

MEDIA RELEASE

Supporting local timber industry for better compliance with the EUTR

Kuala Lumpur (30 July 2015) - The fact that Malaysian timber industry should be able to respond to increasing demands for information on timber legality as a result of the current EUTR review was stressed today at a seminar held by the Danish environmental NGO NEPCon and Malaysian Wood Industries Association (MWIA).

The seminar “EUTR Two Years in Implementation: What do EU Importers Need from Malaysian Companies?” brought together fifty participants from the timber industry, including exporters; MDF, moulding, furniture, door and flooring manufacturers; sawmills and relevant government agencies as well as non-government organisations.

The purpose of this event is to provide information on the EUTR (EU Timber Regulation) requirements and how the current review of this regulation in Europe would have ripple effects on the local timber industry. The EUTR, one of the current key timber regulations in the export markets, is a European-wide law with the goal of halting the import of illegal timber to the EU.

“The Malaysia forest industry is in a good position to demonstrate compliance with the requirements, as the industry has used third party certification and the country is advanced in developing a timber legality assurance scheme according to international requirements. This gives the Malaysia industry a head start compared to the situation in neighbouring countries such as Thailand, Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar”, says Peter Feilberg, Executive Director of NEPCon.

The EU, a traditional market for Malaysian timber and timber products earning RM2.03 billion in export value for 2014, is a major market for Malaysian high value timber.

As the enforcement of EUTR is ramped up in 2015, many manufacturers and traders in timber exporting countries, including Malaysia, would expect more requests on timber legality information and verification from the EU buyers in the coming time.

The Malaysian wood industry is faced with a huge opportunity over the next few years to demonstrate the legality and sustainability of Malaysian timber. Seizing this chance could propel Malaysia to the forefront of the European market and position the industry as the preferred choice for European buyers. However, understanding the challenges and responding to them is a key step if Malaysian companies are to realise this goal.

Aiming to facilitate this process, NEPCon trainers have reviewed the first two years of EUTR implementation, the changes that have occurred in the European timber trade, the responses of European importers to the new requirements and how Malaysian companies can prepare themselves in order to better fulfil the market requirements on timber legality.

At the event, participants had the opportunity to discuss the challenges they are facing in meeting their buyers' demands and receive feedback from a well-recognised and trusted EUTR Monitoring Organisation.

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Media inquiries

Ms. Luu Thi Ngoc Anh, Communications Expert, NEPCon Southeast Asia
Email: al@nepcon.net

Mr. Beh Nam Yeow, Public Relations Officer, Malaysian Wood Industries Association
Email: mwia@mwia.com.my

About the Organisers

NEPCon

NEPCon is a Danish based non-profit organisation with offices in 20 countries across Europe, Russia, Vietnam and Malaysia. NEPCon has been delivering timber sustainability and legality services for over 20 years, engaging with certification systems such as FSC™ and PEFC.

NEPCon was the first organisation recognised by the EU Commission as Monitoring Organisation under the EU Timber Regulation and works with companies around the world to facilitate the sourcing of legal timber. The LegalSource Due Diligence System, developed by NEPCon is freely available online at www.nepcon.net/DDS.

Malaysian Wood Industries Association (MWIA)

The Malaysian Wood Industries Association (MWIA) formerly known as Timber Trade Federation Malaysia was established in 1957. Originally comprising of mainly sawmills in Peninsular Malaysia, MWIA now represents members with diversified business interests covering the whole range of upstream and downstream activities in the timber industry with the change of name in 2000.

The general objective of MWIA is to promote the advancement and protect the interest of the timber industries, represent the members on all matters of common interest affecting timber industry and promote co-operation within the timber industry nationally, regionally and internationally.