

**ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (ESIA)
OF
SIERRA TROPICAL LTD'S FRUIT PROCESSING FACILITY IN LUGBU CHIEFDOM, BO
DISTRICT**



PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND DISCLOSURE WORKSHOP REPORT

Prepared by

CEMMATS Group Ltd



For

Sierra Tropical Ltd

June 2019

Table of Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	2
1.1	Background	2
1.2	Public Consultation and Disclosure Process Brief	2
1.3	Methodology	3
2	OVERVIEW OF WORKSHOP	4
2.1	Statements	4
2.1.1	Chairman’s Opening Remarks – Victor Bangura (<i>Acting Director Investment Promotion, Sierra Leone Investment and Export Promotion Agency (SLIEPA)</i>)	4
2.1.2	Statement by the Regent Chief Lugbu Chiefdom – Chief Modibor Fofana	5
2.1.3	Statement by the Chairman, Bo District Council - Joseph M. Bindi	5
2.1.4	Statement by the Mayor of Bo – Harold Tucker	5
2.1.5	Statement by the Bo District Agriculture Officer – Ambrose Bindi-Kamara	6
2.1.6	Statement by the Resident Minister, Southern Province – Mohamed E. K. Allie	6
2.1.7	Statement by the STL Community Affairs Manager – Lyttleton Braima	6
2.1.8	Keynote Address by the Deputy Director, Natural Resources Management EPA SL – Ramatu B. Massaquoi	8
2.2	Presentations	8
2.3	Interactive Session	9
3	Conclusion	12
	APPENDICES	13
	Annex A: Picture Gallery	13
	Annex B: Notification for Public Disclosure	15
	Annex C: Sample Newspaper Publication	17
	Annex D: Workshop Programme	18
	Annex E: Attendance Lists	19
	Annex F: Power Point Presentation Slides	26

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Sierra Tropical Ltd (STL) is a wholly owned subsidiary of Dole Asia Holdings Pte Ltd, a Singapore-based agro-processing company. The Company arrived in Sierra Leone in 2014 with the aim of embarking on an agro-processing project involving large scale planting and processing of tropical fruits in Bo District, southern Sierra Leone.

In compliance with local regulations EPA Act 2008/2010, STL applied for and was granted an EIA Licence in 2018, covering the first two phases of project implementation, involving the development of up 4,335 hectares of agricultural land in the Lugbu Chiefdom.

Depending on the success of the first phase and early second phase of the project, in terms of quality/productivity of the fruits, it was planned that a processing facility would be constructed in the later stages of the second phase, to process the raw materials into manufactured products in various packages of cans, drums, plastics and boxes. It has now been confirmed that the project will proceed with the development of the processing facility, necessitating an extension of the original ESIA study.

Prior to the commencement of a project/operation that may impact the environment and communities, EPA-SL requires that an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) is carried out for the acquisition of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) license. In line with these requirements, STL contracted CEMMATS to conduct the ESIA study on this processing aspect of the project.

The results of this study were compiled into an addendum to the original ESIA on STL's Agricultural Project, covering the construction and operation of the fruit processing facility in Sumbuya, Lugbu Chiefdom. An addendum to the original ESMP was also developed, which builds on the framework developed in the original ESMP, describing the processing facility-specific management, mitigation and monitoring controls to be effected.

The addendum reports were submitted to EPA-SL; as part of the EIA Licensing process, EPA-SL requires that the results of the ESIA studies are presented to project stakeholders in a Public Consultation and Disclosure Workshop. For this project, the results of CEMMATS' assessments were presented to project area communities and stakeholders during a workshop held in Sumbuya.

1.2 Public Consultation and Disclosure Process Brief

The main objective of the PCDP is to establish a program for multi-directional communication between STL and stakeholders, throughout the lifetime of the project.

The emphasis of the process is to ensure implementation of a formal program of communication in an objective, simple manner, to focus efforts on improving communication among the project management, the project community, major stakeholders and interested parties.

