

FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreements – Achievements as of October 2014

Implementation Countries										
Country	1. Participatory decision making	2. Legislative and policy reform as identified in VPA	3. Timber legality assurance system	4. Trade and FLEGT licences	5. Domestic market measures	6. Transparency	7. Communication	8. Institutional strength and capacity	9. VPA monitoring structures	10. Broader reforms and effects on other sectors
<b>Cameroon</b>	The multi-stakeholder structure defined in the VPA meets regularly prior to JIC meetings. Stakeholders choose their own representatives. The Joint Monitoring Committee ( <i>Comité Conjoint de Suivi – CCS</i> ) has established Multi-stakeholder Working Groups allowing for national decision making to lead on the preparation of work of the CCS on some areas.	Enabling FLEGT legislation, including not only the legal basis for the TLAS, is almost complete. Law reform has been ongoing and awaits a decision by the Prime Minister.	The legal basis for the TLAS is complete. The Independent Auditor is in place and is finalizing assessment of the legality of titles. A service provider will develop software for the Forest Information Management System (SIGIF) to address both legality and traceability verification. Certificates of compliance with environmental and labour legislation are being delivered, and will be followed by the delivery of legality certificates.	Procedures for the management of FLEGT licenses have been approved and published as a regulation. They should apply once the SIGIF is operational	Lumber titles have been allocated to 60 small forest operators throughout Cameroon. Piloting work in setting up wood clusters has started in three localities. SMEs have started to organise with a view to defending their interests.	A dedicated website for information listed in the transparency annex includes a wide range of information as demanded in the VPA. Draft procedures for updating information have been developed and are pending distribution and approval by the MINFOF.	A communication plan exists. Websites, reports, and press articles are among the communication tools being used to reach a variety of audiences.	Work is ongoing within all stakeholder groups to improve capacity on forest governance. Capacity is improving in all areas related to forest governance, although weaknesses remain.	The Joint Implementation Committee (JIC and Council) meets regularly. JIC agendas cover the broad list of forest governance commitments outlined in the VPA, extending beyond technical discussions on the setting up of the TLAS. The JIC has mandated a multi-stakeholder sub-group to develop a VPA monitoring framework. Annual Reports have been published since 2010.	VPA dialogue has succeeded in making a strategy to fight corruption a topic for bilateral exchange and work between Cameroon and the EU.
<b>Republic of Congo</b>	Formal multi-stakeholder national governance structures for the VPA, the Congolese side of the Joint Implementation Committee (CCM) and a Technical Secretariat (ST), are in place. Civil society and private sector select their own representatives to these structures. However, the CCM and ST do not meet as planned.	Some VPA commitments have already been addressed: A new law on the rights of indigenous peoples was promulgated in 2011; a draft revised forestry law taking into account VPA commitments is ready to be submitted to Parliament; and work continues on the implementing regulations. In addition, a final version of a new forest policy, validated by stakeholders, is pending approval by the Presidency.	The TLAS is under development with a focus on contracting a developer for a national data management system to monitor timber legality and traceability, as well as the revision of verification procedures. Independent observation by civil society has functioned since 2007, and from 2014 is fully carried out by a local NGO.	Trade in FLEGT-licensed timber has not started as the underlying TLAS is still under development.	The new draft forest law, validated by stakeholders in June 2014, creates a new permit type for 'domestic exploitation' meant exclusively for supplying the domestic market in semi-industrial transformed products.	Congo has started to make information available as foreseen in Annex X through the <a href="http://apvflegtcongo.info">apvflegtcongo.info</a> website.	Significant efforts have been made to communicate the VPA process to the different stakeholders across Congo since early 2012. A dedicated website ( <a href="http://www.apvflegtcongo.info">http://www.apvflegtcongo.info</a> ) provides information for domestic and international audience.	A number of initiatives have contributed to strengthening the capacity of the main stakeholders (the Forest Legality and Traceability Unit - CLFT, civil society and private sector), but further efforts are still needed.	The Joint Implementation Committee has been formally constituted, but its function as a joint oversight and management mechanism can be improved. The joint working group (GTC) convenes every 1-2 months and provides an oversight mechanism at the technical level.	Forest operators have been made aware of the EUTR and the Ministry (MEFDD) has sought to understand the difficulties they may be facing. FLEGT participatory process and mechanisms have served as a model for the REDD+ process.
