



# Strengthening SFM Standards and Timber Legality Framework in Myanmar



**ITTO**  
INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL  
TIMBER ORGANIZATION

Project Supported by Forestry Agency of Japan  
Implemented by Myanmar Forest Certification Committee (MFCC) &  
International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)

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## About MFCC

Myanmar Forest Certification Committee (MFCC) is the National Governing Body (NGB) of forest/timber certification schemes in Myanmar and a central part of the mandate is to carry out forest and timber certification and create an enabling environment for the sustainability of Myanmar forests. MFCC also aims to promote market access of Myanmar forest products in international trade. MFCC's activities cover the entire forest and forest products, and MFCC has been empowered to execute all processes of forest and timber related certification.

For more information please visit: [www.mfcc.org.mm](http://www.mfcc.org.mm)



### Transparency

MFCC system documentation is publicly available to view. We welcome input through formal consultations, or at any time through our website contact page.



### Certification

MFCC governs all processes of forest and forest products certification to bring an enhanced sustainable forest management to Myanmar Forests.



### Third Party Verification

MFCC Certification Bodies are independent, impartial and qualified. They all are required to achieve ISO accreditation against ISO/IEC 17065:2012.



### Partnership

MFCC has worked on a number of projects with partners that have included PEFC, FLEGT-VPA, FAO, ITTO and the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation.





## Our Mission

To deliver Sustainable Forest Management and timber legality certification in Myanmar. MFCC also support and coordinate standard setting processes and promote access to international markets for timber supply chains.

## Our Purpose

- MFCC Promotes sustainable forest development in Myanmar through conducting forest certification;
- MFCC is responsible for coordinating all stakeholders to conduct work, and is also responsible for the establishment and development of Myanmar Forest Certification Scheme;
- MFCC promotes MFCS to conduct certification activities, and extends the scopes of certification;
- MFCC leads the process of certification scheme endorsement and international recognition.

### Message from MFCC

Myanmar Forest Certification Committee (MFCC) has been striving to support the two areas of the Myanmar forestry sector: The Legal Supply Chain and SFM Certification. In fact, Myanmar is not new to sustainable forest management although the forest certification has not been applied before. The Forest Department is the sole leading institution in the forest governance and conservation. This project will definitely contribute Myanmar in her pursuit to apply the forest certification system which will be endorsed by PEFC.

### Message from Ma Hwan-ok, ITTO

Today's increasingly important timber legality requires collective efforts of policy makers and practitioners to ensure the achievement of sustainable production and consumption (SDG 15). Old and new scientific knowledge, integration, inclusiveness, digitalization, and cooperation can transform timber legality systems. Transformed legality systems can lead and power the shift to sustainable trade and development in Myanmar.

## - Latest Activities

Since 2016, MFCC has been cooperating with international institutions/donors to enhance these two areas. In 2016, MFCC had implemented MTALS Gap Analysis Project under which the certain gaps were identified and most of gaps are addressed as important reform. Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MONREC) have issued Orders to supplement such reforms. This Gap Analysis Project was supported by EU-FAO/ FLEGT programme.

Then in 2018, PEFC in collaboration with the Foundation of Prince Albert II of MONAC supported the 3-Year Project to strengthen both Timber Legality and Forest Certification. Under this project, MFCC became the member of PEFC in 2019, and the PEFC Endorsement of MFCS ( Myanmar Forest Certification Scheme) is under way.

Now, MFCC is implementing another project “Strengthening SFM Standards and Timber Legality Framework in Myanmar” with ITTO. It is a really fortunate for MFCC to get this project since it will enable MFCC to carry on the implementation of the remaining objectives under Price Albert II Monaco Projects. The 2-year project was financed by Forestry Agency of Japan and supported by ITTO.

Although MFCC is facing the constraints to implement few activities because of the Pandemic impacts, MFCC is working hard to prove the tangible results.

### Strengthening SFM Standards and Timber Legality Framework in Myanmar Project



ITTO and MFCC signed the contract for the project on “ Strengthening SFM Standards and Timber Legality Framework in Myanmar” which commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> FEB 2021 for two years. The project is funded by the Forestry Agency of Japan. The project will enhance and strengthen sustainable forest management standards, national certification system of forest management and the Chain of custody in Myanmar.





### **MTLAS Update: Reviewing of MTLAS**

The MFCC project management team reviewed the reports related with the MTLAS - “MTLAS Gap Analysis Report”, “Evaluation of MTLAS and Myanmar CoC Dossier”. In addition, the teams reviewed the “ASEAN Criteria and Indicators for Legality of Timber (2019-draft)” and revised the MTLAS as a draft version number (V.1.02) based on the “ASEAN Criteria and Indicators for Legality of Timber (2019-draft)”. Currently the project team is preparing to present at the EAG, PSC and MFCC members meetings for the approval of the revised standard. As soon as the MTLAS revised standard has been approved, the project team will send out MTLAS (V.1.02) for the Stakeholder Consultations (30 days) according to the MFCC Standard Setting Policy (MFCC P 3 SS).

After the EAG, PSC and MFCC members will approve and finalize the MTLAS revised version, the project management team will also prepare and produce the MTLAS Standard Setting Report and distribute the MTLAS revised version as the V. 2.00 and it will be finally upload on the MFCC website.

And then the project management team will develop the MTLAS Audit Checklists to be used in the field assessment and will conduct Field Testing of MTLAS Version 2.

