

# Selected Forum & Workshop Reports

Under the Project

“Advancing a Legal and Sustainable Global Timber Trade through the EU/FLEGT Action Plan”



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## Executive summary of the Action

Stakeholders in Ghana's forestry sector had the impression that Ghana would have issued FLEGT licences by now considering how fast the negotiation itself progressed. This has however not happened. Nevertheless, there are some indications that FLEGT licenses would be issued sooner than later with an assurance from the Forestry Commission of Ghana.

The participation of various stakeholder groups in the VPA process in Ghana has been quite impressive with civil society players participating right from the negotiation stage through to ratification by parliament. The involvement of civil society actors in the implementation process has been classified very critical if the licenses issued would be considered credible and accepted by all actors.

The project **“Advancing a legal and sustainable global timber trade through the EU FLEGT Action Plan”** which was executed in five Countries including Ghana, sought to address some of these concerns by bringing on board some more underrepresented stakeholders especially communities, in the discussions through capacity building, and researching into some key areas as we contribute to increase supplies of legal, and ultimately sustainable timber and wood products destined for the EU.

Activities were mainly focused on communities, NGOs and other stakeholders whose activities were affected by forest management and exploitation, and implementation of the FLEGT/VPA in Ghana. A critical examination on how corruption in the forest sector can be combated was embarked on through the Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition (GACC) to provide checks- and-balances to ensure sustain-



able timber trade practices.

The project strategy was to strengthen already existing processes rather than create new and parallel structures where they already existed. This came to fruition with the engagement of National Forestry Forum – Ghana to facilitate community, district, regional and national stakeholder discussions on FLEGT/VPA and illegal logging.

Considering the major role played by communities in the fight against illegal forest activities which subsequently would increase supplies of legal and sustainable timber and wood products destined for the EU, a pilot community monitoring exercise was conducted in Numia and Asenanyo forest reserves. This involved building the capacity of 17 communities that were 5m radius away from



the two reserves to serve as watchdogs over the forest. The training engaged about 200 people including community forest committee (CFC) members and some forest officials to promote stakeholder dialogue on illegal logging and VPA implementation through awareness creation and to facilitate stakeholder commitment to implementation of VPA in Ghana.

# Chapter 1. Overview of the forestry sector

Unsustainable timber exploitation, unauthorized agricultural activities in forest reserves, poaching - unauthorized hunting and sale of wild animals, destruction of natural habitats, bush burning, weak forest governance are various causes of deforestation and forest degradation in Ghana.

Though rigorous structures and processes have been put in place to govern the forest, these processes are not being followed. There have been instances of successful renewal of concession permits by timber contractors without the fulfillment or observation of obligations. This negligence has contributed immensely to the about 80% rate of purchasing illegal wood on the domestic market. Nonetheless, efforts

but difficult areas including the domestic market and industry regulation.

## 1.0 Concerns on VPA

- \* Competitive allocation of resources for the Forestry Commission is needed
- \* Representatives from governments and other stakeholders in committees should feed information back to all stakeholders
- \* Need to strengthen the input and advocacy around the table
- \* Need for frequent meetings to address corrupt practices around the forest sector
- \* The FLEGT process is a good opportunity, companies and civil societies are interested but will it cause any change or preserve the status quo?
- \* Increase efforts to ensure that permits are reviewed before signing new agreements
- \* Chiefs are part of the problem, as the chiefs solely take certain royalties which should belong to the community as a whole.



**Oboyoe Forest Reserve**

are being made both internationally and locally to reduce the menace of illegal logging and corruption associated with timber trade.

Ghana's Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) with the European Union (EU) is to eliminate the export of illegally logged timber from Ghana to the EU. The VPA is not only good for the global goods of the forest but is a system that will contribute to the enforcement of the existing forest laws of Ghana and the transformation of other important

## 1.1 Fighting Corruption in the forestry sector

The problems of illegal timber trade which orients from illegal logging and corruption has been persistent in Ghana due to non-enforcement and non-compliance with forest legislations. In providing checks- and-balances to ensure sustainable timber trade practices, the anti-corruption organization, Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition (GACC) was recognised as a very critical stakeholder to help combat corruption faced in the forestry and environmental sector as a whole.



As advocates against forest illegalities and corruption, civil society organisations have learnt that if the EU FLEGT/VPA process is adhered to will, it will promote equitable solutions to the illegal logging problems, Promote trade in legal timber between the EU and timber exporting countries and will provide support for private sector initiatives to encourage good practice in the forest sector.



**Illegal timber at the Atiwa Forest Reserve**

For the forest sector, thus the country to progress, Ghana must pay serious attention to illegal timber trade. Conservation is an integral part of development and therefore the two (conservation and development), should be housed under one umbrella.

## 1.2 Effects of Corruption on the Forestry Sector

Corruption is intentional, involves an improper or non-compliant action and is aimed at deriving a benefit for oneself or others close to them. "Corruption occurs in both public and private sectors" and defined as "***the abuse of public office for private gain***" - World Bank, 1997.

## 1.3 Types of corruption

- ⇒ **Grand corruption;** typically takes place at the top levels of the public sphere and the senior management levels of business, where policies and rules are formulated and executive decisions are made.
- ⇒ **Political corruption;** is another common term that may be used to refer to grand corruption more generally or specifically to the negative influence of money in political campaigns and political parties.
- ⇒ **Petty corruption;** is also considered as small-scale or administrative corruption. It's the everyday corruption that takes place at the implementation end of politics, where public officials meet the public.
- ⇒ **Non-collusive;** refers to the situation where an official demands a bribe for offering a legitimate service which should have been granted anyway whiles Collusive is demanding bribe to allow illegal action.

Corruption helps business to grow faster, but this starts competitive bribery. The Government loses billions of USD every year due to corruption.



**legal timber**

The diagram below, illustrates the levels of corruption in the forestry sector.

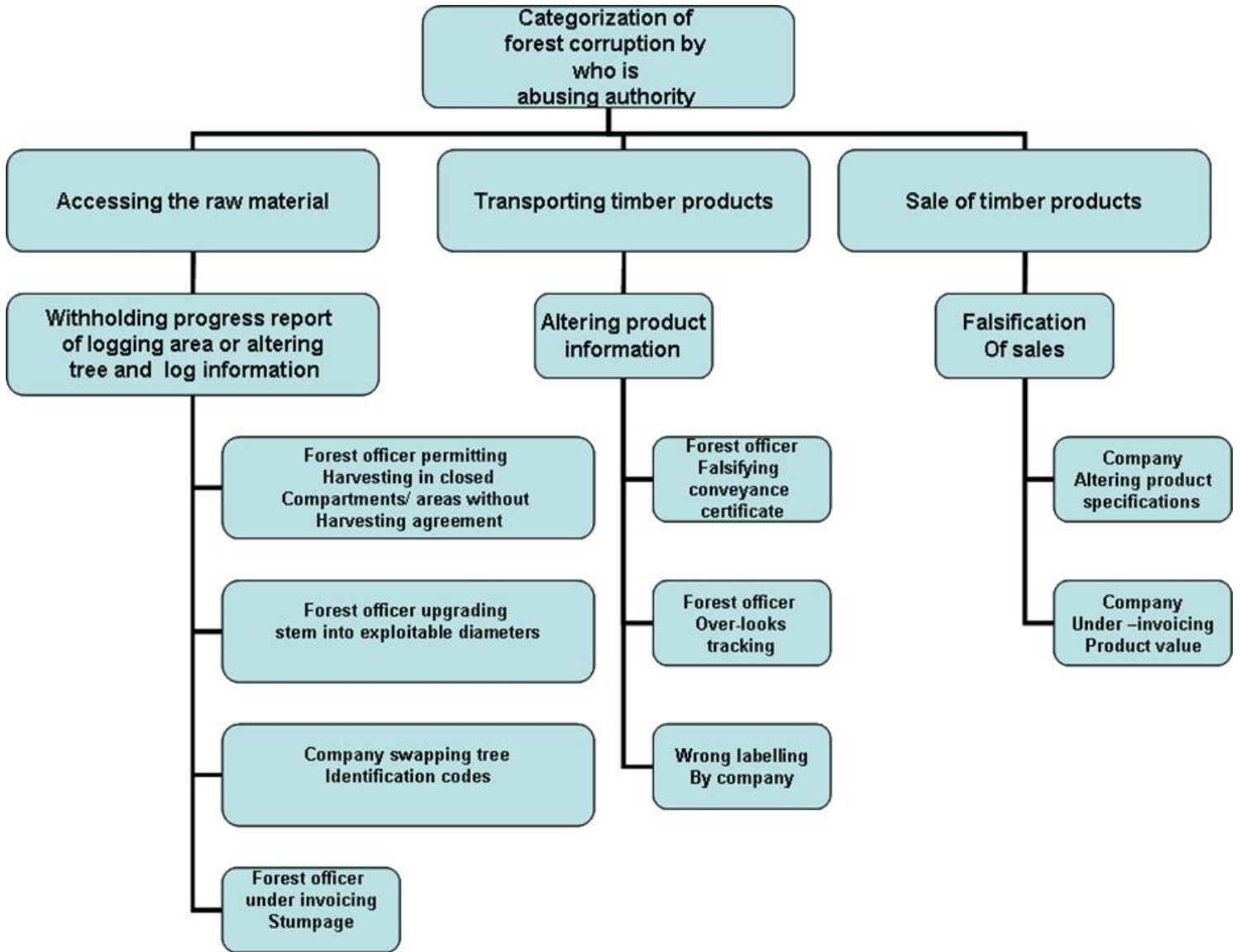


Figure 1; Levels of corruption in the forestry sector

The following diagrams will better present the impact of corruption and its associated forest degradation.

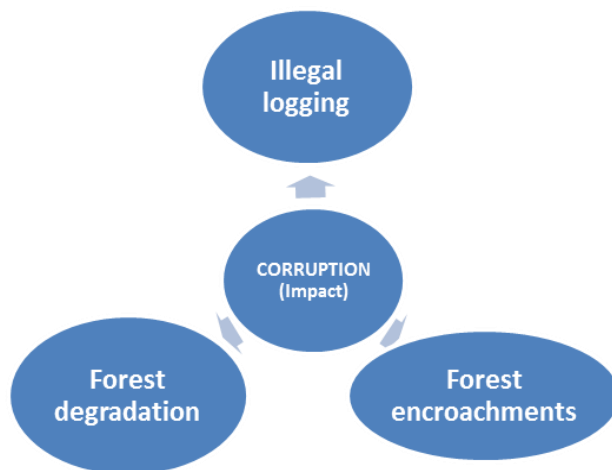


Figure 2; Impacts of corruption

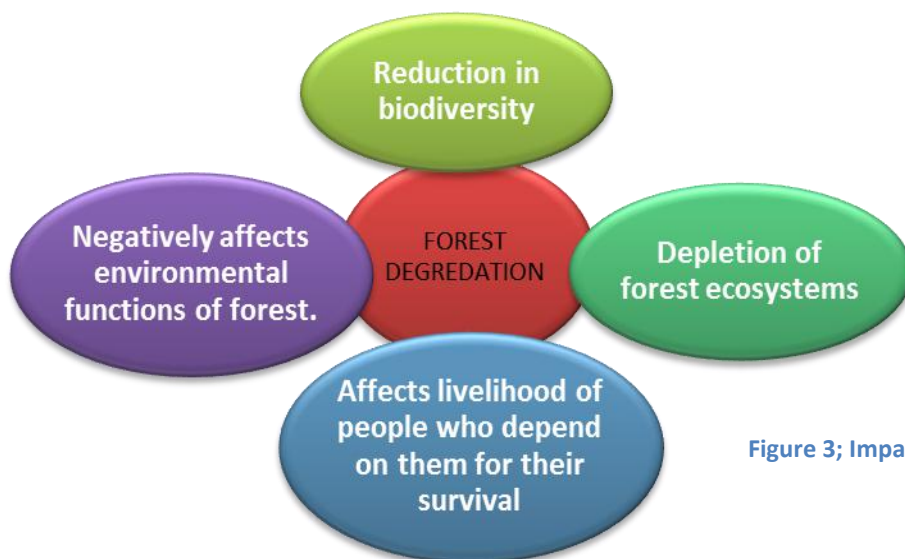


Figure 3; Impacts of forest degradation

#### 1.4 Concerns/Discussions;

- ◆ Is not only public officials who are responsible for corruption
- ◆ Information is power, information needs to be made available
- ◆ Need to have discussion as stakeholders to examine and find other strategies to address issues of corruption
- ◆ Once the Government is committed, there is hope
- ◆ Communities end up not benefitting as government officials take most of the benefits (e.g. REDD +), where is the revenue for communities and others?
- ◆ Government need to be pressurized, need to see roles beyond the class room workshops
- ◆ Need to let politicians know that we elected them and thus must plead our course; by pressuring them on a daily basis
- ◆ REDD and other processes are for our interests
- ◆ Need to organize a workshop for parliamentarians

