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Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
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Organisation des Nations
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Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная организация
Объединенных Наций

Organización de las
Naciones Unidas para la
Alimentación y la Agricultura

منظمة
الغذية والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

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NORTH AMERICAN FOREST COMMISSION

THIRTY-SECOND SESSION

Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada

25 - 27 September 2023

Report of the Illegal logging Working Group

Queries on the content of this document may be addressed to:

NAFC Secretariat
Forestry Division
NAFC32-Secretariat@fao.org

I. WORKING GROUP COMPOSITION

Chairperson	Country	Organization
Rachel Sheridan	United States of America	USDA Forest Service
Member Names	Country	Organization
Kent Elliot	United States of America	USDA Forest Service
Ed Espinoza	United States of America	USDA Forest Service
Rafael Flores	United States of America	USDA Forest Service
Alberto Escamilla	Mexico	CONAFOR
Pedro Plateros	Mexico	CONAFOR
Patricio Vilchis	Mexico	Profepa
Ken Farr	Canada	Canadian Forest Service
Virginie-Mai Ho (until August 2023)	Canada	Canadian Forest Service
Wendy Vasbinder	Canada	Canadian Forest Service

II. LIST OF ACTIVITIES COMPLETED DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS

Activity	Location	Date	Status (done/ongoing)
Established ad hoc working group	<i>N/A</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>N/A</i>
Created a group charter and developed a work plan	<i>N/A</i>	<i>29 March 2023</i>	<i>Done</i>
Meeting with the Secretariat, Commission on Environmental Cooperation (CEC), and presentation on the CEC project “Strengthening the Implementation and Effective Enforcement of CITES for Timber in North America.”	<i>N/A</i>	<i>27 June 2023</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>

III. PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR THE NEXT TWO YEARS

Activity	Location	Date	Status (ongoing/new)
First in-person working group meeting	<i>Mexico</i>	<i>November/December 2023</i>	<i>New</i>
Working group continuance of the Lab Alliance for Advancing Wood Identification initiated within the CEC Timber project	<i>Virtual and in-person</i>	<i>Continuous</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>
Consideration and decision about additional topics for research (<i>e.g. wood identification and traceability</i>)	<i>Virtual</i>	<i>June 2024</i>	<i>New</i>
Support the development, expansion and sharing of wood reference databases	<i>Virtual and in-person</i>	<i>Continuous</i>	<i>Ongoing</i>

IV. WORKING GROUP FINANCIAL INVESTMENTS AND/OR NETWORKING

Period September 2021 – 2023

Activity	Amount USD (cash)	Amount USD (in-kind)
Facilitator and simultaneous translation for the Illegal Logging Webinar Series	USD 5 000	

V. REQUEST FOR FUNDING AND/OR OTHER SUPPORT

1. No funding is requested at this time.

VI. CLOSING REMARKS

2. In 2020, the North American Forest Commission (NAFC) hosted a series of four virtual workshops that explored illegal logging and associated trade, in a North American context. Topics addressed during the workshops included tools and technologies for wood identification, inter-agency coordination, and individual country contexts around illegal logging. The events attracted participants from Canada, Mexico and the United States of America. Several different government agencies from each country participated in these webinar sessions.

3. Following the success of the workshops, at the 31st session of NAFC, the Commission approved the establishment of an ad hoc working group to explore further how the NAFC partners might combine their respective forest management expertise and capacities to promote legal timber trade and combat illegal trade. The Commission requested the Bureau of Alternates (BoA) to take the lead on establishing this working group, including requesting that each country identify potential members, and ensuring that a working group meeting is held to develop and formalize the group charter and work plan. The working group was officially established immediately following the 31st session of NAFC. In the following year, the working group developed both the work plan and charter, which were finalized in March of 2023.

4. The mission of the NAFC ad hoc Illegal Logging Working Group is to facilitate the exchange of information on matters pertaining to illegal logging and associated trade; wood identification science and relevant emerging technologies; and advancing trilateral collaboration for the purpose of combating illegal logging and maintaining legal trade of forest products within North America.
5. The working group will hold its first in-person meeting sometime in November or December 2023 in Mexico City (TBD). The working group members will have the opportunity to visit the National Institute of Ecology and Climate Change (INECC) to see the newly installed DART-mass spectrometer and to visit the National Autonomous University's xylarium.