

Basic information	
2023/0222(NLE)	Procedure completed
NLE - Non-legislative enactments	
EU/Côte d'Ivoire Voluntary Partnership Agreement: forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber and timber products to the EU (FLEGT)	
Accompanying procedure <a href="#">2023/0222R(NLE)</a>	
<b>Subject</b>	
3.10.11 Forestry policy	
3.70.01 Protection of natural resources: fauna, flora, nature, wildlife, countryside; biodiversity	
3.70.18 International and regional environment protection measures and agreements	
6.20.02 Export/import control, trade defence, trade barriers	
6.20.03 Bilateral economic and trade agreements and relations	
6.30.02 Financial and technical cooperation and assistance	
<b>Geographical area</b>	
Côte d'Ivoire	

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	INTA International Trade	KARLSBRO Karin (Renew)	18/09/2023
		Shadow rapporteur  WARBORN Jörgen (EPP)  KUMPULA-NATRI Miapetra (S&D)  HAUTALA Heidi (Greens /EFA)  TARCZYŃSKI Dominik (ECR)  MAUREL Emmanuel (The Left)	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	DEVE Development	ZORRINHO Carlos (S&D)	09/10/2023
Council of the European Union			

Key events			
Date	Event	Reference	Summary
13/07/2023	Preparatory document	COM(2023)0383 	Summary
23/02/2024	Legislative proposal published	12247/2023	Summary
07/03/2024	Vote in committee		
14/03/2024	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
20/03/2024	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading	A9-0136/2024	Summary
10/04/2024	Decision by Parliament	T9-0208/2024	Summary
10/04/2024	Results of vote in Parliament		
29/04/2024	Act adopted by Council after consultation of Parliament		
27/05/2024	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2023/0222(NLE)
Procedure type	NLE - Non-legislative enactments
Procedure subtype	Consent by Parliament
Amendments and repeals	Accompanying procedure <a href="#">2023/0222R(NLE)</a>
Legal basis	Treaty on the Functioning of the EU TFEU 218-p7 Treaty on the Functioning of the EU TFEU 218-p6a Treaty on the Functioning of the EU TFEU 207-p3 Treaty on the Functioning of the EU TFEU 207-p4
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	INTA/9/12717

Documentation gateway				
European Parliament				
Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE756.012	08/11/2023	
Committee opinion	<span style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px;">DEVE</span>	PE756.017	07/12/2023	
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A9-0136/2024	20/03/2024	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T9-0208/2024	10/04/2024	Summary
Council of the EU				
Document type	Reference	Date	Summary	

Legislative proposal	12247/2023	23/02/2024	<a href="#">Summary</a>
<b>European Commission</b>			
Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Document attached to the procedure	COM(2023)0378 	13/07/2023	

<b>Final act</b>
Decision 2024/1413 OJ OJ L 27.05.2024 <span style="float: right;"><a href="#">Summary</a></span>

## EU/Côte d'Ivoire Voluntary Partnership Agreement: forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber and timber products to the EU (FLEGT)

2023/0222(NLE) - 27/05/2024 - Final act

**PURPOSE:** to conclude, on behalf of the EU, the voluntary partnership agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire on forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber and timber products to the European Union (FLEGT).

**NON-LEGISLATIVE ACT:** Council Decision (EU) 2024/1413 on the conclusion of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire on forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber and timber products to the European Union (FLEGT).

**CONTENT:** under this Decision, the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) between the European Union and the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire on forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber products to the European Union is hereby approved on behalf of the Union.

The objective of this Agreement, in accordance with the joint commitment of the Parties to sustainably manage all types of forests, is to provide a legal framework to ensure that timber and timber products defined in Annex I to the Agreement and imported into the Union from Côte d'Ivoire have been legally produced and to promote trade in said timber and timber products and implement the principle of sustainability. The Agreement also provides a basis for dialogue and cooperation between the Parties aimed at facilitating and promoting its full implementation and at strengthening the enforcement of forest law and governance.

The Agreement sets out in particularly the **framework, the institutions and the system for issuing FLEGT licenses**. It also sets out:

- the supply chain controls;
- legal compliance framework;
- independent audit requirements for the system.

