

FORIG NEWS

Volume 4, Issue 3

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QUALITY WOOD PRODUCTS

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FORIG NEWS

Forestry Research Institute of Ghana

Volume 4, Issue 3 July - September 2009

FORIG PROJECTS

QUALITY CONTROL AND STANDARDIZATION OF GHANAIAN WOOD PRODUCTS

The world market for furniture in the year 2000 was estimated at US\$38 billion of which the share of wooden furniture was about US\$12 billion. Philippines for example earned US\$ 500 million from export of wood furniture and it is the 5th foreign exchange earner. Ghana with similar resource capacity has prospects to capture a good share of the world's furniture market.

On the contrary however, Ghana is a 'leading' importer of cheap furniture mainly upholstery, chairs, door and other wooden products from the East mainly because of their design and finishing. Ghana cannot boast of furniture export but timber and some few tertiary timber products.

Even though the quality of timber from Ghana is widely acclaimed on the world market, the same cannot be said of the wood products meant for the local market. There were also no quality control guidelines for furniture and some other wood based products. Furthermore, the local market needs were completely "ignored" in the formulation and implementation of most of the quality control guidelines and grading rules.

The Call for Standards

With this background, Dr. V.K. Agyeman of CSIR-FORIG in 2004, organised a team of scientists to investigate the quality of wood products on the local market and the consumer's perceptions. The results indicated that furniture manufactured in Ghana did not meet any standards, be it physical or structural. Using British Standard:

BS 4875 part 1, 2001, furniture examined would not pass moisture content, drop, seat, back and arm static tests among others. The consumers at all levels sampled were also ignorant of wood standards and choice. It was also observed that the universities, research institutions and other wood training centres lack wood standards.

These findings were supported by the recommendations of a national workshop on "standardization of wood products for furniture, building and construction" held for stakeholders in 1997. The workshop identified that the timber industry displayed little or no experience in managing the production and quality control of their production process .

Other studies that influenced the preparation of this project were results of the Wood Industries Development Project (WIDP) of the Natural Resources Management Programme, which was undertaken between 1999 and 2003. Furthermore, the "Wood industry and log export ban study (WILEBS) of May 2002 established that Ghana's forest industry will only be sustainable if it addresses issues of good governance, economic distortions, accommodation of community interests and ensures sustainable quality control and standardization of products.

A three-year project was therefore conceived to develop and promote the application of quality control guidelines and standards for Ghanaian timber and wood products. The project led by Dr. V. K. Agyeman employed Mr. George Ametsitsi to coordinate the day-to-day activities of the project. The project has so far produced five wood products standards for the local markets.

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Tangible Outputs of the Project

Ghana Standards on timber products produced by the ITTO Quality Control and standards project are:

- GS 980: 2008 Furniture—Specification for Tables
- GS 981: 2008 Furniture—Specification for Seating
- GS 982: 2008 Furniture—Specification for Bedsteads
- GS 983: 2008 Furniture—Specification for Furniture Components
- GS 984: 2008 Semi-Manufactures of Timber—Specification for Planned Timber and Mouldings

Ghana now has 15 wood product standards, of which five or 33% are products of the project. In addition, they represent 71% of standards available for carpenters and joiners. The major tangible output of the project was the implementation of timber and timber products standards which also contain quality control procedures and glossary of terminologies to guide the average artisan or buyer.

Another major achievement of the project is the training of two scientists in quality control of timber products, general application of wood, furniture manufacturing technology and furniture testing among others.



Furniture Testing Machine

Beneficiaries of the training are now capable of applying British and American Standards to wood products finishing, quality evaluation and machine testing of physical properties of furniture.



Training Sessions



Products



APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY DIRECTOR

Dr. D. A. Ofori, Principal Research Scientist of Environment, Land Use and Biodiversity Unit has been appointed the Deputy Director, effective 1st July, 2009. To Dr. Ofori, we all say “**AYEEKO**” and FORIG is indeed proud of you.

APPOINTMENT OF UNIT AND DIVISIONAL HEADS

The following members of staff have been appointed heads and acting head as follows:

- Dr. E. Foli, Senior Research Scientist appointed Head of Environment, Land Use and Biodiversity Unit, effective 1st July, 2009.
- Dr. L. Anglaaere, Senior Research Scientist appointed Head of Environmental Services and Climate Change Division, effective 1st July, 2009.
- Mr. K. Asamoah, Assistant Librarian appointed Acting Head of Commercialisation and Information Division.

