

# GFTN-WEST AFRICA FACT SHEET



## BACKGROUND

The Guinean Moist Forests are tropical moist forests that run parallel to the coast of West Africa, stretching from Guinea to western Togo. Although only 20 per cent of the original forest remains, it is one of the world's 25 biodiversity hotspots and ranks first in terms of mammalian species diversity. This rich forest is also a major pillar in the economy of West African states, contributing 6 per cent to the Gross Domestic Products (GDP) of Ghana and ranking as the fourth largest foreign exchange earner. Despite the importance of forest to local people and to the economy of West Africa, the sub-region continues to lose natural forest cover at an alarming rate. It is estimated that between 1990 and 2010, forest cover in West Africa lost an average of 125,400 hectares, or 1.68 per cent per year, higher than the average rate on the continent. Recent estimates suggest that Ghana has lost 33.7 per cent of its original forest cover, representing 2,508,000 hectares.

## WHAT: GLOBAL FOREST & TRADE NETWORK – WEST AFRICA (GFTN-WEST AFRICA)

The Global Forest & Trade Network-West Africa (GFTN-West Africa) is administered as a programme of the WWF-West Africa Forest Programme Office and was established and operational in Ghana in August 2004, representing the West African arm of WWF's GFTN. As WWF's initiative to eliminate illegal logging, GFTN seeks to transform the global marketplace into a force for improving the management of the world's valuable and threatened forest while providing economic and social benefits for the businesses and people that depend on them.

## WHO: COMPANIES GFTN-WEST AFRICA WORKS WITH

GFTN-West Africa supports companies and individuals in Ghana that are committed to responsible forest management and trade in forest products to meet the requirements of sustainable forest management and certification. The core business of GFTN-West Africa is to provide technical support and guidance on forest and chain of custody certification and sustainable forest management, facilitate timber trade links between companies and individuals committed to responsible forest management and forest product trade and build local capacity on forest certification and auditing techniques.

GFTN-West Africa also undertakes education and awareness in forest fringe communities on local peoples' rights and responsibilities in forest management and, in particular, on communities' engagement in Social Responsibility Agreements (SRAs) with logging companies. Through the auspices of the SRA, GFTN-West Africa promotes joint forest management and participatory forest governance at the local level. Through these strategic initiatives, GFTN-West Africa is contributing significantly to combating illegal logging in Ghana.

## QUICK STATS: GFTN-WEST AFRICA

- GFTN-West Africa works with **4** participants with **8,950** employees
- GFTN-West Africa participants manage **326,000** hectares
- GFTN-West Africa participants trade **688,000 m<sup>3</sup>** of forest products
- GFTN-West Africa participants sell **US\$61.3 million** of forest products

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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