



# Reducing deforestation through improved land-use governance

**EU REDD Facility:**  
Strategic Focus and Priorities 2018-2022

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# Summary

The EU REDD Facility supports countries in improving land-use governance as part of their efforts to slow, halt and reverse deforestation. It also supports the overall effort of the European Union (EU) to reduce its contribution to deforestation in developing countries.

The Facility focuses on countries that are engaged in REDD+, an international mechanism that incentivises developing countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from their forest and land-use sectors.<sup>a</sup>

The Facility works with governments of countries engaged in REDD+ in designing and implementing interventions that support a broad range of in-country stakeholders. Stakeholders in these countries are therefore participants in and beneficiaries of the Facility's interventions. It also works with policy makers in the European Commission and signatory countries of the New York Declaration on Forests<sup>b</sup> and the Amsterdam Declarations<sup>c</sup> in shaping international forest policies and programmes to support REDD+ countries and stakeholders, as well as to address demand for forest-risk commodities.<sup>1</sup>

The Facility is hosted by the European Forest Institute and was established in 2010. It is funded by the EU, France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom. It has experience in facilitating difficult transitions in developing countries, and in capturing and managing knowledge to support effective decision making and action. The Facility believes that, with the right policies and practices in place, improved forest and land-use governance can:

- Yield substantial and cost-effective reductions in greenhouse gas emissions
- Provide opportunities for sustainable development
- Improve livelihoods and the control that forest-dependent communities, including indigenous peoples and smallholder farmers, have over local natural resources
- Provide many environmental and social co-benefits, including biodiversity protection, peace, prosperity, and improved local and regional resilience to climate change

This paper presents the Facility's strategy for 2018-2022. It gives an overview of the problems the Facility aims to help countries address and the context in which this will happen. It then presents the Facility's strategic goal, objectives and planned actions. It also describes how the Facility's communication efforts are informing EU and international policies on deforestation.



<sup>a</sup> REDD+ stands for 'reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries; and the role of conservation, sustainable forest management and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries'.

<sup>b</sup> The New York Declaration on Forests is a voluntary and non-legally binding political declaration to halve the rate of deforestation by 2020, to end it by 2030, and to restore hundreds of millions of acres of degraded land.

<sup>c</sup> The Amsterdam Declarations are non-binding political commitments that aim to support the implementation of private sector commitments on deforestation and sustainable palm oil.









# Why improve forest and land-use governance?

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation will be critical if the global community is to limit global warming well below two degrees above pre-industrial levels, as agreed under the Paris Agreement on climate change.

About a quarter of all greenhouse gas emissions caused by human activities come from land use and from deforestation and forest degradation in particular. This exceeds global emissions from the transport sector. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change lists afforestation, sustainable forest management and reduced deforestation among the most cost-effective mitigation options in the land-use sector.

As well as storing carbon, forests provide other goods and services that are essential for livelihoods and to help people adapt to climate change, from regulating river flows, water tables and local rain patterns, to limiting soil erosion, sustaining economically-important species and conserving genetic resources. Action to address the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation is therefore essential to protect forests, support sustainable livelihoods and to reverse global greenhouse gas emissions trends. It contributes to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. However, there are several barriers to achieving this.

**Demand for forest-risk commodities is set to soar:**<sup>2</sup> Recent studies estimate that agricultural expansion causes up to 80% of tropical deforestation worldwide. Much of this deforestation is carried out illegally to produce food, feed, biofuel and other commodities for export markets.<sup>3,4</sup>

**Poor forest and land-use governance:** Increased transparency, stakeholder participation in decision making, accountability, capacity and coordination help solving challenges associated with forest and land-use governance in tropical forest countries. Clarification of legal frameworks and better law enforcement contribute to eradicating illegal and unsustainable forest loss.

**Information gaps limit ambitious initiatives:** A growing number of corporations and public actors are committed to zero-deforestation goals. But they lack the information they need to identify and mitigate the risks their procurement policies and supply chains pose to forests. Increased transparency in forest-risk supply chains and associated trade facilitates implementation of commitments, increases accountability of corporations and public actors to their commitments, and demonstrates the impacts of public and private zero-deforestation policies.

Most tropical countries have included forests in their climate change plans – the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) they have submitted under the Paris Agreement on climate change. For these countries to deliver on their plans, they will need to turn general pledges into specific policies and measures, and then implement them.

