

# 2017 National Consultation Feedback Matrix

Date	Location	Type of Comment (tick)		Comment	Questions	Responses
		General	Specific			
30 th January, 2017	Moruca		D.1.1.3	Village Council must meet to make proper agreements before commence to sign the agreement.		The VC is the governing body of the Amerindian village and should infact play strategic role in the management of any resource. Surely assisting in forest inventory and encoruaging the use of contractual agreements will all help to achieve the overall goal of the VPA, and thus promote sustainable communitym development.
			D.1.2.2	Strongly support traditional way of life must continue to be part of the law.		
			D.2.1.1	Village Council must seek help to do forest inventory before coming into agreement with non-residents		
			D.3.2.6	FSO must ensure first aid facilitates are important and must be available to all at all times. Employees must be sesitized		As part of Annex VIII, first-aid training will be a part of the implementation phase of the VPA. This is based on similar views expressed by many other Amerindian villages.
				For Santa Rosa Village, there should be more capacity building sessions. There is also more need for forest inventory for our village so we can determine the value of our forest products.		The Guyana Forestry Commission has noted this particular recommendation as it was also reflected in other sessions held. Indeed forest inventory is important in order to keep-up with market demands, and also ensure sustainable harvesting. Indeed, there is much potential for training sessions on conducting forest inventory. Interestingly, the FTCI currently has an RIL course which explains in great detail, various aspects of forest inventory and forest management (particularly during harvesting and extraction)
			Annex I	The first paragraph of Product Scope should include "current" to reflect the current version of the act since the Forest Act is subject to changes.		The Annex 1: product scope was developed specifically under the VPA based on Guyana's system of traceability. Once the VPA is signed, this product scope WILL form part of the Law itself, and is subject to change should Guyana decide to add additional products.

				<p>What is the feedback mechanism from the NTWG? NTWG member disseminating information is poor.</p>	<p>The feedback mechanism fosters transparency with regards to the development of the VPA through multi-stakeholder input, and helps to maintain a 2-way channel of communication between the public and the NTWG. Over the years, stakeholders have had questions, comments or suggestions on the VPA's development. The mechanism allows the NTWG to provide a response to those questions or suggestions stakeholders might have. For instance, this Comments matrix has been actively used to record stakeholder concerns. The NTWG vets these concerns and provides a response. This matrix is public so that every stakeholder is aware of the each parties input. The Feedback mechanism also includes information dissemination protocols. As such, the NTWG has been using printed media, Televised panel discussions, Radio sessions, Consultation sessions and focus group meetings and DVD documentaries to continuously spread information on the Guyana_EU FLEGT VPA process. This ensures stakeholders are kept informed. It should also be noted that there is still a breakdown of communication at the Village level and this has been pointed out by Toshaos themselves.</p>
				<p>VPA cannot solve land titling issues but has a platform to addressing issues. However, the land titlement issue should be resolved before this agreement is signed.</p>	<p>As you clearly stated, the VPA CANNOT solve land titling issues. Both the EU and Guyana has acknowlegded this as well as key Amerindian NGOs. While the VPA signing is eminent, all parties have agreed that the VPA allows for continuous discussion on this issue. Infact, the VPA makes provision for the establishment of a FLEGT coordination mechanism with the specific aim of providing a platform for such discussion. The VPA has also began mobilizing the MoIPA and GLSC.</p>

				Problem paying N.IS for temporary workers. For example some workers work for 2 weeks then leave the job.		Based on the Law, once a person is working for anything above 20GYD, NIS must be paid for that person (whether he is a temporary staff or permanent). The <b>Employer is tasked with dededucting 5.6%</b> from the Employee's pay, and the remaining 8.4% paid by the Employer on behalf of the Employee.
				There is no NIS office in Moruca		Similar concerns have been expressed by other areas. As a result, Annex VIII will be updated to reflect the mobilization of NIS officers across the country so as to assist with addressing NIS concerns and conduct NIS registration (especially in far-out areas)
				There is no GRA office in the entire region . Recommendation that an office be built in each sub region.		This comment has been duly noted. Additionally, Annex VIII will be updated to reflect the mobilization of GRA officers across the country so as to assist with addressing tax concerns (especially in far-out areas)
					Why does this process involve mining Licenses?	The process involves mining licenses because mining areas are potential sources for timber which can form part of the supply chain.
					Is it possible to do logging within a mining concession?	Yes. However, once logging is done for commercial purposes and the produce leaves the boundaries of the allocated mining area, approval must first be granted by the GFC. Removal documents will be issued thereafter.
				Exploitation happens sometimes not often with payment of salaries		

				Seek Guidance in forest management to have stock inventory carried out In amerindian communities		The FTCI currently conducts a Reduce Impact Logging (RIL) training course which focuses heavily on conducting Forest Inventory. Quite possibly, members of Amerindian villages can be trained in this regard. However, funding will be required to offset such training. Through the agreement, Guyana will seek to obtain such funding.
				Agreed that it is vital to be NIS compliant but assistance is needed		NIS is a key requirement of the VPA. The NTWG also recognises that support will be needed to assist stakeholders in gradually improving their NIS compliance. As a result, Annex VIII will be updated to also include support request for the mobilization of NIS to conduct training, awareness and registration sessions across the country.
				All untitled lands should be titled		Indeed they should but only as far as the law and current titling process makes provision for. We need to recognise that there are systems in place to address land titling and the VPA will seek to provide a space and support for the process in any way it can. It should be noted that the VPA cannot address land titling issues.
				Village council should get into agreement with non-residence with guidance from GFC. (Legally binding)		The GFC (specifically the Planning and Development Division) has a community liaison officer who can provide guidance in this regard. Under the VPA this will be made stronger and the GFC will continue to play a role. The Matrix for Amerindian Villages has an indicator which speaks directly to this.

				Include internal trade within AV not only external trade		The GFC has no authority with regards to the internal affairs of the village especially for the use of timber produce within the boundaries of that village. However, once that timber leaves the boundaries does the WTS becomes applicable, and the GFC plays its mandated role. Based on the Amerindian Act, the VC already has the authority to govern internal affairs.
				Employ residents within the communities not only non residents.		The VC can employ whomever they want; this is an internal matter and not one for the VPA.
				Report and recording of incidents and accidents VC should be involved in the same inspection not only MSP and GFC		Agreed. However, the generation of inspection reports will involve "interviews" which will involve VC and residents of the Village. Hence the statement under D.3.2.7 (Amerindian Matrix) "The Inspection Report generated by the analysis of data from <b>interviews...</b> "
				Education on PPE for Community.		Annex VIII will be ammended to reflect this.
			D.1.1.3	Village council must make proper agreements before commencement of logging operations		Agreed. The GFC (specifically the Planning and Development Division) has a community liaison officer who can provide guidance in this regard.
			D.2.1.1	VC must seek help to do forest inventory before coming to agreement with residents and non residents to do commercial havesting .		This is a good approach to sustainable management of the villages forest resources. Surely the GFC and/or GFC can provide useful materials in this regard, and possibly some training once funding is available.
			D.1.1.1	Recommend that all untitled communitis be titled so that all benefit equally from forest resources		There is a Land Titling Process which governs this. As this process continues, more titles will be made ready but the VPA is not the means to ensuring that titles are made available once applied for.

			D.1.1.2	NTC should also have copies of all documents for storage purposes		While this is a good recommendation. This decision will need to be made at the level of the NTC. The NTWG can provide a recommendation in this regard but certainly having copies for yourselves is an excellent suggestion and maybe villages should this about electronic storage as well.
			D.1.1.3	VC should not get into an agreement with non residents without the guidance of legal council.		Agreed. The GFC can provide some level of support in this regard.
			D1.2.1	GFC and VC must coordinate inspection		In this regard, the FMD inspection report is generated from interviews as well. Such interviews will involve the VC. Coordination is the best way to carry this out.
			D.2.1.1	Recommendation - this rule should be for internal trade		Since titled amerindian villages are not state lands. The GFC cannot set a quota. However, the Amerindian Act gives the VC an authority to manage the villages resources and affairs. As such, it is the task of the VC to set how much is allowed for external trade.
			D.3.1.1	Royalties must be paid to VC and not GFC		In deed, for Amerindian villages, royalties are not paid to the GFC. The VC can however set certain financial requirements for any person(s) (resident or non-resident) who wishes to harvest within the Amerindian Village. Revenue generated in this regard also goes to the VC.

