

Gabon

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Forest Management

Gabon has pushed environmental policies for the benefit of its people and communities for many years. Beginning in 1996 with its new forest policy, Gabon attempted to increase and optimize the forest sector's contribution to economic and social development. Similarly, in 2001, Gabon updated its Forest Code (Law No 16/01 of 2001) to improve forest governance and management. The new law is still in effect in 2014, and sets out a contractual framework, which became automatically applicable to operators in 2005.

Under the 2001 Forest Code, Gabon manages a permanent forest estate of 13.5 million hectares, most of which is still primary forest. There are also 25,000-30,000 hectares of planted forest in the country. Timber and wood production generate about 6% of Gabon's GDP, and although the forest sector is not the largest or most lucrative industry in Gabon presently, it is Gabon's largest private-sector employer. It currently employs approximately 28% of the active population, and carries significant potential for added growth.

Gabonese forest land is divided into two main categories: Permanent Forest Estate (PFE) and Rural Forest Domain. the PFE consists of both concessions or Forest Management Units (FMUs) contracted out by the State, but used and managed by individuals or businesses, and protection forests preserved for national parks, etc. To receive an agreement for a FMU concession, the Forest Code requires future concession holders to obtain an agreement to harvest and to prepare an approved management and investment plan, which must be reviewed every five years. The Rural Forest Domain consists of open-access forests for local communities.

In 2011, Gabon had a total of 26 official FMUs within Gabon's national PFE. There were another 31 assigned concessions covering about 5.5 million ha of the PFE that did not yet have plans, and 26 concessions that were yet to be attributed.

Transparency

According to the [Corruption Perception Index 2013](#) from Transparency International, which measures perceived levels of public sector corruption in countries around the world using a score of 0-100 (where 0 is highly corrupt and 100 is completely clean), Gabon is ranked 106 out of 177 countries assessed. It scored a corruption index rating of 34, meaning it is perceived as a corrupt country. These numbers were similar for [Gabon's 2012 perceived corruption](#).

Corruption is widespread in Gabon and combating it is marked as a government priority. As a result, the Forest Law of Gabon contains a mandate to inspect forest crimes (Articles 262 and 263). The government often conducts audits of its own government agencies to expose corrupt actors. This task is shared between the office of the Prosecutor (i.e. the office of the Ministry of Justice), police officers and other officials from the Ministry of Water and Forests. However, forest administration agents can carry out inspections/police functions only after taking an oath before the competent jurisdiction. Fines, restitutions, damages and other logging penalties are received

by the administration of the land and estates department. Most recently, a provincial director of the Ministry of Water and Forests was arrested for participating in illegal logging activities; he was sentenced to five years in prison.

The World Bank compiles a set of **Worldwide Governance Indicators** for all world economies. These indicators are important barometer in terms of risk assessment. The WGI country reports are based on the six following aggregate governance indicators: Voice and Accountability, Political Stability and Absence of Violence, Government Effectiveness, Regulatory Quality, Rule of Law, and Control of Corruption. Countries are ranked (percentile rank model) for each of the six governance indicators on a scale from 0 to 100 where 0 corresponds to lowest rank and 100 corresponds to highest rank (better governance). [Access Gabon's WGI for 1996-2012.](#)

Laws and Regulations

Forestry Laws

Gabon has pushed environmental policies for the benefit of its people and communities for many years. The country's forestry laws are comprehensive and cover a variety planning, mapping, and impact mitigation parameters. Beginning in 1996 with its first forest policy, Gabon attempted to increase and optimize the forest sector's contribution to economic and social development. Similarly, in 2001, Gabon updated its Forest Code (Law No 16/01 of 2001) to improve forest governance and management. The new law is still in effect in 2014, and sets out a contractual framework, which became automatically applicable to operators in 2005 and is the umbrella under which all harvesting and procession entities must operate today.

[Gabon Constitution](#)

The Gabonese Constitution provides for the protections of the country's natural environment as a core principle of the State (Article 1). Outside of the exceptions expressly provided for by the Constitution, it establishes the base rules concerning: the administration of public goods, land use, forestry, mining and habitat; the protection of nature and the environment (Article 47).

