REPORT ON
Current understanding and practices on forest law enforcement, governance and trade (FLEGT) and information and training needs on FLEGT of the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Vietnam

Hanoi, June 2014
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<tr>
<td>ARD</td>
<td>Agriculture and Rural Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>CC</td>
<td>Climate change</td>
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<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organization</td>
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<td>EC</td>
<td>European Commission</td>
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<td>EFI</td>
<td>European Forestry Institution</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>FAO</td>
<td>The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations</td>
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<td>FLEGT</td>
<td>Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade</td>
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<td>FSC</td>
<td>Forest Stewardship Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>GIZ</td>
<td>Deutsche Gesellschaft for Internationale Zusammenarbeit / German Society for International Cooperation</td>
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<tr>
<td>JSC</td>
<td>Joint-stock Company</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ltd</td>
<td>Limited</td>
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<tr>
<td>MT</td>
<td>Manufacturing and trading</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non Government Organization</td>
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<td>SEs</td>
<td>State enterprises</td>
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<td>SME</td>
<td>Small and medium enterprise</td>
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<td>SRD</td>
<td>Centre for Sustainable Rural Development</td>
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<td>TLAS</td>
<td>Timber Legality Assurance System</td>
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<td>TPE</td>
<td>Timber processing enterprise</td>
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<td>VCCI</td>
<td>Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry</td>
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<td>VPA</td>
<td>Voluntary Partnership Agreement</td>
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<td>WTO</td>
<td>World Trade Organization</td>
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ABSTRACT

Vietnam expects to finalize its negotiations with the European Union (EU) on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade/Voluntary Partnership Agreement (FLEGT/VPA) in October 2014. To support and increase the capabilities of business associations and media institutions, and provide information for businesses in a more effective manner in Vietnam, the Center for Education and Development (CED) are implementing a one year long European Union-Food and Agriculture Organization (EU-FAO) FLEGT funded program called “Capacity building of business associations and media to engage in FLEGT to provide information on FLEGT and related issues”, commencing on 13th February 2014.

As a starting point to develop communication and information provision activities of the project, CED and the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) conducted a needs assessment of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). They also evaluated the capacity for communication and information provision of business associations and media institutions. The needs assessment was conducted in six provinces/cities in Vietnam (Quang Nam, Da Nang, Binh Dinh, Binh Duong, Ho Chi Minh city and Ha Noi), where the major timber processing hubs are located. The assessment focused on current knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAPs) on sustainable forest management, timber legality, understanding and knowledge about FLEGT and finally information and training needs on FLEGT.

After consultations in Hanoi, CED designed and conducted a pilot survey in Ha Noi and Bac Ninh to test the questionnaires for three groups: SMEs, associations, and media. After the pilot, CED finalized the questionnaires and conducted the survey in the field from 1st-23rd April, 2014. Interviews with 81 SMEs, associations, and media were conducted. The results were based on interviews and assessments from 63 Vietnamese SMEs. Among those who know about FLEGT/VPA, only 56% know about the definition of timber legality for households, individuals and communities. A staggering 75% of interviewed enterprises do not know about the timber legality assurance system (TLAS) – the core component of FLEGT/VPA. 73% of these enterprises are exporting timber and both indoor and outdoor furniture timber products to the EU. They account for 51% of the export market share.

The results showed that the level of understanding and interests on sources of legal timber varies, and depends upon the timber market that the enterprises are exporting to. The enterprises that export timber and timber products to EU markets are larger enterprises and are interested in FLEGT. However, there are very few enterprises that really understand the contents and requirements of FLEGT. Smaller-sized enterprises, despite exporting timber and timber products to EU markets, still do not have any information on FLEGT. Currently, SMEs are facing difficulties in getting timber legality evidence for timber from domestic sources and timber imported from some neighboring countries. Despite the key role that timber and business associations play in the negotiation process and in providing information and inputs for the negotiation team, their voices have not been well represented while equally, there is no effective provision of information for businesses. These associations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are yet to effectively cooperate with the media and thus, there is limited public information available on FLEGT and the understanding of these issues by journalists is also limited.

In order to effectively provide information for target groups affected by FLEGT/VPA, it is necessary to promote cooperation between civil society organizations (CSOs), NGOs and the media. On the other hand, it is necessary to diversify communication channels to leverage support from both traditional and new media (social networks and media).
1. INTRODUCTION

Vietnam imports a large volume of timber from countries in the region, including Laos, Thailand, Cambodia, Malaysia, and China. Vietnamese timber products are exported to more than 100 countries, including high-end and environmentally conscious areas in Europe, the United States, and Japan. To keep up with increasing processing demands, Vietnam needs to import timber from many countries, including high-risk countries which are using illegal or unidentified timbers. Therefore, signing a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) will definitely improve Vietnamese timber trade in legal and transparency matters. Joining FLEGT/VPA will also promote sustainable forest management and better business governance.

Vietnam entered negotiations with the European Union (EU) on FLEGT/VPA in October 2010. Up until now, there have been 20 video conferences, seven technical meetings and three high level meetings. Most of the VPA annexes have been agreed by both sides (seven out of nine annexes). The negotiations are expected to conclude in October 2014.

The project entitled “Capacity building of business associations and media to engage in FLEGT to provide information on FLEGT and related issues” is funded by the EU FAO FLEG Program. The project is implemented by the Center for Education and Development (CED) in cooperation with the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) – it started in February 2014 and will last for one year.

The overall project objective is to build capacity for business associations and for the media to understand and engage with FLEGT. The objective will be achieved through: i) Promoting the understanding of local media on the FLEGT negotiation process and VPA implementation and ii) Supporting the availability of FLEGT related information to promote informed engagement of the business sector. One of the first activities of the project is to design and conduct a needs assessment of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and related stakeholders on issues related to FLEGT.

The assessment was conducted by CED and VCCI (the central branch). It focused on identifying information and communication gaps as well as training needs on FLEGT from businesses. The field survey was conducted in Hanoi and provinces/cities of: Da Nang, Quang Nam, Quang Ngai, Binh Dinh, Binh Duong, and Ho Chi Minh City. The assessment results will be used for development and implementation of other project activities. The results also provide useful information for organizations that are planning training, capacity building and communication plans on FLEGT and related issues.

The report consists of the following major sections:

- **The scope and methodology of the assessment:** This section describes the contents, target groups, and scope of the assessment. The rationale for setting criteria to select SMEs for assessment is included here. This section also includes some limitations of the assessment due to time and resource constraints.
- **Literature review:** Before the assessment, CED collected information available related to FLEGT, focusing on the FLEGT/VPA negotiation process, the general situation of the timber processing industry in Vietnam and the actual situation of communication work on FLEGT. Results of the consultations are described here.
- **Field survey results:** Results from the interviews of enterprises, associations, and media representatives are presented in this section. This section will include findings
on the current knowledge, attitude and practices of three selected target groups. It will also explore the needs and capacity for information provision and commitment and willingness to contribute to increase availability of FLEGT information from each target group.

- **Conclusion and recommendation**: This section includes the conclusions from the assessment and recommendations for the project. Equally, it includes recommendations from related organizations who are working on FLEGT/VPA related issues, while designing and developing capacity building programs and activities on FLEGT/VPA.

## 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON TIMBER PROCESSING SECTOR AND FLEGT/VPA NEGOTIATION PROCESSES IN VIETNAM

### 2.1. Timber processing sector and relevant policies in Vietnam

Since 2000, timber processing in Vietnam has steadily increased. The production value of the processing industry has continuously increased with a high growth rate. Vietnam exports timber and timber products to more than 100 countries worldwide, accounting for 4% of indoor timber furniture trade, ranked 6th in the world and 2nd in Asia. Vietnam’s main export markets are the United States, China, Japan, and Europe.

The timber processing industry employs around half a million workers and uses millions of cubic meters of timber logs from plantations, indirectly providing employment and income for millions of Vietnamese farmers’ families.

In 2010, the timber industry in Vietnam used about 7.43 million cubic meter timber logs as materials from domestic and imported sources. The domestic timbers are exploited from natural forests and plantations. Domestic sources meet neither quantity nor quality requirements for the production of timber products for exporting, and therefore timber processing enterprises import an increasing number of timber logs and materials. This increased from 1.1 billion USD in 2010 to 1.9 billion USD in 2014.

The government has many policies to support timber processing industries. In 2010, there were 13 laws and associated legal documents related to timber processing and trade. The government is implementing laws regarding the restructuring of timber products, the use of timber materials and the sizes of both timber processing enterprises and timber production villages. The projects and proposals for restricting the sector aim to increase the comparative advantage of timber exports, and aim to increase the value added in exporting timber products. According to the Timber Sector Planner of the General Department of Forest Development, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MARD), in the future the sector will minimize the processing and exporting of wood chips. It is expected that by 2020, the processing of wood chips will stop, and instead focus on production and exportation of indoor and outdoor furniture, and plywood. It is estimated that in 2030, Vietnam will gradually reduce the percentage of timber which it imports.

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1 Information included in this section is summarized from the literature review
2 Summarized from the report of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) and the Association of Timber Processing in Vietnam
3 Source: MARD (2014). From the report on FLEGT/VPA consultation workshop on April 18, 2014
At the end of 2013, Vietnam had more than 3,500 timber processing enterprises and five major processing hubs in Vietnam located in Ho Chi Minh City, Binh Duong, Dong Nai, Binh Dinh, Quang Nam and Da Nang. In coming years, MARD will focus on reviewing, strengthening and improving large-scale timber processing enterprises. Equally, it will focus on improving joint ventures with industrial clusters and timber processing hubs with relevant scale in order to maximize the use of input materials and produce accessories for other enterprises in the regions. These would serve as training hubs for timber processing industries. In addition, MARD will focus on mobilizing resources for: the development and modernization of small-scale timber processing industries; timber production units; processing timber from plantation in rural areas; traditional production units; and, employment and support services for farmers.

2.2. FLEGT/VPA negotiation process

Vietnam and the EU have been officially negotiating the FLEGT/VPA since November 2010. FLEGT/VPA is a government trade agreement between the EU and partner governments who export timber and timber products to the EU - it aims at enforcing timber legality laws through FLEGT licensing. The lead agency in negotiation on FLEGT/VPA in Vietnam is MARD; it works in partnership with the following ministries: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Trade, Ministry of Finance, Association for Timber Processing and Trade (See Figure 1). For the EU, the lead agency is the General Department of the Environment, working under the EU delegation in Brussels, Belgium with technical support from various specialists from the European Forestry Institute (EFI).

The timber legal definition (TLD) in Vietnam is included in annex 2 of the VPA and is one of the most important annexes of the VPA. The TLD is presented as a matrix, including conditions from Vietnamese laws related to exploitations, importation, transportation, processing and the exporting of timber and timber products. This includes conditions about land, labor, environment, financial issues that forest owners face, and the households and enterprises in the timber processing industry that have to comply. The TLD forms an important basis for Vietnam to develop and operate the timber legality assurance system (TLAS) and a FLEGT license, once the VPA is signed.

Joining the VPA will facilitate Vietnam to increase its competitiveness of timber processing enterprises – once Vietnamese enterprises have FLEGT licenses, the European operators they supply will no longer have to conduct due diligence for their timber and timber products that they import and put on the European market. Moreover, joining FLEGT/VPA will also support the policies for Vietnamese world integration, while equally promoting sustainable forest governance and coping with climate change.

The VPA agreement document includes: i) List of products in VPA; ii) Timber legality definition; iii) Supply chain control; iv) TLAS; v) FLEGT licensing processes and vi) Independent monitoring.

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4 Source: MARD (2014). The report on national consultation workshop on VPA/FLEGT, April 18, 2014
5 Source: General Department of Forest Development (2014). The report on development and consultation for timber legality definition in Vietnam
So far, Vietnam and the EU have conducted 20 video conferences, seven Technical Working Group (TWG) working sessions and three Senior Official Meeting (SOM) negotiations. Most of the annexes have been negotiated and agreed by both sides (seven out of nine annexes have been agreed upon).

During the negotiation process, there have been several obstacles: issues relating to controlling importing timbers, rubber tree timber, scattered and home garden trees; and, how to ensure the control and verification system to meet requirements of the EU side whilst minimizing administrative procedures affecting business operations and without increasing transactions and production costs. However, it is expected that the negotiations will finish in October 2014.

3. ASSESSMENT CONTENTS AND METHODOLOGIES
3.1. Target groups and scope of the assessment

3.1.1. Target group
The assessment focused on three target groups:
   i) NGOs and related stakeholders working on FLEGT
   ii) Media representatives and reporters
   iii) SMEs

However, the main focus of the assessment was on timber processing SMEs. In addition, the CED team conducted a series of consultations and meetings with related agencies in Hanoi and Bac Ninh in order to further identify needs and information gaps on FLEGT issues.
The assessment team selected NGOs and stakeholders that are working on issues related to FLEGT or are supporting timber processing businesses to interview (including business associations and NGOs that provide information and support SMEs in the timber sector). For media, the team selected representatives and reporters covering issues related to environmental protection, forestry, and sustainable development issues for interviews. In addition, media representatives were sent an online survey covering issues related to FLEGT.

Criteria to select enterprises for conducting survey and interview
In the five provinces that were surveyed, enterprises were selected and identified by specific criteria to conduct interviews. After studying the available information and materials, CED proposed to select enterprises based on the following criteria:

Criteria 1: Investment scale of enterprises
Most wood processing enterprises are small-scale. Out of 3,930 wood processing enterprises: the enterprises which have less than 1 billion Vietnamese dong capital investment account for 15.83%; from 1 to 5 billion dong is 47.84%; 5-10 billion dong is 12.54%; 10 - 50 billion dong is 15.95%; 50-200 billion dong is 5.73%; 200-500 billion dong is 1.53% and over 500 billion dong is 0.59%. Therefore, wood processing enterprises with an overall investment of under 5 billion dong were selected as a priority group for in-depth interviews.

