GMSA SIGNS CONTRACT WITH CONSULTANT FOR WEB PORTAL DEVELOPMENT

GUYANA MANUFACTURING & SERVICES ASSOCIATION LTD.

GMSA NEWSLETTER

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Forestry and Wood Products Analysis – A perspective of the sector's performance

GMSA's Agro-processing Sub-sector Resumes Joint Technical Working Group with Ministry of Agriculture

GMSA meets with EPA to address Membership Concerns – Collaboration to foster on joint initiatives

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Budget Submission

The Guyana Manufacturing and Services Association (GMSA) Secretariat undertook Sub-sector meetings in December 2020 in order to garner input for Budget 2021. The GMSA Secretariat met with several sub-sectors including Agro-processing, Forestry and Wood Products, Construction and Engineering, Extractive Industries, and Services.

The GMSA Secretariat is pleased to inform its members that an official submission of inputs for Budget 2021 was made to Hon. Minister Mr. Ashni Singh, on January 26, 2021.

The GMSA is currently awaiting feedback on its submission.

Border Issue – Venezuela's Decree

The Guyana Manufacturing and Services Association (GMSA) was represented at the Guyana's Parliamentary Sectoral Committee on Foreign Relations on recent developments concerning the Guyana / Venezuela border dispute.

The GMSA was updated that the Committee has taken note of Venezuela's aggressive actions, and joins the Government in condemning a decree by President Nicolas Maduro that says all of the land west of the Essequibo River is Venezuelan territory.

In a statement, the Committee supports efforts of the Government of Guyana to take all necessary actions to safeguard the national interests of Guyana and reiterates the sentiments already echoed that Guyana stands united and resolute in the protection of sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Upcoming Activities

Strategic Planning Session

The Guyana Manufacturing and Services Association (GMSA) will be hosting its Strategic Planning Session in February. The aim of this session is to set an ambition for the GMSA's future and determine how to best achieve it. The session will be focused and centered around the following:

1. What is the focus of the GMSA over the next three years?
2. Are there new areas for expansion and for expanded membership?
3. How should GMSA work with local, regional and international organizations and the private sector?
4. What kind of relationship does GMSA see itself having with Government?
5. How does the GMSA Secretariat evolve to meet the needs of the organization?

The GMSA Strategic Planning Session will involve the Board of Directors of the GMSA, along with the GMSA Secretariat, who will then formulate a Strategic Plan for the next three years.

Annual General Meeting

The Guyana Manufacturing and Services Association (GMSA) is currently in the process of preparing for its Annual General Meeting. The preparation of the annual report, along with the financial audits are currently in process, and a date will be announced soon.

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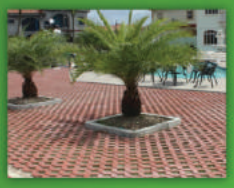
(MADE IN GUYANA BY GUYANESE)



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Forestry and Wood Products Analysis – A perspective of the sector's performance