[Gabon Forest Code \(Law No 16/01\)](#)

The Forest Code (Law No 16/01), enacted in 2001, governs forests management on public lands in Gabon. The main goals of the 2001 Forest Code are to foster: (1) the sustainable development of forests; (2) the industrialization of the Gabonese timber sector; (3) the sustainable conservation of natural resources, and (4) greater local stakeholder involvement in the mangement of Gabon's natural resources. To do so, the new law sets out a contractual framework, which has been automatically applicable to operators since 2005. In short, all forest concession holders must prepare a forest management plan spanning 30 years, which divides and subdivides the concession into smaller annual harvesting lots. The law also requires these small annual plots to have operational plans before logging will be authorized. This rotation system ensures that trees are regenerated during the 25-year fallow period. The implementation and management of the Forest Code and its regulations is conducted predominantly by the Ministry of Water and Forests.

Sustainable Forest Management Concession (CFAD) (Forest Code, Law No 16/01, Article 106 et. seq.)

The Ministry of Water and Forests can issue three kinds of permits, one of which is the Sustainable Forest Management Concession (CFAD). CFAD permits can cover a surface area

between 50,000-200,000 ha. One logging company can have multiple CFADs, but can hold no more than a total of 600,000 ha. The Ministry of Water and Forests processes all CFAD applications. Before the Ministry awards the concession permit, the company will be issued a temporary license to survey and inventory the landscape, and prepare: 1) An analysis of the environment (i.e. mapping, management inventory, ecology diagnostics, socio-economic surveys, etc.); 2) Land use planning decisions (i.e. separation of permits for areas of management, production, ecological interest, scientific interest, etc.); 3) Plan for production (i.e. pace of logging, amount of logging of each tree species, harvesting methods, finalized management parameters, etc.), including plans for sustainable development.

Forest Management Plan (Forest Law, Law No 16/01, Article 21, et. seq)

To use public land, a Forest Management Plan (UFA) is always required. The plan must contain: (1) socio-economic and biophysical data of the forest area; (2) management objectives; (3) proposed development area; (4) costs of development, and (5) implementation plans for monitoring, evaluation and revision of the development plan. Similarly, the plan must define: (1) forest boundaries; (2) composition of the area, namely "objective species"; (3) plot rotation scheme, and (4) minimum exploitable diameter for the objective species. This plan must be submitted within three years of obtaining a license for interim management. The Development plan is also reviewed every 5 years.

Ministry of Water and Forests Responsibilities (Forest Code, Law No 16/01, Article 15)

Article 15 states that the Ministry of Water and Forests will ensure general information, awareness raising, education, extension, control, combat crime and policing. These provisions are complemented by Article 25, which mandates the Ministry of Water and forests to control and inspect forest management and industrialization plans.

Forestry and Environment Sector Program (PSFE)

As Gabon's oil market declines, the country has embarked on a new path to improve the management of its natural resources. The PSFE was designed to take a broad sectoral approach to improving development. The project includes initiatives in forestry, fisheries, environment and biodiversity preservation and promotion. This program is an important element of Gabon's national strategy for the reduction of poverty and resource sustainability. PSFE will help better integrate these other sectors into the Gabonese economy.

Forest Management Plan Requirements (Forest Code, Law No 16/01, Articles. 70, 20-23, 3)

Although logging is not permitted in protected areas under the 2001 Forest Code, they are still a part of Gabon's forestry management structure. Article 20 of the Forestry Code states that all types of forests, whether categorised or not, are to be subject to a management plan. Such a plan should integrate the following objectives: - Involvement with the national activities in the sector of Water & Forests - Protection of eco-systems and conservation of biodiversity - Adding value to resources and eco-systems - Regularity and sustainability of production - Management of natural resources - On-going inventory of resources - Training and research - Awareness raising & communication, information and education of users and of local populations

Forest Concession Limitations (Forest Code, Law No 16/01, Article 148)

Obtaining a license or concession permit under the Forestry Code does not simultaneously grant

the permit holder from exploiting non-timber forest products, such as minerals, water or hunting privileges. Exploitation thereof is subject to separate regulations laid down in decrees of other laws.

