

Mongbo, natural resource and decentralisation in Benin.

*First Draft, not to be quoted*

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Case Title

**Natural resource management and institutional development in the context of  
decentralisation: A Comparative analysis of two forest resources in Benin  
(provisional title)**

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**Natural resource management and institutional development in the context of decentralisation: A Comparative analysis of two forest resources in Benin**

*Roch L. Mongbo*

**Abstract**

This article presents a comparative analysis of natural forest management in two localities, Koussoukpa in the South and Toui-Kilibo in the Central Benin. The latter has experienced over 15 years of participatory sustainable management models with the setting and support to users' associations linked with project staff, state and customary authorities. On the contrary, the former has never captured the attention of central state institutions and is managed by locally developed institutions in loose and informal relations with the regional state forest administration bureaucracies. The article discusses the success and failures of recently elected local governments in their attempts to establish their legitimacy and authority over the forests and the local institutions and actors exerting usage, decision and property rights. The cases illustrate struggle over the status of the resources at stake (private, common versus public), and reveal attempts to redefine citizenship on ethno-centric bases while contesting state authority and democratic rules.

## **Introduction**

The decentralisation reforms have been forcefully proposed by international financial institutions and donor countries since the early nineties to African states confronted in various ways with economic bankruptcy and severe crisis of political legitimacy. Political and administrative decentralisations are then promoted as ideological back up to economic liberalism, political pluralism and the disengagement of state bureaucracies advocated since the mid 1980s, as a normal step towards democratic rules, and might eventually become instrumental to some restoration of state legitimacy and power at local level. Indeed, as a result of its deficiency in all domains of life (with inadequate resource allocation, lack of staff, corruption, arrogance and poor performances of those in place etc.), the state has been rendered virtual in almost every field of its legitimacy and play very marginal role in the everyday life of the people (Mongbo, 2001). Through two decades of so-called participatory projects in most of the state fields of competences (school, health, public infrastructures, agricultural development etc.), committees and association of users were initiated and empowered to countervail and in some cases by-pass state administrative and political bodies at local level. In the particular field of natural resource management, international organisations and donor founded projects have transferred power to a wide range of local institutions including private bodies, customary authorities and NGOs in the process of participatory management of these resources.

Some authors (see Crook and Manor, 1998; Ribot, 2004) postulate that the mix of institutions created and supported in those participatory processes do undermine the formation and consolidation of democratic local government as expected with political and administrative decentralisation. According to them, the recognition of these other local institutions results in fragmented forms of authority and belonging, which means that fledging local governments receive few public powers and face competition for legitimacy, the main consequence being the dampening of long-run prospects for local democratic consolidation.

In this paper, I intend to check this assumption against an empirical case analysis from Benin in West Africa, where the decentralisation reform has been announced in 1990 and finally launched in 2002. I discuss the case of two forests, the Lokoly forest in the south and the Toui-Kilibo forest in centre Benin. While the former one has never attracted any attention from donor or state project until the decentralisation reform, the latter one has been subjected to state central control right from the early 1940s and then the theatre of participatory management projects since the early 1990s. My objective is to compare the strategies of the stakeholders in the two locations and explore the ways in which legitimacy, citizenship and democratic rules are negotiated and the fate there in constructed on the ground for the decentralisation reform in Benin. I am therefore concerned here with the issue of institutional development from a long-term perspective, using the management of forest resources as entry point. I elaborate on the processes of power wielding and yielding, representation and accountability, citizenship and belonging as it derives from the status actors attribute to forest resources, as public, common or private. My working hypothesis is derived from the literature on the matter of governance and local politics in Africa that postulates that a new legitimacy does not wipe away or erase previous ones, no matter where these legitimacies derive their recognition from (see Bierschenk and Olivier de Sardan, 1998:20-49). In the case of natural resource management, we will expect power and legitimacy instances (of various times and spaces) to coexist and compete with each other, with very limited support from the legal system and at the expenses of citizenship, democracy and public domain. My argument therefore is that the threats to the formation and consolidation of democratic local government

through political decentralisation do not proceed simply from previous participatory projects and institutions. I contend that the fate of these decentralisation reforms derives from their top down nature and their failure to read in the existing local institutional landscape, on-going political struggle and institutional innovation processes that have started long before modern state interventions and that are instrumental to some local appropriation or contestation of national state. Before coming back in some detail to the argument, let me first present the research framework and the forest scenes in further details.