Criteria 2: Labor size (or number of employees)
Many wood processing enterprises have a small labor force with a low skill level. Enterprises with fewer than 50 employees account for 76.74%; 13.31% have between 50 and 199 employees; 2.98% have between 200 and 299 employees; 2.85% have between 300 and 499 employees; 2.29% have between 500 and 999 employees; 2.29% have between 500 and 999 employees; and 1.83% between 1,000 and 4,999 employees. The number of employees in wood processing enterprises who hold university and college degrees are low. Some technicians and workers were not technically and professionally trained in wood processing, while most workers are unskilled and are hired on a seasonal contract basis. Therefore, it was recommended to conduct in-depth interviews with as many as possible enterprises with less than 50 employees.

Criteria 3: Equipment and facility conditions of enterprises
Currently, over 50% of small wood processing enterprises only have simple equipment and low quality facilities. They produce low quality products for domestic consumption or the provision of semi-processed materials for the large scale enterprises. The others have medium (size and/or quality) equipment and technology in terms of size and quality according to the world standards. There are approximately 970 Vietnamese businesses and 420 foreign invested enterprises falling into this category.

Therefore, it was recommended to select enterprises that have simple equipment, but are still able to produce finished products that are exported directly to the EU, for in-depth interviews.

Criteria 4: Export markets
Vietnam’s exports mainly focus on three key markets: the United States accounted for more than 36.3%, the EU nearly 15.4%, and Japan 15.1%. Demands for furniture are set to continue to increase globally, whilst the Vietnamese furniture market represents approximately 2% of

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7Review based on the project proposal: “Forestry economics restructuring” of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development in 2013”
the total world market. Therefore, enterprises that are exporting a significant share of their timber and timber products to the EU countries were selected.

**Locations and sites for survey and interviews:**

*Interview locations*
The project surveyed and interviewed in Da Nang City, Quang Nam, Quang Ngai, Binh Dinh and Binh Duong provinces in order to assess the information needs. These sites were chosen for the following reasons:

(i) Binh Dinh and Binh Duong provinces have attracted the investment of major wood processing enterprises from all over the country
(ii) Da Nang City was capable of attracting average investment at the provincial level
(iii) Quang Nam and Quang Ngai provinces are likely to attract less investment. Collecting survey data from these five provinces, will allow us to collect information which can represent the overall information needs on FLEGT/VPA for the whole country.

Some enterprises and related organizations in Ho Chi Minh City were also considered for surveying.

Based on the criteria above, enterprises in specific areas were selected:

- In Binh Duong province: It is recommended that we select enterprises located in Thu Dau Mot City, Thuan An District, and the Tan Uyen District.
- In the Binh Dinh province: It is recommended that we select enterprises located in Qui Nhon City - Phu Tai Industrial Zone
- In Da Nang City: It is recommended that we select enterprises located in the city or in the industrial park.
- In Quang Nam province: It is recommended that we select enterprises located in Tam Ky City.
- In Quang Ngai province: It is recommended that we select enterprises located in Quang Ngai City.

Using a complete list of enterprises from the specific locations, a sample of businesses that fit the criteria was selected. VCCI local branches contacted these enterprises for interviews. In the event that an enterprise was uncontactable and/or were not willing to participate in an interview, VCCI contacted an alternative organization that fitted the same criteria.

**3.1.2. The scope of the assessment**

The assessment is divided into three main sections:

1. The first part focuses on gauging current knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAPs) in SMEs on legal timber used in production, the attitudes towards sustainable forest management, forest governance and timber trade.
2. The second part focuses on assessing the current level of understanding about FLEGT and the current capacity to provide information on FLEGT for businesses.
3. The third part focuses on assessing the FLEGT needs of businesses and examining the ways to build capacity for related organizations, in better provision of FLEGT information to both businesses and communities.

The assessment determines the best methods, and the most relevant content to disseminate to the relevant target groups based on the results from the first two parts of the needs assessment. Further detail on the scope of the assessment in relation to each target group is outlined below.
For timber processing enterprises
Current KAPs of the enterprises in relation to forest law enforcement and trade, timber legality and Flegt/VPA was defined. Information availability is also explored. The team assessed and defined information, capacity building and training needs for businesses on FLEGT content, as well as the time required to conduct the training of employees.

For business associations and timber processing associations
The assessment focuses on ongoing and future efforts to provide information for business and timber processing association members about FLEGT/VPA. Ongoing and planned activities for communicating and working with the media is assessed and recommendations on how best to improve provision of information, as well as providing the necessary support for the associations’ members on FLEGT/VPA, are provided.

For media organizations
The assessment focuses on KAPs of current reporting and information dissemination on forest law enforcement and forest trade by the media. It also considers opportunities for cooperation amongst media and other stakeholders in order to develop an effective communication plan on FLEGT/VPA for enterprises and businesses. The assessment explores current practices of reporting related issues to propose effective cooperative mechanisms among the media, the project, and other related stakeholders in order to promote understanding and awareness on FLEGT/VPA in Vietnam.

3.2. Methodologies and tools used

3.2.1. Literature review
A literature review was conducted to build up a strong understanding about the topic. A variety of publications, documents, reports and workshop proceedings from the last 5 years (2010-2014) on FLEGT/VPA have been collected in Vietnamese and English. Final and draft legal documents and inputs for legal documents about the timber processing sector were also collected for review.

The assessment team collected and searched for articles, press clippings and online documents with popular Vietnamese search engines such as Google and Bing. In order to be objective, the search has been done anonymously with Google Chrome, using advanced search settings according to locations and time. A keyword software analysis, communication forums, and major information sources on FLEGT/VPA have been utilized. This existing information will be useful for the development of websites related to the FLEGT/VPA process in Vietnam.

CED will continue to review these documents and articles and make recommendations for follow-up activities under this project (e.g. development of publication for businesses, development of a website and communication campaigns).

3.2.2. Field surveys
Design questionnaires
Following the literature review, the assessment team designed the questionnaires and scoped the study. The assessment team conducted a pilot of the questionnaires in Bac Ninh and Hanoi with two enterprises, two media representatives and two associations (26th – 27th March 2014). After piloting the questionnaires and obtaining further input from forestry consultants,
the team conducted a field survey, which started on 1st April 2014. The questionnaires and the list of organizations and enterprises interviewed can be found in annex 3.

Consultation with related stakeholders
During the literature review and questionnaire design period, the assessment team also conducted a series of consultation meetings with the EU-FAO, government organizations, VCCI, VIETFORES and members of the NGO-FLEGT network. The purpose was to collect further information and documents on FLEGT/VPA as well as learn more about ongoing and planned activities related to FLEGT, especially communication activities. The team presented the assessment plan, scope, and contents to get more input and feedback from related organizations. Additional input on the criteria for the selection of enterprises, methodologies and key questions have also been collected.

3.2.3. Field surveys in selected provinces and cities
The field surveys were conducted in six provinces/cities from 1st to 23rd April 2014. During this time, the assessment team conducted interviews with 71 enterprises, four associations, and six provincial media representatives. The field survey schedule can be found in annex 2.

The assessment team consisted of three staff and consultants from CED and two staff from VCCI Central branch office. In each province, the assessment team was divided into two groups and conducted interviews with selected enterprises and organizations. Each group was lead by a member of CED or a consultant with participants from local VCCI staff. During the assessment, preliminary results were sent back to CED in Hanoi to enable consultants there to review and provide further input and guidance for the next interview.

3.2.4. Limitations of the assessment
During the assessment in selected provinces, the assessment team recognized that some enterprises used timber from households and very small-scale or family-based businesses. However, due to time and resources constraints, the assessment team was unable to interview these groups of timber suppliers. Therefore, the information and support needs, and the current level of legal timber production of households, small scale and family-based businesses, still need to be further assessed.

This assessment focused on current KAPs of enterprises related to forest law enforcements and trade (timber sources and legality). Other related issues such as labor and environmental protection practices in timber processing enterprises also need further assessment due to the level of compliance required for FLEGT/VPA.

4. ASSESSMENT RESULTS
4.1. Collecting and analyzing online information
Almost 300 documents and publications as “.PDF” and “.DOC” files, including documents, articles, and news items related to timber legality and related laws in Vietnam and the EU (list of reference documents is included in the annex 1), have been collected. In addition, the team collected 338 online news articles related to FLEGT/VPA from the last five years, from 2010 to May 2014. The number of online news articles depended on negotiation events. It is important to note, that there are more articles from the first five months of 2014 than in 2013 due to the new projects launched in early 2014. Online information was collected from the following sources:
• **Government organizations (under domain: gov.vn):** accounting for 20% of the information collected. These are reliable sources of information which have been used and cited by organizations including media and other stakeholders. However, not many businesses have access to these sources as they are difficult to find through normal search engines. The information is also too technical and not relevant for businesses.

• **Associations, institutes, research centers, and NGOs:** accounting for 33% of the information collected. Information from these organizations has increased in recent years, indicating their growing role in information provision. This information source is mainly linked to specific events and project activities related to FLEGT.

• **Online media:** accounting for 36% of information collected. These information sources drastically increased in the first four months of 2014 as there are new projects launched during this period. The majority of articles focused on reporting news, events and project activities.

• **Websites of companies:** whilst timber processing enterprises and businesses are significantly impacted by FLEGT/VPA, company website represents just 8% of news. One of the reasons for this disparity is that many companies do not have a website, whilst others are not interested in FLEGT/VPA.

• **Social networking sites:** 4% news and articles come from social network websites such as Facebook, blogs and YouTube.

The months of March, May, August and November during 2010-2013 had the most online news and articles published about FLEGT/VPA issues. In February, July and October during 2010-2013, the lowest number of online articles was recorded. The majority of articles or documentaries are about specific events. Most of the news articles, appeared around negotiation events (e.g. the first negotiations in August 2010, the second negotiations in November 2011, the third round of negotiations in March 2013), or training and workshop events organized by VIETFORDES and others. These online articles mainly focus on the events themselves with few documentaries or expert reviews focusing on general FLEGT/VPA related issues. A minority of articles have technical content and provide information which will help SMEs and other key stakeholders understand FLEGT/VPA. Most of the 2014 articles and news reports focused on events and the last round of negotiations. CED will continue to review the content of these news items and articles to analyze their quality and relevancy to businesses in order to develop a communication plan in effectively communicating FLEGT/VPA. Below are the top 10 information sources online about FLEGT issues in Vietnam (figure 2).


4.2. Consultations with related stakeholders

Between February and April 2014, the assessment team and CED conducted 14 consultation meetings with relevant stakeholders such as: the EU, FAO, the World Trade Organization (WTO), German Development Agency (GIZ), Center for Sustainable Development (SRD), EU FLEGT facilitator, European Forestry Institution (EFI), amongst others. These consultation meetings aimed to present key objectives and components of the project, in order to get further implementation input and to seek collaboration and cooperation during the implementation stage. The key objectives and the content of the needs assessment were shared in the meetings in order to obtain further input and any comments for finalization.

The consultation showed that since 2014, new activities and projects related to FLEGT/VPA to promote the negotiation process and increase capacity for related stakeholders have been established. Most importantly are the three new EU funded projects and new projects under EU-FAO FLEGT programs. There are also several new projects that require a needs assessment at the outset, in order to better understand the needs of the target groups. Most notably, NEPCon’s Timber Legality Project in Vietnam, “Increasing capacity of CSOs and SMEs to implement FLEGT requirements”; WWF’s project, “Common Access to VPA in Vietnam and Laos”; and three new projects managed by SRD and NGO FLEGT network. Most of the new projects also have communication components, making it important to coordinate and share information amongst these organizations to leverage resources and to have a comprehensive understanding on areas and issues needing support on FLEGT/VPA.

The consultation process also revealed that most of the projects plan to produce communication materials, as well as supporting websites. Although each project differs in its objectives, activities and target group, the coordination and information sharing is important.
because all of these projects are ultimately working towards the same goal of promoting effective implementation of FLEGT/VPA in Vietnam.

With regards to the needs assessment, many organizations have said that it is necessary to evaluate capacity of information provision and communication of related stakeholders (e.g. CSOs and NGOs), in order to design activities and strengthen their capacity to better provide supporting information to other target groups, rather than focusing solely on business. The media will provide information for the community and public, not just business. Some people have also expressed the opinion that the assessment should focus on processing companies using imported timber because many of them use timber from high risk countries. Input from consultations has been considered and incorporated where necessary during the design of this assessment.

4.3. Assessment results from enterprises and stakeholders in provinces/cities

The assessment team selected 60 SMEs for interviews based on the list provided by VIETFORES and the criteria set up during the assessment design. VCCI contacted each SME for an interview. In reality, there are a number of SMEs that could not be contacted due to the correspondence details being invalid or the SME was no longer in operation. In addition, some SMEs were not willing to participate in an interview. Therefore, CED and VCCI used their network to contact other businesses that could provide Certificates of Origin (C/O) for interviews. Although the investment scale and labor size of the enterprises do not fully meet the selection criteria, they are representative of the timber processing industry as they include most business types and sizes. Businesses were selected from VCCI and VIETFORES lists. In general, larger size companies are more willing to participate in the interviews than smaller businesses.

During the assessment period, the team conducted 81 interviews in five provinces/cities, in which: 71 interviews were with enterprises, four interviews were with associations (associations in Hanoi and VCCI are not included) and six interviews were with media outlets. Additionally, the assessment team also conducted interviews with enterprises, associations and media in Hanoi and Bac Ninh during the pilot survey. The questionnaires were revised after the pilot and the data and information collected from these interviews are not accounted for in the results. However, the information and opinions that emerged from these interviews have been analyzed and taken into account in the overall report, as they fit into the conclusion and recommendations section. In addition, an online survey was conducted with the media. The same questionnaire for in-depth interviews was used and sent out to a network of journalists. Nine completed questionnaires were received back.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Assessment participants and method of engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The survey results are analyzed and presented in two main parts. The first part focuses on KAPs toward timber legality and understanding about FLEGT, whilst the second part focuses
on an information needs assessment including training and non-training support, assessment of information provision and communication capacity of associations and media.

