

# **FLEGT VPA update**

**FLEGT / EUTR expert group**

**Brussels, 18 May 2015**

# Introduction

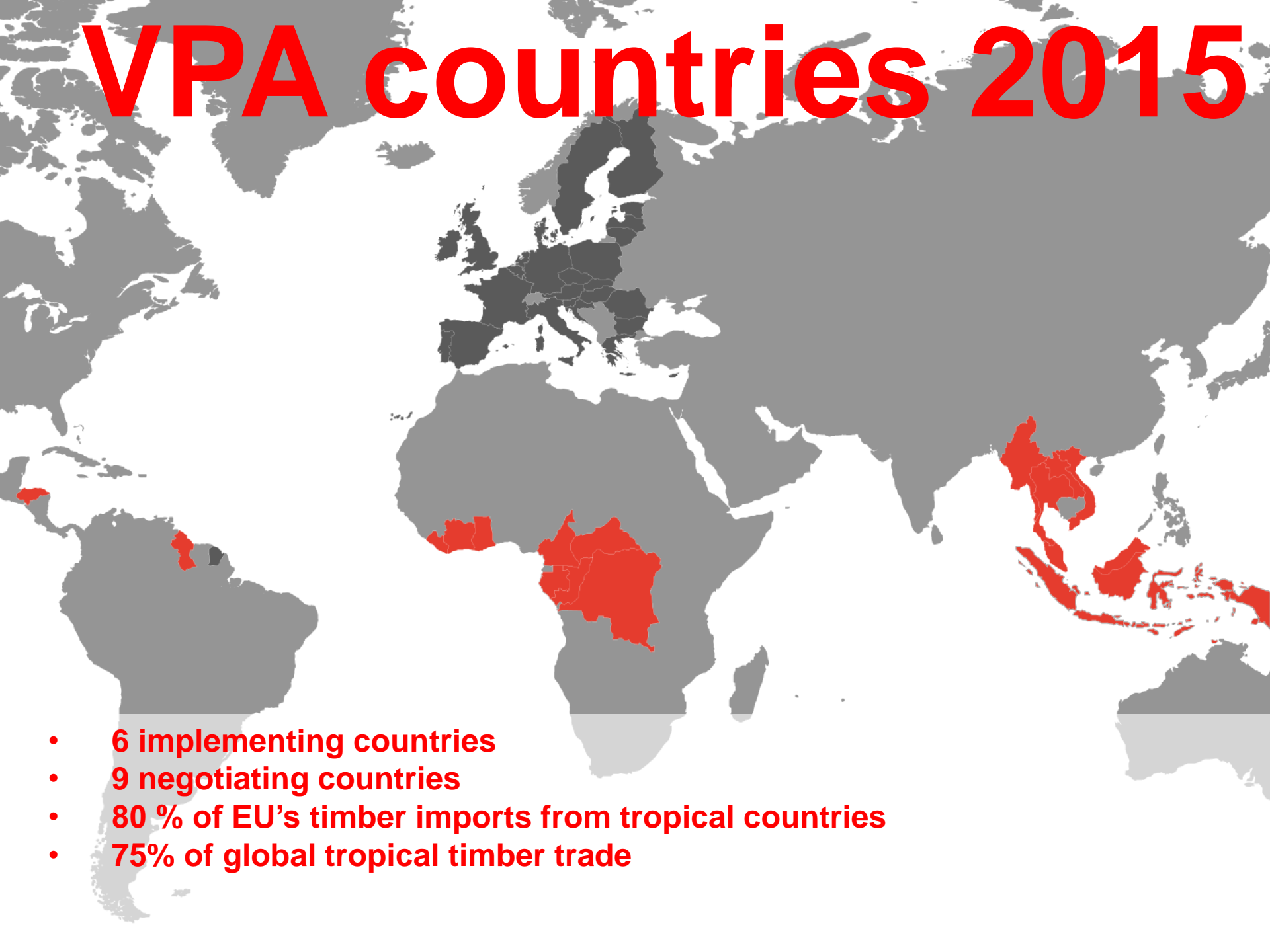
**Overview of progress in FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreements :**

**In implementation countries – Ghana, Congo and Liberia**

**In negotiation countries – Guyana, Honduras**

**Quick overview of other VPAs in Africa**

# VPA countries 2015



- 6 implementing countries
- 9 negotiating countries
- 80 % of EU's timber imports from tropical countries
- 75% of global tropical timber trade



# Ghana



**VPA Ratified  
19 March 2010**

## State of Play:

**First phase evaluation of Ghana's Legality Assurance System (GhLAS) completed – second phase planned September 2015**

**Meeting of the Joint Review and Monitoring Mechanism (JMRM) held 2nd -5th March 2015**

- **Despite good progress, further work required:**
  - **Define use of Ministerial Special Permits**
  - **Agree process for Conversion of old leases to Timber Utilisation Contracts – requires Attorney General OK**
  - **Complete Forest Management Plans**
  - **Control of imports**

