



Conference Note

'Forests for Future Generations - Public and Private Responsibility for Sustainability'

11 - 12 June 2013, Berlin, Germany

The year 2013 marks the anniversaries of three innovative concepts of crucial importance to the forest sector. Three hundred years ago, in 1713, Hans Carl von Carlowitz described for the first time the concept of sustainable use in forestry to preserve forests for future generations. Twenty years ago, in October 1993, the idea of a multi-stakeholder initiative of forestry companies and environmental and human rights organisations emerged aiming to promote responsible management of the world's forests through standard setting, certification and labeling of forest products, and resulting in the establishment of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). Ten years ago, the European Union and its member states agreed to step up the fight against illegal logging and to promote law enforcement and good governance in tropical forests. The 10th anniversary of the EU FLEGT Action Plan coincides with the coming into force of the EU Timber Regulation, which aims to ensure that all EU timber imports derive from legal origins.

Objectives

The conference builds on the common ground of these three concepts, focusing on:

1. **Promoting sustainable forest management in the tropics** with its three dimensions of economic, social and ecological viability. This concept plays an essential role in successful climate protection, biodiversity conservation and sustainable development in today's context of growing global demand for wood as a renewable raw material for material and energy uses. It counts for different types of natural forests and plantations and specific forest tenure systems (concessions, forests managed

by smallholders, communities).

2. **Scaling up sustainable and legal wood products.** Forest certification has spread rapidly in the last few years and is now being recognised internationally as an important instrument that increases transparency and promotes sustainable forest management and trade in forest goods, and is moving out of a niche into the mainstream market. Independent reporting on sustainability and product labelling enable consumers to make informed buying decisions. The EU Timber Regulation just entered into force, aiming to ensure legality of wood-based imports as an intermediate step towards sustainability. Both approaches should reinforce each other.
3. **Exploring options for alliances between public and private sector, and civil society,** for complementary action on sustainable forest management and value chains in producer, processing and consumer countries.
4. **Increasing awareness among procurers and consumers** that avoiding tropical timber is not the way to save tropical forests. Sustainable tropical wood products are available and provide incentives to communities, local and national governments to protect their forests. Responsible consumer and civil society actions can influence private sector and government decisions.

Participants will share first-hand information on good practice examples of government, private sector and civil society actions in support of sustainable forest management and trade in countries producing, processing and importing tropical wood and wood based products. The potential and limitations of **international**



forest policy efforts, trade-related regulatory processes and private sustainability initiatives in improving forest management will be discussed.

This includes their impact on rural livelihoods and poverty reduction, their effects on trade regimes and their effectiveness in reducing illegal logging and deforestation of tropical forests.

Broad implementation of sustainability standards is challenged by limited capacities and financial resources, especially on the part of small companies and forest users. At the same time, credibility of standards has to be ensured and greenwashing avoided. The growing importance of woody biomass for energy use in the EU is already resulting in increased imports from non-EU countries, with a need to ensure sustainable supply. None of these challenges can be solved by governments or producer or consumer countries alone. Concerted action by governments, civil society and private businesses along the supply chains is needed to build new alliances.

Participants

The conference brings together high-level government officials, policy makers, company managers and representatives of civil society, sustainability initiatives and development organisations. About 100 participants from tropical forest regions and consumer countries are expected.

Conference outline

On the first conference day, the German State Secretary for Economic Cooperation and Development, Hans-Jürgen Beerfeltz, will explain in his opening address the historical context of the conference and outline the goals and strategic approach followed by German development cooperation. Keynote addresses by leading figures from government, industry and research will present opportunities and challenges for tropical forest resources and wood as renewable raw material and show how to move forward. Panel discussions and short

presentations will follow, giving participants an opportunity to engage in focused discussions on:

- Dynamics of globalized wood markets: new trade-related regulations and industry actions and how these affect wood trade regimes, livelihoods and forests
- Synergies of regulatory approaches and private standards initiatives in existing regulations and policies

During **the second conference day**, participants will split into three thematic working groups. Starting from a basis of practical experience they will discuss interactions and potential synergies between private standards initiatives and national and international regulatory approaches, focusing on the following key contexts:

1. In producer and processing countries:
Bringing FLEGT/VPA and certified sustainable supply chains together: How can incentives for sustainable timber be set? Will the EU's focus on legality aspects help promote sustainable forest management in the tropics or does it lower the bar (legal timber vs. sustainable timber)?
2. In consumer markets:
The EU Timber Regulation as regulatory effort to prevent illegally harvested timber and derived wood products for material and energy uses from entering EU markets requires due diligence in the supply chains. How can this momentum be used to increase **demand for sustainable wood products in private and public procurement?**
3. **Responsible Finance in certified, sustainable forest management in tropics:** How can public and private investments be mobilized?

Conference venue

The conference will take place at the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) in Berlin.