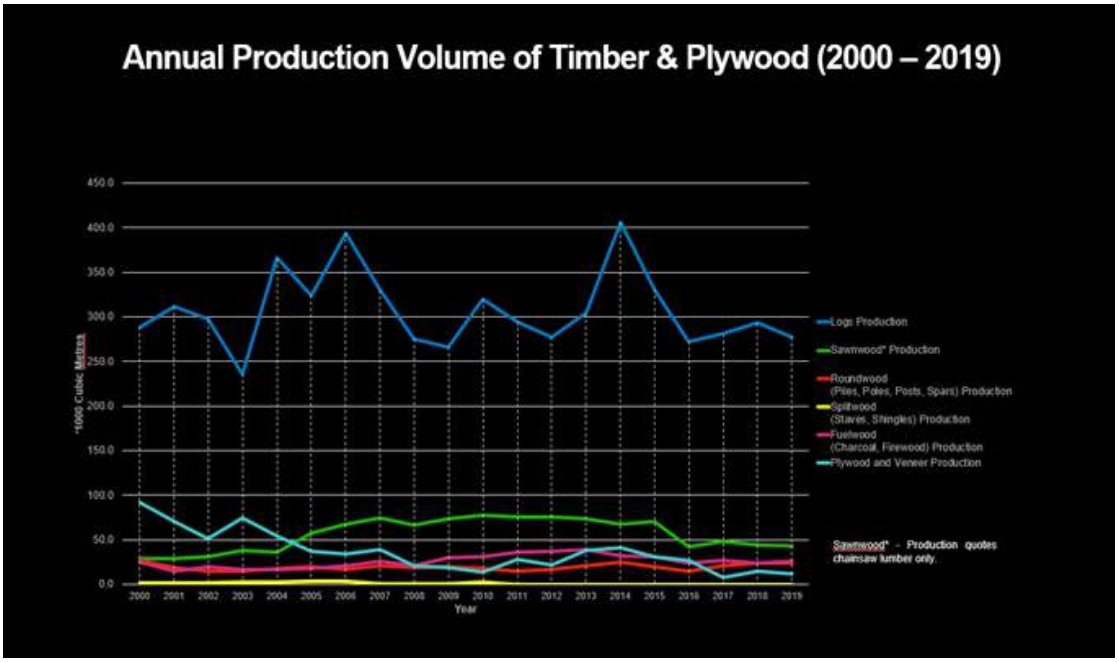

Figure 1: shows the Annual Production Volumes of Timber and Plywood

Figure 1 shows the annual production volumes of timber and plywood over the period 2000 – 2019. As shown above, log production is relatively high compared to secondary production, which involves sawnwood production, roundwood, splitwood, fuelwood and plywood and veneer.

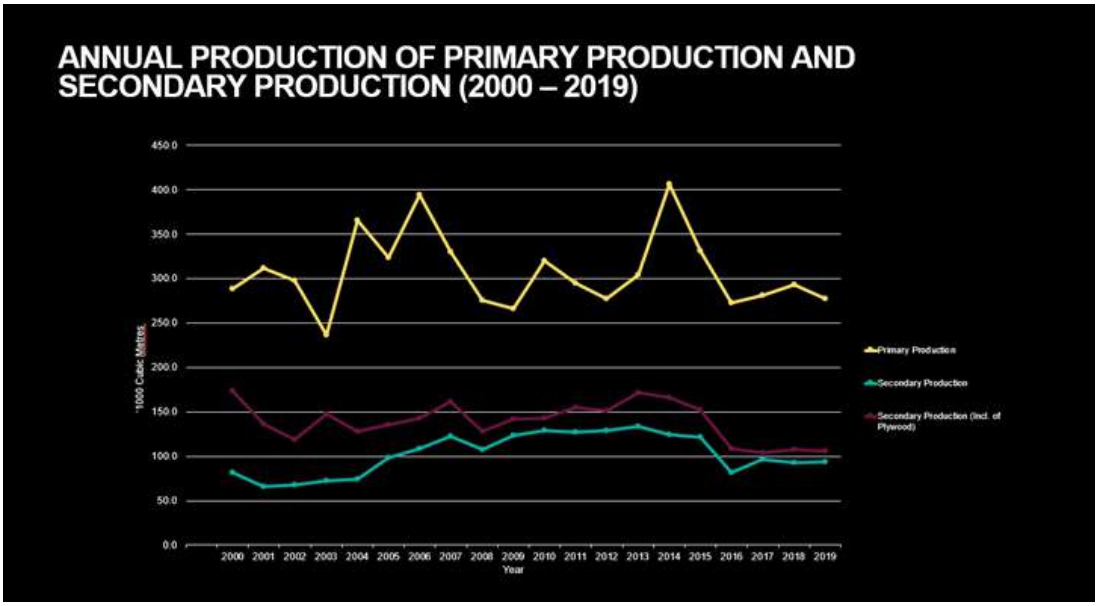

Figure 2: shows the Annual Production Volumes of Primary Production and Secondary Production

Figure 2 above shows the annual production volumes of primary production and secondary production over the period 2000 – 2019. Primary production includes log production, whilst secondary production includes sawnwood, split wood, fuelwood, and roundwood, and then it is expanded to include plywood and veneer, to show an overall comparison. The graph is also indicative that primary production dominates secondary production.