## Next Steps:

- Completion of Forest Management Plans with FAO FLEGT Facility support
- Complete GhLAS evaluation in the third quarter of 2015
- Decision from Attorney General on Timber Utilization Contracts – June 2015
- Guidelines for Special permits agreed by all stakeholders and subsequent modification of LD Annex - June 2015.
- Next Joint Monitoring and Review Mechanism in November 2015 following Evaluation



# Liberia



**VPA Ratified  
1 December 2013**

## **Governance:**

- **JIC and national stakeholder committees in place**
- **Specific working groups/task force to address ongoing issues with involvement from all stakeholder groups**

**TLAS: The legal requirements for TLAS are established.**

- **Additional regulations are under development to cover more sources**
- **Management of non-compliances needs to be improved**

## **Audit & IM:**

- **Independent audit contracting foreseen for 2016;**
- **Independent monitoring carried out since 2013 mandated by NGO coalition.**



## Next Steps

- **stakeholders remain engaged and have now resumed their activities;**
- **The future vision for the forestry sector is blurred by the upcoming large REDD+ program by Norway**
- **Conversion timber is likely to become an issue**

## Support:

- **A new facilitator (DFID) is in place since April 2015;**
- **Two ongoing projects (DFID with contribution from EU) to support TLAS development and wider capacity building for all stakeholders.**



# Congo



VPA Ratified  
19 February 2013

## Governance:

- Regaining political momentum after 2<sup>nd</sup> JIC in May 2015

## TLAS:

- After problems with first contract, TLAS software development starts June 2015, to be completed mid-2016
- Recognition process of private certification schemes started, first legality certificates expected early 2016 for certified operators
- Reflection on TLAS' long-term funding starting with inter-ministerial meeting
- Draft Forest Strategy and Forest Law integrate TLAS requirements.

## Audit & IM:

- Independent Auditor recruited, starts September 2015
- Very active Independent Monitoring carried out by a local NGO (EC and FR funding)





## **Next Steps:**

- **TLAS – preparation to national deployment**
- **Restart work on communication and transparency**
- **Work on secondary legislation**

**Challenges: state budget for administrations in charge of legality verification; capacity issues; controversial agro-industry plans and deforestation**

## **Technical Support:**

- **FLEGT Facilitator (DFID) and technical assistant (EU) in place**
- **11th FED, AFD, DFID, World Bank supporting FLEGT, coordination challenges being resolved**



# Guyana



VPA neg. started  
December 2012

## Negotiation progress:

- **3rd Negotiation held on 17th April 2015**
- **Renewed Momentum and commitment**
- **New Roadmap with clear Milestones leading to VPA signature in 2016**

## Challenges:

- **Continue to advance national negotiation process and stakeholder consultations**
- **Complete Annexes**
- **Increase transparency and publish material on the Forestry Commission website**

# Next Steps

## Technical Commitments by July 2015

- **Finalise Communication and Consultation strategy**
- **Detailed work on Annex 2 (Legality Definition)**
- **Draft of Annex 6 (IA) and Annex 10 (Transparency)**
- **Draft of Annex 4 (FLEGT Licences) and 9 (LAS Criteria)**
- **Draft of Annex 5 (LAS)**

## Political

- **Implications of Election in Guyana – 11th May 2015 unclear**
- **4th Negotiation in Brussels in November 2015**



# Honduras



European  
Commission

VPA neg. started  
January 2013

## Negotiation progress:

- **3rd Negotiation held on January 2015**
- **New Roadmap with clear Milestones leading to VPA signature in June 2016**

## Challenges:

- **Continue to advance national consensus building process, inter-ministries and stakeholder consultations**
- **Complete Annexes (realistic, robust, simply)**
- **Increase transparency and develop a communication strategy**
- **Increased Private Sector participation**
- **Security, Impunity and corruption**

# Next Steps

## Commitments for 2015

- **Advanced draft TLAS annex (Sept 2015)**
- **Near final draft Transparency annex (Sept 2015)**
- **Near final draft Additional Measures annex (Sept 2015)**
- **Near final draft Legal Definition annex (Sept 2015)**
- **Private group is more active in making proposals on different aspects of VPA**

## Political

- **4th Negotiation on Brussels in September 2015**
- **Increased support of GIZ to the process (Clifor)**



**Other African countries**

**Implementing VPA:**

**Cameroon, Central African Republic**

**Negotiating VPA:**

**Ivory Coast, Gabon, DRC**