

EU Timber Regulation (EUTR)



EU timber regulation requires use of legal timber

The EU wants to prevent the entry and use of illegal timber and its refined products in the EU. Illegal timber is timber and wood products harvested, transported or sold in the country of origin in violation of national laws. EU timber regulation (EUTR 995/2010) will be applied in EU countries as of 3 March 2013.

The EU Timber Regulation is based on the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) EU scheme. Each EU state appoints a competent authority to control compliance with the regulation. In Finland, the Agency for Rural Affairs will perform official tasks related to applying the regulation.

Globally, the growing use of illegal timber and wood products is a significant problem. The impact is environmental, financial and social. Illegal felling has a significant impact on deforestation, climate change and the reduction of biological diversity. It also weakens the competitive status of law-abiding operators in export and import countries and causes considerable loss of income for states. Furthermore, illegal felling prevents sustainable development in developing countries, as it may involve serious violation of human rights and the profits are often used for funding warfare.

To whom and what does it apply?

The Timber Regulation will be applied to timber harvested in the EU and timber imported to the EU. EU laws set timber and wood product importers and salespeople in a responsible position. When timber and wood products enter the EU market for the first time, the supplier shall ensure that there are no products in which illegal raw material have been used. The regulation applies to the importers (operators) of timber and wood products reaching the EU market for the first time, and within the EU, to traders who deal timber and wood products (fig.1).

The regulation will be applied to raw wood and timber products such as plywood, cardboard, furniture, pulp and paper. The regulation will not be applied to recycled products, cane, bamboo, or printed paper, such as books, magazines and papers.

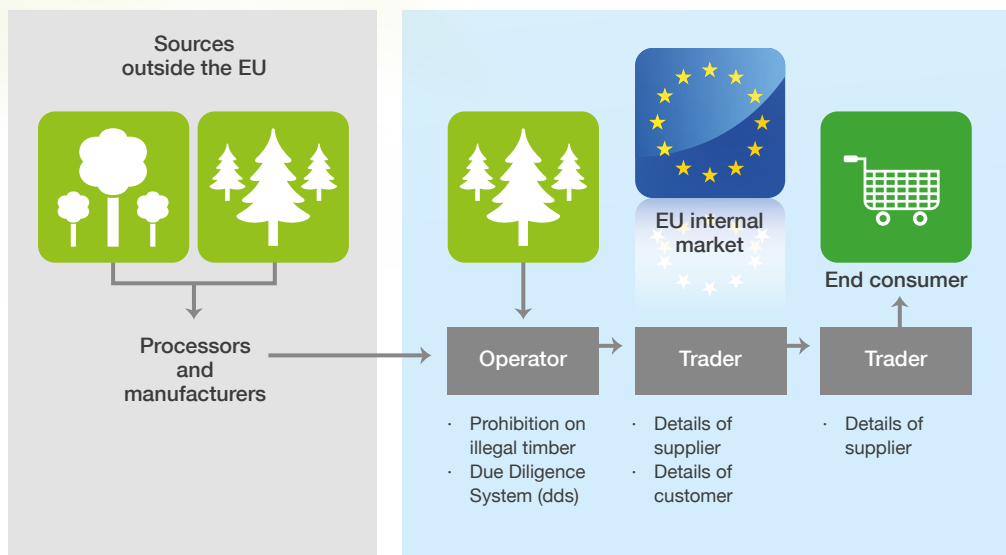


Figure 1: Key elements of supply chains of timber products in the EU.

