Group Management System

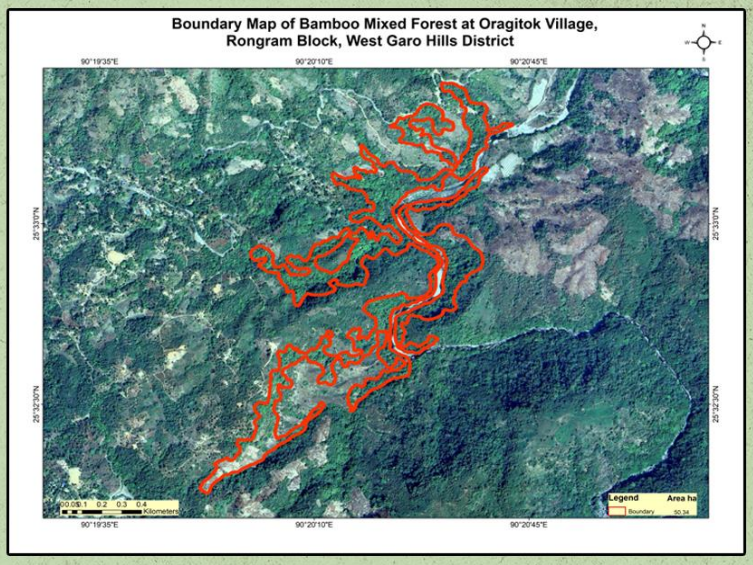
for

Oragitok Village

West Garo Hills District, Meghalaya

(in partial fulfillment of the application for FSC Forest Management Certification)





prepared by Oragitok BFMC with the assistance from

Centre of Excellence
for
Natural Resource Management & Sustainable Livelihoods

Meghalaya Basin Development Authority (MBDA)
Government of Meghalaya

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ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

ASI	Assurance Services International
BFMC	Bamboo Forest Management Committee
BMFP	Bamboo Forest Management Plan
CoE (NRM&SL)	Centre of Excellence for Natural Resources Management and Sustainable Livelihoods
CAR	Corrective Action Request
CB	Certification Body
FM	Forest Management
FMU	Forest Management Unit
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
FSS	Forest Stewardship Standard
GHADC	Garo Hills Autonomous District Council
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPS	Global Positioning System
GMS	Group Management System
ha	hectare
MRM	Management Review Meeting
MBMA	Meghalaya Basin Management Agency
MIDC	Meghalaya Industrial Development Corporation
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Product
PAN	Permanent Account Number
RFSS	Regional Forest Stewardship Standard
SHG	Self-Help Groups
RMU	Resource Management Unit

Group Management System

1. Background

1.1 Legality

The Oragitok Village Council headed by Nokma is formally recognized under the Meghalaya Societies Registration Act, 1983. It holds PAN for transparency and tax compliance. The committee operates in alignment with forest laws including the Indian Forest Act, Meghalaya Forest Regulation, GHADC Forum Regulation and adheres to the principles, laid down in the RFSS, ensuring legality and sustainability of forests, including bamboo forests. The forests belong to the indigenous community under the Meghalaya Local Administration (Empowerment of Traditional Institutions, Traditional Bodies and Headmen in Governance and Public Delivery System) Ordinance, 2015 (Annexure I, Annexure II, Annexure IV).

1.2 Quality Policy / Commitment on Sustainable Bamboo Forest Management

The Council commits to sustainable bamboo forest management in accordance with FSC Principles and the forest regulations applicable in the State and the Country at large.
The objectives of the Bamboo Forest Management Plan are as follows:

(i) To sustainably manage the bamboo forest, allowing sustainable yield to be harvested for the economic benefits to the community.
(ii) To promote biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration.
(iii) To encourage responsible harvesting, replanting, and value addition.
(iv) To ensure fair community participation and equitable benefit-sharing.
(v) To continuously monitor and improve management practices for long-term forest health and productivity (Annexure VII).

2. Organisation

2.1 Organisation Overview

People in the Oragitok village have been using bamboo since ages. Uses of bamboo are deeply rooted in the tradition and cultural practices of the communities. Of late, people in the village have mostly changed to settled form of agricultural practices in place of shifting cultivation. This has led to the growth of bamboo forest which used to be earlier cut during the shifting cultivation practices. The Resource Management Unit (RMU) i.e. Bamboo Forest Management Committee (BFMC) goals span ecological restoration, silviculture improvement, community empowerment, and income diversification through bamboo enterprise development.

For producing raw materials for the bamboo enterprise, community intends to extract sustainable yields (as determined by the bamboo resource inventory) from the bamboo forest. It is also envisioned that new bamboo plantations will be created if the requirement of bamboo raw material for the enterprises or for the supply to the larger bamboo market expand in near future. Short-term priorities include nursery establishment and training; long-term goals include FSC forest management certification and carbon market participation.

2.2 Organisation Structure

The Group Entity i.e. Centre of Excellence (NRM & SL), Meghalaya Basin Management Agency (MBMA), acts as the central administrative body holding the group certificate on behalf of the Resource Management Unit (RMU) i.e. Bamboo Forest Management Committee (BFMC), responsible for ensuring all group members comply with FSC Forest Management standards. BFMC acts as body that has ownership rights over the bamboo forest(s) and is also responsible for managing the overall resource for the process of certification. The highest level of decision-making in the village is the Nokma, heading the Village Council. For bamboo forest management activities, the Village Council will form a Bamboo Forest Management Committee (BFMC). A Group Member in the FSC certification scheme is an individual who is part of a larger group holding a single, shared certificate. The individual member retains specific responsibilities to ensure compliance with FSC principles.

2.2.1 Group Entity i.e. Centre of Excellence (NRM & SL), Meghalaya Basin Management Agency (MBMA)

The Group Entity acts as the central administrative body holding the group certificate on behalf of the Resource Management Unit (RMU) i.e. Bamboo Forest Management Committee (BFMC), responsible for ensuring all group members comply with FSC Forest Management standards (Annexure IX).

2.2.2 Resource Management Unit (RMU) i.e. Bamboo Forest Management Committee (BFMC)

The highest level of decision-making in the village is the Nokma, heading the Village Council. For bamboo forest management activities, the Village Council will form a Bamboo Forest Management Committee (BFMC).

The BFMC will consist of 5 to 8 members:

(i) President, Secretary, Treasurer, Member(s) (including at least 2 female members).

(ii) Members will be representatives from the village households, who own or have been allotted bamboo forest (Annexure X).

2.3 Flow diagram of Organisation Structure

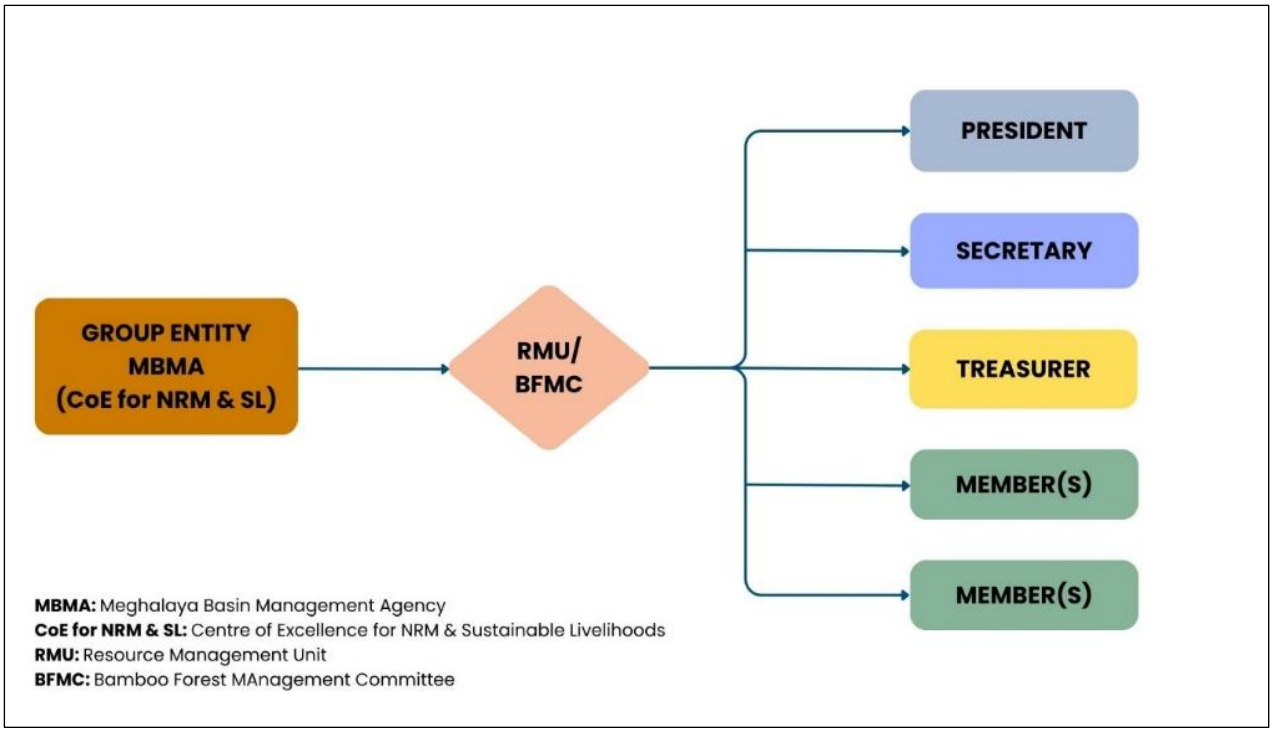


Figure 1: Structure of the Organisation

2.4 Eligibility Criteria

Any smallholder resident of Oragitok Village who own or manage individual units of plantations including bamboo, woodlots, orchards, or agroforestry in block, linear or strip form that are less than 20 hectares in size will be eligible for the membership (Annexure XII) of the BFMC. This includes boundary trees or small groups of trees. Smallholders also include community producers, including Indigenous or others who fulfil the criteria for small size (as above), or a cooperative or community which owns, manages and uses a forest less than 20 hectares.

The Group Entity i.e. MBMA is an organization with over 500 personnel deployed at the headquarters and at the district and Block level. In addition to the regular employees of MBMA, the organization has a very good network of village level workers designated as VCF (Village Community Facilitator). There are more than 1,000 VCFs across the State. The organization has specialized units such as the Centre of Excellence (NRM & SL), Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) and Geographical Information System (GIS) Centre, and MINR, for undertaking specialized and technical works. With this organizational capacity, the Group Entity i.e. MBMA proposes to bring about 20,000 hectares of bamboo forest involving 500 village communities in the next five years.

3. Group Entry Procedure

Any resident of Oragitok interested in Bamboo Management may apply through the BFMC. After screening of the interested member's application, the technical team collects the basic data of members (Annexure XII) and their forests and conducts the initial assessment in consultation with the BFMC for taking a final decision on the membership of the applicant.

(i) Centre of Excellence (NRM & SL), Meghalaya Basin Management Agency (MBMA) will provide each member with information, or access to information, about how the group works. The information shall include-

- The Group Rules and the applicable Forest Stewardship Standard, and an explanation of how to conform with them. The MBMA shall provide access to other applicable normative documents upon request.
- An explanation of the certification body's evaluation process.
- An explanation that the certification body, FSC and ASI have the right to access the members' management unit(s) and documentation.
- An explanation that the certification body will publish a public summary of their evaluation report. ASI may publish a public summary of their evaluation and FSC will include information about the group in its database.
- Explanation of any costs associated with joining the group.

(ii) After getting information & orientation, a declaration of consent shall be signed by each member wishing to join a group (Annexure XVII) (Annexure V) (Annexure XV). In the declaration, the member shall:

- Commit to follow the applicable Forest Stewardship Standard and the Group Rules
- Declare that the management units they are bringing into the group are not included in another FSC certificate
- Agree to allow the Nokma, BFMC, the certification body, FSC and ASI to fulfill their responsibilities
- Agree that the Nokma or BFMC will be the main contact for certification.

(iii) Entry is confirmed upon approval by the BFMC and inclusion in the members' register.

4. Suspension/ Removal Procedure

Members may be suspended or removed if the member -

(i) is not following the group rules, including FSC principles

(ii) is involved in illegal cutting or selling of bamboo.

(iii) is involved in repeated non-compliance with group rules or environmental guidelines.

The BFMC investigates and recommends action to the Nokma, which makes the final decision

regarding the warning, suspension or removal.

5. Group Exit Procedure

Any group member has the right to exit the Group subject to settle all outstanding obligations. They submit the formal application for withdrawal from the group with valid reason. Thereafter, the BFMC shall provide formal exit approval from the contract.