			D 3.2.2	FSO must employ residents of the the village if they have the required skills . MSP and VC must work together in gathering information for inspection report.		With regards to the latter, the inspection report generated will involve interviews. Interviews <b>will</b> be held with the VC to maximise on information gathering, and maintain a good representation of the overall inspection based on all parties views. While the NTWG cannot decide who the FSO employs, the GFC usually encourages FSOs employ local residents as part of their plans for sustainable community development. It is a key element the GFC looks for within the FMPs of many large concessions.
			D.3.2.7	Inspection for report must also include VC		With regards to the latter,the inspection report generated will involve interviews. Interviews will be held with the VC to maximise on information gathering, and maintain a good representation of the overall inspection based on all parties views.
			D 3.2.5	FSO and VC must ensure that workers are educated on the importance of utilizing safety gears.		Agreed. As part of the VPA implementation phase, training with regards to safety gears and its uses is expected to be a major aspect of capacity building nationwide.
1 February, 2017	Mabarum a			The laws are not applicable to every stakeholder based on different conditions and situations . Different Mechanisms should be applied		The regulatory framework of the VPA (Annex II) specifies the DIFFERENT laws which are applicable to the DIFFERENT types of stakeholders. Stakeholders will not be subjected to any law which does not speak to them. Moreover, these laws were used to develop separate matrices of requirements for the different types of stakeholder category. This represents that difference in the applied mechanism which you speak of.

				Stakeholders are willing to comply with GRA tax and NIS but they do not have GRA Offices close by.		This has been a shared concern nationwide. As a result, Annex VIII will be updated to reflect the mobilization of GRA and NIS officers across the country so as to assist with addressing tax and NIS concerns and facilitate the improvement of compliance in this regard (especially in far-out areas).
				Minimum prices for timber should be elevated		Prices for timber are based on internal and external market demands and supply; something that is highly volatile.
				Mabaruma, Port Kaiuma and Moruca need more registration for NIS because the office is only in Mabaruma, Charity and Georgetown but it is too Expensive to travel.		This is duly noted. Similar sentiments have been expressed in Aishalton and the surrounding areas of region 9. As a result, during the implementation phase, the NTWG will focus on bringing NIS officers to these areas to facilitate NIS registration.
					What will happen in the Case that the EU refuses our timber?	Once the agreement goes live (is ratified by both Parliaments), it becomes binding for both parties (Guyana and the EU). Both parties are therefore acknowledging the legality of the produce exported from Guyana, and its ease of access into the EU based on that agreed system which ensures the integrity of the produce. Should there be a refusal of the shipment based on its legality being questioned, the GTLAS houses a mechanism for handling complaints in order arrive at a solution.
					Why does Forestry apply the same taxes to small operations as they do to the larger operations ?	All taxes are based on the Law. The GFC is merely enforcing those Laws.



				Do royalties have a different standard when it comes to amerindian villages.?	Amerindian villages do not pay royalties to GFC. However, the VC will determine the rate of royalty (or whatever they may want to call it) paid by the resident or the non resident.
				NIS was paid for 2 years for the company then self employed for 12yrs. Do I Get benefits for all 14	12 years can't be retrieved, only for the 2 years.
				What is the number of contributions before you can receive benefits after working ?	Only recently the system has become computerized so there are still gaps from the paper trail. 750 contributions for long term benefits (e.g. pension) and 50 contributions for short term benefits (e.g. sickness benefits) and 0 contributions for Injust benefit
				Do loggers have to pay a special contribution ?	There are different payment scales based on salary. For more info, go to <a href="http://www.nis.org.gy/injury_benefit">http://www.nis.org.gy/injury_benefit</a>
				Can you say how much money self-employed persons have to pay to be covered for NIS benefits?	Self- employed persons contribute 12.5% of their declared income as contributions. For example, if an insured person's monthly income is \$40,000.00 per month, his/her NIS contribution will be: $\$40,000/1 \times 11.5/100 =$
		D. 3.1.1	Reciepts should be issued to the FSO for the payment being made to the VC and not to the Guyana Forestry Commission in accordance with the Forest Act.		This will be reviewed accordingly and the necessary changes made in accordance with the Act.
					First-aid and Accident register is required by Law under the Forest Regulations and Occupational Health and Safety Act. Since logging falls within the scope of the forest Act, the GFC plays an important role in ensuring that all forest operations are in keeping with these Laws.

				The Village Council should ensure that FSO finds all safety gears for employees		Agreed. Since the VC is the governing body of the Amerindian village (as established under the Amerindian Act), it is the responsibility of the VC to ensure that all FSOs provide the necessary gears for employees; this should be part of the contract signed.
				Land titlement document should be at the Village Council's Office		Agreed.
			D.3.2.7	Village Council should have a copy of the report.		Agreed.
				Mabaruma FSOs need GPS training, Field Inspection training, Operators and Mechanic, Persons trained to do Marketing, Budgeting and Accounting, Driving ( ATV, Tractors ETC), Tree ID, Training in timber Grading, Equipment ( to get log off the spot).		This is duly noted. Similar views have been expressed by other Amerindian villages across Guyana. The NTWG is currently exploring the possibility of having some of these trainings included as part of Annex VIII so as to obtain resources/support to conduct same during the VPA implementation phase.
				More consultation to more villages across region 1 to educate "our" People		This represents the 4th round of national consultation the NTWG has been conducting on FLEGT. After the agreement has been signed, workshops will still be held to build capacity and continuously inform stakeholders of the VPAs implementation.
3 rd February, 2017	Port Kaituma			We Need Building of GRA for compliance purposes because there is no office in our Sub-region and its costly to travel to Georgetown.		Your concern is noted and the NTWG is exploring the possible solutions. What should be noted is that it is recognised that this and other similar needs will be addressed for the functioning of the VPA.
				Generation of Jobs for everyone especially youths and single parents		The VPA by design promotes good governace and ensures that benefits from forestry operations flow to the relevent persons. With the opening of international markets, other benefits will be seen over time.

				Need for an NIS office and staff	Your concern is noted and the NTWG is exploring the possible solutions. What should be noted is that it is recognised that this and other similar needs will be addressed for the functioning of the VPA.
				A properly equipped Forestry Office	This has been noted, and will be forwarded to responsible Division within GFC.
				More legal source - more concession	It is the Government's decision to make lands available for allocation as Concessions. The public is encouraged to apply for vacant areas once they are advertised by the GFC. It should be noted that current production levels for allocated lands is much lower than can be produced annually.
				GRA/NIS capacity building	Provisions are being made to include NIS and GRA workshops as part of Annex VIII under capacity building.
				FLEGT office/training Guidance	Efforts will be made to use the local GFC office in a greater capacity (in this regard).
				More seminars and consultations	It should be noted that there has been extensive consultations since the commencement of this program and efforts will continue in this regard throughout the implementation process as well. There are avenues such as the website, forest stations, telephone etc. for information sharing.
				How much NIS contributions per month do I have to pay?	For government workers 14% of Personal Income is paid to NIS that is; 5.6 % by employee and 8.4 % by employer. While Self employed contributes 12.5%.

				<p>What happens if my NIS Card is lost, damaged or defaced?</p>	<p>If your National Insurance Card is lost, damaged, destroyed or defaced, you can apply for a replacement by paying a minimal fee of two hundred Dollars (\$200.00) to the office nearest to you for persons in Georgetown, such a replacement can be done at the Records Department, Camp and Bent Streets, Georgetown. A replacement is done free of charge in cases where the Insured Person is a National Insurance Pensioner.</p>
				<p>I am 70 years old and employed. I only began to pay NIS at age 61. Can I get NIS Old Age Benefit?</p>	<p>From the information you have given, the answer is No. Employees do not pay NIS Contribution after age 60. If NIS Contributions are being deducted from your income, this should cease immediately and you can claim a refund of all Contributions deducted after age 60. Your employer can also claim his/ her part. For Pensioners over 60 who are employed the onus is on the employer to pay contribution for the employee. This is paid at a rate of 1.5% to cover persons over 60 or under 16 years old for Industrial Benefits. Please note that I am concerned about your employment record prior to age 60 as there may be something that you are overlooking that may qualify you for Old age Benefit. I suggest you visit or call the Publicity and Public Relations Unit or your nearest NIS Office and speak with an Inspector.</p>
				<p>Could you say for how long a person can receive Sickness Medical Care Benefit?</p>	<p>An insured person is entitled to the reimbursement of Medical Expenses for Sickness from the date on which he/she is rendered incapable of work, for as long as the need for such care continues.</p>

6th February, 2017	Orealla			There were previous challenges with maps and demarcation , but now the GPS has been able to assist the Boundary limitatons. However a proper		The NTWG has begun collaborating with the GLSC in this regard. During the implementation phase of the VPA, this collaboration will materialize with the aim of investigating concerns related to demarcation. An MoU with GLSC is being finalized and will seek to
				Village land boundary and concession state forest are being overtapped		improve the system of having these concerns addressed/investigated/discussed at the national level.
				Rules for Havesting are too stringent and need to be revised.		The rules for harvesting helps to maintain sustainable forest management, and thus reduce the impact of logging on the environment and nearby communities. Guyana has been a leader in reducing environmental degradation, and will continue to maintain the enforcement of these rules to ensure sustainable use of the environment and its resources for all.
				Emphasis on education needs to to be re evaluated in these regions		
				Employment is a huge problem for the youth demographic because of the lack of opportunities. At such consultations it is important to have representation from each Ministry		The NTWG is focusing heavily on inter-agency collaboration. As the VPA moves further, more agencies will be made apart of these sessions as GRA and NIS. The NTWG recognizes that these other agencies are critical as they form part of the verification arm of the VPA. As such, their representation is essential.
				Orealla has challenges to pay NIS at Corriverton , very costly t travel. The system needs to be imporved so all can benefit. The Orealla Loggers Association wants to have their members trained on NIS.		This has been noted and will be forwarded to NIS for consideration. Similar sentiments have been expressed in Aishalton.

