

The Flegt

Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade

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Newsletter

SME sawmill operators kick against salvage permit directive

Small-medium size sawmill operators who do not have concessions and usually resort to acquire yield by means of salvage permits to feed their mills, are crying out to the Forestry Commission to take a second look at a new directive which is being operationalized in the district forestry offices.

According to the operators, as part of their application for the issuance of salvage permits, the Forestry Services Division (FSD) now require them to come along with a written approval from COCOBOD permitting them to remove trees on cocoa farms which the contractors have identified to salvage for timber.

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“Bush Cut” Timber Vendors seek business recognition

Some vendors of chainsaw lumber (illegal wood) popularly called 'Bush Cut' at the Muss Timber Market, Accra, Tema, Ashiaman, Sokoban Wood Village, Ahwiaa, Akwadaso, Kyireapatre and Santaase timber markets, are calling for the regularization of their businesses to make it an open door for government

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Ageing Affecting Pre-felling Survey Teams Accuracy



Timber contractors in the Assin-fosu locality have alleged that age is catching up with members of the pre-felling survey teams of the Forest

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EXERCISE PATIENCE OVER FLEGT LICENSE- CHRIS BERKO

The Director of the Timber Validation Division of the Forestry Commission, Mr. Chris Berko, has advised stakeholders in the forestry sector to exercise patience over the issuance of Ghana's Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) license.

Mr. Berko, who was answering a question on the reasons for the delay in finishing the processes leading to the granting of the license, said, new policies go through stages before being accepted.

He clarified that, "When you are making a change at the core of a sector, you are confronted with a lot of factors that require patience to scale,"

He noted that, tact and time are vital elements in getting a crucial policy accepted by the political leadership, thus the need to wait for the various steps to be taken for the implementation of the FLEGT licensing.



Chris Berko, Director, Timber Validation Division, Forestry Commission

"You can't push Parliament; you can't push Cabinet," he stated, adding that technocracy is routed through the various

state organs of governance, resulting in a comprehensive policy that answers the needs of all relevant stakeholders.

Mr. Berko disclosed that, a new deadline of June-July has been set to see to the completion of the various mechanisms to be followed, and that CSOs are expected to help accelerate the process.

The conversion of leases into Timber Utilization Contracts (TUCs) is one of the relevant actions Cabinet and Parliament are expected to take towards the FLEGT Licensing.

While urging stakeholders to be patient with the principal actors, Mr. Berko also urged them to exert the necessary tactful pressure on them to get things done.

The FLEGT licensing regime is seen as a panacea to the fast-depleting forests of Ghana as it ensures sustainability and proper management of forest reserves in the country.

The European Union (EU) and United Kingdom (UK) are formulating legislation that would restrict the import of timber and timber products that have not gone through the FLEGT process.

Story By: Communication Team

FOREST COMMUNITIES SHOW INTEREST IN MODIFIED TAUNGYA SYSTEM



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Several forest communities including Gyadam and Ananekrom (Kumawu) have expressed interest in joining the Modified Taungya System (MTS) as it serves as an opportunity to increase their income as well as support the restoration of the degraded forest reserves.

During a monitoring visit by Civic Response, a Civil Society Organization (CSOs) to some forest fringe communities, it was observed that areas like Akoburaso (Nkawie), Anhwiam (Assin Fosu), Denchi (Sefwi Wiawso) and Aboagyekrom (Sefwi Wiawso) are already practicing the Modified Taungya system. For instance, 200 farmers in Aboagyekrom and 350 in Denchi are involved

in the MTS.

More members of the communities intimated to the monitoring team they desire to join the system to enable them make a living out of it as they also contribute to the protection of the nearby forest reserves.

However, it was reported by communities around Krokusua Forest Reserve in Juaboso District that even though they have noticed that permits have been granted to a contractor to harvest timber from the MTS they planted, they have not received their benefit-sharing arrangement as was agreed on between them and the Forestry Commission.

