

BACKGROUND

Illegal logging is a growing problem worldwide

- More than 50% of wood exported from the Amazon, Central Africa, SE Asia and Russia is illegally harvested.
- Worldwide, annual losses in revenues and assets are estimated to be US\$ 10-15 billion.
- Trade in illegally harvested products causes many ecological, economic and social problems.

Timber producing countries will continue to lose valuable resources and income until such unsustainable and illegal practices are stopped.

Strong policy responses

Both consumer and producing countries are adapting existing laws, adopting new legislation and increasing cooperation to ensure legal timber trade, strengthen forest governance, and increase transparency and accountability.

Initiatives include the EU Action Plan on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) promoting bilateral Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs) between the EU and timber exporting countries; the EU Timber Regulation; and the USA Lacey Act.



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Elias Ferreira, National Agricultural Research Institute, Mozambique, and Laura Snook, Bioversity, examine a stump of *Pterocarpus angolensis*, a valuable timber tree almost certainly logged illegally.

Proof of the species identity and origin of timber and wood products is necessary to control illegal logging.

A global approach is needed to bring the science, scientists and other stakeholders together to tackle the problem

At present, there is a lack of practicable control mechanisms to identify the origin of timber and wood products. Existing timber tracking systems use paper-based documentation of timber origin and use at all stages of processing. However, paper-based tracking is open to **tampering**.

INNOVATIVE CONTROL TOOLS

Genetic markers and stable isotopes use characteristics **inherent** to the timber instead of externally applied marks. They cannot be manipulated, eliminating the possibility of falsifying accompanying chain-of-custody-documents and reducing the possibility of laundering timber from illegal harvests.



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Sampling wood cambium for genetic and stable isotope fingerprinting, Cameroon.

IDENTIFICATION OF TIMBER SPECIES AND ORIGINS

Funded by the German Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection and based at Bioversity International's Regional Office in Serdang, Malaysia, the project aims to:

- Coordinate and facilitate research on tools to identify species and geographic origin of timber;
- Facilitate information exchange, comparability and networking among research projects, research groups and implementing institutes, especially promoting synergies and complementary work on methods using genetic markers and stable isotopes;
- Organize and establish voluntary international standards, inter alia for sampling, extraction, testing and documentation;
- Organize and set up an **international open access database** for tracing timber species and origin.



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Logging activities in a forest concession, Ghana.

GLOBAL TIMBER TRACKING NETWORK (GTTN)

GTTN will bring together scientists and all key stakeholders concerned about illegal logging, the associated trade and their impacts on environmental and social sustainability. Our goal in creating the network, is to ensure legal timber trade and curb illegal and unsustainable logging by facilitating and promoting the integrated use of genetic and stable isotope fingerprinting techniques with the existing timber tracking systems, certification standards, regulations and legislation.

For more information

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www.globaltimbertrackingnetwork.org



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Canopy of Lama Forest Reserve, Benin.

IDENTIFICATION OF TIMBER SPECIES AND ORIGINS

A global project to facilitate the application of innovative timber tracking tools based on genetic and stable isotope markers, as a practical means to reduce illegal logging.