

**EnABLE Ghana Country Project Supporting Social Inclusion in FCPF
Emission Reductions
Program**

Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF)

November 2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Due to Ghana's significant economic dependence on natural resources, the country now experiences one of the highest deforestation rates in Africa. According to the REDD/Forest Reference Emission Level (2017), Ghana's deforestation rate has been estimated at 3.6 per annum since 2001. Unlike other REDD+ countries facing frontier deforestation, Ghana's deforestation pathway is one of incremental degradation leading to deforestation. In 2023, Ghana lost 110 hectares of natural forest, which is equivalent to 76.3 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions. Ghana's deforestation rate is approximately 2% per year. The REDD+ Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) identified the principal drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, in order of relevance, as :

- (i) Uncontrolled agricultural expansion at the expense of forests
- (ii) Over-harvesting and illegal harvesting of wood
- (iii) Population and development pressure
- (iv) Mining and mineral exploitation

Ghana prepared a National REDD+ Strategy as part of its R-PP. The strategy's vision is to significantly reduce deforestation and forest degradation emissions by tackling the drivers of deforestation. Simultaneously, it seeks to tackle threats that undermine ecosystem services and environmental integrity to maximize the co-benefits of the forests and serve as a pillar of action for the national climate change agenda and a leading pathway towards sustainable, low-emissions development.

Ghana's strategy is to produce emission reductions by focusing on large-scale programs that align with existing ecological boundaries and are defined by major commodities and drivers of deforestation and degradation. These programs would be further supported by a set of overarching actions and policies which are encompassed within the national REDD+ framework.

In 2016, Ghana developed the Ghana Cocoa Forest REDD+ Program (Ghana Emissions Reduction Program), a flagship emissions reduction program (ERP) operating in six (6) Hotspot Intervention Areas (HIAs) within the High Forest Zone (HFZ). The Emission Reduction Program is an offshoot of the national Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) strategy (2016 - 2035), a comprehensive blueprint developed in 2016 and aimed at reducing deforestation focusing on a landscape-scale program tied to specific commodities. By June 2019, Ghana had successfully signed an Emission Reduction Payment Agreement (ERPA) linked to the ERP with the World Bank Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF).

In January 2023, Ghana received its first Emission Reductions (ER) payment. As outlined in the Ghana REDD+ Strategy, the country commits to ensuring that both women and men are fully recognized as REDD+ stakeholders and with equal access to, use of, and control over forest resources, as well as equitable access to REDD+ benefits. However, reports by the World Bank (2018 and 2020) have indicated that access to benefits remains inequitably distributed among REDD+ stakeholders.

Vulnerable groups including women, youth, migrants, and persons with disabilities (PWDs) face significant barriers in accessing benefits. Challenges such as land and tree tenure insecurity, landlessness, customs and traditions, beliefs and practices, discrimination and stigma, language barriers, and limited capacity impede their participation. Additionally, a lack of access to secured tenure, information, and training, such as on results-based climate finance programs, benefit sharing and eligibility, climate change mitigation and adaptation, further restricts the inclusion of these groups. These barriers have significant implications for the equitable distribution of both carbon and non-carbon benefits.

Specifically, to the Ghana ERP, these challenges can lead to the exclusion of vulnerable groups' from climate actions or benefit payments (monetary or non-monetary) directly affecting their livelihoods, participation, and the consideration of their voices in decision-making processes under the Emissions Reduction Program.

The Enhancing Access to Benefits while Lowering Emissions (EnABLE) Ghana Country Project Supporting Social Inclusion in FCPF Emissions Reduction Program, a complementary transformative intervention to the ERP, aims to enhance the inclusion of target beneficiaries comprising predominantly vulnerable groups such as women, youth, migrant farmers, and persons with disabilities (PWD) in accessing payments and other benefits from the ERP. Thus, EnABLE Ghana Project has been conceived to provide direct support to women and other vulnerable groups that may be excluded from accessing the benefits accruing from ERP.

Addressing these social inclusion challenges requires a multi-faceted approach, including increasing awareness and knowledge, strengthening capacities, skills, and voices of target beneficiaries and of their organizations to actively engage in the ERP and access its benefit. Collaboration and partnerships with other key stakeholders through appropriately designed pilot activities, which can be easily replicated and upscale, will be prioritized in the Hotspot Intervention Areas.

This Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) is being updated to contribute to the sustainable implementation of EnABLE Ghana Country Project under the broader Ghana Cocoa Forest REDD+ Program (GCFRP) by providing guidelines to mitigate all anticipated adverse risks and impacts during the planning and implementation of the various subprojects under the strategic interventions.

The Ghana REDD+ Mechanism comprises several subprojects, all of which fall within Category B or C subprojects. As indicated in the main strategies of the REDD+ and EnABLE, activities will focus on strengthening institutions and policies to enhance the inclusion of target beneficiaries comprising predominantly vulnerable groups such as women, youth, migrant farmers, and persons with disabilities (PWD) in accessing payments and other benefits from the ERP.

No subproject that would qualify as category A will be implemented under the EnABLE activities and GCFRP at large.

Sub-projects will be screened to:

- I. Determine whether projects are likely to have potential negative environmental and social impacts
- II. Identify potential environmental and social impacts
- III. Identify appropriate mitigation measures for activities with adverse impacts
- IV. Incorporate mitigation measures into the project design
- V. Monitor environmental and social impacts and concerns during implementation.

An Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) is included to provide guidance to Solidaridad West Africa (SWA) on procedures to be followed and standards to be met in managing the associated risks/impacts in accordance with national laws and World Bank E&S provisions. Roles and responsibilities of SWA and other collaborating agencies are clearly defined, as well as monitoring protocols to be followed to ensure that the required provisions are adhered to and budgetary allocations are provided to support the implementation of the ESMP. The main responsibility for implementing the ESMF rests with the SWA in collaboration with Tropenbos Ghana and other partners, such as National REDD+ Secretariate, District Assemblies, local communities and other institutions to be identified as relevant.

EnABLE will leverage the Safeguards Focal Persons (SFPs) established under the GCFRP, who serves as the main contact person responsible for implementing and reporting on Safeguards activities. They operate under the supervision of the Director of the Climate Change Department and with the support of the technical sub-working group on safeguards. These Safeguards Focal Persons (SFPs), stationed at the Forestry Commission's regional and district offices, have also been successfully trained on World Bank, National and international safeguards requirements.

The SFPs are responsible for the effective monitoring and reporting of safeguards compliance in their various regions and districts. The FSD regional managers will be part of the implementation of all actions

to mitigate adverse environmental and social impacts within their respective operational regions and supervise their district managers to ensure sound management practices at the community level.

The implementation of the programme is within a set of frameworks and policies from the World Bank and National regulations. An Environmental and Social Commitment Plan developed for the programme outlines the Environmental and Social Standards (ESS1, ESS2, ESS3, ESS4, ESS5, ESS6, ESS8 and ESS10) triggered by the programme activities. To ensure compliance, material measures and actions have been designed to guide provisions on labor and working conditions, management of workers relationships, occupational health and safety (including personal protective equipment, and emergency preparedness and response), conduct of workers (including relating to SEA/SH, forced labor, child labor) and FGRM consistent with ESS2.

The Feedback and Grievance Redress Mechanism (FGRM) is designed to receive, evaluate and address project-related grievances from affected communities or stakeholders at the community, HIA, or programme level. Potential conflict sources could be resource use and access, land use and tree tenure, benefit sharing, gender inclusiveness and other related grievances. The PMU, HIA and community level FGRM focal persons will be responsible for the FGRM processes. Monitoring plans have been developed for implementation at different levels.

As part of stakeholder engagement, there was extensive stakeholder consultation in the preparation of the ESMF. Key stakeholders included government ministries, state agencies and departments, projects offices, CSOs and local communities in the Programme area. The consultations also served to gather information on institutional mandates and permitting requirements to inform the development of sub-projects.

A budget of 101,000 USD is allocated for the implementation of the ESMF. The budget will be used for staffing, training of staff involved in the implementation of ESMF, preparation of guidance notes and tools, and monitoring and evaluation of ESMF implementation.

This ESMF is an update of the ESMF prepared for GCFRP based on the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) prepared for the Ghana REDD+ Strategy and ESMF prepared for the Ghana Forest Investment program. As required by the World Bank policies/standards and Ghana ESIA procedures on disclosure, SWA will make copies of the ESMF available in selected public places including beneficiary communities as required by law for information and comments. Solidaridad will select display venues upon consultation with the TBG and NRS including the FC and TBG website.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AfDB	African Development Bank
CFC	Collaborative Forest Committee
COCOBOD	Ghana Cocoa Board
CREMA	Community Resource Management Area
CSOs	Civil Society Organization(s)
DAs	District Assemblies
DGM	Dedicated Grant Mechanism for Indigenous People and Local Communities
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency, Ghana
ESIA	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
ESMP	Environmental and Social Management Plan
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
FC	Forestry Commission
FCPF	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
FDMP	Forestry Development Master Plan
FIP	Forest Investment Programme
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade
FORIG	Forestry Research Institute of Ghana
FP	Focal Point
FSD	Forest Services Division
GHG	Green House Gas
GoG	Government of Ghana
GPRS I	Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy
GPRS II	Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy
GSBA	Globally Significant Biodiversity Areas
HFZ	High Forest Zone
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
LULUCF	Land use, Land Use Change and Forestry
MC	Minerals Commission
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MESTI	Ministry of Environment Science Technology and Innovation
MLNR	Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources
MMDA	Metropolitan Municipal and District Assemblies
MoFA	Ministry of Food and Agriculture
MRV	Monitoring Reporting and Verification
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NREG	Natural Resources and Environmental Governance
NRCD	National Redemption Council Decree
NTFPs	Non-Timber Forest Products
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation
REDD+	REDD plus sustainable management of forest, forest conservation, enhancement of carbon stocks
RMSC	Resource Management Support Centre
R-PP	Readiness Preparation Proposal
SESA	Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment
SWA	Solidaridad West Africa
TAs	Traditional Authorities
TBG	Tropenbos Ghana
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WB	World Bank
WD	Wildlife Division
WRC	Water Resources Commission

1.0. INTRODUCTION

Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) is a proposed global mechanism to mitigate climate change, while mobilizing financial resources for socio-economic development in forest countries. The Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), facilitated by the World Bank, brings together donors and forest country participants with the aim of supporting the forest countries in the preparation and subsequent implementation of their REDD+ strategies. Ghana is a key FCPF participant country.

Due to Ghana's significant economic dependence on natural resources, the country now experiences one of the highest deforestation rates in Africa. According to the REDD/Forest Reference Emission Level (2017), Ghana's deforestation rate has been estimated at 3.6 per annum since 2001. Unlike other REDD+ countries facing frontier deforestation, Ghana's deforestation pathway is one of incremental degradation leading to deforestation. In 2023, Ghana lost 110 hectares of natural forest, which is equivalent to 76.3 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions. Ghana's deforestation rate is approximately 2% per year. The REDD+ Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) identified the principal drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, in order of relevance, as :

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Ghana prepared a National REDD+ Strategy as part of its R-PP. The strategy's vision is to significantly reduce deforestation and forest degradation emissions by tackling the drivers of deforestation. Simultaneously, it seeks to tackle threats that undermine ecosystem services and environmental integrity to maximize the co-benefits of the forests and serve as a pillar of action for the national climate change agenda and a leading pathway towards sustainable, low-emissions development.

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Addressing these social inclusion challenges will require a multi-faceted approach, including increasing awareness and knowledge, strengthening capacities, skills, and voices of target beneficiaries and their organizations to engage in the ERP and benefit. Collaboration and partnerships with other key stakeholders through appropriately designed pilot activities, which can be easily replicated and upscaled, will be prioritized in the Hotspot Intervention Areas.

This Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) is prepared to contribute to the sustainable implementation of the EnABLE Ghana project by providing management measures and principles to mitigate all anticipated adverse impacts during the planning and implementation of the various sub-projects.

1.1 Objectives of the ESMF

The objectives of the ESMF are to:

- Establish clear procedures and methodologies for the environmental and social assessment, review, approval, and implementation of interventions identified by the EnABLE project under the REDD+ strategy
- Specify appropriate roles and responsibilities, and outline the necessary reporting procedures, for managing and monitoring environmental and social concerns related to project interventions
- Determine the training, capacity building and technical assistance needed to successfully implement the provisions of the ESMF
- Provide practical information on resources for implementing the ESMF.

1.2 Approach to the ESMF Study

This ESMF study has benefitted from the following reports:

- Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) for the African Development Bank (AfDB) component of the Ghana Forest Investment Program (GFIP)
- Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) for the World Bank-financed Ghana Forest Investment Program (GFIP)
- The final Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) report for the REDD+ mechanism
- Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) of the Ghana Cocoa Forests REDD+ Project (GCFRP)

1.2.1 Baseline Information

The following baseline data were collected and analyzed for the ESMF:

- Key components of proposed REDD+ interventions
- Relevant existing environmental and social standards, laws, and regulations related to the forestry and agricultural sector in Ghana
- Existing main environmental and social conditions
- Key environmental and social issues associated with the proposed intervention
- Key stakeholders in relation to the identified interventions
- Requirements for the detailed analysis of potential effects:
- Technical studies required
- Public participation and stakeholder involvement.

Available information resources, including other environmental and social assessment studies available as reference.

1.2.2 Stakeholder Consultations

Key stakeholders were defined as those to be directly affected by the proposed interventions, i.e. those that may be expected to either benefit or lose from the proposed alternative/project, particularly among the poor and the marginalized. Those directly involved included persons and institutions with technical expertise and public interest in the REDD+ mechanism as well as with linkages to the poor and marginalized.

Consultation was made in all 6 Hotspot Intervention Areas (HIAs) in five out of the 16 regions of Ghana and these consultations spanned across the high forest zone of the country.

Beneficiary communities were selected together with HIA Management Board (HMB) members, the National REDD+ Secretariat (NRS), and the District Forest Services Division (FSD) Managers using a checklist of communities with EnABLE implementation potential. The consulted regions comprise the Western North, Central, Ahafo, Ashanti, and Eastern. The rest participated in the SESA regional workshops where their views were solicited on the key issues.

The ultimate beneficiaries of this project are communities who manage land and forests for their livelihoods and will have access to new skills, opportunities, and markets. They were, therefore, mostly the target for consultation. The ministries, departments, and agencies responsible for natural resources and environmental management will also benefit from improved policies, capacity development programmes, and outreach and communication programmes, and it was important to solicit their views.

Other stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society, will also benefit from the institutional and policy reform, and improved resource management practices in the key regions and sectors of focus.

1.3 Overview of the EnABLE Ghana Country Project

The EnABLE Ghana Project aims to complement the ERP towards achieving the REDD+ Strategy 2016 - 2035. The GCFRP is one of the first Emission Reductions (ER) Program to be centered upon the development of a sustainable commodity supply chain that hinges upon the non-carbon benefits that will be channeled to farmers because of significant private sector investments into the landscape and the supply chain.

The goal of the GCFRP is to significantly reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation by promoting climate-smart cocoa production, landscape-level land-use planning, strategic policy reforms, integrated coordination and monitoring, law enforcement as well as risk reduction efforts within priority Hotspot Intervention Area (HIA) landscapes. The programme area covers 5.92 million ha, it is in the southern third of the country and forms part of the West Africa Guinean Forest biodiversity hotspot. The programme area overlaps with 92 administrative districts and 5 administrative regions, including the Eastern Region, Central Region, Ashanti Region, Western Region, and Ahafo Region. The administrative districts have been grouped into HIAs, with their respective communities forming sub-HIAs. Each of the HIAs is governed by a duly constituted governance structure. The GCFRP is being implemented in six (6) HIAs (**Figure 1**)

The EnABLE Project will complement the ERP and BSP and will provide direct support to women and other vulnerable groups that are excluded or likely to be excluded from the decision-making process on the distribution of the ER benefits. This will be done through targeted capacity-building and the provision of technical assistance to groups that may lack the knowledge or resources to become organized to fully participate in jurisdictional emissions reduction programs and access their benefits.

The lessons learned from the Ghana FIP and Ghana DGM informed the design of the EnABLE Ghana project to specifically focus on enhancing access to ERP benefits for marginalized and disadvantaged groups to sustain the interest of local communities to reduce deforestation and forest degradation. The project aligns with the Ghana Cocoa Sector Development Strategy (GCSDS) (2017 - 2027) which seeks to create a modernized, resilient, and competitive cocoa environment where all stakeholders strive toward a sustainable cocoa economy in which farmers and their communities can thrive.

The project is consistent with Ghana's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC). The updated NDC submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 2021 commits to 47 mitigation and adaptation policy actions. The project is strongly aligned with the policy action on "Fostering social inclusion focusing on youth and women". The project is also aligned with Ghana's National Climate Change Policy (2013) with a focus on climate-resilient agriculture and increasing resilience of vulnerable communities to climate risks. The EnABLE Ghana Project will contribute to the achievement of these objectives.

Article 5 of the Paris Agreement (PA) which features sustainable forest management as a priority sector for mitigation and adaptation, is strongly manifested in the Project. Component 2 of the project addresses provisions in Article 5 of the PA through the promotion of women-led climate-resilient alternative livelihood models emphasizing enhanced productivity (non-carbon benefit) to women in jurisdictional emissions reduction programs.

