



GTTN

Global Timber
Tracking Network

GTTN Communications Strategy

Version 1.1

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1. Introduction

Unsustainable and illegal logging is a driving force of deforestation worldwide. It is estimated that more than 50% of wood exported from the Amazon, Central Africa, SE Asia and Russia is illegally harvested resulting in annual losses in revenues and assets between US\$ 10-15 billion. Unsustainable and illegal logging as well as related trade cause many economic and ecological problems both in producer and in consumer countries.

Therefore, legal regulations worldwide prohibit the placement of illegally harvested timber in the consumer countries by requiring operators to provide proof of the identity of the species traded and the origin of their products to guaranty the traceability of the supply-chain. A recent example is the new EU law enforcement (EU Timber Regulation) which requires botanical name of the species, country and region of origin of timber.

Hence, proof of the species identity and the origin of timber and wood products are important requirements to control illegal logging. At present, there is still a lack of practicable control mechanisms to identify the origin of timber and wood products though. A global platform is needed to bring together the science, scientists, policy makers and other key players to address the issues in a holistic way. The Global Timber Tracking Network (GTTN) will play such a role by facilitating and promoting the integrated use of DNA and stable isotope markers with the existing species identification and timber tracking. Furthermore, the aim is to develop internationally agreed standards and a database support for the implementation of the GTTN tools and methods.

GTTN Communications is responsible for the communication and promotion of GTTN's activities and the achievements of the GTTN Network. The GTTN Communications Strategy identifies different target groups¹ and develops tailored dissemination modes. Thus, outputs will be synthesized and presented in different

¹Target groups are classified into Consumers and Providers as well Advocacy, see below in Chapter 2.

formats, targeted to specific needs of the users to guarantee a most communications effective outreach.

2. General Approach of Communications Activities

2.1 Consumers

Public authorities and law enforcing agencies

Since the G8 commitment to fight illegal logging in 2008 and the subsequent issuance of legislation by governments (e.g. EU Timber Regulation, US Lacey Act amendment) that requires imported wood products to be of legal origin, requirements for legal authorities to verify legal origin and trade claims have increased dramatically. As law enforcement is complex and incidents cross national borders, governments would benefit from GTTN by supporting the development of international guidelines and standards for timber identification. Furthermore, the tools developed by GTTN will help to enforce forest laws and to prevent the trade of illegal wood and wood products.

GTNN communication will address three groups: (i) public authorities/law enforcing agencies already part of/interested in GTTN; (ii) public authorities/law enforcing agencies interested to take action on illegal logging but not yet part of GTTN; and (iii) the problem countries where illegal logging takes place.

Timber Operators

Operators involved in timber are more and more concerned about timber species and origin due to legal and economic obligations. For many tracing commodities back to the producer level remains challenging. Due diligence requirements are a major driver for companies to implement improved chain of custody checking in their supply chains. GTTN can help to reduce risks by leading both companies requiring due diligence checks, as well as law enforcement authorities to identify methods and service providers that are available to prove a trading claim, relating to wood species and geographic origin, by means of a GTTN. Since very few companies have been involved in GTTN phase I so far, GTTN intensifies its activities and reaches out to companies through relevant forest-based industries and trade

federations. One option to attract companies could be the organization of a special workshop where they can express/explain their specific needs. Furthermore, they can use the methods provided by GTTN to comply with EUTR, the Lacey Act, the Australian Illegal Logging Prohibition Act and similar laws.

Forest Certifiers

DNA analysis and stable isotope timber tracking tools can help to improve Forest Certifier's certification system. This target group can be reached via online publications, events and other public relation activities.

2.2 Providers

Service Providers

GTTN aims to motivate timber tracking service providers to share their data in the reference database. The benefit of joining the network is that GTTN can help broaden service providers' networks by bringing them into contact with experts working on similar topics, providing possibility to synergize efforts, to influence prioritization of systems development, species focus etc. Through GTTN, service providers have the chance of being an early adopter of novel methods. Furthermore, they can guide the tailored development of services to meet customers' demand. A challenging question will be how to reach small labs worldwide that could especially profit from GTTN standards and protocols.

Scientific Stakeholders

Researchers involved in the development of innovative tracking methods such as DNA analysis, stable isotopes and mass spectrometry by working together can yield a higher spatial resolution and stronger statistical power for timber tracking. GTTN encourages and supports scientists to build a community to coordinate development of analysis methods and standards, and to coordinate the collection and sharing of reference data. Furthermore, GTTN fosters networking among research projects, research groups and implementing institutes, especially promoting synergies and complementary work on methods using genetic markers and

stable isotopes. Finally, a network membership can help raising a laboratory's profile by engaging on the international scene.

