

APEC Experts Group on Illegal Logging and Associated Trade (EGILAT)

Terms of Reference (ToR) (2026-2029)

1. Context

Forests and forest resources provide critical economic, social, and environmental benefits for APEC economies and the world as a whole. APEC economies in 2020¹, and in 2022² accounted for 54% of global production of industrial roundwood and 40% (over \$344 billion) of the global trade (import and export) in forest products³.

Illegal logging and associated trade is a significant problem facing forests across the globe and the Asia Pacific Region. This complex problem has wide-reaching and harmful impacts on nature, people, and the economy. APEC Leaders agreed in Yokohama in 2010 to enhance cooperation to address concerns with illegal logging and associated trade and promote sustainable forest management and rehabilitation. In 2011, APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade directed officials to establish an experts' group to combat illegal logging and associated trade, promote trade in legally harvested forest products, and concurrently build capacity of member economies.

2. Goal

The goal of the Experts Group on Illegal Logging and Associated Trade (EGILAT) is to enhance the efforts of member economies to take concrete steps to combat illegal logging and associated trade, promote trade in legally harvested forest products³, and support capacity building activities in member economies.

By taking concrete steps to combat illegal logging and associated trade, and promoting trade in legally harvested forest products EGILAT will contribute to APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040 particularly "to deliver, a free, open, fair, non-discriminatory, transparent and predictable trade and investment environment" (Trade and Investment) and "to promote economic policies, cooperation and growth which support global efforts to comprehensively address all environmental challenges, for a sustainable planet" (Strong, Balanced, Secure, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth) and economic prosperity.

3. Objectives and Scope of Activities

Pursuant to the Economy's domestic laws, regulations and applicable international agreements, EGILAT will strive to, as appropriate, in collaboration with industry, civil society, academia, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and other relevant organizations with expertise in combating illegal logging and associated trade:

¹ FAO. 2020. Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020: Main report. Rome.

<https://doi.org/10.4060/ca9825en>

² FAOSTAT: <https://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/FO>

³ FAO. 2022. Classification on Forest Products 2022. Rome.

<https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/ca0a8b29-6b20-4c42-bcd1-206a87bb1d00/content>

(a) serve as a platform for member economies to strengthen policy dialogue and cooperation on combating⁴ illegal logging and associated trade and promoting trade in legally harvested forest products;

(b) consider, share and exchange information from best practices, where available, on:

- i. policies that combat illegal logging and associated trade and promote trade in legally harvested forest products;
- ii. developments in laws, regulations, and other measures related to combatting illegal logging and associated trade and promoting trade in legally harvested forest products;
- iii. new technologies and transparent information systems, designed to assist efforts to combat illegal logging and associated trade and promote trade in legally harvested forest products, such as those that support more efficient and accurate monitoring, detection, traceability of forest product supply chains and verification of legal origin;
- iv. data and other information on production, processing, exports, imports, and consumption of forest products, to the extent available, with special focus in the Asia Pacific Region;
- v. actions taken by Indigenous Peoples, as appropriate, and local communities to combat illegal logging and facilitate the trade in legal forest products; and
- vi. engage the private sector including industry groups and academia to keep abreast of industry needs and innovations including those of small and medium business enterprises.

(c) assist member economies in identifying capacity building needs, developing targeted capacity-building assistance, including among Indigenous Peoples and local communities, and identifying linkages to project financing (including through a digitally-enabled financing ecosystem), including to facilitate post-pandemic recovery;

(d) promote collaboration with other APEC working groups and initiatives to facilitate law enforcement and other agreed-upon cooperation and information sharing related to combating illegal logging and associated trade;

(e) recognizing APEC's commitment and contributions relating to sustainable forest management and landscape restoration, as well as work on these topics in other organizations, collaborate with those organizations and support economies to engage with those organizations as agreed by EGILAT members, and endeavor to ensure that these activities complement and do not duplicate activities⁵ being carried out in those organizations;

⁴ For purposes of this document, the term "combat" may also include strategies and activities to prevent illegal logging and associated trade, where those strategies and activities: directly support combating illegal logging and associated trade; are agreed-upon by EGILAT members; and do not duplicate activities, objectives, goals and mandates of other organisations.

⁵ Issues relating to sustainable forest management that demonstrate a direct and tangible contribution to combating illegal logging and associated trade, may form part of EGILAT's workplan and activities where agreed by EGILAT members and where those activities do not duplicate activities, objectives, goals and mandates of other organisations.

(f) raise awareness and contribute to domestic and regional efforts to combat illegal logging and associated trade, promote sustainable forest management and support trade in legally harvested forest products; and

(g) support micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to address barriers for small logging and harvested forest businesses.

4. Structure and Administration

(a) EGILAT will be guided by Leaders' and Ministers' directives and the objectives set out in section 3 above.

(b) EGILAT will be composed of officials of member economies responsible for trade, forestry, and other matters relevant to the group's work.

(c) A Chair will be selected and endorsed by consensus within the Group before the end of the preceding Chair's term. The term of the Chair will be for 2 years, and a Chair should not normally serve for more than 2 consecutive two-year terms. The Chair will undertake duties in accordance with the [Guidelines for Lead Shepherd/Chair and Deputy Lead Shepherd/Chair of APEC Working Groups and SOM Taskforces](#).

(d) EGILAT will meet twice a year during SOM 1 and SOM 3, unless it decides otherwise. At least one meeting will be held in person, with the possibility for other meetings to be virtual or hybrid.

(e) The group will conduct inter-sessional work through online meetings including Informal Discussion Group Meetings and email correspondence.

(f) EGILAT may invite non-members, including representatives of non-member economies, international and regional forestry organizations including forestry research and academic institutions, civil society, and the private sector to participate in its work in accordance with the *APEC Guidelines on Managing Cooperation with Non-Members*.

5. Review and Reporting Requirements

(a) EGILAT will periodically review its activities and operations. In addition, EGILAT will be assessed every four years by the SOM Steering Committee on Economic and Technical Cooperation (SCE).

(b) EGILAT will report annually through the SCE Fora Report or as requested by SOM.

6. Sunset clause and quorum:

(a) EGILAT has a current term of four years from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2029. At the expiration of this and any subsequent term, the mandate of EGILAT and its ToR shall be reviewed by EGILAT and SCE, and a recommendation on renewal shall be put to Senior Officials for approval. The EGILAT must be explicitly renewed by Senior Officials in order to continue, following the expiration of the ToR.

(b) Quorum for EGILAT's Meetings constitutes attendees from at least 14 economies. Should EGILAT fail to meet quorum for one meeting, it must notify the SCE Chair. Should EGILAT fail

to meet quorum for two consecutive meetings, it shall be referred to APEC Senior Officials for a decision on whether it should continue to exist. Decisions can be made at EGILAT meetings if quorum and consensus are reached. If the quorum is not reached at a meeting, the meeting may continue on an informative mode, but any matters for decision must be put to the full membership for consideration.