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Reflections on governing *Prunus africana*
in Cameroon

Overview

Reflections on governing *Prunus africana* in Cameroon

- Governance
- What we thought: assumptions & what we now know: practice
- Lessons learnt

What is governance?

“The many ways in which society - public and private actors from the state, market, customary and/or civil society - govern public issues at multiple scales, autonomously or in mutual interaction”

(Arts, van Bommel, Ros-Tonen & Verschoor 2012).

What is governance?



The ways a society organizes itself

- A playing field
- Rules of the game formal & informal
- Boundaries
- Teams
- Stewards
- Supporters
- Umpires
-winners & losers

Why is governance important?

Determines:

- Who participates
- Who benefits
- How & how much
- Who's accountable to who
- Legitimacy
- Transparency



Governance

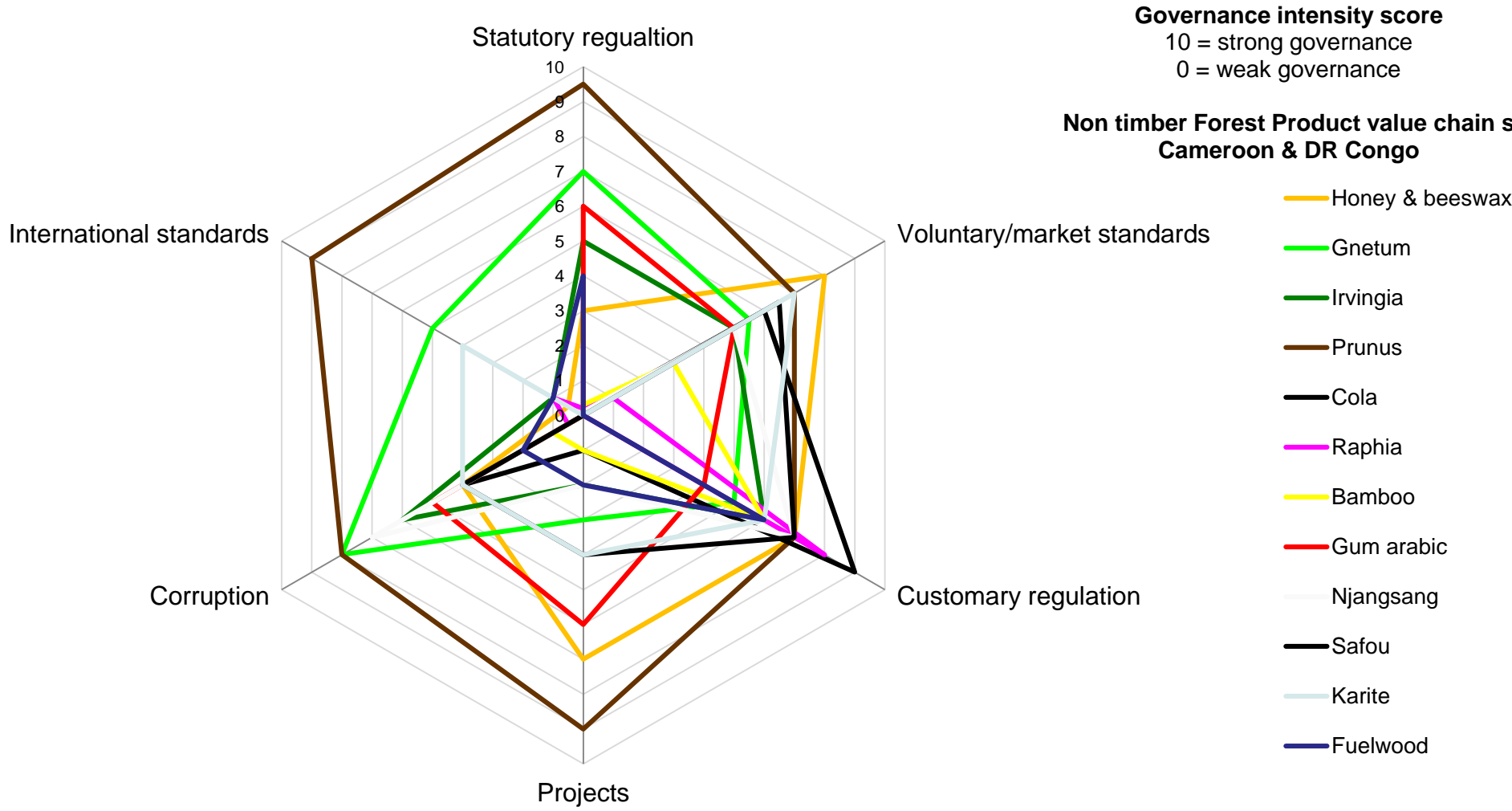
Assumed: Governed by statutory laws & CITES

Practice:

