

PROFILE OF PROFESSOR STEPHEN JOBSON MITCHUAL, PhD

Stephen Jobson Mitchual is a professor of Wood Science and Technology and the current Vice-Chancellor of the University of Education, Winneba (UEW). He assumes office with over two decades of academic and administrative expertise in the higher education space. He is a distinguished figure in the field of Wood Science and Technology, renowned for his groundbreaking research, unwavering commitment to education, and contributions to sustainable wood processing and safety practices which have earned him his place as a luminary in academia. His works have had a profound impact on the wood industry, conservation, and education.

Prof. Mitchual embarked on his academic journey at the prestigious Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, where he completed his undergraduate studies in Agricultural Engineering with excellence in 1993. He further obtained a Postgraduate Diploma in Education from the University of Cape Coast in 1998. His passion for wood science and technology quickly drove him from 2005 to 2014 to pursue a master's degree in Wood Technology and Management and a Doctor of Philosophy in Wood Science and Technology respectively, both from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST).

In his quest for versatility and to position himself for administrative responsibilities, Prof. Mitchual obtained a management-level certificate from the Chartered Institute of Administrators and Management Consultants, Ghana, and certification from the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants. He has also taken courses in financial management and managerial economics.

Throughout his over a score year of work as an academic and researcher with a special interest in the utilization of agro-forest residue for biomass energy, wood machining and sawmill safety, and issues in technical and vocational education, Prof. Mitchual has been at the forefront of pioneering research in Wood Science and Technology, studies on wood processing, wood preservation, wood machining, and sawmill safety, and the development of innovative wood-based materials. He has published numerous papers in top-tier journals, sharing his insights on sustainable forestry practices and the utilization of wood resources. His extensive research portfolio includes collaborations with other researchers to make significant progress and breakthroughs in the production of briquettes from agro-forest residue at room temperature and low compacting pressure without a binder, assessment of fuel characteristics of binder-free briquettes made at room

temperature from blends of oil palm mesocarp fibre and *Ceiba pentandra* and impact of training on the occupational health and safety of woodworkers.

Additionally, these collaborations have led to successful publications in a wide range of reputable international journals and presentations at local, regional, and international conferences. Prof. Mitchual has over 40 peer-reviewed journal articles and books, over 20 conferences/seminar papers, and memoranda to his credit. His publications have made a significant impact on the scientific community, especially in biomass energy.

Professor Mitchual is a reviewer of scholarly papers for publication in a dozen reputable international journals including *Energy Sources, Part A: Recovery, Utilisation, and Environment Effects*, Taylor and Francis; *Alexandria Engineering Journal*, Elsevier, United States of America; *British Journal of Education, Society & Behavioural Science*; *Journal of Global Ecology and Environment*; *Journal of Basic and Applied Research International*, United Kingdom; *International Journal of Agricultural Policy and Research*, Poland; *Energy, Sustainability and Society*, Springer, Germany; *International Research Journal of Public and Environmental Health*, Switzerland and; *Advances in Research*, United Kingdom.

Currently, he is an external assessor for several institutions that run programmes in wood science and technology. He has supervised several scores of postgraduate theses. Prof. Mitchual is a member of the Society of Wood Science and Technology, USA, American Association for Precision Engineering, USA, Ghana Science Association, and the Chartered Institute of Administrators and Management Consultants, Ghana.

Prof. Mitchual is a passionate advocate for the utilization of agro-forest residue for biomass energy, wood machining and sawmill safety, and issues in technical and vocational education. His dedication to these issues has inspired policymakers, industry leaders, and environmentalists alike. He has served on numerous committees, shaping policies and initiatives aimed at conserving our valuable wood resources, wood machining, and sawmill safety as well as projecting vocational and technical education for optimum benefit.

As a dedicated educator, Prof. Mitchual has played a pivotal role in shaping the next generation of wood scientists and technologists. His dynamic teaching style, coupled with his wealth of knowledge, has left an indelible mark on his students. Many of his former students have gone on

to become gainfully employed and leaders in the field, a testament to his exceptional mentorship. He has been supervising and co-supervising both undergraduate and postgraduate theses. He has also mentored and coached colleagues to achieve their professional aspirations.

Prof. Mitchual's contributions to Wood Science and Technology have not gone unnoticed on the international stage. He has spoken at several conferences and symposia worldwide, sharing his expertise and fostering collaboration among scholars from diverse backgrounds. His global perspective and willingness to engage with researchers from different cultures have enriched the field and advanced its horizons. He has been instrumental in fostering a culture of entrepreneurship within AAMUSTED and the broader community. His efforts to bridge the gap between academia and industry have led to the development of wood-based start-ups and the commercialization of sustainable wood products.

Beyond his academic and research endeavours, Prof. Mitchual is deeply committed to community outreach and engagement. He has dedicated himself to projects aimed at promoting wood-related vocational skills and education in the university community at UEW, AAMUSTED, and beyond, empowering individuals with the tools to create sustainable livelihoods.

Prior to his assumption of office as the Vice Chancellor of UEW, Prof. Mitchual was the Ag. Pro-Vice-Chancellor of AAMUSTED and had oversight responsibility for the School of Graduate Studies for two academic years. In his capacity as the Pro-Vice-Chancellor of AAMUSTED, he advocated and supported building a strong institutional culture to transform operations and aided in transforming the ICT and physical infrastructure to improve teaching and learning in the university. As the founding Dean of the School of Graduate Studies at AAMUSTED, he provided leadership for the development of policies and operational documents for the effective and efficient running of graduate programmes. Additionally, he provided leadership for the establishment of the Annual Research Series, which attracted foreign and local presenters and participants to strengthen graduate studies at AAMUSTED.

He served on the Governing Council of the University of Education, Winneba, from 2014 to 2018 as a Convocation Representative, and on the Governing Council of Akenten Appiah-Menka University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development (AAMUSTED). He has also served on several Boards, Standing, and Ad hoc Committees of UEW and AAMUSTED. These included the Academic Board; Management Committee, Executive Committee of the Academic

Board; Appointments and Promotions Board; Appointments and Promotions Committee; Academic Planning Committee; Search Committee for the appointment of Registrar and Director of Finance, respectively, AAMUSTED; Finance Committee; Board, School of Graduate Studies; Residential Management Committee; Student Staff Consultative Committee; Amalgamated Sports and Club Committee; Joint Admissions Board; Strategic Plan Development Committee; and Congregation Planning Committee.

Others are the Committee for the development of Plagiarism Policy for AAMUSTED; Planning Committee for the investiture of the foundation Vice-Chancellor of AAMUSTED; Vice Chancellor's Scholarship Committee; Committee for the development of Post Doctorial Policy; Committee for drafting Health Fund Policy and Steering Committee for the 1st International Conference on Competency-Based Training and Research. He served on all these boards and committees either as the chair or a member.

Prof. Stephen Jobson Mitchual's career as a professor of Wood Science and Technology has been marked by excellence, innovation, and a deep-rooted commitment to education and sustainable practices. His legacy as a scholar, mentor, advocate, and community leader continues to shape the future of wood science and technology as well as the educational space, leaving an indelible mark on both academia and the wood industry. Prof. Mitchual's enduring impact will be felt for generations to come as we continue to strive for a more sustainable and prosperous future, especially in his quest to steer UEW to greater heights.