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Volta Lake cleared of 10,000 tree stumps

From Michael Danso, Akosombo

MORE than 10,000 tree stumps in the Volta Lake have been removed in the last three years, Jim Hayhurst, Vice President of Business Development and Global Services for Triton Logging Incorporated, has said.

This has consequently, improved safety and navigational hazards hitherto confronting both private boat operators and captains of state-owned ferries who operate cross-ferry services on the lake.

For years, the government, in collaboration with the Volta River Authority (VRA), has instituted various measures to remove the stumps which had been safety hazards, resulting in boat wrecks and loss of numerous lives.

To stem the trend, the Clark Sustainable Resource Developments (CSRD), a Ghanaian subsidiary company of Triton Logging Incorporated based in

Canada, was contracted to remove the stumps to ensure navigational safety on the lake.

As a result, the CSRD in March 2010, commenced the project after the signing of a memorandum of understanding between it and the government.

Briefing the *Ghanaian Times* on its performance so far, Mr. Hayhurst noted that about 10,000 stumps had been removed from the 350,000-hectre concession of the lake allocated to the company, adding that the figure encapsulated the south-most part of the Lake and the Afram basin.

Mr. Hayhurst said the 25-year agreement was to enable the company to harvest the 350,000-hectare concession of the lake.

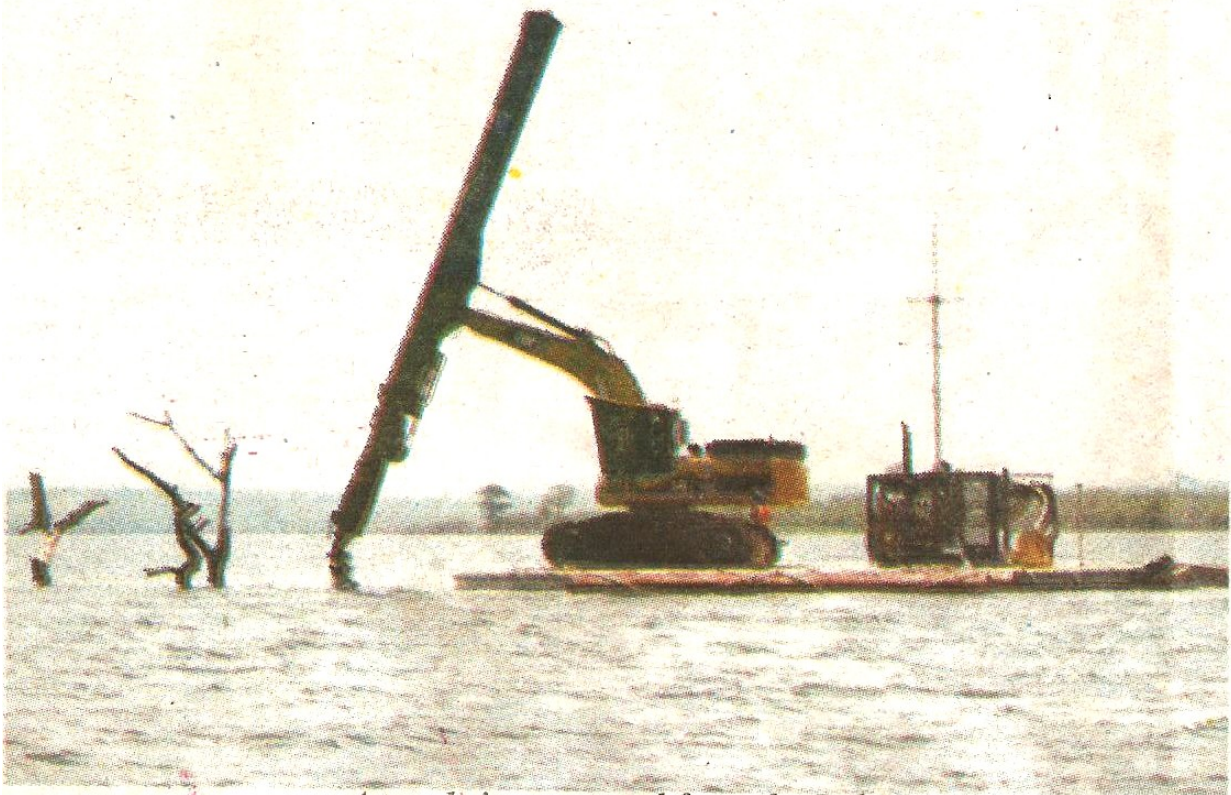
He said the long term deal was reached as a result of the vast tracts of trees flooded by the lake covering a surface area of 8,502

square kilometres.

Mr. Hayhurst said the agreement also included the harvesting and processing of the trees for sale at both local and foreign markets, such as Europe and Asia.

He said the CSRD had constructed a sawmill at Serdom, a village in the Asuogyaman district, where the harvested tress were milled into lumber products before exportation.

He said so far, over 5,000 trees had been processed at the mill since its establishment, adding, "besides, we have made logs and lumber available to the local community for use in construction or as firewood and carving, apart from creating employment for 60 people", he said.



A tree being removed from the Lake