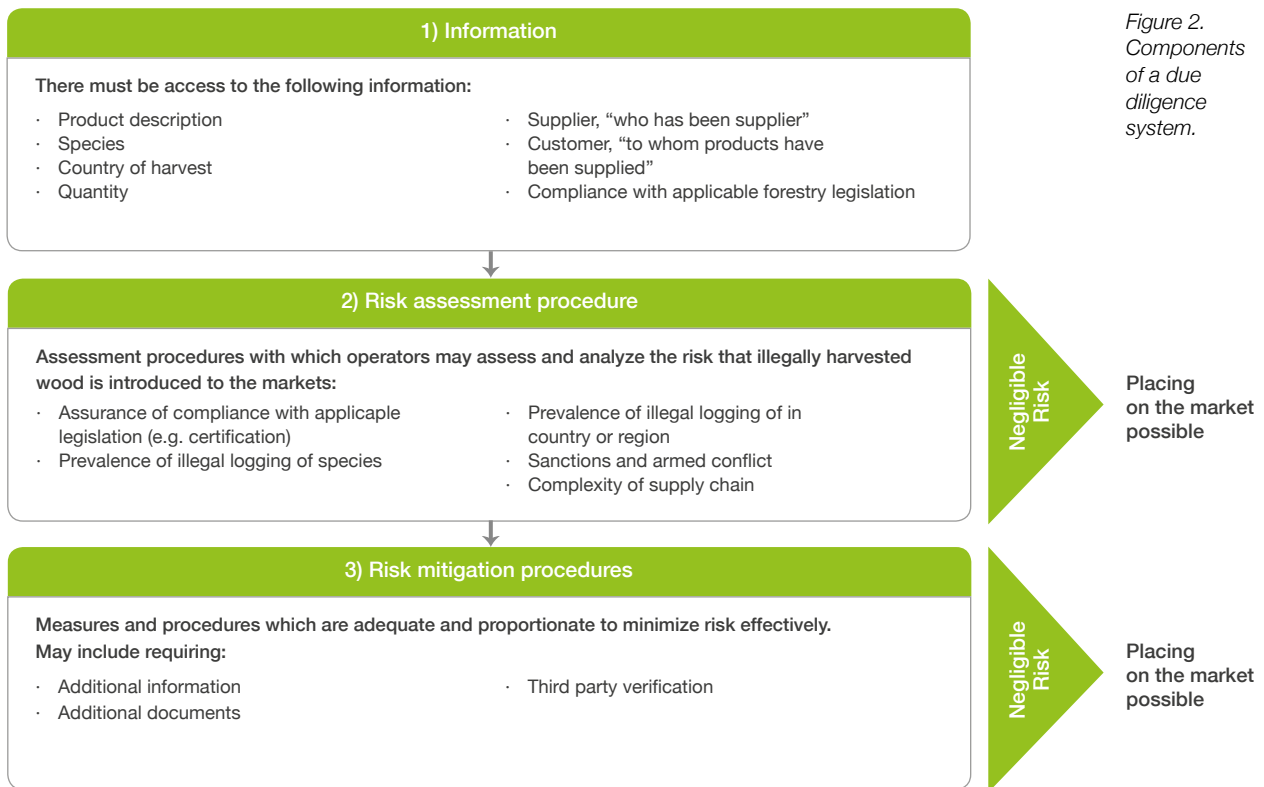


Figure 2. Components of a due diligence system.

What does the regulation obligate you to do?

Operators must follow due diligence when placing timber and wood products on the market, to which end the operators must use a due diligence system (dds). A due diligence system must include the factors provided for in article 6 of the timber regulation (EUTR 995/2010). A due diligence system should comprise three main parts: acquisition of information, risk analysis and risk mitigation (fig. 2). If an operator finds that the risk of illegality with regard to timber and wood products is higher than negligible on the basis of risk analysis, the operator must engage in measures to mitigate the risk.

The EU's execution regulation (EU 607/2012) regulates the detailed rules of an appropriate due diligence system. According to the regulation, the due diligence systems for each different timber type or wood product must be assessed at least every 12 months if the timber or wood product supplier, timber type, harvest country, state-internal area or wood harvest permits do not change. For example, if the timber delivery area or supplier changes, the due diligence system must be re-applied.

The operator must ensure the due documentation of the operator's delivery information (as per EU execution regulation 607/2012, article 5, section 1, and EUTR 995/2010, article 6, section 1, subsection A) and the application of risk mitigation procedures. The information in question must be stored for 5 years.

When applying due diligence systems in accordance with the execution regulation, the operators must be able to show how the gathered information was checked by comparing them to the risk analysis criteria referred to in the regulation EUTR 995/2010 article 6, section 1, subsection B. In addition, the operators must be able to show how the decision on risk mitigation procedures to be used was made and how the extent of risk was defined.

The operator may use their system or systems provided by EC-approved monitoring organisations. Operators must regularly maintain and assess their due diligence system unless the operator uses a system provided by a monitoring organisation.

To ensure origin tracing, traders dealing timber and wood products must keep records of their suppliers and customers. The information about suppliers and customers must be retained for at least 5 years.





For more information from the Agency for Rural Affairs

The Agency for Rural Affairs implements farmer subsidies, rural enterprise and project subsidies as well as marketing subsidies in a customer-oriented manner while simultaneously developing administrative services. The Agency is responsible for the use of national subsidies in Finland as well as the use of EU's agricultural subsidies and rural fund appropriations and monitors the compliance with the EU's timber regulation in Finland.

www.mavi.fi