Since filling the reference database is of the highest priority, a special strategy is needed to foster (young) researchers to develop DNA markers.

2.3 Communication and Advocacy

Civil Society

Illegal exports would not be possible without their end-users. The wealth of (urban) consumers and their demand for wildlife and forest and agricultural commodities can be a strong driver of illegal wildlife, forest activities and land-use changes in general. Key messages to public at large – emphasizing the advantages of buying sustainable and legal products – will be channelled through relevant civil society organisations. GTTN aims to raise public awareness regarding to the local and global consequences of illegal logging and the challenges timber trade is facing.

This also involves occasional cooperation with organisations dealing with forest, environmental or sustainability issues like FERN, WWF and Greenpeace. These organizations usually promote SFM and nature conservation. They can be convinced to join if GTTN demonstrates that genetic data generated for timber tracking purpose is also useful to conserve endangered species and to achieve sustainable forest management.

Media

Through press releases and background briefings, media's awareness of GTTN will be sharpened. Engagement with media serves knowledge transfer, especially via ready-made narratives and videos, exhibited also on the website. Media reporting addressing grand societal challenges like biodiversity loss and risks of illegal timber trade also contributes to public engagement. GTTN will update journalists working on environmental issues with fresh knowledge about illegal activities in the forest sector.

As open alliance for cooperation, GTTN is formed through the joint vision of all stakeholders involved in global action against illegal logging and the associated timber trade.

Donors

Most potential donors are committed to sustainable forest management (SFM). Timber tracking tools are essential to implement forest laws and useful to achieve sustainable forest management.

GTTN needs to demonstrate to them that (1) legality is a necessary step to sustainability, (2) the tools contribute also to achieve SFM, and (3) support certification. To accelerate the development of the tools and promote its use, support by donors is required.

All network members share the following core messages: “We are building a global timber tracking database”; “GTTN helps unambiguous determination of wood species and origin”; “GTTN can support traceability from product to tree”. “We increase awareness among service seekers and potential users (cost-benefit comparison) and offer best-practice examples.”

Advantages of joining the network for all target groups: GTTN membership adds visibility to members work via event, website and publications. Furthermore, GTTN aims to help create opportunities for new projects and funding through its advocacy work, which is essential to enlarge the reference database and widen availability of services.

3. Communication Channels

It is of essential importance for GTTN to disseminate information to various target audiences. This includes gathering relevant information for GTTN from other organizations, websites, distribution channels etc. as well as sharing and discussing news such as research results, data, law enforcement developments, etc. from the

network via several digital and analogue channels. There is no “one-fits-all” solution, in terms of dissemination modes. Outputs will be synthesized and presented in different formats, targeted to specific needs of the users.

Although EFI is responsible for communication and dissemination tasks, support from the network partners is necessary. All GTTN network members have a role in dissemination and interaction with stakeholders and media through their forums at the regional/national/international level, at relevant seminars, conferences etc.

GTTN communications will provide a communication package incl. GTTN logo, mission statement, flyer and possible other material to support “GTTN ambassadors” with their communications in their networks or at meetings, workshops, events etc.

Communication material will be distributed mainly in English.

3.1 Website

The website plays an important role and is supposed to facilitate information exchange and networking among all stakeholders concerned. Presented in a new, innovative design and written mostly in non-technical language (depending on target group), the website is a focal point for project information. As a dynamic information source, it will provide news about the project, publications and other GTTN related material, GTTN partners and experts, news, events and a direct link to the GTTN database. Although the website is conceptualized and maintained by the Secretariat, input from partner organizations and experts is required. Their responsibility is to provide technical information, sound advice and supports. To facilitate this task, partner organizations and experts have to be made aware of this opportunity and they need to be able to contribute in a low-threshold way.

The website will showcase how database support for the implementation of the GTTN tools and methods works in practice, and will also be the central repository for GTTN working group’s results and findings.

Target groups are primarily members of the network: a) researchers developing the tools b) forest and timber trade and industry that need to exercise due diligence c) law enforcement and other public agencies. Furthermore, it is desirable to raise civil society's awareness regarding timber trade and illegal logging.

Social media (eg Twitter, Youtube) will also be used to enhance the GTTN visibility via the website, further raise awareness of GTTN among target audiences and strengthen relationships with stakeholders.

3.2 Newsletter

The "Newsletter" is a compilation from the news published on the website. As a tool for the newsletter format EFI's newsletter system APSIS could be used.

Target group is primarily the network: a) researchers dealing with the tools b) forest and timber trade and industry that need to exercise due diligence c) law enforcement and other public agencies.