Consultative meetings with relevant stakeholders were conducted during the baseline ESIA studies and surveys carried out by CEMMATS.

The EPA-SL normally requires that the results of the ESHIA report are discussed with communities after submission of the draft reports to the Agency in a Public Consultation and Disclosure process. This report presents details of the proceedings and outcomes of the workshop held in Sumbuya, on 12th June 2019.

1.3 Methodology

Sumbuya Town was selected as the most central location to hold the workshop, in order to best target communities within and around the project area

Following approval from EPA-SL to conduct the workshop, the following steps were taken to ensure maximum participation by the public:

1. Copies of the ESIA and ESMP Reports were submitted for public viewing at:

Freetown:

- The Environment Protection Agency - Sierra Leone (EPA-SL) office, 21 Old Railway Line Brookfields, Freetown;
- CEMMATS Group Ltd Office, 7a Cantonment Road, Off Kingharman Road, Brookfields, Freetown
- Sierra Tropical Office at 7 Spur Road, Wilberforce, Freetown;

Bo:

- Bo District Council Office; Bo
- Sumbuya Town *Barrie*¹

2. Advertisements for the Workshop were published on radio and in national newspapers as follows:

Media Type	Media Name	Information Format	Number of Publications/Broadcasts
<i>Print</i>	Salone Times	Public Notice	5

¹ Local Meeting/Court House

Media Type	Media Name	Information Format	Number of Publications/Broadcasts
	Premier News	Public Notice	5
<i>Electronic</i>	Kiss 104 FM Radio in Bo	Public Notice	16
	Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service - Makeni	Public Notice	16

- Letters of invitation were sent to the project stakeholders, government institutions and interested parties prior to the workshop.

2 OVERVIEW OF WORKSHOP

This section describes the statements and presentations made by the workshop participants.

The workshop was conducted in English and translated into Mende and started off with opening prayers (Muslim and Christian), followed by introduction of local authorities and representatives of STL and CEMMATS.

A copy of the workshop programme can be found in Annex D of the appendices.

2.1 Statements

2.1.1 Chairman's Opening Remarks – Victor Bangura (*Acting Director Investment Promotion, Sierra Leone Investment and Export Promotion Agency (SLIEPA)*)

The workshop Chairman extended his greetings to the Chiefdom Authorities, and all stakeholders present at the workshop. He thanked everybody for their patience in waiting for some stakeholders from Bo before proceeding with the workshop. He explained the purpose of the meeting which he said was to discuss the outcome of the ESIA study carried out by CEMMATS Group Ltd on the construction and operation of STL's food processing facility, as well as to ask questions and obtain further clarification. He explained that CEMMATS had done an ESIA and PCDP on the STL operations a year ago and emphasized that the PCDP workshop and ESIA being discussed today, was just for the processing facility. He asked local residents and the council to support and encourage Sierra Tropical in the implementation of the project in their communities, adding that the Government of Sierra Leone was going all out to bring in credible investors and that it was the host communities' duty to encourage and protect those

investors. He entreated the participants to listen keenly to the presentation and ask questions for further clarifications.

2.1.2 Statement by the Regent Chief Lugbu Chiefdom – Chief Modibor Fofana

The Regent Chief expressed his sincere gratitude to STL for bringing such an investment to Lugbu Chiefdom and promised that as chiefdom authorities they would give all the necessary support to the project for its successful implementation. The Regent Chief described the STL project as one of its kind in Sierra Leone, adding that that if the project failed, the chiefdom, district and the country as a whole had failed, because the project has immense opportunities which would benefit the chiefdom, district and the country as whole. He assured that as the Chiefdom Authorities they were pleased that STL was fulfilling one of its promises of constructing and operating a processing facility in the chiefdom. He concluded by admonishing the people in the project area to give the necessary support for the success of this aspect of the project.

