



Call for papers – Regional workshop – “Experiences from the FLEGT/VPA process in West and Central African countries”

The Forestry Commission of Ghana, in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) ACP-FLEGT Support Programme and the European Forest Institute’s (EFI) EU FLEGT Facility, is soliciting papers for a regional workshop on “*Experiences from the FLEGT/VPA process in West and Central African countries*”, scheduled for **23 - 25 October 2012 in Accra, Ghana**.

In 2003, the European Union (EU) adopted its Action Plan on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) with the aim to fight illegal logging and promote better governance. The cornerstone of the Action Plan is the conclusion of Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPA) between the EU and timber producing countries to ensure that only legal timber is imported into the EU. To date, in West and Central Africa, the EU has signed VPAs with 5 countries (Cameroon, Central African Republic, Ghana, Liberia, and Republic of Congo), is negotiating with 2 countries (Democratic Republic of Congo and Gabon) and has introduced the FLEGT/VPA process in Côte d’Ivoire. In addition to the VPAs, the EU recently adopted the EU timber regulation which prohibits the placing of illegal timber on the EU market from 3 March 2013.

In light of the above, the major objective of the workshop is to bring together government authorities, civil society organizations, private sector organizations, professionals, researchers and technicians involved in the implementation of the FLEGT/VPA process in **West and Central Africa** to share and discuss **experiences and lessons** learned from 7 main thematic areas of the **FLEGT/VPA process**.

The organizers invite **papers on the following topics**¹ in the context of the FLEGT/VPA process:

1. Elements of the **Legality Assurance System** (e.g. wood tracking mechanism, definition of legality, compliance monitoring tools/protocols, independent audit, etc.);
2. **Participation mechanisms** in negotiation or implementation of VPA (e.g. fostering engagement in the FLEGT/VPA process or involving civil society, private sector, communities or other stakeholders, etc.);
3. **FLEGT implementation approaches**;
4. **Domestic and regional market issues**;
5. **Independent monitoring and transparency**;
6. **Forest law enforcement and governance** (e.g. changes expected from the FLEGT/VPA process in respect of governance, motivations of stakeholders to engage in the process, etc.);

¹ Authors should not restrict themselves to the examples provided for each thematic area. Any inquiry or guidance on thematic areas should be addressed to both points of contact.

- 7. Communication on FLEGT** (e.g. innovative communication work to solicit interest and/or engage new stakeholders, improve communication, awareness raising, or national understanding within stakeholder groups and timber products consumers, etc.).

Papers that analyze country experiences or that compare experiences across countries or regions are welcome. Papers drafted from government, civil society, and private sector organizations are also encouraged.

During the workshop, at least one selected paper per theme will be presented while all selected papers will be published in a compendium for participants. The organizers of the workshop will fund participation of authors selected for presentation.

If you are interested in presenting a paper, please submit an abstract that include author's name, affiliation and title, title of the paper and the topic addressed to both Ms. Sophie Lemaitre (sophie.lemaitre@fao.org) and Ms. Rhoda Kwarteng (rapak5580@yahoo.com) by **22 June 2012**. Abstracts should be limited to 300 words in length.

Any inquiries or request for information should also be addressed to both contacts.

Authors of papers selected for presentation will be notified by 6 July 2012.

Final papers will be due by 1 September 2012.