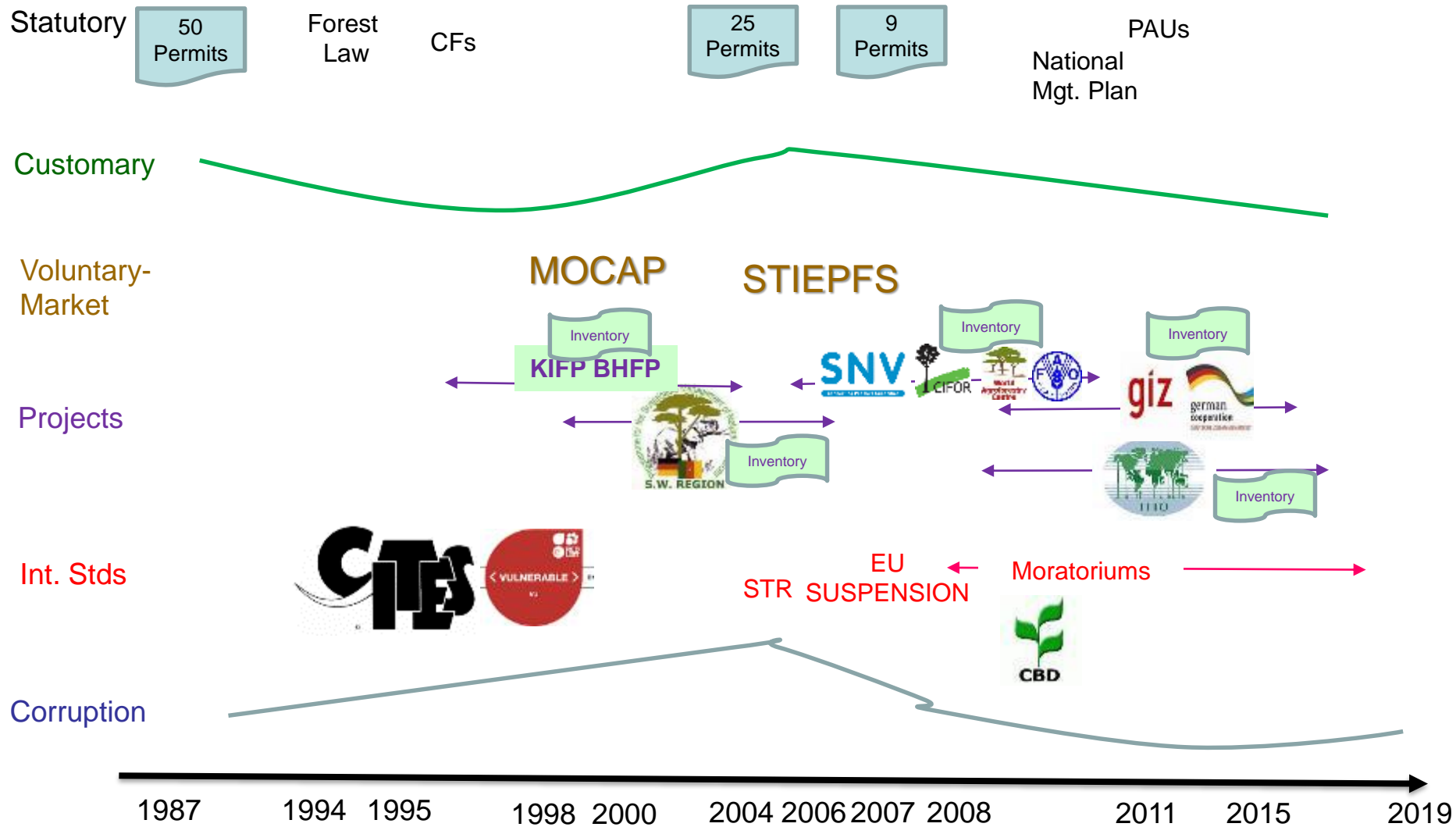
- Mix of governance arrangements
- Incoherent forest conservation, exploitation & agriculture laws
- Most harvesters and farmers poorly informed about laws
- Difficulties in monitoring, enforcement & sanctions



Multiple, overlapping governance



Governance changes over time



IUCN & Appendix II listed species

Assumption: Vulnerable, wild species

Practice:

- Outdated vulnerability assessment
- History of cultivation
 - Nurseries
 - On-farm & boundary planting
 - Plantations
 - Enriched & managed forests
- Harvesting in Protected Areas



An export product

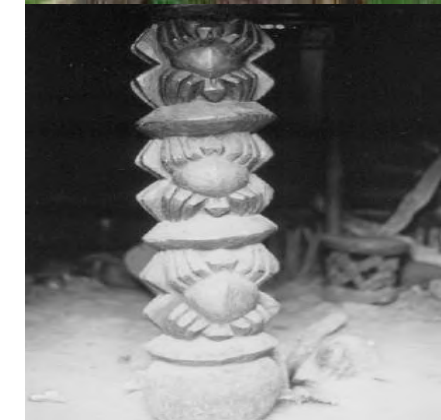
Assumption: Traded for export

Practice:

- Majority exported

But also

- Local timber trade
- Local bark use and trade
- Possible cultivation outside of Africa....



Inventoriable & traceable

Assumption: Inventories of available quantity

Practice:

- Difficulties to inventory accurately
- Costly & timely
- Difficulties for CFs to finance
- Requires different forest and farm methods
- Availability, genetic diversity & chemical composition inventories not linked
- Traceability to source limited



Benefits

Assumption: Large, major income source for harvesters

Practice:

- Occasional, small income
- Uneven distribution of benefits along value chain
- Power capture by elites
- Challenges in Community Forest governance
- PAU model favours large exporters
- Value adding for export market difficult
- Control & monitoring costs outweigh revenues



Appropriate harvest methods

Assumption: Rotational bark harvest feasible

Practice:

- Rotational 2/4 strip bark harvest prone to abuse
- Safe rotation period for different areas unproven
- Coppicing & felling for cultivated, owned trees not legal – disincentive to cultivation



Lessons learnt



- Look beyond statutory governance, recognise plural governance
- Awareness, monitoring and enforcement of regulations
- Multi-sectoral approach needed
- Distinction between wild & cultivated sources in regulations & conventions
- Governance arrangements affect access, benefits & their distribution
- Policy and regulatory systems should actively support cultivated *P. africana*
- Cultivation rates a sustainability indicator for future
- Land and tree tenure challenges for formalising cultivated trade
- CFs & PAUs costly & limited success
- High costs of regulating harvesting vs economic returns and conservation benefits
- International inventory and harvest standards needed

Thank you!



Questions?

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