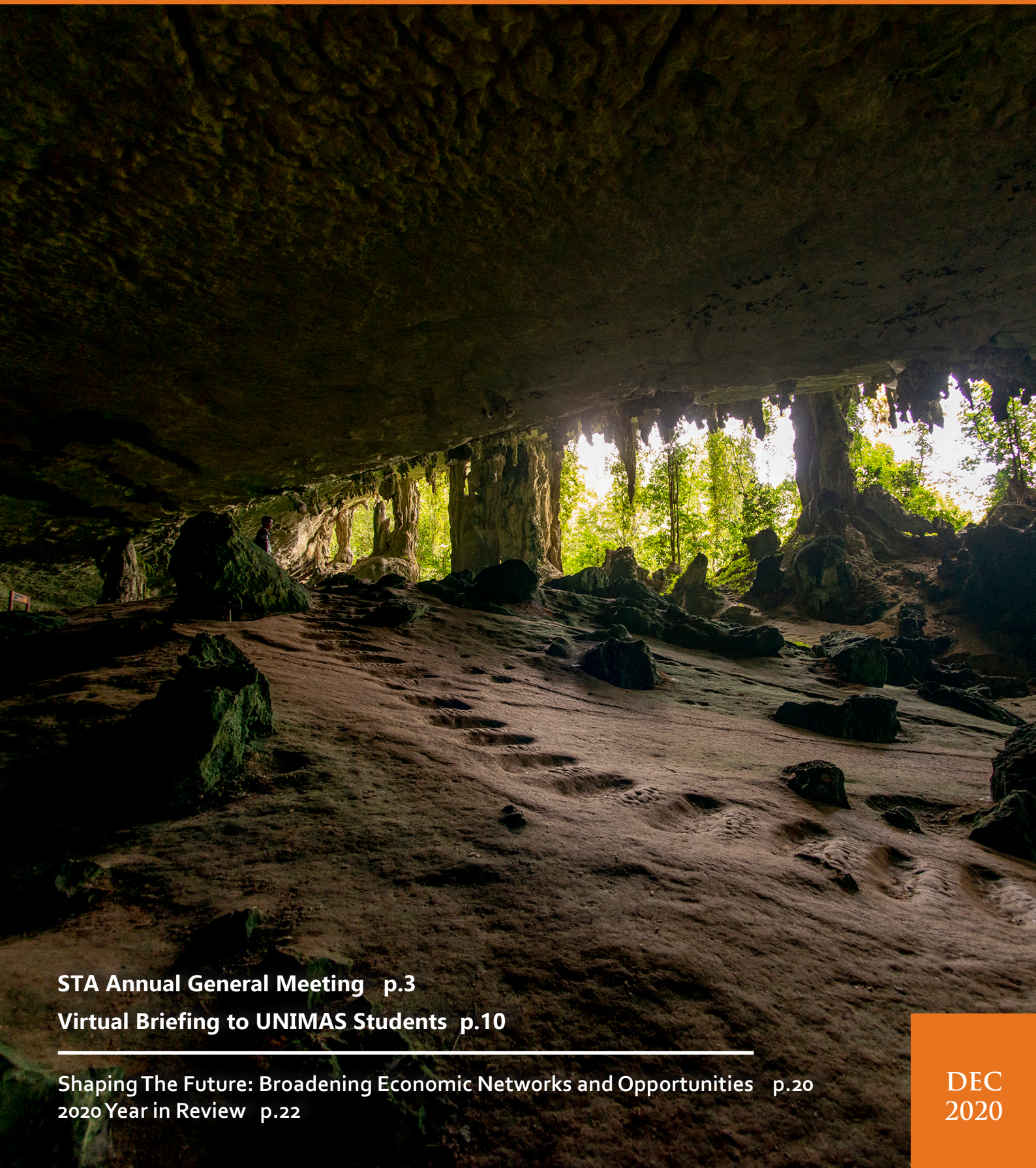


STA Review

Monthly Magazine of the Sarawak Timber Association
VOLUME 327 PPK 174/05/2013 (032756)



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*Niah Cave, Miri, Sarawak;
Photo credit Mr Liew Ted Ghee*

is a monthly magazine published by Sarawak Timber Association (STA) for its members. While every effort has been made to ensure that the information printed in this magazine is accurate and correct, neither STA nor its Council Members, Officers or Employees shall assume any responsibility or be made liable for any inaccuracies and errors printed; nor is such publication, unless otherwise stated, necessarily the views of STA, its Council Members, Officers or Employees. The contents of the STA Review may be reprinted with prior written permission from STA.

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EDITORIAL BOARD

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Members

*Annie Ting
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Tchin Boon Ling
Wong How Chu
Yii Yien Yien*

Published by

Sarawak Timber Association
11 Floor, Wisma STA,
26, Jalan Datuk Abang Abdul Rahim,
93450 Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia
Tel: ++ (60 82) 332 222
Fax: ++ (60 82) 487 888, 487 999
Email: sta@sta.org.my
Website: www.sta.org.my

Printed by

Lee Ming Press Sdn Bhd
No. 48, Jalan Ellis, P.O Box 3068,
93760 Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia
Tel : ++ (60 82) 253 303
Fax : ++ (60 82) 426 382
Email : sales@leeming.com.my

STA Annual General Meeting

The STA Annual General Meeting (AGM), which had been deferred twice from the initial date of 30 March 2020 due to unfavourable COVID-19 situation in Sarawak, was held on 28 December 2020 at Wisma STA, Kuching. The AGM was attended by representative from 137 member companies throughout Sarawak. Dato Henry Lau, Honorary Secretary, was elected to preside over the AGM in the absence of the Chairman, Pemanca Datuk Sir Wong Kie Yik as well as Vice Chairmen, Tan Sri Datuk Ling Chiong Ho and Mr David Tiong.

During the meeting, Dato Henry Lau presented the report of the Association's activities from year 2019 until the weeks leading up to the AGM as well as the Chairman's message. The meeting appointed auditors and public officers for the ensuing years and also dealt with matters relating to the subsidiary companies of the Association, namely STA Enterprises Sdn Bhd, STA Training Sdn Bhd, STA Mutual Sdn Bhd and STA Ventures Sdn Bhd.

Meanwhile, members attending the AGM also elected Council members for the term of 2020 and 2021, as well as voted to pass the proposed amendments to STA's constitution which amongst others included incorporating Bahasa Malaysia name of the Association into the STA emblem and its description.

由于受到砂州新冠疫情影响，被迫2次展延的本会2020年度会员大会，从原定于3月30日举行终于于2020年12月28日假古晋STA大厦召开。共有137间会员公司代表出席该大会。本会荣誉秘书拿督劉利康当选主持此大会。此外，出席大会的会员也推选本会2020年及2021年理事。



Revised STA emblem

Mesyuarat Agung Tahunan (AGM) STA, yang ditundakan dua kali dari tarikh asal iaitu 30 Mac 2020 berikutan situasi buruk COVID-19 di Sarawak, telah diadakan pada 28 December 2020 di Wisma STA, Kuching. AGM dihadiri oleh wakil-wakil daripada 137 syarikat-syarikat ahli STA.

Dato Henry Lau, Setiausaha Kehormat STA, dipilih untuk mempengerusikan AGM. Sementara itu, ahli-ahli yang menghadiri AGM juga telah memilih ahli-ahli Majlis untuk penggal 2020 dan 2021.

Chairman's Message for Annual General Meeting Year 2020

Yang Berbahagia Dato' Sri, Dato' Dato, Tuan Haji, Council members, members, ladies and gentlemen

Thank you Council and members for your support and attendance at our AGM especially at the time of pandemic. 2019 was a very tough year and the situation this year is further aggravated by the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. The timber industry of Sarawak was, and remains today, clouded in uncertainties. The continuous soaring of operational and administrative costs, stiff competition in weak global market as well as implementation of forestry policies which tend to undermine the interests of the economic community combined to pose extraordinary challenges to the industry players and the people it employs.

Despite all these difficulties, STA continues to support our members in treading the fine line between keeping our operations viable and mitigating the adverse impacts of COVID-19. Recognising the needs of our Government in the battle against COVID-19, STA had joined hands with Sarawak Timber Industry Development Corporation (STIDC) by donating COVID-19 test kits and personal protective equipment worth approximately RM2 million which are vital to protect our frontliners.

On behalf of our members, I would like to thank the Government for allowing the industry to operate under a strict Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) during the Movement Control Order period, as this has helped many of our members to stay afloat and minimise the impact on the employment. Nonetheless, the high operational and administrative costs have forced mills to either reduce production or close down. With decreasing production and rising unit costs, economies of scale are no longer achievable. Members are still trying hard to adjust to the current new operating norms. I have to highlight that those plywood mills that still remain in operation are only operating at 30% of their installed capacity. Hence, I urge the government to back our downstream members to address the predicament and tide them over this difficult times so that our members can sustain and go further downstream in producing value-added products towards achieving RM8 billion in export value by year 2030, as envisioned by the Government.

STA members have been putting considerable efforts into forest management certification (FMC) and its related activities despite being in these turbulent times. As of today, I am pleased to note that out of a total of twenty two (22) certified Forest Management Units (FMUs) and eight (8) certified Forest Plantation Management Units (FPMUs) in Malaysia, thirteen (13) FMUs and six (6) FPMUs are located in approximately 1.37 million hectares of forest area in Sarawak. In supporting the Sarawak Government's target of having all long-term forest timber licences certified by 2022, STA has allocated a considerable amount of resources to assist our members in their efforts to achieve this noble objective. However, we foresee FMC related activities to be even more challenging in the coming years for our members.

It is time for the Government, as the main driving force of FMC in Sarawak, to put in more efforts to promote fair market for certified timber to ensure that the price of certified timber commensurate with its value. Security of tenure is of utmost importance for the continuous upkeep of FMC. With that, I seek the Sarawak Government's understanding and expedite the issuance of 60-year licence as announced in 2015.

In consonance with our Government's forest restoration programme, STA members have set up nurseries within their concession areas to facilitate replanting of trees in their concession areas. They have also replanted trees within their areas either on their own or by engaging the local communities.

The industry's commitment in developing forest plantation is demonstrated through its huge capital investments and perseverance despite facing many setbacks and challenges over the years. Achieving the Sarawak Government's tree planting target of one (1) million hectares by 2025 is certainly a tall order for the industry, if issues such as land claims, lack of coordinated research and development, shortage of manpower, among others, are not resolved. I seek the Government's immediate intervention and assistance to overcome these issues in order to speed up the progress of planting. New investors who are to take over the existing LPFs will also face the same issues if these issues remain unresolved by relevant authorities.

Recently, STA has received feedback on the usage of logging roads by the Government's contractors for the rural development projects to transport materials and machineries to the project sites. Members recognise the effort of the Government and are in full support of the rural development projects. However, the upkeep the logging roads for the safety of all users are of paramount importance and the contractors as one of the users of the logging roads should be contributing towards the maintenance costs through a token sum of only RM0.50 per registered gross vehicle tonnage (BDM) per kilometre per round trip on the active logging roads and for bridge span of 30 metres and below with strict adherence to the terms and conditions. I seek the Government's understanding to have prior consultation if any projects are passing through the concession areas and on the need to collect this contribution to maintain logging roads for the safety of all road users.

