



8th Annual FLEGT Project Coordination Meeting

9 to 11 October 2013
Final report





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List of abbreviations

CAR	Central African Republic	IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
CARFAD	Centre africain de recherche forestière appliqués et de développement	ISRA	Institute for Environment and Sustainability
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity	IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism	JIC	joint implementation committee
CIDT	Centre for International Development and Training	LAS	legality assurance system
CIFOR	Center for International Forest Research	MOE	Ministry of Environment
CPET	Central Point of Expertise on Timber	MO	monitoring organisation
CSO	civil society organisation	MPIC	Ministry of Plantation Industries and Commodities
DCA	Dan Church Aid	NGO	non-governmental organisation
DDS	due diligence system	PUP	Private Use Permits
DFID	UK Department for International Development	REDD	reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo	REDD+ (or REDD-plus)	REDD including conservation and sustainable management of forests and the enhancement of forest carbon stocks
EEA	European Economic Area	RRI	Rights and Resources Initiative
EAP	Environment Action Programme	RSPO	Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil
ECCP	European Climate Change Programme	SME	small- or medium-sized enterprise
EFI	European Forest Institute	SVLK	Sistem Verifikasi Legalitas Kayu or timber legality verification system
EFTA	European Free Trade Association	TFT	The Forest Trust
EIA	Environmental Investigation Agency	TLAS	Timber Legality Assurance System
EITI	Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative	TTAP	Timber Trade Action Plan
ENRTP	Thematic Programme for Environment and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources including Energy	UK	United Kingdom
ETTF	European Timber Trade Federation	UNCERD	UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
EU	European Union	UNFF	United Nations Forum on Forests
EUR	euro	US	United States
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization	USD	United States dollar
FGMC	Forest Governance, Markets and Climate	VPA	Voluntary Partnership Agreement
FLEGT	forest law enforcement, governance and trade	WTO	World Trade Organization
FODER	Forêts et Développement Rural	WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council		
FTA	Free Trade Agreement		
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit		



Participants at the 8th FLEGT Projects Coordination Meeting. Photo: European Commission

Executive summary

The European Commission hosted the 8th Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) coordination meeting in Brussels, Belgium from 9 to 11 October 2013. The meeting brought together more than 130 people from the European Commission, European Parliament, EU Member States, partner countries, international organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the private sector. They shared information and lessons learnt and worked together to enhance coordination among projects financed by the European Union (EU) and EU Member States to support the EU FLEGT Action Plan (Action Plan), with emphasis on Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs).

The EU remains fully committed to leading global efforts to fight illegal logging by implementing the Action Plan. The meeting afforded an overview of ongoing efforts in more than 15 countries that are negotiating or implementing VPAs, as well as other countries that are joining the fight against illegal logging. Many participants spoke about the visible impact VPAs are having on forest governance in countries engaged in VPAs, as well as in non-VPA countries.

The European Commission is on track for fully implementing what was planned 10 years ago. Reports indicate that illegal logging is decreasing. The Action Plan is influencing policy beyond the forest sector, as it becomes a keystone in the EU Seventh Environment Action Programme (EAP). At the same time FLEGT is operating in an evolving context, and the EU

needs to engage with other markets while increasing the Action Plan's effectiveness. The EU must also seek ways to apply the FLEGT principles of due diligence and governance in countries that have no relevant trade with the EU and in countries that are not interested in developing a VPA. The EU's additional challenge is to balance quality and quantity of VPAs while showing that a VPA can be an advantage for the private sector.

There were also some new faces at the meeting and new approaches to the issues. Stakeholders in different regions offered many ideas for action. Participants from Myanmar/Burma, for example, shared their knowledge with those who were already experienced in the process of negotiating or implementing VPAs. And some Latin American countries that are not pursuing VPAs described their progress in verifying the legality of their timber and formalising their forestry sectors.

Looking ahead, there are five priority actions for 2013–2014:

- Implementing VPAs and delivering the first shipments of FLEGT-licensed timber
- Concluding ongoing VPA negotiations while preparing for the implementation of these agreements
- Implementing the EU Timber Regulation
- Increasing engagement with the private sector
- Launching a 10-year review of the Action Plan.

1. Introduction

The European Commission hosted the 8th Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) coordination meeting in Brussels, Belgium from 9 to 11 October 2013. The meeting brought together more than 130 people from the European Commission, European Parliament, EU Member States, partner countries, international organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the private sector. They shared information and lessons learnt and worked to enhance coordination among projects financed by the European Union (EU) and EU Member States to support the EU FLEGT Action Plan (Action Plan), with emphasis on Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs).

The meeting was organised as six sessions over two days followed by a day of thematic and regional meetings. The six sessions were:

1	EU FLEGT Action Plan	Plenary
2	Supporting FLEGT in partner countries – lessons learnt	Panel discussion
3	How to be effective in influencing the VPA process and contributing to its implementation	Panel discussion
4	VPA implementation/Non-VPA countries/Action Plan review	Breakout groups
5	Deforestation and forest degradation: global trends and drivers	Plenary
6	Evaluation and conclusion	Plenary

This report summarises the substance of the plenary sessions and debates on Day 1 and Day 2 (9 and 10 October) and the meeting evaluation, and provides contact information for participants.

The agenda and presentations are available in the FLEGT public group on Capacity 4 Dev, the knowledge-sharing platform of the Directorate General for Development and Cooperation: <http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/public-flegt/event/presentations-available-now-8th-annual-coordination-meeting-flegt-projects>.



Timber worker in Cameroon. Photo: FAO

Day 1

2. Session 1: EU FLEGT Action Plan

2.1 Welcome and objectives of the meeting

Roberto Ridolfi, Director for Sustainable Growth at the Directorate General for Development and Cooperation, European Commission, said FLEGT is important for development, business and sustainable growth, and is of paramount importance to the EU, which has been at the forefront of global efforts to combat trade in illegal timber and timber products since 2003. FLEGT directly supports the green economy and the concept of sustainability while taking into account the private sector's expectations. FLEGT protects forests, encourages legal reform, increases transparency, improves governance and strengthens public procurement policies in EU Member States. Implementing the EU Timber Regulation on March 2013 was an important milestone: illegal timber can no longer be sold in the EU Market. He encouraged the participants of the FLEGT practitioners meeting to look for ways to simplify the VPA process without compromising shared goals, and, as FLEGT ambassadors, to reach out and motivate a larger community of actors.

2.2 Keynote address by Natalie Pauwels on behalf of Commissioner Janez Potočnik

Natalie Pauwels delivered the keynote address on behalf of Commissioner Potočnik, EU Commissioner for the Environment who was in Japan to sign the Minamata Convention on Mercury. Pauwels, a member of the Commissioner's cabinet, said negotiating VPAs is a long and complex process. There is room to improve the process, but it is important to get it right. The goal is not to achieve 'paper tigers' but to establish agreements that consider all concerns of all stakeholders and civil society organisations (CSOs) so that agreements are accepted and respected by people on the ground. The EU will continue to pursue VPAs and strongly support regulations to stop illegal logging. The recently adopted EU Seventh Environment Action Programme (EAP) mentions FLEGT and states that the EU will continue to pursue VPAs and to support legislation to stop illegal logging.

2.3 EU FLEGT Action Plan and VPAs

Bernard Crabbé of Directorate General Development and Cooperation updated participants on progress, achievements and future priorities. The EU adopted the Action Plan in 2003 to fight illegal logging, promote better forest governance and law enforcement and foster sustainable forest management through demand-side and supply-side measures. VPAs and supply-side measures use the producer country's interest in accessing the EU market to promote better forest governance and law enforcement in timber-producing countries.

Much has been achieved in the first 10 years of FLEGT: 15 countries are in the process of negotiating and implementing VPAs and many other countries are joining the fight against illegal logging. Studies suggest that there has already been a significant shift in sentiment in favour of legal timber and there has been a drop in illegal logging. Yet, much remains to be done in some very challenging environments where implementation requires time and resources. There is a need to maintain the momentum and to deliver the first FLEGT-licensed timber to the EU market. Priorities for action in 2013-14 include:

- Implementing VPAs: developing and assessing the robustness of timber legality assurance systems (TLASs), fostering governance improvements and delivering the first FLEGT-licensed timber
- Concluding ongoing negotiations while preparing for the implementation phase during negotiation
- Communicating the FLEGT story in the EU and in partner countries
- Preparing markets to accept FLEGT-licensed timber
- Engaging more with the private sector
- Securing resources to support VPAs
- Implementing the EU Timber Regulation effectively
- Conducting a review of the first 10 years of the Action Plan (2003-2013).

For more information go to <http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/public-flegt/document/ec-8th-coordination-meetingflegt-ap-and-vpa-oct9-2013-2>.

2.4 Ten years of the EU FLEGT Action Plan: CSO perspective

An Bollen of FERN said VPAs are improving forest governance through an innovative process that brings different groups together and opens up participation in decision-making to a broad range of stakeholders from government, CSOs and the private sector. As a result, VPAs are: improving the recognition of customary rights and access and benefit sharing; leading to legislative and policy changes; establishing transparency policies that make information about concession allocations, logging contracts, forest management plans and penalties publicly available; and allowing for both formal, independent forest monitoring and informal monitoring by CSOs. The multistakeholder and aid-plus-trade approach has potential for other commodities. As countries implement VPAs, they need to address key challenges such as:

- Implementing the VPA transparency annex to uphold anti-corruption measures
- Moving from legal reform to legal enforcement
- Managing VPA fatigue when and where progress is slow
- Ensuring multistakeholder dialogue beyond the negotiation period
- Building capacity as roles change.

For more information, go to <http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/public-flegt/document/ferneuflegtweekvpacserspective>.

Discussions from Session 1 are available in Annex G.

2.5 A perspective from the private sector: European Timber Trade Federation

André de Boer presented the views of the European Timber Trade Federation (ETTF), which includes 11 trade associations that account for 90% of the EU market for tropical timber. ETTF welcomes the EU Timber Regulation because its members face competition from illegal traders and they want a level playing field. ETTF has developed a due diligence system that complies with the EU Timber Regulation and a knowledge-sharing platform. It issues a quarterly statistical report on trade flows. Internationally, ETTF is helping authorities in Myanmar/Burma to prepare for a possible VPA. ETTF supports consistent implementation of the EU Timber Regulation at the Member State level.

2.6 EU Timber Regulation

Svetla Atanasova of Directorate General for Environment provided an overview of the EU Timber Regulation and updated participants on recent and upcoming changes. Beginning in 2014, the EU Timber Regulation will be applied in the European Economic Area (EEA), which includes Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.

As of September 2013, the EU has received 29 applications from potential monitoring organisations, two are recognised, and others are in the pipeline. Monitoring organisations are

legally established within the EU and are recognised by the European Commission. Related legislation and guidance for the EU Timber Regulation includes the Regulation on due diligence system (DDS) (No 607/2012), the Commission Delegated Regulation on monitoring organisations (No 363/2012) and a guidance document. Monitoring organisations can help operators meet their due diligence requirements. They maintain and evaluate a due diligence system, grant operators the right to use it and ensure that operators correctly apply the due diligence system. Monitoring organisations are subject to checks by competent authorities. The European Commission is monitoring how EU Member States are implementing and enforcing the EU Timber Regulation.

Ten EU Member States have adopted legislation that provides the legal basis for handling non-compliance with the EU Timber Regulation. Some EU Member States do not need additional legislation because EU Timber Regulation requirements are already included in their legislation. EU Member States have a broad range of penalties that are based on different criteria and primarily target operators according to risk-based analysis.

Reports on the effectiveness of the EU Timber Regulation will be compiled from reports received by EU Member States before March 2015. The compiled reporting will be sent before December 2015 to the European Parliament.

For more information on the presentation, go to <http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/public-flegt/document/flegt-week-13-9oct>.

Information about the EU Timber Regulation is available at http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/timber_regulation.htm.

For a list of the EU Member States competent authorities, see http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/timber_regulation.htm.

