



PRESS STATEMENT
(FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE)

**STA RESPONSES QUESTION TO RESTRUCTURING OF THE STATE'S
FORESTRY AGENCIES**

With the latest exercise by the State Government in restructuring the Forest Department Sarawak (FDS) and Sarawak Forestry Corporation (SFC) which took effect on 2 January 2020, STA is aware that the functions of both agencies have been streamlined for the intended purpose of stronger focus. And hence, STA hopes to see a much more robust and efficient operational and administrative procedures with the removal of redundancies and duplications.

STA understands that FDS will now handle all operational matters pertaining to forest management, research & development, forest engineering, forest compliance, revenue collection and compliance as well as forest plantations. As the forestry industry will be greatly impacted, it is important to ensure that the re-assignments of these functions and relevant personnel from SFC to FDS, especially at the regional offices and One Stop Compliance Centres (OSCCs), are performed in a timely manner. All these factors need to be prudently considered to avoid or at most minimise any delays or disruptions to the forest operations on the ground.

STA urges the State Government to bridge the communication gap between the agencies and the industry players on this restructuring and transformation exercise, so that the industry players will have a clear understanding on the new roles and responsibilities of officers in both agencies. Having a better grasp of the changes will also assure that issues relating to legality compliance and certification are promptly responded to and proactively resolved. STA hopes that all documentations related to statutory requirements under the State forestry laws have already been put in place for a smooth transition.

STA will continue to collaborate and work closely with both agencies to support their objectives in managing the forest resources and in conserving Sarawak's biodiversity.

Sarawak Timber Association
7 January 2020