**49th Session of the International Tropical Timber Council and Associated Sessions of the Committees**

**25-30 November, 2013, Libreville, Gabon**

**Side event „** **Development and implementation of a species identification and timber tracking system in Africa with DNA fingerprints and stable isotopes” ITTO project PD 620/11 M (Rev. 1)**

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**Organizers:** Thünen-Institute, Germany (Executive agency of the ITTO project)

**Avenue, date and time:** Hotel Continental-Libreville/Gabon, November 29th, 2013 from 12 to 14 O’clock.

**Background:**

Illegal logging and associated trade are the cause of many economic and ecological problems both in timber producer and timber consumer countries. Although many legal instruments (EU timber trade regulation, US Lacey Act etc.) have been established to combat illegal logging and trade of illegally sourced timber, practical controls mechanisms to identify the tree species and geographic origin of wood and wood products are still lacking. DNA fingerprints and stables isotopes techniques use characters inherent to the timber (impossible to falsify) and the combination of both methods guarantee a high spatial resolution and a strong statistical power at higher cost efficiency for the control of origin of wood and wood products.

Since 2012 a large ITTO project is implementing the new tools on DNA and isotopic timber tracking in seven African countries. In this project DNA-barcodes are being developed to identify a large set of African timber species and DNA and isotope fingerprints to be applied to control the origin of three important African tree species.

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**Objectives:** During the side event we want to present the project and its implementation in Africa and the international context.

**Programme of presentations:**

12:00 - 12:30: “Application of genetic approaches to identify tree species and geographic origin” (Dr. Bernd Degen, Thünen-Institute, Germany)

12:30 – 12:50: “The timber tracking system in Ghana and establishment of genetic reference labs (Dr Emmanuel Opuni Frimpong. FORIG, Ghana)

12:50 – 13:10: “Us support for science and technology to combat illegal logging” (Shelley Gardner. US Forest Service, USA)

13:10 – 13:30: “Practical applications of DNA technology for the timber supply chain" (Darren Thomas,

Double Helix Tracking Technologies Pte Ltd, Singapore)

13:30 – 14:00: “The global Timber Tracking Network" (Dr. Marius R.M. Ekué. Bioversity International, Malaysia)