



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

PRESS RELEASE

## EU and Indonesia set date to start the licensing scheme for legal timber products

Brussels, 15 September 2016

**Indonesia and the European Union agreed today that Indonesia can issue the first ever Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) licenses for legal timber exports as of 15 November 2016. This makes Indonesia the first country in the world to achieve this major milestone in the global effort to combat illegal logging and associated illegal timber trade.**

Karmenu **Vella**, European Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries said: *"In 2002, just 20% of Indonesia's timber was legal. Today, all of Indonesia's timber exports are from independently audited factories and forests. This remarkable progress shows that trade can provide incentives towards ending the scourge of illegal logging, benefitting local communities and protecting unique ecosystems. The EU market is looking forward to the first shipments of verified legally produced timber from Indonesia in November."*

The decision was announced at the fifth meeting of the Joint Implementation Committee, which oversees implementation of the Indonesia-EU FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA). As part of the VPA, Indonesia has developed a system for assuring that all timber products harvested or imported, transported, traded, processed and exported comply with national laws on environmental, social and economic aspects identified by stakeholders from government, the private sector and civil society. This has boosted legal trade, modernised and formalised Indonesia's forest sector, and improved business practices, enabling many thousands of businesses to meet market demand for legal timber.

In addition to improving governance and increasing government revenues, the FLEGT licence will benefit timber traders. FLEGT-licensed products automatically meet the requirements of the EU Timber Regulation, which prohibits operators in the EU from placing illegally harvested timber and products derived from illegal timber on the EU market. EU operators can therefore place FLEGT-licensed timber on the EU market without further due diligence.

The EU has already completed internal procedures to recognise FLEGT licences from Indonesia. Competent authorities and timber importers in the 28 EU Member States are now preparing to receive the world's first shipments of FLEGT-licensed timber.

A report on the JIC meeting will be published on the websites of the Indonesia's [Ministry of Environment and Forestry](#) and the [EU Delegation to Indonesia](#), the [EU FLEGT Facility](#) and the [Multistakeholder Forestry Programme](#).