2.1.3 Statement by the Chairman, Bo District Council - Joseph M. Bindi

The Bo District Council Chairman started by thanking the chiefdom authorities for the support they were giving to the project. He informed all present that STL had just successfully signed an MOU with the Government of Sierra Leone and that the company was now in a better position to go into full operations. He explained the purpose of the meeting, which he described as a forum for the ESIA consultant to explain their findings from the ESIA study on the processing facility, and for STL and Project Affected Persons (PAPs) or interested stakeholders to dialogue. He advised participants to listen keenly and make salient contributions by asking questions, raising concerns or making suggestions.

Mr Bindi requested that STL takes the issue of employment of locals seriously as creating employment opportunities and livelihood improvement are among the numerous positive impacts the community is looking up to as benefits from the project.

2.1.4 Statement by the Mayor of Bo – Harold Tucker

The Mayor expressed his pleasure and support for the project and the progress made towards its implementation. He informed all that he appreciated the fact that even though the project is not in his operational area of Bo city, STL and the organizers had always deemed it fit to invite him to important project-related stakeholder meetings. The Mayor highlighted the fact that some towns and villages had started improving in terms of infrastructure, which he attributed to the presence of the project in their communities. The mayor further highlighted a range of issues including employment of local residents which he encouraged STL to continue to take seriously.

2.1.5 Statement by the Bo District Agriculture Officer – Ambrose Bindi-Kamara

The District Officer commenced by thanking all assembled for attending the Workshop and pointed out that this event marked an important milestone for the STL Project and its development. He assured that not only would the project bring benefits to Lugbu Chiefdom, but also to Bo District and Sierra Leone as a whole. He informed that this would be achieved through the creation of jobs, generation of economic activity, taxes and royalties, education and training and specifically community development of the area. He noted that the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS) was very pleased with private sector investment in agriculture, especially with companies intending to diversify crop production and processing within the country. He encouraged local residents to work cordially with STL in order to reap the benefits and opportunities the company had to offer in the long term.

2.1.6 Statement by the Resident Minister, Southern Province – Mohamed E. K. Allie

The Resident Minister extended greetings to the participants and apologised for arriving late as he had to attend to other equally pressing issues before travelling from Bo to make it to the workshop.

He assured STL of GoSL's support to the project but also warned that the company must ensure that government policies and regulations are adhered to. He noted that GoSL would further monitor the process to ensure that the local people benefit greatly from the project.

Mr Allie thanked STL for their contribution towards making the government's flagship programme of free and quality education become a reality by providing about 150 chairs and desks for the Sir Albert Secondary School and hoped that gestures like this would continue throughout the lifespan of the project.

The Resident Minister expressed his anticipation that employment opportunities would be designed in such a way as to prioritise local residents, whom he described as the utmost PAPs (having given their lands for the project). He advised that employment opportunities for local residents would divert potential conflict related to land issues. He encouraged local residents to provide support to the project in any way they could, which would help the execution of project's interventions.

He concluded by assuring STL of government support to them.

2.1.7 Statement by the STL Community Affairs Manager – Lyttleton Braima

The STL Community Affairs Manager thanked all stakeholders for attending the meeting especially those who had arrived from Freetown and Bo.

He took the opportunity to highlight some of the community development projects undertaken by the company since its inception. These include the following:

- **Community governance and conflict resolution/management structures:**
 - Formation of Community Development Committee
 - Formation of Grievance Redress Mechanism/Committee
 - Formation of Employment Committees in 15 villages

- **Village infrastructure:**
 - Construction of two culvert bridges from Garinga to Moforay
 - Rehabilitation of the Sumbuya township road from crossing point to roundabout
 - Rehabilitation of the Sumbuya township road from Garinga to Moforay site
 - Construction of a palm log bridge to connect Sumbuya to Moforay, Momando, and Baoma communities
 - Rehabilitation of the road to Baoma
 - Construction of three pedestrian bridges (wooden bridge) to link Sumbuya to Garinga; and from Moforay to Baoma

