



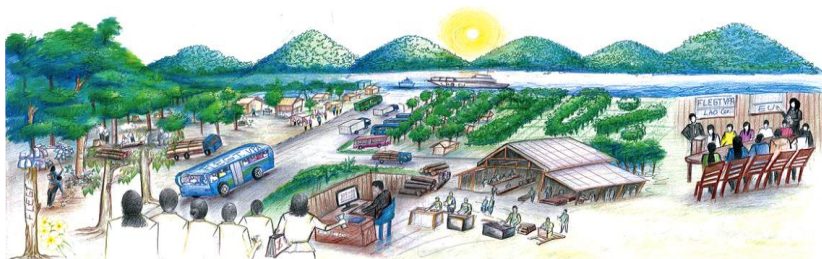
Lao FLEGT-VPA

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Outline

- I. Lao Government Perspectives from Joining VPA
- II. Action Plan in Preparation of First Negotiation Meeting





I. Lao Government Perspectives from Joining VPA



Overall Progress of Implementation

- National Steering Committee has been approved by Prime Minister, No.65/PO, 19 August 2015.
 - Chief Negotiator and Team has been approved by Minister of MAF, No.2598/MAF, 16 Oct 2015.
 - Approval of the negotiations by the Prime Minister Office in June 2015.
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Objective of Lao Government Perspectives from FLEGT-VPA to achieve the following:

1. Improve on Law enforcement, capacity and overall governance regime in the forest sector in Lao PDR
2. Make progress towards to improve local livelihood through the Sustainable Forest Management
3. Maintain Lao Timber Trade Access to the Regional and EU Market



Benefit of participating in a FLEGT-VPA

1. Policy

- Reforming and improving the wood processing industry in consistence with international regulation and principles.
- Will help Lao PDR to equitably export timber and timber products into the EU market
- Improving relevant policies, laws and regulations to be compliance with the EU market including international principle and regulations.
- Good opportunity for Lao PDR to improve the forest management and legal timber trade within country and globally under relevant agreements.



Benefit of participating in a FLEGT-VPA

2. Economics

- Providing opportunity of Lao wood processing to gain greater access to the EU market.
- Promoting and attracting both domestic and foreign investment in wood industry.
- Developing skilled labor to meet standard of the EU market.
- Increasing revenues for the government from value added timbers.
- Reducing negative impacts from Logging to poor people who rely on the forest;
- Promoting the participation of multi-stakeholders in forest management and trade to ensure rights and benefits sharing;
- Creating opportunities to strengthen capacity of human resources



Benefit of participating in a FLEGT-VPA

3. Environment

- Promote effective forest management, create sustainability of forest resources.
- Ensure the decrease of negative impacts from climate change and decrease the release of greenhouse gas pollution from forest destruction and degradation (REDD).
- Support the Forest Strategy to expand forest cover to 70% in 2020.
- Promote and raise awareness among people to live in harmony with the natural environment and protect biodiversity through awareness of the use of forest products and legal timber-based goods.



Challenges

The parallel with the benefits, there are some challenges:

- The participation of Laos in a VPA with EU will cause the need to revise some legislations and mechanisms related to wood industry in order to comply with international regulations and to assure the legality of timber especially from forest sources and processing until exporting points.
- Government authorities and private sectors at national to local levels need to strengthen capacity and comprehensive on legislations of FLEGT VPA.
- It is challenging to adapt into new regulations and its requirement to conduct, need carefully decision making for new changes.



II. Action Plan in Preparation of First Negotiation Meeting





The several items have been completed and available to support the first negotiation:

- The GoL perspective to join VPA
- TOR of NSC
- The output of 1st meeting of NSC
- NSC to nominate Chief Negotiator and TOR for negotiation team
- NSC agreed 3 possible negotiation dates (Nov, 2015; Jan, 2016 and Feb, 2016)
- GoL informed EU about nomination of Chief negotiator and requested first negotiation
- Complete selection of CSO representatives for FLEGT committee and for TWG and NSDC



Status of forest governance and legal framework in Laos is available for 1st negotiation:

- Explanation of approach for developing TLD and explanation of Thematic Expert Groups
- Negotiation modalities/ interaction mechanisms between the EU and Laos
- Road map for FLEGT VPA is available, details to be discussed in the technical meeting.
- Prepared for discussion on who will be FLEGT Facilitator
- The flow charts on how NSC, Negotiation Team, NSDC, TWG interact, including set up of multi-stakeholder process and communication with stakeholders



Three Proposals submitted to FAO FLEGT Facility in 12/2015

- **Support legal timber production through improved competitiveness for small and medium timber processing enterprises in Lao PDR**
Environmental Conservation and Community Development Association (ECCDA)
- **Building Capacity for Timber Species Identification to Strengthen the Timber Legality Assurance System in Lao PDR**
National University of Laos – Faculty of Forestry
- **Private Sector leading better practice for Smallholder and Small Medium Enterprises legal compliance in the plantation industry of Lao PDR”**
Lao Furniture Association



The pending items to be completed before 1st negotiation:

- Selection of institutions to participate in 1st negotiation (8 weeks before date of 1st negotiation)
- Revise TOR (incl. revised membership list) for TWG NSDC (15 Jan 2016)
- Explanation of recent prohibition of exports of logs and sawn timber and implementation of the ban (31 Dec 2015)
- Progress report for last 12 months (8 weeks before date of 1st negotiation)
- Update on new Land Policy, Land Law, Forest Law (date to be confirmed)
- Prepare Questions & Answers (Q&A) for first negotiation (to be confirmed)
- Prepare options for decision making (8 weeks before date of 1st negotiation, if needed)



Thank you

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