In addition, EnABLE fully aligns with the World Bank's mission of a world free of poverty on a liveable planet. The World Bank made a bold commitment at COP 28 to redouble efforts to end poverty on a liveable planet through the transfer of carbon credits to communities from companies and governments as a tool for driving decarbonization whilst protecting the most vulnerable from climate policy impacts. The EnABLE Ghana Project will contribute to promoting social integrity in the carbon market by ensuring that vulnerable people and local communities benefit the most from emissions reduction programs.

The project is aligned with Ghana's Country Partnership Framework (CPF) 2022 – 2026 and Focus Area 3: Promoting Resilient and Sustainable Development. In addition, the project aligns with the Ghana Country Climate and Development Report (CCDR, 2022) which emphasizes the need for capacity building for local communities and stakeholders to respond to the challenges of climate change. Promoting climate-smart agriculture, enabling inclusive participation to global carbon markets, and unlocking finance for climate action and sustainable development are some of the key development pathways, priority areas, and recommended actions for a greener, resilient, and inclusive development outlined in the Ghana CCDR. The operation will contribute to the achievement of these objectives.

The project is responsive to the Ghana National Gender Policy 2015, and the proposed WBG Gender Strategy 2024 – 2030. The project design includes targeted interventions for improving ownership and control over resources and assets, enhancing women's role in local-level climate change initiatives, and creating better alternative income-generating opportunities for women farmers in forest landscapes. The project will pay particular attention to the factors that may impede women from participating in results-based climate initiatives and benefit sharing, alternative livelihoods, and other value-added activities. Civil society engagement and dialogue on the natural resource sectors, climate change, and the REDD+ process have been increasing.

The recently closed Ghana Dedicated Grant Mechanism (DGM) for Local Communities Project sought to strengthen the knowledge and practices of targeted local communities in select Regions of Ghana to advance REDD+ processes and sustainable forest management. The project was implemented by Solidaridad West Africa, a civil society organization with an overall satisfactory rating at completion.

Building on lessons learned from the Ghana DGM, EnABLE Ghana Project will be implemented by Solidaridad West Africa in partnership with Tropenbos Ghana, two local civil society organizations with vast experience in working with various stakeholders in the ERP landscape.

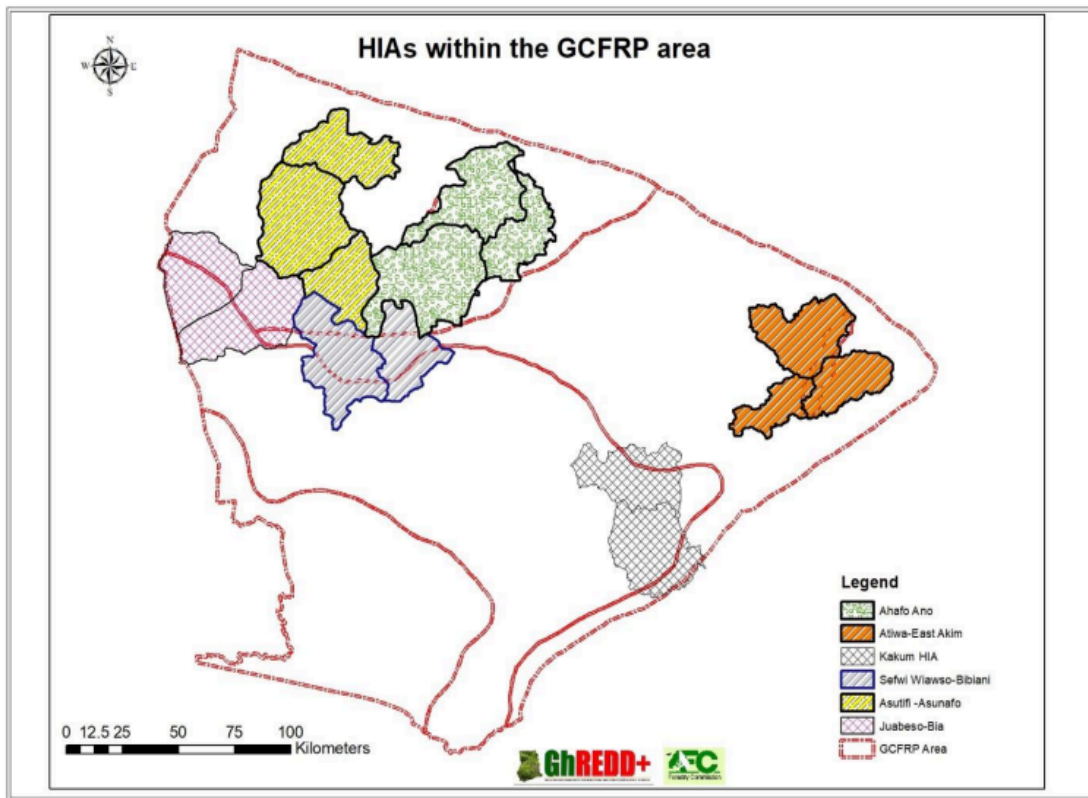


Figure 1: Map of the implementation area of the EnABLE

1.4 Implementing and collaborating institutions

EnABLE Ghana Project is being implemented by Solidaridad West Africa in partnership with Tropenbos Ghana, two local civil society organizations with vast experience in working with various stakeholders in the ERP landscape. The partners will work closely with the National REDD+ Secretariate and landscape-level stakeholders including HIAs, Municipal and District Assemblies (MDAs), and community-based organizations (CBOs). Others are stakeholders in the cocoa landscape supply chain and will include the Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD), licensed buying companies (LBCs), private agents, agricultural extension agents (AEAs), and service providers.

2.0 POLICY, LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

The national policy and legal provisions related to the EnABLE implementation adopted under REDD+ interventions are presented in **Annex 1** of this report.

2.1 Institutional Framework

The institutions below play an important part in the REDD+ strategy.

Environmental Protection Agency

As the law stipulates, the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) of Ghana is statutorily mandated to ensure that the implementation of all undertakings does not harm the environment. To achieve this, the EPA has established a robust framework with multiple collaborative efforts.

The agency continues to implement Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedures as a decision support and planning tool to promote sustainable development. This involves ensuring all developmental activities likely to impact the environment are subject to EIA, in collaboration with other regulatory bodies, such as the Water Resources Commission and the Forestry Commission.

Leveraging these collaborative efforts, the EPA aims to ensure that all undertakings in Ghana are carried out in an environmentally sound manner, promoting sustainable development and protecting the country's environmental resources.

Forestry Commission

The Forestry Commission of Ghana is responsible for the regulation of utilization of forest and wildlife resources, the conservation and management of those resources, and the coordination of policies related to them. The Commission embodies the various public bodies and agencies that were individually implementing the functions of protection, management, and the regulation of forest and wildlife resources. These agencies currently form the divisions of the Commission:

- Forest Services Division (FSD)
- Wildlife Division (WD)
- Timber Industry Development Division (TIDD)
- Wood Industries Training Centre (WITC)
- Resource Management Support Centre (RMSC)

It is the aim of the Commission to be a corporate body of excellence in the sustainable development management and utilization of Ghana's forest and wildlife resources, meeting both national and global standards for forest and wildlife resource conservation and development.

Metropolitan/Municipal/ District Assemblies (MMDAs)

The district assembly system, which serves as the planning authority for overall district development, will ensure that local communities are actively involved in the formulation of the District Development Plan. This includes the election of assemblymen by communities, zones, or villages, who will represent their constituents' interests within the EnABLE programme.

Unit Committees formed at the community level and Urban/Town/Area Councils will be integral in engaging local communities in EnABLE activities. These committees will facilitate the dissemination of information, gather feedback, and ensure that the needs and concerns of the local people are addressed within the programme.

The EnABLE programme will support capacity-building activities for assembly members and other stakeholders. This includes training on data-driven decision-making using the District Data Development Platform (DDDP), and other relevant skills to enhance their ability to participate effectively in the programme. The district assembly system will be a vital partner in the implementation of the Ghana EnABLE programme, ensuring that the programme's objectives are met through inclusive and participatory approaches.

Ghana Cocoa Board

Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD) is the national institution responsible for the regulation and management of the cocoa sector and its functions center on the production, research, extension, internal and external marketing and quality control of cocoa. COCOBOD is an important institution as most of Ghana's cocoa is grown in the High Forest ecological zone and cocoa production in forest areas is a key driver of deforestation.

COCOBOD is working within the Hotspot Intervention Area (HIA) Governance structure, which is an integral part of the Ghana Cocoa Forest REDD+ Programme (GCFRP). This involves strengthening stakeholder effectiveness and efficiency to combat deforestation and forest degradation, improve cocoa farm resilience, increase cocoa farmers' revenues, and reduce poverty. COCOBOD will play a crucial role in the EnABLE Ghana project, ensuring that the cocoa sector contributes to the country's sustainable development goals, improving farmers' livelihoods while maintaining its position as a leading cocoa producer.

Water Resources Commission (WRC)

The Water Resources Commission is responsible for the management and regulation of water resources in Ghana. Within the context of the EnABLE programme, project activities will ensure that water resources are managed sustainably to support agricultural activities and other uses in the High Forest Zones. Where needed, water abstraction and utilization permits will be sought from the commission. The programme will liaise with the commission to monitor water quality to prevent pollution from agricultural runoff or mining activities, which can adversely affect both human health and biodiversity.

Minerals Commission

With the mandate to regulate mining operations in Ghana, ensuring that mineral extraction is conducted sustainably and in compliance with environmental standards, it is particularly important for the programme to widely collaborate with the commission. This is particularly important in the High Forest Zones, where illegal mining can impact both land use and water resources.

2.2 World Bank Environmental and Social Framework

Potential interventions are anticipated to have positive social and environmental impacts. Some of the interventions may result in changes in land use which impact livelihoods. The specific locations of activities and intervention are still being identified.

The relevant World Bank Environmental and Social Standards to EnABLE are summarized Table 1.

Table 1: World Bank Environmental and Social Framework relevant to EnABLE

World Bank Standards	Scope of Application	Relevant Country E&S Regulations	Measures to address gaps between the ESSs and Country Laws
ESS 1: Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts	This standard requires identifying, assessing, and managing environmental and social risks associated with projects	Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Act, 1994 (Act 490)	Aligning national regulations with World Bank ESS through thorough engagement with stakeholders
ESS 2: Labour and Working Relations	Promotion fair labor practices, including non-discrimination and health and safety	Ghana's Labour Act, 2003 (Act 651)	Enforcement of labor laws and protections for vulnerable workers
ESS 3: Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management	Emphasizes sustainable resource use and pollution prevention	Waste Management Policy (2016), Local Government Act (Act 462), National Environmental Sanitation Policy	Closing funding gap to enhance waste management initiatives Improve systems to monitor pollution levels effectively
ESS 4: Community Health and Safety	Focuses on minimizing risks to community health and safety arising from project activities	Public Health Act, 2012 (Act 851), Occupational Health and Safety Policy, Local Government Act (Act 462)	Improvement in coordination between health agencies and project implementers
ESS 5: Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement	outlines requirements for land acquisition processes	Land Act, 2020 (Act 1036) Constitution of Ghana (1992), Public Land Act, 1963 (Act 123)	Need for more robust compensation frameworks for project affected communities
ESS 6: Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources	Promotion of biodiversity conservation	Forest Act, 1994 (Act 457) Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1994 (Act 490), National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP),	Strengthening integration of biodiversity considerations into project planning

		Ghana National Climate Change Policy, Water Resources Commission Act, 1996 (Act 522)	
ESS 8: Cultural Heritage	Protection of cultural heritage during project implementation	National Cultural Policy (2004), Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1994 (Act 490), Local Governance Act, 2016 (Act 936), Antiquities Act, 1967 (NLCD 387)	Comprehensive identification processes for cultural sites
ESS 10: Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure	Emphasizes engaging stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle	Local Governance Act, 2016 (Act 936), Ghana National Climate Change Policy, Local Governance Act, 2016 (Act 936),	Need for more inclusive engagement strategies to reach marginalized communities.

3.0 GHANA BASELINE DESCRIPTION

The Republic of Ghana is situated on the West Coast of Africa between latitude 4° 30' and 11° N and longitude 1° 10' E and 3° 15' W with a land size of 238,539km². It has a total border of 2,093km, including 548km with Burkina Faso to the north, 688km with Côte d'Ivoire to the west, and 877km with Togo to the east. It has a coastline on the Gulf of Guinea, part of the Atlantic Ocean, measuring 560km (350 miles) long.

The coastline is mostly low and sandy, with plains and scrub behind it. The coastline is also intersected by several rivers and streams, most of which are navigable only by canoe. The country is divided into 16 administrative regions and 216 districts. The country is characterized by low relief with few areas of moderate elevation in the north and east. The land is generally 600 meters above sea level. Physiographic regions include the coastal plains, the forest-dissected plateau, and high hilltops which are important ecological subsystems in a generally undulating terrain.

At the southern and northern margins of the Volta Basin, there are two prominent areas of highland – the Kwahu Plateau, and the Gambaga Escarpment. On the eastern margins of the Volta Basin is a relatively narrow zone of high mountains running in a south-west to north-east direction with the Akwapim, Buem, and Togo Ranges registering the highest point (Mt. Afadjato) in the country.

Average rainfall over the country is about 1,260 mm/ year but ranges from 890 mm/year in the coastal zone near Accra to 2,030 mm/year in the southwestern rainforests. The rainfall is bi-modal in the southwestern forest zone, giving a major and a minor growing season; elsewhere, a uni-modal distribution gives a single growing season from May to October. There are two broad ecological zones - a high forest zone (HFZ) covering much of the southern third of the country, and a savannah zone covering two-thirds of the considerably drier northern Ghana Figure 4.

Ghana is drained by three main river systems comprising the Volta, Southwestern, and Coastal River Systems Figure 2. The Volta in Ghana occupies nearly two-thirds (70%) of the land area of Ghana, the Southwestern 22%, and the minor coastal 8%. Global water resources are estimated at 53.2 km³ per year, consisting of 30.3 km³/year of internally produced water resources, and 22.9 km³/year of runoff from other countries.

As identified by the REDD+ process, the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation according to their relevance are listed below: The principal drivers of deforestation and forest degradation are:

- uncontrolled agricultural expansion at the expense of forests
- over-harvesting and illegal harvesting of wood
- population and development pressure
- mining and mineral exploitation

Ghana's deforestation rate is about 3.6 per year, representing a loss of 315,145 ha/year since 2001 with varying reports (Ghana's National Forest Reference Levels; Deforestation statistics for Ghana) indicating that the rate could be as high as **794,214 hectares per year** during peak years between 2013 and 2015. Recent assessments indicate that rates may have been accelerating in the southern Bono, Ahafo, and northern portions of the Western North Regions.

3.1 Environmentally sensitive and protected areas

The environmentally sensitive and protected areas in the country are described in the following table (**Table 3**). Ghana has 3,725 species of plants and 729 birds. The Ghana EPA has also classified ‘no go’ areas for development projects, which are given in Annex 3 of this report.

Table 2: Description of Protected Areas in Ghana

Typology	Area	Comments
Off-Reserve areas	201,000 km ²	Off-reserve areas are lands that are currently (or were) forests. but where the policy presumption is that these lands would be converted to other uses – in particular, agriculture. This includes 5,000 km ² of unreserved forests, 60,000 km ² of bush fallow, 71,000 km ² of bush fallow, 36,000 km ² of unimproved pasture, and 29,000 km ² of tree and annual cropland.
Forest Reserves	26,000 km ²	Areas that have been designated as forest reserves where no farming is allowed (except in “admitted” farms, which were usually present at the time of reservation of the forest).
Dedicated Forests	4 km ²	Dedicated forests are designed to enable communities to manage their own forest ‘reserves’ based on approved management plans. These are in the form of patches of forests, sacred groves, and secondary forests in off-reserve areas. A dedicated forest management scheme was initiated in 1994, under a pilot scheme, two communities were assisted to declare Dedicated Forests (215 ha & 190 ha), in the Fosu district to determine the feasibility of communities. The results proved so positive, and draft legislation and a programme to promote dedicated forests were formulated in 1997, but no further action was taken.
Sacred Groves	Unknown	There are numerous sacred groves throughout Ghana. These are managed wholly by communities, but they have no legal status and are extremely small in most instances.
Protected Areas (National Parks)	10,500 km ²	Generally, a large and relatively undisturbed area of outstanding natural value containing representative samples of major natural regions, features, or scenery and containing one or several entire ecosystems and not materially altered by man (Figure 3). The areas should be accessible to the public and have high recreational, educational, inspirational, and cultural potential of clear benefit to the local people, the region, and the nation.
Resource Reserves (Game Production Reserve)	1,664 km ²	Areas of variable size in which habitats are managed to guarantee conditions essential to the well-being of selected species for the sustained production of wildlife products (meat, timber, pasture, fruits, honey, and other Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) for cultural practices, tourism, and trophy hunting. These areas may be managed by a central authority, or through agreement, by other levels of government, special trusts, or local community institutions as appropriate under the overall supervision of GWD.