(i) If involved in any asset (e.g., nursery tools or bamboo stock), a documented handover must be completed.
(ii) The BFMC will update the records and reassign duties as needed.
(iii) The BFMC will inform the certification body and related stakeholders regarding the changes.

6. Internal Monitoring System of Group Management

The Objective is to ensure transparent, efficient, and sustainable management of Group activities under the jurisdiction of Oragitok Village Council, promoting compliance with local regulations, FSC standards, and community welfare. It will cover all FSC-related activities, financial management, resource utilization, and sustainability practices in Oragitok Village.

The minimum sample to be visited annually by the group manager depends on the group type. Type 1 groups with mixed responsibilities shall apply a minimum sampling of $x = \sqrt{y}$ for normal FMUs and $x=0.6* \sqrt{y}$ for FMUs < 1,000 ha. Oragitok Village Council has formed a BFMC to monitor all activities related to FSC certification of the Bamboo Forest owned by the council.

6.1 Monitoring Process

Step 1: Planning

(i) Identify key areas for monitoring based on risk assessment and strategic objectives.
(ii) Develop an annual monitoring plan (Annexure XIII) including scope, frequency, and responsible personnel.
(iii) Audit checklists and report templates.

Step 2: Data Collection and Record Keeping

(i) Gather relevant data through site visits, community feedback, financial reports, and resource audits.
(ii) Use standardized forms and record sheets.
(iii) Maintain all documents securely for accountability.

Step 3: Monitoring Activities

(i) Perform inspections and evaluations based on a predefined checklist.

(ii) Engage community members and local leaders during inspections / site visits to ensure transparency.

(iii) Identify any deviations, inefficiencies, or non-compliance.

Step 4: Evaluation & Analysis

(i) Review the collected data against set benchmarks.

(ii) Prepare a monitoring report highlighting:

- Achievements
- Gaps and issues
- Risk factors

(iii) Discuss findings in village meetings for collective understanding.

Step 5: Corrective Actions

(i) Develop action plans to address identified issues.

(ii) Assign responsibilities and deadlines for corrective measures.

(iii) Track progress on action implementation.

Step 6: Follow-up and Review

(i) Monitor the progress of corrective actions periodically.

(ii) Schedule follow-up inspections to ensure that issues are resolved.

(iii) Revise monitoring criteria and methods based on lessons learned and evolving needs.

6.1.1 Monitoring of BFMC (RMUs)

The Group Entity i.e., MBMA through Centre of Excellence (NRM & SL) will carry an internal monitoring of all the BFMC involved in certification initiative at least once in a year in a routine manner.

Internal monitoring official of CoE will visit the BFMC and carry out details of the following

(i) Whether forest management prescriptions are being followed as per the plan or not

(ii) Whether all social safeguard and safety measures are followed

(iii) Whether accounts with proper book keeping are maintained or not

(iv) Whether environmental safeguards are being observed as per the plan or not

(v) Whether any complaint regarding malpractice such as barbering, embezzlement etc has been received and if so then whether suitable action by the BFMC has been taken or not.

During the internal audit and training conducted in Oragitok Village on 16th May 2026(Annexure XXX), all BFMC members and executives participated. They were again explained about all the management practices related to sustainable management of bamboo forest, conservation

practices, group management system guidelines, safety measures etc. This was the third such training for the BFMC members. The training also included the field demonstration. After the training, the bookkeeping done by the BFMC members were also inspected. Since they are just in the beginning of sustainable management practices and the procedures and regulations in connection with the certification process. Under the RFSS standard, most of their records were in the initial stage only. Though they are very much aware of the steps to be followed by them in observing the necessary procedures.

6.2 Monitoring Indicators

The MBMA shall ensure monitoring of forest management activities and social and environmental impacts through BFMC using defined indicators and frequency.

6.2.1 Management activities and condition of management units

BFMC will be responsible for management activities as per the following tables:

Table 1: Monitoring of management activities

Sl. No.	Monitoring	Frequency	Remarks
1	Growing stock	Annual	Measurement of volume, density, and growth compared to previous data.
2	Protection from forest fire	Annual	By recording incident of fire and area burnt
3	Survival percentage of seedlings planted	Annual	By actual count
4	Soil health	Annual	Visual observation
5	Invasive species	Annual	Identifying invasive species in any area affected by them.

(Annexure XIII)

6.2.2 Social & Environmental Impacts

The Bamboo Forest Management Committee (BFMC) will record and review these indicators periodically to ensure equity and sustainable livelihood benefits for the community as per the following tables:

Table 2: Monitoring of social & environmental impacts

Sl. No	Monitoring	Frequency	Remarks
1	Income generated from bamboo and related activities	Annual	Average annual income
2	Employment opportunities created for community members (Annexure III)	Annual	Actual number
3	Participation of local stakeholders, including women and SHGs, in forest management activities (Annexure XI)	Annual	Actual number
4	Safety	Annual	Incidence of injury, if any
5	Disturbance to biodiversity	Annual	Observation by transect survey
6	Plastic pollution	Annual	Number of plastic materials observed during transect survey

Transect surveys shall be conducted periodically to monitor biodiversity, plastic pollution, soil erosion, signs of unauthorized tree felling, water pollution, open grazing, manufacturing activities, and culturally important sites. Observations shall be recorded in the Transect Survey Form (Annexure XXVIII).

7. Documentation & Record Keeping

The BFMC shall maintain a structured documentation and record-keeping system to ensure transparency, traceability, and compliance with FSC (RFSS) requirements.

7.1 Record Retention

(i) All records shall be maintained for a minimum of five (5) years (Annexure IV), (Annexure VIII).

(ii) Records shall be securely stored and protected from damage or loss.

(iii) Confidentiality of sensitive information shall be ensured.

7.2 Types of Records Maintained

A. Office Level Records:

(i) Site maps (overview of all FMUs).

(ii) List of group members (name, address, GPS, area, date of inclusion).

(iii) Property details (survey number, area, location).

(iv) Forest Management Plan (FMP) & GMS manual.

(v) Internal standards (local language).

(vi) Consent/declaration forms.

(vii) Individual FMU maps.

(viii) Members' register (operations, inputs, pest control, yield).

(ix) Soil testing records (if applicable).

(x) Internal & external audit reports.

(xi) Non-compliance & CAR records.

(xii) Procurement records.

(xiii) Staff records and training documentation.

(xiv) Financial records (funds, vouchers, bank statements).

B. Field Level Records:

(i) Plantation and harvesting records.

(ii) Bamboo stock and sales records.

(iii) Forest maps.

(iv) Monitoring records (growth, biodiversity, soil, etc.).

(v) Accident & incident records.

(vi) Community participation records.

7.3 FSC Product Traceability Records

A register shall be maintained for all FSC products sold:

Table 3: Record keeping of all the FSC products sold

Sl. No	Bamboo culms number		Date of sale	Name of Purchaser	Address of Purchaser	Remarks
	Species	Number				

7.4 Forest Gate

Bamboo Depot and Gate Management within the Bamboo Forest Area of small land measuring 100 ft to 100 ft will be marked for depot of sustainably harvested bamboo. After harvesting of bamboo or prescribed for each small holder in the management plan according to the sustainable yield will be stack in depot. A proper record of all the harvested bamboo brought to the depot will be maintained in a manner that if it is traceable to the small holder from whose area it was harvested. Likewise proper entry in the register will be maintained for the bamboo stock which is taken out from the depot after sale. The prescribed format for the Depot registers at the gate is given in Annexure XXIX.

7.5 Documentation Control

(i) All documents shall be properly labelled with date and version.

(ii) Updates shall be approved by authorized personnel.

(iii) Obsolete documents shall be archived but not used.

7.6 Accessibility

(i) Records shall be made available during:

- Internal audits.
- External FSC audits.
- Stakeholder verification (if required).

7.7 Public Availability of BFMP and GMS

The Bamboo Forest Management Plan (BFMP) and Group Management System (GMS) documents shall be made accessible to all stakeholders to ensure transparency and compliance with FSC requirements.

The following shall be ensured:

a) The BFMP and GMS documents of each forest under the FSC certification initiative shall be uploaded on the official CoE (NRM & SL) website. The respective links shall be made available at the Village Council office.

BFMP Link: https://coenrm.megplanning.gov.in/fsc-certification/

GMS Link: https://coenrm.megplanning.gov.in/fsc-certification/

b) A hard copy of the BFMP and GMS shall be maintained at the office of the Bamboo Forest Management Committee (BFMC), preferably with the President, for easy access by community members and stakeholders.

c) The BFMP and GMS shall also be made available in the local language to ensure better understanding and inclusivity among community members.

d) A QR code linking to the digital versions of the BFMP and GMS shall be displayed at the BFMC office and printed on the back cover page of both documents for easy access.

8. Complaint Handling Procedure

8.1 Internal (Group Member)

To ensure transparency, accountability, and harmony within the group, a formal procedure has been established for handling internal complaints and grievances.

(i) Complaints from members are first submitted to the BFMC (Annexure XVIII) in writing or verbally during the meetings.

(ii) A sub-committee will investigate and provide a resolution within 7 days.

(iii) All decisions and actions taken are documented.

8.2 External (Buyers, Stakeholders)

To uphold transparency and accountability in community engagement, a formal mechanism is provided for external members to raise complaints or concerns related to group activities.

(i) External complaints are logged by the BFMC secretary (Annexure XVIII).

(ii) The committee addresses the issue with the inputs from the Village Council, if necessary.

(iii) Response must be communicated to the complainant within 14 days.

8.2.1 Stakeholder consultation Procedure

8.2.1.1 Purpose

Group Entity i.e. Centre of Excellence (NRM & SL), Meghalaya Basin Management Agency (MBMA), through the BFMC, shall conduct stakeholder consultations in accordance with the Regional Forest Stewardship Standard (RFSS) aligned with FSC Forest Stewardship Standards (India).

This process is conducted to:

(i) Verify the effectiveness of forest management practices.

(ii) Ensure compliance with legal, environmental, and social safeguards.

(iii) Incorporate stakeholder feedback into bamboo forest management.

8.2.1.2 Stakeholder Identification

Stakeholders from the following categories shall be identified and invited:

(i) Government agencies related to forestry and environment.

(ii) Autonomous District Councils (ADCs).

(iii) Research institutions / universities.

(iv) Forest and bamboo development agencies.

(v) Local and regional NGOs (social/environmental).

(vi) Subject matter experts.

(vii) Labour unions / worker associations.

(viii) Bamboo-based industries / certificate holders.

(ix) Bamboo harvesters, contractors, and consumers.

(x) Local communities / forest-dependent households.

(xi) Farmers and landowners.

(xii) Traditional institutions (Nokma/ Village Councils).

(xiii) Women groups and vulnerable sections.

8.2.1.3 Stakeholder Invitation Process

Identified stakeholders shall be invited using one or more of the following methods:

- Phone calls
- Email communication
- Official letters
- In-person invitations through BFMC

All invitations shall include:

- Purpose of consultation
- Scope (Bamboo Forest Management under RFSS)
- Timeline for feedback submission

8.2.1.4 Consultation Period

(i) A minimum of 45 days shall be provided for stakeholder consultation

(ii) During this period, stakeholders shall be given access to relevant information, including:

- Bamboo Forest management plan
- Environmental and social safeguards
- Community engagement processes

Stakeholders shall be informed that:

(i) Their participation is voluntary

(ii) Their consent is required for publication of comments (Annexure XXVI)

8.2.1.5 Submission of Feedback

Stakeholders may submit their inputs, suggestions, or complaints through:

- Phone communication
- Email submission
- Written submissions via post/courier
- Direct submission to MBMA/BFMC offices

8.2.1.6 Post-Consultation Response

(i) BFMC shall respond to stakeholders within 60 days after the consultation period

(ii) The response shall explain:

- How stakeholder comments were considered
- Actions taken or proposed
- Justifications where suggestions are not adopted

8.2.1.7 Documentation and Record Keeping

The BFMC shall maintain records including:

(i) List of stakeholders invited

(ii) Attendance records (if meetings conducted)

(iii) Minutes of meetings

(iv) Stakeholder feedback received

(v) Consent records for publication

(vi) Action taken reports

(vii) These records shall be maintained for audit and certification purposes.

