly utilized as raw material for medicinal plant industries

Over the last two decades *Prunus* management has been a major concern of the forestry officials in Cameroon with the active support of foreign partners and national stakeholders

A remarkable organisation of the medicinal plant sector have been achieved.

The existing institutional framework in place, the reforms have not allowed all the significant gaps to be filled.

A participatory approach for sustainable exploitation, commercialisation and trade, domestication and cultivation in compliance with the institutional and legal framework is gradually under implementation.

4.1 The legal framework for *Prunus africana* exploitation and trade

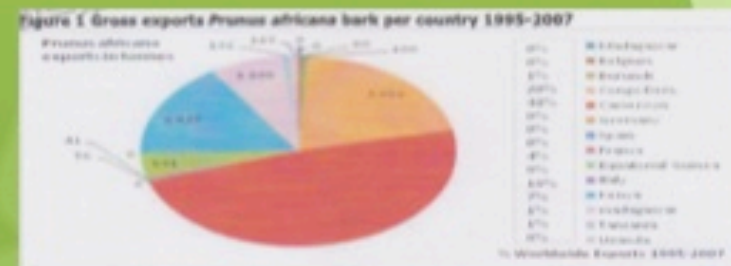
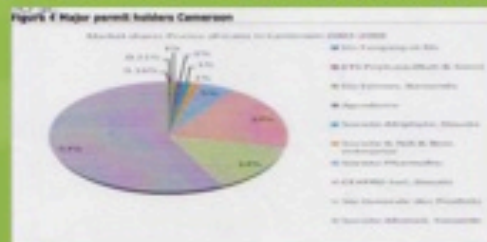
Prunus bark exploitation and commercialisation started in 1972 in Cameroun

Permits were obtained prior to exploitation from the ministry of agriculture and later on the ministry of forest and environment (MINEF, now MINFOF). The more recent law is dated 1994 and his decree of 1995.

This more recent law coupled with the new decree have lead to the creation of community forest and communal forest where *Prunus africana* bark can be harvested.

The Mount Cameroon Prunus Management Common Initiative Group (MOCAP) is the exclusive harvester in the MCNP.

The harvesting and export of *Prunus africana* have been regulated since 1994 as 'special forestry product'



4.2 Getting, to know MOCAP

MOCAP is the Mount Cameroon Prunus Management common Initiative Group established in 2000.

It comprises more than 20 villages.

MOCAP CIG was created to promote community involvement and benefit in the management of Prunus, reduce rural exodus, improve livelihoods of local communities and provide employment for youths.

The main activities of MOCAP among others are to work towards the achievement of a sustainable bark supply chain to the pharmaceutical industry worldwide, manage business partnerships to secure profitable markets for semi-finished bark products.

MOCAP has obtained all the authorizations to be managed under Cameroon law as a Community Based Company

4.3 MOCAP's strategy for the sustainable management of *Prunus africana*.

MOCAP is working to promote community management and conservation of *Prunus africana* in the Mount Cameroon region in collaboration with concerned ministerial departments, NGOs, and other partners involved in sustainable natural resources management

MOCAP also contributes to the development of number villages based on an agreed benefit sharing mechanism.

MOCAP was built from the experience of the Mapanja Prunus Management Union

Benefit sharing by MOCAP see table 1

2003-2004: 100 tons of Prunus bark was harvested by MOCAP Company. The barks were sold 'at 260FCFA/kg (0,4/Kg) for a total amount of 26.000.000 F CFA (39.637 euros). For the benefits charring, see table 2.

Table 1: Prunus africana revenue sharing

N°	Items	%	Units cost (FCFA)
1	Harvesters, fiels equipments, medication	43	150,5
2	Village development fund	16	56
3	Facilitation of community participation (libation)	7	24,5
4	Park management	20	70
5	Regeneration of Prunus trees	7	24.5
6	Transport	4	14
7	Warehouse	3	10.5
TOTAL			350

Source: memorandum of understanding (MOU) on the sales and sustainable harvesting of *Prunus africana* barks in the Mount Cameroon National park and its support zone, 2012.

Table 2: Prunus africana revenue sharing 2003 – 2004

N°	Description	Unit cost	Cost (FCFA)
1	Regeneration	10 frcs per kg	1.000.000
2	Field monitoring	5frcs per kg	500.000
3	Meeting/workshops	5frcs per kg	500.000
4	Village development fund	40 frcs per kg	4.000.000
5	MOCAP management	20 frcs per kg	2.000.000
6	harvesters	180 frcs per kg	18.000.000
TOTAL			26.000.000

Source: (Njie, 2010).

