

Press release to be distributed to Member States

New EU Timber Regulation comes into effect in the European Union

A new EU Timber Regulation (EUTR) to counter the trade in illegal timber comes into effect in all EU countries from 3 March 2013. The legislation, which will affect everyone in the wood trade, prohibits the placing of illegally harvested timber on the European market in an effort to tackle the ever-growing problem of illegal logging across the world.

The law, which covers both imported and domestically produced timber and timber products, sets out procedures for those in the trade to follow in order to minimise the risk of illegal wood being used. This means that **operators** – defined as those who first place a timber product on the EU market – must, through a ‘due diligence’ system, make every effort to ensure that the wood they trade in is legal. In addition, **traders** – defined as those who sell or buy the timber already on the market – are required to keep adequate information so that the wood they deal in can be easily traced. The Regulation, however, is not a border measure and shipments will not be checked at EU borders.

Covering an extensive range of products¹ – from paper and pulp to solid wood and flooring – the EUTR is a part of ongoing efforts in European countries to help tackle the problem of illegal logging. The practice has severe economic, environmental and social impacts – not only is it associated with deforestation and climate change but it also undermines the efforts and livelihoods of legitimate operators and can contribute to conflicts over land and resources. By enforcing the Regulation on this issue, your country can influence forestry practices within Europe and around the world and help stamp out illegal logging.

Notes to editor:

1. Full text of the EUTR, which was adopted by the European Parliament and the Council on 20 October 2010 and will be applied in all EU countries on 3 March 2013, is available here: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32010R0995:EN:NOT>
2. In the EUTR, illegal logging is the harvesting of wood in a way that breaches the laws or regulations of the *country of harvest*.
3. Timber or timber products that carry a valid [FLEGT](#) licence or [CITES](#) permit already comply with the requirements of the regulation.
4. The Regulation does not apply to individuals who sell or buy timber or timber products for their own personal use (rather than for commercial purposes).

¹ Recycled products and printed papers such as books, magazines and newspapers are just some of the wood and wood products excluded from the legislation. A list of all of the products covered by the EUTR is available in the Annex of the Regulation.