

Chainsaw milling project, Ghana

Project updates

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An annual project update of the EU Chainsaw Milling Project, Ghana, funded by the European Commission Programme on Environment in Developing Countries

The Project

The EU chainsaw project "Developing alternatives for illegal chainsaw lumbering through Multi-stakeholder dialogue in Ghana and Guyana" officially commenced in March 2007.

The project is being funded by the European Union and implemented by Tropenbos International (TBI) through its partners in the project countries: In Ghana, the Forestry Commission (FC) and the Forest Research Institute of Ghana (FoRIG) and in Guyana, Iwokrama International Centre (Iwokrama) and the Forestry Training Centre Incorporated (FTCI).

The implementation period is 5 years with a total budget of €2,732,513 (about GH¢3,825,518)

The Problem

Chainsaw lumbering which refers to on-site conversion of logs into lumber using chainsaws, offers livelihood opportunities to many people in local and indigenous forest fringe communities in Ghana and Guyana. In Ghana, this practice has been banned since 1998, but the practice is widespread. The strength of chainsaw lumbering is that it requires high labour input, but low capital. As a result, the price of chainsaw lumber is relatively low and therefore within the means of poor sections of the population.

Notwithstanding the benefits associated with the practice in Ghana and Guyana, it equally poses a number of challenges and threats such as forest degradation; and conflicts between stakeholder groups. Unfortunately these, sometimes deep and open, conflicts characterize the interactions between actors in the chainsaw milling sector.

Objectives of the Project

The project focuses on the broad theme of forest governance in Ghana and Guyana which have high incidence of illegal chainsaw lumbering with its associated conflicts. The overall objectives are to: reduce poverty and promote viable livelihoods in the forest dependent communities; reduce the occurrence of illegal logging; and promote conservation and sustainable management of tropical forests in developing countries. The specific objective is to reduce the level of conflict and illegality related to chainsaw lumbering.

Approach

The landscape approach has been adopted as the guiding principle for the implementation of the project. The landscape approach is a specific development framework emerging from the conservation and development debate.

The landscape integrates natural resource planning, by aligning livelihood analysis with community based initiatives in wider national or regional perspectives. The approach recognizes the importance of institutional arrangements for meaningful negotiations between individuals and institutional stakeholders with diverse and competing interests and different levels of power.

Target Groups

The project targets stakeholders of chainsaw lumbering in Ghana and Guyana such as chainsaw operators, forest managers, sawmill owners, timber resource owners, forest concession holders, policy makers, government, local communities and at the international level forestry decision makers.

Pilot Areas

In Ghana, the project is being implemented in 8 forest districts namely Goaso and Sunyani in the Brong Ahafo Region, Nkawie and Juaso in the Ashanti Region, Begoro, Kade and Akim Oda in the Eastern Region and Assin Foso in the Central Region while in Guyana the project communities are Orealla, Ituni and Annai.

What is Chainsaw milling?

Chainsaw milling in the context of the project means the on-site conversion of logs into lumber using chainsaws.

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Expected results & planned activities

The planned outputs and activities of the project are as follows:

Result 1: Causes and consequences of chainsaw lumbering and its links with illegality understood.

Research will be carried out in both countries to reveal the driving factors and impacts of chainsaw lumbering and determine the macro-economic, political, legal and socio-economic conditions that have fostered the practice.

Result 2: International best practice determined to address chainsaw lumbering.

Case studies emerging from the research in Activity 1 will be further discussed at two international workshops to be held in West Africa and in Guiana Shield/Caribbean regions. The experiences of these meetings will be summarized in a synthesis paper that will be discussed and refined during an e-conference with participation from experts around the globe. The results will be communicated to key policy makers.

Result 3: Multi-stakeholder learning forums established to discuss chainsaw lumbering issues.

This activity will aim at creating a platform for stakeholders to interact and discuss chainsaw lumbering issues at the national level.

Result 4: National consensus achieved in Ghana and Guyana about issues regarding chainsaw lumbering using an institutionalized mechanism for permanent dialogue between stakeholders.

The substantive activities of the multi-stakeholder learning forums consist of listing the critical issues regarding chainsaw lumbering, identifying stakeholders' perceptions, etc. Once agreement can be reached about the principal problems, strategies to address them will be formulated, including a plan for further action.

Result 5: Communities dependent on chainsaw lumber production, producing

timber in a regulated and sustainable way.