Gabon Environmental Code (Law No 16/93)

The General Environmental Law of Gabon was designed to provide basic national principles that should guide national policy in the protection and improvement of the environment. The law addresses: the conservation and sustainable use of Gabon's natural resources; the fight against pollution and nuisance; the improvement and protection of the living environment; the promotion of new values and income generating activities using the natural environment, and finally, harmonization of development with environmental conservation.

Ministry Implementation and Enforcement

The Ministry of Water and Forests is the lead government body assigned to concession management. It is subdivided into various groups that serve different functions. The Directory of Inventories, Management and Forest Regeneration (DIARF) is responsible for monitoring individual concessions. The Department of Forest Production is in charge of the 'small' logging titles'. The Department of Industries and the Department of Research are the agents management forest control and enforcement.

There are also provincial units assigned to carry out local verification activities. The Ministry has also set up various brigades around the country to assist with enforcement. These are presently located in: Owendo, Libreville, and Cape. Two more brigades are planned; one will be near the Cameroon border and the other deeper in the Congo forests.

National Action Plan to Fight against Illegal Forestry Exploitation (PANEFI)

The PANEFI was created in May 2013 as a concrete means of fighting illegal logging through investigations, arrest operations and strict legal follow up of the prosecution thanks to the assistance to/of the forces of law and order and the justice system to the Ministry of Forestry.

The Investment Charter

Through its investment charter, Gabon restates its commitment to an economic and social development by advocating for strong private sector, as part of the government's "Emerging Gabon" agenda. The charter solidifies the new role the private sector and the State will play together and highlights the objectives and mechanisms it will take to favor investment in Gabon, expand companies' and individual's activities regardless of where they are from or what sector they work in.

Processing/Manufacturing Laws

In Gabon, public property is considered all property held by the State or a public entity, which may be comprised of specific zones or classified forests. These areas can be further classified as Areas of Private Domain (domaine privé), which are public areas granted by the State to a body for a finite period of time. These areas will be designated as registered productive forest property or community forests, and they will be assigned, managed, and monitored by the terms of a contract between the holder and the State.

To harvest a concession, holders must construct a Forest Management Plan. These plans include

compliance with standards for human resources laws (i.e. labor rights, providing minimum levels of social services, etc.), respecting local people/communities living on harvest site, a low impact on biodiversity, and sound wildlife management plan.

Untitled Logging (Forest Code, Law No 16/01, Article 14)

Untitled logging is prohibited under the Forestry Code and punishable by six months imprisonment and a fine of 10.000.000 FCFA (approximately USD\$21,000).

Industry Operating License (Forest Code, Law No 16/01, Article 226)

Timber processing and wood products manufacturing enterprises must have the appropriate licenses and permits to operate in Gabon. They are required to keep clear records documenting their work and to provide proof of legal compliance. Licenses related to timber processing plants should be available for inspection by Gabonese officials. An industrialization plan is required and must be approved by the Ministry.

To legally operate in Gabon, industries must comply with the following when making an industrialization plan:

- Provide a feasibility study of the project;
- Conduct an environmental impact statement;
- Establish an implementation program timeline;
- Describe facilities and industrial equipment, and their performance functions;
- Obtain a professional license issued in terms of Article 102 of the the Forest Code.

Manufacturing Limits (Forest Code, Law No 16/01, Article 238)

Except for the Gabonese who operate their own concessions forest, all other registered producers are subject to a quota production. The quota will depend on market fluctuations, and within the limits of the management plan. The Minister of Water and Forests establishes the quota for the maximum annual production for okoume (the country's biggest export species), ozigo, among others. Agencies responsible for forest products marketing are required to establish monthly trade statistics of exported products as well.