4.3.1. Results from interviews and assessment of timber processing enterprises

4.3.1.1. General information on enterprises interviewed

Scale and types of enterprises
A total of 71 enterprise interviews were conducted, in which the majority were private enterprises (see figure 3).

![Figure 3: Types of enterprises that participated in the assessment](image.png)

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) enterprises are not beneficiaries of this project, so interview results from these enterprises are not included in the results of Vietnamese businesses. Instead, survey results from FDI enterprises are summarized below.

Summary of eight FDI enterprises surveyed

Of eight FDI enterprises interviewed, one is newly established - Company Ltd. INNOVGREEN Chu Lai in Quang Nam province, which produces woodchips and has 30 employees. However, the company has not started exporting yet. The seven other FDI enterprises each have between 140 to 1,800 employees, with a total export value of 7 million USD to 26 million USD (except Chan Phong Company Ltd. in Binh Duong, which has 390 employees and a total export value of 192,033 USD in 2013). Six out of eight companies imported timber from Canada, United States, Germany, France, Denmark, New Zealand and Chile. Two out of eight companies buy timber from plantations in Vietnam.

100% of FDI enterprises said that they know about concepts of legal timber and are interested in using legal timber in their production. Four out of eight companies know about legal timber concepts through their clients, three companies are informed via the internet and two companies know from forest rangers. Companies that import timber possess Forest

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8 Results from interviews in the field.
Stewardship Council Chain of Custody (FSC/COC) certificates, phyto-sanitary certificates\(^9\), and certificates of origin (C/O). The two companies that purchase domestic timbers already have certificates from the forest protection offices and local authorities. They are processing COC\(^{10}\). However, only four out of eight companies know about FLEGT/VPA. Some of the companies know about FLEGT/VPA from the internet. The International Timber Company, in Ho Chi Minh city, was informed about FLEGT/VPA though a workshop. Most companies are unclear about the FLEGT license (the process and the value). The Vietnam Japan Paper Pulp Company in Da Nang stated that FSC certification is adequate and does not see the necessity to obtain the other certificate. Seven out of eight companies are willing to participate for half to one day on a training course. Five out of eight companies are willing to pay training fees. 100% of the companies saw VCCI and the timber associations as appropriate bodies to provide effective information to business. There are only three companies that chose the option to obtain information via publications. All companies agreed that the role of the media in information provision should be promoted (e.g. short documentaries about FLEGT). 100% of companies have an internet connection and 100% of people that participated in the interviews are using a smart phone with internet connectivity (both wifi and 3G). Thus, it was conveyed that a website on FLEGT is necessary and helpful for business.

The results analyzed and presented below are from the interviews and assessments from the remaining 63 Vietnamese enterprises (private and state owned).

The following table outlines the profile of the 63 Vietnamese enterprises who participated in the interviews.

Table 2: Profile of 63 enterprise participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of enterprise</th>
<th>Number of enterprises</th>
<th>Percentage (%) of enterprises</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private company with more than two members</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>49.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint stock companies</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>38.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Member Company Limited</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor Size of enterprise</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 50 employees</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 – 300 employees</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300-500 employees</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 500 employees(^{11})</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview participant positions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management position(^{12})</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officers in charge of sale and/or imports and</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^9\) A phyto certificate is issued by the government to provide assurance that the correct procedures and processes have been undertaken to ensure that the timber consignment is free from contaminants. The inspection needs to be verified by an independent third party.

\(^{10}\) 2 Vietnam Japan Paper Pulp Company Ltd. in Da Nang and MTV INNOVGREEN Company Ltd. Chu Lai in Quang Nam

\(^{11}\) According to the decree number 56/2009/NĐ-CP of the government: Enterprises under 300 employees and capital under 100 billion are SMEs in the timber processing sector:


\(^{12}\) 4 General Directors, one Deputy General Director, 16 Directors, 10 Deputy Directors, 12 Head of Division and 2 deputy head (Accounting, planning, and sales divisions)
Female workers constitute a total of 46% of workers in the companies that were interviewed.

The labor size of companies interviewed was different from the set criteria as many businesses proposed by CED could not be reached and/or were not willing to participate in interviews. Therefore, VCCI selected additional companies that could provide C/O, including other business types to get a better understanding of the industry as a whole.

**The actual production and import and export of the companies**

According to the profile of enterprises interviewed, the assessment describes the current management of processing and production within those enterprises as in the chart below (figure 4).
Figure 4: The production cycle of timber processing enterprises

Get the orders

- Calculating the amount of materials
- Calculating the time it takes to fulfill orders
- Responding to customers

Material preparation

- For enterprises with storage: Check inventory of materials, if there are not enough, import more
- For enterprises without storage, to import materials

Materials:
  - Import directly or through other companies from abroad, usually have FSC certificate
  - Purchasing wood from the agents or directly from the people, have certificate by the Forest rangers and local governments

Production

- (indoor furniture, outdoor furniture, sofa frame, flooring, wood chips, wood fibers, wood pulp)

- Designing patterns
- Primary processing
- Refining
- Assembling
- Completing (painting, decorating)

Packaging and Storing

- Final inspection
- Packing and storing

Export

- Exporting directly
- Exporting throughout another company

Materials:
- Import directly or through other companies from abroad, usually have FSC certificate
- Purchasing wood from the agents or directly from the people, have certificate by the Forest rangers and local governments
Out of the 63 enterprises interviewed, 51 were willing to provide information on their current imports and exports. Of this, there are 48 enterprises (81.36%) which directly export timber and timber products, four enterprises (6.7%) export via other export companies, and seven enterprises (11.86%) have both forms of export (both exporting directly and via other companies). In 51 businesses importing timber: five enterprises have less than 50 employees; nine enterprises have 50 - 100 employees; 22 enterprises have more than 300 to 500 employees; 11 enterprises have more than 500 to 1,000 employees; and, 4 enterprises have more than 1,000 employees.

The average export values reported by those companies increased in 2012 and 2013, which correlates with statistics provided by VNFOREST.

Products specified by companies in the interviews were mainly timber products (73% of timber products are indoor and outdoor furniture, plywood, sofa framework). 17% of enterprises produce wood chips, located in Binh Dinh, Quang Nam, and Quang Ngai. 6% of enterprises provide timber materials.

The main export markets of the enterprises interviewed are presented below (figure 5). Most of the enterprises are exporting timber products to the EU and therefore, they will be affected by FLEGT/VPA to some extent.

Figure 5: Main export markets of the 63 enterprises interviewed

In 63 enterprises, there are 51 enterprises that import timber for their production – others only use timber from domestic suppliers. 25 out of the 51 enterprises that import timber (49%) manage the process directly. 15 enterprises (29%) import timber via other importing companies such as Phú Tài, Thanh Hòa, Hoàng Phúc, Mẫu Sơn, and Interwood. 11 enterprises (22%) import both directly and indirectly. Some enterprises only use domestic timber suppliers to produce wood chips, indoor and outdoor furniture for export to domestic markets and to Australia, South Korea, Taiwan, the United States, the EU and Middle-Eastern countries.
Enterprises using imported timber mainly export to the EU market. 30 out of 51 enterprises (accounting for 58.82%) export 70% of their total production to the EU. Seven enterprises export 100% of their production to EU markets. Others are exporting to: Australia, New Zealand, the United States, Argentina, Japan, South Korea, China, Philippines, Arab, Israel, and South Africa.

Out of the 51 companies using imported timber, 48 companies import timber that is certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)13. Timber is mainly imported from Brazil, Uruguay, Malaysia, Chile, the Commonwealth of Independent States (SNG), and Costa Rica. In addition, when the clients do not require FSC certificates of legality, companies are likely to buy timber from domestic suppliers (e.g. maleleuca, teak and eucalyptus). These types of timber have certificates from forest protection units and local authorities such as exploitation licenses, papers certified by forest protection offices, and papers certified by commune and district people’s committees.

4.3.1.2 KAPs of enterprises regarding to forest law enforcement, governance and trade (using timber from legal sources)

The level of interest in using timber from legal sources

Most of the enterprises interviewed confirmed their interest and attention to the use of timber from legal sources in their production. Out of the 63 enterprises, there are 58 enterprises (accounting for 92%) that can prove that the timber used in their production is legal (e.g. FSC for imported timber and/or other documents and papers). Five enterprises did not respond to this question. 61 enterprises responded that they are interested in buying and using legal timber in their production. Two enterprises did not respond and three enterprises (accounting for 5%) responded that they are not influenced by legal timber sources as they export mainly to Hong Kong, China, and South Africa, where their clients do not set requirements for verified legal timber.

In 63 enterprises, there were 58 that were willing to present the certificates that they possess. The FSC certificate is the most possessed document by enterprises. The breakdown is below (see table 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of certificate</th>
<th>Number of enterprises</th>
<th>Percentage (%) of enterprises</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FSC certificates for imported timber</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other certificates</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both FSC and other certificates</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Papers and certificates that the enterprises provided and showed to the assessment team include (see examples of these papers and documents in the annex 5):

- For imported timber: In addition to FSC, other documents include Chain of custody (COC), Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) and SGS

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13 Based on interviews from companies
Company in Vietnam\(^\text{14}\)  
- *For domestic timber (buying from domestics agents or from farmers)*: Enterprises have certificates and papers to verify the legal timber sources such as: exploitation permits, list of forest products, invoices, receipts, documents certified by the local authorities (communes and districts), certified by forest protection agencies and transportation contracts.  
- *Other papers and/or certificates*: In addition to specific timber certificates, some enterprises also hold certificates relating to corporate social responsibility (CSR) such as the Business Social Compliance Initiative (BSCI),\(^\text{15}\) certificates of membership of the Vietnam Forest Trade network (VFTN)\(^\text{16}\) and certificates to prove that specific quality standards that been met such as the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

Most of the enterprises interviewed stated that they have existing knowledge about the timber legality definition as defined under Vietnamese laws and regulations. There are 60 enterprises (98\%) that said they knew about the definition (one enterprise did not know about the definition and two enterprises did not respond). All of the enterprises claimed that they would want to use timber from legal sources for their production. Most of the enterprises said that they know about timber legality because of the requirements from clients when exporting to high-end markets in Europe. There are four enterprises that have searched for information about timber legality through the government documents numbered 01/2012/TT-BNN&PTNT, and EU regulations numbered 995/2010 of the EU parliament and Council.\(^\text{17}\)  
Alternative information and documents are sought from agencies and institutions such as forest protection agencies, associations, GIZ, WWF, and Tropical Forest Trust (TFT) or via websites or trainings and/or workshops. Enterprises have also received information from workshops and training sessions provided by VNFOREST and VIETFORES. They said that VNFOREST and VIETFORES’ websites are reliable sources for information but often the language is too technical and the webpages are difficult to navigate by normal search engines such as Google and Bing.

**KAPs of the enterprises in relation to forest law enforcement, governance and trade (legal timber sources)**

The enterprises that were interviewed are aware of the benefits of using timber from legal sources. Some of the benefits identified are: increased enterprise credibility; building new client relationships, easy monitoring and management (better corporate governance), improved administration for each export timber patch, simple follow-up on the use and storage of materials and easier verification of the timber sources. Using legal timber will also increase social responsibilities of timber processing enterprises through minimizing illegal logging and minimizing negative impacts to environment.

However, some enterprises also mentioned some of the obstacles in using legal timbers in their production. Adaptation to the legal timber requirements of FLEGT varies at different

\(^\text{15}\) BSCI is a code for SCR compliance  
\(^\text{16}\) Vietnam Forest Trade Network (VFTN) is a member of the World Wildlife Fund’s (WWF) Global Forest Trade Network (GFTN) programme  
\(^\text{17}\) Four enterprises are proactive in looking for information from the circular 01/2012/TT-BNN&PTNT: Trường Sơn Co, Ltd. And Thế Vũ Co. Ltd. – Bình Định, Anh Khôi Co. Ltd., Trường Thịnh Co.Ltd. – Hồ Chí Minh
company scales. If there is no support for smaller scale companies, inequality between enterprises may occur and smaller scale companies will face tremendous difficulties as these companies often use timber from domestic sources and markets. Larger companies who often import timbers from trusted sources, and already have FSC-COC certificates, will be able to easily comply with FLEGT requirements. Using legal timber may be more expensive and therefore production costs will be increased, thus decreasing the competitiveness of enterprises (especially small-scale enterprises).\(^{18}\)

It is difficult to verify sources and legal timber from domestic sources due to a lack of awareness and understanding by local farmers. They do not have any knowledge and understanding about required documents and papers to be presented for buyers, therefore, requirements and administrative procedures can be burdensome and time-consuming. In some cases, the types of documents provided vary so it is difficult to document legality in a systematic way and the evidence and documents are frequently not accepted as evidence.

**Summary of difficulties faced by companies and enterprises when verifying legal timber**

Many enterprises stated that, at present, it is difficult to request domestic timber sellers to provide papers and evidence to verify that timber is legal – administration is costly and time-consuming for enterprises. Administrative procedures and requirements are complicated, and with varying documents provided, the timber produced is often stranded in the port for several months at a time.

Some enterprises purchase timber materials upon receiving a new order as they do not store them. It takes about six-eight weeks to process one order. A new product design will take longer and usually more than a month.

Some companies understand the importance of verifying timber sources due to the current demand from their clients. However, they encounter difficulties when asking suppliers to provide the documents and evidence as the suppliers are not engaged in the process.

> “Timbers are from legal sources. We bought rubber timbers from Kontum Company. This company actually bought timber logs from the company 15 for sawing. And then the company 15 will issue receipts for the company 15. Two sides have contractual agreements, settlement documents and they will provide to our company. When Kontum sold timbers for our company, they will provide us the receipts together with the list of timbers, we need only authorization of the domestic companies for domestic timbers. For imported timbers, we need authorization of forest protection agencies. The stamp of commercial companies cannot be notarized, so the companies have to make copies by themselves and be responsible for official duplication of these papers. There are about 20% timbers we bought from other companies having difficulties to verify sources, for example Hung Tinh Company in Binh Duong”

-Interview from a company in Binh Duong province-

It is assumed by suppliers that enterprises requesting this information are problematic and are more inclined to sell the timber to other less onerous clients. Thus, enterprises note that it is necessary to increase awareness within farmers and suppliers so that they understand that this will be transferred to the operations of enterprises.