2.7 EU Timber Regulation enforcement at the national level: Belgium's competent authority

Olivier Demaret of Belgium's Federal Public Service for Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment made a presentation on the main characteristics of the EU Timber Regulation in Belgium. Implementation of the regulation is based on Article 10.2 of the EU Timber Regulation, and oversight is based on planned interventions that result from risk assessment or complaints. In case of non-compliance, Belgian operators face sanctions based on existing regulations. Penalties range from imprisonment and fines to a market ban. Coordination within the EU is a challenge but will prevent unfair competitive advantages. The EU needs a working group to determine a common understanding of certain points of the EU Timber Regulation, to harmonise control procedures and to standardise information exchange on risk analysis, operators and requests for information to third-party countries.

For more information, go to <http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/public-flegt/document/pr%C3%A9sentation-eutraut-compbe>.

Discussions from Session 2 are available in Annex G.

3. Session 2: Supporting FLEGT in partner countries – lessons learnt

Melissa Othman of the European Forest Institute (EFI) underlined the importance of sharing lessons learnt and sharing ideas among the participants. She introduced the three speakers of the panel who come from CSOs, the private sector and government.

3.1 Project experience supporting civil society

Laurence Wete Soh of the Cameroon NGO Forêts et Développement Rural (FODER) said FODER's efforts to support civil society put local communities at the centre of the NGO's work in Cameroon. FODER trained community members, CSOs and regional public officials in forest monitoring practices and provided equipment to improve data collection and reporting. Communities collected information on unauthorised or illegal forest exploitation, wrongly marked concessions,

environmental degradation and abandoned logs. There are many challenges: Information on forest exploitation remains difficult to collect, share and verify. Even regular contact by phone with communities is difficult. Financial and logistical difficulties limited the monitoring missions and corruption remains a challenge. To improve independent monitoring, FODER suggests that a substantial rolling fund be set up for a longer period of time so that CSOs and communities can plan and implement their activities more effectively. FODER also recommended establishing a consistent management system for independent monitoring by CSOs and communities; deeper engagement with the judiciary in the fight against illegal logging; and establishing a reporting network that links national and regional levels.

For more information, see

<http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/public-flegt/document/laurence-weteexp%C3%A9rienceappui-soci%C3%A9t%C3%A9-civileprojet-oe-flegt07102013>.



Emelia Arthur, from the Ghanaian Government, and civil society discussing forest degradation in Nfante, Ghana. Photo: Clare Brogan

3.2 Project experience supporting the private sector

Alastair Herd of The Forest Trust (TFT) spoke about TFT's experiences implementing the Timber Trade Action Plan (TTAP) to raise private sector awareness about FLEGT and about how to mitigate risk in supply chains by verifying legality. Project partners were timber trade federations in EU and non-EU countries. TFT found that private sector actors faced many challenges such as a lack of country specific standards, high cost of third-party verifications without a resulting price premium, declining EU buyer relationships and suppliers shifting to other crops. Yet, responsible buyers were able to leverage the transformation of their supply chains for long-term business relationships. To build momentum, it is important to minimise uncertainty for the private sector and to raise awareness using the right messenger – timber trade federations. Enhanced risk management through third-party assurances is also important for improving production efficiencies and trust and encouraging better business. TFT found that for private sector actors verifying legality is about maintaining market access and brand protection and not about premiums. Such legality provides a competitive advantage under the EU Timber Regulation. With more focus on China as the world's largest timber importer, much work must be done to promote transparency all the way back to the forest to help transform the market. EU Timber Regulation must be enforced strictly to ensure a level playing field. Support for small- or medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) is fundamental to reducing poverty.

For more information, see <http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/public-flegt/document/flegt-update-meetingttap>.

3.3 Project experience supporting partner governments

Robert Simpson of the EU FAO FLEGT Programme spoke about the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nation's (FAO) experiences giving direct support to governments through 52 FLEGT projects. FAO's assistance supports government leadership, helps a government maintain or build momentum for changes to come with VPAs, and encourages ownership within government units. It supports consultation processes, impact assessments and involvement of a broad range of stakeholders in negotiations. FAO has found that governments can face many challenges in the VPA process. Administrations rely on decision-making hierarchies and they can be slow to change. Sometimes government methods are antiquated or exhibit resistance to consultation. And governments can be poorly equipped. But governments are also change agents: they can formalise new structures and systems, legitimise new processes, and they exercise sovereignty. There is still room for improvement in FAO's support as projects are often identified by EFI or EU delegations rather than by the country governments, funding does not leverage additional funding by the government and support has been prescriptive rather than encouraging autonomous implementation.

For more information, see <http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/public-flegt/document/eu-fao-flegtgovt-experiences-09oct2013ppt>.

Discussions from Session 3 are available in Annex G.

Timber certification in Malaysia. Photo: EFI



4. Session 3: How to be effective in influencing the VPA process and contributing to its implementation

Robert Simpson of the EU FAO FLEGT Programme moderated the session. Presenters described how negotiators, CSOs, EU delegation representatives and EU Member State programmes have supported broad forest governance objectives in the development of VPAs.

4.1 How and when to influence the VPA process and contribute to the implementation

Julia Falconer of EFI spoke about opportunities and challenges that arise during the stages of the VPA process and explained how the timing of inputs is crucial to the process. The stages of the VPA from consensus building, negotiation, system development to full implementation all offer opportunities to stakeholders to influence VPA dialogue and decisions. Opportunities are also embedded in the text of the bilateral agreement that emerges from negotiations such as making information public or legislative reform commitments. Further opportunities arise during implementation, as the joint implementation committee oversees the implementation of the VPA. Independent audits, impact monitoring, complaint management and other elements are just a few examples in implementation that can be used to promote improved governance and better accountability.

For more information, see

<http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/public-flegt/document/vpa-process-session-3-project-coord-mtg-falconer-2013>.

4.2 Lessons learnt by CSOs when influencing VPA processes

Indra Van Gisbergen of FERN presented lessons learnt from FERN's work supporting national NGOs and NGO platforms as they engage in the VPA process. The VPA is a practical tool that NGOs can use creatively to secure tenure and community rights, to improve forest governance and to address the underlying drivers of deforestation. Each phase in the VPA process is an opportunity for civil society influence. NGOs have exercised real influence even in places where the government has not recognised their role in the past. In Vietnam, for example, NGO participation changed attitudes toward the way government institutions view civil society engagement in political processes. The Government set out to control the process but civil



FLEGT week participants Marketta Juppi, EFI; Glen Asomaning, WWF in Ghana; and Valerie De Liedekerke De Pailhe, WWF. Photo: European Commission

society set up the VNGO FLEGT Network. The result has been improved communication with the Government, increased NGO capacity and socio-economic issues brought to the attention of national and international audiences. Civil society participation also influenced policy-making in Ghana, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Central African Republic and Cameroon. For many countries, the act of participating in VPA negotiations was an unprecedented experience. However, creating and maintaining political space remains challenging during all phases of the VPA process.

For more information, see

<http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/public-flegt/document/2013-10-flegt-week-presentation-indra-fern>.

4.3 Coordination and lessons learnt from two years of implementing the UK's Forest Governance, Markets and Climate Programme

Hugh Speechly of the UK Department for International Development (DFID) spoke about lessons learnt through the UK's Forest Governance, Markets and Climate Programme

(FGMC), which supports country cooperation in VPA countries and China and awards grants to support research, communication, advocacy, capacity building, monitoring and business-to-business trade links. He noted that high-level political support is essential, but asked how we are to maintain it in a changing world. The solution lies in understanding the actors and their motivations, packaging messages and having stories to tell. Nevertheless, it is a challenge to report on governance results in a digestible form. Reporting results is crucial, especially in relation to the climate change agenda. As implementation progresses, we need better coordination between grantees and contractors within each VPA country. Therefore, in-country facilitation is crucial.

For more information, see <http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/public-flegt/document/forest-governance-markets-and-climate-programme>.



FLEGT week participants Valerie Vautier, Forest Monitor; Cath Long, Well Grounded; Carl Frosio, EU Delegation to Cameroon; and Marta Bignone, FLEGT facilitator in Côte d'Ivoire. Photo: European Commission

4.4 Project coordination at country level: lessons learnt

Carl Frosio of the EU Delegation in Cameroon shared lessons learnt while coordinating projects at the country level where VPA funding totals EUR 14.5 million with contributions from Cameroon, the EU, the European Development Fund, the Thematic Programme for Environment and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources including Energy (ENRTP), EU FAO FLEGT Programme, EU FLEGT Facility and Germany and UK development agencies. A coordination mechanism is in place. The administration, civil society, private sector from Cameroon, head of the EU Delegation and EU Member State representatives are all involved. The EU Delegation focuses on strategic and operational coordination. Challenges include maintaining leadership and ownership by the Government, managing pressures to move when systems are still in development, and coordinating many actors and different funding timetables.

For more information, see <http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/public-flegt/document/pr%C3%A9sentation-flegt-week-2013frosio>.

Discussions from Session 3 are available in Annex G.

Day 2

5. Session 4: Breakout groups

Three breakout sessions addressed different aspects of FLEGT:

1. VPA implementation
2. Experiences of FLEGT activities in non-VPA countries
3. Preparing for an Action Plan review

5.1 Group 1: VPA implementation

Thibaut Portevin from the Directorate General for Development and Cooperation moderated the session, and Alexander Hinrichs of EFI described the stages in the VPA process. The implementation phase is extremely important for ensuring a sustainable VPA. It requires establishing a joint implementation committee and associated governmental structures. Countries implementing a VPA must build capacity for verification bodies and licensing authorities. In this phase it is important to reinforce civil society participation and to engage an independent auditor. Countries implementing a VPA face common challenges. It is difficult to keep all active parties engaged as negotiations conclude. Some stakeholders become unmotivated by the complexity of ratification when it is not well explained. Maintaining a political dialogue is difficult in the long term, especially when local leadership changes. Local authorities are pressured to produce fast results, and this limits understanding of the complexity behind FLEGT licences.

Giovanni Serritella of the EU Delegation to Indonesia said the joint implementation committee is the right mechanism for addressing challenges. In addition, he made the following recommendations regarding the VPA implementation process:

- Ensure all elements of the supply chain are certified by finding a way to aggregate certified and non-certified timber
- Reinforce the vital role of CSOs with an independent monitor who has access to information
- Prepare for the challenge of sharing knowledge and building capacity at a national level, while taking the country's size and its cultural diversity into consideration
- Foster cooperation within the private sector especially in dialogue with the government.

Participants divided into three groups to discuss two questions:

1. How can stakeholders in countries negotiating a VPA prepare for effective implementation during the negotiation?
2. How can stakeholders in countries implementing a VPA maintain momentum during the implementation?

The discussion is summarised in Annex H.

5.2 Group 2: Experiences of FLEGT activities in non-VPA countries

John Bazill of Directorate General for Environment moderated the session. Participants discussed the differing national contexts and compared responses of VPA and non-VPA countries. They also discussed the investment in time and resources needed to engage in a VPA. A representative of FAO, which supports efforts to improve forest governance in both VPA and non-VPA countries, said VPAs support government efforts to combat illegal logging and improve forest governance. But VPA negotiations are costly for countries that have minimal trade in timber with EU countries and for governments that are already tackling governance issues. It could be useful to evaluate ways to ensure legality without going through the lengthy process of negotiating and implementing a VPA. The point is to consider the benefits that a VPA brings, not the VPA itself.

Many countries in Central America are interested in VPAs even when their timber exports to the EU are not significant. They are interested because a VPA brings international recognition, financial support and improvements in governance. In Peru the catalyst for improving legality verification was not a VPA but a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between Peru and the US, where an external push was useful. The FTA committed the parties to developing a legal timber supply system. Peru is now revising laws to align with the FTA, and is establishing the institutional framework for an independent forest authority. The Government of Colombia does not have a clear position on VPAs, but NGOs, the timber employers federation and the Ministry of Environment (MOE) recognise each other as stakeholders in discussions about legality and governance. The MOE acknowledges the need to revise regulations and restructure forest management. Current mechanisms in Colombia support negotiations with stakeholders to review and implement a forest management action plan. The Pact for Legal Timber in Colombia could provide legality without the costs and time of a VPA. It would be worthwhile to evaluate the feasibility of this approach in other countries. Ecuador has undertaken a number of actions to improve forest governance. Much of the timber trade is domestic or regional. The existence of some informality in the sector is not necessarily considered to be a negative factor from a poverty reduction perspective.

