

FGLG-Ghana

NARRATIVE REPORT 2011





Forest Governance Learning Group - GHANA

REPORT FOR FIRST HALF OF 2011

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Civic Response convenes the Forest Governance Learning Group in Ghana. IIED provides funding and support for this, and helps connect the FGLG Ghana team with the nine other country teams in the FGLG initiative. This report examines the achievements and setbacks of the FGLG Ghana team, emerging trends in the forest sector and strategic paths for the learning group in the second half of the year. The Core learning group convened two meetings while the reference group assembled once over the reporting period. This first quarter has provided a good learning opportunity in working with the core group and it is expected to greatly enhance the influence of the learning group in the subsequent half of the year.

2.0 PROGRESS WITH GHANA WORK PLAN

FGLG Ghana has made good progress with the agreed work plan for 2011. Progress with the core group and reference group is outlined below.

2.1 Core Group Meetings

Two core group meetings were organized in the first half of the year; the first on 4th February, 2011 and the second on 15th April, 2011. The first meeting was attended by four core group members and three staff from Civic Response. This meeting sought to give updates of with the work plan for 2011 to the core group and to seek their inputs for finalization. After deliberations, the work plan was accepted. They accepted the set of themes for discussion but also agreed to track issues that emerge in the course of the year. The local impact of the VPA implementation which was previously not featured in the set of themes was added. The group thought it prudent to commence discussion on tenure and rights in the face of new investments at the next meeting. This theme was selected in the light of the Ghana Forest Investment Program which was the latest investment in the sector and its mission scheduled for later in the year. The outcome of the meeting was circulated to all core learning group members and the final work plan forwarded to IIED.

The second group meeting as indicated earlier was held on 15th April, 2011, despite the confirmation of availability of core group, they failed to turn up, necessitating a rescheduling of the meeting. This was an indication of challenge in scheduling meetings for the core group. This setback generated some discussions among members on alternative strategies for working more effectively without necessarily imposing new schedules on members' already difficult schedules.

2.2 Reference Group meeting

A reference group was convened 18-20 May, 2011 in Accra, to hold discussions and to build capacity on sector issues. In attendance were 33 participants drawn from Forest Watch Ghana, facilitators of community and district forest forums, and some participants from

natural resource and social activist organizations. The meeting served as a platform to increase awareness and understanding of the wide range of forest sector initiatives in Ghana and the possible impacts on work in the forest governance sector including community rights and tenure. Sector initiatives explored included the Forest Investment Program, the VPA implementation, the National Forest Plantation Program the Non Legally Binding Agreements on all types of forests. There was also a capacity training conducted by Civic Response for participants on climate justice and the finance mechanisms for REDD+. Presentations were made by different government officials including two members of the core group. Additionally the '*Trees in Local Hands*' FGLG video documentary was shown to members to appreciate the work of the Learning group and the important role participants play as a reference group.

A few critical issues emerged from the analysis of participants after looking at the various initiatives. With the VPA, though members were optimistic about improved revenues to communities and the protection of forest resources through the Legality Assurance System, they expressed concern about the possible increase in cost of wood due to use of new technology, the low capacity of communities in VPA implantation, the export orientation and possible loss in interest in protection of resource due to unavailability of timber for the local market.

On REDD+ and FIP, participants called for clarity on tree tenure and carbon rights and raised concerns on the possible restricted community access to forests, a focus on conservation for REDD+ financial benefits which could negatively impact food security. There was still a lack of clarity among participants on how REDD+ would impact community access to forest resources, particularly reserves being conserved for carbon sequestration.

Additionally, participants raised the need to enhance the capacity of local communities to clearly understand these sector programs, the need for decentralization and devolution of management of forest to District Assemblies and the funding of community and district forest forums by the District Assemblies.

This meeting provided the first opportunity of its kind for the reference group to have a general understanding of the range of forest initiatives and also to interact with government officials on these same issues.

2.3 What has not worked well

The following has been the main challenges of the learning group in Ghana.