This will be particularly challenging with respect to land-related commitments. The EU REDD Facility's analysis has shown that there are opportunities for governments to make commitments more concrete and involve more stakeholders across various sectors.<sup>5</sup> Countries also need to identify approaches and instruments to finance and monitor land-use related policies and measures.

Experience from processes such Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT)<sup>d</sup> and REDD+ provide insights into the emerging challenges and offer possible approaches to address them. They show that it takes consensus building, political support, multifaceted coordination and strong institutional capacities to address land-use governance challenges. In fact, it often requires governments to change the way they do business. However, by anchoring FLEGT/REDD+ processes in national institutions and developing functional multistakeholder dialogue as a way to facilitate difficult changes, governments can improve performance and resilience. It is important to capitalise on such existing initiatives that bring visibility, support and competence to this area.

Experiences from FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs)<sup>e</sup> show that market access and trade provide strong incentives for timber producers to comply with demand-side requirements – including environmental, social and governance criteria – and can trigger forest and land-use governance reforms. VPAs have also shown that dialogue and cooperation among public and private stakeholders in timber-producing countries is critical to foster mutual understanding, broad consensus and effective implementation. Credible monitoring and reporting systems are needed, as transparency increases the accountability of public and private actors, limits opportunities for corruption, and helps markets understand the complex reality in timber-producing countries.

In the case of REDD+, most funding allocated to date has been for ‘REDD+ readiness’. In many countries, this has led to:

- Better understanding of the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation
- Increased capacity to monitor forest cover change and to measure forest-related emissions
- New dialogues among government ministries
- The development of national REDD+ strategies and supporting policies

However, challenges remain in moving from readiness to results. In most countries, REDD+ programmes would benefit from greater alignment with the goals of other sectors, such as agriculture, mining or energy, and stronger integration with the country’s mainstream economic development planning. In many cases, REDD+ processes have yet to engage the private sector – whose investment flows are, and will remain, many times greater than REDD+ finance.

The concept of REDD+ has evolved over the past five years. It was initially framed strictly as a framework for compensating developing countries for reducing emissions from forests and land use. But REDD+ has progressively moved to a broader definition of results, framed in terms of sustainable development, private sector involvement and sustainability of land-use investments.

A growing number of initiatives are seeking synergies between REDD+ and policies and programmes that support land-use planning and deforestation-free commodity supply chains as ways to generate transformational, long-lasting change at the grassroots level and, ultimately, achieve the climate change mitigation objective. These offer many opportunities for anchoring multistakeholder dialogues in efforts to improve forest and land-use governance, and for accelerating the implementation of NDCs and REDD+ national strategies.

The EU REDD Facility’s strategy, which the next section of this document describes, recognises the realities above and addresses the challenges and opportunities they present.

<sup>d</sup> The EU FLEGT Action Plan includes supply-side and demand-side measures to address illegal logging and associated trade.

<sup>e</sup> VPAs are a key component of the EU FLEGT Action Plan on illegal logging. A VPA is a trade deal between the EU and a timber-exporting country. It includes commitments to trade only in verified legal timber products and to improve forest governance through a deliberative multistakeholder process.

# Strategic goal, objectives and actions

The EU REDD Facility's strategic goal is to help countries engaged in REDD+ to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation through improved forest and land-use governance.

The Facility works with governments engaged in REDD+ in designing and implementing interventions that support a broad range of in-country stakeholders. Stakeholders in these countries are therefore participants in and beneficiaries of the Facility's interventions. The Facility also works with policymakers in the European Commission, and in signatory countries of the New York Declaration on Forests and the Amsterdam Declarations, in shaping international forest policies and programmes to support REDD+ countries and address demand for forest-risk commodities.