In the last seventy (70) years, dedication and experiences have always been defined as the key successes for the industry. The industry now has to cope with many highly challenging situations that are disrupting daily operations and affecting the overall workforce. It is therefore crucial to reinforce our perseverance and to have strategic priorities that are clear cut. With combined efforts from the Government, our members and all stakeholders, I look forward to a stronger industry that will contribute in greater proportion towards Sarawak's economic and social growth.

Returning to the matters of the Association, this is an election year. Members shall elect Council members for a term of two (2) years, 2020 and 2021. I hope members will set aside their differences and elect members who are prepared to serve and lead the Association as Office Bearers and Council Members for the mutual benefits of all members and the well-being of the industry.

I would also like to thank all our members for your support, cooperation, tolerance and understanding, especially the outgoing Council members and I wish the incoming Council members a successful term. I would also like to thank Ms Annie Ting, Chief Executive Officer and her officers at the Secretariat for their hard work and I am confident the Secretariat will continue to support and provide excellent services to the new Council and Office Bearers to be elected today.

Thank you.

STA Council Meeting No 4/2020

The STA Council Meeting No 4/2020 was held immediately after the Annual General Meeting on 28 December 2020 at Wisma STA, Kuching, to elect the STA Office Bearers for the term of 2020 and 2021. The following are also the newly elected thirty-six (36) Council members and twelve (12) Permanent Council members:

本会2020年度第四次理事会会议于2020年12月28日在会员大会结束后假古晋STA大厦立即召开，推选本会2020年至2021年的执行理事。本会36位当选理事和12位常务理事在本文中列出。

Mesuarat Majlis STA Bil 4/2020 telah diadakan sejurus selepas Mesuarat Agung Tahunan pada 28 December 2020 di Wisma STA, Kuching, untuk memilih STA Office Bearers untuk penggal 2020 dan 2021. 36 ahli Majlis yang baru dipilih dan 12 ahli Majlis Tetap adalah seperti yang disenaraikan dalam artikel ini.

STA Office Bearers (2020-2021)

Chairman	Pemanca Datuk Sir Wong Kie Yik
Vice Chairman	Tan Sri Datuk Ling Chiong Ho
	Mr Tiong Chiong Ong, David
Honorary Secretary	Dato Lau Lee Kong, Henry
Honorary Treasurer	Mr Choo Kwong Hui, Philip

Permanent Council Members

Group	Permanent Member
KTS Group of Companies	Temenggong Dato Lau Lee Ming, Vincent
	Dato Lau Lee Kong, Henry
Rimbunan Hijau Group of Companies	Tan Sri Datuk Sir Tiong Hiew King
	Mr Tiong Chiong Ong, David
Samling Group of Companies	Datuk Yaw Chee Chik
	Mr Yap Fui Fook
Shin Yang Group of Companies	Tan Sri Datuk Ling Chiong Ho
	Mr Ling Chiong Sing
Ta Ann Group of Companies	Datuk Amar Haji Abdul Hamed Bin Haji Sepawi
	Dato Wong Kuo Hea
WTK Group of Companies	Pemanca Datuk Sir Wong Kie Yik
	Dato' Sri Wong Haw Yeong, Patrick

Forest Plantation

Mr Ling Kwong Hung, Peter (Category Chairman)
Ms Chieng Yew Luang, Margaret
Mr Ling Chii Huo

Furniture and Other Wood Working

Mr Yek Siew Liong (Category Chairman)
Mr Cheng Hwa Tang, Desmond

Hill Logging

Mr Tiang Chiin Yew (Category Chairman)
Ms Wong Fei Fei, Happy
Mr Ling Ting Sie
Mr Wong Ting Chung
Mr Tsen Teck Fen
Mr Ting Jack Hui
Mr Lau Ching Hoo
Mr Law Hui Kong, Kenny
Mr Goh Tee Khiang, Collin

Log Marketing

Ms Wong Haw Ing, Audrey (Category Chairperson)
Dato' Tiong Ing
Dato Hii King Chiong
Mr Ho Yam Kuan
Ms Lau Kor See, Adeline
Ms Lau Kor Ping
Mr Ting Dau Hu, William

Moulding

Mr Law Buong Hoo, Philip (Category Chairman)
Mr Tiong Chiong Chung

Panel Products

Mr Lau Hui Siew, John
Mr Lau Lee Kiong, Stephen
Mr Chieng Ai Ung, Vincent

Sawmilling

Datin Sri Wong Haw Bing, Annie (Category Chairperson)
Mr Wong Hee Sing
Mr Ting Sia Ing, John
Mr Lau Swee Nguong

Swamp Logging

Mr Choo Kwong Hui, Philip (Category Chairman)
Mr Lau Ngi Chong

Timber Products Marketing

Mr Hii Hium Ung (Category Chairman)
Mr Lau Tee Mei, Roland
Mr Teng Kheng Hong, Augustine
Mr Teng Kheng Huh, Patrick

STA Council Meeting No 3/2020

The STA Council held its Meeting No 3/2020 on 16 December 2020 via video conferencing. The Meeting was presided over by Pemanca Datuk Sir Wong Kie Yik, Chairman of the Association.

The Meeting received reports from various Category Committees and Working Committees. The Meeting also endorsed the decisions by the Hill Logging Category regarding usage of logging roads which included rate of maintenance fee and requirements of logging road users.

The Meeting approved the following four (4) Members who applied for financial contributions totaling RM550,000 for achieving forest management certification (FMC) under the Malaysian Timber Certification Scheme in their respective Forest Management Units:

	Company Name	Certified FMU	Size (hectares)	Date Certified
1	Solid Hartabina Sdn Bhd	Melatai-Para	49,524	27 November 2019
2	Billion Venture Sdn Bhd	Gaat-Mengiong	66,190	10 July 2020
3	Shin Yang Sdn Bhd	Danum	200,383	8 August 2020
4	Subur Tiasa Holdings Bhd	Mujong-Melinau	41,696	24 August 2020

This financial contribution shall be provided until year 2022 which is in line with the policy set by the Sarawak Government requiring all long-term forest timber licence areas in Sarawak to obtain FMC by year 2022.

The Meeting also approved the budget for the Association to facilitate and carry out the activities and work for year 2021. Matters pertaining to STA Training Sdn Bhd, STA Mutual Sdn Bhd and STA Enterprises Sdn Bhd were also discussed at this Meeting.

The Meeting deliberated on the financial incentive scheme under STA Training Sdn Bhd, whereby financial incentives of RM1,000 per workman is disbursed to member companies for each workman assessed to be competent in the five (5) prescribed forestry activities under *The Forests (Trained Workmen) Rules, 2015*. The Meeting decided to gradually phase out the financial incentive scheme by reducing the financial incentive to RM500 per workman in year 2022 before discontinuing the scheme on 1 January 2023.

The Meeting also approved one (1) new application for Associate Member and nine (9) applications for the conversion of Associate Member to Member.

The Meeting resolved to call the next Annual General Meeting of the Association on 30 March 2021 in accordance with Article 5(a) of the Articles of Association of the Association.

砂拉越木材公会（STA）理事会于2020年12月16日召开2020年度第3次线上会议。会议由公会主席本曼查拿督黄启晔爵士主持。

会议决议获取森林管理认证的财政捐助将提供到2022年为止，并逐步淘汰根据2015年森林（受训员工）法则规定的5项林业活动经评估获得胜任的员工的财政奖励计划，并于2023年1月1日终止该计划。

Majlis STA telah mengadakan Mesyuarat Bil. 3/2020 pada 16 Disember 2020 melalui persidangan video. Mesyuarat dipengerusikan oleh Pemanca Datuk Sir Wong Kie Yik, Pengerusi Persatuan.

Mesyuarat memutuskan bahawa sumbangan kewangan untuk ahli-ahli syarikat yang mencapai persijilan pengurusan hutan akan diberikan sehingga tahun 2022 dan secara beransur-ansur menghentikan skim insentif kewangan untuk pekerja yang dinilai kompeten dalam 5 aktiviti perhutanan yang ditetapkan di bawah *The Forest (Worked Workmen) Rules, 2015* sebelum menghentikan skim tersebut pada 1 Januari 2023.

The one (1) new application who has been approved as Associate member is:

	Company Name	Category	Official Representative	Proposer	Second
1	Hap Lee Fung Enterprise	Furniture & Other Woodworking	Mr Lai Chin Choi	Mr Lai Chin Fui	Mr Lai King Min

The nine (9) applications for the conversion of Associate Member to Member are:

	Company Name	Category
1	Power Brite Sdn Bhd	Hill Logging
2	Rela Raya Sdn Bhd	Hill Logging
3	Solid Hartabina Sdn Bhd	Hill Logging
4	Tropical Wood Trading Sdn Bhd	Log Marketing
5	Eden Wood Trading Sdn Bhd	Timber Products Marketing
6	Harigold Sdn Bhd	Timber Products Marketing
7	Kaliman Timber Corporation Sdn Bhd	Timber Products Marketing
8	Tropical Timber Marketing Sdn Bhd	Timber Products Marketing
9	Tropical Wood Marketing Sdn Bhd	Timber Products Marketing

Meetings of STA Subsidiary Companies

The subsidiary companies of STA, namely STA Mutual Sdn Bhd (STAM), STA Training Sdn Bhd (STAT) and STA Enterprises Sdn Bhd (STAE), held their respective Meetings via video conferencing on 2 December 2020.

The Meetings were presided over by Pemanca Datuk Sir Wong Kie Yik and are detailed as follows:

i. STAM

During the STA Board of Honorary Advisers (BHA) Meeting No 2/2020, the members of the BHA discussed and recommended various decisions to the Board of Directors (BOD) of STAM for approval.

This included the awarding of three (3) Bonded STA Scholarships for Academic Session 2019/2020 to (i) Mr Canolius Bundan anak Umpi who is pursuing Bachelor of Forestry Science at Faculty of Forestry and Environment, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Serdang Campus; (ii) Ms Magdalena anak Stephen who is studying Bachelor of Science with Honours (Plant Resources Science and Management) at Faculty of Resource Science and Technology, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak; and (iii) Mr Gan Chun Ping who is pursuing Bachelor of Engineering (Civil) at Swinburne University of Technology, Sarawak Campus.

Other decisions include (i) awarding of STA Best Graduating Student to Mr Muhammad Izzuddin Asyraf Bin Abdul Manan and STA Best Final Year Project Award to Ms Tan Hui Qi for the year 2020, both from Faculty of

Forestry and Environment, UPM, Serdang Campus; as well as (ii) financial assistances to be given to non-profit organisations and schools to support their activities.

The Meeting also agreed to continue using online platform to conduct scholarship interview sessions until the pandemic situation improves.

Subsequently, the STAM BOD Meeting No 2/2020 endorsed the decisions made by the BHA as well as deliberated on financial and administrative matters.

ii. STAT

During the STAT BOD Meeting No 2/2020, the STAT BOD was updated on training activities conducted by STAT from 25 September 2020 to 13 November 2020. A total of twenty-nine (29) workmen have been assessed and found competent from 23 October 2020 to 30 November 2020.

