

Thirteenth Dialogue on Forests, Governance and Climate Change:

Harmonizing Tenure and Resource Policies in Central and West Africa’s Changing Landscape

March 5-7, 2013 – Yaoundé Conference Center – Cameroon

Speaker Biographies

**Samuel Nguiffo** - Director, Center for Environment and Development, Cameroon

Samuel Nguiffo directs the Center for Environment and Development (CED) in Cameroon's capital, Yaoundé. A lawyer by training, Nguiffo has devoted himself to the task of stopping the liquidation of the region's forests for short-term profit. He is an elected member of the board of the Forest Stewardship Council, an international organization that brings together environmentalists and logging companies in order to promote standards for environmentally safer logging practices. He has also participated in CEOs’ Process - a World Bank initiative to bring the CEOs of logging companies, conservation organizations and representatives from developing countries together. The sole representative from Africa, Nguiffo speaks out for the rights of communities in tropical rainforest regions. Nguiffo is a member of the Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide (E-LAW), a network of environmental lawyers from 50 countries.

**Michael Richards -** *Natural Resources Economist, Forest Trends*

Michael is a natural resources economist with over 30 years research and development experience in Africa, Latin America and Asia. Currently based in the UK, he is working primarily in support of the Katoomba Group work in West and East Africa, and on the development of social impact assessment methods for multiple-benefit carbon projects. Previous experience includes 8 years as a Research Fellow with the UK Overseas Development Institute, and long-term assignments in Ghana, Honduras, Malawi, Mexico and Sri Lanka working in smallholder agriculture, forestry and rural development. He has worked extensively on policy, institutional and methodology issues around payments for ecosystem services, participatory forest management and economic incentives for sustainable forestry management (SFM). He holds a PhD from the University of Glamorgan in Wales, an MSc in Agricultural Economics from University of London, and a BA in Land Economy from University of Cambridge.

**Phil René** **Oyono** - *Natural Resource Sociologist, CIFOR Cameroon*

Phil René Oyono is a natural resource sociologist. He has extensive experience in research and policy analysis on Africa and on social theory. Oyono is a RRI Fellow as a result of his commitment to the study of forest tenure issues. He is currently leading a research program in Central Africa on the effects of REDD implementation on local democracy with the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa and the University of Illinois, US.

**Cécile Ndjebet** – *Agronomist, Cameroon Ecology*

Cécile is an Agronomist; she holds a Master’s degree in Social Forestry from the Wageningen Agricultural University in The Netherlands. She is a highly experienced Development Agent and an activist for community rights to land and forest. She mainly devotes her work on mainstreaming gender into development and advocacy. Since 2000, Cécile has been coordinating a national NGO in Cameroon, Cameroon Ecology, and is founder and president of a women’s advocacy network composed of 14 African country members, REFACOF.

**Andy White** - Coordinator, Rights and Resources Initiative

Prior to helping create and establish RRI, Andy served as Senior Director of Programs at Forest Trends and Natural Resource Management Specialist at the World Bank, as well as worked as a consultant to the International Food Policy Institute, Save the Children Federation and the Inter-American Foundation.  He has worked extensively in Haiti, Mexico and China and supervises policy research, advocacy and policy engagement Asia, Latin America and Africa.  His research and publications have focused on forest tenure and policy, forest industry and trade, as well as the role of forests, communities and institutions in climate change.  Andy has a PhD in Forest Economics, an MA in Anthropology from the University of Minnesota, and a BS in Forestry from Humboldt State University. Andy is also the President of the Rights and Resources Group, the nonprofit coordinating mechanism of RRI based in Washington, DC.

**Augusta Molnar** - Senior Director, Country & Regional Programs, Rights and Resources Initiative

Augusta coordinates the country and regional activities of the Latin America, Asia and Africa Programs of RRI. Her MA, PhD and post-graduate work in the 1970s and 1980s was focused on South Asia – initially on gender and subsequently on natural resource management and community forestry and related social assessment. Prior to joining Rights and Resources Augusta worked more than twenty years with different international development agencies, mainly with the World Bank, in Asia and Central America on issues of forestry, land tenure, gender, Indigenous Peoples and related policies. Augusta has worked in Nepal, India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Mexico, Honduras, Chile, Costa Rica, and Central and West Africa. She speaks fluent Spanish, Nepali, English, and some French.

**François Tiayon** - *Assistant Coordinator, Africa Program, Rights and Resources Initiative*

François assists RRI’s Africa Program Coordinator and the overall program in its administration, communication and events planning, focusing in particular on technical support, strategic analysis, and collaboration among Africa Partners and Collaborators. He holds a BA and MA in Sociology from the University of Yaoundé, Cameroon, where the majority of his research, including his dissertation, examined the link between community tenure insecurity, the over-exploitation of natural resources and environmental degradation in semi-arid regions of Cameroon; assessed local productive and NR management systems under the influence of market economy in forested areas of Cameroon. Prior to working as a full staff member, Francois worked as an international NGOs and RRI consultant in addition to serving as Cross-Culture and Language Programs Coordinator for Peace Corps Cameroon. He is a fluent French speaker and has resided in the following countries: Rwanda, Uganda, Chad and the Netherlands.