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An annual project update of the EU Chainsaw Milling Project, Guyana, funded by the European Commission Programme on Environment in Developing Countries

Chainsaw Milling Project Guyana

The Chainsaw Milling Project in Guyana starts implementation of its second phase in April 2011

Chainsaw Milling Project:

Towards sustainable chainsaw milling in Guyana

Chainsaw milling in the context of the project is the on-site conversion of logs into lumber using a chainsaw.

The EU-funded chainsaw milling project “Developing alternatives for illegal chainsaw lumbering through multi-stakeholder dialogue in Ghana and Guyana” commenced in April 2007 and concluded in April 2012, after being extended by one year.

The second phase of the EU-funded chainsaw milling project titled “Supporting the integration of legal and legitimate domestic timber markets into Voluntary Partnership Agreements” builds upon the work done in the first phase of the project. This second phase started in April 2011 and will end in March 2015.

The Project’s **overall objectives** are to: (1) promote viable livelihoods in poor forest-dependent communities; (2) ensure adequate supply of legal timber on the domestic market; and (3) to improve consistency between the objectives of FLEGT/VPAs and the socio-economic development of stakeholders dependent on timber production and trade.

An effective incorporation of domestic market issues into FLEGT/VPAs in Ghana, Guyana and other countries (**specific objective**) is required to achieve these overall objectives.



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The project is being implemented by Tropenbos International through the Forestry Training Centre Incorporated (an associate body of the Guyana Forestry Commission), Iwokrama International Centre for Rain Forest Conservation and Development in Guyana, and the Forestry Commission and Forestry Research Institute in Ghana.

In Guyana, the project is being carried out in 4 (four) Pilot communities: Ituni and Kwakwani in Region 10, Orealla/Siparuta in Region 6 and Annai in Region 9.

Key Implementation strategy of the Project

The Chainsaw Milling Project has been using structured dialogue to engage stakeholders in developing a consensus based action plan for addressing the problems associated with chainsaw milling, and by extension domestic market issues in Guyana.

The Project will continue to provide and broaden the platform for stakeholders to discuss domestic timber market issues, and support the implementation by stakeholders of the outcomes of the dialogue, in policy and practice. Lessons learned will be disseminated internationally to promote the inclusion of domestic market issues into other VPAs.

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Addressing issues of the chainsaw sub-sector through dialogue

The Chainsaw Milling Project is using multi-stakeholder dialogue (MSD) as a key tool for developing a consensus based action plan for addressing the problems associated with chainsaw milling in Guyana.

The MSD is independently managed by a task force of key stakeholder representatives of chainsaw milling, while the project supports the process. The task force was established in 2009 and comprises representatives of 9 key stakeholder groups related to chainsaw milling in Guyana.

After conducting four regional level multi-stakeholder dialogue meetings on chainsaw milling in Administrative Regions 9, 10, 6 and 2 in 2010, the task force met in January 2011, to formulate a work-plan for scaling up the dialogue to the national level. At this meeting a decision was taken to form a technical sub committee (TSC) of the task force: (a) to analyse the information gathered from the regional level meetings and research on chainsaw milling; and (b) to prepare a summary report with recommendations on the way forward for discussions at the national level.

In January 2012, after reviews of the report at various levels of the project, the TSC presented a summary report to the task force titled '*Chainsaw Milling in Guyana: an analysis of the issues and recommendations for strategic improvement of the sub-sector*'. The report presented 9 key recommendations for strategic improvement of the chainsaw milling sub-sector in Guyana. These included:

1. Prioritization of research on the environmental and social impact of chainsaw milling and viable alternative

and complementary livelihoods for forest dependent communities.

2. Development of a long-term plan for the chainsaw milling sub-sector.
3. Strengthening of Forest-Based Community Organizations.
4. Reviewing existing policy and legislative framework for chainsaw milling.
5. Establishment of an independent arbitration body with mechanisms for redress.
6. Strengthening, promotion, providing incentives and communication of the benefits of an effective chainsaw lumber value chain at targeted nodes of the supply chain.
7. Further integrating and encouraging into current mechanisms the multi-stakeholder dialogue approach at local, regional and national levels.
8. Broadening the mandate of education and training institutions, supported with the necessary capacity building, to facilitate the holistic development of sustainable community livelihood for forest-based communities.
9. Promotion and support for the use of appropriate technologies and techniques in the chainsaw milling sector.

In preparation for the national level dialogue the report was officially presented to Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC) in March 2012 for its review and approval prior to the dialogue.



The Chainsaw Milling Project hosts a team of Ghanaian stakeholders to share experiences in managing chainsaw milling

The project hosted a study tour for a team of seven stakeholders from the Ghanaian forestry sector involved in the MSD discussion in Ghana 'to develop alternatives for illegal chainsaw milling and supply legal lumber to the domestic in support of the VPA', during February 11-18, 2012.

The tour aimed at learning practical lessons on how the Guyanese domestic lumber trade is organized. The study team focused on learning about: the regulatory and legal framework concerning supply of lumber to the domestic market; monitoring/tracking systems in place; organization of the millers and domestic lumber traders' association/groups and their relationship with the Guyanese forestry authorities; the kind of support given by the government to millers and domestic lumber traders' association/groups and their contribution to community development; and types of milling equipment used for processing lumber for the domestic market.