These elements are set out in the Annexes to the Agreement and provide a detailed description of the structures that will underpin the assurance of legality afforded by the issuing of a FLEGT licence.

More specifically, the Agreement:

- provides a legal framework to ensure that timber and timber products defined by the FLEGT authorisation and imported into the Union from Côte d'Ivoire have been legally produced and to promote trade in said timber and timber products and implement the principle of sustainability;
- establishes a licensing scheme that checks and confirms the legality of timber products exported to EU and non-EU countries, as well as timber sold domestically;
- establishes a mechanism for dialogue and cooperation between the EU and Côte d'Ivoire on the licensing scheme, via a joint implementation committee;
- provides a detailed description of the structures underpinning the timber legality assurance system of Côte d'Ivoire;

- sets out a framework for involving stakeholders, social safeguards, and accountability and transparency.

The VPA's successful implementation will depend on Côte d'Ivoire's sustained commitment and political will. EU assistance should be strengthened to support the VPA implementation as part of the programming review process of the EU bilateral programme for the period 2025- 2027.

This Agreement will be valid for 10 years from its entry into force. It will be automatically extended for consecutive periods of 10 years, unless a Party terminates it.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 29.04.2024.

## **EU/Côte d'Ivoire Voluntary Partnership Agreement: forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber and timber products to the EU (FLEGT)**

2023/0222(NLE) - 20/03/2024 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on International Trade adopted the report by Karin KARLSBRO (Renew, SE) on the draft Council decision on the conclusion, on behalf of the Union, of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire on forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber and timber products to the European Union (FLEGT).

The committee recommended that the European Parliament give its **consent** to the conclusion of the Agreement.

The objective of this Agreement, in accordance with the joint commitment of the Parties to sustainably manage all types of forests, is to provide a legal framework to ensure that timber and timber products defined by the FLEGT authorisation and imported into the Union from Côte d'Ivoire have been legally produced and to promote trade in said timber and timber products and implement the principle of sustainability.

This Agreement also provides a basis for **dialogue and cooperation** between the Parties aimed at facilitating and promoting its full implementation and at strengthening the enforcement of forest law and governance.

## **EU/Côte d'Ivoire Voluntary Partnership Agreement: forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber and timber products to the EU (FLEGT)**

2023/0222(NLE) - 10/04/2024 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 585 votes to 10, with 20 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the draft Council decision on the conclusion, on behalf of the Union, of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire on forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber and timber products to the European Union (FLEGT).

Parliament **gave its consent** to the conclusion of the Agreement.

Côte d'Ivoire has one of the highest deforestation rates in the world. According to the World Bank, as of 2020 only 8.9 % (2.8 million hectares) of Côte d'Ivoire land area was covered by forests, compared to 24.7% in 1990. The causes of this decline include extensive agriculture, cocoa trade, poorly controlled exploitation of forests to meet the demands for timber and wood energy and weak legal enforcement capacity of public authorities in forest governance.

The Commission entered into negotiations with the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire in 2013 and concluded the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) negotiations in October 2022.

The Agreement, *inter alia*:

- provides a legal framework to ensure that timber and timber products defined by the FLEGT authorisation and imported into the Union from Côte d'Ivoire have been legally produced and to promote trade in said timber and timber products and implement the principle of sustainability.
- establishes a licensing scheme that checks and confirms the legality of timber products exported to EU and non-EU countries, as well as timber sold domestically;
- establishes a mechanism for dialogue and cooperation between the EU and Côte d'Ivoire on the licensing scheme, via a joint implementation committee;
- provides a detailed description of the structures underpinning the timber legality assurance system of Côte d'Ivoire;
- sets out a framework for involving stakeholders, social safeguards, and accountability and transparency.

The VPA's successful implementation will depend on Côte d'Ivoire's sustained commitment and political will. EU assistance should be strengthened to support the VPA implementation as part of the programming review process of the EU bilateral programme for the period 2025- 2027.

# EU/Côte d'Ivoire Voluntary Partnership Agreement: forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber and timber products to the EU (FLEGT)

2023/0222(NLE) - 23/02/2024 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to conclude, on behalf of the EU, the voluntary partnership agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire on forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber and timber products to the European Union (FLEGT).