#### 1.5 Recommendations

- The need for (re) introduction of competitive bidding in the awards of contract
- Streamline Timber Resource Management Act (TRMA) and The Constitution in the granting of permit
- Ensure effective implementation of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA)
- Enhance the capacity of communities in the monitoring of timber operations at the community level
- Civil societies should be given the space to monitor the VPA implementations – need for Government to fast-track EITI Reporting to the Forestry Sector
- The Timber Legality Assurance System (TLAS) should ensure community and CSOs participation
- There should be heavy punishment for law breakers - Officials, Companies, etc,
- Increase in information sharing or flow
- Need to enforce the laws and regulations governing the forest industry
- Greater participation of all relevant stakeholders in consolidating the forest laws and policies in Ghana



## Chapter 2 EU Timber Regulation; How Can a Law Help to Fight Corruption?

Demonstration of Demand and Supply; link between legislation, corruption and the opportunity created for corruption by the major driving factors of the market.

### Corruption and markets

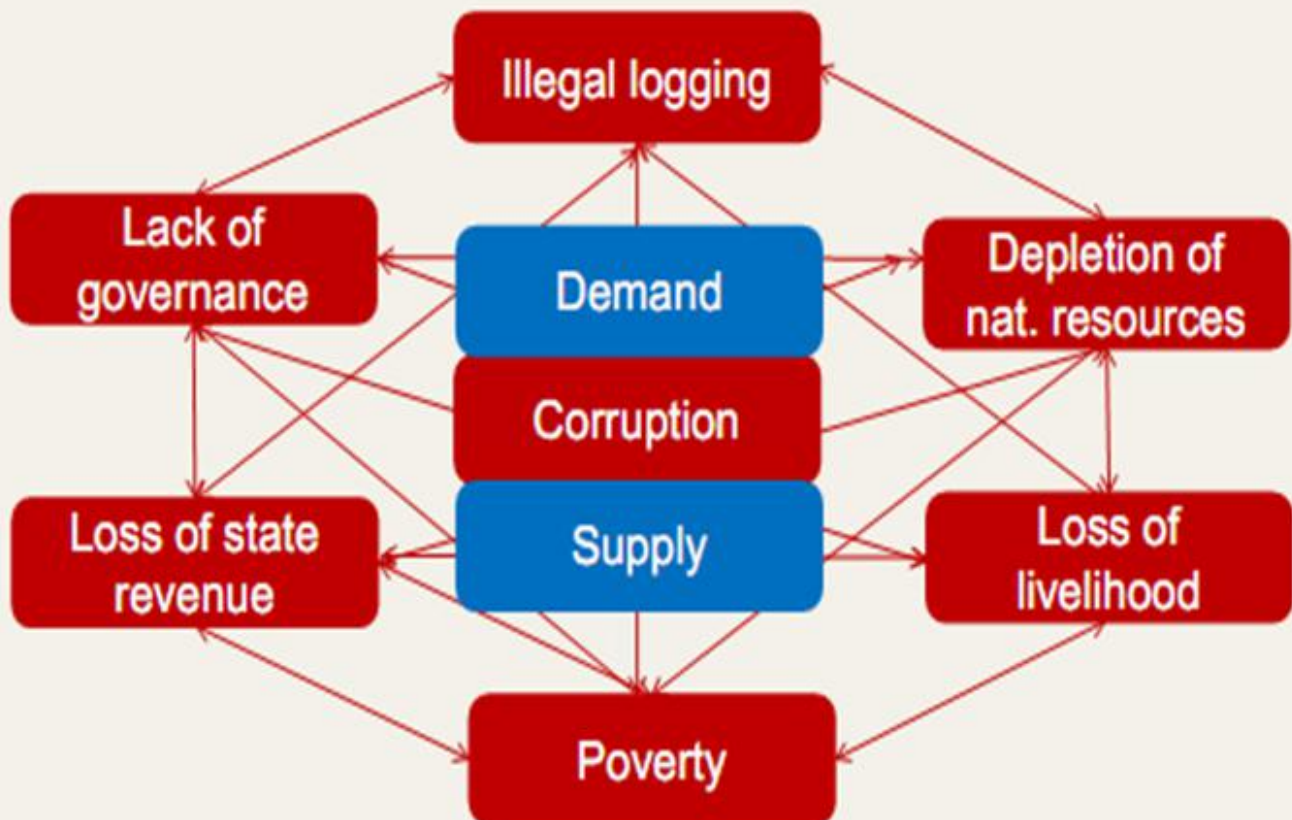


Figure 4; Link between corruption and legislation

Tackling illegal logging is crucial to preventing overall forest loss as between 15 to 30 % of all timber traded globally is estimated to come from illegal sources. The situation is more acute in forest countries, as 50-90 per cent of our (forested countries) timber exports are estimated to be illegal.

Perhaps the situation is so because, in consumer countries, there are limits to how much more can be achieved solely by procurement policies and voluntary private-

sector action driven by NGOs. Thus if consumer countries are to reduce their role further, it will be crucial that well-designed import legislation is enacted and properly implemented.

Proper implementation and enforcement of the EU timber regulations will go a long way to soften the problem of illegal logging and its associated menace if not curbed completely.

## 2.1 Basic provisions in EU timber regulations

- ⇒ Prohibition for operators to place illegal timber products on the EU market (first placers)
- ⇒ Requirement for due diligence for operators, including use of meticulous systems and risk assessment measures
- ⇒ One up one down traceability for traders.

## 2.2 How FLEGT works

- ⇒ FLEGT licensed timber from Ghana will be automatically considered as legal under the EUTR.
- ⇒ The FLEGT license will be checked by EU customs (shipment based – different to EUTR, which is system based)
- ⇒ Until a FLEGT license has been issued, all timber products coming from Ghana will fall under the EU Timber Regulation.
- ⇒ Defaulters of the law would be sanctioned (seizure and or confiscations of timber and jail sentence)



Log measurement in the Asenanyo Forest Reserve

**NOTE: The EUTR is NOT an end to all timber trade problems since there exits some loopholes.**

## 2.3 Loopholes of the EUTR

- ◇ **Coverage:** Only few product categories are binding, all other wooden products have to be negotiated bilaterally
- ◇ **Export:** Covers EU market but not the domestic market
- ◇ **Circumvention:** Wood exported from a VPA country to a third country and then imported to the EU remains unaffected
- ◇ **Whitewashing:** Imports from third countries not affected
- ◇ The VPAs focus is on **LEGALITY** not **SUSTAINABILITY**

**NOTE: The EUTR has some benefits or strength as well which can be enjoyed nationally should the regulations be implemented and enforced to the core.**

## 2.4 Benefits of the EUTR

- ◇ **Improved access to EU markets (green lane under EU Timber regulation)**
- ◇ **Priority for EU Development Assistance for FLEGT related measures**
- ◇ **Funding framework for tracking and verification schemes**
- ◇ **Boost for certification**

# Chapter 3 Community Forestry Forums

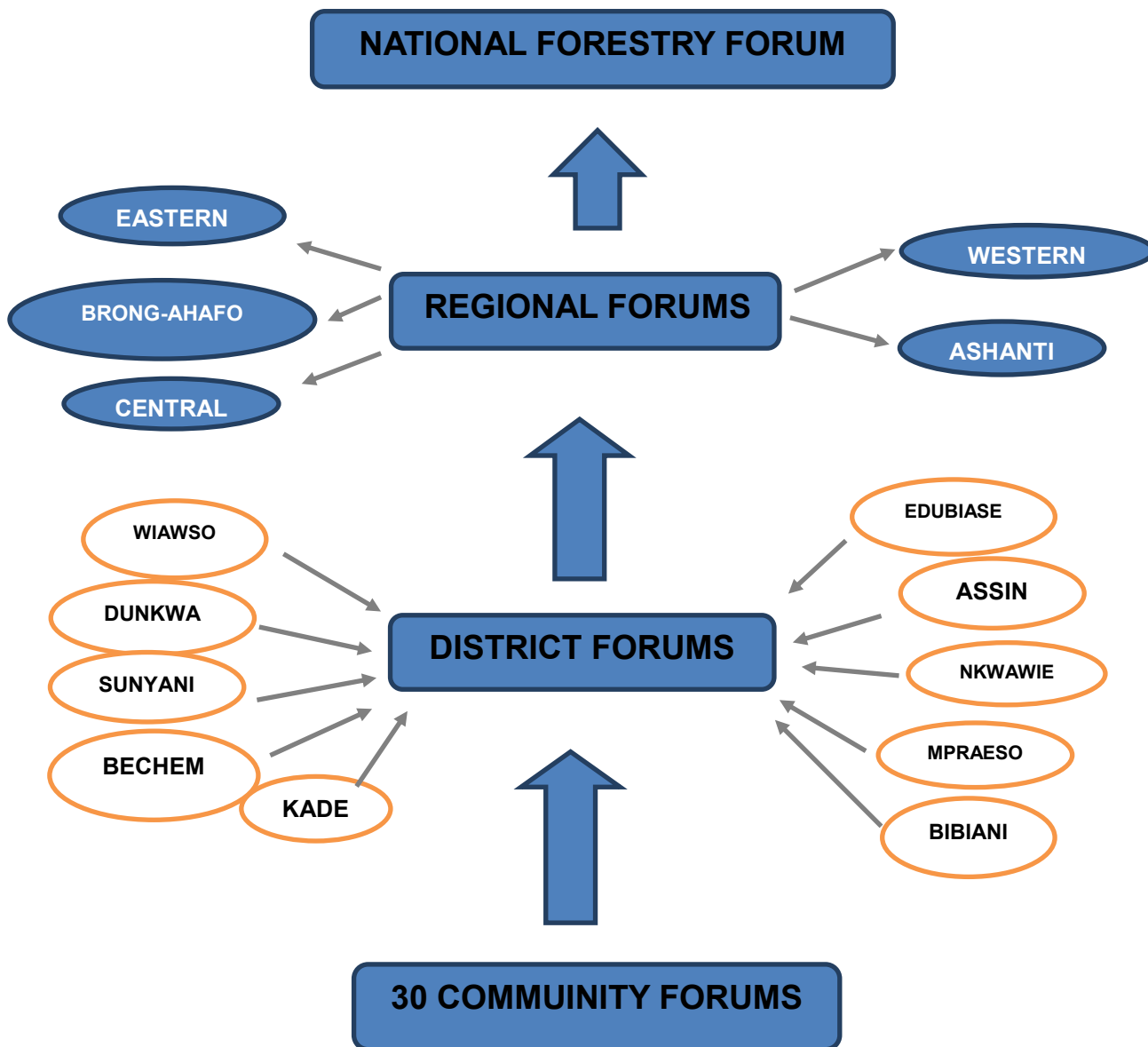


Both Ghana's 1994 and 2012 forest and wildlife policies recognize the role of forest fringe communities in forest management. Decisions concerning forest have in the past been taken without involving forest fringe communities.

