



Lao People's Democratic Republic

Peace Independence Democracy Unity Prosperity

Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

Vientiane Capital, Date:

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### Instruction

#### On the Development of a Timber Legality Assurance System

- Pursuant to the Forestry Law No. 06/NA, dated 24 December 2007.
- Pursuant to the Decree of the Prime Minister No. 99/PM, dated 09 March 2017, on the Organization and Function of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.
- Pursuant to the Decision of the Prime Minister No. 65/PM dated 19 August 2015 on the Establishment of National Steering Committee on Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) and the Implementation of Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT).
- Pursuant to the Decision of Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry No. 1868/MAF, dated 09 March 2016 on the Establishment of the Negotiation Support Development Committee and Technical Coordination Committee on the Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the Lao PDR and the European Union, and on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade.

In order to ensure the unity of implementation of Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade Process for Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the Lao PDR and the European Union to be materialized and to enable the strict implementation of forest management, timber harvesting, timber import, the use of labour, wood processing, the utilization of timber and wood products within the country and for export based on laws and other promulgated legislation. Also, in order to prevent and combat illegal logging and illicit timber trade and for them to be reduced and gradually eliminated.

#### The Minister of Agriculture and Forestry issues an Instruction as follows:

1. Assigning the Negotiation Support Development Committee, the Technical Coordination Committee, the Thematic Expert Groups and FLEGT Standing Office to develop a timber legality assurance system with proactive involvement of related line ministries, the National Assembly, academia, civil society organizations, wood businesses and local administration.
2. The purpose of developing a timber legality assurance system is to ensure and certify that timber and wood products have been legally harvested, processed and traded in accordance with laws and regulations. The timber legality assurance system shall have

following key elements:

- 2.1. Timber and wood products legality definitions, an example of which is included in Attachment 1
- 2.2. Methods of control of supply chain of timber and wood products from the harvesting site or at point of import until the domestic market or export market.
- 2.3. A verification process of timber legality and methods of control of supply chain of timber and wood products which comply with laws and regulations.
- 2.4. A license issuing process for legal timber for domestic trade and export.
- 2.5. An independent monitoring process to monitor the implementation of the TLAS in compliance with all defined requirements.
3. Assigning the Department of Forest Inspection (DOFI) to be the secretariat responsible for coordinating with the Government stakeholders, civil society organizations, wood businesses and local administration to develop the timber legality assurance system as follows:
  - 3.1. Establishing a FLEGT Standing Office for the preparation of Voluntary Partnership Agreement between Lao PDR and the European Union;
  - 3.2. Conducting research, proposing development and the amendment of legislation related to the timber legality assurance system.
  - 3.3. Collecting, consolidating and analysing timber information to be used as references for development of legislation and the timber legality assurance system.
  - 3.4. Collaborating with stakeholders on reconciliation of data in terms of documents and specimens to be used as references for timber verification based on the Timber Legality definitions.
  - 3.5. Conducting research and proposing to the higher level for the issuing of licenses for legal timber to be used in the country and for export.
4. Assigning the relevant technical departments of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Ministry of Industry and Commerce, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare to support the development of the timber legality assurance system and continue to amend relevant legislation.
5. Assigning the Forestry Law Amendment Committee to define the contents of timber legality assurance system for inclusion in the Forestry Law to ensure trading of legal timber and wood products through the mentioned system.
6. Assigning DOFI to collaborate with related stakeholders to take lead in disseminating, expanding, and implementing this Instruction in order to make timber legality assurance system understandable, simple, implementable and in compliance with laws and regulations of Lao PDR and with international conventions which Lao PDR is party to.
7. This Instruction is in effect from the signature date onwards.



**Minister of Agriculture and Forestry**



**Liane THYKEO, Ph.D**