GUIDELINES FOR CIVIL SOCIETY/COMMUNITY LED INDEPENDENT FOREST MONITORING IN GHANA
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ACRONYMS

CFC  Community Forestry Committee
CRMC  Community Resources Management Committee
CSO  Civil Society Organisations
DFO  District Forest Office
DA  District Assembly
DM  District Manager (of DFO)
EU  European Union
FAO  Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFC  Forest Fringe Community
FC  Forestry Commission
FR  Forest Reserve
FSD  Forest Services Division
GhLAS  Ghana Legality Assurance System
GoG  Government of Ghana
GPS  Geographical Positioning System
IFM  Independent Forest Monitor
IM  Independent Monitor
IMT  Independent Monitor Team
LAS  Legality Assurance System
LIF  Lumber Identification Form
LIM  Local Independent Monitor
LMCC  Log Measurement Conveyance Certificate
MDAs  Municipal and District Assemblies
MLNR  Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources
MoFA  Ministry of Food and Agriculture
OFC  Off Reserve Code
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OFR</td>
<td>Off Forest Reserve</td>
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<tr>
<td>RMSC</td>
<td>Resource Management Support Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>RRT</td>
<td>Rapid Response Team</td>
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<td>RUDEYA</td>
<td>Rural Development and Youth Association</td>
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<td>SFMP-G</td>
<td>Sustainable Forest Management Partnership Ghana</td>
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<td>SRA</td>
<td>Social Responsibility Agreement</td>
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<td>Timber Validation Division</td>
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<tr>
<td>VPA</td>
<td>Voluntary Partnership Agreement</td>
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Acknowledgement

This Guideline has been developed under the project titled: “Towards the Establishment of Civil Society/Community led Independent Monitoring Mechanisms in Support of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement in Ghana” with the support of the FAO-FLEGT Programme. We are grateful to FAO who funded this project and also to RMSC, TVD, FSD and all others who contributed to the development of this Guideline.

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Contributors

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Foreword

Over the years forest resources in Ghana have been dwindling at a faster rate. Monitoring of forest activities has been ongoing in and around forest reserves over the past years, but the efforts to curb illegal activities have not achieved its desired goals. The Ghana Forestry Commission (FC) has established and trained a task force, a Rapid Response Team (RRT), Forest Guards and Range Supervisors to monitor illegalities, but the forest resources have continued dwindling over time.

Although local communities have rights and responsibilities in the management of forest resources on and off-reserves, the policy direction on collaborative forest management with communities has not translated into expected forest governance outcomes. This is partly attributable to a lack of enabling legislation and institutionalization of local independent forest monitoring. As a matter of fact local communities do not have any mandate to monitor the operations of logging companies. Also, there is no defined working structure from the side of the FC to report any forest infractions for verification and subsequent corrective actions.

Consequently, there is the need to involve community members as Local Independent Monitors (LIMs) to help identify, observe and report on illegalities with respect to the forest resources. The involvement of local communities /Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in independent forest monitoring however must be structured and standardized. Hence, this guideline has been developed to streamline roles and responsibilities of independent forest monitors at the local level so that they can help identify, observe and report on forest illegalities that occur within our forest reserves and off-reserve areas. Through its implementation this Guideline may also serve as learning ground to practically assess the feasibility of institutionalization of independent forest monitoring (IFM) in Ghana as is being done in other VPA partner countries.

Overall, this guideline is a modest step to define the scope of involvement of key stakeholders such as Civil Society Organizations and forest communities at the district/local level in forest management. In addition, the guidelines will promote sustainable forest management; improve forest governance and by extension contribute to sustainable development and poverty reduction.
1.0 Introduction

The Ghana-EU Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) ratified by Ghana’s Parliament in 2009 is an instrument to ensure forest law enforcement, governance and trade in legal timber, aspects that are all fundamental to sustainable forest management. Article 10 (Independent Monitoring) and Article 16 (Stakeholder involvement in the implementation of the Agreement) of the VPA thus provide entry points for key stakeholders such as local communities and CSOs to fully participate in transparent monitoring of forest operations.

Policy objective 4 of the revised 2012 Ghana Forest and Wildlife Policy underscores the importance of promoting and developing mechanisms for transparent governance, equity sharing and people’s participation in forest and wildlife resources management. Strategic policy direction to enable the attainment of policy object 4 include among others: (i) enacting legislation to support the allocation of timber resources through transparent processes and continuous auditing of the forest utilization operations to ensure compliance with forest management specification and environmental protection standards (ii) enacting the necessary legislation and regulations to facilitate and enhance local participation and control through decentralization of forestry operations at the district level.

Furthermore, Regulation 76 of the newly passed Timber Resource Management and Legality Licensing Regulation of 2017 provides for public access to information on forest resource management in order to ensure transparency in the forestry sector. The FC is charged with the responsibility of making information such as timber rights allocation types, the required payments under Social Responsibility Agreements (SRAs), forest management plans, timber operational specifications, etc. available to stakeholders including CSOs and local communities.

The above efforts notwithstanding, there is no specific legislation in Ghana that allows community or civil society led organizations to engage in forest auditing and monitoring processes as envisaged in the Ghana Legality Assurance System (GhLAS) of the VPA. In order for legislation on community or civil society led independent forest monitoring to be implemented effectively, there is the need for it to be informed by best practices that have stood the test of time. In this regard there is the need to develop a guideline that will standardize the approach for community or civil society led independent forest monitoring, specifically in the implementation of the VPA in Ghana. This guideline could serve as a minimum requirement that may be reviewed periodically following its use for local independent forest monitoring in the forestry sector. Additionally, lessons learnt from the use of this guideline will help in the institutionalization of IFM.

The purpose of this guideline is to identify and define the scope, principles and approach to monitoring, the reporting mechanisms as well as the institutional arrangements to complement government’s efforts in the effective monitoring of VPA implementation in Ghana.
2.0 Monitoring Principles and Basic Methods

A key principle adopted with respect to local independent forest monitoring is that it should complement official forest law compliance activities with the objectivity and public credibility of an independent third party who is from CSO and/or local community. Hence, this will complement the work of the Timber Validation Department (TVD) of FC as well as the Independent Monitor (IM)\(^1\) appointed by the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources (MLNR).

IFM at the local level takes place through selected and trained Local Independent Monitors (LIMs). Detailed information on LIMs is provided in Annex 1. Furthermore, at least 2 qualified persons may constitute a local independent forest monitoring team (IMT); in other words LIMs do not operate alone, but as a team of at least two. IMTs work at district level; an IMT may include LIMs that live in different localities in the district.

CSO/Community-led independent forest monitoring activities may be triggered as a result of one or a combination of the following:

- Targeted/planned monitoring in forest reserves and off-reserve areas of interest;
- Concerns/reports/complaints received by CSOs/ Community leadership from local inhabitants in connection with forestry activities;
- Allegation of corrupt practices /illegalities leveled against actors in logging operations that have come to the notice of CSOs/ Community leadership.

When independent monitoring is to be carried out the sampling method will be determined by the team. At all times a representative sample will be used and it may be random or systematic depending on the monitoring site or infraction in question.

