

EU/Honduras Voluntary Partnership Agreement: forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber products to the EU

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PURPOSE: to conclude the Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the European Union and Honduras on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade in Timber Products to the European Union.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: Council may adopt the act only if Parliament has given its consent to the act.

BACKGROUND: in May 2003, the Commission adopted an Action Plan on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT), which called for measures to combat illegal logging through the development of voluntary partnership agreements with timber-producing countries. The Action Plan was endorsed by the Council in 2003 and the European Parliament adopted a [resolution](#) on the subject on 7 July 2005.

In 2005, the Council adopted [Regulation \(EC\) No 2173/2005](#) on the establishment of a FLEGT licensing scheme for imports of timber into the European Community, a mechanism that enables verification of the legality of timber imported into the EU under the FLEGT partnerships.

Also in 2005, the Council authorised the Commission to negotiate FLEGT partnership agreements with timber-producing countries. The Commission entered into negotiations with Honduras in 2013. The Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the EU and Honduras (Agreement) addresses all elements of the Council negotiating directives.

CONTENT: the Commission proposes that the Council decide to approve, on behalf of the European Union, the Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the European Union and Honduras on forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber products to the European Union.

The agreement provides a legal framework to ensure that all imports into the EU of timber and timber products covered by the agreement from Honduras have been legally harvested.

The agreement does not only promote trade in legally harvested timber, but it also aims to strengthen forest governance in Honduras by improving transparency, accountability and stakeholder participation. Since the implementation of the Agreement will reinforce sustainable forest management this initiative will also contribute to combating climate change through reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.