During the visit the team made a courtesy call to the Minister of Natural Resources and Environment. They also met with the Commissioner and staff of the Guyana Forestry Commission, the Forest Products Association of Guyana, the Guyana Manufacturing & Services Association, the Forest Product Marketing and Development Council; and conducted field visits to Kwakwani and Ituni communities, and sawmills and lumber yards on the East Bank of Demerara. They also shared

experiences and key outcomes from the EU FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) and the joint Forestry Commission-EU Chainsaw Milling Project processes in addressing illegal chainsaw milling and supply of legal lumber to the domestic market under the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) with stakeholders in the Guyanese forestry sector at a seminar held at the Cheddi Jagan Research Centre.

Capacity building for stakeholders to participate in dialogue

The project during 2011-2012 continued to work with stakeholders to build up their capacity to participate in the dialogue on chainsaw milling. Work in this area included:

Preparation of two Facilitator's Manuals and Training

Two Facilitator's Manual were prepared aimed at training trainers to provide governance and institutional strengthening training for communities. The project facilitator also provided governance training for trainers in Annai and Forestry Training Centre Incorporated(FTCl).

Community Leaders Retreat

As part of promoting the MSD, two community leaders' retreats were conducted with the main objectives:

- Engaging participants in visioning for their community.
- Increasing levels of knowledge, skills and attitudes with respect to governance, through an interactive and participatory and behavior change oriented process.
- Informing and engaging community leaders in the second phase of the Chainsaw Milling Project.
- Creating community MSD Management Teams for Orealla/Siparuta, Ituni, Kwakwani and Annai Districts.
- Engaging community leaders in planning for and institutionalizing community MSDs.

As a result of personal conflict situations identified during each of the two leaders' retreats techniques for tackling conflict resolution were initiated.

Preparation of a community bulletin on Governance

A one-page Governance Bulletin on the usefulness of the MSD as a tool to resolve conflict was produced and disseminated following leadership issues in the pilot communities.

Preparation of a booklet on Raising Community MSD Awareness

A booklet, *Raising Community MSD Awareness*, for Community Forest Workers (CFWs) with guidance on facilitating meetings, conflict and dialogue skit scenarios, was produced and disseminated to the community forestry workers.

Training in Forest Governance and MSD Write Shop

A three-day interactive workshop 'Forest governance – concepts, approaches and application in Guyana' and a one-day 'MSD Write Shop' session were conducted in Guyana by Tropenbos International (March 5-7, and 9, 2012 respectively) for CMP staff, national and community-based stakeholder representatives. The Write Shop generated stories of MSD experiences for a Tropenbos publication *Supporting Sustainable Chainsaw Milling through Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue in Guyana*. The objective of this publication was to help raise national awareness on the value of multi-stakeholder dialogue.



Forest based communities strengthened to manage forests

Since its inception, the Chainsaw Milling Project has been working to strengthen community forestry associations, other community associations, and other forms of local stakeholder platforms within its pilot communities through capacity building initiatives and training in a number of areas. During the period June 2011-May 2012, the project conducted training in the following areas in its pilot communities:

Capacity to manage organizations and local stakeholder platform strengthened

1. Organizational Management, Leadership, Decision Making and Communication
2. Book-keeping, Quick-books and basic Information Technology
3. As part of the activities to ensure successful establishment of the MSD, the community forestry workers of the project received training from the Project's Facilitator on the establishment of community level MSDs. Upon completion the CFWs then established MSD steering committees in the pilot communities and developed a plan for the community level MSD.

Capacity to manage forests strengthened

The project also worked on improving forest management practices through the following activities:

1. Practical demonstration exercises aimed at improving chainsaw milling techniques and technologies (board mill attachment)

2. Providing a certified timber grading course in collaboration with the Guyana Forestry Commission
3. Sponsoring a timber harvest planning course through the Forestry Training Centre Incorporated
4. Preparing an Occupational Health and Safety campaign for to be launched in the pilot communities

Support for Amerindian Heritage Month Activities

In recognition of Amerindian Heritage month (September), the project supported the Amerindian heritage month activities in Annai and Orealla/Siparuta through sponsorship of volleyball competitions and the sponsorship of one contestant for the Ms. Amerindian Heritage pageant in Orealla/Siparuta pageant.

The community forestry workers in Orealla/Siparuta and Annai also made presentations on the project at schools in their communities after which a quiz competition for school children were held and project visibility tokens awarded to winners.





Chainsaw Milling Project supports the adoption of alternative livelihoods

As part of the objectives to support the development of alternative livelihood options for chainsaw milling dependent communities, the Project conducted household livelihood surveys to assess the dependence on chainsaw milling in the pilot communities. All data collected was entered into a database.

Observations made during the research included:

- Chainsaw lumbering is accepted as a legal method of conversion of logs into lumber and a justifiable livelihood option in Guyana.
- Chainsaw operators continue to invest in equipment such as tractors, to expand operations.
- Adequate timber resources continue to exist for community level chainsaw lumbering activities.
- Forest dependent communities need technical and financial support for developing alternative livelihood options.

The Community Forestry Workers also met with the community leaders to identify alternative livelihood options for support by the project.

The project also sponsored/co-sponsored the following activities:

1. A training course in Cookery targeting women of Annai.
2. A 5-week sewing training for the Ituni Women In Action Group(IWIA)
3. A 4-week woodworking training to 5 persons from Ituni.
4. A 5 member team from Orealla/Siparuta community to visit Annai community to learn about tourism and alternative livelihood options.



Members of the Project Advisory Committee (2011-2012)

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Representative
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