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*Taking a livelihood approach to forest conservation since 1989*

15 July 2009

**RE: Formal Complaint to EU Matters (Dept of Foreign Affairs) and the National Consumer Agency Regarding the Widespread Use of Illegal Timber in Ireland**

Dear Ms. O'Connor and Ms. Fitzpatrick,

Following on from a brief exchange recently with officials from DG-Environment at the Irish Environmental Network (IEN) meeting in the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government headquarters in the Custom House, Dublin, on 19th June 2009.

Just Forests wish to lodge a formal complaint to your respective department/agency regarding the on-going and widespread use of illegal Timber in Ireland. Attached please find documents supporting this complaint.

Around the world, illegal logging, criminal exploitation and trade in forest resources are destroying forest ecosystems, undermining the livelihoods of local communities and depriving governments in transition of much-needed revenue. Illegal logging causes environmental damage, promotes corruption, undermines the rule of law and good governance and funds armed conflict. It retards sustainable development in some of the poorest countries of the world. Consumer countries like Ireland contribute to these problems by importing timber and wood products without ensuring that they are legally sourced through credible third-party verification.

Just Forests believes that Irish consumers of Timber and wood-products are un-knowingly contributing to forest destruction through their purchases. They need protection under EU Consumer Law. I appeal to your good judgement to use whatever Irish/EU Consumer Protection Laws at your disposal as a means to stop this practice of timber species decline and make it an offence for Ireland (and all EU member states) to import illegal Timber.

If you need any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Tom Roche

Tom Roche

Michelle A O'Connor, EU Matters Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs, Dublin
Ann Fitzpatrick, Chief Executive, National Consumer Agency, 4 Harcourt Rd, Dublin

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