

Progress on the Indonesia - EU FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreement



23 April 2015

Dear colleague,

We appreciate your interest in the fight against illegal logging and we want to update you about the progress we are making with the implementation of the EU-Indonesia Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA).

As you know, Indonesia and the EU signed and ratified a VPA, under the EU FLEGT Action Plan. The Agreement came into force on 1 May 2014. Recently, Indonesia and the EU established a Joint Implementation Committee (JIC) to consider issues related to the implementation and review of the Agreement in line with progress made by the Government of Indonesia with the SVLK, Indonesia's timber legality assurance system. In addition, we also established a JIC Secretariat to support the JIC's work. JIC members include representatives of VPA stakeholders: Indonesia's government, civil society and private sector associations, as well as members of the EU Delegation in Jakarta and representatives of EU member states.

We held the first two meetings of the JIC on 24 September 2014 and 12 February 2015. In this email, we would like to share with you highlights of our progress on two important aspects of the VPA – advances toward FLEGT licensing and VPA monitoring instruments.

1. Advances toward FLEGT licensing

A team of experts from the EU and Indonesia conducted a joint assessment of SVLK to help determine when it can be considered fully operational under the terms of the VPA. The assessment is an important step on the road to FLEGT licensing. A country that has a VPA and an operational timber legality assurance system can issue FLEGT licences for timber and timber products it has verified as legal. The benefit of FLEGT-licensed timber is that it will be automatically considered as meeting the due diligence requirements of the EU Timber Regulation (EUTR) and, hence, considered legal under the EUTR as it enters the European market.

The first stage of the joint assessment identified aspects of the SVLK that needed to be addressed to meet the terms of the VPA. In response, Indonesia and the EU have been implementing an '*Action Plan on the Advancement of the Indonesia-EU FLEGT-VPA*' to improve the SVLK, in preparation for FLEGT licensing. The second stage of the assessment, completed by a team of experts in October 2014, found that Indonesia had significantly improved the SVLK and had addressed most of the areas identified for improvement in the action plan. For a summary of the experts' report, see the [Public Summary Stage II Joint Assessment](#).

At its second meeting, the JIC agreed to establish a Joint Working Group (JWG) to respond to the action plan. The JWG consists of representatives of all Indonesian stakeholders groups and the EU. The JWG is monitoring and assessing progress according to the action plan. The JWG recently held its second meeting and will meet regularly and report to the JIC on action plan progress.

At the second JIC, we agreed to revise some elements of three VPA annexes on product coverage, legality definition, and Indonesia's

timber legality assurance system. The revisions will ensure the consistency of the VPA with recent changes to Indonesia's regulations. Indonesia and the EU agreed that the changes made to these three annexes will strengthen Indonesia's timber legality assurance system and enhance implementation at the national level.

2. VPA monitoring instruments

The JIC reviewed progress on the four monitoring mechanisms identified in the VPA:

- Independent Monitoring
- Impact Monitoring
- Periodic Evaluation
- Independent Market Monitoring (IMM)

We gave particular attention to Independent Monitoring. Indonesia's TLAS gives civil society an unprecedented role in the monitoring of private sector and administration performance. Recently, the civil society representative to the JIC reported that the Jaringan Pemantau Independen Kehutanan (JPIK), a network of independent forest monitors, had already carried out 35 monitoring activities.

We intend to report to you by email on the future progress and decisions made in relation to VPA implementation. Please feel free to share these highlights of the VPA process in Indonesia with your community or your organization. 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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