Organized meeting for the core group

Scheduling a convenient time for meetings has been a major hurdle. The agreed Friday evening quarterly meeting, as explained earlier has been difficult for the core group to honor. Attendance in previous organized meeting was below expectation and these have delayed the process. This can be attributed to the difficult work schedule of members. It is far easier to meet members individually - and in this way they are very willing to lend support to the learning group.

Developing presentations and write-ups

It seems quite tasking for core group members to make presentations and write-ups to lead discussion on themes. Though they have been circulated among the core group, members are yet to indicate their themes of preference.

FGLG needs to give value addition of governance learning to the forest sector to make it relevant and be prioritized by core group members. For this reason some new strategies for working with the core-group have been developed for the next half year of 2011 and beyond, and will be continually reevaluated to ensure it achieves results.

2.4 Recommended changes and strategies

A variety of tactics will be employed in the next half year.

1. Core group meetings will be organized on the shoulder of sector meetings and other relevant sector events. Having these side meetings would provide strategic thinking for such sector events and would largely resolve the meeting problem. Regular contact will be kept with members who cannot be reached in such meetings to have them share their perspectives. Effort will also be focused on the issues for which ‘shuttle diplomacy’, for which FGLG-Ghana has a useful reputation, is critical. Such work is vital – and can be both planned and well described after it is done.
2. Discussants will be contacted to develop lead pieces on selected themes which will be circulated them among members for discussion.
3. The reference group will also reach out particularly to industry to benefit from their experiences.

2.5 Outlook for second half 2011

A series of discussions of the core group will be arranged in the next half year in addition to the first set of publications. Civic Response is taking the lead to develop two policy briefs to share with members. One brief looks at “tenure and rights in the face of new investments – the case of the FIP”, and the other looks at “Critical issues in REDD++ for Ghana”. Two analytical briefs and two further policy briefs will also need to be developed to keep to the aspiration of the work plan. IIED may be asked to help with development and potentially production of these briefs, once drafts are prepared. Additionally, arrangements will be made to broadcast ‘trees in local hands’ documentary on some television stations to generate public discussions on the forest governance challenges such as tree tenure and forest resources beneficiation. The outcomes of these interventions will be reported in the second half year report of 2011.

3.0 FOREST GOVERNANCE DEVELOPMENTS

3.1 Rights Resources and the Constitution

Constitution Review Conference

The National Constitution Review Conference was organized by the Constitution Review Commission from 1st to 5th March, 2011 as part of the 1992 Constitution Review Process. The conference created space for debate on the various submissions for review of the constitution. The conference had a thematic discussion of natural resources and sub theme on forestry and wildlife. Proposals from this sub-theme group include the separation of the governance roles in forestry; policy making, regulation and management functions, the need for local arrangements to determine benefits from forest resources and the need for a

national formula for allocating natural resources revenues accrued to the state. The Commission is finalizing its recommendations which will be placed before cabinet.

Over the same period, the various national civil society networks were mobilized with funding from the Rights and Resources Group to develop and collate positions for the debate on the Natural Resource Provisions at the Constitution Review Conference. In attendance were the Peasant Farmers Association of Ghana, the National Coalition on Mining, Forest Watch Ghana, Civil Society Coalition on Land and the Network for Women's Rights (Netright). The coalitions earlier in 2010 had developed and presented a memorandum to the Constitution Review Commission.

3.2 Natural Resources, Environment and Governance (NREG)

Review of the 1994 Forest and Wildlife Policy

The Government through the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources is reviewing the 1994 Forest and Wildlife Policy. A series of stakeholder engagements have taken place across the country. Consultations are expected to be concluded by the end of August, 2011 after which the new draft policy will be submitted to Cabinet for approval. Members of the learning group are playing key roles in this policy review process.

