

# Implementation of Myanmar Timber Legality Assurance System(MTLAS)



## Myanmar Forest Certification Committee (MFCC)

Presentation to the 25<sup>th</sup> meeting of ITF of Myanmar – EU FLEGT Programme at Hotel Amara, Nay Pyi Taw on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2018

1. Introduction
2. MTLAS
  - (a) Objectives
  - (b) Institutional arrangement of MTLAS
  - (c) Definition of Legal Timber and Standard
  - (d) Source of timbers
  - (e) Product coverage
  - (f) Implementation of MTLAS
3. MTLAS Gap Analysis Project
4. MFCC-PEFC Project to bring Sustainable Forest Management of Myanmar's Forest
5. Conclusion

# 1. Introduction

- To prevent deforestation it was put more pressure in the international market to trade timber which is produced from the systematically managed forests.
- Developing countries face difficulties to implement fully the international standards of forest management.
- Then the market demands for the certification of legal timber.
- It is required to certify as the legal timber according to the set standard and verified by independent third-party.
- In order to support SFM and get access of Myanmar timber to the international market MFCC was established in 1998 by Ministry of Forestry.

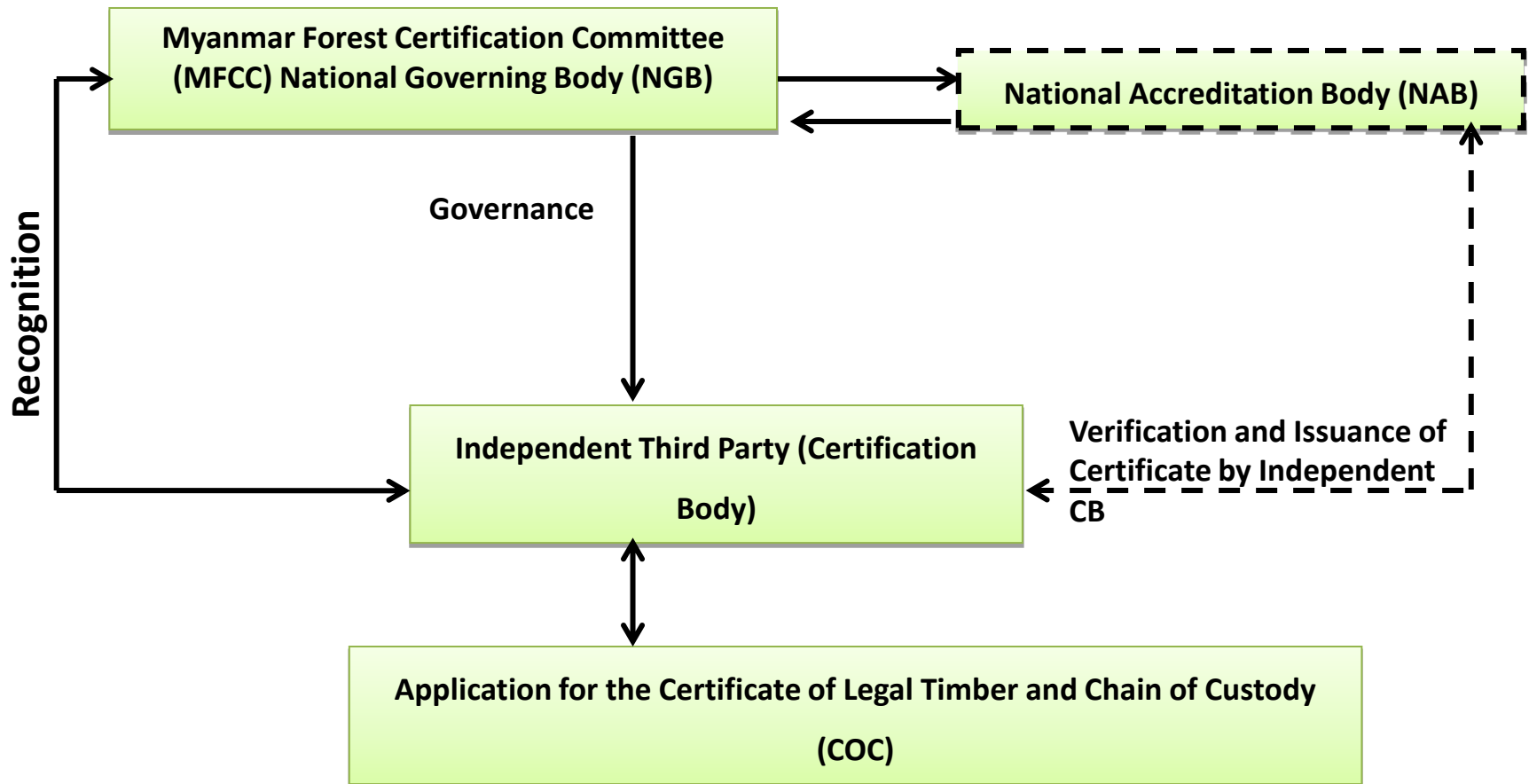
## **2. Myanmar Timber Legality Assurance System (MTLAS)**

- It is mandatory to follow the existing rules and regulation of Myanmar to export timber and wood-based products.
- The MTLAS was developed and is being implemented by MFCC based on the existing rules and regulations of Myanmar. It is the voluntary system.

