



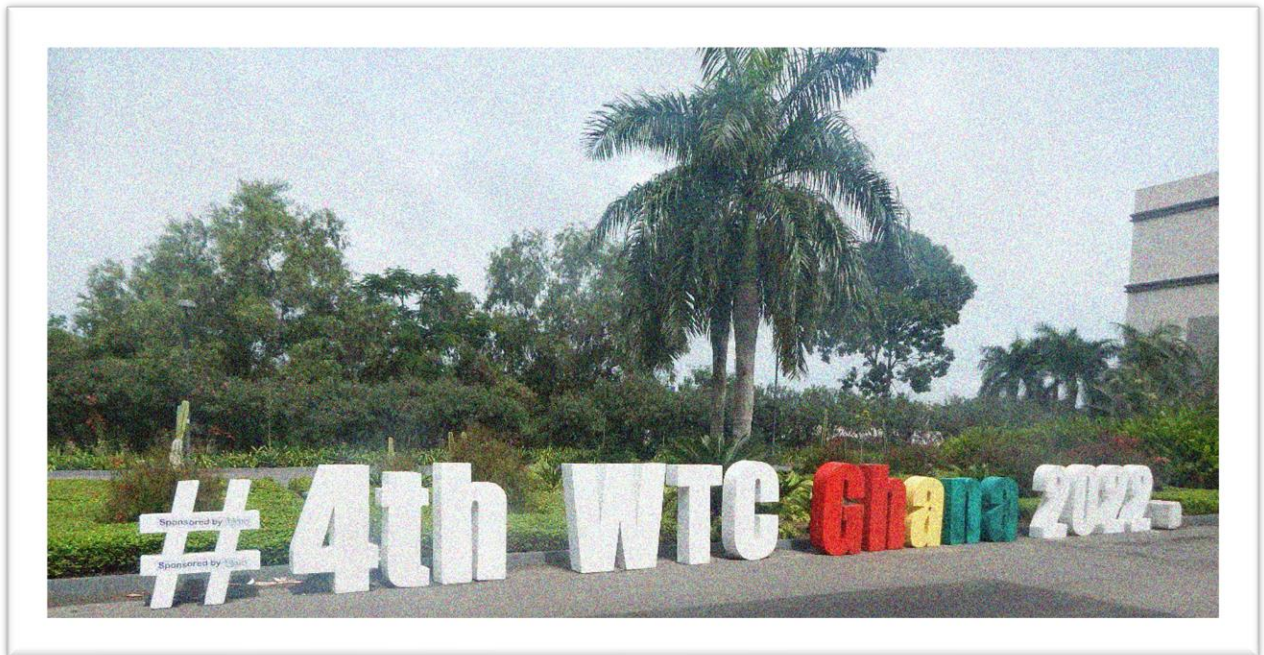
## Ghana hosted 4th World Teak Conference 2022

### *Global Teak Market: Challenges and Opportunities for Emerging Markets and Developing Economies*

5-8 September, Hotel Kempenski Gold Coast, Accra, Ghana

*Report by P.K.Thulasidas*

*Dy. Coordinator, IUFRO D5.06.02-Utilisation of Planted Teak*



The 4th World Teak Conference with the theme ***“Global Teak Market; Challenges and Opportunities for Emerging Markets and Developing Economies”*** was successfully organized at Hotel Kempenski Gold Coast, Accra, Ghana from 5-8 September 2022 for the first time in an African nation. The Conference was jointly organized by the Forestry Commission of Ghana, International Teak Information Network (TEAKNET), International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO), Japan, the Teakwood Working Party of the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO D5.06.02) with the technical support of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Rome. The main topics deliberated in WTC 2022 include value addition and livelihood enhancement of smallholder teak plantations, promoting responsible teak trade and marketing, tree improvements, management and community forestry and family farming. It facilitated the transfer of knowledge and technology among teak

growing countries. The Conference comprised of 5 thematic plenary sessions and offered three Field Excursions to the Kakun National Park canopy walk at Cape Coast, Shai Hills Resource Reserve & Boat cruise and visit to the Form Ghana Teak Plantation in Akumadan Ashanti region, Kumasi. The main sponsors of the conference include Aron Global, SRS Group, Mere Plantations, Renas Prestige, Form Ghana, ETL, Kilombero Valley, TRC Brazil, the Liaison Group for mining in forest reserves and MIRC and their exhibition stands displaying products and services related to the global teak market, suppliers of seeds and inputs, logistics, transportation, developers, manufacturers and marketing experts. Around 273 registered delegates from 28 countries representing 5 continents attended the conference to share knowledge and experience and to exchange ideas on the multiple economic, social and environmental benefits that teak resources can provide. The participants represented government institutions, the private sector, universities, research institutes, and forestry student communities, international and non-governmental organizations. Previous editions of World Teak Conferences were held in Costa Rica 2011, Thailand 2013 and Ecuador 2015.