Subsequently, the Meeting also deliberated and approved other items, specifically pertaining to the financial and administrative matters. The Meeting was also updated on training and forestry matters such as *The Forests (Trained Workmen) Rules, 2015*; training arrangement during COVID-19 pandemic; and skills training offered by STAT.

The Meeting approved the financial incentive scheme for training of forestry workmen to all workmen assessed to be competent from 28 September 2020 to 12 November

2020 in the five (5) Prescribed Forest Activities (PFAs), i.e. (i) *Certificate in Tree Felling-Chainsaw (Natural Forest)*; (ii) *Certificate in Log Extraction – Tractor (Natural Forest)*; (iii) *Certificate in Log Loading – Front End Loader (Natural Forest)*; (iv) *Certificate in Clear-Fell Site Preparation – Chainsaw (Natural Forest)*; and (v) *Certificate in Mechanical Site Preparation – Excavator (Forest Plantation)*.

iii. STAE

The STAE BOD Meeting No 2/2020 deliberated and approved various items which included the tenancy of Wisma STA, maintenance of the building, as well as financial and administrative matters. The Meeting was also updated on the precautionary measures put in place to ensure the health and safety of the tenants and visitors of Wisma STA.

本公司子公司，STA Mutual 有限公司、STA Training 有限公司以及 STA Enterprises 有限公司于2020年12月2日召开董事会议。会议由邦曼查拿督黄启晔爵士主持，内容如本文英语版所示。

Syarikat-syarikat subsidiari STA, iaitu STA Mutual Sdn Bhd (STAM), STA Training Sdn Bhd (STAT) dan STA Enterprises Sdn Bhd (STAE) telah mengadakan Mesyuarat masing-masing melalui persidangan video pada 2 December 2020.

Mesyuarat dipengerusikan oleh Pemanca Datuk Sir Wong Kie Yik dan perincian perbincangan adalah seperti di dalam artikel.

STA Forest Plantation Committee Meeting No 3/2020

STA Forest Plantation Committee held its third meeting of the year on 3 December 2020 via video conferencing. The meeting invited Mr Semilan Ripot, Assistant Director (Revenue and Data Management Division), Forest Department Sarawak (FDS), to share with the Committee members on the standing tree volume method for royalty assessment of planted timbers.

According to Mr Semilan, FDS has conducted a study to develop a standing tree volume table for all planted species as well as established the working instruction for planted timber inventory using 10% sampling intensity. The standing tree volume method is catered for Licence for Planted Forests (LPF) holders who do not have weighbridge within their licensed area and the forest produce is to be consumed by the mill within the licensed area.

The meeting highlighted concerns and comments on the study as well as related working instructions for the consideration of FDS, and agreed to have another session to further discuss the concerns raised.

The meeting also received updates on matters related to the progress of various research and development projects funded by the Association, logging roads usage charges, directives from the Director of Forests and skills training for forest plantation activities.

本公司人工造林委员会于2020年12月3日举办了今年度第三次线上视频会议。

该会议邀请了砂森林局（FDS）助理总监（收入和数据管理部）瑟米兰先生与委员会成员分享有关用于种植木材特许权使用费评估的立木体积法。

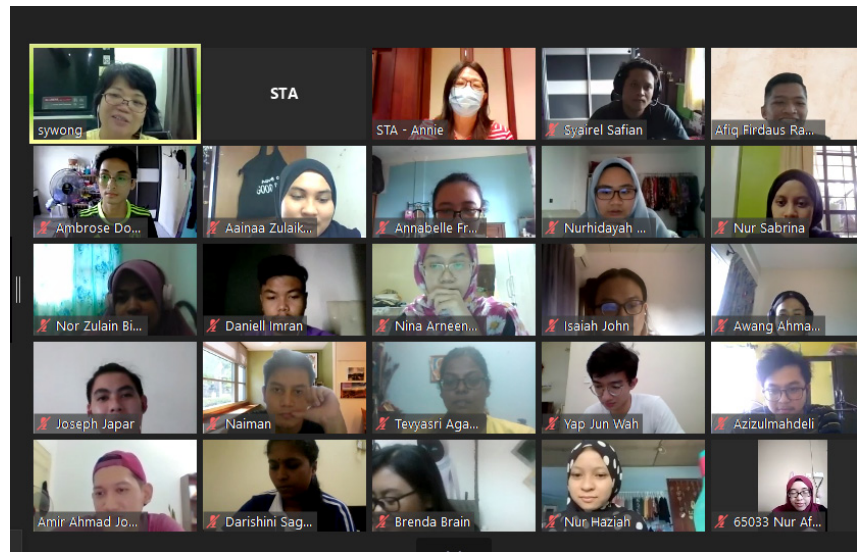
Jawatankuasa Perladangan Hutan STA telah mengadakan Mesyuarat ketiga untuk tahun ini pada 3 Disember 2020 melalui persidangan video.

Mesyuarat menjemput Encik Semilan Ripot, Penolong Pengarah (Bahagian Hasil dan Pengurusan Data), Jabatan Hutan Sarawak (FDS) untuk berkongsi dengan ahli jawatankuasa mengenai kaedah isipadu pokok berdiri untuk penilaian royalti kayu yang ditanam.

Virtual Briefing to UNIMAS Students

Over the years, STA has hosted visits from students of Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) where they get the opportunity to learn about the roles and functions of STA and obtain understanding of the forestry and timber industry in Sarawak. This is part and parcel of their forestry and wood science course at UNIMAS.

This year, in consideration of the COVID-19 pandemic, a group of thirty-two (32) students from the Faculty of Resource Science and Technology, undergoing the course of Wood Science and Protection, attended a virtual briefing organised by STA on 8 December 2020 to know more about the Association's works and the background of the industry. Also present at the virtual briefing was their lecturer, Associate Professor Dr Wong Sin Yeng.



Virtual briefing in progress

Ms Annie Ting, Chief Executive Officer of STA, briefed on (i) STA and its subsidiary companies; (ii) an overview of the timber industry in Sarawak which included the available resources from both natural and planted forests as well as their export performances; (iii) management of forest in Sarawak which included Sarawak's very own Sarawak Timber Legality Verification System, and Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) efforts; and (iv) challenges faced by the timber industry.

The group was also given a pictorial tour of the STA Exhibition Centre which serves as an education and promotion focal point for information related to the forestry and timber industry in Sarawak. Ms Ting encouraged the students to visit the Centre once the pandemic situation has improved.

The virtual briefing ended with a question and answer session. Various questions were raised during this session such as the roles of STA in SFM, issues on planted forests, career opportunities for the students and impacts of the pandemic on the industry.

多年来，本会接待了马来西亚砂拉越大学（UNIMAS）学生的造访，让他们有机会了解本会的角色和职能以及砂拉越的林业和木材工业。这是他们在 UNIMAS 林业和木材科学课程的一部分。

今年，因考虑到新冠肺炎疫情，一群来自资源科学与技术学院，正在就读木材科学与保护课程的32名学生于2020年12月8日参加了由本会举办的线上简报会，让他们进一步了解本会的工作和行业背景。他们的讲师黄欣燕（译音）副教授博士也出席了该线上简报会。

Selama bertahun-tahun, STA terus menerima lawatan daripada pelajar-pelajar Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) di mana mereka berpeluang untuk mengenali peranan dan fungsi STA serta memahami dengan lebih lanjut industri perhutanan dan perkayuan di Sarawak. Lawatan ini merupakan sebahagian daripada Kursus Sains Perhutanan dan Perkayuan mereka di UNIMAS.

Susulan wabak COVID-19, sekumpulan 32 pelajar daripada Fakulti Sains dan Teknologi Sumber yang mengikuti Kursus Sains dan Perlindungan Kayu, menghadiri taklimat maya yang dianjurkan oleh STA pada 8 Disember 2020 untuk mengetahui dengan lebih lanjut tentang tugas-tugas Persatuan dan latar belakang industri. Pensyarah Kursus, Profesor Madya Dr Wong Sin Yeng turut serta dalam taklimat maya tersebut.

Engagement Session with Members on Trained Workmen and Forestry Matters

STA Training Sdn Bhd (STAT) organised a series of Engagement Session with STA members through video conferencing on 18, 21 and 22 December 2020 which was guided by Ms Annie Ting, STAT Manager. The purpose of the sessions was to consult with members on training and forestry matters, especially pertaining to documentation of workmen and timeline for training. The sessions were participated by training coordinators and senior officers from STA member companies.

On documentation of workmen, members were advised to keep a logbook to record details of their workmen in the camp site. Timeline for training was also discussed at length during the sessions. Members also deliberated on training arrangements and procedures to minimise training interferences due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The sessions also noted that the “Train the Trainer Course” and “In-House Refresher Course” will be organised in the first quarter of 2021 with the aim to build up in-house training capacity. STA member companies can register their trained workmen to attend the courses.

STA培训有限公司 (STAT) 与本会会员于2020年12月18日、21日及22日进行了由STAT经理陈燕贞小姐引导的线上交流会。这些交流会的目的是就培训和林业事项与会员进行磋商，特别是有关受训员工的培训文件和时间表。

STA Training Sdn Bhd (STAT) menganjurkan beberapa Sesi Penglibatan bersama ahli STA melalui persidangan video pada 18, 21 and 22 Disember 2020 yang telah diketuai oleh Cik Annie Ting, Pengurus STAT.

Tujuan sesi tersebut adalah untuk berunding dengan ahli-ahli mengenai latihan dan perhutanan, terutamanya berkaitan dengan dokumentasi pekerja dan garis masa untuk latihan.

Meeting on Forest Department Sarawak Licensee Portal

Forest Department Sarawak (FDS) called a meeting on 29 December 2020 to discuss the FDS Licensee Portal. The meeting was attended by representatives from Sarawak Information Systems Sdn Bhd (SAINS) as well as STA Training Sdn Bhd (STAT). The meeting, held at Baitulmakmur II Building, Kuching, was chaired by Mr Afriezul Abdul Rahman, Senior Executive Forester of FDS.

The meeting was updated on the progress of the FDS Licensee Portal which is currently developed by SAINS. According to Mr Afriezul, the implementation of the portal will enable licensees to register all their workmen online and ensure that the records are up-to-date. Apart from that, training coordinators will also be required to submit the nominations for workmen's training and assessment through the portal in the future.

As a training provider to the forestry and timber industry, STAT will continue to collaborate with FDS and SAINS to ensure smooth development and implementation of the FDS Licensee Portal.



Meeting in progress

砂森林局 (FDS) 于2020年12月29日假其古晋总部召开会议商讨FDS执照持有者门户。砂拉越信息系统有限公司 (SAINS) 和 STA 培训有限公司 (STAT) 出席由 FDS 高级行政林务员阿菲祖先生主持的会议。

Jabatan Hutan Sarawak (FDS) telah mengadakan mesyuarat pada 29 December 2020 untuk membincangkan mengenai Portal Pemegang Lesen FDS. Mesyuarat dihadiri oleh wakil-wakil daripada Sarawak Information Systems Sdn Bhd (SAINS) serta STA Training Sdn Bhd (STAT). Mesyuarat diadakan di Bangunan Baitulmakmur II, Kuching, dan dipengerusikan oleh Encik Afriezul Abdul Rahman, Pemelihara Hutan FDS.