<b>Central African Republic</b>	Participatory structures were created and regularly used through negotiations and implementation, even during the ongoing political crisis.	Stakeholders have agreed the priority reform commitments as identified in the VPA.	Before the political crisis, the government, through the Permanent Technical Secretariat (STP), started work on verification procedures and how such verification would be structured across the different ministries. In addition, some testing of private sector compliance capacity took place to guide capacity building priorities. Reflection on TLAS development priorities – including elements of the system,	Timber exports to neighbouring Sahel countries, including sawn wood processed by the informal sector, have continued during the current conflict.	The domestic market is not covered by the TLAS and the system to be developed will need to ensure separation so as not to compromise TLAS integrity.	Transparency in the natural resource sector gained government interest before the crisis, but there has been no movement since.	Communication is taken seriously by CAR and is a focus of financial support	CSO capacity, strengthened during negotiation process, is showing results in implementation related to independent observation and their ability to organize.	The Joint Implementation Committee (CCMO) had one meeting before the conflict started. VPA implementation has been mostly stopped during the conflict and monitoring tools and efforts have not been developed further. However, the STP and civil society have continued to remain engaged, discussing VPA issues and how to maintain national and international interest in CAR forestry. Ministers and	

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			capacity building, procedures to be developed, etc. – helped frame a programme to support TLAS development.						a number of government posts changed and STP has tried to inform newcomers to the portfolio.	
<b>Ghana</b>	Ghana’s approach to multi-stakeholder engagement in VPA negotiations is widely acknowledged as having set the standard for other VPA countries. Although the Government has maintained the inclusion of both civil society and the private sector in a national oversight committee for VPA implementation and has also included these groups as members of the Ghanaian delegation at meetings of the Joint Monitoring and Review Mechanism (Ghana’s JIC), the quality of the deliberative process appears to have declined during implementation.	Ghana’s commitment to using verification of legality as a step towards sustainability meant that there was strong stakeholder support for widening the VPA scope to strengthen sector governance beyond putting systems in place to verify the legality of timber exports to the EU. While the reforms outlined in the VPA may be considered ambitious, the progress made with them indicates the Government’s commitment to seeing them through.	Following an initial failure to deliver a workable IT system to support the Wood Tracking System, FC have made considerable progress since December 2012 with the development of the TLAS, to the extent that the parties agreed to launch a joint assessment of the system in April 2014.	Although Ghana had initially hoped to issue FLEGT licenses by the end of 2011, a joint evaluation completed in August 2014 concluded that there is still work to be completed. When fully developed, the TLAS will track all timber sold on the domestic market as well as exported products. Ghana is also developing procedures for verifying the legality of imported timber.	Since conclusion of negotiations, Ghana has developed and approved new policies, including a Public Procurement Policy, to address the legality of timber supplying the domestic market. The challenges that remain are the development of supporting legislation to enable artisanal millers to access legal sources of timber and the finalisation and implementation of the procurement policy.	Although Ghana’s VPA does not include an annex on transparency, the Government has invited civil society to clarify the information they wish to have access to and in what format. The Government agreed to make all requested information available, with the exception of one item, which required further clarification.	Communication efforts have focused mainly on work to develop systems to enable the issuance of FLEGT licenses. Although this is important, this approach risks undervaluing achievements in other aspects such as the work on the domestic market.	Prior to VPA negotiations, the capacity of Government, private sector and civil society organisations was relatively strong compared to many other VPA countries. The VPA required the creation of new institutional structures within the FC: the Timber Validation Department (TVD) and the Timber Validation Council (TVC), both of which have been established. The training of FC staff is ongoing; the fact that the VPA processes are based on existing systems and control procedures, facilitates the capacity building of both Government and private sector.	The JMRM has proven to be an effective mechanism for oversight of VPA implementation in so far as it has been able to deal effectively with a number of governance challenges that have been brought to its attention.	Although there is strong ownership of the VPA process, there is currently no evidence that it has impacted on processes in other sectors. However, it may be the case that such impacts are not immediately apparent and that a stakeholder survey may identify areas where the FLEGT processes has had some influence.