## Opening Ceremony

The Minister of Lands and Natural Resources, Mr. Samuel Abu Jinapor, MP speaking at the Opening Ceremony commended the organisers for selecting Ghana as a host for the conference at a time the world was recovering from the global COVID-19 pandemic. This, he said, would afford the governments and the private sector to work together to conserve natural resources and protect global ecosystems to support health and well-being platforms that gives opportunity to foster partnerships for the sustainable development and utilization of one of the most important tree species in the world.



Mr. Samuel Abu Jinapor, Minister of Lands and Natural Resources at the Opening Ceremony

Giving a brief historical antecedent of teak to Ghana, the Minister disclosed that the timber species was introduced around 1905, with seeds sourced mainly from India and Burma, now Myanmar. The minister stated that about 5.2 million teak trees were distributed at this year's trees planting exercise on estimated 200,000 hectares of land owned by both the government

and private sector. The tropical timber constituted approximately 70 percent of forest plantations in the country. He noted that under the distinguished leadership of President Akufo-Addo, Ghana has prioritized forest landscape restoration, and especially commercial forest plantations, anchored around teak and other timber species. He asserted that currently, teak is the most exported timber species from Ghana, both in terms of volume and value. "Last year, for instance, teak constituted fifty-four (54%) by volume, and forty-five percent (45%) by value, of all the forty two (42) timber species and wood products exported from the country".

The Vice President, Dr. Mahmudu Bawumia, in a speech read out on his behalf by the Minister of Information, Mr. Kojo Opong Nkrumah, who declared the Conference Open said, even though Ghana was a leading producer of teak on the African continent it would focus on building a stronger teak market capable of creating jobs to promote the socio-economic development of the member countries. He indicated that the country Ghana is the destination choice for investors looking to explore and do business on the teak market.



Mr. Kojo Opong Nkrumah, Minister for Information, Ghana



A view of the attendees during the opening session





Traditional Ghanaian cultural interlude during the Opening Ceremony

### Welcome remarks

The CEO of Forestry Commission of Ghana and the Chair of LOC, Mr. John Allotey who delivered the Welcome Address said Ghana is privileged to host the 4<sup>th</sup> World Teak Conference in Accra. He said the conference revolves around the production of teak, and the presence of key stakeholders from Academia, Researchers, Policy Makers, Exporters and Marketers is a testament of the great value and importance of teak.



Welcome address by CEO of Forestry Commission and LOC Chair, Mr. John Allotey

On behalf of the Steering Committee of TEAKNET, Dr. Walter Kollert congratulated the Forestry Commission of Ghana and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) for their support and efforts to make this event happen for the first time in an African nation after some considerable set-backs due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. He further gave a brief about TEAKNET which has more than 200 members from 50 countries in its rolls and is committed to work for the sustainable development of the world teak community and to facilitate continued interaction between the teak stakeholders. The organisers look forward the fruitful deliberations

and outcome of the conference which will be communicated to the national governments and policy makers for the sustenance of the global teak sector.



Welcome remarks by Dr. Walter Kollert, Member, Steering Committee of TEAKNET

Dr. John Parrotta, President of the International Union of Forest Research Organizations, (IUFRO) in his virtual recorded statement gave an overview of IUFRO and its linkage with Teak through its dedicated Teakwood Working Party under the Research Division 5 (Forest Products), adding that IUFRO is proud as a partner and financier of the 4th World Teak Conference.



Virtual recorded address by IUFRO President, Dr. John Parrotta

He is hopeful that the conference will afford participants the opportunity to connect, share ideas and contribute to the growing conversation on the opportunities and challenges of teak on the global market.

Dr. Yurdi Yasmi, Deputy Director of FAO Regional Office for Africa in his welcome remarks lauded the organisers, Forestry Commission, Teaknet and LOC members of WTC in organising the conference in Africa. FAO was instrumental in the establishment of TEAKNET and is supporting

the organisation in all its activities including the previous editions of three WTC's held in Asia and S. America. By strengthening existing networks and forging new partnerships among the international teak community, this conference will foster innovative ideas for the conservation and sustainable management of natural and planted teak forests, he said.



Dr. Hwan-Ok MA, Senior Project Manager who spoke on behalf of ITTO, Japan, informed that ITTO is the sole inter-governmental organisation that focused entirely on tropical forest resources and the ITTO members cover over 80% of global tropical forests and account for 90% of trade in tropical forest products! With these strong mandates, ITTO joins hands with its member countries, international organizations and other stakeholders to promote sustainable forest management thereby increasing trade volumes and value of legally and sustainably harvested timber and timber products.



Dr. Hwan-ok MA, ITTO- Japan

### **General Thematic Address**

The opening ceremony and welcome remarks were followed by the general Thematic Address delivered by Mr. Rahul Ahuja, the CEO and Founder of Aaron Global. He gave a three phased

presentation on the theme of the conference, naming his organisation as an exclusive Indian sales partner and the world's largest teak trader in partnership with TRC Brazil.



His presentation encompassed the teak market landscape which he said has a global plantation teak market of 1.4 million geometric CBM per year, while disclosing that India is the dominant market for teak in the world with 94% production capacity, and the other 6% coming from Vietnam and China.