The Facility provides demand-driven and customised support for developing and implementing REDD+, FLEGT and land-use governance strategies and actions to improve forest and land-use governance. Its support can include:

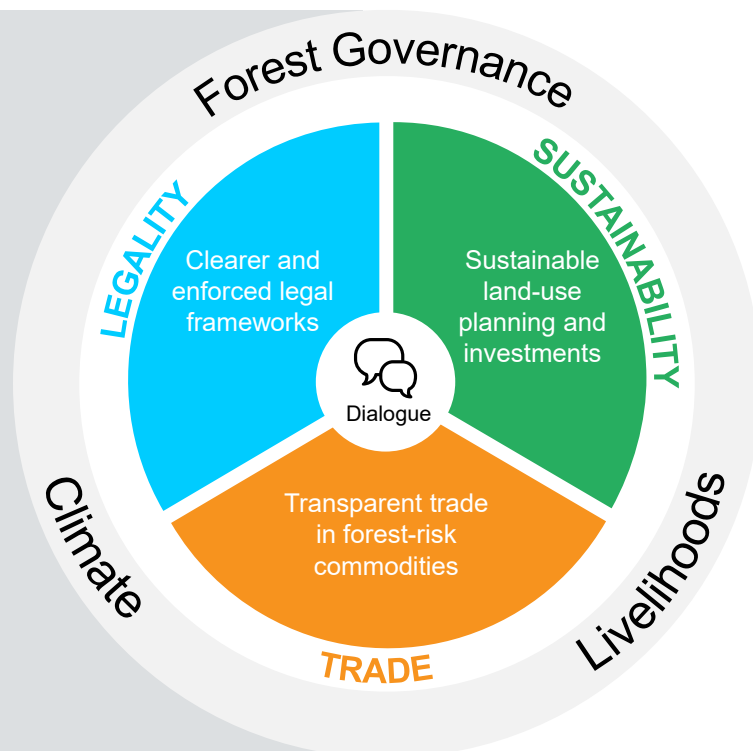
- Bringing in expertise
- Mobilising technical assistance
- Facilitating dialogue among stakeholders
- Sharing knowledge at national and international levels

To support REDD+ countries in implementing their NDCs under the Paris Agreement on climate change, the Facility will work towards three objectives that respond to the challenges outlined above:

1. Supporting the clarification and implementation of legal frameworks
2. Enabling sustainable land-use investment and management
3. Informing deforestation-free production and trade

The Facility's work and strategy connects with key initiatives and programmes working in the field of NDC implementation, REDD+, legal timber production and trade, deforestation-free commodity production and trade, land restoration, land-use tenure and land-use planning, and land-use finance to support progress and ensure scaling up of solutions developed through direct action in support of REDD+ countries.<sup>f</sup>

More detail on each objective and the rationale for the Facility's planned activities follows.



<sup>f</sup> For example: The NDC Partnership; Adapt'Action; the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility; UN-REDD; the Forest Investment Program of the Climate Investment Funds; the BioCarbon Fund Initiative for Sustainable Forest Landscapes (ISFL); REDD Early Movers programmes; FLEGT VPA processes; Tropical Forest Alliance 2020; the UNDP Green Commodity Programme; andgreen.fund; the Cocoa & Forests Initiative; AFR100 (the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative); VGGT (Voluntary Guidelines on the Governance of Tenure) initiatives; the International Land and Forest Tenure Facility; the UNEP Finance Initiative; the Governors' Climate and Forests Task Force.



## Objective 1

# Supporting the clarification and implementation of legal frameworks

Key underlying causes of emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in tropical forest countries are unclear legal frameworks governing land allocation, land use and forest conversion, as well as the lack of implementation of and compliance with these frameworks.

These factors contribute to illegal land allocation and forest conversion, including for the expansion of commercial agriculture. In addition, significant volumes of timber are extracted from illegally-converted forests, raising concerns around the legality of the timber, particularly in light of the EU FLEGT Action Plan on illegal logging.

The Facility will work with REDD+ countries to enhance the understanding of gaps and weaknesses of legal frameworks governing land allocation, land use and forest conversion. It will assist participatory dialogues in this field, within and outside VPA processes, and wherever possible linking to ongoing programmes and initiatives to strengthen land-use governance, including through the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security.<sup>6</sup>

It will provide support to non-state actors on approaches for independent monitoring of the implementation of relevant legal frameworks. It will also develop and promote ways to incentivise legal compliance of forest operators linked to the provision of REDD+ funding. As such, it builds on FLEGT VPA experience in using the legality approach as a driver for change towards deforestation free commodity production and related trade, and improved land-use governance.

The opposite table outlines the changes needed and what the Facility will do to promote them.



