



Who we are

The Centre for Nursery Development and Eru Propagation (CENDEP) was created in 1999 as a farmer group and legalized as a Common Initiative Group (CIG) on the 19th July 2000.

CENDEP promotes livelihood through dialogue, participatory education, training and research. She also promotes long term conservation and development initiatives and enabling policies in partnership with local community members and other partners

CENDEP's activities cover principally the Northwest and Southwest Regions of Cameroon. In the NW Region our activities are aimed at addressing issues of climate change indirectly. This is through our Analogue Forestry program through which we are assisting local communities to establish permanent forests to buffer extreme weather events and also to act as carbon sinks. The interest and participation of the local population is driven by their assurance on the water supply services of permanent forests.

In the SW Region our activities are centred on domestication and development of the value chain for Eru. Eru is a perennial crop which starts to produce after 3-5 years, and then can be productive for 30-50 years. Value chain development activities are carried around the Mount Cameroon Region and in the buffer zone of the Korup National Park. Sustainable agriculture and environmental education activities are carried out in the two regions.



## CENDEP Newsletter (CN)

CN is a bimonthly update of the field activities of CENDEP.

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## **EDITORIAL**

**By Youndjie Koleoko Gabriel**  
**CEO, CENDEP.**

**In July 2011 we participated in the meeting** of the Working Group of the non wood forest products (NWFPs) Sub Program of COMIFAC to share our experiences on *Gnetum* spp domestication and value chain development and to contribute in laying down guidelines for NWFP exploitation and commercialization in the Central African Sub-region. In the meeting we advocated for COMIFAC member countries to support initiatives to promote the processing of *Gnetum* spp (eru) before export to external markets as this will add value and create local jobs.

**We also participated in a workshop**, from the 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> of July 2011, organized by the Centre for Environment and Development (CED) and Rainforest Foundation, a UK based NGO, to build the capacity of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Cameroon for effective participation in the ongoing REDD+ process in Cameroon. The workshop was to see how CSOs could influence the process. The workshop examined amongst many things why it is necessary for CSOs to participate in the process, the strategies to guarantee participation of CSOs and local communities in the process & the advantages for participation. At the end of the workshop, participants issued a declaration against the steps initiated by government with support of the World Conservation Union (IUCN) to organize CSOs in Cameroon in order to take forward the REDD+ process.

**We completed the training on eru domestication** in the Republic of Congo and the Central African Republic and recommended that governments in the three African countries where we just conducted training (Nigeria, Congo and Central African Republic) should support the initiative by addressing the needs of the local people in setting up eru plantlet multiplication/demonstration units. Collective efforts by the respective governments will reduce the rate of depletion of the vegetable in the forests by encouraging privatization (individual plantations) and sustainable management of the wild stocks. If this is not done, market forces will continue to push the resource to economic depletion in the source areas thereby putting the livelihoods of the forest dependent people at jeopardy. We considered it early enough for these governments to start putting in place a strategy to declassify eru from a forest product into an agricultural product so as to encourage domestication.

**Bee keeping training in Yokadouma:** CIFOR in partnership with CENDEP organised a 4 day training workshop which brought together 21 participants from 3 different communities around Yokadouma, East Cameroon on modern techniques of beekeeping. This was in an effort to incorporate climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies in CIFOR's interventions in the area.

**SETAC/CENDEP Partnership:** In an effort to sustain analog forestry activities in Cameroon when IUCN NL support for our work ended in August 2010, we embarked on exploring other sources of funding to keep our activities going. In 2010 we established contact with SETAC which resulted in the announcement of an

award of 1271 Euros in August 2011 to support us to carry out tree planting in Cameroon. Our new partner, The Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC) –is a worldwide non-profit professional society.

**The NEBF financed analog forestry project** entered its second month of implementation with a rethinking of the approach. Thus rather than rush into planting thousands of unprotected trees the project adopted a phased approach. Through this approach resources are now being deployed in specific sections of the forest ensuring the planted trees are 100% protected from intruders (grazers). A major positive outcome of sensitization carried out during the previous month was the participation of cattle farmers in tree planting exercises. We think that it is difficult for these farmers to again turn their cattle to destroy the trees they planted themselves.

**Forest House**, a social enterprise created to market the non wood forest products produced by farmers with technical support from CENDEP acquired a short term loan from a local microfinance institution. This loan will permit Forest House to buy and marketed close to 8 tons of honey from the farmers in the coming 10 months allowing the farmers to generate circa FCFA 6,654,297 (Euro 10,159.23)

The management and staff of CENDEP are thankful to all the partners who enabled us to carry out these and other activities that have not featured in this newsletter.



