

Large Enough to Make a Difference, yet Small Enough to Care

Climate change is occurring and there are only two ways of tackling this. The first is to reduce emissions over time. The second is to enhance carbon removal from the atmosphere, with trees being nature's preferred option.

Mere Plantations are a privately owned, privately funded British company, and have been reforesting 10,000 acres (equivalent to 6,250 UK football pitches) of UN-classified degraded former forestland at Afram Headwaters Forest Reserve, Ashanti Region, for over 15 years. To date, Mere has successfully grown c. 4 million trees both for its own purposes and on behalf of individuals and businesses.

At Mere, a sustainable and traditional forest management method has been adopted to bring high-quality, legal, and traceable, tropical timber to market. Through a benefit sharing agreement with the community, stools, and Ghana Forestry Commission, Mere are making a real impact on the livelihoods of the Abofour people through profits achieved from the sale of timber. Using more timber, as a non-fossil fuel-based raw material, is assisting the circular bioeconomy and in turn combatting climate change. Mere are delivering on the long-term growth through a 'Trade beyond Aid' business model that benefits everyone, from the forest-fringe communities to the wider economy.

"The presence of the Mere Plantation has served as a catalyst which has attracted development and several workforces into the neighborhood and is bringing life to the Abofour Township and its environs. The impact is that there is demand for land and this finds expression in the relatively high land values."

SAMUEL BENSON BSc, MSc., M.Gh.I.S, Regional Land Valuation Division, Ghana (2020)

The principal purposes of the business are the production of teak for profit and to monetize the economic value of the carbon capture achieved. The latter arises, of course, because fundamental to the growth of any tree (and teak trees in particular) is the absorption of Carbon Dioxide (CO₂). This carbon capture lasts beyond cutting since teak is a prestige, valuable, but more importantly enduring wood. Thus, it tends not to be burnt after cutting or to decompose in use – the usual processes by which CO₂ is released after felling. Teak, known as the 'King of Hardwoods' being an exceptionally durable timber can store carbon for centuries. Mere rotationally coppice the Teak trees to ensure continuous growth and carbon sequestration.

The carbon capture achieved by Mere can be adopted by individuals/companies to offset past CO₂ emissions, but without limit in respect of ongoing and future emissions. Mere's ability to grow trees to order, and hence to produce quantifiable off-settable carbon capture is unlimited.

Through the sale of high-quality hardwood timber and high-integrity carbon offsets, this form of impact finance has multiple benefits that positively affect broader environmental, social, and ecological systems, often referred to as co-benefits/additional impacts.

"The Company's restoration efforts have contributed enormously to various improved environmental and socio-economic outcomes, including community-based wildlife prevention, control and suppression measures; watershed protection; job creation and enhancement of rural livelihoods; as well as protection of remnant forests within their allocated sites from illegal logging activities."

HUGH C. A. BROWN, Executive Director, Forestry Services Division, Ghana (15th of October 2021)

Mere provides much-needed stable rural employment, valuable skills sharing opportunities, and is focused on delivering and monitoring every one of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals that are positively affected by the project. These goals are not just a 'nice to have' but are instead an integral part of the business.

As at the end of 2023, a total of **568,742 tonnes of carbon** will have been removed from the atmosphere through the growing of trees and sustainable land management practices. Over the life of the project, Mere will have sequestered **32 million tonnes of carbon**. This is equivalent to c. 10% of the UK's current annual emissions.

Mere has a turnkey solution to carbon sequestration, environmental restoration, and sustainable investment.

From Seed to Saw®

For further information, please contact us at info@mereplantations.com

2023 UK-GHANA BUSINESS AWARDS MADE FROM MERE'S SUSTAINABLY GROWN AND HARVESTED GHANAIAN TEAK

Teak (*Tectona grandis*) timber species was introduced to Ghana around 1905 – more than a century ago, with seeds sourced mainly from India and Burma (now Myanmar). However, it was not until the early 1970's that Ghana started embarking on large-scale teak plantation development under the Ghanaian Government's Rural Development Programme.

Mr. Samuel Abu Jinapor, Minister for Lands and Natural Resources, speaking at the opening ceremony of the '4th World Teak Conference' in Accra, said the position Teak occupies in the Ghanaian timber industry today is not by accident.

He attributed it to deliberate and structured efforts by government, through the Forestry Commission and in collaboration with private sector players and rural communities, to take advantage of the conducive investment, climatic and edaphic conditions to actively promote the development of forest plantations.

- Mere Plantations is one of the largest privately funded tropical hardwood plantation developers in West Africa.
- Mere Plantations has a 50-year agreement with the Government of Ghana to commercially reforest degraded former forest land (classified by the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) with *Tectona grandis* Teak trees.
- The main environmental benefits from Mere's reforestation project are the restoration of carbon sequestering forest cover over the 10,000+ acre site, with an improvement in soil and water conservation function of the stand and the reduction in the loss of soil nutrients through erosion.
- Since the first planting in early 2011, Mere has commercially reforested over 2,000 hectares with c. 4 million trees, ensuring any remnant trees on the land are fostered.
- The plantation furthers many of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and Global Forest Goals.
- The timber produced is fully compliant with FLEGT (Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade)-VPA requirements. Moreover, the timber is from a sustainable source as Mere (i) plant more trees than are extracted; (ii) encourage new growth by using a rotational coppicing practice; and (iii) intersperse with indigenous species and promote sustainable land management practices.

True sustainability is the ability to continue over a period; development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the capacities of future generations, whilst creating a balance between the environment, equity, and economy. By mimicking nature's patterns with good forestry practices, Mere is ensuring the plantation stands the test of time.

The United Nations defines sustainable land management as the use of land resources, including soils, water, animals, and plants, to produce goods to meet changing human needs, while simultaneously ensuring the long-term productive potential of these resources, and the maintenance of their environmental functions.

By taking a holistic approach to managing resources, Mere is maintaining a balance for the future.

Through growing the right tree in the right place, and implementing best land management practices, Mere is ensuring sustainable, healthy, development can continue for generations.

TO GROW IN GHANA IS TO GROW WITH GHANA