

## Federal Administration now only procuring wood from verifiably legal forest management

As a signal for environmentally and socially sound, economically viable forest management throughout the world, the Federal Administration Office will in future procure wood and wood products only from verifiably legal and sustainable forest management. "With its new procurement regulation the Federal Government is sending a clear signal against overexploitation and illegal logging," said Federal Environment Minister Sigmar Gabriel. He stressed the vital role of forests in the preservation and sustainable use of biodiversity: "To curb the continuing destruction and degradation of forests worldwide it is vital to pursue sustainable forest management," said Gabriel.

Initially, certificates issued by the FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) and the PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes) will be accepted as verification. Comparable proofs will be recognised in individual cases. However, this is not a blank cheque for authorised certification systems. These systems can be excluded at any time if any serious deficiencies arise, for instance where there is reason to suspect illegal logging, or if sustainable forest management and the complete traceability throughout the product chain cannot be guaranteed.

The regulation will at first be restricted to four years and will undergo a detailed review in this time. Greater focus will be placed in future on better controls and more transparency, ecologically ambitious standards for plantations and on responsible management of primeval forests and forests of special ecological importance.

The new regulation also calls on the certification systems to further develop their standards if they wish to be considered for federal procurement in the long term. "This regulation, coordinated between the ministries, demonstrates that if the will is there, environmental needs can be laid down as binding criteria for public procurement at federal level," said Gabriel.