

Issuing FLEGT Permits in Ghana

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Background

- VPA/FLEGT: An Agreement in Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade



- VPA was signed on September 3, 2008 in Accra.
- Ghana and the EU ratified the Agreement in June and November 2009 respectively.

Benefits to Industry

- Public and private procurement policies that recognize efforts to:
 - ensure a supply of legally harvested forest produce; and
- FLEGT-licensed products promoted on European timber market.
- Resource life prolonged due to reduction in illegal logging
- VPA has a potential to be an effective tool to protect the timber resources of Ghana

FLEGT Licensing Scheme

- "FLEGT Licence" issued to attest to the legality of a shipment of wood products from Ghana.
- A legislation passed by Parliament in Nov. 2017 (Timber Resource Management and Legality Licensing Regulations, 2017, LI 2254) provides definition and framework for accessing legal timber and issuing FLEGT licence.
- The "licensing authority" designated by Ghana to issue and validate -FLEGT licenses is the Timber Industry Development Division (TIDD) of the Forestry Commission (FC)

Provisions for Issuing Licenses

- Requirement: for export and domestic distribution of wood products.
- **Application for license:** cover shipment for export; consignment harvested in-country or for domestic sale.
- Conditions of license: (a) product obtained from Ghana, exported from Ghana, distributed in Ghana; (b) checked in accordance with Ghana's WTS to conform with definition, principles, standards and criteria of the Ghana Legality Assurance System.

STATUS OF THE VPA FLEGT LICENSING

- FC Nationwide rollout of GWTS has been completed.
- Five (5) trial shipment FLEGT licenses were issued last quarter of 2017. Queries were raised by the EU-CA . Corrections to be effected between June – September 2018.
- On-going FC/Private Sector dialogue on processes to grant land for award of timber rights in LI2254: i. large and small scale TUCs; ii. conversion of permits to TUCs within 6 months; iii. mode of payment of Timber Rights Fees (TRF)



STATUS Contd.

- Divisions and Departments of FC moving on to the fully electronic GWTS (1st January, 2018)
- Issuance of mock FLEGT licenses along side export permits (delayed from Jan 1, 2018 in order to clean the WTS of redundant control points arising due to LIs withdrawn on coming into effect of LI2254
- In progress addressing power supply challenges in remote FC/FSD district offices – provision of solar power

STATUS Contd.

- Public Procurement Policy for verified legal timber supply on domestic timber on hold:
- (i) to ensure there is adequate timber to circulate and
- (ii) cost implication to local and central government projects.



Industry Capacity Building

- Products covered by the FLEGT Licensing Scheme (amendments introduced to cover only products whose legality can be assured).
- Knowledge and skills on WTS processes and documentation to prove legality compliance
- Understanding VPA implementation process and suppliers obligations to prevent delays in shipment



Finalities

- EU-Ghana joint final assessment of the GhLAS will enable a recommendation of the readiness for FLEGT licensing to be made
- Issues highlighted during the assessment would be closed during subsequent ones
- Timeline for the assessment to conclude will depend on how fast Ghana is able to address issues highlighted.
- Landmark dates to watch are June/July to begin the assessment and November ' 2018 when the next JMRR meeting is likely to be held
- Thank You