In Asia, Lao PDR (Laos) intends to negotiate a VPA. The Government of Cambodia does not have an official position in favour of a VPA, but the Forest Administration thinks that implementing a VPA could improve law enforcement. Like Cambodian officials, Myanmar/Burma officials have differing opinions. They have a plan for reform in the forestry sector and they recognise that engaging in a VPA could help institutionalise such reform. The monitoring organisation NEPCo is assessing how it can assist Myanmar/Burma to sell legal wood



Timber products in Democratic Republic of the Congo. Photo: Yann Petrucci

while the country decides whether or not to implement a VPA. In India, the Forest Rights Act is an important legal development to control forest resources, even if India is not negotiating a VPA.

Regional trade in Asia is key to combating illegal logging. Laos's exports to the EU are not as high as exports to Vietnam and Thailand. The Governments of Laos and Vietnam are meeting on VPA issues. In Myanmar/Burma much illegal timber is shipped to China. China is developing as an importer and end user. India also imports a significant quantity of timber, but does not export a proportional quantity of finished timber products.

The discussion is summarised in Annex H.

5.3 Group 3: Preparing for an EU FLEGT Action Plan review

Bernard Crabbé moderated the session which addressed the upcoming 10-year review of the Action Plan. The review will explore important questions, such as: What are the Action Plan's strengths, weaknesses and challenges? What can we learn from our experience to guide future efforts in governance and trade? As FLEGT and REDD+ are complementary, how should the Action Plan be planned and implemented in the future. Crabbé said multistakeholder participation was key to the review and that the session was an opportunity for participants to contribute to the design. He outlined the next steps after the consultation:

- Preparing terms of reference
- Arranging financing
- Establishing a reference group
- Launching the review in mid-2014
- Agreeing on expectations with the evaluation team during the inception phase.

John Hudson, an advisor to EFI, presented seven questions to encourage discussion about the design of the review in break-out groups.

Those discussions are summarised in Annex H.

6. Session 5: Deforestation and forest degradation – Global trends and drivers

Julia Falconer of EFI moderated the plenary session.

6.1 Evolution of tropical forests since 1990 and analysis of deforestation drivers

Philippe Mayaux of the Joint Research Centre of the Institute for Environment and Sustainability (ISRA) presented research on global forest land use changes between 1990 and 2005, with a focus on tropical forest degradation. Mayaux concluded that illegal logging is not the main deforestation driver overall, but it can be the main driver in some areas. He recommended that FLEGT be combined with other EU policies for the long-term benefit of the healthy ecosystem that tropical forests provide at all levels, and that countries implement innovative land-use planning policies that prioritise land use according to the benefits they provide for those countries and for the planet.

For more information, see <http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/public-flegt/document/deforestationflegt20131010>.

To obtain a copy of the full report, visit <http://www.fao.org/forestry/fra/remotesensingsurvey/en/>.

6.2 Results of the study 'The impact of EU consumption on deforestation'

Giuliana Torta of Director General for Environment presented the results of a study on the impact of EU consumption on deforestation published 2 July 2013. The study shows that deforestation associated with the EU's final consumption accounts for 10% of worldwide deforestation embedded in commodities and products in 2004. From 1990 to 2008, the 27 Member States imported almost 36% of all deforestation embedded in crop and livestock products traded between regions, more than East Asia and the US. The study presented 34 policy proposals.

For more information, see the full presentation at <http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/public-flegt/document/presentation-study-deforestationflegt-week>.

For the study, visit http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/impact_deforestation.htm.

Discussions from Session 5 are available in Annex G.

6.3 REDD–FLEGT linkages: How can FLEGT have an impact on other drivers?

Christophe Van Orshoven of the EU REDD Facility of EFI said the development of carbon markets, and forest carbon as a new commodity, was seen by many as the main avenue by which to engage with the profit-driven private sector in the fight against deforestation. But people are realising this may not happen as quickly as was expected, and it may not be as influential as people hoped. At the same time, the role of global commodity markets in driving deforestation and forest degradation is increasing. Meanwhile agricultural expansion accounts for 55% to 80% of deforestation. Growth in the agricultural sector can be decoupled from deforestation if other indirect drivers including land tenure, land use planning and law enforcement, are addressed. The Action Plan as a policy approach can inspire efforts to address drivers of deforestation in the agriculture and mining sectors. Key building blocks from the Action Plan are:

- Expand support for commodity production to timber-producing countries
- Enact new EU legislation that supports trade in deforestation-free commodities
- Create public procurement policies that support sustainable commodities
- Encourage those private sector initiatives that build on sustainable practices on the supply and demand sides.

For more information, see <http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/public-flegt/document/131009-flegttoother-driversefi>.



FLEGT week participants Christophe van Orshoven, EFI; Giuliana Torta, European Commission and Philippe Mayaux, ISRA. Photo: European Commission.

7. Session 6: Evaluation and conclusion

Bernard Crabbé moderated the final plenary session, presenting conclusions from the three breakout groups of Session 4.

7.1 Conclusions

Group 1: VPA implementation

The breakout groups discussed two issues about VPA implementation: 1) preparing effective implementation during negotiations; and 2) maintaining momentum during implementation. The group illustrated the VPA process in the 15 VPA countries as shown below.

The group presented recommendations for addressing seven main issues related to VPA negotiations and implementation:

1. Support consistency between VPAs and sector policies

- Clarify links among national forest policies, global reforms and the VPA in partner countries.
- Support synergies with other initiatives, land use and other sectors to take into account the global governance agenda.
- Ensure effective EU Timber Regulation enforcement to reinforce the relevance of VPAs and FLEGT-licensed timber to the EU market.
- Clarify the vision of partner countries regarding long-term sustainability of the timber industry.

- Address the issue of conversion timber. Are national land use policies in line with the VPAs to support the forest sector and related industries such as mining and agriculture?

2. Allocate resources in a timely and flexible way

- Make funding available in a timely manner.
- Allow for flexibility to adjust to country needs.
- Encourage gap assessments and cost.

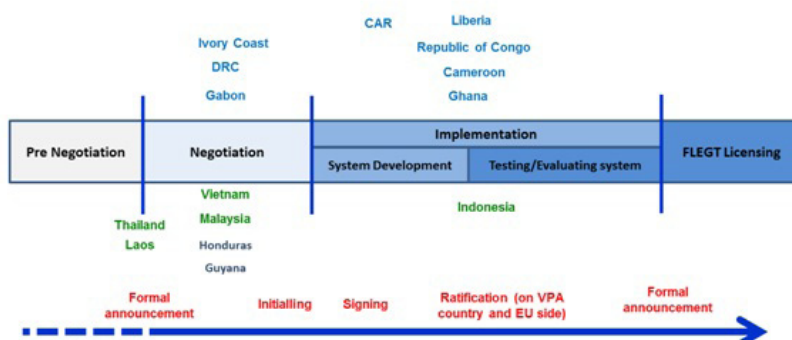
3. Use strategic planning during VPA implementation

- Define key milestones for VPA implementation.
- Structure the complementary measures annex so that it leads to implementation work planning.
- Use the joint implementation committee to monitor progress and discuss challenges.
- Ensure that stakeholder groups have clear roles in implementation activities.

4. Build and implement a feasible TLAS

- Consider more field tests during negotiation to assess the practicality of TLAS components.
- Use existing structures and experiences to develop the TLAS.
- Ensure procedures match legality definitions and legal references.
- Discuss possible impact of corruption when operators seek legal compliance.

VPA Sequencing and Landscape





Man measuring a tree diameter in Republic of the Congo. Photo: Nicolas Guyot

- Avoid getting bogged down in technical aspects of implementation.
- Find the right balance in the level of detail to include in VPA annexes.
- Share the key message that it costs more to become legal when there is corruption.

5. Manage non-compliance during VPA implementation

- Consider that the VPA implementation phase exposes pre-existing non-compliances.
- Hold early discussions with law enforcement agencies on how to manage non-compliance.
- Consider the impact on day-to-day forest governance.

6. Encourage balanced participation to ensure ownership of VPA processes

- State actors: engage all relevant administrations.
- Non-state actors: engaging only with the private sector is insufficient, and civil society platforms will need to be strengthened.
- Make joint implementation committees operational as soon as possible because they play an essential role.
- Participation in joint implementation committees (JICs) should remain flexible for new actors to join.
- Facilitation is a way to promote participation and national dialogue.

7. Use well-planned communication to increase stakeholder engagement

- Reach out to all stakeholder groups and sub-groups early during negotiation.
- Match the potential of VPA negotiations with stakeholder group interests.
- Build stakeholder capacity to negotiate in the context of national dialogue.
- Establish networks or a common forum among facilitators.

Group 2: Experiences of FLEGT activities in non-VPA countries

The second group presented conclusions from the discussion on FLEGT activities in non-VPA countries:

- The forest sector remains a less visible economic sector for some countries.
- Forest policies and control mechanisms need improvement.
- Categorise countries because domestic and regional markets in some countries (Colombia, Ecuador, Laos) are more important than far-away markets.
- Reconsider whether countries need a VPA to accomplish legality verification or whether they only require support to achieve their own goals for formalising the timber sector.
- Many local processes are underway that are not necessarily linked to FLEGT actions as in Colombia and Myanmar/Burma.
- Legality needs to be cost-effective and tailored to different contexts, and the different degrees of legality need to be acknowledged.
- China and India are emerging economies and important global players, and new trade flows are emerging in southern countries. For example, Colombia now imports processed timber products from China.
- Develop a better understanding of domestic and regional trade dynamics.
- Keep the scope of legality broad to include labour regulation, taxes, contracts and fair bargaining power.

Group 3: Preparing for an EU FLEGT Action Plan review

The third group discussed what the Action Plan review should cover, methods to use and which stakeholders could be involved. John Hudson emphasised that there is no preconceived idea for this review. The views of FLEGT stakeholders are central to a well-conducted review.

- Maintain the assumption that illegal logging is a driver for deforestation, and document the successes and the achievements of the past 10 years in order to draw lessons for the future. Use an approach that analyses effectiveness and sustainability.
- Focus the review on VPAs but include all elements of the Action Plan and emphasise the role of governance.
- Define in the terms of reference who the European Commission wants to influence, the key messages to convey and how to use the results.

- Consider the countries that are still in negotiation and those that do not intend to join but have nonetheless developed useful experiences.
- Present country case studies to show the evolution of the VPA process.
- Maintain momentum and strong political will.
- Describe the challenges of developing a tracking system.
- Though resources and time are limited, involve as many stakeholders as possible. Use a sampling approach and use existing research to look at different ways stakeholders have become engaged.
- DFID's Forest Governance, Markets and Climate Programme (FGMC) uses a deliberative process where stakeholders share a common goal but engage based on their own interests
- The EU market for timber is declining and we are moving towards an era where sustainable development goals are being redefined. Consider how to insert FLEGT experience to feed into the changing political environment.
- Consider the role of EU Member States and the role of NGOs involved since the beginning of FLEGT, and invite them to evaluate the past 10 years.

Bernard Crabbé explained that the European Commission wants the report to share what has been achieved in order to maintain support, and demonstrate accountability. The European Commission will use the report to analyse how the international context has evolved and whether the underlying assumptions are still valid. The report will assist the EU in considering other approaches and how law enforcement can have a positive effect.

7.2 Evaluation and conclusions

Hugo-Maria Schally of Directorate General for Environment joined the panel for the final remarks and invited participants to present their comments and questions.

Emily Unwin of ClientEarth discussed the views of EU NGOs. Watchdog organisations want to know the speed of implementation and enforcement of the EU Timber Regulation in the 28 Member States. For the private sector the EU Timber Regulation has many obligations and prohibitions, and due diligence is about taking responsible steps, not simply avoiding illegal acts. All relevant information is valid including reports from CSOs and independent observers, not just information

from government or industry. The link between the EU Timber Regulation and VPAs is important: when FLEGT-licensed timber is available, it will greatly ease regulatory requirements. Until that happens, all information should be scrutinised carefully.

Guillermo Navarro of the regional International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) office in Mesoamerica spoke about governments' role in governance, reducing poverty and fostering trade. Policies that apply best-governance practices at national and international levels in one sector can be models for other sectors. National policy makers who heed the voices of poor people and encourage consultation can balance the interests of markets, livelihoods and better living standards for all.

Faith Doherty of the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) said that forests and CSOs working on forest issues are facing numerous problems. FLEGT has given an opportunity to those who had no voice to intervene in the process. People on the ground play an important role, and violence toward environmentalists is getting worse. One reason FLEGT was started was to provide safety to those on the ground.

