



PRESS RELEASE

Indonesia-European Union Joint Implementation Committee

Jakarta, 15 September 2016

Indonesia and EU agree to start the FLEGT licensing scheme for verified legal timber products on 15 November 2016

Indonesia and the European Union today agreed that beginning 15 November 2016 Indonesia can issue 'FLEGT' licences to verified legal timber products it exports to the EU.

The decision 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. This decision was made at the 5th Joint Implementation Committee, which oversees the implementation of the Indonesia-EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade-Voluntary Partnership Agreement (FLEGT VPA). The agreement was signed in Brussels on 30 September 2013 and set the process of negotiation between Indonesia and the EU.

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. The country's timber legality assurance system, called *Sistem Verifikasi Legalitas Kayu (SVLK)*, is subject to independent monitoring by civil society and periodic evaluation by an independent auditor. The implementation of the FLEGT licence means that the Indonesian SVLK meets the requirements of the VPA with the EU, something that is not so easy as the EU usually sets considerably high certification standard.

"Indonesia has achieved great progress in bringing its forest sector under control and improving transparency, participation and other aspects of good forest governance through a process of dialogue and compromise among all stakeholder groups," said Putera Parthama, Director General of Sustainable Forest Management at Indonesia's Ministry of Environment and Forestry, and co-chair of the JIC. "By addressing legality we have built the foundation for sustainable forest management and action to address climate change. We have met the high certification standards of the EU."

In addition to improving governance and increasing government revenues, the FLEGT licence benefits 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 doing due diligence.

The JIC also agreed on joint activities until the end of 2017 through which the EU and Indonesia will oversee the continual improvement of Indonesia's timber legality assurance system and wider VPA implementation. The plan will address continuation of the multistakeholder process, data collection, independent forest monitoring, enforcement, and monitoring the EU market FLEGT-licensed timber products.

"The decision to begin FLEGT licensing is a landmark achievement in a partnership that links EU businesses and consumers with legal traders in Indonesia," said Vincent Guérend, the EU Ambassador to Indonesia and co-chair of the JIC. "By guaranteeing legality, FLEGT licences should not only make business more efficient for traders in both Indonesia and the EU but also strengthen governance and ensure fairness to all forest stakeholders. They are the result of increasing transparency and better accountability and stakeholder participation in decisions about forests. Today, all of Indonesia's timber exports are from independently audited factories and forests."

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](#).

Interviewees available for comment:

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For more information and resources

- Indonesia-EU VPA media backgrounder
<http://www.euflegt.efi.int/publications/the-indonesia-eu-voluntary-partnership-agreement>
- Q&A <http://www.euflegt.efi.int/publications/indonesia-eu-voluntary-partnership-agreement>
- Experts for interviews <http://www.euflegt.efi.int/experts-indonesia>
- Dropbox folder of B-roll footage for broadcast media
www.flegtlicenceindonesia.org
- Indonesian Multistakeholder Forestry Programme photo gallery
<http://mfp.or.id/index.php/en/publication/photo-video-gallery>
- EU FLEGT Facility photo gallery
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/138229316@N05/sets/72157661606511683>
- FLEGTmedia.org <http://www.flegtmedia.org/>

For more information on the Indonesia-EU VPA and the decisions of the JIC, visit the websites of [Indonesia's Ministry of Environment and Forestry](#) or the [EU Delegation to Indonesia](#), the [EU FLEGT Facility](#) and the [Multistakeholder Forestry Programme](#).

Notes for editors

The EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan of 2003 is the EU's initiative against illegal logging. The Action Plan aims to reduce illegal logging by strengthening the sustainability and legality of forest management, improving forest governance and promoting trade in legally produced timber. FLEGT contributes to efforts to limit climate change, conserve biodiversity, protect rights and increase transparency. See: <http://www.flegt.org/about-flegt>

The EU FLEGT Action Plan's demand-side measures include the EU Timber Regulation, which prohibits operators in the EU from placing illegal timber products on the EU market. The EU FLEGT Action Plan's supply-side measures include Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs) with countries outside the EU, which commit to develop a robust timber legality assurance system and export to the EU only verified legal timber products accompanied by FLEGT licences. See: <http://www.euflegt.efi.int/vpa-unpacked>



When a VPA country begins FLEGT licensing, EU member states will no longer allow products listed in the VPA to enter the EU unless they have a FLEGT licence. Indonesia is the first VPA country to set a date for FLEGT licensing to begin. Fourteen other countries are implementing or negotiating VPAs with the EU. Together these countries provide 80% of the EU's tropical timber imports and have a total area of forest as large as the entire EU. See: <http://www.euflegt.efi.int/vpa-countries>

An independent evaluation, published on 4 May 2016, confirmed that the EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan is a relevant and innovative response to the challenge of illegal logging and that the Action Plan has improved forest governance in all target countries. See: <http://www.flegt.org/evaluation>