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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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Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Expert grout on Illegal Logging Meeting

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Member Economies held its 3rd Senior Officials Meeting (SOM3) and related meetings with the theme "Resilient Asia-Pacific, Engine of Global Growth" from 22 June to 6 July 2013 in Medan, Indonesia. The main emphasis of this two-week cluster of technical meetings and workshops was to improve sustainable growth in the Asia-Pacific region.

Recognising the importance of the APEC Economies which accounts for more than 50% of the world's forests and approximately 80% of global trade in forest products, the APEC Experts Group on Illegal Logging and Associated Trade (EGILAT) was formed in 2011 to enhance the efforts of Member Economies to take concrete steps to combat illegal logging and associated trade, promote trade in legally harvested forest products, and support capacity building activities in Member Economies.

The 4th Meeting of the APEC EGILAT was held from 25 to 27 June 2013 in Medan, Indonesia. The Meeting was chaired by its Chairman Dato' Dr Haji Abdul Rahman from Malaysia, with the support of delegates from seventeen (17) APEC Member Economies namely, Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, China, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Russian Federation, Singapore, Chinese Taipei, and the United States of America (USA). Representatives from the APEC Secretariat and guests from the World

Bank were invited to attend the Meeting.

The delegation of nine (9) members from Malaysia was led by Dato' Haji Kamaruzaman bin Husain, Under Secretary of the Ministry of Plantation Industries and Commodities, includes representatives from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Peninsular Malaysia Forestry Department, Sarawak Forestry Department, Malaysian Timber Council, Malaysian Timber Industry Board, Sarawak Timber Industry Development Corporation and Sarawak Timber Association.

The following two (2) exploratory events were held in conjunction with the meeting:

- 1) EGILAT Dialogue with the Private Sector on "Effort to Combat Illegal Logging and Associated Trade and Promote Trade in Legal Forest Products" organised by USA; and
- 2) Joint Meeting of the Anti-Corruption and Transparency Working Group (ACTWG) and EGILAT.

The meeting agreed to support these two events as EGILAT members recognised the importance to engage the private sector to combat illegal logging and associated trade, and promote trade in legal forest products and the importance in cooperating with the ACTWG.

ACTWG and EGILAT agreed to jointly organise a self-
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12th Meeting of the Working Group on a Pan Asean Timber Certification Initiative



Photo: Meeting in progress

Malaysia hosted the twelfth (12th) meeting of the Working Group on a Pan Asean Timber Certification Initiative (AWG-PATCI) from 24 to 25 June 2013 at Primula Beach Hotel, Kuala Terengganu in Terengganu. The Meeting was attended by delegates from Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam as well as the ASEAN Secretariat and the representatives from European Forest Institute Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Asia and the ASEAN-German Programme on Response to Climate Change.

Mr M Nagarajan, Deputy Secretary General (Commodities), Ministry of Plantation Industries and Commodities (MPIC) delivered the Opening Remarks on behalf of Malaysia as the Lead Country for this Initiative. He stated that since the inaugural meeting in 2002, the Working Group has formulated and adopted a number of key documents such as (i) The ASEAN Guideline on Phased Approach to Forest Certification; (ii) The six elements for the definition of legality of timber; (iii) The ASEAN Criteria and Indicators for Legality of Timber; and (iv) The ASEAN Chain of Custody (CoC) Guidelines for Legal Timber and Sustainable Timber. He noted that the pursuit of sustainable forest management (SFM) is demanding and challenging for tropical countries including the ASEAN Member States. He attributed it to the lack of financial resources, institutional capacity, and skilled and trained manpower resources. This is reflected by the fact that 20 years after the Earth

Summit where timber certification was mooted as a market-driven initiative to encourage and promote SFM, only about 10% of the world's commercial forests have been certified, of which less than 5% of these certified forests are tropical.

The Meeting was chaired by Dato' Dr Freezailah Che Yeom, Chairman of the Malaysian Timber Certification Council (MTCC), and assisted by Ms Fe Oliveros, Senior Forest Management Specialist of Philippines Forest Management Bureau Department of Environment and Natural Resources. The ASEAN Secretariat, Ms Aniq Fadhilah informed the delegates of the outcomes of the 15th Meeting of the ASEAN Senior Officials on Forestry (ASOF) held in Hanoi from 28 to 30 June 2012, and related meetings on issues relevant to AWG-PATCI. She also updated the Meeting on the decisions of the ASEAN Leaders during the ASEAN Summits, the ASEAN Economic (AEC) Council, the ASEAN Economic Ministers, the Senior Officials Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry as well as the ASEAN Ministers on Agriculture and Forestry (AMAF) Meeting on the implementation strategy to deliver the ASEAN Roadmap for an ASEAN Community. She mentioned that in the 21st ASEAN Summit which was held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia in November 2012, the leaders welcomed the prioritisation of AEC measures undertaken by the AEC Council. The ASEAN Leaders decided that the date of realisation of the ASEAN Community would be on 31 December 2015.