Legislative Review

The consultant who had been engaged to undertake a review of the legal provisions including acts, regulations and legislative instruments for the forest sector was yet to submit his proposals. He had recommended however that not all legal provisions required the strict amendment procedure. He explained the powers given sector managers (Minister, FC Board) granted powers to change some provisions. Thus the change over from paper based tracking to bar code tracking of wood products did not require parliamentary approval. CSO drew the attention of the ministry and the FC to the parallel nature of the policy and legislative review and the need for the legislative review to incorporate the issues and directions of in the new policy.

3.3 Forest Investments Program

An FIP mission was organized from 30th May to 3rd June, 2011 to allow for interaction with sector stakeholders. The processes for the development of an investment strategy under the program were communicated to participants. Critical issues discussed at the meeting included the need for clarity on tenure and tree rights and the size of land for REDD+ models that can be scaled up. Some participants from the reference group meeting held between 18th and 20th May part of the process. The Forest Investment Program in Ghana is in the national strategy development phase.

3.4 West Africa Forest Governance Forum

The first ever West Africa Forest Governance Forum was organized in Accra 7 - 8th June, 2011 by the IDL Group and the Center for International Development and Training (CIDT). Participants at this forum included Government officials, industry and civil society activists from Ghana, Liberia and the EU. It was a Chatham House type meeting which deliberated on forest governance issues including FLEGT VPA processes in the West Africa sub-region, REDD+ processes, and Forest Certification Standards.

3.5 GIRAF

Forest Forums

A series of community and district forest forums are being organized under the EU funded GIRAF project. The first round of forest forums were completed over the period. Consultations had been held in 19 Districts in five regions of Ghana – Brong Ahafo, Ashanti, Western Region, Central Region and Northern Region. Emerging issues presented at the district forum from the communities included Social Responsibility Agreements (SRAs), compensation for crop losses, accountability and transparency of traditional authorities, and forest managers, community access to Non Timber Forest Products, among others. Plans were underway for the second round of forums to culminate in a National Forest Forum.

A national forest forum will be organized later in the year to discuss the various forest governance issues that have been raised by these forums. It is expected to provide some important bottom-up policy alternatives to enrich the sector reform process. It will also provide space for dialogue between these forest fringe communities and national duty bearers.

A series of televised and radio documentaries were aired on national television and in various regional and district radios to educate the public on their rights with regard to forest resources. A meeting was held with the Parliamentary Select Committee on Forestry and Lands to update them on key outcomes of the project.

Forest Governance Scorecards in Ghana

The report of the Making forest sector Transparent were published by Global Witness and Centre for Indigenous Knowledge and Organizational Development (GIKOD). Data had been collected from six districts with responses from 323 respondents. A further detail of the report is available on www.foresttransparency.info. Key findings from the report include;

- An improved awareness on timber royalties and Social Responsibility Agreements by local communities and traditional authorities though knowledge on legal obligation on SRA is low.
- More consistent publication of royalties by the FC though the publications are always behind schedule and there is low awareness of this publication by local communities

3.6 VPA

Legality Assurance System

The Wood Tracking System (WTS) is being piloted by four companies. The process is also underway to recruit the Independent Monitor and also establish the Timber Validation Council. Measures have been proposed for control of illegal chainsaw logging and they are being looked at from the supply sided, demand side, market pressure and price differentials between legal and illegal timber. Some measures on the supply side include mobile the use of mobile recovery teams which is being piloted, review of tenure and benefit sharing arrangements in the off-reserve, and exploring alternative sources of raw materials. On the demand side measure include review of government procurement systems, livelihood alternatives for those displaced by FLEGT, development of standards and public education.

Abuse of Permit Regime

During the period also, the commitment of the government to the VPA was questioned. Forest Watch Ghana raised concerns about the mandate of the forestry commission to issue several salvage permits to companies for commercial logging purposes. These concerns were in respect to about 100 salvage permits issued in 2010 and 30 new permits issued in the first quarter of 2011. The concerns were drafted in a statement¹ and a letter addressed to the Forestry Commission Board, the Minister of Land and Natural Resources, EU Delegation in Ghana and the Parliamentary Select committee raising the issue that government seems to have reneged on its commitment to good governance principles and the spirit of the FLEGT which were to eliminate this kind of illegality and corruption in the sector. This concern was to be table by Forest Watch Ghana at the Joint Monitoring Review Meeting of the VPA in July, 2011 if responses were not satisfactory.