Seminar on Engineered Timber Product 2020

The Seminar on Engineered Timber Product 2020 was successfully organised by the Sarawak Timber Industry Development Corporation (STIDC) in collaboration with Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Shah Alam on 7 November 2020, at the Waterfront Hotel, Kuching. The objective of the seminar was to promote the benefits and use of engineered timber products for building structures especially in Sarawak. About fifty (50) participants from various Government agencies, associations as well as timber industry players attended the 1-day seminar.

In his opening speech, Datu Haji Len Talif Salleh, Assistant Minister of Urban Planning, Land Administration and Environment cum Director of STIDC Board of Management, said that in line with the Sarawak Government's aspiration of becoming a developed State by 2030, the Sarawak Government has set a target of RM8 billion in export value of timber and timber products.

To achieve this target, he hoped that the industry players would rise to the challenge and further explore the potential of developing the State's timber products, especially engineered timber products which is commonly used worldwide as part of building components. He added that the world market for engineered timber products is expected to reach a total value of US\$41.27 billion by 2022, and that there is huge prospect for Sarawak to develop relevant products, particularly using timber from its planted forests.

Furthermore, Datu Haji Len Talif also stressed that Sarawak needs to forge partnerships with institutions of higher learning, research agencies and industry players to develop the engineered timber products in Sarawak. He revealed that the Sarawak Government through STIDC has taken up few initiatives to enhance Sarawak's capacity building in terms of knowledge and technologies. These included collaboration with Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) to promote and share knowledge about engineered timber products, as well as teaming up with Woodsfield Glulam Manufacturing Sdn Bhd, a Johor-based company specialising in engineered timber products, to carry out research and development on utilising Acacia species from Sarawak's planted forests to produce engineered timber products.

On Sarawak's export value of timber and timber products, Datu Haji Len Talif shared that the total export earnings for the third quarter of 2020 has dropped by 20% as compared to the same period last year. Hence, he said that the Sarawak Government is taking initiatives and actions to ensure that the timber industry continues to grow and remain relevant. Adding that the future of the industry is everyone's concern, he urged all parties to work together and hoped that the industry players would continue to strive for the best in ensuring vibrancy of the timber industry. The Sarawak Government will also continue to find new ways to generate and boost income of the industry in order to contribute further to Sarawak.

A total of six (6) papers were presented by speakers from Construction Industry Development Board Malaysia, Institute for Infrastructure Engineering and Sustainable Management, Sarawak Planted Forest Sdn Bhd, STIDC and UiTM, touching on current status of timber industry in Sarawak, engineered wood products in relation to mass timber construction, potential timber from planted forests, current scenario and challenges on application of engineered timber products, timber structure design based on MS 544 and Eurocode 5 as well as potential of glued laminated timber using Malaysian tropical hardwood as alternative to timber railway sleepers.



Opening speech by Datu Haji Len Talif Salleh

砂拉越木材工业发展机构 (STIDC) 联合莎阿南玛拉工艺大学 (UiTM) 于2020年11月7日假古晋河滨酒店成功举办了2020年工程木材产品研讨会。该研讨会旨在推广工程木材产品在建筑结构中的好处和用途, 特别是在砂拉越。大约五十名来自各政府机构, 协会和木材行业的参与者参加了该为期1天的研讨会。

Seminar Produk Kejuruteraan Kayu 2020 telah dianjurkan secara jayanya oleh Perbadanan Kemajuan Perusahaan Kayu Sarawak (STIDC) dengan kerjasama Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Shah Alam pada 7 November 2020, di Hotel Waterfront, Kuching.

Tujuan Seminar adalah untuk mempromosi manfaat dan penggunaan produk kejuruteraan kayu untuk struktur bangunan terutamanya di Sarawak. Seramai 50 peserta daripada pelbagai agensi Kerajaan, persatuan dan pemain industri kayu menghadiri Seminar tersebut.

Briefing on Study to Evaluate Potential of Producing Biomass Pellet from Oil Palm Trunk and *Acacia mangium*

Biomass pellets can become an important renewable energy industry source in the future. To this end, Sarawak Timber Industry Development Corporation (STIDC), in collaboration with Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM) conducted a study on the potential of producing biomass pellet from oil palm trunk (OPT) and *Acacia mangium*. On 17 December 2020, a briefing, chaired by Tuan Haji Hamzah Haji Morshidi, Assistant General Manager (Resource Planning) of STIDC, was conducted via video conferencing to disseminate findings of the study to participants from various Government agencies, research institutes, non-government organisations and private sector.

Mr Puad Bin Elham, Senior Research Officer at the Bioenergy Laboratory, Biomass Technology Programme of the Forest Products Division, FRIM, highlighted the opportunities and challenges faced in developing the OPT pellet industry in Malaysia. He also described the pellet production process, technology and facilities. He

then shared the quality and properties of the biomass pellet made from OPT and combination of OPT and *Acacia mangium*. Comparison of the chemical, physical and energy properties between the OPT pellet with other commercial pellets was also shared. As a preliminary conclusion, biomass pellet produced from *Acacia mangium* mixed with 30% or less OPT is deemed to meet the standard properties of commercial pellet that is available in the market.

During the discussion session, the source of OPT material, production costs and market opportunity of OPT pellet were highlighted.

砂拉越木材企业发展机构 (STIDC) 联合马来西亚森林研究所 (FRIM) 进行一项油棕树干 (OPT) 和大叶相思树生产物质颗粒的潜能研究。STIDC 资源策划助理总经理哈芝哈姆扎先生于2020年12月17日通过线上研讨会向参与者分享该研究的成果。

Perbadanan Kemajuan Perusahaan Kayu Sarawak (STIDC), bekerjasama dengan Institut Penyelidikan Perhutanan Malaysia (FRIM) melakukan kajian mengenai potensi menghasilkan pelet biomas dari batang kelapa sawit (OPT) dan *Acacia mangium*. Pada 17 Disember 2020, satu taklimat yang dipengerusikan oleh Tuan Haji Hamzah Haji Morshidi, Penolong Pengurus Besar (Perancangan Sumber) STIDC telah diadakan melalui persidangan video untuk menyebarkan penemuan kajian kepada para peserta.

Meeting on the Usage of Logging Roads for Government Rural Projects

The Ministry of Urban Development and Natural Resources (MUDeNR) called a meeting on 17 December 2020 at their office in Wisma Sumber Alam, Kuching, to further discuss STA's proposals on the usage of logging roads for Government rural projects following their meeting with Datuk Amar Haji Awang Tengah Ali Hasan, Deputy Chief Minister of Sarawak cum Minister of Urban Development and Natural Resources II.

Mdm Tessy Nimos, Principal Assistant Secretary of MUDeNR, provided updates on the decisions proposed during their meeting with the Deputy Chief Minister and requested STA to look into the usage of (i) non-active logging roads within valid forest concessions; (ii) bridges with a span of 200 metres or more; and (iii) logging roads for Rural Transformation Projects (RTPs) and projects utilising cess collected by the Sarawak Government.

Consequently, STA Hill Logging members met on 23 December 2020 via video conferencing to further deliberate on these requests and then submitted the related proposals to MUDeNR on 31 December 2020.

城市发展与天然资源部 (MUDeNR) 在与砂拉越副首席部长兼城市发展和天然资源第二部长拿督阿玛哈芝阿旺登雅讨论后于2020年12月17日假古晋资源大厦召开会议以进一步讨论本会相关政府乡村发展项目中涉及伐木道路使用的提案。

Kementerian Pembangunan Bandar dan Sumber Asli (MUDeNR) mengadakan mesyuarat pada 17 Disember 2020 di pejabatnya di Wisma Sumber Alam, Kuching, untuk membincangkan dengan lebih lanjut cadangan STA mengenai penggunaan jalan pembalakan untuk projek luar bandar Kerajaan berikutan pertemuan mereka dengan Datuk Amar Haji Awang Tengah Ali Hasan, Timbalan Ketua Menteri Sarawak merangkap Menteri Pembangunan Bandar dan Sumber Asli II.

Sharing Session on Forest and Landscape Climate Finance Investments in Sarawak

Forest Department Sarawak (FDS) in collaboration with Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) implemented a project entitled “*Developing an Operational Example of a Jurisdictional-Level Platform for Sarawak, Malaysia for the Management and Monitoring of Forest and Landscape Climate Finance Investments*”. The project aimed to produce (i) Operational Plan to manage and monitor climate finance investments opportunities; and (ii) Decision Making Tool to guide strategic climate finance investments in forest landscapes. On 14 December 2020, both drafts for Operational Plan and Decision Making Tool were shared in a session conducted by FDS at Baitulmakmur II Building, Kuching, to obtain feedback and comments on the outputs of the project.

In the welcoming speech by Director of Forests, Datu Hamden Bin Haji Mohammad, he said that the session served as an important platform to discuss climate finance which is essential in addressing climate change issues and support sustainable development. He added that deforestation and land degradation are the main causes of carbon emission while sustainable forest management is imperative to mitigate climate change. He also informed that the Sarawak Government has undertaken various efforts towards sustainable forest management, one of which is the establishment of Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) Programme. FLR has emerged to be a promising alternative concept that can holistically improve rural livelihood and preserve forests and minimise land degradation through introducing new host for carbon in the soil.

However, as FLR requires huge investment which often exceeds the budget of national governments, international holders and multilateral development banks, climate finance investment is seen as an opportunity for private and financial sectors to be involved and fill the investment gap. According to Datu Hamden, climate finance includes multiple financial mechanisms, instruments and products that aim to deliver environmental and social benefit combined with financial return. The objectives of climate finance investment are to (i) reduce carbon emission from deforestation and forest degradation; (ii) enhance forest carbon stock; (iii) strengthen forestry governance, at the same time reduce poverty and improve the lives of forest-dependent indigenous people and local community; (iv) reduce biodiversity loss; (v) increase resilience of forest ecosystem to climate variability and changes; and (vi) improve governance of forestry resources. Ending his speech, Datu Hamden hoped that the session will provide Sarawak Government with useful information towards implementation of the FLR project.

The Sharing Session featured four (4) papers as listed below:

Paper 1: Leveraging Forest and Landscape Climate Finance in the Asia-Pacific Region

by Mr Ben Vickers, FAO

Mr Vickers shared the technical and strategic support for forest and land-based mitigation strategies provided by FAO, initiatives and financing from FAO regional office, and FAO partnership with FDS on climate investment in forest landscapes.

Paper 2: Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation-plus (REDD+) Financing: Current Landscape and Opportunities?

by Mr Richard McNally, FAO

Mr McNally presented on the overview of global REDD+ finance landscape, Article 6 under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Paris Agreement, green climate fund pilot programme, voluntary carbon markets, carbon offsetting and reduction scheme for international aviation, as well as opportunities and recommendations for Sarawak on climate finance investments.