Koen Everaert of the EU Delegation to Cambodia said the meeting was a good opportunity to network, get updates and share information. Information on the ties between EU consumption and deforestation was useful. He plans to share information with EU Member State colleagues in Cambodia, and suggested that the next FLEGT conference could be hosted in a VPA country.

John Bazill of Directorate General for Environment said FLEGT is influencing policy beyond the forest sector. The challenge for the European Commission is to balance quality and quantity of VPAs while demonstrating that a VPA represents an advantage for the private sector. Asian markets are evolving and the EU needs to work on how to engage with other markets while increasing the effectiveness of the Action Plan. It is therefore important to see how to apply FLEGT principles in countries with little trade with the EU or not interested in developing a VPA.

In his closing remarks, Hugo-Maria Schally said FLEGT is thriving and the European Commission is on track for fully implementing what was planned 10 years ago and looks forward to seeing the first FLEGT licensed timber entering the EU.



Annex A: Agenda

Venue: Hotel Metropole

31, place de Brouckère

Brussels

Working languages: English, French, Spanish

Wednesday 9 October 2013 – Room 'Excelsior'

8:30 – 9:30	<i>Coffee and registration</i>
Session 1 (plenary): EU FLEGT Action Plan Moderators: Roberto Ridolfi, Director Sustainable Growth and Development, Directorate-General for Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid (DEVCO), European Commission	
9:30 – 9:45	Welcome & Objectives of the meeting Roberto Ridolfi, Director, DEVCO Sustainable Growth and Development
9:45 – 10:00	Keynote address Natalie Pauwels on behalf of Commissioner Potočník, EU Commissioner for the Environment
10:00 – 10:20	FLEGT Action Plan and the VPA Bernard Crabbé, Unit C2 – Climate Change, Environment, Natural Resources, Water, DEVCO, European Commission
10:20 – 10:40	10 years of FLEGT Action Plan: Civil Society perspective An Bollen, FERN
10:40 – 11:00	Q&A
11:00 – 11:20	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:20 – 11:40	Introduction of participants
11:40 – 12:00	EU Timber Regulation (EUTR) Svetla Atanasova, DG Environment, European Commission
12:00 – 12:20	Enforcement of the EUTR at national level Olivier Demaret, Belgian Competent Authority
12:20 – 12:45	Q&A
12:45 – 14:00	<i>Lunch break</i>
Session 2 (panel discussion): Supporting FLEGT in partner countries – lessons learnt Moderation: Melissa Othman, EFI	
14:00 – 15:45	Introductory presentations: • Project's experience in supporting civil society – Laurence Wete, FODER • Project's experience in supporting the private sector – Alastair Herd, TFT • Project's experience in supporting partner governments – Robert Simpson, FAO Discussion
15:45 – 16:00	<i>Coffee break</i>
Session 3 (panel discussion): How to be effective in influencing the VPA process and contributing to its implementation Moderation: Robert Simpson, FAO	
16:00 – 16:45	• How and when influence the FLEGT VPA process and contribute to the implementation – Julia Falconer, EFI • Lessons learned from FERN's projects, Indra Van Gisberghen, FERN • Discussion
16:45 – 17:30	• Coordination and lessons learnt from two years of implementation of FGMC program – Hugh Speechly, UK • Project coordination at country level: lessons learnt – Carl Frosio, EU Delegation Cameroun • Discussion
17:30 – 17:40	Conclusion & introduction of 10th Oct agenda
17:40 – 19:30	Drinks reception

Thursday 10 October 2013 - Room 'Excelsior'

9:00 - 11:30 - Session 4: Breakout groups	
Thematic breakout groups (in parallel): Groups will start with a brief introduction to the subject, followed by an open discussion	
Group 1: FLEGT VPA implementation - How to maintain momentum and promote progress towards full implementation	
Facilitated by DEVCO C2 & EFI	
Group 2: Experiences of FLEGT activities in non-VPA countries	
Facilitated ENV E2 & EFI	
Group 3: Preparing for a FLEGT Action Plan review	
Facilitated by DEVCO C2, John Hudson & EFI	
11:30 - 11:45	<i>Coffee Break</i>
Session 5 (plenary): deforestation and forest degradation: global trends and drivers	
Moderation: Julia Falconer, EFI	
11:45 - 13:00	• Evolution of the Tropical Forests since 1990 and analysis of the deforestation drivers, Philippe Mayaux, JRC • Results of the study "The impact of EU consumption on deforestation", Giuliana Torta, ENV E2 • REDD - FLEGT linkages; how can FLEGT have an impact on other drivers, Christophe Van Orshoven, EFI • Discussion
13:00 - 14:30	<i>Lunch Break</i>
Session 6 (plenary): Evaluation and conclusion	
Moderation: DEVCO	
14:30 - 16:00	Feedback from each group and discussion in plenary
16:00 - 16:30	<i>Coffee break</i>
16:30 - 17:30	• Evaluation and conclusion, ENV E2 • Participants views (3 participants invited to present their conclusions) • Concluding remarks - Hugo Maria Schally, Head of Unit E2, Global sustainability, Trade & Multilateral Agreements, DG Environment, European Commission • Introduction of 11th Oct agenda

Friday 11 October 2013 - 9:00 - 17:30

YOUR SPACE! The FLEGT projects representatives will have the possibility to continue exchanging experiences, discussing and networking

9:00 - 10:00	Plenary presentation on Cap4Dev(DG DEVCO)
10:00 - 12:30	Break out groups per (sub)region:
Latin America (FAO - Daphne Hewitt) West Africa (FAO - Robert Simpson) Central Africa (FERN - An Bollen & Indra Van Gisbergen) South-East Asia (FERN - Rudi Kohnert & EIA - Faith Doherty)	
12:30 - 14:00	<i>Lunch Break</i>
15:00 - 17:30	Country discussions if relevant (could be consecutive, based on inscription/interest)

*For the (sub)regional coordination meetings we would focus on on-going and new ENRTP proposals and explore synergies between proposal, coordination in management, avoid overlaps and discuss reoccurring thematic areas of the different proposals. For potential country meetings, we intend to put up sheets on Wednesday and Thursday for people to sign up for these and to assess if there is an interest and on the basis of that define if we continue separate country meetings (max 2) in the afternoon or not. The idea is to have these as consecutive meetings

End of the meeting

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Annex C: List of publications

EU FLEGT briefing notes

1. What is FLEGT?



2. What is legal timber?

3. A timber legality assurance system

4. Control of the supply chain: Wood tracing system and chain of custody

5. Legality assurance systems: requirements for verification

6. Voluntary Partnership Agreements

7. Guidelines for independent monitoring

8. Market participant-based legality assurance and FLEGT licensing

English

French

Vietnamese

Thai

http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/efi_briefing_note_01_eng_221110.pdf

http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/efi_briefing_note_01_fra_net.pdf

http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/flegt_briefing_1_vn.pdf

http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/efi_briefing_note_02_eng_221010.pdf

http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/efi_briefing_note_02_fra_net.pdf

http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/flegt_briefing_2_vn.pdf

http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/efi_briefing_note_03_eng_221010.pdf

http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/efi_briefing_note_03_fra_net.pdf

http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/flegt_briefing_3_vn__ta_1.pdf

http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/efi_briefing_note_04_eng_221010.pdf

http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/efi_briefing_note_04_fra_net.pdf

http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/flegt_briefing_4_vn.pdf

http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/efi_briefing_note_05_eng_221010.pdf

http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/efi_briefing_note_05_fra_net.pdf

http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/flegt__briefing_5_vn.pdf

http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/efi_briefing_note_06_eng_221010.pdf

http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/efi_briefing_note_06_fra_net.pdf

http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/flegt_briefing_6_vn.pdf

http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/efi_briefing_note_07_eng_221010_b.pdf

http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/efi_briefing_note_07_fra_net.pdf

http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/flegt_briefing_7_vn_ta.pdf

http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/efi_briefing_note_08_eng_221010.pdf

http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/efi_briefing_note_08_fra_net.pdf

http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/flegt_briefing_8_vn.pdf

https://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/flegt_bn_web.pdf

EFI policy briefs



EFI Policy Brief 2: Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade – the European Union approach

EFI Policy Brief 3: What is a Voluntary Partnership Agreement? – the European Union approach

EFI Policy Brief 5: Changing International Markets for Timber and Wood Products – Main Policy Instruments

English

French

Spanish

Bahasa Indonesian

http://www.efi.int/files/attachments/publications/efi_policy_brief_2_eng_net.pdf	http://www.efi.int/files/attachments/publications/efi_policy_brief_2_fra_net.pdf	http://www.efi.int/files/attachments/publications/efi_policy_brief_2_sp_net.pdf	http://www.efi.int/files/attachments/publications/efi_policy_brief_2_in_net.pdf
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VPA implementation annual reports

English

VPA Implementation Ghana-EU 2009-2010

http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/ghana_annualprogressreport_vpaimplementation_09-10_lores.pdf

VPA Implementation Ghana-EU 2012

<http://www.euflegt.efi.int/documents/10180/23025/Implementing%20the%20Ghana%E2%80%93EU%20Voluntary%20Partnership%20Agreement.%20Annual%20Report%202012>

VPA briefing notes

FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreement between Ghana and the European Union - Briefing Note November 2009



FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the Republic of the Congo and the European Union - Briefing Note June 2010

FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreement between Cameroon and the European Union - Briefing Note May 2010

FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the Central African Republic and the European Union - Briefing Note September 2011

FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreement between Indonesia and the European Union - Briefing Note May 2011

FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreement between Liberia and the European Union - Briefing Note May 2011

English	French	Spanish	Bahasa Indonesian
http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/ghanabriefingnoteen.pdf	http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/briefingnotes-ghanafrench.pdf	http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/ghanabriefingnote_spanish.pdf	
http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/congobriefingnoteenglish.pdf	http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/efi_congo_briefingnote_frenchrevision.pdf	http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/rocbriefingnote_spanish.pdf	
http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/cameroonbriefingnoteeng.pdf	http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/cameroon-briefingnotefra.pdf		
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http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/liberia_vpa-briefingnote_eng.pdf			

Fact sheets

	English	French	Spanish	Chinese
Fact sheet on FLEGT-licensed timber	 http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/publications_2013/fact_sheet_on_flegt-licensed_timber-en-april13-v3.3_ap_rcv.pdf	http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/publications_2013/fact_sheet_on_flegt-licensed_timber-fr-april13-v3.2_ap_rcv.pdf	http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/publications_2013/fact_sheet_on_flegt-licensed_timber-es-april13_ap_rcv.pdf	
Fact sheet on the EU Timber Regulation and VPAs	http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/publications_2013/100-eutr-vpa-english.pdf	http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/publications_2013/200-eutr-vpa-french.pdf		
Sources of information on the EU Timber Regulation	http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/publications_2013/vpa_eutr_sources_v5_1304_rcv.pdf	http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/publications_2013/vpa_eutr_sources_v5_130426_rcv_fr.pdf		
Questions and answers on the EU Timber Regulation: Importing and exporting	http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/publications_2013/eutr_faqs_importing_exporting_en_1303_v2_rcv_print.pdf	http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/publications_2013/eutr_faqs_importing_exporting_fr_1303_v2_rcv_print.pdf	http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/publications_2013/eutr_faqs_importing_exporting_es_1303_v3_rcv.pdf	http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/faqs_eutr/faq_2_-_import_export_chinese.pdf
Questions and answers on the EU Timber Regulation: Due diligence, certification and enforcement of the EUTR	http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/publications_2013/eutr_faqs_due_diligence_en_1303_v2_rcv_print.pdf	http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/publications_2013/eutr_faqs_due_diligence_fr_1303_v1_rcv_print.pdf	http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/publications_2013/eutr_faqs_due_diligence_es_1303_v3_rcv.pdf	http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/publications_2013/eutr_faqs_due_diligence_vn_1303_v1_tth_rcv_print.pdf

Reports

V-Legal/FLEGT shipment test – Lessons learned from the EU visits

The shipment test for anticipated FLEGT licensed timber for export from Indonesia to the European Union

Guidance on Legality Definition

Forestry Stakeholder Mapping in Thailand



English

http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/publications_2013/vlegal_flegt_shipment_test___lessons_learned_from_the_eu_visits.pdf

<http://www.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/publications-2012/briefing-note-shipment-indonesia-eu.pdf>

French

http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/publications_2013/legality_definition_fr_final.pdf

http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/publications_2013/stakeholder_mapping_thailand_-_final.pdf

FLEGT in Action

Overview of the EU FLEGT Action Plan Progress Report for 2003–2010



Governance Research Agenda for FLEGT

How can a VPA contribute to poverty reduction?