For targeted/planned monitoring in forest reserves and off-reserve areas of interest, the frequency of monitoring will be established in consultation with the FSD District Manager. As a guideline however, it is suggested that planned monitoring shall cover any active forest operation of a timber company at least once a year. In case infractions with law are detected, a follow-up visit can be implemented after some time (e.g. after 2 or 3 months, enabling the timber firm to make the necessary adjustments to ensure that incompliance will not happen again).

For reported concerns/complaints and other forms of allegations leveled against actors in forest operations, real-time monitoring/verification methods will be applied. These shall allow for immediate action and include the immediate alerting of FSD and Civil Society on the case and the planning of action to be taken (a combined field check by FSD and LIMs and/or police and/or Rapid Response Team to verify and validate the alert and take - where appropriate –

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\(^1\) The GoG has appointed the certification body Scientific Certification Services (SCS) as Independent Monitor of the overall VPA implementation.
immediate action against it). Follow-up field checks may be planned in coordination with the authorities involved, especially where concerns about continued infractions occur. This applies both to infractions by timber firms and to illegal logging events by illegal loggers.

3.0 Scope of Independent Forest Monitoring and Approach

The scope of this guideline covers forest governance elements that are consistent with Ghana’s Legality Assurance System of the VPA and which potentially allow CSOs and local communities to monitor with little or no duplication of work from other mandated institutions. When fully operational the VPA will ensure that only legally verified timber from Ghana is imported into the EU, exported to any country in the world and used or traded on the domestic market. The scope of the CSO/Community led Independent Forest Monitoring (IFM) guideline focuses on the following thematic areas which are related to legal timber criteria under the VPA:

1. On-reserve logging operations.
2. Off-reserve logging operations in agricultural landscapes.
4. Revenue collection, disbursement to beneficiaries and utilization of timber royalties.
5. Illegal timber operations.

For each of the thematic areas identified above (i.e. 1-5), listed approaches and/or activities that will serve as a guide for independent forest monitoring is provided. This is supported by a legality matrix (Annex 2) that allows verification and validation of key criteria and outputs under each thematic area mentioned above. An overview of verification criteria and indicators is attached as Annex 3. For the above mentioned thematic areas separate protocols have been developed.

As a civic responsibility and in consonance with Article 10 of the VPA, local communities and CSOs have a duty to monitor the timber legality requirements mentioned above in order to ensure that forest laws are enforced and forest governance at the local/district level is effectively achieved.

3.1 On-reserve logging Operations

This section relates to VPA principles on source of timber, allocation of timber rights and harvesting as well as transport from the forest reserve. Independent forest monitoring at this level allows local communities to participate in monitoring processes leading to the transparent allocation of timber rights. Furthermore, it allows communities living in close proximity to productive forest reserves to monitor timber utilization contracts (TUCs) and other types of timber rights held by loggers in order to prevent unauthorized timber harvest or environmental infractions.
3.1.1 Monitoring forest reserve operations

In monitoring timber rights granted, the source of timber as well as harvesting operations from forest reserves, Local Independent Monitors may be guided by the following steps in the conduct of independent forest monitoring at the office and in the field.

Step 1
- Gather relevant information about the forest reserve of interest from the Forest Services Division (FSD) district office where the forest reserve falls under. Alternatively, you may find some information from the Forestry Commission website- [www.fcghana.org](http://www.fcghana.org) and the approved VPA-wood tracking system (WTS) web portal ([http://axoninfosystems.com/v3/?g1_work=ghana-wood-tracking-system](http://axoninfosystems.com/v3/?g1_work=ghana-wood-tracking-system)). Some information of interest may include:
  - Copies of forest reserve management plan with maps indicating boundaries of the reserve and the timber right holders (past and present);
  - Copies of TUC, salvage permit or other types of timber right granted and their terms & conditions;
  - Geographical location and zonation of TUC, salvage permits or other types of timber right;
  - Approved yield including stock & yield maps released to Logger for timber harvest in specified forest reserve compartment(s) under given conditions;
  - Application documents from logger to the district office seeking the grant of salvage permit or small scale TUC or any other timber right as may be appropriate;
  - Copies of pre-felling inspection forms noting the composition of the inspection team as specified by law and also a map of the area indicating boundaries of the area where timber is to be harvested;
  - Approved number of trees and volumes released to logger to be harvested from a defined area.

Step 2
- It is important for commissioned LIMs to identify themselves and inform the appropriate district forest office (DFO) about their intention to conduct field verification of forest operations in selected forest reserve sites at scheduled period(s). LIMs shall plan the field visit in a manner that they may undertake the following activities preferably with the cooperation of the FSD district office and timber right holder(s):
  - Identify and interview forest fringe communities within 5 km about their knowledge of any forest operations going on in the selected sites of interest;
  - verify whether timber harvest areas indicated on map correspond with areas identified on the ground preferably with the use of GIS equipment (e.g. GPS);
confirm whether or not quantities and species of timber trees approved for felling are adhered to;

Observe and report whether permits for harvesting restricted species are adhered to;

Look out for infractions on environmental logging standards (e.g. felling of timber too close to streams and rivers, felling at community sacred sites, etc.);

observe whether logging requirements are respected by noting the following:

- Labeling/marketing of tree stumps and harvested logs is done with appropriate locality mark, property mark of logger, forest reserve code, tree stock number, species code, compartment number and logger (company’s) number;
- Labeling/marketing is done with white water proof paint and the marking is legible;
- Tree Information Forms (TIFs) have been prepared and duly signed for all the felled trees approved in the yield (to be checked with the Range supervisor in charge).

For harvested logs being transported from the forest reserve by a logger the following shall be checked:

- Authorized log measurement conveyance certificate (LMCC) issued to a driver of the vehicle;
- Validity of the LMCC and the destination of the logs;
- Correct labeling/marketing at both ends of the logs;
- Time of log transport (which shall be between 6:00 am and 6:00 pm).

**Step 3**

- The LIMs shall communicate their findings to the respective DFO and seek explanation or clarification on any non-compliance(s) observed in the course of the forest monitoring. The LIMs shall confirm and validate any infraction detected with the District Forest Manager (DM). Any point of disagreement shall be noted by the LIMs and included in their report.

### 3.2 Off-Reserve Logging Operations

This section relates to VPA principles regarding source of timber, the allocation of timber rights and harvesting as well as transport from off-reserve area. IFM at this level allows local communities to participate in monitoring processes leading to controlled exploitation of timber from off-reserve areas.

Off-reserve logging covers all timber harvesting operations on farm and fallow landscapes including secondary forests outside the forest reserve areas. The LIMs can monitor critical control points identified as community roles in the pre-felling and harvesting operations. Attention shall be paid to prior consent by farmers before timber harvesting operations on farmlands and all private lands. In case of crop and farm damage, the timber rights holder shall
settle all damages through negotiated agreements with the affected farmers. The Guidelines on Off-Reserve Logging can be used, which contain a tool to calculate the compensation to be paid.

