



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTRY AND TOURISM

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS AND FORESTRY

Division: FORESTRY MANAGEMENT

Sub-division: KAVANGO EAST AND KAVANGO WEST SUB-DIVISION

BACK-TO-OFFICE REPORT – NATIONAL WORKSHOPS, MEETINGS & FIELDTRIPS

DUTY STATION: RUNDU

FIELDWORK TITLE: RESOURCE INVENTORY/TREE COUNT IN A SMALL-SCALE FARMING UNIT OF THE KAVANGO WEST REGION: **SITETU NO 1861**

DATE/PERIOD OF FIELDTRIP: 11 May to 16 May 2025

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: 1. Fillemon Iita-Forester, Rundu
2. Joseph Ifile-Forest Ranger-Rundu
3. Kandjimi Rudolf- Labourer



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1. Introduction

Kavango East and Kavango West are among the few regions in Namibia endowed with rich, natural forest resources dominated by three highly valued commercial indigenous timber tree species: *Guibourtia coleosperma* (Rosewood), *Pterocarpus angolensis* (Kiaat), and *Baikiaea plurijuga* (Rhodesian Teak). Due to the exceptional quality of these species' timber, demand has steadily risen in both local and international markets. Following the Ministry of Environment, Forestry, and Tourism's lifting of the moratorium on timber harvesting, small-scale farmers were invited to submit applications for authorized harvesting. Since September 2024, applications have been steadily received, and the Ministry is currently deploying resources to conduct resource inventories as part of the permit evaluation process.

This report outlines the resource inventory conducted at Sitetu Farm No. 1861, owned by **Mr. Petrus Epafroditus Unengu** in the Kavango West Region. The fieldwork was carried out by three staff members from the Rundu Forestry Office from **11 to 16 May 2025**.

2. Aim of the Operation

The primary aim of this operation was to conduct a comprehensive resource inventory/tree count of the commercial timber species *Pterocarpus angolensis* (Kiaat) and *Guibourtia coleosperma* (Rosewood), for which the farm owner applied for a harvesting permit.

3. Strategies Used

To ensure credible, accurate, and scientifically valid results, the following methodologies were employed:

Desk Assessment: Preliminary analysis using satellite imagery and land parcel records to delineate the boundaries and plan sampling methodology.

Transect Sampling: The farm was divided into manageable blocks, using farm camps as units. Systematic line transects were laid out, and all target species within the transects were counted.

Field Data Collection: Tools used included GPS units, DBH (Diameter at Breast Height) tapes, and data sheets to record tree species and DBH for each tree.

Community Engagement: Two local workers assisted the team, improving access, safety, and fostering transparency with the farm owner and community.

4. Staff Members Involved

Mr. Iita N. Fillemon – Forester (Team Lead)

Mr. Ifile Joseph – Forest Ranger

Mr. Kandjimi Rudolf – Labourer

5. Findings

The table below presents the results of the resource inventory conducted on Sitetu Farm No. 1861 from 13 to 16 May 2025. The inventory focused on mature individuals of *Pterocarpus angolensis* and *Guibourtia coleosperma* with a DBH of 45 cm and above.

			<i>Guibourtia coleosperma</i> (Trees)
Day 1	13 May 2025	230	245
Day 2	14 May 2025	215	261
Day 3	15 May 2025	833	445
Day 4	16 May 2025	1,130	257
Total		2,408 trees	1,208 trees

All trees recorded during the operation had a Diameter at Breast Height (DBH) of 45 cm and above. These are considered mature trees and may be eligible for selective harvesting, pending approval in accordance with forestry regulations.



Figure 1: team marking trees above 45 DBH trees in Sitetu farm 1861.

6. Conclusion

The resource inventory confirmed that Sitetu Farm No. 1861 hosts a substantial population of mature *Pterocarpus angolensis* and *Guibourtia coleosperma*. These results substantiate the applicant's request for a harvesting permit, based on both species' maturity and distribution across the farm.

7. Recommendations

Permit Approval: It is recommended that Mr. Petrus E. Unengu be granted a selective timber harvesting permit, provided all legal and environmental compliance measures are observed.

Suitable harvesting numbers: Based on species abundance, the site demonstrates potential for regulated, sustainable harvesting of these valuable timber species. No evidence of prior illegal harvesting or environmental degradation was found, and the forest appears suitable for selective logging under official supervision.

NB: Therefore it is recommended that the applicant be authorized to harvest 600 *Pterocarpus Angolensis* and 400 *Guibourtia coleosperma*.

Monitoring: Regular inspection by forestry officials should be conducted during and after harvesting to ensure sustainability.

8. Challenges

- (a) Despite the lifting of the moratorium on timber harvesting by the ministry in 2023 and many farmers submitted timber harvesting applications, staff members in the region still could not start with resource assessment on farms, due to a lack of resources (transport, fuel, camping equipment, and S&T budget).
- (b) The above is suspected to be one of the contributing factors to illegal logging activities, as many carpenters can not find raw materials for furniture manufacturing; hence, they opt for illegal logging or buy illegal harvested timber.
- (c) It is therefore recommended that the region be equipped with the necessary resources to enable staff members to promptly provide services to farmers, assisting those who qualify for harvesting permits.