INTRODUCTION
The Chain of Custody (COC) or Traceability of legally harvested logs or legally manufactured timber products involves the following processes:

- Confirmation that the logging company has FDA-approved forest concession(s) (e.g. Forest Management/Service Contract (FMC, TSC) and Permit (PUP) areas) and that the timber products exporting company has manufactured the goods from logs from FDA-approved forest concessions
- Confirmation of the minimum sizes, the type of species, the total number and volume of trees that have been approved for felling by the FDA
- The allocation of a unique set of tags each with specific barcodes for each FDA-approved forest concession area (to minimise their use to harvest logs from other forest concession areas or unapproved forest areas)

a. that the numbers, Species/Class and sizes of the harvested trees are in agreement with those approved by the FDA
b. the Species/Class, lengths and diameters of the long logs at the stumps of a felled trees are related/linked to the those of the cross-cut logs at the port(s) of export or domestic market(s) (including wood processing mills) and that the:
   - diameters of the thick and thin ends of the following are comparable:
     - standing tree and felled tree
     - felled tree and the long log produced from it
     - the long log and cross-cut logs produced from it
   - the sum of the lengths and volumes of the cross-cut logs are comparable to the length and volumes of the parent long logs

- the volumes of the converted wood products at the port(s) of export or the domestic market(s) are comparable to the input legal logs

Figure 1: Overview of the Chain of Custody

Figure 2: Chain of Custody System
(Linkage of Logs to Tree Stumps in the Forest with Barcoded Tags)
The following process is followed to enable the export/sale of parcels of logs and manufactured timber products after they have passed traceability as described above.

a. The invoicing of the logging and/or timber products exporting companies for the appropriate forest fees and charges related to the trading of the log parcels and timber products

b. Payments of the invoices into the appropriate Government accounts at the Central Bank of Liberia by the logging and timber products exporting companies.

c. **Current Situation.** The issue of a **Certificates of Origin (Cos)** and an **Export Permits (EPs)** to the exporters that are signed by the FDA and SGS after confirmation of payment of the invoices at the Central Bank of Liberia

d. **With VPA Implementation.** Compliance with Traceability together with fulfilment of the requirements of the Legality Matrix is necessary for the issue of **FLEGT Export License** that will eventually replace the Export Permit.

e. **Shipment inspection.** Physical checks of each export parcel are made against the approved Export Permit specifications

For further information, please contact the FDA Legality Verification Department:

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