Should there be disagreements between the two parties as to how much to settle on, the Land Valuation Board\(^2\) can be invited to assess the value of the crops damaged and establish what amount the TUC holder has to pay to the affected farmer.

**Step 1**
- Gather relevant information about the off-reserve area of interest from the FSD district office where the off-reserve area falls under. Alternatively, you may find some information from the Forestry Commission website - [www.fcghana.org](http://www.fcghana.org) and the approved VPA-wood tracking system (WTS) web portal ([http://axoninfosystems.com/v3/?g1_work=ghana-wood-tracking-system](http://axoninfosystems.com/v3/?g1_work=ghana-wood-tracking-system)). Some information of interest may include:
  - Information on the timber right holders (past and present) in the off-reserve area;
  - Copies of TUC, salvage permit or other types of timber right granted and their terms & conditions;
  - Geographical location and zonation of TUC, salvage permits or other types of timber right;
  - Approved yield including stock & yield maps released to Logger for timber harvest in specified off-reserve areas under given conditions;
  - Application documents from logger to the district office seeking the grant of salvage permit or small scale TUC or any other timber right as may be appropriate;
  - Copies of pre-felling inspection forms noting the composition of the inspection team as specified by law and a map of the area indicating boundaries of the area where timber is to be harvested;
  - Approved number of trees and volumes released to logger to be harvested from a defined area.

**Step 2**
- It is important for the commissioned LIMs to identify themselves and inform the appropriate district forest office about their intention to conduct field verification of forest operations in selected off-reserve sites at scheduled period(s). LIM should plan the field visit in a manner that they may undertake the following activities preferably with the cooperation of the FSD district office and timber right holder(s):
  - Identify and interview farmers and forest communities about their knowledge of any timber harvesting operations going on in the selected off-reserve site(s) of interest;

\(^{2}\) The Land Valuation Board is formally mandated to do such type of assessments. In practice however this is a costly procedure, which is not very practical for the average conflict resolution process between farmers and timber firms/contractors. It is therefore recommended that “fair and commensurate compensation” - as requested by law - is agreed upon by the farmer and the timber firm. The methodology for fair compensation negotiation is described in the Guidelines for Off-Reserve Logging (SFMP-G, 2016).
o Find out from the affected farmers if their free informed prior consent was sought before timber harvesting operations started on their farm lands and private lands;
o Confirm whether timber harvest areas indicated on map correspond with areas identified on the ground, preferably with the use of GIS equipment (e.g. GPS);
o Verify whether or not quantities and species of timber trees approved for felling are adhered to;
o Look out for infractions on environmental logging standards (e.g. felling of timber too close to streams and rivers; felling at community sacred sites, etc.);
o Check whether logging requirements are respected by noting the following:
  ▪ Labeling/marking of tree stumps and harvested logs is done with appropriate locality mark, property mark of logger, off-reserve code (OFR), tree stock number, species code, compartment number and logger (company’s) number;
  ▪ Labeling/marking is done with white water proof paint and the marking is legible;
  ▪ Tree Information Forms have been prepared and are duly signed for all the felled trees approved in the yield (check with the Range supervisor in charge of the off-reserve area).
o Find out from farmers whether crops were damaged in the course of timber harvesting and whether there is evidence of approved compensation payment commensurate with the type and quantity of crops damaged;
o For harvested logs being transported from the off-reserve area by a logger the following shall be checked:
  ▪ Authorized log measurement conveyance certificate (LMCC) issued to a driver of the vehicle;
  ▪ Validity (date of issue and expiry) of the LMCC and destination of logs;
  ▪ Correct labeling/marking at both ends of the logs;
  ▪ Time of log transport (which shall be between 6:00 am and 6:00 pm).

**Step 3**
- The LiMs shall communicate their findings to the affected DFO and seek explanation or clarification on any non-compliance(s) observed in the course of the forest monitoring. The LiMs shall confirm and validate any infraction detected with the District Forest Manager. Any point of disagreement shall be noted by the LiMs and included in their report.
### 3.3 Social Responsibility Agreement Negotiation and Implementation

This section relates to VPA principles on harvesting operations and fiscal obligations. Regulation 26 (1) of L.I. 2254 requires that the holder of a timber right shall negotiate a Social Responsibility Agreement (SRA) with communities in and around the contract area at a value of 5% of the stumpage fee. This obligates the timber right holder to provide cash or amenities or services or benefits to cater for negotiated development needs of the communities and inhabitants of the timber operational area at a cost of 5% of the value of the stumpage fee of timber that is harvested.

Inhabitants of the contract area are inhabitants of Forest Fringe Communities (FFC) which fall within five kilometers (5 km) around a forest reserve or in off-reserve areas. Before SRA can be negotiated, the communities have the right to know which timber contractor is operating in their area. It is important to note that SRA negotiation and implementation shall take into account the terms in the SRA guidelines and code of conduct which are obtainable from the Resource Management Support Center of FC.

#### 3.3.1 Monitoring SRA Negotiation and Implementation

**Step 1**

Gather relevant information about SRA of interest from the Forest Services Division district office where that SRA is supposed to be affected. Alternatively, you may find some SRA information from the Forestry Commission website ([www.fcghan.org](http://www.fcghan.org)) and other sources such as the approved VPA-wood tracking system (WTS) web portal ([http://axoninfosystems.com/v3/?g1_work=ghana-wood-tracking-system](http://axoninfosystems.com/v3/?g1_work=ghana-wood-tracking-system)). Some pertinent information may include:

- SRA guidelines and code of conduct;
- Timber right holder operating in the area of interest (on or off-reserve);
- Terms and conditions specified in a given timber right with respect to SRA;
- Beneficiary communities identified in the timber operations area;
- SRA negotiation notes taken prior to the SRA preparation;
- Duly signed SRA document;
- Estimated stumpage fees for the total yield released to the timber right holder;
- Actual TIFs prepared up to date for the harvested compartments.

**Step 2**

- It is important for commissioned LIMs to identify themselves and inform the appropriate district forest office about their intention to conduct monitoring of SRA implementation in selected on and off-reserve sites at scheduled period(s). LIMs should plan the field visit in a manner that they may undertake the following activities, preferably with the cooperation of the FSD district office and timber right holder(s):
Identify and interview all beneficiary communities about their knowledge of any negotiated SRA that is being implemented by timber right holder(s) in forest reserves or off-reserve site(s) of interest;

Find out if there exist in the beneficiary communities local SRA committees to deal with the negotiation and implementation of the SRA;

Find out how the financial value of the SRA was determined and ascertain whether the total of cash and/or kind (service, facility, etc.) provided match up with the prescribed 5% stumpage fee;

Find out whether negotiations were documented and duly signed by all parties involved (community representative, the timber rights holder and witnesses);

Confirm whether FSD officials acted as mediators of the negotiation and witnessed the SRA to the satisfaction of the parties;

Comment on the state and progress of SRA implementation and support it with objective evidence;

Find out whether SRA was timely received by the community;

Find out how communities are fulfilling their part of the code of conduct in relation to timber resource protection, prevention of forest illegalities and cooperation with the timber rights holder.

