



PRESS RELEASE

IMPLEMENTATION OF PRIME MINISTER ORDER 15 AND FLEGT GO HAND IN HAND

(For immediate release)

Attapeu, 07-08 February 2017: Implementation of Prime Minister Order No. 15 and the Lao-EU FLEGT process go hand-in-hand. This was highlighted at the annual FLEGT meeting held in Attapeu province on 7 and 8 February 2017 with participation of representatives from government agencies, National Assembly, timber sector, academia and civil society organisations.

“FLEGT supports the implementation of Prime Minister Order No. 15 in many aspects”, said Mr. Souksamay Chanthamath, Vice Governor of Attapeu. “As part of the FLEGT process a master plan to strengthen the Lao wood processing industry is being developed and a training centre to enhance the capacity of its companies on value adding processing is being established, thereby supporting the Prime Minister’s order to modernize the domestic timber sector. A mandatory national Chain of Custody (CoC) system - input-output monitoring for timber in particular - is being drafted to strengthen the operations at company-level, thereby further contributing to a modernized wood processing sector.”

According to Mr. Khamphout Phandanouvong, Director General of Department of Forest Inspection, and the Head of the National Support and Development Committee, additional areas where FLEGT supports implementation of Prime Minister Order No. 15 are:

- Timber flow monitoring in the FLEGT pilot provinces Attapeu, Khammouane and Sayaboury improves recording and management of data from the timber supply chain, thereby helping the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry to collect detailed information such as timber volumes and outstanding obligations at log landing 2 and helping to coordinate handling of confiscated timber from different Government agencies.
- The regulation 0112 for timber harvesting in conversion areas is being revised and tested in pilot provinces to improve demarcation of conversion areas for infrastructure and plantations, to improve inventory of timber and monitoring of harvesting operations.

Lao PDR is now starting to see the fruitful results of stronger forest governance and the intention to solve country’s problem on illegal logging, after the announcement of the Prime Minister Order No. 15 since May 2016. The Lao-EU FLEGT process (Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade) is one of the initiatives that helps contribute to the Government of Lao PDR to realise this, since the process also seeks to improve forest governance throughout the timber supply chain.



NOTES FOR EDITORS

In 2003 the EU published a Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) action plan to help combat illegal logging in countries from which it imported timber. A key element of the FLEGT Action Plan is a voluntary scheme to ensure that only legally harvested timber is imported into the EU from countries agreeing to take part in this scheme. The internal EU legal framework for this scheme is a Regulation adopted in December 2005, and a 2008 Implementing Regulation, allowing for the control of the entry of timber to the EU from countries entering into bilateral FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs) with the EU.

A key element of a FLEGT VPA is the development and implementation of a timber legality assurance system (TLAS) which comprises a national timber legality definition, a system of supply chain controls, procedures for timber legality and supply chain verification, a FLEGT licensing scheme; and independent auditing of the entire system.

Once agreed, the VPAs include commitments and action from both parties to halt trade in illegal timber, notably with a license scheme to verify the legality of timber exported to the EU. The agreements also promote better enforcement of forest law and promote an inclusive approach involving civil society and the private sector.

Laos has started to negotiate such an agreement with the EU, with assistance from the German Development Cooperation's project 'Support to the Lao EU-FLEGT Process' (ProFLEGT), implemented by GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Internationale Zusammenarbeit).

ProFLEGT is a joint initiative of the Lao Government and the German Development Cooperation. It is working closely with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (through the FLEGT Standing Office under the supervision of the Department of Forest Inspection, DOFI), Ministry of Industry and Commerce, and Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, as well as other Government agencies, civil society organisations, academia and timber processing industry.

During the initial stage of the Lao EU-FLEGT process, three pilot provinces have been selected, which are Sayaboury, Khammouane and Attapeu. In this regard, WWF is working with the Department of Forest Inspection (DoFI) to implement its FLEGT project in support of the Lao EU-FLEGT process in the two pilot provinces (Khammoane and Attapeu provinces). WWF takes a solutions-oriented, integrated and local to global approach that seeks synergies with relevant stakeholders to influence drivers of deforestation and degradation.

For further information on Lao EU-FLEGT Process: <http://FLEGTlaos.com/>

For further information on EU-FLEGT Action Plan: <http://www.flegt.org/>

For further information for journalists reporting on efforts to combat illegal logging through the EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan: <http://www.flegtmedia.org/>



For further information on ASEAN Forest Policy: <http://www.asean.org/>

For further information on the Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade initiative:
http://ec.europa.eu/development/policies/9interventionareas/environment/forest/forestry_intro_en.cfm
www.euflegt.efi.int

For further reading on the European Timber Market and the EU Timber Regulation:
<http://www.cbi.eu/market-information/timber-products/eutr-guide>

For further information on understanding timber flows and control in Lao PDR:
<http://www.euflegt.efi.int/publications/-/document/25520>

For further information on FLEGT, please contact:

Dr. Khamfeua SIRIVONGS

Head of FLEGT Standing Office

Tel: +856-20-5541 9493

Email: khamfeua.s@flegtlaos.com