



ITTO
INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL
TIMBER ORGANIZATION



समृद्धिं वन्दते
Ministry of Environment, Forest
& Climate Change



— GLOBAL —
FOREST
— GOALS —

Concept Note for UNFF 19 Side-event 6–10 May 2024, UNHQ, New York

Title:

Mainstreaming Legal and Sustainable Supply Chains of Tropical Wood Products for Responsible Production and Consumption

Organized by: International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) and Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change, India

Date: 7 May 2024 (Tue, 1:15–2:30 pm)

Venue: Conference Room 4

Background:

Forest certification is a vital tool for recognizing and promoting the sustainable management of all types of forests and enhancing forest management practices, including operational control and worker safety and health. It also plays a pivotal role in ensuring that both ecological and social sustainability needs are met when placing forest products on the market.

Integrating forest certification with some recently introduced international trade rules presents both challenges and opportunities. Smallholders and community-based forest producers often face high transaction costs, which limit their access to certification and thus their participation in international markets. Moreover, the lack of standardization among certification schemes complicates international trade. Nevertheless, forest certification serves as an indicator of a country's progress in sustainable forest management and the investment being made.

The UNFF Country-led Initiative meeting held in October 2023 in Dehradun, India, hosted by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, provided valuable recommendations on forest certification and sustainable forest management. These recommendations underscore the importance of:

- Exploring additional actions to resolve issues such as monopolization, transparency in timber tracking, and contradictions with national legislation.
- Generating clarity, especially for the Global South, on which forest products will be considered for certification, as well as mechanisms for developing markets.

- Scaling up ecosystem restoration initiatives and evaluating the contributions of forest certification to the development of green economies.
- Assessing the role of certification in sustainable forest management.
- Promoting capacity building and international cooperation on certification and legal compliance and fostering collaboration and partnerships. It is recommended that the UNFF continue discussions on this matter to amplify certification at UNFF 19.
- Exploring technology and digital integration in recognition of digitalization as a key means for reducing certification costs. Collaboration on the horizontal and vertical integration of best practices should be pursued.

Objective:

The objective of this side-event is to contribute to mainstreaming legal and sustainable supply chains of tropical wood products for sustainable production, consumption and trade. Specifically, the event aims to:

- Discuss the challenges and opportunities of legal and sustainable tropical wood product supply chains, including certification schemes, traceability and general legality assurance systems.
- Share the experiences and best practices of developing countries in implementing legal and sustainable supply chains, including innovation to better enable timber certification.

The side-event is expected to raise awareness and understanding of the importance of legal and sustainable wood product supply chains for the sustainable development of tropical countries. It will also foster partnerships and collaboration among stakeholders to support sustainable forest management and the responsible sourcing, consumption and production of forest products.

Tentative programme:

Moderator: **Ms Sheam Satkuru, ITTO Executive Director**

- **Indian Forest and Wood Certification Scheme**
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, India
- **Legal and Sustainable Supply Chains for Sustainable Tropical Forestry**
Malaysian Timber Certification Council (MTCC), Malaysia
- **Timber Traceability and Control Systems in Guatemala**
INAB – INSTITUTO NACIONAL DE BOSQUES, Guatemala
- **Ghana Timber Certification**
Ghana Forestry Commission, Ghana
