

## How we can help

NEPCon and SFMI's three year project 'Increasing capacity of Civil Society Organisations and Small and Medium Enterprises to implement FLEGT requirements' was launched in February 2014.

We aim to raise awareness of FLEGT and encourage greater participation in the FLEGT process by increasing the capacity of the Intermediary Organisations (IOs) that work with SMEs in the Vietnamese timber industry.

IOs are any person or group that work directly with SMEs, including: industry associations, NGOs, heads of wood processing villages, private consultants, etc...

### Project Activities: awareness raising, tools and training

- ✓ Identify and communicate legality risks for Vietnam and five key countries where wood is sourced from.
- ✓ Develop a toolkit for legality risk mitigation specifically designed for Vietnamese SMEs. Examples of such tools include forms for collecting and recording information, checklists, letter templates, and risk profiles for countries, products and groups of species.
- ✓ Conduct pilot tests of the toolkit at 20-25 SMEs, to see how effective the toolkit is and if it encourages sales to the EU.
- ✓ Train IOs how to use the toolkit and how to teach SMEs to use it.
- ✓ Trained experts from IOs in turn provide training to 300-500 SMEs.
- ✓ Raise awareness of FLEGT and our toolkit among SMEs in the timber industry.

### The toolkit

The toolkit will be free to use, you can take and adapt the tools to your business. The tools can form the foundation of your purchasing policy, tracking procedures, communication with customers and suppliers, along with guidance and reference material to help you source legal timber.



## Get involved!

To ensure the toolkit is user friendly, functional and effective the project team needs the involvement of 20-25 SMEs to test the toolkit. These companies will benefit as follows:

- ✓ Training in the use of the toolkit and sourcing legal timber;
- ✓ Verification of toolkit implementation and compliance with applicable requirements, along with a report of this verification; and
- ✓ An action plan tailored by local and international experts to close any gaps and communicate compliance status to customers.

Please contact us if you would like to get involved, our project team will be happy to hear from you!

### Resources for legal timber sourcing

URL	Information provided
<a href="http://tongcuclamnghiep.gov.vn">http://tongcuclamnghiep.gov.vn</a>	Official website of VNFOREST giving updates on the VPA process in Vietnam
<a href="http://www.euflegt.efi.int/home/">http://www.euflegt.efi.int/home/</a>	Official EU FLEGT Facility web page with basic information, publications and updates on the FLEGT VPA process in each country
<a href="http://www.apec.org/Groups/SOM-Steering-Committee-on-Economic-and-Technical-Cooperation/Working-Groups/Illegal-Logging-and-Associated-Trade.aspx">http://www.apec.org/Groups/SOM-Steering-Committee-on-Economic-and-Technical-Cooperation/Working-Groups/Illegal-Logging-and-Associated-Trade.aspx</a>	Asia-Pacific Economic Corporation's Expert Group on Illegal Logging and Associated Trade is a platform set up to share information and experiences, collaborate to combat illegal logging and build capacity in members' forest and forest products industries.
<a href="http://www.illegal-logging.org">www.illegal-logging.org</a>	A comprehensive site with news and updates focussing on illegal timber harvesting worldwide
<a href="http://www.ettf.info">www.ettf.info</a>	European Timber Trade Federation's website includes a news feed with regular updates on timber legality issues
<a href="http://www.globalforestregistry.org">www.globalforestregistry.org</a>	An interactive world map outlining the risk of sourcing illegal wood from specific geographic areas.
<a href="http://sourcing.gftn.panda.org/">http://sourcing.gftn.panda.org/</a>	WWF's Global Forest and Trade Network (GFTN) offers guidelines for sourcing of legal and sustainable wood.

### Contacts

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## Do you work with wood?

### A quick guide to FLEGT and sourcing legal timber

## New requirements for your business

Under the FLEGT VPA the domestic material your business sources will be evaluated to meet Vietnamese legality requirements. However, as a large portion of material processed in Vietnam originates from other countries, the legality of this material will also be relevant in order to provide your buyers overseas with assurance of legality, not only of Vietnamese material, but of material imported from other countries too.