4.0 IMPACTS OF THE WORK

Impacts are difficult to measure at the moment. The reference group meeting effectively mobilized and prepared particularly civil society participants for the mission. It ensured that such participants were better informed on the general sector governance reform and the FIP and REDD+ processes. Also, ownership of the learning group has been greatly enhanced. Core group members have offered a variety of suggestions to ensure work effective engagement in the subsequent years. This shared sense of ownership is expected to enhance the cohesion of the learning group.

5.0 LESSONS & IMPLICATIONS FOR WORK AHEAD

Convening the core group for meetings will require some tact and varied approaches to make it possible to live up to its core role. Also the learning group will have to position itself more strategically along relevant sector processes to add value. It also opens up space for engaging other important sector leaders who could enhance the quality of discussions of the learning group.

6.0 FGLG EXTERNAL LINKAGES.

6.1 FGLG and state authorities

The learning group has good relation with state authorities. The full extent of the opportunity is yet to be fully explored. This relationship greatly facilitated the efforts to secure a speaker on FIP for the reference group meeting held in May.

6.2 FGLG and target groups

FGLG is associated with the key sector policy makers and forest governance activists. Better relations with other sectors such as industry and other natural resources are expected to develop as work progresses. Such groups will also be co-opted periodically into the reference group.

¹ Copy can be found at www.loggingoff.info

6.3 FGLG and other EU-supported initiatives

FGLG links with key EU supported initiatives, namely the GIRAF Project, the FERN Strong Seat at the table, the EU Chainsaw project among others. The FGLG through the reference group discussions has facilitated discussions which bring these projects together on themes such as domestic market supply and reform, governance reform and accountability. On this platform, chainsaw millers, lumber traders, forest forum facilitators, forest watch members and other CSOs in the sector have had the opportunity to share learning on progress and outcomes of these initiatives – a critical value addition that FGLG brings to these initiatives.

6.4 FGLG and EU acknowledgement

The EU support has primarily been acknowledged on occasions that the video documentary 'Justice in Forests' has been screened; at the reference group meeting and at a general meeting of Forest Watch Ghana.

7.0 CONCLUSION

FGLG work has progressed steadily in Ghana over this reporting period. It is expected that some publications can be produced in the next half year on critical issues in the forest sector, starting with the FIP strategies. Multiple strategies have been advanced to improve the effectiveness of the core learning group to redress the draw backs of the first half and they are expected to produce better outputs for the second half year.



Forest Governance Learning Group - GHANA

Report on second half of 2011

2.0 INTRODUCTION

In the second half of 2011 Civic Response continued to convene the Forest governance learning group. In the period, one core group meeting was organized followed by separate consultations with core group on different occasions. The reference group was also convened and was organized jointly with the National Forest Forum. The learning group despite the challenges has gained legitimacy as a model government, industry and civil society collaboration in governance.

3.0 PROGRESS WITH GHANA WORK PLAN

The learning group continues to be the nerve centre of sharing learning on processes in the forest sector. The reference group meeting convened saw a representation from a range of sector stakeholders and discussed bottom up issues relating to governance of the sector. The convening meetings of the core group as a strategy has not yielded much result hence outputs such as the written learning products have to be developed by the secretariat. Commitment of the core group is not commensurate to the goals outlined in the work plan. Special effort was made to engage learning group members at the Natural Resource Summit for them to share perspectives on processes in the sector.