### **Myanmar Forest Certification Scheme (MFCS)**

Project Management Team conducted video conferencing meetings ten times with the representatives of the pilot project areas (Natural Forests, Departmental Plantations and Private Plantations) between May 2020 and January 2021 to access the auditability of “Myanmar Criteria and Indicators for Forest Management Certification Standard Checklist/Audit Form (Third Draft)”. The team summarized the results of the meetings and revised the verifiers step by step.

### **MFCS Endorsement process with PEFC International**

For the PEFC Endorsement process, MFCC submitted sets of technical documentations of Myanmar Forest Certification Scheme (MFCS) to PEFC international in May 2020. According to the endorsement steps in the assessment process of PEFC GD 1007, MFCS technical documentations are now pre-checked by assessment PEFC Technical Unit. Based on the comments and feedbacks of PEFC Technical Unit, we are currently now review and amend the documentations including standards and policies to solve the comments and ensure completeness before reaching “International Public Consultation Stage by PEFC”.

### **Reviewing and Revising of System Documents**

The implementation and development of standards and system documents is a continuous activity as the demand for legal/SFM/CoC certificate increases. During MFCC-ITTO project, MFCC plans to conduct reviewing and revising process. Currently, MFCC project management team is revising some documents which are not compliance with the current situation in priority. All system documents are available on our website ([www.mfcc.org.mm](http://www.mfcc.org.mm)). If you are interested, they are available for download.

## Other Progresses

The implementation of the project for the initial months has been on the track in accordance with the work plans of the project despite the political issues in Myanmar. Because of the security concern, MFCC has suspended the physical attendance of project staff members. This situation reduced the travel for project staff and organizing meetings/workshops.

However, the project staff members worked regularly on virtually meeting and discussing, reporting and assignments are taking place. Because of the previous working environment and experiences from the MFCC-PEFC 3 years project,

Project Management Team can well organize and concentrate on desk work and literature review for the amendments of the Myanmar Forest Certification Scheme (MFCS) and Myanmar Timber Legality Assurance System (MTLAS).

Endorsement process of MFCS by PEFC is also going through according to their Policy and can be done as preliminary endorsement (like Ukraine) and regular endorsement at the end of this year when it is possible to visit for necessary field assessment by the assessor. In addition, the [introduction of the Myanmar Forest Certification System endorsement webinar](#) will be hosted by PEFC international in 16<sup>th</sup> of August and the public consultation, to give feedback on this new system, will run from 16<sup>th</sup> of August to 14<sup>th</sup> of October.



The screenshot shows the PEFC website's event page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the PEFC logo and menu items: News, COVID-19, Resources, Events & Training, Contact us, Find Certified, and Find Certification Bodies. Below the navigation bar, there are five main categories: WHAT WE DO, WHAT YOU CAN DO, FOR BUSINESS, STANDARDS & IMPLEMENTATION, and DISCOVER PEFC. The main content area features a large green background image of a forest with the title "Introduction to the Myanmar national system" in white text. Below the title, there is a breadcrumb trail: Home > Events & Training. The event title "Introduction to the Myanmar national system" is repeated in green text, followed by the subtitle "SYSTEM INTRODUCTION WEBINAR". A green text block states: "The Myanmar Forest Certification Scheme has been submitted to PEFC for endorsement. The public consultation, which is your chance to give your feedback on this new system, will run from 16 August to 14 October." Below this, a smaller text block explains: "This is the first time the Myanmar Forest Certification Committee (MFCC), the PEFC national member for Myanmar, has applied for PEFC endorsement of the country's national forest certification system." On the right side, there are social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Email. Below these is a "Dates" section with a calendar icon, showing "16 August 2021" and "10:00 - 11:00 (UTC+2)". A green button labeled "ADD TO MY CALENDAR" with a calendar icon is positioned below the dates. At the bottom right, there is a "PEFC contact" section with a horizontal line.

Moreover, MFCC has been actively taken part in the PEFC activities such as Supporting Sustainable Rubber Campaign as well as other communications activities, Asia Pacific Coordination Hub (APAC) as a National Governing Member of the PEFC international.

## Certification Bodies Profile

Myanmar Forest Certification Committee fully notified two local Certification Bodies and one international Certification Body. Local CBs are United Forestry Services, Nature Watch and international CB is Double Helix. Another local CB SGS successfully completed as provisional notification status and it is under the full notification process.



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For Further information please contact the organizations below.

### **Myanmar Forest Certification Committee (MFCC)**

MFCC is set up to develop forest product standards to ensure the sustainable management of Myanmar's forest resources. MFCC serves as the National Governing Body of the Myanmar Timber Legality Assurance System (MTLAS) and the Myanmar Forest Certification Scheme (MFCS). The MFCC Secretariat, guided by the MFCC Chairman and Committee Members, carries out the day-to-day activities of the Committee.

### **International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)**

ITTO is an intergovernmental organization promoting the conservation and sustainable management, use and trade of tropical forest resources. Its members represent the bulk of the world's tropical forests and of the global tropical timber trade. ITTO develops internationally agreed policy documents to promote sustainable forest management and forest conservation and assists tropical member countries to adapt such policies to local circumstances and to implement them in the field through projects. In addition, ITTO collects, analyzes and disseminates data on the production and trade of tropical timber and funds projects and other actions aimed at developing sustainable forest industries at both the community and industrial scales.

#### **CONTACT:**

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