



# INTERNATIONAL POLICIES FOR PREVENTING FOREST DEGRADATION



© WWF-SWITZERLAND/A. DELLA BELLA / WWF-CANON



## ILLEGAL LOGGING

HAS TURNED INTO A HUGE GLOBAL PROBLEM

### International policies and illegal logging

Forests provide a wide range of environmental services, including water regulation, soil protection, biodiversity conservation and the protection of our climate. They also give us economic and social benefits vital for the sustainable development of human society.

However, pressure on forests has been increasing due to economic growth. The increased demand for timber and timber products coupled with often inadequate legislation, have turned illegal logging, as well as the trade associated with it, into a global problem and an issue of major international concern.

Illegal logging has pushed its way onto the agenda of many governments and international legislation and agreements are needed to stop its devastating effect on communities and biodiversity (for example the EU's Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade licensing system FLEGT, the ENPI-FLEG Programme).

The USA, EU and Australia have adopted legislation to prevent and combat the illegal use of wood, both in terms of imported wood and wood on the domestic market.



© JURAJ VISOKY

## EU Timber Regulation

On 3 March 2013 Regulation (EU) No 995/2010 of the European Parliament came into force, laying down the obligations of operators who place timber and timber products on the EU market – also known as the (Illegal) Timber Regulation.

In essence, the regulation requires operators to act with caution when entering the European market of timber and timber products. The regulation specifies that they must use a framework of procedures and measures, known as "due diligence".

The core of the "due diligence" notion is that operators undertake a risk management exercise so as to minimise the risk of placing illegally harvested timber, or timber products containing illegally harvested timber, on the EU market.

The three key elements of the "due diligence" system are:

- **Information:** The operator must have access to information describing the timber and timber products, country of harvest, species, quantity, details of the supplier and information on compliance with national legislation.
- **Risk assessment:** The operator should assess the risk of illegal timber in his supply chain, based on the information identified above and taking into account criteria set out in the regulation.
- **Risk mitigation:** When the assessment shows that there is a risk of illegal timber in the supply chain that risk can be mitigated by requiring additional information and verification from the supplier.

## Credible certification & the EU Timber Regulation

Every country has its own regulations (in the shape of legislation) for forest management, timber harvesting (with possible provisions for environmental and social impact) as well as in terms of trade and export of timber. However, often there are major differences in the way each country approaches this issue. For example, several EU member states have not adapted their national legislation to make possible the effective implementation of the EU Timber Regulation. Moreover, the interpretation of risk assessment and the identified risk mitigation measures mean differences in implementing this regulation.

In order to encourage and recognise the best practices in the forestry sector, certification or other third party verified schemes (for example verification of compliance with legislation) can be used to aid the risk assessment process required by the EU Timber Regulation.

WWF believes that credible certification systems represent useful tools, which support the "operators" in the timber sector - forest managers, logging companies, wood processing companies. Thanks to credible certification systems they not only follow and respect the provisions of the EU Timber Regulation for "due diligence", but go beyond this. They also:

- Promote responsible forest management as a whole (by following the principles of Responsible Forest Management) and – arising from that – promote environmental, social and cultural benefits.
- Create more transparent processes, including complaint procedures available to all stakeholders.
- Generate economic benefits by providing access to the certified wood market.

## WWF's work on the issue of illegal logging

WWF believes that in order to reduce the threat of illegal logging and prevent forest degradation, the support of all stakeholders is needed. WWF in the Danube-Carpathian region works with all stakeholders to ensure a constructive dialogue for an efficient legislative framework.



**3 MARCH  
2013**

**THE STRICT EU TIMBER  
REGULATION CAME  
INTO FORCE**



**Why we are here.**

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

[www.panda.org/dcpo](http://www.panda.org/dcpo)