The News Digest will be send to everyone who registered at the website or at one of the several events. Furthermore, followers on Twitter or ResearchGate can be approached whether they are interested in receiving frequent information from the GTTN network.

3.3 Twitter

Twitter is an efficient tool to share, gather and exchange information. It serves as a networking platform to approach individuals and organizations, and hierarchies play a less important role. For scientific purposes, it can be used as a monitoring tool but also to stimulate scientific discussions.

Although a GTTN twitter account was set up in 2012 (<https://twitter.com/GTTNetwork>), communication and interaction with different target groups will be intensified in Phase II based on the fact that GTTN's network is very active on twitter (scientists, public authorities, timber production industry, international organisa-

tions etc.). This involves frequent tweets, interaction with the network and beyond, tweets from events, and communication including likes/retweets/comments.

In case GTTN is anticipating emotional discussions on a topic, twitter will be used cautiously.

Target/Interaction groups of the GTTN twitter activities are research organizations, scientists, timber trade industry, journalists, "interested public", NGO's, public agencies involved in timber trade.

3.4 Youtube

A GTTN Youtube channel was already installed and used as a platform in Phase I (<https://www.youtube.com/user/GTTNetwork>). It contains six videos so far. Interaction on Youtube will be intensified in Phase II. Different videos will be produced to share information with different target groups, but also to engage them. Visual information is fundamental to communication. Videos are an effective tool to describe scientific methods and technical procedures because they combine information such as colour, position and motion.² Occasionally, GTTN will embed videos from the network and stakeholders dealing with related topics to increase traffic to the YouTube channel. This approach was successfully implemented with a report on wood analysis introduced by GTTN project partner Thünen Institute and produced by Deutsche Welle (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hEaVb11-Dis>) shared on GTTN's Youtube channel.

3.5 Multi-media outreach - Ideas for video production

1. (Scientific) video informing on GTTN

GTTN will produce a video informing about its activities. The video has to be understandable for all the target groups, offers facts on GTTN and an overview of

² For inspiration please check: <https://blogs.helmholtz.de/augenspiegel/2015/11/von-englischsprachigen-youtube-wissenschaftsvideos-lernen/>

GTTN network and services. It will be produced in an edutainment style with a length of approx. 5 minutes.

Questions discussed in the video can be: For what do we need timber? Where does timber come from? What happens if timber is illegally logged? Who is affected? What are the advantages of tracking timber? What methods can we use to track timber? Who is interested in tracking timber (national governments, EU, companies, scientific organizations, NGOs)? Why do stakeholders join the GTTN network / what are the advantages of joining the network?

The video will be covering short statements from stakeholders involved in GTTN, explanation how the technical procedures work (isotopes, wood anatomy, mass spectrometry), including nice pictures from different types of timber from all over the world.

A prompt option would be to produce a video during the October Working Group meeting to make people feel responsible for the GTTN involvement, to make it feel a common effort by asking questions like:

- Why do you participate
- What would you like to achieve with GTTN
- Why is a project like GTTN important

2. *“Testimonial” Interview series with stakeholders involved in the GTTN network (approx. 2 minutes each)*

The interview series will be produced with the purpose to attract further donors and stakeholders from trade and industry. People involved in the GTTN network report on advantages of supporting and joining the network. These stakeholders can be traders sharing their experience with timber tracking tools or scientists elaborating on the helpful exchange of data. By reaching out to their peers and stimulating the GTTN clientele, this interview series supports the objective of maintaining and expanding the GTTN network. By offering a stage for them, members of the network feel valued – and possible new members can find out why joining is helpful.

Questions discussed in the video interview series can be (i) quite general, like:

Why does timber concern you? How do you work with timber? What does GTTN mean to you and what do you expect the network to do in the future?

or (ii) quite specific, depending on the audience of the video. Questions could also be very concrete if the video is produced for the purpose of attracting more members to emphasize why stakeholders should join being a scientist/trader/manufacturer/policy maker.

3. Video reports from events

During coffee/lunch breaks at GTTN or relevant network meetings participants can be interviewed. One recent example for inspiration is the Future Earth meeting: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LPbc2WgSW0U>

4. Video tutorials on specific (steps of) methods

Depending on scientists' demands, GTTN can occasionally offer a camera and a camerawoman to shoot video tutorials on specific (steps of) methods. Another option is the organization of a workshop in parallel with meetings hosted by a member's lab or a company, which is videotaped by GTTN communications staff.

Furthermore, GTTN Communication can contribute to the development a comprehensible narrative for tutorials. This option links to capacity building and requires a keen interest of scientists in communicating their work.