				<p>What role does MOIPA play in the consultation of FLEGT VPA?</p>	<p>MoIPA as well as other Amerindian groups such as NTC and IPC are members of the NTWG; the national steering committee which advances the VPA process. These groups are table local concerns/feedback of Amerindian peoples at the national level. Their offices are open to the public and have been used as repositories for stakeholder feedback. These members have also been on past consultation teams, speaking about FLEGT from an Amerindian perspective. The Ministry of Indigenous People's Affairs provides data and information on Amerindian Villages involved in timber harvesting for commercial purposes.</p>
				<p>What is a third party agreement?</p>	<p>It is a legal term for any individual who does not have a direct connection with a legal transaction but who might be affected by it. A third-party beneficiary is an individual for whose benefit a contract is created even though that person is a stranger to both the agreement and the consideration. It also refers to a party added to a contract, between the two other parties. Unlike the two main contract parties, a third-party might not be named in the document.</p>
				<p>If a non-resident of an VC wants to harvest for private use and harvets without tagging, will there be a charge ?</p>	<p>There will be no charge provided the harvesting happens on Village lands.</p>
				<p>Jungle stock as long as it is not removed do you need to tag it ?</p>	<p>Once you remoce the stock you will have to declare it , it must be tagged so that it corresponds with the removal documents. Jungle stock is only applicable to large concessions</p>

					If a non member from an AV cuts in a SFP without permission what happens	It is Illegal and the individual will have to pay a compensation and may even be charged; the legal process will take over.
					How do third party contracts work?	Inform GFC and draft a contract with the third party for harvesting . They work by developing a document that makes it legal for another person to be legally involved in some aspect of the forest operation. Tractors for example can be contract under this arrangement.
					How do the smaller operators benefit from the VPA	The VPA provides a level playing field for all operators and thereby gives them an opportunity to expand their business. All parties will benefit from improved systems of tracking timber and better governance.
					If someone is self-employed and is in an accident do they receive benefits?	1. Sickness Benefits once there has been 50 paid contributions (1 Year). 2.Last three months you must have 8 weeks insurable coverage and must be working. 3. Accident benefits- 70% drugs; dressing, 80% x-ray and lab tests, 50% Miscellaneous.
						Current threshold ceilings \$220,000 10% of current ceiling is reimbursed.
					General labour is defined in different categories, once on the job and the employee has alternative duties he must inform NIS.	
					When working in the “backdam” and an employee suffers a snakebite how do you receive NIS benefits?	1. If there is special risk involved it falls under industrial coverage; you will be entitled to these benefits. 2.With common risks there is no coverage available. 3. If there is any negligence or breach on the job; there will be no compensation. 4.Contributions are paid monthly but counted weekly every Monday.

				Is NIS compulsory for everyone self-employed and employed?	Yes it is compulsory for everyone to pay NIS.
				Self-employed earn at different rate how do you access?	Based on employment annually , there is a minimum ceiling , but if you can justify your earnings below the minimum , there is a compensation
				Minimum pension =27,500 per month 40% of income to achieve	To calculate minimum pension once you are contributing the average of Best 3 years of employment is taken.
				If there is reduced earnings of income should you stop paying	Don't discontinue, NIS will access your new income earnings.
				If there was discontinued payment for a period of 5 years and then a resumption will the new contributions be added or	Yes the contributions will be added on.
				Orealla encountered problems with persons paying contributions but employers don't put it in how to deal with this?	Need to inform NIS, provide evidence of such it's called "Vicarious Liability"
				Can you be paid more than one employer?	Yes you can if you can afford the contributions.
				Is transportation reimbursed for industrial	Yes, you are compensated for transportation.
				NIS medical advisor deems you fit to work and you are not fit how is this	You can make an appeal the medical board and it's possible to work under a different category ( alternate duty )
				Is there a specific GPS with determined tolerance that should be used?	There are different types of GPS but the readings stated must be within a 6 meter radius. The GFC tries to make the most suitable and affordable ones available to all stakeholders.



8th February, 2017	Moraikobai			Moraikabai awaiting training in GPS. The village was on a list for training by forestry.		A follow up will be done with the relevant training section of the GFC and feedback given.
					If I ship 10 pieces but only 9 reach destination will I still be compensated for the 10	The joint monitoring committee will investigate and revise the issue. In the case such as this GFC cannot dictate terms of the personal contract agreements.
					Can Forestry or EU FLEGT develop a document to guarantee payment for services between Amerindian	Forestry has no say in private matters and can only recommend contract relationships which will allow for better protection in case of defaulters.
					When can the villagers submit proposals for funding for projects?	There are a number of funding agencies who make Call for Proposals at various times of the year as well the NTWG (on two occasions). Whenever Call are made, submissions can be made with the time specified by the agency.
					I am 42 years old and was never employed until recently, how do I join NIS?	You can become a contributor to NIS if you satisfy any of the following requirements: 1. SELF-EMPLOYED Age 16- 60, Employed with yourself or under a (Contract for service). NOTE: Your employment must be insurable (legal). Earning not less than \$5.00 per week. 2. EMPLOYED: Age 16-60, Employed by someone / business etc. Earning not less than \$7.50 per week. N.B. Persons under 16 years and over 60 do not pay contributions. If they are employed, their employers contribute for their insurance coverage.

13th February, 2017	Coomacka				If SFP do not contribute to the VPA process? What will be the outcome?	All FSOs should follow the Guyana Timber Legality and Assurance System, whether that FSO is supplying to the local or international market. If otherwise, the produce will be considered illegal.
					Who is considered an Amerindian?	An "Amerindian" is defined in section 2 of the <b>Amerindian Act</b> as any citizen of Guyana who belongs to any of the native or aboriginal peoples of Guyana or is a descendant of any of the native or aboriginal peoples of Guyana.
					If I take my logs to a sawmill and I am only paid half, who do I make my complaint to?	You can take the matter to GFC. However, if there is a contractual agreement between the buyer and seller then the matter can be taken to court for legal proceedings.
				If sawmillers don't pay loggers then they wont be able to pay employees, pay NIS, pay GRA.		If the sawmiller is the employer, he Employer is tasked with dedeucting 5.6% from the Employee's pay, and the remaining 8.4% paid by the Employer on behalf of the Employee. Non-payment of salaries by an employer can be reported to the Ministry of Labor for further investigation.
					Will the FLEGT License be issued to individual or association?	FLEGT License will be issued to the consignor (either individual or association (if being a company)) for the SHIPMENT.
					Can one individual from the association apply for a FLEGT license?	Yes. The FLEGT license is shipment-based.

				Why not concentrated on value added?	Value added has always been advocated by many including the GFC and FPDMC. The current products covered by the VPA represents those in vast circulation in Guyana, and those which can be adequately traced back to stump. Value added products such as furniture would require a more detailed system of traceability. As the VPA progresses, it is the vision of the NTWG to include value added products such as furniture as part of the product scope. However, this can only be done once the GTLAS is further develop to include such products. Also, as part of its enhanced value adding strategy for the sector, Guyana will increase the promotion of its Lesser Used Species, to provide the sector with a more diverse range of commercial species. The value adding strategy will also focus on upgrade of machinery and equipment within the sector, enhanced technical and management skills in processing, marketing and promotion, as well as the production of modern ICT- based processing systems.
				Do we have to be compliant if we are not supporting?	All FSOs should follow the Guyana Timber Legality and Assurance System, whether that FSO is supplying to the local or international market. If otherwise, the produce will be considered illegal.
				Will FPDMC assist with marketing?	Yes. Most certainly.
				will persons get a fine for not being compliant with PPE?	This still being discussed. However, if the Law makes provisions for a fine then that will be enforced. There should be focus on ensuring PPE are provided and used as they are for the protection of the workers.

				will the JMRC only address FLEGT license or GFC issues as well?	The JMRC will have a system for dealing with complaints. These would include those raised by local stakeholders as well as the verification agencies such as GFC etc. It should be noted that there currently exists a mechanism to deal with general issues and this will continue.	
				GFC should intervene in cases of exploitation of producers by sawmillers	Since safeguarding against exploitation is key to the VPA (especially in Annex II), the GFC and Ministry of Labor/Ministry of Social Protection will be highly involved in this regard. It should be noted that exploitations can also coem as a result of the way we do business; lets improve the business environment individually as well.	
				GFC should ensure that all stakeholders(loggers and sawmillers use one standard of measurement.	The timber grading rules is currently being revised and will be applicable to all FSOs. There will be collaboration with the Bureau of Standards in this regard. This should help in standardising measurements related to forest produce.	
				Reports takes too long		
				Logging Associations need more lands and tags		
16th February, 2017	Malali			Majority if not all the time logs are taken to sawmillers and they do not pay the correct rate or they pay in terms	A ruel or law by forestry to force sawmillers to pay loggers fairly	Again it is important for contracts to be in place to allow for action to be taken in case of defaulters.
				Complaints are falling on deaf ears.	The rules on filling out forms are too stringent	GFC are currently refining these rules; the VPA seeks to improve governace as well.
				Officers have to be more understanding because if they find two stumps one tagged and one not tagged ( used for subsistence ) they apply a fine without asking the reason	As an amerindian village do we have to follow the Guyana Forestry Commission system ?	Once the produce is being used for commercial purposes yes you must follow the GFC WTS. The WTS should be followed as it allows for your produce to be easily traced to the source and makes life easier for you.