Honey packaged according to the needs of the consumers

## **Workshop participants elaborate a road map for the domestication of *Gnetum* spp in the Central African Republic**

**By Perie mentah Kutchoteh Ndzefemmegho**  
**Forest and Nature Conservation Officer**

The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is currently executing a project titled “Enhancing food security in Central Africa through the sustainable management of non-wood forest products”. It is sponsored by the German Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection. Eru is one of the most important non wood forest products that is harvested from forests in the Central African sub region.

The Centre for Nursery Development and Eru Propagation (CENDEP) has been a partner in the execution of this project principally through the training of trainers in pilot communities of the Republic of Congo and the Central African Republic on the domestication of *Gnetum* spp. commonly referred to as “eru”.

The training which began in two pilot communities in the Republic of Congo from May 18 to June 2, 2011 was taken to Mbaiki, a village community in the district of Lobaye, in the Central African Republic between June 17 and 23, 2011. A total of 83 participants were effectively trained on how to independently produce eru plantlets for farm establishment and on how to manage in a sustainable manner the wild stocks of the vegetable so that they can continue to harvest them forever. Nine of the trainees received further training to enable them act like trainers for other communities in their respective countries.

During the workshop, the national coordinator of the project in the Central African Republic, Mr. Bruno BOKOTO de Semboli, presented the overall objectives of the project and its long term goals and benefits to the communities in the district of Lobaye in general. The divisional officer of Lobaye was represented by the first deputy mayor of Mbaiki who in his opening speech thanked the FAO and the German government for choosing Mbaiki to host the training workshop. He also added that the workshop would improve the food security status of the communities as well as contribute in eliminating the anarchical exploitation of forest resources in the district as a whole.



A cross section of workshop participants

A significant difference between the workshop held in the Central African Republic and that which took place in the Republic of Congo earlier was the elaboration of a road map for the establishment of demonstration units for the production of plantlets for distribution to farmers. This was the initiative of the National Coordinator and facilitated by the trainers. Five working groups representing the different communities and organizations that participated in the training workshop were formed and asked to brainstorm on the following issues:

- i. Specific challenges envisaged in the establishment and management of *Gnetum* spp plantlet multiplication/demonstration units.
- ii. Use of past experiences with different project interventions to assure a better valorization and execution of this project in their different communities
- iii. Elaboration of a 5-month action plan and proposition of suggestions for swift action.



Different groups brainstorm during working sessions...

An output of the group work was an action plan and a strategy to implement it within the stipulated timeframe of 5 months. This was a positive innovation and indication that the participants would immediately put to practice the knowledge they had acquired. Participants were able to highlight future technical, material and financial difficulties involved in setting up *Gnetum* spp demonstration/multiplication units and to share their concerns with the workshop organizer (FAO), thus allocating responsibilities to key persons directly involved in contributing to solving some of the difficulties.

#### **Conclusion:**

The extension of *Gnetum* spp domestication technology to forest resource users has been underway in Cameroon since 2000. There is ample evidence that a thrust in production can be translated into economic and social gain. CENDEP has been championing knowledge transfer thanks to the support of her partners notably ICCO and IUCN NL and recently CIFOR and the FAO. So far three countries have benefitted from CENDEP's expertise in eru domestication. These are Nigeria, Congo and the Central African Republic. The

efforts taken by the FAO to ensure the training of trainers in her project area is very important in ensuring that participants do not abandon after the training.

It is important for governments in the three countries to support the initiative by addressing the needs of the local people in setting up eru plantlet multiplication/demonstration units. Collective efforts by the respective governments will reduce the rate of depletion of the vegetable in the forests by encouraging privatization (individual plantations) and sustainable management of the wild stocks. If this is not done, market forces will continue to push the resource to economic depletion in the source areas thereby putting the livelihoods of the forest dependent people at jeopardy. Thus it is of paramount importance for governments within the Central African sub region to introduce the domestication of *Gnetum* spp. into their national agricultural policies and action frameworks so that initiatives such as the one just concluded between CENDEP and the FAO should be multiplied and the local trainers supported to take the technology to more farmers. These governments should already start putting in place a strategy to declassify eru from a forest product into an agricultural product.



Trainees collecting planting materials from forest

A detailed report (in French) of the training in Congo and Central African Republic will soon be available on the FAO webpage.