### **The research setting**

The Lokoly-Koussoukpa forest in the South Benin is a humid forest of over 1000 ha, about half of which is swampy. The forest contains a great diversity of woods, plants and animals, but has never attracted the attention of state administration and therefore has never been involved in any participatory management project or institutional arrangement. Local population has developed endogenous institutions for its management, based on myths and religious believes. With the decentralisation reform, various attempts have been launched by elected authorities to take a share in this management (Mongbo, et al., 2000; Egboou, 2000; Mongbo, Floquet et Egboou, 2005, Egboou et Aguèmon, 2005).

The Toui-Kilibo forest is much larger (over 47.000 ha) with historically established management rights for two different ethnic groups, the Fon and the Tchabè. This forest was declared a protected forest in the early 1940s by the colonial state and was later one of the sites of the natural resources management project conducted by Benin state services for forest resources since 1992 with the support of donors (the World Bank, the German and the French cooperation agencies).

With the decentralisation reform<sup>1</sup> enacted through local elections in December 2002 and January 2003, the local governments are endowed with legal competence on land resource management and local development. Within this law, the Toui-Kilibo forest falls under the jurisdiction of two communes, Ouessè (75%) and Tchaourou (25%) local governments while the Lokoly-Koussoukpa forest falls under Zogbodomey (70%) and Toffo (30%) local government. In the context of this research, we have decided to limit ourselves to Ouessè (for Toui-Kilibo) and Zogbodomey local governments (for Lokoli). We are here interested in the ways in which these elected local governments succeed or fail to establish any legitimacy over forest resource management matters and in the consequences for local democracy. In other terms, to what extent has the recognition legally granted to the elected decentralised authorities been affected by the one attributed (by donors and central government on the one hand and indigenous people on the other) to users committees and organisations, and in what the consequences are for legal institutions and democratic experience in Benin.

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<sup>1</sup> Political decision to decentralise was taken since 1989 and preparation started since then but the process took more than 10 years for completion. The reform is expected to enhance democracy and development at local level. Each of the 77 communes or “Collectivités Territoriales” (former districts) elected a “Conseil Communal” of 9 to 45 members (depending on population size), who then elected one of them as Mayor and two others as deputy. These “Collectivités Territoriales” are endowed with autonomous budget and hold competence (executive and decision-making) over various sectors as nursery and primary education, health, land management, local development, socio-economic and commercial infrastructures local finances etc. In addition, there is a “deconcentration” disposition whereby the state central administration is brought closer to local level (see Blundo et Mongbo, 1998, Mongbo, 2001).

Specific questions addressed in the research are related to the process of institutional development (through history and associated with forest resources), the issues of resource status (as private, common or public and the implications for identities, citizenship and related democratic rules), the issues of agency and power (in terms of power wielding and yielding and symbolic construction and channelling of power among groups), and the matters of representation (of committees and managing institutions) and their accountability (upward or downward or both).

Field investigations have been conducted in Lokoly-Koussoukpa on forest resources management, on livelihood and endogenous institutional development from 1999 to 2001. (Mongbo, et al., 2000; Egboou, 2000; Mongbo, Floquet et Egboou, 2005). Planning sessions have been facilitated at communal level for various sectors (health, agriculture, water and sanitation) and for the overall communal development from 2002 to 2005. In 2006, additional data have been collected for a more systematic documentation of the initiatives taken by communal authorities in the past 12 months as far as forest resources management is concerned.

As for the Toui-Kilibo forest, I was involved in 1993 in the training and settling of the project team. Later in 1999, I took part in the evaluation of the process, especially for the part concerning land and forest management institutions (Pescay et Mongbo, 2000). Various studies were later conducted on the institutional development and on forest and natural resource management in the area. A literature review has been conducted that allowed us to take stock of these studies. In addition, further data have been collected on institutional development and power dynamics around natural resource management, with their consequences for resource use, citizenship and representation as they proceed from attempts taken by communal authorities since their installation.

### **The Lokoly and the Toui-Kilibo forests**

The Lokoly forest is basically a humid one, half of which is swampy, while the Toui-Kilibo forest is a tropical savannah forest. Lokoly is small (979 ha) as compared to Toui-Kilibo that covers 47.120 ha. But each of these forests is of great ecological and socio economic values.