2.1 Core Group Meetings

One core group meeting was convened in Accra on 22nd July 2011 after four members confirmed attendance. Discussions covered a range of issues. They included the position of the government and the forestry commission on issuing administrative permits instead of going through the competitive process and the options available to redressing. In the worst case scenario, a judicial interpretation was to be explored for a definite understanding of the laws. Also discussions touched on the proposed consultation on tree tenure which is to be lead by civil society. Proposals were made for extensive consultations with various interest groups and with earlier reports and studies on tenure. This was to feed in to discussions with the ministry in the development of the TOR for the consultation. Core group members present at this meeting included Elijah Danso, Kingsley Bekoe Ansah and the Convener, Kyeretwie Opoku.

A couple of member of the core group were engaged in the natural resources summit.² Discussions were skewed towards the FIP, REDD and tenure.

2.2 Reference Group meeting

One reference group was convened over the period. In order to optimize coverage and also to avoid unnecessary strain on participants, the reference group meeting was planned and executed with the National Forest Forum for 2011. Core group members served as resource persons at for the forum to help build capacity on processes in the sector and also to

² Summary of iteration is attached to this report.

address some issues that participants had from their various communities. Issues raised on FLEGT included the regulation and mainstreaming of artisanal milling into sector programs, enhancing capacity of forest fringe communities to respond to FLEGT in their local communities and the role of local communities in ensuring legality compliance among other. Details can be found in the National Forest Forum Report Attached.

In attendance at this meeting were stakeholders from 19 administrative districts including traditional authorities, local government service workers, forestry commission staff, artisanal millers, domestic lumber traders, members of forest watch Ghana, and other civil society organizations.

Key issues raised at the forum includes the following

1. The activities of Fulani herdsmen who a significant threat national security threat in the transitional zones.
2. The lack of transparency in the use of royalties by traditional authorities and the roles of chiefs in negotiating social responsibility agreements.
3. The promotion of alternatives to charcoal and fuel wood to reduce the impact of desertification and land degradation in the three Northern Regions.
4. There is the need for closer collaboration between forest officers and forest fringe people to address the local challenges with forest governance
5. Realistic solutions such as small scale TUPs and regularization chain saw millers to solve the problem of illegal chainsaw milling other than the current blanket ban.

2.3 What has not worked well

Core group work

Getting the core group to follow sector processes has not really been effective partly due to the unavailability of member for interface meetings. It will be necessary among that in next year greater effort is put into engagement with individual core group members or engaging in pairs to get their perspectives on particular issues follow up with outputs to share learning with the larger group.

Documentation:

Despite specific plans, we have been slow this year to develop learning products to inform policy. In 2012 we aim to secure real commitment and ensure we document core group meetings and interactions; provide files of presentations made; and, most importantly, write the planned policy briefs.

2.4 Use of the FGLG film '*Trees in local hands*'

The Video was sent to SKYY TV (a television network which has dedicated time for environmental programs) and it has been aired a couple of times. In future we plan to hand more of these videos to policy makers in the forest sector (ministry & forestry commission) – but more copies are needed. There is still the space to use the video to highlight the good work of IIED/FGLG in Ghana.

Also the Film was a major talking point at the National Forest Forum (see below) - it generated a lot of discussion in the informal sessions. Due to the positive reviews it would be very useful again at such a forum.

2.5 Recommended changes and strategies

Emphasis on shuttle diplomacy and small group meetings: Emphasis on the occasional corridor meetings and specially arranged meetings would greatly enhance communication and links between the members of the core-group which is currently low. Convening core group members in pairs for much smaller group discussions is likely to yield greater results

Better effort into producing governance products: It will help to develop strategies to get core-group members to produce write-up and governance to share learning with a much wider audience.

2.6 Outlook for 2012

Issues that the learning group could follow up for 2012 could include key processes in the sector, including the following. In all cases here we will aim to pin the issues down to a greater level of specificity than is seen below, draw out the key impacts and the key governance implications, lessons, challenges and specific recommendations and how they can be taken forward:

- The FIP investment plan development process and outcomes of REDD+ pilots
- Next stages of the FLEGT - establishment of the Timber Validation Council, the work of the independent monitor, impact monitoring and the legislative review processes
- The study on tree tenure and the subsequent emerging issues
- Community involvement in forest governance and the issues of illegal settlers

[Any plans to use the FGLG Ghana film – ‘trees in local hands’ – surely it is a major FGLG product that needs to be used. What happened to the efforts to get it screened on TV? What further films or other media efforts could be pursued?]