## Celebration of the International Year of Forests

By Youndjie Koleoko Gabriel  
CEO CENDEP

The United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 61/193 of 20 December 2006, proclaimed 2011, the International Year of Forests and invited governments, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and other stakeholders to make concerted efforts to raise awareness at all levels to strengthen sustainable management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests for the benefit of present and future generations.

It is in this regard that CENDEP was invited in the meeting of experts from countries in the Central African sub-region in Non Wood Forest Products (NWFP) for a high-level meeting to show firstly the importance of forest resources in the fight against poverty and strengthening food security and secondly to raise the level of inclusion of NWFPs in the Convergence Plan of COMIFAC and national forest programs of its member countries.

Therefore in July 2011, CENDEP Director, Mr. Youndjie Koleoko Gabriel, was invited to make a presentation on the experiences of CENDEP on the Cultivation and Sustainable Management of non timber forest products in the Central African sub-region. The meeting took place from the 25<sup>th</sup> to the 28<sup>th</sup> of July 2011 in Boali, Central African Republic. The theme for this meeting was Non timber forest products, fight against poverty and food security in the Central African sub region: Putting in place and the Implications of COMIFAC's Convergence Plan.

The meeting brought together participants from 5 of the 10 COMIFAC member countries (Congo, Gabon, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo and Cameroon) to commemorate the international year of the Forest declared by the United Nations. Mr Koleoko made a presentation on the success story of CENDEP in the domestication and sustainable management of the *Gnetum* spp (eru) in Cameroon and recently in some countries of the Central African sub region as well as in the development of value chains *Gnetum* spp and honey. The objectives of this pioneer meeting of the Working Group of the non timber forest products (NTFPs) Sub Program were to:

- To present and capitalize experiences showing the role of NTFP in the fight against poverty and enforced food security of the population in the Central African sub region with the aim of sensitizing policy makers on the importance of these products.
- Reflect on the extension mechanism and success stories by Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SMEs), other actors and local population implicated in the NTFP sector.
- To analyze the level of consideration of NTFP's on COMIFAC's Convergence Plan and Governments' annual action plans and make suggestions to ameliorate these documents so as to improve the relationship between forests and forest users.

- To ease the movement of the Non Timber Forest Products in the Central African sub region.

After presentation by each partner organization of her role in the NTFP sector, the participants were divided into 3 working groups to see how the COMIFAC's Convergent Plan could be developed. Presentations and validations of group work were made and the final document was adopted. The following resolutions were arrived at:

- Limit control and check points to enable free circulation of NTFP's in the local markets and possibly within the sub region.
- Governments of the various COMIFAC countries should contribute funds for the running of COMIFAC activities rather than continuously depending on donor support which sometimes is never timely.
- Protection of the Natural Genetics of NTFPs, while focusing on food security with less reliance on GMOs (Genetically Modified Organisms).

The meeting ended with the announcement of the GTBAC (Biodiversity Programme for the Central African Sub Region) meeting scheduled to take place in Gabon in September or October 2011. It shall be during this meeting that the venue and time for the next NTFP sub programme meeting would be decided.

As usual CENDEP advocated for national governments to support initiatives to promote the processing of eru before export to external markets as this would add value and create local jobs.



Cross section of participants at the meeting

## **BEEKEEPING TRAINING WORKSHOP IN YOKADOUMA**

*By Ngah Presley Bongnjo  
Community Facilitator CENDEP*

Nowadays, most development organizations are incorporating climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies in their interventions. Development initiatives nowadays centre on sustainable ways of protecting the already vulnerable environment while improving the livelihoods of the vulnerable rural population. It is in this context that CIFOR in partnership with CENDEP organised a 4 day training workshop which brought together 21 participants from 3 different communities around Yokadouma, East Cameroon on modern techniques of beekeeping. Visual aids for this training were donated by bees for development – a UK based charity organization and moral support was provided by the former parliamentarian of the Bijouki constituency, Honourable Baloulo. The workshop was animated by Mr. Ngah Presly and Assoua Dimitri.

Being the first of its kind in this part of the Cameroon, the training was received with enthusiasm and fanfare. Participants were made to appreciate apiculture as a system of farming which requires less energy. The workshop provided an opportunity for the participants to appreciate how the practice of modern bee farming can help reduce their constant pressure on the forest and the environment for their subsistence needs. Practical tips were given to participants at each step of the workshop. Lectures were provided through interactive exercises, practical step by step instruction on honey production and extraction.