				There is a gap that needs to be filled to declare or inform that stumps without tags are indeed being used for subsistence purposes. GFC needs to develop and implement such a mechanism.	As an employer th employees are constantly changed due to the nomadic nature of the workers. How do I pay NIS for all of them ? Do I	Yes, NIS has to be paid for all of them. Their first employer should register them.
				GFC staff to be present during measurement at sawmills and ensure that sawmillers honor agreement		There will be efforts to improve the monitoring system over time not only for the GFC but all other agencies
				Small concessions should get more incentives and lower taxation		
				initiatives to e placed on a source for lower energy; wind, solar, turbine etc.		This will be looked at under Annex VIII. Alternative energy sources has also been something that is being examined at the govermental levels.
				More workshops/ training required		Agreed. Workshops and training will continue as the VPA progresses.

	<b>Bartica</b>	Workers not wanting to use their safety equipment-		Stakeholders explained many difficulties in trying to get their workers to be clothed with their personal protective clothing, though these are issued on an annual basis, workers usually complained of the gears being too uncomfortable as such making them feel uncomfortable.		This has been a shared concern nationwide. Many safety gears presently in the country may not be climate appropriate (i.e. designed for tropical climates) and can thus be more of a hazard given the high humidity and temperature in our forests. As a result, as part of the VPA (Annex VIII), the NTWG will be exploring the possibility of procuring climate appropriate safety gears, or seeking funding pathways to do such. These safety gears can then be purchased on a cost recovery basis (as with the recent GPS distribution done by the GFC). However, some research will be done to first determine the best safety gears adapted for this type of climate, and those which provide maximum protection to the individual but with optimum comfort. It should be noted however that in some cases persons simply resist change when it makes them a bit uncomfortable.
	<b>Bartica</b>	<b>Stakeholder inquired of whether</b>			<b>Can the export licence</b> be used by someone other than the licensee to export forest produce?	The FLEGT license will cover a specific shipment and will be issued to the individual or company who is exporting. This license cannot be used by anyone other than the licensee as a unique License number will be affixed to that person's (or company's) name/ID.
	<b>Bartica</b>	<b>The Business</b>			Is there any way forestry	Currently, the FPDMC in partnership with the GFC has been advocating

		<b>of forestry has decelerated in Bartica.</b>		can help to bridge the gap for marketing, especially of the lesser known species that are in abundance and not being sought after by buyers.	(both at the local and international level) for the use of Lesser Used Species (LUS). For instance, newspaper articles, handbooks and information calendars were published and distributed throughout the sector to detail the useful application of these species in different areas such as furniture making, construction, engineering etc. Moreover, even GFC has been using these species as part of its building constructions. Compared to a decade ago, there has been an increase in the use of these species in favor of the more known species such as greenheart etc. The GFC and FPDMC will continue in its efforts showcase the benefits associated with the LUS. Interestingly, through the VPA (Annex VIII), as part of Market Improvements and Industry Development, the NTWG will seek to develop a national marketing strategy which will entail the promotion of LUS on the domestic and export market.
	<b>Bartica</b>	<b>Problems with measurement.</b>		Producers complained of not being paid at sawmills for quantities approved by the Guyana Forestry Commission. When the measurements of produce are done by forestry and declared on the permit, those are not being accepted by the sawmiller, who would usually pre-measure, taking what is needed by them and paying for same. Is there anyway forestry can help to alleviate or	Again these issues can be addressed to some extent by having contracts in place. The GFC, through its grading rules will also seek to ensure the grades are determined prior to sale to allow for a fairer transaction.
	<b>Bartica</b>	<b>Accounting for logs</b>		FSOs inquired of how they should account for logs left in the back dam due to defects. Should these logs be tagged and declared?	All trees felled must be tagged as well as corresponding stumps. However, if a particular tree (now a log) will be used for commercial purposes (i.e. sold and leaving the boundaries of the concession), that log must be declared on a removal document. To avoid felling naturally defected trees, FSOs are usually advised to sound the tree for hollows or have the harvesting team evaluate the quality of the tree before it is felled.

	<b>Bartica</b>	<b>Some of the producers have a problem with the quota system.</b>		They say they reach their quota before the year and do not have anything else to get them by for the rest of the year. One producer claim that she was given a letter once for over harvesting.		The quota system (AAC/MAC) enforced by the GFC has been established to safeguard against over harvesting. This particular calculation helps to ensure that there are marketable produce available for future generation, a common technique used in sustainable forest management. Over harvesting will result in a penalty.
	<b>Bartica</b>	<b>Stakeholders and NIS</b>		Very few FSOs in the area are registered with <b>NIS. Many expressed concerns of being uneducated of the benefits of NIS and their requirements under the law.</b>		The NTWG has recognise this as being an issue countrywide. As a result, through the VPA, more workshops will be held with FSOs to improve registration, foster a better understanding of the NIS requirements (among each stakeholder group) and the benefits associated with paying NIS. Annex VIII will be drafted to include such sessions as part of capacity building during the VPA's implementation.
				Employers expressed concerns of workers who constantly moving from job to job.		Understanding the volatile nature of employment in the forest sector, it is the responsibility of the EMPLOYER to ensure NIS is paid for his employee even if that person works for a short period of time. Based on the Law, once a person is working for anything above 20GYD, NIS must be paid for that person (whether he is a temporary staff or permanent). The Employer is tasked with dededucting 5.6% from the Employee's pay, and the remaining 8.4% paid by the Employer on behalf of the Employee.
	<b>Bartica</b>	<b>The topic of</b>		Some FSOs claimed that there are single		



		<b>working age was highlighted.</b>		parents trying to get additional income they send their children that are below 16 to work. They also expressed this act as a means of teaching their children their traditional way of life especially within the indigenous /Amerindian communities.		Based on my understanding, the law restricts persons below the age 16 from doing industrial type work (and/or those associated with strenuous tasks). However, that individual may be allowed to do more administrative work such as those done in an office setting, and where the activities are not laborious. With regards to tradition, many Amerindians have expressed same. The NTWG (inclusive of the NTC, IPC and MoIPA) has also brought this up at the international level. As such, while training does not breach the law, that person should not be engaged in any form of work for commercial purposes with regards to what they are being trained to do. It is also advised that such trainings be done in a more controlled environment, away from the area where commercial harvesting/extraction is taking place, and where many hazard are present. Person should also be well-equipped with safety gears during such training.
	<b>Santa Mission</b>	<b>Registering Amerindian communities</b>			Is it the responsibility of the village council to register everyone in their community for NIS?	If the VC/village is operating as an employer, then yes. However, it is recommended that the VC (whether an employer or not), as the governing authority in the village, should seek registration of its people given the long and short term benefits associated with NIS.
					If someone is licenced to operate in the community shouldn't they be responsible for their NIS	If that person is operating as a self-employed person, then yes.
					What is the best solution for persons who are not registered with NIS and are from outlying areas to be registered and start the process of compliance?	That person should proceed to the nearest NIS out-station or office where an NIS officer will be able to get that person registered.
	<b>Santa</b>	<b>Dealing with</b>			Is there any mechanism in	As it currently is, a FLEGT license will not be issued to any

	<b>Mission</b>	<b>non-compliance.</b>			place to deal with first time offenders who after checks by forestry are found to be in breach of any of the laws as outlined by the LD e.g. NIS, warning before fines are issued?	person/company etc who does not pass the requirements outlined in the LD (that includes NIS). However, Annex 4 allows for the applicant to be notified (in case of non-compliance with an indicator), and given the opportunity to rectify such non-compliance. With regards to fines, each law should outline specific penalties associated with breaches. These will be enforced. If the Law makes provisions for a warning before a fine then this will also be enforced.
		<b>Agreement with the FLEGT VPA</b>		What if a few of the Amerindian villages can't or don't agree to the VPA, Will that stop the process?		While the NTWG strives for concensus on the VPA, satisfying ALL stakeholder concerns may be impossible. That is why this process involves negotiation. However, the NTWG continuously strives to ensure that all stakeholder benefit (in some way) from the VPA with the long term vision of gradually addressing any outstanding issues. It should be noted that the system under the VPA is the national system.
		<b>Payments of royalties by VCs</b>		The village council collects royalty for timber after their members remove it from the reservation and would agree to pay after they sell it. However many of the members would return with royalty payment below the quantity of wood that was taken out. The VC claim that this has been happening for years now. FSOs		It is advised that before transporting, the VC invites the buyer(s) to verify the quantity and quality of wood on the ground. This would help to safeguard against reduced/non-payment. Again contracts will help to alleviate some of these discrepancies.
		<b>Paying taxes</b>			What percentage of GRA taxes should be paid by Indigenous communities, Could the GRA accompany the GFC in the next round of consultations?	Every individual tax payer must pay 30% of his chargeable income. For instance, John works for \$55,000. His chargeable income is all revenue above \$50,000 (i.e. \$55,000 - \$50,000 = \$5000). His tax would then be: 30% of \$5000 = \$1500. This is called Pay As You Earn (PAYE), and represents GRA income tax deductions. Persons working for \$50,000 or less are not required to pay PAYE. Yes, the NTWG has begun mobilizing GRA to be apart of its future workshops.