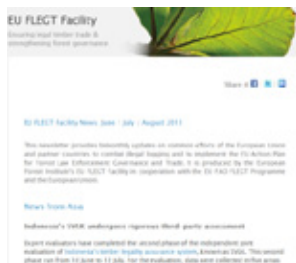
English

http://www.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/publications-2012/overview_of_the_flegt_action_plan_progress_report_for_2003_2010

http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/publications_2013/flegt-in-action_research_agenda_280113_b.pdf

http://www.euflegt.efi.int/files/attachments/euflegt/publications_2013/flegt_in_action_3_v2_130626_ap_final_net.pdf

EU FLEGT newsletter



Updates on common efforts of the EU and partner countries to combat illegal logging and to implement the EU FLEGT Action Plan. English, French and Spanish issues published bimonthly.

Past and current issues: <http://www.euflegt.efi.int/portal/newsletter/>

Subscribe online at: <http://news.efi.int/newsletter/subscribe>

Training films

	English	French	Spanish
Illegal Logging: Why enter a VPA?	http://vimeo.com/17949018	Available on DVD at info@euflegt.efi.int	Available on DVD at info@euflegt.efi.int
VPAs: Assuring Legality	http://vimeo.com/17949024	Available on DVD at info@euflegt.efi.int	Available on DVD at info@euflegt.efi.int
VPAs: Involving Stakeholders	http://vimeo.com/17949289	Available on DVD at info@euflegt.efi.int	Available on DVD at info@euflegt.efi.int
VPAs and Changing Markets	http://vimeo.com/17956187	Available on DVD at info@euflegt.efi.int	Available on DVD at info@euflegt.efi.int

Useful links

	English
EU FLEGT Facility website	www.euflegt.efi.int
European Commission DG DEVCO	http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/development-policies/intervention-areas/environment/forestry_intro_en.htm
FLEGT at European Commission DG Environment	http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/flegt.htm
FLEGT Asia at European Commission EuropeAid	http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/asia/regional-cooperation/environment/flegt_en.htm

FLEGT related regulations

	English	French	Spanish
EU FLEGT Action Plan	http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2003:0251:FIN:EN:PDF	http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2003:0251:FIN:FR:PDF	http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2003:0251:FIN:ES:PDF
FLEGT regulation	http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2005:347:0001:0006:EN:PDF	http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2005:347:0001:0006:FR:PDF	http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2005:347:0001:0006:ES:PDF
FLEGT implementing regulation	http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2004:0515:FIN:EN:PDF	http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2004:0515:FIN:FR:PDF	http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2004:0515:FIN:ES:PDF
EU Timber Regulation	http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:295:0023:0034:EN:PDF	http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:295:0023:0034:FR:PDF	http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:295:0023:0034:ES:PDF

Annex D: Evaluation of the 8th FLEGT Annual Coordination Meeting, 2013

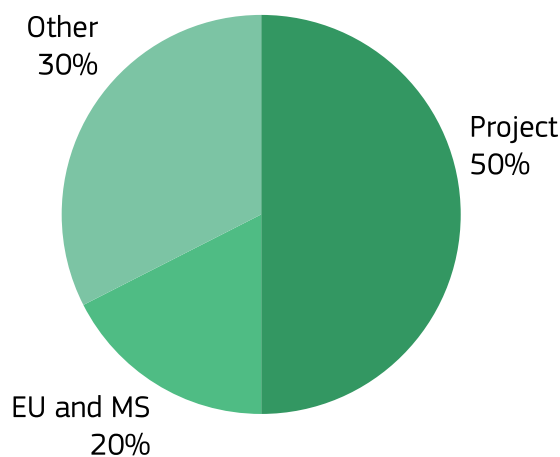
Participants were asked to complete an evaluation of the Conference. Nearly 100 evaluation forms were completed. The form asked participants to rate their overall satisfaction with the meeting, and whether it responded to their objectives. They were also asked to rate each session individually. In the second part of the evaluation, participants were also invited to highlight issues of importance that were not addressed, and to make recommendations for the next meeting. There was also the opportunity to comment on overall logistics, and translation services.

The FLEGT team have recorded the results of the evaluation. Some observations:

- Over 90% of respondents had a positive (58%) or very positive (33%) experience of the meeting. Only 9% of responses with a 'negative' reaction to the meeting were recorded. There were no respondents who rated their experience as 'very negative'. Similar results were recorded for participants responding on whether the meeting met their objectives: 56% responded 'positive', 14% 'negative' and 30% 'very positive'.
- Responses to the individual plenary sessions reflected similar results. The most common rating tended to be 'positive' (range from 47%-68%), the next most likely to be 'very positive' (21%-35%), then 'negative' (range from 8%-27%) and finally 'very negative' (range from 0%-5%). This pattern was the repeated for all but one session.
- Respondents reacted most positively to the breakout sessions (particularly group 1 on FLEGT VPA implementation and group 3 on Preparing for a FLEGT Action Plan Review). The Session on Deforestation also received a notably positive reaction.
- Where respondents were asked to say what was missing from the meeting, and to make recommendations for future meetings, a range of responses were received. The most common suggestions were about the FLEGT meeting giving a greater practical focus – such as challenges of implementation, and lessons learned from individual countries. This category accounted for more than 20% of suggestions. Other common themes were wider participation, more private sector focus, logistical improvements, and more opportunities for interaction. Asked to respond on the translation, nearly 87% of respondents found it useful.
- Recommendations, observations and ratings from participants are extremely useful to the organisers, and we thank for participants for taking the time to complete the evaluation forms. Meeting organisers will take the results of this evaluation into account in preparation for the 9th FLEGT Annual Coordination meeting, and further meetings.

Annex E: Detailed evaluation results

Almost exactly 100 response sheets were completed. Respondents were asked to identify which group they represented. These can be categorised as: i) representatives from projects; ii) representatives from EU Institutions (HQ and Delegations) and Member States; and, iii) representatives from other groups. The breakdown of completed evaluation forms received, by group was as follows:¹



Quantitative Results - Overall Satisfaction

Respondents were asked a series of questions on their overall satisfaction with the meeting, whether their objectives were

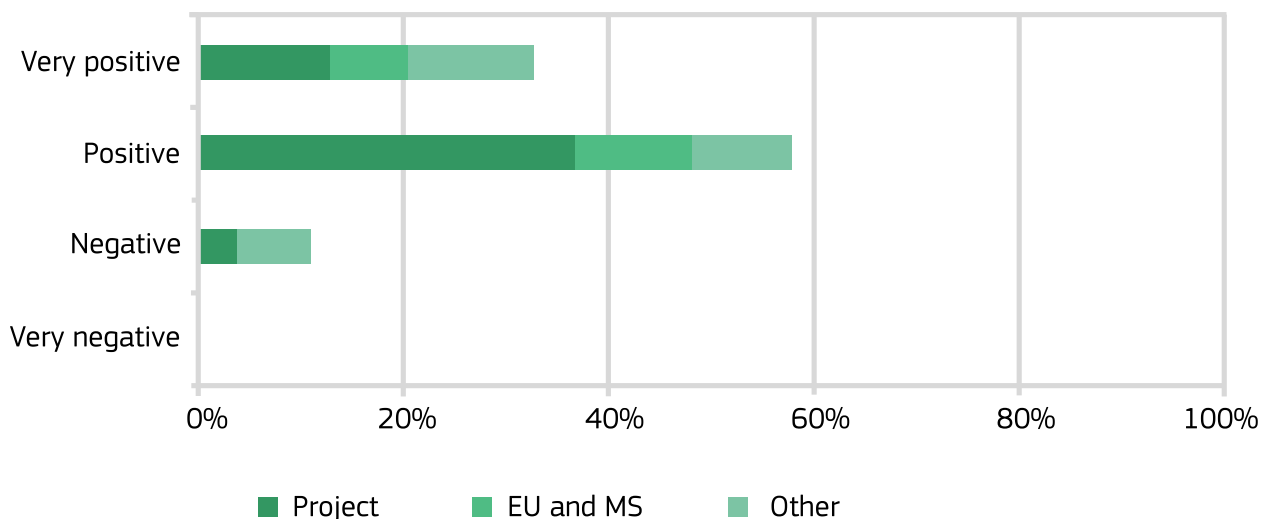
¹ In some cases, results are presented so that the proportion of responses attributable to each group is visible. In other cases, the results are presented without a breakdown of different groups' responses, to avoid unnecessary complexity.

met, and were asked to rate each session. Answers were graded on a four point scale from 'very negative' to 'negative' to 'positive' to 'very positive'.

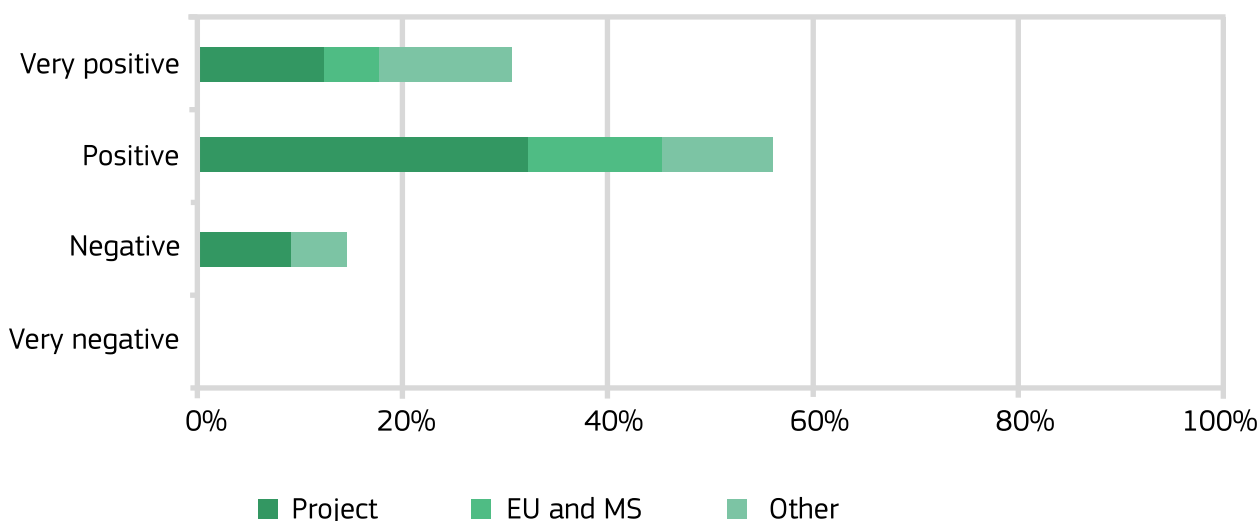
Over 90% of respondents had a positive (58%) or very positive (33%) experience of the meeting. Only 9% of responses were negative. The 'project' group's responses were highest (in proportional and absolute terms) in the 'positive' category (over half of the overall 58% 'positive' figure). The 'other' group's responses were more polarised, with the highest number of responses in the 'very positive' category (representing over one third of the overall 33% 'very positive' figure); but also the most number of responses in the 'negative' category – both in proportional and absolute terms (representing two thirds of the overall 9% 'negative' figure). The EU and Member States group did not give any 'negative' responses, with the most common response as positive (around one quarter of the overall 58% 'positive' figure).

Similarly, around 90% of respondents gave a positive (56%) or very positive (30%) response to the question of whether the meeting responded to their objectives. 14% of respondents responded with a negative. Similarly to the previous questions, the 'project' gave the highest number of responses in the 'positive' category (over half of the overall 56% total), slightly more than half. Unlike the previous questions, the 'project' group had the most number of responses in the 'negative' category (over half of the total 14%). Like the previous question, the 'other' group gave the highest number of responses, both in proportional and absolute terms, in the 'very positive' category (representing nearly half of overall 31% 'very positive' figure). As per the previous question, EU and MS group did not give any 'negative' responses, but proportionally responses were concentrated in the 'positive' category.

