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## **Beverage Carton Industry Supports Commission Proposal to Fight Illegal Logging**

*Industry set up a traceability system for its wood used worldwide to this effect*

ACE, representing Europe's beverage carton manufacturers and their paper board suppliers, takes note of the European Commission's proposal to prevent illegally harvested forest products being imported into the EU market.

"We identify fully with the Commission's objective", says ACE Director General Christian Verschueren, "and support a legal framework which assigns to economic operators a key role in helping to achieve it".

ACE views the EU proposal as an important step in the ongoing fight against illegal logging. In the context of FLEGT, the call on operators to exercise due diligence regarding the legality of forest products they import, appears to be a reasonable demand. It should help create a level playing field, which is essential if responsible operators are not to be put at a competitive disadvantage by free riders who make no effort to control their supply chains.

In particular ACE welcomes the call made by the Commission for operators to set up supply-chain audit schemes to help avoid illegal logging.

"As a grouping of companies linked together in a supply chain for wood-based products, we at ACE recognize the complexities of tracing products back to source", says Mario Abreu, responsible for Forestry and Recycling at Tetra Pak, and ACE Board member. "But we also understand the need to do it, and in a way which is independently verified and credible", Abreu added..

"That is why ACE beverage carton producers signed in 2007 a commitment to achieve 100% certified traceability of all wood used in their manufacture worldwide", Verschueren explains<sup>1</sup>. ACE will report to the EU authorities on progress towards this objective by end-2008.

"More generally", concludes Verschueren, "having effective and credible traceability systems for beverage cartons is a support to responsible forest management, contributing to the role of forests as a reservoir of biodiversity and in mitigating climate change".

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<sup>1</sup> Responsible Forestry Practices: Industry Commitment by the beverage carton sector on wood traceability; July 2007