\(^{18}\)From interviews in Quang Nam, Da Nang and Binh Dinh
“A few years ago, some enterprises borrowed the red books of farmers for some unclear purposes, so now farmers are very reluctant to provide red books or related papers for enterprises. FSC certificates need verifying sources and need red books, so when we ask for that they are not willing to provide and said we have only timbers you can buy if you like”

- Interview a Company in Quang Ngai-

Some enterprises also stated that, in reality, the supply of melaleuca timber (Tram) is chaotic and not transparent. Increasingly, domestic sources are not sufficient and the timber is imported from Cambodia. It is difficult to verify the source of the melaleuca timber from here as they are not old enough for exploitation. In many cases, the timber is mixed with timber from household gardens and other timber without certification from the local authorities.

Enterprises noted that some existing legal documents about timber legality in Vietnam are unclear and inadequate, or there are disparities in understanding among government agencies (most notably, between custom and forest protection agencies) about these documents, creating difficulties for businesses. These problems sometimes cause delays when exporting products (sometimes it can take several months) as customs will ask for verification from forest protection agencies, which will not verify. Finally, businesses will have to sign commitments and be responsible for their products. Additionally, forest protection agencies will not verify Type 7 Timber, because they consider it to be fuel-wood while customs officers do not agree with this, and still request for certification. Many credible businesses in this sector are interested in sustainable development and are willing to buy legal timber for their production. However, if some legal documents remain unclear, guidance for suppliers will be difficult. This causes delays for exporting and increasing timber products stocked.

“Timbers exploited from state-owned plantations, when they are old enough for exploitation, they will call for exploitation quotations, and those who are qualified will be invited for exploitation, so then this will be clear and legal but we still have problems when export products using these timbers as we do not have certifications from forest protection agencies. While local authorities (people’s committees) certify for local farmers, customs offices will accept and we can export. Another case, 1000 trees have planted and harvested and have been certified by commune people’s committees. That certification together with full documents including contracts for exploitation … then we also cannot export as papers from forest protection offices are missing”

- Interview from a Company in Thuan An, Binh Duong-

According to some enterprises which use rubber tree timber for production, 95% rubber tree timber is from plantations and according to them, this timber is from legal sources, but they still face difficulties when using these timber sources. Therefore, it is necessary to clearly define timber from plantations. Rubber trees should be defined as industrial trees (e.g. longan trees) as rubber trees are different from other species in plantations.

Some enterprises mentioned that the main difficulties are that documents for verifying legal sources are unclear. Documents and papers presented to clients are often papers from forest protection offices but the current forms are handwritten making them unclear and sometimes hard to read. In addition, the documents and papers are not filed properly so many have been lost. When FSC certification is required, the enterprises have to check that their FSC suppliers

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19 Interviews in Ho Chi Minh City.
20 From interviews in Binh Duong province.
21 From interviews in Ho Chi Minh City.
are still valid. Full files of the timber from domestic sources often include receipts, contracts, and a checklist (information on timber: volume, sized, sources).

According to some enterprises, operators in the EU have not accepted legal timber in the past because the documentation to prove legality presented is not clear and standardized like those of other countries. For example, acacia timber from plantations is legal timber, yet businesses still do not have the proper evidence to show that this is legal. Therefore, there is a need to provide support for administrative procedures (with clear and unified documents) to verify legal sources of timber.22

In general, some enterprises have said that they still have difficulties in showing evidence and proof for legal timber as they have not managed the whole transportation process from suppliers to storage and production. Thus, it is difficult to ensure that 100% of legal timber is used in their production. It is necessary to have stipulations and measures to control the transportation process.

4.3.1.3. Understanding the current channels that enterprises receive information on FLEGT/VPA

34 out of the 63 enterprises (accounting for 57%) answered that they are aware of FLEGT/VPA, while 26 enterprises (accounting for 43%) did not know about FLEGT/VPA. Three enterprises did not respond. Among the 34 enterprises that know about FLEGT/VPA, there are three enterprises that have less than 50 employees, four enterprises have between 50 to 100 employees, 11 enterprises have more than 100-300 employees, three enterprises have more than 300 to 500 employees, and 12 enterprises have more than 500 employees.23

Although, there are 57% of enterprises that know about FLEGT/VPA, there are still very few enterprises that really understand it clearly but are being proactive in looking for information and learning about the impact on their businesses (e.g. Anh Khôi Company, Cẩm Hà Company). Some companies responded that they know about FLEGT/VPA but they cannot answer specific questions about it as they do not understand much of the content. Enterprises that know about FLEGT are often larger scale businesses, with an annual export value of more than 2 million USD. For example, in Binh Duong, 14 out of 20 enterprises interviewed said that they know about FLEGT/VPA. In Da Nang, all five enterprises interviewed know about FLEGT/VPA. However, the level of understanding about it is varied. The enterprises that do not know about FLEGT are smaller scale businesses with an annual export value of under one million USD, and mainly located in Quang Nam and Quang Ngai provinces. Most of the enterprises have learnt about FLEGT through their clients and export partners.

The survey also showed that, up until now, enterprises learn about FLEGT from workshops, training courses organized by related organizations and associations (accounting for 54%)24, and via the internet (accounting for 20%)25 (see figure 6).

22 From interviews in Ho Chi Minh City and Binh Duong province.
23 According to the government decrees numbered 56/2009/ND-CP: SMEs in timber processing sector have less than 300 employees and capital under 100 billions Vietnamese dong: http://www.chinhphu.vn/portal/page/portal/chinhphu/hethongvanban?class_id=1&mode=detail&document_id=88612
24 In which, there is one company with 18 employees, two companies with 50-100 employees, nine companies with more than 100 to 300 employees, two companies with more than 300 to 500 employees, three companies with more than 500-1000 employees and one company with more than 1000 employees.
Among the 34 enterprises that know about FLEGT, 13 enterprises (accounting for 38%) have said that ‘promoting forest governance’ is an important issue as it will ensure better verification of timber legality and promote better forest law enforcement resulting in positive impacts to environment protection. Nine enterprises (accounting for 26%) said that “forest law enforcement” plays an important role as illegal logging still exists in Vietnam. In addition, it is difficult to verify sources for timbers from domestic suppliers. Good forest law enforcement will have positive impacts overall and on related legal systems, including land law, plantations and exploitations of plantations, processing, exporting, fees and taxes, transportation, and environmental protection. This will help businesses to verify legal timber sources and increase credibility of timber processing sector in international markets.

Eight enterprises (24%) said that the “development of forest products trade” is important as it will help increase access to EU markets, improving transparency in trade between Vietnam and the EU. This in turn will increase local budget and promote economic development. Four enterprises did not have an answer.

Enterprises are highly interested in two areas in the FLEGT action plan: ‘supporting timber processing nations’ and ‘encouraging implementation of policies to buy timber and timber products from legal sources’. There are no enterprises interested in the “support initiatives in private sectors” (figure7).

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25 In which: one company has 85 employees, two companies with 100 to 300 employees, one company with 320 employees, three companies with 500 - 1000 employees.
Enterprises said that: “Supporting timber processing nations” and “Encouraging implementation of policies to sell timber and timber products from legal sources” play important roles. These two areas of the action plan will help to minimize illegal logging and the exploitation of young plantations, thus facilitating export to EU markets.

Most of the enterprises confirmed that they need to receive more effective information on FLEGT and require support on how to provide guidance on administrative procedures to avoid overlapping and bottle necks. With improved understanding of the laws and regulations, enterprises will be more willing to implement them. Moreover, enterprises require guidance on obtaining the references for legal timber sources. Small and medium enterprises need support to certify timber bought from farmers’ plantations. Information provision for businesses should be specific, adequate and coherent, in particularly, the requirements from EU markets (technical guidance, stipulations, and standards of the EU). FLEGT licenses should be provided to complying businesses without fees.

VPA negotiations have reached agreements on draft versions of the timber legality definition (applied to households, individuals and communities) and the timber legality definition for organizations (e.g. companies and associations).

Of the 30 enterprises that answered questions, there are 17 enterprises (accounting for 53%) which said that they know about the timber legality definition applied for households, individuals and communities. They also mentioned some principles such as: legal timber is when the source of the timber can be transparently verified; timber exploited has a license and features on the list of timbers certified by the local authorities (commune people’s committees); timber exploited in Vietnam and in compliance with regulations on processing, transportation, export, taxation, and labor in accordance with current laws and regulations;
possessing permits of exploitation; moving out of storage; and, transportation and exportation to ensure that timbers used in all processes are legal. 13 enterprises (47%) do not know about these concepts.

Similarly, 16 enterprises (53%) said that they know about the timber legality definition for organizations such as companies and/or associations and they can recall some of the principles. For example: exploitation of timber in Vietnam and compliance with land use rights, forest use rights and environmental protection regulations; compliance with regulations on importing timber, regulations on transportation of timber, regulations on timber export, regulations on taxes, regulations on labor; have planting and harvesting licenses, list of timber certified by local forest protections offices; and, legal timber suppliers must have planting certificates. 14 other enterprises (47%) do not know these definitions.

There are priority issues and/or factors to ensure implementation of the timber legality assurance system (TLAS) to the EU. These include: timber processing control; internal verification; licensing; and, independent monitoring. 29 out of 34 enterprises (85%), who know about FLEGT, provided a total of 49 opinions on the priority issues and factors to ensure implementation of TLAS (see figure 8). Some participants provided more than one opinion. 18 out of 49 opinions (37%) state that “timber processing control” plays the most important role as it is necessary to control timber inputs during the processing and to prove that timber used in production is legal. This avoids exploitation of young plantations, but increases the credibility of Vietnamese businesses in international markets. The licensing process should be implemented in a transparent manner to facilitate exportation without delay but in compliance with VPA requirements. 11 enterprises (accounting for 22%) said that “independent monitoring” has an important role. Other enterprises said that licensing, processing and internal verification play important roles.

![Figure 8: Priority issues and/or factors to ensure implementation of TLAS as defined by enterprises](image)

At present, many Vietnamese businesses have contractual agreements with counterparts in Europe. A requirement set by these counterparts is to use an independent third party to verify the production process (using the CoC) in order to ensure compliance with EU requirements. Costs for independent monitoring will be incurred by the EU partners or by Vietnamese businesses depending on each contract agreement. Currently, there are some independent monitoring agencies that have offices in Vietnam, or Tropical Forest Trust (TFT), and SGS (headquarters are in Switzerland but has an office in Vietnam). These offices also provide guidance on buying timber from legal sources (e.g. Cam Ha Company in Quang Nam is one
of clients of TFT). Most of the enterprises have supported independent monitoring (e.g. TFT) as it creates transparency and will also provide useful feedback for enterprises. It will also increase the responsibility and accountability of businesses and ensure long term use of timber from legal sources. Moreover, independent monitoring will provide updates on new requirements from buyers and clients and new requirements from the markets. This enables business to be prepared and respond accordingly.

Within the 34 enterprises that already knew about FLEGT, 29 enterprises (88%) listed important requirements in the implementation of FLEGT/VPA in Vietnam. These include: a reliable legal system; administrative structures; and, a technical system to verify timber legality. 19 out of the 29 enterprises (accounting for 66%) reflected that a “technical system to verify timber legality” plays the most important role alongside “reliable legal and administrative systems”. These three issues are closely related and will reinforce each other.

Seven out of 29 enterprises (accounting for 24%) said a “reliable legal system” will support enterprises to buy legal timber materials. An “administrative system” should minimize administrative procedures, implement one-door policies and electronic administrative systems, technical systems, information systems, specific guidance, and facilitation for businesses. There are three enterprises (accounting for 10%) that said that administrative systems have important roles. Four enterprises do not have any opinions.

Among enterprises that know about FLEGT there are only 7 enterprises which know about TLAS. However, these enterprises admitted that they do not know about the specific contents of TLAS as it is still work in progress.

4.3.2. Roles of timber processing associations in FLEGT-VPA

All four associations interviewed in Da Nang, Binh Dinh, Binh Duong, Ho Chi Minh City and VIETFores in Hanoi have had activities related to FLEGT/VPA. For example: workshops on FLEGT/VPA organized by HAWA in Ho Chi Minh City, and workshops organized by TFT in 2011, 2012 and 2013. Moreover, associations have access to many EU regulations: regulations 995 and 60726. Associations also provide much input and comment for VNFOREST about the draft timber legality definition and TLAS.

In four associations at the local level, there is only one that has a communication officer (in Binh Duong). Two others have part-time communication officers Ho Chi Minh City and Binh Dinh. The association in Danang does not have any designated communication officers.

Only HAWA and an association in Binh Dinh have articles in local newspapers about FLEGT. In addition they provided training to their members and related organizations such as the Department of Agriculture and Rural Departments and the Department of Commerce and Industry.

Normally, when events are organized, they issue invitations to the media who attend if they are interested and create a news story. Associations are not proactive in making contacts and providing information for media. The information provided by associations for media is often prepared for other participants (e.g. workshop materials and information) or via individual

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interviews. Associations are operating based on membership fees so they do not have a budget for communications.

The communications to date have only utilized traditional media (television and print newspapers). Costs for these activities have been funded by other organizations. For example, cooperation with Forest Trend to implement a documentary film on VTV227. Training was funded by GIZ and they invited the media to report the news and make a documentary on project sites.

Associations interviewed have participated in following activities:

- Participated in workshops related to VPA negotiations organized by VNFOREST (enterprises also presented)
- Introduced ideas about the timber legality definition during training on FLEGT for members organized by the EU EFI in early 2014
- Participated in meetings co-organized with the EU EFI, GIZ, WWF, Forest Trend, HAWA, VIETFORES
- Worked with third party agents such as Bureau VERITAS on the verification of legal timber

Associations receive information on FLEGT/VPA through a variety of official and unofficial channels including: official letters; information from VIETFORES, VNFOREST and MARD; and, meeting and workshop proceedings of VIETFORES, WWF, EU, and GIZ.

Associations have said that there is plenty of information available. For example, updates from the VPA/FLEGT negotiation with the EU are published on VNFOREST’s website (http://tongcuclamnghiep.gov.vn) - this provides comprehensive and detailed information. However, they noted that information is posted on the main websites of government institutions so it is sometimes difficult to find through normal search engines. In addition, this information is often technical and not relevant for businesses and communities. There is also EU information and the experiences of other countries with the VPA such as an Indonesian case (Sistem Verifikasi Legalitas Kayu- SVLK), where sawing wood was approved but not timber logs by the EU and Indonesia in April 2014. Three out of four associations at local levels follow news and information related to FLEGT/VPA in the media, while one association said that they do not have enough time to follow this news.

Most associations appreciate the news and articles in the current forms of media (newspaper and magazines). While some have said that news stories and articles are relevant and close to the needs of timber processing enterprises, other associations have said that information is inadequate as the negotiations are still ongoing and many of the VPA articles and annexes are still under consultation and have not been fully agreed upon among stakeholders. For example, timber legality definition version 6.3, technical labor issues concerning employees working in the timber processing sector, the use of equipment, means and vehicles which

have not yet been registered and the verification of timber origins from small traders have not been agreed yet.

Associations also said that information provision and training in the past have focused mainly on larger size companies. Therefore, it is necessary to pay more attention to smaller scale companies which will also be affected by FLEGT/VPA.

**Association assessment on the role of media**

Two out of three associations said that the media does not have a good understanding about FLEGT/VPA, one association did not provide an answer. Three out of four associations said that media outlets are interested in FLEGT/VPA but they do not have enough information and resources to cover the issues, while one association said that they are not interested at all.

According to the associations, the limited news and articles on FLEGT/VPA is because they are not interested in the issues for a number of reasons:

1. broad topics related to many stakeholders
2. too many technical terms
3. prolonged negotiations
4. disparity in opinions between different stakeholders
5. many other emerging environmental issues and hot topics that attract media attention
6. the knowledge and understanding levels about FLEGT/VPA amongst many journalists is still limited

**4.3.3. Awareness, attitude, and understanding of journalists about FLEGT/VPA**

**Issues currently covered by media related to FLEGT/VPA**

An assessment was conducted with 15 media representatives (60% of interviews were conducted via an online survey; 40% were direct interviews) who provided a total of 26 responses. Some representatives provided more than one response. The breakdown of the media responses is shown in figure 9.

![Figure 9: Media representatives and distribution of responses](image-url)
There are 86 opinions stating the issue areas that they are currently covered related to FLEGT/VPA. The majority of opinions focused on CSR and sustainable development, followed closely by environment and climate change. Other issues, which received the least opinions, were scientific and technology, laws, natural resources and environment, political and news, economic news (on forest and timber products) import and export, finance and banking, and customs (see figure 10).

![Percentage of opinions](chart)

*Figure 10: Media coverage of FLEGT/VPA issues*

There are also some other related issues that the media can cover (e.g. land use, costal land areas, policy issues, administration reform, the quality of life of workers in agricultural sector, local news, transportation, economics, and environmental news).

From the media institutions interviewed, there are on average 19 journalists in each institution. Among them, there are about six full-time journalists and three part-time journalists covering the issues mentioned above. Journalists and reporters often have the knowledge and background on journalism, environment, economics, laws, foreign languages, culture and art, society and humanity.

Recent reports include field trip reviews, a network for information exchange, interviews with specialists and local leaders, collecting information from media releases or workshop documents, and proceedings. Journalists also conduct investigations at requests by their supervisors and leaders. This leads to research and a report on relevant news and emerging topics as well as collecting news and information from the internet for overall reporting.

**Media knowledge and understanding on FLEGT/VPA**

14 out of 15 media representatives provided answers for this question. Eight out of 14 (accounting for 57%) said they know about FLEGT/VPA, while six said that they have not heard about it (accounting for 43%).
Media understanding of FLEGT/VPA among those who already know about it is described below. In general, information provided on FLEGT and VPA by media is more or less the same.

**Media understanding about VPA:** It is a legally binded bilateral agreement between the EU and countries that export timber to the EU. The agreement helps to promote trade development based on commitments to produce and process legal timber among VPA member countries within the FLEGT action plan. VPA is a voluntarily agreement between the EU and Vietnam and needs to be relevant to both parties’ unique conditions and context. Joining the agreement is necessary to facilitate the export of enterprise products. However, most of the enterprises are unclear and do not understand the VPA and only perceive the challenges and barriers created.

**Media understanding of FLEGT:** This is a policy from the EU to ensure timber and timber products entering the EU market are legal. This is an action plan to enhance forest law enforcement and forest and trade governance. The policy was implemented to counter illegal logging. Measures of support, and technical and financial assistance comes from the EU. FLEGT includes the following contents: timber source verification, legality assurance, due diligence (companies have to be responsible for verifying timber legality of timber materials exploited). When FLEGT comes into effect, companies that produce wood chips will be affected. However, most enterprises are not informed and are concerned about the additional costs incurred for FLEGT compliance.²⁸

Areas that the media considered important in FLEGT/VPA include forest law enforcement (42%), promoting forest governance (33%), and developing forest product trade (25%) (see figure 11). Consistent and thorough implementation of the above will help to protect the forests, reduce illegal logging, promote export and increase competitiveness for timber processing enterprises. On the long term, it will help to improve monitoring the use of legal timber, improve community awareness, improve law enforcement and compliances, and ultimately, promote international integration.

![Figure 11: Areas that media considered important in FLEGT/VPA](image)

Drafting timber legality

Six out of 15 media opinions (accounting for 40%) said that they know about the timber legality definition according to Vietnamese laws and regulations for households, individuals and communities. Four out of the 15 know the definitions for companies and associations.

According to the media, legal timber from individuals and families and communities are allowed for transportation and production and are certified by the forest protection offices. Timber must have clear proofs of origins and be legally exploited.

According to the media, legal timber used by companies and associations is timber used in the supply chain (chain of custody), inspected by a designated independent monitoring agency and has associated legal papers and documents (such as FLEGT and FSC certificates) to ensure that they are legal timbers from exploitation. Other related issues include settlement of confiscated timbers, imported timber materials, legal transportation, legal exporting, and, compliance with tax and labor laws.

The eight journalists who know about FLEGTVPA considered factors that they thought were important to ensure effective implementation of TLAS (see figure 12).

![Figure 12: Factors to ensure effective implementation of TLAS as defined by journalists who know about FLEGTVPA](image)

According to these media outlets, the implementation of FLEGTVPA will promote sustainable development through linking enterprises that comply with requirements of EU markets. Independent monitoring will play an important role. It will ensure subjectivity, transparency and minimize negative issues during the whole process of timber production (with forest protection offices, enterprises, and custom offices). Independent monitoring also promotes transparency and rules of laws in general.

Among the eight journalists who already know about FLEGTVPA, seven (88%) provided answers about the most important areas of VPA. Four out of these seven (53%) said that the technical system to verify timber origin is important; three out of seven emphasized reliable legal systems (43%); and, none considered the administrative system to be important.
Six out of eight journalists (75%) who know about FLEGT/VPA provided answers about due diligence. Out of the six, only two had prior knowledge about due diligence in VPA and they said that enterprises must be responsible for verification of timber origins through evidence and proof. The CoC will help enterprises during the verification of legal timber and timber products. Four out of six (67%) did not know about due diligence.

Eight media representatives responded to seven areas and which they considered to be the most important in FLEGT (see figure 13).

![Figure 13: Media response to seven areas that are important in FLEGT](image)

**Figure 13: Media response to seven areas that are important in FLEGT**

**Self assessment of media in the role of information provision and increasing awareness during negotiations and implementation of FLEGT/VPA**

The media confirmed that they play an important role in providing information for communities and businesses. They also help to raise awareness about these issues in all three areas: negotiations, signing, and implementation. Information provision on FLEGT/VPA is also part of the media responsibility to promote public participation in law implementation and minimize negative impacts to the environment.

However, the media has also realized that there is still limited coverage about FLEGT/VPA related issues. The current forms of reporting and coverage are still limited in providing news about events. There is a lack of in-depth analytical articles and reports. The media also recognizes that current reports and news coverage are not yet useful for business as they are mainly reporting news and events and/or copying technical information from the meeting, workshops, and events. Therefore, they are not fully aware and prepared for the VPA.
A case study about reporting news on FLEGT/VPA issues versus climate change issues

On 19th March 2014 three different FLEGT projects, which had a total of $403,337USD of funding from DFID, FERN, EU and FAO, were launched at a workshop. Another workshop was held on 20th March 2014 to launch a project on climate change issues that had total funding of $224,065USD from DFAD and AusAid. These two workshops received 14 media articles, yet there is only one covering the FLEGT/VPA workshop, while the 13 others report solely on the climate change project. This reflects the unbalanced media reporting – the journalists may have a stronger understanding of climate change than FLEGT, and there is also a plentitude of resources for climate change that the media can refer to, which is not the case for FLEGT-VPA.

Figure 14: Case study on media coverage of FLEGT/VPA versus climate change and a list of 14 articles representing unbalanced reporting

The media have realized that effective communication strategies and plans should be tailored to specific target groups to enable them to understand the process, contents, roles and consequences to their operations. This will help them prepare for implementation and compliance.

Therefore, the media should be proactive and reach out to the organizations and institutions that are working on these issues – these include timber processing enterprises, civil society organizations (CSO), NGOs and government organizations. From these sources, they can gain information, updates, documents, networks, resources and equally technical and expert inputs and reviews, which will help them with their reporting and coverage of these issues.
4.4. Results on information and training needs assessment for capacity building

4.4.1. Information and capacity building needs from timber processing enterprises to ensure effective implementation of FLEGT/VPA

It was established that it is necessary to provide information and knowledge from businesses through training courses and workshops on FLEGT/VPA to supplement the following media means and channels: television, magazines, and electronics newspapers.

Out of the 57 enterprises who gave recommendations for capacity building (six did not provide responses), eight enterprises (14.04%) acknowledged that they only require information via emails and two enterprises (3.51%) favored training or workshops. The other participants recommended a variety of different types of information provision: 17 enterprises (29.82%) would prefer to receive information through both training/workshops and via the internet (or publications); 17 enterprises (29.82%) selected to receive information through three channels (training/workshops, VCCI/Association networks and one of following: publications or internet or email); Nine enterprises (15.79%) selected four options (training/workshops, VCCI/association network, internet and publications); and, four enterprises (7.02%) selected all five options of information provision (figure 1).

![Figure 15: Options selected by enterprises to receive information on FLEGT/VPA](image)

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29 Including five companies under 300 employees, two companies with 500 to 1000 employees, one company with 6000 employees (Trường Thành Timber company in Ho Chi Minh City)

30 One company with 299 employees, and one company with 700 employees

31 10 companies have less than 300 employees, three companies have 300 to 500 employees, two companies have 500 to 1000 employees and two companies have more than 1000 employees

32 10 companies have less than 300 employees, one company has 400 employees, three companies have 500 to 1000, three companies have more than 1000 employees

33 Seven companies have less than 300 employees, one company has 400 employees and one company has 1700 employees

34 Three companies have less than 300 employees and one company has 700 employees
40 enterprises said that at the moment, workshops and training are the most effective methods of disseminating information, especially when supplemented with information from the internet, media or publications. These companies are also willing to send their staff and officers (in charge of import and exports, accounting and production) to training workshops. Regarding the length of workshops and training, 34 out of 40 enterprises (85%) said that one-day training is appropriate. Four enterprises (10%) said that a half-day workshop would be adequate, whilst only two enterprises (5%) are willing to devote two days to training. Training between May and November every year would be the most convenient, as other times would be difficult for them to attend.

22 enterprises acknowledged that there is a need for a website on FLEGT with information related to VPA issues and a Question and Answer forum for businesses.

Out of the 18 enterprises who selected information through publications, half of the enterprises said that booklets would be useful for business as they are simple but contain sufficient information.

Out of the 18 enterprises who selected information through publications, half of the enterprises said that booklets would be useful for business as they are simple but contain sufficient information.

![Figure 16: Business preferences on publication formats to receive information on FLEGT/VPA](image)

*Contents of training and information provision*

Any training and information provision should focus on the legal requirements for timber, especially for the private sector, small scale enterprises and families. This will raise awareness about using legal timber for both individuals and organizations.

The enterprises that have a lack of knowledge about FLEGT are interested in FLEGT details and the policies to encourage using and buying legal timbers. For these enterprises, gaining knowledge on FLEGT and TLAS is important. Some enterprises said that a list of enterprises and companies (both domestic and international) that have timber from legal sources would be helpful for them. In addition, information and guidance about FLEGT licenses, and files for legal timber and guidance on the due diligence of legal timber would also be useful for them.
Organizations and institutions provide training for enterprises as proposed by enterprises

Enterprises were questioned on appropriate training providers, in which 37 participants responded (see table 4).

Table 4: Potential training providers as suggested by business

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential training provider</th>
<th>Number of participants</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VCCI</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timber processing and trade associations</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both VCCI and timber processing associations</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A group of different organizations (including VCCI, timber processing associations, forest protection departments, Department of Taxation, Customs,...)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

35 Out of the 15 companies that suggested VCCI as trainers include: eight companies have less than 300 employees, three companies have 300 to 500 employees, two companies have 850 employees, and one company has more than 1000 employees. Six companies suggested VIETFORES as trainers: These include two companies that have less than 300 employees, three companies have 500 to 1000 employees and one company has more than 1000 employees. 12 companies proposed both VCCI and VIETFORES as trainers: Five companies have less than 300 employees, two companies have 300 to 500 employees, three companies have from 500 to 1000 employees and two companies have more than 1000 employees. Four companies proposed VCCI, VIETFORES and other institutions: three companies with less than 300 employees and one company with 650 employees.
VCCI may be high on the selection list of training providers due to being a member of the assessment team. A general observation from the assessment is that both VCCI and timber processing associations can conduct training for businesses. However, the capacity of timber processing associations differs between locations. Whist timber processing associations seem to have closer relations with MARD and have access to many technical documents and knowledge, VCCI has a wider network of registered timber processing enterprises as it provides certificates of origins (C/O) for them. Therefore, VCCI also can easily convene workshops and meetings with their network members and provide updates on FLEGT as needed.

There are 40 enterprises that are willing to participate in a training course organized in the coming months. 23 other enterprises are not sure as it will depend on their schedules. There are 29 enterprises (accounting for 46%) that are willing to cover the costs for participation if the training courses prove to be of quality and valuable for their businesses. Nine enterprises (accounting for 14%) are not willing to pay for training, 25 (accounting for 40%) require more information on the cost, agenda and objectives of the training before being able to respond.

“Enterprises have to meet market requirements and so must have updates on these new requirements. So we are willing to participate in a half day or one-day training and willing to cover the costs of participation as it will be beneficial for our business. The ultimate goal is to ensure that we know the requirements and ask suppliers to provide enough documents when purchasing materials and we do not have to purchase them after work for completing papers”

-Interviews at a Company– in Thuan An, Binh Duong-

Among companies that are not willing to pay for training, one of these companies is state-owned while the rest are smaller scale companies and their annual export volume is less than 1 million USD. The enterprises that are willing to contribute for the training costs are larger companies with export markets in the EU, United States and Australia.

Assessment by enterprises on the role of media in information provision for businesses

Most of the enterprises have appreciated the role of the media in providing information for enterprises about environmental protection and forest protection and listed a number of different media channels (see Table 5).

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36 Sizes of 40 companies are willing to participate in the training as follows: four companies have less than 50 employees, eight have from 50 to 100 employees, and 13 companies have 100 to 300 employees, five companies have 300 to 500 employees, seven companies have 500 to 1000 employees and three companies have more than 1000 employees.
Table 5: Media channels followed by enterprises

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information channel</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provincial forestry newspapers (printed and online news)</td>
<td>VnExpress, Tuổi trẻ etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keyword search on FLEGT/VPA on search engines</td>
<td>Keywords: “FLEGT”, “legal timbers - gõ hợp pháp”, “lacey”, “phyto” Search engines: Google, Bing, Yahoo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television channels</td>
<td>60s news for business on HTV7 (television channels in Ho Chi Minh City) 24 hours News, and documentaries on VTV1 (National Vietnam television)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short documentaries on the VPA (between 5 and 20 minutes)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Communication should also focus on communities not just for businesses, as communities provide materials for companies to process. According to business, effective communication programs will help to increase awareness and understanding for farmers. This will make it easier for businesses when dealing with farmers – this will save a lot of time on both sides.

“Both business and farmers should understand about FLEGT/VPA. Training for business is important but awareness and understanding of local farmers is also important. Communication for business alone is not enough. Communication through television and radio programs is necessary and can reach farmers as they will know about the requirements and willing to cooperate with enterprises and willing to provide papers and documents to verify the sources for legal timbers”

-Interviews from a Company in Quang Ngai-

Other support (excluding training) proposed by businesses for effective implementation of FLEGT/VPA

Enterprises noted the importance of governmental support and related organizations to ensure that they understand the requirements of new laws and regulations. In addition, it is necessary to provide clear and open guidance for FLEGT licensing.

It is necessary to have technical support for FLEGT licensing. More specifically, clear and detailed forms for each group working within the supply chain is required. The groups are farmers, agents, material provision companies, processing enterprises, and export companies working on timber and timber products export. The forms should be available in Vietnamese and English, to reduce one more step of notarization and translations of the form into English for clients in the EU.

Most of the enterprises expect support to increase capacity of associations as they will play important roles in supporting business. At present, enterprises join associations on a voluntary basis and the responsibilities of members of associations are not clear. Businesses expect associations to have a stronger role in representing the voice and rights of business, and not just act as a body to provide information and training. It is perceived that associations can then support businesses in gaining FLEGT licenses.

One of the examples that enterprises referred to is in Thailand where business associations play an important role in directly influencing legislation. Therefore, it is necessary to improve
the legal framework so that associations in Vietnam can provide a platform for business. It is also necessary to oversee the work of the associations, in order to ensure their accountability, responsibility of information and guidance provided. Associations need to work closely with businesses as well.

In summary, associations need to be empowered by legal regulations. Empowering associations will enable them to support businesses in verifications and establish governance procedures to ensure legal timber is used in production. Periodically, associations can provide reports on compliance of businesses to governmental offices as needed. Associations will also act as a bridge to connect businesses to legal timber sources.

**Information technology capacity of enterprises**

All of the enterprises have computers and an internet connection. On average each enterprise has 27 computers with an internet connection. 57 enterprises have both Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line (ADLS) and wifi (accounting for 91.94%). Furthermore, 52 out of 63 respondents have used a Smartphone with internet access through 3G and wifi (accounting for 82.26%).

56 respondents said they have frequent access to printed and online newspapers (accounting for 89%), training and workshops. The seven remaining respondents often search for information using Google.

*Figure 18: The means that businesses connect to the internet*
4.4.2. Information and training requirements on FLEGT/VPA for associations

100% of the associations said that they have planned training and programs for their members to learn about FLEGT/VPA, specifically:

- How to follow the negotiation process and develop an action plan accordingly.
- Cooperation with VNFOREST and the negotiation team on FLEGT/VPA to pilot test the latest version of TLAS (e.g. in Binh Dinh) and conduct an evaluation.
- Developing training and communication plans in cooperation with media outlets. However according to associations, local newspapers have limited spaces for covering these topics, so they will focus on trusted magazines such as Viet timber (GỗViệt), business forums or documentaries on FLEGT/VPA on television such as VTV (VTV1, or related news)
- Leveraging of associations’ websites for information related to FLEGT/VPA (e.g. http://dawoodfor.com.vn, an association in Da Nang).

However, these plans have not been finalized as they depend on the negotiation process and budget of the associations. Associations also proposed that they have media relations with news agencies such as Vietnam Agriculture newspaper, Binh Dinh newspaper, Youth newspaper and television.

4.4.3. Training and information needs from the media

The media also proposed that activities need to be organized to raise awareness for the community on VPA and related issues such as FLEGT action plans for communities, media, business, and related stakeholders respectively. Training and workshops, with specific technical and financial support, for the media were proposed. All media participants have expressed a need to obtain more information on FLEGT/VPA (see figure 19).

![Preferred method to receive information by media](image)

**Figure 19:** Methods that the media would like to receive information on FLEGT

The newspapers requested further information on the following issues: the VPA contents and FLEGT action plan, progress and time of signing the VPA, assessment of impacts on different groups, views from Vietnam and the EU, views from experts, case studies from businesses to adapt with new requirements, the costs and benefits, and the potential outcomes if the VPA is not signed.
Eight people (57%) said that they are willing to participate in the training workshops and six acknowledged that they are interested but their attendance will depend on their schedule (43%). Nobody refused to attend the training workshops.

100% are willing to cooperate with the project and related stakeholders. Mechanisms for communicating FLEGT/VPA were suggested. Specifically, the project can provide information and introduce trusted information sources on FLEGT/VPA. The project could also support costs for the production of documentaries (field trips) or act as an agent to connect organizations to specialists and businesses around FLEGT/VPA issues.

In return, the media can also provide support where it is needed. For example, the media can report news, write articles, or act as a connecting agent. In order to attract readers, it is necessary to ensure the continuity of articles, sponsored columns, or reviews. It is also necessary to organize forums and/or dialogues between media, business and communities so that the media has access to information. Some specific recommendations include: public reviews and contribution, FAQs, short articles on FLEGT/VPA about the business and country benefits, some potential risks and solutions, experiences in other countries and experiences from those who implemented FLEGT/VPA. These communication channels would benefit business public relations.

A number of channels were recommended to support capacity building for the media: eight media representatives interviewed (53%) are willing to support the cause by providing news and articles; four representatives (27%) are willing to provide in-kind support; three representatives are willing to support communication channels (13%); and, one representative proposes other forms of communication such as advertisement for enterprises about FLEGT related issues.

Proposed mechanisms to cooperate with media (proposed by media representatives)

The project can provide support by providing information on a monthly basis in the form of newsletters or through email updates to the media about the progress of FLEGT/VPA. Feedback from the media and related stakeholders would also be useful for the project in order to organize more effective activities or support. The project, media and related stakeholders will discuss and jointly develop a proposal with a specific budget and resource allocation relevant to each communication channel. This can then be implemented under contractual agreements with each media representative including specific agreements on the contents and time required to conduct the activities. The project will provide information and organize relevant communication activities for the media to participate in. It can also support the media in fieldwork and improve understanding of local needs. The media will be able to observe and experience the situations first-hand and interview related stakeholders and affected groups (businesses and communities).

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Conclusions

- From the consultations and meetings for assessment design, it is clear that the government is very keen to join FLEGT/VPA. This is evident in the last round of negotiations, and also in the policies and strategies for the management and development of the timber processing industry to operate in a more sustainable manner.
The increasing role of CSOs and associations has been evident since 2014. Equally, negotiation representatives are also willing to work with CSOs to participate in FLEGT/VPA. They are willing to take the results of CSO’s work into consideration as long as the information is relevant and helpful for the negotiation process. On the other hand, VNFOREST has recognized that they need input from NGOs to have a more comprehensive overview of how FLEGT/VPA might affect different target groups. NGOs have better connections than the government with specific groups such as SMEs and communities.

Timber exporting companies, especially those exporting to high-end markets such as the EU, have paid attention to FLEGT and understand its objectives and meanings at a minimum. However, there are only a few larger scale businesses, which really understand its requirements.

Most of the businesses interviewed have said that joining FLEGT/VPA will contribute greatly to the sustainable development of the timber processing industry and the overall timber product trade in Vietnam. Most of the businesses said that promoting forest governance and forest law enforcement is very important in verifying the legal sources of timber used. Large scale businesses that export directly to EU markets understand the FLEGT requirements. However, there are varying levels of understanding with only a few businesses possessing an in-depth understanding. Small scale businesses are interested in legal timber sources but lack the knowledge about FLEGT.

The businesses that are exporting to EU markets are facing some challenges in verifying timber sources from both domestic sources and imported timbers. These difficulties come largely from a lack of knowledge about legal timber from farmers, individuals, families and businesses in the timber supply chain. The process is fraught with unclear evidence, incorrectly filed papers, and inconsistent forms between sectors – this disparity is particularly noticeable between customs and forest protection officers.

Timber processing and trade associations work closely with the negotiation team, and therefore have access to many documents and information about FLEGT/VPA and TLAS. They therefore contribute to the negotiation process significantly. However, the effective translation of technical information for businesses and communities has been neglected due to limited capacity and resources. There is a notable lack of communication capacity.

Other business associations, including VCCI and provincial business associations, represent business voices and interests on policies and issues related to business operations and legislation. However, they have limited access and understanding about FLEGT/VPA so are unable to provide relevant information for their members. In addition, cooperation between these associations and those in the timber sector is still limited.

The media, in general, has a basic understanding of FLEGT/VPA but is interested in the topic. The level of understanding and interest varies amongst different media groups. In the past, most of the information disseminated by the media has focused on the negotiations, related project activities or events. Analytical articles and reviews are limited. Informative articles written to the same level as the FLEGT and TLAS newsletters do not exist. Government website information is also available but, according to businesses and associations, this is too technical and not accessible from common search engines. Enterprises and related stakeholders appreciate the role of media in information dissemination and provision for target groups. There are, however, shortcomings and limitations with these communication channels. Reporters
lack the knowledge and understanding of the issues as the information provided to them is inadequate and not relevant. This has confirmed the need for stakeholders to cooperate with the media.

- The current information provision to the media and targeted groups is ineffective. As a result of technical information not being translated to the needs of different target groups, reporters are unable to identify with the issues and focus on reporting the events surrounding FLEGT rather than the subject itself. In addition, the negotiation process is ongoing and has not been finalized. Therefore, official information and documents are not yet available.

- All of the businesses that participated in the survey are interested in receiving information and gaining knowledge about FLEGT/VPA. Receiving information via different sources and training/workshops was welcome. However, businesses have varying and specific needs, which need to be considered by organizations who are working on capacity building. It is important to note that larger and medium size businesses are more willing to participate and share the costs for training courses on FLEGT than smaller scale businesses. In addition, assigning relevant staff to attend training is also more difficult for smaller businesses and so they prefer receiving information through alternative channels.

- Business plays a key role in educating and providing FLEGT information to communities who supply timber but this role has not been promoted. The same holds true for FLEGT related information from EU operators and customers to the suppliers in Vietnam as well as from businesses in Vietnam that import timbers from other countries. Transfer of information through the supply chain (from business to business) is important and needs to be leveraged.

- Businesses have access to the internet and are able to search for information through various search engines. Information provision through the internet and the use of social networks and social media is still yet to be leveraged.

5.2. Recommendations

- It is clear that joining FLEGT/VPA will contribute to forest law enforcement in Vietnam. When TLAS is available, it will be possible to avoid some of the challenges that businesses are currently facing. There needs be a unified understanding and agreement on the documentation required between the forest protection and customs offices for timber and timber products exported.

- When TLAS is available, it is necessary to provide guidance on administrative procedures to avoid duplications and negative implications in FLEGT licensing. Support is required on certifications for timber materials bought from farmers’ plantations. It is necessary to have forms in both languages (Vietnamese and English), and specific requirements about documents and papers for verification of legal sources of timber have to be widely published. In addition, businesses and communities need to be publicly informed about the processes.

- Governmental institutions should be more proactive in providing information for media and invite media to relevant events and meetings. Media needs to be provided with adequate information including interviews and answers to questions that they pose to help improve their understanding of FLEGT/VPA and related issues. As a result, the media should disseminate that information for different target groups.