8.2.1.8 Consultation Summary Report

After completion of the stakeholder consultation, a summary report shall be prepared including:

(i) Area/location of consultation

(ii) List of stakeholders invited and participated

(iii) Summary of stakeholder comments (with consent)

(iv) Description of how comments were addressed

(v) Identified risks and mitigation measures

(vi) Justification of bamboo sourcing as per RFSS requirements

(vii) Community and environmental safeguards considered

Table 4: Stakeholder consultation

Sl. No.	RFSS – FM Principles	Stakeholder Comments	Response by BFMC	Action Taken
1	Compliance with Laws and RFSS Principles			
2	Workers' Rights and Employment Conditions (Annexure VIII)			
3	Indigenous Peoples' Rights			
4	Community Relations and Participation			
5	Benefits from bamboo Forest			
6	Environmental Impact			

7	Socio-Economic Impact			
8	High Conservation Value Forests			
9	Child Labour & POSH			
10	Grievance Redressal			
11	Cultural Landscapes / Sacred Sites			
12	Any Other Remarks			

Table 5: Grievance log

Sl. No.	Date Received	Name of Complainant	Contact Details	Description of Grievance	Action Taken	Status	Date Closed
1							
2							

8.2.2 Stakeholder Inputs, Disputes & Complaints Procedure

8.2.2.1 Stakeholder Engagement Framework

The MBMA adopts a culturally appropriate and inclusive engagement approach to ensure that stakeholders are proactively and transparently involved in the following processes:

(i) Dispute resolution mechanisms (Annexure VI).

(ii) Definition and implementation of living wages (wages exceeding statutory minimum wages).

(iii) Identification and protection of indigenous rights and cultural landscapes. (Annexure XXVI)

(iv) Community participation in socio-economic development activities.

(v) High Conservation Value Forest (HCVF) identification, management, and monitoring.

This approach respects the traditional governance systems of Meghalaya, including Nokma and community-based decision-making.

8.2.2.2 Complaint Submission Mechanism

Stakeholders may submit complaints or grievances related to bamboo forest management to the Group Entity i.e. Centre of Excellence (NRM & SL), Meghalaya Basin Management Agency (MBMA) through the following channels:

- Phone communication
- Registration in the Complaint Register available at the MBMA Unit Office

- Email submission
- Written complaints via post/courier
- In-person submission during village-level meetings

8.2.2.3 Acknowledgement and Initial Response

(i) All complaints shall be formally acknowledged within 7 days

(ii) Initial response shall be provided within 15 days from the date of receipt

8.2.2.4 Complaint Registration and Processing

(i) All complaints shall be recorded in a centralized Complaint Register

(ii) Complaints received at field level shall be forwarded to the Project Office / MBMA Unit

(iii) In certain cases, complaints may be directly received at the MBMA office

8.2.2.5 Investigation and Resolution Mechanism

Step 1: Assessment

(i) Complaints shall be assessed by the designated official of MBMA

(ii) Root cause analysis shall be conducted

Step 2: Solution Development

(i) Appropriate corrective and preventive actions shall be identified

(ii) Measures shall aim to prevent recurrence

Step 3: Approval

(i) Proposed actions shall be reviewed and approved by: MBMA

Step 4: Implementation

(i) MBMA shall implement the approved actions

Step 5: Verification

(i) Implementation shall be verified by the MBMA authority.

8.2.2.6 Timeline for Complaint Resolution

(i) Total resolution period: within 60 days from receipt of complaint

(ii) Stakeholders shall be informed of timelines via:

- Phone
- Email
- Written communication

8.2.2.7 Compensation Mechanism (Damage/Loss Cases)

Where complaints involve damage or loss, the following procedure shall apply:

Step	Timeline
Registration of complaint	Immediate
Field verification	Within 60 days
Assessment & approval	Post verification
Compensation payment	Within 30 days
Total resolution time	≤ 90 days

(i) Compensation shall be approved by the MBMA

(ii) Payment shall be made based on verified damage and applicable norms

8.2.2.8 Common Categories of Complaints

Typical grievances may include:

(i) Poor quality bamboo seedlings

(ii) Delays in harvesting permissions

(iii) Payment-related issues for bamboo supplied

(iv) Replacement of damaged or failed planting materials

(v) Issues related to bamboo forest management practices

(vi) Social and Environmental matters

(vii) Wages and rights related issues

(viii) Sexual harassment.

8.2.2.9 Competent Authority

The Executive Director, MBMA shall act as:

(i) Final decision-making authority

(ii) Ombudsman for dispute resolution

This ensures a consistent and transparent grievance redressal system. (Annexure– XVIII)

8.2.2.10 FSC-Related Complaints

Complaints related to FSC Principles & Criteria shall be:

(i) Reported to the Certification Body immediately

(ii) Processed as per FSC complaint procedures

8.2.2.11 Suspension of Operations under Dispute Conditions

The MBMA shall cease or suspend FSC/RFSS-certified operations in areas where disputes:

(i) Are of substantial magnitude

(ii) Persist for significant duration

(iii) Involve multiple stakeholders

(iv) Such areas shall:

- Be excluded from certification scope

8.2.2.12 Criteria for Substantial Disputes

8.2.2.13.1 Substantial Magnitude

(i) More than 15 stakeholders involved

(ii) Significant, evidence-based impact

8.2.2.13.2 Substantial Duration

(i) At least one complaint per day for one week

(ii) Unresolved beyond 15 days

8.2.2.13.3 Significant Stakeholder Interest

(i) More than 10 stakeholders involved

8.2.2.13 Action under Dispute Conditions

(i) Immediate suspension of operations in affected area

(ii) Exclusion from FSC/RFSS certification scope

(iii) No sourcing of bamboo during investigation

(iv) Material treated as uncontrolled / non-certified

(v) If non-compliance with FSC standards is confirmed and corrective action is not feasible:

- The area shall be permanently excluded from certification scope
- Bamboo shall not be marketed as FSC-certified

8.2.2.14 Interim Control During Verification

During complaint investigation:

(i) No bamboo shall be sourced as FSC/RFSS-certified from the affected area

(ii) Supply shall remain suspended until compliance is verified

8.2.2.15 Record Keeping

(i) All complaints, actions, and outcomes shall be documented

(ii) Records shall be maintained for minimum 5 years

(iii) Documentation shall be available for FSC audits and verification

8.3 Dispute Resolution Mechanism

8.3.1 Objective

To establish a transparent, timely and effective mechanism for receiving, addressing and resolving disputes and grievances from farmers, workers, contractors, local communities and other stakeholders in compliance with FSC Principles. (Annexure VI)

8.3.2 Scope

This procedure applies to all forest management operations, employees, contractors, local communities, indigenous people and other affected stakeholders within the Forest Management Unit (FMU).

8.3.3 Definitions

Dispute: A formal disagreement related to forest management activities, rights, working conditions or environmental and social impacts.

Grievance: A concern or complaint raised by any stakeholder.

Complainant: Person or group raising the dispute.

8.3.4 Principles

Transparency, accessibility, non-retaliation, confidentiality, timely resolution and documentation.

8.3.5 Roles & Responsibilities

(i) Complainant: Submit grievance through defined channels.
(ii) Site Supervisor/Range Officer: Record and acknowledge receipt.
(iii) FMU Manager: Lead investigation and resolution.
(iv) FSC/Admin Officer: Maintain grievance register and monitor timelines.
(v) Dispute Resolution Committee: Review complex or unresolved disputes.

8.3.6 Procedure

(i) Submission of Grievance – Through written application, verbal communication, grievance box or email.
(ii) Registration – Entry into Grievance Register (Annexure XXV) with unique reference number.
(iii) Acknowledgement – Within 7 working days.
(iv) Assessment & Investigation – Verification of facts and stakeholder consultation.
(v) Resolution – Mutually agreed corrective action and timeline.
(vi) Communication – Written response to complainant.
(vii) Closure – After confirmation of satisfaction or implementation of decision.
(viii) Appeal – Escalation to higher authority if unresolved.

8.3.7 Timeframe

(i) Acknowledgement – Within 7 days
(ii) Resolution – Within 30 days (depending on complexity).

8.3.8 Confidentiality & Protection

Identity of the complainant shall be kept confidential upon request and protection against any kind of retaliatory action shall be ensured.

8.3.9 Monitoring & Review

Periodic analysis of disputes and incorporation into management review for continuous improvement.

8.3.10 Records

Grievance forms, Grievance register, Investigation reports, Meeting minutes, Resolution agreements, communication records.

8.3.11 Training & Awareness

Stakeholders shall be informed about the dispute resolution mechanism through consultations, notice boards and induction programs.

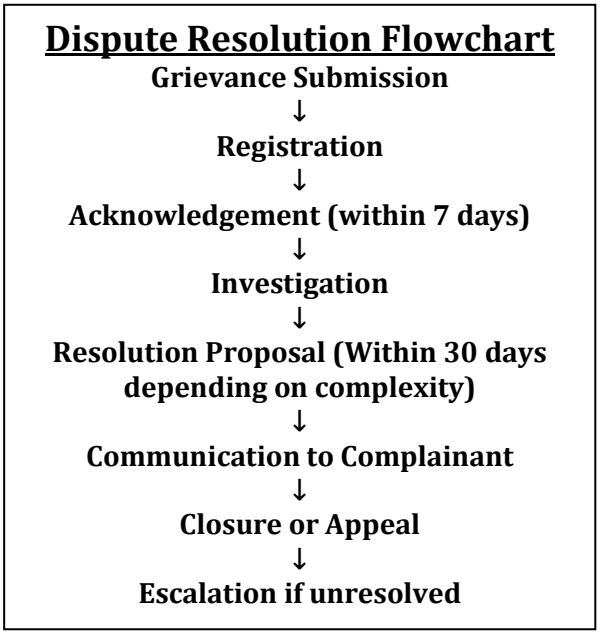


Figure 2: Dispute Resolution Flow Chart

Annexures

- Grievance Submission Form (Annexure XVIII)
- Grievance Register Format (Annexure XXV)
- Investigation Report Template (Annexure XXIV)

9. Internal Audit Procedure

The internal inspection is an essential part of the system. Internal inspection verifies the policies & procedure of GMS (Group Management System) and applicable FSC (RFSS) standards followed by the group members. BFMC has developed the internal inspection checklist based on the FSC (RFSS) standards.

The internal inspector shall follow the instructions for conducting internal inspection as given below:

(i) At least minimum one inspection of the group should be carried out by the internal inspector in a year and must be documented in prescribed format.

(ii) The inspection must be carried out in presence of the member or his representative and must include a visit of the whole forest area, production area, storage, harvested products & post-harvest handling.

(iii) The internal inspector verifies the records maintained at forest level and also verify the last season/year production and stock.

(iv) The internal inspector verifies, if the internal standards have been followed and whether the conditions of the previous internal inspection have been fulfilled.

(v) The visit of the internal inspector must be documented in the farm inspection checklist duly signed by the inspector and counter-signed by the member or his representative.

(vi) In case of severe non-compliance, the results must be reported immediately to the Group Manager or BFMC and all necessary measures or shall be taken according to the internal procedures.

(vii) The internal inspector summarizes the overall findings and non-compliances to the group member at the time of completion of inspection and take a signature or thumb impression (if illiterate) on the checklist.

(viii) The Internal inspector submits his report to BFMC for further processing.

Summary Reports are submitted to the BFMC and discussed during Management Review Meetings (MRMs).

10. Non-Compliance Handling

The process for resolving corrective action requests (CARs) of handling of non-compliance, whether issued internally or by the certification body, involved several key steps:

1. **Receipt and Review:** Upon receiving a CAR, the responsible team/ team member reviews the issue to understand the non-conformance and its implications.
2. **Root Cause Analysis:** An investigation is conducted to identify the underlying causes of the non-conformance.

3. **Planning and Implementation:** A corrective action plan is developed, detailing the steps, responsible persons, and timelines for resolution. The plan is then executed to address the identified issues.
4. **Timelines:** Typically, corrective actions must be implemented within 15-30 days, depending on the severity of the non-conformance and FSC requirements.
5. **Verification:** Once corrective actions are completed, a follow-up review or audit verifies their effectiveness.
6. **Documentation:** All actions taken are documented for record-keeping and future reference.

Implications if corrective actions are not resolved as per FSC Standards:

(i) Continued non-conformance may lead to suspension of certification.
(ii) Potential loss of FSC certification status until corrective actions are satisfactorily completed.
(iii) Possible reputational damage and loss of market access.
(iv) Need for re-assessment or additional audits to demonstrate compliance.

Timely resolution of CARs is essential to maintain compliance and FSC certification integrity. (Annexure XVII)

11. Management Review Meeting (MRM)

To ensure continuous improvement and effective decision-making, regular management review meetings will be conducted to assess overall performance, address key issues, and guide strategic direction.

(i) To be held every six months, chaired by the president BFMC with participation from the BFMC.
(ii) Agenda includes: audit results, member feedback, harvesting plans, financial updates, and training needs.
(iii) Outcome: updated action plan for continuous improvement of bamboo forest management.

12. Procurement

(i) Bamboo seedlings are sourced preferably from community nurseries and government-certified suppliers.
(ii) Tools and materials (e.g., machetes, protective gear, bio fertilizer, seeds) are purchased using BFMC group funds or grants.

