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## Quick Read

- Wood exported to the EU market is expected to be legal and improve Forest Governance of the exporting country.
- The Forestry Commission of Ghana has slated December 2014 as the date for the issuance of the first FLEGT licenses.
- 11 persons have been tasked to ensure that applications for forest licenses are done in a transparent and credible manner.

## NDF'S FIRST NEWSLETTER



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The Nature and Development Foundation, NDF, now has a Newsletter known as "the FLEGT Newsletter". The quarterly Newsletter would give account of various activities on FLEGT/VPA, activities being undertaken by NDF and other like minded organizations that will contribute. Columns for the Newsletter include;

- Update on the Wood Tracking System
- NDF Activities with summary of reports

- Articles
- International News on FLEGT

The publication of this exciting, informative and educative Newsletter has been made possible with the support of the European Union and WWF through the project "Advancing a legal and sustainable global timber trade through the EU/ FLEGT Action Plan".

You are reading the first edition of "The FLEGT Newsletter". Subsequent editions will capture more stories from other FLEGT related activities, CSOs, Government and Industry.

ENJOY!!!!

## Introduction

In recent years, producer and consumer countries alike have paid increasing attention to illegal logging and other illegal forest related activities. In 2003 the EU adopted an Action Plan for Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) to address these problems. The Action Plan combines measures in producer and consumer countries to facilitate trade in legal timber, and eliminate illegal timber trade with the European Union (EU). The plan is also geared towards driving improvement in forest management and eliminating illegal logging through credible and verified licensed timber. The former WWF Ghana, now Nature and Development Foundation (NDF) has been involved in various actions that is contributing to the implementation of the various elements of Ghana's VPA with the EU.



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## Summary of Initial Roll Out of the Wood Tracking System to Date

AMGG and FC have jointly been involved in rollout of the Ghana Wood Tracking System (GWTS). This involves installing the GWTS at sites, training staff in system use and providing support and maintenance services. The first stage of rollout, under a limited number of sites is underway and nearly complete.

The initial rollout was conducted at JCM Suhuma and JCM Takoradi mills. The modules implemented included: Stock survey, Pre-felling inspections, Information Form, LIF, LMCC, Mill processes, Inspection certificates and export permits.

AMGG have finished configurations to GWTS system to enable full rollout in stage two of the rollout. These included all items identified in the UAT which AMGG were contractually obliged to implement.

These modifications included: Completion of the plantation systems for 'on and off' reserve (GWTS/ mobiles), Export payments ledger (GWTS), Sun accounting interface (GWTS), Container exports of logs through LOGIC, Company mill system, Flagging operational errors and implementing corrective actions and Management of incorrect / mismatching species.

It is now recommend that the rollout progress to stage 2, which comprises a scaling up of the rollout and implementation of all modules.

### Closing out the Initial Rollout

AMGG has completed the systems deployment and training requirements for the initial rollout. FC needs to complete the implementation in the field to ensure all of JCM production is operating under the GWTS database and mobile applications.

AMGG is completing the following documentation to support stage 2 of the rollout.

1. Procedures Manual for migration from manual to electronic documentation. We have prepared a document that describes recommended procedures for migrating from paper based systems to electronic data capture.
2. Prepared procedural manuals and WTS user manuals for: Stock survey, Harvesting, Off reserve survey and TIF / LIF , Plantation production, Salvage logs and timber, Recovered logs and timber, Mill processing, TIDD wood inspections and Export Permits, Sun Accounting System interface, Imports of logs and timber, TVD inspections.

*By Forestry Commission*

## NDF ACTIVITIES ON FLEGT



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Currently, NDF is running the FLEGT/VPA project funded by the European Union. The project is targeted at key stakeholders in the Timber Industry for awareness and education on the need to be engaged in **Legal Timber Trade**.

- A second project is aimed at involving civil society organizations in the FLEGT processes" and is supported by the International Tropical Timber Organization

(ITTO). Its objective is to build capacity of Civil Society Organizations to contribute effectively to forest law compliance.

- Another project funded by the Food and Agriculture Organisation is being run by NDF. The project is developing and implementing guidelines for the Implementation of the Public Procurement Policy on timber and timber products in Ghana.

## I. Sensitization Fora on Illegal Forest Activities

Illegal forest activities are said to affect forest fringe communities greatly, as their livelihoods mainly depend on the forest.

In a bid to help find solutions to this menace and save the local people and Ghana's heritage, NDF in collaboration with the National Forestry Forum (NFF), with support from the European Commission, organized local sensitization forums for 1,759 participants in 30 forest fringe communities across Ghana.