Typology	Area	Comments
Wildlife Sanctuaries	66km ²	Wildlife sanctuaries can be created on state land or local land. There is a revenue-sharing mechanism at Agumatsa Wildlife Sanctuary in place. (Community 57%, FC 23% and Hohoe Municipal Assembly 20%)
CREMA-Community Resource Management Area	2,000km ²	The Community Resources Management Area is a legally recognized unit of management that is capable of managing the wildlife resources within the defined area. Devolution of authority to the CREMA to the Executive Committee is conditional and confers the right to restrict access to the common property and extra-farm resources. This provides the incentives for sustainable management of wildlife resources. So far only 8 CREMA (Akontombra CREMA, Asum Ayokwaw CREMA, Kwamebikrom CREMA, Asuopri CREMA, Kurkosue CREMA, Elluokrom CREMA, Juaboso CREMA, Asubia CREMA Amok-wasuazo) have received the authority to manage its resources within the 6 HIAs.
Globally Significant Biodiversity Areas-GSBAs	2,302 km ²	Legally established globally significant biodiversity areas identified within the existing forest reserve system, forming a potential network of thirty forest reserves which are proposed for either full (11 reserves) or partial (19 re-serves) protection to provide global security for floristic diversity, these include GSBAs and Southern Dry Forests the Provenance Protection Areas.
Strict Nature Reserve (SNR)	385 km ²	Only 1 Strict Nature reserve, Kogyae, has been created. Originally created from a Forest Reserve it was taken over by the WD in 1971 and established as an IUCN Category I strict nature reserve. However, the WD has been unable to evict a number of farms and settlements that have occurred within the reserve.
Ramsar Sites	1,784 km ²	6 Ramsar sites are listed as wetland sites of international importance. Under the Convention, there is a general obligation for the Contracting Parties to include wetland conservation considerations in their national land-use planning. They have undertaken to formulate and implement this planning to promote, as far as possible, "the wise use of wetlands in their territory"

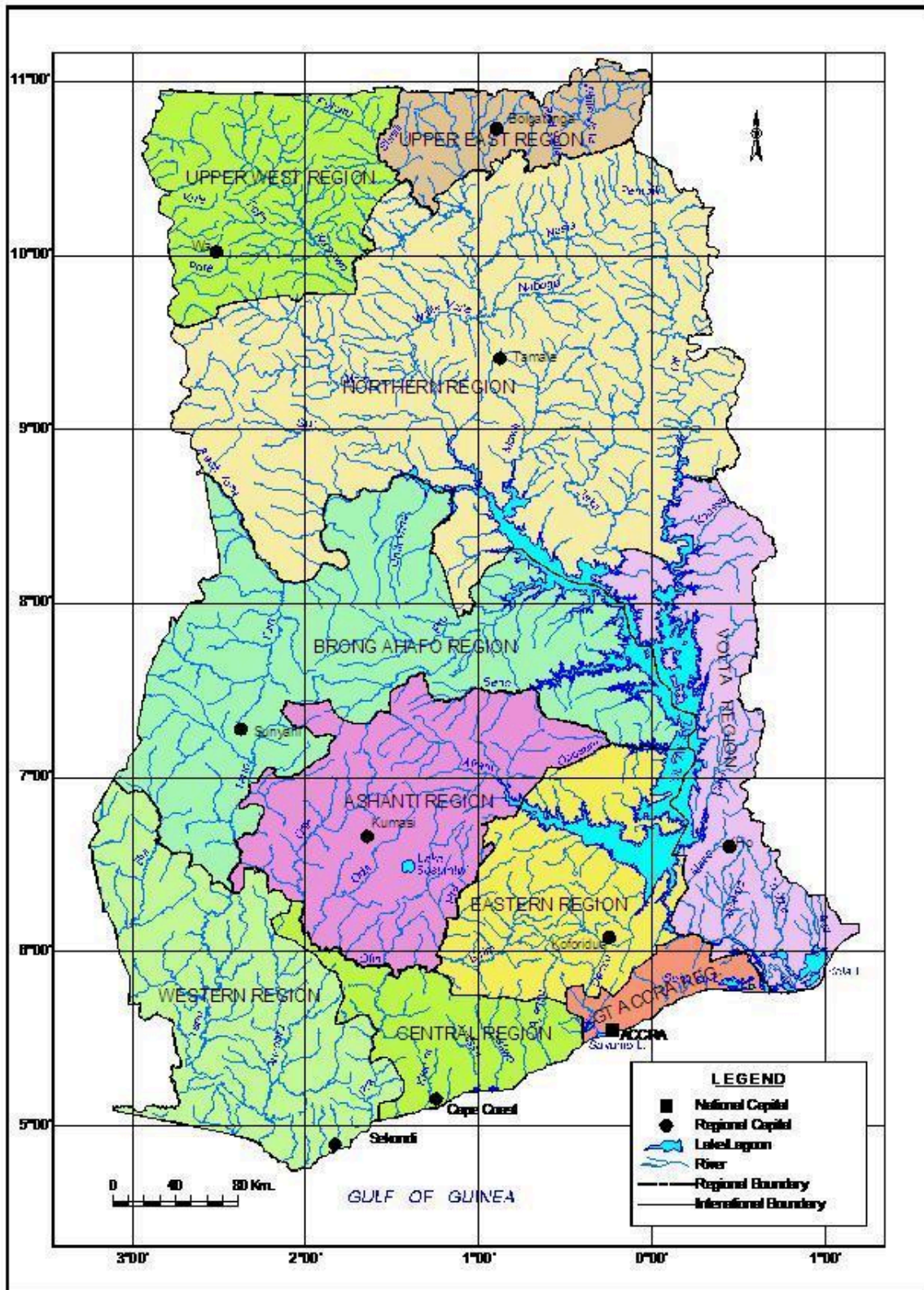


Figure 2: Drainage map of Ghana

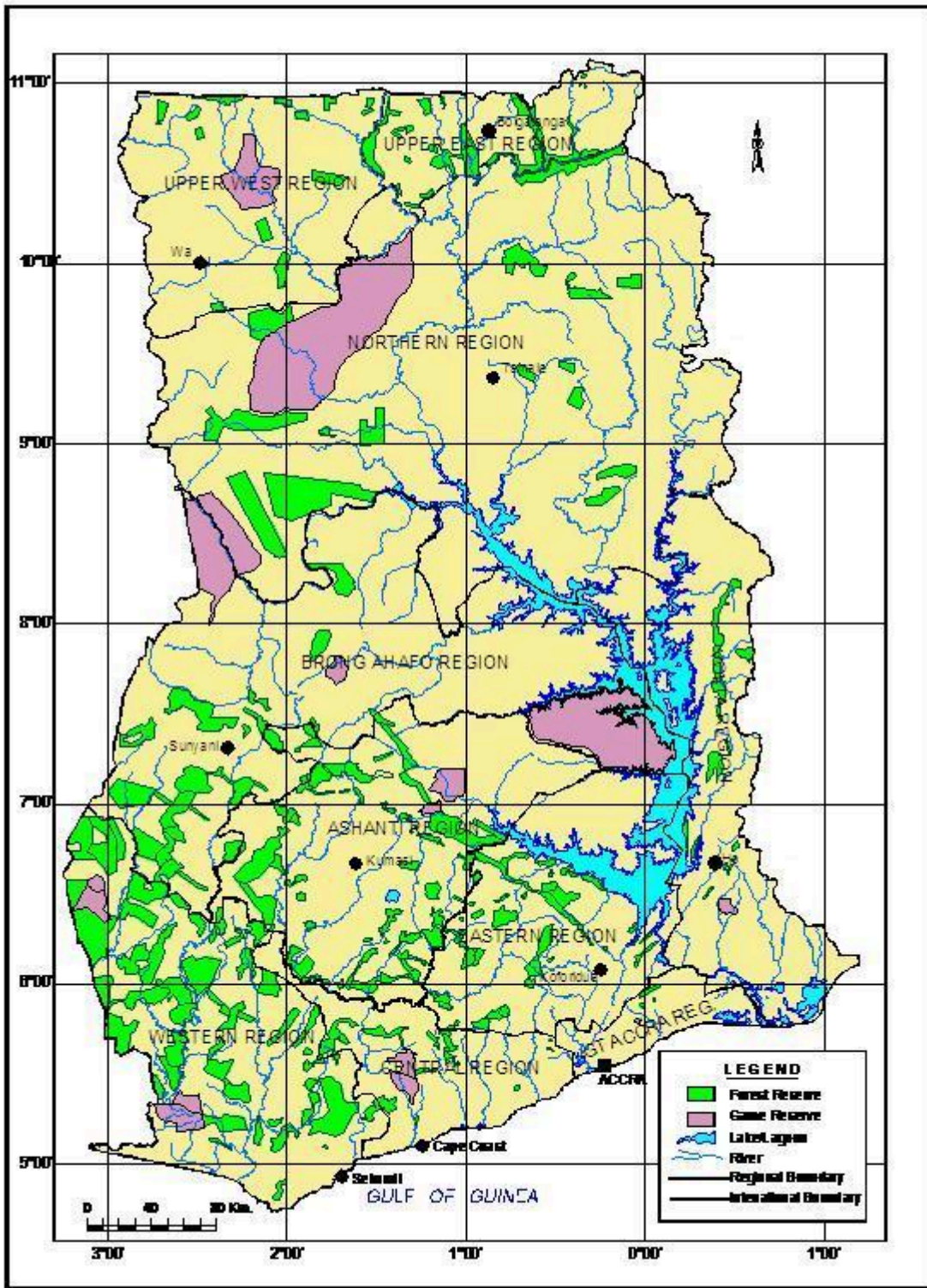


Figure 3: Map of protected areas in Ghana

Map Of Vegetation Zones In Ghana

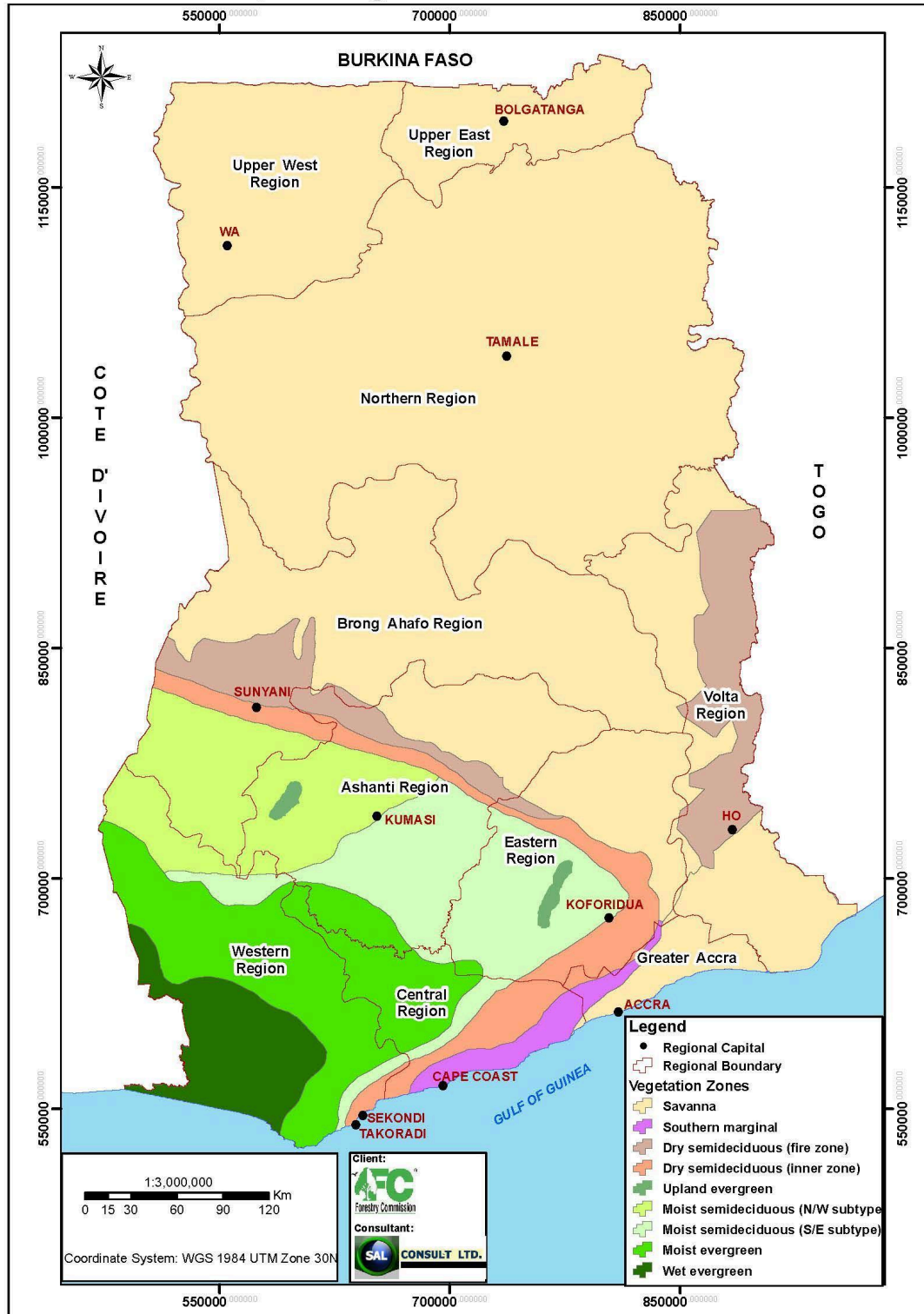


Figure 4: Vegetation/Ecological map of Ghana

3.2 Analysis of carbon stock distribution

Ghana's terrestrial carbon stocks are estimated to total 7.46 gigatons of carbon dioxide equivalent (GtCO₂e), comprising 6.22 GtCO₂e, in above- and below-ground biomass and about 1.24 GtCO₂e in soil carbon to 1 m depth (Katoomba Group *et al.* 2011a). Reflecting rainfall and vegetation zones, biomass and soil carbon are distributed unevenly over the country. Areas of high biomass carbon density contain 6% of Ghana's biomass carbon but cover only 2% of the country's land area. High carbon density areas are associated with intact natural forest in the moist forest zone and contain over 730 tCO₂e/ha in above and below-ground biomass, and soil carbon (Katoomba Group *et al.* 2011a). Although the total area is small, mangroves also contain substantial carbon stocks per unit area.

Land-use and land-use change have added significant heterogeneity and variation in carbon stocks. Broadly, carbon stocks decline from southwest to northeast and move from intact forest to increasingly open farming landscapes. The national biomass map shows that the highest biomass is in the HFZ, with carbon stocks (above and below-ground biomass, and soil carbon) ranging from 180 to more than 700 tCO₂e/ha. In the entire savannah and the transitional zone, i.e. the northern two-thirds of the country, carbon stocks are on average below 140 tCO₂e/ha.

Data on soil carbon stocks is limited. Conservative estimates based on IPCC default values estimate Ghana's soil carbon stocks to be about 260 tCO₂e/ha (RoG 2010b). Soil carbon stocks in the high forest zone and savannah zone would range from 110 to 340 tCO₂e/ha and from 100 to 125 tCO₂e/ha respectively. In the cultivated areas within the high forest zone soil carbon stocks range from about 100 to 260 tCO₂e/ha, while the respective estimates in the savannah zone would be 70 to 160 tCO₂e/ha (Abu-Bredu *et al.* 2010, Katoomba Group *et al.* 2011b).

3.3 Carbon emissions

According to Ghana's second national communication to the UNFCCC, Ghana's total emission in 2006 was about 24 MtCO₂e, amounting to around 1.1 tCO₂e per capita. Ghana's emissions were still low by global standards (0.05%) and ranked 108 in the world. Ghana's total carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions in 2024 are estimated to have reduced to about 19.877 metric tons. In 2022, Ghana's CO₂ emissions per capita were 0.75 tons per person. Ghana has committed to reducing its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and climate adaptation in several sectors, including energy, land use, and food production.

Emission data for the period 1990 to 1996 indicates that the country was a net sink due largely to high levels of carbon sequestration in the Land Use, Land Use Change, and Forestry (LULUCF) sector (66%) in 1990. However, Ghana's Second National Communication to UNFCCC estimated a 96% decrease of the net greenhouse gas removals within the LULUCF sector from around -26.1 MtCO₂e in 1990 to -1.04 MtCO₂e in 2000 and 5.6 MtCO₂e in 2006. Since 2001, the sub-sector has become a net emitter, contributing 25% of total emissions in 2006.

Deforestation and conversion of forests and grasslands were the major reasons for this change accounting for 20% share of total LULUCF emissions in 1990 to 50% in 2006. This, together with changes in forest and woody biomass, accounted for 95% of the LULUCF emissions in 2006. Ghana's low carbon growth plan estimates that 65% of baseline emissions come from land use changes, whilst a further 10% comes from the burning of biomass. Combined, these are estimated to produce 42.3 MtCO₂e emissions. Nevertheless, the importance of baseline emissions from land use changes will have to be reviewed as Ghana's low carbon growth plan has not adequately incorporated the emissions from the rapidly growing oil and gas sector in the overall emissions.

3.4 Socio-economic Baseline Conditions

3.4.1 Population and Population Density

The 2020 population census by the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) for the participating regions by percentage share is given in **Table 4**. The population density per square kilometer for the participating regions is provided in **Table 5**.

Table 3: 2020 Population Figures

Region	Total Population	Male Population	Female Population	Percentage Share %
Ashanti	5,440,463	2,688,000	2,752,463	17.65
Eastern	2,925,653	1,440,000	1,485,653	9.49
Central	2,859,821	1,400,000	1,459,821	9.28
Western North	880,921	262,428	618,493	2.86
Ahafo	564,668	274,914	289,754	1.83

Source: Ghana Statistical Service

Ghana's population exceeded 30 million in 2020, an increase of 24.7% from 2010. The average annual growth rate is about 2.1% and the population is projected to reach 31 million by 2025. The percentage share and population density per square kilometers of the population for the programme participating regions are presented in table 3 and table 4 respectively. Over the past years, population density increased from 102 to 129 persons per km². Urban population is about 56%, growing by 3.3% on average.