13. Marketing & Sales

Sales & Marketing of all products include bamboo poles, treated bamboo produced by the village council will be managed by BFMC and marketed through fairs, exhibitions, and local buyers and a

percentage of profit is channelized to the BFMC fund which would be reinvested in the bamboo program, the rest is distributed fairly among contributors according to the quantum of their contribution in terms of wages spent. (Annexure XXXI)

13.1 Sales & Marketing of FSC certified products, must follow the requirements given below

The BFMC will be free to explore market/buyer of Bamboo from the forest under its control. After identifying the Buyer, Secretary of the BFMC will seek consent of the MBMA for selling the Bamboo.

After receiving the request from the BFMC, the MBMA will ensure that the quantity intended to be harvested/sold is within the prescribed yield limit. The MBMA will also scrutinize the legal aspects, if any, about the buyer Industry/Firm. It would be the responsibility of the BFMC to ensure that the prescribed yield and management prescriptions are strictly followed. Record in the following format will be maintained for all the sales

Table 6: Marketing and Sales

Sl. No.	Group members name	BFMC	Quantity intended to sell kg	Species Name	Sustainably yield		Name of Buyer and Address & Contact No.	Price of Bamboo INR	Amount received INR
					Kg	No. of culms			

14. Accurate Certification Claims

(i) Only products that are FSC-certified, or part of a controlled wood or FSC controlled sources, can be marketed as FSC-certified.

(ii) Use of FSC trademarks and claims must comply with FSC's Trademark Use Rules and branding guidelines.

(iii) Do not make false or misleading claims about FSC certification status or scope.

15. Labelling Requirements

(i) Labels must be clear, durable, and accurate.

(ii) Labels should include appropriate FSC trademarks, license codes, or claims per FSC's criteria.

(iii) The language used should not be confusing or imply unverified FSC certification.

16. Avoiding Misleading Practices

(i) Marketing materials should not imply FSC certification for products, processes, or companies that are not certified.

(ii) Do not use FSC trademarks or claims in a way that suggests FSC endorsement beyond the scope of certification.

(iii) Avoid vague, ambiguous, or false claims related to FSC sustainability standards.

17. Authority & Approval

(i) All marketing claims, advertisements, and labels using FSC trademarks must be approved by the FSC license holder or authorized person.

(ii) Follow FSC's branding and communication guidelines.

18. Using the FSC trademarks and the trademark license code

To ensure proper, consistent, and compliant use of FSC trademarks and license codes in line with FSC standards, safeguarding the integrity and reputation of FSC-certified products and activities conducted by BFMC.

(i) Only authorized entity with a valid FSC Trademark License from FSC are permitted to use the FSC trademarks.

(ii) Obtain written authorization and license documentation before using FSC trademarks or license codes.

18.1 FSC Trademark Use Rules

(i) Use the FSC trademarks only in connection with FSC-certified products, services, or activities as authorized.

(ii) Follow the official FSC Trademark Use Guidelines regarding logo size, placement, and colour.

(iii) Do not alter, distort, or modify the FSC trademarks; maintain their original form and proportion.

18.2 Use of Trademark License Code

(i) Display the FSC License Code alongside the FSC trademarks on all relevant products and promotional materials.

(ii) The license code must be clearly visible, for example: "FSC® License Code: FSC-XXXXXXX".

(iii) Ensure the license code is accurate and corresponds to the license issued to Oragitok Village Council (Nokma)

18.3 Proper Placement & Usage

Use the FSC trademarks and license code appropriately on:

(i) FSC-certified product labels
(ii) Packaging
(iii) Marketing and promotional materials
(iv) Websites and digital media

Ensure the trademarks are not misleading or used in a way that could cause confusion regarding FSC certification status.

18.4 Record Keeping

(i) Store copies of all materials bearing FSC trademarks and license codes.
(ii) Maintain records of where and how trademarks are used for audits and compliance verification.

18.5 Monitoring & Enforcement

(i) Regularly monitor the correct use of FSC trademarks by all relevant departments.
(ii) Address and rectify any improper or unauthorized use promptly.
(iii) Report misuse or infringement to FSC authorities immediately.

18.6 Training & Awareness

(i) Provide training sessions for staff involved in FSC branding and labelling.
(ii) Distribute clear guidelines and reminders about the correct use of FSC trademarks.

18.7 Periodic Review

(i) Conduct annual reviews of this procedure.
(ii) Update procedures to reflect any changes in FSC standards or licensing agreements.

19. Roles and Responsibilities

The MBMA acts as the central administrative body holding the group certificate on behalf of the BFMCs, responsible for ensuring all group members comply with FSC Forest Management standards.

19.1 Group Entity i.e., Centre of Excellence (NRM & SL), Meghalaya Basin Management Agency (MBMA)

Key responsibilities of the MBMA include:

(i) Develop the framework and maintain written procedures for membership, covering

organizational structure, eligibility, and withdrawal/ suspension.

(ii) Maintain written procedures for managing the group and a public policy of commitment to FSC Principles and Criteria. (Annexure XII)

(iii) Ensure sufficient human and technical resources to manage the group, including defining the maximum number of members.

(iv) Provide members with documentation, including the FSC standard, group rules, an explanation of the certification process, and cost structure.

(v) Identify training needs and provide training and communication strategies to help members implement FSC standards.

(vi) Act as the primary contact for the certification body, FSC, and ASI when required.

(vii) Implement a documented monitoring system to ensure continued compliance with FSC standards.

(viii) Conduct regular (at least annual) on-site monitoring visits to a sample of group members.

(ix) Issue corrective action for non-compliances identified during internal audits and monitor their implementation.

(x) Maintain up-to-date group records for at least five years, including member lists, consent forms, training records, maps and monitoring reports.

(xi) Implement a system for tracking and tracing forest products from group members to ensure non-certified material is not mixed with FSC-certified products.

(xii) Provide consent for trading of bamboo when all criteria have been met by BFMCs.

(xiii) Verify the credibility and authenticity of the buyer before issuing the consent.

(xiv) Approve use of the FSC trademark for BFMCs working with the certification body.

(xv) Ensure invoices for FSC-certified material are issued correctly and filed by members.

(xvi) Evaluate every applicant to ensure compliance with standards before adding them to the group.

(xvii) Ensure all actors within the group understand their responsibilities.

(xviii) The MBMA holds the certificate and ensures that no confusing or incorrect certificates are issued to members.

19.2 A Resource Management Unit (RMU) i.e. Bamboo Forest Management Committee (BFMC):

A body that has ownership rights over the bamboo forest(s) and is also responsible for managing the overall resource.

(i) The primary responsibility of a BFMC is to implement centralized, homogeneous, and sustainable forest management on behalf of members, ensuring compliance with FSC Principles and Criteria.

(ii) Ensure that their management units are not included in any other FSC certificate.

(iii) Implementing and keeping up-to-date management plans for all units in the BFMC.

(iv) The BFMC must take control over key management activities, including harvesting, planting, and silvicultural practices, to ensure they meet FSC standards and are consistent with sustainable forest management practices.

(v) Implementing a documented, regular (annual) monitoring and internal audit system to verify that management units continue to comply with FSC requirements.

(vi) Establishing a tracking system to ensure that non-certified material is not mixed with FSC-certified material, and that all bamboo can be traced from the forest to the point of first sale.

(vii) Ensuring all forest workers and community members operating in the BFMC receive necessary training, supervision, and safety protection.

(viii) Maintain records of forest management activities, including harvest volumes, planting, and sales of FSC-certified material, for at least five years.

(ix) Actively engaging with local communities and other affected parties to identify and resolve conflicts over tenure, use rights, and management impacts.

19.2.1 President

(i) The President has overall responsibility for ensuring conformity with forest management certification standards and group rules.

(ii) He/ She oversees all operational forest management activities (e.g., planting, harvesting) within the BFMC to ensure they meet certification standards.

(iii) Maintains all necessary documentation, implements internal monitoring, and tracks conformance with the group certification standard.

(iv) The President identifies training needs and records/ closes out any non-conformities found during internal or external audits.

(v) He/ She serves as the key contact between group members, group auditors, and the certification body.

(vi) In some cases, he/ she will be responsible for training, evaluating, and supervising work within the group.

19.2.2 Secretary

(i) Maintains secure, organized records of all certification applications, assessments, and decisions, ensuring they are available for audits.

(ii) Files and manages all committee correspondence, reports, and official documents.

(iii) Liaises with the President to convene meetings, prepare agendas and schedules meetings well in advance.

(iv) Records accurate minutes, documenting discussions, motions, and decisions made regarding certification.

(v) Circulates meeting materials, agenda items, and minutes to group members.

(vi) Ensures the BFMCs certification activities align with governing documents, legal requirements, and industry standards.

(vii) Responds to queries regarding the certification process, procedures, and status.

(viii) Prepares annual reports or updates on certification activities.

(ix) Communicates certification decisions to stakeholders and ensures follow-up actions are completed.

(x) Assists in auditing and verifying the accuracy of certification documents before final approval.

19.2.3 Treasurer

(i) Manage bank account of the BFMC and ensure funds are deposited in the Bank correctly.

(ii) Provide regular, accurate financial updates to the committee regarding income, expenses, and cash flow, highlighting any budgetary deviations.

(iii) Maintain up-to-date, detailed financial records, including receipts, invoices, and bank statements, ensuring they are prepared for annual audits or legal requirements.

(iv) Authorization of payments whenever required.

(v) Asset management.

(vi) The Treasurer should have a grounded understanding of budgeting, accounting practices, and financial reporting.

19.2.4 Executive member

(i) Member registration and field verification

(ii) Monitoring and training support

(iii) Maintain field-level records

19.2.5 Labour Management, Wages and Equal Remuneration

The Resource Management Unit (RMU) / Bamboo Forest Management Committee (BFMC) shall ensure that all labourers and community members engaged in bamboo forest management and certification activities are paid wages in accordance with the prevailing wage rates notified by the Government of Meghalaya.

The RMU/BFMC shall ensure timely and fair payment of wages to all engaged workers.

In cases where women labourers are engaged, the BFMC shall ensure that women are paid equal wages as male labourers for the same work, in compliance with minimum wage rate as per prevailing government order (Annexure XXXI).

19.3 Group Member

In the FSC certification scheme Group Member is an individual that is part of a larger group holding a single, shared certificate. The individual member retains specific responsibilities to ensure compliance with FSC principles.

The responsibilities of an FSC group member generally include:

(i) Implement the relevant FSC requirements within their own forest management unit.

(ii) Follow the written procedures, guidelines, and rules established by the MBMA.

(iii) Sign a declaration of consent committing to FSC principles and authorizing the MBMA to manage the certification on their behalf.

(iv) He/ She will be responsible for implementing all the prescriptions given in the Bamboo Forest Management Plan (BFMP).

(v) Utilize the tracking system defined by the MBMA to ensure non-certified material is not mixed with FSC-certified material.

(vi) Participate in internal monitoring visits conducted by the MBMA (usually annually).

(vii) Cooperate with the third-party certification body during their evaluation of the group, which includes allowing site access to auditors.

(viii) Implement necessary corrective actions for any non-conformities identified during internal or external audits.

(ix) Use of the FSC trademark and logo only with the prior approval of the MBMA and the certification body.

(x) Ensure all sales invoices for FSC-certified material contain the required information (including the group certificate code).

(xi) Attend training activities and familiarise themselves with the FSC standards and group procedures provided by the group manager.

19.4 Technical Capacity Building Organisation (TCBO)

(i) Develop the policies and procedures for FSC and implement the same in coordination with the in coordination with the BFMC.

(ii) Providing technical training. (Annexure XIII)

(iii) Preparation and management of all documentation towards the implementation and maintenance of the FSC standards in coordination with BFMC

(iv) Coordinate with the external inspection & certification agency in coordination with BFMC

19.5 Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is required for providing direction to the BFMC for the sustainable growth of bamboo forests and its gainful utilization in the near future for at least 10 years.

(i) BFMC will explore possibilities of leveraging financial and technical help from the Meghalaya State Bamboo Mission for developing bamboo resource in Oragitok and also

enterprise based on bamboo.

(ii) BFMC will also make efforts to derive the above-mentioned benefits from others agencies like MBMA and Government of India initiatives if any.

19.6 Technical Support through Experts

Technical experts will provide guidance based on scientific knowledge and field experience to ensure best practices in bamboo management and utilization of bamboo for value addition and better economic gains.

(i) Selection of suitable bamboo species for Oragitok 's soil and climate

(ii) Plantation design (spacing, intercropping)

(iii) Sustainable harvesting methods

(iv) Support the village with nursery setup and bamboo treatment technology.