At the district level, 464 participants in 10 districts benefitted. This was to encourage

the communities to take measures to managing the forest since its destruction has direct impact on them. The Police, Fire Service, District Coordinating Directors and Planning Officers were present at various district forums to respond to questions that directly related to their outfits.

Regionally, five forums covering 238 participants have since been held in all the forest regions of Ghana and this is what has culminated into the National Forestry Forum which is held on the 7th of August 2014.



*A participant contributing to discussions at a District Forum*

© WWF-WAFPO



## II. NDF on Anti-Corruption in the forestry sector



*NDF's Projects Officer explaining FLEGT process at a Reg. Forum*

© WWF-WAFPO

Over the years, various efforts have been made to improve forest governance in Ghana and reduce corruption in the timber industry. Given the importance of timber harvesting and processing as a source of employment, attention has increasingly focused on improved management.

As a result, WWF-WAFPO in collaboration with the Ghana Anti-Corruption Coalition, educated thirty participants on Anti-corruption in the forestry sector at the Ange-Hill Hotel in Accra. This was to first create awareness about corruption in the sector and put participants in action through networking to share information on how to minimize the menace.

In a related development, the capacity of about thirty representatives from various district forest offices and communities in the Brong-Ahafo Region, was also built on the need to protect the forest from the intrusion of illegal or chainsaw operators and ensure its sustainable management.

Meanwhile, the Forestry Commission of Ghana has slated December 2014 as the date for the issuance of the first FLEGT licenses. This is expected to reduce the movement of illegal timber outside the borders of Ghana thus reducing the corrupt practices in the forest sector.

## III. CSOs Equipped on Forest Law Enforcement

As part of the ITTO sponsored project with NDF, Knowledge level of 30 Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) & other Non-State Actors (NSAs) were strengthened to be able to establish models of legal & sustainable requirements on practical forest operations.

Also, an online community of practice for CSOs & NSAs to share lessons and experiences has been created on yammer (a social network)

and named, "Forum for Forest Governance Ghana (FFGG)".

Still geared towards the attainment of the projects objective, a two day workshop was organized for various civil society organizations in the forestry sector on how they can effectively engage forest authorities and concession holders to ensure compliance with the country's forest laws.



*CSOs undergoing Training on how to help enforce forest laws*

© WWF-WAFPO



## NFFG, NDF & FOE-Ghana Collaborate to Facilitate Forestry Dialogue

The National Forestry Forum-Ghana in collaboration with the Nature and Development Foundation and Friends of the Earth-Ghana have provided a neutral platform and a single converging point where concerns and current issues on the forest governance agenda which have attained national importance will be openly and effectively discussed.

The approach is expected to open opportunity to build good relationships between civil society, government and the private sector for effective networking among stakeholders.

The National Forestry Forum is projected to address among other things the domestic timber market reforms and encroachment on forest lands and solutions.

A publication is expected to be generated to serve as a follow-up document for subsequent forums. Organizers are hopeful that the publication will be valuable to stakeholders for analysis.

By Theodore Mawuli Vivotor

The depletion of Ghana's forests has brought in its wake a considerable decrease in the country's earnings from timber products. This gives a signal for the country to re-consider activities in the timber industry and more so its afforestation efforts.

It remains a mystery how little appears to be done in the fight against deforestation in the country in this era of climate change, with its devastating global warming that has nefarious consequences for the globe.

Former Minister of Lands and Natural Resources, Mr. Mike Hammah, once announced that, "Ghana has since concluded arrangements to import timber from Cameroun," saying the decision was to beshort to medium-term measure."

A nation that used to export timber is now looking to other countries to get the same resource that it had in abundance.

When will the trend change to restore the nation to its former glory? This million dollar question shall continue to linger on the lips of Ghanaians as long as the status quo is not changed.

Ghanaians ought to wake up from their slumber to change the worrying trend that poses a great threat not only to our timber revenue but our very existence, considering the importance of forests to the lives of humans.

The time to act is now if we want to do something about the situation. Who initiates the action? Don't look elsewhere, IT IS YOU!!! .

*Article contributed by a concerned journalist*



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## Timber Export from Ghana to Europe Up by 60%

By Glen Asomaning



© Packaged wood for export

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Statistics provided by the Timber Industry Development Division (TIDD) indicates that timber export from Ghana to Europe increased by about 60% in 2013 over 2012 both in volume and value with an all-destination overall increase of about 20%.

Total export to Europe increased from 27 to 46 million Euros in value and from 52,000 m<sup>3</sup> to 83,000 m<sup>3</sup> in volume.

This is however about 60% of 2006 and 43% of 2001 export values. While Europe contributed about 40% of the total value, Africa contributed about 24% with an even higher volume (97,000m<sup>3</sup>) of wood. A clear difference in value for volume is observed.