Table 4: Population density by region, 2020

Region	Total Population	Area Km2	Population Density (Persons per sq. Km)
Ashanti	5,440,463	24,389	223
Eastern	2,925,653	19,323	151
Central	2,859,821	9,826	291
Western North	880,921	10,079	87.40
Ahafo	564,668	5,196	109

Source: Ghana Statistical Service

3.4.2 Social Inclusion/Exclusion of Vulnerable Groups

The regions participating in the Ghana Cocoa Forest REDD+ Programme (GCFRP) are characterized by a youthful population with a significant presence of women and young people. Here are the key demographic and socio-economic characteristics of these regions:

I. Youth Demographics, challenges and opportunities

The youth, aged 15-35, form a substantial portion of the population in all these regions. For instance, in the Ashanti Region, this age group constitutes approximately 38.2% of the population, aligning with the national trend where young people represent a major demographic segment. However, these young individuals face significant challenges related to employment and skills development.

To address these challenges, there is a growing emphasis on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). Initiatives include modernizing TVET institutions, offering free TVET and apprenticeship programmes, and integrating work-based learning to enhance employability. Despite these efforts, there is still the need for policies and programmes to build the skills and capacity of this young segment to support the country's development agenda. The GCFRP aims to improve the livelihoods of young people by providing them with skills and opportunities in sustainable cocoa production, including training in climate-smart cocoa practices, access to resources, and involvement in decision-making processes at the community and HIA levels.

II. Women's Demographics and Challenges

Women make up slightly more than 50% of the population in these regions, aligning with the national average. The demographic trends in these areas are influenced by urbanization, migration, and varying access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities. Women play a critical role in cocoa production and rural livelihoods, but often face challenges such as limited access to land, education, and economic resources.

III. Persons with Disabilities

Specific data on persons with disabilities at the regional level is limited, but national surveys and censuses have started to include questions about disability to better understand the needs and challenges of this population. At the national level, efforts are being made to include persons with disabilities in development planning. The Ghana Statistical Service and other agencies are working to improve data collection on disability to inform policy decisions.

IV. Inclusive Approach of GCFRP

The GCFRP includes a comprehensive approach to understanding and addressing the socio-economic conditions of marginalized groups, particularly within the Hotspot Intervention Areas (HIAs). The programme ensures women's participation and benefits, including access to training, resources, and decision-making processes. The Benefit Sharing Plan (BSP) specifically addresses gender equity, ensuring that women receive a fair share of benefits and are involved in the governance and management of the HIAs.

The programme's inclusive nature extends to all community members, including those with disabilities. Efforts are made to ensure that these groups are considered in the planning and implementation phases, reflecting a broader commitment to social inclusion and equity.

V. Addressing the Needs of Marginalized Groups

Through the EnABLE sub-projects implementation, there will be opportunities for additional/alternative livelihood interventions for groups and individuals within the programme area. The focus will be to create a more inclusive and equitable environment that supports the sustainable development and livelihoods of all community members, particularly marginalized groups.

Ultimately, addressing the needs of women, youth, and persons with disabilities is essential for achieving sustainable development and inclusive growth in these regions. This involves ensuring they have access to economic opportunities. Promoting entrepreneurship, apprenticeships, and other skills development programs tailored to their specific needs is also crucial.

Key strategies include:

Education and Skills Development: Enhancing access to TVET, apprenticeships, and other skills development programs to equip young people and women with the skills needed for sustainable cocoa production and other economic activities.

Economic Opportunities: Providing access to economic resources, such as credit facilities, farm inputs, and market access, to empower women and young people to engage in sustainable cocoa production and other income-generating activities.

Inclusive Decision-Making: Ensuring the participation of women, youth, and persons with disabilities in decision-making processes at the community and HIA levels to guarantee that their needs and concerns are addressed.

3.5 Land Ownership and Tenure System

Land ownership

Land ownership and tenure in Ghana is governed by a system of common law and customary land law, from which have emerged the following categories of landholdings:

- Customary owned;
- State-owned; and
- Customary owned but State managed land (also known as vested land).

Customary Ownership

Customary ownership occurs where the right to use or to dispose of use-rights over land is governed by the customary laws of the land-owning community, based purely on recognition by the community of the legitimacy of the holding. Rules governing the acquisition and transmission of these rights, which vary from community to community depending on social structures and customary practices, are normally not documented but are generally understood by community members.

The Allodial title, equivalent to common law freehold rights, forms the basis of all land rights in Ghana. Allodial rights are vested either in a stool, a clan, a family, an earth priest, or a private person. Lesser interests, such as tenancies, licenses, and pledges, emanate from the Allodial title.

Customary lands are managed by a custodian (a chief or a head of a clan or family) together with a council of principal elders appointed in accordance with the customary law of the land-owning community. They are accountable to the members of the land-owning community for their stewardship. All grants of land right by the custodian require the concurrence of at least two of the principal elders for the grant to be valid.

State Land

State land includes tracts specifically acquired by the government under an appropriate enactment using the state powers of eminent domain. Currently, the principal acquiring legislation is the State Land Act of 1962, Act 125, for public purposes or in the public interest. Under such ownership, Allodial rights become vested in the government who can then dispose of the land by way of leases, certificate of allocations, and licenses to relevant beneficiary state institutions as well as private individuals and organizations. The boundaries of these land parcels are cadastral surveyed and are scattered throughout the country.

Vested Land

Vested land is owned by a chief but managed by the State on behalf of the land-owning stool or skin. Under such ownership, legal rights to sell, lease, manage, or collect rent are taken away from the customary landowners by application of specific laws on that land and vested in the State. Landowners retain an equitable interest in the land (i.e., the right to enjoy the benefits from the land). This category of land is managed in the same way as State land. Unlike State land, however, the boundaries are not cadastral surveyed, and they are usually larger, covering wide areas.

3.6 Land tenure rights and issues

The customary owners (stools, clans, families, and Tindamba) who hold the allodial title, own about 78% of the total land area in Ghana. Of the remaining 22% the state is the principal owner of about 20%, while 2% is held in dual ownership (i.e. the legal estate in the Government and the beneficiary / equitable interest in the community). Customary owners hold land in custody for communities and various arrangements on land use for community members prevail.

The situation has been further complicated by internal migration related primarily to expanding cocoa and, in many areas, more than 50% of the population are from other parts of Ghana engaged through various arrangements, (lease, sharecropping, etc.) in cocoa and other farming activities. Even though the state has elaborated institutional and legal structures for the management of all these types of land, the management of this resource is characterized by incoherent, conflicting, and sometimes outdated legislation.

The separation of land from the resources on land, such as naturally growing trees, is complicating tenure and benefit sharing as well as reducing incentives for maintaining trees on off-reserve lands. Insufficient consultation and engagement of stakeholders in land management have contributed to increased encroachment of acquired lands (including forest reserves), unapproved and haphazard development schemes, uncertainties about titles to land, and land litigation. The complexity is illustrated by the number of land litigation cases before the courts, estimated at about 60,000 in 2002. The effect of this is continuous conflicts, overburdening of the judicial processes, over-centralization of authority in urban capitals, and rent-seeking behaviour.

3.7 Common Land Tenure Arrangements in Cocoa Growing Areas

Land for cocoa cultivation can be obtained from individuals, families, or stools through crop or land-sharing arrangements. The common practices are (i) where the land or crop/produce is shared into two equal parts between tenant farmer and landowner, referred to as locally as 'Abunu', and where the land or crop/produce is shared into three equal parts with the farmer taking 2/3. Landowner taking 1/3, referred to locally as 'Abusa'.

The Abunu system dominates cocoa-growing areas. The Abunu system is of two kinds, (i) where the cultivated farmland is divided into two equal parts between the tenant farmer and the landowner. In such a case, the tenant farmer has some form of ownership of the land. The land usually reverts to the owner for re-negotiation when the cash crop/tree crop is cleared or removed due to disaster or disease or when the life span of the crop is over; (ii) where only the crop/produce is divided into two equal parts between landowner and tenant farmer. With this second system, the tenant farmer has no form of ownership of the land at all.

3.8 Brief Country Economic Profile

Gross National Income (GNI) per capita was around US\$ 1,283 in 2010 (RoG 2010a, World Bank 2011a) and \$2,350 in 2022. Cocoa, timber processing, mining, and oil are the main economic activities in Ghana. The agriculture sector, which includes forestry, is the largest contributor to GDP (about 40% in 2000 – 2004 and 19.57% in 2022), while forestry alone contributed an estimated 4% in 2004 (World Bank 2005) and about 1.96 billion Ghanaian cedis (GHS), or roughly 163.3 million U.S. dollars in 2022. Over 70% of the population depends on natural resources for their basic food, water, and energy requirements.

The mining industry, primarily gold, provided the largest share (38%) of the export value in 2011 and in 2023, gold bullion accounted for 45.2% of Ghana's export value. In 2011, cocoa contributed 22% of the export earnings and about 30% in 2023 but as the world's second-largest producer (about a fifth of the world's cocoa), after Ivory Coast (about 45% of the world's cocoa in 2024), the role of cocoa is significant in the Ghanaian economy. The timber industry export has provided around 10% of the foreign exchange between 1990 and 2000 but there has been a considerable decline since 2005 from 8.1% to only an

estimated 1.3% in 2011. Ghana's timber and timber products exports were valued at US\$ 198.4 million in 2020, 34% down from US\$302 million in 2019.

Ghana made significant progress in addressing poverty between 1992 and 2006. Poverty decreased from affecting 51.7% of the population in 1992 to 28.5% in 2006. However, the downward trajectory halted between 2012 and 2016, and poverty remained virtually unchanged at 23.4% in 2016. According to the World Bank, poverty rates are expected to rise until 2026, peaking at 31.5% in 2025 due to limited growth in services and agriculture, increasing prices, and other factors. Increase in wealth was most pronounced in the southern part of the country. The Upper West Region had the highest incidence of extreme poverty, at 45.2 percent, followed by the Northern Region (30.7 percent) and the Upper East Region at 27.7 percent in 2016.

Ghana has made good progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). Targets on income, poverty reduction, ending hunger, completion of primary education, gender equality, and access to clean water are well on track to be met by 2030. Other SDGs, such as sanitation, and child and maternal mortality require more effort. The SDG target on environmental sustainability continues to be a challenge, especially with the loss of forest area and increasing CO₂ emissions, primarily from land use change and loss of carbon stocks.

The commercial production of oil, though providing potential for economic growth, increasing wealth, and for financing development, may also increase pressure on forests and natural resources through increasing economic activity, urbanization, building and demand for energy. It may also exacerbate several already existing challenges related to natural resources and environmental governance, volatility, agricultural competitiveness and geographical disparities.

3.9 Forestry and agricultural (cocoa) sectors

The formal forestry and wildlife sector employs about 120,000 Ghanaians, with employment predominantly in the log processing industry. The timber industry is the fourth largest foreign exchange earner after minerals, cocoa, and oil exports. Primary wood and processed products account for 89% and 11% of timber exports, respectively.

The informal forestry sector, mainly chain saw milling (CSM), is almost equal in size to the formal sector in terms of employment and production. CSM, though illegal since 1998, provides the bulk of the supply (84%) for the domestic market, with an estimated volume of around 0.5 million m³ and a market value of around 280 million GHC. It is also the main source of (illegal) overland export lumber to neighbouring countries with an estimated volume of around 260,000 m³. It provides employment for around 130,000 people and livelihood for 650,000 people, and is the source of considerable revenue, to the mostly urban financiers of the operations (Marfo, 2010). The disconnect between growing domestic demand and sustainable wood harvest creates huge pressure on forests, particularly in off-reserve areas.

In addition to timber, forests provide the main source of domestic energy in the form of fuelwood and charcoal. The average annual per capita wood energy consumption estimate is 1.3 m³. This would give a total estimated wood removal of more than 30 million m³ for fuelwood and charcoal, or about 85% of the total wood removal in Ghana. Non-timber forest products (NTFPs) are also very important, especially for women, but much of their value is not formally recorded and remains inadequately represented in policy analysis.

Agricultural crops, both subsistence (e.g. maize, cassava, millet), and cash crops, (e.g. as cocoa, cashew, oil palm and coffee) make up 64% of the natural capital of Ghana. Agricultural land use accounts for more than 50% of all land use, and though decreasing, still provides employment for an estimated 60% of the population, particularly women (53% of whom are employed in agriculture). It is primarily smallholder farming though it is important to note that certain crops such as cocoa have been intensively commercialized already for at least a century.

The cocoa sector in Ghana provides the primary livelihood to an estimated 800,000 farm households. Cocoa farming is one of the dominant land use activities in Ghana with an estimated cultivation area of over 1.6 million ha (World Bank 2012a). Cocoa farm sizes are relatively small with over 84% of the cocoa farms and 44% of the area falling in the size range of below 4 ha (Rice & Greenberg 2000).

To clearly understand cocoa's role in driving degradation and deforestation, and the potential to reduce emissions associated with land use change driven by cocoa farming, a multi-stakeholder working group consisting of government, private sector, and civil society came together in 2011 to conduct a more detailed analysis of the cocoa sector and its role as a principal driver of deforestation in the high forest zone.

The results of this analysis determined that despite major gains in national production (cocoa production had increased from a base of 300,000 tons in the late 1980s to an all-time high of 1 million tons in 2011/2012, extensive (or expansive) cultivation of cocoa in Ghana is still the most widely practiced and ubiquitous land use across the program area. What this means on the ground is that to maintain or increase yields (and income) farmers establish new farms, at the expense of forests, instead of investing in improved management of existing farms or replanting/rehabilitation of old farms.

In addition, there has also been a rapid transition from shaded cocoa cultivation to progressively low/no shade cocoa cultivation, driven mainly by short-term profits, increasing competition for land, and a rising demand for domestic timber in combination with an absence of information about recommended practices and tree tenure/benefit sharing arrangements that give farmers no economic incentives to maintain trees on-farm.

Overall, the gap between farmers' average yields (approximately 400 kg/ha) and their potential yield (>800 kg/ha) remains unacceptably large, and the pressure on forests reserves from smallholder cocoa farmers' expansion and loss of shaded cocoa forests from reductions in shade continues.

The private sector and civil society are investing substantial resources into cocoa projects and programs. The most common institutional arrangement has been the use of public-private partnership (PPP) models. The introduction of social and environmental standards through certification, and efforts to improve access to education and other social amenities has also been the focus of these projects and social corporate responsibility initiatives. Despite the number of projects and programs in operation, there is no evidence that there has been a positive sector-level impact on yields, nor a reduction in deforestation and degradation at the landscape scale.

As a result, the gap between farmers' yields and their potential yield remains unacceptably large and the pressure on forests reserves from smallholder cocoa farmers seeking to profit from the "forest rent" continues. Ghana's Cocoa Forest REDD+ Program aims to enable and facilitate a transition to a climate-smart cocoa production system, while concurrently reducing emissions in the landscape.

It is estimated that 25% of the cocoa tree stock exceeds their 30-year maximum production life. A tree planting and rehabilitation program was launched in 2010 to replace old and infected trees. Focus in the first phase is on the Eastern, Bono, Ahafo, Central, and Volta regions. Insecure land tenure and insufficient access to affordable credit are some of the major constraints in the cocoa sector.

Tree crops such as Oil Palm, Rubber Trees, Cashew, etc. are envisaged to play an important role in agricultural development in Ghana (GoG 2011c). Especially the plans for and establishment of palm oil plantations have huge economic potential but are also the cause of major controversies in relation to clearing forests in West Africa (e.g. Liberia, Sierra Leone). The palm oil sector (300 – 350,000 ha) is largely smallholder driven but may also become an area for large-scale investment and development in Ghana with current economic drivers persisting, which potentially could impact the HFZ.

4.0 ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL RISKS/IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This section provides some discussion regarding the potential environmental and social risks and impacts associated with activities to be financed by the programme. The discussion that follows addresses these concerns from a thematic context, such as biodiversity, soils, and social issues and concerns. The assessment however reveals that activities under REDD+ and hence EnABLE would be low to moderate risk in nature.

4.1 Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) study

The SESA as required by Environmental Assessment (EA) requirements of the World Bank was conducted with an intention to be an inclusive process whereby the REDD+ team, with the participation of all potentially affected stakeholders, seek to “identify likely impacts and risks, as well as opportunities,” among different strategic REDD+ options. During the SESA process these impacts, risks and opportunities were assessed and weighed by the various stakeholders. The assessment identified and prioritized the drivers of deforestation, and the key social and environmental issues associated with the drivers. The assessment also includes looking at how issues such as land and tree tenure, benefit-sharing and access to resources are managed in the context of Ghana.

In conclusion, this Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) provides a means of managing the environmental and social risks identified during the SESA.

