

TROPENBOS-IIED FOREST CONNECT PROJECT

MINUTES OF SECOND WORKING GROUP MEETING

Venue: Forestry Commission, Accra

Date: Thursday June 4, 2009

1. PRESENT

1. Dr. Emmanuel Acheampong, Faculty of Renewable Natural Resources, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST)
2. Mr. Daniel K. Darko, Association of Ghana Industries (AGI)
3. Mr. Joseph Osiakwan, Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources (MLNR)
4. Mr. K.S. Nketiah, Tropenbos International Ghana Programme Team Leader
5. Mr. Kwasi Afena, Brong Ahafo Regional Grass-cutter Farmers' Association (BARGFA)
6. Mr. Paul Osei Tutu, Project Officer, Tropenbos International Ghana (TBI Ghana)
7. Mr. Oti Awere, Wildlife Division (WD) of the Forestry Commission (FC)
8. Mrs. Juliana Asante-Dartey, ASNAPP Ghana
9. Mr. Sam Bansa, National Board for Small Scale Industries (NBSSI)
10. Mrs. Akua H. Adusei-Hebstain, Akuaba Ltd.
11. Mrs Mercy Owusu-Ansah, TBI Ghana
12. Dr. Kyereh Boateng, Scientific Coordinator, TBI Ghana
13. Mr. Wellington Baiden, Portal Sustainably Managed Forest Estate
14. Ms. Dorothy Adjei, Energy Commission

2. APOLOGIES

1. Mr. Gustav Adu, Kumasi Wood Cluster - engaged in another meeting
2. Mr. Attah Antwi, Rural Enterprises Project (REP)
3. Mr. Wisdom Ahiataku Togobo, Ministry of Energy - travelled

3. AGENDA

1. Priority needs of SMFEs in Ghana identified by Working Group members
2. Comments on final draft report of diagnostic study on SMFEs in Ghana
3. Any relevant further studies
4. Finalisation of draft action plan
5. Existing policy gaps and how to participate in ongoing policy review processes
6. A.O.B
7. next meeting

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The members present had copies of the first Working Group meeting. Mr. Nketiah, the Chairman of the meeting asked for comments on the minutes. Mr. Oti Awere suggested that some details be added to the section of the minutes that mentions what TBI Ghana does and what the Forest Connect project is about. The minutes was then accepted and adopted for the meeting.

5. PROCEEDINGS

5.1 Update on policy review

Two stakeholder identification meetings have been held in Accra and Kumasi. As a next step, a national multi-stakeholder workshop will be held. After that, consultations will be held with the identified stakeholders. From the consultations, a draft reviewed policy will be produced and discussed before finalising it into a reviewed policy document. The whole process will be driven by the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources, but facilitated by consultants. It is expected that the review process will be completed in one year. In the interim, individuals and groups are encouraged to send their written concerns and interests to the policy review secretariat.

With respect to provisions in the current policy for SMFEs, the background and guiding principles make a lot of mention to the fact that the interests of the wider society, in particular that of communities, need to be safeguarded. The policy states that people should have the right of access to resources to support basic standard of living.

However in the five policy objectives, no specific provision has been made for the SMFE sub-sector. Section 4.2.2¹ appears to cater for all forest enterprises, including SMFEs. However, in the strategies section of the policy document, the portion which spells out how objective 4.2.2 will be pursued is entirely focused on formal timber enterprises. The SMFE sub-sector has been completely left out in the strategies. The policy is silent on important issues as access to forest lands for plantation development, development of SMFEs and regulations on the harvesting of non-timber forest products (NTFPs).

By way of inputs into the policy review, the meeting agreed to suggest to the review secretariat that:

- In the background section of the policy document, additional information be added to the effect that with the dwindling of the resource base, activities in the formal forestry sub-sector are expected to go down drastically in the near future. That would lead to massive reduction in revenue generation from the formal sub-sector. Since the informal sub-sector characterised by SMFEs have proven to have the capacity for revenue generation in several countries, it will be prudent for the country to make adequate provision for development of the SMFE sub-sector in the reviewed policy.
- In the objectives section, a separate objective be made for the promotion of SMFEs to help them realise the poverty reduction and resource conservation potential inherent in them.
- Once there is a separate policy objective for SMFE development, the strategies section would outline strategies for achieving that objective. The strategies should focus on livelihood improvement. It should make provisions

¹Section 4.2.2 of the 1994 Forest and Wildlife Policy states: Promote the development of viable and efficient forest-based industries, particularly in secondary and tertiary processing, so as fully utilize timber and other products from forests and wildlife resources and satisfy domestic and international demand for competitively-priced quality products;

for research, enterprise development and regulation. There should be a defined body to coordinate and regulate the many activities going on in the SMFE sub-sector. The summarised strategies should be expanded in the Forestry Development Master Plan, which is also to be reviewed.