What is needed	What the Facility will do
Stakeholders identify and understand strengths and weaknesses of legal frameworks governing land allocation, land use and forest conversion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist stakeholders in assessing gaps and weaknesses in legal frameworks governing land allocation, land use and forest conversion</li> <li>• Support the development of independent monitoring of land allocation and broader land-use governance challenges to increase the collection of information feeding into the above assessment of gaps in legal frameworks</li> </ul>
Participatory dialogues address weaknesses of legal frameworks governing land allocation, land use and forest conversion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support stakeholders in identifying opportunities and space to strengthen legal frameworks governing land allocation, land use and forest conversion, including within or outside (but in support of) FLEGT VPA processes</li> <li>• Facilitate participatory dialogues on land allocation, land use and forest conversion to identify solutions and policy recommendations leading to improvement in legal frameworks or in their implementation</li> </ul>
Forest operators are engaged in efforts to clarify legal frameworks and improve their compliance with them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote approaches that link REDD+ incentives to increased legal compliance by forest operators and to the improved control by, and accountability of, authorities, on which law-abiding operators depend</li> <li>• Advance the collection and demonstration of evidence of the role that improved forest governance plays in enabling emission reductions from the forest sector</li> </ul>
REDD+ countries integrate the clarification and implementation of legal frameworks governing land allocation, land use and forest conversion in the operationalisation of their NDCs under the Paris Agreement on climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the integration of solutions and policy recommendations to improve legal frameworks governing land allocation, land use and forest conversion, and their implementation in national dialogues on the operationalisation of NDCs</li> <li>• Support the development of functional independent monitoring as a means to monitor and sustain improvement in the implementation of legal frameworks governing land allocation, land use and forest conversion</li> </ul>



## Objective 2

# Enabling sustainable land-use investment and management

Unsustainable land-use management in tropical forest countries fuels conflicts over competing land uses and often leads to increased emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. Factors include: a lack of reliable data and limited government experience with land-use planning processes, a lack of coordination among sectors and stakeholders, and a lack of understanding of financial flows and incentives towards various land uses.

Addressing these challenges and ensuring a conducive regulatory and financial environment for sustainable land-use management are essential to both the implementation of private sector zero-deforestation commitments, and the operationalisation of land-use related activities in NDCs under the Paris Agreement on climate change.

To support this, the Facility engages at the national level but also at the level of subnational jurisdictional units such as states, provinces or districts. This allows the Facility to work with various stakeholders on concrete topics and approaches, at an operational yet ambitious scale, and where land-use decisions are taken. Designing solutions at the sub-national level has huge potential to inform efforts to address the challenges of operationalising the NDCs and to inform the design of national policies.

To ensure that sustainability is taken into account in land-use decisions with the backing of all relevant stakeholders, the Facility will support the development of inclusive land-use planning processes. It will also support the facilitation of public-private partnerships to ensure zero-deforestation commitments are implemented and monitored, and smallholder producers are incentivised. To increase the coordination of land-use management and related incentives and financial flows across various sectors and stakeholders, the Facility will help REDD+ countries to analyse and map financial flows. This will also support countries to identify approaches and instruments to finance and incentivise land-use related NDC activities.

To attract sustainable investments and sustain political and economic incentives for change, the Facility will support the governments of REDD+ countries to demonstrate and communicate progress towards sustainability, linking monitoring of legal frameworks, incentives and socio-environmental safeguards with monitoring of forests and forest carbon stocks. Tracking progress at local jurisdictional levels can help incentivise early movers. It also allows collection of information that can feed into monitoring systems tracking progress and sustainability of government policies and their impact on forest cover and carbon stocks.

In support of the above activities, the Facility will further develop and deploy successful tools and approaches it developed over the past five years, such as the Land-Use Planner<sup>7</sup>; the Common Mapping Platform<sup>8</sup>; public-private partnerships on zero-deforestation commodities; jurisdictional planning and monitoring for sustainable development performance; and land-use finance tools. The table below outlines the changes needed and what the Facility will do to promote them.