19.7 Capacity Building on Bamboo

BFMC will organize training and workshops in the village for.

- Implementing Bamboo Forest Management Plan (BFMP) prescriptions.
- Bamboo artisans and local youth.
- Train villagers on nursery management, plantation techniques, pest control, and bamboo product-making.

19.8 Fund Allocation and Financial Support

To ensure the successful implementation of bamboo-related activities in the village, appropriate financial planning and resource allocation are essential. This includes providing adequate funds for various operational needs such as plantation, nursery development, training, and maintenance. Financial support will be extended to community members and Self-Help Groups (SHGs) actively participating in these activities.

(i) Disburse funds for use in Oragitok 's bamboo activities.

(ii) Ensure timely payment for community members and SHGs involved in plantation, nursery, and maintenance works.

19.9 Community Mobilization and Institutional Strengthening

Community mobilization is vital for ensuring grassroots involvement in bamboo forest management. The objective is to encourage active participation from villagers, SHGs, youth, and traditional institutions, fostering a sense of ownership and long- term commitment toward sustainable bamboo resource management. Mobilization efforts will focus on awareness building, participatory planning, and strengthening local governance structures related to bamboo activities.

(i) Create awareness in the community members about bamboo resource, its management

and utilization by setting up enterprises

(ii) Support the formation and functioning of the Bamboo Forest Management Committee (BFMC).

(iii) Provide tools and templates for record-keeping, planning, and reporting.

19.10 Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

Monitoring and Evaluation helps track the progress of forest management activities in bamboo plantations. Its helps to identify the areas where improvement to request and also helps in adapting better management practices. M&E employs a variety of approaches to assess the effects of its forest management activities on various aspects such as plant growth, environmental health, biodiversity, and societal benefits. It utilizes multiple data collection and analysis methods to identify both positive and negative impacts, aiming to ensure that there are no significant adverse effects on the forest's services and resources. Data collection methods may be continuous, annual, or periodic, depending on the specific requirements.

Table 7: Monitoring and assessment

Sl. No.	Monitoring & Assessment Criteria	Frequency	Remarks
1	Bamboo Plantation Growth & Survival rate	Annual	By permanent sample plots
2	NTFP harvesting	Continuous	Daily Records
3	Pre-harvest	Before Harvest	Pre-harvest Checklist
4	Post-harvest	After Harvest	Post-harvest Checklist
5	Biodiversity	Periodical	By sample plots, Site surveillance
6	Animal or Bird sighting	Continuous	Visual & by records
7	Invasive species	Continuous	
8	Rainfall	Daily	By Records
9	Soil erosion	During harvesting /Annual	By Records
10	Pest and disease	Continuous	By Records
11	Agrochemical use	Continuous	By Records
12	Environmental hazard	Continuous	By Records
13	Health and safety (including accidents)	Continuous	By Records
14	Social impact	Annual	By Records
15	Complaints	Continuous	By Records
16	Feedback & Suggestions	Continuous	By Records

(i) Participate in the periodic resource assessment and monitoring exercises.

(ii) Track the progress of bamboo plantation, survival rates, and growth.

(iii) Collect feedback and make mid-course corrections based on local challenges.

(iv) Involve local youths or volunteers in community-based monitoring.

19.11 Livelihood Development and Market Linkages

This focuses on helping villagers earn more by adding value to bamboo products and connecting them to markets and support schemes.

(i) Promote value addition and handicrafts using locally available bamboo and by introducing simple machines.

(ii) Facilitate exposure visits for villagers to other bamboo-growing clusters.

(iii) Link artisans and SHGs in Oragitok to:

- Buyers, bamboo boards/ furniture markets
- Skill development schemes and rural entrepreneurship programs

19.12 Knowledge Sharing and Documentation

Recording experience and sharing ideas help improve bamboo activities and benefit communities.

(i) Share local bamboo knowledge and good practices.

(ii) Record key activities using notes, photos, or videos.

20. Policy & Procedure

20.1 Procedure on Capacity Building

Capacity Building Procedure in Oragitok Village are:

20.1.1 Group Member Training (Community Level)

Target Groups:

- BFMC members
- SHG members
- Youth/women artisan groups
- Bamboo farmers

Objective:

To equip community members with practical skills to participate in bamboo nursery, plantation, value addition, and local governance

Procedure:

Step	Activity
Step 1: Identification	BFMC and Village Facilitator prepare a list of interested/eligible trainees

Step 2: Training Design	CoE (NRM & SL) designs the modules based on local needs: Bamboo propagation - Nursery setup - Plantation & protection techniques - Harvesting & maintenance - Bamboo craft making - Record-keeping & fund management
Step 3: Training Delivery	Conducted in-village or at block-level by experts from: - CoE (NRM & SL) Technical Team - Meghalaya State Bamboo Mission, Forest and Environment Department.
Step 4: Materials & Tools	Provide toolkits, manuals, seedlings, demo tools
Step 5: Post-Training Follow-up	Facilitators support practical field application; BFMC monitors progress

20.1.2 Organizational Staff / Employment Training (Implementing Staff)

Target Groups:

(i) CoE (NRM & SL) staff (Livelihood/Forestry/M&E officers)

(ii) Village Facilitators

(iii) Field Coordinators

(iv) District-level Subject Matter Specialists

Objective:

To enhance the technical, coordination, and monitoring capacity of field and project staff involved in implementing (Bamboo Forest Management Plan) BFMP.

Procedure:

Step	Activity
Step 1: Skill Gap Analysis	CoE (NRM & SL) identifies training needs of each staff category based on roles
Step 2: Curriculum Design	Training modules prepared on: - Bamboo biology & silviculture - GIS mapping and monitoring tools - Bamboo resource inventory - Community mobilization - MIS data entry and reporting
Step 3: Training Schedule	Conducted at district/state level by MBMA/partner institutions
Step 4: Practical Exposure	Staff taken on exposure visits, demo site walks, or lab-based sessions
Step 5: Performance Review	Post-training assignments or assessments to track learning
Step 6: Continuous Learning	Staff are included in refresher trainings every 6–12 months

20.2 Accident & Incident Reporting Mechanism

20.2.1 Objective

To establish a system for reporting, recording, investigating and analysing accidents, incidents and near misses in compliance with FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2, Criterion 2.3.

20.2.2 Scope

This procedure applies to all forest operations, including harvesting, silviculture, nursery, transport, road maintenance, contractors, workers and visitors within the FMU.

20.2.3 Definitions

Accident, Near Miss, First Aid Case (FAC), Medical Treatment Case (MTC), Fatality.

20.2.4 Roles & Responsibilities

(i) Workers/Farmers: Immediate reporting and participation in the investigation.
(ii) Supervisor: Ensure first aid and submit a report within 24 hours.
(iii) FMU Manager: Ensure investigation and CAPA closure.
(iv) H&S/FSC Coordinator: Maintain database and conduct trend analysis.

20.2.5 Reporting Timeframe

(i) Fatality – Immediate
(ii) Serious Accident – Immediate
(iii) Accident of not very serious nature – within 6 hours

20.2.6 Procedure

(i) Immediate Response – First aid, stop unsafe work, and inform supervisor.
(ii) Initial Notification – Reporting through defined hierarchy.
(iii) Recording – Entry into Accident & Incident Register.
(iv) Classification – FAC, MTC, Fatal, Near miss.
(v) Investigation – Root cause analysis within 7 days.
(vi) CAPA – Action, responsibility, timeline and verification.
(vii) Communication – Safety meetings.

20.2.7 Monitoring & Trend Analysis

Calculation of frequency rate, near miss rate and annual management review.

20.2.8 Training & Awareness

Induction and refresher training for all workers and farmers.

20.2.9 Legal Compliance

All statutory reportable accidents shall be notified to concerned authorities within the prescribed time.

20.2.10 Records

Accident report form, Near miss form, Accident register, Investigation reports, CAPA log, Training records, Safety meeting minutes, PPE issuance records.

Annexures

- Annexure XXI– Accident / Incident Reporting Form
- Annexure XXII– Near Miss Reporting Form
- Annexure XXIII– Accident & Incident Register Format
- Annexure XXIV– Investigation Report Template

20.2.11 Compliance Statement

(i) The MBMA has established a mechanism to identify, report, record, investigate and analyse accidents, incidents and near misses in accordance with FSC-STD-01-001 V5-2, Criterion 2.3.

(ii) The mechanism is implemented at the field level through BFMC and group members (smallholders) to ensure timely reporting and response to incidents.

(iii) All accident and incident records are maintained at the BFMC office and are made available for verification during internal and external audits.

(iv) BFMC ensure that smallholders follow safe practices and modify or discontinue activities that have caused, or are likely to cause, accidents in the forest management unit.

(v) The smallholder or their designated representative maintains records of all accidents and incidents, with support from BFMC where required.

(vi) Corrective and Preventive Actions (CAPA) arising from accident investigations are implemented and monitored by the MBMA, with support from BFMC, to prevent recurrence.

Bamboo Forest Management Plan – Gantt Chart

Sl. No.	Activity	Start Timeframe	End Timeframe	Frequency/Notes
1	Legality	Week 1	Week 2	Registration, compliance setup
2	Organization Overview	Week 1	Week 2	Initial planning
3	Organization Structure	Week 2	Week 2	Committee formation
4	Roles & Responsibilities	Week 2	Week 2	Delegation of duties
5	Capacity Building	Week 3	Week 4	Training workshops
6	Group Entry Procedure	Week 3	Week 3	Orientation of new

				members
7	Suspension/Withdrawal Procedure	Week 3	Week 4	As needed
8	Group Exit Procedure	Week 3	Week 4	As needed
9	Complaint Handling (Internal & External)	Week 3	Week 4	Setup and training
10	Internal Audit	Quarterly	Quarterly	4x per year
11	Non-Compliance Handling	Quarterly	Quarterly	Triggered by audit
12	Management Review Meeting	Biannual	Biannual	Jan–Jun / Jul–Dec
13	Procurement & Sales	Ongoing	Ongoing	Based on demand & season
14	Soil Management	Monsoon Prep	During Monsoon	Ground cover, erosion control
15	Riparian Buffer Protection	Ongoing	Ongoing	No harvest zone maintenance
16	Wildlife Habitat Protection	Seasonal	Seasonal	Avoid nesting season
17	Bamboo Inventory & Harvest Planning	Annual	Annual	Once per year
18	Environmental Protection (Fire, Invasives, etc.)	Ongoing	Ongoing	Firebreaks, manual removal
19	Silviculture Practice (Rotational Harvest)	Annual	Annual	Zone-wise harvesting
20	Forest Health Monitoring	Pre- & post-monsoon	Twice a Year	Pest/disease check
21	Invasive Species Control	Every 6 Months	Every 6 Months	Manual clearing
22	Chemical/Biological Controls	As Needed	As Needed	Only during outbreaks
23	Site Access, Roads & Trails	Pre-Monsoon	Monsoon	Trail repair & culvert placement
24	Mapping (Inventory, Satellite, Sample Plots)	Week 2	Week 4	Mapping, GIS tagging
25	Monitoring (Shoots, Harvest, Compliance, etc.)	Biannual	Biannual	Linked with MRM

Annexure – I Judicial System in Garo Hills Districts

Judicial System in the Garo District : The Rules of 1953

Detailed provisions as to the judicial system of the Garo District are contained in the Rules called the Garo Hills Autonomous District (Administration of Justice) Rules, 1953 (hereinafter referred to as Rules) dealing with the administration of justice in that district. Topic-wise discussion of the position follows.

Constitution of Village Councils

In the Garo District, there is a Village Council for each village within the jurisdiction of the District Council. Each Village Council is to be composed of—

(a) the *lasker*[1] of the village, to be recognised by the District Council.

(b) elders, half of whom shall be nominated by the executive committee and the other half elected by the adult members of the village, the number of elders for each Village Council being determined by the District Council.[2]

There is a president and a vice-president of each Village Council. The president and the vice-president shall be elected by the members of the Council from amongst themselves, by a majority of votes.[3]

Every Village Council has a life of five years from the date of its first meeting, unless dissolved earlier by the District Council.[4]

Constitution of courts

There are three classes of courts (as specified below) in the areas

1. *Lasker* is an office-holder resembling the village headman.
2. Rule 4.
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*

Annexure – II Meghalaya Societies Registration Act, 1983

Postal Registration No. N. E.—771/2006-2008

The Gazette of Meghalaya

EXTRAORDINARY

PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY

No. 49 Shillong, Friday, May 29, 2015, 8th Jyaistha, 1937 (S. E.)

PART-IV

GOVERNMENT OF MEGHALAYA

LAW (B) DEPARTMENT

ORDERS BY THE GOVERNOR

NOTIFICATION

The 29th May, 2015.