<b>Liberia</b>	The multi-stakeholder structure as defined in the VPA exists and meets regularly on a monthly basis. Multi-stakeholder deliberations bring together affected and interested stakeholders. To date, Liberia is the only country to have direct representatives from community members in their multi-stakeholder committee overseeing implementation (NMSMC).	Liberia has drafted new regulations for about half the areas that were identified for law reform in the VPA. The stakeholder dialogue on the VPA implementation has identified further needs for regulatory development and harmonization. New commitments have been agreed at the JIC to address these issues.	The legal requirements for timber within the TLAS are established for main timber sources. Additional regulations are under development to cover more sources; upon completion the Legality Matrix will be revised to integrate these requirements. There is a clear institutional structure to implement the TLAS with general verification procedures for verification outlined within the Legality Matrix. The Forest Development Authority (FDA), with the help of SGS, is building up and operationalizing the TLAS. The Ebola crisis resulted in SGS	With the objective of FLEGT licenses in mind, export permits (to be eventually replaced by FLEGT licences) are currently delivered only for timber coming from FMCs, TSCs and CFMAs and compliant with the current chain of custody system. No export permits are issued for uncontrolled timber.	A new Chainsaw Milling Regulation was passed in 2011 to tackle illegality in the domestic market. Efforts are on-going to help the chainsaw loggers, who are the main suppliers of the domestic market, to structure themselves better and to prepare themselves for the inclusion of the domestic market into the TLAS (as a 2nd stage after FLEGT licensing for the export market has started).	Access to some information has improved, by being made available on a rebuilt FDA website, and distribution of paper copies of laws and regulations. A more comprehensive approach for the implementation of the transparency commitments remains to be developed.	Communication and outreach on the VPA and forest governance, especially towards forest communities and informal private sector operators, has so far been mostly led by non-governmental organizations. Recent development of a FDA communication plan for the VPA is expected to improve institutional communication.	The VPA recognizes a large gap between the intended functions prescribed in the legal framework and the capacity of government, private-sector operators and civil society. Significant capacity building measures envisaged in the VPA have been initiated. Government capacity to regulate and verify is improving through the development of the TLAS and the new Liberia Verification Department within FDA. Improvement in civil society capacity to monitor illegalities and social impacts in the forest sector has resulted in tangible law enforcement actions in	The Joint Implementation Committee convenes regularly and serves as a forum to discuss VPA implementation and forest sector challenges. JIC meetings have helped to clarify how to address issues of concern. CSOs have also used the VPA Process to raise concerns over the non-disbursement of forest revenues from central government to the communities. This pressure resulted in an agreement in mid-2014 between Community Forest Development Committees (CFDC) Union and GoL concerning transfer of funds to	A Land Rights Policy, finalized in May 2013, represents a major paradigm shift for land rights, land tenure, land and natural resource governance. Beyond the forest sector, Liberian civil society and affected communities are calling for the Government and two large palm oil concessionaires to address alleged violations of legal and Human Rights principles. The work of the local civil society has been influenced by the VPA Process and related capacity building.

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			temporarily relocating senior management to Accra in August, where development of manuals and procedures has continued, while awaiting clearance to continue in-country					the case of the falsely allocated Private Use Permits. The current Government ban on public gatherings due to the Ebola crisis is preventing planned consultations on draft regulations and monthly stakeholder meetings. Some local NGOs.	the National Benefit Sharing Trust (NBST).	