3.6 Flickr

In the beginning of the first phase of GTTN, a Flickr account was set up (<https://www.flickr.com/photos/gttnnetwork>)³. It served the purpose of reporting

³ Great pictures maybe for websites or Social Media Publications:
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/gttnnetwork/8161250325/>,

on field trips and international events. Flickr is a helpful branding tool and it supports storytelling. In GTTN phase II, behind-the-scenes photos of innovative tools for wood identification being used or of stakeholders engaging with the network will be posted. After important events like working group meetings and regional workshops, the GTTN Flickr account can also be shared with participants of events to offer pictures as souvenirs. Due to the CC BY-NC-ND 2.0⁴ license, users can download and share the photos under certain restrictions.

3.7 ResearchGate

Research Gate is an efficient venue specifically targeting the scientific community. It should be used as soon as the project starts publishing. Eventually, it may serve as a collaborative platform to inform researchers involved in the network – and to attract further scientists to engage. It is appropriate that the ResearchGate presence of GTTN is administered by a senior scientist involved in the project due to credibility and practical reasons (networking with colleagues etc.)

4 Communication material and publications

Communication material will be prepared for promotion and dissemination purposes. This material should be used to promote the concept, work and results of the GTTN project, with the goal to expand the network of partners, experts and potential donors. PR material will be a leaflet/brochure, Flyers, roll-up, woodeb buttons as give-aways and potentially poster. The Secretariat considers instructing an agency for the design of promotion material.

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/gttnnetwork/8161282196/>,
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/gttnnetwork/8161240913/>

⁴ <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/>

One leaflet has already been produced in GTTN phase II, informing on main objectives of the project, core working group activities, benefits of the GTTN membership and organisational set-up. Further flyers (postcards) targeting different stakeholders and potential new members of the network will be designed after the first working group meetings.

Further publications:

Articles in relevant media and specialized press will ensure that knowledge gathered in the project can be utilized in different ways and be published on various platforms. In 2017, GTTN2 will be publishing an article in the EUFORGEN Newsletter.

Title of publication	Type	Number of pages	Target groups	Deadline
GTTN Phase II: What, Who, How?	Flyer	4	Service Providers	published
GTTN Phase II (working title), Article for EUFORGEN Newsletter	Article	2	Scientific stakeholders, potential donors	End of 2017
GTTN Phase II: Network and Services (working title)	Flyer	4	Potential service users	End of 2018

5 Events

Events relevant for the GTTN Network and the documentation of these events will be shared on the website. Some events – mainly those who are public-oriented/relevant for Civil Society or Media stakeholders – will be accompanied further by press releases, reports, and Social Media activities.

5.1 Kick-off meeting with BMEL in Bonn in February 2017

The GTTN phase II kick-off meeting was held in Bonn on 15-16 February, hosted at the premises of the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture. In total 32 people participated from 21 organizations, coming from 12 countries. 11 participants represented the supply side of timber tracking services, and 10 participants represented the actual and potential customer base for such services.

The first part of the meeting started with a review of GTTN phase I activities, followed by presentations on the progress with the development of the different methodologies, and presentations on the actual and potential application in real-life business and law enforcement.

The second part of the meeting introduced GTTN phase II objectives, activities, modes of interaction and organisational setup. Breakout discussions focussed on the key GTTN activities: standardisation of methods, development of an expert and service portfolio, development of a reference database and promotion of the timber tracking tools.

<http://gttn2.globaltimbertrackingnetwork.org/2017/03/30/gttn2-kick-off-meeting/>

5.2 Working group meetings (2017 & 2018)

GTTN's first Working Group Meetings take place on 19-20 October 201 and are organized back-to-back with the Forest Legality Week in Washington, D.C.

GTTN Working Groups will address key issues related to the successful development of timber tracking tools and policies and promote their use to reduce illegal logging and associated trade worldwide. In face-to-face meetings, GTTN WG will discuss the working papers on Standardization, on Lab Finder and Reference Database, and on the Communication and Advocacy Strategy. Furthermore, GTTN addresses practical questions and develop milestones for the future organization of the Working Groups. The GTTN workshops are organized in collaboration with and kindly hosted by the World Resources Institute (WRI).

<https://globaltimbertrackingnetwork.org/event/gttn-timber-tracking-workshops/>

5.3 Regional workshops

Regional workshops contribute to Secretariats tasks of actively maintaining and expanding the GTTN network on three levels: countries, expert institutions, experts (scientists, representatives of expert institutions). Regional workshops can be documented with different Social Media tools such as Twitter (via hashtag), Video-Interviews, podcasts etc. to increase visibility of the event and allow active participation of other network members from all over the world via the social web.

