



6th Report of the LTA Secretariat For the period • November 19- December 17, 2015



Since the last sitting of this body on November 18, 2015, the Secretariat has undertaken and/or implemented the following activities:

A. ADMINISTRATION

1. **Staffing:** During the period under reviewed, the staff of the Secretariat continued to enjoy a cordial working relationship with each other. Meanwhile the Secretariat continues to enjoy a cordial working relationship with members of the Executive Committee as well as most of the member companies.
2. **Electricity & Internet:** During the period under review we continued to experience an uninterrupted supply of internet services however during this same period we continued to experience an interrupted supply of electricity. This was due mostly to damage done to the line by a contractor of the United Methodist Church while trying to clear a parcel of the compound in the back. We have since worked with others that were also affected and we are happy to say that we are once more enjoying an uninterrupted supply of electricity. The break in the supply of electricity had a high financial toil on the Secretariat as we were constrain to purchase fuel to run the generator.
3. **Registration of members:** During the period under reviewed, no additional member registered with the Secretariat. There is still a large number of those listed in the directory that hasn't as yet register with the Secretariat. Registration Completed Certificates for this year are being distributed. Those who haven't as yet received theirs can get it today. As this fiscal year comes to an end within a fortnight we are gearing up to begin registration for 2016 which we hope will commence by the mid of January or early February 2016. We are therefore appealing to all members to start planning to do same at that time.
4. **The LTA's Act ad Other Legal Documents:** The Secretariat has reached out to Attorney Kulah L. Jackson on the possibility of him and a team of lawyers drafting a new LTA's Act for onward submission to the Legislatures for enactment. Work to have an Article of Incorporation for the Association is almost 75% completed. It is our sincere hope that said work will be complete within January of 2016. There are still a few member companies who have yet to sign the Memorandum of Understanding. We are again openly appealing to all member companies who are present and haven't signed to kindly to so today.
5. **LTA Policy Manual & Code of Conduct:** Work on the Personnel Manual has been a bit delay for several reasons beyond our control but is still ongoing. Work on the Code of Conduct for LTA member companies has not yet begun. The Secretariat will make it possible that these documents be ready within the first quarter of 2016.
6. **Company Export Information Form & Company Profile Form:** While all members were encouraged during the last meeting to fill out these two forms and return them to the Secretariat as soon as possible, we have not as yet received any. We cannot over emphasis the need to have these forms fill out by members and file with the Secretariat therefore we have reprinted these forms and placed them in your folders with the hope that they will today be filled out and left here.
7. **Farewell Dinner for Mr. Baxter:** The LTA on Friday, the 27th of November hosted a farewell dinner in honor of its outgoing 1st Vice President, Mr. John M. Baxter. Said dinner

was held at Terra-Cotta Bar and Restaurant on Tubman Boulevard. It is however regrettable that most member companies did not turn up for said activity.

8. **LTA/LEITI Retreat/Workshop:** The LTA/LEITI 2-day Retreat/Workshop was held at the YMCA on December 3rd and 4th 2015. We are now in the process of doing the report for said retreat/workshop and hope that same will be available for your reviewing during our January's Member meeting. It is again however regrettable that most member companies did not turn up for said activity. We are openly encouraging every member to kindly participate in activities of the LTA that have been officially endorsed by this body.
9. **LTA's Foreign Travel Policy:** Based on the instruction of the President, the Secretariat is currently in the process of developing a foreign travel policy for your review and endorsement. It is our hope that said policy will be completed within the first quarter of 2016.
10. **LTA's 2016 Work Plan and Budget:** During the period under review, the Secretariat under the direct guidance of the Executive Committee developed a draft work plan and budget for 2016. Said draft work plan and budget for 2016 is in your file for discussion and endorsement.
11. **Budget Support:** During the period under reviewed, the Secretariat continued to receive the regular monthly support from the VPA-SU in the amount of Three thousand nine hundred fifty United States Dollars (US\$3,950) for the month of November. Please also be informed that since the VPA-SU was closing its books on today, the 19th, we have been given the regular monthly support for December. Monthly contributions from member companies are still not forthcoming. As of this moment, only few companies have fully paid their respective monthly contributions for the past months. The Secretariat, while realizing the difficulties being confronted by members, is appealing to everyone to please pay, as these funds are badly needed to maintain the office and do other things.
12. **Support from the VPA:** As can be seen from the below financial report, the major source of income for the running of the Secretariat during this reporting period was from the VPA-SU as monthly dues from member companies and other expected sources of income weren't fully forthcoming during the period under review.
13. **Networking:**