Lokoly forest extends over a small river of 6 to 10 meter width, over 30km cross the forest (Laleye, 2000). The deep water part of the forest is made of *Raphia hookeri* exploited by the village community for its wine processed in alcoholic drink. There are also various species of woods, grasses and animals. There are a diversified aquatic fauna (crocodiles, lizards, turtles, etc.).

The Toui-Kilibo forest is considered as important for regional climate. Three rivers run cross it. Forest wood of various species as well as animal, fishes etc. are part of the interest riparian populations have in this forest.

### **The resources utilisation and the managing institutions**

The two forests have been through different trajectories as far as resource management and access are concerned. Until present days, the Lokoly forest is managed by traditional institutions while for Toui-Kilibo, management committees have been installed since the early 1990s and traditional institutions are now hardly cited.

*Lokoly forest*

Mainly one ethnic group (the Fon), and six village communities (4 in Zogbodomey and 2 in Toffo) located in 2 *Arrondissements* (Koussoukpa and Sèxuè) share the forest, of whom, 3 will retain our attention here, Lokoly, Koussoukpa and Dèmè. Most villages are reported to have founded in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The management of the forest and the river was based on the local pantheon, the river *Hlan* being paramount Vodoun over all other Vodouns of the land, right after *Mahu Sègbo Lissa*, the Supreme one. Hlan river and vodoun has rules and regulations, that are basically portray a conception of hygiene, purity, equity in access and sustainable management of the resources<sup>2</sup>. According to riparian communities (of these three villages), the resources of the forest and its river have been free of access since then until the early 1950s. Then a tendency of private appropriation emerged, whereby a portion of the forest cleared by someone can only be taken over by his family members even after fallow period. In this way, some family groups have managed to claim interesting and large parts of the forest land that are easy to reach, excluding some others from these particular areas. Then various forms of contracting appeared whereby one could borrow or rent from these portions of land or river. But from 1960 to 1965, palm wine and alcoholic drink production became a very attractive business, from which those who ‘owned’ these portions profited the most. Then a group of young men rebelled with the support of the Hlan priest of that moment and restored the free access regime together with an institutional innovation called ‘Zoukanhounhoun’ whereby every year, all young men are called on to a collective path opening in the forest and on the river, which makes it easy to everyone to accede to palm trees and process wine. Since then and up to now, the free access regime is maintained, together with the zoukanhounhoun institution under the supervision of the Hlan priest.

These general rules are adapted at different professional groups operating on the river and the forest, the organisational set up of which varies according to the particular resource concerned. In fact, palm wine collectors and processors have no particular head. Every body plays by the general rule of not being allowed to privatise any portion of the forest. But on this point, one informant confesses:

*‘But I think we might now need to set a committee in order to stop a recent tendency of some lazy young men. They would start extracting wine from some palm trees and stop while there will still remains wine on the palm trees, which is a waste of resources to every one as nobody is allowed to get on a tree that has been started by someone else. We need to sit and talk on these matters a find ways to control them.’*

Fishermen have a committee and the hunters have two different committees depending on the weapon used (traps or gun). Each committee has rules for equity and sustainability. There is no particular structuring within the group, except that they are mostly chaired by the eldest or the most experienced member. Nor is it any regular meeting. The groups gather when needed, mostly to sort a particular problem. The hunters meet when the village forestier is expected to visit the village. Then hunters gather to prepare to ‘welcome’ the host, mostly with some animal. In addition, every hunter who kills an animal is expected to report to the forestier via

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<sup>2</sup> It is forbidden to cross the river with a living or dead pork (considered as a dirty animal) nor with a dead person. A menstrual woman should not come to the river for any reason. All these rules seem to be concerned with hygiene and cleanness. As for sustainability and equity, various rules are observed: interdiction to harvest some particular plants or animal species during the week after someone died in one of the three villages, the interdiction to use hunting tools or techniques that catch or kill young or female animals or fishes.

the committee president, which might mean that the hunter has to give some particular part of his butin. But some hunters now reject the idea, arguing that they have never obtained any assistance from state agents.