Pilot projects will be carried out to support implementation of the action plan that will be adopted by the multi-stakeholder platform. The activities will build on other initiatives by stakeholders in both countries.

Result 6: Actions managed effectively.

These are activities that must be carried out for smooth and effective implementation of the project.

Updates of activities from March 2007 to December 2008

The following activities have been undertaken since the inception of the project in March 2007:

> **Project launch**

The project was launched in Ghana on 12th-13th December, 2007 in Kumasi. It was organized for key stakeholders in the chainsaw lumbering enterprises in Ghana. Objectives of the meeting were; to present the project to key stakeholders, present some results from the stakeholder' analysis, discuss the Multi-stakeholder Dialogue (MSD) in the context of the project and solicit support of stakeholders in the implementation of the project.

> **Case study development**

The Ghana situation regarding chainsaw milling will be described in a case study. This in-depth analysis will reveal the driving factors and impacts of chainsaw milling and determine the macro-economic, political, legal and socio-economic conditions that have fostered and continue to foster chainsaw milling. The themes for research activities in Ghana and Guyana were; general background information; chainsaw lumbering compared to sawmilling; drivers of chainsaw lumbering; analysis of policy and legal framework; impact of chainsaw lumbering; and options for controlling/transforming chainsaw lumbering. The research activities are being carried out by FoRIG. Prior to the start of the research work, a gap



analysis was carried out.

Research work started in March 2008 and data collection and analysis for all the six research areas is almost completed. Draft report preparations are ongoing and it is expected that research activities will be completed by January 2009.

> **Stakeholder Analysis**

As part of activities to ensure a successful establishment of the MSD, a stakeholder analysis was carried out. The objective was to provide insight into who has stake in the chainsaw lumbering enterprise, how big this stake is and the ways in which these stakeholders can influence the processes that determine the chainsaw lumbering issues.

> **Sensitization Programme**

A key outcome of the stakeholder analysis and inception workshop was the need to sensitize all stakeholders especially those in the project area. The purpose of the sensitization programme was to present the project to all the stakeholders identified, seek their consent and commitment and understand their fears and expectations from the project. The programme was divided into 3 parts namely; community level sensitization covering the non-formal stakeholders in the project area, district level sensitization involving stakeholder institutions in the project area and sensitization of stakeholders





outside the project area.

A total of 2,758 people from 503 stakeholder groups were sensitized from July-September 2008. Some of the key issues raised were; the policy on the ban on chainsaw lumbering, sustainable timber resources utilization, enforcement of chainsaw lumbering ban and selection of stakeholder representation on the MSD.

> **District Level Meetings**

District level meetings were held in all 8 project districts in August and September 2008. Stakeholder groups were represented at the meeting. Objectives of the district level meeting were to: assess the extent to which stakeholder perceptions on chainsaw issues and the MSD differ, propose acceptable means to bridge the divisions, discuss and address important issues raised during the sensitization programme, facilitate the selection of representatives for subsequent district level, national focus group & MSD meetings and agree on issues to be discussed at the national focus group and MSD meetings.

A total of 373 participants attended the meetings. Major agreements reached include; number of participants and venues for subsequent district level meetings, representation for the focus group meetings and issues to be discussed during the focus group and MSD meetings in order of preference.

> **National Focus Group Meetings**

National focus group meetings were held from 22nd-26th September 2008. The aim of the meetings was to provide insight into the attitude and expectations of important stakeholder groups and their views with regard to the MSD as a tool to address critical issues. The specific objectives of the focus group meetings were to: build understanding of stakeholders' interests, problems and concerns in chainsaw operations; generate stakeholder visions for chainsaw operations and identify issues, values, motivations, problems and opportunities associated with the MSD. In all, 125 participants including 3 municipal/district chief executives,

a district magistrate, the executive director of Forestry Services Division, 2 traditional chiefs and the chairpersons of 2 regional forest forums attended the meeting.

> **Capacity Building**

Orientation for CFWs

A one-day orientation was organized for Community Forestry Workers (CFWs) on 29th February 2008 in Kumasi. The objectives of the orientation were to: introduce the CFW to the project; discuss activities to be implemented by FC; the role of CFW and to develop a work plan for CFW activities.

