What are Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs)?

VPAs are bilateral trade agreements between the EU and timber-exporting countries that:

- aim to ensure countries only export legally harvested, transported, processed and traded timber products
- are negotiated by governments in close consultation with private sector, civil society and indigenous peoples
- agree on a timber legality assurance system that is audited and results in FLEGT licences for consignments of legal timber exported to Europe

What are the costs of illegal logging?

Illegal logging and associated trade:

- DEGRADE carbon-rich forests
- UNDERMINE sustainable forest management
- THREATEN livelihoods
- CONTRIBUTE to biodiversity loss

Are worth an estimated 30-100 billion USD annually, or 10-30% of the global timber trade (UNEP/Interpol, 2014)

Which countries are engaged in the VPA process?

In 2016, Indonesia and the EU agreed to issue the world’s first FLEGT license, helping to ensure that Indonesian timber entering the EU has been legally harvested, transported, processed and traded.

Six countries are implementing VPAs
Nine countries are negotiating VPAs

How does FAO strengthen forest governance?

FAO offers technical and financial support to countries in Africa, Asia and South America:

Support is provided through:

- Calls for proposals
  - Project ideas promoting forest governance and timber legality
  - Open to government, civil society and private sector organizations
- Direct Assistance
  - Immediate, specific requests such as provision of training and technical assistance
  - Open to governments and private sector organizations

The FAO FLEGT Programme has supported over 200 projects in some 40 tropical timber-producing countries since 2008

For more information on the FAO FLEGT Programme, visit www.fao.org/in-action/eu-fao-flegt-programme/en.