### **Thematic Sessions**

The scientific programme has been organized in 5 thematic sessions that include oral presentations and posters encompassing all aspects of teak management, genetics, marketing and trade, community farming and forest landscape restoration as detailed below.

**Session I:** Smallholder teak plantation, value addition and livelihood enhancement of rural communities

**Session II:** Cost-benefit analysis on teak investments and promoting responsible trade and markets of teakwood

**Session III:** Tree improvement, genetics, silviculture and stand management

**Session IV:** Management models for community forestry and Family farming

**Session V:** Environmental protection, biodiversity conservation and Forest Landscape Restoration

**ITTO Teak Session:** *Sustainable Teak Management in Mekong Sub-region*

**IFSA Session:** *Young Champions of Sustainable and Legal Supply Chains for Forest Resources; Focus on Timber/Teak Resources*

**FORNESSA Session:** *Building Productive and Resilient Forest Landscapes in Africa*

Thematic side events had been organized by the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), the International Forestry Students' Association (IFSA) and the Forestry Research Network of Sub-Saharan Africa (FORNESSA) that is managed from Ghana. In addition, the private sector had the great opportunity to meet in Business to Business (B2B) sessions in all the 3 days of the conference. The Conference had organized a number of exhibition stands displaying products and services related to the global teak market. A total of 16 Oral presentations and equal number



of Posters were presented. There was one General Keynote at the beginning each session by prominent speakers followed by Oral presentations and three Panel discussions on important topics during the 3 days.



Interactive session in progress

In the ITTO special session on the first day of the conference, the new ITTO publication on “**Teak in Mekong for a Sustainable Future**” was released on the occasion by handing over a copy of the book by Dr. Ma to Mr. John Allotey, CEO of Forestry Commission in the presence of Prof. Victor Agyeman, Chairman of the World Teak Conference 2022. The Teak book presents best practices for planting, managing, harvesting and processing teak in the Mekong Sub-region and demonstrating legality and sustainability along supply chains. An outcome of an ITTO project, the book will be essential reading for policymakers and practitioners involved in teak supply chains.



### Closing Ceremony

The Closing ceremony on 7th evening was marked with the gracious presence of the Deputy Minister for Lands and Natural Resources, Hon. Benito Owusu-Bio said, Ghana is proud to have successfully hosted the 4th World Teak Conference as the First African country to have ever done



so in the history of the teak conferences. On behalf of TEAKNET Steering Committee, Dr. Walter Kollert announced the next World Teak Conference to be held in India in 2025. Prof. Victor Agyeman, Chairman of 4<sup>th</sup> WTC handed over the baton to Dr. Syam Viswanath, Director of Kerala Forest Research Institute, the host institution of TEAKNET.



In the closing remarks, the Conference Chair, Prof. Victor Agyeman provided a broad overview and summary report based on the 3-day deliberations on the various topics discussed on the successful organization of the 4th World Teak Conference hosted in Accra. The conference was attended over by more than 273 delegates from 28 countries in 5 continents. Sponsors of the 4th Teak Conference received various categories of awards ranging from bronze, silver, gold, platinum and diamond packages. Some took home plaques with certificates and other plaques with African artifacts beautifully embroidered with Ghanaian emblems.



SRS group receiving mementos from Hon. Dy. Minister

All the keynote speakers, session chairs and ITTO delegates at the event were also recognized and rewarded for their participation and contribution to the overall success of the event. The conference also agreed to present a copy of the summary communique to the government of Ghana through the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources.

The salient highlights of the summary communiqué for action are:

- ❖ Make available superior planting material to private companies and local communities to improve the planted teak forests.
- ❖ Facilitate capacity building for local community and field workers, particularly in teak management techniques and intercropping of teak with profitable agricultural crops.
- ❖ Establish confidence in teak investments with small holders and farmers through the provision of realistic cost-benefit analyses, market price information and enabling government policies.
- ❖ Encourage smallholder growers to apply better silvicultural techniques, to use intercropping systems in order to bridge the initial years without earnings from forestry, to organize group marketing and to make better use of marketing data and information.
- ❖ Investigate the opportunities of linking teak plantations with carbon credit markets.
- ❖ Commit more resources to research and development to advance the sustainable management of planted teak forests and investigate in particular the quality of teak wood.

The delegates enjoyed the Farewell Dinner at Labadi Beach Hotel in the evening.



### Field Excursion

On 8<sup>th</sup> September 2022, the participants joined for Field Excursions/Tours to three locations; namely, the Kakum National Park and rainforest canopy walkway and Cape Coast castle, the Shai Hills Resources Reserve & Boat cruise and to the FORM Ghana Plantation at Kumasi that offered a better understanding of Ghana's natural environment and its commercial teak sector flourishing in the country.





Delegates at Cape Coast castle



In Kakun National Park canopy walk



In Wildlife Reserve



In Shai Hill Resource Reserve



In FORM Ghana plantation at Kumasi

*(Photo courtesy: Ms. Clara Allotey, LOC Secretariat, FC Ghana)*

The presentations of the conference has been posted in the TEAKNET webpage [www.teaknet.org/](http://www.teaknet.org/) under Alerts & News.