



## Section 3: Good Practice Guides

### Timber

#### What is the issue?

Forests and woodlands around the world are being destroyed, not only to meet demand for timber and timber-based products, but also to clear the way for large scale agriculture.

Approximately 6-19% of the timber imported into the EU is from illegal or suspicious sources<sup>5</sup>.

Forests store large quantities of carbon and when destroyed they release this carbon into the atmosphere. Forests also play an important role in regulating global climate; continued destruction of forests around the world reduces their ability to perform this vital function.

“By implementing a responsible timber purchasing policy, you can reduce your environmental footprint and make a significant contribution to protecting the world’s forests and the local communities they support. Furthermore, it does not need to cost the earth and you could support the green agenda in general.”

*Source: Central Point of Expertise for Timber Procurement (CPET)*

#### Government Buying Standards

Timber must be purchased in accordance with [UK timber procurement policy](#). Only timber and timber products originating either from independently verified legal and sustainable sources or from a licensed Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) partner can be purchased. Recycled timber is also accepted.

<sup>5</sup> Source: WWF



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The Government funded **Central Point of Expertise for Timber Procurement (CPET)** has considered a number of certification schemes, and has listed four as meeting both legal and sustainable criteria. These are:

- Canadian Standards Association
- Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)
- Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC)
- Sustainable Forestry Initiative

### What else can be done?

- ✓ Make it clear in the specification that timber must be from a legal and sustainable source<sup>6</sup>. You cannot specify that timber should be FSC certified but you can specify that you require 'certification or equivalent evidence'
- ✓ Consider using recycled or reclaimed timber where appropriate
- ✓ Do not buy tropical hardwoods
- ✓ Always consider the repair or re-use of timber products before making a new purchase
- ✓ When buying plywood or chipboard, check that they are manufactured with low (or none at all if possible) formaldehyde resins, and that they are sourced from sustainable forests
- ✓ Ask the supplier to provide evidence of a chain-of-custody (CoC) certificate; if the timber is certified, the supplier should be able to provide this as verification that the timber product is from a well managed forest. The timber will not necessarily carry the logo of the certifying organisation, but the supplier may include on the invoice a CoC certificate number; if they do not provide this number ask the supplier to provide this information and to include it on any future invoices

### Suggested wording for inclusion in tender documents

The Central Point of Expertise for Timber Procurement (CPET) has developed a **Model Contract Specification Clause** for sustainable timber and a **Model ITT Letter Paragraph on Timber**.

### Further information

The following link provides detailed guidance on how to check evidence of compliance with a sustainable timber procurement policy: [http://www.cpet.org.uk/files/Checking\\_evidence.pdf](http://www.cpet.org.uk/files/Checking_evidence.pdf)

The CPET website provides further information on how to assess evidence to demonstrate that products come from both a legal and sustainable source: <http://www.proforest.net/cpet>

Friends of the Earth have compiled a list of different types of wood assessing how endangered each type of wood is: [http://www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/biodiversity/resource/good\\_wood\\_guide/wood\\_timber\\_types\\_a\\_to\\_g.html](http://www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/biodiversity/resource/good_wood_guide/wood_timber_types_a_to_g.html)

<sup>6</sup>The only way to guarantee that the timber or timber-based products are from sustainable and legal sources is if the product has been independently certified.

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Forest Stewardship Council: [www.fsc-uk.org](http://www.fsc-uk.org)

Forests Forever: <http://www.forestsforever.org.uk>

Red list of threatened species: [www.iucnredlist.org](http://www.iucnredlist.org)

Timber Trade Federation: [www.ttf.co.uk](http://www.ttf.co.uk)

World Wildlife Federation: <http://www.wwf.org.uk>

**Timber Procurement Guidance Note** (the TPAN, April 2010).

### Case study 9 – Durham County Council

Local authorities are beginning to recognise the importance of procuring timber from sustainable sources. In the North East, CPET has been working with the North East Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (NEIEP) to develop and introduce sustainable timber procurement policies into local authorities in the region.

The initial pilot of the initiative was conducted with **Durham County Council** who developed a policy in line with the UK Government timber procurement policy. The success of this initial endeavour led to a roll out of the policy across the region with the North East Procurement Organisation (NEPO) and several other local authorities are now moving towards adopting the policy.

CPET is working with WWF and the Timber Trade Federation (TTF) to encourage local authorities to adopt sustainable timber procurement policies, and together offer a range of services and toolkits to aid implementation. The CPET website ([www.cpet.org.uk](http://www.cpet.org.uk)) has a section dedicated to local authorities and contains case studies and model policies. CPET also runs a helpline which is free of charge for public sector buyers or suppliers of timber or timber products to the public sector, and delivers free training workshops at various locations throughout the UK.