Such incidents are feared to be a disincentive to these farmers who expect to receive their benefits as soon as companies begin harvesting logs from earmarked zones.

The Modified Taungya System (MTS) is an agroforestry system within forest reserves where farmers are allocated a portion of degraded forest reserve to plant timber seedlings alongside food crops.

The farmers receive 100% proceeds from the crops while benefits from the sold timber are shared among Forestry Commission (40%), the farmers (40%), the

traditional landowners (15%) and the forest-adjacent community (5%).

The system is seen as an incentive to fringe communities to complement the reforestation efforts of the Forestry Commission (FC) in their bid to save Ghana's fast-depleting forests.

With regards to the new Land Act which came into force in December 2020, Civic Response also took advantage of the trip to educate communities about it. The new Land Act is a consolidation of all existing laws on land and land administration into a single act.

The community visits which took place in August 2021, had Civic Response visiting 49 communities in 15 districts across the country.

The districts visited were Ho in the Volta Region, Jasikan in the Oti Region, Goaso in the Ahafo Region, Dormaa in the Bono Region, Bibiani, Sefwi Wiawso, Juaboso & Aowin in the Western North Region, Kumawu, New Edubiase & Bosome Freho in the Ashanti Region, Oda, Kade & Asankragwa in the Eastern Region as well as Assin Fosu in the Central Region.

Source: Civic Response

SME sawmill operators kick against salvage permit directive

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They say, the Forestry Commission should review the directive of timber operators having to seek approval from COCOBOD for the removal of matured trees on cocoa farms for timber.

The directive, the operators say, is impeding their work as the district COCOBOD offices they visit are not even aware of the directive and hence are unable to issue them the written consent or approval.

The SME Timber Operators are also of the view that the directive will not only make

their work cumbersome, but will also increase their operational cost as the issuance of the said approval letter will come with cost. They lamented that the additional cost will lead to their products (legal wood) being priced out in the market by the illegal chainsaw lumber.

According to the operators, the Forestry Commission should be mindful of the fact that illegal chainsaw operators will not require such approval



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FORESTRY COMMISSION BLAMED OVER LOW REPORTING OF INFRACTIONS

Community monitors from Abutia, Temante, Anhwiaso, Gyadam, Amantia, and Kontenase have lamented over the lack of feedback from the Forest Services Division (FSD) of the Forestry Commission (FC), on reported cases of infractions in the forest reserves.

According to the monitors who spoke to a team of officers from Civic Response, a Civil Society Organization (CSO) on a visit to the areas, the lack of feedback from the FSD on such cases, accounts for the low number of alerts from the monitors.

They claimed they were discouraged from reporting infractions to the FSD officials because they were not getting feedback from them when they report infractions to them.

The Kantankruba community in particular accused the Forestry Commission of stoppage of arrest of offenders, a situation that has lowered morale and reduced the number of reported infractions.

Since 2018, Civic Response with the support of RFUK has been implementing Real Time Monitoring (RTM) of Ghana's forest using the ForestLink app.



© CR *Community monitors discussing feedback mechanisms on forest infractions*

The Organization has so far, trained 75 forest-fringed communities in 17 districts across the country to report forest infractions using the ForestLink mobile application.

However, Covid-19 restrictions in 2020 and 2021 interrupted the implementation of RTM which also led to a drastic reduction of the number of alerts being sent on the platform. The community visits were, therefore, used to revamp RTM implementation in Ghana and to understand the reason behind the reduction of alerts received.

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before removing the same trees they are competing for. They said, it's just a matter of the illegal operators settling on a price for the tree with the farmer and all is set for the removal of the trees.

They proposed that the FC should come up with some direct benefit allocation for the farmer aside the usual SRA and royalties paid the entire community and the traditional authority of the area respectively.

The operators also called on the FC and civil society organizations in the sector to educate farmers and communities on timber right allocation as their ignorance results in their connivance with illegal chainsaw operators to remove all matured trees as soon as the farmers get wink of timber contractors showing interest in their area.