Overall satisfaction with the meeting - participants were asked to give an overall rating for the meeting.



Overall satisfaction with the meeting – participants were asked to give an overall rating for the meeting.



Quantitative Results – Response to individual sessions

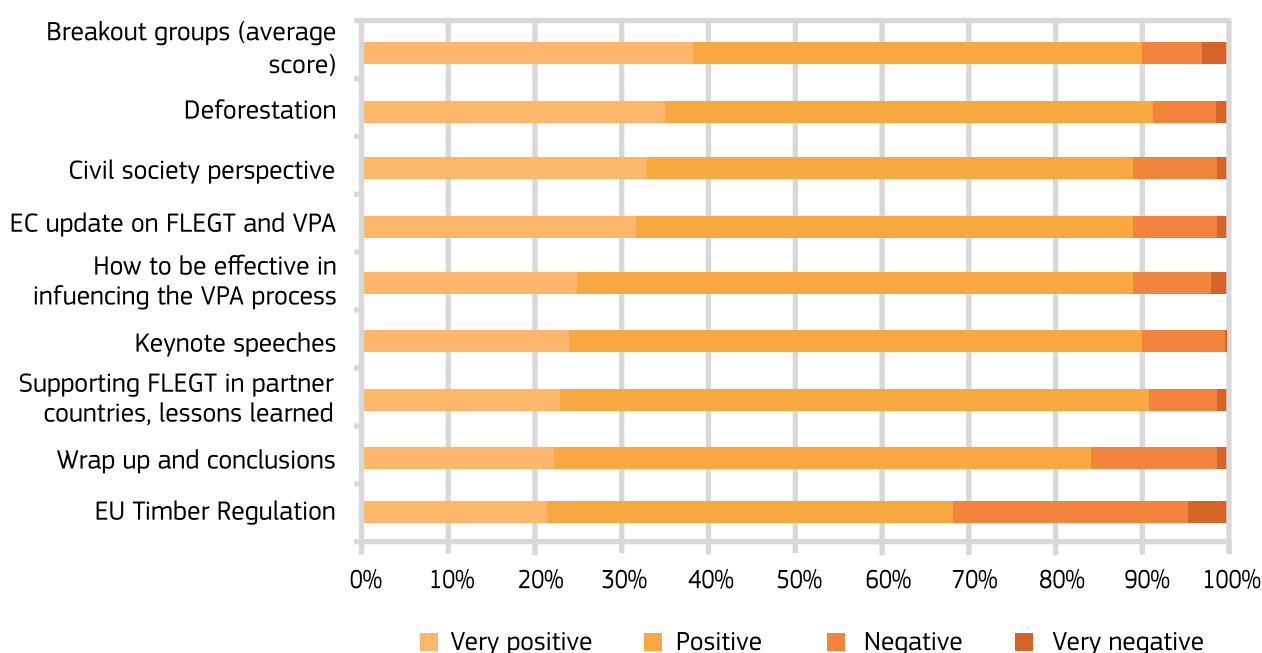
Participants were asked to respond to each session, according to the same four ratings. This yielded the following results.

Analysis suggests that:

- The individual plenary session with the most 'very positive' ratings (35%) was on deforestation. 91% of respondents on this session rated it as 'positive' or 'very positive'. The session with the next most 'very positive' responses was 'civil society perspectives' (34%). An average score for the three breakout groups gave the highest number of 'very positive responses' (37%).

- Each plenary session has a very similar pattern of responses – sessions are commonly rated as 'positive' (range from 47%-68%), the next most likely to be 'very positive' (21%-35%), then 'negative' (range from 8%-27%) and finally 'very negative' (range from 0%-5%).

- The exception to this pattern is the session on the EU Timber Regulation, where there were more 'negative' responses than 'very positive'. This also received the highest number of 'very negative' responses for any plenary session (5%). However, responses that were either 'positive' or 'very positive' still outnumber those which rated the session 'negative' or 'very negative', by two to one (68% compared to 32%).



Breakout Groups

On Thursday morning of the meeting, participants left plenary to split into three separate breakout groups. These were:

- i) FLEGT VPA implementation - How to maintain momentum and promote progress towards full implementation?;
- ii) Experiences of FLEGT activities in non-VPA countries;
- iii) Preparing for a FLEGT Action Plan review.

Different respondents attended different groups, and some reacted more generally to breakout groups (without detailing which group they participated in).

The graph below illustrates the responses in each category for each group, as well as an average overall rating.²

- Breakout groups were among some of the most popular sessions over the course of the FLEGT meeting, with some of the highest amounts of 'very positive' responses. While reactions to the different breakout groups differed, the 'very positive' response averaged 37% (higher than any plenary session).³

² The average includes all respondents, including those that gave a general response without specifying which group they participated in (29%). Of those remaining, 36% participated in Group 1, 14% in Group 2 and 21% in Group 3.

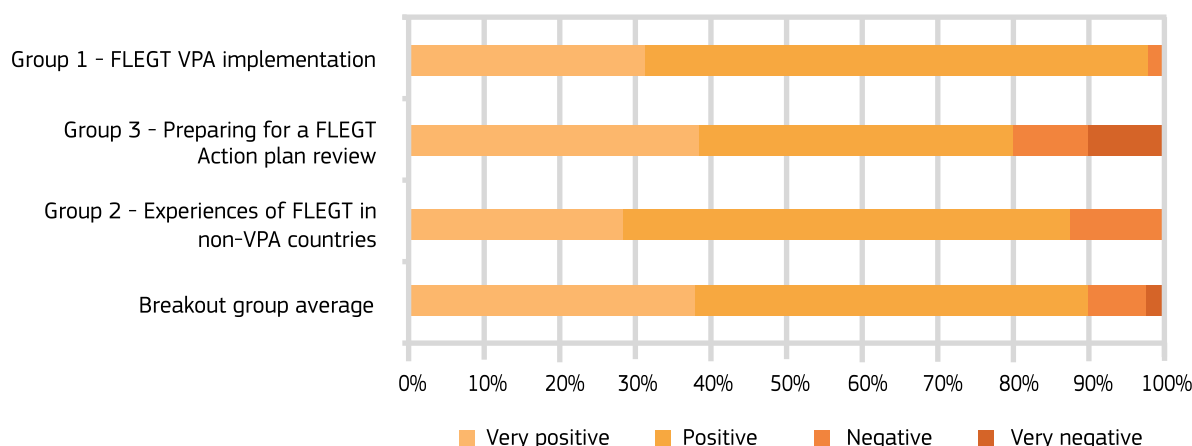
³ As well as combined responses from the different groups, this also included responses from respondents that did not detail which group they were part of but still gave a rating.

- The largest percentage of respondents that rated group 3 as 'very positive' was the highest overall for any session (39%). However, the number of respondents, in absolute terms, that gave a 'very positive' response was in Group 1.
- Generally speaking, Group 1 and Group 3 appeared to have received more positive reactions than Group 2. However, no respondent gave a 'very negative' reaction to group 2, which was not the case for Groups 1 and 3.

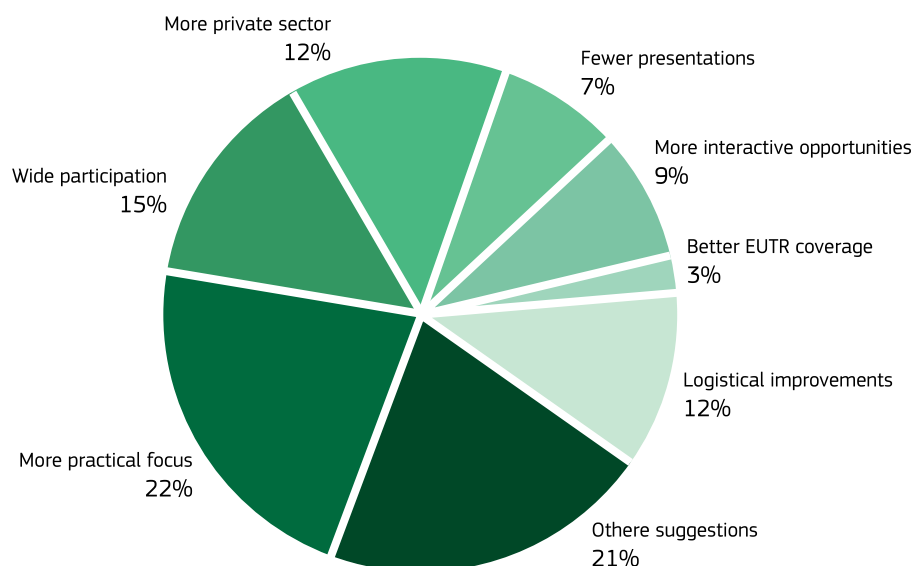
Part 2 – Qualitative Analysis⁴

In the second part of the survey, participants were invited to highlight anything they felt had been missing from the meeting, and to make recommendations. Many suggestions were made – not all were the same, but many fell into broad groups of ways in which participants thought the meeting could be improved. The following chart is a breakdown of the suggestions received, presented by categories. It reflects recommendations from all groups of participants.

⁴ It is worth noting that evaluation forms were completed the end of the second day of the meeting (Thursday 10 October). Responses will therefore not reflect Friday sessions. Recommendations made by respondents relating to more interactive opportunities and/or practical focus, may have been addressed at the regional breakout groups, which were held on Friday 11 October.



Suggestions on what was missing from the meeting, and recommendations



The following is a list of suggestions that made up each category.

Category	List of suggestions
More practical focus	• More time for focus on challenges faced in countries • More experience sharing • Clearer meeting objectives needed • All VPA countries explain challenges of implementation • Recommendations for actors to help improve FLEGT process • Reality check/problem solving • Best practice exchange should be more formalised • Session on challenges to overcome issues or improve VPA process • Consider national, country-based reviews • Consider VPA impacts (negative) at next meeting • Address bottlenecks in issuing of FLEGT certificates in partner countries – especially in VPA signed countries • Specific Session on Timber Legality Assurance System Lesson Learned • Address how momentum be maintained when FLEGT licenses are issued
Wider representation	• Invite relevant officials from signed VPA countries (or those on course for signature – better idea of state of play). • Better representation from VPA countries • China should be represented • More input from monitoring bodies, and competent authorities • Invite relevant officials from VPA countries (or those on course for signature) • More 'south voice'
More private sector focus	• More private sector participation! • Include SMEs
Fewer presentations	• Information overload for newcomers • Shorter Presentations
More interactive Opportunities	• More opportunities for networking • More specialised groups
Better EUTR coverage	• Important area of policy, should be better addressed
Logistical improvements	• More information, more promptly prior to event • Better timekeeping • More help with visa processes
Other suggestions	Meeting could address: • VPA conflicts of interest • VPA and human rights • EPA vs. VPA • More emphasis on FLEGT outside VPA • Regional Approaches • Role of educational institutions • Working conditions in the forest • REDD/FLEGT linkage • Linkage between sustainability and legality (often too much on legality) • A session on key messages to pass between EU and projects, and vice versa • Less time on VPAs • Workshop for recipient of grants • More on capacity building • The ability of VPAs to advance community land rights/address underlying land and planning • More emphasis on action plans, not VPAs • More technical clarity • Effective Collaborations with administrations in the VPA process • Expansion of VPAs • Objective assessment of FLEGT programmes/VPA processes – help or harm SMEs, community forestry and land tenure reform process • Address Root Causes of Deforestation • Discussion on monitoring • More focus on China • Some working group suggestions: preparing for negotiations; CSO; Focus Group • More answers on illegal exploitation needed • Session on how to refuse illegal wood • Protecting safety of Civil Society • Real local civil society involvement • More technical presentations • Meeting should continue annually • Distribute Presentations in week following meeting • More text dissemination (not just PowerPoint)



Field mission in Côte d'Ivoire. Photo: EFI

As illustrated, a wide range of recommendations to improve the meeting were made. From these recommendations, there are common themes. It is clear that participants are keen to see future meetings bring more practical focus to the implementation of VPAs, and to use the occasion of the annual FLEGT meeting to facilitate more best-practice sharing, and focus on individual countries' experiences to draw out lessons learnt (although this may have been addressed by the Friday sessions, which are not accounted for in this evaluation). There is also clearly a desire to see an increased focus (and participation) from the private sector, to widen the scope of participants in the meeting, and to maximise opportunities for more focussed workshops, and networking between participants.

