

# STA Review

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The Informal Sector (Logging Sector) p.3

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## COVER IMAGE



Location: Mulu National Park, Miri  
Photo Credit: Hazize Bin San

# STA REVIEW

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# Engagement with DOSH Sarawak

In 2020, the Department of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH) Sarawak, Sarawak Timber Industry Development Corporation (STIDC) and STA worked together to develop a Training Module on Occupational Safety and Health in Forest Industries. Since then, a total of thirty (30) representatives from forest industries have been trained and received qualification as in-house trainer to conduct ground training within their companies.

On 12 October 2021, DOSH and STA met virtually to discuss training implementation by qualified in-house trainers as well as the way forward to support capacity building for the timber industry. At the session, Ir Dr Nor Halim Bin Hasan, Director of DOSH Sarawak, welcomed STA's involvement on the implementation of the Training Module to support the objective of the Module; promote self-regulation amongst forest industry players and

enhance their compliance with occupational safety and health laws and regulations, ultimately minimising the occurrence of work related accidents at workplace. In-house trainers are also welcomed to feedback their comments and experiences in conducting training based on the developed Module to DOSH for future improvement.

Following that, STA Secretariat organised a discussion with STA members on 22 October 2021 to discuss and obtain feedback on the implementation of the Training Module.

Pada tahun 2020, Jabatan Keselamatan dan Kesihatan Pekerjaan (DOSH) Sarawak, Perbadanan Kemajuan Perusahaan Kayu Sarawak (STIDC) dan STA telah bekerjasama untuk membangunkan Modul Latihan bagi Keselamatan dan Kesihatan Pekerjaan dalam Industri Perhutanan. Sejak itu, seramai 30 wakil-wakil daripada industri perhutanan telah dilatih dan layak sebagai jurulatih dalaman untuk mengadakan latihan di syarikat masing-masing.

马来西亚职业安全与卫生部 (DOSH), 砂拉越木材工业发展机构 (STIDC) 连同本会3方共同开发森林工业职业安全与健康培训模块。自此以后, 共有三十名来自森林工业的代表接受了培训, 并获得了内部培训师资格, 以在其公司内进行实地培训。

## Workshop on Working Safely and Healthily for The Informal Sector (Logging Sector)

The Occupational Safety and Health Master Plan 2021-2025 (OSHMP25) which touched on various strategic core values to drive the formation of a safe and healthy work culture and raise the Malaysian well-being index was launched by the Prime Minister of Malaysia on 13 October 2021. The seven (7) key strategies outlined in the OSHMP25 are (i) empowerment of occupational safety and health (OSH) in the public sector; (ii) strengthening self-regulation practice at the workplace; (iii) encouraging OSH education and research; (iv) empowering occupational health; (v) better OSH compliance in small and medium industries; (vi) boosting OSH through technology; and (vii) improving OSH on work-related road safety, informal sector and future jobs.

In view of this, the Department of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH) organised the Workshop on Working Safely and Healthily in the Informal Sector for the Logging Sector in the Borneo region on 30 October 2021 via online platform. The objectives of the Workshop were to (i) strengthen the understanding and awareness of the need for the informal sector to comply with the requirements of the *Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) 1994* and the *Factories and Machinery Act 1967*; (ii) explain the importance of working in a safe and healthy environment; and (iii) provide a platform for two-way communication between the Government and employers/employees to jointly find solutions to the problems faced in the informal sector.

This workshop, attended by stakeholders including Forest Department Sarawak, Sarawak Timber Industry

Development Corporation, Forestry Department Sabah and STA, was launched by Tuan Haji Zulkifli Bin Yahya, Director of DOSH Sabah. The four (4) presentations shared during the workshop were (i) Introduction to DOSH and OSH Workplace Audit by Mr Suhaidy Bin Latip of DOSH Selangor; (ii) Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment and Risk Control (HIRARC) in Logging Sector by Ir Mohammad Rhadhi Bin Kamshah; (iii) OSH Best Practice and Sharing Experience by Mr Haridyn Bin Hanti of Forestry Department of Negeri Sembilan; and (iv) Act and Benefit Scheme of SOCSO for Self Employed by Mr Marwan Bin Ibrahim of SOCSO.

Participants also actively joined the question and answers session. Some of the information and clarification sought were on safety & health officer, OSH coordinator, competent person and personal protection equipment.

马来西亚职业安全与卫生部 (DOSH) 于 2021 年 10 月 30 日通过线上平台为婆罗洲地区的伐木业举办非正规部门职业安全与健康研讨会

Jabatan Keselamatan dan Kesihatan Pekerjaan (DOSH) telah menganjurkan Bengkel Bekerja Secara Selamat dan Sihat di dalam Sektor Tidak Formal bagi Sektor Pembalakan di Borneo pada 30 Oktober 2021 melalui platform atas talian.

# Challenges Faced by The Industry in Complying with The Environmental Quality (Clean Air) Regulations, 2014

The Department of Environment (DOE) has introduced more stringent emission standards to regulate emission of air pollutants from various industrial activities through enactment of the *Environmental Quality (Clean Air) Regulations, 2014* (CAR 2014) on 5 June 2014. The CAR 2014 which replaces the *Environmental Quality (Clean Air) Regulations, 1978* also calls for industries to self-regulate by carrying out monitoring and maintenance of the air pollution control systems (APCS).