This led to apathy on the part of forest dwellers to contribute to forest management and in most cases neglect forest authorities. The onset of VPA/FLEGT processes which came about as a result of rampant and uncontrollable illegal logging is however bringing some change. Forest forums have been used as one of the main tools to reach out to forest fringe communities to contribute to forest management.

A hierarchical approach to these forums was adopted. There were a number of community engagements which culminated into district meetings, regional and finally a National Forestry Forum.

Figure 5 . Ascending hierarchical approach to the forestry forums





About 1,814 participants in 30 communities were educated on the VPA. To reach a wider audience, community meetings were favourably located within the communities of interest. These selected communities were usually central points, serving as capital for many households spread around and sometimes within the particular forest reserve of interest. The aim was to get massive participation.

**Table 1. List of communities visited**

ASHANTI	EASTERN	WESTERN	CENTRAL	BRONG-AHAFO
Subriso	Akronfosu	Kwekuboah, Bedii	Pewodie	Asuakwa Nsuatre
Betinko	Gyaekasa	Ankwaso	Tegemuoso	Atronie
Wioso	Miaso	Afulkrom	Ayaase	Derma
Whibaa	Akokowaso	Aboabo Betenase	Bassafi Ningo	Yamfo
Fumeso ket-ewaa Asirifekrom	Akadoaso Okumaning		Amoakrom Nyankumasi	Borma

Discussions centred on the importance of forests to our livelihoods, introduction of the FLEGT and VPA process, illegal harvesting of timber and its effects on especially communities. Fringe communities got to know their rights and responsibilities in ensuring the effectiveness of FLEGT implementation.



### 3.1 LESSONS LEARNT AT COMMUNITY LEVEL MEETINGS

**Poor attitude of communities towards forest management;** It was realized that communities were indifferent towards forest management due

to believe that the forests belong to government and it has absolute control over the resource. Ignorant community members made verbal appeals to TUC holders instead of signing SRAs which gave room for disappointments. Reasons being that communities do not have much knowledge and access to the Forest laws, they have no copies of permits and yields available to contractors working in reserves close to them and have no training on log markings to be able to identify illegal logs. **Wide Communication gap between Communities and Forestry officials** made it difficult for community members to approach officials or know the point of complaint in cases of illegal logging. This problem led to the involvement of communities in the illegal logging business as there was nobody to report to in case of any illegality.



**Participants contributing to discussion at a community forum at Betinko in the Ashanti region**





**Doreen Asuman-Yeboah (Right) Facilitating a community training on VPA at Betinko**



### **3.2 Notable issues raised at community meetings**

- ⇒ Alleged political interference in the enforcement of laws being the main driver for illegal logging in the country
- ⇒ Failure of timber contractors to pay SRAs to communities
- ⇒ Forestry Commission should halt illegal farming rights from on-set rather than waiting to destroy matured crops
- ⇒ Request for degraded forest lands for agro-forestry as a form of livelihood to divert community attention from illegal logging
- ⇒ Farmers encourage illegal logging activities due to benefits they obtain from operators. They alleged that timber contractors cause huge damages to their crops compared to chainsaw operators
- ⇒ Persons who report illegal activities are not motivated



**Community meeting at Kansakrom**



**Patience Olesu-Adjei (NFFG) facilitating a community meeting at Akota**

## Chapter 4 District Level Meeting

With an average turn-out of fifty (50) participants; ten district forums were organized for 465 members as a follow-up to the community sensitization meetings. This was aimed at bringing participants from selected communities (including those not visited during community sensitization) together with district level officials to dialogue and discuss the way-forward for VPA implementation in the various districts. Participants were drawn from the communities that benefited from the community level sensitization as well as others who did not. Environment and Agricultural sub-committees of all administrative districts within the forest district, Assembly members, District Assemblies, NADMO officials, National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), Police Personnel, Fire Service officials, Forestry Officials, the Media, Plantation developers and NGOs were also present.



*Participants contributing at a District Forum*

**Table 2 List of Districts Visited**

ASHANTI	EASTERN	WESTERN	CENTRAL	BRONG-AHAFO
Edubiase	Mpraeso	Wiawso	Dunkwa	Sunyani
Nkawie	Kade	Bibiani	Assin Fosu	Bechem

### *4.1 Issues raised from open forum discussions at District level*

- The need for the redefinition of the ECOWAS protocols vis a vis our national laws and thereby enforcing our laws to help mitigate the impact of uncontrolled cattle grazing in our forests
- The possibility of government regulating the importation and sale of chainsaws as a check on the menace
- There is duplication of duties in the forest
- Junior FSD officials are involved in illegal activities. Communities were entreated to report such cases
- The need for FC to employ local youth
- Punishment meted out to illegal loggers not deterrent enough.
- The need for protection of informants of illegal logging activities
- Access roads to the forests when repaired will make it easier for arresting of illegal loggers who normally operate in inaccessible areas
- FSD to increase patrols
- The need for attitudinal change amongst stakeholders especially fringe communities and officials of Forestry Commission
- A call for collaboration between Forestry Commission and fringe communities to ensure their involvement in forest governance at all levels
- Participants also proposed stricter punitive action against perpetrators of illegal logging activities as the current is not deterrent enough
- High demand for wood and wood products. Therefore the need to promote alternative to wood products to reduce pressure on the forests.



## Chapter 5 Regional level meetings

Five regional forums organized brought diverse stakeholder groups together to deliberate and agree on how they could get involved with FLEGT issues in Ghana. 238 participants were selected from all forest districts in the region based on their potential role in monitoring illegal logging activities in Ghana. The meeting sorted to find out the expectations of participants, their knowledge on the state of the forest and what they suggest can be done to curb the menace. Remarkable successes achieved in their various communities and districts were announced during the regional level engagements.



Cross section of participants at a regional forum in Sunyani

### 5.1 Participants Expectations

- ◆ That an act will be enacted to allow farmers to have access to wood on their farms for domestic uses such as roofing of their houses
- ◆ Standard management measures would be reached to protect the forest
- ◆ Some fire volunteers hope that authorities would make funds and logistics available to them in fighting against fires in the forest
- ◆ Total community involvement in logging processes
- ◆ Closure to the political interference in fighting the menace

### 5.2 Issues raised on state of the forest

- ⇒ Punishment given to people who sell illegal logs.
- ⇒ The need for law enforcement agencies to be readily available to promptly attend to alerts of illegal activities including those in very remote areas.
- ⇒ Measures should be employed to stop the trend in deforestation and forest degradation.
- ⇒ A stop to cattle rearing in forest reserves.
- ⇒ A stop to illegal farming and extension of admitted farms in the forest reserves
- ⇒ Healthy portions of the forest should be demarcated for reforestation projects
- ⇒ There should be more collaboration between the communities, civil societies and Forestry commission
- ⇒ Government to set-up specific funds to aid volunteerism
- ⇒ A taskforce to be established to include community members and other security personnel for the protection of the forest
- ⇒ Forest guards should be regularly replaced to discourage corruption due to familiarity
- ⇒ The District Assembly to be totally involved in giving permits to TUC holders.



Resource person responding to questions at a regional forum in Brong-Ahafo

## 5.3 Success Stories

Initial observations made during the community, District and regional level engagements revealed that existing Community Forest Committee (CFC) groups formed as a result of previous engagements by some civil society organisations had all collapsed after project implementation. Subsequently, training and capacity building exercises held for members on the need not to work in isolation to achieve positive results in forest illegalities, encouraged communities to rekindling their existing volunteer (CFC) groups and hit the ground with their monitoring exercises. The initiative led to the establishment of new CFCs in several communities across the regions which enhanced community forest monitoring activities.

One giant step taken by some communities' as a way of reducing illegal logging was their refusal to accommodate



*NFF-G Coordinator, Doreen Asuman-Yeboah, facilitating a regional forum in Brong Ahafo*

Illegal chainsaw operators into their various communities and homes.

In relation to punishment for perpetrators of illegal forest activities, Assemblymen in some districts submitted proposals to their assemblies to increase court levy in their



*Group photograph after a regional forum in Brong Ahafo*

districts to enable offenders receive stiffer punishments.

Communication gap between community members and forest authorities was bridged as Community members confirmed their closeness to forest authorities in their districts which previously was not the case. Forest Services Division (FSD) officials also committed to openly respond to their needs whenever required.

Social Responsibility Agreements (SRAs) spells out the rights and responsibilities of Communities in forest protection. Benefit of sensitization programmes empowered communities to insist on SRA with timber contractors. Members, who hitherto had no knowledge about their rights, were able to successfully sign SRAs with timber contractors.

## 5.4 Further successes gained in specific communities and districts

Communities/Districts	Remarkable activities (steps) undertaken
Kwekututu	Opinion leaders after district forum met with a contractor as part of efforts to monitor his activities. Through this, they observed that the contractor had extended to other compartments outside his concession and the incident was duly reported to the Forestry Commission for the necessary actions.
Breku	Community members met with illegal loggers and came to a consensus to stop the act in order to protect the Picathartes (Rock fowl) birds and the forest as a whole
Betinko	After the community sensitization, they engaged TUC holders on SRA through which an amount of GHC 2000 cedis was paid to them for developmental project.
Mpasaso	Traditional authorities took full force to fight illegal activities and this put fear in illegal loggers hence a drastic reduction in illegal activities in their forest. The community also reached a consensus that annual remuneration from trees found on farmlands will be used to develop the community.
Afulkrom	Community rekindled their CFCs and effectively monitored harvesting operations.
Pewodie	Community members formed CFCs which effectively monitored illegal forest activities in the area.
Ayaase	Community rekindled their Committees and ensured efficient monitoring of forest operations.
Tano South	The district has enacted bye-laws to protect and manage the forest which was agreed to by the District Assembly and permitted barriers to be mounted to collect tolls at vantage points to discourage illegal logging
	Coupon Sawmills, a TUC holder was queried by TA as to why he (the contractor) has not reported to the traditional authority upon commencement of operations. The contractor apologized and agreed to payment of SRA to the communities.



## Chapter 6 National Forestry Forum

(About 200 participants from across the country.)

It is an undeniable fact that Ghana's implementation of FLEGT VPA can be successful only with the active involvement of all relevant stakeholders in the process – one of the aims of the National Forestry Forum; a culmination of the community, district and regional level forums.

Divergent views on the theme *“Deepening Ghana's forest dialogue, contributing to sustainable forest management”* were sort from participants from all ten regions of the forestry sector, the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources and the Ministry of Food and Agriculture.

Others include Representatives from ITTO, the European Union, Forestry Commission of Ghana, Civil society Organizations across the country. Farmers, tree growers, Timber Industry including small and large scale millers, Security Services and the Media were not left out. Representatives from SoS-Foret in Cote D'ivoire and the International Centre for Enterprise and Sustainable Development also graced the National Forestry Forum.



Participant contributing at the National Forestry Forum

cluding forests forms a central part of the EU's programme and thus the strategic objective in the forest sector is to promote sustainable and equitable forest management as a means of reducing poverty.

Central to the VPA signed in 2009 is the Legality Assurance System (LAS) which ensures compliance with national laws. The definition of 'legal' is expected to be sovereign and for the EU the requirement is that it should address social, environmental and economic principles. The pro-active participation of all stakeholders is important in the definition of legal timber and it against this definition that compliance should be checked and FLEGT license issued.

The EU under the NREG Programme has contributed 15million dollars together with other development partners (DFID, AFD, Netherlands and World Bank) to improve management and governance of natural resources. In addition the EU has provided 54.7million Euros to fund a number of interventions in wildlife, forestry and mining sectors.

### 6.1 Statement by Organisers

#### I. EU Representative



Christopher Ackon

Since the year 2000, the primary objective of the European Union (EU) Development Corporation has been to reduce poverty through sustainable development. Sustainable management of natural resources in-

## II. Nature & Development Foundation (NDF)



**Mustapha Seidu, Director NDF**

Mobilization of key stakeholders can create an enabling environment to drive sustainable natural resources utilization. The contribution of civil society and other non-state actors to the fight against the stemming illegal activities in our forest cannot be over emphasised.