On our part, The Working Group could commission a study to come out with a model for making SMFEs serve as tool for revenue generation and sustainable resource management. We could learn from the experiences of other countries like Costa Rica, which has made giant strides in this direction. Also, the Working Group needs to facilitate development of trade standards for the fuel wood industry and other SMFEs, learning from what has been developed for products like Voacanga.

The Working Group shall express its interests in the on-going policy review as mentioned above in a brief which will be submitted to the policy review secretariat. Juliana Asante-Dartey, Oti Awere, Wellington Baiden, Kyereh Boateng and Paul Osei Tutu volunteered to draft the brief.

We can expect to get a slot when the policy review consultations start. Mr. Osiakwan would ensure that.

5.2 Priority needs identified by members

There were submissions on identified priority needs of SMFEs from Ms. Adjei (Energy Commission), Dr. Acheampong (KNUST), Mr. Afena (BARGFA), Mr. Osiakwan (MLN), Mrs Asante-Dartey (ASNAPP) and Mr. Oti Awere (FC). Below is a summary of discussions on the submissions.

- Energy Commission: the submission was on wood fuel, in particular, charcoal. Wood fuel has been captured in the current Forestry Development Master Plan. An important wood fuel issue that needs attention is the non-conversion of wood waste from logging and milling operations into useful wood fuel products (charcoal briquettes). Logging and milling companies need to be encouraged to use logging and milling wastes as part of their downstream processing schemes. Energy Commission, on its part ensures that charcoal exporters obtain their raw materials from logging and milling residues and also Forestry Commission woodlots. There is a charcoal briquette producer in Kumasi, who produces charcoal from wood residues for export. If this is promoted, it will help reduce the destruction caused to forests through charcoal production in places like the Sekyere West District. Instead of perceiving charcoal production as a destructive activity, it should rather be seen as a potentially sustainable enterprise that could also generate revenue for the country. It is even argued that the use of charcoal is more environmentally friendly than the use of liquefied petroleum gas. Structures must be put in place to ensure that every charcoal on the road comes from legal and sustainable source. Energy Commission and Forestry Commission need to collaborate on that. Appropriate steps need to be taken to finalise the wood fuel policy, which is still at the draft stage. Also, the new policy should be synchronised with provisions in the wood fuel policy.

- Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources: the Ministry identified capacity building for SFME actors through master craftsmanship training to be of high priority. Most practitioners have the basic craft skills, but do not have good finishing skills. Their capacity need to be built so that they can produce good quality products that can even meet export requirements.
- KNUST: the submission was on priority needs for bamboo and rattan enterprises. With the depletion of bamboo and rattan stands in off-reserve areas, the actors have started collecting raw materials from protected areas. For instance, rattan products are now being collected on an appreciable scale from the Kakum national park. Because bamboo and rattan products can serve as suitable substitutes for wood products, there is the need to promote their cultivation and usage. Dr. Acheampong is to develop ToR for a consultancy work to produce a paper on bamboo and rattan situation in Ghana: resource base, training needs, service providers, etc. The International Network of Bamboo and Rattan (INBAR) Ghana has some documented information on bamboo and rattan supply chain in Ghana and a policy plan for bamboo and rattan development in Ghana. The Forestry Research Institute of Ghana (FORIG) has also conducted some research on bamboo and rattan in Ghana. Dr Acheampong would therefore consult these bodies in preparing the TOR for the study.
- ASNAPP: The fundamental priority needs cut across most SMFEs. The Forest Connect project needs to focus on those fundamental priority needs that are common to many SMFEs. They include capacity building, pricing, record keeping, raw material uncertainty, quality standards, marketing and market information. There is the need for a catalogue that provides relevant information for actors in the SMFE sub-sector. Weak proprietor association is also a major problem. There is the need to learn from the success of such institutions as AGI and NBSSI. ASNAPP has some information which they are willing to share. Mrs. Asante-Dartey is to develop a brief on priority needs that are common to many SMFEs.
- BARGFA: the submission was on priority needs of the grass-cutter rearing industry in Ghana. Though the grass-cutter industry in Ghana started around the same time as that in Benin, Benin's industry has grown into a big one while Ghana's own remains a young one. Training is relevant for new farmers and on-the-job training for farmers already in the business. BARGFA is the strongest of the grass-cutter framers' associations in the country. The association has master trainers who update their knowledge and skills periodically in Benin. Breeding stocks coming from Benin are very expensive (about 50 Ghana Cedis per young animal). There is therefore the need to establish breeding stocks in Ghana. Government support is needed through provision of functional credit facilities. The available short term loans are not favourable for the grass-cutter industry since it is medium term in nature. One of the reasons behind the success of the industry in Benin is access to enough credit on favourable terms. Proprietors in Benin can have industries