This concern recurred in all zonal training workshops on 'FLEGT COMPLINACE' organized by the Nature and Development Foundation (NDF) for selected timber companies in the Bono, Ahafo, Western North, Ashanti, Eastern, Central and Western Regions of Ghana.

The trainings are part of implementing the project "Building Capacities of Small-Medium Forest Enterprises (SMFEs) In Ghana and Liberia to Supply and Trade in Legal Timber-Phase II" which is receiving funding support from UK aid through their

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“Bush Cut” Timber Vendors seek business recognition



©NDF Some Timber vendors calling for regularization of their businesses

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to rope in more revenue for development.

They say, government is losing huge sums of revenue because, they don't pay taxes on their business and are calling for their registration

and regularisation. “Assess the number of people involved in the business you are terming as illegal, quantify the volumes of wood traded and calculate the monies that could be generated as taxes should we have been duly recognised and registered to be paying taxes. Year on year, we would have renewed our registrations with the Timber Industry Development Division (TIDD) and also paid taxes on our income to government but government is losing all that money”.

The vendors made this request when officials of the Nature & Development Foundation (NDF), accompanied by officers from the TIDD and Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA) visited the timber markets to educate the vendors on the need for them to be registered with the TIDD, and acquire the requisite documents that will be required for the registration as well

as be involved in the processes of proper documentation.

Advancing their arguments, the vendors said, chainsaw lumbering also known as “bush

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SME sawmill operators kick against salvage permit directive



© NDF Training workshop for Timber Companies on FLEGT Compliance

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FGMC programme.

Another concern raised at the training was the seizure of consignments at the Kasoa and Nsawam checkpoints. The Research and Statistics Manager, TIDD, Takoradi who was also the resource person for the training, Mr. Samuel Mawuli Doe, advised the operators to desist from malpractices such as conniving with some FC officials to make an area qualify for harvesting when in reality the area does not, felling outside allocated yield, swapping of allocated tree species, buying and processing illegal logs, poor record keeping among others.

Mr. Doe explained that the FC has now computerized everything including the position of the trees in the forests, hence, the slightest illegality or mismatch will be flagged by the system.

He said, “The Wood Tracking System has come to stay and advised the timber operators to sanitize their processes so as to ensure their smooth and continual operations in the sector”.

Source: Nature and Development Foundation

KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE BALL- CSOS TOLD

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in the forestry sector have been urged to keep their eyes on the ball in the processes leading to the conversion of leases into Timber Utilisation Contracts (TUCs) for the granting of the Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) license.

Speaking at the Legal Working Group Meeting of the forestry sector in Accra, Mr. Chris Berko, Director of the Timber Validation Division (TVD) of the Forestry Commission (FC), said, “Any time the CSOs keep their eyes off the ball, everything starts going cold”.

He explained that CSOs play a critical role in ensuring that officers in charge of the sector are up to their task, urging them to continue doing the things they have been doing.

“Be busy asking the useful questions; we enjoy the questions; we are learning from your questions,” he said in a poetic tone, disclosing that they (officers) do not feel offended by the probing questions from the CSOs.

He encouraged them to embark on further engagements with the major stakeholders in the coming year in order to maintain the tempo that has brought the implementation of the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) /Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) to the level it is now.

On the issue of Management Plans, Mr. Berko said, though the Commission is aware of the expiration of some management plans, they are hopeful it will be rectified soon.

He said one hundred of the plans will be ready by end of 2021, adding that all production forest

reserves will have management plan before the year closes.

The Commission also hinted that the expiration date for management plans has been extended from ten years to twenty years.

Ghana is making efforts to attain the FLEGT licensing to give it access to the European Union (EU) and the United Kingdom (UK) timber market, with processes that started around 2009.

Though the country is expected to have completed the process by now, considering the time, stakeholders believe the bureaucratic processes have contributed to its delay.

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have been at the centre of the process, exerting pressure on the political leadership to play their role in bringing closure to the regime.

It is believed that the issuance of the FLEGT license would ensure sustainability of Ghana's forest.

Story by Communication Team



Exempt New Timber Vendors from Producing Tax Certificate –GRA



© NDF Mr. Anderson Yakubu, Principal Revenue Officer of GRA advising on exempting first-time timber vendors from TCC.

Mr. Anderson Yakubu, Principal Revenue Officer (PRO) with the Tax Audit and Quality Assurance Department of the Ghana Revenue Authority (GRA), has advised that first-time timber vendors in the country be exempt from producing tax clearance certificates (TCCs) as pre-requisite for registering with the Timber Industry Development Division (TIDD) of the Forestry Commission.

“The TIDD should proceed to register timber vendors who approach the division to register for the first time without demanding tax clearance certificate (TCC) as a requirement, I think,” Mr. Yakubu stated during educational engagements with timber vendors in selected timber markets in Accra on documentations required for registering with the TIDD as a timber vendor in Ghana.

He explained that, “This is because, if the person is just starting the business or even in the process of commencing the business, the person has no tax obligation as no profit has been made yet”, adding that, “TCCs are issued upon request and fulfilment of tax obligations. However, here is the case, the said business is yet to commence or perhaps has just commenced and no tax has been paid yet, so how is the vendor supposed to come by the TCC?”

Justifying his statement, Mr. Yakubu said, requirements such as this, give room for recalcitrant tax officers to take advantage of innocent individuals who wish to comply with regulation requirements. Rather, he suggested that, the TCC be demanded during renewal of the registration as by then, state of the business within a period would have been determined (making profit or loss) and tax obligations would have been satisfied to enable obtaining the TCC.

“Registration processes should not be made cumbersome for businesses as this deters many SMEs from being compliant with national registration regulations. In the end, it is government and the entire country that loses revenue which would have been generated to certain

individuals” _Mr. Anderson Yakubu added.

It is a requirement for retail vendors of timber on the domestic market of Ghana to be registered with the Timber Industry Development Division (TIDD) of the Forestry Commission (FC) of Ghana. However, most timber retail vendors have not been able to register with the TIDD due to challenges in acquiring certain documentations which are pre-requisite for their registration with the TIDD.

Among the requirements for registration with the TIDD as a timber retailer are; certificate of business registration (which is obtained from the Registrar General's Department upon the successful registration of one's business) and a tax clearance certificate (obtained from the Ghana Revenue Authority-GRA upon the successful filing of tax returns). Acquisition of these documents is noted to be of great challenge to the timber retailers therefore hindering their onward registration with the TIDD.

To facilitate SMEs access to buyers in the timber market, Nature and Development Foundation (NDF) as part of implementing the project, “Building the Capacities of Small and Medium Scale Forest Enterprises in Ghana and Liberia to Trade and Supply Legal Timber – Phase II”, developed an online platform (www.ghanatimbermarket.com) to link buyers of wood to vendors of legal wood. The requirements for vendors to be listed on the platform is to be registered with the TIDD and also to deal in legal wood. The platform is viewed by most people as a great innovation however, the platform is currently inactive due to inability of vendors to be listed on the platform because they are not registered with TIDD. Which TIDD registration is consequently challenged by vendors' subsequent registration with RGD and GRA.

To help resolve the challenge, NDF has



© NDF Cross-section of Timber Vendors at the Muss Timber Market in Accra

collaborated with the TIDD of the Forestry Commission and the GRA, to educate timber vendors on the processes and procedures to register one's business, file tax return and obtain a tax clearance certificate.

Timber markets which benefited from this all important education are the Muss Timber Market, Accra Timber Market, Tema Timber market, Ashiaman Timber Market, Sokoban Wood Village, Ahwiaa Timber market, Akwadaso timber market, Kyireapatre timber market and Santaase timber market.

At the end of the education, vendors in each of the timber markets visited were enthused to get registered with TIDD and also to trade in legal wood to facilitate listing of their products on the online platform.

Source: Nature and Development Foundation

Ageing Affecting Pre-felling Survey Teams Accuracy

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Services Division (FSD) of the forestry commission and this is affecting the quality of work undertaken by the teams.

According to the contractors, the aging team members are unable to thoroughly comb the forest reserve or outside reserve area which is to be subjected for timber rights allocation to take inventory. They claim due to age and its associated health deteriorating issues, some of the team members especially the team leaders resort to staying in a community and send out the rest of the members to conduct the survey and report with no means of verifying whether the report received is a true reflection of the exercise.

Rendering the account, the contractors claim most of the team members who usually have no inclination to forest operations in terms of education in forestry, knowing the incapability of their team leaders, resort to shabby works; conjuring diameters for trees in areas where they deem difficult to access, improper identification of trees (species), improper numbering of trees, etc.

Again, the contractors alleged that the few

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It also came out that apart from the lack of feedback from the FSD, technical challenges

FORESTRY COMMISSION BLAMED OVER LOW REPORTING OF INFRACTIONS

with mobile network connectivity and mobile devices also hinders their work.

The community visits, which were to assess the states of the Real Time Monitoring (RTM) and the Social Responsibility Agreement (SRA) projects being implemented by Civic Response in these districts, took place in August 2021,

Civic Response visited 49 communities in

15 districts across the country comprising Ho in the Volta Region, Jasikan in the Oti Region, Goaso in the Ahafo Region, Dormaa in the Bono Region, Bibiani, Sefwi Wiawso, Juaboso & Aowin in the Western North Region, Kumawu, New Edubiase & Bosome Freho in the Ashanti Region, Oda, Kade & Asankragwa in the Eastern Region as well as Assin Fosu in the Central Region.

Source: Civic Response

“Bush Cut” Timber Vendors seek business recognition

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cuts” is not illegal as perceived generally because they believe the Government of Ghana approves of it.

According to them, “If it's indeed illegal, why doesn't the government arrest us when we place the products on the market? or even come to the market to confiscate the products?” The vendors also claimed that the wood being termed as illegal is what government purchases for most, if not all, of its developmental projects.'



©NDF *A cross-section of some timber vendors at the Ashaiman Timber market*

They questioned the feasibility of the Public Procurement Policy on Timber and Timber products, arguing that “it's been years since we heard there was going to be a policy to restrain contractors from using chainsaw lumber for public works, where is the policy? Why hasn't it been passed up till now? Look, we are reliably informed that the policy was thrown out of cabinet. Why would cabinet throw out the policy if indeed they deem bush-cut lumber as illegal?,” emphasizing that government supports the bush-cut lumbering work they are engaged in.

The sawmill lumber, according to them, is only few and not enough to satisfy demand for wood on the domestic market, claiming that the “bush cut” business contributes greatly to most developmental works in the country.

In a bid to explain acts that are termed illegal in the country, the vendors compared government's stance on marijuana also called weed and cocaine and the actions taken against users of the substance as against their products. They said, “occasionally, the police swoop in on areas suspected to be inhabited by people dealing in weed and cocaine because they are considered illegal. However, in our case, the government even comes to patronise our products once we have managed to get it to the market and even bargain for reduction, so

we are not committing any illegality by trading in bush-cuts”.

Officers from the Timber Industry Development Division (TIDD) of the Forestry Commission Mr. E. K Bonney and Madam Matilda Nsiah Boatemaa, who disagreed with the claims of the vendors, asked; “why their products are arrested when found in the forest and on the roads whiles they are transporting them?”

Responding in a baffled manner, the vendors said “honestly, we think it's probably a strategy you Forestry Commission people have adopted to merely worry and extort monies from us. How can you term the act (chainsaw lumbering) and the products (Bush Cuts) as illegal yet you only arrest culprits in the forests and on the roads but not in the market where the products are openly displayed for sale? You even turn around and purchase some for your buildings and other infrastructural works’.

They accused the Forestry Commission officers for crippling the businesses of those engaged in the saw-mill lumber trade or what is termed as legal. They said, the

innocent timber men suffer from high fees, to delays on the road to arrests for improper documentations when in actual sense the said documents have been prepared by officials of the commission.

“So please advise the government to reconsider its decision and openly approve of our businesses as it will enable us pay taxes to the government to support its developmental works in the country. So, Madam, allow us to register and get listed on your platform as well because we also want to increase sales.’

NDF's visit to the markets was to enable the foundation boost patronage of its online timber market platform, www.ghanatimbermarket.com which was developed as part of implementing the Ukaid funded project, “Building the Capacities of Small and Medium Scale Forest Enterprises in Ghana and Liberia to Trade and Supply Legal Timber-Phase I”.

According to the projects officer for NDF, Ms Margaret Appiah, the platform was developed to promote trade in legal wood (linking buyers to sellers of legal wood) but is currently inactive because almost all vendors of timber on the domestic market of Ghana are not dully registered with the TIDD hence they are unable to list their products on the platform as it is a pre-requisite. The objective of the activity is to educate the vendors and get them registered with TIDD to enable them trade on the platform.

Again, the market engagement activity by NDF is part of implementing the project, “Building the Capacities of Small and Medium Scale Forest Enterprises in Ghana and Liberia to Trade and Supply Legal Timber-Phase II” which is funded by Ukaid under the Forest Governance Market and Climate (FGMC) programme.

Source: Nature and Development Foundation

Ghana Submits Nationally Determined Contributions at COP26

Ghana, for the first time hosted a Pavilion in the Blue Zone Area in COP26 to showcase the countries efforts for addressing global climate change.

Ghana submitted its Updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). The NDCs are a set of targets by Parties to the Paris Agreements aimed at reducing national emissions and adapting to the impacts of climate change. The [Paris Agreement](#) (Article 4, paragraph 2) requires each Party to prepare, communicate and maintain successive nationally determined contributions (NDCs) that it intends to achieve.

The main highlights of Ghana's Updated NDCs are to "Generate absolute greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions of 64 MtCO₂e", avoid at least 2,900 premature deaths per year from improved air quality, create over one million decent and green jobs and benefit cumulatively nearly 38 million people, with the majority being the youth and women. The update has 19 policy actions in 10 priority areas. The Gh-NDCs are divided into 13 adaptation and 34 mitigation actions. These are also divided into 16 unconditional and 31 conditional programmes and the estimated financial investment needed is 9.3 to 15 billion dollars.

Ghana also signed two carbon trading deals at COP26 with Emergent, a US non-profit

organisation, under the Lowering Emissions by Accelerating Forest Finance (LEAF) Coalition and with Mecuria, a Swiss trading house to "help operationalise Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, including driving project development in some sectors across the economy".

Beyond COP26

As we accelerate to achieve "Net Zero" and put in measures to adapt to the impending dangers posed by climate change, it is time for all stakeholders to rally together to help achieve the targets set in the Paris Agreements.

CSOs in Ghana must actively support, monitor and report on the implementation of Ghana's NDCs and Commitment towards the implementation of the Glasgow Leaders Declaration on Forest and Land Use.

The 26th COP was hosted by the United Kingdom, in the City of Glasgow in Scotland from 1-12 November 2021. The COP was preceded by pre-sessional



© ECG President Akufo Addo with Lands Minister, Abu Jinapor, at COP 26 at Glasgow, Scotland

meetings from 24 – 31 October in Glasgow by the various negotiation groups/blocs to prepare their members for the actual COP meetings.

COP serves as an avenue for all Parties to meet and review the implementation of the United Nations Focal Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and any other legal instruments that the COP adopts. The conference facilitates decisions necessary to promote the effective implementation of the Convention, including institutional and administrative arrangements.

Source: *Ecocare Ghana*

EU CHARGES GHANA TO BE DILIGENT WITH FLEGT IMPLEMENTATION

The European Union (EU) is calling on Ghana to be diligent in observing the requirements of the FLEGT/VPA implementation, as it prepares to roll out new regulations on the importation of timber and timber products onto its market.