Table 5: Summary of potential negative impacts of subprojects based on the findings of the SESA

Impact category	Potential Negative Impact
<u>Biodiversity</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Mono specific exotic tree plantings may alter natural vegetation ✓ Plantation tree seedlings may invade adjacent forest (species invasion) ✓ Uniform age as clear felling may prevent succession processes
<u>Water Resources</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Alterations in local natural water cycles/ hydrology ✓ Water pollution from agrochemicals including runoff
<u>Soils</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Changes in soil nutrient cycles (fertility and carbon storage capacity) ✓ Increased soil erosion due to repeated disturbance ✓ Poor plantation management could impact soil structure and surface layers ✓ Soil contamination from agrochemical usage.
<u>Air quality</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Deterioration from the burning of biomass from clearing ✓ Dust emissions from milling operations resulting in air pollution.
<u>Pesticides</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Improper storage, handling, application and disposal of pesticides ✓ Issue of increased runoff into water bodies during rainy season ✓ Impacts of highly toxic chemicals to plants, animals and humans ✓ Health impacts of high exposure of pesticides to humans

<u>Land tenure and ownership</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Land Conflicts issues ✓ Economic displacement resulting from increased land values ✓ Transparent rules for benefit sharing of carbon payments ✓ Land acquisition and compensation issues ✓ Lack of valuation rates for timber species ✓ Discrimination, lack of grievance mechanisms for all land users and tenants
<u>Maintaining Livelihoods</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Food insecurity resulting from impacts of climate change on agriculture production ✓ Potential expansion of negative activities by admitted settlements and farms that result in biodiversity loss, ecosystem changes, depletion of natural resources ✓ Increasing demand for forest lands for farming/ settlements by fringe communities because productive lands not available ✓ Challenges with vacating admitted farmers from unauthorised sections of forest
<u>Farmer Rights</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Farmers have little say in the harvesting of matured shade trees ✓ Higher income from improved yields ✓ No financial benefit to farmers for planting and nurturing shade trees ✓ Difficulties in registering shade trees ✓ Unreliable supply of seedlings ✓ Long gestation period of native species.
<u>Forest Management</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Plantation security, Fire prevention and control challenges ✓ Difficulties with community inclusion in forest management decisions ✓ Unwillingness of communities to participate in forest surveillance and protection ✓ Conflicts over the rights to use forest resources
<u>Occupational health and Safety</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Lack of awareness creation programs on health and safety including chemical handling. ✓ No Environmental, Health and Safety (EHS) Plan ✓ Unavailability and poor use of personal protective equipment and limited/ no enforcement process
<u>Cultural Heritage</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Limited access to community shrines ✓ Distortion to local cultural identity and heritage

4.1.1 Some issues arising from the SESA study

The SESA process identified some of the likely environmental and social risks that need to be addressed to minimize adverse environmental and social impacts during project implementation. Some of these concerns are provided below.

Table 6: Some issues arising from the SESA study

Natural Resource Issues
Protection of key river/water bodies including Kakum River in Kakum HIA, Tano Offin in the Ahafo ano HIA, Krokosua, Bia and Sui Rivers in the Juaboso-Bia HIA
Soil and water quality concerns from increasing agrochemical usage
Soil fertility and farm erosion issues
Community over-dependence on forest for fuelwood
Lack of sustainable income sources
Lack of community forests
Threat from group hunters and alien herdsman especially in the transitional and Savannah zones
Resource wastage- during exploitation and use of timber
Economic Issues
Equity issues in carbon benefit sharing
Limited financial resources hampering effective forest management
Lack of valuation rates for timber species-LVD compensation rates limited to only annual
Limited economic/livelihood activities during the dry season in the savannah zones putting pressure on forest resources
Some communities rejecting REDD+ due to uncertainties surrounding economic benefits
Farmers impatient for long gestation periods for tree species
The economic viability and benefits from carbon trading versus tree trading
Perceived Job creation opportunities and long-term revenues for beneficiaries
Socio-cultural issues
Acquisition of large tracts of land for afforestation projects put peasant farmers at risk
Food security issues
Admitted farms in forest reserves posing risk to forest conservation
Tree on-farm ownership insecurities
Lack of royalty payments from wildlife reserves/parks and GSBA's to traditional authorities and landowners
Lack of sustainable alternative livelihood schemes- Persons/ farmers/ communities heavily dependent on forest resources
Women access and right to tenure and ownership of land and natural resources - Challenges due to cultural, traditional norms and customs
Customary land acquisition and conflicts
Communities rejecting REDD+ due to technicalities/complexities/uncertainties/ unmet expectations, previous projects completion issues
Competition and demand for off-reserve lands (peasant farmers at risk)
Women's multiple roles in the household, in production and reproduction limit their free time to engage effectively in other social and economic ventures/activities
Institutional

Weak law enforcement due to inability of FSD/government to halt illegal farming in forest reserves
Conflicting policies of forestry, cocoa and mineral/mining sectors
Tree tenure rights reform law to enable tenant farmers benefit from naturally occurring trees on their farms during period of occupation
Lack of policy on carbon rights and payment for ecosystem/environmental services
Security of Land tenure and ownership
Inadequate bye laws at district/ community level- Bush fires, group hunting and cutting of wild economic trees such as shea trees
Mandated institution capacity for monitoring, data storage/management
Off reserves management challenges Community/ traditional authority role not clearly defined
Weak implementation of land use plans
Change in government leading to change in policy direction
Frequent adjournment of forest cases in court and low penalties for offenders
Ineffective collaboration among key government institutions-e.g. FC/COCOBOD/MOFA /MC /MMDAs/GNFS etc.
Lack of Health and safety regulations in forest/plantation operation
Lack of transparency at the institutional level during project implementation
Misuse of power/conflict of interest by some traditional leaders and government officials to benefit from encroachment into FRs

The SESA recommended that the implementation of the proposed strategy interventions for the REDD+ Mechanism in Ghana will offer several opportunities to local communities, landowners, and farmers which will improve their livelihoods. However, this must be done with greater consideration for sustainability.

4.2 Mitigation Measures

The SESA process identified various environmental and social risks associated with REDD+ interventions, with greater emphasis on issues such as deforestation, forest degradation, impacts on local communities, and biodiversity loss. It determined which World Bank Safeguards standard would be triggered by these interventions and hence the development of an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) with necessary mitigation options. However, opportunities and risks identified for the various strategy options provide a key reference point for the appropriate enhancement and mitigation measures to be considered for the specific strategy intervention to be implemented. Therefore, an ESMP would be developed to draw specific mitigation measures for the sub-projects to be implemented under the EnABLE programme.

The SESA report identified strategy options for GCFRP which will guide the implementation of admissible interventions under EnABLE. Mitigative measures are drawn to guide implementation.

The ESMF to be developed for the implementation of admissible sub-projects under EnABLE will outline specific mitigation measures for the identified risks. This includes strategies to manage the potential environmental and social impacts associated with the implementation.

Table 7: Strategy points and mitigative measure

Strategy point	Mitigative measure
Improving the quality of multi-stakeholder dialogue and decision-making	Enhancing participation and engagement of all stakeholders to ensure inclusive decision-making
Clarifying rights regime	Ensuring clear land tenure and rights to reduce conflicts and promote sustainable land use
Addressing unsustainable timber harvesting	Implementing sustainable forest management practices and enforcing regulations to prevent over-harvesting.
Mitigating effects of agricultural expansion	Promoting agroforestry and high-biomass tree crops systems to reduce the pressure on forests from agricultural activities
Strengthening local decentralized management of natural resources	Empowering local communities to manage their natural resources sustainably e.g. HIA management structure
Expansion of high biomass agroforestry/tree crops systems	Encouraging practices that integrate trees into agricultural landscapes to enhance carbon sequestration and reduce deforestation
Improving regulation of mining activities	Strengthening regulatory frameworks to prevent mining-related forest degradation

5. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) will be prepared to provide guidance on procedures to be followed and standards to be met in implementing sub-projects under the programme consistent with National and World Bank safeguard provisions. Roles and responsibilities of SWA / TBG and other collaborating agencies will be clearly defined as well as monitoring protocols to be followed to ensure that the required provisions are adhered to. Finally, the ESMP will have a budgetary estimates provided to support the implementation of the environmental and social management plan.

The ESMP will be included in the project's Manual of Operations. The ESMP will outline mechanisms for:

- screening of proposed sub-project interventions,
- identifying potential environmental and social impacts associated with the selected sub-projects
- management of safeguard standards implications
- arrangements by SWA/TBG and other relevant institutions for implementation and capacity building requirements
- monitoring implementation of ESMP measures
- effectively conducting community consultations
- budget for implementing the ESMP.

V.1. The Environmental and Social Screening Process

The purpose of the preliminary screening is to:

- determine whether sub-projects are likely to have potential negative environmental and social impacts
- decide if EPA Form EA1 (Environmental Assessment Registration Form for Schedule 1 undertakings) needs to be submitted to EPA
- identify appropriate mitigation measures for activities with adverse impacts
- incorporate mitigation measures into the sub-project design
- review and approve sub-projects proposals
- monitor environmental and social impacts and concerns during implementation.

Preliminary environmental and social screening of proposed sub-projects will be undertaken using the checklist suggested in Annex 2. If significant impacts are anticipated, then the EPA must be consulted, and the Ghana Environmental Assessment (EA) procedures duly followed.

When there are minimal or no impacts (as determined using the checklist), project managers must consult internally with Safeguard Focal Persons for confirmation. Once an agreement is reached, the manager may proceed with the minimum regular reporting requirements discussed and agreed with the Safeguard Focal Persons. When there may be doubt concerning sub-project risks and impacts, Safeguard Focal Persons should consult the EPA for guidance as provided by the Ghana EA procedures.

V.2. Institutional Capacity For ESMF Implementation

V.2.1. Institutional roles and responsibility for the ESMF Implementation

The ESMF will be executed by the SWA in collaboration with other partners such as Tropenbos Ghana and NRS. It is expected that these will feed into the Safeguard Information System set up under GCFRP. However, there are institutions implementing REDD+ who have an interest in the management of the associated environmental and social risks and impacts:

- Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources
- Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI)
- Ministry of Food and Agriculture
- Forestry Commission (FC) -Forestry Services Division, Resource Management Support Centre
- Ghana Cocoa Board (COCOBOD)
- Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)
- Municipal and District Assemblies (MDAs)
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- The World Bank

The Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources (MLNR) is the sector Ministry entrusted with the management of the country's land, forest, wildlife and mineral resources. The Ministry was responsible for the implementation of FIP activities. The MLNR provides ministerial oversight to the **Forestry Commission of Ghana**, which is responsible for regulating the utilization of forest and wildlife resources, the conservation and management of those resources and the coordination of policies related to managing these resources. Divisions like the Forestry Services Division (FSD) has regional and district offices throughout the country presenting good systems to support ESMF implementation. The **Climate Change Directorate** of FC was established in 2007 as a unit to manage forestry-sector initiatives related to climate change mitigation with the birth of REDD+. It hosts the National REDD+ Secretariat (NRS) and serves as the National REDD+ focal point. The REDD+ Secretariat / Climate Change Unit is responsible for the implementation of GCFRP.

The Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) plays a central role in formulating environmental policies and coordinating the implementation of environmental management strategies across sectors. MESTI ensures that the GCFRP is integrated into broader national strategies for climate change mitigation and biodiversity conservation, aligning it with Ghana's commitments under international agreements. MESTI's involvement in the GCFRP is vital for ensuring that environmental sustainability is prioritized alongside agricultural productivity. By coordinating efforts across various sectors, developing supportive policies, and promoting best practices among stakeholders, MESTI will contribute significantly to the success of the GCFRP in reducing emissions from cocoa production while enhancing livelihoods for local communities.

The Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) is responsible for developing and executing policies and strategies for the agriculture sector within the context of a coordinated national socio-economic growth and development agenda. It also provides ministerial oversight to the Ghana Cocoa Board which plays a significant role in the implementation of the GCFRP and EnABLE. MoFA is instrumental in promoting climate-smart agricultural practices among cocoa farmers through training and providing resources to enhance agricultural productivity while minimizing environmental impact, thereby contributing to the reduction of deforestation. The Ministry of Food and Agriculture significantly contributes to the implementation of the Ghana Cocoa Forest REDD+ Programme, aiming to create a sustainable cocoa sector while addressing deforestation and promoting environmental conservation in Ghana's cocoa-producing regions

Regulatory Agencies

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible for ensuring compliance with the laid down environmental assessment (EA) procedures in Ghana in accordance with the EPA Act, 1994 (Act 490). The Agency is expected to give environmental approval for Project activities where applicable. However, none of the activities under the GCFRP and EnABLE are expected to require environmental permitting because of their nature and scope. The EPA is represented in all the ten (10) regions of the country and will continue to support the project by providing guidance for E&S risk management.

The Ghana EA procedures are largely in agreement with the World Bank standards and procedures and the former is now well entrenched in the country to assure satisfactory environmental and social performance of REDD+ activities including GCFRP and EnABLE.

Water Resources Commission (WRC): The WRC is mandated to regulate and manage Ghana's water resources and co-ordinate government policies in relation to them. The NRC is expected to collaborate with the WRC through its River Basin Secretariats in the management of water resources occurring within the cocoa landscapes under the Project, and to enable accurate reporting at the HIA levels.

Lands Commission: The Land Commission is responsible for facilitating land title registration, which is essential for clarifying ownership and user rights over land and forest resources. This clarity helps prevent conflicts and ensures that farmers and communities involved in cocoa production have secure tenure. Recognizing and formalizing customary land rights, allow local communities and traditional authorities to maintain control over their lands while participating in the GCFRP. This is vital for ensuring that benefit-sharing arrangements are equitable and respect local governance structures. Successful partnership with the Commission will help create a conducive environment for sustainable cocoa production while addressing deforestation and promoting climate resilience in Ghana's forest landscapes

Minerals Commission: The Minerals Commission is responsible for regulating the mining sector in Ghana, ensuring that mining activities comply with environmental laws and standards. This oversight is crucial for mitigating the impacts of illegal mining, which is a significant driver of deforestation in cocoa-producing areas. The Commission collaborates with the Forestry Commission and other stakeholders to integrate mining activities with forest conservation efforts through regulatory oversight, collaboration, policy development, and stakeholder engagement. The involvement of the Minerals Commission in the GCFRP is vital for addressing the challenges posed by illegal mining and ensuring that mineral extraction does not compromise forest conservation efforts

V.2.2. Implementing Plans

SWA will serve as the lead institution on EnABLE and collaborate with the REDD+ Secretariat at the FC responsible for REDD+ activities for both on and off reserves and it is also the designated national safeguard focal point for the REDD+.

The REDD+ Secretariat works with COCOBOD, the EPA, and the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA), as well as other relevant agencies represented in the National Safeguard Sub-Working Group to ensure smooth implementation and sharing of the lessons learnt.

The main responsibility for implementing the ESMF rests with the SWA and will be supported by TBG, and NRS with technical guidance from the World Bank. The FSD regional managers/regional safeguard focal persons and EnABLE programme officers will oversee the implementation of all actions to mitigate adverse environmental and social impacts within their respective operational regions. SWA will also work at the community level with HMBs, Sub HIA and CREMA executives to ensure sound management practices at the community level.

V.3. Capacity Building and Strengthening for Implementation

With the set-up of a functioning coordination and implementation group by NRS to address environmental and social due diligence for REDD+ activities and other forest related programmes, EnABLE will mainstream its activities into the system.

Capacity strengthening activities will be organized for frontline programme staff and selected landscape representatives to be equipped to support ESMF implementation.

The designated lead for safeguards implementation on EnABLE will be part of the REDD+ Safeguard Sub-Working Group (SSWG), a multi-stakeholder technical and advisory forum created to provide guidance and supervision for the effective implementation of REDD+ Safeguards in Ghana.

The specific role of the REDD+ Safeguards Sub-Working Group is to facilitate, promote and supervise the development and effective implementation of REDD+ safeguards instruments through the design of the Country Approach to Safeguards (CAS) and Safeguards Information System (SIS) in a transparent and participatory manner.

The programme, when necessary, will fall on the Bank's safeguards team to support the implementation of the environmental and social standards including the preparation of instruments, checklists and screening tools. Particular attention will be on the ESSs triggered by the programme. The capacity building will follow a set of activities, and it would be iterative.

The first step in pursuing capacity building will be to identify the capacity needs of the various stakeholders. This will include programme staff, selected HIA and CREMA executives. When necessary, this will be done for contractors onboard the programme for sub-project implementation.

The capacity building will include training workshops and production of guidance reports and tools. The following training programmes are recommended

Table 8: Capacity strengthening on Safeguards

Training programme	Content	Participants
Programme 1	World Bank ESS1, ESS2, ESS3, ESS4, ESS5, ESS6, ESS8 and ESS10 and Ghana EPA Environmental Assessment Regulations, updated SESA, disclosed ESMF of GCFRP	EnABLE programme staff, HMB, Selected SHEC and CEC members
Programme 2	Emission Reduction Program (ERP), REDD+ Benefit Sharing Plan (BSP), REDD+ governance and platforms, climate-resilient alternative livelihood, climate smart cocoa practices, entrepreneurship, financial management/book-keeping, business plan, REDD+ / Cancun Safeguards requirements, World Bank Group (WBG) Environment, Health and Safety (EHS) Guidelines.	EnABLE programme staff, HMB, Selected SHEC and CEC members, Programme beneficiary communities
Programme 3	Preparation of Terms of Reference for ESIA	EnABLE programme staff
Programme 4	Environmental and Social provisions in sub-project implementation (ESMP)	EnABLE programme staff
Programme 5	Screening Checklist, Preparing appropriate instrument and Completion of EA Registration Forms (when applicable)	EnABLE programme staff

It is expected that participants would at the end of the training be able to deal more effectively with potential environmental and social challenges that they may come across in programme implementation.

The ESMF will provide guidelines to mitigate adverse environmental and social impacts arising out programme implementation. Training manuals and checklists are required to assist safeguard focal points to carry out their functions.

V.4. Budgetary Provisions for ESMF implementation

The awareness creation, capacity improvement and training workshops as well as some logistic support expenses for key stakeholders involved in the implementation of proposed interventions is estimated at US\$101,000 over the programme life as explained in the table 7 above.