African bees are considered wild and many people who start beekeeping run into problems with excessive stings that result in the farmer getting rid of the bees. Knowledge on how to keep and handle bees properly can overcome a fear of bees. At the end of the training, start up materials were donated to the participants to enable them start their bee keeping enterprises. Materials donated were comprised of bee suits, smokers, beeswax, gloves, hives, honey collection buckets and honey presses for filtering their honey.

Madame TSOTSONI Sylvain nicknamed "le Blanc" commented, 'Now we are unlike others who regard bees as their enemies, for we have been taught to protect bees'.

We are grateful to CIFOR for giving us the opportunity to carry out this training, Bees for Development for the support in visual aids and the farmers who braved to embrace bee farming in Yokadouma.



Materials donated to the trainees

## Update on the analog forestry project in Mbiame

By Lawir Felix Yuven

Community Facilitator, Analog Forestry Promotion

Dear readers,

In our July newsletter we announced the NEBF award, the sensitization and planning meetings we held as well as achievements for the month. In this issue we shall analyze the project achievements in August.

In July it was agreed that at least 5 hectares of degraded forest land be allocated to farmers for cultivation during the short farming season that would last from August to November. During this season farmers grow mostly short cycle crops like beans, potato, tomatoes and huckleberry.

This target was not met as only 2ha of degraded section of the "Bihfir" section of the forest was cultivated. This was as a result of further thoughts by the forest management committee. The success of reforestation in the peripheral zone of the forest depends on the level of protection of the planted trees. Thus rather than rush into planting thousands of unprotected trees the project adopted a phased approach. Through this approach resources are now being deployed in specific sections of the forest ensuring the planted trees are 100% protected from intruders (grazers). That is why only 2ha of forest land was cultivated this season. But in order to use all the mature seedlings available a higher planting density was adopted. This has the added advantage of reducing the need for replacement of dead seedlings in the future. The project facilitated the demarcation and distribution of forest land to the farmers against next year. At the end of the second month of the project 36 farmers qualified to farm in the forest.

These farmers, under the guidance of the Forest Management Committee, began the construction of a dead fence in the "Bihfir" section of the forest where it was agreed farming should be concentrated this season.

This area was demarcated and a dead fence established using an invasive species that was being eradicated from the forest. A local species of *Ficus* spp used for life fencing was planted around the dead fence to replace it when it dies up in the future.



#### **Fencing of degraded forest areas to allow agriculture**

The local council promised to support the farmers with barb wire and an engine saw to facilitate the felling and crosscutting of eucalyptus for fencing poles. We shall not only monitor if this is done but shall ensure the promised is followed up.

Tree planting was intensified during this period so as to allow enough time for the young trees to establish before the approach of the harsh dry envisaged to begin in late October.

In the month of August 2011 we noticed some positive changes in the behavior of project stakeholders. For example a minimum of 18 to 20 participants were always present during events like tree planting. The most important outcome of sensitization was the improvement in the participation of the grazers and women. These stakeholder categories showed a lukewarm attitude to project activities in the past. The local council pledged support to the farmers and the Divisional Delegate of the Ministry of Environment and Nature Protection (MINEP), attended the launching of the SETAC sponsored tree planting event.

In the coming two months we shall focus our attention on:

- a. Planting out the remaining 259 tree seedlings that are ready for planting
- b. Fencing around the Forest
- c. Identification/mapping out of all water sources in the communal forest.
- d. Training of more farmers to engage in cultivation of the degraded areas of the forest next cropping season
- e. Identification and collection of seeds for nursery work

## SETAC AND CENDEP TREE PLANTING PARTNERSHIP

By *Wirsiy Eric Fondzenyuy*  
*Knowledge Management Officer*

The Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry (SETAC) is a nonprofit, worldwide professional society comprised of individuals and institutions engaged in:

- a. the study, analysis, and solution of environmental problems
- b. the management and regulation of natural resources
- c. environmental education
- d. research and development

They have as mission is to support the development of principles and practices for protection, enhancement and management of sustainable environmental quality and ecosystem integrity.

In an effort to sustain analog forestry activities in Cameroon when IUCN NL support for our work ended in August 2010, we embarked on exploring other sources of funding to keep our activities going. In 2010 we established contact with SETAC that resulted in the announcement of an award of 1,271 Euros in August 2011 to support us to carry out tree planting in Cameroon.