Industrial facilities including the timber industry were given a 5-year grace period until 4 June 2019 to comply with the regulation. However, since 2014, little effort has been made to create awareness and ensure that the information and requirement are brought to the notice of and made comprehensible to the timber industry especially in East Malaysia. The timber industry in Sarawak only caught wind of the 'new' regulation in 2019, during which the 5-year grace period was close to expiring.

Immediately upon learning about details of the new regulation, STA held discussions with its panel product members and with the assistance from the Sarawak Timber Industry Development Corporation (STIDC), obtained extension of grace period for another thirty (30) months for the timber industry in Sarawak, until 31 December 2021. The extension was given with conditions that timber mills submit application for Contravention Licence to DOE and indicate their commitment to comply with the CAR 2014. STA and STIDC were also asked to organise briefings on CAR 2014 for the industry.

Throughout 2019 to 2020, the industry has taken numerous initiatives to comply with the CAR 2014. Site visits to learn from companies that have installed APCS and reduced their emission level were scheduled and numerous correspondences were exchanged with consultants. However, the COVID-19 outbreak that spread across the world leading to total lockdown and complete travel bans have stalled progresses made by the industry.

Meanwhile, DOE appointed AGV Environment Sdn Bhd (AGV) to carry out survey study to obtain status of compliance with CAR 2014's prescribed limits, identify obstacles faced by industries in complying with CAR 2014 and determine environmental charge rate for Contravention Licence. To present the findings, AGV organised a briefing on 4 October 2021 attended by representatives from DOE Headquarters, STIDC and STA. At the briefing, it was also highlighted that premises only need to apply Contravention Licence if the amount of pollutants emitted from the chimney exceeds the limit value stated in CAR 2014. Premises that did not respond to the survey study extended by AGV were deemed to not have any issue with complying with the CAR 2014 and accept the environmental charge rate proposed by the consultant.

Noting that not many other timber associations in the country are aware or have feedback to the survey study, STA sought for a briefing session to be carried out to all timber associations. A virtual briefing session was then held on 7 October 2021 and provided attendees with opportunity to seek clarification on the survey study. During this session, representatives from timber associations informed that they were not aware of the requirement for Contravention Licence, hence lack of action from the industry should not be considered to constitute compliance with CAR 2014.

In STA's submission of feedback collated from its members to the consultant, the industry underlined that companies still need more time to make necessary changes to their existing facilities. Although DOE has extended the grace period for timber industry until 31 December 2021, the specific expertise required to advise, design and install APCS are only available overseas and in West Malaysia. The constantly evolving standard operating procedures to limit entry of travellers into the country and State has made travelling more complicated and expensive with quarantine requirements at traveller's own cost on top of the risk of flight tickets being cancelled. This has discouraged travels and consequently delayed the arrival of consultants, engineers and equipment for the design, supply, and installation and commissioning of APCS.

To add to that, companies' initial verbal and written consultation with consultants have revealed other challenges that could arise from retrofitting existing facilities such as incompatibility, insufficient land space and other possible impacts arising from the installation of APCS such as water pollution.

STA cautioned that any delay or disruption to production caused by upgrading works will incur more costs to companies that are already reeling from the impact of pandemic in both ends of its supply and demand sides. In fact, reduced supply of raw material, manpower and demand for an extended period of time has caused some companies to suffer steep fall in profit and put in a situation where they cannot assume additional costs, thus forced to cease operation.

Subsequently, an online engagement session and workshop with stakeholders of few industries was organised on 15 October 2021. During the session, Mr Wan Abdul Latif Wan Jaffar, Director General of DOE, explained that the study was carried out under the 12<sup>th</sup> Malaysia Plan, where DOE was mandated by the Government to ensure that pollutants emitted into the air by industries are minimised. Therefore, he urged all industries to equip their premises with suitable and efficient APCS in order to meet the prescribed limits.

Mdm Mashitah Binti Darus, Director of Air Division, DOE Putrajaya, reminded that DOE no longer accepts

appeal from association on behalf of the industry for extension of time. Instead, premises that are still not able to comply with the limits prescribed in CAR 2014 are advised to individually submit application for extension of Contravention Licence to DOE Sarawak before 31 December 2021. The application is to be accompanied by (i) Self-Declaration Form to assure DOE that there are provisions set aside for the installation of APCS, (ii) APCS implementation schedule and expected date of compliance to the CAR 2014, (iii) report or proof of compliance to existing interim limit values, and (iv) commitment to engage Competent Person certified by DOE in handling APCS.

马来西亚环境部 (DOE) 于 2014 年 6 月 5 日颁布 2014 年环境质量 (清洁空气) 条规 (CAR 2014), 以更严格的排放标准监督各种工业活动空气污染物的排放。CAR 2014 取代 1978 年环境质量 (清洁空气) 条规, 并呼吁各行业通过空气污染控制系统 (APCS) 的监测和保养来进行自我调节。

包括木材工业在内的工业设施有 5 年的宽限期, 直至 2019 年 6 月 4 日以遵守该规定。然而, 自 2014 年以来, 特别是在东马, 该局对提高相关意识做出鲜少努力, 包括将信息和要求完整的传达给木材工业。砂拉越的木材工业于 2019 年才获得该条规的琐闻, 其间 5 年宽限期也即将到期。

Jabatan Alam Sekitar (DOE) telah memperkenalkan piawaian pelepasan yang lebih ketat untuk pengawalseliaan pelepasan bahan pencemar udara daripada pelbagai aktiviti perindustrian melalui penggubalan *Peraturan-Peraturan Kualiti Alam Sekeliling (Udara Bersih), 2014* (CAR 2014) pada 5 Jun 2014. CAR 2014 yang menggantikan *Peraturan-Peraturan Kualiti Alam Sekeliling (Udara Bersih), 1978* juga menyeru industri untuk pengawalan sendiri dengan menjalankan pemantauan dan penyelenggaraan terhadap Sistem Kawalan Pencemaran Udara (APCS).

Kemudahan-kemudahan industri termasuk industri perikanan telah diberi tempoh tangguh selama 5 tahun sehingga 4 Jun 2019 bagi mematuhi peraturan tersebut. Namun demikian, sejak 2014, tidak banyak usaha telah diambil untuk mewujudkan kesedaran dan memastikan maklumat dan keperluan tersebut disalurkan kepada pengetahuan dan difahami oleh industri perikanan, khususnya di Malaysia Timur. Industri perikanan di Sarawak hanya mengetahui peraturan 'baru' ini pada 2019, di mana tempoh tangguh 5 tahun telah hampir tamat.

## Meetings with Chemsain

Chemsain Konsultant Sdn Bhd (Chemsain), the appointed consultant by SEB Power Sdn Bhd to study and produce Biomass Removal Plan (BRP) for Baleh Hydroelectric Project (HEP) has been engaging relevant stakeholders including STA members in discussion to gather information.

During the first meeting, the team, led by Ir Brian Chong, informed that data and input from timber companies are crucial for BioREM Modelling and preparation of Guidelines for Salvage Logging at the Baleh HEP Reservoir.

In a subsequent meeting held on 12 October 2021, the team presented their proposed Guidelines for Salvage Logging and sought feedback from STA members. Some of the proposals comprised installation of river buffer and log-booms at all major tributaries.



Discussion between Chemsain and STA members on 12 October

作为砂拉越能源有限公司研究和制定巴勒水电项目(HEP) 生物质清除计划 (BRP) 的指定顾问, Chemsain 环境顾问有限公司 (Chemsain) 一直与包括本会在内的利益相关者商讨以收集信息。

Chemsain Konsultant Sdn Bhd (Chemsain), perunding yang dilantik oleh SEB Power Sdn Bhd untuk mengkaji dan menghasilkan Pelan Pengeluaran Biomass (BRP) bagi Projek Hidroelektrik Baleh (HEP) telah melibatkan semua pihak berkepentingan termasuk ahli STA melalui perbincangan untuk mengumpul maklumat.

# Auditor Training Course on Forest Management Certification

The Malaysian Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management (MC&I SFM) had come into force since 1 January 2021 and superseded the MC&I(Natural Forest) and the MC&I Forest Plantation.v2 as the document used for the certification of forest management of natural forests and forest plantations in Malaysia. In an effort to familiarise the stakeholders with the requirements of MC&I SFM and its implementation, the Forest Department Sarawak (FDS) and the Malaysian Timber Certification Council (MTCC) jointly organised an auditor training course on forest management certification (FMC) from 13 to 15 October 2021 via video conferencing. This training was attended by staff of FDS, Certification Bodies (CBs), Department of Standards Malaysia, Forest Management Units (FMUs) and STA. The training also served as a refresher course for those who had already undergone training.



Meeting in progress

Mr Ricky Jonathan Alex, Assistant Director (Planning and Management) of FDS, in his welcoming remarks reiterated Sarawak's directive on the implementation of FMC whereby all long-term forest timber licences are mandated to obtain FMC by 31 December 2022 and failure to do so may cause the licence to be suspended or cancelled. He further revealed that currently there are thirteen (13) FMUs and six (6) Forest Plantation Management Units (FPMUs) certified in Sarawak and he hoped that more FMUs/FPMUs would be certified in the future.

Ms Siti Syaliza Mustapha, Chief Executive Officer of MTCC, in her welcoming remarks highlighted that in line with the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) Benchmark Standard, new elements such as climate change, greenhouse gas emission reduction and carbon have been included in the MC&I SFM. She further informed the participants on the appointment of a new CB, i.e. Control Union (Malaysia) Sdn Bhd, as forest management certification auditor under the MC&I SFM.

In the 3-day training course, participants were briefed on the nine (9) principles of MC&I SFM, requirements on group forest certification, PEFC trademark rules, accreditation requirements of CBs by Standards Malaysia and conformity assessment requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems. At the end of the training course, participants who demonstrated adequate understanding on the MC&I SFM by passing the online competency evaluation were awarded a Certificate of Completion.

马来西亚可持续森林管理标准和指标 (MC&I SFM) 自2021年1月1日起生效, 并取代天然林 MC&I 和人工造林 v2 MC&I 作为用于认证马来西亚森林种植园和天然林的森林管理文件。

为了让利益相关者熟悉 MC&I SFM 的要求及其实施, 砂森林局 (FDS) 和马来西亚木材认证委员会 (MTCC) 于 2021年10月13日至15日通过线上视频联合举办有关森林经营认证 (FMC) 的审核员培训课程。FDS 职员、认证机构 (CBs)、马来西亚标准部, 森林管理单位(FMUs) 以及本会参加了该培训。

Kriteria dan Petunjuk Malaysia untuk Pengurusan Hutan Mampan (MC&I SFM) telah berkuatkuasa sejak 1 Januari 2021 dan menggantikan MC&I (Hutan Asli) dan MC&I Ladang Hutan.v2 sebagai dokumen yang digunakan untuk pensijilan pengurusan hutan bagi hutan asli dan ladang hutan di Malaysia.

Sebagai usaha untuk membiasakan pihak berkepentingan dengan keperluan MC&I SFM dan pelaksanaannya, Jabatan Hutan Sarawak (FDS) dan Majlis Pensijilan Kayu Malaysia (MTCC) telah bersama-sama menganjurkan kursus latihan juruaudit mengenai pensijilan pengurusan hutan (FMC) dari 13 hingga 15 Oktober 2021 melalui persidangan video. Latihan ini dihadiri oleh kakitangan FDS, Badan Pensijilan (CB), Jabatan Standard Malaysia, Unit Pengurusan Hutan (FMUs) dan STA.

# MTCC Promotes Sustainable Forest Management Through Certification at MyKomoditi 2021

The Malaysian Timber Certification Council (MTCC) took the opportunity to promote sustainable forest management (SFM) through certification at the Malaysian Family: Agricommodity Week 2021 (MyKomoditi 2021), which was a programme organised by the Ministry of Plantation Industries and Commodities (MPIC) from 25 to 29 October 2021.

Themed “*Shared Sustainability and Prosperity*”, MyKomoditi 2021 was aimed at educating the public on the latest initiatives, technology and innovation under MPIC with regard to the development of agricommodity’s upstream and downstream industries. Its objectives also included to spark interest among the public to go for entrepreneurial ventures or build a career in the commodity-based sector, as well as to give exposure to the youth on the various skills training programmes available in the plantation and commodity sectors.

At the event, MTCC conducted four (4) online sessions from 26 to 29 October as follows:

- i. **Ensuring Sustainability and Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Through Certification** by Ms Siti Syaliza Mustapha, Chief Executive Officer of MTCC and Ms Phang Oy Cheng, Executive Director, Governance & Sustainability, KPMG Management & Risk Consulting Sdn Bhd

Both speakers provided practical information on how certification can help to raise values of forest resources, increase transparency and engagement with other stakeholders in the forestry sector, as well as demonstrate commitments to the ESG criteria.

- ii. **Evolution of Sustainable Timber Certification in Malaysia** by Ms Sabrina Mawasi, Manager (Product) of MTCC; Mr Dick Anning, Environmental Manager, Carl Ronnow (M) Sdn Bhd; and Mr Harith Ridzuan, Director and The Green Carpenter, One Tech International (M) Sdn Bhd

Ms Sabrina covered the evolution of timber certification in Malaysia specifically on the case of the Malaysian Timber Certification Scheme (MTCS) which is developed and operated by MTCC. Meanwhile, both Mr Anning and Mr Harith shared their experiences of how practising sustainability and obtaining certification have helped boost their businesses across the globe.

- iii. **Introduction to Forest Management Certification and its Requirements** by Mr Haniff Salleh, Executive (Forest Management) of MTCC

The speaker touched on the implementation and benefits of MTCS which is endorsed by

the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC). He then provided an overview of the MTCS ST 1002:2021 Malaysian Criteria & Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management (MC&I SFM) that comprised requirements for natural forest and forest plantation.

- iv. **Introduction to Chain of Custody Certification and its Requirements** by Ms Adibah Mohd Aris, Executive (Product) of MTCC

Ms Adibah introduced the Chain of Custody (CoC) Certification and its requirements under MTCS and explained ways CoC certification such as the PEFC ST 2002:2020 Chain of Custody of Forest and Tree Based Products - Requirements are able to give businesses the competitive edge in the global green timber supply chain.

Virtual information booths were also made accessible throughout the 5-day event for visitors to know more about MTCC and MTCS as well as the importance of certification for SFM and responsible manufacturing and trade in forest products.

马来西亚木材认证委员会 (MTCC) 借机透过2021年大马一家:农产品周 (MyKomoditi 2021) 的认证来推广可持续森林管理(SFM)。该项目由种植和原产部 (MPIC)于2021年10月25日至29日举办。

活动期间, MTCC 于10月26日至29日举办了四场线上分享会, 并设计虚拟信息展台, 让参观者更了解有关 MTCC 和 MTCS 以及认证对可持续森林管理和林产品有责任的制造和贸易的重要性。

Majlis Pensijilan Kayu Malaysia (MTCC) mengambil peluang untuk mempromosikan pengurusan hutan mampan (SFM) melalui pensijilan bersempena Keluarga Malaysia: Minggu Agrikomoditi 2021 (MyKomoditi 2021), yang merupakan program anjuran Kementerian Perusahaan Perladangan dan Komoditi (MPIC) dari 25 hingga 29 Oktober 2021.

Pada majlis itu, MTCC menganjurkan 4 sesi dalam talian dari 26 hingga 29 Oktober dan menganjurkan gerai maklumat secara maya bagi pengunjung untuk mengetahui dengan lebih lanjut tentang MTCC dan MTCS serta kepentingan pensijilan untuk SFM dan pembuatan dan perdagangan produk hutan yang bertanggungjawab.

## 3<sup>rd</sup> IUFRO *Acacia* Conference 2021



The Chief Minister of Sarawak sitting on the rocking chair presented to him as memento during the launching ceremony

The International Union of Forest Research Organisations (IUFRO) Working Party 2.08.07 on Genetics and Silviculture of *Acacia* and the Forest Department Sarawak (FDS) jointly organised the 3<sup>rd</sup> IUFRO *Acacia* Conference from 26 to 28 October 2021 via online platform. The main objectives of this conference were to (i) share knowledge, research findings and experience from different disciplines, (ii) discuss current issues and ways forward for Industrial Forest Plantation, as well as (iii) strengthen collaboration among participants.

In his welcoming speech, Datu Hamden Bin Haji Mohammad, Director of Forests, said that the conference's theme "*Embracing Transformation for Sustainable Management of Industrial Forest Plantations*" was timely to help the industry answer the Sarawak Government's call to apply technology and innovation in the upstream and downstream research and development (R&D) to ensure productivity and viability of the forest plantation industry. He hoped that the conference would bring greater understanding on the current issues and challenges in industrial forest development across disciplines and promote discussion on the way forward among researchers, policy makers and plantation managers.

Professor Dr Wickneswari Ratnam, Coordinator of the IUFRO Working Party 2.08.07, in her welcoming speech informed that the conference had to be postponed twice since September 2020 due to COVID-19 pandemic. She said R&D in both growing and breeding of *Acacia* and downstream processing of its timber need to be continued, and she welcomed those working on industrial tropical *Acacia* as well as temperate species and arid zone taxa to join the Working Party.

The physical launching ceremony of the conference was held on 26 October 2021 at the Sarawak State Legislative Assembly, in the presence of the Chief Minister of Sarawak, Datuk Patinggi (Dr) Abang Haji Abdul Rahman Zohari Bin Tun Abang Haji Openg.

In the opening speech delivered by the Chief Minister of Sarawak, he said that Sarawak is committed to preserve a good balance of forest for perpetuity including the preservation of biodiversity and the ecosystem functions,

and forest plantation is an essential part of the strategic approach for sustainable management of forest resources. In light of the declining trend of log production from the tropical natural forests, it is of exigent need to increase the scale of operation and productivity of forest plantation with efficiency in order to produce sufficient quality plantation logs to offset the shortage of log supply from natural forests.

He admitted that Sarawak is still behind as compared to other Asian countries in forest plantation development, especially in R&D where support from a higher level of expertise is required. Hence, he welcomed international collaborations to build up the research capacity in Sarawak, thus contributing to the growth of high value profitable plantations based on high productivity and quality. He added that testing alternative species and regimes, pests and diseases resistance, short and long rotation for different wood quality and timber products, as well as the restoration of degraded lands should be the utmost agenda for industrial forest plantation development in Sarawak.

He informed that as logs from planted forests will be the ultimate substitute for future raw materials in timber processing industry, R&D for downstream is crucial to produce competitive and marketable planted timber products. In line with the strategic plan by Sarawak Government to embark on tertiary downstream timber processing industry, he urged the timber product manufacturing sector to transform themselves and re-invest to adapt their processing equipment and techniques to the change of log quality and species. He said future transition to profitability is not only dependent upon achieving a high level of productivity of forest plantation, but also requires well-trained, highly skilled and motivated employees. Universities and training institutes need to work closely with the industry to understand, prepare and develop integrated industry-universities training courses to provide skilled and motivated employees for the industry, thus making the industry a success. He also encouraged the use of advance technologies in monitoring and managing the planted forests as well as in the downstream timber processing industry, and advocated the forest plantation management certification for a sustainable forest plantation industry.

The conference was divided into five (5) sub-themes comprising (i) Industrial Forest Plantation Policy, (ii) Plantation Management for Sustainable Wood Production, (iii) Risk Management, (iv) High Value-added Timber Products, and (v) Genetics and Breeding. The 3-day event saw more than 600 participants from 28 countries and featured a total of 40 papers and 11 posters presentation by local and international researchers, policy makers, plantation managers, lecturers and postgraduate students. The recording for the conference can be accessed via FDS Official Channel on YouTube at [www.youtube.com/c/ForestDepartmentSarawakOfficialChannel](http://www.youtube.com/c/ForestDepartmentSarawakOfficialChannel).

In the keynote address by Dr Sadanandan Nambiar, Honorary Fellow, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), Australia, he highlighted four (4) challenges in reimaging and transforming the Asian forestry industry which included (i) increasing wood supply, (ii) restoring landscapes, (iii) reducing rural poverty, and

(iv) mitigating and adapting to climate change. He said plantation forestry in Asia need not more environmentalism and international-policy-declarations, but pragmatic on-the-ground actions, judiciously balanced between reliable long term economy, profitability, and the aspirations of the people living in forest-rural landscapes. He stressed that the small forest growers in tropical landscapes should be embraced as partners for green-growth with genuine sharing as they provide a conduit for connecting green-growth for rural poverty reduction and for their roles in future wood supply and land restoration. He added that the R&D investments should be prioritised and supported by strong public-private partnerships. He was optimistic that the forestry businesses in Asia, Southeast Asia in particular, have substantial opportunities for growth - in invigorating rural economy, reducing rural poverty and assisting in climate change mitigation.

As one of the keynote speakers, Datu Hamden highlighted the development of forest plantation in Sarawak as well as its issues and challenges which includes difficult terrain, infancy stage of R&D in both the upstream and downstream sectors as well as lack of R&D expertise. He also briefed on the way forward in transforming the Sarawak's forest plantation in line with the Sarawak Government's aspiration and fulfilling the national and international agenda.

**国际森林研究组织联盟(IUFRO)相思木遗传和造林学2.08.07工作组和砂森林局(FDS)于2021年10月26日至28日通过线上视频联合举办第三届IUFRO相思木大会。**

Ms Annie Ting, Chief Executive Officer of STA, moderated the conference's session on "High Value-added Timber Products". This session featured a total of six (6) papers highlighting the usage of planted *Acacia* wood in manufacturing engineered wood products, the optimised accelerated drying protocol for *Acacia* sawn timber and the thermal treatment for improving the physical wood properties of *Acacia* hybrid. Furthermore, the session discussed the potential of *Eucalyptus pellita* for structural used application due to its mechanical properties that are comparable with tropical hardwood species. The session expressed optimism that the abundant resources of planted raw materials in Sarawak have the potential to drive the market growth of engineered wood products as material for furniture and construction purposes.

The conference also featured a virtual tour to introduce the development of industrial forest plantation in both Sarawak and Sabah which was prepared by GP PUSAKA Sdn Bhd, Samling Group of Companies and Sabah Softwoods Berhad.

Kumpulan Kerja Kesatuan Antarabangsa Pertubuhan Penyelidikan Hutan (IUFRO) 2.08.07 mengenai Genetik dan Silvikultur *Acacia* dan Jabatan Hutan Sarawak (FDS) secara bersama telah menganjurkan Persidangan IUFRO *Acacia* ke-3 dari 26 hingga 28 Oktober 2021 melalui platform dalam talian.

## Global Launch of the World of Wood Festival

The global timber industry is collectively hosting World of Wood Festival (WoW Festival) throughout 25 October until 3 December 2021, in anticipation of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26). The six-week celebration of global timber and global forests will tell the story of how global forests and the wood products cycle is helping to avert climate change, decarbonising construction, as well as supporting social, environmental and economic growth through governance in developing countries.

At the digital launch of the WoW Festival on 26 October 2021, attendees learned about two (2) manifestos that will be launched at COP26. The first manifesto, "Global Forests Need Global Governance", presented by Mr David Hopkins, Chief Executive of Timber Trade Federation aims to send a powerful message to the leaders at COP26 asking for a strong legal governance and strict regulation in the markets and countries it operates in. He highlighted that timber industry as a business model, need presence of trees on land while other land uses need absence of trees. So, in forestry, trees are important and a lot of businesses in the timber industry have put in significant efforts to ensure resources are sustainable. Unfortunately, their efforts are undermined by those who do not play by the rule and this is where intervention from global leaders is needed.

The other manifesto, "Growing our Low-Carbon Future: Time for Timber" echoes with the WoW Festival's key message that wood equals hope. Mr Paul Brannen, Policy Director

of CEI-Bois, in presenting the manifesto shared that the built environment contributes to 40% of global carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emission which is more than the contribution from industry at 30% and transportation 22%. He added that the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> emitted is so high that if concrete were to be a country, it will be the third largest emitter of CO<sub>2</sub> in the world, after China and the United States. These startling statistics and facts underline the importance of substituting concrete with wood to help avert the effects of climate change, a change that the global timber industry is able to support owing to knowledge, technology and development in engineered wood products.

Recording of the launch is available at website [worldofwoodfestival.org/global-launch-of-the-world-of-wood-festival-video/](http://worldofwoodfestival.org/global-launch-of-the-world-of-wood-festival-video/).

**全球木材工业于2021年10月25日至12月3日期间共同举办世界木材节 (WoW Festival) 以配合联合国气候变化大会 (COP26)。**

Industri perkayuan global secara kolektif menganjurkan Festival Kayu Sedunia (WoW Festival) dari 25 Oktober hingga 3 Disember 2021, dengan menjangkakan Persidangan Perubahan Iklim Pertubuhan Bangsa-Bangsa Bersatu (COP26).

# MEF Industrial Relations Conference 2021

The Malaysian Employers Federation (MEF) held its inaugural Industrial Relations Conference 2021 virtually on 26 October 2021. The Conference was attended by approximately 140 participants from various sectors.

The conference was launched by Dato' Syed Hussain Syed Husman, President of MEF. In his welcoming address, he highlighted that in a poll conducted by MEF, a majority of MEF members had indicated a new hybrid work model of work-from-home and normal/fixed work schedule as the strategies for future work arrangements in moving forward post lockdown. Other work arrangements polled included normal/fixed-hours, flexible working hours, shift work, work-from-home and staggered working hours/day. He mentioned that the conference is timely as the employers look into conducting their businesses in a new environment while managing COVID-19 at the same time after many months of lockdown. This conference is purposely designed to address priorities and issues in managing the gradual re-opening of the economy and the return to workplaces in a way that minimises health risks that take on board the concerns of workers and all stakeholders as well as the impact of digitalisation on human resources (HR).

The first speaker, Dr Priya Ragunath, Head of Occupational and Environmental Health Sector from the Ministry of Health, discussed the topic *"Vaccination for Employees – Can it be Made Mandatory?"*. Citing the increase in workplace clusters during the third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, she reiterated the importance of prevention and control measures such as risk communication, compliance to standard operating procedures, seeking treatment, isolation/quarantine, testing and vaccination for employees, etc. She said that although vaccination is voluntary in principle, the company reserves the rights to implement their policy with regards to not allowing non-vaccinated employees to work based on the employment agreement between the company and the employee. One such instance is the mandatory requirement for all civil servants to be vaccinated against COVID-19. Additionally, the Minister of Human Resources was quoted as saying that employers have rights to insist that their staff be vaccinated against COVID-19. Employees who could not receive the vaccination due to pre-existing medical condition or severe allergies could be exempted with a letter of exemption from their doctors.

