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Syndicat des Producteurs Industriels du Bois



THE LEADING AUTHORITY ON TROPICAL TIMBER

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Private sector involvement in the FLEGT, REDD+ and certification processes

FLEGT-REDD, FLEGT-IP and FLEGT-CERTIFICATION projects



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European Union





Tropical rainforests are at the heart of **many issues whose scope affects multiple stakeholders**, including populations and administrations, economic players, western consumers and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). These issues affect both environmental and social aspects (global warming, biodiversity, poverty, etc.) as well as economic aspects (forest employment and income, local development, public revenue, etc.).

In the Congo Basin and in West Africa, forest harvesting represents a major activity sector. The African tropical rainforest is also the earth's second largest forest resource after the Amazon. As such, its carbon storage role is essential in today's global warming context. This forest also plays a very important role for all the Bantu and indigenous populations who draw the bulk of their resources from the forest. Lastly, it is a reservoir of biodiversity with a specific and particularly rich flora and wildlife.

Regarding these issues, the **FLEGT** (Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade) and **REDD+** (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation and enhancing carbon stocks) processes, as well as **third party certification** of legality and sustainable management, **can enable the private sector to meet the challenges of forest management and guarantee the preservation of the services it provides, as long as it is able to control both objectives and conditions.**



FLEGT

In 2003, the European Union (EU) published the FLEGT Action Plan, which aims to **combat the problem of illegal logging and its associated trade**. The FLEGT approach places particular emphasis on governance and policy reforms, promoting transparency and enhancing the capacity of governments and civil society. The key instruments to achieve this objective are the **EU Timber Regulation (EUTR) and the FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs)**. Within this framework, the EU provides support to the FLEGT Action Plan to establish a timber legality assurance system (LAS) to ensure effective means of verifying legality and traceability in the producer countries. Currently, the EU has signed VPAs with seven countries (Ghana, Republic of Congo, Cameroon, Indonesia, Central African Republic, Liberia and Vietnam), concluded negotiations and is preparing a signature with two countries (Honduras and Guyana) and is pursuing negotiations with six other countries (Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Laos, Malaysia and Thailand).

REDD+

Among the initiatives to combat global warming and protect biodiversity, the REDD+ mechanism was developed **to encourage tropical forest countries to reduce their forest sector's emissions**. The REDD+ mechanism can be defined as a set of initiatives aiming at effectively curbing deforestation and/or forest degradation dynamics in a given and delimited area in order to enhance the value of avoided CO2 emissions on the carbon markets.

Complementary mechanisms such as **Payments for Environmental Services (PES)** aim to establish a link between a "willingness to pay" for services provided globally and forest users locally. **Innovative forest plantations and agroforestry** are also initiatives that should be explored.

A mobilisation of timber sector stakeholders is expected in relation to these mechanisms in order to combat climate change. The objective is to propose a way to **improve the forest concession model with a view to making tropical rainforests a sustainable catalyst for the development** of both populations and territories.

Certification

Third-party forest certification is derived from the **concept of sustainable development**, a term that has been in use since the early 1980s. The forestry sector has received particular attention for its responsibility in the management of natural resources.

The objective of forest certification is to **attest to the quality of forest management (sustainable, legal)** which is assessed by an independent audit according to recognised standards (specifying forest management principles and criteria) and to inform the consumers or end users to help them choose the "right" product, as identified by a label.

Forest certification works via the sum of two approaches:

- **forest management certification** (verification of requirements at the forest level)
- **chain of custody certification** (verification of the traceability of certified products)

In Central and West Africa, the existing certifications are FSC and PEFC/PAFC (sustainable forest management), and OLB, LegalSource, TLV (legality).

A programme to involve the private sector

Forestry companies, which range from national entrepreneurs to international groups, are the main users of the forest. Surprisingly, this stakeholder has been neglected during the first years that the FLEGT Action Plan and REDD+ were implemented. These early years were dedicated to the reinforcement of governments and civil society. At the initiation of these projects, **some players of Central and West Africa's forest-timber sector** who were insufficiently informed, aware and federated, **had a hard time adapting to the requirements linked to these new stakes** and seizing the opportunities of Western markets (proof of legality, efforts to combat climate change, etc.). Others have individually turned to third-party certification to meet the requirements of their markets.

Under these conditions, it was necessary to **contribute to the greater involvement of companies in these processes by improving the organisation of the forest-timber sector and its representation**, and to encourage the private sector to accept legality and sustainable management in order to contribute effectively to the sustainable economic, ecological and social development of the producer countries. Throughout the course of the projects, it appeared key to implement actions based on the **synergies between the three processes** while seeking to both reinforce and highlight them.