Transport Laws

Transporting harvested materials and timber products throughout Gabon requires documents and licenses for all enterprises involved in the products' transportation. Trucks and other forest product transport vehicles must have valid registration licenses and numbers. Vehicles are to be registered to the Ministry of Transport, which issues plate numbers and grey cards (identification cards).

Specific Ministry of Transport Requirements: Transport licenses for forest products must be valid and up to date. Trucks transporting logs and other timber products should have an "authorization for exceptional transport" from the Ministry of Transport, which is renewed annually. Trucks transporting logs are allowed to circulate between 5:30 and 11:30 a.m. and between 2:00 and 6:30 p.m. only.

Identification (Forest Code, No16/01, Article 26, 128)

Stumps of harvested trees must be hammer marked, and the stumps should bear the same marks as the logs derived from the harvested tree. The hammer for marking trees is specific to each company, and is registered by the forestry administration and the judicial authorities. Billets of timber in forest yards must be marked with the same mark used on the trees (i.e. by the registered hammer). Each billet should be marked the same as the tree from which it came so as to facilitate identification during transportation.

All exported timber species must be authorized by the appropriate agency under existing regulations. These include CITES regulations (although Gabon is a signatory, currently there are no CITES-listed species from Gabon) and national requirements. There is no apparent list of nationally protected timber species in Gabon, so this requirement applies to the limitation within each specific forest management plan.

Classification Standards of Processed Products Authorized for Export (Arrêté No 015/MEF/SG/DGICBVPF)(2012)

This order sets the standards and classification of processed products that are authorized for export. They are often updated. These are from 2012.

Tax Laws

Companies dealing in Gabonese wood products must pay all appropriate fees, royalties, and taxes. Tax returns on timber production, processing, and trade must be done in compliance with rules and regulations. Auditors can verify compliance through review of working site books, inventory reports, and the technical specifications signed by the forest administration.

Wood processing, export, etc. are subject to the following export taxes, which are set by the Gabonese Finance Act:

- tax area;
- renewal fee;
- transfer tax;
- conversion fee by chainsaw milling;
- taxes of output;
- rent tax;
- progressive surtax on exports of non-quota logs;
- specific fee for submission of plantations;
- felling tax.

Collections and customs administration functions are conducted by the Ministry of the Economy, Finance, Budget and Privatization. The Water and Forests administrations collaborate to ensure fluidity between departments.

Annual Tax (Forest Law, No 16/01, Article 137, et seq.)

Industry is required to pay a yearly finance tax. The company must hold all required documents for export (and import) of timber products. Timber products exporting companies should have a specification sheet detailing all timber products to be exported by species, quality, and quantity.

The specification sheet should be approved by the appropriate forest authority - which is conditional upon proof of payment of all applicable taxes.

Trade Laws

Voluntary Partnership Agreement/FLEGT

In September 2010, Gabon entered into VPA negotiations with the EU. However, they have since stalled. The Gabonese Government seems to be focussing instead on the development of a Sustainable Development Framework Law, which would create a biodiversity offset market in Gabon. Gabonese NGOs have not been consulted, but fear the law will allow operators to go ahead with projects which have a negative impact on local communities and their livelihoods. This law will likely generate funding for conservation, but will lead to increased land conflicts, and further undermine community tenure. In addition, the Ministry of Forestry has called for a revision of the Forest Code based on limited consultation, disregarding earlier comments from local NGOs when the process was launched. This approach goes radically against the principles of the inclusive participatory and multi-stakeholder nature of the VPA process and confirms the lack of political will to move forward. The Forest Code and its reform are at the heart of the legality definition of the VPA, which is where the process got stuck.

Central African Forest Commission (COMIFAC)

Due to persistent problems with illegal logging in the region, six Congo Basin countries (Republic of the Congo, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire and Gabon) adopted the Brazzaville Declaration, which created the COMIFAC. Countries have agreed to implement sustainable forest management, through management as well as conservation plans. An international commitment to work towards the sustainable and legal development of the wood industry in the region. The Declaration was adopted by both timber industry representatives and civil society organizations. It highlights the need for improved transparency, monitoring, and governance. and ILO 169 (not ratified as of April 2014).