- NGOs play a role in providing information to and cooperating with the target groups that they serve. They need to ensure information and messages on FLEGT/VPA are effectively communicated. Specifically, NGOs and CSOs should translate information
and documents provided by VNFOREST and the Forest Protection Department to a language that is understood by communities, families, and businesses.

- Media should work closely with NGOs and CSOs. A hands-on approach to better understand the context and needs of different target groups is required. Coverage needs to include a broad range of in-depth issues related to FLEGT/VPA rather than only reporting on events held by organizations and institutions in Hanoi.

- The role of business in providing information to communities where they are operating or from who they are buying materials from needs to increase. This can be achieved through training and/or CSR or public-private initiatives, especially in Quang Nam, Quang Ngai and Da Nang where businesses are dealing directly with smaller businesses, traders, and famers.

- Peer learning and information sharing (business to business, from EU to Vietnam and Vietnam to countries that it imports timber from) should be encouraged. There is clearly a strong need for businesses in Ho Chi Minh City, Binh Dinh and Binh Duong to share information.

- Given the fact that the majority of enterprises suggest that associations (VCCI, VIETFORES, HAWA etc.) should be the main agencies responsible for short-term training of enterprises, cooperation between business associations need to be strengthened. VCCI has a strong network and contact with businesses so they understand the needs of enterprises in terms of business operations. VIETFORES has better access and understanding about FLEGT and issues related to forest governance. Both organizations could work together to leverage their strengths in order to reach out to a larger number of SMEs. SMEs can then transfer the information to small businesses and communities as suggested above. Through this process, the information will reach a broader number of businesses as a whole. VCCI and other associations will then need to develop the outreach and communication plans to meet this goal.

- It was identified that programs and activities need to be developed and supported to build capacity for stakeholders and media to better understand FLEGT and the related issues to business. It is also necessary to diversify information provision to business and communities to ensure it reaches specific target groups (especially small businesses and traders) in a digestible format. Training courses provided should last about half to one day and be organized between May and November so businesses can attend. It is necessary to build capacity for larger businesses so that they can provide information and training as required for small businesses and traders in their supply chain.

- It is necessary to provide information for target groups (communities and businesses) via the internet and websites. These forms of information need to be clear, concise and jargon free. Question and answer pages and expert views are also important to include.

- Promoting cooperation and information exchanges among CSOs (including business associations) and other stakeholders to better provide information for business will increase the role of associations to represent the voice and needs of businesses for sustainable development. For example, VIETFORES, HAWA and VCCI can work together to develop updates and briefings for their members using information provided by VNFOREST and other government institutions.

- The use of social network and social media as well as providing information online should be promoted as it is relevant for business and will complement other communication efforts.
ANNEX
Annex 1. References

1. 1334/TCLN-KH & HTQT August 30, 2013 of Vietnam Administration of Forestry on comments of Draft 6.3, Definitions of legal timber and Draft 2, Appendix 3, TLAS to negotiate with EU for VPA /FLEGT.
2. Decision No. 1565/QD-BNN-TCLN January 8, 2013 of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development approved "Forestry restructuring sector".

Annex 2. Survey schedule and members of assessment team

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Annex 3. The list of businesses and organizations interviewed

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Association

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<td>1081 Ngo Quyen, Son Tra District, Danang</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>The Forest Products Association of Binh Dinh</td>
<td>General Secretary</td>
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<td>4th floor, Phu Tai building, 278 Nguyen Thi Dinh, Quy Nhon City, Binh Dinh</td>
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<td>Binh Duong Furniture Association - BIFA</td>
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<td>Handicraft &amp; Wood Industry Association of Ho Chi Minh City - HAWA</td>
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Annex 4. Questionnaires

INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

(For small and medium enterprises – SME)

Note: Please refer to the notes for interviewers for more information on program introduction and guidance for interviews.

Content of Survey
Name of interviewee ................................................. Date: ....../...../2014
Duration ............................................................................................................................................
Address: ...........................................................................................................................................

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT SME

1.1 Registered Name of business:
(In Vietnamese)...........................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................................
(In English)...........................................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................................

1.2 Address:
.......................................................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................................
Branch or representative offices (if any)
...........................................................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................................
Number of employees:...................... of which number (or %) are female employees....................

1.3 How to communicate with the business:
Name of person in charge:
Tel: Mobile: Fax:
Email: Website:

1.4 Type of business (please tick to appropriate boxes)
Type of business:

- Private Enterprise
- Co-operative

**Company Limited**

- One member
- more than two members

**Other types of company**

- joint-ventured
- Share-holder

**Economic sector of business:**

- Private
- State Owned
- Foreign Direct Invested

1.5 How does your business exports timber or timber products? (Select one or more options)

- Export directly
- Export through contractual agreements on producing and processing timber products with other exporting businesses

1.6 Export Yield (in 2012 and 2013)

+ By value, 2012:.................2013 ...............USD or VND

+ Volume (cubic meter): 2012:.................2013 ...............m³ for raw material or m³ final products.

**Annual Export Markets:**

.............% to EU..............% to US..............% to Japan.............% to China

.............% domestic markets.............% others

+ List other markets (if any)

.......................................................... ..........................................................

1.7 Volume of timber used in 2012 and 2013 (of which specify the domestic sources and imported sources):

**Imported timber materials in 2012 and 2013** (Select one or more options)

- Direct Import
- Import through other enterprises
+ By Value in 2012.........................................in 2013......................................................USD or VND
+ By volume in 2012........................................in 2013..........................................................m$^3$ timber (logs, sawn wood, wood-based panels)
Of which, imported timber accounts for..............................................................% of the total volume of timber materials used in the

Compare imports and exports values: ........................................% of exports

What kind of certificates or evidences does the company have for imported timbers? Provide details and make copies of certificates and evidences.
........................................................................................................................................

What kind of certificates or evidences does the company have for timbers from domestic suppliers? Provide details and make copies of certificates and evidences.
........................................................................................................................................

1.8. List the names of countries which provide timber materials for the company.
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

PART II: KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND CURRENT PRACTICES OF BUSINESSES IN RELATION TO FOREST LAW ENFORCEMENT GOVERNANCE AND TRADE (USING TIMBER FROM LEGAL SOURCES)

2.1 Do you pay attention to the origins of wood used in your business’ production?

☐ No  ☐ Yes;

Can you describe the sources of timber used in your companies?

About .................% clearly identified sources/origins ..............% not clearly identified sources/origins

For imported timber, what available evidences/certificates/papers do you have? Please tick the relevant boxes below, and include more details and make a copy of any evidence.

☐ FSC  ☐ Others (name in detail?)
2.2 Can you define when timber is considered legal timber?

- Can define  - Can not define;
If you can, how do you know the definition of legal timber and how can you verify legal timber?

Does your business pay attention to the legality of timber in your enterprise’s production?

- No  - Yes;
If yes, can you describe some of the advantages and disadvantages of using legal timber in your enterprise’s production?

+ Main advantages?

+ Main disadvantages/obstacles?

2.3 Can you describe management process in your company (process and procedures of managing timber material inputs/storage for production and exporting of final products)?

PART III: UNDERSTANDING ABOUT AND INFORMATION ON FLEGT
Notes: Investigator introduces about FLEGT and VPA briefly (based on information provided).

3.1 Do you know anything about FLEGT or VPA?

- No  (If no, move to PART IV)
- Yes (Continue with questions below, then move to PART IV).
If yes, from which channels you got the information on FLEGT/VPA

☐ Newspapers ☐ Workshop  ☐ TV  ☐ Radio

From Internet

☐ Online press ☐ Social Network (facebook, forums,...)  ☐ Email  ☐ Other (please specify)

...............................................................................................................................

3.2 If you’ve known about FLEGT, which area below is most important? (please tick in appropriate boxes)

☐ Law enforcement in forest management and forestry sector

☐ Promoting forest governance

☐ Promoting trade of forest products

If FLEGT.VPA came into effect, how will it influence the timber processing sector Vietnam?

........................................................................................................................................

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3.3 FLEGT action plan has seven main components, described below:

- Supporting timber production/processing nations
- Encouraging legal timber trade
- Encouraging enforcement of policies on buying legal timber and purchasing products processed and used from legal timber
- Supporting initiatives from the private sector
- Ensuring the safety of financial and investment transactions
- Using existing legal instruments or developing new legal instruments to support the action plan
- Handling controversial timbers

Please select two most areas that you think will be most important for businesses and give explanations as to why you selected those two areas.

........................................................................................................................................

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3.4 What support do you think that businesses will need for effective implementation of FLEGT action plan? How should we promote understanding and active participation of SMEs in Vietnam? Please give specific recommendations that are beneficial to SMEs.

3.5 : Since the negotiations of Voluntary Partnership Agreement ( VPA ) has been underway, the following documents have been drafted:

1 . Definition of legal timber (applied to households , individuals, and communities ). Do you have information on contents of this draft ? (please tick the appropriate box )

☐ Yes ☐ No ;

If Yes please describe some principles *(note for investigators: there are seven 7 principles)*

2. Definition of legal timber for use by organizations (such as companies , associations of forest/processing products) . Do you know about this draft document? (please tick one appropriate box )

☐ Yes ☐ No;

If you select “Yes” please name some principles *(for investigator: there are 8 principles)*

3.6 In your opinion, which stage is considered to have the most important position in the Timber Legality Assurance System System (TLAS) to ensure legal timber is imported into the EU: ( possible to choose more than one answers )

☐ Timber exporting control ☐ Timber processing ☐ Internal Verifications

☐ Licensing ☐ Independent Monitoring (TLAS contents)

How does it influence partner countries of the EU like Vietnam?

How will the role of independent monitoring benefit implementation?
3.7: According to you, what is the most important content of voluntary partnership agreement (VPA): (please select one option)

- [ ] reliable legal system
- [ ] Administrative Structure
- [ ] Technical system to verify the legality of timber

Do you see any correlations among the three above-mentioned areas?
........................................................................................................................................
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3.8: What do you know about accountability in the system to ensure legal timber is specified in the VPA?
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3.9: To make VPA and TLAS working our country, what would be needed for business associations and SMEs (especially small businesses) in your opinion? What are the roles of business associations in Vietnam?
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3.10: Have you read the draft version of TLAS?

- [ ] Yes  - [ ] No

What is your opinion about TLAS (has the evidence mentioned been sufficient or not, any other comments, ...)?
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3.11: What is your opinion on the need to categorize types and/or size of businesses to verify legal timber sources and evidence, in order to be compliant to the TLAS?
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3.12 What advantages and disadvantages will the classification of enterprises have in providing evidence to comply with TLAS?

+ Main advantages?

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.................................................................................................................................

+ Main Disadvantages?

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3.13 For those enterprises that have a FSC Certificate, Do they need any additional certificates or proof when the VPA is signed?

.................................................................................................................................

PART 4: PROVING INFORMATION NEEDS ABOUT FLEGT/VPA

Note for investigator: For those enterprises that do not have any information or understanding about FLEGT/VPA, please give a short introduction of its contents (Please refer to the notes prepared for investigators).

4.1. Which of following content do you think would be necessary for SMEs: (select and tick appropriate boxes)

- General information and knowledge on FLEGT/VPA
- Information on TLAS and its contents
- Forest law enforcement
- Promotion of forest governance
- Developing forest product trade
- Supporting timber processing nations
- Encouraging legal timber trade
- Encouraging the implementation of policies to purchase legal timber for processing and using products processed from legal timber
- Supporting initiatives of the private sector
- Ensuring the safety of investment and financial transactions
- Using existing legal instruments or developing new legal instruments to support the action plan
Handling controversial timber

Timber and timber product export control

Timber processing

Internal Verification

Licensing

Independent Monitoring (TLAS new content)

Reliable legal system

Administrative Structure

Technical system to verify the legality of timber

Other content (please specify):

............................................................................................................................
............................................................................................................................
............................................................................................................................
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4.2. If you need to have information about FLEGT/VPA, what would be the most effective way to provide information to your company?

Through Workshop and training courses (choose duration of courses)

- 1 day
- 2 days
- ½ day

Who will be attending these courses? (Name and contact information)

............................................................................................................................
............................................................................................................................
............................................................................................................................
............................................................................................................................
............................................................................................................................

(Is you company willing to pay a fee to attend these courses?)

- Yes
- No

Provision of information through Internet (Accessed by both computer and mobile phone). What would be the best way to inform SMEs about this new website?

............................................................................................................................
............................................................................................................................
Provision of information through various publications (including booklets, pamphlets): Please specify the form, language used and design of publications, etc.?

- Booklets
- Leaflets
- Pamphlets

How will these publications be distributed?

- VCCI network
- Association network (names)
- Other organizations at provincial level (Specify names)

Others (specify name)

4.3: In your opinion, what is the role of mass media (newspaper, TV, Radio..) in provision of information about FLEG, VPA?

4.4. Does your enterprise have Internet access in the office?

- No
- Yes. If yes, tick in an appropriate cell: ADSL, WIFI

Who has access to internet at work in your company? : ....................................................(sets)
Do you use smart phones and tablets to access Internet? If Yes, Please provide name of service.

- Wifi
- 3G
INTERVIEW GUIDELINES
(For Media representatives)

Notes for interviewers: Please refer to guides/notes for introduction before interviewing.

Interview contents

Name of interviewer .................................................................Date : ....../....../2014
Duration ....................................................................................................................

Address: ..................................................................................................................

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION ON ORGANIZATION
Note: Investigator introduces the purpose of the interview and assessment with the media

1.1 Name of interviewee:

Position : ..................................................................................................................

Tel : Mobile : Fax:
Email : Website organization :

1.2 Getting general Information about the organization:

(In Vietnamese)..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................
(In English)..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................

Type of media

☐ Online Press/newspaper ☐ Printed Newspapers/press
☐ Television ☐ Radio ☐ Others (specify what kind)
..................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................

1.4 . What topics do your media organization report on?

☐ Agriculture & Rural Development ☐ Forestry
Environment & Climate Change  Trade & forest products

Social Responsibility & Sustainable Development

The Commercial  Small and Medium Enterprise

Others (specify what field? )

- Number of Journalists in the above-mentioned categories:
  Number of full-time journalists........... Number of part-time journalists ............

- Educational background of journalists in charge of each area above:

1.5 Which major topics is your organization reporting on in the immediate future? (list and mention priorities):

1.6 How do you cooperate with related organizations and agencies to report on certain subjects or issues? (How do you get information from the relevant authorities for reports on news, articles, and documentaries?)

PART II : UNDERSTANDING OF ISSUES RELATED FLEGT – VPA AND MEDIA COVERAGE TO-DATE

2.1: Have you seen any information about the FLEGT - VPA yet?

- No  Yes ; If yes please give a brief explanation about the FLEGT – VPA and where did you got the information from:

2.2: Can you propose a mechanism for media to get a better understanding of FLEGT - VPA which will lead to better reporting on these issues?

- No  Yes ; If yes, please give specific recommendations for better collaborations:
a) Which specific issues will journalists need support for, in terms of information and better coverage?

b) How can the project help to promote effective information provision for media?

c) What kind of support can media provide for NGOs and organizations to improve public understanding about FLEGT/VPA (especially SMEs)

- Space/coverage
- Duration
- Media means and/or equipment
- Other resources (please specify)

2.3 If you already have information and know about FLEGT, which of the following three areas are the most important to you and/or your media? (please tick the appropriate box)

- Forest Law Enforcement
- Promote forest governance
- Promote forest products trade

Will implementation of FLEGT/VPA have any impacts upon the Vietnam forestry trade?

2.4: FLEGT action plan has seven main components, described below:

- Supporting timber production/processing nations
- Encourage legal timber trade
Encourage enforcement of policies on buying legal timber and purchase products processed and used from legal timber

Support initiatives from the private sector

Ensuring the safety of financial and investment transactions

Using existing legal instruments or developing new legal instruments to support the action plan

Handling controversial timbers

Please select two most areas that you think will be most important for businesses and give explanations as to why you selected those two areas.

2.5: Since the negotiations of Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) have been underway, the following documents have been drafted:

1. Definition of legal timber (applied to households, individuals, and communities). Do you have information on the contents of this draft? (please tick the appropriate box)
   - Yes
   - No

If yes please name some principles (note for investigators: there are seven principles)

2. Definition of legal timber for use by organizations (such as companies, associations of forest/processing products). Do you know about this draft document? (please tick one appropriate box)
   - Yes
   - No

If yes please name some principles (for investigator: there are 8 principles)

2.6 In your opinion, which stage is the most important in the Timber Legality Assurance System (TLAS) in ensuring timber imported into the EU is legal: (Choose one or more options)

- Timber exporting control
- Timber processing
- Internal Verifications
- Licensing
- Independent Monitoring (TLAS contents)

How does this/these stage(s) influence a partner country of the EU like Vietnam?
Will independent monitoring bring any benefits to implementation?

2.7 In your opinion, what is the most important aspect of the voluntary partnership agreement (VPA): (please select one option)

- reliable legal system
- Administrative Structure
- Technical system to verify the legality of timber

Do you see any correlations among the above-mentioned areas?

2.8: Do you understand about accountability in the system to ensure legal timber specification in the VPA?

Question 2.9 To make VPA and TLAS work in our country, what would be needed for business associations and SMEs (especially small businesses) as well as media in Vietnam in your opinion? What are the roles of business associations and media in Vietnam?

2.10 It is expected that FLEGT VPA will be signed between Vietnam and the EU in October 2014. Do you need updated information on that process in order to provide information to the public and/or businesses?

- No
- Yes (If yes, what kind of information will be needed?)

What is the best way to provide information for your reporting purposes?

- Official letters
- Workshop materials
- Press Release
- Website
- Newsletter
- Others (please specify:)

2:11 In your opinion, what is the role of media (newspapers, radio, TV, ...) in raising awareness and public understanding during negotiations and implementation of VPA?
2.12 For effective communication on FLEGT / VPA, what support will media need from related stakeholders? (specifically what support and resources will be needed from the authorities, government, business, community, and NGOs?)

2.13 After this assessment, we are planning a media training workshop where we will provide updated information on FLEGT VPA for media and related organizations. Are you interested in participating in this workshop and inputting on the development of an effective media plan?

☐ No ☐ Maybe ☐ Yes

If yes, who will be attending?

If yes, please provide contact details so we can follow up:

Name: .......................................................... Contact: ..........................................................

INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

(For related stakeholders)

Using same introductory notes as other interviews

Name of interviewer: .................................................. Date: ........../....../2014
Time: ..........................................................

PART I: INFORMATION ABOUT INTERVIEWEE AND HIS/HER ORGANIZATION

1.1 Name of interviewee:
Position:
Tel: .......................................................... Mobile: ................ Fax of Organization: ...................
Email: .......................................................... Website of Organization: ......................
1.2 General information about organization

(In Vietnamese)............................................................................................................................................
..............................................................................................................................................................

(In English)................................................................................................................................................
..............................................................................................................................................................

1.3 What are the main activities of your organization in relation to FLEGT/VPA until now? (both ongoing and planned activities)
..............................................................................................................................................................
..............................................................................................................................................................
..............................................................................................................................................................
..............................................................................................................................................................

1.4: What are the main activities of your organization in relation to FLEGT/VPA provision for businesses until now? (both ongoing and planned activities)
..............................................................................................................................................................
..............................................................................................................................................................
..............................................................................................................................................................
..............................................................................................................................................................
PART II: INFORMATION AND UNDERSTANDING ON FLEGT AND VPA

2.1 How did you get information on FLEGT VPA and related issues? (Note Please be specific: where did you get the information, through which channels, both formal and informal, or from internet)

a) Name of organization that provided the information for you:
.................................................................................................................................
.................................................................................................................................

b) Under which of the following forms was the information given?:
☐ Formal ☐ Informal
☐ Internet ☐ Others (please specify details)
.................................................................................................................................
.................................................................................................................................

2.2 What have been the advantages and disadvantages in finding out information about FLEGT VPA and updates on the negotiation progress in Vietnam? (Please be specific)

a) Main advantages:
.................................................................................................................................
.................................................................................................................................

b) Main disadvantages
.................................................................................................................................
.................................................................................................................................

2.3 In your opinion, is the current information sufficient?
☐ Yes ☐ No (If no, what needs to be improved?):
.................................................................................................................................
.................................................................................................................................

2.4 Is the available information suitable for the target groups that you support?
☐ Yes ☐ No (If no, what needs to be improved?):
.................................................................................................................................
.................................................................................................................................
2.5 Do you have any plans to improve communications on FLEGT/VPA to your targeted groups?

☐ No  ☐ Yes (Summarize the plans):
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

PART III : COMMUNICATIONS ABOUT FLEGT/VPA

3.1 Have you invited media and press to your events before?

☐ Yes  ☐ No (If No, why not?)
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

3.2 Has your organization had any staff in direct control of communication?

☐ No  ☐ Yes; full time communication officer (CO)  ☐ Yes; Part-time CO

If yes, what is the professional background of the staff in charge of communication?:
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

Are there any communication plans at your organization related to FLEGT/VPA?

☐ No  ☐ Yes (If yes, list in detail)
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

b) Which target groups have been (or will be) provided with information?
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

c) Which means of media have been used or will be used in your projects?

☐ Newspaper  ☐ Internet (social network, email...)

☒ TV  ☐ Radio  ☐ Others (Name):
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

d) How have you organized your communication activities?:
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

e) Which future plans/activities are there in your organization that will involve working with media: (target groups, messages...)
........................................................................................................................................

........................................................................................................................................
f) Do you have a budget for communication activities/plans?

3.3 How would you assess the knowledge, interests, attention and understanding of the media about issues related to FLEGT and VPA?

☐ A good understanding  ☐ Not a good understanding (please be specific):

☐ Very interested  ☐ Not very interested  ☐ Don’t pay attention (Please be specific in clarifying reasons):

3.4 Do you read and track news and reports about FLEGT-VPA?

☐ Yes  ☐ No (state the reasons why?):

If yes, how would you assess the quality of the coverage to date?

☐ Excellent  ☐ Good  ☐ Normal  ☐ Not good (Detail?):

3.5. How do you provide information for media during organization of your events? (Get documents for reference)

☐ Workshop documents/materials  ☐ Provide information as requested
☐ Press release  ☐ Others (Detail?):

3.6 Which newspapers or media organizations are you collaborating with?

What are the advantages of collaborating with them?

What are the disadvantages of collaborating with them?
Annex 5. Examples of certificates provided by enterprises during the survey

Certificate ISO 2008 Quang Nam Forest Product join Venture Company.
Certificate SGSHK-COC-001649
The management system of
Forest Products Export Joint Stock
Company of Quang Nam (FOREXCO
Quang Nam)
Head Office: Dien Ngoc Village, Dien Ban District,
Quang Nam Province, Vietnam
has been assessed and its products certified as meeting the requirements of

Chain-of-Custody
The company was assessed against the following standards:
FSC-STC-45-001 V2.0 Standard for COC Certification – November 2017
FSC-STC-45-002 V2.0 Company Evaluation of Controlled Wood – April 2017

for the products detailed in the scope below

This certificate is valid from 1 August 2011 until 13 August 2014
Issue 2. Certified since August 2008
SGS No: HN1110009A

This is a group certification scheme
Additional site details are listed on subsequent pages

Authorized by:

SGS Hong Kong Limited Systems & Services Certification
26F, Metroplis Square, Zhan Yu Street
Et Liuk Yuen, Sheung N.T., Hong Kong
+852 3134 4611 / +852 3134 3337 / www.sgs.com

The holder of the certificate and the client must ensure that the certificate is issued by SGS Hong Kong Limited, as the issuer.

SGS Hong Kong Limited Systems & Services Certification
26F, Metroplis Square, Zhan Yu Street
Et Liuk Yuen, Sheung N.T., Hong Kong
+852 3134 4611 / +852 3134 3337 / www.sgs.com

This certificate does not provide assurance that a particular product supplied by the certificate holder is FSC-certified or FSC-controlled wood.

Products affected, supplied by the certificate holder may also be included covered by other forest supply certification schemes. The use of the certificate of this certificate shall be limited to the forest product(s) specified on the certificate.

The certificate holder is required to ensure that the information provided to the certificate holder is correct and complete.

FSC – COC – page 1 - Quảng Nam Forest Product Join Venture Company
Forest Products Export Joint Stock Company of Quang Nam (FOREXCO Quang Nam)

Chain-of-Custody

Issue 2

Debuted 2010

Purchasing of FSC pure logs and sawn timber; FSC controlled logs and sawn timber; Sawmilling, manufacture of FSC pure outdoor and indoor furniture (transfer system); FSC mixed outdoor and indoor furniture (percentage system); Sales of FSC pure logs and sawn timber; FSC pure outdoor and indoor furniture.

Additional Chains:

Factory: Viet Duc Factory; Quang nam Province Vietnam
Factory: Dien Ngoc Factory; Quang nam Province Vietnam
Factory: Tam Ky Factory; Quang Nam Province, Vietnam

GIAY CHUNG NHAN THANH VIEN
FOREST PRODUCTS EXPORT COMPANY OF QUANG NAM
Hamlet 5, Dien Ngoc, Dien Ban, Quang Nam Province, Vietnam.

This is to certify that

We hereby declare that our company, Giay chung nhan thanh vien, is a member of the Global Forest & Trade Network Vietnam and is hereby a Participant of the Global Forest & Trade Network Vietnam.

Date: 03/04/2014

Certificate of a trusted timber exporting company provided by the Ministry of Trade. Duc Thanh Wood Processing Company, Ho Chi Minh city
Certificate for FSC-"Chain of Custody"

LGA InterCert Zertifizierungsgesellschaft mbH, an accredited and recognized certification office for Forest Stewardship Council A. C. (FSC), hereby certifies that the company

Hoang Thien Company Limited
47 Ngo May Street
Quy Nhon City, Binh Dinh Province
Vietnam

FSC registration no.: IC-COC-100393
meets the requirements of the

FSC-Standard (Chain-of-Custody)
FSC-STD-46-004 (version 2-1)
for the products/activities mentioned.
For the full list of product groups covered by this certificate see www.fsc-info.org.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>products/activities</th>
<th>with the status of material</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Garden Furniture or Sewn Timber, Log Wood / Manufacturer | FSC Control System: Transfer System
- FSC 100% |

The evidence of conformity was provided in the context of a certification audit by LGA InterCert Zertifizierungsgesellschaft mbH.

This certificate is valid until June 22nd 2014
The validity of this certificate shall be verified on www.fsc-info.org.

Nuremberg, September 17th 2012

[Signatures]

Andrea Sterl
Authorized Signatory

FSC – COC Hoang Phat Company Ltd. – Binh Dinh.
1. Tên mẫu
Name of sample

2. Số lượng mẫu
Quantity

3. Mô tả mẫu
Description of sample

4. Ngày nhận mẫu
Date of receiving

5. Nơi gửi mẫu
Customer

6. Điều kiện thử nghiệm
Temperature and relative humidity at testing laboratory:

7. Thời gian thử nghiệm
Test period

8. Kết quả thử nghiệm
Test result

Trưởng PTH Hàng Tiêu Dụng
HEAD OF CONSUMER PRODUCTS TESTING LABORATORY

Phó Giám Đốc
VICE DIRECTOR

Nguyễn Phước Hải
TRẦN Thị Mỹ Hiền
Annex 6. Some photos taken during the assessment

Wood processing workshop in Vinafor Da Nang.

Packaging for export - Vinafor Da Nang.
Wood chip processing in Dai Hiep Commercial and Service Company–Quang Nam

Logs in stock pile PISICO indoor furniture processing in Binh Dinh
Premises of Green River Furniture Joint Stock Company- Binh Duong.
Timber products exported to the EU. Dewberry Co. Ltd.
Interviews in Duc thanh Processing Company – Ho Chi Minh city.