### **(a) Objectives**

- To support the Sustainable Management of Myanmar Forest Resources.
- To strengthen the process of Myanmar's timber harvesting and trade.
- In the mean time, it could become the Due Diligence System to export timber and wood-based products to EU member countries.
- To support the Myanmar – EU FLEGT VPA process.

## (b) Institutional Arrangement



Institutional arrangement of MTLAS

## National Governing Body

- ❖ With the approval of President's office, MOECAAF reformed MFCC to govern the forest certification activities in 2015.
- ❖ It is permitted to recognize the certification bodies until the Department of Research and Innovation is ready to accredit the certification bodies.
- ❖ MFCC's main responsibility is to certify sustainable timber.
- ❖ It is also assigned by MONREC to administer the verification activities of legal timber by third parties.
- ❖ Up to now, the certificate for forest management has not been issued under the Myanmar Forest Certification Scheme as the FMU's cannot comply the set standard fully.

## **National Accreditation Body**

- Standard Department of the Department of Research and Innovation is the National Accreditation Body.

## **Certification Body**

- It is the independent third-party to verify and issue the certificate.

## **Applicants to get certificate**

- It is the companies/organizations which need certificate.

## **(c) Definition of Legal Timber and Principle , Criteria and Indicators of MTLAS**

- Timber harvested by authorized agency from approved areas and timber products extracted, transported, manufactured and exported in accordance with the laws, regulations and procedures pertaining to forestry, timber industry and trade of Myanmar.
- MTLAS was developed based on the Myanmar C&I for legal timber (2009).
- MTLAS was developed after the consultation of relevant stakeholders.



## **Six principles or elements of the legal timber are:**

- (a) Right to harvest
- (b) Forest operation
- (c) Statutory charges
- (d) Other users' right
- (e) Mill operation
- (f) Trade and custom

### **(d) Source of timbers**

- **Natural forest**
  - Reserved forests
  - Protected public forests
  - Unclassed forest
- **Plantation**
  - Department (FD)
  - Private
  - Community (CF)

**(e) Product coverage**

- Log
- Sawn timber
- Veneer
- Plywood
- Furniture
- Other value-added products

## **(f) Implementation of MTLAS (Progress)**

- MFCC is organizing and coordinating to issue certificates by CBs.
- MFCC circulates open invitation to conduct as CB to the Cos and relevant organizations.
- Major requirements for CB are
  - have legal entity according to the national registrations
  - cannot be involved in the standard setting process
  - are independent of the certified entity
  - have a good understanding of MTLAS on its economic, social and environment of impacts
- Two companies, United Forestry Services Co., Ltd and Nature Watch Co., Ltd has been recognized by MFCC.
- These CB's are being trained to conduct verification independently.

### 3. MTLAS Gap Analysis Project

- To strengthen the MTLAS it was conducted in 2016-17 with the assistance of EU FAO FLEGT Programme
- The following gaps were identified by the project and reported to the MONREC.
  - Multi - stakeholder participatory review of the current MTLAS
  - Address all sources of timber
  - Strengthen and simplify existing mechanisms for supply chain control
  - Strengthen internal and external verification
  - Specify measures for assurance against dishonest or unethical conduct

- Mechanisms for monitoring and oversight of MTLAS
- Mechanisms for the issuance of statements, licences or other evidence of conformity
- Document and make publically available MTLAS System, processes and procedures
- It is being organized to fill up the gaps identified by the projects with the collaboration of all concerned departments and organizations.
- If some of the gaps of MTLAS could be filled up, it would speed up the negotiation phases between Myanmar – EU FLEGT VPA process.

#### **4. MFCC-PEFC Project on Forest Management Certification**

- During the project period of 3 year (2017-2020) it is expected to establish a sound national forest certification system.
- It also includes to work together by concerned departments/ organizations to verify the timber legality and timber supply chain transparency.
- In the first stage, it will fulfil the requirement of the Supply Chain of MTLAS.
- In the second stages, it is expected to achieve the PEFC control source COC certification.

## 5. Conclusion

- MFCC is Coordinating among concerned parties for issuing timber legality certificate by CBs.
- In the long term it is expected to achieve the PEFC certification.
- It is mandatory to follow the current rules and regulation of the country to export timber and timber- products.
- It is voluntary for the companies or organizations to be certified by the third-party certification under MTLAS.
- The policy, legislations, rules and regulations for forest management, harvesting and trade of forest products are in place.
- It is paramount important to work together all stakeholders to comply with the principle, criteria and indicators of MTLAS.