### What you can do

- **Work with your suppliers to identify and document origin and timber species.** For each species, the country of origin – in some cases even the forest of origin - must be known.
- **Document legal harvesting:** Work with your suppliers to provide reliable documentation for legal harvesting. Legal harvesting entails compliance with all legislation applying to timber harvesting, including e.g. logging permits, harvest regulations, environmental laws and payment of fees and taxes.
- **Consider what you are buying and where you are buying it from:** Are there reports of illegal logging in the country you are buying timber from? Or of the particular species you are buying? Levels of illegality risk vary widely.
- **Implement timber tracking systems** to ensure traceability, unless your products are already covered by a verification scheme offering this. This enables you to offer assurance for the origin of your products.
- **Engage in a credible timber certification or verification scheme** covering legal harvesting assurance, such as FSC™.
- **Encourage your suppliers to obtain certification/verification** according to a credible scheme. Or select suppliers who are already certified.

For several products it may be hard to implement the tasks described. We are here to help you!

### What if I don't export to the EU?

Although the VPA is an agreement with the EU, the Vietnamese TLAS will be applicable to all exports and the domestic market too.

## Good to know

Illegal logging is a widespread problem that is a key cause of deforestation and human impoverishment around the world. The European Union (EU) have developed an Action Plan to tackle this problem. This Action Plan is called 'Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade', FLEGT.

The FLEGT Action Plan includes measure to:

- ✓ Prevent the import of illegal timber into the EU;
- ✓ Improve the supply of legal timber; and
- ✓ Increase demand for timber from responsibly managed forests.

### What is illegal logging?

Illegal logging is the harvesting, processing, transporting, buying or selling of timber in contravention of national and international laws.

### What are VPAs?

A FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) is a legally binding trade agreement between the EU and a timber-producing country outside the EU (Vietnam). VPAs are intended to ensure that timber and products made from timber harvested in Vietnam and exported to the EU come from legal sources. The agreements also help timber-exporting countries stop illegal logging by improving regulation and governance of the forest sector.

Vietnam is currently negotiating a VPA with the EU.

### What about the EU Timber Regulation?

The EU Timber Regulation (EUTR) prohibits importers in Europe from placing illegally harvested timber and products derived from illegal timber on the EU market.

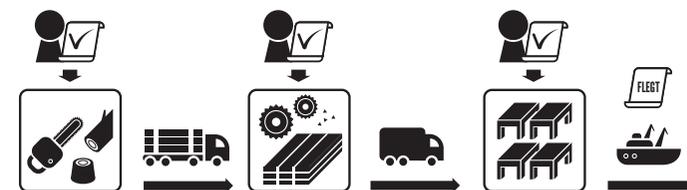
The EUTR and VPAs work together, they are both part of the EU's FLEGT Action Plan. When Vietnam's VPA/ FLEGT system is fully functional, compliant Vietnamese timber products will have easier access to European markets.

## How it will work

Vietnam will establish a Timber Legality Assurance System (TLAS), a system designed to identify, monitor and license legally produced timber, to ensure that only legal timber is exported.

There are five components of a TLAS:

1. Definition of legal timber.
2. Procedure for checking the supply chain.
3. Tools and trained employees for checking the supply chain.
4. Issuing of FLEGT licenses by the state.
5. Independent audit.



## Have your say!

**The TLAS is still under development, you have the chance to influence it**

Either contact your trade association or VNFOREST directly on:

Address: Permanent Office of the Steering Committee of FLEGT and Lacey, Vietnam Administration of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, 2 Ngoc Ha Street, Ba Dinh District, Hanoi

Fax: 04-38438 793

Email: [minhth@vnforest.gov.vn](mailto:minhth@vnforest.gov.vn);  
[hieuminho8@gmail.com](mailto:hieuminho8@gmail.com)

Website: <http://tongcuclamnghip.gov.vn>

Watch out for stakeholder events, these are a great forum for voicing your opinion and discussing the issues with other stakeholders!