Paper 3: Draft Operational Plan for Climate Finance Investments

by Mr Dawend Jiwan and Mr Mohamad Muhaimin B Zakaria, FDS

Both presenters shared the baseline assessment of jurisdictional sustainability for Sarawak, relevant policies and legal framework leading to climate finance investments in Sarawak, the proposed forest landscape restoration implementation process, and implementation of agro-forestry / community forest.

Paper 4: Recommended Structure and Approach to the Decision-making and Data Management Platform

by Ms Josephine Wong, FDS

Ms Wong presented on the spatial planning protocols for forest landscape restoration, review of existing mapping / forest monitoring in Sarawak and other available data and gaps.

The session received physical and virtual participation from personnel from the Government agencies and non-governmental organisations. Both drafts are currently subject to comment before it is finalised.

砂拉越森林局 (FDS) 与粮食和农业组织 (FAO) 进行一项课题为“为马来西亚砂拉越制定一个司法平台的操作示例, 以管理和监测森林和景观气候融资投资”计划。该计划的目的是制定 (i) 管理和监测气候融资投资机会的业务计划和 (ii) 指导森林景观气候融资投资战略的决策工具。

FDS 也于2020年12月14日在古晋 Baitulmakmur II 大厦举办研讨会分享该业务计划和决策工具的草案, 并希望获得相关项目成果的反馈和评论。

Jabatan Hutan Sarawak (FDS) dengan kerjasama Pertubuhan Makanan dan Pertanian (FAO) melaksanakan projek bertajuk “*Membangunkan Contoh Operasi bagi Platform Peringkat-Perundangan untuk Sarawak, Malaysia bagi Pengurusan dan Pemantauan Pelaburan Pembiayaan Iklim Hutan dan Lanskap*”. Projek ini bertujuan untuk menghasilkan (i) Rancangan Operasi untuk mengurus dan memantau peluang pelaburan kewangan iklim; dan (ii) Alat Membuat Keputusan ke arah pelaburan kewangan iklim yang strategik bagi lanskap hutan.

Pada 14 Disember 2020, kedua-dua draf untuk Rancangan Operasi dan Alat Membuat Keputusan telah dikongsikan dalam sesi yang dianjurkan oleh FDS di Bangunan Baitulmakmur II, Kuching bagi mendapatkan maklum balas dan komen.

National Stakeholder Consultation on Draft 2 of Malaysian National Interpretation for the Management and Monitoring of High Conservation Values

The Draft 2 of Malaysian National Interpretation for the Management and Monitoring of High Conservation Values (HCV) incorporating inputs from the first public consultation underwent another round of 30-day public consultation from 7 December 2020 to 6 January 2021. As part of the public consultation, the Proforest Southeast Asia conducted a virtual national stakeholder consultation from 8 to 10 December 2020 to seek further inputs from the Technical Working Group members and HCV practitioners.

At the stakeholder consultation, Mr Surin Suksuwan, Regional Director of Proforest Southeast Asia, updated the progress and discussed with participants on the draft document. He mentioned that this national interpretation is the second document being developed for the HCV Malaysia toolkit targeting larger commodity producers, i.e. palm oil and forestry sectors. The first document “*Malaysian National Interpretation for the Identification of HCV*” was developed and published in 2018.

This draft document is prepared based on the “*Common Guidance for the Management and Monitoring of HCV*” developed by the HCV Resource Network and with technical inputs from specialists, relevant stakeholders and the Technical Working Group members. The document aims to assist management unit to maintain and, where possible, to enhance the significant and critical environmental and social values, as well as to monitor the implementation of HCV management strategies and its management goals. The outcomes from the HCV monitoring will provide basis for adaptive management interventions and gradual build-up of information about the management unit and the HCV present as well as to facilitate continuous improvement.

Besides the national stakeholder consultation, three (3) other sessions on salticks, human-elephant conflicts, non-timber forest products were also held from 21 to 22 December 2020 to further discussed the legislative requirements and management practices in the three (3) regions of Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak.

纳入第一次公众咨询意见的马来西亚高保护价值 (HCV) 管理和监测国家解释法 (草案2) 进行了另一轮从2020年12月7日至2021年1月6日为期30天的公众咨询。作为公众咨询的一部分, 东南亚区益林国际于2020年12月8日至10日举办了线上全国利益相关者咨询, 以获取技术工作组成员和HCV从业者更多的意见。

Draf 2 Tafsiran Nasional Malaysia untuk Pengurusan dan Pemantauan Nilai Konservasi Tinggi (HCV) yang merangkumi input daripada perundingan awam yang pertama menjalani satu lagi sesi perundingan awam selama 30 hari dari 7 Disember 2020 hingga 6 Januari 2021.

Sebagai sebahagian daripada perundingan awam, Proforest Asia Tenggara mengadakan satu perundingan pihak berkepentingan nasional secara maya dari 8 hingga 10 Disember 2020 untuk mendapatkan input lebih lanjut daripada ahli Kumpulan Kerja Teknikal dan pengamal HCV.

Webinar Sharing Session: Biodiversity and Conservation Management

On 21 December 2020, the Ministry of Urban Development and Natural Resources (MUDeNR) organised a webinar sharing session themed *"Biodiversity and Conservation Management"* with the objectives to discuss the role and function of Sarawak Government agencies and their collaboration with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in preserving and managing biodiversity in Sarawak.

Datu Haji Len Talif Salleh, Assistant Minister of Urban Planning, Land Administration and Environment, officiated the virtual knowledge sharing session. He commended MUDeNR for their effort to create public awareness on the importance of biodiversity conservation and environmental stewardship by disseminating proper knowledge on the subject matter and promoting sustainable development in Sarawak.

Speakers from MUDeNR, Sarawak Forestry Corporation (SFC), Forest Department Sarawak (FDS), Sarawak Biodiversity Centre (SBC), Sarawak Research and Development Council (SRDC) and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Malaysia contributed to the sharing session, which was joined by more than 100 participants from various States, Federal ministries, Government agencies, department, institute of higher learning and NGOs.

Mr Oswald Braken, Deputy CEO of SFC, talked about past, present and future of biodiversity conservation in Sarawak and highlighted that, with effect from 1 January 2020, the Sarawak Government has made SFC a full fledged agency to look after national parks, nature reserves and wildlife sanctuaries. He added that the implementation of biodiversity conservation in Sarawak is influenced by multilateral environmental agreements that Malaysia is signatories to such as Ramsar Convention, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

Meanwhile, Mr Peter Sawal, Special Administrative Officer (Biodiversity and Environment), gave a more general overview of what biodiversity conservation managements are. On the subject of economic valuation of environmental services, Datu Haji Len Talif Salleh contributed by drawing from the example of Rajang Mangroves National Park, which was converted to produce wood chips in the 1970s. However, in the late 1980s, a study on the economic benefit of this conversion by the Sarawak Government has led to the decision to stop the conversion and preserve the mangroves as a source of marine ecosystem as this was found to benefit the community at large.

Mdm Madeline Ak George Pau, Assistant Director of Forests (Constitution and Conservation) of FDS, with experience and knowledge on sustainable forest management, international affairs and community engagement, highlighted the various conservation efforts undertaken by FDS. This is in the likes of making forest management certification mandatory for all long-term timber licence holders by 2022, Heart of Borneo initiative, research on flora and fauna as well as gazettment of Permanent Forest Estates and gazettment of Totally Protected Areas in the past before it was handed over to SFC in 2020.

Mdm Jadyr Anak Nicholas Ningkan, Administrative Officer of SBC, shared about implementation of Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) as well as the experiences of SBC in carrying out ABS. In Sarawak, ABS implementation began in 2001 and the development of framework for ABS and Prior Informed Consent (PIC) only started after Nagoya Protocol was adopted in 2010. She also shared that Sarawak is the first State in Malaysia to enact a biodiversity law, when the Sarawak Biodiversity Centre Ordinance was enacted in 1997. The Ordinance was amended in 2014 for provision on the requirement of ABS and the Sarawak Biodiversity Regulation was subsequently amended to strengthen the procedures on PIC, which needs to be obtained prior to the collection of biological resources associated with traditional knowledge.

Associate Professor Ts Dr Peter Morin Nissom, General Manager of SRDC, shared the three (3) main functions of SRDC which are to (i) support, stimulate and facilitate research and development (R&D) in Sarawak; (ii) coordinate, direct and monitor research among Government agencies and departments as well as educational institutions; and (iii) enhance research standards and capabilities as well as facilitate commercialisation of research outcomes. The Council, established in 2017 as a statutory body, envisions to create a healthy, compatible and competitive world class R&D ecosystem for Sarawak.

Dr Jason Hon, WWF Malaysia Head of Sarawak Conservation Programme, in his presentation, highlighted that the alternative views of the NGOs are equally important in nation building and sustainable development and their perspective can help Sarawak Government to achieve its conservation agenda. He added that the long term goal of WWF Malaysia is to have the forests to be recognised for their ecosystem services and values and for all species within our watch to remain in existence and not go into extinction.

砂城市发展与天然资源部 (MUDeNR) 於2020年12月21日举办生物多样性与保护管理线上研讨分享会。此分享会旨予讨论砂拉越政府机构的角色与功能以及它们与非政府组织 (NGO) 在保护和管理砂拉越生物多样性方面的合作。

分享会的讲员来自 MUDeNR, 砂林业机构 (SFC), 砂森林局 (FDS), 砂生物多样性中心 (SBC), 砂研究与发展理事会 (SRDC) 以及马来西亚世界自然基金会 (WWF)。

Pada 21 Disember 2020, Kementerian Pembangunan Bandar dan Sumber Asli (MUDeNR) menganjurkan sesi perkongsian webinar bertema “Pengurusan Biodiversiti dan Pemuliharaan” dengan objektif untuk membincangkan peranan dan fungsi agensi Kerajaan Sarawak dan kerjasama mereka dengan badan bukan kerajaan (NGOs) dalam memelihara dan mengurus kepelbagaian biologi di Sarawak.

Penceramah-penceramah daripada MUDeNR, Perbadanan Perhutanan Sarawak (SFC), Jabatan Hutan Sarawak (FDS), Sarawak Biodiversity Center (SBC), Sarawak Research and Development Council (SRDC) dan World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Malaysia turut serta dalam sesi perkongsian tersebut.

State-level Greening Malaysia Programme



The Chief Minister of Sarawak planting a Belian tree at Bukit Siol, Kuching

The Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources has initiated the national Greening Malaysia Programme (GMP) to plant 100 million trees from 2021 to 2025. The launching of the state-level GMP was organised by Forest Department Sarawak (FDS) and Kuching North City Hall on 23 December 2020 at Bukit Siol, Kuching.

The Chief Minister of Sarawak, Datuk Patinggi (Dr) Abang Haji Abdul Rahman Zohari Bin Tun Datuk Abang Haji Openg, mentioned that Sarawak Government is confident that it can fulfil its target of planting 35 million trees in five (5) years. On average, each year for the next 5 years, as many as seven (7) million trees will be planted throughout Sarawak. He shared that Sarawak's Forest Landscape Restoration Programme also supports this national programme. He also shared that the programme will be implemented through various logging areas, forest plantations, forest reserve areas, fully protected areas, native customary rights (NCR) lands and privately-owned lands. The Chief Minister called on timber companies to replant trees to replace the ones that were harvested from Sarawak's forests. He said that FDS has come up with a forest restoration model and that, through this model, directives have been issued to timber companies to take part in the programme.