The three initiatives represent different approaches to the stakes of sustainable natural resource management and they demonstrate clear synergies:

- The FLEGT Action Plan, in particular through the Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs), promotes **improved forest sector governance** and law enforcement by establishing strong and effective multi-stakeholder processes in the timber-producing countries.
- The REDD+ mechanism can bring about **catalysts for change** in the forest sector by facilitating access to funding for loggers that manage natural areas sustainably and by significantly increasing political support.
- Forest certification based on high-performance standards pertaining to environmental, social and economic components can **prepare and consolidate an environment that is favourable** to the implementation of the FLEGT action plan (FLEGT licensing scheme and due diligence system) and climate-sensitive projects.



The three projects

The projects include four Central African target countries: **Cameroon, Republic of Congo, Gabon and the Democratic Republic of Congo**. The FLEGT REDD and FLEGT IP projects also include **Côte d'Ivoire**.

Project activities are implemented with ATIBT's professional association partners: **GFBC (Cameroon), SPIB (Côte d'Ivoire), UFIGA (Gabon) and FIB (DRC)**. In Congo, activities are implemented by ATIBT, which has a headquarters agreement. A reinforcement of these associations is included in the project activities, enabling them to be better involved in the FLEGT and REDD+ VPA and certification processes.

FLEGT-REDD+ PROJECT

INTEGRATION OF CENTRAL AND WEST AFRICA'S TROPICAL TIMBER SECTOR IN THE FLEGT AND REDD+ MECHANISMS

Since its signature on 28 February 2013, ATIBT is implementing a major FLEGT-REDD project to improve the involvement of the private sector in the implementation of the FLEGT Action Plan (VPA process and EUTR enhancement) and the REDD+ mechanism. This project is funded in part by the **FFEM** and has the overall objective of **actively involving the private forestry sector in the sustainable management of tropical forests and the socio-economic development of timber-producing countries**.

The project features 5 activity components:

- **Component 1** aims to integrate the private forestry sector in initiatives to combat climate change and protect biodiversity (REDD+, PES, innovative plantations, agroforestry);
- **Component 2** aims to involve the private sector in negotiations pertaining to the Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs) of the FLEGT Action Plan and in their implementation;
- **Component 3** of the programme aims to harmonise national approaches to the implementation of the EUTR and to increase reliance on sustainable forest management and related certifications;
- **Component 4** should provide relevant information to facilitate the implementation of the EUTR;
- **Component 5** focuses on the capitalisation and dissemination of private sector experiences accumulated throughout the programme.



FLEGT IP PROJECT

CAPACITY BUILDING OF THE PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS OF CENTRAL AND WEST AFRICA'S PRIVATE FORESTRY SECTOR IN ORDER TO ENABLE IMPROVED INTEGRATION OF THE LATTER IN THE FLEGT ACTION PLAN

This project, signed on 10 December 2014 with the **European Union**, is part of the FLEGT REDD project and partially co-funds components 2 and 5 of the latter, which were presented earlier.

The objectives of this project are:

- The private forestry sector contributes to the sustainable economic, ecological and social development of producer countries;
- Strengthened professional associations contribute to improving private sector involvement in the FLEGT Action Plan.



The activities enabling these objectives to be achieved consist of improving knowledge of the forest-timber sector and access to information, supporting companies in terms of legal compliance, and strengthening private sector advocacy.

FLEGT-CERTIFICATION PROJECT

IMPROVING THE INCLUSION OF THIRD-PARTY VERIFIED CERTIFICATIONS IN THE FLEGT PROCESS

This project signed on 5 July 2018 with **PPECF/COMIFAC** is integrated and co-funds the two above-mentioned projects, mainly on component 2 (VPA) presented above.

The joint action aims in particular at improving the legal level of companies through professional associations and project partners, and by promoting third-party verified certification.

It pursues three specific objectives:

- increase the amount of forest areas that are certified as legal or sustainable;
- improve the recognition of private certifications in the VPAs of target countries;
- increase the level of companies' legal compliance.



Implementation partners



THE LEADING AUTHORITY ON TROPICAL TIMBER

Based in France, the International Tropical Timber Technical Association (ATIBT) is a non-profit association, governed by the French law of 1901 that was **created in 1951** with the support of the FAO and the OECD.

The association contributes to the sustainable and responsible development of the tropical forest-timber sector, from the forest to the markets, in order to guarantee a supply of timber that meets the needs of the present without compromising the potential of future generations.

Its mission is to **facilitate effective and innovative cooperation between all relevant stakeholders** to ensure the implementation of sustainable and responsible management of tropical forests by meeting their needs in terms of information, training, technical and scientific support.

Through its triple role as:

- a technical and scientific authority on tropical timber resources,
- a privileged contact person for sector professionals, and their representative with various stakeholders (States, international organisations, NGOs, etc.),
- and a manager of international tropical forest programmes,

ATIBT acts with the conviction that a healthy and legal forest economy can make an important contribution to the preservation of the tropical forest and its services.

Thanks to a headquarters agreement, ATIBT has set up **representation in the Republic of Congo** in 2018 in order to implement various projects and contribute to the leadership of the private forestry sector.

In 2021, following two years of collaboration through these projects, ATIBT and UNICONGO have signed a partnership agreement.