The other professional groups meet only when there is a problem that needs to be solved. An example is with the fishermen group in 2001 when one of them got his filet stolen. He reported to the President of the group. The latter appointed a fisherman for the investigations. He managed to identify the robber, a meeting was organised and the guilty one got appointed chief surveyor of all hunting implements at used on the river.

Income generating activities conducted in the forest are mostly done during the dry season, the rainy one left for activities outside the forest (agriculture, food processing, animal husbandry and trade). In average, 38% of annual income is derived from forest activities. In fact, 44% get less than 25% of their income from the forest, while 20% earn between 25 to 50% from the forest. For 13% of the active population, this forest-based activities' contribution to income amount at 50 to 75% while for 23%, this is above 75%. The most lucrative activity is the wine extraction and processing, which is conducted by few people, due to the high level of necessary investment. But this category of professionals is the one that has no formal committee and do not pay any tribute to anyone, traditional or modern authorities.

#### *Toui-Kilibo forest*

Dominant ethnic groups in the area are the Fon, the Tchabè and the Fulbé. Migrants from the northern and southern part of Benin have been settling in the area since the early 1970s. Four *Arrondissements* share this forest. Kokoro, Kilibo and Toui in Ouessè, and Papanè in Tchaourou. The forest has been declared state protected forest since 1942 and divided into so-called 'Unités d'Aménagement' as shown on the table below.

<b>Unités d'Aménagement</b>	<b>Cropping Zone</b>	<b>Forest Zone</b>	<b>Zone de pâturage</b>	<b>Total (ha)</b>	<b>%</b>
Kokoro	-	5800	3700	9500	20,16
Kilibo	2295	8100	6100	16495	35,01
Toui	4645	3200	2900	10745	22,80
Papanè	1180	4900	4300	10380	22,03
<b>Total</b>	<b>8120</b>	<b>22000</b>	<b>17000</b>	<b>47120</b>	<b>100</b>
%	17,23	46,69	36,08	100	

The area cultivated is planted by individual native or migrant farmers with various annual crops (yams, maize, cassava, groundnuts, cotton etc. and perennial tree crops mainly cashew. Professional hunters use to form a traditional organisation with rituals and regulations. Most of them are native from the two major ethnic groups (Fon and Tchabè). Pastoralists are Fulbé, some of whom are settled and others transhumant. Each of the villages of the forest is headed by a traditional chief in charge of land matters called Balê from whom migrants seek permission to settle, except those who came through native families, in which case they settle on the family's land while the latter keep the Balê informed.

With the 'classification' of the forest as a state forest since 1942, the Balê's authority has been officially restricted, until the early 1990s when the various 'Unités d'Aménagement' have been defined. Then, their authority was declared to be limited to the cropping zones. Nevertheless all through these years, they have remained the entry point to the village

dominion for agricultural migrants and for pastoralists. Also, they hold a honorific position with regards to the hunters confreries.

Following the classification of the forest, the professional groups that got access to the forest resources and yet escape the authority of the Balê are the '*exploitants forestiers*' and to some extents charcoal processing specialists and dealers. They use to register in the books of the state forest administration to which they pay taxes. Very few these people are native, except the people they recruit on wage basis.

In total and starting from the early 1940s, some 18 forests have been classified in Benin, with a total size of about 1.500.000 ha. But the state administration has failed to ensure effective control over all these area and to manage these classified forests on a sustainable basis, while riparian communities kept on expressing discomfort on the situation. The participatory management programmes of the early 1990s were meant as solution to the situation.

Within these programmes first call PGRN (Projet de Gestion des Ressources Naturelles) and later PGFTR, various committees were created at various levels as shown on the table below:

Territorial level	Users' organisations	State administration	Non-State administration
Village	Comité Villageois de Gestion des Forêts (CVGF)	-	
Arrondissement	Comité de Gestion de l'Unité d'Aménagement (CGUA)	Forest agent of PGFTR	NGO agent
Commune and supra Commune	Conseil de Coordination des Unités d'Aménagement (CCUA)	Forest officier of PGFTR	NGO officier

Members of the CVGF are two representatives from each of the agricultural and forest professions operating on the village territory (farmers, fishermen, hunters, pastoralists, seedling specialists, charcoal specialists, exploitant forestier etc.). Each CVGF send 2 representatives to the CGUA of their Arrondissement. Most CGUA are composed of 12 members. Then each of the CGUA of the forest send 3 representatives to the CCUA, namely the president, the treasurer and the secretary in charge of management and enrichment. The executive board of the CCUA is operated by each CGUA represented on a cyclical basis for 2 years, while members of CVGF and CGUA are elected for a 4 years mandate. The first CGUA (the one of Toui) was put in place since 1994 followed by the others in 1995 and 1996.

