



INTERPOL



# PROJECT LEAF

Law Enforcement Assistance for Forests

An INTERPOL initiative against illegal logging and related crimes

INTERPOL's Project LEAF supports member countries to strengthen the response of law enforcement agencies, identify criminals and their modus operandi as well as to disrupt transnational criminal operations related to forestry crimes. Due to the need for a strong and organized law enforcement response to illegal logging and trade, the project enables investigators, criminal intelligence analysts, police, forestry law enforcement institutions, customs and tax authorities to advance and coordinate internationally their intelligence, analytical and investigative objectives. Project LEAF collaborates with international institutions and the national Ministries of the law enforcement agencies globally, with the joint mission of addressing transnational organized crime against forests and the environment.

## Situation

Illegal logging and the international trade in illicitly harvested timber is a serious, international crime estimated to account for 15-30 per cent of all timber traded globally. It has disastrous economic, environmental and social consequences. The trade of illegally logged timber has an estimated value of between USD 51-152 billion annually, representing a major loss in tax revenues. Moreover, it is responsible for deforestation, habitat loss, species extinction, and contributes to global warming, while the illicit proceeds from forestry crime may be used to fund conflicts.

## Response

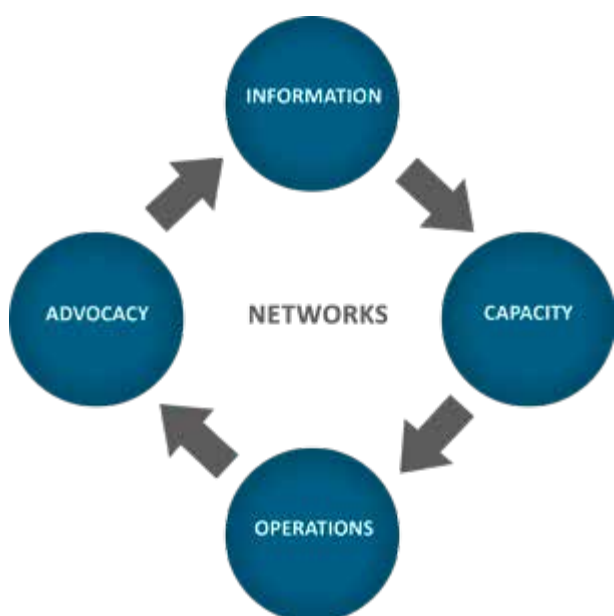
Environmental criminals are often involved in acts of corruption, money laundering, tax evasion, violence, and other related crimes. INTERPOL supports member countries to reinforce their forestry law enforcement capacities and ensure international cooperation between national agencies; analysing all types of information that facilitate or accompany illegal forestry activities and other related crimes. INTERPOL is strategically placed to provide a wide range of tools and services to support its member countries with this project.

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## Activities

- **Support criminal intelligence analysis** to identify criminals, their networks and their modus operandi.
- **Provide analytical support on the movement of illegal timber along the entire supply chain and ownership associations of the companies and vehicles or vessels involved.** This may include forensic analysis of electronic equipment through support from the INTERPOL Digital Forensics Laboratory, and expert examination of forestry material, equipment and documentation.
- **Issue international notices and alerts** on behalf of member countries to request information on, and warn of, the movements and activities of people, vehicles and vessels.
- **Provide case-specific investigative and technical guidance** through the deployment of specialised Investigative Support Teams composed of INTERPOL and national experts.
- **Organize national and regional trainings** relevant to forestry crime, including evidence collection, chain-of-custody and operational planning.
- **Convene Regional Investigative and Analytical Case Meetings (RIACMs)** to facilitate the exchange of investigative information and provide a setting for countries to collectively examine ongoing transnational cases and prepare joint enforcement actions.
- **Support the implementation of National Environment Security Task Forces (NESTs)** to ensure institutionalised cooperation between national agencies and international partners.
- **Disseminate** experts' recommendations and the best practices for combating forestry crimes.
- **Enhance information and intelligence sharing** among investigators and intelligence services from different countries, and optimise the entry of information into INTERPOL databases.

## Project Cycle



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