Translation

Participants were asked to comment on the usefulness of the translation. Of those that responded, 87% found it useful, and 3% did not. 10% answered that it was not applicable.

Next Steps

Recommendations, observations and ratings from participants are extremely useful to the organisers, and we thank participants for taking the time to complete these and leave comments. Meeting organisers will take the results of this evaluation into account in preparation for the 9th FLEGT Annual Coordination meeting, and further meetings.

Annex F: Progress in VPA countries

Bernard Crabbé of Directorate General for Development and Cooperation presented updates for Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Guyana, Honduras, Laos, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam. Unprecedented stakeholder participation is creating political space for dialogue and raising awareness about illegal logging and broader deforestation issues. Ambitious planning goes well beyond a simple licensing scheme and toward reaching governance reforms. VPAs are tailored to country realities; help raise the profile of the forest sector; provide leverage for institutions in charge of forestry to engage with other key departments; support the capacity building of civil society, the private sector and government; and support transparency.

There are still challenges. It is a slow process which requires a lot of human resources. VPA countries face capacity constraints, some must take special measures to include all stakeholder groups while others are overcoming human rights abuses. A VPA is difficult to apply in countries with large volumes of imports or complex supply chains. It is also sometimes difficult to maintain the momentum from negotiation through implementation.

VPA implementing country updates

There are six countries implementing VPAs: Cameroon, Central African Republic, Ghana, Indonesia, Liberia and Democratic Republic of the Congo. They share some general characteristics and some countries have made special progress.

All countries are developing their TLASs. Legal frameworks and legality definitions are clarified and legal reforms are already started. Transparency has been improved and independent monitoring and civil society monitoring have been strengthened. VPA governance structures and joint implementation committees are established in all countries. Countries, along with the EU, are producing joint annual reports.

In Ghana and Liberia, VPAs have paved the way for increased accountability in the forest sector. In Ghana, new policies have been agreed upon that address illegal logging in the domestic market. Stakeholders in several countries have experienced better dialogue on governance issues, as, for example, with the forest law reform in Cameroon. And Indonesia and the EU completed the first full evaluation of a TLAS.

The existing challenges are the following:

- Maintaining stakeholder engagement
- Developing systems, which takes time due to the complexity behind licences
- Dealing with increased pressure to deliver fast results, since the EU Timber Regulation has entered into force

- Securing resources to build capacity and systems
- Integrating the domestic market

The following country-specific updates include the date when VPA negotiations concluded, milestones achieved, challenges and next steps.

Ghana - 20 November 2009

Ghana was the first country to conclude a VPA, but there was some loss of momentum during implementation. But a new minister at the lead ministry brought in a new dynamic. The wood tracking system under development is advancing well and operators are testing the system. The legislature has enacted VPA enabling legislation, but the drafting of broader legislation has halted. There is now a new Timber Validation Department, which handles internal auditing of the TLAS. Consultations and tests of the legality verification protocols are set to begin soon. An independent monitor has been recruited, but the position is not yet operational. A joint working group is developing a VPA impact monitoring framework. They have agreed upon domestic market measures including a public procurement policy. The Government of Ghana's communication efforts have intensified. They held two events in London (28 October) and Brussels (30 October) that aimed to inform the private sector about progress in legality verification and when the EU market can expect FLEGT-licensed timber from Ghana. CSOs set the standard for stakeholder participation in negotiations, but interest has waned during the implementation phase.

The next joint steering group meeting was to take place the week of 18 November 2013.



Stakeholders meeting in Ghana. Photo: FAO

Cameroon - 6 September 2010

Cameroon has adopted enabling legislation for FLEGT licensing, but broader forest legislation is still under review. The national multistakeholder technical committee is established and functioning. Certification schemes were assessed against the legality verification standard. After the first project for a wood tracking system did not progress, a more comprehensive system incorporating legality verification has been designed and new support is being recruited. The independent auditor unit is operational, but as the TLAS is not ready, they will assess forest title allocations and provide baseline assessments for seized timber.

The Government and CSOs are advancing their joint efforts on corruption measures and transparency. CSOs continue to raise concerns about forest conversion, oil palm and mining.

The next joint implementation committee was to meet 12 and 13 November 2013.

Democratic Republic of the Congo - 17 May 2010

The Democratic Republic of the Congo ratified the VPA, which has entered into force, and held its first joint implementation committee meeting in April 2013. The JIC established mechanisms for working and for engaging stakeholders. The JIC agreed on the annual work plan and is using it to oversee implementation. The Government is drafting a new version of the Forest Law with support from FAO and the French development agency Agence française de Développement (AFD). Legality verification procedures are established and field-tested. The communication plan is prepared and the website is available. The pilot traceability project gave useful results, more work on the legality assurance system (LAS) development has been scoped and there are ongoing negotiations with a new contractor. As implementation continues, stakeholders in the Democratic Republic of the Congo see that capacity building is necessary for state and non-state actors.

The next joint implementation committee meeting was to have taken place at the end of November 2013.

Liberia - 27 July 2011

Forestry continues to be a flagship sector for the country's reconstruction after the civil war. Liberia is in the final stages of ratifying a VPA. Regulations have been drafted, including a draft regulation for Private Use Permits (PUPs) after the abuse of PUPs was reported and the Government organised an independent investigation. A new land rights policy was approved in May 2013. A VPA support unit has been established. The legality verification function including traceability has been outsourced; full mobilisation is scheduled this year. Political leadership must respond to many competing demands and the forest sector is still lacking capacity. As part of the Government response to the PUP issue, the FDA Board was dissolved and has not yet been reconstituted and the FDA director is continuing in a temporary post.

The next joint implementation meeting will have taken place the week of 11 November 2013.

Indonesia - September 2013

Indonesia and the EU signed a VPA in September 2013 and ratification is underway. An EU-Indonesia expert team assessed Indonesia's operator-based national certification scheme (SVLK) before ratification and issued recommendations to improve systems to meet the jointly agreed standards prescribed in the VPA. The team will present the assessment

results to the first joint implementation committee. The SVLK auditing system is operational with national coverage planned through a phased approach. Indonesian timber exports to the EU increased as EU operators used SVLK documents to help fulfil due diligence obligations under the EU Timber Regulation. The Government and private sector associations have carried out extensive communication efforts to inform markets of the benefits of SVLK certification. As SVLK roll-out continues, the challenge remains to extend SVLK coverage to a critical mass of small operators, many of them working in the furniture sector.

Central African Republic - 28 November 2011

The Central African Republic is experiencing civil conflict and the political situation has halted all formal action. Nevertheless the national committee steering VPA implementation continues to function and EU support for the process is in place. Support to CSOs continues whenever possible. When VPA implementation can begin again, the key issues will be:

- Capacity building for government and non-government actors
- Coordinating with Cameroon on FLEGT-license issuance
- Developing the LAS
- Drafting and enacting enabling legislation

VPA negotiating countries

Nine countries are preparing to negotiate or are negotiating VPAs. Each country update includes the date when activities began and a summary of milestones and challenges.

Thailand- Started in 2013

Thailand and the EU agreed to open negotiations in April 2013. They have begun work on the legality definition, supply chains and stakeholder consultations. The first joint experts meeting was to have been held in November 2013 to support work on defining legality. The first formal negotiation session is planned for the end of 2013. From the outset mobilising concerned stakeholders is high on the agenda. Since Thailand is a regional processing hub, one issue the VPA must handle is imports. Another issue is rubber wood production, which is defined as an agricultural commodity. Thailand is also looking to clarify laws and policies that affect smallholders and community forestry.

Laos - Started in 2012

The Government of Laos organised a multistakeholder workshop in November 2012, and expert missions and a national workshop in 2013. Work has begun at the national level to organise the negotiation structure and assign responsibilities to prepare for the first negotiation session. The main challenges include civil society participation, human rights, land-use and large-scale forest area conversion. Vietnam is an important destination for Laos timber exports.

Cote d'Ivoire - Started in 2012

The first negotiation session and field visit was organised in June 2013. Cote d'Ivoire established a national committee for negotiations with representatives from the offices of the president and prime minister, five ministries, the private sector, civil society and traditional authorities. National discussions are ongoing on the legality definition and the scope of timber products that the VPA will cover. Cote d'Ivoire has identified some challenges: forest cover is shrinking, the voice of CSOs

need to be stronger, the timber sector is set up for harvesting and processing rather than for sustainably, and forest law needs to be revised to match current standards for sustainable forest management.

The next face-to-face talks will be organised in early 2014 and the next negotiation session is set for July 2014.

Guyana - Started in December 2012

Negotiations in Guyana are advancing according to the agreed roadmap. The last negotiations were held in Brussels in July 2013. Discussions focus on defining legality and on the LAS. A broad national consultation process is planned. The VPA work is linked to Guyana's REDD+ initiative. Guyana's main challenges are: limited trade with EU countries, civil society participation in negotiations, and integrating Amerindian requirements for logging on their lands.

The next negotiation session is set for March 2014. Technical progress is reviewed with bi-monthly meetings using video conferencing.

Honduras - Started in 2013

Negotiations began in Brussels in October 2013. The Government of Honduras has said their main motivation for engaging in a VPA is forest sector governance. Negotiators are discussing the legality definition and the scope of the VPA. CSOs and the private sector are participating. The main challenges are: security; decentralisation and its effects on laws, policies and enforcement; indigenous people's rights; and limited trade with the EU.

The next technical session is set for April 2014 and the next negotiation session is to take place in Honduras in June 2014.

Democratic Republic of the Congo - Started in December 2012

VPA negotiations have new momentum. There have been six technical meetings since late 2012. Discussions have focused on LAS, defining legality and artisanal logging. Stakeholders in Kinshasa are active, but there is limited provincial engagement. The challenges are many: artisanal logging; outreach to provinces, large-scale land allocation and forest conversion; limited capacity and limited provincial resources; and a complex web of international initiatives.

Two new negotiators will have held bilateral talks in November 2013 and the next negotiation session is expected in early 2014.

Vietnam - Started in 2012

The last negotiation session was held in Brussels in November 2012. Stakeholder consultation continues on the timber legality definition. Experts are developing the LAS. Methods to verify the legality of imported timber are under discussion, as Vietnam is a major timber processing hub that imports wood from many corners of the world.

There is no date yet set for the next negotiation session.

Malaysia - Started 2013

Negotiations started in the first half of 2013 by video conference. National elections in Malaysia were held in May 2013 and a new Minister took office at the lead ministry, the Ministry of Plantation Industries and Commodities (MPIC). The LAS for both Sabah and Peninsular Malaysia is in the final stages. Sarawak maintains its position of wanting to join the scheme later. Negotiations are also in the final stages.

Gabon - Started 2011

Representatives from Gabon and the EU last met in a negotiation session in October 2011 and negotiations have not continued since.



Lluís Riera, Director of DG Development and Cooperation, and José Trinidad Suazo Bulnes, Minister-Director of the National Conservation Institute of Honduras (ICF), signing an aide-mémoire. Photo: EFI.

Annex G: Questions and answers from Sessions 1, 2, 3 and 5

Session 1a - 10 Years of the EU Action Plan

Does FLEGT address the issue of legally valid licences issued after questionable practices?

Engaging CSOs after VPAs enter into force is a good way to monitor potential corruption. Independent actors and CSOs can play a role in monitoring compliance as they have in Indonesia and Cameroon. It is up to CSOs to apply pressure to support anticorruption principles. Independent audits, monitoring and transparency policies are the checks and balances that inhibit corruption.

Does the European Commission intend to secure resources to support VPAs for middle-income countries such as Colombia as well as for low-income countries?

It is true that the European Commission Agenda for Change is intended to focus on the poorest countries, but FLEGT is a flagship of the European Commission's development policy, which means its scope is more broad. We are aware that vulnerable groups in Colombia are affected by illegal deforestation. We have financed some projects to tackle this issue. Moreover the EU FAO FLEGT Programme has reinforced its regional office to support countries in South and Central America and EFI shares information on illegal logging to countries that are not negotiating or implementing a VPA.

Is it possible to have access to more information about actions concerning the Chinese timber market and other non-EU countries?