The mandate of the committees is control forest management, settle conflicts between users and limits frauds. Every CGUA is requested to produce a minimum of 34.000 seedlings each year, of which 20.000 are freely given to villagers for planting for their own use while the remaining 14.000 are used to enrich the forest with 200 ha of planted forest every year in areas called 'Free Zones', outside the classified forest. This particular activity is funded by the state forest administration.

The committees charge all professionals at village level (CVGF). The money collected is shared between the state forest administration and the committees. No allocation is meant to reach the local administration.

Professions	Taxes (fcfa)	Shares of stakeholders			
		Fonds d'aménagement	Fonds forestier national	Committees	Villages
Farmers (annually)	New farms: 5.000 each Old farms: 500 each	85%	-	15%	-
Pastoralists (per animal and annually)	Transhumant: 350 Resident: 250	35%	10%	45%	10%
Fishermen (annually)	Big ones: 20.000 Small ones: 5.000	80%	-	20%	--
Wood	10% Gross income	95%	5%	-	-
Charcoal (per bag)	100	95%	5%	-	-
Fire wood (per bundle)	100	95%	5%	-	-
Cashew public plantations	Net income	25%	10%	55%	10%
Teck plantations	Net income	40%	30%	20%	10%

One can imagine that we have here an arena of stakes and struggle over resources and revenue that might not be easy to manage and monitor. Funds are supposed to be collected by the CVGF who is supposed to transfer them to the CGUA within 48 hours, the latter having the same obligation to the CUA who should deposit the funds in Parakou within the same time frame at no less than 200km.

This allocation scheme has been devised before the decentralisation. Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning that the first participatory management project started in 1993 while the national constitution prescribing political decentralisation dates back to 1991.

Since the communal authorities are in place, the express concerns over these resources. The solution under scrutiny is an increase in the taxes rates. The reality though is a sharp decrease in the taxes income. In Kokoro UA for example, the CVGF used to deliver 100 trees cutting permit and 1.600 bags of charcoal per month by the end 1990s. But for the past 3 to 4 years, there seem to be no tree cutting permit request while monthly charcoal exports has dropped down to 1000 bags. Professionals in these fields are said to prefer resort now to the areas called 'free zones' that were enriched since the beginning of the process (early 1990s) and were they are not subjected to any tax.

#### *Toui-Kilibo and Lokoly*

The Toui-Kilibo forest appears to enjoy a complete architecture of participatory management. But a question that prompts is at the benefit of whom. The set up looks like the upgrade of some local elite to serve as instruments for the state forest administration strategic plan. These elites are extracted from their communities except for marginal infrastructures that might get

funded at village levels. Though the share committee members get from the matter is very low, it gives them much room for manoeuvre and turn the business into stakes they might be willing to defend in front of intruding authorities, be they elected communal council members.

In Lokoly, there is no taxation except for the reports hunters have to address to their head man and to forest agents visiting the village. The profession that win the most from the forest (palm wine extractors and processing specialists) are not organised in any committee and do not report any share to any authority. Nevertheless, there seems to be a consensus by which palm exploitation proceeds that ensure its sustainability.

Let us now have a look at the attempts made by elected communal authority to accede to these resources and how the stakeholders in place react to it.

### **Attempts of local governments to get in the arena**

#### *The Lokoly forest and the Zogbodomey local government*

Communal authorities have very limited knowledge of the stakes in the forest as far income and tourist potentials are concerned. The Mayor and his close assistant have no idea of how the forest is managed by local authorities and believe that it is under good control of the state forest administration. In the communal development plan, the Lokoly forest is mentioned as a site to be promoted as a tourist destination, in addition to the need for a sustainable management of forest resources. But no disposition has ever been taken in communal budget towards such direction. Unless private initiatives emerge on the forest, there might not be any investment on the forest until the end of the present local government's mandate.