- **Agriculture:**
 - Cultivation of 40 hectares of boliland for rice planting for the Hiima community

- **Education:**
 - Donation of 150 sets of chairs and desks for Sir Albert Secondary School to ease sitting accommodation

- **Support to Social events:**
 - Provided financial and material support (about SLL 18,000,000) to the funeral of the late PC. Mohamed Alie Nallo
 - Provided financial support (SLL 5,000,000) to the inauguration ceremony of the regent chief
 - Provided financial and material support (about SLL 1,500,000) to provide refreshment for Bo district council meeting held at Sumbuya on the 1st of May.
 - Facilitated the donation to poor people during the hunger period.
 - Cash donation to the funeral of the Moforay town chief
 - Cash donation to the funeral of the Hiima town chief.

- **Water and sanitation:**
 - Construction of three water wells, one in Momando, Baoma, and Moforay communities pending.

Mr. Braima concluded by saying STL would soon start effective implementation of the CDAP for both the plantations and the processing facility.

2.1.8 Keynote Address by the Deputy Director, Natural Resources Management EPA SL – Ramatu B. Massaquoi

Mrs Massaquoi extended greetings to the participants on behalf of the Executive Chairman whom she said would have loved to be present for the disclosure but was unable to attend due to other engagements.

She explained the process that led to the establishment of the EPA-SL (through an act of parliament), the mandates of the Agency, the Board and the details in the statutory instrument used by the Agency, which is the Environmental protection Agency Act 2008. She stated that the Agency is mandated to protect the environment for the benefit of the people and highlighted the fact that the Act requires the conduct of an ESIA study as part of the requirements for the issuance of an EIA licence to companies/projects.

She explained to participants that prior to the commencement of any project that may affect the environment and communities, it is mandated by legislation that an ESIA (or ESHIA) study be conducted; if approved by EPA-SL, the project would be issued with an EIA Licence to proceed.

Mrs Massaquoi described the requirements and process for securing an EIA licence, which she informed, is laid out in a “checklist” prepared by EPA-SL. She explained that the process requires that assessments are carried out to investigate the environmental, social and health impacts of the planned operations on ecosystems, the physical environment and communities within the Project area. She went on to explain that a report is to be prepared at the end of the study and submitted to EPA- SL for review. If approved, the proponent would then be requested to conduct public disclosure meetings with relevant stakeholders on the findings and recommendations of the study, and incorporate comments, suggestions and requests made during those meetings into a public consultation and disclosure report. Finally, all reports pertaining to the ESIA study would then be forwarded to the Board of EPA-SL for a decision to be made on the issuance of the licence

She informed participants that the workshop was an important aspect of licence process, and encouraged the people to be confident in making their comments, contribution or suggestions that would bring maximum benefits to themselves and their communities.

2.2 Presentations

Rashidu Sinnah of CEMMATS provided an overview of the ESIA Process which was followed by presentations, as follows:

- ⇒ 1st Presentation: Environmental Baseline, Impact Assessment and Mitigation Measures
(Leonard Buckle - CEMMATS Group Ltd)
- ⇒ 2nd Presentation: Socio-Economic Baseline, Impact Assessment and Mitigation Measures
(Rashidu Sinnah - CEMMATS Group Ltd)

⇒ 3rd Presentation: Technical Description of Project

(Patrick Blake and Andrew Brooke-Smith– STL)

⇒ 4th Presentation Environmental and Social Management Plans

(Leonard Buckle- CEMMATS Group Ltd)

Copies of presentations are attached in Annex F of the appendices.

2.3 Interactive Session

An open discussion session was carried out to obtain participants' various opinions on the presentations, statements and project as a whole.