In pursuance of the provisions of the 1994 forestry laws that fosters community participation in forest management and considering the provision of the decree creating the MCNP, the local population has been allowed limited and supervised access to the resource in the parc.

It is also within the new orientation of the government policy for neighbouring communities to a protected area to participate and benefit from its management.

MOCAP CIG (representing surrounding villages) has the exclusive right to collect all the bark from MCNP

Sharing the benefit appears to be too bureaucratic and confusing

MOCAP CIG through MOCAP Company could derive substantial benefit from the sale of Prunus bark by selling directly his product to any national, regional or preferably foreign purchaser: need of equitable agreement.

The price paid to the community is generally in favour of the exporters. (e.g. community forest in the North-West, MOCAP).

Community based organisation must be encouraged by the legal framework to derive more revenues from their products: facilitation of access to permits and export authorization by the government.

MOCAP company is a holder of the exploitation permit

The signing of a MOU for the sale of all the Prunus bark harvested by MOCAP CIG did not go through equitable negotiation with all the parties.

MOCAPs' evolution has been seriously disturbed.

MOCAP acquired some facilities for bark processing and drying: well constructed hall, crusher machine from UNDP.

These facilities are not in function.

Direct interaction of CBO with the pharmaceutical industry is necessary and vital to obtain high price for the harvested Prunus bark.

4.4 collaborative production of *Prunus africana* bark for the economic empowerment of Community Based Organisation (MOCAP)

The communities under users right shall significantly contribute to the collaborative management and protection of the resource.

In the Mount Cameroon Region, MOCAP-CIG (representing surrounding villages) was granted the exclusive right to collect sustainably all the barks from the Mount Cameroon National Park (MCNP).

Sharing the benefits appears to be too bureaucratic and confusing.

For instance MOCAP through special arrangements (signing of a memorandum of understanding) with the regional delegation of MINFOF and the MCNP management was not allowed through his licensed entity (MOCAP Company) to purchase and/or sell the barks harvested to any potential buyer who can offer a competitive price for the product.

The memorandum of understanding on the sale of *Prunus africana* bark gives exclusive access rights to a national exporter of all the Prunus bark harvested.

MOCAP CIG through MOCAP Company could derive substantial benefit from the sale of Prunus bark by selling directly his product to any national, regional or preferably foreign purchaser, if a well defined and equitable agreement is entered between MOCAP CIG/MOCAP Company and the foreign purchaser.

The proposed operational agreement framework should address the commitments of both parties (foreign pharmaceutical company and the exploiter/exporter).

The goal of the collaborative production on the one hand is to insure that sustainable harvested Prunus in the respect of prescribed harvesting techniques as well as the approved annual quota and to further facilitate the marketing of the produce and the equitable sharing of revenues generated.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Local people's involvement in the Prunus business should not be limited to harvesting only.

Community based organisations must be given significant incentives by the policy makers: a key problem policy and regulatory should solve is setting measures that facilitate better access to exploitation permits and other licensing procedures for local communities that have already proven their commitment to sustainable management of the species.

The policy makers should ease the procedure of acquiring land titles and ownership, this will permit long term involvement of rural communities and other stakeholders in the on-farm cultivation and enrichment planting of the resource.

If MOCAP or any other Community based organisation is given the opportunity to exploit, process and sell their product in an opened national, regional or international market this shall lead to the poverty alleviation, the reduction of rural exodus, and more employment for the youths.

The phytopharmaceutical and processing industries are highly advised to assist growers and exploiters in source countries to the sustainable management of medicinal plants (*Prunus africana*) necessary to run their factories.

Purchasing companies should work in partnership with community based organisation like MOCAP:

The partnership agreement shall be helpful (warranty) to local companies for loan acquisition from funding bodies and bank institutions for the efficient structuring and running of Prunus bark business.

The partnership will enable the community based organisations to add value to their product and earn more important revenue from their products.

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LINKING BIODIVERSITY WITH SUSTAINABLE BUSINESSES FOR IMPROVED LIVELIHOODS

LE MONDE DES PLANTES AU SERVICE DE L'INDUSTRIE PHYTOPHARMACEUTIQUE ET LA HEALTHFOOD



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IMPROVED LIVELIHOODS

*Mieux gérer les PFNL
notamment les plantes
Médicinales,
Aromatiques (PAM) et
Cosmétiques dans les
pays du Bassin du
Congo pour réduire les
effets du changement
climatique et
promouvoir
l'amélioration des
conditions de vie des
populations.*



*Contribuer à la valorisation
des PAM et Cosmétiques du
Bassin du Congo par la
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