The Meeting took note of the update from the ASEAN Member States (AMS) on Criteria and Indicators (C&I) for legality of timber (or) forest management certification (and/or) implementation of timber certification and legality assurance systems. The AMS from Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia and Thailand shared their experiences on negotiations with the EU to conclude a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA).

The 13th AWG-PATCI will be held in Myanmar in 2014.

Did you know that.....



President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono signed a new presidential instruction, known as the Forest and Peat Land Moratorium on 13 May 2013. It seeks to protect primary forest and peat land, both major stores of carbon by suspending the issuing of any new forest-clearing permits. The two-year moratorium serves as an extension of a previous presidential instruction.

Source: Thomson Reuters Foundation - 30 May 2013

Did you also know that....

The Sabah Forestry Department has reclassified 63,700 hectares of rainforest zoned for logging as protected areas. The reclassification applies to four commercial forest reserves: Malua (33,969 hectares), Mt. Magdalena (6,665 ha), Tambulanan (3,265 ha) and Sungai Tiagau (19,870 ha). The region has the highest biodiversity on the island of Borneo and includes key habitat for endangered orangutans, Bornean clouded leopards, Sumatran rhinos, and pygmy elephants.

Source: <http://news.mongabay.com> 22 June 2013



Briefing on the Australian Illegal Logging Prohibition Act 2012



Photo: Group photo

The Sarawak Timber Association (STA) organised a briefing on Australian Illegal Logging Prohibition Act (AILPA) 2012 on 6 June 2013 at Wisma STA in Kuching. It was attended by twenty seven (27) participants comprising representatives from the Sarawak Forestry Corporation (SFC), Sarawak Timber Industry Development Corporation (STIDC), Harwood Timber Sdn Bhd (HTSB), STA Member Companies and STA Secretariat.

The Briefing was aimed to update the participants and discuss on the key elements of the final version of the regulations for the implementation of the AILPA 2012 and the plan for developing materials to guide Australian importers who wish to trade with members of STA.

Mr Wong Ting Chung, the Deputy General Manager, Strategic Planning, CEO Division of SFC gave

a presentation on the 'Legality Verification of Logs in Sarawak' which outlined an overview of forestry, definition of legal logs and the legality verification process of logs in Sarawak. Dr Peter Kho, General manager of STA gave a presentation on the 'Sarawak's Timber Trade Statistics', which outlined the Sarawak logs and timber products' export by destination and value over the past few years.

Mr Ben Mitchell briefed the participants on the 'Australia's Action to Combat Illegal Logging'. He informed the participants that the Illegal logging Prohibition Amendment Regulation 2013 (the regulation) was registered as a legislative instrument on 31 May 2013 and the requirements set out in the Regulation will come into effect on 30 November 2014. From that date onwards, due diligence needs to be carried out for all regulated timber products before importation into Australia. He also mentioned that Australian Government would work with importers in Australia by providing education package and work with the Malaysian Government on developing the Country Specific Guideline.

For more information, please visit <http://www.daff.gov.au/forestry/policies/illegal-logging>.

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Seminar on Sarawak's Heart of Borneo 2013

A Seminar on "Sarawak's Heart of Borneo (HoB) 2013 - The Living Treasure of Sarawak" was organised by Forest Department Sarawak (FDS) on 26 and 27 June 2013 at Riverside Majestic Hotel in Kuching. The Seminar was officiated by Tan Sri Datuk Amar Hj Adenan Hj Satem, Minister in the Chief Minister's Office and Minister of Special Function, Sarawak. Approximately one hundred (100) participants from various State and Federal Government agencies, institutions of higher learning,

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), private sectors, the media fraternity and a representative each from Brunei and Indonesia attended the seminar.

The objectives of the seminar are:

1. To create awareness on the State's Government's effort in implementing HoB Initiative in

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Sarawak;

2. To serve as the platform to share the valuable opportunities in research and ecotourism within the HoB area; and
3. To enhance the capacity building and networking among the local and international scientists and researchers.

The Director of Forest Sarawak, Datu Haji Ali Yusop in his speech said that Sarawak has been working with Indonesia (Kalimantan) on two important trans-boundary biodiversity conservation projects funded by the International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO) in the Lanjak-Entimau Wildlife Sanctuary and Pulong Tau National Park areas.

A total of twenty (20) papers on research findings and expeditions various speakers from Forest Department Sarawak (FDS), Sarawak Forestry Corporation (SFC), Sarawak Biodiversity Center (SBC) Swinburne University of Technology (Sarawak) and Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) were presented in this 2-day Seminar.

As the HoB includes areas issued for harvesting and industrial tree plantations, Datu Haji Sudarsono Osman, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Resource

Planning and Environment, Sarawak in his closing remarks said that the involvement of all stakeholders inside the HoB boundary is important to ensure this initiative is successful.

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funded workshop on Law Enforcement Cooperation in conjunction with the next APEC Senior Officials Meeting in 2014 in China.

EGILAT members deliberated on the scope of laws relevant to the definition of illegal logging and acknowledged the complexity of the issue if the scope of laws has not been agreed upon by EGILAT members. The meeting agreed for members to share individual approach through presentation at the next meeting before any further in-depth discussions on the issue could be held.