The SETAC award came at a moment when CENDEP facing financial difficulties making it difficult for her to continue with the work she had been doing with local communities on analog forestry. A prerequisite for this award was the agreement by CENDEP to donate the planted trees to UNEP's Billion Tree Project (<http://www.unep.org/billiontreecampaign/index.asp>). This award came at the heels of the New England's Biolabs Foundation grant to continue

forest watershed protection activities in one of our project villages. It also came at the time that support from the Rufford Small Grants Foundation is ending. This gives us the chance to continue some field activities while negotiating an extension with our current and potential donors. It should be noted that results of our analog forestry activities take long to be noticeable.

In August, 2011 Dr. Patricia Bi, Vice President, SETAC Africa Branch, commissioned to monitor field activities participated in a tree planting event, organized to launch the work supported by SETAC. Of the 803 trees targeted to be planted during the launch only 544 were planted due to bad weather. The remaining 259 seedlings will be planted in the first week of September, marking the end of tree planting for the year as the dry season is soon to step in.

CENDEP intends to use the grant to forward the common goal of the two organizations in promoting sustainable management of the environment.

Environmental Education will be promoted through a Holyday Education Workshop and school children encouraged in establishing “baby tree nurseries” to provide tree seedlings for reforestation. Proceeds from these nurseries shall be used in acquiring basic school needs while a culture of tree planting will be instilled in the pupils/students. In some communities these nurseries shall be run by adults (especially forest management committee members and graziers who have joined the initiative after years of sensitization). The financial incentives they get from producing tree seedlings it is hope will deter them from engaging in destructive habits like grazing their cattle in areas under reforestation. Thus we are happy we shall use the small grants to keep the momentum while looking for sustainable sources of financing for our work.



**Dr. Patricia Bi explains the SETAC ward**



**Cattle farmer planting a tree during the launching**

The management and staff of CENDEP are very grateful to SETAC for this support.



## **Capacity building workshop for CSOs for effective participation in the REDD process in Cameroon**

*By Wirsiy Eric Fondzenyuy  
Knowledge Management Officer*

From July 19 to 20, 2011, the Centre for Environment and Development (CED) and Rainforest Foundation, a UK based NGO organized a workshop to build the capacity of CSOs in Cameroon to effectively participate in the ongoing REDD process in Cameroon.

Since 2005 Cameroon has been actively involved in the preparations to benefit from financial compensations previewed in REDD. A Readiness Plan Idea Note (R-PIN) has been developed and validated by the World Bank. This gives Cameroon the opportunity to benefit from US\$3.600.000 for the elaboration of Readiness Plan Proposal(R-PP) and other activities. Cameroon has already submitted a Readiness Grant Request to elaborate her R-PP, and a workshop held to launch the R-PP in June 2011. Prior to the workshop IUCN and the Cameroon government through its Ministry of Environment and Nature Protection (MINEP) had programmed a workshop for the creation of a civil society platform to assist in the elaboration of Cameroon's Readiness Plan Proposal.

The capacity building workshop was to see how CSOs could influence the REDD+ process. It was also meant to sensitize CSOs and not to validate REDD in Cameroon. The workshop was very important considering that there is a lot of argument on issues surrounding REDD+. Equally Cameroon is lagging in the sub region on issues of REDD+ and the workshop was seen as an opportunity for CSOs to learn from the mistakes of other countries that were advanced in the process. The workshop examined amongst many things why it is necessary for CSOs to participate in the process, the strategies to guarantee participation of CSOs and local communities in the process & the advantages for participation.

At the end of the workshop, the participants issued a declaration against the steps initiated by government with support of IUCN to organize CSOs in Cameroon in order to take forward the REDD+ process. Participants noted with dismay the limited participation of local NGOs/organizations in REDD+ activities in Cameroon and the seeming overriding role of INGOs like IUCN. After discussions, the following observations were made:

The idea of laying the foundation for dialogue to structure civil society organizations is laudable but the approach taken by IUCN and MINEP was inappropriate for the following reasons:

The platform of CSOs cannot be created by a simple act of MINEP (government) whereby after a proposal had been done, it defines its mandate, its constitution and its operating procedures and organization.

The list of targeted organizations was not representative of all regions of Cameroon and representatives of local communities, indigenous peoples and women were not directly targeted.

