Awareness creation on the Ghana Timber Transparency Portal

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What is the Ghana Timber Transparency Portal?

- A portal on Ghana’s Forestry Commission Wood Tracking System (GWTS)
- Makes information from GWTS transparent and available in real time
- Picks information directly from GWTS without any intermediary
Legal Basis for the GTTP / The Cornerstone of the GTTP

LI 2254 requires FC to be transparent on forest governance indicators:

1. Source of timber
2. Timber rights allocation
3. Timber harvesting operations
4. Transportation
5. Timber processing
6. Social Obligations
7. Fiscal obligations
8. Timber trade

- These information forms the basis for Ghana’s VPA Legality Definition
Why is the GTTP Necessary?

Changing Regulatory and International Timber Market Environment

• Shift from paper base to electronic information
• Forest Certification demands timber companies to sustainability mechanisms
• Historical precedencies necessitating FLEGT VPA
• EUTR Requirements and obligations
• Global drive for legal timber: US Lacey Act, EU VPA, Australia’s Illegal Logging Prohibition Act; on-going discussion with China on legal logging enforcement
• Need for Ghanaian timber industries to adapt to remain relevant in the global timber business
Advantages of the GTTP

• GWTS web interface does not introduce any new obligation on industry besides the need to become digital

• Makes due diligence requirements and information easily accessible to the International timber buyers, Competent Authorities etc
• Reduces burden on timber industries to provide due diligence information
• Enhance credibility of Ghana timber industries in the international arena
• Provides platform for industry to share product information, market products etc
CSOs involvement in FLEGT VPA Implementation

- CSOs part of FLEGT VPA processes since 2005 till date
- FLEGT VPA seen as vehicle for forest sector reforms in Ghana
- CSOs roles have been multifaceted: complimentary, watchdog roles, advocacy, use of multi stakeholder process to create ownership of policy and legislative reforms and implementation
- bringing Community level stakeholders along in the processes to assert their rights - SRAs, compensations
- FLEGT license timber: the icing on the cake
- VPA has enabled lots of transformation in the forestry sector in Ghana:

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Transformative Processes

• General shift from government monopolized processes to stakeholder led processes:
  • Progressive 2012 FWP developed with stakeholder involvement at every stage
  • Tree Tenure policy reform ongoing with stakeholders
  • Stakeholder involvement in legislative reforms – a major breakthrough for multi stakeholder engagement
• Forest management transparency legalized ahead of Parliament passing Right to Information Bill
• Industry, CSOs and government can sit together to agree or disagree
• Collaborative monitoring systems developed to ensure law enforcement and credibility of WTS
• CSOs can invite forestry officials to participate in CSO events and vice versa
GWTS Public Portal – Importance to Government

- FC’s commitment to demonstrating transparency
- Enables FC to ensure complete pre FLEGT license issuance due diligence and credibility of FLEGT Licenses issued
- Ensure integrity and credibility of GWTS
- Enhances FC ability to fulfil transparency requirements
Presentation of GTTP

Demonstration of how the GTTP works
Changing social arrangements that entrench marginalization