



FLEGT Compliance in Ghana:

Developing the capacity of Loggers without processing mills.

The Government of Ghana and the European Union (EU) signed the world's first Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) in 2009 to ensure that timber products exported from Ghana to the EU have been legally produced. Under the VPA, partners agreed to establish a Legality Assurance System, to ensure that timber and timber products destined for the EU markets are produced in accordance with the existing legislation of the exporting country, i.e. Forest Laws Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) of Ghana. Ghana's Legality Assurance System (GhLAS) outlines legality principles and criteria, which are the bedrock for verifying legal wood in Ghana. Not adhering to the requirements of these principles may render logs supplied by the logger illegal.

Loggers without processing facilities begin the timber transformation process from the forest floor until they are handed over to millers for onward processing and yet many of them have little understanding and appreciation of the critical requirements of this process. As implementers and beneficiaries of the FLEGT-VPA processes, the understanding and compliance of this category of loggers in the timber industry is crucial in the eventual success of FLEGT-VPA in Ghana.

To ensure compliance to FLEGT-VPA, Nature and Development Foundation (NDF) under the FAO EU FLEGT Programme funded project titled "**FLEGT Compliance: Developing the capacity of Loggers without Processing Mills**" developed this infographic guide to aid loggers without sawmills to conform to the requirements of FLEGT.



This guide outlines the "Dos and Don'ts for FLEGT Compliance" for the timber sourcing, timber rights allocation, timber harvesting, transportation, and fiscal obligations in the supply of legal timber to both domestic and international markets.



Principle 1 : Source of Timber




Timber originated from prescribed sources and concerned individual, group and owners gave their written consent to the land being subjected to the grant of timber rights.




DOs	
	01 Keep copies of approved yield.
	02 Keep your off-reserve TUC/salvage area clearly delineated and mapped out at all times.
	03 Maintain marked area of plantation permit areas at all times.

DON'Ts	
	01 Don't commence harvest operations in off-reserve areas with farmlands without permission from farm/land owners.
	02 Don't trespass from your permit areas.

Principle 2 : Timber Rights Allocation

The logger held a TUC issued by the Minister and ratified by Parliament following the specified competitive process or Logger held a Salvage Permit issued by the Forestry Commission.




DOs	
	01 Apply for the conversion of your extant and expired leases/permits to TUC.
	02 Keep copies of your timber rights at all times.
	03 Apply for renewal where applicable after expiry of your timber rights leases and permits to TUC.

DON'Ts	
	01 Do not evacuate abandoned timber until you have the authorization to do so.
	02 Do not flout conditions that have been stated in your permit.
	03 Do not fell, haul and transport logs when your timber rights expire.

Principle 3 : Timber Harvesting Operations

The logger complied with forest operation procedures and standards specified by statute.




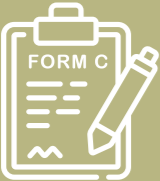

DOs	
	01 Prepare logging plans for reserve areas and harvesting plans for off-reserve areas to be approved before commencement of harvesting operations.
	02 Provide workers with prescribed PPEs and ensure that workers are wearing PPEs at all times.
	03 Put in place measures to prevent accidents and forest fires.
	04 Sign and implement SRA.
	05 Pay appropriate compensation in respect of crops damaged.
	06 Maintain all constructed roads throughout the harvesting rights lifespan.
	07 Label all felled tree stumps and logs in your yard at all times.
	08 Keep environmental hygiene at all times.
	09 Request for compartment closure when operation is complete.






DON'Ts	
	01 Don't haul logs before TIF is captured.
	02 Don't log in environmentally sensitive and prohibited areas such as rivers and streams.
	03 Don't log in areas that you have not been permitted to do so.
	04 Don't harvest trees with numbers that don't match with yield list numbers.
	05 Don't start logging operations without a written, correctly documented and signed SRA, including an agreed timeframe for payment.
	06 Don't fell undersize trees even if they are in your yield.
	07 Don't swap stock survey numbers and species during logging operation.
	08 Don't alter or deface stock numbers on a tree or stump.
	09 Do not haul logs through water bodies.

Principle 4 : Transportation


Timber was at all times transported in accordance with standards prescribed by statute.



DOs	
	01 Secure valid transport documents (LMCC and PLMCC) for every log and load of timber to be transported, where such a load is legal.
	02 Always have a valid Form C before applying for transport documents.
	03 Apply and receive weekend and holiday permit before working on weekends and statutory holidays.

DON'Ts	
	01 Do not transport logs with expired transport documents.
	02 Don't repeat log numbers on your application for transport documents.
	03 Don't under-declare/over-declare measurement of logs during transportation.

Principle 7 : Fiscal Obligations

Neither the logger nor the Vendor was at the time of sale or export in default of fees, rents or taxes, prescribed by statute.

DOs	
	01 Pay all issued statutory fees and taxes on time. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stumpage 2. Timber Rights Fees (TRF) 3. Annual ground rent 4. Corporate income tax

DON'Ts	
	01 Don't operate when you have defaulted in honoring your statutory requirement.
	02 Do not destroy or misplace certificates, invoices and receipts for payment of statutory fees.

About Nature and Development Foundation

Nature & Development Foundation (NDF) was born out of the long presence of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) in Ghana and across the West African region. The WWF West Africa Regional Office was based in Abidjan since the mid-70s until 2005 when the office was relocated to Ghana. Since 2009 the WWF team in Accra focused on forest and trade related activities as a part of the WWF International Global Forest & Trade Network (GFTN) programme.

In the past decade the team has built up a set of global expertise and has successfully worked closely with governments, communities and leading companies within and outside the region. In 2013 WWF decided that a local NGO would be better equipped to work on forest and related conservation issues across the region in the long term, and chose to assist in the creation of a new, local NGO. With the support of WWF, the Nature & Development Foundation (NDF) was created.

NDF was legally established in November 2013 in Ghana as a non-profit organisation limited by guarantee. NDF is proud of its WWF heritage and will continue its association with WWF as it develops further. NDF's cooperation agreement with WWF International seek to collaborate with the WWF Global Forest Programme on issues which are of interest to both organisations. NDF also has Memoranda of Understanding with the Forestry Services Division and the Resources Management Support Center of the Forestry Commission on forest management development in Ghana.

For over five (5) years, Nature and Development Foundation (NDF) has been working to ensure legality compliance within the timber industry in Ghana and the West African sub-region. Actions have been geared towards curbing illegal logging by restricting the market for illegally sourced wood. NDF trains and assists Small Medium Forest Enterprises and companies in the timber sector of Ghana to organize their internal systems to meet regulatory requirements. NDF's efforts are contributing to halt further degradation of forests and loss of biodiversity in Ghana and across West Africa.

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