CITES

Gabon has acceded to CITES, but at present there are no tree species listed in either Appendix I, II or III that are applicable to Gabon. See the CITES link for more information.

Gabon is also a participant in the following international treaties and agreements: CBD (ratified), UNFCCC (Non-annex I Party), Kyoto Protocol (acceded); UNCCD (acceded), ITTA (Producing Member), RAMSAR (Contracting Party), World Heritage (ratified), NLBI (Member State)

CITES

CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) is an international agreement among governments whose purpose is to ensure that international trade in wild animal and plant species does not threaten the survival of these species. A total of 180 countries have agreed to the CITES regulations, which is a legally binding agreement. It is up to each CITES Party to draft its own domestic legislation in order to comply with its CITES obligations.

[See current list of member countries here](#)

Gabon ratified the Convention in 1989. All exported timber species must be authorized by the

appropriate agency under existing regulations. These include CITES regulations and national requirements.

As of April 2014, no CITES listed timber species apply to Gabon's forest or timber trade, meaning that the export of species grown in Gabon should not be subject to additional CITES-related permit requirements.

For more information on CITES and Gabon, see the following resources:

- [CITES National Contacts: Gabon](#)
- [CITES Species Database](#)
- [Species+ CITES Database](#)
- [ARKive Database: Species Search Engine](#)

Forest Resources

Gabon is home to the second largest area of rainforest in the Congo region, and it is extraordinarily biologically diverse. Its forests cover 80% of Gabon's total surface area, nearly 258,000 square kilometers. The tropical forests are home to 8,000 known plant species, over 300 mammal and 600 bird species. The deforestation rate in these forests has remained relatively low even though commercial logging has impacted most of the country at some point and remains its biggest threat.

Forest Products

Sustainable management of forest ecosystems and the development of biodiversity are major components of Gabon's forest and economic development strategy. As part of its "Green Gabon" pillar program, Gabon is looking at ways to diversify its economic dependence on oil production. Increasing its timber and wood products output in a sustainable way is believed to be one effective economic alternative.

As a result, today Gabon is focused on processing all of its timber entirely within its borders, like many of its neighboring African countries have done. Gabon used to be a lead supplier of tropical hardwood logs to China beginning in the mid-1990s, but since Gabon's current president decided to ban roundwood exports to promote more domestic processing this has directly affected its exports to Asia. As a result, right now, timber exports have shifted in favor of European buyers looking for more processed wood.

Historically, the majority of Gabonese forestry production was industrial roundwood, fuelwood, sawnwood, and wood-based panels. In 2009, Gabon exported 1.87 million cubic meters of logs and approximately 157,000 cubic meters of sawnwood. Thirty percent of these exports were of one species: okoume. Okoumé is Gabon's most valuable wood and it provides 90% of the world's okoumé supply. This wood makes excellent plywood. Gabon also produces hardwoods, such as mahogany, Iroko, kevazingo, and ebony. Other woods are dibetou (tigerwood or African walnut), movingiu (Nigerian satinwood), and zingana (zebrano or zebrawood).

Today, exporters in Gabon are still hampered by port congestion due to a lack of local capacity and the availability of facilities to handle both outbound and inbound commercial activity.

Production Status

Gabon has been a producer, processor and major exporter of forest products for some time. Forestry was the main driver of the national economy up until the 1970s when oil production began booming. Although not the top grossing sector in the Gabonese economy, forestry is reemerging as a top industry as oil reserves decline. It also remains the country's top employer, as well; Almost 28% of the workforce is employed in the forestry sector.

Gabon's forests contain over 400 species of trees, with about 100 species suitable for industrial use. However, while timber exports are becoming slightly more diversified, they are still dominated by one species: [Okoumé](#). This species is almost entirely oriented towards export markets, with particular exposure to environmentally sensitive European markets. In fact, Gabon provides 90% of the world's okoumé supply. The wood is excellent for plywood production. In addition to okoumé, the main productive species are redwood and ebony from native forests, and pine and eucalyptus from plantations. Gabon also produces limited quantities of hardwoods, such as mahogany, Iroko, kevazingo, and ebony. Other woods are dibetou (tigerwood or African walnut), movingiu (Nigerian satinwood), and zingana (zebrano or zebrawood). Through its efforts, the Government hopes to reach 30 different species for export by 2010 and 60 by 2025. Investments in the management of natural forests to promote the regeneration of high-value species is increasing.