with as high as 4,000 animals, 20 employees, with separate departments for production, slaughtering and marketing.

- NBSSI: Mr. Bansa is working on getting a list of trainees and service providers (trainers) from the Rural Enterprises Project (REP) districts.
- Wildlife Division (WD): the submission was on community-based ecotourism ventures. The WD is promoting joint community-based ecotourism through community guesthouses, community walks, and tourist visits to the community palace, community schools, *pito* centres, shea butter making centres, herbalists, craft areas, etc. Issues with the communities that demand attention include lack of understanding of ecotourism on the part of communities, lack of record keeping, and inability to properly cost and market products. Capacity building and micro-financing are needed. Communities also need to be exposed to success cases. Service providers and supporting institutions that the WD has been working with include Nature Conservation Research Council (NCRC), Ricerca e Cooperazione, Ghana Wildlife Society (GWS), Royal Netherlands Embassy, EU, USAID, and 'Aids to Artisan Ghana'. Ecotourism could be an effective tool for rural poverty alleviation and resource conservation. The WD is working on park to park basis, and is collaborating with communities through the establishment of community resource management areas (CREMAs). Mr. Oti Awere provided a database on funding sources for conservation activities (attached to mail). Mr. Oti Awere is to provide a short write-up on the priorities for the area.

5.3 Final draft report of diagnostic study of SMFEs in Ghana

Many of the members had not been able to read the full report. Those who had, made the following comments:

- ASNAPP: the term 'medicines' in the NWFP category of SMFEs should be changed to medicinals. The specific examples should include such export medicinal products like Giffonia and Voacanga.
- ASNAP should be added to the list of organisations that can provide services to SMFEs (page 37). Also, KNUST should be added to that section, stating the relevant colleges and faculties like the College of Renewable Natural resources (CRNR), Faculty of Pharmacy, etc.
- Palm wine tapping should be added to the list of identified SMFEs in Ghana.
- Dr. Acheampong is to draft a definition of SMFEs in the Ghanaian context.

It was agreed that members who had not been able to read the report could later read the report and send their comments to the Project Secretariat.

5.4 Working Group Action Plan

The following comments were made on the draft action plan for the activities of Forest Connect Working Group. The draft action plan had been circulated as an annex to the minutes of the first Working Group meeting.

Under action 2.1 which talks about development of a catalogue on SMFEs, add to the content of the catalogue: markets and funding sources. The catalogue should include research institutions, trainers, and other service providers.

Under action 2.3, the wording should be changed to: 'help create a national federation of SMFE associations'. Under that action, attention should be paid to strengthening existing SMFE associations before bringing them together under one federation. Students could be assisted to undertake their thesis research on SMFE associations and related issues.

Also add an action to facilitate the development of trade standards and quality assurance.

The final action plan for the Forest Connect Working Group which incorporates the above suggestions has been presented as Appendix 1.

5.5 To be done before next meeting

| Action | Responsible party |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Write a brief statement expressing the Working Group's interest in the on-going policy review. Draft relevant sections for inclusion in the reviewed policy document. | Dr. Kyereh Boateng (Leader), Mrs Juliana Asante-Dartey, Mr. Oti Awere, Mr. Wellington Baiden, and Mr. Paul Osei Tutu |
| 2. Get the Working Group a slot when the policy review consultations start | Mr. Osiakwan |
| 3. Develop a ToR for a consultancy work to produce a paper on bamboo and rattan situation in Ghana: resource base, training needs, service providers, etc. | Dr. Emmanuel Acheampong |
| 4. Write a brief statement on priority needs that are common to SMFEs | Mrs. Juliana Asante-Dartey |
| 5. Develop a list of service providers (trainers) for SMEs | Mr. Bansa |
| 6. Write a brief statement on priority needs of community ecotourism ventures | Mr. Oti Awere |
| 7. Draft a definition of SMFEs in the Ghanaian context | Dr. Acheampong |