<b>Indonesia</b>	Multi-stakeholder governance structures have been created as a result of the VPA/SVLK process. Although the functioning and sustainability of some of the structures can still be improved, involving stakeholders in strategic reflection and decision making has become standard in the Ministry of Forestry's procedures on implementing the VPA and its underlying legislation. Civil society and private sector are able to select their own representatives for these structures. Civil society engagement is based on a solid platform, sharing the load and allocating lead responsibilities. Intensive inter-ministerial coordination takes place.	Indonesia's national TLAS is comprehensively described and fully embedded in national legislation. There is no specific provision for legislative & policy reform in the VPA, but Indonesia has strengthened its legal framework since the regulation on its national TLAS was issued in 2009. This includes revisions of specific TLAS regulations, and is linked to the issuance of broader legislation like the Transparency Act or the establishment of an Anti-Corruption Commission.	The Indonesian TLAS ( <i>Sistem Verifikasi Legalitas Kayu/ SVLK</i> ) has been designed, developed and regularly strengthened in a multi-stakeholder process since first introduced in 2009. The TLAS builds on a mandatory certification concept and is applied to all sources of timber and all destination markets. Its enforcement will be mandatory for all operators from 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2015 (related to the products covered in Annex I of the VPA/the Indonesian export regulation). Some elements still need further development. Full implementation at national scale remains a challenge.	FLEGT licensing has not yet started in Indonesia, but issuance of "V-legal" documents for all destination markets based on a step-wise phasing in of timber products started on 1 January 2013. The handling of FLEGT licenses has been tested in both Indonesia and the EU and online access to information on export licenses is already possible for EU Competent Authorities.	The domestic market is included in the VPA. Simplified verification measures, accommodating the lower production risks in this sector, are outlined in the TLAS. However, information on the structure and organization of the operators in this market is still insufficient.	Indonesia is committed to implement transparency measures linked to the VPA and the underlying national Law on Freedom of Information. Implementation challenges are systematically identified through joint TLAS assessments and will have to be addressed before FLEGT licensing can start.	Joint communication by both Parties is identified as essential and tools and tactics are defined. Implementation of a joint communication strategy of the JIC started in late 2014.	Indonesia's capacity to regulate is strong. However, for all actors to achieve sufficient capacity to implement the TLAS is still a challenge. Various important elements of the TLAS are well developed and some targeted capacity building occurs.	VPA monitoring structures are understood and increasingly in place. The JIC is functioning and tentatively agreed on its rules and procedures.	Knock-on effects of the VPA into other sectors are still at an early stage, but some indications of broader governance reforms triggered or influenced by the VPA and related civil society engagement are becoming visible.

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<b>Democratic Republic of Congo</b>	A representative multi-stakeholder Technical Commission has been established but is currently not functioning, due lack of both government funding and a clear commitment from the government following elections.	Discussions on the legality matrix and introduction of a new regulation on community forests make clear the need to clarify other land tenure issues. Provincial level involvement is identified as a key issue for further implementation	The slow process of building legality matrixes has raised a wide range of questions on their operability. Back and forth discussions have helped reaching a consensus on practicality of the first 3 principles of the legality matrix for industrial permits. Although the introduction of planned tracking software failed, the related development and training has contributed to improved operators' and regulators' field practices. An Independent Observer has been appointed and is active.	DRC is far from issuing FLEGT licenses. Current discussions focus on industrial concessions but little progress has been made on improving the reputation of the country's timber business.	The tracking software developed and managed by SGS (now disrupted) includes timber flow control around Kinshasa, one of the two major consumption centres (the other is Kisangani) for informal trade in timber products. This experience, together with the ProFormal study on the artisanal sector, should inform VPA negotiations on how the domestic market can be addressed.	The VPA annex on information to be made public has been presented but not discussed yet in negotiations. This provides a basis for stakeholders to discuss key forest sector information which may contribute to improved transparency and governance in the sector.	A website has been initiated to share information approved by the Technical Commission during the negotiations.	Conflicting requirements concerning central and provincial authorities weaken the capacity of the institutions to work on the ground. Other non-governmental stakeholders use their own channels to build their capacity in order to respond to the VPA expectations.	Negotiations have been moving slowly and are currently stopped because the Technical Commission has no more funding.	