No.LL(B)39/2015/21.–The Meghalaya Local Administration (Empowerement of Traditional Institutions, Traditional Bodies and Headmen in Governance and Public Delivery System) Ordinance, 2015 is hereby published for general information.

MEGHALAYA ORDINANCE NO. 1 OF 2015.

Promulgated by the Governor on the 29th May, 2015.
Published in the Gazette of Meghalaya Extra-Ordinary issue dated 29th May, 2015.

THE MEGHALAYA LOCAL ADMINISTRATION (EMPOWERMENT OF TRADITIONAL INSTITUTIONS, TRADITIONAL BODIES AND HEADMEN IN GOVERNANCE AND PUBLIC DELIVERY SYSTEM) ORDINANCE, 2015.

An

Ordinance

to provide for association of traditional institutions, traditional bodies and headmen in the Government developmental programmes and delivery of public services, wherever required and to the extent necessary, in the interest of public at large and for matters connected therewith.

Annexure – III Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Policy

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Oragitok Village Council is committed to creating a workplace environment that promotes fairness, equality, and respect for all employees, contractors, visitors, vulnerable persons and community members. We strictly prohibit discrimination of any kind based on race, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, or any other protected characteristic, and ensure equal opportunity in recruitment, employment, training, and development.

Annexure – IV Self-Declaration Regarding Legal Rights, Compliance and Harvesting

SELF-DECLARATION REGARDING LEGAL RIGHTS, COMPLIANCE, AND HARVESTING WITHIN THE MANAGEMENT UNIT

I, _____, Headman/ Nokma of _____ Dorbar Shnong/ Village having its registered office at _____ (Address), do hereby affirm and undertake the following:

That _____ **(Name of the Organization)** possesses valid **legal rights** to operate within the **Management Unit** located at _____ (location details-village, block, district).

That the legal rights held by the Organization are consistent with the legal status of both the Organization and the Management Unit, and are supported by valid documentation such as ownership/ title deeds, lease agreements, customary rights recognition, as applicable.

That **the Organization** shall fully comply with all **applicable national laws, local laws, ratified international conventions**, and **mandatory practice** governing the **transportation and trade** of forest products originating from the **Management Unit**, up to and including the point of first sale.

That the Organization is legally authorized to harvest and/ or supply ecosystem services from within the Management Unit, in accordance with the scope and conditions set out in the applicable legal framework.

That the Organization commits to maintaining all necessary records, permits, proof of compliance, records of all transactions and shall make them available for inspection by relevant authorities or certification bodies upon request.

That the Organization shall take all reasonable measures to prevent the illegal transport or trade of forest products.

That the Organization shall take full responsibility for ensuring that all employees, agents, contractors, and stakeholders involved in the transportation or sale of forest products act in accordance with the applicable legal and regulatory requirements.

That this undertaking is made in connection with the Organization’s Forest management activities and certification process and shall remain binding and valid for the duration of such activities, or until formally revoked in writing by competent authorities.

Date	: _____
Place	: _____
Name of the Authorized Person	: _____
Designation	: _____
Organization Name	: _____
Contact Information	: _____
ID Proof/ Registration Details	: _____

Annexure – V Self-Declaration by the Smallholder

SELF-DECLARATION BY THE SMALLHOLDER

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that I am committed to the responsible management and protection of my forest resources. As a smallholder, I have implemented appropriate measures to safeguard my forest area from unauthorized or illegal activities, including illegal resource extraction, encroachment, and settlement.

I acknowledge the importance of maintaining the ecological integrity of the forest and understand the legal and ethical responsibilities associated with its stewardship. Accordingly, I actively monitor and take necessary steps to prevent any unauthorized use or activity within my forest land. I also declare that –

- Commit to follow the applicable Forest Stewardship Standard and the Group Rules;
- Declare that the management units I am bringing into the group are not included in another FSC certificate;
- Agree to allow the Village Council, BFMC, the certification body, FSC and ASI to fulfill their responsibilities including access to site, documents, records etc.
- Agree that the Village Council or BFMC will be the main contact for certification

Furthermore, I am prepared to cooperate with relevant regulatory authorities and community institutions to address any potential threats and ensure the continued protection of the forest under my care.

This declaration is made in good faith and reflects my ongoing commitment to sustainable and lawful forest management.

Name of Smallholder : _____
Signature : _____
Date : _____
Location : _____

Annexure – VI Self-Declaration Regarding Dispute Resolution

SELF-DECLARATION REGARDING DISPUTE RESOLUTION OVER STATUTORY OR CUSTOMARY LAW

I, _____, Headman/ Nokma of _____ Dorbar Shnong/ Village and resident of **_____ Village of _____ (District), Meghalaya, India**, do hereby solemnly affirm and declare as follows:

That the Organization shall make every reasonable effort to identify, prevent, and resolve disputes arising from issues related to statutory or customary law, particularly those that may affect local communities, stakeholders, or rights holders.

That the Organization shall actively engage with affected stakeholders through open, inclusive, and culturally appropriate processes to ensure that such disputes can be addressed in a fair and transparent manner.

That wherever possible, the Organization shall seek to settle disputes out of court through dialogue, negotiation, and consensus-building mechanisms, ensuring that such processes are conducted in a timely and respectful manner.

That the Organization shall maintain records of all identified disputes, actions taken to resolve them, and outcomes, and shall make such records available to relevant authorities, auditors, or certification bodies upon request.

That this undertaking is made in alignment with national legal frameworks, customary practices, and relevant certification requirements aimed at ensuring responsible forest management and community well-being.

Date : _____
Place : _____
Name of the Authorized Person : _____
Designation : _____
Organization Name : _____
Contact Number : _____
ID Proof Details : _____

Annexure – VII Commitment to Conservation

Oragitok Village Council is committed to responsible forest management that ensures conservation of biodiversity, protection of ecosystems, and sustainable use of forest resources. We strive to operate in compliance with FSC principles and standards, ensuring that our forest management practices respect local communities, workers' rights, and environmental integrity.

Annexure – VIII Self-Declaration on Upholding ILO Principles

SELF-DECLARATION ON UPHOLDING ILO PRINCIPLES AND RIGHTS AT WORK

I _____, the undersigned smallholder, hereby declare my commitment to uphold the principles and rights at work as defined in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998), including adherence to the eight Core Labour Conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO).

In accordance with these principles, I confirm that:
All the activities are carried out by the small holder and his/ her family members above 15 years of age.

I do not engage temporary workers, employees, or volunteers below the age of 15 years in any activities related to my forest or land management operations.

That I do not allow work to interfere with the schooling of any children under the age of 15.
That I do not allow any children under the age of 18 to perform hazardous or heavy work.

This declaration reflects my commitment to fair labour practices, the prevention of child labour, and the protection of human rights in accordance with international standards.

Name of Smallholder : _____
Location of Management Unit: _____
Signature : _____
Contact Information : _____
ID Proof Details : _____
Date : _____

Annexure – IX Group Entity i.e. Centre of Excellence

Annexure – IX

Group Entity i.e. Centre of Excellence (NRM & SL), Meghalaya Basin Management Agency (MBMA)

Centre of Excellence (NRM & Sustainable Livelihoods) has taken up an initiative for FSC Forest Management Certification for five (5) bamboo forest areas located in Garo Hills and Khasi Hills on a pilot basis. A team of the following officials from CoE have been entrusted with the responsibility of carrying out field works including community engagements, training, resource inventory, mapping, socio-economic surveys and guidance to the group members on matters related to Regional Forest Stewardship Standard for Smallholders (RFSS).

They are also responsible for documentation in connection with the application of the FSC Certification.

1. Dr. Lavinia Mary Dkhar, Technical Specialist, CoE, MBMA
2. Dr. Tremie M. Sangma, Technical Specialist, CoE, MBMA
3. Mr. Jyswill K R Nongpiur, Manager, CoE, MBMA
4. Mr. Rajaul Karim, Manager, CoE, MBMA
5. Mr. Daniel Aibor Pyngrope, Data Analyst, CoE, MBMA
6. Ms. Batkynti Kharkongor, Programme Associate, CoE, MBMA
7. Ms. Aquilyne Biam, Programme Associate, CoE, MBMA
8. Ms. Deimonhi Dkhar, Programme Associate, CoE, MBMA

Dr. S. Ashutosh, IFS (Retd.)
Co-chairman & Director
Centre of Excellence
for NRM & Sustainable
Livelihoods
MBMA, Shillong

Annexure – X List of BFMC Members in Oragitok Village

List of BFMC Members in Oragitok Village, West Garo Hills

Sl. No.	Name	Designation	Area (ha)
1	Abal Sangma	Member	10.00
2	Miksington Sangma	Member	2.50
3	Rakkanbirth M.Sangma	Member	2.84
4	Hemosh A. Sangma	Member	4.00
5	Hevingstone A Sangma	Member	3.00
6	Winderbirth Sangma	Member	4.00
7	Manring Sangma	Member	6.00
8	Tenderson Sangma	Member	3.00
9	Dinatson Sangma	Member	4.00
10	Simpo D. Sangma	Member	5.00
11	Tabitha Ch Marak	Member	3.00
12	Eppila A Sangma	Member	3.00

Annexure – XI Self-Declaration on Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination

SELF-DECLARATION ON GENDER EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

I _____, the undersigned smallholder, am committed to promoting gender equality in all aspects of forest-related activities, including employment practices, access to training, awarding of contracts, engagement processes, and management decisions.

If the forest under my management is community-owned or operated as a cooperative, I ensure that meetings, management committees, and decision-making forums are organized in a manner that encourages and supports the active participation of both women and men. Equal opportunity and respectful inclusion are core principles in the way decisions are made and responsibilities are shared.

This declaration represents my ongoing effort to ensure fair, inclusive, and respectful practices for all members of the community or workforce, regardless of gender.

In the case that the forest is community-owned or managed as a cooperative, I further declare that:

Confidential and effective mechanisms are in place to report and address any instances of sexual harassment or discrimination based on gender, marital status, parenthood, or sexual orientation. Such mechanisms are designed to ensure the safety, dignity, and inclusion of all members, and to promote a working and decision-making environment free from bias or harm.

This declaration reflects my ongoing responsibility to create and uphold a fair, respectful, and inclusive working environment, in alignment with FSC requirements and human rights standards.

Name of Smallholder : _____
Location of Management Unit: _____
Signature : _____
Contact Information : _____
ID Proof Details : _____
Date : _____

Annexure – XII Self-Declaration of Commitment to FSC Principle

SELF-DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT TO FSC PRINCIPLES AND CRITERIA

I _____, the undersigned smallholder, hereby declare my long-term commitment to adhere to the FSC Principles and Criteria, and to comply with the relevant FSC Policies and Standards within my Management Unit.

By voluntarily participating in the FSC certification process, I confirm my intent to manage my forest resources responsibly, in accordance with the values and guidelines set forth by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). This includes environmental stewardship, social responsibility, and economic viability as outlined in the FSC system.

This commitment shall be documented in a publicly available format and made freely accessible to all stakeholders, including community members, regulatory agencies, and certifying bodies.
By choosing to participate in the FSC certification system, the smallholder confirms their conformity with the requirements of this criterion and their active role in supporting sustainable and responsible forest management.

This declaration affirms that I understand and accept the obligations and benefits of being part of the FSC system, and that I will continue to operate in conformity with its requirements.

Name of Smallholder : _____
Location of Management Unit: _____
Signature : _____
Contact Information : _____
ID Proof Details : _____
Date : _____

Annexure – XIII Trainings for BFMC Members

Trainings for BFMC Members

1. Health and safety practices to protect workers

1. The Organization shall implement health and safety practices to protect workers from occupational safety and health hazards. These practices shall, proportionate to scale, intensity and risk of management activities, meet or exceed the recommendations of the ILO Code of Practice on Safety and Health in Forestry Work.
2. The smallholder and his or her temporary workers, employees, family members, business associates and volunteers have safe work practices.
3. The smallholder and his or her temporary workers, employees, family members, business associates and volunteers use appropriate safety equipment.
4. The smallholder or their named representative keeps a record of any accidents.
5. The smallholder changes practices that have caused, or will likely cause, accidents in the smallholder's forest.
6. If hunting or other dangerous activities are part of the forestry activities, the smallholder identifies the dangerous activities and implements safety measures to protect the public where hunting or other dangerous activities related to NTFP activities are carried out

2. Health and safety practices to effectively implement the Management Plan

1. The Organization shall demonstrate that workers have job-specific training and supervision to safely and effectively implement the Management Plan and all management activities.
2. The smallholder provides training and supervision so that temporary workers, employees, family members, business associates and volunteers can work safely and effectively in the tasks that they do.