National Multi-stakeholders Steering Monitoring Committee - The LTA was represented by its President, its Head of Secretariat, and Mr. Isaac F. Mannah at the regular November Monthly Meeting of the NMSMC at the Chamber of Commerce held on November 24, 2015. During said time the LTA, who is also Co-Chair of this stakeholder committee, presided. The December Monthly Meeting of said stakeholder committee was held on December 16th at the same venue. During that meeting the LTA was again represented by its President, its Head of Secretariat and Mr. Mannah.

VPA-SU - Madam Marieke Wit, a member of the VPA's Executive Steering Committee, visited the LTA's office on November 24, 2015 at the hour of 12:00noon to review some activities/progress within the VPA. During said meeting the LTA was represented by its President, its 2nd Vice President, its Treasurer, its Head of Secretariat, and its Communication & Training Manager. Also on the 15th of December, the President and the Head of Secretariat sought and obtained an audience with the Team Leader and senior staff of the VPA-SU. The outcome of the December 15th meeting was very fruitful with the VPA-SU agreeing in principal to extend its support to the LTA for another twelve (12) months beginning January 2016. The LTA was however requested to present an updated work plan for 2016 on or before

mid-day on Thursday, the 17th of December for onward transmission to DFID for consideration.

Forestry Development Authority - The LTA received an invitation from the FDA to participate in a workshop “National Stakeholder Meeting on the Liberia Forest Sector Project (LFSP)” on the 9th of December. The LTA was represented by Mr. Martin Kerkula, its Communication and Training Manager, at said workshop which was held at the Corina Hotel. The objectives of the meeting were: (1) To build consensus on various issues relative to the LFSP components; (2) to facilitate the public disclosure of the Integrated Safeguard Data Sheet (ISDS); and (3) to obtain and incorporate stakeholders’ feedback. The meeting brought together stakeholders of the forest sector from the 15 counties of Liberia, the World Bank and other international stakeholders. Experts presented papers on the three major components that are being considered for the implementation of the REDD+ Project in Liberia. The components include (1) Strengthened Regulatory and Institutional arrangements for the implementation of REDD+; (2) Strengthened Management of Targeted Forest Landscapes; and (3) Forest Monitoring Information System. Component 1 will consider amongst other things, strengthened capacity in institution (public, private and CSO) for improved management of the forest landscapes and support FDA, EPA, MOA and LISGIS, as well as CBOs and CSOs. This component which will also consider legal reform and will cost US\$8 million. Component 2 will focus on assisting in the preparation of current land use map at the subnational level (for targeted landscapes) and the national level. The cost attached to component 2 is US\$24 million. Component 3 will be the establishment and operation of a successfully tested and operational national system for management, reporting and verification (MRV) and the establishment of an information system for safeguards as well as capacity building for FDA and other implementing agencies. The total cost of this component is US\$ 2 million.

The Liberia Forest Sector Project (LFSP) is a project to actualize and operationalize the agreement or Letter of Intent signed by the Governments of Liberia and the Kingdom of Norway in October 2014.

The LTA was also invited by FDA to attend a meeting on December 17th in the FDA’s conference room to discuss the issue of conversion timber and said meeting was attended by Mr. Isaac F. Mannah on behalf of the LTA. It is the Technical Secretariat hope that it will be able to give you an update of this meeting during the January’s Monthly Members meeting, once it has been debriefed by Mr. Mannah.

