





Forest Legality Week: US Approaches

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Forests Are Indispensable

According to the latest IPCC report, we only have eight years left to keep 1.5°C within reach.

- There is no pathway to achieving that goal without halting deforestation.

In addition to forests' carbon sequestration and biodiversity benefits:

- Forests can reduce risks for some **noncommunicable diseases**, such as cardiovascular diseases, cancers, and mental health issues.
- Forests are our first line of defense against new **infectious diseases** and reduce the spread of **zoonotic infectious diseases**.
- Roughly **one-third of humanity** has a close dependence on forests and forest products.
- Forests are vital to the **US economy**.





The Way Forward

A comprehensive approach backed by programs, policies, funding, and engagement is needed now to:

- Protect and restore forests and other natural landscapes.
- Eliminate commodity-driven deforestation, forest degradation, and habitat conversion.
- Halt bad actors from illegally engaging in land conversion, timber extraction, and trade.
- Promote sustainable livelihoods and recognition of the rights of Indigenous peoples and local communities.



Halting the Illegal Timber Trade

- Illegal logging and associated trade has been ranked the **third-largest global transnational crime** after counterfeiting and drug trafficking, generating between **US\$52–157 billion per year**.
- Illegal logging threatens some of the world's most **biologically diverse and vulnerable forests**, contributes to **climate change**, harms **Indigenous peoples and local communities**, and **undermines the legal forest products trade** by significantly depressing world timber prices.



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Lacey Act Amendments of 2008

- In 2008, the **United States**, the world's largest consumer of **forest products**, became the **first country to ban** trafficking of products containing illegally sourced wood.
- US leadership for supply chain **traceability, transparency, and accountability** for illegality
- A landmark case in 2015 resulted in the **first U.S. felony conviction** related to trade in illegal timber.
- Contributed to **reduced imports of illegally sourced wood products by 32%–44% (2015)**



Lacey Act Amendments of 2008

- However: A 2019 study by WWF, WRI, and the U.S. Forest Service used wood anatomy testing on 73 wood products purchased from U.S. retailers. **Testing revealed that 55% of the products had incorrect species claims.**
- The Lacey Act declaration requirement still only applies to approximately **42% of the value of wood products imported into the U.S.**
- **\$45 billion of imports** subject to the prohibition in the Lacey Act remain, in practice, uncovered by the declaration requirement – **including furniture, pulp, and paper.**

Recommendations to Halt the Illegal Timber Trade:
Fully Utilize the Bipartisan Lacey Act Amendments of 2008

American Forest & Paper Association · American Forest Foundation · American Sustainable Business Network · Center for International Environmental Law · Ceres · Climate Advisers · Conservation International · Decorative Hardwood Association · Environmental Investigation Agency · Forest Stewardship Council US · Friends of the Earth US · Hardwood Federation · International Paper · League of Conservation Voters · National Alliance of Forest Owners · National Wildlife Federation · National Wood Flooring Association · Rainforest Action Network · Sierra Club · Sustainable Furnishings Council · Sylvamo · The Nature Conservancy · United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber, Manufacturing, Energy, Allied Industrial and Service Workers International Union (USW) · Wildlife Conservation Society · World Wildlife Fund





Agenda for Action

- Administration announcement to halt illegal timber imports and prioritize implementation, compliance, and enforcement of the Lacey Act Amendments of 2008.
- USDA finalizes Lacey Act plant import declaration phase-in.
- Agencies & Congress prioritize Lacey Act Amendments funding, staffing, training, and technology.
- Administration redoubles engagement with producer countries and other markets.



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Deeper dive: Implementation

- Improve USG use of **technology**, such as **real-time analysis** of declarations and **timber testing** to validate declared species and origin;
- Improve coordination around **collection and dissemination of critical data** with key agencies, such as CBP;
- Assign enough **agents at ports** and the **compliance officers** necessary to perform additional data **analysis and outreach** for monitoring and enforcement purposes.
- Agencies should be **routinely flagging suspect shipments** for greater scrutiny, **generating action** leading to enforcement and **improved due care practices**.



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Lacey & US Leadership

- Glasgow Leaders Declaration & Climate and Forest Leaders Group
- President Biden's Plan for Global Forests
- \$9B Pledge for Forests & FY24 Budget Request
- President Biden's Earth Day Executive Order
- National Security & Anti-Corruption



Questions ?



Thank you



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FOREST Act

Purpose

To halt US imports of agricultural products linked to illegal deforestation and human rights abuses

Features

- Requires companies to know and show high-risk supply chains
- US assistance to coordinate solutions to illegal deforestation
- US purchasing preference for deforestation-free products

24 Deforestation Fronts

Over 43 million
hectares lost
2004–2017

■ Forest area (2018)
■ Deforestation front

LATIN AMERICA

- 1 Amazon – Brazil
- 2 Amazon – Colombia
- 3 Amazon – Peru
- 4 Amazon – Bolivia
- 5 Amazon – Venezuela/Guyana
- 6 Gran Chaco – Paraguay/Argentina
- 7 Cerrado – Brazil
- 8 Chocó-Darién – Colombia/Ecuador
- 9 Maya Forests – Mexico/Guatemala

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

- 10 West Africa – Liberia/Ivory Coast/Ghana
- 11 Central Africa – Cameroon
- 12 Central Africa – Gabon/Cameroon/Republic of Congo
- 13 Central Africa – DRC/CAR
- 14 Central Africa – Angola
- 15 East Africa – Zambia
- 16 East Africa – Mozambique
- 17 East Africa – Madagascar

SOUTHEAST ASIA AND OCEANIA

- 18 Mekong – Cambodia
- 19 Mekong – Laos
- 20 Mekong – Myanmar
- 21 Sumatra – Indonesia
- 22 Borneo – Indonesia/Malaysia
- 23 New Guinea – Indonesia/PNG
- 24 Eastern Australia