The added value of a specific platform for REDD+ was not clear. Moreover, in a recent workshop in June 2011 (Mbalmayo workshop) to launch R-PP participants had recommended that the mandate of the platform forests who represented civil society in the FLEGT process be expanded to REDD +. The participants recommended that:

The government's role was to acknowledge rather than create/structure a civil society platform .

The list of invitees for the meeting to create a REDD+ platform to assist government in the preparation of the R-PP be extended to other networks to ensure proper representation.

Notwithstanding, participants designated a representative who attended the platform meeting during which:

- A national platform called "REDD and Climate Change" was created. It will coordinate at national, regional, municipal and village level.
- It was agreed that three networks will provide national coordination for this platform.

Participants at the platform meeting recommended to the new team to develop a draft charter that will define specifically the role of the platform that should be validated during a plenary.

## Towards Honey Chain Financing in the NW Region of Cameroon

By Matilda Chibuike Walimbe  
Manager Forest House

On November 25, 2010 Forest House participated in an information and sensitization workshop to contribute in the development of a support program for bee farmers in Bui and Ndonga Mantung Divisions of the NW Region of Cameroon. The workshop brought together 29 honey value chain development stakeholders comprising honey farmers, processors, economic operators, micro financial institutions, and delegates of honey farming groups, local NGOs and government officials. During the workshop, a market place was organized and enabled participants to know each other in detail. As a result of the market place farmers established business links with processors. For some participants especially farmers from remote areas it was the first time for them to meet on the same table with almost everybody who had a say in honey

Forest House is a social enterprise and a subsidiary of CENDEP. The company was created in June 2009 and legalized in September 2009. The goal of the enterprise is to assemble, package and distribute organic food products and crafts starting with dry eru/eru seedlings and honey whose production CENDEP is promoting. It is envisaged that part of the profits from the sales of honey and eru would be reinvested in preserving the environments where these resources are produced. A concrete example will be the reforestation of degraded forests where bee farming is taking place

business. Participants were able to meet with people who had a solution to one or more problems that had been worrying them.

During this meeting a manager of a local Microfinance Institution, the Shisong Credit Union, complained that farmers were not making use of the financial services offered by his organization. This caught the attention of Forest House Manager, Mrs Matilda Walimbe, who immediately enquired about the loan procedure of the institution.

Six months after the workshop Forest House finalized arrangements with the Shisong Credit Union that led to the acquisition of a short term loan to finance the purchase of honey from over 500 farmers with whom Forest House has been working. This loan will enable Forest House to acquire honey for distribution enabling her customers to continue to have access to high quality honey from the Bamenda Highlands.

This loan will also help in solving the problem of farmers abandoning hives in the forest without harvesting them for lack of market while a processor like Forest House is unable to meet the demands of her customers due to the lack of capital to purchase honey from the farmers. At the end of 12 months when the short term loan will be reimbursed in its entirety Forest House will have bought and marketed close to 8 tons of honey from the farmers allowing them to generate circa FCFA 6,654,297 (Euro 10,159.23). Forest House is grateful

to ICCO that initiated the Value Chain Development approach in Cameroon and thanks ICCO immensely for enabling them to participate in the meeting.

In other news, on the 19<sup>th</sup> of August 2011 Cameroon's Minister of Small and Medium Size Enterprises, Social economy and Handicraft, Professor Laurent Serge Etoundi Ngoa paid a visit to Forest House when he visited Limbe. The manager Madame Matilda Walimbe took the opportunity to hand a complain on application of Cameroon Sales Tax, the TVA of 19.25%, on the marketing of honey, which is an agricultural product. She complained the TVA is charged on Forest House gross income. This, she said is very unfavourable Forest House as there are other competitors in the field who are not registered and who do not pay this tax. It is impossible to make a profit with this tax as our prices are the same as those of our competitors, she lamented.

In her complain Matilda pleaded to the Minister to help create a climate favourable for the expansion of small enterprises like Forest House allowing them to grow. At the moment Forest provides employment to the local people especially women who constitute about 80% of her workforce. Matilda pleaded on behalf of Forest House, for the minister to intercede in the review of payment of TVA tax on the marketing of farm produce. She went further to note that Forest House was already considering the option of establishing her own bee hives if that could enable them to break even. This would enable Forest House meet her customer demand nationally, regionally and equally access the international market of organic honey from Cameroon. However, such a move by Forest House would mean that the 500 and more farmers who depend on Forest House for the marketing of their honey will go without a market. The consequences would be disastrous for the bee farmers.



**Minister arrives Forest House**



**Forest House hands plea to Minister**