The Liberia Chamber of Commerce (LCC): During the period under review, we began negotiations with the LCC for the re-admittance of the LTA back into the membership of the LCC. Based on the instruction of the President, we have submitted a Membership Application Form to the LCC and is now awaiting its reaction to it. There is a progress on regaining membership with LCC. The form have been signed by the President of the LCC and the LTA need to make payment of One thousand United States dollars (US\$1,000) annually to the LCC if LTA is reactivating her membership with the LCC. Secondly, the LTA needs to present copy of business registration receipt.

SGS Office: The Secretariat is still actively engage with this Office. During the period under review, we still unable to access its files as promised by them but we are working with them to ensure that same is done. We are hopeful that same will be accomplished within the first quarter of 2016.

European Timber Trade Federation and Timber Legality Programme Management: We are still engaging Mr. Andre de Boer, Secretary General of the European Timber Trade Federation and Mr. Christian Sloth of the Timber Legality Programme Management for some form of cooperation and collaboration between their respective organization and the LTA.

National Union of Community Forestry Development Committee (NUCFDF): The LTA has received a verbal invitation from the above mentioned group to fill a seat on its Advisory Board. We have requested that they put said request in writing but is meanwhile bring in forward to you for your timely consideration.

LEITI Secretariat: The Secretariat is still actively engage with the Secretariat of the LEITI and hope to strengthen said relationship in the coming year.

B. FINANCIAL REPORT FOR the Periods November 19th - December 17th, 2015

Analysis of the receipt book and deposit slips reveal the following:

Income

➤ Receipts (11/27/2015) International Consultant Capital	US\$ 2,000.00
➤ Receipts (11/27/2015) Geblo Logging	US\$ 1,000.00
➤ Receipts (12/01/2015) VPA Monthly Support (November & December)	<u>US\$ 7,900.00</u>
Total	<u>US\$10,900.00</u>

Expenditure

➤ Salaries & Transportation Allowances (November & December)	US\$ 6,645.22
➤ Stationery & Others (11/19/2015) LEITI-LTA Workshop	US\$ 3,930.00
➤ Dinner in honored of Mr. Baxter's departure (11/27/2015)	US\$ 1,185.00
➤ Operational Cost (December 2015)	US\$ 1,250.00
➤ Local travel to and from Gbarnga, Bong County for Funeral	<u>US\$ 135.00</u>
Total	<u>US\$13,145.22</u>

Balance **(US\$2,245.22)**

1. **Financial Narrative:** A total of US\$13,145.22 was disbursed during the period November 18th thru December 17th 2015. Of this amount, US\$6,645.22.00 was used for salaries and transportation allowances for staff for the months of November and December. US\$1, 250.00 was used for stationery and electricity as well as other office's needs. US\$135.00 was used for transportation and DSA for the Head of Secretariat o travel to Gbarnga, Bong County to attend the funeral of Mr. Singbe G. F. Johnson. US\$1,185 was used for the farewell dinner in honor of Mr. Baxter while US\$3,930 was used for the hosting of the LTA/LEITI's retreat/workshop. As can be seen, the Technical Secretariat expenses during the period under review surpass revenues received during that same period by US\$2,2245.22..
2. **Personnel Expenses:** According to our records the total cost of maintaining the staff in the Secretariat monthly is US\$4,106.75, inclusive of the 4.75% required employer's payment to NSSWC. The VPA-SU is supplementing this monthly salary with the amount of US\$3,500.00. This leaves the amount of US\$606.75 that needs to be raised every month to augment the monthly payroll of the Secretariat.

C. HINDERANCES AND SETBACK

During the period under review, the Secretariat continued to be plagued with the issue of lack of needed office equipment and logistics to carry out the various tasks that were assigned to it. Most often than not, cartridges have to be refilled instead of being purchased due to the limited funds allocated for monthly stationaries. The Secretariat is without an official vehicle to move around to carry out the various tasks assigned to it. The amount of time spent waiting for a taxi is a serious steal

away from productive office hours. Due to serious financial setback cause by the slow payments of dues by its members which can rightly be attributed to the slump in the market; the LTA hasn't yet been able to do some of the key things it had original earmarked to do under its work plan and budget.