<b>Côte d'Ivoire</b>	Negotiations are helping local actors organise themselves and create an environment of trust between administration, private sector and civil society which were previously not used to working together. A multi-stakeholder negotiation committee ( <i>Comité technique de Négociation – CTN</i> ), established in May 2013, meets at least once a month to prepare CDI's position. Three multi-stakeholder thematic working groups were established in August 2014 under the CTN. The 4 major stakeholder groups (Administration, Civil Society, Private Sector, and Traditional Chiefs) each have nominated representatives on the CTN and working groups. The industry sector tempo-	Deliberations on the legality matrix and the VPA scope have highlighted the need to complete the revision of the Forest Law and pursue the revision and drafting of regulatory texts as a matter of urgency in order to update and clarify the legal framework and to better regulate the domestic timber market.	Agreement has been reached on product scope for the TLAS, but the legality matrix development is complicated by the ongoing Forest Code revision. Discussions on the verification of legality and supply chain controls were initiated in July 2014 within the CTN.	CDI agrees that the TLAS will apply to all exports as well as the domestic market, signalling a focus on improved governance and level playing field for business.	A Dec 2013 study estimates that only about 7.5% of the formal national timber production is sold on the domestic market. This is well short of domestic consumption and at least 95% of the domestic demand is met by informal operators. A multi-stakeholder working group has been established to examine ways to better regulate and control the domestic market and propose measures to this effect.	Negotiation practices underscore importance of public disclosure and all aide memoires of negotiation sessions are available to public on MINEF and EFI websites	A FLEGT web page exists and is used to publish key VPA negotiation news and documents.	Since the passing of the degree forbidding chainsaw logging, the forest administration has publicised a number of seizures of chainsaw timber, demonstrating capacity to regulate and enforce the law. Both civil society and private sector have taken steps to better organise themselves to help them engage in the VPA negotiations.	The negotiation process is advancing: 2 formal negotiation sessions and 6 technical sessions have been held since the start of the negotiations in June 2013.	Possibility to develop and apply VPA like legality definition and legality verification approach for agricultural commodities, especially cacao, is being discussed in the REDD+ context. However, it is yet too early to judge know-on effects of the VPA process.

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	rary suspended their participation in September 2014.									
<b>Malaysia</b>	Malaysia has conducted a series of well-documented stakeholder consultations since the negotiation process began. Civil society was not allowed to be directly involved in negotiations, and a walk-out by some CSO groups in 2008 has hampered the consultation process. Strong private sector and civil society opinions, including fundamental differences between the regions, have so far not been reconciled.	Malaysia's TLAS is based on existing national legislation. There is no specific provision for legislative and policy reform in the VPA; in fact Malaysian negotiators' intention has been to avoid discussions about legal reform and to focus on TLAS implementation.	Drafting of the TLAS, which so far includes only the systems for Peninsular Malaysia and Sabah, is quite advanced. It builds on current legislation and procedures. Malaysia already uses an intermediate "MYT-LAS" (not endorsed by the EU) to accompany exports from Peninsular Malaysia to the EU.	Parties have agreed to monitor acceptance of FLEGT-licensed timber on the EU market which has been a request by Malaysia throughout the negotiations. The EU financed Independent Market Monitor (ITTO) has started this work in Fall 2014.	The TLAS includes all market destinations, as the Malaysian system does not separate production for domestic or export use. However, coordination under the IAAC occurs and a licence is issued only in the case of exports.	There is a dedicated EU-Malaysia FLEGT VPA website; transparency annexes are agreed to in principle.	The commitment to joint JIC communication exists, but joint communication during negotiations has been rather poor. Malaysia requested EU assistance for communications outreach, and recently conducted intensive outreach work on the VPA in Peninsular Malaysia.	The need to strengthen institutional capacity has been a point of discussions in recent technical and negotiation discussions. Malaysia has asked for EU support for implementation.	Negotiations have been ongoing since 2007. Most technical issues have been addressed, but internal issues, in particular concerning the integration of Sarawak's TLAS, remains an obstacle to conclusion. Preparations for implementation advanced through a joint TLAS assessment in 2008 and, more recently, through internal compliance tests conducted by the Malaysian side in Peninsular Malaysia and Sabah.  The management of the stakeholder consultation process and coordination amongst the states/ regions suggests that more external support might have been helpful. Nevertheless, past EU offers, e.g. to bring in independent facilitators, were not taken up.	There is no specific provision for broader governance reform in the VPA; in fact it has been the intention of the Malaysian negotiators to avoid discussions about legal reform and to focus on status quo implementation. Negotiations have identified differences between states and regions that so far have not been possible to reconcile.