3. Training on Implementation of the Bamboo Forest Management Plan (BFMP): Horseshoe Method

4. Training on Environmental Stewardship, covering key areas such as:

- Biodiversity Conservation
- Water Resource Management
- Soil Protection
- Forest Fire Prevention and Control

5. Training on the Management Plan

1. The Organization shall make publicly available a summary of the management plan free of charge. Excluding confidential information, other relevant components of the management plan shall be made available to affected stakeholders on request, and at cost of reproduction and handling.
2. If requested, the smallholder provides public information from the management plan to a person who requests it at no cost to the requestor.

6. Training of stakeholders for engaging in the Management Plan

1. The Organization shall, proportionate to scale, intensity and risk of management activities, proactively and transparently engage affected stakeholders in its management planning and monitoring processes, and shall engage interested stakeholders on request.
2. The smallholder informs affected and interested stakeholders about management planning and monitoring.
3. If requested, the smallholder carries out culturally appropriate consultation with affected and interested stakeholders.

7. Training on Monitoring Activities

1. The Organizations shall make publicly available a summary of the results of monitoring free of charge, excluding confidential information.
2. If requested, the smallholder provides results of monitoring to a person who requests them at no cost to the requestor.

Annexure – XIV Self-Declaration of Commitment to FSC Principle

SELF-DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT TO FSC PRINCIPLES AND CRITERIA

I _____, the undersigned smallholder, hereby declare my long-term commitment to adhere to the FSC Principles and Criteria, and to comply with the relevant FSC Policies and Standards within my Management Unit.

By voluntarily participating in the FSC certification process, I confirm my intent to manage my forest resources responsibly, in accordance with the values and guidelines set forth by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). This includes environmental stewardship, social responsibility, and economic viability as outlined in the FSC system.

This commitment shall be documented in a publicly available format and made freely accessible to all stakeholders, including community members, regulatory agencies, and certifying bodies.
By choosing to participate in the FSC certification system, the smallholder confirms their conformity with the requirements of this criterion and their active role in supporting sustainable and responsible forest management.

This declaration affirms that I understand and accept the obligations and benefits of being part of the FSC system, and that I will continue to operate in conformity with its requirements.

Name of Smallholder : _____
Location of Management Unit: _____
Signature : _____
Contact Information : _____
ID Proof Details : _____
Date : _____

Annexure – XV Consent form for givng BFMC village as member

Consent form for giving BFMC_____ village as member (small holder)

I_____S/o_____ resident of _____ hereby give my consent willingly to be a member of the _____ BFMC. I understand that as a member, I will be responsible for management of bamboo forests in the village allotted to me, as per the prescriptions given in the BFMC.

Signature

Aadhar No/EPIC.:

Date:

Place:

BFMC-na on·anio _____ songni bak ra·gipa (chonchone bak man·giparang) ku·rachakaniko uina gita gapatanirang

Anga _____, _____ ni depante/demechik _____ songo songdongenggipa an·tangni ku·rachakaniko _____ BFMC-o bak ra·pana ine on·enga. Anga uia bak ra·pagipa ong·e angaba angna on·gimin songni wa·grimrangko nirok simsakanio jak dongpaa ine BMFC-ni on·gimin niamrango pangchake ku·rachakaniko dakenga.

Signature

Aadhar No/EPIC.:

Date:

Place:

Annexure – XVI Certificate of Local Community

Certificate of Local Community Membership

This is certified that Shri/Smt_____ resident of _____ _____ village who is a group member of _____ BFMC has customary and legal rights and obligations towards the management of Forest in the village and he/she is responsible for sustainable management of _____ ha of Bamboo forests

Signature & Seal of Headman

Songsaro Bak Man·paani bidingo Sakki On·ani

Iano indake sakki on·aha Shri/Smt_____, _____ songo songdongenggipa jean jinmarang baksa BMFC-o bak man·e songni nokni niam aro gipin donsogimin niamrango pangchake songni buring bolgrimrangko nirok simsakanio bak man·paa aro wa·grimrangni pangkamanaiko nirokanio uni daito ong·paa.

Nokmani soi ka·ani aro mohor su·ani

Annexure – XVII Declaration of Consent for Group Membership

DECLARATION OF CONSENT FOR GROUP MEMBERSHIP UNDER FSC CERTIFICATION

I, hereby voluntarily apply for membership of the Group and declare the following:

1. I agree to comply with all applicable requirements of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Forest Stewardship Standard, as well as the rules and procedures laid down by the MBMA.
2. I hereby declare that the forest management unit under my management, which is being included in this Group certification, are not currently part of, nor included in, any other FSC certification.
3. I agree to allow the MBMA, the Certification Body, FSC, and Accreditation Services International (ASI) to carry out their respective roles and responsibilities, including monitoring, audits, evaluations, and inspections of my management unit(s), as required under FSC certification.
4. I acknowledge and agree that the MBMA shall serve as the primary point of contact for all matters related to FSC certification, including communication, coordination, and compliance requirements.

I understand that failure to comply with the above conditions may result in suspension or 7

Name of Member : _____

Address : _____

Location of Forest Management Unit : _____

Signature : _____

Date : _____

JINMA BAKSA BAKRIMANI KU·RACHAKANIKO FSC-ni NING·O SAKKI ON·E PARAKATANI

Anga iano an·tangan an·tangko on·kange jinma baksa bakrimna jakko on·a aro ka·mao on·giminrangko paraka:

1. Anga Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Forest Stewardship Standard-ni pilak nangnikanirang baksa, unbaksana pilak niam aro ja·rikanirang jekon jinma namnike ra·chakaha uarangko namnike ra·chakpana ku·rachaka.

2. Anga iako paraka je buring bolgrimrangko nirok simsakna angna donsoahachim, jekon jinmani gita sakki on·anio dongpaachim, uako gipin FSC-ni sakki on·anirango dao bak man·chapa dongja ba ra·chapanirang dongja.

3. Anga jinma bakrimgiminrangko iako ra·chakpana ba ku·chakpana gita didina ska jean sakki on·aniko dakgiprang, FSC aro bil dongani ba bil on·ani bidingo kam ka·giparangko uamangni kam aro dakna nanganirangko uamangko dakna on·ani ong·a jeon namdapanirangko nirokani, hisaprangko niani, raiko on·ani aro nirokanirangko angna on·gimin biaprango nangnikani gita FSC-ni sakki on·ani niamrango pangchake dakanggen.

4. Anga iako namnike ra·chakna gita ska je pilak nanganirangna mongsonggipa uichenggipa ba koborko man·sochengna nanggipa uan jinma bakrimgiminrangan ong·gen. je neng·nikani ba nangani somoirango kamko ka·anggen jekai nangarangko agangrikani, bakrime kam ka·ani aro ku·rachakgrikanirangko nangnikani donggipa kamrangni bidingrang ong·gen

Anga uia je ia ja·rikanirangko ba niamrangko pe·anian jinma bakrimaoniko ra·galna ba changala man·aniona sokatani ong·a.

Bak ra·gipani biming : _____

Dongram biap : _____

Ongimin buring bolgrimni biap/ba song : _____

Soi Ka·ani : _____

Tarik : _____

Annexure – XVIII Grievance Submission Form

Grievance Submission Form

Grievance ID: _____ Date: _____

Name of Complainant (Optional): _____

Contact Details: _____

Address / Village: _____

Stakeholder Type (Farmer/Worker/Community/Other): _____

Description of Grievance:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Location of Issue: _____

Date of Incident: _____

Any Evidence Provided:

_____

_____

_____

Signature / Thumb Impression:

_____

Annexure – XIX Anti-Corruption and Bribery Policy

Anti-Corruption and Bribery Policy

Oragitok Village Council (Nokma) commits to conducting all its activities with honesty, integrity, and transparency. We strictly prohibit any form of corruption, bribery, or unethical practices among employees, contractors, suppliers, and stakeholders involved in FSC-certified operations. This policy reflects our dedication to ethical conduct, legal compliance, and safeguarding FSC's reputation.

SELF-DECLARATION ON NON-INVOLVEMENT IN CORRUPTION

I, _____ a smallholder managing forest resources located at _____ (location), hereby make the following declaration and take full responsibility for its lawful and ethical use.

That I have not offered, received, or participated in any form of bribery, coercion, or other corrupt activities, either in cash or in any other form, related to the management, use, or trade of forest products or services.

That I understand and fully support the principles of transparency, integrity, and accountability in all forest-related activities and dealings.

That I am committed to complying with any applicable anti-corruption laws, and in the absence of such legislation, I pledge to uphold ethical standards and practices proportionate to the scale and intensity of my forest management activities and the risk of corruption.

That this declaration is made in good faith for the purposes of compliance, certification, or any other requirement related to the responsible management of my forest.

Name of Smallholder: _____

Location of Management Unit: _____

Signature: _____

Contact Information: _____

ID Proof Details: _____

Annexure – XX Marketing and Sales

Marketing and Sales

The Resource Management Unit (RMU) i.e. Bamboo Forest Management Committee (BFMC)will be free to explore market/buyer of Bamboo from the forest under its control. After identifying the Buyer, Secretary of the BFMC will seek consent of the MBMA for selling the Bamboo.

After receiving the request from the BFMC the MBMA will ensure that the quantity intended to be harvested/sold is within the prescribed yield limit. The MBMA will also scrutinize the legal aspects, if any, about the buyer Industry/Firm. It would be the responsibility of the BFMC to ensure that the prescribed yield and management prescriptions are strictly followed.

Sl. No.	Group members name	BFMC	Quantity intended to sell kg	Species Name	Sustainably yield		Name of Buyer and Address & Contact No.	Price of Bamboo INR	Amount received INR
					Kg	No. of culms			

Annexure – XXI Accident / Incident Reporting Form

Accident / Incident Reporting Form

1. Basic Details

Report ID: Date & Time of Incident: Location (Village):

Reporting Person Name: Farmer ID / Group Member Name:

2. Incident Type (tick)

☐ Injury ☐ Fatality ☐ Property Damage ☐ Environmental Damage ☐ Equipment Failure

3. Description of Incident

……

……

……

……

……

4. Persons Involved

Name: Role (Farmer/Worker/Supervisor):

Injury Details:

5. Immediate Action Taken

First Aid Given :

Hospital Referral (if yes, specify) :

Work Stopped? ☐ Yes ☐ No

6. Root Cause (initial)

☐ Unsafe Act ☐ Unsafe Condition ☐ Lack of Training ☐ Equipment Issue

7. Reported To

Group Manager Name:

Date Reported :

8. Signature

Reporter Signature Supervisor Signature

Annexure – XXII Near Miss Reporting Form

Near Miss Reporting Form

Report ID: Date & Time:

Location: Reported By:

Description of Near Miss

……

……

……..

Potential Risk

☐ Injury ☐ Fatality ☐ Environmental Damage

Cause (perceived)

☐ Slippery terrain ☐ Tool misuse ☐ Lack of PPE ☐ Poor supervision

Corrective Action Suggested

……

……

Immediate Action Taken

☐ Yes ☐ No (Explain)

Reviewed By (Group Manager):

Signature

Annexure – XXIII Accident & Incident Register

Accident & Incident Register

Sl. No	Date	Time	Location	Type (Accident/ Incident/ Near Miss)	Name of Person (s) Involved	Description of Incident	Severity (Minor/ Major/ Fatal)	Immediate Action Taken	Reported By	Investigation Required (Yes/No)	Corrective Action	Status (Open/ Closed)	Closure Date

Annexure – XXIV Investigation Report Template

Investigation Report Template

1. Incident Reference ID : _____

2. Investigation Team : _____

3. Date of Investigation : _____

4. Incident Summary :

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. Root Cause Analysis

_____

_____

_____

6. Contributing Factors

☐ Lack of PPE ☐ Poor training ☐ Weather conditions ☐ Terrain issues

8. Corrective Actions

Immediate:

Long-term:

9. Preventive Measures

- Training planned:
- SOP updates:

10. Responsibility & Timeline

- Action
- Responsible Person
- Deadline

11. Approval

Group Manager Signature:

Annexure – XXV Grievance Register

Grievance Register

Sl. No	Grievance ID	Date Received	Complainant	Issue	Status	Action Taken	Closure Date

Annexure – XXVI Investigation Report

Investigation Report

Grievance ID: _____. Investigation Date: _____

Investigation Team: _____

Summary of Complaint:

_____

_____

_____

Findings:

_____

_____

_____

Root Cause Analysis:

_____

_____

_____

Stakeholder Consultation Details:

_____

_____

_____

Conclusion:

_____

_____

_____

Recommended Actions:

_____

_____

Responsible Person : _____

Timeline : _____

Authorised Signature

Annexure – XXVII (Free, Prior, Informed and Consent) Form

FPIC (Free, Prior, Informed and Consent) Form

Project Title: Bamboo Forest Management under RFSS (FSC Certification)

Location/Village: _____

Name of Community / Institution: _____

1. Information Provided

The following information has been shared with the community:

- Purpose and scope of bamboo forest management
- Expected environmental and social impacts
- Rights and responsibilities of stakeholders
- Grievance redressal mechanism

2. Consent Statement

We, the undersigned, confirm that:

- We have received adequate information regarding the project
- We have been given sufficient time to consider the information
- We have had the opportunity to ask questions and receive clarifications
- Our participation is voluntary

3. Decision

☐ Consent Given ☐ Consent with Conditions (specify): _____ ☐ Consent Withheld (specify reasons): _____

4. Signatures

Sl. No.	Name	Designation / Role	Signature	Date
1				
2				

5. Witness (if applicable)

Name : _____

Signature : _____

Annexure XXVIII Transect Survey Form

Village …….. District ……

Date …….. Area of the Village ……

Sl No	Observation on Plastic Pollution	Burning of Solid Waste	Open Grazing	Manufacturing Units	Water Pollution	Unauthorized falling of trees	Rare threatened Endangered and Endemic Species	Soil Erosion	Sites of Cultural Importance
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									

Annexure XXIX Bamboo Depot & Gate Management Record

Village …….. District ……

Bamboo Stock Inflow						Bamboo Stock Outgo					
Sl No	Date	Small Holder Name(s)	Number of Culms	Weight	Remaining quantity from the Prescribed Yield	Sl No	Date	Small Holder Name(s)	Number of Culms	Weight	Contact Details of the Firm/Buyer
1						1					
2						2					
3						3					
4						4					

Annexure XXX Training Records

The meeting and training for community members and fieldwork for the Bamboo Certification Programme in West Garo Hills District, was conducted in the village of Oragitok on the 17th September 2026, 25th April 2026 and 16th May 2026.

A meeting and training including a capacity-building programme on Bamboo Certification was held in the villages of Oragitok (WGH) in the presence of Village Council members. The session aimed to inform and engage the villagers about the certification process and to seek their willingness to have their bamboo-bearing areas certified for Bamboo Certification and also undertake training and capacity building to them.













Training on Bamboo certification for community members in PRIME HUB

Venue: Tura, West Garo Hills

Date : 25/04/2026

SL NO	NAME	GENDER (M/F)	DESIGNATION	EMAIL ADDRESS	PHONE NO	SIGNATURE
1	Dr. S Ashutosh, IFS (Retd)	M	Co-Chairman & Director Centre of Excellence for NRM & Sustainable Livelihoods		9760041824	
2	AT. T. M. Sangma	F	T. Specialist		9366347103	
3	Sitaram Prasad Sah	M	CPM. CMU. Govt Tura	Sahsitaram22feb@gmail.com	7005051834	25/4/26
4	Ranggam K Marak	M	Regional Manager		8787497794	
5	Milan Mataram M Sangma	M	Field Assistant		8794235187	
6	Tehosapath R Sangma	M	Program Associate		6009654507	
7						
8	Amriston Ch Marak	M		amriston chmarak134@gmail.com 87983355/8	87983355/8	
9	Wanhol M Sangma.	M			8798443281	
10	Balin M Sangma.	M			87983356 31	
11	Dickson M Sangma	M			87983358 74	
12	Phillipson R. Marak	M			8787658744	

13	Runal B Marak	M			7005398661	
14	Romeo A Sangma	M			7005393284	
15	Joel L. Marak	M			6009672822	
16	Rakkenbirth N Sangma	M.			9366072288	
17	Manning T Sangma	M			8119975285	
18	Luther A Sangma	M			9612323386	
19	Simpo D Sangma	M			8730002857	
20						

List of participants present in the Training for Bamboo Certification with Dzuyitok BFMC Member on the 16th May ,2026

S.No	Name	Male/Female	Designation	Signature
1	Daniel A. Lyngwape	M	Data Analyst (CoE, MBDA)	
2	Deinorthi Dkhar	F	IA (CoE, MBDA)	
3	Jelithson Lyngdoh	M		
4	Addorg Sohpa			
5	Mensing Marak	M		
6	Sumish Marak	M		
7	Manning Sohpa	M		
8	Ebbellita Sohpa	F		
9	Rakkenbairth M Sohpa	M		
10	Tabeitha ch marak	F		
11	Dr. T. M. Sohpa	F		
12				

List of participants present in the stakeholder meeting with Oragitok Village Council held on the __th September, 2

Sl .No.	Name	Male/ Female	Designation	Signature
1	Shri, Bhaswanich Marak	M		
2	" Arun Singh N. Marak	M		
3	" Greting Sbirth D. Momin	M		
4	" Hevingstone A Sangma	M		
5	" Phillatson Marak	M		
6	" Chandra Kanta Sangma	M		
7	Smt Rikmera Ch Marak	F		
8	Smt Sithamery Ch Marak	F		
9	" Lucina Ch Marak	F	VEC Secretary	
10	" Arangni A Sangma	"		
11	" Eppilla A Sangma	"		EAS
12	Mikesington Sangma	F		
13	Luther A Sangma	F		
14	Winderbirth N. Sangma	F		
15	Klife Ch Marak	M	(Jica Sec)	
16	Barkish R Marak	M	(VCF)	
17	Salnang K. Sangma	M	DPM, MegLIFE, WCH	
18	Kandhaiya Ch Marak	F		
19	Mikal Ch Marak	M		
20	Tenderson Sangma	M		
21	Rilimkari T. Sangma	M		
22	Jalseng S. Sangma	M		
23	Jangjing Ch Marak			
24	Silvera N. Sangma	F	VEC president	
25	Luckjam Ch Marak	F		
26	Minjina A Sangma	F	M	
27	Sosbin Ch Marak	F		

Annexure XXXI Department of Labour, Employment and Skill Development

GOVERNMENT OF MEGHALAYA
DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR, EMPLOYMENT & SKILL DEVELOPMENT
Room No.511 (A), Addl. Secretariat Building, Shillong-793001
E-mail: labourdeptt.secrt@gmail.com

******

NOTIFICATION

Dated Shillong, the 1st May, 2026

No.LE&SD.9/2023/Pt/26 –In exercise of the powers sub-section (2) of Section 5 of the Minimum Wages Act, 1948 (Central Act XI of 1948) as amended, the Governor of Meghalaya is pleased to revise the rates of minimum wages in respect of the following schedule of Employments all categorized and defined as indicated in the table below :-

(1) Agriculture (2) Construction and maintenance of Buildings including Public Health Engineering, etc., (3) Stone crushing and breaking operations (4) Construction, Generation and Distribution of Powers, Water supply, land development excavation and reclamation, (5) Sericulture & Weaving, (6) Fruit Preservation, (7) Soil Conservation, (8) Animal Husbandry and Veterinary, (9) Forest, (10) Local Authority, (11) Public Motor Transport (12) Saw Mill, (13) Plywood Industry, (14) Motor Workshops, (15) Furniture Industry, (16) Bakery (17) Shops and Establishment, (18) Printing Press (19) Sales, Distribution and handling of petroleum products (20) Steel Fabrication and concrete products including brick making, (21) Tailoring, (22) Wax and Candle industry (23) Hotels and Restaurants (24) Mines and Minerals(25) Safai Karamcharis (26) Employment in Registered Factories not elsewhere classified (27) Employment under Government Authority (casual contingency Employee) (28) Domestic Workers and (29) Security Guard :-

Sl. No.	Category	Minimum wage + Revised VDA per day w.e.f 1.4.2026
1.	Unskilled	₹525/- + ₹ 30 = ₹ 555/-
2.	Semi-skilled	₹565/- + ₹ 33 = ₹ 598/-
3.	Skilled	₹605/- + ₹ 35 = ₹ 640/-
4.	Highly-skilled	₹645/- + ₹ 37 = ₹ 682/-

The above rates of minimum wages are effective from 1st April, 2026.

Explanation:

1. **UNSKILLED** : means work which involves simple operation, little or no skill or experience in the job.
2. **SEMI-SKILLED**: means work which involves some degree of skill and competence acquired through experience on the job which is capable of being performed under the supervision and guidance of skilled employees and includes unskilled supervisory works.
3. **SKILLED** : means work which involves skill or competence acquired through experience on the job or through training as apprentice in a technical or vocational institute and the performance of which calls for initiative and judgement.
4. **HIGHLY - SKILLED** : means expert in the work requiring great skills.

The revised rates proposed are inclusive of Variable Dearness Allowance but exclusive of other concession if any enjoyed by the employees. The existing task and hours of work i.e. 8 (eight) hours a day 48 (forty eight) hours a week shall continue until further orders. The Minimum rates of wages proposed include the wages payable for weekly day of rest. The rate of wages of overtime work shall be double the ordinary rate of wages.

The revised rates shall be deemed to come in force with effect from 01.04.2026 and will be revised every 6 (six) months by adoption of Consumer Price Index (CPI) linked Variable Dearness Allowance (VDA).

This supersedes this Department's earlier Notification No.LE&SD.9/2023/Pt/14 dt 21.07.2025.

Contd.....P 2/-

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The Variable Dearness Allowance has been rounded off to the next higher rupee.

This issues with the concurrence of Finance (PR) Department vide I/D No.F(PR)-36/2026 dated 1.05.2026

Sd/-
Shri F.R.Kharkongor, IAS,
Principal Secretary to the Govt. of Meghalaya,
Department of Labour, Employment & Skill Development

Memo No. LE&SD. 9/2023/Pt/26-A **Dated Shillong, the 1st May, 2026**

Copy to :

1. P.S. to Chief Minister, Meghalaya for favour of kind information of Hon'ble Chief Minister.
2. P.S. to Minister i/c Department of Labour, Employment & Skill Development, Meghalaya for favour of kind information of Minister.
3. P.S. to all Ministers, Meghalaya for favour of kind information of Minister.
4. P.S. to Chief Secretary to the Govt. of Meghalaya for favour of kind information of the Chief Secretary.
5. P.S to the Additional Chief Secretary/Principal Secretary/Commissioner & Secretary/Secretary for kind information of Additional Chief Secretary/Principal Secretary/Commissioner & Secretary/Secretary.
6. The Labour Commissioner, Meghalaya, Shillong for information and necessary action.
7. Finance (Pay Revision) Department (consulted I/D above).
8. Finance (EA) Department.
9. Director of Information and Public Relations for wide publicity.
10. Director of Printing and Stationery, Meghalaya, Shillong for publication in the extra ordinary gazette and to supply 100 copies to this Department urgently.
11. Managing Director, MTC, Meghalaya, Shillong
12. Chairman/Chief Executive Officer, Shillong/Jowai/Tura/Williamnagar/ Baghmara/ Resubelpara Municipal Board
13. All Administrative Department/All Heads of Department.
14. President, Frontier Chamber of Commerce, G.S. Road, Shillong-2
15. Managing Director, Meghalaya Plywood Pvt. Ltd C/o Bawri Mansion, Dhankheti, Shillong
16. General Secretary, Shillong Municipality Harijan Mazdoor Union, Bara Bazar, Harijan Colony, Shillong-2
17. President INTUC, Meghalaya Branch, Opp. Lum Jingshai, Short Round Road, Shillong
18. General Secretary, AITUC, Meghalaya Branch, C/o CPI Officer, Quinton Road, Shillong-2
19. General Secretary, Meghalaya Power Workers' Union, C/o B.C. House, Me.E.C.L, Shillong-1
20. General Secretary, Garo Hills PWD, Labour Union, P.O. Tikrikilla, P.S. Phulbari.
21. General Secretary, Shillong Municipal Employers' Association, Shillong.
22. General Secretary, Meghalaya PWD, Muster Roll Workers' Union, C/o CPI Office, Quinton Road, Shillong-1
23. General Secretary, All Jaintia Muster Roll Workers& Labour Union, Central Executive Committee, Headquarter,Jowai-793150.

By Order etc.,

Deputy Secretary to the Govt. of Meghalaya,
Department of Labour, Employment & Skill Development

Annexure XXXII Photos of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) and transect survey fieldwork for High Conservation Value (HCV) in Oragitok Village













Water bodies in Oragitok villages



Rongram chiring (Stream)



Domesal chiring (Stream)

The Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Natural Resource Management & Sustainable Livelihoods (NRM & SL) under the Meghalaya Basin Development Authority (MBDA) is an institution devoted for strengthening Natural Resource Management (NRM) in Meghalaya and beyond.

Visit us: https://coenrm.megplanning.gov.in/

email: coe.nrm.meg@gmail.com

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