



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



Brussels, 28 January 2010
5688/10 (Presse 12)

Council acts against illegal logging

The Council today agreed on a draft regulation laying down obligations of operators who place timber and timber products on the European market ([5571/10 ADD 1](#) + [5571/10 ADD 2](#))¹.

The future regulation is aimed at minimizing the risk of placing illegally harvested timber and timber products on the EU market. The new rules are intended to be based on the due diligence system, enabling operators to track the timber and timber products, to have access to information concerning compliance with the applicable legislation and to manage the risk of placing illegally timber products on the European market.² More specifically, the draft regulation is aimed at obliging operators to seek sufficient guarantees that the timber products they sell have been harvested according to the relevant laws of the country of origin.

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- ¹ This decision was taken, without debate, at a meeting of the General Affairs Council in Brussels. The Netherlands voted against, while Denmark, Belgium, Spain and the United Kingdom abstained.
- ² The due diligence system includes three elements inherent to risk management: access to information, risk assessment and mitigation of the risk identified. The due diligence system should provide access to information about the sources and suppliers of the timber. On the basis of this information, operators should carry out a risk assessment. Where risk is identified, operators should mitigate such risk in a manner proportionate to the risk identified.

P R E S S

Illegal logging poses a significant threat to forests as it contributes to the process of deforestation, which is responsible for about 20% of CO2 emissions, threatens biodiversity and undermines sustainable forest management and development.

The Council's decision completes the partial agreement reached by the Agriculture and Fisheries Council on 14-16 December 2009. The agreement enables the adoption of a Council's position to be forwarded to the European Parliament for its second reading.