Gabon's logging rates have increased significantly in recent years. Before the log export ban, Gabon was Africa's main timber supplier to China. Export volumes to China grew very rapidly beginning in the 1990s, from around 12,300 cubic meters in 1991 to almost 2,000,000 cubic meters at its peak in the year 2000. Since Gabon decided to ban roundwood exports to promote more domestic processing this has directly affected its exports to Asia. As a result, right now, wood products exports have shifted in favor of European buyers looking for more processed wood.

The [Green Gabon](#) of the PSGE relies on this target of adding value to forestry and as a result the government has fast tracked forestry companies' targets of investing in local sawmills and plywood production facilities. It is hoped that doing so will advance secondary and tertiary processing in the country, which is especially important following the roundwood export ban in 2010. The Société Nationale des Bois du Gabon (SNBG) is the oldest exporter of Gabonese wood and is one of the first companies to take part in the President's fast track for local processing. [The company has already excelled, building several processing facilities and employing many Gabonese, and intends to be a major player in Gabon's new industrialized forestry sector.](#)

Processing and manufacturing enterprises must have the appropriate licenses and permits to operate. They also must keep certain records documenting compliance with the law. Licenses related to timber processing plants should be available for inspection. Verify that the company has an industrialization plan approved by the ministry in charge of forestry and forest administration. The company should keep evidence of local processing. Verification may be accomplished by review of timber harvesting records (official harvesting reports from annual coupes) and log processing reports.

In the forest sector, Gabon is also among the leading African countries in terms of [FSC certification](#).

Recent events:

- [CIFOR Report: Social Impacts of FSC Certification \(2014\)](#)

- [Gabon News: Containers of Timber Intercepted at Ndjole, Head of a Chinese Company in Jail \(2013\)](#)
- [Gabon News: 12 million Euros for sustainable exploitation of the forest \(2014\)/a>](#)
- [Gabon News: Illegal Logger Arrested in Donguila \(2014\)/a>](#)
- [Gabon News: Gabon Structural Transformation and Natural Resources \(May 2013\)a>](#)
- Le Gabon Portal: Gabon's National Wood Company (SNBG) Announces Outstanding Results in 2012 (2013)
- [Le Gabon Portal: Emergence Journal - Timber sector in Gabon \(2012\)](#)

Contacts

Industry Associations

Gabon Chambre de Commerce, d'Agriculture, d'Industrie et des Mines (CCIMA)

CCIMA is an industry and commerce organization dedicated to promoting the resource industries of Gabon, including forestry.

[TEREA](#)

TEREA is a consulting group that works on issues related to environment and sustainable management of natural resources. TERE works in close collaboration with the administrations in charge of forests and the environment, private operators and funders. In the field of environment, TERE works with various industrial sectors beyond forestry, including petroleum and mining, for conducting environmental impact studies, environmental audits and assessments, ecological inventories, management of the environment.

[Inter-Forest Industries Association \(IFIA\)](#)

Founded in 1996, the IFIA is a trade association of about 300 logging companies and associations. In Gabon, the Syndicat des Forestiers Industriels du Gabon (SYNFOGA) is an active member operating in Africa. The IFIA is assigned to represent the interest of the forest industry; some of its main objectives are to: 1) actively contribute to the economic and social development of the countries where they operate; 2) support a network of communication and information related to the interests of members and other professionals; 3) represent the interests of the industry at international level; 4) promote the sustainable development of forests.

Civil Society Organizations

[Rainforest Foundation \(RF\)](#)

RF is active in Gabon. They recently partnered with Brainforest, a local NGO, to implement and run a project monitoring forest policy in Gabon. This effort is designed to enable forest communities to increase their access to forest resources by making use of Gabon's recent effort to develop community forestry in Gabon and to increase interest from some international donors in the country.