NEW APPOINTMENTS

One Research Officer and a Technical Officer have been employed by CSIR and assigned to CSIR-FORIG as follows:

- George Ametsitsi, Research Scientist assigned to Environmental Services and Climate Change Division, effective 2nd July, 2009.
- Frank A. Baffour, Principal Technical Officer, assigned to Biodiversity and Land Use Management Division, effective 1st September, 2009.

REGULARISATION OF APPOINTMENT

The appointment of Mr. K. Oduro, Research Scientist at the Forest and Wildlife Management and Governance Division has been regularized by the Council, effective 1st January, 2006.

To Mr. Oduro, we say **WELL DONE**.

NATIONAL SERVICE PERSONNEL PRESENTATIONS

Fifteen service personnel posted to CSIR-FORIG for the 2008/2009 service year delivered presentations at the end of their term and some highlights of their delivery have been captured below

Mr. Abdul Rauf's presentation was about his duties as a service person at FORIG, attached to “*Forest Livelihood and Sustainable Development Division*.”

Mr. Rauf stated that he assisted in two projects, one of which sought to identify various Non-Timber Forest

Products in the Brong Ahafo Region and how their availability has been affected by climate change over the years.

Abdul was indebted to FORIG for availing him the opportunity to put into practice his theoretical knowledge acquired at the University.

Nana Yaw Adade, assigned to the *Biodiversity and Land Use Management Division* in his presentation, was grateful to staff of the Institute for their cordial relationship towards service personnel.

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In his concluding remarks, he suggested that the institute provides office accommodation for service personnel and increase the equipment at the Nursery. Effort should also be made to repair damaged ones



Miss Adwoa Ofosu-Mensah's presentation centred on her duties at the *Forest Products and Marketing Division*. Her duties included the preparation of *Tetraplura Tetraptera* (Prekese) Syrup, Castor Oil as well as Charcoal and Sawdust Briquettes. She was indebted to FORIG for helping her to improve her interpersonal relationship.

Mr. Ahmed Seidu, attached to *Forests, Livelihood and Sustainable Development Division* made the following statement in his presentation "I designed a Collaborative Management Plan for Gacon", He was also involved in data collection, entry, processing and analysis, among others.



Weather Station

Mr. Bernard Obeng-Nsiah, assigned to *Forest and Wildlife Management and Governance Division* was grateful to the Institute for giving him the opportunity to acquire skills in the use of meteorological equipment.

Mr. David A. Marfo who was assigned to the *Accounts Division* in his presentation, stated that his duties included writing of accounts for cash book, preparation of bank reconciliation statements, keeping of special loan ledger, writing and checking data input forms as well as writing petty cash. He was grateful to FORIG for assisting him improve upon his skills in the use of Microsoft Excel for the preparation of cash book.

SECOND MID-YEAR REVIEW MEETING

A Mid-Year Project Review Meeting was held on Tuesday 14th July, 2009 at FORIG Conference room. The purpose of the meeting, according to Professor J. Ayarkwa who chaired the function, was to find out if scientists were on course of their proposed work schedule for the year and to find appropriate strategies to overcome problems militating against these action plans so as to achieve set targets for the year.

In his welcome address, Dr. V. Agyeman, the Director expressed dissatisfaction about the habitual lack of punctuality of staff to meetings and urged all to endeavour to be time conscious. He stressed the fact that a critical review of the Institute's activities were prudent to enable staff be proactive and strategize to achieve their targets. He introduced Dr. D. A. Ofori as the New Deputy Director and outlined his functions to include income generation, transport, development of infrastructure and co-ordinate research activities.

Dr. D. Ofori, on his part outlined his vision for the Institute and wished that the Institute's research agenda became more relevant and indispensable for national building. After outlining his strategies to enhance FORIG's visibility, the Deputy Director was of the view that his vision could lead to increased interaction with industry and the general public, increased government commitment to Science and Technology and increased flow of financial support from government industry and development partners.



ITTO & IUFRO CORNER

ITTO MEETING

09 - 14 November, 2009

Forty-fifth Session of the International Tropical Timber Council and Associated Sessions of the Committees
Yokohama, Japan

Contact: Emmanuel Ze Meka

E-mail: itto@itto.or.jp

Website: <http://www.itto.int/en/schedule>

IUFRO MEETING

22 - 28 November, 2009

Knowledge-Based Management of Tropical Rainforests
Cayenne, French Guiana

Contact: Robert Nasi

E-mail: r.nasi@cgiar.org

Website: <http://www.iufro.org/events/calendar/2009>

Calendar of meetings was reproduced from IUFRO & CIFOR News.

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