3.0 FOREST GOVERNANCE DEVELOPMENTS

NREG:

Review of the 1994 Forest and Wildlife Policy

The final leg of stakeholder consultations on the new the new forest and wildlife policy was held in Kumasi on 31st July, 2011. Participants were drawn from the various actors in the forest sector including industry, civil society, professional foresters, academia, FORIG, the ministries and the Forestry Commission. The various positions were synthesized into thematic discussions. Inputs were incorporated into an updated version of the new policy which was deliberated upon by a much smaller group. Some factual inaccuracies were corrected and the finalized version has been forwarded to the President’s Cabinet for consideration and later for Parliamentary approval in 2012. The timeline for submission to parliament and for final approval is not so certain ³.

Kingsley Bekoe and Elijah Danso made contributions to the review of the draft policy which was submitted to the Policy coordinator at the Ministry. Two critical components of the contributions bothered on the need for greater accountability and transparency in the administration of revenue from forest resources and the need for greater political space for communities, CSOs and other non-state actors to engage the sector. Additionally, the

³ Latest version of draft policy attached to report

coordinator of FWG was part of the final validation and the final small group validation of the new draft policy. Their contribution ensured that those issues were factored into the final draft of the new forest and wildlife policy which is due to be submitted to the Cabinet.

Legislative Review

A report has been issued by the legal consultant on the legislative review though it is yet to be made public. The report is supposed to shape the processes for the development of the consolidated forest legislation. The policy review process and the tree tenure study are among the issues that would contribute to this review process. Core group members will be a part of the discussions of the final report that is released. Chris Beeko, team lead at Timber Validation Division and member of the Multi-Stakeholder Implementation Committee (MSIC) of the VPA, will play a central role in the subsequent processes which is expected to be concluded by the end of 2012.

GIRAF

National Forest Forum

A National Forest Forum was organized under the Project with support for the FGLG. This allowed for a wider coverage vis-as-vis sector players and actors and the scope of forest governance issues to be discussed. The national forum was a culmination of a series of district and community forums organized across five regions namely Ashanti, Eastern, Central Western and Northern Regions. In attendance were CSOs, community representatives, traditional authorities and officials from the forestry commission from the various regions. The summary of issues raised is highlighted in 2.2 of this report. Also attached is the report of the National forest forum. Chris Beeko assisted with capacity building for participants on the progress of the implementation of the VPA and domestic market issues while Kingsley facilitated the organization of the forum.

FOREST GOVERNANCE SCORECARD IN GHANA

The report for the transparency scorecard for 2010 was launched in the period in Accra, Wassa Akropong in the Western Region and in Sunyani in the Brong Ahafo Region. Some local communities have been empowered by this process to develop protocols or bye-laws on natural resource governance. Kingsley serves on the project steering committee

3.6 VPA

Legality Assurance System

The pilots of the Wood tracking system have been concluded and processes are underway on the verification protocols that would operationalize the wood tracking system. The process for recruiting an independent monitor (IM) is almost concluded and should be in place by end of 2012. The Timber Validation Council which will serve as an arbiter in the event of non-compliance will be established by mid-2012. Additionally the TIDD has been properly setup to assume responsibility.

Governance Underpinnings

The legislative reform is under way and some proposals have been put to operationalize the WTS. The FC is looking onto some of the LIs that would help implement the FLEGT. The

Multi-stakeholder platform met periodically though not as often as planned. There is also a coordination of other activities and programs that would help deliver the FLEGT. Discussions are also underway to roll out the communications strategy and to coordinate FLEGT education in the Ghanaian society, particularly the frontline communities.

