

Illegal logging

Environment Committee toughens measures against illegally harvested timber

Today the European Parliament Environment Committee overwhelmingly adopted a draft recommendation for second reading by **Caroline Lucas** on illegal logging. The UK Green MEP commented:

"I am delighted that the Environment Committee has agreed fundamental improvements to the draft regulation on illegally harvested timber. Strong support came from across the political spectrum on key issues including adoption of an overriding prohibition on placing or making available illegally harvested timber on the EU market, extension of traceability requirements throughout the supply chain, and setting of minimum standards for penalties, including criminal sanctions."

"The EU Agriculture Council position on the timber proposal, officially adopted in March, fell far short of the progressive position backed by Parliament at first reading. In particular, the Council position does not include a prohibition, so the fact that was reinstated from Parliament's first reading in this morning's vote, despite considerable pressure to weaken our position, is a big victory."

"For years the EU has preached against illegal timber, a major driver of deforestation worldwide, but has hypocritically continued to provide one of the biggest markets for it. Between 20% and 40% of global industrial wood production is estimated to come from illegal sources, and up to 20% finds its way into the EU - with biodiversity and forest-dependent peoples paying the price. The longer term effects are potentially even more serious, since deforestation accounts for nearly a fifth of the global total emissions causing climate change."

Note to editors:

The next step, if agreed by the political groups, will be the start of negotiations with Council, to seek a compromise between the positions of the two legislators before the Parliament's plenary vote scheduled for July.

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