<b>Laos</b>	The decision making mechanism at the political level is not yet organized and the stakeholder representation remains uncertain. Technical work is starting with increasing participation from all stakeholder groups.	Not yet identified as negotiations have not started.	Formal work has not yet started but technical discussions on product scope and legality definition is starting.	Although the VPA negotiations have not yet started and export to EU is marginal, trade with other VPA countries and engagement in ASEAN are an incentive for Laos to engage in the process.				Lack of political commitment to the VPA process so far has prevented mobilisation to strengthen Lao institutions. The government is structuring itself to work on VPA-related topics while waiting for official approval of the process by the Prime Minister's office and the launch of formal negotiations.	Formal approval of the process by the Prime Minister's Office and nomination of a lead negotiator by the government is needed before for negotiations can start.	
<b>Thailand</b>	A negotiation committee and three sub-committees in which private sector and government agencies are represented have been	The current military administration has announced significant legal reforms. VPA stakeholders have called for use of the	The Royal Forest Department (RFD) has initiated TLAS work with a focus on supply chain controls and a software module	Thailand currently proposes to apply the TLAS to all export destinations, signalling a focus on improved governance, and a level playing field for	The ADWG-LD is considering illegality in the domestic trade and proposing measures to encourage legal compliance by smallhold-		Joint EU-Thai communication activities temporarily stopped in mid-2014 due to the EU Foreign Affairs Council decision, but resumed	Capacity of the private sector and civil society appears quite strong.	The start of negotiations was jointly announced on 11 September 2013, but formal negotiations have not yet started and the	Thailand has responded to the EU TR through a government study and development of private sector solutions.

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	established. The first Joint Expert Meeting (JEM), November 2013, provided for civil society groups to be represented at working level through an Ad-hoc Working Group on Timber Legality Definition (ADWG-LD). Productive joint working routines and a draft Legality Definition are being developed.	VPA process to engage with the new administration and to provide stakeholder inputs to reforms in the forestry sector.	under the National Single Window System (NSW). Work on the supply chain controls has been paused in order to focus on the Legality Definition and an inclusive stakeholder process.	better business and trade.	ers.		mid-October in preparation of a high level FLEGT event in November 2014 with participation of the EU Delegation.		EU Foreign Affairs Council conclusions, adopted in June 2014, suspended official visits and negotiations until a democratically-elected government is in place. Some technical level work can advance.	
<b>Vietnam</b>	For the first time, Vietnamese non-governmental organizations (VNGOs) and CSOs, together with the private sector, are actively engaged in VPA negotiations through being consulted on draft VPA documents. As a result, a climate of joint work between state and non-state actors has been created and progressively improved. The perceptions that stakeholders have about each other have changed, with the government being more positive about the capacity of VNGOs and CSOs to engage in policy work.	Deliberations on the TLAS have made clear the need to update the legal framework to address perceived gaps in the verification of legality. Since the beginning of the negotiations, Vietnam has drafted a number of regulations and circulars to address gaps in the legal framework related to verification of legality. Vietnam has stated the intention that specific legislation will be required to implement the VPA and to accommodate FLEGT licensing and new TLAS requirements.	The text (related to the Legality Definition) is near final following a long process involving broad and intensive consultation compared to other policy development processes at MARD. The product scope is still being negotiated. Innovative suggestions made by VN for addressing the legality of imports, include a risk-based approach with classification of companies to be verified, and a stepwise approach of VPA implementation with a possible focus on products or markets.	The annex on FLEGT licenses is still under discussion. The FLEGT licensing authority has been identified. Discussions regarding the market scope of the FLEGT licenses are ongoing.	Application of TLAS to domestic markets is still subject to discussion and negotiation as of Oct 2014.	Negotiation discussions have highlighted the importance of public disclosure of information. For the first time in forest policy making the forest administration has shared working documents online and via emails and held workshops for comments on these.	Increased outreach on FLEGT and the VPA is taking place at national level, via the media but also through activities carried out by stakeholders.	EUTR coming into force and VPA negotiations have both opened space for state and non-state actors to increase their awareness and capacity in a variety of ways, including through involvement in the development of TLAS and through EUTR and FLEGT related training by NGOs.	In 2014 preparation of annexes picked up markedly with drafts of all annexes prepared and tabled for political and/or technical discussion. The roadmap was revised in 2014 with target to conclude negotiations in September 2015	
