WORLD BANK GROUP | KOREA GREEN GROWTH TRUST FUND

Sustainable Forest Economy

Advancing a Sustainable Forest-Based Economy in Ghana ($ 400,000)

This grant supports Ghana in transitioning toward a sustainable forest-based economy that balances conservation with livelihoods. By strengthening value chains, governance, and nature-based enterprises, the program promotes green jobs and long-term forest resilience.

Ghana is carrying out measures to develop sustainable and resilient forests that benefit the environment and society. The World Bank is supporting these efforts by championing a holistic, integrated approach to forest economy transformation. This approach positions forests not only as environmental assets to be conserved, but as platforms for inclusive economic growth.

This vision is being advanced through a proposed operation the Ghana Forests Economy Program (GFEP), and Analytical work through Livable Planet ASA: Supporting Forest Economies (P514830). The program aims to modernize forest governance, scale up climate-resilient forest management, and strengthen inclusive value chains that generate jobs and market access for rural communities.

South Korea **Ghana**

COUNTRY	WHEN	NUMBER OF DELEGATES
Ghana	July 27-31, 2026	10

HOSTING ENTITIES

Korea Forestry Promotion Institute

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

Ministry of Land and Natural Resources
Forestry Commission
Ministry of Finance

Knowledge Exchange Objectives

Ghana wants to learn about good practices in plantation management and sustainable forest economy transformation; advanced technologies for digital forest monitoring and efficient wood processing; and innovations to develop forest-based SMEs and market timber and non-timber forest products.

Korea is globally recognized for its successful forest sector modernization, having transformed degraded landscapes into thriving ecosystems. It has developed strong expertise in sustainable plantation management, efficient wood processing, and digital forest monitoring, as well as governance frameworks that promote sustainable forest-based economies.

“Korea has done a lot in forestry management and looking at how they've transformed their forestry sector from when the forest was degraded to now, I think they've done an amazing job and that's a key lesson for us... they've leveraged technology to get here, they've leveraged long term planning and commitment, and then they've also developed the forestry sector looking at an integrated value chain approach.”

Margaret-Ann Wilson, Head of World Bank Group Unit, Ministry of Finance

What Were the Key Insights and Learnings?

POLICY, GOVERNANCE AND LONG-TERM INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT

- **Long-term political commitment** — Successful forest restoration requires commitment that transcends political administrations and is supported by strong legislation, sustained public financing, and stable institutions.
- **Regulatory and incentive balance** — Forest governance is most effective when regulatory measures are complemented by incentives, community participation, and private sector engagement, creating shared ownership of forest resources.
- **High-integrity carbon markets** — Transparent carbon markets require robust governance, transparent MRV systems, and clear benefit-sharing mechanisms.

TECHNICAL INNOVATION — NURSERIES, SEEDS AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

- **Modern nursery systems** — Automated nurseries and smart greenhouses ensure year-round, high-quality seedling production at scale; seed orchards, banks, and certification systems protect genetic diversity and underpin reforestation quality.
- **Digital transformation** — Satellites, drones, LiDAR, and GIS enable accurate carbon accounting and real-time monitoring; technology adoption should be phased, starting with pilots before scaling nationally.

VALUE CHAIN DEVELOPMENT AND INDUSTRIAL COMPETITIVENESS

- **Cascading wood utilization** — Korea's approach maximizes value across the timber chain, prioritizing solid wood products, converting residues into engineered wood (MDF, particle board), and using remaining materials for energy. Public investment in research and standards de-risks private sector participation.

"...from day one to the last day there are a lot of lessons that we've documented and key among them is that forest restoration is achievable. You can achieve full forest restoration at the same time addressing the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation."

John Appah, Operations Manager, Forestry Commission

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, LIVELIHOODS, AND SME DEVELOPMENT

- **Forests as social infrastructure** — Korea's "Healing Forests" ecotourism model shows how forests can generate community income and local employment while reinforcing conservation.
- **Community participation and benefit-sharing** — Forest conservation is more sustainable when communities are directly involved in managing ecotourism enterprises and share in the benefits; Ghana's CREMAs should be strengthened to play this role.
- **Diversified forest-based livelihoods** — Bamboo, furniture, ecotourism, and other forest-based activities help diversify income sources for local populations and reduce dependence on extractive uses.
- **Forest-based SME ecosystems** — A thriving SME ecosystem requires targeted finance, mentorship, and market access, particularly for youth entrepreneurs in green enterprises.

"The other interesting thing I have seen being here is to actually see forests as a coordinated sector, not working in silos."

Macdana Yunus, Principal Planning Officer, Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources

Which Good Practices Did Participants See and Learn About?

- **Korea Forest Service**—wood-based material development, private forest management and monitoring systems, smart forestry using digital tools with futuristic planning
- **Korea Forest Promotion Institute**—forest produce varieties, wood and forest products quality management, value chain development, packing, branding.
- **National Institute of Forest Science**—remote sensing, wood processing
- **National Forest Seed Variety Center**—seed management policies, production techniques, genetic resource conservation and good practices in distributing high-quality seeds
- **Forest Training Institute, Yongmun Nursery Center** — forest recruitment, training modules for career development, smart nursery system, governance structures and public-private support mechanisms
- **Unid BT Plus Factory**—wood processing, forestry production and quality control, forestry product R&D
- **Korea Forest Welfare Institute**—community-based eco-tourism

How Will the Learnings Be Applied?

- Ghana's forestry institutions have an opportunity to apply the learnings from this exchange by developing policy frameworks that support sustainable wood utilization, strengthening nursery and certification systems, and creating an enabling environment for private sector investment in forest-based industries.
- There is a collaboration opportunity between Ghana and Korea to maintain long-term technical engagement on wood processing technologies, seed certification, community-based ecotourism, and digital forest monitoring.

"The knowledge exchange in Korea gave us the opportunity to travel through both the past and the present of Korea's forest sector. By witnessing its remarkable journey from national reforestation to sustainable forest management, we gained invaluable lessons that will help shape Ghana's long-term Forest Economy Program. These insights will be critical in developing productive forest value chains, creating green jobs, and managing Ghana's forests as both ecological and economic assets. As one of our Korean partners said, 'Seeding is a promise; a mature tree is a legacy.' That message captures the essence of this exchange and the transformational dialogue that will help unlock future investment in Ghana's forest sector."

Ngao Mubanga, Senior Environmental Specialist, World Bank

RESOURCES
Grant page: Advancing a Sustainable Forest-Based Economy in Ghana

KEY PARTNERS
Korean Forest Service
Korea Forestry Promotion Institute

Knowledge Exchange Focal Point: Ngao Mubanga, Senior Environmental Specialist, World Bank

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