During the launching ceremony, the Chief Minister planted a Belian tree that has been declared as Sarawak's heritage tree. The Sarawak Government will allocate at least one (1) hectare in the area of Bukit Siol to become a modern and well-planned park consisting of Belian trees, while other locations will also be identified for similar purposes.

Kementerian Tenaga dan Sumber Asli telah memulakan Program Penghijauan Malaysia (GMP) kebangsaan untuk menanam 100 juta pokok dari 2021 hingga 2025.

Pelancaran GMP peringkat negeri telah dianjurkan oleh Jabatan Hutan Sarawak (FDS) dan Dewan Bandaraya Kuching Utara pada 23 December 2020 di Bukit Siol, Kuching.

马来西亚能源及天然资源部已经开始国家绿化马来西亚计划 (GMP), 从2021至2025年种植1亿棵树。砂森林局 (FDS) 及古晋北市政局于2020年12月23日假古晋 Bukit Siol 推展州级 GMP。

Briefing on Incentives & Financings to Encourage IR 4.0

Stakeholders from the forestry and timber industry including STA were invited to an online briefing session on 22 December 2020 by the Malaysian Timber Industry Board (MTIB). The aim of the session was to help the industry better understand the incentives and financings provided by the Government in moving the country towards Industrial Revolution 4.0 (IR 4.0).

The session was officiated by Cik Hajah Robiyah Haji Husin, Deputy Director-General (Management & Operation) of MTIB. In her opening speech, Cik Hajah said that IR 4.0 is treated as an important agenda by the Government and that a total of RM210 million



*Opening speech by Cik Hajah Robiyah Haji Husin,
Deputy Director-General (Management & Operation) of MTIB*

has been allocated from 2019 to 2021 to support its transition and migration. IR 4.0 is not only seen as a way to achieve Malaysia's vision of becoming a high-income country, it is also seen as a solution to overcome issues of human labour which will change the future of the workforce. According to her, it is estimated that about 60% of all occupations have at least 30% of activities which could be automated, and that automation could increase productivity growth on a global basis by 0.8% to 1.4% annually.

Cik Hajah mentioned that the Government, through its short term Economic Recovery Plan (PENJANA), has allocated loans and grants totalling RM700 million to enable companies to subscribe to or use services related to digitalisation of businesses. This amount is divided into (i) RM100 million small and medium enterprises (SME) Digital Matching Grant for collaboration with telecommunication companies; (ii) RM500 million SME Technology Transformation Fund as simple loans; and (iii) RM100 million Smart Automation Grant where every eligible company receives a grant of up to RM1 million.

On the National Timber Industry Policy (NATIP) which is expiring this year, she said that MTIB has laid out a strategic action plan for the country's timber industry post 2020. This is to ensure the direction of the industry is in line with the 12th Malaysian Plan (12MP) and the increasingly challenging economic situation. She added that the timber export target under the 12MP is RM28 billion by year 2025.

During the session, IR 4.0 related incentives and financings available under governmental bodies such as Malaysia Productivity Corporation, Malaysian Investment Development Authority, Malaysian Industrial Development Finance Berhad, Malaysian Technology Development Corporation Sdn Bhd were presented and discussed.

马来西亚木材工业委员会（MTIB）邀请森林与木材企业利益相关者包括砂拉越木材公会（STA）参与于2020年12月22日举办的线上简报会。

该简报会的目的是帮助企业更了解政府为推动国家迈向工业革命4.0（IR4.0）所提供的奖励和资金。

Pemegang Taruh daripada industri perhutanan dan perkayuan termasuk STA dijemput ke sesi taklimat secara atas talian pada 22 December 2020 oleh Lembaga Perindustrian Kayu Malaysia (MTIB).

Matlamat sesi tersebut adalah untuk membantu industri lebih memahami insentif dan pembiayaan yang disediakan oleh Kerajaan bagi memajukan negara ke arah Revolusi Industri 4.0 (IR 4.0).

DF Circular No 6/2020: The Directive on Trained Workmen

STA had received a DF Circular No 6/2020 with reference number (53) JHS/100-1/8/104/Jld.1 dated 24 December 2020 from the Forest Department Sarawak on 29 December 2020 addressed to all Holders of License, Contractors and Employers, and copied to STA on the above subject.

The following is an excerpt of the above-mentioned circular, for your information:

1. Please be informed that with effect from 1st January 2021, the period of six (6) months are hereby given to all licensees, contractors, and employers to hire, engage, or appoint workmen who have successfully completed training courses in all prescribed activities as listed in the First Schedule of the Forests (Trained Workmen) Rules, 2015 (as attached herewith).
2. Action shall be taken with no further notice against non-compliance of the Forests Ordinance, 2015 and its subsidiaries related to the employment of trained workmen, upon lapse of the above period.
3. The DF Circular No. 6/2015 dated 22 May 2015 and DF Circular No. 11/2015 dated 21 September 2015 are hereby revoked.

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FIRST SCHEDULE (Rules 2 and 4)

TRAINING COURSES

- (a) Certificate in Tree Felling
- (b) Certificate in Log Extraction
- (c) Certificate in Log Loading
- (d) Certificate in Clear-fell Site Preparation
- (e) Certificate in Mechanical Site Preparation
- (f) Others

First Schedule of the Forests (Trained Workmen) Rules, 2015

STA telah menerima Surat Pekeliling DF Bil 6/2020 mengenai perkara di atas dengan nombor rujukan (53) JHS/100-1/8/104/Jld.1 bertarikh 24 December 2020 daripada Jabatan Hutan Sarawak pada 29 December 2020 yang ditujukan kepada semua Pemegang Lesen, Kontraktor dan Majikan, serta disalinkan kepada STA.

Petikan dari pekeling tersebut adalah seperti yang disenaraikan dalam artikel ini.

本会于2020年12月29日接获来自砂州森林局于2020年12月24日所发布的编号6/2020通告。该通告致函于所有执照持有者、承办商和雇主，并提供本会有关事项的复本。

以上通告的摘录如英文版所列。

Titled “*Shaping The Future: Broadening Economic Networks and Opportunities*”, the first webinar of the Export Excellence Awards (EEA) 2021 Webinar Series was held on 15 December 2020 by Star Media Group.

The highlights of the webinar included (i) impact of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) free trade agreement on Malaysia and ways Malaysian exporters can take advantage of the RCEP; (ii) managing trade risks and benefits of trade financing; as well as (iii) outlook and strategies to tap into new markets.

Dato’ Fu Ah Kiow, Chairman of Star Media Group, in his welcoming address, was delighted to note the significant development of the RCEP which was signed on 15 November 2020 by fifteen (15) countries in the Asia Pacific region. He pointed out that Southeast Asian countries including Malaysia will benefit significantly from RCEP as this would open up more market access to not only existing Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) market, but also non-ASEAN members of RCEP, especially China and Japan. In addition, favourable rules of origin of RCEP will also attract foreign investment into Malaysia and other member countries. To further benefit from the opportunities under RCEP, he also encouraged exporters to adopt technology and strengthen human resources to improve efficiency, productivity and competitiveness.

Referring to a working paper released by the Peterson Institute for International Economics, Dato’ Fu shared that RCEP could add USD209 billion annually to the world income and about USD500 billion to the world trade by year 2030. Understanding the importance of RCEP, he said the Star Media Group will continue to provide up-to-date news and information about the agreement for the readers and the business community. On the EEA, he encouraged all exporters in Malaysia to challenge themselves and put their companies up for the award so that they can analyse and review the strengths, weaknesses and progress of their company.

In the opening address by Mr Abrar A Anwar, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Standard Chartered Bank Malaysia, he stated that RCEP will be able to give the Malaysian economy a much needed boost for a swift and robust recovery during the challenging times of the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, RCEP will help to provide small and medium enterprises (SMEs) with a level playing field between developed and less developed economies, strengthen regional supply chains and facilitate ventures into new opportunities. Apart from these, Mr Abrar also relayed that the pandemic has accelerated digital transformation across every industry where digital channels have

become the primary conduits of customer engagement, business productivity and supply chain resiliency. Touching on the bank’s strategy, he said that technology has always been the bank’s focus in driving efficiencies, increasing automation, introducing global platform, reducing manual errors, and combatting financial crime.

The keynote address was delivered by Dato’ Seri Mohamed Azmin Ali, Senior Minister, Minister of International Trade and Industry. In his speech, he applauded the joint initiative between Star Media Group, Standard Chartered Bank Malaysia and Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE) in recognising Malaysia exporters’ contribution to the economy through the EEA.

Sharing the recent updates of Malaysia’s trade performance, he revealed that Malaysia’s trade surplus in October 2020 has widened to RM 22.12 billion registering a double-digit growth of 25.9% year-on-year and was the highest trade surplus ever recorded for the month of October. Export in October 2020 reached RM91.05 billion, increasing by 0.2%, as compared to October 2019. This expansion was supported mainly by high exports to the United States, China, India and the United Kingdom. Imports totalled RM68.93 billion, decreasing by 6%, while total trade was valued at RM159.98 billion representing a contraction of 2.5%. As announced by the Central Bank of Malaysia recently, the country’s gross domestic product (GDP) in the third quarter of 2020 recorded a much smaller contraction at -2.7% compared to the second quarter of 2020 which was at -17.1%. This shows that there is significant recovery in economic activities mainly due to re-opening of the economy after the implementation of the movement control orders and improved external demand factors.

On the benefits of RCEP, Dato’ Seri Mohamed Azmin Ali mentioned that the primary purpose of RCEP is to modernise and act as an overarching mechanism in synchronising free trade agreements or FTAs between the 15 countries, specifically RCEP brings together a harmonised set of rules and procedures pertaining to access of preferential tariffs across the region. It will also open doors for businesses to capitalise on opportunities that would lead to a broader spectrum of new markets. All together, the member countries of RCEP, comprising 30% of the world’s population, have an estimated GDP of USD25.8 trillion accounting for about 29% of the world’s GDP. This makes RCEP the largest trading bloc in the world. Malaysian companies, especially SMEs, can also benefit from the advanced technical cooperation in digitalisation and smart manufacturing which will enable them in developing more innovative and competitive products.

Economic Networks and Opportunities

During the webinar, two (2) speakers were invited to share about trade information pertinent to exporters in Malaysia.

The first speaker was Ms Wendy Ang, Head of Transaction Banking and Cash Products, Standard Chartered Bank Malaysia, who covered the topic of trade finance and its associated risks as well as various digitalisation agenda. She explained about the trade risk elements to consider such as foreign exchange risk, fraud risk, shipping risk, country risk, embargo risk, bank risk and credit risk.

Ms Ang also shared findings of a survey done by the bank on its clients' digital journey. From the survey, four (4) key client stakeholders were shortlisted to be very important in a company's digital journey, and they are (i) Procurement Head to look into efficiency and cost; (ii) Chief Financial Officer to look into real-time reporting; (iii) Treasurer to look into visibility on balance sheet and risk management; and (iv) Innovation Head to look into exploring proof-of-concepts and new business models.

