

# TTAP News

May 2009 – Issue 10

**ttap** timber trade  
action plan

[www.timbertradeactionplan.info](http://www.timbertradeactionplan.info)

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the tenth edition of the TTAP newsletter! This year's second issue contains exciting news about efforts being done in the field of legal and sustainable forest management around the world and we are already looking forward to announcing the verification of two supply chains in Africa and Malaysia in the next issue.

The second International Timber Trade Federation Day (ITTFD) taking place from 8-9 October 2009 in Geneva will build upon the topic of last year's ITTFD "Responding to changing market requirements". The event will be followed by the UNECE Timber Committee session (12-16 Oct). Official invitations to the ITTFD with more information will be sent out in the next two weeks.

Whether you are a Timber Trade Federation member, TTAP partner or interested stakeholder, we hope TTAP News will be a useful resource for you. Please feel free to share this newsletter with your colleagues.

Enjoy reading!

The TTAP Team

## About TTAP:

TTAP is an EU-funded project managed by the TFT and co-funded by the Belgian (FBCIB), Dutch (VVNH) and UK Timber Trade Federation (UK TTF) to assist wood suppliers in tropical countries produce verified legal timber.

We currently advise and support timber companies based in Asia, Africa, and South America as well as engage in timber trade policy initiatives in the European Union.

## Quick Links

[www.timbertradeactionplan.info](http://www.timbertradeactionplan.info)

[www.tropicalforesttrust.com](http://www.tropicalforesttrust.com)

## Consumer Country Partners

[FBCIB](#)

[UK TTF](#)

[VVNH](#)

[Le Commerce du Bois](#)

[UCBD](#)

[FEBO](#)

## Producer Country Partners

[Malaysian Timber Council](#)

[IFIA](#)

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## Latest news – Africa: Republic of Congo signs Voluntary Partnership Agreement!

The Republic of Congo has become the second country after Ghana to sign a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) with the European Union to ensure timber entering the European market has been legally harvested. Being the core of the European Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan, the VPA requires timber producers in the Republic of Congo to obtain a license attesting the legality of the timber to be exported to the EU market. VPAs are supposed to improve forest governance in tropical timber producing countries by establishing systems for collecting timber taxes, laying out procedures to ensure that harvests and sales are legal, and that they have been obtained in a way that maintains the health of the country's forests.

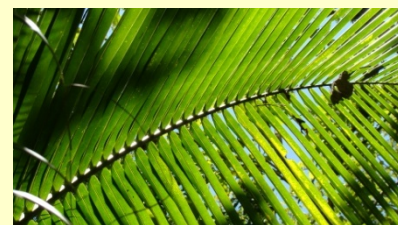
TFT tested in the scope of the TTAP project in cooperation with the Congolese Ministry of Forest Economy and representatives from the civil society the practicability and applicability of the national standard for legality developed by the Congolese government during the VPA negotiations. The European Forest Institute (EFI) contributed the necessary funding for the test. This national standard for legality will be used when assessing the legality of timber for the FLEGT license.



## Latest News – Europe:

## Is the EU legislation getting closer to the Lacey Act?

In April the European Parliament voted to endorse all the amendments proposed by its Environment Committee to the draft 'due diligence' regulation published by the Commission last October.



One of the key amendments constitutes an obligation on timber operators to 'ensure that only legally harvested timber and timber products are made available on the market'. This adds teeth to the original text, which required operators only to put in place due diligence systems to try and *ensure* that illegal products did not enter the market. The regulation did not explicitly ban the import or marketing of illegal timber, and it was not at all clear what would happen if operators put in place due diligence systems but nevertheless ended up handling illegal timber.

If the amendment does survive, it will move the regulation much closer to the US Lacey Act, which makes it unlawful 'to import, export, transport, sell, receive, acquire, or purchase' timber or timber products produced illegally in foreign countries.

The Lacey Act and the due diligence regulation are essentially both trying to do the same thing, to exclude illegal timber from consumer markets. At the moment they are almost mirror images of each other: the Lacey Act defines in law what companies must not handle, but leaves it up to them to work out how, whereas the due diligence regulation does not define any underlying offence, but describes in some detail the systems operators must put in place to try and make sure they avoid handling illegal products.

For further information, see [www.illegal-logging.info/Additional Legislative Options](http://www.illegal-logging.info/Additional_Legislative_Options)

Duncan Brack, Chatham House

## Latest News - Brazil:

## São Paulo construction sector signs protocol to promote purchases of legal and sustainable timber!

The "Madeira é Legal" (wood is legal/wood is cool) Protocol was signed in March 2009 by 23 institutions representing the private and public construction sector of the State of São Paulo, Brazil. The main goal of this initiative is to promote the use of legal and certified timber in the construction sector, a market that is well-known for absorbing large parts of illegal timber coming out of the Brazilian Amazon. The Protocol foresees a series of actions such as the training of buyers of big construction companies aimed at improving the identification and monitoring of their purchases.

Experts estimate that 80% of the illegally harvested timber in Brazil is being absorbed by the entire domestic market, whilst the State of São Paulo consumes around 15% of Amazonian timber, of which 70% is used in civil construction. If the Protocol turns out to be successful, the "Madeira é Legal" initiative could substantially support the fight against illegal logging in the Brazilian Amazon.