Step 3
- The LIMs shall communicate their findings with the affected district office and seek explanation or clarification on any non-compliance(s) observed in the course of the SRA monitoring. The LIMs shall confirm and validate any infraction detected with the District Forest Manager. Any point of disagreement shall be noted by the LIMs and included in their report.

3.4 Revenue Collection, Disbursement to Beneficiaries and Utilization of Timber Royalties

Article 267 (6) of Ghana’s Constitution prescribes the formula for distributing royalties obtained from timber harvesting from On- and Off-reserve areas. 50% of the revenue collected goes to the Forestry Commission and the remaining 50% is disbursed amongst the rest of the beneficiaries. The rest (50%) is treated as 100% and 10% of the 100% is allocated to the Administrator of Stool Lands. The rest (90%) is also treated as 100%. This 100% is shared as follows:

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<td>District Assembly:</td>
<td>55%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stool Land:</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Authority:</td>
<td>20%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The 55% paid to the District Assemblies are disbursed to fund different projects in their respective Districts. The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana does not make it clear as to
how the 55% royalties should be used on behalf of the forest communities. The general assumption is that the District Assemblies will use these royalties from timber to provide fair and equitable community development projects for rural development with fair access to forest communities to encourage them to sustain their efforts in forest protection and management at the community level.

3.4.1 Monitoring Revenue Collection, Disbursement to Beneficiaries and Utilization of Timber Royalties

Step 1
- Gather relevant information about shareable revenue collected and royalty disbursed from the Forest Services Division district office where such information originates. Alternatively, you may find some royalty disbursement information from the Forestry Commission website- www.fcghana.org and the approved websites such as the VPA-wood tracking system (WTS) web portal (http://axoninfosystems.com/v3/?g1_work=ghana-wood-tracking-system). Some pertinent information may include:
  - Stumpage fees collected from timber harvesting in the operational area of interest;
  - Trends in revenue collection in the forest district for the past five years or so;
  - Trends in royalty disbursed to beneficiaries in the forest district for the past five years or so;
  - State of indebtedness of stumpage fees by loggers in the forest district.

Step 2
- It is important for commissioned LIMs to identify themselves and inform the appropriate district offices (DFO; DA) about their intention to conduct monitoring of stumpage fees collected and disbursed in the forest district at scheduled period(s). The LIM should plan office or field visits in a manner that they may undertake the following activities preferably with the cooperation of the FSD district office, the District Assembly and - where relevant - timber right holder(s) and other local stakeholders:
  - Identify and interview royalty beneficiaries such as Traditional Authorities and District/Municipal Assemblies about timely receipt of royalties;
  - Find out from FC any challenges in processing royalty disbursement;
  - Find out from communities whether they are aware of timber royalties received by their District/Municipal Assemblies;
  - Find out from District/Municipal Assemblies any project/facility undertaken in those forest communities with funds from timber royalty.
  - Find out what percentage of timber royalty contributes to District/Municipal Assemblies, Traditional Authorities and Forestry Commission’s income generation;
  - Find out from District/Municipal Assemblies and Traditional Authorities whether there is any system in place for ensuring transparent monitoring of the receipt and use of royalties.
Step 3
• The LIMs shall communicate their findings with the affected district office and seek explanation or clarification on any non-compliance(s) observed in the course of the timber royalty monitoring. The LIMs shall confirm and validate any infraction detected with the District Forest Manager. Any point of disagreement shall be noted by the LIMs and included in their report.

3.5 Illegal timber operations
Timber harvesting also takes place in illegal ways. Although such operations are not planned according to forest related laws and regulations, they are part of the reality and therefore shall be monitored and reported on, where possible. Informal logging often takes place during night time and results in chainsaw-lumber which is transported out of the forest on the head/shoulder of timber thieves, which may or may not be part of the local community. They cause harm to the community, forest estate owners, farmers, nature and authorities, affecting both living conditions and income position of all the beneficiaries of the formal system. Eventually the sawn lumber may be transported and traded beyond the locality of origin, to regional markets or often to the notorious domestic timber markets, where chainsaw lumber seems to be traded without much of government interference. Also the transport to these markets, often by night and by back roads, is an illegal activity, but generally controls seem to be circumvented or avoided.

3.5.1 Monitoring illegal timber operations

Step 1
• Gather relevant information from fellow community members/CSO colleagues on 3rd party caused illegal activities that have taken place or are taking place or will take place with respect to logging in forest reserves and off reserve areas. The following aspects may be of interest:
  o Trends in 3rd party illegal logging activities;
  o Concrete information on cases of illegal logging, including people involved (names), location, time and species logged;
  o Up-dated information on transport of chainsaw lumber (type of vehicles used; information on suspected people and vehicles; suspected transport routes);
  o Up-dated information on processing and marketing of chainsaw lumber (species, suspected or known origin, processing location, and marketing location).
Step 2
• To facilitate the monitoring of illegal activities in the district, it is important for commissioned LIMs to identify themselves and inform the appropriate district forest office about their intention to conduct monitoring of illegal timber operations in the forest district whenever relevant. The LIMs should plan office or field visits in an ad-hoc basis, during which they may undertake the following activities preferably with the cooperation of the FSD district office and timber right holder(s):
  o Contacting and/or maintaining contact with inhabitants of forest fringe communities and/or communities in agricultural landscapes of interest with harvestable trees and/or CSO representatives in order to identity and/or where possible prevent cases of illegal logging. Relevant information may include: name(s) of chainsaw logger(s) involved; names of other people involved; location of trees (to be) logged; number of trees (to be) logged; species (to be) logged; date and time of logging (sound of chainsaws observed); materials observed (chainsaws, tractors, trucks, etc) where possible with identification of makes, colours, number plates;
  o Maintaining contact with inhabitants of FFCs and/or communities in agricultural landscapes of interest with harvestable trees and/or CSO representatives in order to gather information on transport of chainsaw lumber to domestic and/or other markets. Relevant information may include: truck plate number, name and colour; name owner truck; names other people involved; estimation of quantity; indication of timber species; location of loading; destination; transport route; date of transport; time of transport).

In case a LIM receives information about any newly reported and/or on-going and/or suspected and/or planned case of illegal logging he/she shall immediately contact the District Manager and civil society by appropriate means (mobile phone) to brief them on the matter, so that relevant authorities can act accordingly. This may include a joined field visit in order to verify the information obtained earlier and – where possible – to prevent and/or arrest the culprits involved, confiscate any illegally logged/sawn timber and used equipment.
The LIMs shall share the information gathered in the course of the informal timber operation monitoring (step 1), without identifying their sources of information.

Step 3
• Within 3 working days of detection, the case shall have been verified by the district office and a written report containing all relevant verified information, validating the case shall be available from the DM and be made available to civil society.
4.0 Reporting Mechanism

4.1 Reporting by LIMs

The LIMs will prepare reports following forest monitoring investigations. It is expected that all infractions and illegalities detected will be communicated to the respective District Forest Manager (DM) for their comments. Comments received from the DM will be incorporated into the LIM’s report. The communities and CSOs will undertake peer review of the LIM’s report within one week after validation by the DM.