This difference may be directly or indirectly attributed to the product types and the purchasing power of Europe.

What accounted for this sharp rise in export to Europe?

Could it just be as a result of an economic recovery in Europe generally? Could it be as a result of the FLEGT process in Ghana, thus giving buyers some level of confidence in meeting the EUTR due diligence requirements?

FSC Certification of some of the major exporters to Europe may also account for this. These assumptions may however be confirmed only after an assessment is conducted to compare these numbers with those from other traditional exporters within the region.

If this is so, then this calls for all actors (Government, Civil Society and Industry) to continue relentlessly in their effort to get the first FLEGT licenses issued. Statistics for the subsequent years will however tell.



## Photo Gallery



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### DESCRIPTION OF PHOTOS

1. A forest guard taking measurement of a log at the Asenanyo Forest Reserve
2. Participants contributing to discussions at a local forum at Betinko in the Ashanti region
3. CSO's touring the Logs and Lumber Limited, LLL at Kumasi
4. Participants looking on as Resource Person explains Forest Yield Selection at the Asenanyo Forest Reserve

## JOKES

Two young idiots were camping out in the forest one night. They were fiercely bitten by mosquitoes that they had to hide under their blankets to keep from getting more bites. One of the boys saw some lightening bugs and screamed at his friend, 'we have to give up, they are now coming at us with flashlights'. By Riceater

Once there was a cubical seed lying in a triangular forest. He buried himself in the spherical earth and went to sleep. Years later, he woke up, discovered what he had become, and exclaimed, "Gee I'm a tree!"

[www.ribald.net/joke/forest](http://www.ribald.net/joke/forest)

In the middle of the forest, a turtle and a snail had a shocking head-on collision. The snail was rushed to the emergency room, where a doctor asked what happened. On the edge of consciousness, the snail responded, 'I don't know, Doc. It all happened so fast.'

[www.ribald.net/joke/forest](http://www.ribald.net/joke/forest)

## WWF-Ghana Transitions to NDF

WWF-WAFPO has transited to Nature and Development Foundation, NDF. The transfer is to enable WWF and NDF carryout a more effective and efficient conservation and related activities in the sub-region.

With a mission aligned to that of WWF, NDF is geared towards bringing a halt to further degradation of the forest resources and loss of biodiversity across West Africa.

As a Foundation who believes in team work, it welcomes partners with specific interest in responsible forestry, agriculture, commodity production, wood consumption, legality and capacity building for primary producers and communities to achieve its vision.

Meanwhile, collaboration between NDF and WWF in specific areas will continue, for the next three years for the benefit of both organizations.



## UKAID joins EU FAO FLEGT Programme as key donor



UKAID from the Department for International Development (DFID) has recently become a major donor to the EU FAO FLEGT Programme.

Recognizing that illegal logging and trade of illegal timber pose serious risk to the integrity of forest landscapes, global climate change and perpetuates negative economic impact on global markets, DFID agreed through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to contribute £ 1,408,833 to FAO's FLEGT Programme to address the challenge.

Support under the MoU will directly contribute to fostering improved implementation of



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FLEGT/VPA processes, such as assisting stakeholders to implement selected projects in countries that are currently negotiating or that have entered into VPAs with the European Union.

Source: <http://www.fao.org/forestry/euflegt/en/>

## Ghana Forestry Commission holds VPA conference in London

Ghana makes progress in developing its Electronic Timber-Tracking System.

Business operators and NGOs from Europe attended a conference in London to learn about Ghana's progress in implementing its VPA.

At the VPA stakeholder conference, officials from the Ghana Forestry Commission gave presentations on the country's experiences and lessons learnt from implementation of the VPA.

Participants also discussed challenges for small-scale forest enterprises in meeting legality requirements and the readiness of Ghana's timber industry to obtain FLEGT licenses.

Another presentation updated participants on Ghana's progress in developing its electronic timber-tracking system.

In their presentations, Raphael Yeboah and Chris Beeko of the Ghana Forestry Commission reiterated the value of the VPA as a tool for strengthening forest governance.

Source: <http://www.euflegt.efi.int/news/-/asset>

## Seventh Mission of the Joint Monitoring and Review Mechanism

The seventh Joint Monitoring and Review Mechanism (JMRM) to facilitate the implementation of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) between Ghana and the EU took place in Accra from 4th to 6th June 2014.

The meeting reflected on progresses made with various aspects of the VPA implementation since November 2013. This included the advancement on an accelerated schedule of the Legality Assurance System. According to the stakeholders, with exception of the plantation, export and mill modules,

the design of all other elements of the Wood Tracking System have been completed. They however bemoaned that connectivity to the system server to enable data logged on the hand-held devices to be downloaded to the central database remain a challenge.