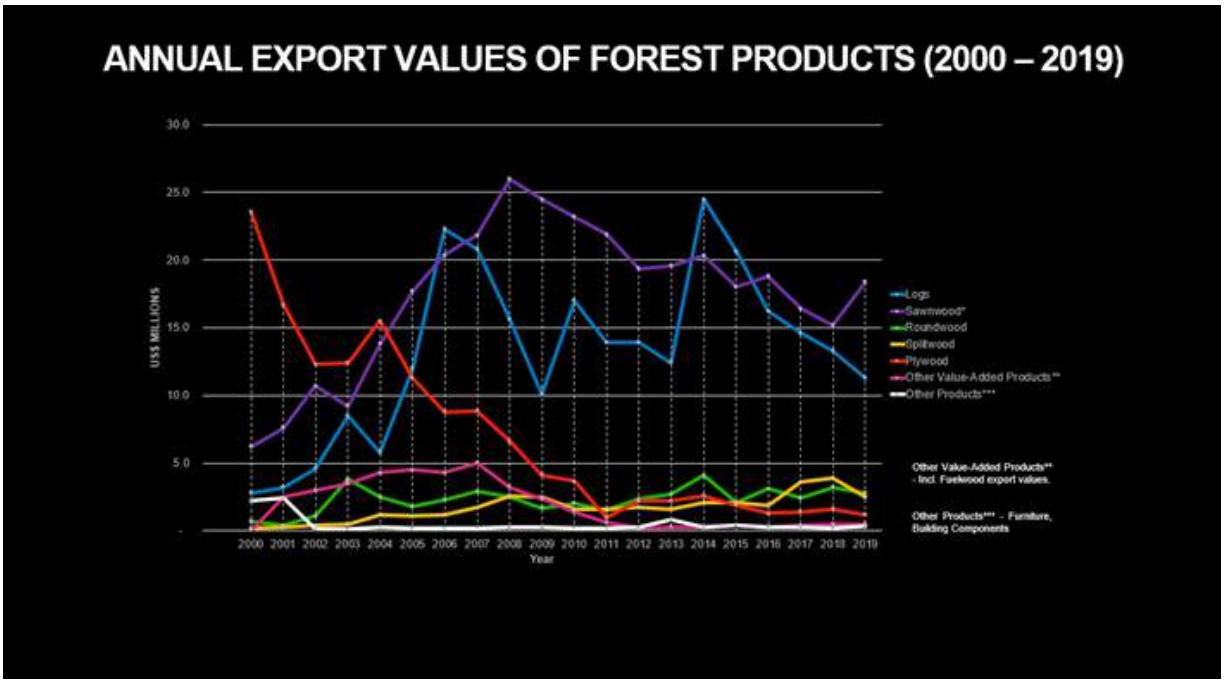

Figure 3: shows the Annual Export Values of Forest Products

In figure 3 above, the depiction shows the annual export values of forest products in USD millions. As shown, sawnwood has a higher earning of export value compared to logs. Whilst earnings for plywood has shown potential from 2000-2004, export values of this product continue to decline overtime, falling from over USD 20mil below USD 5mil. All other forest products earn below USD 5mil over the 20-year period.