To further strengthen forest governance, efforts of civil society groups in trying to stop illegal activities must be seen as complement to government agencies and not as competitors. It is only through that that forest sustainability can be promoted. Dialogue will not bring any change unless there is respect for each and every stakeholder's view to find solutions and Government commitments to implement relevant outcomes of forums.

## III. Friends of the Earth-Ghana (FoE-G)



**Eric Lartey, Project Manager**

Forest Forum concept is a tool that is most likely to promote consensus building, participation, accountability and transparency which are important prongs of good governance and must be neutral as possible to accommodate

all opinions. Joining forces with like-minded institutions in deepening dialogue on forestry issues is the way to go.

## IV. Forestry Commission (FC)



**FC Representative, Mr. Oppon Sasu (first from right on high table) giving his opening statement**

The Forestry Commission has a mandate to protect, manage and supervise the utilization of forest and wildlife resources for the benefits of all Ghanaians, now and in the future. Protection of these resources has become very difficult due to illegal activities across the country. Assistance from all stakeholders is appreciable in achieving the mandate of the commission.

In the past whenever the FC met with stakeholders it was accusations and counter accusations.

The establishment of forums has created a platform for communication between FC, civil society and other stakeholders in the forest sector.

## V. Ministry of Lands & Natural Resources

It is commendable to bring all stakeholders in the forestry sector at a converging point for discussion on critical issues on the rate of deforestation in Ghana especially illegal logging.

Though efforts have been made in the past to curb the problem of illegal logging, results yielded have not been satisfactory. This is as a result of weak law enforcement, high demand for arable land and encroachment.



**Deputy Minister for Lands and Natural Resources, Ms Barbara Serwaa Asamoah presenting Keynote address,**

A rapid Response Unit and training for forest Prosecutors have been deployed by the Forestry Commission as a step to help curb these problems. Dialogue between various stakeholders and support from media is recommended to curb the rate of deforestation in Ghana.

Cabinet is yet to approve a proposal that would ensure that every government project that requires timber is acquired from only legal source. The policy when implemented will constrict the market for illegal timber. Strategies for supplying timber to the domestic market and how to encourage industry efficiency in the use of resources to curtail industrial wastage are also being considered.

## 6.2 Technical Sessions

This section deliberated on four topics; the domestic timber market reforms, the major barriers to the FLEGT license realisation, solutions to encroachment on forest lands and plantation development in Ghana. After every briefing, plenary sessions were held for questions and contributions to help solve outstanding challenges.

### Table 3 Themes Discussed

#### Session 1: The domestic timber market reforms

##### SUB-TOPICS

- State of domestic timber demand and supply
- The domestic lumber Procurement policy
- Off-reserve LI, the status and the way forward

##### RESOURCE PERSONS

- Mr. Kwabena Nketiah
- Dr. Ben Donkor (TIDD)
- Mr. Afreh-Boakye (DOLTA)

#### Session 2: Major barrier (s) to FLEGT License Realization

- Conversion of leases / TRFs

- Dr. K.A Adams (GTMO)
- Mr. Chris Beeko
- Mr. Elvis Kuudaar
- Mr. Alex Dadzie (GTA Rep.)

#### Session 3: Encroachment on forest lands – what are the solutions?

- Illegal farms
- Illegal lumbering – e.g. illegal exploitation of rosewood
- Illegal settlements

- Mr. Alex Boadu (FSD)
- Mr. Augustine Dabo;
- Nana Kwasi Nkrumah II;
- Mr. Alex Asare

#### Session 4: Plantation development in Ghana

Opportunities and Challenges

- Plantations Director (FSD)
- Form International;
- Nana Aboagye (Offinso North)



**Cross section of participants at the 5th National Forestry Forum at Dodowa in Accra**



### 6.2.1 Domestic timber market reforms

In the 1980's chainsaw milling was said to be very difficult to control and in 1997 a ban was placed on illegal chainsaw milling. High percentage of timber to the domestic market was obtained from illegal chainsaw millers and this has become difficult to control because of the strong support it receives from communities.

To reform this, experts say there must be efficient use of timber as well as adequate supply of legal timber to the domestic market before the roll out of the FLEGT License. In the interim, the status of the off reserve LI is unknown and this is believed to be an impediment to its passage and a contributor to the continual illegal logging in our forests.



It was suggested that the domestic market reforms, some of which include the wood procurement poli-

cy, use of alternative material e.g. bamboo in panelling and supporting alternative livelihood such as charcoal production, must be fast tracked to curtail the problem.

### 6.2.2 Major Barrier (s) to FLEGT license realisation

The Legality Assurance System (LAS) and Wood Tracking System are two (2) most important elements of VPA/FLGT but it is not clear whether all timber companies know and understand their role and responsibilities in these systems. Small Scale Timber Companies are inadequately informed on their roles and responsibilities in the timber trade with VPA. A proposal was made to build the capacity of timber companies and operators on proper documentation and record keeping (data storage, retrieval and processing) and on legal obligations associated with the VPA.

Other perceived challenges of the FLEGT Licence realization include; difficulty in applying for an off reserve Legislation under current circumstances, likelihood of off reserve logs not passed for a FLEGT license, The probability of TUC holders contesting to the extension of Timber resource management fees into old concessions and the consideration of SRAs under the FLEGT process. With education and discussions by all stakeholders, these challenges could be surmounted.

On log importation, efforts were being made by DOLTA to import logs from Guyana and Cameroun to improve access to lumber in the country. It was submitted that there should be a complete change in management



**GTA rep., Mr. Alex Dazie (insert) explaining the position of GTA on off-reserve legislation**

responsibility regarding off reserve LI. Panellists stressed that ownership of off reserve resources has not been taken from communities.

They said parliament's approval on the timber procurement policy is pending because certain basic questions have not been answered while consultations have also not been properly done. With regards to conversion of concessions to TUCs it was stated that ingredients for negotiations are ready and the basic problem was the payment of fees. The forest reserve Management plan is a requirement for the issuance of the FLEGT license thus the need to prepare them immediately for all reserves.

**Table 4 Questions and Clarifications on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> themes**

Questions	Responses
<p>A concern was raised about a private company SOCFIN-AF destroying the Subri Forest Reserve and growing rubber and oil-palm. In the past, SRA was paid for removal of trees. Currently benefits from this project are not known.</p>	<p>There were divergent views on the status of the Subri reserve. It was operating under an executive instrument. The Forestry Commission was asked to visit the area immediately.</p>
<p>What training /educational programme has been planned for chainsaw operators?</p>	<p>Chain saw operators' also known as artisanal millers have been mobilized and trained on VPA and given livelihood options under the TBI –EU chainsaw project.</p>
<p>Why is Rosewood still being transported despite it being banned?</p>	<p>The ban on Rosewood is still in place so its transportation is illegal</p>
<p>What is the status of the off reserve legislation and when will Saw millers give 20 % of timber to the local market?</p>	<p>The domestic supply market scheme will take care of domestic supply, citing that in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2014, 50% supply was made to the domestic market. It was also stated that the new policy will encourage selling on the local market.</p>
<p>What work should trained chainsaw operators do?</p>	<p>Earlier training programmes were mainly for the formal sector GTA/GTMO. Now, Small and medium scale operators and wood workers at the Sokoban Wood village have been grouped under FAWAG (Furniture And Wood workers Association of Ghana) which is currently covered in all training programmes.</p>
<p>How will operators without sophisticated equipment get permits to work in reserves?</p>	<p>The off reserve LI was submitted to parliament and the civil society groups requested for some extra information. Work is ongoing and the new Forest and Wildlife policy has given strategic direction to some of these off reserve issues.</p>

### 6.2.3 Encroachment on forest lands- What are the solutions?

Encroachment has been a major cause of the nation's deforestation rate, especially in areas with admitted settlements and farms. There is little to no collaboration between the Forestry Commission and the communities. This is manifested in instances where contractors enter forest reserves without any consultation with communities and destroy peoples' assets with impunity. This is partly attributed to the absence of



**Illegal Farming and Logging in the Atiwa forest**

Technical Officers and Forest Guards in certain reserves and at certain times. There is also delay in the submission of MTS (Modified Taungya Sytem) agreements to farmers thus causing mistrust and increase in illegal activities.

Other concerns are the expansion of admitted farms and settlements due to population growth and the inability of stakeholders to agree and demarcate boundaries of the original admitted farms and settlements. An example is Aboduabo in the Western region.

The influx of cattle rearing in the forest is also a major challenge in the management of forest resources due to the level of destruction caused.

### 6.2.4 Plantation Development in Ghana

Plantation development has for a long time been identified as one of the important strategies required to meet the demand for wood resources in Ghana, where the rate of forest cover loss remains high (1.7 percent per year in the 1990s [FAO, 2001]).

The Government of Ghana in the 1930s launched a plantation development programme using the taungya system, where parcels of degraded forest reserves were given to farmers to produce food crops and to help establish and maintain timber trees. The intention was to produce a mature crop of commercial timber in a relatively short time, while also addressing the shortage of farmland in communities bordering forest reserves. About 75 percent of Ghana's current total area of commercial public and private forest plantations of 35 000 ha were established using the taungya system. It was observed that due to the lack of knowledge on the status of signed benefit sharing agreement for the Modified Taungya Sytem (MTS), some farmers deliberately destroyed plantations since a successful plantation meant the discontinuation of cultivation on allocated plots.



**Plantations**

The MTS has been very helpful and useful to communities. For instance, Chiefs and community members in the Offinso District have established a number of plantations using the Modified Taungya Sytem (MTS) in reserves under the CFMP as well as National plantation programme. The FC can do more to motivate fringe communities to participate in Management of forests and prevention of illegal activities. Meanwhile, access to timely and adequate resources to maintain existing plantations and rehabilitate degraded areas remained a major challenge.



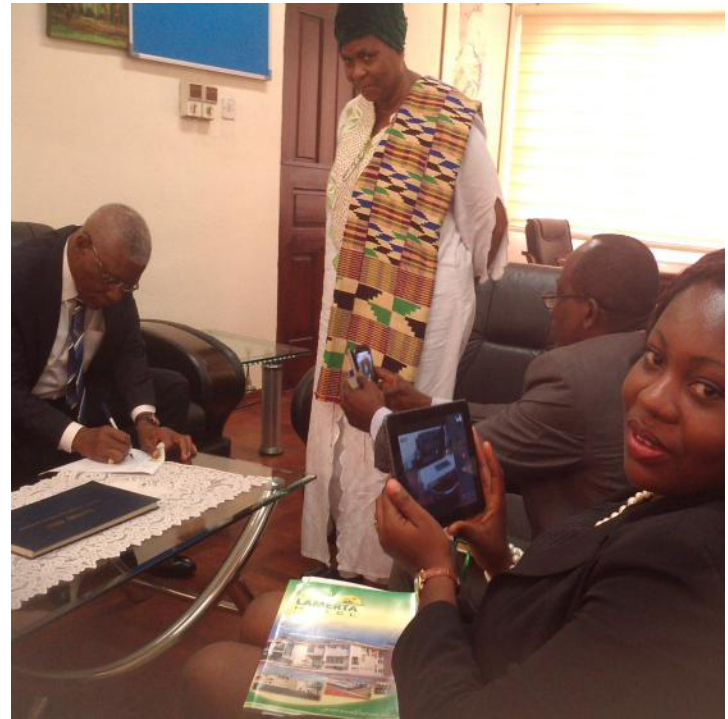
**Table 5 Questions and Clarifications on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> themes**

Questions	Responses/ Suggestions
<p>MTS Plantations within some districts have reached age 14 and yet to be attended to by authorities. What benefits will accrue to the community and whether these plantations have been abandoned?</p>	<p>In the absence of the documents, the agreement still holds. Benefits for all farmers who participated in the MTS are safe.</p>
<p>Tenure rights on off reserve lands is an issue requiring immediate attention</p>	<p>Tenure rights in Ghana are fraught with problems and for a long period this has been raised and discussed. Studies are currently underway under the REDD+ programme and Forest investment programme to address these issues on benefit sharing, tree tenure and land right.</p>
<p>Concern on the probability of the FC implementing a policy like it has been done in the Cocoa sector, where there are very good incentives for growing and managing cocoa trees?</p>	<p>Due to the many problems deliberated on, it is obvious there are a lot of policy failures and thus second look should be taken at the policies and legislation and some harmonization done to improve implementation.</p>
<p>Alarming rate of deforestation in certain regions especially in the Northern, Volta and Brong Ahafo which are being turned into deserts. No conscious efforts are being made by anyone to reforest these areas.</p>	<p>There have been successes with the MTS. The Ayigbe community in Sunyani have received huge sums of money from the thinning of their plantations. The difficulty of registering all beneficiaries as well as data storage and processing among others has contributed to the delay in the signing of the BSA.</p>
<p>Illegal logging is still prominent in most areas in the night, especially near Abofuor and Nkekansu and what have chiefs in the area done about it?</p>	<p>There should be harmony between government and traditional rulers concerning management and utilization of forest products. Illegal farmers and admitted farmers should be trained in forest operation skills so that their activities would contribute to sustainable management.</p>
	<p>There should be more education of communities on the permits, contract and all agreements that the FC engages with contractors so they could have adequate knowledge and rid any doubts such as the operations of any contractor in any forest reserve.</p>

## 6.3 Communiqué Presentation

A report of everything that was discussed at the National Forum was put together to be communicated to the appropriate authorities. Areas of concern and actions required by stakeholders especially the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources (MLNR), Forestry Commission, Parliamentary Select Committee on Forestry, the Timber Industry and all Forestry Forum participants were finalized in an eighteen point's communiqué.

