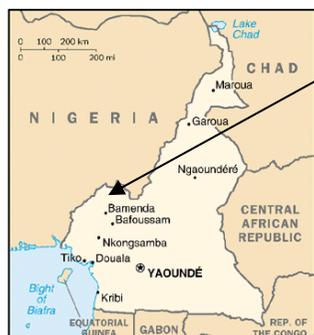


## The CVP Tree Nursery.



The CVP nursery is near Bamenda. It was started in response to requests from people around the grassland region<sup>1</sup> for trees they could plant instead of eucalyptus. Eucalyptus was introduced some 50 years ago and has done well. In some places it now characterises the landscape. It is profitable, provides timber, fuel wood, posts, poles and shelter. It has fueled much development in the region : houses built, children educated, living standards raised. However, as elsewhere in the

world people find that it lowers the water table, causes streams to dry up, and reduces fertility of the soil, that it is a tree best restricted to marginal lands.

We researched (drawing on our own experience, old and new forestry and botany records, discussion with local plants-men, plant users and professionals) and produced a list of trees that would meet local needs and were suited to the various conditions in the area. This included trees that used to occur naturally and have become scarce and, or, are not, or are rarely cultivated. Some exotic species already grown in other parts of Cameroon were recommended to us and also added. We built up a network of seed suppliers, local and national, and used our nursery to see if target species could be produced. It has been successful, and our species list has grown, as partners request or suggest, or we find sources of interesting seed.

<sup>1</sup> which includes much of the area from the Nigerian border NW of Bamenda, south to Nkongsamba, looping around the Bamenda label on the map to meet the border again)



There is clearly no single alternative to eucalyptus, but potential to diversify. To promote this the nursery now produces seedlings of species suited to different conditions, communities and needs in the region. It serves as a research site, a source of seedlings for outreach and as a demonstration for training and awareness raising. We focus on native, socio-economically useful species, to promote appreciation and sustainable use of these.



Many native species are tricky to germinate. We run trials, and on the basis of our observations produce simple technical briefs for germinating and nursing species for which this information has been unavailable.



Mahogany seeds (above), and seedlings (right). Njangsang - *Ricinodendron heudelotii*, Euphorbiaceae – seedlings in the foreground (far right).

The nursery is central to our tree planting programme, which works with **community groups** and **individuals**, as well as **schools**, **village and town councils** and **traditional leaders**, in the grasslands and beyond.