

INTERVENTION HIGHLIGHT

Saving Solomon Islands' sawn timber market

Custody certification to secure market access



The Solomon Islands sawn timber industry is seen as being relatively small, but significant component of its economy. Because of this, PHAMA Plus has supported the Solomon Islands Timber Processors and Exporters Association (SITPEA) over a long period to work towards certification. International requirements for timber traceability and sustainability and the role of certification in this continue to evolve and have become more stringent. However, Solomon Islands still lacks certified sawmills or certified sawn timber producers. The country's sawn timber export market access to New Zealand and Australia is under threat of closure due to lack of progress with meeting requirements for certification.

At a glance

- PHAMA Plus has worked with the Solomon Islands sawn timber industry on a range of initiatives to strengthen the sawn timber sector, including greater private sector representation through the establishment and facilitation of SITPEA.
- SITPEA is a local sawn timber organization that incorporates 12 timber companies that are majority-owned by Solomon Islanders.
- SITPEA members buy timber from all major provinces across the country for further processing for domestic and international markets like New Zealand and Australia.

Getting out of the woods

PHAMA Plus continues to work with SITPEA and MOFR to increase awareness on changing and emerging market requirements and work towards certification. This has included the establishment of strong linkages and collaboration with end markets and industry bodies like the New Zealand Imported Tropical Timber Group (NZ ITTG).

In collaboration with FAO, PHAMA Plus supported a multi-stakeholder Workshop on Forest Sector Governance, Value Addition and Trade in July to increase understanding and identify appropriate measures to enhance forest sector governance and promote value addition and trade in Solomon Islands. PHAMA Plus' renewed partnership with SITPEA now looks at getting three members certified for Chain of Custody (CoC) by end of 2024. This involves a local adviser working with SITPEA members and liaising with the MOFR, FAO, the NZ ITTG and the certification provider. During the reporting period, awareness sessions were held in five provinces to provide guidance to SITPEA members on the certification scheme.

In January 2024, PHAMA Plus in collaboration with MOFR and FAO facilitated a workshop by Responsible Wood and the Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) custody framework to protect SITPEA members' market access to Australia, New Zealand and European markets.

These efforts have provided of improved market information and training for sawn timber producers to meet the requirements of markets.