GTTN

Global Timber
Tracking Network

GLOBAL TIMBER TRACKING NETWORK (GTTN) REGIONAL WORKSHOP for EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

Beijing, Peoples Republic of China, 22-24 May 2019

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<u>Policy background</u>

Illegal logging and related trade pose a significant threat to the sustainability of forest ecosystems, result in losses of government revenues, foster a vicious cycle of bad governance, undercut forest businesses operating legally, and contribute to increased poverty and social conflict. Unsustainable and illegal logging is one of the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation worldwide.

A number of trade-driven legislations have come into force over the past ten years in the main forest products consumer markets. Several countries have made it a punishable offence to trade wood-based products of illegal origin in their territories.

The United States of America, with the 2008 amendment of the Lacey Act, penalizes trade of illegally-sourced forest products; Australia's 2012 Illegal Logging Prohibition Act makes it a criminal offence to import illegally logged wood or products thereof; and the European Union's Timber Regulation (EUTR) of 2013 requires timber products on the EU market to be of legal origin. These legislations put responsibilities to economic operators. In return, numerous initiatives have been developed at various levels, in public and private sectors, both in consumer, producer and processing countries, to achieve demonstrable legal origin of traded forest and wood-based products.

For example, Indonesia is the first and currently the only country in the World that is issuing FLEGT licensed timber, a result of their Voluntary Partnership Agreement with theEU. Vietnam has signed its FLEGT VPA in October 2019 and is now putting systems in place to implement the agreement.

China has been setting up new legislation to promote legally-sourced timber and timber products, addressing supply-chain actors both domestically and in timber source countries.

Furthermore, other measures taken by some East and Southeast Asian countries to address sustainability of the timber trade include either national level timber traceability systems, promotion of voluntary forest certification schemes, and increased law enforcement cooperation through Interpol, CITES and REDD+ initiatives. However, significant gaps still exist both in the identification and evaluation of policy responses and also in finding effective methods of halting illegal logging.

Legality verification and assurance approaches as now required in trade with developed consumer markets still mostly rely on a correct handling of permits, licenses, inspections and taking account of wood conversions factors along the wood chain-of-custody.

While human-made systems will always be vulnerable to human-made tampering, several scientific methods can unambiguously confirm or reject claims of wood species and origin. These tests can be implemented on any type of wood-based products in any section of the wood chain-of-custody.

Why a GTTN Workshop now?

From around the globe, the Global Timber Tracking Network (GTTN) brings specialists together to further cooperation, development and promotion of innovative technologies to screen and/or validate wood species and its origin. These include genetics analysis, stable isotope analysis, mass spectrometry, NIRs, modern wood anatomy tech and other methods.

GTTN promotes these with customs, law enforcement agencies, third-party certifiers of responsible forest management, forest-based industries, traders and other actors to independently verify chain-of-custody traceability documentation or to establish species and origin in absence of such documentation.

The GTTN Regional Workshop provides an opportunity to increase regional discussion and cooperation to strengthen both capacities and cooperation amongst East and Southeast Asian countries to detect and prevent illegal timber trade in the region.

Objective of the Regional Workshop

In general, while momentum is gearing up, the level of adoption of GTTN-promoted technology remains low in East and Southeast Asia, both in terms of policy and practice. This is partly because of the relatively high investment costs involved in the use of many of the technologies and, in some instances, a lack of local scientific capacities. Furthermore, scientific research on wood identification, collection of reference material and development and sharing of reference data need more attention and funding. Therefore, the regional GTTN Regional Workshop aims at the following:

- Increase awareness of stakeholders in East and Southeast Asia about GTTN and the growing potential of timber tracking techniques to help curb illegal logging,
- Map existing capacities and knowhow with laboratories already involved with timber tracking as well as with laboratories that currently apply their competencies to other areas (e.g. agriculture, CITES-listed species other than wood etc.).
- Identify the needs for knowledge transfer and financial assistance for developing skills, knowledge and tools with the aim to adopt timber tracking technologies including the collection of sample material and the development of reference data.
- Handling and sharing of intellectual property rights, concerning technology, methodology, reference data, thereby also addressing issues relating to Access and Benefits Sharing (with reference to the Nagoya Protocol).
- Identify interest and potential demand or prospective barriers for adoption of timber tracking techniques in East and Southeast Asia. Identify interest for the development of strategic partnerships (with private sector, key institutions and decision makers) within East and Southeast Asian countries in the application of the timber tracking technologies.
- Give the floor to regional and international scientists active on the development of reference data for East and Southeast Asian wood species.
- Explore avenues for collaboration and up-scaling GTTN initiative between demand and supply side countries for effective wood traceability systems (including e.g. timber legality assurance systems, CITES monitoring, due diligence systems etc.).

- Explore development of a East and Southeast Asian regional network node for GTTN

Who can participate in the Regional Workshop?

GTTN's stakeholders include government and non-government institutions, academia, public and private sector, forestry and timber sectors as well as law enforcement agencies. The workshop will be advertised to GTTN network members, to FLEGT stakeholders, through CITES secretariat and towards Interpol focal points.

Expected outputs of the Workshop

- **Improved awareness** of the benefits of timber identification methods and of stepping up cooperation through the GTTN initiative
- **Input to roadmap development** towards the use of GTTN technology in the fight against illegal timber trade.
- **New avenues for collaboration amongst East and Southeast Asian countries** in reducing illegal timber trade identified.
- **East and Southeast Asian stakeholder** (government and non-governmental institutions, customs, law enforcement, development cooperation partners, concessionaires, private sector) potential **roles in the GTTN initiative identified.**

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Tentative Agenda Modules

Day 1 (half-day: afternoon)

Welcome notes by GTTN and cooperation partners

Introduction to GTTN

Presentation of different wood identification methods (*depending on the programme of the preceding IAWA-IUFRO workshop, this may be omitted*)

Interests, demands and barriers for wood ID in East and Southeast Asia

Poster Session continuous

Day 2

Scientific timber identification capacities in East and Southeast Asia

Towards a regional network node for GTTN in East and Southeast Asia

Workshops

Day 3

Workshops (continued)

Excursion: Visit to the wood anatomy lab and the wood collection of the Chinese Academy of Forestry.

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