

Guyana Forestry Commission
Guyana's Programme of Work under EU FLEGT
Terms of Reference – Development of a Communication and Consultation
Strategy for EU FLEGT in Guyana

1. Background/Context

Guyana and the European Union (EU) have commenced formal dialogue on an EU Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade, Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) (referred to hereafter as EU – Guyana VPA). The first formal negotiations were held in December 2012, at which key timelines were agreed to, that would guide the process moving forward. In announcing its decision to commence formal negotiations with the EU on a VPA, Guyana expressed that it is aware of the benefits of FLEGT such as stimulating markets, enabling Guyana's exporters to retain markets, developing systems that demonstrate legality of timber production on international markets, and expanding reporting requirements and existing systems in the chain of custody management.

The commencement of formal dialogue with the EU, was preceded by a series of stakeholder engagement exercises and consultations that helped Guyana to take the decision to enter into formal negotiations. The Government of Guyana, FAO, EU and local stakeholder groups were instrumental in supporting this process of sharing information, conducting initial analyses and contemplating potential impacts and benefits of a VPA for Guyana. As part of the initial stakeholder engagement exercises, there is a broader understanding amongst Guyanese stakeholders on the major issues that needs to be addressed during the negotiation process. As recent as January to March 2012, the most updated effort was undertaken to inform the decision to enter into formal dialogue with the EU, and was supported by the ACP FLEGT Support Programme managed through FAO and funded by the European Commission. This series of engagements saw the participation of a large number of stakeholder groups across communities, civil society, private sector, non government bodies and Government bodies.

So far, a number of steps have been taken, including the establishment of a VPA Secretariat in Guyana which is housed within the Guyana Forestry Commission, the formation of a multi stakeholder steering body for the VPA negotiation and implementation efforts (called the National Technical Working Group (NTWG)), and the development of a Guyana Roadmap for EU – Guyana VPA Negotiations. In September 2012, through a multi stakeholder process, Guyana collaborated with international expertise from Ghana, to develop a Guyana EU – Guyana VPA Roadmap to guide the negotiations process in Guyana. This activity was also support by the ACP FLEGT Support Programme. This effort saw the participation of various stakeholder representatives from the private sector, civil society, NGOs, Government and other groups, in shaping the Roadmap which contains both activities that Guyana will itself undertake in the process, as well as those aspects that will be jointly undertaken by Guyana and EU.

Like the process of arriving at a decision, the process of negotiations on the VPA as well, has included a strong stakeholder participation element. As part of the management structure developed to oversee the VPA negotiations in Guyana, several meetings of the NTWG have already been held, as well as meetings of the sub committees under this Steering Body. Additionally, specific stakeholder constituency meetings were also executed so far with plans to continue with these sessions throughout the process. To date, 4 meetings of the NTWG have been held, 10 meetings of separate key stakeholder constituency groups mainly targeting indigenous Groups and NGO, and private sector, and 6 meetings across the four sub committees of the NTWG.

The NTWG is a democratically elected group consisting of stakeholders from various groups representing a wider range of stakeholders who are involved in the forest sector. There are four subcommittees formed from the NTWG, each of which focuses on various aspects of the VPA. The four (4) sub committees are: Sub Committee on Stakeholder Engagement and Communication; Sub Committee on the Legality Assurance System (LAS); Sub Committee on the Voluntary Partnership Agreement Formulation and Monitoring; Sub Committee on the Independent Audit under the EU FLEGT VPA. These Sub Committees are chaired by various members of the NTWG. It should be noted that both the NTWG and Sub Committees have a co-opting mechanism which allows for other members to be part of the group for agreed periods of time depending on the topics being discussed. The Sub Committees hold meetings to address their specific aspects of the VPA. The outcomes of these meetings are fed to the NTWG via minutes of the meetings held. The final decision rests with the NTWG.

By design, members of the NTWG and Sub Committees are required to meet with their respective constituency members to provide updates on the FLEGT process. These discussions take place at statutory and other meetings which are held periodically by each group.

There are other constituency groups who were also organised under the FLEGT program. These groups comprise the Forest Products Association, the Civil Society/NGO group, the Government group, the Mining Association and the National Toshao's Council. These groups also meet regularly and outputs from these meetings are fed to the NTWG for discussion and final approval.

As the formal effective date of the European Union Timber Regulations (EUTR) approaches in early March 2013, Guyana has expressed plans to expand its communication efforts to local and international stakeholders, to share details on the efforts made so far in the EU – Guyana VPA process, as well as details on existing system on which the VPA will build that, in its views, will fulfil the requirement of the EUTR through Guyana's current system of forest legality.

The Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement process is integral to the successful implementation of VPA activities in Guyana, both at the negotiations and implementation stages.

The main objectives of the Communication and Consultation Strategy are to:

1. Build awareness of Guyana's efforts to reduce illegal logging and strengthen forest governance through negotiating a VPA.
2. Identify what are the mechanisms to be used for effective stakeholder dialogue
3. Update stakeholders on progress on VPA negotiations and provide opportunity for dialogue and feedback.
4. Update international stakeholders on Guyana's progress.
5. Develop mechanisms which ensures that all levels are informed

For this reason, the development of a Communication and Consultation Strategy was pinpointed as a key input on the Roadmap for EU FLEGT Activities in Guyana. It is intended that the main resources for developing and implementing the Communication and Consultation Strategy will be the framework that has already been set up, that involves the NTWG, the Sub Committees and the Stakeholder Constituency Bodies. This will effectively include the main private sector associations and businesses, indigenous NGOs and constitutional bodies, Guyana NGOs, and the Government.

2. Scope of work in Communication and Consultation Strategy for FLEGT Programme in Guyana

The GFC seeks to engage the services of an individual consultant or firm to develop a Communication and Consultation Strategy for FLEGT Activities in Guyana that will largely focus on the negotiation process and initial activities of the implementation stage of the VPA. The methodology that will be used to develop this Strategy will include interviews with stakeholders identified in the stakeholder mapping section of this TOR, focus groups, and participation in on-going meetings of the VPA groups and workshop sessions that will be coordinated closely through the existing mechanisms already in place namely: the NTWG and its Sub Committees, and importantly at the level of the key Stakeholder Constituency Groups level.

The Consultant/ Firm will be expected to complete the following:

- a. **Conduct mapping of forest governance stakeholders in Guyana** - the Consultant/ Firm, in collaboration with the GFC will conduct a stakeholder analysis in order to identify national stakeholders and stakeholder groups that are likely to be key stakeholders (directly or indirectly), in the negotiation of the EU FLEGT VPA for Guyana and implementation of the VPA following negotiations. This activity will ensure that the diversity of national stakeholders needs is recognized. Additionally, the consultant will solicit the inputs from various stakeholder groups during this mapping process for greater effectiveness.
- b. **Design Communication and Consultation Strategy** which will include the following main elements as listed below and will cover the period September, 2013 to December 2015:
 - a. ***Describe Methodology Used for the Development of the Communication and Consultation Strategy*** – this is expected to include conducting focus groups, one on

- one interview, larger meetings to share and validate recommendations and workshop session at which the elements of the strategy are to be discussed and the modalities for the execution of the strategy will be assessed.
- b. ***Outline of Main Outcomes of the Stakeholder Mapping Exercise*** – this is expected and identify the main stakeholder groups most likely to be involved, communicating on and effected by the VPA that will be targeted under the consultations and engagement exercises and will include stakeholder that are or will be, directly and indirectly related to VPA negotiations and eventual implementation in Guyana. This will need to take into account the existing networks for communication and capacities (physical and human) that are currently available at each stakeholder group level.
 - c. ***Develop proposal for Mode of Communication to be used*** – this will examine the existing channels of communication, identify effective channels of communication to reach stakeholders in Guyana, and recommend the appropriate channels that can be used for various stakeholder groups.
 - d. ***Outline a proposal for consultation and stakeholder engagement methods and materials, including identification of what the main materials should be*** - these materials must be technically and culturally appropriate, whilst being comprehensive and user friendly. In addition the consultant will identify what are the most effective methods of stakeholder consultation to be used, depending on the target groups, to ensure that the messages are clear, coherent and achieves the desired objectives. The methods stipulated for consultation will ensure that clear feedback mechanisms are in place which would allow for proper updates to be made to relevant aspects of the documentation presented.
 - e. ***Outline Plan for dissemination of materials*** – A specific requirement of the Communication and Consultation Strategy will be an outline of the schedule for disseminating material to stakeholders so that material and requests for input are available well in advance of each negotiation session. This will be done to ensure as far as possible, that materials arrive at least 30 days prior to the planned session. Due to terrain in some areas, media such as transport by air, water and road will have to be utilized.
 - f. ***Develop protocol for soliciting, receiving, cataloguing and addressing feedback*** – the consultant should develop protocol for soliciting, receiving, cataloguing and addressing feedback on the various VPA tools and issues under negotiation. This will ensure a transparent and fair system of receiving and demonstrating reaction to stakeholder input.
 - g. ***Develop proposed Implementation Plan for Communication and Consultation Strategy*** –
The implementation plan should include:
 - i. A list of sessions that are to be conducted, outlining the type of session, objectives and best use of the various communication tools (interviews, focus groups, meetings, validation workshops),

- ii. An indicative timeline for the implementation (can take the form of a Gantt Chart). This schedule should be informed by the VPA Roadmap development for Guyana particularly with regard to the main benchmarks for outputs and deliverables set in the Roadmap.
- iii. Indicative costing for the implementation of the Communication Strategy.
- iv. An outline of options for evaluating mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of Communications and Consultation activities at the stakeholder level.

C. **Develop Final Report** – this report should contain a summary of all activities conducted under this Contract including but not limited to stakeholder sessions (meetings and workshops) held as well as main outcomes and recommendations. Next Steps should also be outlined. This Report as well as the Communication and Consultation Strategy should be presented to the NTWG.

3. Profile of Consultant

- a) **Qualifications:** At Least a BSc degree in Communication, Marketing, Public Relations, Forestry, Natural Resources Management, Environmental Science, Journalism, or relevant field and equivalent professional work experience in the communications and consultation area.
- b) **Experience:** Candidates must possess a minimum of 5 years proven experience at the national and/ or international level working in the field of communications and consultation. Familiarity with the forest sector in Guyana is a plus.
- c) **Skills and Abilities:** Candidate must also possess excellent oral and written English communication, consultation and facilitation skills and be able to articulate ideas and write reports in a clear and concise style. Preference will be given to persons with experience communicating in culturally appropriate ways with forest sector stakeholders of Guyana
- d) **Technological Awareness:** Ability to make effective use of relevant computer software programme for training and preparation of training materials (MS Office), and other equipment relevant to the execution of training workshop.
- e) **Teamwork:** Good interpersonal skills and ability to establish and maintain effective working relations in a multicultural organization. Ability to provide effective support in relation to work conducted by colleagues.
- f) **Availability:** The Consultant is expected to make his/her self available throughout the duration of the project.

4. Authority and Responsibility

a. The Role of the GFC

The Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC) has full authority and responsibility for this contract which includes oversight over service provider and of the procurement process.

The GFC is a semi-autonomous organization formed in 1979 with a legal mandate to manage and control the utilization of the State Forest Estate. Its main role is to ensure the sustainable

utilization of the State Forest Estate in keeping with sustainable forest management principles and guidelines captured in the Forest Act 2009. Governed by a developmental mandate, this agency ensures that there is a balance among the pillars of social, economic and environmental development. Over the past decade, the Commission has undergone rapid development in the implementation of sustainable forest management, legality, and environmental standards. In this regard, the GFC has been tasked with the responsibility of coordinating the process for negotiation and eventual implementation of EU FLEGT Activities in Guyana. The Guyana Forestry Commission, through its Project Coordinator will provide access to relevant personnel and information to be used in the preparation of the Communication Strategy. The management of GFC will, through the Project Coordinator, approve the:

- Work plan
- Communication and Consultation Strategy
- Final Report.

The management of GFC will identify GFC staff members whom will be collaborating with the Consultant to plan and execute the training sessions. The Consultant will receive full logistical support at pre approved level, from the GFC

b. The Role of the Consultant

- I. The Consultant will work along with the GFC, the NTWG and other relevant stakeholders in planning and executing consultation and stakeholder engagement activities for relevant stakeholders.
- II. Prepare a work plan in collaboration with the NTWG, detailing activities and outputs for the duration of the assignment.
- III. Develop Communication and Consultation Strategy and all related elements as outlined in Section 2.
- IV. Coordinate stakeholder meetings and workshops - the Consultant is expected to conduct at least 5 sessions with relevant stakeholders. The key stakeholder groups that will be targeted will include but not limited to the private sector (Forest Products Association of Guyana, Guyana Manufacturers and Services Association), civil society (Indigenous NGOs, National Toshao's Council), Government agencies (Office of Climate Change, Ministry of Amerindian Affairs), and Community Forestry Representatives (Representatives of Community Small Loggers Association).
- V. The Consultant will prepare a final report detailing findings and recommendation on complete execution of the assignment.

5. Modalities for Engagement with various Stakeholder Groups

There are a number of steps which should be followed as it relates to the consultation with various stakeholder groups; particularly forest based groups.

- I. Key representatives with knowledge of the communities and its workings must be integrally involved in the process

- II. Stakeholder groups identified in the mapping process must be kept informed at every stage of the process. All reports generated must be taken to these groups for comments and inputs before finalising.
- III. An effective feedback mechanism must be in place to ensure that comments are received in a timely manner
- IV. Direct engagement with stakeholders in workshops, seminars and other similar engagements must be given adequate time for execution. Planned schedules must be adhered to as far as is practical.
- V. A holistic view must be used when looking at each stakeholder group for better understanding i.e. the whole gamut of issues, social, marketing, environmental, health etc. must be looked at, and not just one or two.

6. Reporting & Timelines

The Outputs & Deliverables expected from this assignment are:

- a. Report on Stakeholder Mapping
- b. Communication and Consultation Strategy for EU FLEGT that should include all items outlined in Section 2.
- c. Final Report that should include Presentation made to the NTWG on the Strategy.

7. Schedule and Duration

The work of the Consultation and Outreach Specialist is expected to be conducted over a 4 month period, commencing August, 2013.

8. Remuneration

The fee for the implementation of activities and delivery of results for this consultancy will be negotiated between the GFC and the Consultant.