



## Terms of reference

### Analysis of the consistency between the legal standards of Gabon, China and the European Union on sustainable forest management

#### Background and Rationale

With a forest area of more than 23 million hectares, or approximately 88.9% of its territory (AGEOS, 2018), Gabon has the second highest forest cover amongst Central African countries (FOCA, 2008) and its forests provide habitat for many wildlife species such as forest elephants (*Loxodonta africana*), western gorillas (*Gorilla gorilla*), etc. They also play a major role in the life of local communities because of the many services (food, cultural, medicinal) the ecosystem provides to them. Moreover, thanks to this high forest cover, logging has risen to second place in the national economy with a contribution to the GDP estimated at 3% (MINEF, 2016). Thus, in view of the commercial potential of wood, the wood forest sector has been identified as a driver for economic growth to benefit from strategic investments through the “Plan Stratégique Gabon Emergent (2012).

As one of the leading producers of tropical timber in the world with a production of over 270,000 m<sup>3</sup> of plywood (MINEF, 2018), Gabon mainly sells Okoumé (**Aucoumea klaineana**) Azobé, Bongossi (*Lophira alata*), Okan (*Cylicodiscus gabunensis*), the Padouk of Africa (*Pterocarpus soyauxii*), Beli (*Julbernardia pellegriniana*), Tali (*Erythrophleum suaveolens*), etc. Since 1995, the timber trade (first processed material) has been mainly oriented towards Asia, specifically China (48%); while products made in China are mainly exported to Europe<sup>1</sup>.

Given its potential economic, environmental and social benefits, and with its international commitments to sustainable development, the Gabonese State is in the process of restructuring the sector to ensure sustainability. Since 2001, the Government has undertaken several reforms aimed at ensuring sustainable forest management. Among these, there are the revisions to forestry law (first in 2001 and the current one since 2014), the ban on log exports (in 2010), the launch of the country's FLEGT membership process (2010), the obligation to develop a wildlife protection plan and the generalization of FSC certification to all forest dealers (2018). In order to support Gabon's efforts, measures are being taken on the side of the recipient countries of Gabonese forest products to ensure the legality of timber entering their territories, particularly the European Union and China.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.timbertradeportal.com/countries/gabon/> Accessed 01/18/2019.



In 2010, the EU adopted the FLEGT action plan which includes measures acting on both supply and demand, such as the EU Timber Regulation (EUTR, 2013). In addition, it has adopted legality verification procedures of products sold on its market.

On the Chinese side, the Government has also developed policies, tools and standards to combat illegal logging and the illegal timber trade, such as the Foreign Trade Law (2004). China's goal is to develop a legal timber framework that meets the requirements of international markets and supports global trade in legal and sustainable forest products.

In order to maintain the accessibility of legal Gabonese wood products in both the Chinese and European markets, these countries must have procedures for monitoring the legality of exploited and marketed timber. Also, with its support to the Gabonese government in the exploitation and responsible trade of timber, WWF proposes to carry out an analysis of the consistency between the standards of legality of Gabon, China and the European Union in the material.

### **Main objective**

This study aims to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of Gabon and China's legal frameworks in terms of sustainable logging and responsible timber trade to reinforce their consistency with the legal framework of the European Union.

### **Specific objectives**

Specifically, this will involve:

- Present the strengths and weaknesses of the legal frameworks of Gabon, China in terms of sustainable logging and responsible timber trade;
- Identify the similarities, points of convergence and inconsistencies between the legal frameworks for sustainable logging and responsible timber trade in Gabon, China and the EU;
- Make recommendations for strengthening coherence between the legal frameworks of Gabon, China and the EU in sustainable logging and responsible timber trade;
- Present the results of the analysis to the main actors in the sustainable forest management and responsible timber trade sectors in Gabon.

### **Study duration**

The study will last 15 working days from the date of signing the contract with the consultant.



### Key activities calendar

Activities	Number of days
Primary data collection on the standards of China, Gabon and the EU in sustainable forest management and responsible timber trade	5
Production and submission of the preliminary report	2
Return trip to Gabon	1
Briefing Meeting with WWF-Gabon team	1
Finalization of discussions with key stakeholders (Gabon)	3
Finalization of the report (Gabon)	2
Validation meeting of the finalized report (Gabon)	1
Total	15

### Deliverables

The successful consultant will provide:

- A preliminary report outlining the methodology, sources of information and the main results achieved in connection with the objectives of the study;
- A consolidated final report of the study.

### Reporting format

All reports, notes and other documents prepared by the consultant will be written in French, with a summary in English. The documents to be filed will be presented in a printed format and electronically in Word, Excel and/or PowerPoint.

### Qualifications of the consultant

The consultant must meet the following requirements:

- Have at least a Master or an MBA in at least one of the following areas: economics, socio-economics, international trade, international environmental law, natural resources management;
- Have a good knowledge of the context of timber trade between China and the European Union as well as the legal standards in force in Gabon, China and the European Union;
- Have demonstrated experience in the comparative analysis of legal frameworks in forestry or a related sector;
- Be able to communicate and write in English.

### How to apply

The application must contain:



- A technical proposal detailing the understanding of the mission, methodology, activities to perform, the timing of the study;
- A detailed financial proposal;
- ½ page document that clearly presents the experiences of the consultant with similar missions;
- A CV of the consultant (4-5 pages), attached.

Completed application forms must be submitted no later than 26 August 2019 to the following address:

WWF Regional Office for Africa Yaoundé Hub  
Gabon Country Office  
Montée de Louis  
BP 9144 Libreville Gabon  
Tel: (241) 01 73 00 28  
Website: [www.panda.org](http://www.panda.org)

Or to the email address: [wwfgab@wwfgab.org](mailto:wwfgab@wwfgab.org)

With the subject line:

Service offer for the comparative analysis between the legal standards of China and the European Union on sustainable forest management