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This monthly news bulletin is produced by Sarawak Timber Association (STA) to disseminate information to our counterparts on training, research and other relevant areas.

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The Chatham House 27th Illegal Logging Update and Stakeholder Consultation Meeting

The Chatham House 27th Illegal Logging Update and Stakeholder Consultation Meeting was held from 19 to 20 June 2017 at the Chatham House in London.

This two-day meeting was organised by the Chatham House, The Royal Institute of International Affairs, with the support of the United Kingdom's Department for International Development and additional funding from the FAO-EU FLEGT Programme.

The Meeting brought together about 250 participants from civil society, industry and governments from around the world and Sarawak Timber Association (STA) was represented by Ms Annie Ting, Senior Manager.

This Meeting is part of the European Union's (EU) Action Plan aiming to reduce illegal logging by strengthening sustainable and legal forest management, improving governance and promoting trade in legally produced timber.

The Meeting provided an update on global efforts to improve forest governance and reduce illegal logging, which covered the following main topics:

- Update on the Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) action plan and Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) countries;
- Timber trade regulations – developments from around the world;
- Recent developments in China to tackle the trade in illegal timber and promote responsible overseas' investments;

• Tackling deforestation – legality and issues in the plantation sector; and • Improving transparency through forest monitoring and satellite technology.

The Meeting was briefed on Vietnam's efforts in concluding the negotiation with EU on FLEGT VPA, highlighting its key commitments and implementation framework to ensure the compliance with the regulations related to individual stages of timber supply chain in Vietnam, including the importation of timber into Vietnam. Indonesia has started issuing FLEGT License since 15 November 2016.

Indonesian exporters are hoping that with FLEGT-licensed timber products they can increase their market share in EU, which has yet to happen. The speakers from Indonesia also highlighted some of the challenges they had faced during the implementation of FLEGT VPA as well as experiences and perspectives on export with FLEGT License for the first six (6) months.

The speakers from China shared with the participants of the Meeting their efforts in combating illegal logging and trade as well as their journey in developing the timber legality verification system in China to ensure the legality of timber, including imported timber from all over the world.

The Meeting took note of the consumer countries' efforts to comply with the

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importation regulations to make sure the imported timbers are legal, particularly in Australia, EU and Asia countries. There was also a presentation on the overview of forest plantation, whether the forest plantation is established from the conversion of natural forests or degraded forests in terms of legality in the FLEGT VPA.

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Meeting on the Development of Skills Standards for Sarawak Industry Skills Certification System



Photo: Meeting in progress

The Workforce Development Unit (WDU) in the Chief Minister's Department, Sarawak organised a meeting on the Development of Skills Standards for Sarawak Industry Skills Certification (SIS-Cert) System on 16 June 2017 at the Water Front Hotel, Kuching.

The Meeting was chaired by Dr Abdul Rahman Deen, the Director of WDU and attended by approximately twenty (20) representatives from the hotel and forestry sectors.

Dr Abdul Rahman Deen informed the Meeting that WDU has appointed People Matrix Consultancy Sdn Bhd to develop skills standards for trade in the forestry and hotel sectors, as part of the SIS-Cert system project with the aim to develop an industry driven system that recognised and accredit people who have acquired skills informally or through work experience as well as to develop progression pathway for skills development.

The objective of the Meeting was to collect feedback from participants on the relevant trades for the forestry and

hotel sectors relating to the development of skills standard. He said the State Government (SG) intends to develop skills standards of its own to certify the local people of Sarawak who are competent but have no qualification or recognition.

The SG will establish a Sarawak Skill Council to do the recognition and certification and a steering committee will be set up to provide guideline for proper certification. The certificate will only be recognised by the SG of Sarawak and not Malaysia.

After much discussion, the Meeting decided to develop skills standards on certain areas for the hotel operation first as many Sarawakians who have completed their secondary education are currently working in the hotel sector. The consultant engaged by WDU will liaise with the hotel operation managers to develop the work process and standard, required for certification. As the forestry sector has to be in compliance with the Forests (Trained Workmen) Rules, 2015, all workmen will have to

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Did you know that....



According to The Environmental Status of Borneo Report produced by a WWF staff from Indonesia, Malaysia and the Netherlands, Borneo's upland rainforest and montane forest do not suffer high rates of deforestation, with nearly 90% and 96% respectively of historical coverage still remaining. In addition, the area known as the Heart of Borneo has fared far better than the lowlands and coastal areas.

Source: http://wwf.panda.org/what_we_do/where_we_work/borneo_forests/resources/report_2/?305330/Full-Report-The-Environmental-Status-of-Borneo-2016

Did you also know that....

One of the biggest icebergs ever recorded, estimated to cover an area of roughly 6,000 sq km, has just broken away from Antarctica. Although scientists are not expecting the more than 200m-thick tabular berg to move very far, very fast, currents and winds might eventually push it north of the Antarctic, where it could become a hazard to shipping.