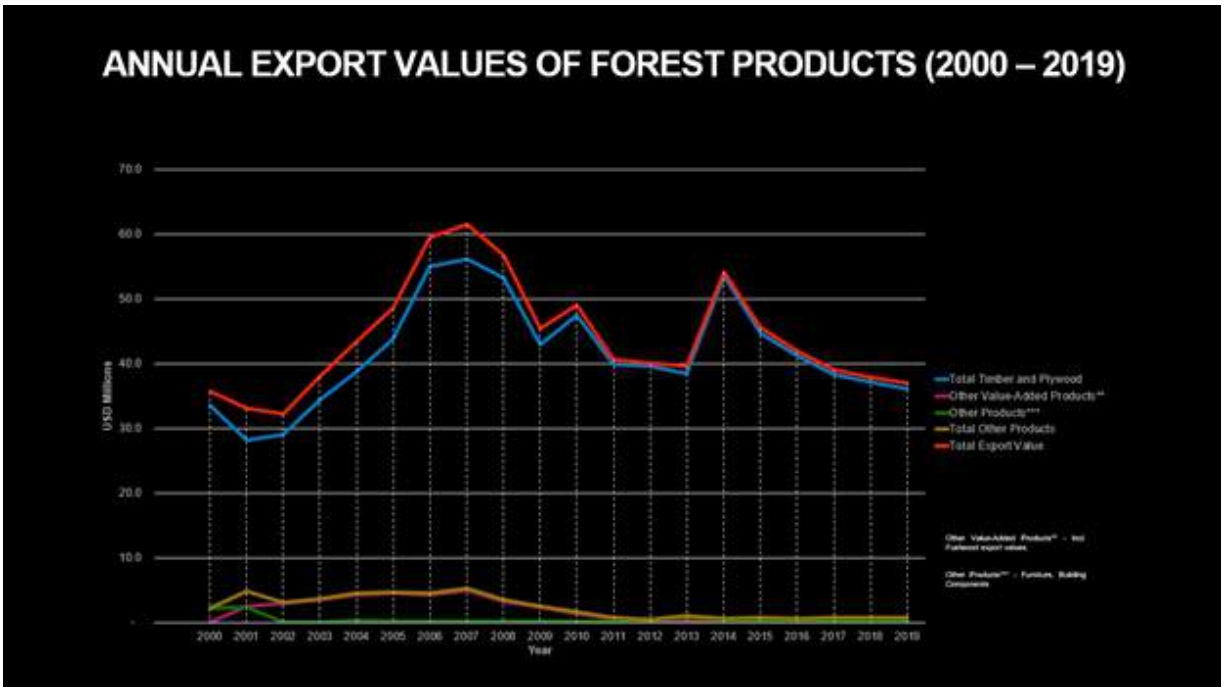

Figure 4: shows the Annual Export Values of Forest Products

In Figure 4 above, the depiction shows the annual total export values of forest products. As indicated, export values for secondary production – which includes sawnwood, plywood, splitwood, and roundwood, have a higher export earning than those in the tertiary production, such as furniture and building components.

GMSA's Agro-processing Sub-sector Resumes Joint Technical Working Group with Ministry of Agriculture

The Guyana Manufacturing and Services Association resumed its Joint Technical Working Group with the Ministry of Agriculture, on Wednesday, January 20, 2020. The GMSA was represented by Mr. Shyam Nokta, President of the Association, and Mr. Ramsay Ali, Chairman of the GMSA's Agro-processing Sub-sector, along with Ms. Rosalinda Rasul, Executive Director of the GMSA. Other GMSA members include Mr. Ramesh Dookhoo, of Banks DIH; Mr. Chris Persaud, of Umami Inc.; and, Mr. Raymond Ramsaroop, of Edward Beharry Company.

The Ministry of Agriculture was represented by Chief Technical Officer, Mr. George Jervis, along with representatives of the Guyana Marketing Corporation (GMC); National Research Extension Institute (NAREI); Pesticides and Toxic Chemicals Control Board (PTCCB); Guyana Food Safety Authority (GFSA); Fisheries Department; Guyana Rice Development Board (GRDB); Guyana School of Agriculture (GSA); and, Guyana Livestock Development Authority (GLDA).

The Joint Working Group resulted from an initial meeting with the Minister of Agriculture, Hon. Mr. Zulfikar Mustapha, and the GMSA, in September 2020, and was established to address issues in the Agriculture and Agro-processing sector through collaboration with the private sector and the Government of Guyana.

Among the issues discussed at the Joint Working Group included costs of production in agro-processing and agriculture, as it relates to access to raw materials, taxation and reliable energy for the industry. Additionally, access to affordable finance was discussed, since this is still a major challenge for many small and medium scale agro-processors. The Working Group will seek funding opportunities and continue discussions with financial institutions to determine a way to access affordable finance.

Technology and technical knowledge were also considered among the Working Group as it regards agro-processing facilities and research and development for the sector. Additionally, marketing and market access was considered as it regards improving quality and standards to prepare agro-processors for export markets, and improving packaging and labelling as presentation is critical to consumer perception of products.

The Working Group will convene again in February to further discussions on the sector.

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GMSA Signs Contract with Consultant for Web Portal Development

GMSA's Executive Director Ms. Rosalinda Rasul and Mr. Roger Gajraj of Atlantic Science

The Guyana Manufacturing and Services Association, on Thursday, January 14, 2021, officially signed a contract with Mr. Roger Gajraj, of Atlantic Science to develop a digital platform in the form a web portal to facilitate information sharing, connectivity and communication between agro-processors, particularly the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

Mr. Gajraj has begun developing the digital platform immediately and will have a first view for the GMSA by February.

About the Web Portal

Through a sponsorship the GMSA's is piloting a web portal to facilitate information sharing, connectivity, and communication, lining products and service providers with potential clients nationally, regionally, and internationally.

The initiative is focused primarily to help SMEs recover and grow during and post COVID19, as the pandemic has had a devastating effect on small businesses.

The GMSA and ExxonMobil Guyana previously teamed up to implement the successful UncappeD Initiative which increased awareness in the public domain and among key stakeholders of the wide range of quality agro-products being produced in Guyana and the entrepreneurs behind these products. In addition to raising the profile of over 100 agro-processors and their products, UncappeD facilitated linking producers, suppliers and support service providers to enhance the development of synergies. It was accompanied by an active education, awareness and capacity building program to enable small agro-processors to better manage and grow their business.

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REFLECTIONS

Timber Expo

Members of the Guyana Manufacturing and Services Association Ltd. participated at the Timber Expo hosted by Forest Products Development & Marketing Council (FPDMC) and The Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC) at the Guyana National Stadium Tarmac on May 18-20, 2018.