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: on 21 May 2003, the Commission adopted a Communication to the Council and the European Parliament 'Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT): proposal for an EU action plan'. The Action Plan set out in that communication ('the FLEGT Action Plan') called for measures to address illegal logging by developing voluntary partnership agreements with timber-producing countries. Council conclusions on the action plan were adopted in October 2003 and a European Parliament resolution on the subject was adopted

on 11 July 2005 .

In line with a Council Decision, the Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire on forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber and timber products was signed, subject to its conclusion at a later date.

It is now necessary to approve the Agreement on behalf of the Union.

CONTENT: the Council draft concerns the approval, on behalf of the Union, the Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire on forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber and timber products.

The objective of this Agreement, in accordance with the joint commitment of the Parties to sustainably manage all types of forests, is to provide a legal framework to **ensure that timber and timber products** defined by the FLEGT authorisation and imported into the Union from Côte d'Ivoire have been legally produced and to promote trade in said timber and timber products and implement the **principle of sustainability**.

The Agreement, *inter alia*:

- establishes a licensing scheme that checks and confirms the legality of timber products exported to EU and non-EU countries, as well as timber sold domestically;
- establishes a mechanism for dialogue and cooperation between the EU and Côte d'Ivoire on the licensing scheme, via a joint implementation committee;
- provides a detailed description of the structures underpinning the timber legality assurance system of Côte d'Ivoire;
- sets out a framework for involving stakeholders, social safeguards, and accountability and transparency.

# EU/Côte d'Ivoire Voluntary Partnership Agreement: forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber and timber products to the EU (FLEGT)

2023/0222(NLE) - 13/07/2023 - Preparatory document

PURPOSE: to conclude, on behalf of the EU, the voluntary partnership agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire on forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber and timber products to the European Union (FLEGT).

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: the action plan on forest law enforcement, governance and trade (FLEGT), endorsed by the Council in 2003, proposes a set of measures to stop illegal logging. These measures include support to timber-producing countries, multilateral collaboration to tackle trade in illegal timber, support to private-sector initiatives, and action to discourage investment in activities that encourage illegal logging.

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. This enables authorities to check the legality of timber imported into the EU under 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 Côte d'Ivoire in 2013. It has kept the European Parliament and stakeholders informed about the negotiations.

The Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire on forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber and timber products was signed, subject to its conclusion at a later date.

**CONTENT:** the Commission proposes that the Council should decide to approve, on behalf of the Union, the Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire on forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber and timber products to the European Union (FLEGT).

The objective of this Agreement, in accordance with the joint commitment of the Parties to sustainably manage all types of forests, is to provide a legal framework to **ensure that timber and timber products** defined by the FLEGT authorisation and imported into the Union from Côte d'Ivoire have been legally produced and to promote trade in said timber and timber products and implement the **principle of sustainability**.

This Agreement also provides a basis for **dialogue and cooperation** between the Parties aimed at facilitating and promoting its full implementation and at strengthening the enforcement of forest law and governance.

The Agreement:

- establishes a licensing scheme that checks and confirms the legality of timber products exported to EU and non-EU countries, as well as timber sold domestically. For imported timber, Côte d'Ivoire commits to ensure that the timber has been harvested according to the law of the country of origin;
- establishes a mechanism for dialogue and cooperation between the EU and Côte d'Ivoire on the licensing scheme, via a joint implementation committee;
- provides a detailed description of the structures underpinning the timber legality assurance system of Côte d'Ivoire;
- sets out a framework for involving stakeholders, social safeguards, and accountability and transparency;
- describes how complaints are handled and how monitoring and reporting will be carried out;
- provides for import controls at the EU's borders under Regulation (EC) No 2173/2005 on the FLEGT licensing scheme and Regulation (EC) No 1024/2008 laying down detailed measures for implementing the scheme.

The Agreement is underpinned by the principle of non-discrimination, which means that stakeholders from both within and outside the forestry sector will be involved. These include stakeholders from the private sector, civil society, and local communities.

The Agreement is relevant to the EU Biodiversity strategy 2030 because it combats illegal timber trade and promotes sustainable forest management and effective participation of local communities, which will help preserve biodiversity.