Table 9: Estimated budget to implement ESMF

No	Activity	Description	Annual cost, US\$	Total Cost, US\$
1.	<u>Staffing</u>	1. SWA Environmental and Social Inclusion Officer 2. TBG Environmental and Social Inclusion Officer	33,000 14,000	48,000
2.	<u>Training</u> Awareness creation and Capacity building for programme staff	Training workshop/ seminars on Programmes 1,2,3 and 4	12,000	12,000
3.	Capacity building HIA level stakeholders	Training workshop/ seminars on Programmes 1, 2 and 4	3,000 per <u>HIA</u>	18,000
4.	Awareness creation and capacity building for selected members of community	Community meetings and training	2,500 per HIA	14,000
5.	Monitoring and Evaluation	Safeguards component for M&E is addressing E&S due diligence and verification	9,000	9,000
	TOTAL			101,000

V.5. Monitoring And Evaluation

Monitoring plans will be developed for the implementation processes of the applicable ESSs. This is for ESMF level monitoring and for sub-project activities. The proposed plans are presented in **Table 9**. The table confirms the verifiable indicators as well as responsibilities for the various monitoring actions.

The monitoring issues at the ESMF level include the dissemination of ESMF and RPF documents as well as capacity building and training activities. At the sub-project activity level, this will encompass instituting monitoring actions to, for example, confirm the Screening of projects, and ensuring compliance, documentation etc.

Table 10: ESMF monitoring indicators and responsibilities

No	Monitoring level	Monitoring Issue	Verifiable indicators	Responsibility
1.	ESMF level	Adequate dissemination of ESMF to stakeholders	Record of consultations and meetings Workshop reports	SWA/ TBG/WB
		Capacity building and training programmes	Training reports	SWA
2.	Sub- project activity level	Screening of sub project	Checklist completed	SWA
		Adequate mitigation measures provided to manage adverse impacts	ESMPs prepared	SWA
		Post project monitoring and evaluation	Monitoring reports, annual environmental reports	SWA/WB

6. CONSULTATIONS, ESMF DISCLOSURE AND GRIEVANCE MECHANISM

6.1. Stakeholder consultations

The ESMF preparation included stakeholder consultations based on the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP). Key project stakeholders include HMB members, NRS, COCOBOD, FSD, CSOs, MoFA, MMDAs, Project offices, and local communities in the six HIAs. Consultative meetings with key officials and opinion leaders help gauge level of awareness and involvement with the project, concerns of project implementation, and to obtain relevant documents or baseline information. Details of stakeholders contacted and issues discussed are summarized SEP.

6.2. ESMF Disclosure

The World Bank policies require that environmental reports for projects are made available to project affected groups, local NGOs, and the public at large. Public disclosure of documents or environmental reports is also a requirement of the Ghana ESIA procedures. SWA/TBG will make copies of the ESMF available in selected public places as required by law for information and comments as well as online platforms of both SWA and TBG.

The notification will be done through newspaper advertisements and provide:

- a brief description of the Project.
- a list of venues where the ESMF report is on display and available for viewing.
- duration of the display period.
- contact information for comments.

SWA will collaborate with NRS and HMBs to select display venues upon consultation.

6.3. Feedback and Grievance Redress Mechanism

6.3.1. Grievance Mechanism

The implementation of the FGRM seeks to ensure that parties with any programme related dispute will file their complaint at the designated District FSD office or Focal person within the ER Programme area where it will be received and further processed where necessary. The implementation of the FGRM therefore assists in resolving complaints and grievances in a timely, effective, and efficient manner that satisfies all parties involved.

EnABLE will implement a hybrid Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) that will start its implementation from the community level while making use of the system established by GCFRP. GRM will be established at communities within the operational areas of SWA and TBG to receive submissions directly from stakeholders in written or verbal forms; it may also receive complaints forwarded by the service providers and EnABLE team trainers and staff. The grievance complaint handling process will require screening of submissions for appropriate handling.

The grievance complaint handling processes will require screening of submissions for appropriate handling. HMBs/SHEC/ZEC will be used as the focal structure for the GRM at the landscape level.

The GRM will directly focus on and seek to resolve submitted complaints (and requests for information or clarification) that pertain to outputs, activities and processes undertaken by the EnABLE Project, i.e., activities which

- I. are described in the programme implementation manual.
- II. are funded through the EnABLE Programme (including Bank-executed evaluation component)
- III. are carried out by staff or consultants of the EnABLE or the training providers, or by their partners and sub-contractors, who are directly or indirectly supporting the programme.

It is envisaged that such cases would fall under (but are not limited to) the following categories:

- a. request for information, comment, or suggestion, e.g., request for clarification as to the perceived rights of participants or applicants in each training event.
- b. violation of rights or non-performance of obligations, e.g., complaint by consultant or firm whose contract is suspended because of presumed poor performance or non-delivery of agreed-upon outputs.
- c. grievances or offenses involving a violation of law, e.g., allegations of corruption.
- d. complaints against project staff, members of project committees, consultants, and subcontractors involved in project implementation, e.g., allegations of bias in the awards.
- e. complaints against modalities for the award of grants for sub-projects and related sub-project interventions.
- f. GBV/SEA/SH complaints against project staff, members of project committees, consultants, and subcontractors involved in project implementation

The GM will provide an appeals process if the complainant is not satisfied with the proposed resolution. Once all possible means to resolve the complaint have been exhausted, if the complainant is still not satisfied, they should be advised of their right to legal recourse.

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse/Harassment (SEA/SH) Cases

Though SEA/SH risk for this programme is low, a provision for its reporting is made in the PIM. The project will have other measures in place to handle sensitive and confidential complaints, including those related to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse/Harassment (SEA/SH) in line with the World Bank ESF Good Practice Note on SEA/SH.

The staff of SWA/TBG and workers to be contracted during the project implementation will have access to the organization's internal processes to log complaints. Knowing that the World Bank and the Recipient do not tolerate reprisals and retaliation against programme stakeholders who share their views about Bank-financed projects.

6.3.2. Institutional Arrangements for the GRM

To ensure fairness, oversee due diligence, and coordinate as needed in the handling of complaints, a Complaints Committee will be constituted to be overseen by the safeguard expert. The complaints committees will have a minimum of two and a maximum of three members, selected by SWA/TBG.

The implementation of Grievance Redress Mechanisms (GRMs) will require a well-defined institutional arrangement to ensure the effective handling of grievances. This arrangement will involve the following key components.

- I. Community Grievance Handling Team: SHEC/ZEC/CREMA executives will be responsible for managing the grievance handling process. This will include registration, verification, communication with the grievant, and monitoring resolution progress. Grievance handling is conducted in a participatory manner, engaging the grievant throughout the process until resolution is achieved.
- II. HIA Grievance Committees (HGC): A committee comprising representatives from HMBs, FC, SWA/TGB officers, and Traditional authorities will be tasked with reviewing and approving grievance handling plans within the operational levels.
- III. Grievance Uptake Channels: Multiple channels, such as in-person, phone, email, and complaint logbooks, and complaint boxes will be made available for stakeholders to submit grievances. These will be made available at the community level, with project officers and FC district offices.

- IV. Grievance Tracking and Monitoring: The GRM performance will be tracked to ensure the process is effective in capturing and resolving complaints. The performance will be monitored through indicators like the number of grievances received, percentage resolved within stipulated time, and complainant satisfaction levels.
- V. Institutional Capacity Building: Project staff and dedicated persons will be trained for effective grievance management. GRM training will be integrated in the overall program training to raise awareness among beneficiaries including project staff.

7. CONCLUSION

The EnABLE ESMF has been prepared to be consistent with the ESMF for GCFRP, FIP and other REDD+ interventions. The project if well implemented, will offer significant benefits for the society not only in the area of carbon emissions reductions but also in relation to biodiversity conservation, forest industry, agriculture and livelihoods improvement.

Together with the GCFRP, the program will support enhancing inclusivity in benefit sharing, institutional practices, capacity strengthen community-based natural resource management institutions with improved practices and incentives for managing landscapes sustainably, enhance practices through improved communication methods and materials, and reduce CO₂ emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.

The mitigation measures advocated will address adverse impacts, and also the implementation plan and training programmes suggested are sufficient to ensure the success of the programme.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Policy and Legislative Framework

Annex 2: Screening Checklist for Environmental and Social Issues

Annex 3: Environmentally Sensitive/ Critical Areas

Annex 4: Undertakings requiring Registration and Environmental Permit (EPA LI 1652 (1999))

Annex 5: Sample copy of EPA Registration Form, EA1

Annex 6: Terms of Reference for the REDD+ Safeguards Subworking Group

Annex 1: Policy and Legislative Framework

National Policy Framework

No.	Policy	Description
1.	Forest policy	<p>The 1994 Forest and Wildlife Policy (FWP), revised in 2011, and the 1996 Forestry Development Master Plan (FDMP) serve as guiding policies for the sector.</p> <p>The stated overall aim of the FWP was: “Conservation and sustainable development of the nation’s forest and wildlife resources for the maintenance of environmental quality and perpetual flow of benefits to all segments of society.” The policy represented a shift towards the principles of sustainability. This is most evident in the objectives for management of the off-reserve forest areas.</p> <p>In order to further strengthen the objectives of the FWP and the FDMP, the Government enacted the Timber Resources Management Act, 1997 (Act 547), the Timber Resources Management (Amendment) Act, 2002 (Act 617), and the Timber Resources Management Regulations, 1997 (LI 1649). These pieces of legislation focused on efficient resource allocation and prevention of illegal logging and chainsaw lumbering.</p> <p>However, the Timber Resources Management Act made it illegal for farmers and other users of off reserve lands to harvest any naturally growing trees for commercial or domestic purposes, even if it is growing on their land. It also prohibited logging without prior authorisation from concerned groups or individuals.</p> <p>However, regardless of the efforts Ghana still struggles with illegal logging and good governance of the forest sector (RoG 2011a). There appears to be no significant reductions in illegal logging. The problems are most obvious in the CSM sector and the domestic timber supply. Though parliamentary oversight of forest agencies is relatively good, information management and use of best practise in law enforcement remains weak.</p>
2,	Environmental Policy	<p>Ghana’s Environmental Policy resulted from a series of Government actions initiated in March 1988 to put environmental issues on the priority agenda. Subsequent to this, an Environmental Action Plan (EAP) was drawn up which identified specific actions to be carried out to protect the environment and ensure better management of natural resources. The plan addresses itself to sustainable development issues as defined by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987 and provides a broad framework for the integration of environmental issues into development strategies and actions.</p> <p>The National Environmental Policy (NEP) was adopted in 1991 to provide the framework for the implementation of the National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP). The ultimate aim of the policy is to ensure sound management of the environment and the</p>

		<p>avoidance of exploitation of resources in ways that may result in irreparable damage to the environment. The policy makes provision for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance of ecosystem and ecological processes essential for the functioning of the biosphere; • Sound management of natural resources and the environment; • Protection of humans, animals and plants and their habitat; • Guidance for healthy environmental practices in the national development effort; • Integration of environmental considerations in sectoral, structural and socio-economic planning at all levels; • Seek common solutions to environmental problems in West Africa, Africa and the world at large. <p>The Project will be guided by these policy considerations to ensure that the interventions do not adversely impact on the environment or cause harm to persons.</p>
3.	Agricultural Policy	<p>Agricultural expansion is one of the major underlying causes of deforestation in Ghana. The first Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy (FASDEP) was developed in 2002 as a framework for the implementation of strategies to modernise the agricultural sector in order to increase food and cash crop production. The strategies in the policy were based on the Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Development Strategy, which was designed to forge linkages in the value chain.</p> <p>The revised policy of 2006 (FASDEP II) encourages the formation of inter-ministerial teams to ensure environmental sustainability in agricultural production systems. These could be common platforms to consider also in the implementation of FIP.</p>
4.	Land Policy	<p>The revised National Land Policy (NLP) in 2002, and the implementation of the World Bank supported Land Administration Project (LAP), has promoted the judicious use of land and natural resources in the pilot areas. However, the achievements have so far been local and there is need to upscale the achievements.</p>

Legislative Framework

Legislation	Description
Forestry	
<i>Forestry Commission Act, 1999 Act 571</i>	An Act to re-establish the Forestry Commission in order to bring under the Commission the main public bodies and agencies implementing the functions of protection, development, management and regulation of forests and wildlife resources and to provide for related matters.
<i>Timber Resource Management Act, 1997 - Act 547:</i>	An ACT to provide for the grant of timber rights in a manner that secures the sustainable management and utilization of the timber resources of Ghana and to provide for related purposes.
<i>Timber Resources Management Act 617 (Amendment) Act, 2002:</i>	An ACT to amend the Timber Resources Management Act 1997 (Act 547) to exclude from its application land with private forest plantation; to provide for the maximum duration, and maximum limit of area, of timber rights; to provide for incentives and benefits applicable to investors in forestry and wildlife and to provide for matters related to these.
<i>L.I. 1649 - Timber Resources Management Regulations, 1998</i>	The Timber Resources Management Regulations, 1998 (L.I. 1649), are a set of regulations implemented under the Timber Resources Management Act, 1997 (Act 547) in Ghana. The Timber Resources Management Regulations, 1998, have been amended by subsequent regulations, such as the Timber Resources Management (Amendment) Regulations, 2003 (L.I. 1721), which introduced competitive bidding procedures and other changes to the original regulations.
<i>L.I. 1721 Timber Resources Management (Amendment)</i>	The Timber Resources Management (Amendment) Regulations, 2003 (L.I. 1721) is amendments to the original Timber Resources Management Regulations, 1998 (L.I. 1649). The Act, aims to improve the transparency, efficiency, and sustainability of timber resource management in Ghana by introducing competitive bidding, enhancing social responsibility, and strengthening regulatory oversight
<i>The Forest Protection (Amendment) Act, 2002 Act 624</i>	The Forest Protection (Amendment) Act, 2002, Act 624, is a legislative amendment to the Forest Protection Decree 1974 (NRCD 243) in Ghana. It is designed to enhance the protection of Ghana's forests, deter illegal activities, and promote sustainable forest management. It serves as a critical component of Ghana's forest governance framework, supporting the country's environmental and conservation goals
<i>The Trees & Timber (Amendment) Act, 1994</i>	The Trees and Timber (Amendment) Act, 1994 (Act 493) is a legislative amendment to the original Trees and Timber Decree of 1974 (N.R.C.D. 273) in Ghana. The Act, aims to improve the regulation and management of Ghana's timber resources, enhance enforcement mechanisms, and ensure sustainable forest practices.
<i>Forest & Plantation Development Act, 2000 Act 583</i>	Forest Plantation Development Fund Act, 2000, is designed to foster the development of forest plantations in Ghana through financial assistance, research, and technical support, with the goal of promoting sustainable forestry and encouraging investment in this sector
Environmental	
EPA Act 1994 (Act 490)	The Act provides for the establishment of an Environmental Protection Agency with functions among others, to 'advise the minister on the formulation of policies on all aspects of the environment and in particular make recommendations for the protection of the environment'. The other parts of the Act include Enforcement and

		<p>Control which gives powers to the Agency to request for an ESIA; Part three establishes an Environment Fund and finally Part four describes the administration and general provisions of the Act.</p> <p>Part 1 of the Environmental Assessment Regulations, 1999 LI 1652 on Environmental Permit describes undertakings requiring registration and issuance of environmental permits, as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. (1) No person shall commence any of the undertakings specified in Schedule 1 to these Regulations or any undertaking to which a matter in the Schedule relates, unless prior to the commencement, the undertaking has been registered by the Agency and an environmental permit has been issued by the Agency in respect of the undertaking. 2. No person shall commence activities in respect of any undertaking which in the opinion of the Agency has or is likely to have adverse effect on the environment or public health unless, prior to the commencement, the undertaking has been registered by the Agency in respect of the undertaking.' <p>The list of undertakings requiring environmental assessment is provided in the Annex 6 together with the list of environmentally sensitive areas, Annex 5 in which developments are to a large extent, prohibited.</p> <p>The procedures establish an ESIA process to among others, provide enough relevant information to enable the EPA to set an appropriate level of assessment of any proposed undertaking, investment or programme for the necessary review and to facilitate the decision making process for the ESIA approval. The procedures comprise activities such as project Registration, Screening, Scoping, EIS preparation, and Public hearing. The administrative procedures requires a total processing time of 90 days. The procedures are statutorily recognised under the EPA Act 1994 (Act 490).</p> <p>The Environmental Assessment (Amendment) Regulations, 2002 (LI 1703) is an amendment to LI 1652 and provides for the substitution of regulations relating to 'fees and charges for environmental permits and certificates'.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the Programme will abide by these legislative provisions and procedures as and when applicable, and that all proposed interventions will be mindful of the requirements of the EPA Act 1994 (Act 490).</p>
	Land	
	<i>The Lands Commission Act 2008, Act 767</i>	The Lands Commission Act 2008 establishes the Lands Commission to integrate the operations of public service land institutions in order to secure effective and efficient land administration to provide for related matters.