The second speaker was Ms Sharimahton Mat Saleh, Deputy CEO (Exporters Development), MATRADE. She presented topics on Malaysia's export performance for January-October 2020, assistances available for business revival, outlook and strategies to tap into new markets, strategic thrusts for market expansion, as well as promoting Malaysia as a major player in the halal sector. She highlighted that, due to the pandemic, there is a significant increase in exports of various medical related products for January-October 2020 which included rubber gloves, electro-diagnostic apparatus, disinfectants and surgical masks. Meanwhile, Ms Sharimahton also said that buyers around the world are not just considering the price of a product, but they are also looking at how the product is manufactured as well as the effects on environmental and labour issues.

A question and answer session took place afterwards with topics raised on the progress of digitalisation in Asia, importance of trade partnership, foreign investment, blockchain in trade finance, effects of pandemic on transactional business of bank, as well as the rise of e-wallets and digital transactions.

EEA 2021 is organised by Star Media Group in partnership with Standard Chartered Bank Malaysia, with MATRADE as patron. For more information, visit exportawards.com.my

For more information on RCEP, visit fta.miti.gov.my/index.php/pages/view/rcep

To watch the recording of the webinar, visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=8MQMBMDT_GY

星报媒体集团于2020年12月15日举办了2021年出口卓越奖（EEA）线上研讨会系列的第一个线上研讨会。该研讨会题为“塑造未来:扩大经济网络和机会”，其重点包括：(i) 区域全面经济伙伴关系（RCEP）自由贸易协定对马来西亚的影响以及马来西亚出口商可以利用RCEP的方法；(ii) 管理贸易风险和贸易融资的利益；以及 (iii) 开拓新市场的前景和策略。

**SHAPING THE FUTURE:
BROADENING ECONOMIC
NETWORKS AND OPPORTUNITIES**
15 DEC 2020 | TUESDAY | 8.00PM - 9.30PM

KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY

Yang Berhormat Dato' Seri Mohamed Azmin Ali
Senior Minister,
Minister of International Trade and Industry

SPEAKERS

Wendy Ang
Head of Transaction Banking and Cash Products,
Standard Chartered Bank Malaysia

Sharimahton Mat Saleh
Deputy Chief Executive Officer (Exporters Development),
MATRADE

EXPORT EXCELLENCE AWARDS
Standard Chartered Star

Online webinar organised by Star Media Group

Webinar pertama bagi Siri Webinar Anugerah Kecemerlangan Eksport (EEA) 2021 bertajuk “*Membentuk Masa Depan: Memperluaskan Peluang dan Jaringan Ekonomi*” telah diadakan pada 15 Disember 2020 oleh Star Media Group. Sorotan webinar tersebut merangkumi (i) kesan perjanjian perdagangan bebas Perkongsian Ekonomi Komprehensif Wilayah (RCEP) ke atas Malaysia dan cara-cara pengeksporn Malaysia dapat memanfaatkan RCEP; (ii) menguruskan risiko perdagangan dan faedah pembiayaan perdagangan; serta (iii) tinjauan dan strategi untuk memasuki pasaran baru.

2020 Year in Review

The year 2020 presented an enormous challenge for the forestry and timber industry. Against the backdrop of a pandemic which rendered activities of the industry beyond the norms, the industry also had to deal with existing difficulties including soaring operational and administrative costs, stiff competition in weak global market as well as constant change in policies. For STA, this meant adjusting its efforts and resources to support members in navigating the uncertainties, maintaining closer collaboration with the Government and State agencies, as well as helping the industry and the community in times of need.

Highlights of The Year

STA remained steadfast in tackling several other issues vital to the sustainability of the industry.

Throughout the year, STA worked on highlighting the impact of placing 7-year limitation on the carry forward of unabsorbed business losses effective 1 January 2019 by the Federal Government. As tree planting involves long gestation period and higher investment risk, implementing this tax law would greatly affect the forest plantation industry. On a few occasions, STA submitted appeals to the Ministry of Finance (MOF) to exempt the forest plantation industry from the tax law.

STA also worked with other stakeholders from Peninsular Malaysia and Sabah to acquire support from the Ministry of Plantation Industries and Commodities and to reiterate the case to MOF, as well as jointly submit an appeal to the MOF. On 17 September 2020, STA raised this issue during an industry engagement session with the Minister of Finance where the Minister expressed optimism in resolving the issue. STA will continue to work towards a positive outcome for the industry.



12 February 2020: STA with other stakeholders met with Mr Ma. Sivanesan Marimuthu, Undersecretary of Tax Division of MOF, to discuss and submit exemption on the tax law



10 March 2020: One of the many engagement sessions between STA plywood members and STIDC to understand challenges faced by plywood manufacturers

For the downstream sector, STA intensified its effort of highlighting the roadblocks faced by members to the Sarawak Government and State forestry agencies. These included crucial issues such as soaring production costs, plywood importation policy, anti-dumping duties imposed by South Korea on Malaysian plywood, and compliance with the Environmental Quality (Clean Air) Regulations 2014, amongst others. STA assisted members especially plywood manufacturers in putting forward recommendations that the Sarawak Government could adopt to regain its market share and competitive edge.

In another effort, STA also supported the implementation of the Sarawak Young Designers (SayD'SignersSarawak) Training Programme carried out by STIDC to transform the furniture industry into a high value added industry by 2030.

STA Responds to The Pandemic

Since the early stages of the movement control order (MCO), STA liaised closely with the relevant authorities and the Sarawak forestry agencies especially Forest Department Sarawak (FDS) and Sarawak Timber Industry Development Corporation (STIDC) to enable certain activities of the industry to operate with minimal workforce and under strict compliance with the standard operating procedures (SOPs). This effort was essential in ensuring a smooth and safe operational environment, while maintaining a functional supply chain and safeguarding livelihoods of the people in Sarawak.

Consequently, special approval was given to the upstream sector, i.e. logging and forest plantation, to operate in order to supply the required raw materials to the downstream sector. Meanwhile, STA also worked closely with STIDC to assist the downstream sector in obtaining approval from the State Disaster Management Committee to continue operations for about 100 mills across Sarawak.

At the same time, STA focused to ensure members were constantly kept abreast with pertinent information and latest updates by both the Federal and Sarawak Governments to make necessary adjustments to operations. STA also continued to maintain active communication with the Sarawak forestry agencies to assure that legality compliance and certification matters are promptly addressed by related parties.

STA sought to assist the industry in reducing its tremendous costs burden by constantly voicing out concerns to the relevant channels as well as submitting information needed and recommendations to the Sarawak Government.

In April 2020, STA collaborated with STIDC to help Sarawak battle the pandemic through the donation of personal protective equipments (PPEs) worth RM2 million. This donation provided medical-graded critical PPEs which were very much needed to protect the frontliners such as doctors, nurses and other healthcare workers treating COVID-19 patients, especially those who were in the intensive care units.



22 April 2020: Tuan Haji Hashim Bin Haji Bojet, General Manager of STIDC (centre), and Ms Annie Ting, Chief Executive of STA (2nd from left), presented the donation to Dr Chin Zin Hing, Director of Sarawak State Health Department (2nd from right), at a handover ceremony

2020 Year in Review

Highlights of The Year

In forest plantation development, STA continued to fund research projects to improve the growth and production of tree species planted in Sarawak such as *Falcataria moluccana* and Kelampayan. As of now, there are four (4) on-going projects with a total invested amount of around RM3 million. Another notable milestone was the publication of a monograph documenting the genomes of Kelampayan, linkages between gene markers and favourable traits of Kelampayan as well as the tissue culture of Kelampayan by Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Sarawak Forestry Corporation and STA.

	Name of Research Project	Research Conducted by
1	Production of Quality Kelampayan Planting Materials for Industrial Tree Plantation in Sarawak Using Plant Tissue Culture Technique - Phase 1	Universiti Malaysia Sarawak
2	Development and Deployment of Improved Genetic Materials of <i>Falcataria moluccana</i> - Phase 2	Forest Department Sarawak & GP Pusaka Sdn Bhd
3	Scaling-up Production of Micropropagated Kelampayan Clone Towards Sustainable Growth of the Wood-based Industry in Sarawak	Universiti Malaysia Sarawak
4	Ecosystem Approach Towards Formulation of a Biofertilizer Containing Growth-Enhancing Rhizospheric Microorganisms for Silviculture of <i>Neolamarckia cadamba</i> and <i>Eucalyptus pellita</i>	Swinburne University of Technology Sarawak Campus

The 4 on-going research projects funded by STA



27 November 2020: Representatives from DOSH Sarawak, STIDC and STA flashed the newly established OSH Training Module during the final Workshop

Through joint collaboration, the Department of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH) Sarawak, STIDC and STA developed an OSH Training Module, first of its kind in Malaysia, for the logging sector focusing on five (5) prescribed forestry activities (PFAs), i.e. ground survey, tree felling, log extraction, log loading and log transportation.

The Training Module was developed through a series of three (3) Workshops, with participants attending the events both virtually and physically. The OSH Training Module would be used to train in-house operators, promote self-regulation as well as enhance safety and health at workplace.



19 August 2020: Ms Annie Ting, Chief Executive of Officer of STA (3rd from left) presented the donation to Tuan Haji Zolkipli Mohamad Aton, witnessed by the Chief Minister of Sarawak (4th from right)

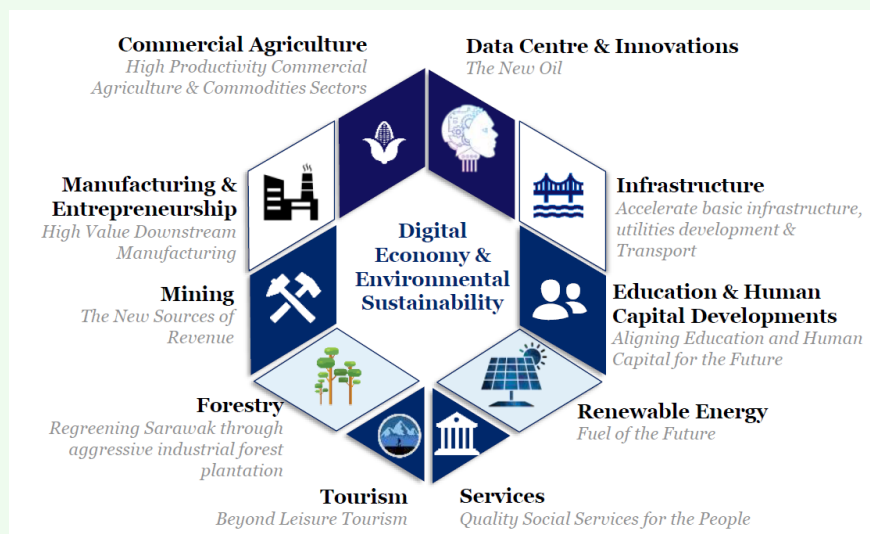
STA was actively involved in other efforts and initiatives beneficial to the industry, including review of MC&I for Sustainable Forest Management, revision of Reduced Impact Logging (RIL) Guidelines, consultation on draft Malaysian National Interpretation for the Management and Monitoring of High Conservation Values (HCV), and study on minimum wage rate.