Abuse of Permit Regime

Parliament and the Forestry Commission have responded to the queries raised by Forest Watch Ghana. This particular provision has been criticized in time past as giving the FC a far too wide discretionary power without adequate balance. Parliament through the select committee on Lands and forestry has committed to “ensure that measures are put in place so that there would be no arbitrariness in the granting of timber harvesting rights”. Civil society members of the learning group were aiming for the institution of investigations into these issues and for the appropriate remedial measures to be taken. Though the response of parliament was not as progressive as expected it is no mean assurance that has been given. Also the JMRM [spell this out] directed the government to respond to the issues raised by civil society.⁴

3.7 FCPF/REDD+

The RPP implementation process hit a snag as a result of lack of funds from the WB FCPF. Hence timelines for activities were not achieved. Regardless over the period the Secretariat has tried to commence and piloting of potential REDD+ projects. In the second half, seven proposals were shortlisted for piloting; however a series of capacity gaps were identified. These included the lack of clarity in benefits sharing arrangement and how it would be delivered by the proposals, the minimum land size available for piloting and other legal arrangements. For this reason, a capacity building was organized for all applicants on these specific issues. Final reviewed proposals are expected to reach the REDD secretariat by mid-year 2012 for the pilots to commence. The Secretariat has also been building capacity of CSOs and communities

4.0 IMPACTS OF WORK

The Learning group's supported one of the largest forest governance meetings in Ghana in 2011 possible- (the national forest forum). The political space created for communities to directly input into policy has enhanced their awareness, capacity and their resolve to play greater roles at their local levels in forest governance. Several reports indicate that communities on their own accord reconvened their community forest forums to give feedback to their constituents and also to follow-up with important unresolved issues: an activity which was usually facilitated by the external persons other than the communities. The impacts will be followed and rendered in subsequent reports.

Also there is an increasing awareness among natural resource policy makers on the benefits of a learning group such as the FGLG in the forest sector. Bits of information gathered from policy implementers from the EPA and the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources recognized the need for a space for open dialogue among the actors of the sector. There is

⁴ Copy of the aide memoire of the meeting available at www.fcghana.org/vpa/

the possibility that the learning group could make a presentation at the next Natural Resources Summit in 2012. This possibility will be followed up.

5.0 LESSONS & IMPLICATIONS FOR WORK AHEAD

There is the need for new ways for working in the next year with unfolding challenges of the core group as emphasized earlier. There is also a need to engage members at different times and on different occasions when such opportunities avail themselves. Time is also of essence to meet the outputs expected of the learning group in 2012. Engagement with the reference group will also enhance and processed followed more closely to examine impacts.

6.0 FGLG EXTERNAL LINKAGES.

6.1 FGLG and state authorities

Through the membership of bureaucrats on the core group, FGLG has good relations and access to the top policy implements in the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources and the Forestry Commission. Continued engaged would enhance access to the top state authorities and the impact on dialogue in the sector.

6.2 FGLG and target groups

Communities and civil society organizations have benefited mostly from the work of FGLG in Ghana. Unionized labor in the sector will be reached on specific issues just as industry. A greater role by industry in the core group will greatly enhance.

6.3 FGLG and other EU-supported initiatives

FGLG continues to build synergies with the GIRAF and the Strengthening African Forest Governance. Collaboration with these projects helped in the execution of the National forest forum. There are also links between FGLG and the Forest Connect Project but there is room for improvement in relations.

6.4 FGLG and EU acknowledgement

EU support was acknowledged in the reference group/National forest forum meeting organized in September 2011.

7.0 CONCLUSION

FGLG work has progressed steadily in Ghana during the period of the report with greater results from the reference group discussions. While the core group is yet to reach its optimum potential and meet what is expected from them, they continue to provide an important bridge for communication and dialogue in the sector. A bit of innovation would provide needed boost for the core group. Additionally, the learning group is becoming familiar among some policy makers as one of the very useful participatory model for dialogue on natural resource governance. It is expected that documentation would help cement the critical role of the learning group in subsequent years.