



Press Release
For Immediate release

SGS and Helveta announce agreements for a nationwide forest and timber chain-of-custody monitoring system in the Republic of Liberia

Geneva, Switzerland / Oxford, United Kingdom, 5 February, 2008: SGS Société Générale de Surveillance S.A. (SGS) announced today the signature of a 5-year contract with the Forest Development Authority (FDA) of Liberia for the management of a nationwide system to monitor and verify forest logging and timber chain-of-custody across the territory of Liberia. Concurrently, Helveta Ltd. announced an exclusive supply agreement with SGS to supply the FDA with the technology and support services to manage the entire supply chain of wood and wood products in the West African timber producing nation. The project will utilize Helveta's CI World™ technology to track 100% of the wood produced from the Liberian forestry sector, from the standing tree in the forest, through wood processing plants, and finally to the nation's export gates and local wholesale markets.

SGS, as the prime contractor to the FDA, will provide overall project management leadership, turnkey operations support, and capacity building to the institution for the project. Helveta, through its CI World™ supply chain management solution, will provide database technology, software applications, and hardware components to operate the end-to-end traceability system. CI World will be used as the engine of the Chain of Custody Information (COCIS), which will afford the FDA back to stump traceability for all timber products as well as data validation and integration with the government regulatory reporting framework. In this way, CI World will enable comprehensive timber supply chain control and revenue collection from the Liberian timber sector.

Liberia's valuable tropical forests are an essential source of revenue for a nation still recovering from years of civil war. As is the case in many tropical timber producing nations, illegal logging is a significant threat to the sustainable development of the sector as well as to the hard currency revenues critical to Liberia's economic recovery. The COCIS will ensure that the sector develops with a robust timber legality assurance system and will equip Liberia to meet the requirements of international agreements to prevent illegal logging and the associated trade in illegal timber products.

The project was made possible by seed funding provided by the US Government and was developed under the technical guidance of the US Forest Service. The seed funding will be used to support the nationwide implementation of the systems. Once the COCIS project is operational, the project will become self-financing through ongoing and improved forest and export tax collection, with the

ultimate objective of handing over the national system and management capacity to the FDA under a Build, Operate, and Transfer (BOT) model.

John T. Woods, Managing Director of the Liberian Forest Development Authority, observed: “the Liberian forest sector is a critical asset for the country’s economic development and this project will enable the FDA to effectively manage the use of those resources while controlling illegal logging. The combination of SGS project management expertise and Helveta technology will provide Liberia with the support required to restart its timber industry in an efficient, legal, and sustainable manner.”

Thomas Pichet, SGS Project Manager in Liberia added: “the Chain of Custody Information System is unique in that it allows multiple stakeholders to have access to critical forest information, while empowering the FDA to manage the sector considering their long term objectives as well as their near term needs. SGS is proud to be involved in a project that will make a significant contribution to Liberia’s economic recovery while developing the infrastructure and capacity to ensure the long term viability of the sector.”

Helveta CEO, Patrick Newton, commented: “The Liberia project is a cornerstone of our broader regional strategy to bring leading edge technology solutions to empower West African and Congo Basin timber producing nations to effectively manage their forest resources and provide the legally and sustainably produced products required in today’s markets. This is particularly relevant as a number of African timber producing nations advance in the Voluntary Partnership Agreement negotiations as part of the EU FLEGT process.”

About SGS

Established in 1878, with Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, SGS is the world’s largest inspection, verification and testing company. With branches in 140 countries and 50’000 staff, SGS provides services to the agriculture, mineral, petroleum, quality assurance, industrial, environmental and consumer sectors as well as services to Governments through its Governments and Institutions Services Division. SGS has no trading or manufacturing interests and its Services are based on impartiality, independence and integrity.

www.sgs.com

About Helveta

Helveta was incorporated in 2004 and is the developer of the CI World™ software platform. CI World is a unique technology providing fully auditable traceability and chain of custody control for extended supply chains in the Timber and Food production sectors. CI World and its components – TracElite™ and CI Earth™ - have won a number of awards as innovative technologies for the timber sector. Helveta is privately held.

www.helveta.com

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