

International Tropical Timber Agreement, 2006

2006/0263(NLE) - 08/11/2011 - Final act

PURPOSE: to conclude, on behalf of the EC, the "International Tropical Timber Agreement, 2006."

NON LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Decision 2011/731/EU on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of the 2006 International Tropical Timber Agreement.

BACKGROUND: on 27 January 2006, the negotiating conference established under the aegis of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) approved the text of the 2006 International Tropical Timber Agreement. This Agreement was negotiated to replace the International Tropical Timber Agreement of 1994 as extended, which will remain in force until the entry into force of the 2006 Agreement.

The Community signed the 2006 Agreement on 2 November 2007. All the Member States have expressed their intention to ratify it.

It is now necessary to approve the 2006 Agreement.

CONTENT: with this Decision, the 2006 International Tropical Timber Agreement is hereby approved on behalf of the Union. The objectives of the International Tropical Timber Agreement, 2006 are to promote the expansion and diversification of international trade in tropical timber from sustainable managed and legally harvested forests and to promote the sustainable management of tropical timber producing forests.

More specific objectives of the Agreement are, *inter alia*:

- to provide an effective framework for consultation, international cooperation and policy development regarding the world timber economy;
- to provide a consultation forum in order to promote non-discriminatory timber practices;
- to contribute to sustainable development and to poverty alleviation;
- to enhance members' capacity to export tropical timber and timber products from sustainably managed sources;
- to promote improved understanding of long term trends in the tropical timber market;
- to improve forest management and wood utilisation research;
- to improve market transparency;
- to encourage tropical timber reforestation and restoration of degraded forest land (taking the needs of local communities into account);
- to improve the collection of timber statistics;
- to encourage the development of national policies that seek to conserve timber producing forests and that maintain an ecological balance;
- to strengthen forest law enforcement, governance; and
- to address the problem of illegal logging of tropical timber.

As the **compulsory contributions** by the consumer members of the International Tropical Timber Organisation are assessed primarily in terms of the volume of tropical timber they import, the Union will contribute to the Administrative Account of the International Tropical Timber Organisation, once the 2006 Agreement enters into force, while the Member States, as well as the Union, will be able to make voluntary financial contributions to the planned actions via the voluntary contribution accounts of the Organisation.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: the Agreement will enter into force as soon as the necessary procedures have been completed.