According to Mr. Roberto Schiliro, of the European Union Delegation (EUD) in Ghana, the EU wouldn't compromise on the issues outlined in their new legislation that emphasizes on wood and wood products being procured without causing deforestation, or using child labour.

Mr. Schiliro, who was speaking via zoom to a Legal Working Group meeting in Accra, said, "the EU would insist on due diligence, independent assessment of the processes and the role of the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in the enforcement of

the new legislation."

He explained that the Forestry Commission (FC) and the sector ministry would be required to provide evidence of the independent assessor's consent in all documentation regarding the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT)/Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA).

"We have to monitor the process because nothing should be taken for granted," he insisted.

The European Union and United Kingdom are rolling out new legislation laying out conditions for the acceptance of wood and wood products entering their markets.

The legislation, expected to be operational in 2022, would require such products and others such as cocoa to meet some criteria including evidence of child labour-free production, avoidance of activities causing deforestation, among others.

The two economic blocks are warning of strict enforcement of the regulations with prescribed punitive measures including outright ban on importation of products from defaulting countries.

The EU maintains that the role of CSOs in the implementation of the regulation is key in ensuring adherence by trading partners, thus calling on them to be involved in the processes.

Story by *Communication Team*

Ageing Affecting Pre-felling Survey Teams Accuracy



to recruit competent staff who have been trained in forest operations to compose the pre-felling inventory team and gradually take over from the aging team leaders.

This issue came up during a training workshop organized by the Nature and Development Foundation (NDF) for selected timber operators in the enclave. The training centered on 'FLEGT legality compliance'. Other topics covered included, 'understanding the Ghana Legality Assurance system (GhLAS), Regular Non-compliance by the Private Sector in VPA Legality Regime – as they occur and how to address it'. Chain of custody for sawmilling operations and calculations on input and output volumes of timber.

The training workshop is a part of implementing the project "Building Capacities of Small-Medium Forest Enterprises (SMFEs) In Ghana and Liberia to Supply and Trade in Legal Timber-Phase II" which is receiving funding support from UK aid through their FGMC programme.

Source: Nature and Development Foundation

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leaders who can accompany their team members also commit lots of mistakes and omissions which they blame on hearing difficulties due to age.

This, the contractors say, is affecting their

work as valuable matured trees are left out in the stock surveys and subsequently yield allocation and later become substrate for illegal chainsaw operators. The contractors are therefore calling on the Forestry Commission, especially the FSD,

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ABOUT NDF

The Nature & Development Foundation (NDF) was legally established in November 2013 in Ghana as a non-profit organization, limited by guarantee. It was born out of the long presence of WWF in Ghana and across the West African region.

The foundation has a mission to help build a society in which human development and nature conservation complement each other. At NDF, we believe ways exist to balance the needs of development with sustainable land uses that do not threaten forest, biodiversity and forest dependent livelihoods of the region.

We collaborate with Government's, Local communities, Private Sectors and other stakeholders to balance the needs of development with sustainable land uses.

Though currently active in Ghana, we aim to increase our activities in Cote d'Ivoire and Liberia in the future. For more information; Visit www.ndfwestafrica.org Or call TEL: +233-302-903-359



ABOUT ECOCARE GHANA

EcoCare Ghana is a rights-based campaign and advocacy organization duly registered and licensed to operate as a local non-

governmental organization. We focus on policy and practices around community rights and forests, and how it relates to development, climate change, wildlife conservation, agriculture and other land-use options. We seek to positively impact the livelihoods of resource communities for them to meaningfully contribute and equitably benefit and develop from resource use.

We want to see transformed and well-to-do communities protecting resources and contributing to national development. We are driven by the zeal and enthusiasm to ensure that NRE policies address the need of local people. EcoCare Ghana seeks to build strategic partnerships with like-minded local and international organizations that share our principles and values. We operate as a flat organization with open-door policy that promote gender-mainstreaming and equal opportunities for all; irrespective of race, religion or sex

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