

Civil Society role in TLAS

Challenges facing CSOs on FLEGT / TLAS in SE Asia

1. Creating, accessing and sharing information is a challenge – including understanding technical information
2. Limited human resource and financial capacity of CSOs
3. Creating an enabling / supportive environment for CSOs to work with government agencies
4. Lack of public interest on timber legality
5. Issue of relationships – especially between CSOs and private sector (large companies). Also issue of how CSOs can support SMEs.
6. Awareness raising and legal reforms
7. CSOs' being ignored e.g. complaints on illegal logging not being addressed by government.
8. Security of activists is still an issue in many countries (intimidation, harassment, and 'disappearing').
9. FLEGT VPA is a slow process. Difficult to keep CSO commitment (and support of donors in this) through whole process.

Opportunities and strategies

1. CSOs to form an alliance to speak as one – national level and even regional level? EFI FLEGT Facility has funds to support work of CSOs on FLEGT – including focusing on linkage with ASEAN WG (to establish CSO FLEGT Forum on Southeast Asia level).
2. Need to involve CSOs in ASEAN technical working groups? There is also concern that this body/platform will be time consuming and ineffective, as well as being expensive. Also need to get China involved (also Japan).
3. CDNA for CSOs in VPA process, leading to a capacity development program to respond to these needs.
4. Numerous resources including at EFI FLEGT Facility (www.flegt.org). Including FLEGT media – resources available (from EFI FLEGT Facility) to translate into national languages.