



Promoting sustainable forest management

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## **PEFC calls for harmonisation of Government Timber Procurement Policies**

At its General Assembly, the Chairman Mr Henri Plauche-Gillon of the PEFC Council, the world mutual recognition umbrella for forest certification systems, called on governments developing procurement policies to harmonise them, in order to avoid artificial trade barriers.

Mr Plauche-Gillon said: "Much effort has gone into the multi-stakeholder developed voluntary forest certification systems, which now cover 20% of the world's industrial roundwood production and more than 7% of the world's forests. Governments are rightly developing public procurement policies to promote sustainable forest management and we applaud the French, German, Dutch, Belgian, Danish, UK, Spanish and Japanese governments for their efforts to give preference to certified timber. They must however be mindful that timber is traded internationally and that as major buyers of wood, their procurement policies affect this trade. In order to avoid the same certified timber being recognised as legal und sustainable in one country but not in another, governments especially in the EU countries, where most procurement policies are currently being developed, must make every effort to ensure a harmonised approach. Failure to achieve this will put at risk the efforts and achievements of civil society in developing certification as a tool to promote sustainable forest management."

At the General Assembly in Brussels today, the PEFC Council also announced the endorsement of the Brazilian forest certification system. The newly endorsed system covers plantation and natural forests in Brazil and will give public and private procurers the possibility to buy tropical wood from sustainable forest management.

The thirty PEFC Council member countries welcomed Belarus as a new member within PEFC. The European Association for Manufactures of Educational and Commercial Stationery joined the PEFC Council as an Extraordinary Member, to demonstrate its commitment to the responsible sourcing of paper products. Delegations from six continents together with representatives of international organisation among them the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) attended the event.

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press release



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## Editors Notes

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### **Forest Certification**

Forest certification is a process, which provides an assurance mechanism to purchasers of wood and paper products that the wood used in the products comes from sustainably managed forests. Sustainably managed forests are those whose management implements performance standards based on internationally agreed environmental, social and economical requirements.

### **PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes)**

PEFC is a framework for the mutual recognition of credible national or regional forest certification schemes that have been developed based on internationally recognised requirements for sustainable forest management. Since its launch in 1999, PEFC has become the largest forest certification umbrella organisation covering national schemes from all over the world, delivering hundreds of millions of tonnes of wood to the processing industry and then onto the market place from over 127 million hectares of certified forests. PEFC has strong grass roots support from many stakeholders including the forestry sector, governments, trade associations, trade unions and non-governmental organisations.

press release