Independent evaluation confirms EU action plan on illegal logging has led to improved forest governance in all targeted countries

An independent evaluation report, published today, confirms that the EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade Action Plan (FLEGT) is a relevant and innovative response to the challenge of illegal logging and has improved forest governance in all targeted countries¹.

The report concludes that the EU FLEGT Action Plan has been effective in terms of raising awareness of the problem of illegal logging, contributing to improved forest governance globally and particularly in partner producer countries, and has contributed to a reduced demand for illegal timber in the EU.

EU Commissioner for International Development Neven Mimica said: “The new evidence shows that FLEGT remains an innovative, comprehensive and future-proof initiative, with the power to inspire a global movement to eradicate illegal logging. Improving forest governance can bring major economic, social and environmental benefits. A long-term commitment is needed to tackle the complex issues that enable illegal logging to still persist, and to achieve sustainable forest management in line with Sustainable Development Goal 15.”

The experts conclude that the FLEGT Action Plan remains “fully relevant” but needs to address new challenges - in particular with regard to deforestation and forest conversion - and focus more on international coalitions and partnerships to bring an end to illegal logging. It also identifies areas for improvement including that delivery to producing countries be more demand-driven and flexible, while bottlenecks affecting VPAs should be addressed and the private sector more involved. It recommends implementation in a more balanced manner and that strategic direction, management and monitoring of outcome also need strengthening. The Commission will take account of these suggestions in order to update its approach to FLEGT and enhance its effectiveness and impact in the future.

The report’s findings and recommendations will guide the European Commission (EC) in improving the efficiency, effectiveness and value-for-money of work undertaken to further implement the EU FLEGT Action Plan. The report will also guide the EC in assessing policies to address the broader drivers of deforestation, and in linking action under FLEGT to the international climate change and Sustainable Development Goals agendas.

¹ Ghana, Liberia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Cameroon, Republic of the Congo, Cote D’Ivoire, Gabon, Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Thailand, Laos, Myanmar, Honduras, Guyana
Last month, the EU and Indonesia announced their readiness to start the first ever FLEGT licensing system, and as soon as the procedure on the EU side is completed, the first shipments of FLEGT-licensed timber will take place.

**Download the report**
The report from independent experts is available online at:


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