5.63 Next meeting:

The finalised action plan will be developed into a draft proposal before the next Working Group meeting. The main agenda for the next meeting shall be a discussion of the draft proposal. It will be a two-day meeting (tentatively Thursday August 20 and Friday August 21, 2009). On the first day (reporting day), the meeting will start at 11. 00 am. The meeting will be held in Kumasi.

Appendix 1: Final action plan for the Forest Connect Working Group

| Specific mandate | Actions needed | Responsible party |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Ensure that SMFE concerns are captured in on-going policy review | 1.1 Identify policy concerns of SMFE actors through study of available information, forums and consultancies 1.2 Identify gaps in the existing policy document 1.3 Compile and submit policy recommendations to policy review committee 1.4 Seek participation and participate in policy review process | Working Group (WG), Project Secretariat (PS) WG, PS WG, PS WG, PS |
| 2. Develop networking and communication strategies for SMFEs | 2.1 Develop a catalogue of SMFE associations, markets, and research institutions, funding sources, trainers and other service providers. The catalogue should build on existing information with the AGI, NBSSI, Department of Cooperatives, Registrar General's Department, etc. 2.2 Create awareness of the catalogue developed ² to encourage usage 2.3 Help create a national federation of SMFE associations 2.4 Ensure proper networking and information flow among SMFEs, between SMFEs and service providers, and among WG members | WG, PS WG, PS WG, PS PS |
| 3. Identify capacity building needs and institutions that can offer them | 3.1 Undertake capacity building needs assessment through study of available information 3.2 Commission study on capacity building needs of SMFEs and institutions that can offer them | WG members WG, PS |
| 4. Develop framework for SMFEs to contribute to sustainable forest management | 4.1 Study existing SME frameworks for contributing to the Ghanaian economy e.g. tax and levy arrangements 4.2 Propose a framework for the SMFE sub-sector 4.3 Facilitate the development of trade standards and quality assurance for SMFEs | WG, PS WG, PS WG, PS |
| 5. Link SMFEs to existing natural resource management platforms in Ghana | 5.1 Create national awareness of SMFE association to be formed 5.2 Create awareness of natural resource management platforms and programmes in Ghana among SMFE association members 5.3 Promote participation of SMFE association in resource management platforms and programmes | WG, PS WG, PS WG, PS |

² Create awareness of catalogue through such media as newsletters, websites, NBSSI Regional and District offices, SMFE associations, radio programmes, etc.

Appendix 2: Contact information of participants to the second Working Group meeting

| Name | Address/Organisation | Contact number | Email address |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Daniel K. Darko | Association of Ghana Industries (AGI) | 0243114020 | skerryrising@yahoo.com |
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| 3. Emmanuel Acheampong | Faculty of Renewable Natural Resources, KNUST | 0243412179 | ekachie@yahoo.com |
| 4. Joseph Osiakwan | Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources | 0208182556 | josephosiakwan@yahoo.com |
| 5. K. S. Nketiah | Tropenbos International Ghana | 0208150148 | knsketiah@yahoo.com |
| 6. Kwasi Afena | Brong Ahafo Grass-cutter Farmers Association (BARGFA) | 0208233639 | |
| 7. Paul Osei Tutu | Tropenbos International Ghana | 0243752019 | p.oseitutu@yahoo.co.uk |
| 8. Sam Bansa | National Board for Small Scale Industries (NBSSI) | 0208190648 | |
| 9. Wellington Baiden | Portal sustainably managed forest estate | 0244530142 | wbaiden@portalgh.com |
| 10. Mercy Owusu-Ansah | Tropenbos International Ghana | 0244977268 | mercyowusuansah@yahoo.com |
| 11. Kyereh Boateng | Tropenbos International Ghana | 0244636669 | kyerehb@gmail.com |
| 12. Jacob Oti Awere | Wildlife Department, Forestry Commission | 0208150084 | pickjacob@yahoo.com |
| 13. Juliana Asante-Dartey | ASNAPP Ghana | 0244270832 | jadartey@hotmail.com |
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