In support of wildlife conservation in Sarawak, STA also donated RM50,000 to Semenggoh Wildlife Centre to upgrade its feeding platforms for orang utans in August 2020.

In May 2020, the Sarawak Government formed the Sarawak Economic Action Council (SEAC) to facilitate the achievement of the new economic agenda to revive the economy of Sarawak post COVID-19. Featuring Sarawak's economic development strategy until 2030, the roadmap identified ten (10) key sectors to be developed based on two (2) core principles of digital economy and environmental sustainability.

Several subcommittees and working teams were established to support the SEAC and drive the formulation of action plans for the identified key sectors.

STA was involved in 2 of the working teams, namely the Forestry Working Team and the Manufacturing Working Team, to contribute valuable feedback and recommendations on sustainable forest management, biodiversity conservation and sustainable growth of the industry.



*The 10 key sectors identified to drive Sarawak's economy in the new normal
(Image courtesy of Economic Planning Unit Sarawak)*

2020 Year in Review

Highlights of The Year

On the matter of logging road usage for Government rural projects, STA focused on bridging understanding between its members and the Sarawak Government. STA worked closely with specifically the Ministry of Infrastructure and Port Development, Ministry of Urban Development and Natural Resources and FDS on this initiative.

STA emphasised on the importance of contributing a token fee towards the maintenance costs of the roads for the safety of all road users and sustainability of the industry. STA also submitted proposals regarding the token fee for the consideration of the Sarawak Government.



6 November 2020: STA attended a meeting called by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Port Development on usage of logging roads for government rural projects

STA attended the COVID-19 Forestry Webinar Week organised by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations from 22 to 25 June 2020. Ms Annie Ting, Chief Executive Officer of STA, was invited to speak in one of the webinar sessions on *“The Global Forest Sector & COVID-19: Navigating a Sustainable Future in an Economically & Socially Constrained World”*. This session was attended by more than 200 participants globally.

During her sharing, Ms Ting talked about the impacts of COVID-19 on the industry in Malaysia and its respective region, especially on disruption in supply chain, decline in production and slowdown in the market demand. She also encouraged all international development partners to undertake strategies including (i) more efforts to improve the world's recognition of sustainable forest management (SFM) tropical timber as a more environmental friendly renewable resource compared to other substitutes such as steel and plastic; (ii) world Governments' commitment in utilising SFM tropical timber in their procurement policies to guarantee sustainable demand for SFM tropical timber; and (iii) promotion of green pricing to address price mismatch between cost and the market's present value of SFM tropical timber.



24 June 2020: Ms Annie Ting, Chief Executive Officer of STA, was invited to speak in one of the webinar sessions on *“The Global Forest Sector & COVID-19: Navigating a Sustainable Future in an Economically & Socially Constrained World”*

In support of the development of forest plantation in Sarawak, STA, together with its members, participated in the Seminar on Industrial Forest Plantation organised by Forest Department Sarawak on 4-5 November 2020. At the Seminar, STA also set up an exhibition booth to showcase efforts carried out by its members in the development of forest plantation.



An Impetus for Change

Still, there is much work to be done together. The industry remains a vital revenue contributor of the State. In one way or another, it is supporting hundreds and thousands of livelihoods across Sarawak. Its vibrancy may as well affect other sectors such as glue suppliers, furniture companies, transportation companies and shipping lines.

STA is encouraged to note that its members have been working hard towards sustainable forest management. STA acknowledges that any change and adjustment to the industry does not happen overnight, and members and the industry are already on the arduous journey to survive and sustain.

Nevertheless, the impetus for change to revitalise the industry must be led by the Government implementing the policies. The Government needs to set a strong foundation for each policy implementation in order for them to be carried out successfully. This means carving out strategies that are realistic to the ground situations and providing incentives that can truly benefit the industry. It is also equally important to consider the different perspectives and ideas of the stakeholders, and to be resolute in finding a common ground in advancing together.

Whatever 2021 may hold, STA will continue to demonstrate resilience in sustaining the business growth of the industry in Sarawak, safeguarding the well-being of its members and for Sarawak to be globally recognised in sustainable management of tropical forests.

STA would like to thank members, readers and other stakeholders for their continued support.

Stay safe and healthy.

Towards Well-managed Labour Migration: Fair Recruitment for Migrant Workers in Malaysia

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) held a webinar entitled “Towards Well-managed Labour Migration: Fair Recruitment for Women and Men Migrant Workers in Malaysia” via video conferencing on 18 December 2020. The objective of this webinar was to discuss the opportunities and challenges for working towards the implementation of well-managed labour migration policies and realising fair recruitment for women and men migrant workers in Malaysia. A total of three (3) topics were presented at the webinar as follows:

Topic 1: ILO’s General Principles and Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment and Definition of Recruitment Fees and Related Costs

by Ms Anna Engblom, Chief Technical Advisor of ILO Triangle in ASEAN Project

The speaker presented the ILO guidelines on fair recruitment, particularly focusing on the new definition of recruitment fees and related costs adopted by the Governing Body of ILO. The definition recognises the principle that workers shall not be charged directly or indirectly, in whole or in part, any fees or related costs for their recruitment which is based on the findings from the ILO’s report “A Global Comparative Study on Defining Recruitment Fees and Related Costs: Interregional Research on Law, Policy and Practice” published in November 2020. She went on to explain about the three (3) categories of costs which are (i) recruitment fees; (ii) related costs; and (iii) illegitimate, unreasonable and undisclosed costs. She also shared the migration costs for various destination countries.

Topic 2: Findings of Migration Cost Survey of Indonesian and Filipina Domestic Workers in Malaysia and Indonesian Plantation Workers in Malaysia

by Ms Rebecca Napier-Moore, Safe and Fair Programme: Realising Women Migrant Workers’ Rights and Opportunities in the ASEAN Region

The speaker highlighted that the survey conducted by PE Research Sdn Bhd reveals the factors that influence high migration costs. The survey was done face-to-face with a total of 701 interviewees from November 2018 to April 2019 in Peninsular Malaysia.

According to the findings on migration costs for plantation workers, all of them had to pay for their migration costs upfront, i.e. all costs were paid before they left their home country. These costs are usually paid with their own savings, borrowings from others or advances that were made by recruiters and employers to them.

As for domestic workers, not all of them paid to migrate to Malaysia. Among the respondents, 40% Indonesian and 33% Filipinos paid zero migration costs. The speaker also noted that the Malaysian labour law excludes domestic workers from full labour law protection as compared with workers from other sectors, such as working hours, paid holiday and rest day, annual and sick leave, maternity benefits, etc.

Topic 3: Realising Fair Recruitment for Women and Men Migrant Workers in Malaysia

by Ms Elaine Sim, Pink Collar Employment Agency; Mr Khai Yau Chua, Responsible Business Alliance; and Mr Mohd Effendi A Ghani, Malaysian Trades Union Congress

All three (3) speakers spoke about mainstream migration cost issues in labour laws and policies as well as in bilateral agreements between countries of origin and destination. They stated that one of the major issues faced by migrant workers is difficulty in using the services of outsourcing companies or third party agents. If these outsourcing companies and third party agents are not regulated properly, it will lead to problems such as human trafficking and debt bondage.

The speakers also shared various cost management measures, better utilisation of the workforce and usage of ethical companies to source migrant workers. During the question and answer session, some of the issues raised by participants included shortage of labour inspectors, migrant workers’ availability during COVID-19 pandemic, repatriation costs and strengthening of regulations to avoid passing on migration costs to workers.

The closing remarks was delivered by Ms Panudda Boonpala, Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific from ILO. She pointed out that addressing labour migration challenges would need strong and integrated policy support from the Government as well as strong inclusion and collective bargaining from trade unions. It would also require mainstreaming good labour recruitment practices of businesses and recruitment agencies. She also stressed on the importance of advocating and raising awareness on well-managed labour migration and noted that different stakeholders have already been proactively taking relevant initiatives in Malaysia.

The webinar was attended by representatives from various Government agencies, employers, employees and other associations including STA.

国际劳工组织 (ILO) 于2020年12月18日举办题为“趋向良好劳务移民管理：马来西亚男女外劳公平招聘”线上研讨会。该研讨会的宗旨是讨论在马来西亚实施良好劳务移民管理的政策及实现公平招募男女外劳的机会和挑战。研讨会一共讨论如同英文版中列出的3个主题。

Pertubuhan Buruh Antarabangsa (ILO) mengadakan webinar bertajuk “Menuju Migrasi Buruh yang Terurus: Pengambilan Adil Pekerja Migrasi Wanita dan Lelaki di Malaysia” melalui persidangan video pada 18 Disember 2020. Objektif webinar ini adalah untuk membincangkan peluang dan cabaran ke arah pelaksanaan dasar migrasi buruh yang terurus dan mewujudkan pengambilan pekerja migrasi wanita dan lelaki yang adil di Malaysia. 3 topik dibentangkan semasa webinar seperti yang dinyatakan dalam artikel ini.

STIDC Registration Circular No 1/2020 – 13th Amendment Conditions and Restrictions

The Sarawak Timber Industry Development Corporation (STIDC) through its Registration Circular No 1/2020 with reference number STIDC.22.Rg.1.1.1 (44) dated 21 December 2020 addressed to all companies involved in timber and timber related products registered with STIDC, notified that with effect from 21 December 2020, the STIDC Registration Conditions and Restrictions has been revised.

The following is an excerpt of the above-mentioned circular, for your information:

This Circular served to inform all registered companies that the validity of registration date is limited to the last date of registered as appeared in the Registration Certificate. Failure to renew the registration will deem the registration to be expired and invalid.

As such, companies are required to renew Registration Certificate at least three (3) months before the date of expiry of Registration Certificate. Any renewal after the expiry date will be considered as new registration.

Attached is the 13th Amendment Conditions and Restrictions, which has been revised with effect from 21st December 2020. This revision is available in STIDC official website. This revised version supersede the 12th Amendment Conditions and Restrictions dated 18th April 2019.

For a copy of the 13th Amendment Conditions and Restrictions, visit STIDC official website www.sarawaktimber.gov.my

本会接获来自砂拉越木材工业发展机构（STIDC）于2020年12月21日所发布编号STIDC.22.Rg.1.1.1（44）的注册通告。该通告致函于所有涉及木材及木材相关产品并向STIDC注册的公司。自2020年12月21日起，STIDC的注册条件和限制已得到修订。以上通告的摘录如英文版所列。

Perbadanan Kemajuan Perusahaan Kayu Sarawak (STIDC) melalui Pekeliling Pendaftaran Bil. 1/2020 dengan ruj. STIDC.22.Rg.1.1.1(44) bertarikh 21 December 2020 dialamatkan kepada semua syarikat yang terlibat dalam produk perkayuan dan kayu balak yang berdaftar dengan STIDC, memaklumkan bahawa mulai 21 December 2020, Syarat dan Sekatan Pendaftaran STIDC telah disemak. Semakan tersebut adalah seperti yang disenaraikan dalam artikel ini.