The event was hosted under the theme "Expanding Markets for Guyanese Timber Products through Public Education, Awareness and Sensitisation to promote a Greener Guyana.".

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REFLECTIONS
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Within the Guyana Manufacturers and Services Association (GMSA), agro-processors are one of the largest sub-sectors. In mid-2017, the idea was put forward that the GMSA should create a local exhibition that could bring together agro-processors, both large and small, from across Guyana, to showcase local products. The intention of the event is aimed at facilitating the linking of producers, suppliers and support service providers to enhance the development of synergies, while increasing market awareness of local products.

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GMSA meets with EPA to address Membership Concerns – Collaboration to foster on joint initiatives

The Guyana Manufacturing and Services Association, on Wednesday, January 27, 2021, met with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to discuss a number of concerns GMSA members have with the EPA. The GMSA was represented by Mr. Shyam Nokta, President of the Association; Mr. Ramsay Ali, Vice President; and, Ms. Rosalinda Rasul, Executive Director, and Chairman of the GMSA's Extractive Industries Sub-sector, Mr. Norman McLean.

Other GMSA members included Mr. Ramesh Dookhoo, of Banks DIH; Mr. Raymond Ramsaroop, of Edward Beharry Company; Mr. Robert Ross, of Sterling Products Limited; Mr. Chris Persaud, of Umami Inc; Mr. Peter Benny, of Aurora Gold Mines Inc.; Mr. Michael Rodrigues, of Troy Resources; Ms. Annette Arjoon, of Air Services Limited; and Ms. Gale Dowdin, of Bulkan Timbers Inc.

The EPA was represented by Ms. Shariefa Razack, acting Executive Director, along with representatives of various departments within the EPA, such as the Gas Stations Unit, Mining Unit, Legal Unit, Technical Services, Legal and Corporate Services, Industry and Waste Management, and Agriculture and Forestry Unit.

Among some of the issues discussed include permit fees, EPA regulations, and the overlapping of other governmental agencies and the EPA. It was also discussed that effective communication between the EPA and private sector businesses must be improved upon, as this is lacking.

The EPA and the GMSA were able to find to find common ground on the various issues raised at the meeting, and the EPA will follow up on special cases regarding GMSA members.

The GMSA and the EPA have agreed to continuous engagements and to collaborate on different initiatives such as a presentation to the GMSA membership on EPA's mandate and regulations relating to various environmental matters.

The GMSA and the EPA will also be collaborating on events and activities for the upcoming World Environmental Day.

GMSA Signs Contract with Consultant to Undertake Feasibility Study on Consolidated Log Yard

GMSA Executive Director Ms. Rosalinda Rasul and Consultant Mr. Errol LaCruez

The Guyana Manufacturing and Services Association (GMSA), on Wednesday, January 13, 2021, has officially signed a contract with consultant Mr. Errol LaCruez to conduct a feasibility study on a Consolidated Log Yard (CLY) operation in Guyana. The project is expected to last six months under the Food and Agriculture Organization – European Union (FAO-EU) Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Programme.

Project Background

The GMSA and the FAO signed an agreement in September 2020, for a 6M GYD grant which will be used to determine the feasibility of establishing a CLY operation in Guyana. The approach to this study will be through a consultative process involving key stakeholders such as forest sector operators, Government agencies, civil society, indigenous organisations and other non-governmental organisations. The establishment of any CLY should have as its intended purpose to improve growth within the forestry sector in an open marketplace and as a clearing house for legally produced timber that meet the needs of the local and international markets.

The facility is envisioned to serve as an open marketplace and as a clearing house for legally produced products. The current objectives are three-pronged: increased revenue from the forest resource, increased value-adding opportunities and creation of a platform for equal access to legally produced raw materials at competitive prices that meet international standards. To this effect, only wood products which are compliant with Guyana's Timber Legality Assurance System (GTLAS), will be traded through the facility. The facility's adherence to the GTLAS will engender enhanced confidence in the legality of wood products on the local and international market.

This project advances the Guyana-EU Joint Implementation Framework for FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) in the specific area of marketing and promoting of legal timber and timber products.

About FAO-EU FLEGT Programme

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United

Nations (FAO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations which lead an international effort to assist governments and development agencies with coordinating improvement and development activities for sustainability. Through funding of projects, the European Union Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FAO-EU FLEGT) programme promotes the implementation of the FLEGT Action Plan by improving forest governance, providing technical assistance, and building capacity. Guyana has a history of collaboration and cooperation with the FAO, which has served to benefit the country in sustainable development.

GMSA Secretariat Alongside Consultant Mr. Errol LaCruez and Associate Mr. Justin King

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