The communiqué was signed by the National Forum Executives and a copy was presented to the Minister for Land and Natural Resources, Nii Osah Mills for discussion and initiate action. It was also published in the Daily Graphic Newspapers. ***A copy of the communiqué is attached as Annex A.***



Some Forum officials in the Lands Minister's office



Minister for Lands & Natural Resources, Nii Osah Mills verifying the 5th National Forestry Forum communiqué



Nii Osah Mills signing the communiqué



NFFG, NDF, FOE-G Officials in a group picture with Nii Osah Mills

## Chapter 7 Piloting Community Forest Monitoring

Reports indicate that sustainable forest management cannot be achieved without community involvement. It is believed that communities play key roles when it comes to forest illegalities and therefore can give more protection to forest resources when sensitised to understand the importance of forest to their crops and lives. Lack of capacity, low motivation and weak feedback mechanisms were identified as some of the challenges affecting community involvement in the VPA.

A strategic outcome was embraced to build the capacity of more other forest fringe communities and support communities already involved to commit to help in intensive forest monitoring.

The aim was to provide support for proactive forest dwelling communities for effective monitoring of forestry activities to contribute to national FLEGT implementation efforts and sustainable forest management. It was also to support the establishment of formalized structures at community level for the protection of forests and networking amongst various community committees.



**Community sensitization at Kansakrom in Nkawie Forest District**

The strategy resulted in a pilot Community Forest Monitoring of seventeen communities in two Forest Reserves, Numia and Asenanyo in New Edubiase and Nkawie Forest districts of the Ashanti Region through capacity building and field implementation.

### 7.1 More Communities Sensitized

The pilot community programme sensitized seventeen communities on forests ownership, the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA), Social Responsibility Agreements (SRA) and the impacts of illegal activities on the forests and environment at large. They were also educated on how to keep record of illegal activities before reporting to the Forest Services Division.



**Community sensitization at Bayerebon**

Beneficiary communities include Akota, Kansakrom and Bayerebon no. 5 in the Nkawie forest district and Bronikrom, Dotom, Siana, Aboaboso, Krobo, Aboaboi & II, Subriso, Kwameadu, Mennang, Breku and Bonkro in the New Edubiase forest district.

After successfully identifying interested members for the committee at the various communities, their capacities were built on group dynamics and Ghana Legality Assurance system to enable them function effectively in the monitoring roles assigned to them.



## 7.2 Questions and Clarifications

- ⇒ A participant wanted to know if volunteers will be given salaries but was told they would not be given. Community members asked for some form of incentives to keep the interest of volunteers intact.
- ⇒ How different will the work of the community monitoring committees (CMCs) be from the Forest Guards? The community is to support the Forest Guards in monitoring illegal activities and report cases to them first.
- ⇒ Are the FSD staffs willing to collaborate with communities? He was given an affirmative answer by the FSD technical officer who was present at the meeting. The elders of the community also gave their full approval and admonished their youth to volunteer.

The TLAS is a set of principles and criteria that need to be fulfilled to make a lumber legal. When these criteria are satisfied, the wood or wood product would be traceable to its source and this would then give a timber contractor an opportunity to get a FLEGT licensee for export or trade in lumber.

## 7.4 Seven Legality Principles

- The timber originated from approved **source** and received consent from owners
- The logger, at the time of felling, held a **valid TUC**, issued by the Minister for Lands and Natural Resources, ratified by Parliament following the prescribed competitive process
- The logger at the time of felling, held a **valid Salvaging Permit (SP)** issued by the Forestry Commission ; or
- The logger complied with forest **operation procedures and standards** prescribed by statute
- The logger/producer complied with **timber transport** standards prescribed by statute
- The producer complied with timber **processing & trade** standards prescribed by statute
- The producer complied with **fiscal obligations** prescribed by statute (including SRA)

## 7.3 Understanding the VPA and TLAS at Community level

The VPA demands that we obey all the laws in our forest sector before we can export lumber to Europe or even use domestically. The VPA has a backbone called the TLAS.



Community sensitization on VPA

## 7.5 Community activities to aid VPA implementation process

- \* Monitoring all activities in the forests and trying to establish their legality
- \* Reporting all illegal activities to the FSD office
- \* Helping community with SRA deliberations and signing
- \* Getting rid of all chainsaw operators in our community
- \* Protecting the forest from fires and helping to put off bush fires.
- \* Halting the use of fires for hunting since that is a major cause of bush fires

## 7.6 Group Dynamics for CFCs

Group means “two or more people who have come together with a common aim”. Group dynamics is where diverse behaviours and psychological processes occur within a social group.



figure 6 [www.langevin.com](http://www.langevin.com)

As human behaviours defer, so was it among Community Forest committee (CFC) members. Their diverse views sometimes made it difficult for them to come to a consensus on some important issues which affected the strength of the group.

With their knowledge on the need to appreciate and accommodate the varied conduct of each member through group dynamics, they were able to manage their meetings appropriately and execute their works promptly.

This enhanced the communication link between committee members and the Forestry Commission on reported cases of illegalities and among themselves leading to reduced incidence of illegalities in the forest range of some communities.



CFC members in Bonkro working on a problem scenario



Timber right holder repairing Aboaboso bridge after meeting with all committee members in a group.

## 7.7 CFC Group Discussions

Eliminating the problem of group dynamics is the results of effective group discussions. Throughout, community members expressed worry about issues they encounter in their course of monitoring. Some of these have to do with how to approach and prevent illegal loggers from destroying the forest as well as how to verify if contractors were also doing what is expected of them as prescribed to them by Forestry officials. In finding solution to some of these difficulties, communities were presented with various problem scenarios in the forest and were assisted to find answers to them.

**Table 6 Community Problem Scenarios and responses**

	Scenarios	Responses
<b>GROUP 1</b>	A contractor has been logging in your forest for two years without your consent. You were just sensitized on VPA and SRA. Elaborate the steps you will take to receive your SRA.	First inquire of the contractor's permit before starting the process of getting all SRA stakeholders ready for the negotiations and signing.
<b>GROUP 2</b>	As a committee member, you were working on your farm and saw a chainsaw operator cutting a tree in the forest. Elaborate the steps you will take to solve the problem	For safety sake the committee member will have to return home and inform the entire committee so that they approach the illegal logger as a group. FSD officials added that they should approach the logger tactically, without anger and keep the forestry officials informed of all steps taken to assist when the need arises.
<b>GROUP 3</b>	A truck load of logs appeared from the forest. You suspect it is illegal since SRA has not been done. Looking in the car, you saw a forest guard. What steps will you take to ascertain the legality or otherwise of the logs?	Stop the truck irrespective of the presence of the forest guard and ask for papers that indicate the logs are legal. In case the vehicle does not stop report the incident to a higher FSD authority and mention the name of officer that was involved in such activity.
<b>GROUP 4</b>	You have reported an illegal activity to the FSD office. You heard nothing about the actions taken. What will you do?	Follow up with a letter through the authority chain until you get your issue resolved. Participants were educated on the various reporting channels in the forestry sector.



	Scenarios	Responses
<b>GROUP 5</b>	A logger just came to your community preparing to enter the forest. Elaborate how you will ascertain his legitimacy.	The committee should invite the logger and inquire of his permit in a tactical manner but not with anger. The forestry officials added that acquisition of permit involves a lot such that the communities should be aware of logging activities before the logger comes to start work. Therefore if he appears without the community knowing, inquire from both the logger and FSD. As much as possible avoid fighting with loggers.
<b>GROUP 6</b>	A committee member is conniving with illegal loggers. How will you deal with the problem?	Speak with the member as a committee and further invite him to the traditional authorities. If he pays deaf ears to them then inform the FSD.
<b>GROUP 7</b>	You tried to stop a chainsaw operator but he has the backing of a renowned person in the community. What will you do?	Report the operator to the traditional authorities and FSD and also look for his operation sites and report same to the authorities. The DM of New Edubiase advised that such allegations should be well investigated before any action taken as illegal loggers use such excuses to scare community members.
<b>GROUP 8</b>	You chanced upon illegal farms in the forest. What will you do?	Monitor and catch the owners of such farms and report them to the FSD officials. Members were also admonished to avoid farming in forests and make request to the FSD offices for degraded portions for farming where necessary.
<b>GROUP 9</b>	You noticed a fire burning in your forest. What steps will you take?	Inform community authorities to gather citizens to help put the fire off. Members were advised that the most effective fire control method is prevention by not using fire for hunting and not sending fire to the forest in the dry seasons. Further education on prevention of fire was proposed by the FSD.

## Chapter 8 Follow-up visits on forest monitoring committee

A monitoring visit to various forest communities revealed the level of effectiveness among committee members in the area of information transfer, how they utilize information given to them, their challenges and the information gaps and the how far they have gone with their monitoring exercises. Generally it was realized that committee members were very enthused about their role in forest management and were giving their best despite the fact that they were not being paid.

This was evident in their working as a unit unlike individuals as



*Committee members of Bayerebon Community*

they used to do; an indication of lessons learnt from the training on group dynamics. Others communities put in place by-laws to enhance their monitoring works. A very commendable finding was the fact that committee members committed their personal monies during monitoring operations and also located all illegal logging sites and led FSD officials to them.



### 8.1 Analysis of Monitoring Results

The monitoring took the form of focus group meeting of committee members with lead respondents. Data was gathered on how beneficial the training was to participants and to know what steps CFC members have taken to minimise forest illegalities in their various communities.



*Monitoring Team at Krobo Community*

Data collected on number of people in each committee revealed a maximum of twelve members and a minimum of nine.

Dotom and Krobo communities have the highest number of CFC members, while Bonkro, Menang and Aboaboso have the lowest. Siana, Bronikrom and Kwameadu have 10 members each with Breku being the only outstanding community with 11 members.

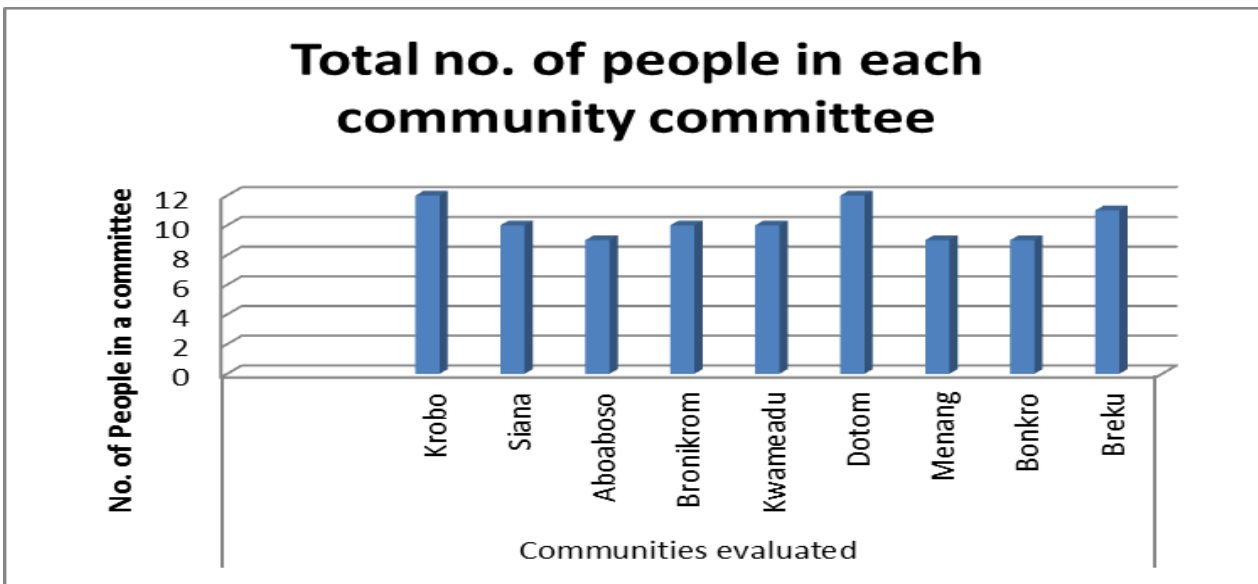
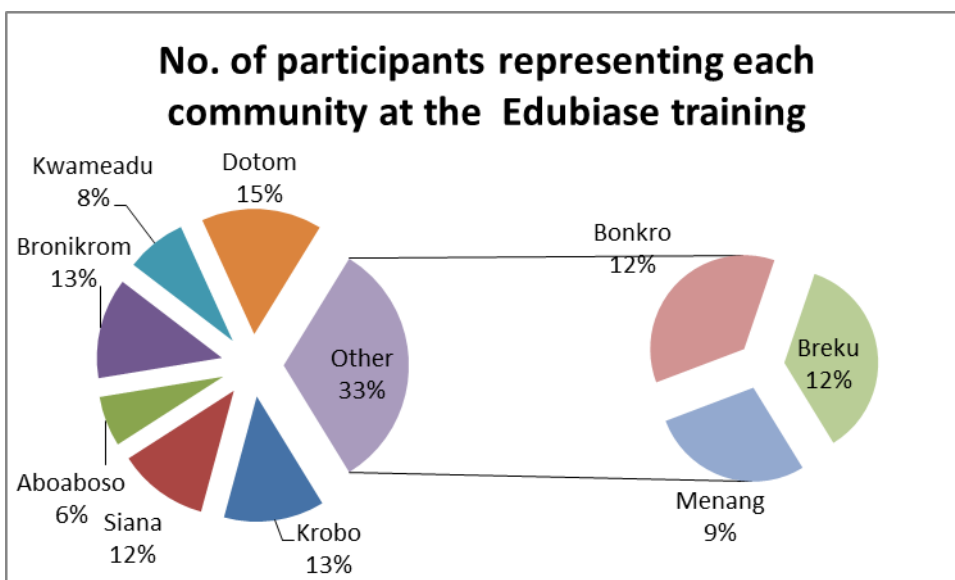
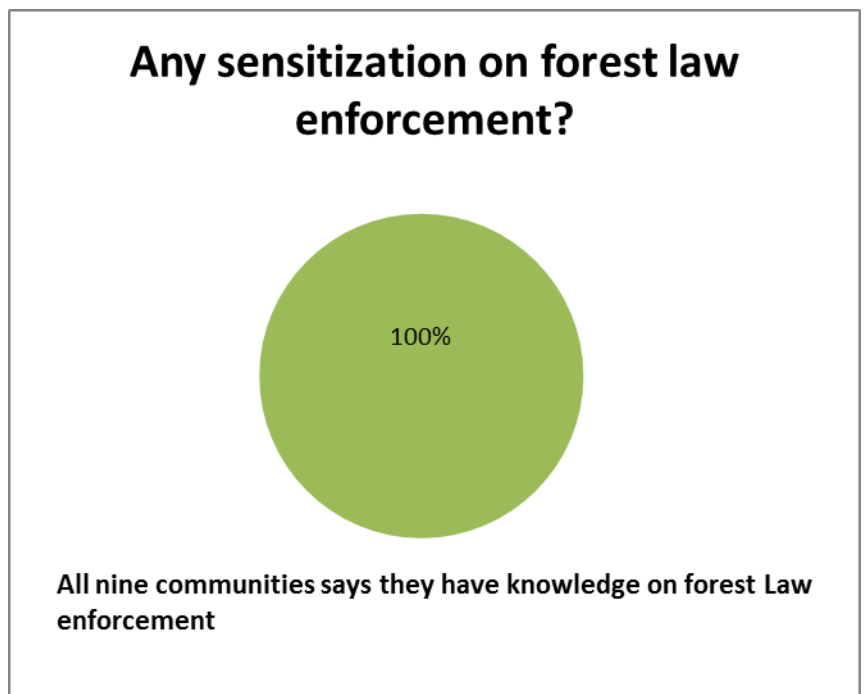


figure 7

Committee members of all nine communities visited confirmed that they had basic knowledge on Forest Law enforcement.

figure 8

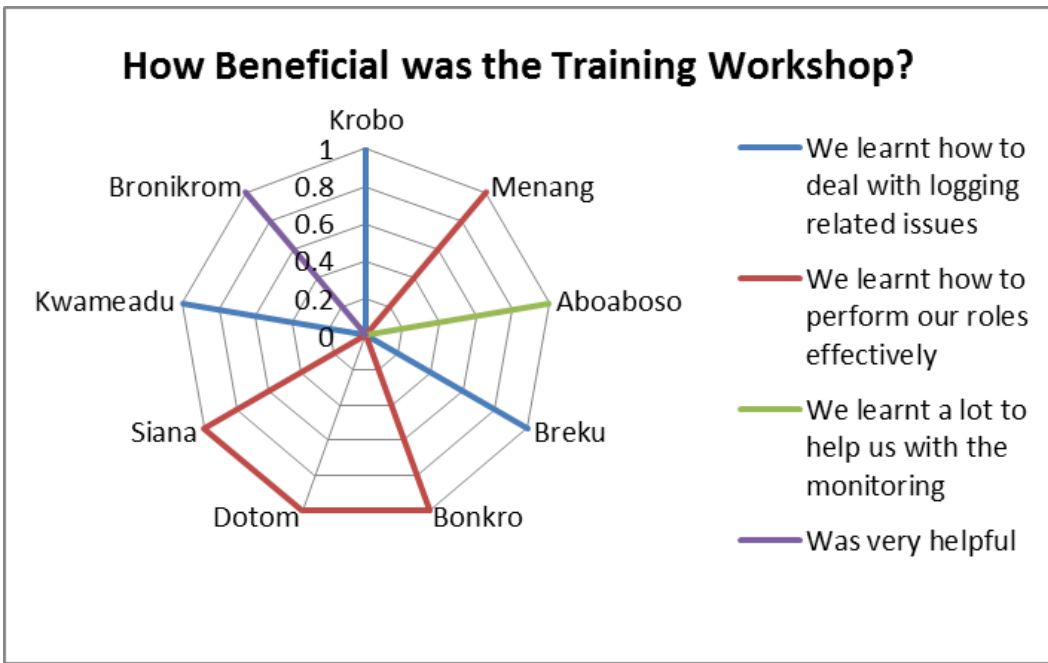


All members of Bronikrom, Dotom and Bonkro were present at the New Edubiase training on the VPA. Aboaboso and Kwameadu had the highest absentees. The rest recorded between 1 & 2 persons not participating in the training. Generally, an appreciable number of CFC members benefited from the exercise.

figure 9



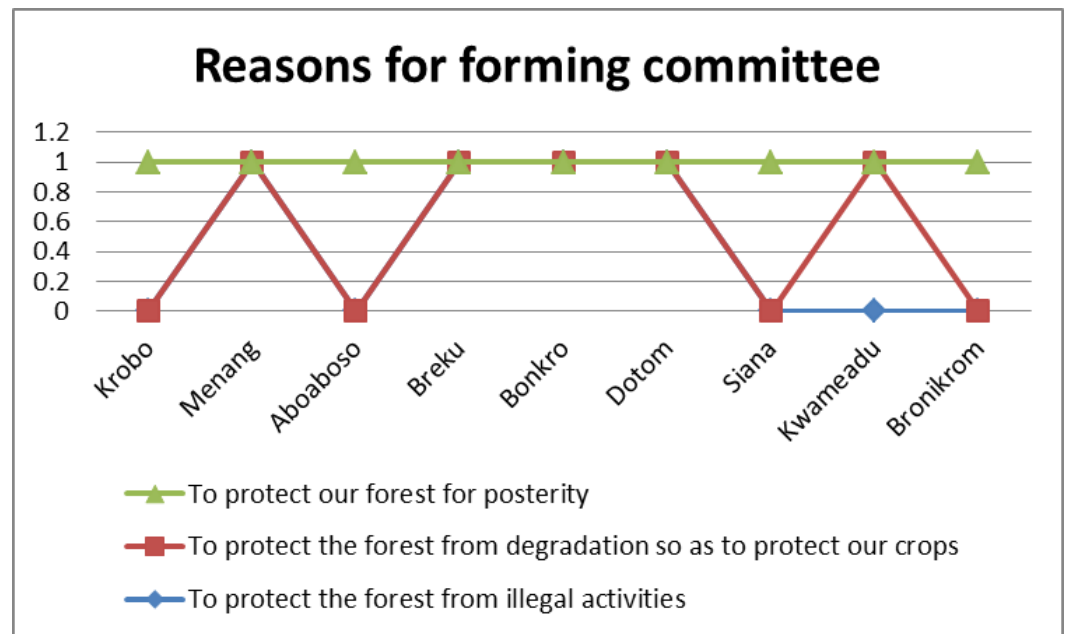
figure 10



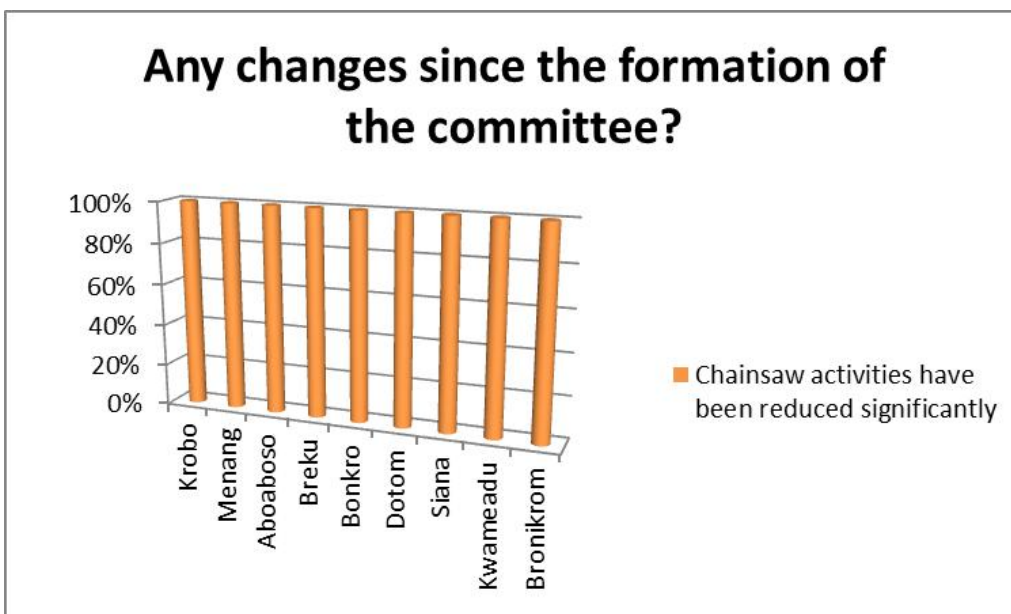
Overall, communities were optimistic about the benefits derived from the training. Per the above diagram, majority of the communities said the training helped them to perform their roles effectively. Others said they were able to deal with illegal logging issues after the sensitization programme.

