COMMUNITY RIGHTS IN TIMBER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN GHANA

ILLEGAL LOGGING PRACTICES
Community members do not have the right to sell or allocate naturally regenerated trees for logging or engage chainsaw operators to cut timber for commercial purposes.

OWNERSHIP OF PLANTED TREES
Any timber tree planted and registered with the Forestry Commission in off reserve areas belong to the planter who is entitled to 100% of the benefits.

TIMBER TO UNDERTAKE COMMUNITY PROJECT
Communities may apply to the Forestry Commission to be permitted to log timber from areas that is not under concession to undertake community projects. Such timber must strictly be used for the purposes for which it was granted.

The Environmental Sustainability and Policy for Cocoa Production Project (ESP) has been established by United Nations Development Programme, Modelez International and the Ghana Cocoa Board to help deliver alternative solutions towards strengthening best agricultural practices in the cocoa sector for sustainable production.

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Timber Resources Management Act 1998 (Act 547) as amended by Act 619, section 4
Before the start of logging operation, the Timber Right Holder (Timber Company) has to negotiate and sign a Social Responsibility Agreement (SRA) with the respective communities. The SRA is purely meant for community development and not for any individual’s benefit. The SRA must be 5% of stumpage fee of the timber to be harvested.

**NOTIFICATION AND INVOLVEMENT OF THE OWNERS OF AN AREA GIVEN AS TIMBER CONCESSION**

- Communities have the right to be informed of the granting of timber rights in their areas.
- Communities have the right to be involved in the field inspection of any off-reserve area where timber right is to be granted.
- Communities have the right to request the exclusion of their farms from the area where timber right is to be granted.

**FULFILMENT OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AGREEMENT**

- Before the start of logging operation, the Timber Right Holder (Timber Company) has to negotiate and sign a Social Responsibility Agreement (SRA) with the respective communities.
- The SRA is purely meant for community development and not for any individual’s benefit. The SRA must be 5% of stumpage fee of the timber to be harvested.

The Community Rights Programme is a key component of Environmental Sustainability and Policy for Cocoa Production in Ghana Project’s (ESP) broader activities. It seeks to increase awareness and understanding about individual and community rights in the Timber Resources Management in Ghana. In the context of achieving this objective, the Project Management Unit has developed this brochure as part of its commitment to enlighten farmers and communities on their rights to timber resource management in the country’s forestry law.

At the heart of the Community Rights Programme is the conviction that individuals and communities will become better informed about their rights in the timber resource management and be able to apply them effectively.

**The Timber Resources Management Act 1998, as amended by Act 619, Section 4** establishes provisions for the granting of timber rights in Ghana. The act further indicates that no timber rights shall be granted in respect of:

- a) Land subject to alienation holding; or
- b) Land with farms without the written authorization of the individual, group or owner concerned.