FLEGT Glossary

Glossaire du FLEGT

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-- 1 of 2 --

Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPA) are legally binding agreements between partner countries and the European Union regarding the trade of timber and legally derived products. This legal timber is produced according to standards defined within a multi-stakeholder dialogue and is subject to an independent audit.

The independent audit in the context of FLEGT aims to provide assurance that forest management and regulatory systems are functioning effectively, to identify weaknesses in forestry practices, and to uncover forest crime. As the name suggests, this audit is conducted by organizations that are not involved in the regulation of logging. In the context of VPAs, the independent audit provides an essential element of legality assurance. It focuses on monitoring the legality assurance system to ensure that it operates as intended: it provides a systemic audit and does not typically focus on identifying specific cases of forest crimes.

Also known as government procurement policies. Policies of member states establishing minimum requirements for administrations and government agencies. Estimates indicate that public procurement accounts for up to 20% of the timber and derived products market. As part of the FLEGT action plan, member states are encouraged to define criteria for all wood-derived products to ensure that their legality and/or sustainability are independently verified.

Legality Assurance Systems Systems aimed at independently monitoring and auditing exploited forests and timber supply chains destined for the European market.

-- 2 of 2 --