
Experts Group on Illegal Logging and Associated Trade

The 21 APEC economies account for 2.19 billion hectares of forest cover—over 50 per cent of the world’s forests. They also engage in a significant amount of trade in forest products, which represents approximately 80 per cent of the international trade in such products.

In 2010, APEC Leaders pledged to enhance cooperation to address concerns with illegal logging and any kind of trade associated with it, and to promote sustainable forest management and rehabilitation. In 2011, APEC ministers responsible for trade directed officials to establish an experts group to promote trade in legally harvested forest products, combat illegal logging and associated trade, and build capacity. In the same year, at the APEC Leaders’ meeting in Hawaii, Leaders committed to implementing appropriate measures to prohibit trade in illegally harvested forest products and to do more to combat illegal logging and associated trade.

To accomplish this mission, the APEC Expert Group on Illegal Logging and Associated Trade (EGILAT) was created in 2011.

The first EGILAT meeting was held in 2012.

In 2015, EGILAT members reached consensus on a milestone document which clearly identifies the scope of illegal logging and associated trade ([APEC Common Understanding of the Scope of Illegal Logging and Associated Trade](#)).

The Goal of EGILAT

[EGILAT’s Terms of Reference](#) provides that the group’s overall goal is to enhance the efforts of member economies to take concrete steps to combat* illegal logging and associated trade, promote trade in legally harvested forest products, and support capacity building activities in member economies.

(*As per the EGILAT Multi-Year Strategic Plan 2018-2022, endorsed in 2018, the term “combat” also includes strategies and activities to prevent illegal logging and associated trade, which may be included in the annual work plan of EGILAT. In considering what activities are included within the scope, consideration should be given to the Terms of Reference of EGILAT, and of Leaders’ and Ministers’ directives.)

Timber Legality Guidance Documents

In 2014, EGILAT members have agreed to develop a compendium of timber legality guidance documents, to promote the trade in legally harvested forest products within the APEC region. These documents seek to provide clarity and transparency for businesses, government and civil groups on what constitutes legal and illegally logged timber within individual APEC economies.

Looking Ahead

In 2018, EGILAT members endorsed the [EGILAT Multi-Year Strategic Plan 2018–2022](#) to guide its work over the next five years. Member economies look forward to EGILAT’s capacity building activities and other initiatives, which aim to contribute to APEC’s primary goal to support sustainable economic growth and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region, as well as the milestone the goal of APEC Leaders to increase forest cover in the region by at least 20 million hectares by 2020.

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