



FORIG NEWS

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DNA TIMBER TRACKING KICK-OFF MEETING IN PICTURES

FORIG NEWS

Forestry Research Institute of Ghana

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DNA TIMBER TRACKING PROJECT KICK-OFF MEETING

Introduction

For its excellent record on international projects management, CSIR-FORIG has once again been identified as a key Institute to coordinate a new project on Timber Tracking System using DNA to track illegal timber resources. Seven African countries together with other international partners are involved in the project. In his introductory statement, Dr. Gerhard Breulmann of ITTO welcomed participants to the inception meeting. He said development of scientific timber tracking system using DNA fingerprints could be the surest way of tracking illegal timber resources from Africa. The kick-off meeting which was organized by CSIR-FORIG and sponsored by ITTO, German Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection in collaboration with Johann Heinrich von Thünen Institute of Germany was held at the Institute's premises from 22nd to 24th May, 2012.

In attendance at the opening ceremony were over fifty (50) participants representing Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom and of course Africa. Mr. Musa Abu Juam, Technical Director from the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources (Ghana) facilitated the ceremony.

Background Information

Illegal forest activities contribute to the degradation of forests and undermine the contribution of the forest sector to poverty alleviation, climate change mitigation and socio-economic development. Although many legal instruments like the European Union (EU) Timber Trade Regulation have been established to combat illegal logging and the trade of illegally sourced timber, practical control mechanisms to identify the tree species and geo-



Opening ceremony

Photo: Bukari Daramani

graphic origin of wood and wood products are still lacking. The project on DNA fingerprinting and isotope analysis is expected to provide such practical control mechanisms by using characters that are inherent in timber and impossible to falsify. The combination of both methods would guarantee a high spatial resolution as well as a strong statistical power at a higher cost efficiency for the control of origin of wood and wood products.

Objectives of Kick-Off Meeting

The objectives of the meeting were:

- ⇒ To initiate the project
- ⇒ Present and discuss the final design (work program and time schedule) of the project
- ⇒ Present and discuss the expected contributions and roles of the different partners
- ⇒ Present and discuss the analysis of relevant stakeholders of the project

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It is worth mentioning that this is a three-year regional project on species identification and timber tracking system with DNA fingerprints and stable isotopes for several important timber tree species in seven African countries, namely Cameroon, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo, Gabon, Ghana and Kenya. Furthermore, the project will focus primarily on the three target species chosen by representatives from timber producing countries, which are iroko (*Milicia excelsa*, *M. regia*), sapelli (*Entandrophragma cylindricum*) and wawa (*Triplochiton scleroxylon*).

Presentations

The Deputy Director of CSIR-FORIG, Dr. E. G. Foli who represented the Director gave a brief delivery on the overview of research at the Institute. Specific areas he spoke on included a brief history of the Institute, current research programmes scientists are involved in and revenue generating activities of the Institute. He concluded by stating key challenges to research activities at CSIR-FORIG like inadequate research funding from government, the fact that the industry is not ready to use research results, high attrition rate due to poor service conditions and a recent development which has to do with illegal logging activities in some research plots.

Dr. Breulmann during his delivery mentioned that certain activities under the DNA Timber Tracking Project are linked to the recent ITTO activity which is geared towards preparing a compendium on Timber Tracking Technologies and Case Studies. The Compendium, he said is expected to provide guidance to governments and other stakeholders on how tracking technologies could contribute effectively towards improving forest governance.

Mr. Musa Abu Juam, in his keynote address said he was proud to be part of the meeting especially because the Project is aimed at developing technologies for tracking illegal timber. He further stated that since the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) in 2003, Ghana has remained keen on maintaining access to the European timber market and building a good governance regime to promote sustainable development of the resource. However, a concern which is being addressed is the supply of legal timber to the domestic market. Mr. Abu Juam was emphatic that the drive to control illegal logging associated with the domestic market is on-going.

In his concluding remarks, his belief was that the inception of the Project was an important milestone in the control of the timber trade and industry in both Ghana and the world at large. He was hopeful such cooperation amongst fellow African countries and International partners would lead to effective and beneficial developmental cooperation.



During the Technical Session

Photo: Bukari Daramani

The opening ceremony was followed by a two-day technical session which was climaxed with a field trip to SAMARTEX in the Western Region of Ghana.

OBITUARY

It was with saddened hearts that Management and Staff of CSIR-FORIG and in fact, all CSIR institutes received the news of the death of Dr. Ebenezer Owusu-Sekyere, Principal Research Scientist of Forests, Livelihood and Sustainable Development Division. "Dr. Owuu", as he was affectionately called, has been buried.

Although disheartening, we do take consolation in the account at John 5: 28, 29 which speaks about the resurrection of the dead as the only hope for our dead loved ones.

STAFF PROMOTIONS

The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research has approved the promotion of the following research, senior and junior members of staff. Management and Staff wish to congratulate them for a good work done.