The European Commission has a high-level dialogue with China. Two years ago a FLEGT conference was held in China. The European Commission has also had numerous discussions on FLEGT with the US.

all EU Member State competent authorities in one or two years, but this will depend on the resources of each competent authority. It was suggested that a database be created of the kinds of timber imported to the EU. Uniform implementation is important as it protects the market.

Concerning procedures for handling seizure of products deemed illegal, isn't it better to destroy the illegal goods? Will uniform procedures be followed throughout Europe?

Belgium prohibits trade in seized illegal timber and discusses possible solutions with the trader. In Belgium, destruction is the only solution because selling seized material at auction and using the funds to finance specific projects is not an option. If operators are aware that the timber was illegal, they will be fined and the authorities must conduct an enquiry that results in penalties. Sometimes it is difficult for national authorities to rely on remote and unofficial sources of information.

Will the European Commission and national authorities accept information from CSOs and not only from government representatives?

EU Member States are already checking operators using information received from CSOs.

The EU Timber Regulation is not a border control measure but rather a control implemented after timber is placed on EU markets. The beauty of the DDS requirements is that they are flexible. A DDS cannot be standardised or based on a checklist. EU Member States have already agreed to participate in a committee to coordinate the application of the EU Timber Regulation so that competent authorities can exchange information regularly.

Session 1b - EU Timber Regulation

Is the EU considering creating a task force focused on consistent application of the EU Timber Regulation by Member States to consolidate uniform regulation at entry points?

The European Commission is selecting monitoring organisations (MOs) and in the meantime supporting EU Member States with training courses and technical assistance. The EU needs to intervene so that the 28 EU Member States apply the legislation consistently and harmonise sanctions. For uniform implementation, national competent authorities must check operators consistently. Ideally all operators will be checked by

Session 2 - Supporting FLEGT in partner countries: Lessons learnt

In the example of Cameroon, how can negative reports be openly shared without pitting one supplier against another? Could a panel of experts in forestry issues serve as an itinerant court to preside in areas where there have been allegations? Would that solve the logistics and information sharing issues? Is there an opportunity for community forest management?

FODER always verifies with forest managers that the denunciations are true and verifiable, but there have been some allegations that were not based on real data. Although Cameroon is a pioneer country with the VPA, community forest

management is still a challenge. Other interventions might suit Cameroon's situation better, such as private equity investments that could lead in a more entrepreneurial direction. Despite the lack of information and training of the judicial corps, it could prove effective to explore sharing knowledge and experience with some representatives of the judicial system.

In Liberia, companies were interested at the beginning in getting involved in the VPA process, but once negotiations concluded they were less interested or even tried to block it because they saw FLEGT as a threat to profit. How does TFT approach companies to discuss profitability and legality going hand in hand?

Private sector interests have always been relevant. The way to frame the discussion is to bring together groups of buyers and producers in the EU and outside the EU. The private sector does not always want to be the first to react and the challenge is to get the first business leaders to come on board. Then other companies will follow.

How does FODER see the role of civil society?

The Government of Cameroon recognises the important role of civil society, and the forestry administration accepts that CSOs have a part to play. As for political will, some parties are more conservative, others more liberal. Civil society plays an important role in keeping public and private interests separate. Also the forestry administration in Cameroon is not big enough to handle the large area they must cover and therefore they need the help of CSOs.

Has FODER considered working with the National Anti-corruption Commission, since communities do not have the opportunity to engage in that process due to lack of financing?

FODER has received some funds for this purpose and intervened accordingly. CSOs need time to respond, so that input comes from other sources, not just from government. Security protocols are needed so that no one is put at risk for doing their job.

Session 3 - How to be effective in influencing the VPA process and contributing to its implementation

Robert Simpson as moderator said that better coordination is needed to mobilise funding and in the implementation process.

How is the Government of Cameroon involved in calls for proposals?

On some initiatives the Government leads. In Cameroon forest control is highly relevant and public administration plays an important role in validating documents. Cameroon has interim measures while FLEGT licensing systems are under development. A control process has been developed with a guiding

document to be used by the controller and the controlled company.

Session 5 - Evolution of tropical forests since 1990 and analysis of deforestation drivers

Was the shifting of cultivation included in the analysis?

The data of the analysis do not include duration.

Has a correlation ever been made between land tenure and deforestation?

The idea is to look at land managed by the state or by private companies. This is an interesting idea, but until now no analysis has shown a connection.

Illegal exploitation is not the only cause of deforestation that we must consider. Some laws are not adapted.

Is there also a prospective analysis?

It could be useful especially in Central Africa where other drivers will affect deforestation, namely mining and construction. At the moment, there are no prospective analyses.



FLEGT week participants Marc Vandenhaute, FAO; Bruno Portier, IDLGroup FLEGT facilitator in Congo; Laurence Wete Soh, FODER; Andrew Sutherland, IDLGroup; and Nathalia Dukhan, Global Witness. Photo: European Commission

Annex H: Breakout group discussions from Session 4

Breakout Group 1 - VPA Implementation

The breakout groups discussed two questions.

1. How can stakeholders in countries negotiating a VPA prepare for effective implementation during negotiation?

- Communicate the potential of VPA negotiations for stakeholder group interests.
- Assess local legislation and consider options for revision during the negotiation phase.
- Double-check that each indicator in the legality definitions has a feasible verifier in line with the capacity of the enforcing agency. If a verifier cannot be found, the verification process faces long delays, which are best to avoid.
- Conduct a step wise pilot test of TLAS elements during the negotiation phase and discuss and address the issue of non-compliance in the context of the negotiations.
- The general context should be carefully and thoroughly analysed.
- From the beginning involve all departments, ministries and agencies affected by a VPA.
- Ensure efficient cooperation and good communication among authorities of different central administrations and among local and central administrations.
- Grant local authorities access to available information.
- As early as possible, ensure the legal framework is harmonised.
- In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which has ratified the VPA, the forestry code must be changed because the criteria used by the bodies issuing certificates must match the Congolese legality grid. Policies in other sectors need to be revised, including mining, tax and biodiversity regulations.
- Ensure that all ministries involved in VPA negotiations are fully participating; in some cases it has been difficult to engage ministries that are not leading.
- Clarify sanctions and penalties to better outline the consequences of non-compliance during the negotiations.
- Anticipate the effect of corruption on VPA implementation.

2. How to maintain momentum during implementation?

- Momentum can be maintained ensuring clear and transparent communication. Cameroon lost the dynamic of the VPA from the beginning mainly because of a lack of communication among local administrations.
- Emphasise the advantages of having a fully implemented VPA to stakeholders in VPA countries to foster their engagement during implementation.
- Exchange lessons learnt among countries and share best practices to ease VPA implementation in each country and allow each to benefit from the other experiences.
- Engage civil society and private sector and mark the achievement of milestones to regain stakeholder interest.

- Identify a better use of limited governmental attention and improve information sharing.
- Keep stakeholders motivated by sharing successful stories, and by communicating the state of work and key milestones.
- Ensure that the joint implementation committee supports all actors and keeps everyone mobilised in the implementation process.

At the end of the discussion, Alexander Hinrichs summarised four key factors for an effective and sustainable VPA:

1. Consistent sectoral policies
2. Stakeholders participating throughout the process
3. Reality check – testing the TLAS requirements to be sure they are practical
4. Timing and identifying the right priorities

Breakout Group 2 - FLEGT and non-VPA countries

Discussion on Colombia

Even without a VPA, Colombia can monitor and modernise the internal market, which is more important than the export market. As the EU market is not significant, what can a VPA offer to Colombia beyond what Colombia can already achieve alone?

A VPA offers incentives to facilitate the process of putting stakeholders together, but it seems that the private sector, the stakeholders and the MOE are already working together in Colombia. Is there a demand for legal wood in Colombia as well?

The Corporación Autónoma Regional de Risaralda (CARDER) and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) worked with the timber employers federation and convened the transport sector, agricultural representatives, universities and other actors to develop a Pact for Legal Timber, which is part of the National Development Plan.

The Pact for Legal Timber is comprehensive since it covers the domestic market and about 85% of timber production. Given the relative importance of the domestic market it was suggested that a public procurement policy for legal timber would have more impact on promoting demand for legal timber than a VPA.

Some studies indicate that Colombia may become a net timber importer in a few years. And we in Colombia must be sure that we can verify the legality of our imports.

Laws and policies in the Latin American region have often been achieved with help from foreign aid. The results in Colombia are different. The country is going towards legality verification efficiently, involving all relevant stakeholders and with lower costs than a VPA would incur.

It is important to involve the population and civil society, especially – as in Colombia – indigenous people.

Discussion on other countries

When evaluating other mechanisms besides the VPA, we must be careful about grey areas and governance because the abuse of people can be worse if the system is informal. A solution could be to see how to transform informal practices into formal ones in a simpler way without adding complications.

It is all about balancing competing interests when formalising. If SMEs and big companies must prepare the same documentation, small businesses are hurt disproportionately.

Sometimes there is reluctance to discuss a VPA for sovereignty reasons: a VPA can be seen as a threat or as the EU intervening in internal affairs. To avoid such misconceptions, foreign governments need clear explanations of the real significance of a VPA. A VPA offers tools to improve governance, supports exports and develops the domestic market. It can also link with other initiatives including REDD+.

The FLEGT process is quite new for Bolivia. The Government has yet to take a position, and it is aware that timber exports to the EU are just USD 20 million yearly. What can the EU offer in terms of finance and expertise to those countries not interested in engaging in a VPA, without scaring the local governments in terms of proceedings and cost?

A catalyst is important to help push a VPA, especially considering that for many countries the internal market is more relevant than exports to the EU.

Breakout group 3 – The EU Action Plan review

What logical or conceptual framework should be used?

- It is important to lock-in sustainability in timber management. Sustainability ought to be viewed as a process of change in which the exploitation of resources is made consistent with future and present needs.
- Consider the best practices from the Tackling the Underlying Cause of Illegal Logging programme. Avoid complex approaches to designing the review framework. Instead focus on the attribution issue.
- We need a theory of change to frame the review.
- The Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI) is drafting a theory of change with two components: capacity building and adequacy. The theory of change will be used for consulting with stakeholders and further on, the results will be redirected back into a logical framework. A key aspect of the theory of change is the deliberative process, covering a series of events for which stakeholders are getting together. The theory of change will be published at the end of this month in RRI's annual review.
- The use of legality would simplify the framework.
- Use analysis of the underlying causes of illegal logging in the quest to tackle the root of the problem.

- Efforts should be oriented toward defining the objectives of the Action Plan.
- It is crucial to assess the benefits of having an Action Plan – the Action Plan as a useful instrument.

Who should be consulted?

- Encourage different sets of players to define the important aspects of the Action Plan. This would call for a careful selection of players.
- Conduct a multistakeholder assessment separately from the government assessment.
- Actors in VPA countries need to be consulted and the assessment should include a wide variety of views such as of trade actors and implementation actors from the EU.
- Has the Progress Report led to a change in the EU Member States? This has not yet been assessed. The progress report was helpful in securing FLEGT support from the European Commission.
- Do not forget the private sector.

What methods should be used (questionnaire, semi-structured interviews)?

- Include a desk-review of assessments of the Action Plan. The exercise should be appropriately sized and targeted.
- Avoid numbers such as areas of deforestation and other detailed metrics, but rather focus on graphics, illustrations and stories of country experiences.

What other sources of information are available and what amount of work might be needed to fill information gaps?

- Public procurement policies, designed to increase demand for legal and sustainable timber and timber products, were adopted in several European countries. Can this aspect be replicated?
- Non-successful stories are difficult to share due to their sensitivity. But, non-successful stories are opportunities to identify where things went wrong and can offer useful lessons.

What criteria or evidence should be used to assess which aspects are less relevant or no longer relevant?

- What did we set out to achieve? Did we get there?
- Since 2003, other drivers are growing rapidly. To what extent can the Action Plan affect trending drivers?
- The demand for agricultural land, for example, is increasing and the Action Plan would evolve to address the needs of stakeholders in the sector.
- The continuously shrinking trade in Europe ought to be included in the review.

What aspects of the external environment which affect the Action Plan have changed in 10 years and should be taken into account?

- The FLEGT Progress Report offers essential insight on what has been and what needs to be achieved, and recommendations for future action are not considered a European Commission action plan, but rather an umbrella for actions by EU Member States.

What matters should be considered in guiding the assessment of future priorities?

- [There were no responses to this question.]