[BrainForest](#)

This local Gabonese NGO works on a variety of forest issues affecting the country and its people. It is also dedicated to issues related to human rights abuses and indigenous communities. It has partnered with other international NGOs, like the Rainforest Foundation, to improve forest monitoring and management in Gabon as well.

World Wildlife Fund - Gabon

The World Wildlife Fund runs programs in Gabon from its Central Africa program office in Yaounde, Cameroon.

Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)

WCS has been working in Gabon since 1985. Although its focus is on local wildlife, WCS work is dedicated to forest conservation in Gabon. The WCS is the largest international conservation NGO working in Gabon. WCS is focused on two major landscapes: the Congo Basin Coast and the Ivindo-Chaillu Forest. Through these programs, WCS supports conservation in 7 of the 13 national parks.

The Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE)

CARPE is a USAID initiative aimed at promoting sustainable natural resource management in the Congo Basin. Many of its data products and reports are relevant to forestry concerns.

Government Ministries

Directorate General of Water and Forests

The Directorate General of Water and Forests is responsible for preparing and implementing the laws and regulations relating to the activities of the Department of Water and Forests. It often partners with the following: COMIFAC, ECOFAC, Organization of African Forests (OAB), ITTO, Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP/PFBC)

Directorate of Forest Production (DRF)

DPF is responsible for developing the general guidelines for inventories, forest management, reforestation and their implementation. The agency incorporates scientific inventory tactics to monitor forests and concessions. It is also required to prepare an annual report of its findings.

The National Center for Scientific and Technological Research (CENAREST)

CENAREST was established in 1976 to help coordinate technical and scientific research in Gabon. The Institute for Research on Tropical Ecology (IRET) was established by government decree in 1985 and is a part of CENAREST. It is part of the Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research and Technological Innovation of the Government of Gabon. The institute undertakes research in Gabon on: biodiversity conservation and the functioning of forest ecosystems; ecosystem stability; and topics related to global change and sustainable use.

Ministry of Water and Forests

This Ministry is in charge of proving sustainable and responsible management of Gabon's forest and water resources. It is required to monitor and control the implementation and enforcement of the rules of the forestry sector. Working closely with the African Timber Organization, the ITTO, and CIFOR, this Ministry was also Gabon's leader in developing the guidelines and standards for

the sustainable management of its forests. The Ministry is also responsible for the verification of the concessions operations in accordance with the provisions of the 2001 Forest Code. The Department is subdivided into four agencies. The first, the Directory of Inventories, Management and Forest Regeneration (DIARF) is mandated to monitor concessions. Second, the Department of Forest Production is in charge of “small logging titles”. Lastly, the Department of Industries and the Department of Research. These bodies conduct forest control. Where enforcement is decentralized at the local level, the MEF has some provincial units assigned to carry out verification activities. There are also some designated officials working closely with provinces and cantons as mobile control units.

[Agency for Activity in the Forestry/Timber Sector \(AEAFB\)](#)

The AEAFB was set up in 2012. Its main goals are to promote the forestry and timber sectors, while also providing technical support and advice to the Ministry of Water and Forests. The Agency’s responsibilities include inventory assessments, forestry management, sorting, certification, product traceability, among other tasks. The AEAFB is a major stakeholder in forestry/timber related activities in Gabon. AEAFB also has to estimate the quantity and quality of Gabon’s national forestry holdings by 2014. This is an important undertaking as 85% of Gabon is covered by a dense evergreen rainforest.

Tools and resources

- [ITTO: Status of Tropical Forest Management \(2011\)](#)
- [Official Portal of the Gabonese Republic](#)
- [Knoema Database for International Information and Statistics](#)
- [Global Forest Watch: Gabon](#)
- [ITTO Tropical Timber Market Report \(15 February 2014\)](#)
- [African Economic Outlook: Gabon \(2013\)](#)
- [CIA World Factbook: Gabon](#)

Citations