4.2 Reporting by Civil Society

The finalized LIM reports will be submitted as part of the reporting by Civil Society on IFM to the respective FSD Regional Manager(s), RMSC and TVD and to the Government appointed Independent Monitor (IM) for the Ghana VPA/FLEGT initiative on a half-yearly basis. At this point factual accuracies of the report may be verified at the level of FC and IM and the necessary correction requirements initiated by TVD on behalf of FC.

The reports developed will include field inspection reports covering all timber illegalities and forest infractions which impinge on the proper functioning of the Ghana LAS and related forest laws.
5.0 Institutional Arrangements

Although the 2012 Ghana Forest and Wildlife Policy underscores the importance of promoting and developing mechanisms for transparent governance and people’s participation in forest and wildlife resources management, there is no established institutional arrangement to support independent forest monitoring at the local level.

Apart from the FC which is mandated under Act 571 to monitor forest operations, other stakeholders such as Traditional Authorities, Municipal/District Assemblies (MDAs), forest communities and CSOs all have a role to play in an effort to institutionalize independent forest monitoring. In this regard, the listed institutions are expected to perform their respective roles as described in the following paragraphs.

5.1 Forest Communities, LIMs/IMTs

Forest communities should make use of existing networks and platforms such as Forest Forum at the district, regional and national level, supporting independent forest monitoring by:

- Active involvement of identified and trained LIMs;
- Participation of community members and LIMs in awareness campaigns;
- Cooperation of community members with the LIMs by sharing of relevant information (“eyes, ears and mouth” function);
- Training of community members by LIMs.

5.2 Civil Society Organizations

CSOs shall also make use of existing networks to undertake the following in support of independent forest monitoring:

- Create capacity building/training opportunities for LIMs;
- Establish a process for appointing LIMs and provide qualified LIMs with an identity card;
- Implement awareness campaigns against illegal logging;
- Report and inform relevant FC departments, the Independent Monitor, civil society and the general public on IFM results and cases of illegal logging;
5.3 Forestry Commission

The following obligations/roles are expected from FC:

- Sensitize all FSD district offices about the concept of independent forest monitoring referencing Article 10 (Independent Monitoring) and Article 16 (Stakeholder involvement in the implementation of the Agreement) of the VPA;
- Provide easy access to relevant information for qualified LIMs;
- Ensure the FSD district offices cooperate with LIMs in their course of duty;
- Provide relevant training/education on the FC manual of operations and other guidelines necessary for the work of LIMs;
- Support awareness campaigns against illegal logging;
- Contribute to a fund enabling LIMs to operate;
- Monitor the results of IFM at district, regional and national level.

5.4 Government Appointed Independent Monitor of the VPA-GhLAS

The MLNR/FC has engaged the services of SCS Global Services as the Independent Monitor (IM) for assessing the transparent, effective and efficient implementation of the Ghana Legality Assurance System under the Ghana-EU VPA. The following obligations/roles in terms of working with stakeholders such as CSOs and communities are expected of the IM in the conduct of annual compliance and witness audits:

- consults with CSOs and communities during audit, especially on socio-economic and local governance related timber legality criteria and indicators;
- receive inputs/reports/concerns from relevant CSOs and communities during audit;
- take into consideration the semi-annual IFM reports received from CSOs.

5.5 Municipal/District Assemblies

The following obligations/roles are expected from MDAs:

- Contribute to a fund enabling LIMs to operate (e.g. by earmarking a percentage of the royalties received for LIM support);
- Liaise with FSD district offices and traditional authorities to sensitize communities on IFM;
- Provide political leadership in promoting IFM at the local level;
- Demand accountability from CSOs and local communities on IFM;
- Support awareness campaigns against illegal logging.
6.0  **Key Terms and Concepts**

i. **FLEGT licence**  
A licence granted by the Forestry Commission for full compliance with VPA requirements.

ii. **Ghana Legality Assurance System**  
A system of checks and balances implemented to ensure the legality of timber sources and compliance to all the relevant legally prescribed regulations with respect to logging, transport, processing and export and/or sales of timber on the domestic market of Ghana.

iii. **Legality licensing**  
The process for ascertaining compliance with the legality matrix for the purpose of the issuance of a legality licence.

iv. **Logger**  
A harvester of timber, either a timber firm or a logging contractor.

v. **Local Independent Monitor**  
A community person appointed by the CSOs to conduct independent monitoring of the activities of timber logging companies and monitor and alert on illegal logging activities.

vi. **Off-reserve logging**  
Formally permitted logging outside of forest reserves.

vii. **Permit**  
Logging permit issued by the competent authorities for a specified period of time, a specified location, specified species and specified volume or number of trees.

viii. **Permit holder**  
Timber firm or logger holding a permit on its name.

ix. **Production Forest Reserve**  
An area in a forest reserve where controlled logging activities are permitted.

x. **Regional Manager**  
The Regional Forest Manager or an authorised representative of the RFM.
xi. **Restricted Species**
A permit issued under regulation, for the regulation of the felling of a species of timber specified in the Ninth Schedule.

xii. **Social Responsibility Agreement**
A specific agreement signed between a logger and a community (and witnesses, including the DFO and traditional authorities) defining the value and type of contribution of the logger towards the development of FFCs in whose area (on or off-reserve) logging is to take place.

xiii. **Stumpage Fee**
The rate used to calculate stumpage fees according to regulation 60 which is determined by the Minister in consultation with the Commission and the Administrator of Stool Lands, having regard to the market demand and the inventory on levels of timber species.

xiv. **Voluntary Partnership Agreement**
Agreement between the Government of Ghana and the European Union specifying the requirements that shall be fulfilled by both parties to enable the production, transport, processing, sales and export of duly monitored legal timber and related issues in the context of Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT).

xv. **Wood Tracking System**
Includes a chain of processes that relate the monitoring and reporting system used by the Commission to ensure that a timber product of the class description specified in the Second Schedule meet the criteria required by the Commission.
6.0 References


Annex 1 The Local Independent Monitor (LIM)

Independent forest monitoring (IFM) at the local level is done by selected and trained Local Forest Monitors (LIMs). The LIMs are mobilized and organized from forest communities. This is an innovation from the Civil Society/Community Independent Forest Monitoring (IFM). They are mobilized and trained to monitor timber harvesting operations at the community level using formal and standardized methods and procedures. A Civil Society/Community Independent Monitoring Guidelines has been developed by the RMSC and RUDEYA to facilitate their work. The Guidelines contain the scope, methodology and reporting mechanisms for the independent forest monitoring operations. The main function of the LIMs is to assist Civil Society in undertaking independent forest monitoring by reporting forest infractions to the District Forest Services Division and the Civil Society Networks for verification and necessary actions. They work as observer groups with the view to enhance forest law compliance and enforcement, in line with the Ghana VPA. At the formative stage there is the need to forge close working relationships with Civil Society Organizations in the forestry sector that have a clear objective to do independent forest monitoring.