Finding out their reasons for forming the CFCs, majority said it was to protect the forest for posterity and degradation so as to shield their crops. Kwameadu community had a divergent reason which was to protect the forest from illegal activities.

figure 11



### Any changes since the formation of the committee?



In accessing if there had been any changes since the formation of the committee, all nine communities monitored reported a significant reduction in chainsaw activities in their localities.

figure 12

## Table Other information gathered during the focus group

Communities	Actions taken after the workshop	What are the results and verifiable evidence	What are the capacity gaps
<b>Krobo</b>	The group has met three times and are in the process of coming out with their bye- laws. They have also given each committee member a role to play	Community members can attest to the significant reduction of chainsaw sounds heard in recent times	Dealing with illegal logging in areas closer to other communities that do not have monitoring committees, Fire fighting techniques and Alternative livelihoods
<b>Siana</b>	The group has met twice and has come out with their bye-laws but is yet to get it typed. They have selected their leaders and undertake monitoring visits once every 4 days.	They have found out that boundary lines from Edubiase to pillar 38 is bushy but the rest are neatly cleaned. They also seized 30 beams and gave them to the FSD Have recently chazed an illegal chainsaw opeartor and seized his chain, cutlass and gallon of petrol.	Community sensitization on water protection, Right farming practices and Species of economic importance to plant in cocoa farms
<b>Aboaboso</b>	The group has met once and are in the process of coming out with their bye- laws They have invited and spoken to a timber rights holder	The timber right holder has agreed to and was repairing a bridge that led to Aboaboso on the day we visited. They were going to sign SRA with the community within the same week.	Fire fighting techniques and Alternative livelihoods
<b>Bronikrom</b>	The group has met once and also had one meeting with the elders of the community and updated them on issues They seized illegal logs on the 11th June when they returned from the training and handed it over to the FSD	FSD came for the seized logs	Fire fighting techniques and Alternative livelihoods They want the entire community to be sensitized on the importance of their activities
<b>Kwameadu</b>	Have arrested illegal mortar in a truck Have selected their leaders	Illegal mortar was handed over to the FSD Community members can attest to the significant reduction of chainsaw sounds heard in recent times	Fire fighting techniques and Alternative livelihoods Dealing with illegal logging in areas closer to other communities that do not have monitoring committees,

# discussion with committee members

<b>Response of the FSD so far</b>	<b>Have you received the support of the FSD so far</b>	<b>Have you received the support of the community so far</b>	<b>What are your recommendations to improve the work</b>
Collaborative. They are happy about our work and visit us whenever they come around	Yes	Yes except some few who were logging illegally. We meet with the odikro occasionally for discussions	Wants funds to be made available to cover all the expenses they make during their activities.
Collaborative. They have met the forest guard and are collaborating with him.	Yes. They followed up whenever we make any report	Yes except some few who were logging illegally	Wants funds to be made available to cover all the expenses they make during their activities. Eg. Feeding of committee members on monitoring errands. More visits from the project team to their communities Further training workshops which should include alternative livelihood trainings.
Collaborative	Yes. They advise us on what to do We have helped them with boundary cleaning	Yes	Wants funds to be made available to cover all the expenses made. More visits from the project team to encourage them
Collaborative	Yes They are happy about our work	We have the full backing of the odikro and some of the community members but the presence of the saw mill has turned some community members against us	They need overall protective clothing and mobile phones
Collaborative	Yes. They are happy about our work and visit us whenever they come around. (The DM gave us a message to thank them for helping him arrest some illegal logs)	Yes except some few who were logging illegally	They want the whole community to be re-sensitized on the activities of the committee.



## Other information gathered during the focus group discussion

Communities	Actions taken after the workshop	What are the results and verifiable evidence	What are the capacity gaps
<b>Dotom</b>	<p>Have had 2 meetings and have also met with the assembly member of the area</p> <p>Have arrested a truck full of illegal charcoal and handed it over to FSD forest guard</p> <p>Have selected their leaders</p>	<p>Chainsaw activities have been reduced significantly</p> <p>Group members have contributed some money which is kept to be used for group expenses.</p>	<p>Fire fighting techniques and Alternative livelihoods</p>
<b>Menang</b>	<p>Have had 4 meetings</p> <p>Have arrested a 3 truck full of illegal lumber and handed it over to FSD forest guard</p> <p>Have selected their leaders</p> <p>The night after they were visited they chanced upon illegally harvested logs and reported it to the FSD district officers.</p>	<p>The seized logs were handed over to the FSD office</p> <p>Chainsaw activities have been reduced significantly</p>	<p>Further education on markings on legal logs and effective communication with loggers</p> <p>Fire fighting techniques and Alternative livelihoods</p>
<b>Bonkro</b>	<p>Have had 3 joint meetings with Breku committee members</p> <p>Have helped FSD to arrest a 3 truck full of illegal lumber</p> <p>Have sensitized traditional leaders</p>	<p>Illegal loggers in Breku who are not natives of the town were informed through a gong by the odikro to leave the town. Within that period they tried to take away their logs and but were intercepted by the FSD officials and arrested.</p>	<p>Fire fighting techniques and Alternative livelihoods</p>
<b>Breku</b>	<p>Have had 3 joint meetings with Bonkro committee members</p> <p>Have sensitized traditional leaders</p>	<p>Illegal loggers in Breku who are not natives of the town were informed through a gong by the odikro to leave the town.</p> <p>Gave information that led to the arrest of a truck full of illegal logs</p>	<p>Further education on the duties of the committee members since they believe that some of their members have not gotten the understanding</p> <p>Fire fighting techniques and Alternative livelihoods</p>

## on with committee members (Cont.)

Response of the FSD so far	Have you received the support of the FSD so far	Have you received the support of the community so far	What are your recommendations to improve the work
Collaborative, except for the corrupt forest guard	Yes	Yes except some few who were logging illegally	<p>That the FSD officials should always pick the calls that come from the committee members</p> <p>Some funds should be made available to them to help them in their expenses like transportation to check on purported illegal activities.</p>
Collaborative	Yes	Yes with very strong backing of their chief	<p>Be provided with protective gears</p> <p>That the FSD officials should always pick the calls that come from the committee members</p> <p>Some funds should be made available to them to help them in their expenses like transportation to check on purported illegal activities.</p>
Collaborative	Yes. But sometimes it is difficult to reach on phone	Yes	<p>Be provided with incentives</p> <p>Want the entire community including the committee to be re-sensitized on their role</p>
Collaborative	Yes	Yes except the illegal logger of which most are visitors.	<p>Be provided with protective gears</p> <p>To be visited at least once a month</p>



Bayerebon Community sensitization

## 8.2 Challenges Encountered by CFCs

- ⇒ It was discovered that committee members received insults, threats and had misunderstandings with some community members who were engaged in the illegal logging business including their relatives and friends.
- ⇒ Committee members had to travel long distances into the forests before locating illegal sites as operators usually cut down trees in the deep forest.
- ⇒ Illegal loggers used alternative routes in close communities that do not have monitoring committees.
- ⇒ Alleged police reproach over unauthorized arrest of logs. Committee members attributed this challenge to the absence of identification cards which also made illegal operators to question their authority.
- ⇒ Alleged unidentified committee members leaking information to illegal loggers.
- ⇒ Communities alleged that some forest guards are corrupt as they connive with illegal loggers and charcoal burners which makes their monitoring difficult.

## 8.3 Successes Chalked

- ◇ Volunteers acquired knowledge to sharpen their monitoring skills from the sensitization they were given though needs further training. This was evident from the manner in which they tackled the problem scenarios at the training workshop.
- ◇ Enthusiasm of Volunteers has increased
- ◇ Cost of operation of the FSD in New Edubiase and Nkawie forest districts was reduced since part of their monitoring work was being done by the committees
- ◇ The effectiveness of forest monitoring has also been enhanced due to the presence of volunteers around the clock unlike the usual on-and-off monitoring of the FSD.
- ◇ Volunteers are committing their personal funds in support of their monitoring activities
- ◇ Community participation has been recognised by FSD as highly essential to effective forest monitoring.
- ◇ Forestry authorities impressed and looking forward to much better results after volunteers are given protective gears



Committee member receiving protective gears



## 8.4 EU Delegation to Ghana Visit



EU Delegation to Ghana appreciating people of Kansakrom Community

As part of accomplishments attained with regards to the implementation of the FLEGT project was the visit of the European Union Delegation to Ghana, Ambassador William Hanna to one of the project communities Kansakrom which is within the Nkawie Forest District of the Ashanti Region.

His visit was to have first-hand information on the status of development of Ghana's Legality Assurance System (GhLAS) and to clarify what remains to be done to pave way for the issuance of FLEGT licenses in Ghana.



EU Delegation to Ghana presenting footballs to Kansakrom Community school

The ambassador was pleased with community involvement and applauded Community Forest Committee (CFC) members of Kansakrom for their selfless services in guarding the forests of Ghana.

Read a detailed news report on his trip here <http://www.ndfwestafrica.org/eu-ambassador-on-flegt-tour/>.

A filed report is also attached as **Annex B** to this publication.

## 8.5 Conclusions & Recommendations

The fact that communities wanted to help the FSD fight illegal activities was enough evidence to conclude that the various sensitization and involvement of other enthusiastic communities to the pilot monitoring programme was successful. For improved outcome in the fight against illegal logging to ensure Sustainable Forest Management, the following is recommended;

- ⇒ There is need to find innovative ways of providing continuous support to these communities to maintain their enthusiasm
- ⇒ Communities need intermittent training and a little recognition coupled with some incentives to enhance their effectiveness of forest monitoring. The incentives should be in a form of additional livelihood programmes for them
- ⇒ The volunteering communities must be visited periodically by the project team to enhance their sense of recognition
- ⇒ For communities to play their roles well to establish their rights for SRAs, the Forest Services Division (FSD) must make forest laws available to fringe communities and provide training on it for them.

## APPENDIX

### ANNEX A: COMMUNIQUÉ

ISSUED BY PARTICIPANTS AT THE NATIONAL FORESTRY FORUM AT FOREST HOTEL, DODOWA AND PRESENTED TO THE MINISTER OF LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCES, HON. NII OSAH MILLS

We, the participants from all sections of the forestry sector of Ghana, who gathered at the Forest Hotel Conference Hall, Dodowa for the National Forestry Forum on the theme, “Deepening Ghana’s Forestry Dialogue - Contributing to Sustainable Forest Management”, on the 7<sup>th</sup> of August 2014, recognize that government has exerted some efforts in the form of design, installation and implementation of strategies towards the building of a vibrant forestry sector. We further commend the Government of Ghana for their policy intention to involve communities and other stakeholders in the management of the country’s forest resources in the revised forest and wildlife policy. We believe this is a major step towards sustainable forest management.

However, the forestry sector in Ghana continues to be saddled with the issue of illegal logging and illegal mining (galamsey) operations in spite of the huge investments in the sector by development partners. These challenges emanating from weak forest governance continue to deplete and degrade our fragmented forests. These weaknesses been caused partly by the ineffectiveness of the Forestry Commission to enforce forest laws and the prevailing constitutional conditions that tend to direct timber rights as well as revenues away from our poor farmers and forest fringe communities in favour of private interests.

