



PRESS RELEASE

Workshop on GFS' Legal Verification Services (LVS) and Wood Tracking Programme (WTP)

As world markets are demanding greater transparency and verification of the legal origin of timber, Sarawak Timber Association (STA), together with Global Forestry Services (GFS) organised a two-day Workshop on GFS' Legal Verification Services (LVS) and Wood Tracking Programme (WTP) on 26 – 27 October 2015 at Wisma STA, Kuching.

Since 2004 GFS has been working with the timber industry around the world to develop systems that meet the needs of the market and reflect the local needs in many different countries. GFS has worked with government agencies in Ghana, Laos and Cambodia and private sector companies and associations in Philippines, Indonesia, China and other producing countries to establish verification systems. GFS provides means to demonstrate compliance to legal requirements for Sarawak under the Legal Verification Services based on existing local regulations for forestry operations and the Wood Tracking Program for manufacturing and trade of wood products. GFS has already had the opportunity to work with clients in Sarawak to access and maintain markets in Japan, in 2014 GFS went to Japan to explain to buyers how their system of legal verification met the third party requirements.

The two-day Workshop commenced today was attended by 66 participants comprising STA members as well as senior officers from the State forestry agencies, namely Forest Department Sarawak, Sarawak Forestry Corporation, Sarawak Timber Industry Development Corporation and Harwood Timber Sdn Bhd.



Photo: Participants of the Workshop

The two-day Workshop aims to give participants a clear understanding of current requirements of the market and international regulations regarding trade of legal logs and timber products as well as to understand GFS' LVS and WTP by going through the Checklists against the State's forestry laws and regulations.

The three Directors of GFS, Dr Kevin Grace, Mr Bill Maynard and Mr Jason Lim as well as Mr Daim Balingi, Deputy Head of FLEGT Unit, Sabah Forestry Department spoke at the Workshop. Today, they covered on the market requirements for legality, in particular the due diligence obligations imposed by the consumer countries under the US Lacey Act; the Australian Illegal Logging Prohibition Act 2012; the Japan Goho-Wood and EU Timber Regulations, and two international timber certification schemes, namely Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC); legality requirements for forest management in Sarawak as well as in Sabah and Peninsular and GFS LVS Checklist. The Workshop will continue tomorrow with the topics related to legality requirements for Chain of Custody for Wood Processing and Trade, production control system and GFS WTP Checklist. The experience of GFS can be used to support Sarawak in the context of developing a local standard that reflects the legal systems for forestry in the State and demonstrates how this system can meet global requirements.

Sarawak Timber Association
26 October 2015