Criteria for the selection of LIMs:

- To qualify as LIM one has to be a native from a forest community.
- The person should not belong to any other CBO like the CRMCs, CFCs or LSRACs.
- The person should not have any previous criminal record.
- The person should be free from any previous illegal logging activities.
- The person should be able to communicate in the native language and English, and with a minimum education standard of Junior High School certificate.

The LIMs are formed with a gender balance approach including women and youth. There shall not be any discrimination on political or religious background. To qualify as a LIM one has to be nominated by community or opinion leaders or a local NGO. LIMs are selected by CSOs; their selection is formalized by the issuance of a LIM ID.

The work of LIMs:

LIMs are doing their work on a largely voluntary basis. However, in order to facilitate their work, including field visits, they shall be provided with some field equipment (e.g. a mobile phone with sim card and air time; wellington boots; cutlass; torch light; rain coat; T-shirt). Further they shall be adequately trained and be reimbursed for transport costs once on mission outside of their locality, i.e. related to meetings and training outside of their locality. They shall also be provided with a LIM ID card, to facilitate their introduction to stakeholders during official activities, where applicable.
LIMs are encouraged to operate as a team of at least two LIMs, a so called Independent Monitoring Team (IMT). LIMs both monitor the formal logging activities and related aspects, as well as illegal logging activities. With respect to the former, LIMs plan their monitoring activities in close coordination and where possible in cooperation with FSD district office and the respective timber companies. With respect to the latter, they have a role to immediately alert the authorities and CSO network.

**Sustainability aspects regarding to LIMs**

**Technical sustainability:** The LIMs receive training from National NGOs and technical experts. After training they are accompanied by CSO staff for technical support in case they have questions. While gaining experience LIMs become trainers of trainees, capable of training other people in the communities on IFM principles.

**Socio-economic sustainability:** They work to promote community development through the implementation of Social Responsibility Agreements, fair compensation of farmers for damage caused in off-reserve logging and increased royalty flows to their District Assembly, meant for development projects. This will enhance community interest, forest protection and sustainable forest management practices.

**Environmental sustainability:** They are a community based group that is trained to protect the community interest in social and environmental values in forest protection including sacred groves and scenic sites in the forest.

**Financial sustainability:** The LIMs concept is a new innovation that can be tapped to check rampant illegal logging and also control illegal timber trade in the Ghanaian domestic market. It is highly recommended that the LIMs should have strong affiliation with their Ghanaian NGO counterparts to do fund raising from local sources and to augment donor support in their operations. The established LIMs should be assisted to prepare simple and small budgets for their operations by the NGO counterparts. Where possible an IFM Fund shall be established with the aim to sustainably provide a long-term financial basis enabling effective IFM operations, including the functioning of LIMs. Contributions to this IFM Fund could be made by MDAs, FC and donors. Funding sources may include a percentage of the value of confiscated illegal timber auctioned by FC; a percentage of royalties obtained by FC; a percentage of royalties obtained by District Assemblies; donations by the donor community and/or the private sector.

**Institutional sustainability:** LIMs collaborate with FC, MDAs, communities, CSOs and timber firms avoiding non-compliance with legal requirements, thereby contributing to enable FLEGT licensing. More specifically, they operate in close coordination with FC. The IFM Guideline, including the operational protocols for LIMs, have been established by the RMSC of the FC in close cooperation with other relevant stakeholders.
## Annex 2  Legality matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Forest Monitoring Subject Area</th>
<th>Related VPA Legality Principle</th>
<th>What Criteria &amp; Associated Output will LIM verify</th>
<th>How &amp; Which Auditee will LIM verify Output</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **ON-RESERVE FOREST OPERATIONS**           | Identification of sources of timber in forest reserve *(Relates to Principle 1)* | 1. For Timber Utilization Contracts (TUC) in on-reserves, forest management plan preparation covers strategic plan;  
   ii. Delineation of TUCs;  
   iii. Conduct of an inventory before harvesting (on-reserve, off-reserve and plantation);  
   iv. Written consent of concerned individual, group or owners.  
   **Completed legality outputs confirming a valid management plan for the reserve** | √  
|                                            |                                | Field Audit & Interview | FSD, Landowner |
|                                            | Timber rights allocation procedures *(Relates to Principle 2)* | i. Natural Forest TUC and Plantation permit;  
   ii. Salvage permit process/ Issued salvage permit  
   iii. Other approved timber right from FC/MLNR  
   **Completed legality outputs confirming a valid TUC, Salvage or other valid timber right** | √  
|                                            |                                | Field Audit & Interview | FSD, TRAU, Timber right holder |
|                                            | Timber harvest operations *(Relates to Principle 3)* | i. Stock surveys on reserve conducted in accordance with the logging manual.  
   ii. Harvesting plan.  
   iii. Logging was carried out in accordance with harvesting requirement in areas designated for timber production  
   iv. Logs were accurately measured and recorded.  
   v. Timber harvested corresponded to the species and volumes or numbers authorized in the TUC or Salvage permit.  
   vi. Stumps and logs were marked and numbered in accordance with the logging manual.  
   **Completed legality outputs confirming harvesting operations such as TIF, LIF, marked/labeled stumps and logs, forest hygiene kept and minimal environmental damage** | √  
|                                            |                                | Field Audit & Interview | FSD, RMSC, Logger |
|                                            | Timber transport and inspection *(Relates to Principle 4)* | i. Timber was transported with official documentation detailing its origin and corresponding with physical identification of the timber  
   ii. Timber was transported within the time | √  
<p>|                                            |                                | Field Audit &amp; Interview | FSD, Logger/Driver of vehicle |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Forest Monitoring Subject Area</th>
<th>Related VPA Legality Principle</th>
<th>What Criteria &amp; Associated Output will LIM verify</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OFF RESERVE LOGGING OPERATIONS IN AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPES.</td>
<td>Identification of sources of timber in forest reserve (Relates to Principle 1)</td>
<td>i. For controlled timber exploitation in off-reserves, logging plans are prepared over TUC/Permit areas; ii. Delineation of TUCs/permit areas; iii. Conduct of an enumeration in agricultural landscapes/fallow lands before harvesting in off-reserve areas iv. Written consent of concerned individual, group or owners or farmers</td>
<td>Field Audit &amp; Interview FSD, Landowner</td>
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<td>Timber rights allocation procedures (Relates to Principle 2)</td>
<td>i. Natural Forest TUC mostly small scale and; Qualification of loggers for grant of TUC by TREC. ii. Salvage permit process/ Issued salvage permit iii. Other approved timber right from FC/MLNR</td>
<td>FSD, TRAU, Timber right holder</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Timber harvest operations (Relates to Principle 3)</td>
<td>i. Pre-felling inspection conducted in accordance with the logging manual. ii. Annual logging plan. iii. Logging was carried out in accordance with harvesting requirement in areas designated for timber production iv. Logs were accurately measured and recorded. v. Timber harvested corresponded to the species and volumes or numbers authorized in the TUC or Salvage permit. vi. Stumps and logs were marked and numbered in accordance with the logging manual. vii. Compensation paid to affected farmers in respect of crop damage</td>
<td>FSD, RMSC, Logger, Affected farmers, Land Valuation Dept.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Timber transport and inspection (Relates to Principle 4)</td>
<td>i. Timber was transported with official documentation detailing its origin and corresponding with physical identification</td>
<td>FSD, Logger/Driver of vehicle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Forest Monitoring Subject Area</td>
<td>Related VPA Legality Principle</td>
<td>What Criteria &amp; Associated Output will LIM verify</td>
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<td>WTS Portal &amp; Docs. Review Field Audit &amp; Interview Responsible FC Div./Unit/Other</td>
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</table>

of the timber
ii. Timber was transported within the time periods permitted by law (6 am- 6 pm).
Completed legality outputs confirming completed and valid LMCC/PLMCC

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AGREEMENT NEGOTIATION AND IMPLEMENTATION.
Timber harvest operations *(Relates to Principle 3)*

i. The logger followed procedures for SRA negotiation and implemented Social Responsibility Agreement
ii. Community observed code of conduct associated with SRA implementation
iii. FSD mediated SRA negotiation
Completed legality outputs confirming completed and signed SRA with evidence of implementation

√ √ FSD, Communities, Timber right holder

REVENUE COLLECTION, DISBURSEMENT TO BENEFICIARIES AND UTILIZATION OF TIMBER ROYALTIES
Collection of stumpage fees and shareable revenue *(Relates to Principle 7)*

i. Logger was not in default of stumpage fees or any other sharable fees payable by loggers
ii. Beneficiaries receive royalties timely
iii. Evidence of utilization of royalties for the benefit of communities
Completed legality output confirming effective collection of stumpage fees and evidence of timely receipt of royalties

√ √ FSD, Finance Unit at FC-HQ, MDAs, Traditional Authorities
### Annex 3 Criteria and indicators monitored by LIMs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Forest Monitoring Subject Area</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 ON- RESERVE FOREST OPERATIONS</td>
<td>1.1 For Timber Utilization Contracts (TUC) in on-reserves, forest management plan preparation covers strategic plan;</td>
<td>1.1.1 An up-dated forest management plan and/or a TUC permit;</td>
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<td>1.2 Delineation of TUCs;</td>
<td>1.1.2 TUC permit is valid (relevant to the specific area; not relevant to the species logged; permit period is expired; permit issued to the logger concerned);</td>
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<td>1.3 Conduct of an inventory before harvesting (on-reserve, off-reserve and plantation);</td>
<td>1.2.1 TUC is clearly delineated on maps;</td>
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<td>1.4 Written consent of concerned individual, group or owners.</td>
<td>1.2.2 TUC boundaries are clearly marked in the field;</td>
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<td>1.3.1 Up-dated pre-harvesting inventory is available;</td>
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<td>1.4.1 Written consent of owner(s) (individual or group) is available;</td>
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<td>1.4.2 Consent was negotiated before start of operations (=felling of any tree);</td>
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<td>1.5 Natural Forest TUC and Plantation permit;</td>
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<td>1.5.1 Valid natural forest TUC or plantation permit present;</td>
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<td>1.5.2 Logging company appears on the list of qualified loggers issued by TREC;</td>
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<td>1.6 Salvage permit process/ Issued salvage permit</td>
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<td>1.6.1 Presence of a valid salvage permit;</td>
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<td>1.6.2 Salvage permit issued by competent authority;</td>
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<td>1.6.3 Salvage permit issued for an area that for some reasons shall not be logged;</td>
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<td>1.6.4 Salvage permit issued according to the formally established procedures;</td>
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<td>1.7 Other approved timber right from FC/MLNR</td>
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<td>1.7.1 Presence of a valid permit;</td>
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<td>1.7.2 Permit issued by competent authority;</td>
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<td>1.7.4 Permit issued according to the formally established procedures;</td>
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<td>1.8 Stock surveys on reserve conducted in accordance with the logging manual.</td>
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<td>1.8.1 Evidence of stock survey done;</td>
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<td>1.8.2 Stock survey in line with logging manual;</td>
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<td>1.9 Harvesting plan.</td>
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<td>1.9.1 Compliance with harvesting plan present;</td>
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<td>1.10 Logging was carried out in accordance with harvesting requirement in areas designated for timber production</td>
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<td>1.10.1 Trees logged outside of designated timber production area with timber harvesting requirement;</td>
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<td>1.10.2 Trees logged do not concern allowed species;</td>
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<td>1.11.1 Volume logged or number of trees logged is</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent Forest Monitoring Subject Area</td>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>Indicators</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.11 Logs were accurately measured and recorded.</td>
<td>too high (= more than allowed according to the permit);</td>
<td>1.11.1 Harvested timber corresponds (reference numbers of logs) to the authorized permit; 1.11.2 Harvested timber does correspond to the authorized species;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.12 Timber harvested corresponded to the species and volumes or numbers authorized in the TUC or Salvage permit.</td>
<td>1.12.1 Stumps and/or logs all marked; 1.12.2 Stumps and/or logs numbered in line with the logging manual; 1.12.3 Stumps and/or logs have all required marks (FR mark; TUC mark; company mark); 1.12.4 Stumps and/or logs marked with white paint; 1.12.5 Stumps and/or log marking legible;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.13 Stumps and logs were marked and numbered in accordance with the logging manual.</td>
<td>1.13.1 Stumps and/or logs all marked; 1.13.2 Stumps and/or logs numbered in line with the logging manual; 1.13.3 Stumps and/or logs have all required marks (FR mark; TUC mark; company mark); 1.13.4 Stumps and/or logs marked with white paint; 1.13.5 Stumps and/or log marking legible;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.14 Timber was transported with official documentation detailing its origin and corresponding with physical identification of the timber</td>
<td>1.14.1 Presence of official and valid (check permitted timeframe) FC transport documentation (LMCC); 1.14.2 Origin of the timber mentioned in transport documentation; 1.14.3 Documentation matches with the physical identification of the transported load (same species; specified volume; specified number of logs; log numbers do coincide with numbers mentioned in permit or logging plan);</td>
<td>1.14.1.1 Presence of up-to-date logging plans that are in line with the issued TUC permit; 1.14.2.1 TUC permit is valid (relevant to the specific area; relevant to the species logged; period is expired; issued to the particular logger);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.15 Timber was transported within the time periods permitted by law (6 am - 6 pm).</td>
<td>1.15.1 Timber transported within permitted time slot (after 6 p.m.); (after 6 p.m. and before 6 a.m. not allowed to transport logs!);</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2 OFF RESERVE LOGGING OPERATIONS IN AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPES.

<p>| 2.1 For controlled timber exploitation in off-reserves, logging plans are prepared over TUC/Permit areas; | 2.1.1 Availability of up-to-date logging plan that is in line with the issued TUC permit; 2.1.2 TUC permit is valid (relevant to the specific area; relevant to the species logged; period is expired; issued to the particular logger); | |
| 2.2 Delineation of TUCs/permit areas; | 2.2.1 TUC area delineated on maps and on the field; 2.2.2 TUC boundaries are clearly marked in the field; | |
| 2.3 Conduct of an enumeration in agricultural landscapes/fallow lands before harvesting in off-reserve areas | 2.3.1 Up-dated pre-harvesting inventory is available, including the enumeration of trees in the off-reserve landscape; | |
| 2.4 Written consent of concerned individual, group or owners or farmers | 2.4.1 Written consent of owner(s) (individual or group) is available; 2.4.2 Consent was negotiated and given before start of operations (=felling of any tree); | |
| 2.5 Natural Forest TUC mostly small scale and; Qualification of loggers for grant of TUC by TREC. | 2.5.1 Valid natural forest TUC or plantation permit absent; 2.5.2 Logging company appears on the list of qualified loggers issued by TREC; 2.5.3 Salvage permit process/ Issued salvage permit | |
| 2.6 Salvage permit process/ Issued salvage permit | 2.6.1 Valid salvage permit; 2.6.2 Salvage permit issued by competent authority; | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Forest Monitoring Subject Area</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.7 Other approved timber right from FC/MLNR</td>
<td>2.6.3 Salvage permit issued for area that for some reasons shall not be logged; 2.6.4 Salvage permit issued according to the formally established procedures;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.8 Pre-felling inspection conducted in accordance with the logging manual.</td>
<td>2.8.1 Pre-felling inspection done; 2.8.2 Pre-felling inspection in line with logging manual;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.9 Annual logging plan.</td>
<td>2.9.1 Approved harvesting plan present;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.10 Logging was carried out in accordance with harvesting requirement in areas designated for timber production</td>
<td>2.10.1 Trees logged within designated timber production area with timber harvesting requirement; 2.10.2 Trees logged do concern allowed species;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.11 Logs were accurately measured and recorded.</td>
<td>2.11.1 Volume logged or number of trees logged correct</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>2.12 Timber harvested corresponded to the species and volumes or numbers authorized in the TUC or Salvage permit.</td>
<td>2.12.1 Harvested timber does correspond (reference numbers of logs) to the authorized permit; 2.12.2 Harvested timber corresponds to the authorized species;</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>2.13 Stumps and logs were marked and numbered in accordance with the logging manual.</td>
<td>2.13.1 Stumps and/or logs all marked; 2.13.2 Stumps and/or logs numbered in line with the logging manual; 2.13.3 Stumps and/or logs have all required marks (FR mark; TUC mark; company mark); 2.13.4 Stumps and/or logs marked with white paint; 2.13.5 Stumps and/or log marking legible;</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>2.14 Compensation paid to affected farmers in respect of crop damage</td>
<td>2.14.1 Compensation negotiated; 2.14.2 compensation paid; 2.14.3 Compensation paid fair and commensurate to damage caused; 2.14.4 Compensation paid does cover all damage caused; 2.14.5 complete or timely payment of compensation; 2.14.6 Logging started after negotiation resulted in agreement; 2.14.7 Presence of proof of consent and/or payment (relevant documentation not available);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Forest Monitoring Subject Area</td>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>Indicators</td>
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<td><strong>2.15</strong> Timber was transported with official documentation detailing its origin and corresponding with physical identification of the timber</td>
<td><strong>2.15.1</strong> Official and valid (check permitted timeframe) FC transport documentation (LMCC); <strong>2.15.2</strong> Origin of the timber mentioned in transport documentation; <strong>2.15.3</strong> Documentation match with the physical identification of the transported load (same species; specified volume; specified number of logs; log numbers do coincide with numbers mentioned in permit or logging plan);</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>2.16</strong> Timber was transported within the time periods permitted by law (6 am-6 pm).</td>
<td><strong>2.16.1</strong> Timber transported within permitted time slot (after 6 p.m. and before 6 a.m. not allowed to transport logs!);</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>3</strong> SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AGREEMENT NEGOTIATION AND IMPLEMENTATION.</td>
<td><strong>3.1</strong> The logger followed procedures for SRA negotiation and implemented Social Responsibility Agreement</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>3.2</strong> Community observed code of conduct associated with SRA implementation</td>
<td><strong>3.2.1</strong> Presence of a local SRA Committee; <strong>3.2.2</strong> Community aware of SRA payments received (transparency); <strong>3.2.3</strong> Presence of proof regarding SRA receipt; <strong>3.2.4</strong> Payment proof present indicates that payments have been made to the community; <strong>3.2.5</strong> SRA payments received used for personal interest of one or some community members only (e.g. the chief);</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>3.3</strong> FSD mediated SRA negotiation</td>
<td><strong>3.3.1</strong> SRA document signed by FSD; <strong>3.3.2</strong> Other information indicating that FSD was involved in mediating the SRA negotiation;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>4</strong> REVENUE COLLECTION, DISBURSEMENT TO BENEFICIARIES AND UTILIZATION OF TIMBER ROYALTIES</td>
<td><strong>4.1</strong> Logger was not in default of stumpage fees or any other sharable fees payable by loggers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>4.2</strong> Beneficiaries receive royalties timely</td>
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<td><strong>4.3</strong> Evidence of utilization of royalties for the benefit of communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Forest Monitoring Subject Area</td>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>Indicators</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **5 ILLEGAL TIMBER ACTIVITIES**          | 5.1 Logger does not comply with one or more highly relevant regulations, including, but not limited to:  
  1. Having a valid logging permit  
  2. Having paid stumpage fees and/or other relevant taxes and royalties  
  3. Logging in non-permitted areas (outside of permitted logging area or in areas with limitations due to slope, water courses, High Conservation Values, cultural values or other restrictions)  
  4. Logging of non-permitted timber species  
  5. Not having duly negotiated and/or paid SRA  
  6. Not having duly negotiated and/or paid compensation for damage caused to crops  
  7. Having used chainsaws for the sawing of logs into planks, beams, etc  
  8. Not having duly followed FC instructions for registration of logs  
  9. Not having duly followed FC instructions on transport of logs, including the timing of transport (allowed between 6 a.m. and 18 p.m. only) | transparent way;  
  5.1.1 Presence of a valid logging permit, issued by the relevant authority;  
  5.1.2 Presence of payment slips or other proof indicating that correct payment has been effected for stumpage, royalties and/or other taxes due;  
  5.1.3 Logging taking place in areas clearly outside the boundaries of the logging permit;  
  5.1.4 Logging of species listed as protected and/or endangered (e.g. CITES listed), while no CITES authorization or written exemption can be produced;  
  5.1.5 Presence of duly signed SRA document and/or proof of related payments;  
  5.1.6 Presence of proof of a compensation negotiation report, written consent of farmer, calculations on fair and commensurate compensation amounts, and/or signed proof of payment;  
  5.1.7 Use of chainsaws, as can be seen at the logging location and on the marks left on the sawn timber and can be heard by the community;  
  5.1.8 Lacking or no legible markings on stumps, logs and/or lumber;  
  5.1.9. Presence of LMCC and/or PLMCC; (http://axoninfosystems.com/v3/?g1_work=ghana-wood-tracking-system);  
  5.1.10 Transport of logs and/or lumber encountered on the road between 6.00 p.m. and 6.00 a.m. (when transport is not allowed). |