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(Information)

## COUNCIL

## COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS

## Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT)

(2003/C 268/01)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

1. Considering the Council Resolution of 11 November 1999 on forests and development where it recommended the Community and the Member States to contribute to the partnership for action between the Community, its Member States, partner countries, international organisations and civil society for efficient implementation of global forest related priorities;
2. Recalling the Council conclusions on the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and Plan of Implementation;
3. Recognising that the Action Plan on FLEGT proposed by the Commission forms part of the firm commitment made by the EU to actively contribute to international processes such as the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), the expanded work programme of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) with regard to forest biological diversity, the International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO) and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES);
4. Welcomes the Action Plan on FLEGT set out in the Commission Communication as a first step to tackle the urgent issue of illegal logging and its associated trade in a collaborative and coordinated way with consumer and producer countries, the private sector and other stakeholders;
5. Recognises that illegal logging is a complex problem that requires a multidisciplinary approach;
6. Acknowledges the fact that forest law enforcement, governance and trade needs to be addressed within the framework of sustainable development, sustainable forest management and poverty reduction, as well as social equity and national sovereignty;
7. Recognises the need for the EU to contribute to global efforts to tackle the problem of illegal logging;
8. Stresses the importance of strengthened governance in the forest sector, and the positive impact this has on reducing poverty;
9. Urges the Community and Member States to enter into political dialogue with key target countries to instigate forest sector governance reforms, more specifically to:
  - strengthen land tenure and access rights especially for marginalised, rural communities and indigenous peoples <sup>(1)</sup>;
  - strengthen effective participation of all stakeholders, notably of non-state actors and indigenous peoples <sup>(1)</sup>, in policy-making and implementation;
  - increase transparency in association with forest exploitation operations, including through the introduction of independent monitoring;
  - reduce corruption in association with the award of forest exploitations concessions, and the harvesting and trade in timber;
  - engage the private sector of the timber producing countries in the efforts to combat illegal logging;
  - address other issues related to illegal logging as identified, such as the financing of violent conflict.
10. Invites the Community and Member States, *inter alia* in the course of the mid-term review of the Country Strategy Papers (CSPs), to introduce forest sector governance into strategies and development cooperation programs especially in regions and countries with significant forest resources, and to provide adequate funds from geographic and thematic budget lines in order to build capacity and support implementation of key reforms;

<sup>(1)</sup> There is no common EU position on the use of the term indigenous peoples. Some Member States are of the view that indigenous peoples are not to be regarded as having the right of self-determination for the purpose of Article 1 of the ICCPR and the ICESCR, and that use of the term does not imply that indigenous people or peoples are entitled to exercise collective rights.

In particular, the Council:

11. Invites the Commission together with Member States to engage all the major consumer and producer countries and organisations in a dialogue in order to seek to build a consensus on the best way to tackle the problem of illegal logging and the associated trade, in particular by exploring multilateral and regional responses and by presenting and discussing the ideas developed in the Action Plan at the appropriate international meetings such as UNFF, the ITTO, the regional FLEG processes, the Asia Forest Partnership and the Congo Basin Forest Partnership;
12. Invites the Commission together with Member States to enter into discussions with timber producer countries and regional organisations about their readiness for, their views on and the scope of voluntary FLEGT Partnership Agreements and to report back to the Council by mid-2004. The results of the discussions will form the basis for a future debate on the mandate to the Commission for negotiations with concerned partners;
13. Invites the Commission to review options for, and to consider the internal and external impact of the measures indicated in the Action Plan, including the development of a Regulation, and to review options for, and the feasibility of, further legislation to control imports of illegally harvested timber and conflict timber, taking account of relevant initiatives in other areas, as well as existing multilateral mechanisms, and the impact on domestic industries, and present its findings to the Council by mid-2004;
14. Urges Member States to provide the Commission with relevant information regarding national legislation which could be applied to address the illegal logging issue. In this regard, the Council suggests that Member States and the Commission establish a virtual network to facilitate the exchange of information on their findings.

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## COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS

of 27 October 2003

on a European environment and health strategy

(2003/C 268/02)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

I. RECALLING THAT:

1. The Treaty in Articles 152 and 174 requires that a high level of human health protection should be ensured in the definition and implementation of all Community policies and actions, that Community policy on the environment shall contribute to, inter alia, the protection of human health and the promotion of measures at international level to deal with regional or global environmental problems, and that the Community policy on the environment shall be based on the precautionary principle.
2. The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines 'environment and health' as including 'both the direct pathological effects of chemicals, radiation and some biological agents, and the effects (often indirect) on health and well-being of the broad physical, psychological, social and aesthetic environment, which includes housing, urban development, land use and transport' <sup>(1)</sup>.
3. The Sixth Environmental Action Programme has the goal of contributing to a high level of quality of life and social well-being for citizens by providing an environment where the level of pollution does not give rise to harmful effects on human health and the environment.
4. The Programme of Community action in the field of Public Health (2003-2008) lists among its range of actions and support measures that of promoting health and preventing disease through action on health determinants across all Community policies and activities.

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<sup>(1)</sup> 'Environment and health. The European Charter and commentary', Copenhagen, WHO Regional Office for Europe, 1990 (WHO Regional Publications, European Series, No 35).