Facilitators' training programme

As part of activities to establish the MSD in Ghana and Guyana, a 12-day facilitators' training programme was organized for project staff from Ghana and Guyana from 19th-30th May, 2008 in Kumasi. The programme was attended by 16 participants. The aim of the training was to contribute to knowledge and develop skills to enable facilitators guide stakeholders through series of activities that are consistent with landscape approach to establish and manage the MSD. The training programme covered the fundamental theoretical elements of multi-stakeholder processes (MSP) and also focused on complementary concepts and competencies such as communication and dialogue, facilitation, mediation, leadership and critical reflection necessary to facilitate successful multi-stakeholder learning platforms in the context of forest management in Ghana and Guyana. Course certificates were presented to all participants at the end of the programme.

> **Project Management**

The project is managed by a national project management team (PMT), which consists of a representative of each partner and the National Coordinator. The PMT is responsible for the overall execution and monitoring of project activities in Ghana. The PMT has so far held a total of 20 meetings since the inception of the project.

At the project level, there is an International Project Coordination Committee (PCC), consisting of the

PMTs plus the overall coordinator.

The Committee meets once a year to discuss progress on the basis of semi-annual reports, and approve annual work plans and annual budgets submitted by the PMTs.

Furthermore a 14-member Project Advisory Committee (PAC) has been constituted in Ghana. The PAC which is an advisory body will offer general guidance and support to the PMT for the successful implementation of the project activities. The PAC is made up of representatives of key stakeholders and agencies whose area of operation, mandate or expertise are crucial to the project objectives in the long term.

> **General observations and challenges**

A key issue for successful establishment of the MSD is a good representation of key stakeholders. The project area covers over 20 political districts with more than 250,000 people and 28 stakeholder groups. These groups are not well organised and lot more activities therefore, have to be organised at the community, districts and national levels to get the stakeholders well organised for good representation at the MSD meetings.

It is acknowledged that the policy banning chainsaw lumbering needs to be reviewed, since the ban has not been effective. Stakeholders have high expectations of this project in providing essential inputs for this review. These expectations need to be carefully managed.

There is a high misconception amongst non-formal stakeholders that the project is aimed at fighting for the legalization of chainsaw lumbering and trade. This has led to the spread of false information about the project in Ghana which has resulted in a non-cooperative attitude by the timber industry. This may adversely affect the establishment of the MSD.

The wide publicity given to the project already triggered a number of publications and discussions, which were reported in the print and electronic media as well as on the internet. Most of the articles are dealing with the legalization of chainsaw milling.



> **Planned Activities for 2009 in Ghana**

Compilation of the Ghana case study on chainsaw milling.

Organisation of a regional workshop:

- » Prepare proceedings and synthesis paper for West African Region.

Establishment of the Multi-stakeholder Dialogue:

- » Finalization and distribution of the stakeholder analysis
- » Create a "task force" responsible for the management of MSD
- » Conduct preparatory workshop for establishment of the MSD
- » Build capacity of stakeholder groups to participate in the MSD.
- » Conduct regular meetings of the MSD
- » Create a communication mechanism to document and disseminate findings.
- » Set-up of the Community work:
- » Organize community forestry associations or other forms of local stakeholder platform.
- » Conduct livelihood surveys to

assess dependence on chainsaw lumbering

General project management activities:

- » Organize PAC meeting.
- » Organize bi-monthly PMT meetings

PAC members

1. Prof. A.A. OtengYeboah, Former Deputy Director General, CSIR (Chairman)
2. Mr. K. S. Nketiah, PTL, TBI-Ghana
3. Mr. J. Osiakwan, Senior Planning Officer (Policy), MLFM
4. Dr. Victor Agyemang, Director, FoRIG
5. Mr. M. Owusu Abeberese, Executive Director, FSD, FC
6. Mr. M. O. K. Boateng-Poku, National President, GTA
7. Mr. D.F. Korsah Brown, Executive Director, CELD
8. Hon. Alhaji Ishak. A. Bonsu, Municipal Chief Executive, Asunafo North
9. Mr. E.E. Acquah Moses, Executive Secretary, GTMO

10. Mr. F. Nana Akowuah, National Executive, FAWAG
11. Dr. C. Amoako Nuamah,
12. Nana Amoako Ababio, Chief of Kukuom Traditional Area
13. Niklas Borker Bjerre, Programme Officer, EU Delegation, Ghana
14. Mr. J. Parker, National Coordinator, EU Chainsaw Project, Ghana

PMT members

1. Mr. K.S. Nketiah, PTL, TBI-Ghana (Chairman)
2. Dr. E. Marfo, Scientist, FoRIG
3. Mr. A. Boadu, Operations Director, FSD
4. Mr. J. Parker, National Coordinator, EU Chainsaw Project, Ghana



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