<b>Honduras</b>	Actors from all sectors (public, private, civil society and indigenous peoples) are actively engaged in the discussion of the design of the LAS through the VPA Technical Committee. The Technical Committee is generating some trust between stakeholders. The VPA momentum after the elections and the change in government was kept through the joint actions of all non-public sector actors		A first draft legality definition was produced in 2013. In October 2014 a second draft has been in preparation to be presented during the third negotiation round. Honduras is considering including more products than the five minimum in the VPA, but internal discussions on the product scope are still ongoing as of Q3 2014. The tracking system will need to	Honduras's intends to include all export markets under the VPA.	Honduras intends to include the domestic market under the VPA	Honduras intends to make information on the VPA available and to include domestic legislation related to transparency in the VPA.	Honduras communicates openly and frequently on the results of the negotiation and on advances of the VPA process. VPA working documents are readily available for national stakeholders.	The government has some capacity to regulate, verify and enforce the laws. However, financial difficulties, the general security situation, and the remoteness and difficulty of access of forested zones will require additional support, both logistically and financially. The government may further need to build capacity with a view to developing and implanting procedures for implementing the	Negotiations and interim VC sessions are functioning	

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	(except for indigenous peoples).		take into account high- and low-value timber species.					LAS. Even though some capacity exists, support will also be needed for small and medium operators, for civil society organizations and for indigenous groups.		
<b>Guyana</b>	The National Technical Working Group (NTWG), the structure in charge of negotiating the VPA, works under the leadership of the Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC). It includes government agencies, private sector, and government-supported Amerindian representatives, and has been divided into thematic sub-committees. Active representative participation of civil society in the NTWG could be improved. The NTWG and its sub-committees meet regularly to work on various elements of the VPA. Communication with the NTWG is done exclusively through the GFC.	Guyana's intention is to use its current forest policy, legal, and operational frameworks to implement its VPA; however there may be a need to consider broader legislative and/or policy reforms.	Guyana's current functioning control structures are well developed and its existing forest legality and monitoring mechanisms provide a strong foundation for the development of a VPA-compatible TLAS. However, there may be a need for further system refinements to fully meet FLEGT Licensing requirements.	A slowing of the pace of negotiations during 2014 may affect the roadmap that anticipates ratification of the VPA by the end of 2015.		The purpose and general content of the Public Information Annex was presented to Guyana during the second negotiations session. Guyana agreed to reflect on its principles.	The first draft of a communication strategy has been developed by Guyana. The objectives are to ensure a culturally and socially appropriate communication process with the aims of generating the genuine and effective participation of all actors. The first draft was essentially aimed at reaching out to Amerindian communities. Subsequent drafts will be revised to reach out to a broader range of stakeholders.	The government already has a strong capacity to regulate, verify and enforce the laws, especially at the central level. However, the remoteness and difficulty of access of forested zones might require additional support, both logistically and financially. The government may also need to build further capacity to develop and implement the TLAS procedures. Support might also be needed for smaller operators. Representation of both Amerindian and non-Amerindian interests tends to be weak and fragmented and ensuring civil society's voice is heard in the process might prove to be a challenge.	The pace of the negotiations slowed during 2014. However, the frequency of communications between the parties seems to have increased during the 4th quarter of 2014.	Although there is strong ownership by Guyana of the VPA process, there is currently no evidence of impacts on other sectors.
<b>Gabon</b>										