***This forum categorizes these challenges under the following themes:***

#### 1. Domestic Timber Market Reforms

- ⇒ Unavailability of legally produced lumber continues to be a challenge that needs proper redress as part of reforms in the domestic lumber market.
- ⇒ The structural complexity of the domestic market is a major contributor to the problem of legal lumber availability. This is partly because multiple and divergent interests exist in this sector and also the actual size of the market is not known.
- ⇒ The status and content of the draft off-reserve LI is still unknown by a large segment of stakeholders and this we believe sends negative signals to all stakeholders on the commitment of government to make timber resources available to small scale/artisanal millers. This weakens the drive to halt illegal logging in our off-reserve forest areas.

#### 2. FLEGT License Realizations

- ◇ The consistent failure of government to convert concession leases to Timber Utilization Contracts (TUCs). The interpretation is that government is not ready to issue FLEGT license.
- ◇ Lack of preparedness and ignorance of timber industry players on the necessary documentation procedures and legality requirements.
- ◇ The unavailability of management plans for the majority of forest reserves which is a requirement for the issuance of the FLEGT license.

## APPENDIX

### ANNEX A: COMMUNIQUÉ (CONT.)

#### 3. Encroachments on Forest Lands

- ◆ Encroachment has been a major cause of deforestation, especially in areas with admitted settlements and farms. Admitted farms and settlements are being expanded with impunity whilst the Forestry Commission struggles to deal with it due to interference by politicians at the local and national levels. This problem has occurred as a result of unresolved boundary disputes on the original admitted farms and settlements. To cite few examples are Abodua-bo and areas in the Sui River Forest reserve in the Western Region of Ghana.
- ◆ The influx of cattle ranching in our forest reserves is highlighted as a major challenge in the management of forest resources due to the destruction they cause.
- ◆ Understaffing of Range Supervisors and Forest Guards in the Forestry Commission.

#### 4. Plantation Developments in Ghana

Plantation establishment has been identified as the main strategy to restore the degraded areas across the country but saddled with the following setbacks:

- Inadequate resourcing of the plantation development fund.
- Limited access to the plantation development fund by farmers.
- Untimely allocation of funds for plantation development programmes.

- Lack of security of tenure on trees tends to reinforce government's interest in short term economic values. Farmers still destroy naturally occurring trees on their farms because of the little value they attach to such trees. Farmers lack the assurance of access to future harvests.
- Farmers are not consulted during the development of some plantation programmes.
- Conversion of forest landscapes to rubber plantations in the Western Region.

*As much as we want other stakeholders to take collective action to resolve the afore-mentioned challenges, we consider the legitimate interest of our government and responsible regulatory agencies to be a mix of varying interests of the entire Ghanaian society. This Forum therefore calls upon the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources (MLNR) and the Forestry Commission to take proactive action on the following:*

- ⇒ Make known the status and content of the off-reserve Legislative Instrument to all relevant stakeholders to get buy ins that will fairly reflect interests of relevant and affected stakeholders. The LI must favour allocation of timber to small scale/artisanal millers to meet the domestic market demand for timber.
- ⇒ Finalize, approve and start implementation of the domestic timber procurement policy.
- ⇒ Implement strategies to train and technically support local forest based enterprises to make them competitive on the domestic market.
- ⇒ Strengthen the coordination among stakeholders of the domestic market sector and ensure that all of them are well informed and trained.



## **CONTINUATION OF ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN**

- ⇒ Create avenues for the small scale enterprises in the timber sub sector to have equitable access to raw materials.
- ⇒ Resolve the issue of timber rights fee payment and thereby fast track the conversion of concession leases to TUCs.
- ⇒ Lead the revision of revision of guidelines governing the administration and implementation of SRAs to ensure that, communities become the sole beneficiaries of the SRAs and not just a hand full of local elites.
- ⇒ Commit resources to development management plans for all forest reserves.
- ⇒ Institute a long term programme to integrate admitted settlements into sustainable forest management.
- ⇒ Commit resources to facilitate the process of demarcating admitted farms and settlements.
- ⇒ Ensure that funds and resources for plantations development are given high priority and provided on timely basis.
- ⇒ As a matter of urgency, conclude and deliver all Modified Taungya System Agreements with farmers.
- ⇒ Prioritize the issue of cattle herdsmen in our forests and find lasting solution to the menace.
- ⇒ Involve local and grassroots stakeholders in the development of plantation programmes
- ⇒ Put a stop to the conversion of Subri Forest to rubber and oil palm plantations, considering the hidden values of the forest.
- ⇒ Forestry Commission staff must be effective in the delivery their supervisory duties in areas of our forests where encroachment and conversion are still occurring.
- ⇒ Based on the competing value interest in the forests, the Forum further calls for a more effective inter-sectorial coordination to ensure that forest related decisions by other state agencies (e.g. Divestiture Implementation Committee in the case of Subri FR) are sanctioned by the FC in consultation with other stakeholders.
- ⇒ Aside the national FLEGT initiative, government must promote intensive rehabilitation of degraded forest reserves in the southern belt and landscape restoration programme to halt the fast spreading desertification in the three Northern regions.

# APPENDIX

## ANNEX B

### EU AMBASSADOR TOUR FLEGT PROJECT SITES

#### Introduction

FLEGT related projects are one of the key projects in the forestry sector sponsored by the European Union to reduce illegal logging by strengthening sustainable and legal forest management, improving governance and promoting trade in legally produced timber. These processes are geared towards the issuance of a Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) license timber in Ghana.

NDF's projects, supporting the development of forest Management Plans, Developing implementation guidelines for the Public Procure Policy on Timber and Timber Products and the WWF-UK project; Advancing a legal and sustainable Global Timber trade through the EU FLEGT Action plan are all FLEGT related Projects critical in facilitating the issuance of FLEGT licenced timber. Through the WWF-UK project, capacity of forests communities have been built on forest protection and monitoring; an aspect of the FLEGT Project cherished by the European Union (EU). This is built on the assumption that sustainable forest management cannot be achieved without immense involvement of local communities.

As a result of NDF's enormous contributions towards FLEGT execution and its licenses, through the implementation of the aforementioned projects, NDF was invited as one of two NGOs to be part of a tour by the Head of the European Union Delegation to Ghana, Ambassador William Hanna of the Ashanti region. The tour began from the Nkawie district office, to the Asenanyo forest

Reserve, then Kansakrom- a forest fringe community and finally to the Logs and Lumber Limited – a timber company.

#### Objective

The purpose of the visit was to assess the status of development of Ghana's Legality Assurance System (GhLAS) and clarify what remains to be done in order to issue Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) licenses.

#### Stakeholder Representation

Ambassador William Hanna was in the company of some other members of the European Union delegation, the Minister for Lands and Natural Resources, Nii Osah Mills, Officials from the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources and Management of the Forestry Commission of Ghana. Also present were representatives of the National Forestry Forum Ghana (NFFG) and staff of the Nature and development Foundation (NDF).

#### Meeting at Nkawie District Forest office

The delegations were briefed on the status of the GhLAS and the stock survey processes by the Executive Director of the Timber Validation Division (TVD), Mr. Chris Beeko and the Director of the Resource Management Support Centre (RMSC) Mr. Edward Obiaw. Details were also given on the development of forest management plans.

It was gathered that the manual system of stock survey was tedious as it involved recording data onto a piece of paper before developing a manual stock summary for mapping by a cartographer.

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### ANNEX B

## EU AMBASSADOR TOUR FLEGT PROJECT SITES (CONT.)

This takes several weeks to complete and made cross-checking difficult. The delayed procedure many a times affected the business processes of the Timber companies. The new system on the other hand needs some few days to complete. The data is entered onto a machine on the field and sent directly into the server. Retrieving of data in the new system was said to be more reliable.

It was explained that the wood tracking system is being piloted and goes through three stages. The first check is done at the forest by the Forest Services Division (FSD), second is done at the roadside by the Timber Industry Development Division (TIDD) and the third check is done by communities and CSOs who have the right to voluntarily enter the forest where trees are being felled to take records and report to the district office who then report to the Timber Validation Division (TVD). The TVD is expected to do a final quality check to ensure that all the systems are working before a FLEGT Licence can be issued.

They concluded on the note that, the tracking system is currently in place but the only thing left is a full scale test (from the forest base to the issuance of the FLEGT Licence) and the resolution of some few challenges associated with the process, then the FLEGT licence can be issued in Ghana.

### Visit to Asenanyo Forest Reserve

The trip to the Asenanyo Forest Reserve was to gather first-hand information on how the electronic tracking system was done. The Forestry Commission explained that records of all physical characteristics of the tree is taken before sent to the server. Data can however be retrieved at any time on the server even if the gadget for recording gets missing. It was gathered that the timber companies also have an obligation to protect the forest and concessions given them from illegal chainsaw operators.

### Forest Community visit- Kansakrom

Kansakrom is one of the seventeen forest communities in the Nkawie forest district who have been trained by NDF and NFFG on how to protect and monitor forest illegalities. A Community Forest Committee (CFC) has been formed to oversee the monitoring processes.

Representatives of the CFC recounted their diligence and voluntary service to protecting the forest since the training by NDF and NFFG on the need to restrict illegal chainsaw operators from forest destruction. They were confident that though not totally eradicated, illegal chainsaw operations in the forest range of the Kansakrom community had drastically dwindled since they started the monitoring.

The EU Delegation and his team commended committee members for the good work in protecting the forest for future generations.



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## EU AMBASSADOR TOUR FLEGT PROJECT SITES (CONT.)

Ambassador Hanna said his duty was to come down to see at first-hand, processes being put in place in conserving the forest in order to deliver a good report about Ghana to the European Union.

### Visit to Logs and Lumber Limited (LLL)

At the Logs and Lumber Limited (LLL), the Forestry Commission and representatives of the company demonstrated how logs felled in the forest are tracked through processing in the mill for onward transport to the ports. It was also gathered that for the company, verified legal timber is providing strong incentive for FLEGT licensing. Clients are more demanding and there is a need to harmonise systems.

### Conclusion

Issuance of a FLEGT licence in timber producing countries like Ghana is a heartbeat of the European Union, hence processes to enhance its implementation are widely being considered.

At present, a wood tracking system is being piloted and expected to be fully operational soon. Generally, the tour was a success with anticipations to settle all backlogs delaying the issuance of the FLEGT licence in order to make it a reality.

## 9.0 ACRONYMS

AFD	French Agency for Development
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CC	Community Committees
CBAG	Community Biodiversity Advisory Group
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CREMA	Community Resource Management Area Committee
CFC	Community Forest Committees
DFID	Department For International Development
DOLTA	Domestic Lumber Traders Association
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
FC	Forestry Commission
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade
FMC	Forest management Committees
FoE	Friends of the Earth
FSDP	Forestry Sector Development Project
MLNR	Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources
NDF	Nature Development and Foundation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NREG	Natural Resource Environmental Governance
PAMAB	Protected Area Management Advisory Board
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organization
NFF-G	National Forestry Forum of Ghana
NTFP	Non Timber Forest Product
RMSC	Resource Management Support Centre
SRA	Social Responsibility Agreement
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
TBI	Tropenbos Ghana
VPA	Voluntary Partnership Agreement
WITC	Wood Industry Training Centre
WWF	World Wide Fund
TUC	Timber Utilization Contracts
TA	Technical Assistance

## 9.0 ACRONYMS (CONT.)

TRF	Timber Rights Fee
GTMO	Ghana Timber Millers Organisation
GTA	Ghana Timber Association
LI	Legislative Instrument
FAWAG	Furniture And Wood workers Association of Ghana
MTS	Modified Taungya Sytem
CFMP	Community Forest Management Project
FSD	Forest Services Division
BSA	
SWAT	
WTS	Wood Tracking System
LAS	Legality Assurance System
NSAs	Non-State Actors
EITI	
TRMA	Timber Resource Management Act
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
EUTR	European Union Timber Regulation
LLL	Logs & Lumber Limited
TVD	Timber Validation Division
GhLAS	Ghana Legality Assurance System





*For enquires and feedback, contact*

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