



In Memory of Mr Mans Vroom

Sunday the 21st of March our much esteemed colleague Mans Vroom passed away at the age of 77.

Mans was a passionate person who in his long worldwide career has worked with many different timber and forestry companies. With his enormous passion, a good sense of humour and an ever positive spirit we've known Mans to be a special person with a big heart for sustainable forestry.

His rich career was unique; for over 45 years he worked in tropical forestry as a real pioneer and held various management functions in West and Central Africa and South America.

In 1964, after a training at the "Nederlandse Houtacademie", Mans started in Suriname and French Guyana in the Bruynzeel concessions. Shortly before leaving to Zaire (DRC) as it was then called to lead a forest exploitation, he met his wife Christien. Being a tough lady, she decided to join him to Africa and thus their joint adventure started. In the Congo (2,000 kilometres up river in the inlands) they had to fend for themselves with the produce from a vegetable plot and whatever could be hunted in the forest. Together they have spent many years in Africa, among others in Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Gabon and Ghana where Mans was responsible for forest exploitations, saw mills and timber trading for various companies.

Toward the end of the nineties, Mans was working for Wijma in Ghana, but after this was no longer possible due to health issues, he joined Form International to apply his rich experience as forest management advisor.

Mans has been instrumental in the development of Reduced Impact Logging which Form had started in the concessions of Wijma in Cameroon. With "IPC Groene Ruimte" (a vocational training centre) much had already been developed for training concerning the use of chainsaws in tropical forests. Together with various trainers, Mans has developed further training modules such as for work planning, road construction, forest inventory, skidding, etc. We can safely say that these trainings have contributed to the practical implementation of sustainable forest management. During his time at Form International, Mans also worked as project director for the Tropical Forest Foundation (TFF) in Gabon.

Mans was also the co-founder of Form Ghana Ltd., a plantation company which has in the meantime grown into a company with about 1,000 employees. As one of his last assignments, shortly before retiring in 2014, Mans has played an important role in the start-up of the plantation company SFI Tanzania Ltd. in Tanzania.

Everybody in the sector knew Mans and many have been inspired by his practical advice.

It was great to be travelling with Mans and to discuss practical solutions for sustainable forest management or to visit a game park together. Especially with the Mole Game reserve in Ghana, he was deeply connected.

We will remember Mans as an adventurer that loved African nature and the African culture and as a very inspired pioneer who spotted opportunities everywhere and was not afraid to take risks. We would like to thank him for his passion and enthusiasm for sustainable forest management and as a most appreciated colleague and friend at Form International. Mans was a special person within our organisation and we will miss him enormously.

We wish his wife Christien, his family and friends much strength in coping with this loss.

Colleagues Form International
Hattem, March 2021