Source: <http://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-40321674>

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be trained for five (5) prescribed forestry activities such as;
 (1) Certificate in Tree Felling,
 (2) Certificate in Log Extraction,
 (3) Certificate in Log Loading,
 (4) Certificate in Clear-fell Site Preparation and
 (5) Certificate in Mechanical Site Preparation.

In view of this requirement, WDU will have further discussion on the above matter with the relevant agencies. Dr Abdul Rahman Deen concluded by informing the Meeting that WDU is now under the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Research and its name has been changed to Workforce Development Division (WDD).

WDD will have their new office located at Level 3 Bangunan Pelita, Isthmus, Kuching in July 2017.

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Briefing and Dialogue with the Sarawak State Health Department on Malaria Cases in the Timber Industry

Sarawak Timber Association (STA), in collaboration with Sarawak State Health Department (SSHD) organised a Briefing and Dialogue on Malaria Cases in the Timber Industry on 8 June 2017 at Tanahmas Hotel, Sibu.

The objectives of the Briefing and Dialogue, which was attended by twenty four (24) representatives from STA member companies, were
 (i) to brief member companies on the incidence and prevalence of malaria cases in the timber industry,
 (ii) to share with member companies on the current trend of malaria infection in Sarawak as well as
 (iii) to inform member companies on the vision and objective of the Ministry of Health in terms of malaria elimination in Sarawak.

In her welcoming remarks, Ms Annie Ting, Senior Manager of STA, informed members that the briefing and dialogue was an outcome from the meeting between SSHD and STA, held on November 2016 to discuss prevention of malaria cases in the timber industry as well as to raise awareness among timber industry workers.

Dr Haji Nordin Salleh, Deputy Director of SSHD said Sarawak was free from locally transmitted malaria cases in 2016 and SSHD is targeting Sarawak to achieve zero locally transmitted malaria cases by the end of 2017 in order to gain the malaria-free status.

Dr Nanthakumar a/l Thirunavukkarasu, Assistant Director of Vector Unit then gave a presentation entitled "Imported Human Malaria Cases and Preventing Re-introduction of Malaria into Sarawak". He said that human malaria is caused by four (4) different species of Plasmodium, namely *Plasmodium falciparum*, *Plasmodium malariae*, *Plasmodium ovale* and *Plasmodium vivax*. Currently, there are increasing reports of monkey malaria in Malaysia, most of which are due to *Plasmodium knowlesi*, which is recognised as the fifth cause of human malaria and can lead to fatal infections in humans.

A dialogue session followed, in the presence of Dr Haji Nordin Salleh, Dr Nanthakumar as well as Dr Muhd Rais Bin Abdullah, Sibu Divisional Health officer and Dr Ooi Choo Huck, Senior Principal Assistant Director of the Vector Borne Diseases Control Unit of SSHD. At the dialogue session, members of STA and SSHD addressed and recommended remedial measures in preventing malaria cases in the timber industry.

Member companies were also able to gather knowledge on ways to determine the level of risks, methods of preventing malaria in their workplaces and mosquito fogging system used in Sarawak. SSHD advised members to seek early treatment and be extra careful when they are back from logging or camp sites as logging industry workers are most commonly infected with malaria.

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Steering Committee Meeting on Research of *Ceratocystis Disease on Acacia mangium No 2/2017*

The Malaysian Timber Industry Board (MTIB) called presented the framework and stocktaking of the project a Steering Committee Meeting on Research of to the Meeting. He briefed the members of the Meeting *Ceratocystis Disease on Acacia mangium No 2/2017* on the current status of the *Ceratocystis* infection in 13 June 2017 at Menara PGRM, Cheras, Kuala Lumpur. Southeast Asia and researches undertaken worldwide.

The Meeting was chaired by Dato' Dr Jalaluddin Harun, Director-General of MTIB. He also outlined the project scope, funding allocation as well as agencies and research experts involved in this project. the importance of this research project to mitigate the *Ceratocystis* disease infection which has threatened *Acacia* plantations in Malaysia. He then highlighted to the Meeting the eight (8) expected outputs from this project and proposed to establish fourteen (14) research plots across the

The Meeting was informed that Forest Plantation Development Sdn Bhd (FPDSB) has recently conducted a survey on eleven (11) companies who planted *Acacia* plantations in Peninsular, Sabah and Sarawak. Members present at the meeting also gave suggestions and advices on relevant aspects to Programme, with a total area of 32,582 hectares. better improve the project design and efficiency.

From the survey, the incidence of *Ceratocystis* attacks was found in two (2) companies, at different level of seriousness. The Meeting then went through and accepted the terms and conditions of the joint venture research agreement between MTIB and FRIM on this project.

Dr Mohd Farid Bin Ahmad, researcher cum project leader from Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM)