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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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Verification of the Weight to Volume Conversion Constant of *Albizia falcataria*



Photo: Research personnel measuring and recording the diameter (top photo) and length (bottom photo) of Albizia falcataria planted logs that were felled.

A trip to verify the weight to volume conversion constant for *Albizia falcataria* was jointly organised by Sarawak Forestry Corporation (SFC) and Sarawak Timber Association (STA) from 17 to 20 April 2017 and was conducted in LPF0017 Kejin Plantation near Miri and LPF0018 Seping Plantation near Bintulu.

This study was initiated upon receiving requests from members to validate the weight to volume conversion constant of *Albizia falcataria* as they found that the conversion constant calculated by them, varied significantly from the conversion constant [2 cubic meters:1 metric ton] that was approved by the Forest Department Sarawak (FDS) in 2012 through the DF Circular No 2/2012.

This study involved the representatives from SFC, FDS and Shin Yang Forestry Sdn Bhd and STA.

The diameters, length and weight of thirty (30) *Albizia falcataria* planted logs felled at each sampling site were measured and recorded. Disc samples were collected at middle and both ends from the six (6) selected logs and kept in plastic bags with proper labelling.

The disc samples will be tested in Timber Technology Centre (TTC), Applied Forest Science and Industry Development Division (AFSID) of SFC to further verify the weight to volume ratio of *Albizia falcataria*.

REDD+ National Strategy Workshop in Sarawak



Photo (left): Dato' Sr Dr Azimuddin bin Bahari giving his opening speech, (right) Participants of the Workshop during the breakout group session

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (NRE) organised a REDD+ National Strategy Workshop in Sarawak on 18 April 2017 at Hilton Hotel, Kuching. Approximately forty (40) participants from various State government agencies, civil society organizations (CSOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) attended the Workshop aimed to identify action plans undertaken by the State as well as the role of NGO and CSO in REDD+ implementation and examples of benefit sharing system practiced in the State.

Dato' Sr Dr Azimuddin bin Bahari, Deputy Secretary-General (Environmental Management) of Ministry of NRE, in his opening speech urged various stakeholders to work together to outline actions that would help maintain Malaysia's pledge to the world which is to keep at least 50% of its land mass forested. Development of such strategy is deemed vital to enhance Malaysia's involvement in REDD+ and provide result-based payment for the country. Five (5) presentations were delivered in the Workshop as follows:

- 1)(i) National Policy on Climate Change, and
(ii) The Paris Agreement and Malaysia's INDC
- by Mr Yusmazy bin Mohd Yusup, Principal Assistant Secretary, Environmental Management and Climate Change Division, NRE

The speaker shared with the participants of the Workshop

that the national policy is set up to mainstream climate change, integrate responses into national policies and strengthen the institutional and implementation capacity.

The speaker also mentioned that the Prime Minister announced in 2009 at COP15 Copenhagen that Malaysia has adopted a voluntary indicator to reduce its greenhouse gas (GHG) intensity of GDP by up to 40% by 2020 relative to emissions intensity of GDP in 2005, fully conditional upon receipt of climate finance, technology transfer and capacity building from developed countries. Building on this, the Prime Minister announced during the United Nations Climate Summit in 2014 that Malaysia was well on track to hit a 40% reduction on GHG by 2020.

- 2) Draft of Sarawak's Forestry Policy
- by Mr Abang Ahmad Abang Morni, Assistant Director, Forest Management & Planning Division, Forest Department Sarawak

Participants of the Workshop were informed that the Department has formed a Task Force to review and re-evaluate the Statement of Forest Policy, 1954 as well as propose a new forestry policy for the State.

- 3) National Biological Diversity Policy
- by Ms Chitra Subramaniam, Principal Assistant Secretary, Biodiversity Management and Forestry Division, NRE

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Did you know that.....

Clastrobryum scalare (Müll. Hal.) Tixier, a species of moss which was thought to have gone extinct, was found by a group of researchers on a scientific expedition at Long Banga, Ulu Baram. The discovery gave scientist much optimism and a second chance to conserve this species found in this part of Borneo.

Source: Professor Emeritus Dato Dr. Haji Mohamed bin Abdul Majid (2017, 3-4 May), *The Moss Diversity in Long Banga*. Findings presented at Sarawak Heart of Borneo (HoB) Scientific Expedition Long Banga Seminar 2017. Imperial Hotel, Kuching.

Did you also know that....

To exacerbate impacts of deforestation and curb illegal logging activities, the government of Myanmar had imposed a yearlong ban on logging across all of Myanmar, which was lifted at the end of March 2017. While the ban was in place, the Myanmar Timber Enterprise (MTE), a government's logging entity relied on existing stockpiles of timber to meet domestic and international demand for Myanmar timber.

Source: <https://coconuts.co/yanmar/features/with-logging-ban-lifted-major-markets-shun-myanmar-timber/>



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The speaker gave a brief presentation on the National Biological Diversity Policy with an implementation period of ten (10) years; from 2016 to 2025.

- 4) REDD+ Implementation in Malaysia
- by Dr Elizabeth Philip, Head of REDD Unit, Ministry of NRE

The speaker shared with participants of the Workshop that forestry sector contributed to the highest GHG reduction in the country. Therefore, state level efforts directed towards protecting and reducing carbon dioxide (CO2) emission will need to be gathered for the purpose of receiving incentives from developed countries, to transform forest as a natural capital by 2030.

Participants of the Workshop were then divided into two (2) groups; State Government group and NGO/CSO group to discuss on the REDD+ action plans. In closing, the Secretariat informed participants of the Workshop that a draft REDD+ National Strategy, which accounts for all the inputs received from participants of Workshops conducted in the three (3) regions in Malaysia, will be circulated to all for comments.

A final consultation will be held in the last week of May 2017 to produce Malaysia's REDD+ National Strategy which will be submitted to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to obtain and receive results-based payments.

STA Mutual Sdn Bhd Continues its

Corporate Social Responsibility Projects



Photo: Primary 6 students of Long Kevok smiling for the cameras upon receiving their new school bag filled with a complete set of stationeries.

On 11 April 2017, 100 students of Sekolah Kebangsaan (SK) Long Kevok, Baram in Miri received the Assistance-in-kind (i.e. a school bag and a complete set of stationeries). The following day, 100 students of SK Long Luteng, Baram in Miri received the same Assistance-in-kind.

Mr Dennis anak Lalen, Senior Assistant for Student Affair at SK Long Kevok and Mr Chali anak Bundak, Headmaster of SK Long Luteng, in their welcoming speeches, thanked the Association and Samling Group of Companies for providing such assistance to the students and hope that more assistance will be rendered especially in the area of improving the facilities in the schools.

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61st World of Wood Annual Convention

The International Wood Products Association (IWPA) organised its 61st World of Wood Annual Convention from 5 to 7 April 2017 at Hotel Nikko in San Francisco, California. It was proudly announced that this year's Convention had attracted over 300 participants from nearly thirty (30) countries, with nineteen (19) participants from Malaysia.

Mr Bronson Newburger, the President of IWPA highlighted in his opening speech that the shifting political winds could impact growth prospects for the global wood products market in 2017. Therefore, IWPA members must keep abreast of market developments that will have a direct impact on profitability.

He further commented that "World of Wood is the one North American event that brings together leaders from every segment of the global wood products supply chain. The information my staff and I take away each year is critical to our business."

This year's Convention provided participants with the opportunity to learn from and interact with speakers and panelists, their foremost expertise in regulatory compliance, market intelligence and corporate branding. The highlights of the Convention included the keynote

address delivered by Mr Marc Chandler, Brown Brothers Harriman Global Head of Currency Strategy on the latest currency trends and the impact on the global wood products market; a timely deep dive session on formaldehyde emissions for composite wood products; panel discussion on a new petition initiated with the International Trade Commission and Department of Commerce which could result in higher duties on plywood products imported from China; and a timber market forum which highlighted the global demand for wood products and the downtrend in the demand for tropical wood products.

The Convention concluded with the closing of passing the gavel from the former president to the incoming President, Ms JoAnne Gillebaard Keller of Holland Southwest International, reception and banquet.

On 8 April 2017, the Malaysian delegates also visited two (2) retail timber stores to further understand the timber market requirements in San Francisco, in terms of timber quality, usage and prices.

The World of Wood 2018 will be held from 14 to 16 March 2018 at Hotel Monteleone in New Orleans, Louisiana, USA.