The SPIB is one of Côte d'Ivoire's oldest trade unions. Founded in 1943, its aim and primary role has always been collaboration with the authorities in general - especially the supervisory ministries - and the promotion of Ivorian timber and processed products.



SPIB

Syndicat des **P**roducteurs **I**ndustriels du **B**ois

- The SPIB has 25 effective members, who process and export 70% of the country's total processed products, representing as many industrial companies out of the 78 units that are currently operating.
- The SPIB is a member of ATIBT and UNEMAF, so it operates at the level of the Employers' Association and is particularly well informed about new laws, decrees and orders issued by the Government, as well as all other guidelines and information relating to the sector.
- The SPIB maintains ongoing discussions and exchanges with international organisations (BAD - ITTO - FAO - World Bank - EU - AFD - EFI, etc.) and national structures (MINEF - SODEFOR - OIPR, etc.) and it also collaborates with African trade union organisations, particularly in Gabon, Cameroon and Congo (notably through the FLEGT projects).



The GFBC (*Groupement de la Filière Bois au Cameroun*) is a sectoral employers' organisation, whose members represent about 75% of Cameroon's timber business volumes.

The GFBC's main missions focus on the following points:

- To provide representation before any court or administration in order to defend the rights inherent to the collective interest of the profession or its members;
- To establish or provide information through the publication of bulletins and publications of interest to the profession, both in terms of the laws and regulations governing activities and the organisation and implementation of the sector;
- To establish and enforce a code of ethics for the profession;
- To carry out or commission studies on economic and social issues of interest to the profession;
- To contribute to the promotion of products marketed by its members, through exhibitions, fairs, announcements and publications;
- Generally speaking, to represent timber sector companies wherever it is useful.





The FIB (*Fédération des Industriels du Bois*) is a professional trade union in the Democratic Republic of Congo that was founded on 24 March 2006 without any profit motive.

The FIB aims to act as a chamber of commerce, of industry and of trade as well as the employers' organisation for the industrial timber sector.

Among other duties, it aims to:

- Promote the interests of timber sector companies so as to participate in the integral development of the community;
- Represent the timber industry in the Democratic Republic of Congo before public authorities and both national and international organisations;
- Advise forestry companies in the interpretation of national and international legal and regulatory provisions, gather and disseminate the latter among members, and settle disputes between members that are brought to arbitration by the Federation.

The UFIGA (*Union des Forestiers et Industriels du Gabon*) is a professional union created on 24 March 2003 with the sole purpose of assessing and defending the economic, material and moral interests of its members who carry out forestry activities.



Its objectives:

- To facilitate relations between its members;
- To intervene with public authorities to defend the sector's general interests;
- To participate in all studies aimed at improving the conditions under which the forest is harvested and managed, the development of a competitive timber processing industry and the conditions of timber marketing both on the national and international markets.

Its action plan:

- Organise meetings with public authorities, development partners or private sector partners having an impact on the forest-timber sector, in order to ensure of the members' economic visibility and sustainable development;
- Continue to support members towards legality/sustainable management certification within the framework of the FLEGT certification project (ATIBT/PPECF), and also that of PPECF III;
- Support any initiative to set up a traceability system to support public authorities and put an end to the exploitation and export of illegal timber;
- Accompany the government in the programme for the further processing of timber (2nd and 3rd level);
- Develop projects to reinforce the capacity of inter-union member unions in terms of the VPA/FLEGT process.

Project results

C1 Project opportunities in the fight against deforestation and climate change

C2 Involving the private sector in the FLEGT VPA process, forest certification and regulatory frameworks, and the reinforcement of professional associations

C3 Raising European stakeholders' awareness of the use of certification in the implementation of the EUTR

C4 Online help platform for the implementation of the EUTR

C5 Knowledge capitalisation and the sharing of experience



C1 Project opportunities in the fight against deforestation and climate change

Forest preservation

In 2016-2017, [a study](#) and [a brochure](#) on the opportunities of the REDD+ mechanism as well as the prerequisites for the implementation of REDD+ projects for the forest sector were produced with the support of the [ONFI](#).

Furthermore, in order to preserve the forest's potential, both in terms of quantity and quality, it is increasingly essential, especially in some countries where demographic pressure is intense, **to combine natural regeneration with silvicultural methods such as agroforestry and timber plantations, while giving priority to local species with high heritage value**, a topic that has been explored in conjunction with this component.