What is needed	What the Facility will do
<p>Inclusive land-use planning provides a robust basis and benchmark for sustainable development at the jurisdictional level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop sustainable land-use planning approaches supported by socio-environmental and economic land-use planning tools</li> <li>• Facilitate constructive dialogue among users of a territory</li> <li>• Support efforts to identify and act on levers for behavioural change for each stakeholder group, including smallholders, women, economic operators, local authorities, indigenous people and low-income groups</li> </ul>
<p>Effective economic incentives and cross-sectoral cooperation mechanisms are in place and promote sustainable land use</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate public-private dialogues on deforestation-free supply chains, focusing on incentives for scaling up sustainable investments, progress monitoring and improved conditions for smallholders</li> <li>• Assist local authorities and stakeholders in analysing and mapping land-use finance to identify the most relevant approaches and instruments to finance the land-use component of their NDCs, as well as to inform cross-sectoral coordination and the design of economic incentives towards low-carbon development</li> </ul>
<p>Monitoring of progress towards sustainability at the jurisdictional level encourages action and helps to sustain political commitment and economic incentives towards sustainable practices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyse performance measures and analytical frameworks that different stakeholder groups and initiatives use to define and measure performance at jurisdictional levels with a view to incentivising sustainable investments</li> <li>• Facilitate dialogue and consensus-building between public and private actors on practical measures of progress and performance at jurisdictional level</li> <li>• Support local governments and stakeholders in developing jurisdictional sustainability monitoring systems able to measure progress against selected performance indicators</li> </ul>





## Objective 3

# Informing deforestation-free production and trade

The production and trade of commodities such as palm oil, soy and beef drives deforestation and forest degradation. It therefore increases greenhouse gas emissions. Rising demand for such commodities in a globalising economy is a critical indirect driver. And although a growing number of public and private actors is committed to stopping deforestation associated with international commodity trade, the implementation of such commitments is lagging for various reasons:

- Companies and financial institutions lack reliable and systematic information they need to manage risks in their procurement and investment policies
- Jurisdictional REDD+ and zero-deforestation initiatives – such as those of members of the Governors Climate and Forests Task Force<sup>9</sup> – face poor market visibility for their responsible value chains, and are impatient to see incentives on commodities markets to sustain their efforts and keep local actors committed to responsible land use
- REDD+ countries lack the capacity to use emerging supply chain information systems, in combination with their own national systems, to address deforestation and other governance issues, notably tax avoidance by multinational supply chain actors

Significant work is needed to improve the accessibility and transparency of information along complex commodity supply chains. This would support responsible behaviour and the development of innovative, tailored solutions that enable governments, including trade and customs authorities, to monitor and address forest-related risks and opportunities in commodity production and trade.

The Facility will work with REDD+ countries and their trade partners to further develop information systems on forest-risk commodity supply chains. It will provide capacity to help REDD+ countries use these systems to inform economic, fiscal, land-use and trade-related decisions, and to increase recognition of their responsible land-use policies.

The Facility will also generate and share forest-risk market intelligence to inform REDD+ countries and their trade partners. It will also work with public and private financial institutions to strengthen and mainstream their due diligence systems. This can include providing information to fiscal authorities in commodity-producing and consuming countries on issues related to tax avoidance in export-import transactions.

The Facility will use the Trase (Transparency of Sustainable Economies) initiative<sup>10</sup>, which makes use of an unprecedented mass of untapped production, trade and customs data. It will work with governments of producer and consumer countries to ensure that increased transparency, information on forest-risk supply chains and related market intelligence inform trade relationships and policymaking on deforestation-free supply chains.

The table below outlines the changes needed and what the Facility will do to promote them.

<p>REDD+ countries and stakeholders working on zero-deforestation policies have access to strategic information they need to monitor risks and opportunities for meeting the emerging demand for deforestation-free commodities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support producer countries in developing information systems for managing risks in supply chains, building on the combination of national information systems and global transparency platforms</li> <li>• Help governments of producer countries to use this information in their policy processes</li> <li>• Generate and share with the EU, its Member States, other interested European countries and REDD+ countries forest-risk market intelligence, including on: key supply-chain actors and local places of production; land-related impacts of forest-risk commodity production; monitoring of impacts of policies on deforestation-free commodity production and trade</li> <li>• Work with public and private financial institutions and fiscal authorities to strengthen and mainstream their due diligence systems</li> </ul>
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# Communication as a strategic tool

Communication is fundamental to the Facility's 2018-2022 strategy. Having tested approaches over the past five years, the Facility is now more systematic in its communication. It has a strong focus on capturing and sharing lessons learnt, and developing strategic analysis to inform EU and international policy debates on deforestation issues.

The Facility will use the communication infrastructure developed over the past five years to increase its impact beyond the results it achieves in its partner countries. To enhance the relevance, effectiveness and impact of its work, the Facility will take a strategic and stepwise approach to communication, which can be scaled up when additional resources from partners become available.

Over the next five years, the Facility will:

- Consolidate a unified, coherent identity with a compelling value proposition and narrative
- Integrate strategic communication systematically in its work, with the aim to effectively reach and influence its priority audiences and enhance the impact of its actions
- Provide tools and intelligence to enhance knowledge creation and related learning and sharing
- Create and share knowledge, tools and best practices on clarifying legal frameworks on land allocation, land use and forest conversion, and on innovative approaches to implement land-use related activities in NDCs and to enhance transparency in forest-risk supply-chains
- Help REDD+ countries, the EU and EU Member States, and other interested European countries to develop and implement policies, through strategic reviews, analysis, briefings and information on lessons learnt, best practices and innovative approaches related to climate change mitigation in the land-use sector and linkages with FLEGT

## Notes and references

1 See the New York Declaration: [www.un.org/climatechange/summit/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2014/07/New-York-Declaration-on-Forest-%E2%80%93-Action-Statement-and-Action-Plan.pdf](http://www.un.org/climatechange/summit/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2014/07/New-York-Declaration-on-Forest-%E2%80%93-Action-Statement-and-Action-Plan.pdf); and the Amsterdam Declarations: [www.euandgvc.nl/binaries/euandgvc/documents/publications/2015/december/7/declarations/Amsterdam+Declaration+Deforestation+%26+Agro-commodity+chains.pdf](http://www.euandgvc.nl/binaries/euandgvc/documents/publications/2015/december/7/declarations/Amsterdam+Declaration+Deforestation+%26+Agro-commodity+chains.pdf); and [www.euandgvc.nl/binaries/euandgvc/documents/publications/2015/december/7/declarations-palm-oil/Amsterdam+Declaration+Fully+Sustainable+Palm+Oil.pdf](http://www.euandgvc.nl/binaries/euandgvc/documents/publications/2015/december/7/declarations-palm-oil/Amsterdam+Declaration+Fully+Sustainable+Palm+Oil.pdf)

2 Cropland, currently about 1,500 million hectares worldwide, is forecasted to expand by an additional 320 to 850 million hectares by 2050 (UNEP. 2014. Assessing Global Land Use: Balancing Consumption with Sustainable Supply A report of the International Resource Panel).

3 Including: Kissinger, G., Herold, M. & De Sy, V. 2012. Drivers of Deforestation and Forest Degradation: A Synthesis Report for REDD+ Policymakers. Lexeme Consulting. Vancouver, Canada; and, Lawson, S. 2014. Consumer Goods and Deforestation: An Analysis of the Extent and Nature of Illegality in Forest Conversion for Agriculture and Timber Plantations. Forest Trends, Washington, DC. [http://www.forest-trends.org/documents/files/doc\\_4718.pdf](http://www.forest-trends.org/documents/files/doc_4718.pdf)

4 Lawson, S. 2014. Consumer Goods and Deforestation: An Analysis of the Extent and Nature of Illegality in Forest Conversion for Agriculture and Timber Plantations. Forest Trends, Washington, DC. [http://www.forest-trends.org/documents/files/doc\\_4718.pdf](http://www.forest-trends.org/documents/files/doc_4718.pdf); Lawson, S. 2015. Stolen goods: the EU's complicity in illegal tropical deforestation <http://www.fern.org/stolengoods>

5 Internal working document by the EU REDD Facility, presented to its Steering Committee in 2016

6 Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security <http://www.fao.org/docrep/016/i2801e/i2801e.pdf>

7 See the Land-use Planner: [www.landuseplanner.org](http://www.landuseplanner.org)

8 See the action Building a mapping alliance for inclusive and transparent land-use planning in Cameroon: <http://www.euredd.efi.int/publications/building-a-mapping-alliance-for-inclusive-and-transparent-land-use-planning>

9 See the Governors' Climate and Forests Task Force website: <https://gctff.org/>

10 See the action Unlocking supply-chain data to reduce deforestation: <http://www.euredd.efi.int/publications/unlocking-supply-chain-data-to-reduce-deforestation>

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### About the EU REDD Facility

The EU REDD Facility supports partner countries in improving land use governance as part of their effort to slow, halt and reverse deforestation. The Facility also supports the overall EU effort to reduce its impact on deforestation in developing countries. The Facility is hosted by the European Forest Institute (EFI), and was established in 2010.

### Disclaimer

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