Abstract:
The amount of illegal logging in Finland is negligible. Finnish forest law enforcement eliminates effectively illegal logging in Finland. All forest owners (private, company and state forests) do have to send in a forest use declaration to the regional forest centre before felling can take place. In the forest use declaration forest owners shall inform about the stand characteristics, intended measures, regeneration in case of final felling and ecological concerns on the site.

An extensive national forest inventory, national forest programme and regional forest programmes, widely spread individual forest management plans and large share of private non-industrial ownership of forests contribute to the almost non-existence of markets for illegal timber and negligible amount of illegal logging in Finland. The companies purchasing timber usually know the owner of forest land.

Finland's customs legislation allows stopping illegally harvested timber at the border. Nearly all of the Finnish timber imports are conducted by a handful of companies that all use ISO/EMAS certified chain of custody systems to exclude illegally logged timber from their procurement chains.

1. Illegal logging
1.1 Types of illegal logging

Illegal logging without permission from public forests, wood theft or illegal logging from private forests, false declaration of volumes, species, values or origins of harvested wood and illegal logging in protected areas such as national parks are negligible in Finland. Very small amount of logging in prohibited habitats (so called key biotopes defined in Forest Act) take place due to difficulties to define these habitats (e.g. due to snow in wintertime). Some 80% of the key biotopes are currently mapped.

The average annual number of forest law delicts is less than 10 per year (0 delicts in 2003). Which is relatively small amount considering the total number of fellings (some 150 000) fellings totalling at some 60 million m3)

Finnish legislation does not recognise removing of oversized trees. Cutting permits are given according to average size of the trees. Obtaining logging authorisation through bribes does not exist in Finland because owner of the forest sells the timber. Owner needs to get acceptance for forest use declaration from regional forest centres, only. In the Finnish forest types trees would not be purchased by industry if they were burned or killed before felling.

1.2. Mechanisms in place to monitor or estimate the importance of illegal logging

Finnish Forest Act regulates felling of timber. Regional Forestry centres control the implementation of the forestry legislation at the regional level. Forestry centres accept forest use declarations. All forest owners (non industrial private owners, company and state forests) do have to send in a forest use declaration to the regional forest centre before felling can take place. In the forest use declaration forest owners shall inform about the stand characteristics, intended measures, regeneration in case of final felling and ecological concerns on the site. Regional environment centres control the implementation of Nature Conservation Act. Regional environment centres must inform the forest centres about areas where logging is prohibited. Forest development centre Tapio
collects the delicts of forest legislation from regional forestry centres (the number and type of delicts) and forwards them for the Ministry of agriculture and forestry.

An extensive national forest inventory, national forest programme and regional forest programmes would reveal illegal logging activities and therefore contribute to negligible amount of illegal logging in Finland. The main forest law enforcement instruments are extension service and education of forest owners. Well known ownership of forests contribute to the almost non-existence of markets for illegal timber and negligible amount of illegal logging in Finland. The companies purchasing timber usually know the owner of forest land.

Some 70% of the area of private forestry land is covered by individual forest management plans add to elimination of illegal logging in Finland. Also, forests owned by forest industry companies and government are covered by other types of forest management plans. Good mapping of forest holdings covers both borders of holdings as well as variability of areas within the holding and also set limits for illegal logging.

1.3 Volume of illegal logging

Volume of illegal logging in Finland is in the questionnaire class "less than 1%" of total amount of logging (0 delicts in 2003).

This estimate is based on information collected by Forest development centre Tapio as described in section 1.2.

2. Trade in products of illegal logging

Imports of illegally logged timber to Finland are in the questionnaire class "less than 5%. Exports of illegally logged timber do not take place.

3. Forest law enforcement, governance and trade policies

Finland is involved with the preparation of the EU FLEGT action plan.

Finnish forest law enforcement eliminates effectively illegal logging in Finland. Other policies/activities are described in section 1.2.

Finland's customs legislation allows already stopping illegally harvested timber at the border. Nearly all of the Finnish imports of timber are conducted by a handful of companies that all use ISO/EMAS certified chain of custody systems to exclude illegally logged timber from their procurement chains.