The Timber Validation Committee (TVC) is to oversee the functioning of the Timber Validation Department (TVD) and ensure that it operates in a transparent and independent manner.





### Lessons learned from the EU FLEGT Action Plan

The EU has released a summary of the publication Lessons from the EU FLEGT Action Plan. It examines the Action Plan's impact in the 10 years since its adoption, why the EU must continue the fight against illegal logging and related trade, lessons learned and options for responding to changes in the world timber trade.

For details on the publication, visit: <http://www.euflegt.efi.int/documents/>

### WRI launches a new online forest mapping tool

The World Resources Institute and its partners from across the world have launched Global Forest Watch (GFW). GFW is an online mapping application that uses satellite technology to provide timely and accurate information about forests around the world to help monitor forest management.

For more information visit: <http://www.wri.org/our-work/project/global-forest-watch>

### Report of the 8th FLEGT annual coordination meeting

The report of the eighth FLEGT annual coordination meeting which took place on 9-11 October 2013, is available. This report summarised discussions and conclusions reached during the three-day meeting. It also provided the results of the meeting evaluation, information on the participants and contact details for FLEGT focal points at EU delegations.

To read the full report, Visit



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## VPAS ON POVERTY REDUCTION



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A driving feature of the EU FLEGT Action Plan and VPAs is the EU's strong commitment to poverty reduction. In a document, the authors considered how VPAs might affect poverty and suggested ways to improve the positive outcomes of VPAs for poverty.

They also examined how VPAs might be used to prevent or mitigate any negative effects of the agreements.

This document is based on a longitudinal study on VPAs and poverty. Links to the documents can be found below.

[http://www.euflegt.efi.int/news/-/asset\\_publisher/](http://www.euflegt.efi.int/news/-/asset_publisher/)

Actions to address illegal logging activities should not target weak groups, such as the rural poor, while leaving powerful players unscathed.

## Tanzania, Kenya & Uganda Unites Effort to Combat Illegal Timber Trade in East Africa

High-level government representatives from Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania at the first United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA), announced their intention to work together, along with INTERPOL and UN agencies, to curb the illegal timber trade that is stripping East Africa of one of its most valuable natural resources.

The East Africa Initiative on Illegal Timber Trade and REDD+ represents an innovative cross-border, multi-sectoral effort that will create a powerful deterrent to Africa's illegal timber trade.

These countries recognize that illegal logging must be mitigated, and forests managed sustainably, in order to reduce emissions from forest loss.

As such, a key goal of the initiative is to curb illegal logging and trade in



associated products in East Africa as a way to address deforestation and subsequently reduce emissions from forests.

## Timber Validation Committee Inaugurated

An eleven member Committee to improve activities in the Legality Assurance System (LAS) has been inaugurated.

The Timber Validation Committee (TVC) who is to serve for three years, will monitor and ensure that the Department of the Forestry Commission, which is responsible for the verification and validation of applications for licenses, performs its functions in a credible, transparent and independent manner.

The then Minister for Lands and Natural Resources, Alhaji Inusah Fuseini said government has a responsibility to educate the citizens about their rights and obligations and also the duties of the Legality Assurance System (LAS).

He was hopeful that the TVC would address the existing inadequacies in the Forest sector.

Members of the committee include Appeal Court Judge, Justice Dennis Adjei, the Chairman; Okatakyi (Dr) Amanfi VII ( House of Chiefs), Mr Samuel Afari Dartey and Chris Beeko (Forestry Commission), Mr Frederick Gavor (GRA), Mr Musah Abu-Juam (Ministry of Lands & Natural Resources), and Mr Frank Adu-Poku (Ghana Police Service).

The others are Madam Sedina Agbemava (Judiciary), Mr Joshua Ansah (TWU of TUC), Mr Imad Berbari (Private Sector) and Mr Kofi Afreh Boakye (Domestic Timber/CSO).

The first meeting of the TVC has since been held and a report submitted by the Civil Society Representative. Contact Mr. Afreh Boakye on +233209568541 for further information.



Alhaji Inusah Fuseini, inaugurating the committee  
Graphic.com.gh

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## ABOUT NDF



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

The foundation has a mission to help build a society in which human development and nature conservation complement each other. It also believes that, 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.

NDF understands that it must not limit itself to working only with those in the forest industry but must engage more widely in multiple sectors and processes, if it is to achieve its mission.

Though currently active in Ghana, it aims to increase its activities in Cote d'Ivoire and Liberia in the future.



COLLABORATING  
ON FOREST  
CONSERVATION IN  
WEST AFRICA