Agroforestry

Agroforestry is making a strong comeback in many forums and projects thanks to the opportunities offered by this model. ATIBT also wanted to take up the subject through several actions:

- In 2018, with the support of [Kinomé](#) and [Oréade Brèche](#), an [opportunity study](#) on agroforestry projects based on cultivation under the shade of forest species was conducted.
- In connection with this work and at the initiative of the stakeholders at the [Cité du Développement Durable](#) in Nogent-sur-Marne, a first meeting of the Cité's "agroforestry group" was held on 25 April 2018.
- This was followed in 2019 by a presence at the [4th World Agroforestry Congress](#) in Montpellier (April 2019), which was highly stimulating for the group.
- In collaboration with the [Cité du Développement Durable's](#) partners, ATIBT and Kinomé presented [a poster](#) based on the above-mentioned study and in connection with the ["Equity" programme](#) implemented by Fair Trade France and funded by the FFEM.
- In 2020, with the support of the [Eticwood](#) - [Gembloux](#) - [Pallisco](#) consortium, consideration continued, leading to the creation of [a guide](#) on agroforestry projects for forestry companies and the development of two agroforestry project feasibility studies.
- Part of this work was presented during the [Cité du Développement Durable's](#) online "agroforestry group" meeting held on 7 May 2020.
- [A brochure](#) completing this guide and capitalising on the studies of the two projects was produced in September 2020.



Plantations

Consideration on timber plantations has also been carried out:

- In 2018, the [FRMI analysed the experiences of forest plantations in Côte d'Ivoire](#), examining diversification opportunities for natural forest concessions. One of the main lessons to be learned is that afforestation, which was initially more of an obligation, is now central to the strategy for the long-term supply and therefore viability of the profession.
- In addition, [a study on the current state](#) of legality and regulations relating to timber plantations in five countries (Gabon, Congo, DRC, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire) has identified numerous obstacles to the development of plantations and proposed solutions ([TEREA](#)).
- In 2020, the ATIBT, with the support of the [ONFi - CIRAD](#) consortium was able to continue and expand upon these first two studies. Initially, a didactic [guide](#) on how to set up projects integrating timber plantations was developed as well as two feasibility studies to support two forestry companies working in this direction ([see summary brochure](#)).



Plantation and agroforestry webinar: innovative opportunities for the private forestry sector in the Congo Basin and Côte d'Ivoire

On 28 October 2020, ATIBT organised a one-day webinar:

- Around 95 people logged on at some point during the day;
- 12 different presentations and two collective discussion periods took place on this day;
- A replay of this event is available on [ATIBT's YouTube channel](#) and a [summary article](#) was posted on the ATIBT website.

The challenge today is to have **inclusive projects that respond to the needs of populations and the environmental and economic challenges of companies and countries**. This raises the issue of the technical and economic feasibility of such projects, hence the importance today of moving **towards multi-product projects**. **Partnerships between all of the territory's stakeholders**, whether private-private, private-public, private-population or multi-stakeholder, are key and take on various possible forms. During this webinar, we identified several areas that should be explored in greater depth.

The studies carried out between 2018 and today with ATIBT's support provide **an initial basis for consideration**. This provides an initial foundation for future discussions. **ATIBT would like to continue to bring these subjects to the forefront and it encourages its members to consult each other and to propose initiatives that are in line with its initial priorities**.





Payments for Environmental Services

The last topic under component 1 that is of interest to the forest-timber sector, and in particular to FSC and/or PEFC-PAFC certified industrial and forestry companies, is **the Payments for Environmental Services (PES) mechanism**. This subject is also included in the agendas of the Think Tanks that ATIBT organises, and is one of the areas to be examined by the certification commission. Indeed, these companies play a critical role **in the protection or improvement of a large number of environmental and social services (ESS)**, in addition to their operating activities. Examples include the protection of wildlife, the protection of rare and/or endemic plant species, the safety of workers, the contribution to the socio-economic development of forest-dependent populations, and the protection of forests against agro-industrial conversion. Compared to non-certified companies, these companies also make more efforts to minimise deforestation and erosion due to tree felling and road construction, and to avoid polluting watercourses with hydrocarbons and waste water from the living bases. This way, they contribute to the preservation of water quality in the catchment areas.

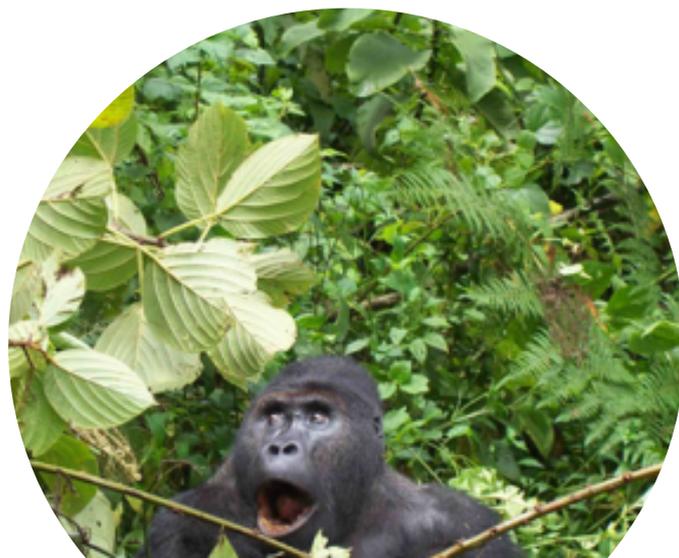
A review of the remuneration or payment mechanisms for environmental and social services was **initiated in April 2020** by ATIBT with assistance from the Venturexpert financial consulting firm.

