










Procedure file

Basic information	
NLE - Non-legislative enactments	2020/0157M(NLE)
EU/Honduras Voluntary Partnership Agreement: forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber products to the EU	
Accompanying procedure 2020/0157(NLE)	
Subject 3.10.11 Forestry policy 3.70.18 International and regional environment protection measures and agreements 6.20.02 Export/import control, trade defence, trade barriers 6.20.03 Bilateral economic and trade agreements and relations 6.30.02 Financial and technical cooperation and assistance	
Geographical area Honduras	
Procedure completed	

Key players				
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed	
	 International Trade	 KARLSBRO Karin Shadow rapporteur  WARBORN Jörgen  KUMPULA-NATRI Miapetra  HAUTALA Heidi  TARCZYŃSKI Dominik		10/09/2020
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed	
	 Development	 BENTELE Hildegard		23/11/2020
Council of the European Union European Commission	Commission DG International Cooperation and Development	Commissioner URPILAINEN Jutta		

Key events			
26/11/2020	Committee referral announced in		

	Parliament		
18/03/2021	Vote in committee		
24/03/2021	Committee report tabled for plenary	A9-0054/2021	Summary
27/04/2021	Results of vote in Parliament		
27/04/2021	Decision by Parliament	T9-0129/2021	Summary

Technical information

Procedure reference	2020/0157M(NLE)
Procedure type	NLE - Non-legislative enactments
Procedure subtype	Motion for a resolution under consent procedure
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 105-p2
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 159
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	INTA/9/04461

Documentation gateway

Committee draft report		PE660.067	16/12/2020	EP	
Committee opinion	DEVE	PE661.868	27/01/2021	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE681.010	11/02/2021	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A9-0054/2021	24/03/2021	EP	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T9-0129/2021	27/04/2021	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary		SP(2021)414	18/08/2021	EC	

EU/Honduras Voluntary Partnership Agreement: forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber products to the EU

The Committee on International Trade adopted the report by Karin KARLSBRO (Renew, SE) containing a motion for a non-legislative resolution on the draft Council decision on the conclusion of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Honduras on forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber products to the European Union.

The EU published its Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan in 2003. The plan aims to combat illegal logging around the world.

Forests are important to the Honduran economy. Almost half of Honduras' land area is covered by forests, half of which is still tropical rainforest. The problem of deforestation in Honduras needs to be addressed effectively.

Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA)

The report welcomed the conclusion of negotiations on the EU-Honduras Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) which will: (i) ensure that only legally logged timber is imported into the EU from Honduras; (ii) promote sustainable forest management practices and sustainable trade in legally produced timber; (iii) improve forest governance, law enforcement (including labour and occupational, health and safety obligations), human rights, transparency, accountability and institutional resilience in Honduras.

Members welcomed the fact that Honduras is the first country seeking to conclude a VPA that has included indigenous peoples as a separate interest group at the negotiating table.

Ensuring the implementation of the VPA

The report called for the swift ratification of the VPA by both sides so it can enter into force in 2021 and pave the way for the subsequent important steps in terms of implementation, including the setting up of licensing.

Members recognised that the full implementation of the VPA will be a long-term process which will require the adoption of a whole set of

legislation and adequate administrative capacity and expertise for its implementation and enforcement. They recalled that FLEGT licencing can only begin once Honduras has demonstrated the readiness of its timber legality assurance system (TLAS).

Implementation requires genuine and continued consultations and substantial multistakeholder involvement, including the meaningful participation of civil society organisations and local and indigenous communities in decision-making so as to guarantee the principle of free, prior and informed consent.

Members are aware that concrete safeguards are needed for local and indigenous communities with regard to land ownership. They stressed the importance of land use in forest governance and the need for a strategic vision on land use in the light of climate change issues. They stressed that the fight against fraud and corruption along the timber supply chain must be constant.

Furthermore, the importance of forestry and rural employment in the Honduran economy should be taken into account in the implementation of the VPA.

EU responsibility

Members believe that the EU has a very important and responsible role to play and obligation to abide by in improving both the supply and the demand side of timber in order to reject illegally produced timber and assist exporting countries in their efforts to combat illegal logging and corruption, which results in the destruction of their forests, climate change and human rights violations.

The report stressed the need to complement this work with a forthcoming due diligence and forest-risk commodity.

The Commission and the Member States are invited to fully integrate the FLEGT agenda into the new strategic framework of the European Green Deal by encouraging its promotion at global and regional level and further strengthening international cooperation between producing and importing countries.

EU/Honduras Voluntary Partnership Agreement: forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber products to the EU

The European Parliament adopted by 576 votes to 54, with 69 abstentions, a non-legislative resolution on the [draft Council decision](#) on the conclusion of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Honduras on forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber products to the European Union.

The EU published its Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan in 2003. The plan aims to combat illegal logging around the world.

Almost half of the land area in Honduras is covered by forests, half of which is tropical rainforest. Honduras has lost about 12.5 % of its forest area since 2015 due mainly to a pest infestation, most likely caused by climate change, while some forest area has been lost due to fires, deforestation and illegal logging.

Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA)

Parliament welcomed the conclusion of negotiations on the EU-Honduras Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) which will:

- ensure that only legally logged timber is imported into the EU from Honduras;
- promote sustainable forest management practices and sustainable trade in legally produced timber;
- improve forest governance, law enforcement (including labour and occupational, health and safety obligations), human rights, transparency, accountability and institutional resilience in Honduras taking into account that forests are important for the Honduran economy.

Members welcomed Honduras' success in ensuring the participation of government institutions, civil society, the private sector, indigenous peoples and people of African descent, academia and communities in the development of the VPA.

Ensuring the implementation of the VPA

Parliament called for the swift ratification of the VPA by both sides so it can enter into force in 2021 and pave the way for the subsequent important steps in terms of implementation, including the setting up of licensing.

Members recognised that the full implementation of the VPA will be a long-term process which will require the adoption of a whole set of legislation and adequate administrative capacity and expertise for its implementation and enforcement. They recalled that FLEGT licencing can only begin once Honduras has demonstrated the readiness of its timber legality assurance system (TLAS).

Implementation requires genuine and continued consultations and substantial multistakeholder involvement so as to guarantee the principle of free, prior and informed consent.

Around 80% of private land in Honduras is untitled. Members are aware of the need for concrete safeguards for local and indigenous communities regarding land ownership. They stressed the importance of land use in forest governance and the need for a strategic vision in this area in view of the hazards of climate change.

They stressed that the fight against fraud and corruption along the timber supply chain must be constant, calling on the EU to strengthen the scope and enforcement of the EU Timber Regulation, including through more regular and systematic checks and investigations in EU ports.

The resolution called for supply chain management to be rolled out in the animal husbandry, coffee and palm oil sectors, as this is essential to address the root causes of deforestation.

Furthermore, the importance of forestry and rural employment in the Honduran economy should be taken into account in the implementation of the VPA.

EU responsibility

Members believe that the EU has a very important and responsible role to play and obligation to abide by in improving both the supply and the

demand side of timber in order to reject illegally produced timber and assist exporting countries in their efforts to combat illegal logging and corruption, which results in the destruction of their forests, climate change and human rights violations.

The resolution stressed the need to complement this work with a forthcoming due diligence and forest-risk commodity.

The Commission and the Member States are invited to fully integrate the FLEGT agenda into the new strategic framework of the European Green Deal by encouraging its promotion at global and regional level and further strengthening international cooperation between producing and importing countries.