	<i>The State Lands Act 1962, Act 125</i>	The State Lands Act 1962, Act 125 vests in the President of the Republic the authority to acquire land for the public interest via an executive instrument.
	<i>Survey Act 1962, Act 127</i>	<p>The Survey Act 1962, Act 127 relates to geological, soil and land survey. Part II of the Act deals with demarcation and survey of lands. Under the law, the sector minister may appoint official surveyors, and the Chief Survey Officer (Director of Surveys) may license private surveyors. It is the official surveyor or licensed surveyor that shall certify plans for attachments to instruments of conveyance, leases, assignment, charge or transfer. Under the law it is an offence to damage, destroy or alter any boundary mark.</p> <p>The Act 127 gave legal backing to the Director of Surveys to carryout cadastral and other surveys through official surveyors who work directly under him at the Survey Division of the Lands Commission. It also gave authority to the Director of Surveys to recommend from time-to-time experienced surveyors to the Minister responsible for Lands to be licensed to undertake surveys.</p>
	<i>The Lands (Statutory Wayleaves) Act, 1963</i>	<p>The Lands (Statutory Wayleaves) Act 1963, Act 186 details the process involved in occupation of land for the purpose of the construction, installation and maintenance of works of public utility, and for the creation of rights-of-way for such works</p> <p>Further to this Act, the Statutory Wayleave Regulations, 1964, provide procedural details and address grievance mechanisms.</p>
	<i>The Land Title Registration Act 1986, PNDCL 152</i>	The challenges arising from registration of instruments under the Land Registry Act 1962, Act 122 led to the promulgation of the Land Title Registration Act 1986, PNDCL 152 which would be an improvement on the registration of deeds. The Law provides for among others, accurate parcel or cadastral maps which would reduce fraud, multiple registrations and reduce litigation.
	<i>Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands Act 1994, Act 481</i>	The Act establishes the Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands as enshrined in Article 267 (2) of the 1992 Constitution and it is responsible for establishment of stool land account for each stool, collection of rents and the disbursement of such revenues.
	<i>Water Resources</i>	
	<i>Water Resources Commission Act 1996, Act 522</i>	The Water Resources Commission (WRC) Act 1996 (Act 522) establishes and mandates the WRC as the sole agent responsible for the regulation, management and utilization of water resources and for the co-ordination of any policy in relation to them. The Commission does this through the granting of water rights to potential water users.
	<i>Water Use Regulations 2001, LI 1692</i>	The Water Use Regulations 2001 (LI 1692) enjoins all persons to obtain Water Use Permits from the Water Resources Commission for commercial water use. The Commission is also mandated to request for

		evidence that an environmental impact assessment or an environmental management plan has been approved by the EPA before issuance of the Water Use Permit.
	<i>Others</i>	
	<i>Ghana Investment Promotion Centre Act 1994, Act 478</i>	The Ghana Investment Promotion Centre Act 1994 (Act 478) requires that every investor wishing to invest in the country must in its appraisal of proposed investment projects or enterprises, "...have regard to any effect the enterprise is likely to have on the environment and measures proposed for the prevention and control of any harmful effects to the environment...".
	<i>Local Governance Act, 2016 (Act 936),</i>	Local Governance Act, 2016, provides a comprehensive framework for decentralization, financial autonomy, capacity building, and community participation in local governance in Ghana. It aims to enhance the effectiveness and accountability of local government units, aligning with the country's constitutional and development goals
	<i>Factories, Offices and Shops Act 1970, Act 328</i>	The Factories, Offices and Shops Act of 1970 (Act 328) requires all proponents to register every factory with the Chief Inspector of Factories Inspectorate Division.
	<i>The Labour Act 2003, Act 651</i>	Section 118(1) of the New Labour Act 2003 (Act 651) stipulates that it is the duty of an employer to ensure that every worker employed works under satisfactory, safe and healthy conditions.
	<i>The Fire Precaution (Premises) Regulations 2003, LI 1724</i>	The Fire Precaution (Premises) Regulations 2003 (LI 1724) requires all premises intended for use as workplaces to have Fire Certificates.
	<i>The Constitution of the Republic of Ghana 1992</i>	The Constitution of the Republic of Ghana 1992 makes provisions that protect the right to private property and sets principles under which citizens may be deprived of their property in the interest of the public.
	<i>The Lands Act 2020, Act 1036</i>	The Land Act 2020 is a significant step towards modernizing Ghana's land law, enhancing transparency, and improving the efficiency of land administration. It addresses various historical challenges and sets a robust framework for sustainable land management and dispute resolution.

Annex 2: Screening checklist for Environmental and Social Issues

1. Project Information: Name and Contact Details:			
Project Name	Location: (region/district/village)		
	If other, explain:		
FSD District Focal Point			
Name of reviewer:		Date of screening	

Subproject Details: Attach location map (longitude – latitude coordinates (GPS reading) if available):	
Type of activity: <i>What will be done, who will do it, what are the objectives and outcomes</i>	
Estimated Cost:	
Proposed Date of Commencement of Work:	
Expected Completion of Work	
Technical Drawing/Specifications Reviewed:	Yes/No – refer to Application Portfolio

2. Physical Data:	Comments
Subproject Site area in ha	
Extension of or changes to existing land use	
Any existing property to transfer to subproject	
Any plans for construction, movement of earth, changes in land cover	

3. Preliminary Environmental Information:	Yes/No	Refer to Resettlement Policy Framework	Comments
Is there adjacent/nearby critical natural habitat?			
Is there activities On Forest Reserve?			

Is there activity adjacent to Forest Reserve?			
What is the land currently being used for? (e.g. agriculture, gardening, etc)			List the key resources.
Will the proposed activities have any impact on any ecosystem services, biodiversity issues or natural habitats?			
Will there be restrictions or loss of access to using natural resources in any traditional areas including medicinal plants or those of economic value for livelihoods?		✓	
Will there be water resource impacts?			
Will there be soil impacts?			
Will the subproject require use of pesticides?			If Yes, refer to Pest Management Plan
Are there any new or changing forest management planning or activities?		✓	
Any cultural heritage/sacred sites in project area?		✓	

4. Preliminary Social and Land Information:	Yes/No	Refer to Resettlement Policy Framework	Comments
Has there been litigation or complaints of any environmental nature directed against the proponent or subproject?		✓	
Will the subproject require the acquisition of land?			
What is the status of the land holding (customary, lease, community lands, etc)?		✓	
Is there evidence of land tenure status of farmers and/or occupants (affidavit, other documentation)?		✓	
Are there outstanding land disputes?		✓	
Has there been proper consultation with stakeholders?		✓	
Is there a grievance process identified for PAPs and is this easily accessible to these groups/individuals?		✓	
Will there be any changes to livelihoods?		✓	
What are the main issues associated with farmer benefits and community benefits?		✓	
Will any restoration or compensation be required with "admitted" farmers?		✓	

5. Impact identification and classification:

When considering the location of a subproject, rate the sensitivity of the proposed site in the following table according to the given criteria. Higher ratings do not necessarily mean that a site is unsuitable.

They indicate a real risk of causing undesirable adverse environmental and social effects, and that more substantial environmental and/or social planning may be required to adequately avoid, mitigate or manage potential effects. The following table should be used as a reference.

Issues	Site Sensitivity			Rating (L,M,H)
	Low	Medium	High	
Natural habitats	No natural habitats present of any kind	No critical natural habitats: other natural habitats occur	Critical natural habitats present; within declared protected areas	<u>If High Refer to Annex 3 and Contact Regional EPA</u>
Water quality and water resource availability and use	Water flows exceed any existing demand; low intensity of water use; potential water use conflicts expected to be low; no potential water quality issues	Medium intensity of water use; multiple water users; water quality issues are important	Intensive water use; multiple water users; potential for conflicts is high; water quality issues are important	
Natural hazards vulnerability, floods, soil stability/ erosion	Flat terrain; no potential stability/ erosion problems; no known flood risks	Medium slopes; some erosion potential; medium risks from floods	Mountainous terrain; steep slopes; unstable soils; high erosion potential; flood risks	
Land and Farming Tenure	No conflicts, disagreements around use of land, tenant farmer rights and location of admitted farms and farmers transparent	Process of land regularization and rights to natural resources being worked out with clear communication and grievance process in place	Land conflicts historically unresolved, admitted farmers being evicted, tenant farmers losing rights and no transparency or grievance redress available	<u>If Medium or High Refer to Resettlement Policy Framework</u>

6. E & S assessment comments based on site visit:

Summary Observations

Determination of environmental category based on findings of the screening: A ___ B ___ C

- Requires an EIA
- Requires preparation of additional E&S information
- Does not require further environmental or social due diligence

Prepared by:

Date:

Potential Environmental and Social Issues That Require Referral to EPA or Using EA1 Form

	Benchmark and Issues	Impact description	Yes	No	Remark
1.	Statutory provisions	Is the proposed plantation area less than 40ha?			If yes, proceed with EA1 Form
2.	Statutory provisions (see <i>Natural Habitat Issues in Checklist</i>)	Are there any ecologically sensitive/ critical areas within the proposed project area (refer to Annex 3)			If yes, contact regional EPA
3.	Protected areas and wildlife	Will project activities potentially impact natural habitats or critical wildlife species			If yes, proceed with EA1 form
4.	Biodiversity loss	Will land use change or vegetation clearance lead to loss of exceptional flora/ fauna			If yes, proceed with EA1 form
5.	Water pollution	1. Is there a local stream close to the project site? 2. Does it flow all year round? 3. How long does it take to walk to this stream 4. Do you think any project activity will affect this stream			If 4 is yes, proceed with EA1 form
6.	Soil erosion	Are there steep slopes in the project area? Can you easily walk on the slopes without falling			If yes, proceed with EA1 form

Annex 3: Environmentally Sensitive/ Critical Areas

NB: *Projects sited in these areas could have significant effects on the environment and the EPA could require a more stringent environmental assessment*

All areas declared by law as national parks, watershed reserves, forest reserves, wildlife reserves and sanctuaries including sacred groves

Areas with potential tourist value

Areas which constitute the habitat of any endangered or threatened species of indigenous wildlife (flora and fauna)

Areas of unique historic, religious, cultural, archeological, scientific or educational interest

Areas which provide space, food, and materials for people practicing a traditional style of life

Areas prone to disaster (geological hazards, floods, rainstorms, earthquakes, landslides, volcanic activity etc)

Areas prone to bushfires

Areas classified as prime agricultural areas

Recharge areas of aquifers

Water bodies characterized by one or any combination of the following conditions:

Tapped for domestic purposes

Within controlled/ protected areas

Which support wildlife and fishery activities

Mangrove areas characterized by one or any combination of the following conditions:

With primary pristine and dense growth

Adjoining mouth of major river system

Near or adjacent to traditional fishing grounds

Which acts as natural buffers against shore erosion, strong winds and storm floods

Estuaries and lagoons

Other coastal areas of ecological, fisheries or tourism importance or which are subject to dynamic change

Wetlands

Rivers

Areas of high population density

Annex 4: Undertaking requiring Registration and Environmental Permit (EPA LI 1652 (1999))

SECTOR	Sub sector	Description
AGRICULTURE	Community Pastures	Involving the clearing of land greater than 40 ha Involving the clearing of land located in an environmentally sensitive area
	Fruit and other vegetable farms	Management areas: Involving the clearing of land greater than 40 ha Involving the clearing of land located in an environmentally sensitive area
FISHING AND TRAPPING	Fishing	a. fish or shell fish farming in salt water, brackish water or fresh water, where the proposal includes the construction of shore-based facilities other than wharves; b. permanent traps or weir fisheries, salt water.
	Services incidental to fishing	Fish or shellfish breeding and propagating services, or fish or shellfish hatchery services, where the proposal includes the construction of shore based facilities other than wharves.
LOGGING AND FORESTRY	Logging	Management of forested land for the primary purpose of harvesting timber in a contract area.
	Forestry services	a. application of pesticides; b. introduction of exotic species of animals, plants or microbial agents.
MINING	Metal mines Non metal mines	-
CRUDE OIL AND NATURAL GAS	Crude oil or petroleum production facilities Natural gas production facilities	
QUARRIES AND SAND PITS	Stone quarries	Where the total area is greater than 10ha, OR Where any portion is to be located within an environmentally portioned area
	Sand and gravel pit	a. where the total area is greater than 10 hectares, or b. where any portion is to be located within an environmentally sensitive area.
FOOD	Meat and poultry products	a. abattoirs; b. meat, fat or oil processing facilities c. poultry processing facilities.
	Fish products	-
	Flours, prepared cereal foods and feeds Feed mills	-
BEVERAGES	Distillery products Brewery products Wines	-
RUBBER PRODUCTS	a. tyres and tubes;	-

SECTOR	Sub sector	Description
	b. rubber hoses and beltings; c. other rubber products	
PLASTIC PRODUCTS	a. tyres and tubes; b. rubber hoses and beltings; c. other rubber products	-
LEATHER AND ALLIED PRODUCTS	Man made fibres and filament yarns Spun yarns and woven cloths Broad knitted fabrics	-
TEXTILE PRODUCTS	Natural fibres processing and felt products Carpets, mats and rugs Canvas and related products Other textile products	-
WOOD	Sawmill, planning mill and shingle mill products industries Veneers and plywoods Other wood products Wood preservation facilities which use hazardous chemicals or similar chemical processes Particle board or wafer board production	-
PAPER AND ALLIED PRODUCTS	Pulp and paper Asphalt roofing Other converted paper products	-
PRIMARY METALS		-
FABRICATED METAL PRODUCTS		-
TRANSPORTATION EQUIPMENT		-
REFINED PETROLEUM PRODUCTS	Agricultural chemicals Plastics and synthetic resins Paints and varnishes Soaps and cleaning compounds Other chemical products	-
OTHER MANUFACTURING	Scientific and professional equipment	Photographic films and plates manufacturing Floor tiles, linoleum and coated fabrics manufacturing Other manufacturing products
CONSTRUCTION	Industrial construction (other than buildings)	a) Construction of pipelines for the transmission of oil, natural gas and other

SECTOR	Sub sector	Description
		related products from the source to the point of distribution, where: Any portion of the pipeline is to be located at a distance greater than 500m from an existing right of way; or Any portion of the pipeline is to be located in an environmentally sensitive area b) diesel electric power generating plants having capacity greater than 1 megawatt a gas turbine electric power generating plants having capacity greater than 1 megawatt c)nuclear electric power generating plants
HIGHWAYS AND HEAVY CONSTRUCTION	Roads	-
	Waterworks and sewage system	Construction of trunk pipelines for transmission of water from the source to the point of distribution Construction of trunk sewer pipelines Construction of trunk sewer pipeline outfalls
	Hydroelectric power plants and related structures	Construction of dams and associated reservoirs Inter or intra basin water transfers Construction of hydroelectric power developments
UTILITIES		Establishment of waste disposal sites Establishment of facilities for the collection or disposal of hazardous waste materials
WHOLESALE TRADE	Petroleum products	Wholesale establishment of petroleum products storage facilities
	Waste materials, wholesale	Establishment of facilities for the purpose of assembling, breaking up, sorting or wholesale trading of scrap, junk or waste material of any type
SERVICES	Economic services administration	Resource conservation and management programmes involving introduction of exotic species of animals or plants for any purpose; Resource conservation and management programmes involving introduction of native species of animals or plants into areas where those species do not occur at the time of the proposed introduction Designation of land for cottage development or other recreational development
ACCOMMODATION SERVICES	Establishment of recreation and vacation camps	-
AMUSEMENT AND RECREATIONAL SERVICES	Commercial spectator sport	Establishment of horse racetrack operations Establishment of racetrack operations for motorized vehicle sports and recreation clubs and services Establishment of facilities, including trails Establishment of outdoor firearm ranges

SECTOR	Sub sector	Description
		Establishment of marina operations Establishment of facilities, including trails for mortised recreational vehicles Other amusement and recreational services

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, GHANA
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REGISTRATION FORM

(To be completed in Duplicate)

FEE: ₵50,000

Serial No.

FORM EA1

PROPONENT:

Address for correspondence:

Contact person:

Position:

Phone No.:

Fax No.:

Email:

ASSESSMENT NO:		FILE NO:	
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Environmental Protection Agency
P.O. Box M 326
Accra, Ghana

Tel: 664697/8, 664223, 662465

Fax: 662690

Email: support@epagghana.org

Web-site: www.epa.gov.gh

*This form shall be submitted to the relevant EPA Regional Office. It is important that you read carefully the guide for completing the form before starting.

- **PROPOSED UNDERTAKEN/DEVELOPMENT**

Title of proposal (General Classification of undertaking)

Description of Proposal (nature of undertaking, unit processes [flow diagram], raw materials, list of chemicals (source, types and quantities), storage facilities, wastes/ by-products (solid, liquid and gaseous)

Scope of Proposal (size of labour force, equipment and machinery, installed/production capacity, product type, area covered by facility/proposal, market)

- **PROPOSED SITE**

Location (attach a site plan/map)

Plot/House No.

Street/Area Name

Town

District/Region

Major Landmarks (if any)

Current zoning

Distance to nearest residential and/or other facilities

Adjacent land uses (existing & proposed)

Site description (immediate activities should be described)

3. INFRASTRUCTURE AND UTILITIES

Structures (buildings and other facilities proposed or existing on site)

Access to water (source, quantity)

Access to power (type, source & quantity)

Drainage provision in the project area

Nearness to water body

Access to project site:

Other major utilities proposed or existing on site (e.g. sewerage, etc)

4. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Potential environmental effects of proposed undertaking (Both constructional and operational phases)

5. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Potential significant risks and hazards associated with the proposal (including occupational health and safety). State briefly relevant environmental studies already done and attach copies as appropriate.

