



Do you comply with the UK Government's Timber Procurement Policy?



Support for central government departments, executive agencies, non-departmental public bodies and their contractors and suppliers



Illegal and unsustainable logging are drivers of deforestation. Deforestation and forest degradation are responsible for about a fifth of all carbon emissions and thus a major contributor to climate change.

The UK Government's Timber Procurement Policy

The Government's timber procurement policy now requires that all timber and wood-derived products procured originate from:

- either **legal and sustainable**
- or FLEGT¹ licensed or equivalent sources.

Recycled products are equally accepted under the policy.

Implementation of the policy is relatively easy. To help you implement the policy, Defra has set up CPET (the Central Point of Expertise on Timber Procurement) which you can call on at any time for information and support.

¹ FLEGT (Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade) is an EU initiative to support countries to address illegal logging. A key component of FLEGT will be a licensing scheme between producer partner countries and the EU which verifies legal origin of timber. FLEGT licenced timber is expected to become available by the end of 2010, after which more detailed guidance will be available on the CPET website.

Who and what does the policy apply to?

The policy is **mandatory** for all Central Government Departments, Executive Agencies and Non Departmental Public Bodies. Local Authorities, other public bodies and the private sector are also encouraged to adopt sustainable timber procurement policies. CPET provides free of charge support and tools to implement the policy and ensure compliance for public sector buyers and their suppliers and contractors.

The requirements apply to all timber and wood-derived products, such as paper, furniture and construction timber, including temporary site works and material supplied by contractors.

How is the policy implemented?

The policy is implemented through contract clauses that should be included in all contracts involving the supply of timber and timber products. The 'Timber Procurement Advice Note' provides detailed guidance for public sector procurement professionals on implementation of the policy and includes a model for the invitation to tender letter and contract conditions. This document is available from the CPET website: www.cpet.org.uk

The policy is mandatory for all central government departments, Executive Agencies and Non Departmental Public Bodies and covers all timber and timber-products such as construction timber, furniture and paper.





Evidence is needed to provide assurance that the source is legal and sustainable. This requires checks in the whole supply chain, from the forest, through to sawmills and traders.

Evidence of compliance with the policy

Government buyers should request evidence from contractors that the supplied products comply with the policy requirements. Contractors and suppliers should ensure that evidence is provided. Evidence relates to the management of the forest of origin as well as to the traceability of products through the supply chain to the final user; the so-called chain of custody.

For non-recycled timber products, two types of evidence are accepted:

- **Category A evidence** is independent certification under a scheme recognised by the UK Government as meeting the criteria set. These currently include FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) and PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification). They include both forest management certification and chain of custody certification.
- **Category B evidence** is alternative documentary evidence that provides assurance that the source is legal and sustainable and that there is a robust chain of custody. Information and support on collecting and evaluating Category B evidence is available from CPET.

How can CPET help you?

The Central Point of Expertise on Timber Procurement (CPET) is funded by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) to support you in the implementation of the policy.

CPET runs a **website** which provides all the information needed for the policy: including standard contract clauses and detailed guidance on evidence checking.

CPET also runs a **helpline**. The helpline is free of charge for public sector buyers or suppliers of timber or timber-products to the public sector. You can contact CPET by email or phone with all your questions, from general information to detailed support on evidence checking.

CPET also runs regular **training workshops** at various locations throughout the UK. Again, these are free of charge and available to public sector buyers and their contractors and suppliers. Just check the CPET website for dates and locations, and sign up.

For regular CPET news sign up for the CPET update by emailing cpet@proforest.net.

CPET provides free of charge support and training to help you implement the policy and ensure compliance.



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Implementation of the policy does not have to be difficult or expensive and makes a world of difference.

Myth 1 Finding products from legal and sustainable sources is hard and they are always more expensive.

In all sectors and in all product groups, the availability of verified legal and sustainable products is high. Latest reports show that the proportion of certified sustainable products (such as those certified by FSC and PEFC) available to the UK supply chain is now close to 85%. The majority of timber used in the UK is softwood, most of which is certified with marginal or no premiums. In the vast majority of cases requesting legal and sustainable timber should therefore add no extra cost for buyers. Only for specialist timber products or where the risk of sourcing illegal timber is high can an additional cost be incurred.

Myth 2 It requires a lot of work and resources.

For public sector buyers the first steps are simple: Copy the model requirements, which can be found on the CPET website, and include them into tenders and contracts. Then make sure your contractors and suppliers are aware of the mandatory policy. It is up to contractors and suppliers to provide evidence of compliance and CPET support is also available to them free of charge. Evidence provided to public buyers can, if time or technical expertise to assess it is not available, simply be forwarded to CPET and the response from CPET referred to when accepting the evidence or requesting further evidence from suppliers.

Myth 3 It doesn't really make a difference.

With the UK being the world's 4th largest net importer of timber and with public sector procurement accounting for about a third of all timber purchases, implementation of the public timber procurement policy plays an important role in tackling illegal logging and deforestation. By creating a demand for legal and sustainable wood the policy creates an incentive for sustainable forest management, which helps maintain biodiversity, mitigate climate change and benefits the livelihood of local communities. Although your order may seem small, it is widely agreed that a strong and consistent demand for legal and sustainable timber products is contributing towards real changes in the way forests are managed.



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