## Latest News – Europe:

## Farewell to Emily Fripp, TTAP manager from 2006 - 2009!

After 3 years of managing TTAP, Emily Fripp has left TFT and TTAP at the end of April and moved on to new challenges. Emily has taken a project outline and put words into practice, getting the project up and running in China, Brazil, Indonesia, Malaysia, Cameron, Gabon and Congo Brazzaville, with scoping visits completed to Suriname and Guyana. The TTAP project is now fully functioning, with a team of 25 around the world, achieving targets, work plan deliverables on time and within budget.



**Emily Fripp, second from right**

The project is on line to meet the target number of supply chains (70 by December 2011) verified legal, with currently 5 in Malaysia already verified, with a further 8 supply chains in progress in Indonesia/Malaysia, 5 in China, 6 in Brazil and 11 in Africa (total of 35), moving towards legal verification and a further 14 supply chains in the pipeline where work will begin when time permits. TTAP has become a global network, recognized for the work it is doing, assisting companies to meet verification

of legality requirements and field testing legality standards for governments as part of the VPA process.

TTAP is a key tool used by the partner TTFs in Europe to implement their responsible purchasing policies and policy targets, as well as providing tools and support to companies and TTFs meet changing international market requirements. A highlight of the last 3 years was the International TTF Day in October 2008, where 29 TTFs (representing more than 10,000 companies) from around the world were present for a two day seminar, sharing lessons and experiences, developing a global network.

On behalf of the TTAP Governing Body, I would like to thank Emily for her hard work, enthusiasm and determination to make TTAP a success. I wish her well in her future.

Best wishes

Andre de Boer, VVNH, Chairman of TTAP Governing Body

### **Latest News - Africa:**

### **Gabon promotes small-scale forestry businesses and empowers local actors!**

The Project for the Management of Small-Scale Forest Concessions (PAPPFG), initiated in 2007 by the Gabonese government, aims at increasing the participation of small-scale timber businesses (PMEF) and empowering local actors in the timber industry. In 2004, the government decided to temporarily suspend the attribution of logging concessions to improve the implementation of the new forestry legislation (code forestier) adopted in 2001 which amongst other issues includes the obligation to develop management plans. Concessions without management plans by the end of the transitory period in December 2005 were transformed into State property.

The role of the PAPPFG project is to promote the grouping of small forest concession holders and to ease their development of management plans whilst creating national expertise in the timber business. So far, the project has recorded more than a million hectares of small-scale forest concessions, and seen the creation of syndicates advocating for the grouping of these concessions. This year's allocation of permits for small forest concessions took place mid May and was for the first time a public and transparent event.

### **Latest News – VVNH:**

### **VVNH visits China to get an idea of the giant's timber market!**

Confronted with growing import volumes of Chinese plywood and other wood products, a delegation of the Netherlands Timber Trade Association (VVNH) visited China from 21-28 March 2009 to get a picture of the Chinese timber market and the scope of sustainable and legal forestry. The delegation consisting of 14 participants had fruitful meetings with several big players such as the Chinese State Forestry Administration (SFA), the Pizhou Timber Distribution Association, several plywood, furniture, flooring and packaging companies and FSC and PEFC China.

Whereas some of the companies visited used advanced techniques, others worked in a rather old-fashioned way and the delegation noted big differences in development and environmental and social issues. Still, a lot has been achieved in little time, and representatives of the Chinese government stated that cooperation with Europe will continue within FLEGT and through TTAP.



### **Latest News – Climate Change:**

### **FAO state of the world's forests report available for 2009!**

The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) released the State of the World's Forests 2009 report during the 19th session of the FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO), on 16 March in Rome, Italy. The report underlines the increasing importance of forest management and anticipates a rising demand for environmental services and products due to the current economic crisis and pressing climate change issues.

## News in Brief:

- **The GESDEF Database – An innovative tool to get key information on sustainable forest management!** The GESDEF database containing valuable information about sustainable forest management was launched by the French timber trade federation “Le Commerce du Bois” in cooperation with the technological Institute “Forêt Cellulose Bois Construction et Ameublement “ (FCBA) and “France Bois Forêt” (FBF). The aim of the database is to support the fight against illegal logging and to promote sustainable forest management by providing key information on major supplier countries, on tree species, forestry legislation, organizations of forest management, certification schemes and environmental alerts.

Use this innovative tool by subscribing on: [www.gesdef.com](http://www.gesdef.com)!

- **Malaysian Timber Certification Scheme first tropical timber certification scheme in the Asia Pacific region to be endorsed by PEFC!** The General Assembly of the Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes (PEFC) has made the Malaysian Timber Certification Scheme (MTCS) become the first tropical timber certification scheme in the Asia Pacific region and second in the world after the Gabonese Forest Certification Scheme to be endorsed by the PEFC. This endorsement will enable MTCS to achieve further recognition with 26 other PEFC endorsed certification schemes, and allow the labeling of products consisting of PEFC certified material from Malaysia combined with PEFC certified material from other countries under the PEFC logo.

## Future Events:

- 23-24 June 2009, London: Chatham House Illegal Logging Update and Stakeholder Consultation Number 14
- 8-9 Oct 2009, Geneva: International Timber Trade Federation Day (ITTFD)
- 12-16 Oct 2009, Geneva: UNECE Timber Committee session
  - 12 Oct 2009: UN Green building workshop
  - 13-14 Oct 2009: UN Timber Committee Market Discussions
  - 15 Oct 2009: UNECE/FAO Policy Forum

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