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ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF BHUTAN

ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSION

"NATION'S CONSCIENCE"

THIMPHU, BHUTAN

"Lead by Example"

ACC/INVESTIGATION-02/2007/2022

27 August 2007

Secretary,
Ministry of Agriculture

Dear Sir,

As the Ministry is aware, we have investigated cases of illegal timber felling in Haa. The matter will be forwarded to the Attorney General's Office soon. While running through the documents there appeared to be many irregularities, which may warrant further verification. The Investigation Team has compiled last 5 years' timber allotment in Haa Dzongkhag from the available records in the Range Office. Four General Permit (GPT) books were not available as they reportedly were with the Audit Team. The operations on the ground is a matter of concern. There are about 17 sawmills in Haa Dzongkhag.

Soft and hard copies (sorted by *thram & name*) of the timber allotment data are enclosed for your perusal and appropriate action. Further, if found in order, the issue of subsidized timber, which is rampantly being abused, needs to be reviewed and alternate policy explored to truly cater to the humble needs of the common citizens; discretionary powers on natural resources - nation's asset, if any, have to be done away with immediately. Rules have to be applied uniformly. As forestry is highly prone to corruption, forest officials and staff have to be transferred regularly as per the BCSR 2006. Their asset declarations also have to be closely monitored and anyone enjoying a living standard and has assets beyond his/her legal means must be made accountable.

If forest officials and staff fail in their duties, Bhutan as a small and fragile country will experience grave social, economic and political consequences. We cannot allow individuals or groups of individuals to exploit the nation's wealth!

We look forward to working closely with you and the ministry in sustaining our pristine and healthy environment.

Yours sincerely,


(Natsen Zangmo)
Chairperson

- Cc: 1 Honorable Prime Minister, Cabinet Secretariat – with hard copies (sorted by *thram & name*) of the data; &
2 Secretary to His Majesty the King – with hard copies (sorted by *thram & name*) of the data.

Encl: Hard and soft copies of data (5 years) on timber allotment.