5.4 GTTN network and other relevant events

GTTN Secretariat is participating in GTTN network and other relevant events to present and discuss GTTN's activities, to broaden the network and engage potential stakeholders from different GTTN target groups defined in chapter 2 (page 4-6) of the GTTN Communications Strategy.

Furthermore, GTTN Secretariat will support its Steering Committee and further "ambassadors" to present the network in relevant meetings organized by CITES Secretariat, FLEGT Expert Group, FAO Meetings etc.

5.5 Forums and Programs at the global or regional level

Forums and Programs⁵ as well as other events can be used to address and attract countries to join the network. It is considered essential for the implementation of the GTTN Phase II that funding would be provided from multiple donors, as this would strengthen the multilateral character of the project and its visibility, as well as for the project sustainability in the longer term.

⁵ Some examples of these are the activities under the EU FLEGT-EUTR expert group meetings, Forest Legality Alliance, TNC-RAFT, Law Enforcement Assistance for Forests Project, UNODC, Global Programme for Combating Wildlife and Forest Crime, Chatham House events, FAO FLEGT.

Table of relevant events

Meeting/Conference title	Date	Location	GTTN partners participating	GTTN contribution	Other information
GTTN2 kick-off meeting	15/16 February 2017	Bonn		GTTN Event, organized by EFI, hosted by donor BMEL	http://gttn2.globaltimbertrackingnetwork.org/2017/03/30/gttn2-kick-off-meeting/
CITES Workshop	7 June 2017	Hamburg, Germany	Thünen Institute	Meetings/networking core team (Jo Van Brusselen, Gesche Schifferdecker, Nele Schmitz, Tommi Suominen), distribution of GTTN flyers	https://www.thuenen.de/de/infrastruktur/thuenen-kompetenzzentrum-holzherkuenfte/neue-cites-listungen-auswirkungen-fuer-den-holzhandel/
Illegal Logging Update and Stakeholder Consultation Meeting Number 27	19/20 June 2017	London, UK	WRI, Thünen Institute	Meetings/networking Jo Van Brusselen, Nele Schmitz, distribution of GTTN flyers	https://www.chathamhouse.org/event/illegal-logging-update-and-stakeholder-consultation-meeting-number-27
Experts Group on Illegal Logging and Associated Trade (EGILAT) Meeting	20 August 2017	Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam	Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources	Distribution of GTTN communications material by Emma Hatcher, GTTN Steering Committee Member and Director - International Forest Policy, Australian Government	
Application of high throughput genotyping technologies for forest tree species identification and timber tracking	13-15 September 2017	Madrid	U.S. Forest Service, INTERPOL, Thünen Institute of Forest Genetics, ITTO, University of Adelaide, Bioversity International	Side-event with GTTN presentations by Jo Van Brusselen, Tommi Suominen, and Nele Schmitz, Meetings/networking, distribution of GTTN flyers	https://congresosalcala.fgua.es/crpoecdgentimtrack/

Forest Legality Week	17-19 October 2017	Washington D.C.	WRI, U.S. Forest Service, Chinese Academy of Forestry, INTERPOL, Thünen Institute of Forest Genetics, ITTO, University of Adelaide, Bioversity International	Side-event with GTTN presentations, panel discussion and plenary input on GTTN Phase 2	http://www.forestlegality.org/document/forest-legality-week-draft-agenda
GTTN Working Group Meetings	19-20 October 2017	Washington D.C.	WRI, U.S. Forest Service, Chinese Academy of Forestry, INTERPOL, Thünen Institute of Forest Genetics, ITTO, University of Adelaide, Bioversity International, Agroisolab	Meetings initiated and organized by GTTN	https://globaltimbertrackingnetwork.org/event/gttn-timber-tracking-workshops/

6. Internal Communications

Secretariat is communicating via E-Mail, weekly Skype meetings and occasional face-to-face meetings.

Information on news and events relevant for the network will be provided by the secretariat and members of the Network and shared with GTTN communications for further distribution.

Interaction of GTTN Expert Committee and constructive communications in GTTN Working Groups (E-Mail, Google.doc, Dropbox?) will be discussed during GTTN WG Meetings in Washington D.C.

With support from



by decision of the
German Bundestag

www.globaltimbertrackingnetwork.org

The objective of the Global Timber Tracking Network (GTTN) is to promote the operationalization of innovative tools for wood identification and origin determination, to assist the fight against illegal logging and related trade around the globe. GTTN is an open alliance that cooperates along a joint vision and the network activities are financed through an open multi-donor approach. GTTN phase 2 coordination (2017-2019) is financed by the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL).