Dear colleague,

The Indonesia-EU Joint Implementation Committee (JIC) took a decisive step toward FLEGT licensing on 8 July 2015. We recommended that both Indonesia and the EU initiate the internal preparations necessary to begin FLEGT licensing promptly when the terms of the VPA are met.

Our expectation is that the actions in the joint action plan will be addressed by December 2015, and we agreed to reconvene at a later date to verify progress and agree on the date when FLEGT licensing will begin.

When issued, the FLEGT license is expected to give Indonesia’s products an advantage on the EU market and in other markets that are joining the global movement to stop illegal logging. FLEGT-licensed timber will be considered legal under the EU Timber regulation. Companies placing FLEGT-licensed Indonesian timber
products on the EU market will be exempt from doing further due
diligence to ensure the legality of their products.

You can find the Committee’s recommendation in this link to Record of Discussion and this link to Press Release. We appreciate your interest in the fight against illegal logging and hope you will share news of Indonesia’s progress towards FLEGT licensing with your community or organization.

Our recommendation was based on the findings of a Joint Working Group (JWG), which was established in February 2015 to monitor and assess progress on the joint action plan. The JWG consists of representatives of the Indonesian government, private sector and civil society stakeholders group and the EU. The JWG found that significant progress has been made on the nationwide rollout of SVLK to all sectors of Indonesia’s diverse forest industry, including small and medium enterprises.

Today, more than 1,500 timber industries are SVLK certified. Eight-five percent of timber harvested in natural forests concessions is certified. All plantation forest concessions where timber is harvested are certified. SVLK certification and the use of Suppliers Declaration of Conformity is rapidly advancing in smallholder forests and land.

The Government has trained 980 SVLK auditors. KAN has accredited 20 Conformity Assessment Bodies to issue legality certificates. The Ministry of Environment and Forestry has registered 4,634 supervisors to play their roles in SVLK implementation, including assessing management units, providing technical support and performing internal audits.

On the EU side, our recommendation is to initiate procedures to amend the annex to the FLEGT regulation and to prepare the EU market for receiving FLEGT licences. This will require amending the annex to the FLEGT regulation: Council Regulation (EC) No
2173/2005 of 20 December 2005 on the establishment of a FLEGT licensing scheme for imports of timber into the European Community.

On the Indonesian side further action is needed, in particular, to:
• certify more producers under the SVLK, particularly those areas covered by new timber utilization permits (IPK), including those on conversion areas, industries and traders;
• ensure that the civil society, individuals and communities that are independently monitoring Indonesia’s timber legality assurance system have access to the information they need to do their work; and
• discontinue all non-VPA compliant temporary procedures.

FLEGT is a bold initiative that fundamentally changes the rules of the game in the forest sector of producer countries as well as in consumer countries. Strengthening governance and law enforcement to ensure the legality of timber trade is a colossal challenge. JIC members were greatly encouraged by the progress on the roll out of the SVLK and we anticipate rapid progress towards meeting the terms of the VPA.

For more information on the Indonesia-EU VPA and the decisions of the JIC, visit the websites of SVLK or the EU Delegation.

Best regards,

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