

Lacey Act

The most important U.S. policy initiative to reduce illegal logging and its associated trade in recent years is the 2008 Lacey Act amendments. The amendments make it illegal to trade plants and plant products, including wood and paper, harvested or traded in violation of the laws of a foreign country. It also requires importers to file a declaration with the name of the country of harvest and the genus and species of plants contained in their products, although the declaration requirement has yet to be phased in for composite wood products or for pulp and paper.

Hardwood Federation has been a strong proponent of international efforts to suppress illegal logging and trade. HF played an active role in a coalition of forest products industry, environmental and labor groups in advocating for passage of the 2008 amendments, because trade in illegally sourced fiber is a serious detriment to the industry's sustainability, the environment, and the global economy. An American Forest & Paper Association commissioned study estimated that illegal logging costs the U.S. forest products industry some \$1 billion annually in lost export opportunities and depressed U.S. wood prices.

HF is still working closely with a broad consensus coalition, including industry, environmental, and labor organizations, that is calling on federal agencies to ensure successful implementation of the law. HF supports adequate funding for the implementation of the Lacey Act and the phase-in of the declaration requirement to imports of composite wood products and pulp and paper.

HF continues to push for a required Agency report on the Lacey Act from APHIS and supports the ongoing talks between Sen. Wyden (D-OR) and Sen. Alexander (R-TN) to identify improvements in the law, which can be made without undermining its integrity or promoting ill-conceived legislative fixes. HF is also looking at possible Due Care standards to ease the import process for domestic importers in ways that will still keep illegal wood out of the marketplace.