



PRESS RELEASE

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U.S. House of Representatives Passes Legislation to Ban Illegal Wood Trade
Environmental Investigation Agency commends U.S. leadership on issue

WASHINGTON, DC – The U.S. House of Representatives today passed landmark legislation to address the global illegal logging crisis. The law would make the United States the first country in the world to prohibit the import, sale, or trade in illegally-harvested wood and wood products.

The law amends a long-standing wildlife trafficking statute, the Lacey Act, to include timber, wood products and other plants. It has been championed by Democratic Congressman Earl Blumenauer and Senator Ron Wyden, both of Oregon, and received strong bipartisan support in both Chambers of Congress. Reconciled language passed with the Farm Bill today. The Senate is expected to pass the bill tomorrow.

“After more than a year of work with an unprecedented coalition of industry, environmental and union groups, today we passed legislation that will help bring an end to the egregious practice of illegal logging,” said Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR). **“Not only does illegal logging threaten some of the world’s richest and most vulnerable forests, but it leads to serious human rights violations. It also costs the U.S. forest products industry over \$1 billion every year, including \$130 - \$150 million to my home state of Oregon. This is a great achievement that will protect the environment, help honest businesses, and prevent rampant corruption both here and abroad.”**

The Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA), the leading environmental organization providing expertise to policy makers on illegal logging and associated international trade, estimates that 10% of annual wood product imports into the U.S. – worth some \$3.8 billion dollars – are derived from illegally logged timber.

“EIA commends Congressman Blumenauer’s leadership on this landmark bill to protect the global environment,” said Alexander von Bismarck, Executive Director of EIA, which spearheaded the coalition supporting the ban. **“Governments, timber companies, and traders around the world are taking note as the largest consumer of wood products, the United States, becomes the first country to ban the import and sale of illegal wood.”**

Further information on illegal logging and associated trade is available at:
www.eia-global.org and www.eia-international.org