The second paper on *"Managing Mental Health at the Workplace and Community"* was presented by Dr Yuka Ujita, Occupational and Health Specialist of the International Labour Organisation Regional Office for Asia and The Pacific. According to Dr Ujita, mental health is an integral part of health and is not limited to the absence of mental disorders. Although work is good for mental health, a negative working environment can lead to physical and mental health problems. Examples of mental health problems include stress, overworking, and post-traumatic stress disorder. In the last two (2) years, employees are more susceptible to mental health problems due to anxieties produced by COVID-19 health risks, uncertainties about how long the pandemic will last, worries over loss of jobs or business closures as well as radical changes in work organisation, processes and conditions. Article 16 of the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No 155) states that *"Employers shall be required to ensure that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the workplaces, machinery, equipment and processes under their control are safe and without risk to health"* and Article 3 of the same Convention defined *"the term health, in relation to work, indicates not merely the absence of disease or infirmity; it also includes the physical and mental elements affecting health which are directly related to safety and hygiene at work"*.

Therefore, employers are encouraged to carry out workplace risk assessment and management to identify hazards affecting mental health, decide on risk control measures as well as monitor and review risk assessment when necessary. For example, employers in Japan are mandated by law to conduct the Stress Check Programme annually as primary prevention of mental health problems. Under the programme, employees shall voluntarily complete questionnaires to assess their mental health. Each employee shall receive a report of his or her mental health assessment and those identified as having high levels of stress shall undergo a follow-up with an occupational physician.

As the last speaker, Tuan Haji Mohd Syukri Ahmad Sudari, Chief People Officer of Affin Bank Berhad and Vice President of MEF, touched on *"Impact of Digitalisation on HR & IR"*. HR digital transformation is a process of changing operational HR processes to become automated and data-driven with an aspiration to be a strategic partner to provide valuable services. Digital transformation is rapidly changing skill needs and HR is in the hot seat to develop new skills set for employees. Employers must understand the what and why of HR digital transformation, set the objective of HR digital transformation and conduct skill gap analysis. Tuan Haji shared a case study of Digital HR, how robots or bots increase recruiter's efficiency and productivity in recruitment/predictive analytic/better employee experience.

The conference concluded with a tripartite panel discussion on *"Social Security for Gig Workers"* moderated by Datuk Haji Shamsuddin Bardan, Executive Director of MEF. The panel comprised of Mr John Riba Anak Marin, Chief Executive (Operations) of Social Security Organisation; Dato' Jalaldin Haji Hussain, Senior Consultant-Industrial Relations of MEF; and Mr Mohd Effendy Bin Abdul Ghani, Deputy President of Malaysian Trade Union Congress (MTUC). All panelists acknowledged the rapid growth of gig economy after the COVID-19 pandemic, due in part to the increased reliance on gig workers to home deliver necessities to consumers. The pandemic has also transformed the traditional 9 to 5 working world as well as driven many blue and white collar employees to be involved in gig work for additional or even primary income during this unprecedented time. Although there is no universal definition of a gig worker, but it is generally accepted that gig workers are independent contractor or considered as self-employed as they provide independent services to third parties.

Labour rights group are criticising the service providers and technology firms such as Grab and Foodpanda for avoiding social benefits payment by keeping the gig workers' employment informal, and are therefore pushing for laws to be passed to recognise gig workers as formal workers and compel them to provide social protection such as Employees' Provident Fund (EPF), Social Security Contribution and Employment Insurance Scheme for gig workers. MTUC is in support of this call whereas MEF was of the view that a mandatory coverage of these social benefits to gig workers would be very costly to employers given that the gig economy is currently absorbing 4 million people. Furthermore, SOCSO announced sometime in July 2021 that over 145,000 delivery riders employed by Grab and Foodpanda have been given social security under SPS Lindung Scheme, with the costs borne by the Government.

In addition, there is also an avenue for gig workers to contribute to EPF via its i-Saraan voluntary contribution and receive a 15% contribution from EPF up to a maximum of RM250 per year, on top of their contributions. MEF felt that any disruption to the existing business model may have adverse consequences for the self-employed to generate income.

马来西亚雇主联合会 (MEF) 于 2021 年 10 月 26 日举办 2021 年首届劳资关系线上研讨会。大约 140 名来自各行各业的参与者出席了研讨会。研讨会由 MEF 主席拿督摄胡赛因主持。

Persekutuan Majikan-Majikan Malaysia (MEF) telah mengadakan Persidangan Perhubungan Industri 2021 julung kalinya secara maya pada 26 Oktober 2021. Persidangan dihadiri kira-kira 140 peserta daripada pelbagai sektor. Persidangan tersebut telah dilancarkan oleh Dato' Syed Hussain Syed Husman, Presiden MEF.

## Usage of Timber and Engineered Timber Products in The Construction Industry

The Malaysian Timber Industry Board (MTIB) and the Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) jointly organised a webinar titled "*The Usage of Timber and Engineered Timber Products in The Construction Industry*" on 21 October 2021. The webinar was held to (i) enhance knowledge on the use of timber and engineered timber products as building material in the construction industry; (ii) increase awareness of the potential application of timber and engineered timber products in building construction in Malaysia; (iii) reveal the current scenario, issues and challenges on structural timber construction; and (iv) promote utilisation of timber and engineered timber products in the domestic and international markets.

The webinar was officiated by Tuan Haji Mahpar Atan, Director General of MTIB. Also present were Associate Professor Dr Nazirah Ramli, Deputy Rector of Academic Affairs, on behalf of the Rector of UiTM Pahang, as well as Professor Dr Nor Hayati Abd Hamid, Director of Institute for Infrastructure Engineering and Sustainable Management (IIESM).