Table 2-1: Question and Answer Session

ISSUE	QUESTIONS/ COMMENTS	RESPONSES STL, CEMMATS and EPA
<p>Land Issues</p>	<p><u>Samuel Gbongon (Section Chief)</u> Why is it that the company does not want to lease all the land in the demarcated area together, but leases in bits? Our land has been registered for quite some time but for which we are not receiving any payment or compensation</p> <p><u>Timu Kamara (Land Owner -Hima)</u> The land we gave to the company at Benduma Sewa was for farming purposes, now that the company has decided to construct a processing facility, we think we need to go into fresh arrangement for the land.</p>	<p><u>STL</u> We are going to lease all the land in the near future but at the moment we are concentrating on the areas where we are active.</p> <p><u>STL</u> The processing facility is part of the entire project, and is not a new project. The land was leased for the project and it is going to be used for the project; we do not believe that the use to which the land will be used calls for a fresh arrangement.</p>
<p>Processing Facility Location</p>	<p><u>Chief Hassan Bangura – (Town Chief - Sumbuva)</u> What is the distance between the proposed processing facility and Benduma Sewa Village?</p>	<p><u>EPA-SL</u> The acceptable distance should be 500 meters; this was communicated to the project proponent and we trust the consultant took that into consideration when doing the study.</p>
<p>Employment Opportunities</p>	<p><u>Madam Gladys Kanagboi (Women’s Leader)</u> We want know if the employment opportunities are only for the educated people. If yes, we would want to appeal to the company to consider the uneducated and provide training for them.</p> <p><u>Edward J. Nallo (Bush Owner- Kpatema):</u> What is the company’s method of employment and what is the age limit for employment?</p>	<p><u>STL</u> Employment opportunities are for everybody whether you are educated or not, but as long as you meet the requirement for the related opportunities.</p> <p>We have formed employment committees in each community, we will be employing through those committees. In terms of age limits, we will not employ anybody below the age of 18. We do not have an upper age limit; anyone who is strong, able and willing to work will be given the opportunity.</p>

ISSUE	QUESTIONS/ COMMENTS	RESPONSES STL, CEMMATS and EPA
	<p><u>Modibor Fofana – Regent Chief, Lugbu Chiefdom</u> Most of our educated brothers do not have jobs; we would want at least 90% of the employees to come from Lugbu.</p> <p>Will the company hire untrained labour and train them?</p>	<p>Employees will be provided with on the job training.</p>
<p>Worker Welfare and Condition of Service</p>	<p><u>Musa Kebbie – Bush Owner</u> Will all workers be provided with PPE all the time? This is because we are seeing most of the workers without PPEs</p>	<p><u>STL</u> Yes PPEs are provided for all the workers depending on the nature of their tasks.</p>
<p>Other</p>	<p><u>Ibrahim Bangura - Benduma Sewa Desendant</u> Will the company provide electricity for the people of Benduma Sewa?</p> <p><u>Amie Rashid_Regent Chief, Jaiama Chiefdom</u> The company needs to train its supervisor well, some are not really fit for purpose.</p> <p><u>Mustapha Jabbi -Driver Union President-Sumbuva:</u> We understand that the company will be constructing its own road from Upper Saama to Benduma Sewa, we would want to know if the company intends to construct other roads for the community.</p>	<p><u>STL</u> We intend to hire an independent power producer to generate and supply the cannery with electricity. If anybody or household can afford the bill, that individual or household will be connected.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Yes, we have been constructing roads and we will continue to construct roads for company and community use.</p>

3 Conclusion

The PCDP Workshop for the Sierra Tropical Ltd Agricultural Project was successfully conducted on 12th June 2019, drawing representation from project community and institutional stakeholders in Sumbuya Town and surrounding communities (see appendices for attendance list).

The workshop was conducted predominantly in Mende, using translators, to ensure that community stakeholders fully understood the details of the project and to encourage questions/comments.

Presentations were made, describing the technical, environmental and socio-economic aspects of the development and operation of the fruit processing facility, followed by interactive question and answer sessions.

Generally, participants were most concerned about land lease issues and employment opportunities. Questions fielded by participants were responded to by representatives of STL, EPA-SL and CEMMATS.