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Position Statement on Illegal Logging

The American Forest & Paper Association (AF&PA) represents the majority of wood and paper product producers in the United States. The U.S. forest products industry promotes sustainable forest management and sustainably produced forest products to meet society's needs. The U.S. forest products industry strongly supports high forest management standards around the world and is committed to using forest management and manufacturing practices that meet environmental, social, and economic objectives.

Illegal Logging

A basic tenet of any responsible producer should be clear opposition to illegal logging. Illegal logging not only contributes to deforestation but also undermines the viability of legally harvested and traded forest products and is a serious detriment to forest sustainability. The environmental destruction caused by illegal logging creates negative perceptions of the forest products industry in general. AF&PA is committed to address this problem to the best of its ability.

AF&PA defines illegal logging as theft of timber or logs, cutting in parks, reserves or similar areas, and cutting where government approvals are obtained by corrupt practices.

AF&PA Position Statement

- AF&PA strongly supports the conservation of forest areas which have been designated for protection by law. AF&PA encourages governments and the private sector to work together to end all illegal logging from areas where timber harvesting is expressly prohibited.
- AF&PA members commit to abide by domestic and sovereign laws pertaining to logging and harvesting in any country where logging and tree removals take place. In countries where such laws are not in place, we support the establishment of laws and regulations that promote and advance sustainable forest management and their subsequent enforcement.
- AF&PA supports government monitoring and assessment of forests as essential to devising appropriate and effective measures to counteract illegal logging and associated illegal trade. Accurate and reliable information will greatly improve the ability of government and private landowners to curtail illegal activity.
- Elements of certification processes can partially address the problems associated with illegal logging, but certification in and of itself will not prevent it. The private sector must be vigilant in situations where illegal logging is suspected and all levels of government must work to enforce laws established to prevent it.

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