D. FUTURE OUTLOOK AND IMPLEMENTATION

During the incoming period, the Secretariat hopes to continue working with the Executive Committee in striving to implement the goals and objectives of the LTA. Based on a mandate of the President, we will be developing a policy of Foreign Travels for your review and endorsement. It is also envisaged that we will finalize with SGS our access to its monthly report on the internet, execute the VPA-SU's sponsored workshop/retreat, as well as the documentary activities. It is also hope that we will continue networking with those that are listed in this report and that we will be able to begin work on the new Act, the Code of Conduct for Members, among others.

E. BANK RECONCILIATION FOR the Periods November 1st - December 17th, 2015

THE LIBERIA TIMBER ASSOCIATION

BANK RECONCILIATION FROM NOVEMBER 1-DECEMBER 17, 2015

DESCRIPTION	CK #	DATE	DEBIT	CREDIT	BALANCE
Balance B/F					8,772.40
Deposit (Check)	134595	16-Nov-15		4,000.00	12,772.40
Deposit (Check)	119804	27-Nov-15		800.00	13,572.40
Deposit	UBA00344254	1-Dec-15		3,000.00	16,572.40
Deposit	ECO-00369444	1-Dec-15		3,950.00	20,522.40
Deposit	ECO-00431910	17-Dec-15		3,950.00	24,472.40
Total Deposit					24,472.40
Less Expenditure					
Bank Service Charge		1-Nov-15	25.00		24,447.40
Withdrawal (Princess Gbatu)		3-Nov-15	1,248.00		23,199.40
Withdrawal (E. Witherspoon)		4-Nov-15	280.00		22,919.40
Withdrawal (Princess Gbatu)		19-Nov-15	580.00		22,339.40
Withdrawal (Shirley Gardiner)		19-Nov-15	595.00		21,744.40
Withdrawal (YMCA)		19-Nov-15	400.00		21,344.40
Withdrawal (Terra- Restaurant)		24-Nov-15	500.00		20,844.40
Withdrawal (E. Witherspoon)		27-Nov-15	1,612.00		19,232.40
Withdrawal (Martin Kerkula)		27-Nov-15	1,094.00		18,138.40
Withdrawal (Henra G. Baysah)		27-Nov-15	278.00		17,860.40
Withdrawal (Princess Gbatu)		27-Nov-15	191.00		17,669.40
Withdrawal (Jessica Teld)		27-Nov-15	145.00		17,524.40
Withdrawal(E. Witherspoon)		27-Nov-15	85.00		17,439.40
Withdrawal (Terra- Restaurant)		27-Nov-15	600.00		16,839.40
Bank Service Charge		1-Dec-15	25.00		16,814.40

Withdrawal (Shirley Gardiner)	154790	1-Dec-15	595.00		16,219.40
Withdrawal (Princess Gbatu)	154791	1-Dec-15	1,822.00		14,397.40
Withdrawal (Princess Gbatu)	154792	8-Dec-15	1,250.00		13,147.40
Withdrawal (E. Witherspoon)	154793	10-Dec-15	135.00		13,012.40
Withdrawal (E. Witherspoon)	154794	15-Dec-15	1,612.00		11,400.40
Withdrawal (Martin Kerkula)	154795	15-Dec-15	1,094.00		10,306.40
Withdrawal (Henra G. Baysah)	154796	15-Dec-15	278.00		10,028.40
Withdrawal (Princess Gbatu)	154797	15-Dec-15	191.00		9,837.40
Withdrawal (Jessica Teld)	154798	15-Dec-15	145.00		9,692.40
Book Balance					9,692.84

The above reconciliation is in keeping with the records of the Administrative and Finance Officer of the Technical Secretariat, Ms. Henra G. Baysah, and isn't an official reconciliation statement of the Association's account with the LBDI.

Revamping the Nation's economy through Sustainable Forest Management, I remain,

Respectfully submitted: _____
E. Ekema A. Witherspoon, I.
Head of Secretariat
Liberia Timber Association