The Chef d'Arrondissement of Koussoukpa, member of the same communal council, has a better though little knowledge of the matter. His attention is less captured by the local dynamics around the forest resources than the numerous research and development actors trying to operate in the village. He called and held a meeting of these institutions on the 4<sup>th</sup> June 2005, chaired by the deputy Mayor. Discussions were about sustainable management, tourist potentials, individual and communal gains from the forest. Villagers argue for bridge over the river and good road for a better marketing of forest products while at the same time reject any idea of external people mixing in the management of forest resources, not even suggesting any rationality for sustainability. Some strong declarations at this meeting were:

*'Who are you people to warn about the extension of our forest resources? I am older than any of you here and got from my grand father that the forest was there before his grand father. We know what the threats to the forest are and what to do to keep those threats aside. It is nothing of what you are pretending'*

*Or*

*'I have not learned any other work than extracting wine and processing it into alcoholic drink. Are you expecting me to stop this work because you think it might exhaust palm trees? You even don't know how these trees born and die.'*

In fact, through out the meeting, there has never been any suggesting from the visitors of stopping or even refraining palm processing. But the professionals of this sector were just afraid that the subject is touched.

The meeting ended with speeches urging for further discussions on the sustainable management of forest resources and on a call to NGOs and private initiatives to invest in the forest. The week after the meeting, the Mayor invited all the institutions intervening on the forest at a meeting; asked each of them to briefly present their activities. Then he requested that each submits a report of their activities and be ready for a meeting at communal level, which he never managed to organise until now. But one of the conclusions of the meeting held was that any further intervention in the village should be known to the local government.

Here again, attempts are not on how local dynamics around the forest could be upgraded for the interest of the whole Commune and as a way of asserting local government's authority on local resources. The Chef d'Arrondissement and the deputy Mayor who were present at the June 2005 meeting seem to have got a flavour of the reluctance of villagers to cope with intruders. The way out seems to be near intervention institutions.

#### *The Toui-Kilibo forest and the Ouessè local government*

Here, the local government has a clear idea of the importance of the resources and its legitimacy over their management. Right at their installation, they have tried to get a hold on the resources generated by the CGUA but face opposition from the latter. The document of the communal development planning is explicit on the confrontation between these forest management committees and the communal authorities. In that document, the local government asserted:

*'All the localities of the Toui-Kilibo forest has a 'Unité d'Aménagement' with village management committee. If the management of the fund generated by the forest remains until now the chasse gardée of the CGUA, newly elected local government have tempted to change the situation, which the CGUA members strongly objected to. But such a position cannot be held for long, as natural resources legally fall under the competences of local governments'*

One member of CGUA read these as pressures from the communal council that ignores the realities of CGUA management as an empty shell. He said:

*'Right when he got on office, the Mayor jumped on CGUA because he thought we have important funds in our account. He called all the CGUA on a meeting and demand that every CGUA reports on his management. He finally notice that there is nothing in this business, that we are not gaining anything from it. He finally congratulated us for doing a voluntary office for the commune. Of course if he ever suspects mismanagement, it is his right to call upon us. But I do not think he will ever get at that...'*

#### Resource status, citizenship and accountability in Zogbodomey and Ouessè

The clear stipulation of the stakes around forest resource management in Ouessè is most probably one of the unintended outcomes of the participatory forest management project. Local communities and therefore elected elites have some suspicion as to the importance of the fund generated and the potentials of the forest resources. The arena has also been settled as field of legitimacy and power. If similar top down participatory project had been implemented on the Lokoly forest, similar awareness might exist at the Zogbodomey communal council.

Nevertheless, this awareness advantage noticed in Ouessè over Zogbodomey does not yield any better return to Ouessè as far power over managing groups, legitimacy over forest resources are concerned. Both communal councils are contested in their attempts to take control, and most importantly, seem to give up.

The Toui-Kilibo forest resources have been attributed a national public good status with some meagre remittances to local committee members who seem to have little to say on resource management strategy. They would not certainly choose for the opening of the 'free zones' to wood and charcoal professionals, nor agree for the rates of the shares in the income if their views were really asked for.

The users of the resources in the Lokoly forest seem to reject any idea of upgrading this forest to a communal one.

In both cases, we face a contestation of communal authorities legitimacy and the modern democratic rules for public good management. If in Ouessè, local elites seem to be helped by project and forest staff, the case in Lokoly seem to indicate that they are rather playing by their own interest and the card they believe to hold in their hands.

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