Discussions then continued during the final quarter of 2020 between the CIRAD, Oréade Brèche, Venturexpert and ATIBT through the following activities:

- **Pre-feasibility** (phase 0): evaluation and analysis of existing impact funding mechanisms and sources, proposal of a remuneration concept;
- **Opportunity assessments** (phase 1): which consists of further evaluating the opportunities for remuneration of environmental and social services provided by certified sustainable forest management companies in the Congo Basin, through three studies:
 - Current practices, concept and terminology of PES,
 - Proposal for the identification and evaluation of environmental and social services (ESS) in certified concessions of the Congo Basin that are eligible for the Vertdeep funding mechanism (© Venturexpert),
 - Feasibility of a system to remunerate environmental and social services (ESS) provided by certified logging companies located in the Congo Basin.

Post-project activities to be carried out will consist in making the platform operational:

- Phase 2: **Proof of Concept (POC)**
- Phase 3: **development of a platform prototype**
- Phase 4: **implementation**



C2

Involving the private sector in the FLEGT VPA process, forest certification and regulatory frameworks, and the reinforcement of professional associations

Within the framework of this component, **ATIBT worked in collaboration with the following unions:**

- **FIB** in the Democratic Republic of Congo
- **UFIGA** in Gabon
- **GFBC** in Cameroon
- **SPIB** in Côte d'Ivoire

In Congo-Brazzaville, ATIBT was able to open an **ATIBT Congo** office in 2018 following negotiations in 2015 for a host agreement.

In each country, an advisor was **recruited and trained within the trade unions** to support the project coordination (ATIBT) and the trade unions in their implementation of the project activities. A large number of activities were carried out under this component.

The trade unions were able to improve their **communication tools** via their logos, email addresses and websites in order to gain visibility to support the companies.

Studies on the current state of affairs among private forest-timber sector stakeholders were carried out in each country, producing reports and summaries to fine-tune knowledge of the sector and to target the activities of this component.

Informational watches (FLEGT/certification) and **regulatory ones** were kept up to date throughout the projects. The resulting information is available from the trade unions, on their websites and on USB keys distributed to stakeholders at the end of the project. Some texts were the subject of advocacy (see table on the following page).

Through this component, reference persons supported the **PPECF coaching tool** for companies towards certification. Thanks to the numerous contacts, information sessions and exchanges between FLEGT-Certification reference persons and forestry companies, the PPECF coaching programme has grown through expressions of interest which have led to a number of coaching agreements as shown in the below table:

| | GABON | CONGO | DRC | TOTAL |
|--------------------------------|-------|-------|-----|-------|
| Expressions of interest | 23 | 6 | 3 | 32 |
| Registrations | 22 | 5 | 2 | 29 |
| Diagnostics | 12 | 4 | 2 | 18 |
| Coaching agreements | 11 | 2 | 0 | 13 |





At the heart of joint actions with the PPECF, activities have been carried out to **facilitate the recognition of private certification within the FLEGT VPAs**:

- In Congo, their recognition is acknowledged in the agreement's text. With the assistance of a consultant, concerted work was carried out to develop a manual of procedures for the recognition of certification in the VPA, the draft of which **was validated in October 2020 and resulted in a new roadmap for its implementation.**
- In Gabon, preparatory work for the resumption of VPA negotiations includes **recommendations for the recognition of certification, to ensure that they are taken into account in the agreement's text.**
- In DRC and Côte d'Ivoire, **workshops** were held to present the certifications, how they work and the guarantees they can provide in terms of the legality and traceability of companies, including under a FLEGT VPA.

Thanks to the backing of the projects via the FLEGT-certification advisors and the means available to recruit experts and organise consultations, the syndicates were able to **lead the forestry sector in their respective countries on subjects that are important to the companies.** This has made it possible to facilitate certain exchanges with all stakeholders and to bring together contributions from the private sector in the context of country-specific advocacy efforts.

Examples of advocacy work carried out

Democratic Republic of Congo

2019: Electronic customs seal, new foreign trade export authorisation, suspension of raft timber shipments, new pricing on the electronic export information sheet, new nomenclature of duties, taxes and usage fees for the province of Tshopo,
2020: Concerns regarding private port owners and managers, exit duties on timber, private sector-civil society partnership, list of critical products in the framework of the free trade area, social clause, taxation.

Republic of Congo

2018: Simplified management plan standards and guidelines
2019: Consultation with the private sector regarding the procedure for the cancellation and withdrawal of the FLEGT legality certificate, deployment of the computerised legality verification system (through 2020).
2018-2019-2020 : Draft law on the forestry code
2020: recognition of private certification in the LVS

Gabon

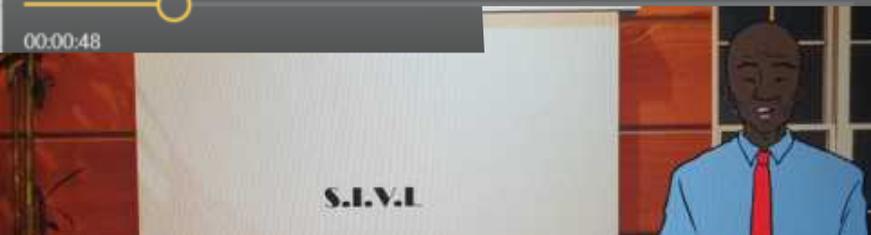
2019-2020: expanding the choice of certificates, AGEOS fees, files to be submitted by forestry companies during Water/Forest inspections, resumption of FLEGT VPA negotiations, revision of Environmental Impact Assessments/ESMPs, the KEVAZINGOGATE scandals - relaunch of exports for UFIGA member companies and - as a priority - certified companies.

Côte d'Ivoire

2019-2020: forest code decrees, certification, traceability

Cameroon

2019: FLEGT legality grids, national collective agreement, 2019 finance law



Short films

In 2020, nine short films were made (seven of which were broadcast) on two main themes:

major concepts

best forestry practices

Although the films were shot in different countries, they are part of the same collection which aims to raise awareness among the Congo Basin and Côte d'Ivoire's companies and their employees.

The "major concepts" theme deals with the main topics of this project:

- The principles of the FLEGT - VPA and EUTR
- Third-party verified forest certification - general certification
- Forest governance - a specific approach in the DRC
- Voluntary Partnership Agreements - FLEGT - Deployment of the computerised legality verification system in Congo

The "best practices" theme is more technical and provides more specific training and awareness-raising elements:

- Reduced impact logging - controlled felling,
- Safety at work - the wearing of personal protective equipment,
- Forest management plans - implementation,
- The fight against poaching - protection of wildlife in forest concessions,
- Traceability of the supply and manufacturing chains.

These short films are a foundation for training and awareness raising tools available to both companies and stakeholders.

C3 Raising European stakeholders' awareness of the use of certification in the implementation of the EUTR

Component 3 focuses in particular on the EUTR and sustainable forest management, with the objective of increasing awareness at the European level of the importance of harmonising national approaches for the EUTR's implementation and the importance of relying on the value of forest certificates that include legality criteria and are independently verified.

Several actions have been carried out such as:

- Awareness raising of the Italian and English EUTR Federations in 2015
- Participation in the EU's EUTR consultation at the end of 2020
- Communication on the EUTR via the ATIBT newsletter according to the news (18 articles since 2016)
- Co-organisation of webinars in the first quarter of 2021 with Preferred by Nature on the role of third-party certifications in the EUTR and the exercise of due diligence.



C4 Online help platform for the implementation of the EUTR

Component 4, in collaboration with [ETTF](#) (European Timber Trade Federation) and with the support of [Form International](#), consolidated and updated the [Timber Trade Portal](#), an internet platform that provides access to accurate and reliable information for the exercise of due diligence in the context of the application of the EUTR.

Timber Trade Portal is therefore a unique platform containing well summarised and in-depth information on the regulatory frameworks of 23 countries relevant to the international timber trade.

The website is currently [maintained and updated by ATIBT](#), which is overseeing the adaptation and updating of the country profiles through Form International. In order to broaden accessibility to French-speaking visitors, a French translation of the profiles is provided.



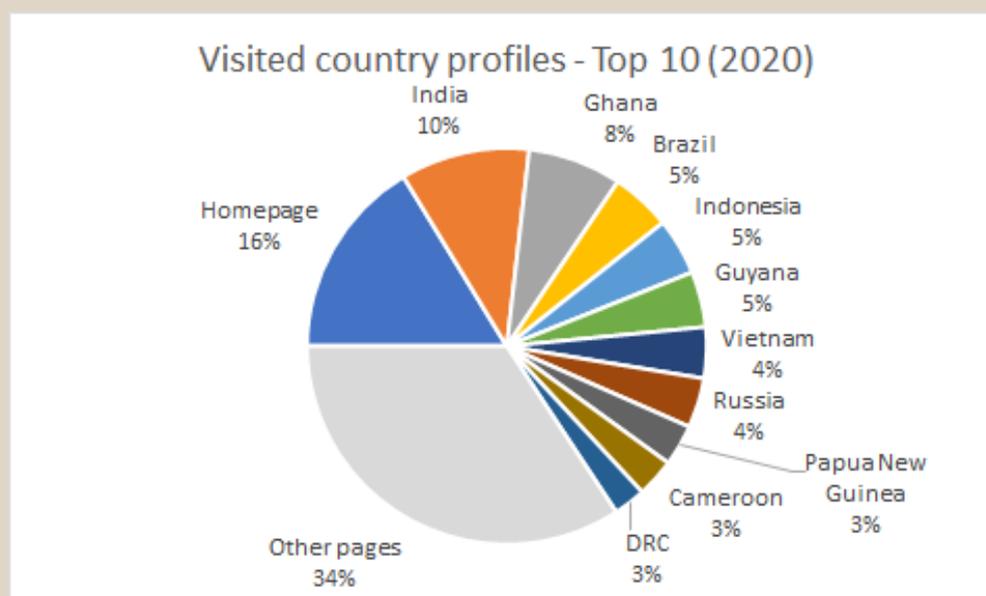
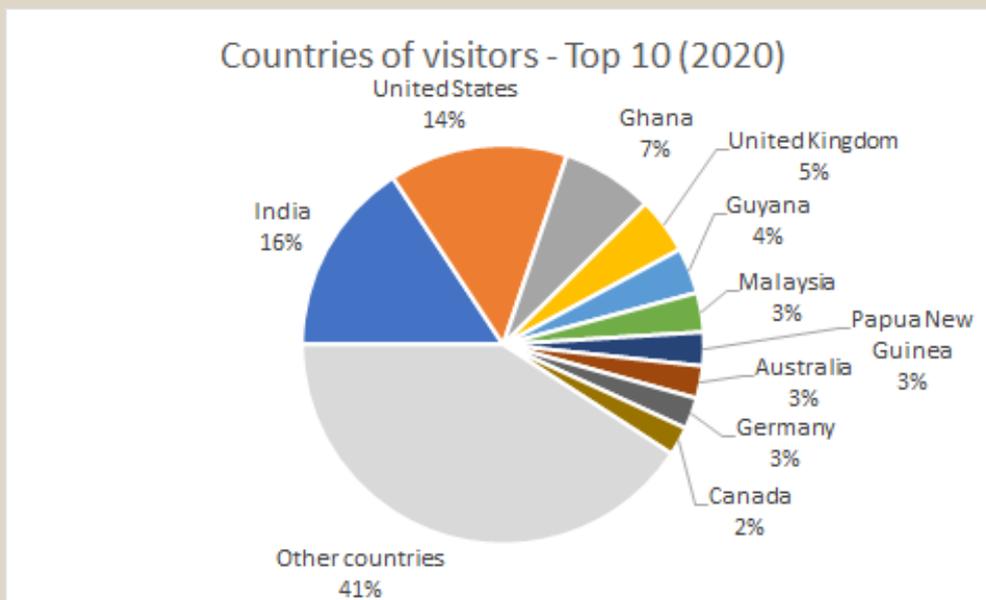
Gateway to international

TIMBER TRADE

The information contained on the website's country profiles is regularly reviewed and updated by independent experts. These experts are familiar with the timber regulations and developments in these countries, and often based there. Wherever possible, sample documents are provided which show the types of documents needed for forestry and for timber transport.

The website aims to provide an independent and clear overview of relevant country-specific information to support importing companies in their due diligence processes. However, it remains the sole responsibility of the importer to conduct its due diligence.

Website statistics



In 2020, (i) as many as 33,000 visitors have visited over 200 country profiles, and (ii) the most visited country files are: India, Ghana, Brazil, Indonesia, Guyana, Vietnam, Russia, New Guinea, Cameroon and the DRC.

C5 Knowledge capitalisation and the sharing of experience

Component 5 was more specifically concerned with the capitalisation of the work that was done and the sharing of experiences. During the projects, this component made it possible to support the Dubai Forum, the Racewood Gabon and the Shanghai Forum where the results and progress of the project were presented and discussed.

Every two years, the ATIBT International Forum brings together experts from the tropical forest-timber sector in cities around the world. For the first time since its 1982 launch in Rome, the ATIBT 2018 forum was held in the Middle East, in Dubai. From 4 to 6 March 2017, 130 participants attended debates on five themes: the future of the forest and its population, training, legality, logistics and the African timber market, with the official participation of the Ministry of Economy of the United Arab Emirates and Her Excellency Estelle Ondo, Minister of the Forest Economy, Fisheries and Environment in Gabon.

On 21 and 22 June 2018, ATIBT organised the Racewood in Libreville, in the wider context of the Gabon WoodShow, the Congo Basin's leading timber fair. Opened by the Gabonese Ministry of Water and Forests in the presence of COMIFAC, this new edition of the Racewood was an opportunity for ATIBT to continue **its reflection and exchange efforts with its partners on all the major themes linked to the future of the Congo Basin's forests**, such as the legality of logging, sustainable management certification and its promotion, the development of certified African timber, training, the transformation of tropical timber and its qualities in terms of sustainability and competitiveness for the greatest number of people. Issues pertaining to forest plantations were also discussed.

The international "Together Towards Green Global Supply Chains" forum was held in Shanghai in October 2019 and brought together 350 major players of the tropical forest products sector. **Co-organised by CTWPDA, CNFT NFGA, the ITTO and ATIBT**, it led to the creation of the global green supply chain network, which aims to promote the responsible production and consumption of forest products. This international forum was organised with the shared objective of **"promoting the development of legal and sustainable supply chain management, encouraging best practices in responsible production and purchasing, thereby ensuring poverty reduction, job creation, economic growth, income generation, and of course contributing to fight against climate change"**.



Conclusion

This major "three in one" project, which also involved a multitude of other initiatives such as the FLEGT VPA support project in the Republic of Congo, the SPIB-DUE project in Côte d'Ivoire and FAO-EU-FLEGT programme projects in the target countries, **has enabled ATIBT to:**

- **promote various practices** and responsible forest management among loggers and industrial players, mainly based in Africa, in order to enhance the sustainable management of tropical forests;
- **actively involve the forestry sector** in the FLEGT process and its implementation;
- **raise awareness** of third party certification among stakeholders;
- and **standardise** the implementation of the EUTR in tropical timber importing countries.

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Project deliverables that are online on the ATIBT website

Component 1

Forest and climate change (FR, CH, .pdf)

Opportunity study of the REDD+ mechanism for the private forestry sector (FLEGT-REDD FFEM project) (FR, .pdf).

Plantation studies

- Study on the current state of legality and regulations relating to lumber plantations (FR, .pdf).
- Study on the capitalisation of experience in Côte d'Ivoire lumber plantations (FR, .pdf).
- Kakemono workshop Republic of Côte d'Ivoire - 2018 (EN, .pdf).
- Guide for forestry companies that intend to establish lumber plantation projects (FR, .pdf).
- Knowledge learned from the feasibility studies of two projects by the SCB/Inprobois companies in Côte d'Ivoire and CFT in DRC (FR, .pdf).

Agroforestry studies

- Feasibility study for cacao agroforestry projects under the shading of timber tree species (EN, .pdf).
- Opportunity study of agroforestry projects for shade cultivation (FR, .pdf).
- Cocoa Agroforestry brochure - 2019 (EN, .pdf).
- Cocoa Agroforestry poster - 2019 (EN, .pdf).
- Guide for forestry companies that intend to establish agroforestry projects (FR, .pdf).
- Knowledge learned from the feasibility studies of two companies' projects: Pallisco in Cameroon and Tranchivoire in Côte d'Ivoire (FR, .pdf).

Component 2

Current state of the private forestry sector - 2019/2020

- Republic of Congo (FR, .pdf).
- Cameroon (FR, .pdf).
- Democratic Republic of Congo (FR, .pdf).
- Gabon (FR, .pdf).
- Côte d'Ivoire (FR, .pdf).

Congo forestry code

- Fiscal study of Congo's draft forestry law - 2019 (FR, .pdf).
- Comparative study of the former and new forestry laws in Congo - 2020 (FR, .pdf).
- Reading guide to the Republic of Congo's new forestry code for the private sector (FR, .pdf).

Gabon

- Resumption of FLEGT negotiations - 2020 (FR, .pdf).
- Overview of sustainable management certification schemes - 2020 (FR, .pdf).

DRC

- Study on social clauses - 2020 (FR, .pdf).
- Fiscal and parafiscal study - 2020 (FR, .pdf).
- Transport study - 2019 (FR, .pdf).

Short films

- Major concepts
- Best practices

Components 3 and 4

Timber Trade Portal

- Information Sheet- 2019 (EN, .pdf).
- Information sheet- 2020 (EN, .pdf).
- Practicing Due Care and Due Diligence (EN, .pdf).

The Congo Basin: moving towards forest legality (FR, EN, CH, .pdf)

Timber passport (FR, .pdf).



The FFEM (French Facility for Global Environment) funds innovative environmental projects in developing countries. It backs initiatives capable of generating local environmental, social and economic benefits. Created in 1994 by the French government following the first Earth Summit, it has already supported 333 projects in over 120 countries, two-thirds of which are in Africa.

The projects backed by the FFEM aim to preserve biodiversity, the climate, international waters, land and the ozone layer, and to combat chemical pollution. The FFEM draws lessons from these pilot projects so that the most effective solutions can be deployed in other places or on a larger scale.



European Union

In 2003, the European Union (EU) published the FLEGT action plan that aims to combat the problem of illegal logging and its associated trade. The FLEGT approach places particular emphasis on governance and policy reforms, promoting transparency and building the capacity of both governments and civil society. EU cooperation with partner countries supports actions that are in line with the FLEGT Action Plan and promotes sustainable silviculture. The FLEGT mechanism revolves around a twofold import regime: through Voluntary Partnership Agreements with producer countries and through the EUTR timber regulation. Within this framework, the European Union funds projects that support the implementation of the FLEGT and EUTR regulations.

Following a feasibility study for the promotion of certified forest operations in the Congo Basin countries, carried out in 2008, a funding agreement between KFW Bankengruppe and the COMIFAC Central African Forest Commission was signed on 4 January 2012, in order to support the latter in its convergence plan, which aims for an improved management of Central African forests. Through the PPECF (Programme for the Promotion of Certified Forest Harvesting), the convention establishes and provides for support in three areas of intervention:

- the establishment of technical and formal mechanisms and institutional conditions conducive to certification, through networks of private and public players;
- the improvement of the quality of the industrial use of forests through training and specific activities related to certification (industrial, social and environmental areas);
- reinforced communication on sustainable industrial harvesting.