	<b>Kwakwani: KNRO</b>	<b>PROXIMITY RULE</b>			Can the proximity rule be revised under FLEGT to show a lesser	The GFC will need to determine such revision and this has to be based on sound data and analysis.
		<b>GPS readings</b>			Many times stakeholders are penalised by officers for improper GPS readings, sometimes stakeholders would explain to officers the reasons for the reading. One most popular occurrence being GPS malfunction, because of battery or other technical glitches. Can the GFC have refresher courses with stakeholders and officers on how to read	The possibility of GPS workshops are being considered by the NTWG as a key area for support through the VPA's Annex VIII. However, the FTCI currently does GPS training, and such can be requested. This may however involve a cost.
		<b>Harsh fines by forestry officers</b>		Too Harsh penalties are instituted by forestry officers for minor misdemeanours such as typos of tag numbers on permits and measurements.		
		<b>Delay of checks and balances at</b>		Delays in transshipment of timber due to checkpoints. Members claim that the time taken at checkpoints are too long		
				Some of the members not paying NIS. Many are not knowledgeable about NIS payments and benefits.		As was mentioned earlier, the NTWG will be mobilizing NIS officers during workshop sessions which will be conducted as part of its capacity building forums geared towards VPA implementation. This will form a critical aspect of Annex VIII.
	<b>St Cuthbert's mission</b>	<b>Acronyms not listed for</b>		a. FRMD		LD will be adjusted to reflect these acronyms.
				b. FMD		
				c. AAC		
				d. MAC		
			<b>Indicator</b>	Consideration should be made to the use		While the VPA does not prevent Amerindian villages from using their

			<b>D:3.2.5</b>	of natural remedies especially in Amerindian villages where those have been in use for centuries and not First-		traditional/natural remedies, it is by LAW that first-aid facilities are provided for at the workplace. The VPA is founded on the legislative framework of Guyana, as relevant to the forest sector.
				Bi-annual should replace semi-annual where applicable		Will be reviewed for consistency.
		<b>Request for training in GPS</b>		Request for training in GPS reading and Reduce impact Logging for loggers.		This request will be forwarded to the FTCI for consideration and feedback.
				Request for GPS to be donated to the village council to loan to community members involved in logging		This request will be forwarded to the GFC for consideration. However, GPS are available for purchase on a cost-recovery basis, and can be obtained efficiently through a payment plan.
		<b>the unresolved issues</b>		The community members expressed concern for the unresolved issues that arose from the formation of Community Forestry Organization and difficulty in making payments owed to Guyana Forestry Commission in this regard.		This request will be forwarded to the GFC for review. A feedback should follow soon thereafter.
				Sustainable management was suggested as a topic to be discussed at the village council level to address the current situation of overharvesting within the community.		General forestry operations training (inclusive of those relating to SFM, harvesting and extraction such as COPs and WTS) is expected to form a key part of capacity building during the VPAs implementation phase. Moreover, information material relating to SFM is available to the public and can be uplifted at the GFC's head office or out-station (upon request.
				Consideration should be given to communities out of Georgetown to provide NIS services (Monthly/quarterly presence to uplift contribution) within the villages or have alternative sources for information. The...		This is a useful recommendation, and will be discussed further at the level of the NTWG, and with NIS.
	<b>Santa</b>			Request for training in record keeping		This request has been noted and will form part of the Community

	<b>mission ,St Cuthbert?</b>			and financial management		Deliverables matrix. This matrix is expected to guide the completion of such training request over the coming months (as part of the VPA implementation phase)
	<b>St Cuthbert?</b>	<b>REQUEST</b>		Request for provision of Personal Protective equipment		
	<b>Hururu</b>	<b>Boundary demarcation</b>		The boundary line isn't properly demarcated from the reservation lands. Members claimed they paid forestry to demarcate their boundary but it was only partly done and the problems are		This concern has been noted and will be forwarded to the GFC's FRMD (responsible for demarcation) for investigation.
	<b>Hururu</b>			Given that the fine was paid. Officers from the different forest stations are not always in agreement with certain issues.		
	<b>Hururu</b>			Problems with NIS, some of the members not paying NIS. Many are not knowledgeable about NIS payments and benefits.		The NTWG has recognise this as being an issue countrywide. As a result, through the VPA, more workshops will be held with FSOs to improve registration, foster a better understanding of the NIS requirements (among each stakeholder group) and the benefits associated with paying NIS. Annex VIII will be drafted to include such sessions as part of capacity building during the VPA's implementation.
	<b>Hururu</b>			Mistakes are sometimes made by GFC with record keeping. A member claimed to have paid a fine that was issued by GFC but was charged with the same fine		This has been acknowlegded.
	<b>Muritaro</b>			Problems with NIS, some of the members not paying NIS. Many are not knowledgeable about NIS payments and benefits. Some members claim that they work for a number of years with companies that deducted NIS payments from salaries and at time of claim NIS told them there is no contribution.		In cases where an employer/former employer has been suspected of deducting NIS but has not been paying same, the employee/former employee can make a formal complaint to the Ministry of Labor/Social Protection so that a proper investigation can be launched. Additionally, workers are advised to keep all payslips as this can be used as evidence for showing NIS deductions by the employer. Through the VPA, more workshops will be held with FSOs to improve registration, foster a better understanding of the NIS requirements (among each stakeholder group) and the benefits associated with paying NIS.
				Permit selling, some of the members		Such cases should be immediately reported to the nearest GFC out-

				claim that sometimes permits that are issued to them end up with persons that		station or Head Office.
				Members' claim that they are accustomed to taking their kids to the backdam to teach them as this is part of their customs and do not consider it as child labour. They claim they do not give them arduous work		Based on my understanding, the law restricts persons below the age of 16 from doing industrial type work (and/or those associated with strenuous tasks). However, that individual may be allowed to do more administrative work such as those done in an office setting, and where the activities are not laborious. With regards to tradition, many Amerindians have expressed same. The NTWG (inclusive of the NTC, IPC and MoIPA) has also brought this up at the international level. As such, while training does not breach the law, that person should not be engaged in any form of work for commercial purposes with regards to what they are being trained to do. It is also advised that such trainings be done in a more controlled environment, away from the area where commercial harvesting/extraction is taking place, and where many hazards are present. Person should also be well-equipped with safety gears during such training.
				There is lack of first aid kits.		This has been noted. The NTWG is seeking to incorporate the provision or access to first-aid kits as part of its Annex VIII in order to improve compliance with this particular requirement. The NTWG will also begin collaborating with the Ministry of Health to have a solution in this regard.
		Land Titling		The titling for our village (Rockstone) is taking too long.		While titling is part of a longer term process, through the VPA the NTWG has begun to work more closely with the Ministry of Indigenous People's Affairs to foster discussions on issues relating to land tenure, land titling etc. Moreover, through the VPA, there are plans for the establishment of a FLEGT coordination mechanism which will seek to be a platform for open-dialogue on these same issues with all relevant agencies such as GGMC, Ministry of Agriculture, MoIPA, GFC.

January 30th 2017	Rockstone	Taxes			Would the association be required to pay taxes or individual members?	If the association operates as a company, then that association will have to pay tax. Similarly, any person earning an income will have to pay Income tax (PAYE).
		Measurements		Buyers measure under the heart while GFC and supplier measures under the skin of the log. Such measurement should be the same for buyer and seller.		
		Request		We need snake-bite kits		This has been noted. The NTWG is seeking to incorporate the provision or access to first-aid kits and snake-bite kits as part of its Annex VIII in order obtain support to improve compliance with this particular requirement. The NTWG will also begin collaborating with the Ministry of Health to have a solution in this regard.
		Request		We need EPA staff to hold workshop so that we can know the environmental fines and how to protect the environment, especially riverine areas.		Similar to NIS and GRA, environmental requirements form a major part of the VPA (especially those laid out in Annex II). As a result, the NTWG has begun making provisions (via Annex VIII), to make capacity building with the different verification agencies (including EPA) and Amerindian villages a possibility. These capacity building forums are expected to be a large part of the implementation phase of the VPA come 2018.
		Request			Can we have some timber grading and GPS training?	While the NTWG is discussing the possibility of obtaining support through Annex VIII to have these training for our stakeholders as a subsidize cost. These requests will however be forwarded to FTCL.
		Request	Indicator B.3.1.3		Can we have GRA workshops to discuss tax requirements?	Annex VIII will be updated to reflect the mobilization of NIS officers across the country so as to assist with addressing NIS concerns, build capacity in this regard, and conduct NIS registration (especially in far-out

		Request	Indicator B.3.2.1		Can we have more information on NIS and can you help us with setting up our NIS system?	areas)
		Templates	Indicator B.3.2.5 Indicator B.3.2.7	We need help with developing a payslip and we want a template of the Accident register. We need a list for the items which go into a first-aid kit.		These requests have been acknowledged and are recorded as part of a Community Deliverables Matrix. This matrix maps all stakeholder request (during the 2017 national consultation). The NTWG will begin to address these request (where possible) soon. The distribution of templates may be more easily addressed given the less financial resource it requires. These will be provided.
		Request			Can we have the forest officer visit more regularly so as to tell us where we are going wrong beforehand so that we can rectify the problems? We also need a better understanding on undersize felling, proximity rule and buffer zone?	The association can make this request at the Forest station in Linden where a forest officer can surely provide this level of support. Additionally, through the VPA, more workshops will be held with stakeholders to foster better understanding of the GFCs requirements relating to Codes of Practices such as undersize fellings, buffer zone etc. Additionally, these COPs are available online (free of charge) and can be provided to the association upon request. The have very simple language outlining the procedures for conducting sustainable harvesting and extraction.
		General			Why so much emphasis on Indigenous communities?	Whilst much empahsis has been placed on the indigenous communities, there has been equal efforts with many other stakeholder groups such as sawmillers and lumber yard owners. The challenge with reaching manmy indigenous communities means that we have to spend a few days during each visit. With some of the otger staekholders groups, access to internet, television, newspapers etc. is far greater.



January 31st 2017	Greatfalls	General			How is the NTWG and FLEGT Secretariat doing in terms of the project? Is there good progress so far?	The NTWG and FLEGT secretariat has been working steadfastly to upkeep the momentum in advancing the VPA process. On a good note, a number of Key milestones of the Joint roadmap were completed, and the NTWG are now close to initialling the VPA (in July-August). This is a good indication of the level of progress which have been made throughout the years since 2012. Specifically, there has been great progress in the areas of consultation and ensuring better communication and improved transparency. 10 out of the 11 VPA annexes have been drafted and are near to finalization as well.	
		Request		We need more GPS training, and we need a GPS		The NTWG is discussing the possibility of obtaining support through Annex VIII to have these training for our stakeholders at a subsidize cost. These requests will however be forwarded to FTCI and GFC. These requests have also been acknowledged and are recorded as part of a Community Deliverables Matrix. The NTWG will begin to address these request based on the availability of resources. With regards to the GTLAS, additional workshops will be mandatory since the Implementation phase of the VPA encompasses the successful operation of the GTLAS.	
		Request			Can we have more workshops on the GTLAS especially the parts relating to the filling out of removal documents?		
		Request		We need to have a timber grading course here as the village does not have a timber grader at the moment.			
		Request	Indicator B.3.2.1	we need workshops with NIS so that our people can become registered, and trained to calculate NIS			Since conducting these workshops would require some form of financial support (such as cost associated with traveling to far-out areas), Annex VIII will be updated to reflect the mobilization of NIS, GRA and Health officers across the country so as to assist with addressing NIS/Tax concerns, build capacity to calculate NIS/tax and to conduct emergency first-aid, and to conduct NIS registration. It is with much hope that
		Request	Indicator B.3.2.5		Can we have some first-aid training because lately snake bites have resulted in a casualty.		

		Request	Indicator B	We need GRA workshops to clarify how to do employee/employer income tax.		through Annex VIII, the NTWG can acquire some form of funding/avenue for funding to make these trips a possibility.
		Reports		We need a system where we can submit GFC reports online.		The GFC has a long term vision of gradually moving from a paper-based system to one that is technology-driven. This of course requires much financial and technical resource. The process has however begun. Submission of reports online is a part of this vision.
		Request	D.3.2.7 Indicator		Can we have a copy of the Accident Register and PPE issuance register?	Yes. These types of requests have been ear-marked and will be granted soon. Requests have been recorded in the Community Deliverables
		Request	Indicator D.3.2.5		Can we have the items list for first-aid kits?	This has been noted. The NTWG is seeking to incorporate the provision or access to first-aid kits and snake-bite kits as part of its Annex VIII in order obtain support to improve compliance with this particular requirement. The NTWG will also begin collaborating with the Ministry of Health to have a solution in this regard.
		Request		We need snake-bite kits.		
		Amerindian NGOs			Who are the APA, GOIP and TAAMOG representing?	These are Amerindian NGOs and are thus representing on behalf of the wider Indigenous society.
		NIS payment	Indicator B.3.2.1		Where do I go to pay NIS in Region 9, and how do I do it?	NIS can be paid at the Lethem office. For government workers 14% of Personal Income is paid to NIS that is; 5.6 % by employee and 8.4 % by employer. While Self employed contributes 12.5%. The information sheets you were given details this process. However, you can check <a href="http://www.nis.org.gy">http://www.nis.org.gy</a> for additional info.
		Recommendation		Out of this consultation, we recommend a joint meeting with GFC, TAAMOG, APA and GOIP		This request has been noted. the NTWG will seek to make arrangements for such.
		Request		We the NRDDDB wish to have a meeting with EU to discuss OUR position on the VPA and not APAs, TAAMOGs or GOIPs.		

		Requirements		We are happy to hear that the VPA is going to help us in meeting these requirements (LD) such as PPEs and first-aid.		Well, the aspect of legality does not only encompass environmental requirements but social welfare as well.
		First-aid	Indicator D	I am glad first-aid will be enforced under this VPA.		
		Toshao's stipend		Toshao's are being exploited because they are being paid \$30,000. We need more than just a stipend since our work requires us to be present 24 hours each day.		This comment/recommendation has been noted. It will be forwarded to the MoIPA member on the NTWG who can make representation on your behalf at the national level.
		Recommendation		Every sector (not just the forest sector) should follow these social requirements.		This is quite true since the requirements are part of National Law, not just relevant to the forest sector.
		Inspections		Its important we do proper inspection to ensure the requirements of the LD are met and not just based on assumptions.		Indeed, that is why inter-agency collaboration and detailed inspection protocols involving interviews and evidence gathering will be the primary means of verification of these requirements.
		NTFPs		While we do not have a system in place to properly track NTFPs, we can explore the development of such a system so that we can have NTFPs apart of the VPA in the future.		Indeed. It is the vision of the GFC and wider NTWG to have additional product (especially value added products) added to the VPA. The VPA allows for such addition. Guyana will however first seek to gradually develop its GTLAS to account for these products.
		Request			We need more tree spotters, and qualified timber graders. Can we have some training in this regard?	The NTWG is discussing the possibility of obtaining support through Annex VIII to have these training for our stakeholders at a subsidize cost. These requests will however be forwarded to FTCI and GFC. These requests have also been acknowledged and are recorded as part of a Community Deliverables Matrix. The NTWG will begin to address these request based on the availability of resources.

February 2nd 2017	Annai	Request			Can we have some training in FLEGT at the village level (for our youths) so that they can act as extension officers	This can be discussed further at the level of the NTWG. It will surely add positively to the NTWGs existing system of communication/information dissemination.
		Request			Can the GFC hold a workshop/training in Annai to discuss general forestry operation practices (relating to the COPs and WTS), forest inventory, GPS and	This request will be forwarded to the GFC for consideration. However, once in the implementation phase of the VPA, workshops//training in this regard will be a priority.
		Request		We need more FLEGT posters and books to place in our public centres.		This request is noted. Packages will be sent for distribution.
		Grants			Is there another grant to continue the DVD sessions in each community?	Not at the moment. However, there are newer versions of DVDs comprising recent panel discussions, radio sessions and documentaries which can be sent to the villages upon request.
		Request	Indicator D.3.2.6	We need safety gears for our small loggers because once the VPA becomes Law, we will have to abide by it.		As part of the VPA (Annex VIII), the NTWG will be exploring the possibility of procuring climate appropriate safety gears, or seeking funding pathways to do such. These safety gears can then be purchased on a cost recovery basis (as with the recent GPS distribution done by the GFC).
		Request		We need a proposal writing course for the different VCs so that they can apply for funding to assist in FLEGT work.		This request is noted as a key deliverable for Communities. Once funding/avenue for funding can be achieved through the VPA or some other means, the GFC and FPDMC will collaborate to assist with such training.

		General		FLEGT is a good step forward towards the right development of our communities because it outlines the proper way of doing things. And once the VPA goes into effect, it can be a mode of enforcement of OUR rules and we are happy to be apart of the process, and we look forward to more information like this.		Thank you. More information can surely be provided. Additional information packages will be sent for distribution throughout the region.
		Request		We need a needs Assessment to be conducted in the area.		The Planning and Deveopment Division of the GFC should be conducting a needs assessment within the first quarter of 2017.
		Request	Indicator B.3.2.1		Can we have NIS workshops to discuss NIS requirements and get our people registered?	Annex VIII will be updated to reflect the mobilization of NIS officers across the country so as to assist with addressing NIS concerns, discuss Nis requirements, and conduct NIS registration (especially in far-out areas). The NTWG has begun this collaboration with the Region 9 NIS office. Mr. Leslie Allen (NIS officers for Region 9) will be happy to assist in this regard, and provide any further clarification.
		GRA and NIS	Indicator B.3.2.1 Indicator B.3.1.3	We are advocating for an improvement in the services offered by the GRA and NIS offices in Lethem. Currently, these offices are unable to provide certain services to us resulting in us spending a lot of time and money to travel to Georgetown. For instance, many people work in the Mines so it is very difficult for them to get time off to travel all the way to the city.		While this comment has been noted (and will be forward to NIS and GRA), Mr. Leslie Allen (NIS officer for Region 9) has assured his availability/ staffs availability at the Region 9 NIS office to assist with any NIS concerns/matters, especially those dealing with NIS registration. The NTWG will seek to acquire similar support from the GRA office based in Lethem.

February 3rd 2017	Rupertee	Recommendation		Local companies should assist in getting NIS for their employees who are also residents of the surrounding Amerindian villages/communities.		Indeed. This is something the NTWG can advocate for during the implementation phase of the VPA.
		General		We are happy to know that this process will help to mobilize NIS and GRA to assist us.		
		Issues		Companies are taking NIS from our villagers and NIS is claiming that the NIS is not paid for them.		This issue has been noted and was forwarded to the NIS officer of Region 9 for consideration. Our NIS officer has indicated that the matter has been documented and further investigation/follow-ups will be launched.
		Annex VI			How often will the Independent Audits be conducted?	Based on Annex VI, once every year for the first 2 years after which this frequency will be reviewed with the hope of having it done every 2 year.
		Issues			We have an issue with our demarcation. Can the EU FLEGT trigger the Government and GLSC to fix these issues or have	The NTWG has begun collaborating with the GLSC in this regard. During the implementation phase of the VPA, this collaboration will materialize with the aim of investigating concerns related to demarcation. An MoU with GLSC is being finalized.
		3rd Party Contract	Indicator D.1.1.2 Indicator D.1.1.3		Many of the 3rd party contracts developed by companies are too technical. As a result, the language gives preference in favor of the non-resident because we do not fully understand, and therefore we are being taken advantage of. Can we have some training to draft our own contracts in	This request has been made part of the community deliverables matrix. It is the approach of the NTWG that during the VPA implementation phase, such workshops/training will be conducted to foster better understanding.
			Indicator D.3.2.4		How much is minimum wage per day?	Private sector: \$2040. Public sector: \$2,314

		Request	Indicator D	We need first-aid and snake-bite kits.		The NTWG is seeking to incorporate the provision or access to first-aid kits and snake-bite kits as part of its Annex VIII in order obtain support to improve compliance with this particular requirement. The NTWG will also begin collaborating with the Ministry of Health to have a solution in this regard.
		Request		We need training in timber grading, sawmilling and downstream processing.		The NTWG is discussing the possibility of obtaining support through Annex VIII to have these training for our stakeholders at a subsidize cost. These requests will however be forwarded to FTCI, FPDMC GFC. These requests have also been acknowledged and are recorded as part of a Community Deliverables Matrix. The NTWG will begin to address these request based on the availability of resources.
		Issue		We need the forest officer to properly check our wood in terms of measurements because our wood gets rejected when it reaches Georgetown because it does not reach the buyers measurements.		Your village is not far from the Forest station in Aranaputa. At any time, please make a request at the GFC office to have a forest officer assist in this regard.
		Issue		We need buyers and sellers to agree on the ID of wood species.		While the GFC officers can verify the species based on the permit, you can purchase a WOOD ID sample booklet/GFCs wood species book to assist with Wood Species Identification. These can help substantiate your claim of your produce to the buyer.
		Annex VI		We need payment for the IA. Guyana cannot pay for it.		Indeed. Annex VIII is being drafted with this in mind.
		Field Testing			When is field testing happening? We should first test before we sign.	Based on the Joint Roadmap, field testing is tentatively scheduled for April to May 2017, a few months before signing the VPA sometime in July-August 2017.
		Issue		We believe illegal logging is happening (by outsiders) on our land and we need GFC to do an investigation.		Please make a formal request at the GFC outstation in Aranaputa where an officer will do an inspection. Provide as much detail as possible. A representative from the village may be required to assist the officer.

February 3rd 2017	Wowetta	Taxes		We need to know why we are being taxed. We need more workshops with GRA to tell us.		The NTWG will be making requests to the GRA to have additional workshops of this nature conducted. Additionally, these workshops will fall under the capacity building heading which is being developed under Annex VIII. Support will be procured through this annex to acquire resources to conduct such sessions.
			Indicator B			
		Request		We need safety gears or access to user-friendly safety gears.		As part of the VPA (Annex VIII), the NTWG will be exploring the possibility of procuring such kits and gears, or seeking funding pathways to do such. These equipment can then be purchased on a cost recovery basis (as with the recent GPS distribution done by the GFC). Additionally, other means of support to obtain these kits will be explored through possible collaboration with the Ministry of Health.
		Request	Indicator D.3.2.5		There is a lack of first-aid kits in the village. Can we have some first-aid kits and first-aid training for our youths?	
		Request		We need proposal writing training and training in forestry operations, especially relating to export, harvesting and extraction, sawmilling and quality assurance.		These training requests have been well documented in the Community deliverables matrix. During the implementation phase of the VPA, (once funding/funding pathways have been made available), such training will be paramount. These requests will also be forwarded to the relevant agencies for consideration beforehand.
Request			Can we have more FLEGT posters, videos and books.	FLEGT information packages will be sent for dissemination. Please make a follow-up in this regard.		



February 6th 2017	Toka	Certification			How does FSC respect traditional rights of Amerindian people?	FSC's FSC Forest Management Standard is built on a core principle: i.,e. Principle 3: Indigenous Peoples' Rights. Based on this principle, the organization has pledged to identify and uphold indigenous peoples' legal and customary rights of ownership, use and management of land, territories and resources affected by management activities.	
		Forest Act 2009	The new forest act does not speak about protecting the rights of Amerindian People when compared to the Old forest Act. The wording is different. Can you please clarify this?				
		Traditional Rights	Indicator D.1.2.2	What is the meaning of traditional rights. What does it cover?			
		Annex II			Who has to get EP, ESIA or COP?	Currently, based on Annex II; All small and large concessions have to abide by the COP. Additionally, all large concessions require an ESIA to be done. All large concessions, small concessions and Sawmills require an EP.	
		Taxes and NIS	Indicator B.3.2.1 Indicator B.3.1.3		Can we have GRA and NIS workshops? We need these officers to visit us because we have	Annex VIII will be updated to reflect the mobilization of GRA and NIS officers across the country so as to assist with addressing tax/NIS concerns (especially in far-out areas)	
Afforestation			we would like to do an afforestation project in our village because we don't have that much large trees. Can you help us to collaborate with Araranaputa who has a project of this nature?	The FRMD of the GFC can assist in this regard. This will be forwarded to FRMD for consideration.			

		Request		We need more FLEGT books and posters since they have some simple language and diagrams when compared to the actual Annex.		Additional material can be provided to the village. Please do a follow-up/request using the number Tel: +592-226-7247 or 226-7271/4. These requests have also been recorded in the deliverables matrix. The FPDMC/FLEGT secretariat will deal specifically with requests for additional packages.
		Request			Can we have these FLEGT books and posters translated into the Meluki language?	The NTWG is currently discussing this aspect, and should be engaging with translators soon.
			Indicator D.3.2.6		Why do we have to use a helmet with a Chainsaw, even out in the open?	Chainsaws can result in "kickback". This is where the blade bounces back towards the person's head when subjected to pressure during the cut. Additionally, the chain can break and can thus make contact with the operators head. In this regard, a helmet is important.
		Request		We need more forestry training/workshops for our loggers, especially in RIL and other SFM practices.		During the implementation phase of the VPA, (once funding/funding pathways have been made available), such training will be paramount. These requests will also be forwarded to the relevant agencies for consideration beforehand. COPs outlining SFM practices such as RIL are also available free of charge. Just make a request to the nearest GFC outstation. They have very simple language detailing the various SFM requirements, best practices and procedures.

February 9th 2017	Karasabai	Request	Indicator D.3.2.5	Can we have some first-aid kits and snake-bite kits in our villages along with first-aid training for our people?	As part of the VPA (Annex VIII), the NTWG will be exploring the possibility of procuring such kits and gears, or seeking funding pathways to do such. These equipment can then be purchased on a cost recovery basis . Additionally, other means of support to obtain these kits will be explored through possible collaboration with the Ministry of Health whom can also provide some first-aid training. During the implementation phase of the VPA, these training and provision of equipment/access to such will be a critical objective of the NTWG.	
		Request	Indicator D	We need safety gears, especially for our sawmen.		
		Request	Indicator D.3.1.3 to Indicator D.3.2.8	We need Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Social Protection, NIS and GRA to hold workshops with us to sensitize on employer/employee rights related to the labor laws of Guyana, especially aspects relating to overtime, minimum wage, NIS, income Taxes.		These workshops will like form part of Annex VIII under the heading capacity building. Through this Annex, Guyana is lobbying for support (financial, and technical) since such training/workshops will require extensive resources. These trainings have also been recognised as important to the overall success of the VPA, especially during the implementation phase. Once funding/funding avenues have been established, the NTWG will be in a better position to conduct such workshops. The NTWG has however begun the process of improving its collaboration with these agencies/ministries with the hope that a shared system of resources can offset these workshops.
		Issue		There's an issue with pollution at Chiliber (village of Yamparo). We need EPA to come in and do an investigation.		This issue will be forwarded to EPA for consideration/investigation. Please do a follow-up with us.
		Annex VIII		We need scholarships through the VPA so that our youths can benefit and gain jobs with logging companies.		The inclusion of this particular request into Annex VIII will be discussed at the level of the NTWG.

		General		Are we covering the entire country with the VPA?	Yes. The VPA will be binding for both parties i.e. Guyana and the EU. All operators shipping to the EU will have the benefits associated with the VPA.
		General		Is this VPA part of the LCDS?	Yes. The VPA was birthed out of the LCDS since it was seen as a means of reducing deforestation through reduced illegal logging.
		UK Ban		what is going to happen with the Ban on Greenheart? What has been done by the GFC/Guyana?	
		FLEGT Vacancies		Is there vacancy for our youths to act as FLEGT extension officers? Most of our youths have CXC so we can use them.	This can be discussed further at the level of the NTWG. It will surely add positively to the NTWGs existing system of communication/information dissemination with Amerindian communities/villages.
		General	There should be a system in place to inform villagers of the process/requirements to do logging.		There is a system. Requests can be made at any GFC outstation for an explanation of such process/requirements. Additionally, GFC has its manual of procedures and COPs which are available online (or at any GFC out station upon request, free of charge). These outline the process/requirements to do logging.

February 10th 2017	Lethem	Request		we need training in forest inventory, forest operational practices, and RIL, mensuration, biomass estimation, GPS.		These training will likely form part of Annex VIII under the heading capacity building. Through this Annex, Guyana is lobbying for support (financial, and technical) since such training/workshops will require extensive resources. These trainings have also been recognised as important to the overall success of the VPA, especially during the implementation phase. Once funding/funding avenues have been established, the NTWG will be in a better position to conduct such training. These requests will be forwarded to the GFC and FTCI for consideration, and are recorded as part of the NTWGs deliverables matrix for community development, and improved compliance with VPA requirements.
		Request			Can we get the GFC wood species book and more information on the application of Lesser Used Species?	Yes. Please make a request to the FPDMC/ GFCs head office or nearest outstation. A cost may be associated with the provision of these books.
			Indicator B.3.2.1		How long does it take to get back an NIS card if it was lost?	Once the minimal fee (for replacement) of two hundred Dollars (\$200.00) is paid to your nearest NIS office, a card can be issued on the spot. Or within the timeframe set by the NIS officer.
					If you're a self-employed person, how much NIS do you have to pay?	Self-employed persons contribute 12.5% of their declared income as contributions.
					How long do I have to pay NIS in order to receive benefits?	750 contributions (15 years) for long term benefits (e.g. pension) and 50 (one year) contributions for short term benefits (e.g. sickness benefits) and 0 contributions for Injury benefit. With regards to the latter, you must be registered with NIS.

				When do we get NIS pension?	Old Age Benefit is payable to Insured Persons who have attained the age of sixty- (60) years. The Benefit can be in the form of a Periodical Payment (Pension) or a Grant (lump-sum).
		Indicator D.3.2.4		How much is minimum wage per month?	For private sector: \$44,200. For Government workers: \$50,000
	Request			Can we get the Amerindian obligations met?	Yes. Information packages will be prepared and sent.
	General			Will the Protected Areas be available for commercial harvesting?	No. Not unless approved by the Government of Guyana. Protected areas were established to preserve the culture, flora and fauna therein. Commercial harvesting tend to displace these.
	Request		We need some scholarships for our youths to do forestry at GSA.		The inclusion of this particular request into Annex VIII will be discussed at the level of the NTWG.
		Indicator D.3.2.1 to Indicator D.3.2.8	We need more workshops with Ministry of Labor or MSP to better understand the labor laws, especially as it relates to employer and employees knowing their rights.		These workshops will like form part of Annex VIII under the heading capacity building. Through this Annex, Guyana is lobbying for support (financial, and technical) since such training/workshops will require extensive resources. These trainings have also been recognised as important to the overall success of the VPA, especially during the implementation phase. Once funding/funding avenues have been established, the NTWG will be in a better position to conduct such workshops. The NTWG has however begun the process of improving its collaboration with these agencies/ministries with the hope that a shared system of resources can offset these workshops.
	Request		We need more workshops with GRA and the other verification agencies.		
	General			What are the three pillars this Agreement stands on?	The three pillars are: Environmental, Social and Economical.

		Allocation		What happens when concession is granted next to Amerindian Villages?	The FSO is allowed to conduct commercial harvesting within the boundaries of that concession and cannot encroach on the titled village lands to do such. That is an offence unless the VC gives written approval. The FSO must also allow the village access to the allocated area in keeping with their traditional rights in accordance with the Amerindian Act.	
		General		Will there be improvement in governance and inter-agency collaboration as a result of the VPAs.	Yes. There has been improved collaboration with other agencies. Quite recently, meetings have been held with the relevant verification agencies (as outline in Annex II) to finalize MoUs. This will ensure an active means of collaboration throughout the life of the VPA.	
			Indicator B 2 2 1	Can we have some more workshops to get registered with NIS and have our VC trained to do NIS?	Yes. This is something the NTWG has envisioned and will be a major part of the activities set out for during the VPA implementation phase.	
				Can we have an NIS desk here in Aishalton because of the cost involve in travelling to Lethem?	This request can be forwarded to the NIS head office in geogetown for consideration. The NIS officer of Region 9 has also been notified of such suggestion.	
		Issues		NIS are not being paid for Toshaos.		The NIS officer of Region 9 has been made aware of this. Please do a followup with Mr. Leslie Allen (NIS officer based at Lethem NIS office)

February 13th 2017	Aishalton		B.3.2.1		What are the benefits of NIS? What age does NIS have to be paid for? Who pay NIS? Does NIS card Expire?	From 16 to 60, NIS must be paid once the individual is earning an income. Your NIS contributions can be paid at the Lethem office. For government workers 14% of Personal Income is paid to NIS that is; 5.6 % by employee and 8.4 % by employer. While Self employed persons contribute 12.5%. The information sheets you were given details this process. However, you can check <a href="http://www.nis.org.gy">http://www.nis.org.gy</a> for additional info. NIS cards do not expire.
		General		Toshao's are being exploited because they are being paid \$30,000.		Similarl views were expressed by toshaos in Annai. This comment/recommendation has been noted for Aishalton as well. It will be forwarded to the MoIPA member on the NTWG who can make representation on your behalf at the national level.
		Request		We need training for our people to act as forest rangers.		This request has been recorded as part of the NTWG's deliverables matrix. It is with much hope that resources can be procured through the VPA to offset such training and workshops. As such, some of these trainings (as relevant to the VPA) will be included as part of capacity building in Annex VIII after discussions at the level of the NTWG. The request for Forestry related training will be forwarded to the GFC/FTCI for consideration beforehand.
		Request	Indicator B.3.2.1 Indicator B.3.1.3	We need more workshops with GRA and NIS.		



		Request			Can we have some training in Tree/Wood ID and the use of these species in different application?	
		Request		We need training on the use of maps, conducting inventory and GPS use, OSH, COPs, WTS, record keeping, mensuration, biomass estimation, afforestation.		
		Request			Can we have some workshops with Ministry of Legal Affairs to better understand the laws which govern the VPA? This will help to improve our interpretation of the Laws.	
		Request		We need more of your user-friendly booklets, posters, post-ups and videos and copies of the Forest Act, Labor act, Trafficking in Persons Act and Mining Act		These can certainly be provided to you. Please contact the GFC/FPDMC or FLEGt Secretariat for follow-up in this regard. The Secretariat and FPDMC will begin the preparation and distribution of such packages shortly.
		Issues		In Katoonarib, the Agriculture leasees do not consult with our VC before they burn good forest produce.		This issue will be forwarded to the GFC's Forest Monitoring Division which will do a follow-up.

		Request		We need snake-bite and first-aid kits.		As part of the VPA (Annex VIII), the NTWG will be exploring the possibility of procuring such kits and gears, or seeking funding pathways to do such. These equipment can then be purchased on a cost recovery basis . Additionally, other means of support to obtain these kits will be explored through possible collaboration with the Ministry of Health. Similarly, OSH training will be a key aspect of capacity building during the VPA implementation phase with much collaboration with the Ministry of Labor in this regard.
		Request		We need training in OSH.		
		General			Is there possibility that we can have grants we can use for community development?	This is something that will tabled at the level of the NTWG for consideration. Under the support measures a number of efforts will be made to ensure the communities are FLEGT ready.