6. CONSULTATIONS

Views of immediate adjoining neighbours and relevant stakeholders (provide evidence of consultation)

7. MANAGEMENT OF IMPACTS AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT MEASURES

ATTACHMENTS

Tick appropriate boxes below indicating that the following required documents have been attached:

- Authentic site plan (signed by a licensed surveyor and certified by Survey Dept.)
- Block plan of the site
- Photographs of the site
- Fire report from the Ghana National Fire Service
- Zoning letter from Town & Country Planning Department

DECLARATION:

I,, hereby declare that the information provided on this form is true to the best of my knowledge and shall provide any additional information that shall come to my notice in the course of processing this application. I also declare that information provided is true.

Signature

Date

* Use additional sheets where spaces provided in 3, 4 and 5 are inadequate.

Annex 6: Terms of Reference for Ghana REDD+ Safeguards Sub-Working Group

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.0 BACKGROUND

Ghana has been implementing REDD+ Readiness Activities since 2011 with financial support from the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) of the World Bank and other local and international partners. The Climate Change Unit of the Forestry Commission serves as the National REDD+ Secretariat (herein referred to as NRS) and has responsibility for the coordination of Ghana's REDD+ Readiness process. Ghana has made good progress on activities under the four (4) FCPF's REDD+ Readiness thematic components, i.e.:

- Readiness Organization and Consultation
- REDD+ Strategy Preparation
- Establishment of a Reference Emission Level/ Reference Level
- Setting up of Monitoring System for Forests and Safeguards

The first phase of Ghana's REDD+ Readiness was successfully completed in November 2014 and Ghana has received Additional Funding from the FCPF for the continuation of its REDD+ Readiness Activities to enable the country to develop the frameworks, systems and structures necessary for engagement in an international REDD+ mechanism.

Additionally, Ghana has also been selected into the pipeline of the FCPF Carbon Fund following approval of an Emissions Reduction Programme Idea Note (ER-PIN) by the Carbon Fund in Brussels in early April, 2014. In line with Ghana's National REDD+ Strategy, the ER program targets the cocoa and forests mosaic landscape within the High Forest Zone, with a vision to reduce carbon emissions driven by expansive cocoa farming, mining and other agricultural drivers, whilst enhancing farmers' productivity and fostering a multi-stakeholder, public-private sector, collaborative effort across the program area.

1.1 UNFCCC REDD+ safeguard requirements

After several years of negotiations and discussions at the international level, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP) adopted the 'Warsaw Framework for REDD+' at its 19th meeting in December 2013.¹ This officially anchored REDD+ to the UNFCCC regime. The Warsaw Framework builds on previous COP decisions and clarifies and consolidates the requirements and methodological guidance countries must meet in order to access results-based finance.² According to the Warsaw Framework, developing country Parties aiming to receive results-based finance for REDD+ must fulfil the following REDD+ safeguard related requirements:

Requirement 1: Implement REDD+ activities in a manner consistent with the Cancun safeguards
REDD+ activities, regardless of their type of funding source, are to be implemented in such a way that the Cancun Safeguards are addressed and respected (see Box 1).³ This implies that the Cancun safeguards constitute *the default*, not minimum, safeguards to be applied. Countries are expected to take steps to define how the Cancun safeguards will be implemented, and to ensure compliance with the safeguards throughout the implementation of REDD+ activities.

Requirement 2: Establish a system to provide information on how the Cancun safeguards are being addressed and respected

The governments of countries implementing REDD+ activities are required to establish a system to provide information on how the seven Cancun safeguards are being addressed and respected in all of the phases of implementation of REDD+ activities.⁴ This is commonly referred to as the Safeguard Information System (subsequently referred to as the SIS).

¹ UNFCCC Decisions 9/CP.19; 10/CP.19; 11/CP.19; 12/CP.19; 13/CP.19; 14CP.19 and 15/CP.19

² UNFCCC Decision 2/CP.17 paragraph 63

³ Decision 1/CP.16 paragraph 69, Decision 2/CP.17, Paragraph 63

⁴ UNFCCC Decision 1/CP.16 Paragraph 71(d).

According to the UNFCCC guidelines, the SIS should:⁵

- Be consistent with guidance in decision 1/CP.16, appendix I, paragraph 1⁶;
- Provide transparent and consistent information that is accessible by all relevant stakeholders and updated on a regular basis;
- Be transparent and flexible to allow for improvements over time;
- Provide information on how all of the safeguards are being addressed and respected;
- Be country-driven and implemented at the national level;
- Build upon existing systems, as appropriate.

Requirement 3: Provide a summary of information on how the Cancun Safeguards are being addressed and respected. In order to receive results-based payments, countries must present their most recent summary of information demonstrating how the safeguards have been addressed and respected.⁷ The UNFCCC also establishes that the summary of information should be provided periodically, and be included in national communications or other communication channels identified by the COP. An additional and voluntary format for providing information to the UNFCCC is through the UNFCCC REDD+ web platform.⁸

Box 1: The Cancun Safeguards⁹

When undertaking the activities referred to in paragraph 70 of this decision, the following safeguards should be promoted and supported:

- (a) That actions complement or are consistent with the objectives of national forest programmes and relevant international conventions and agreements;
- (b) Transparent and effective national forest governance structures, taking into account national legislation and sovereignty;
- (c) Respect for the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples and members of local communities, by taking into account relevant international obligations, national circumstances and laws, and noting that the United Nations General Assembly has adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
- (d) The full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular indigenous peoples and local communities, in the actions referred to in paragraphs 70 and 72 of this decision;
- (e) That actions are consistent with the conservation of natural forests and biological diversity, ensuring that the actions referred to in paragraph 70 of this decision are not used for the conversion of natural forests, but are instead used to incentivize the protection and conservation of natural forests and their ecosystem services, and to enhance other social and environmental benefits;¹⁰
- (f) Actions to address the risks of reversals;
- (g) Actions to reduce displacement of emissions

1.2 Forest Carbon Partnership Facility REDD+ safeguard requirements

In addition to the UNFCCC REDD+ safeguards requirements, the Government of Ghana has committed to meet the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) safeguards requirements.

⁵ UNFCCC Decision 12/CP.17 Paragraph 2

⁶ Which states that REDD+ activities should: (a) Contribute to the achievement of the objective set out in Article 2 of the Convention; (b) Contribute to the fulfilment of the commitments set out in Article 4, paragraph 3, of the Convention; (c) Be country-driven and be considered options available to Parties; (d) Be consistent with the objective of environmental integrity and take into account the multiple functions of forests and other ecosystems; (e) Be undertaken in accordance with national development priorities, objectives and circumstances and capabilities and should respect sovereignty; (f) Be consistent with Parties' national sustainable development needs and goals; (g) Be implemented in the context of sustainable development and reducing poverty, while responding to climate change; (h) Be consistent with the adaptation needs of the country; (i) Be supported by adequate and predictable financial and technology support, including support for capacity-building; (j) Be results-based; (k) Promote sustainable management of forests;

⁷ Decision 9/CP, Paragraph 4, UNFCCC Decision 2/CP.17, op cit, Paragraph 63 and 64.

⁸ Decision 12/CP.19, Paragraph 2 and 3

⁹ UNFCCC Decision 1/CP.16 Appendix 1 paragraph 2

¹⁰ Taking into account the need for sustainable livelihoods of indigenous peoples and local communities and their interdependence on forests in most countries, reflected in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, as well as International Mother Earth Day.

Countries receiving FCPF funding for readiness preparation through the World Bank are required to ensure compliance with the FCPF Readiness Fund's common approach to environmental and social safeguards for multiple delivery partners (Common Approach).¹¹ This also applies to countries seeking to obtain results based funding from the FCPF Carbon Fund.¹²

The REDD+ safeguard requirements of the FCPF Readiness Grant that Ghana is a beneficiary to, has two dimensions, substantive, and procedural.

Substantive Requirements

According to the Common Approach, participating countries are expected to achieve "substantial equivalence" to the "material elements" of the World Bank's environmental and social safeguard policies and procedures applicable to the FCPF Readiness Fund.¹³ In addition, according to the World Bank, its own safeguards policies, procedures and practices are "consistent" with the Cancun safeguards for REDD+,¹⁴ which means that a country approach developed to address and respect the Cancun safeguards could be understood substantively at least, to be "consistent" with the FCPF safeguard requirements.

Procedurally however, a number of additional processes need to be taken in order to fully meet the FCPF safeguard requirements.

Procedural Requirements

There are two procedural requirements:

- Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA), and
- Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF)

Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA)

The SESA stems from environmental assessment (EA) requirements of the World Bank.¹⁵ It is intended to be an inclusive process whereby the REDD+ country, with the participation of all potentially affected stakeholders, seeks to "identify likely impacts and risks, as well as opportunities," among different strategic REDD+ options. During the SESA process these impacts, risks and opportunities are assessed and weighed by the various stakeholders. Activities that form part of the SESA include (see diagram in Annex):¹⁶

- Identifying and prioritising the drivers of deforestation and the key social and environmental issues associated with the drivers. This assessment also includes looking at how issues such as land and tree tenure, benefit-sharing and access to resources are dealt with in Ghana. A preliminary examination of the likely social and environmental impacts of the REDD+ strategy options identified in the R-PP is also necessary.
- Analysing the legal, policy and institutional "aspects" of REDD+ readiness
- Assessing existing capacities and gaps to address the environmental and social issues identified
- Establishing outreach, communication and consultative mechanisms with relevant stakeholders throughout the process

The SESA should conclude with the production of an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) as a means for managing environmental and social risks as REDD+ countries develop their REDD+ national strategies.

Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF)

¹¹ UN REDD FCPF (2012) R-PP Template Annexes Version 6, for Country Use p. 44

¹² FCPF (2013) Carbon Fund Methodological Framework. Final. P. 17

¹³ FCPF (2011) Readiness Fund Common Approach to Environmental and Social Safeguards for Multiple Delivery Partners. https://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/sites/forestcarbonpartnership.org/files/Documents/PDF/Nov2011/FCPF%20Readiness%20Fund%20Common%20Approach%20_Final_%2010-Aug-2011_Revised.pdf

¹⁴ FCPF Carbon Fund (2013) World Bank Safeguard Policies and the UNFCCC REDD+ Safeguards. FMT Note CF-2013-3 https://www.forestcarbonpartnership.org/sites/fcp/files/2013/june2013/FMT%20Note%20CF-2013-3_FCPF%20WB%20Safegu ard%20Policies%20and%20UNFCCC%20REDD%2B%20Safeguards_FINAL.pdf

¹⁵ See OP 4.01 – Environmental Assessment, para. 7; and Annex A, para. 10.

¹⁶ Ibid

All REDD+ countries must produce an ESMF as a direct output of the SESA process.¹⁷ The ESMF lays out principles, rules, guidelines and procedures for assessing issues and impacts associated with planned REDD+ activities that may occur in the future but are not presently known or are uncertain.¹⁸ It largely provides a framework for REDD+ countries to address environmental and social issues in their REDD+ Strategy as it is implemented.

In fulfilling the above requirement, Ghana has completed both the SESA and the development of ESMF as part of its REDD+ R-Package.

1.3 Institutional framework for REDD+ in Ghana

The institutional framework designed for implementing REDD+ evolved through an extensive stakeholder consultation during the readiness plan phase. The hierarchical architecture from the executive level of government through statutory agencies to the local level multi-stakeholder consultation platform allows for vertical and horizontal coordination to implement REDD+ actions. The institutional arrangement is complex, demanding intra and inter-sectorial coordination and extensive consultation with civil society and technical subject experts. The Climate Change Unit of the Forestry Commission remains a fulcrum around which most of these actions can take place and hence its capacity to manage a complex programme like REDD+ must be kept in balance.¹⁹

¹⁷ R-PP Template, Component 2d, p. 44.

¹⁸ Common Approach, p. 47, para. 23.

¹⁹ P.31 Ghana REDD+ Strategy

Overview of the REDD+ Readiness Progress in Ghana

Ghana joined the international REDD+ Readiness Programme through the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) in 2008, and its Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) was approved in 2010. The R-PP outlined the process by which the Government of Ghana was to develop its National REDD+ Strategy and the supporting mechanisms and processes for participating in and implementing REDD+. During this period, Ghana also became a recipient of the Forest Investment Programme (FIP), of the Climate Investment Fund (CIF) of the World Bank, which is currently supporting the government to implement projects that are synchronized with Ghana's REDD+ programme. Ghana has submitted its Readiness Package, which outlines the completion of the preparation phase and indicates a move towards full implementation.

Ghana began with the formation of the NRWG and technical sub-working groups focusing on thematic areas such as Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV), SESA, etc. Consultancies were also commissioned during the first phase of REDD+ Readiness and various studies and assessments were conducted such as SESA, opportunities for Alternative Dispute Resolution for REDD+ Schemes, existing options for Benefit Sharing mechanism for REDD+, etc. The next stage with regards to REDD+ Safeguards is to develop a Country Approach to Safeguards (CAS) and Safeguards Information System (SIS).

REDD+ SAFEGUARDS SUB-WORKING GROUP

In light of the commitment made by the government of Ghana to develop a process of a Country Approach to Safeguards (CAS), it has become necessary to establish a Safeguards Sub-working Group with a clear scope of work and membership to support both the design and implementation of the CAS and the safeguards information system (SIS).

3. OBJECTIVE

The objective of the REDD+ Safeguards Sub-Working Group is to assist Ghana's efforts to respond to the multiple international safeguard requirements through the adoption of a CAS

The specific role of the REDD+ Safeguards Sub-Working Group is to facilitate, promote and supervise the development and effective implementation of REDD+ safeguards instruments through the design of the CAS and SIS in Ghana in a transparent and participatory manner. The REDD+ Safeguards sub-Working Group shall provide feedback to the National REDD+ Working Group (NRWG)²⁰, ensuring the inclusiveness of the various CAS processes in Ghana.

These Terms of Reference (ToRs) shall guide the work of the REDD+ Safeguards Sub-Working Group.

4. CHAIR

The REDD+ Safeguards Sub-Working Group will be chaired either by a representative of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on the sub-working group, or members shall exercise the prerogative to elect a capable member to Chair as needed.

The Chair will provide leadership for the REDD+ Safeguards Sub-Working Group and ensures the execution of the mandates of SWG as outlined in this TOR.

5. COMPOSITION

Membership of the REDD+ Safeguards Sub-Working Group includes representatives from Government agencies, civil society organizations, and the private sector. A full list of current members is shown in Appendix I. The list is not exhaustive. Other participants will be invited/co-opted as necessary.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The REDD+ Safeguards Sub-Working Group is a multi-stakeholder technical and advisory forum created to provide guidance and supervision for the effective implementation of REDD+ Safeguards in Ghana including the adoption of a CAS and establishment of Safeguards Information System (SIS). This will be done through the provision of regular feedback, throughout the process of development of the CAS.

The roles and responsibilities of the REDD+ Safeguards Sub-Working Group are as follows:

- Contribute to setting the goals and scope of the CAS
- Ensure full and effective implementation of the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) developed under the SESA
- Review and contribute to the design and implementation of a CAS, including the set-up of a Safeguard Information Systems (SIS)
- Provide overall technical and traditional knowledge and direction on REDD+ safeguards
- Provide a platform for different stakeholders to provide views and inputs throughout the CAS and SIS design process.
- Facilitate a multi-stakeholder process to determine how the National REDD+ Strategy informs the CAS scope and goals
- Liaise with other initiatives and programs such as the Forest Investment Programme (FIP) and Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) to synergies and safeguards requirements.
- Submit technical documents to the NRWG for approval to move the development of the CAS and the SIS forward, as needed

²⁰ NRWG is a cross-sectorial body made up of representatives from various Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), Traditional Authority, Private Sector, CSOs, etc. The group is chaired by the Deputy Minister for Lands and Natural Resources.

The above roles and responsibilities of the SWG will be subject to periodic review based on emerging needs. The review process shall be facilitated by the National REDD+ Secretariat.

7. SUPPORT TO THE SUB-WORKING GROUP

The work of the REDD+ Safeguards Sub-Working Group will be facilitated as follows:

- a. Having access to advanced technical information generated from the Forestry Commission and/or individuals/organizations consulting on Safeguards.
- b. Relevant data sharing among members of REDD+ Safeguards Sub-Working Group
- c. Having access to technical and scientific experts within Ghana and overseas.
- d. Receiving training, technical advice and support where required from the REDD+ National Working Group
- e. Participating in meetings, conferences, workshops, etc., as required by National REDD+ Secretariat work plan and REDD+ Safeguards Sub-Working Group calendar.

8. ATTENDANCE

Members will attend and participate in meetings on a continuous basis to ensure effective work within the REDD+ Safeguards Sub-Working Group. In case members are not able to attend a meeting, they will nominate an alternative representative to attend on their behalf and inform the-Chair prior to the meeting.

9. MEETING and REPORTING

The Chair shall report to the Co-Chairs of the NRWG through the PMU.

The SWG shall meet at least once every quarter. Other meetings may be organized based on issues relevant to the object of the SWG. In all cases, at least one week's notice shall be given to members. The notification of members to attend meetings shall include the agenda and other relevant documents.

Membership to REDD+ Safeguards Sub-Working Group will include representatives from the Government agencies, CSO, private sector and Academia as listed below:

Institution	Designation
Independent Resource Person	Chairman
Tropenbos Ghana	Member
Stakeholders & Ecotourism at the Wildlife Division	Member
ICT-FC	Member
Cocobod	Member
Ecocare Ghana	Member
IUCN Ghana	Member
ARocha Ghana	Member
SNV Ghana	Member
NRS – FC	Member