- ⇒ Dr. Daniel Aninagyei Ofori has been promoted from Principal Research Scientist to Chief Research Scientist, effective 1st January, 2010.
- ⇒ The late Dr. Ebenezer Owusu-Sekyere was promoted from Senior Research Scientist to Principal Research Scientist, effective 1st January, 2010.
- ⇒ Mrs. Theresa Peprah has been promoted from Research Scientist to Senior Research Scientist, effective 1st July, 2009.
- ⇒ Dr. Emmanuel Marfo has been promoted from Research Scientist to Senior Research Scientist, effective 1st January, 2010.
- ⇒ Dr. Nana Sarfo Agyemang Derkyi has been promoted from Research Scientist to Senior Research Scientist, effective 1st January, 2010.
- ⇒ Dr. Emmanuel Opuni-Frimpong has been promoted from Research Scientist to Senior Research Scientist, effective 1st July, 2010.
- ⇒ Mr. K. Prempeh Bando has been promoted from Principal Technical Officer to Chief Technical Officer, effective 1st January, 2011.
- ⇒ Mr. Felix Boakye has been promoted from Senior Technical Officer to Principal Technical Officer, effective 1st January, 2012.
- ⇒ Mr. Richard K. Adjei has been promoted from Senior Technical Officer to Principal Technical Officer, effective 1st January, 2012.
- ⇒ Mr. Elvis E. Nkrumah has been promoted from Technical Officer to Senior Technical Officer, effective 1st January, 2012.
- ⇒ Mr. James K. Govina has been promoted from Technical Officer to Senior Technical Officer, effective 1st January, 2010.
- ⇒ Mrs. Wendy O. Amankwaah has been promoted from Accounting Assistant to Senior Accounting Assistant, effective 1st January, 2012.
- ⇒ Mr. George K. Kpodo has been promoted from Security Assistant to Senior Security Assistant, effective 1st January, 2012.
- ⇒ Mr. Emmanuel K. Antwi has been promoted from Security Assistant to Senior Security Assistant, effective 1st January, 2012.
- ⇒ Mr. Thomas Avarason has been promoted to Assistant Transport Officer, effective 1st January, 2012.
- ⇒ Mr. Michael Atitsogbui has been promoted to Security Officer, effective 1st January, 2012.
- ⇒ Mr. Pascal Katoule has been promoted to Driver Inspector, effective 1st January, 2011.
- ⇒ Mr. Stephen E. K. Acheampong has been promoted to Security Assistant Grade 1, effective 1st January, 2012.
- ⇒ Mr. Joseph K. Ansah has been promoted to Security Assistant Grade 1, effective 1st January, 2012.
- ⇒ Mr. Solomon K. Adjei has been promoted to Tradesman Superintendent 1 (Operator), effective 1st January, 2012.
- ⇒ Mr. Kofi Poku has been promoted to Supervisor Grade 1, effective 1st January, 2012.
- ⇒ Mr. Kofi Abraham has been promoted to Supervisor Grade 1, effective 1st January, 2012.
- ⇒ Mr. Edward Nsorwaa has been promoted to Supervisor Grade 1, effective 1st January, 2012.
- ⇒ Mr. Abdul Atinga has been promoted to Supervisor Grade 1, effective 1st January, 2012.
- ⇒ Mr. Samuel Ayambire has been promoted to Supervisor Grade 1, effective 1st January, 2012.
- ⇒ Mr. Thomas Atendana has been promoted to Supervisor Grade 2, effective 1st January, 2012.
- ⇒ Ms. Gifty Agyeiwaah has been promoted to Senior Labourer, effective 1st January, 2012.

TRAINING WORKSHOP ON CARBON USE EFFICIENCY PROJECT

CSIR-Forestry Research Institute of Ghana in collaboration with Oxford University in the United Kingdom organized a four-day training workshop titled: *“Does Shifting Carbon Use Efficiency Determine the Growth Rates of Intact and Disturbed Tropical Forests? Gathering New Evidence from African Forests”* from 28th to 31st May, 2012 at the Institute’s Conference Room. Professor Yadvinder Singh Malhi (Oxford) is the Principal Investigator while Dr. Stephen Adu-Bredu, Head of Forestry and Wildlife Unit is the project leader.

The purpose of the training was to equip participants with data analysis and write-up, using examples from similar work done in other countries. A total of twenty (22) participants from Oxford University, Nature Conservation Research Centre (NCRC - Accra), Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Kogyae Strict Nature Reserve and CSIR-FORIG were in attendance during the training period.

The main project aims at establishing studies at 18 plots (five sites) in Africa to address hypotheses on carbon production, respiration and allocation in tropical forests, while simultaneously generating a powerful simultaneous multi-site comparison using a uniform methodology between African and Amazonian forests. To be able to assess generalised results, there will be the need to incorporate substantial replication across plots. Beneficiaries of the project would be the scientific communities comprising researchers, forest ecologists and ecosystem scientists, global change and global carbon cycle scientists together with African scientists seeking collaboration and resources to engage in international research programmes.



Training workshop on carbon use efficiency

Photo: Bukari Daramani





ITTO & IUFRO CORNER

ITTO MEETINGS

6 - 15 September, 2012

IUCN World Conservation Congress

Jeju, Korea

<http://www.itto.int/workshop>

IUFRO Meetings

27 - 31 August, 2012

Bioenergy from Forest Conference - Bioenergy from Root to Boiler

Jyvaskyla and Jamsa, Finland

<http://www.cifor.org/events/upcoming-events>

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