In his opening speech, Tuan Haji Mahpar Atan said that timber, which is usually used to build traditional houses, account for less than 10% of materials used in the local construction industry. Concrete and steel are still preferred in the construction of modern building. With technology moving forward, the usage of timber and engineered timber products is now increasing globally, especially as alternative material in the construction industry. However, the construction industry in Malaysia lack drivers of change, namely knowledge and technical support on the application of timber and engineered timber products. For that, further studies and researches need to be carried out to improve the regularity and practicability of timber and engineered timber products in the country's construction industry. New practical knowledge in timber and advances in timber product must also be channelled to the local

construction industry in the effort to promote timber and engineered timber products as a viable building material.

According to Tuan Haji Mahpar Atan, MTIB will continue to facilitate the development of the country's timber industry, particularly in the expansion of promotional activities in enhancing the use of domestic timber in the local construction industry, including the application of timber as an Industrialised Building System (IBS) material as well as the application of engineered timber products such as glued laminated timber (Glulam), cross laminated timber (CLT), laminated veneer lumber (LVL) and many others. Furthermore, MTIB is collaborating with strategic partners such as UiTM, Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM) and other relevant organisations to conduct researches in order to obtain data regarding timber usage for the construction industry.

The webinar invited four (4) timber experts to share their knowledge and experiences. About 140 participants comprising Government agencies, academicians, students, engineers, architects, associations as well as industry players including manufacturers of timber and timber products, joined the event.

马来西亚木材工业局(MTIB)和玛拉理工大学 (UiTM) 于 2021 年 10 月 21 日联办一场名为“木材和工程木材产品在建筑行业中的使用”的线上研讨会。

Lembaga Perindustrian Kayu Malaysia (MTIB) dan Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) bersama-sama telah menganjurkan webinar bertajuk "Penggunaan Kayu dan Produk Kayu Kejuruteraan dalam Industri Pembinaan" pada 21 Oktober 2021.

OCTOBER 2021

## ONLINE REVISION SESSION FOR EXISTING IN-HOUSE TRAINERS

The session is designed with the aim to strengthen knowledge and upsurge teaching efficacy among existing in-house trainers who will be training their operators on various forestry activities specifically tree felling, log extraction, log loading, etc. It is initiated as a coaching-mentoring session to provide guidance and opportunities to develop and hone specific skills sets that are essential to being a proficient and confident in-house trainer.



*Skills set: Mechanical Site Preparation – Excavator (Forest Plantation), Activity: Spreading and Crushing at the Plantation Site*

An online revision session was conducted from 12 to 14 October by STAT trainers/assessors, and participated by STA member companies including Shin Yang Sdn Bhd and Jaya Tiasa Holdings Berhad.

STA member companies who wish to nominate their in-house trainers to undergo the online revision session can submit names to STAT for arrangement.



*Day two breakout session for Tree Felling-Chainsaw (Natural Forest & Forest Plantation Harvesting) & Clear-Fell Site Preparation-Chainsaw (Planted Forest Establishment)*

STA Training Sdn Bhd (STAT), a subsidiary company of STA, offers training to workmen in the forestry and timber industry. STAT is the appointed training provider under The Forests (Trained Workmen) Rules, 2015.

## Webinar on German Dual Vocational Training

The Webinar on German Dual Vocational Training (GDVT) was hosted by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Research Sarawak (MESTR) on 5 October 2021. The webinar welcomed participants from several Government agencies, local and private institutions and companies such as Malaysian Investment Development Authority (MIDA), Sarawak Timber Industry Development Corporation (STIDC), Fire and Rescue Department of Malaysia, Sarawak Multimedia Authority (SMA), Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UiTM), Sarawak Skills, Advanced Technology Training Center (ADTEC), Institut Latihan Perindustrian (ILP), Curtin University of Technology (Sarawak Campus), STA, etc.

In the opening speech, Dr Annuar Bin Rapae, Assistant Minister of MESTR, said that the engagement session was organised to provide stakeholders with a better understanding on GDVT. He added that undergraduates could have been better prepared to meet the requirements of the jobs at the workplace if they could undergo training for at least a year before they graduate. He also extended invitation to engineers, consultants and advisors from the industry to collaborate with the Government to coordinate teaching groups for universities.

Mr Daniel Bernbeck, Chief Executive Officer of Malaysian-German Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MGCC) was invited to talk about GDVT. According to him, GDVT aligns the Malaysian National Occupational Skills Standards (NOSS) and the German training and regulatory

framework plan or standards, trainees are prepared for the best in apprenticeship for which learning at the workplace is considered the most effective domain of learning. Currently, GDVT in Malaysia offers three (3) courses, namely Mechatronics & Electronics, Industrial Management and Logistics Operation Management. He also shared information such as roles of MGCC as well as application requirements, costs and certification of GDVT amongst others.

Mr Bernbeck hoped that both the Government and the industry could work together to synchronise ideas to improve the education system and to help the industry to innovate, bring new technologies and turn to automation.

砂拉越教育、科学及工艺研究部(MESTR)于2021年10月5日主办德国二元制技职培训(GDVT)线上研讨会。GDVT目前在马来西亚提供三项课程,即机械电子,工业管理和物流操作管理。

Webinar Latihan Dwi Vokasional Jerman (GDVT) dianjurkan oleh Kementerian Pendidikan, Sains dan Penyelidikan Teknologi Sarawak (MESTR) pada 5 Oktober 2021. Kini, GDVT di Malaysia menawarkan 3 kursus, iaitu Elektronik & Mekatronik, Pengurusan Perindustrian dan Pengurusan Operasi Logistik.