Wood

EUDR mapping for wood — v1.2

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Wood & Timber EUDR Overview — Colombia

EUDR Context

Field	Value
eudr_commodity	wood
country_focus	Colombia
deforestation_risk	high
last_updated	2026-05-26

Overview

Wood and timber products are regulated under EUDR Article 2, covering a broad range of products including sawn wood, veneer, plywood, pulp, paper, printed matter, and furniture. Colombia presents one of the most complex compliance landscapes for wood products among Latin American countries, given the scale of its natural forests (approximately 59.1 million hectares, covering 51.8% of national territory), the prevalence of illegal logging, and the diversity of timber species and harvesting contexts involved.

Colombia's forestry sector encompasses two fundamentally different segments: a small formal plantation forestry industry (approximately 427,000 hectares of planted forest, representing just 0.72% of total forest cover) and a large, often informal natural forest extraction sector that operates across the Pacific coast, the Amazon, and the Andean slopes. The formal plantation sector—concentrated in pine, eucalyptus, and teak—is relatively well-documented and presents a manageable EUDR compliance pathway. The natural forest extraction sector, where estimates suggest 40-47% of circulating timber is of illegal origin, represents the core compliance challenge.

The EUDR requires that timber products entering EU markets were harvested from land that was not deforested after December 31, 2020, and that harvesting complied with all applicable laws. For Colombia, where illegal logging has been estimated to drive approximately 10% of national deforestation (with estimates by IDEAM and FAO suggesting that 40-47% of domestically traded wood may come from unauthorized sources), meeting the legality requirement is as challenging as meeting the deforestation-free requirement.

Colombian Context

Colombia's timber sector operates under the regulatory framework of the Código Nacional de Recursos Naturales and is overseen by the Autoridad Nacional de Licencias Ambientales (ANLA) and regional environmental authorities (CARs). Legal timber harvesting requires a forest management plan (plan de manejo forestal) approved by the relevant CAR, a harvesting permit (permiso de aprovechamiento), and transport permits

(salvoconductos) for timber movement. In practice, enforcement is uneven, and the multi-authority governance structure creates gaps that illegal operators exploit.

The Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) documented in a 2025 report that illegal wood from Colombia's Pacific and Amazon rainforests—including protected species like Dipteryx odorata (cumarú/choibá)—enters both US and EU supply chains. Afro-Colombian and Indigenous communities in the Atrato watershed were found to be both victims and participants in the illegal timber trade, often under conditions described as modern economic exploitation with few legal livelihood alternatives.

Colombia has 223 forestry companies and the sector generates approximately 400,000 jobs. The government has set targets to position the country as Latin America's second forestry powerhouse, though this ambition requires significant improvement in governance, traceability, and legal compliance infrastructure.

EUDR Compliance Requirements

For Colombian timber operators and EU importers, EUDR compliance requires:

- **Harvest origin documentation**: Provide geolocation data (GPS polygons) for the forest compartment where timber was harvested, linked to a valid forest management plan approved by the relevant CAR.
- **Legal harvesting proof**: Document the complete permit chain: forest management plan approval, harvesting permit (aprovechamiento forestal), transport permits (salvoconductos), and processing/transformation records.
- **Deforestation-free verification**: Demonstrate that the harvested area was forested before and after harvesting (i.e., selective logging within a managed forest, not clear-cut conversion), using satellite imagery to confirm forest cover maintenance.
- **Species identification**: Identify timber species using scientific nomenclature, verify that no CITES-listed species are included without proper permits, and ensure that harvesting volumes comply with sustainable yield calculations in the management plan.
- **Chain-of-custody tracking**: Map timber from forest to sawmill to export, with batch-level documentation preventing mixing of legal and undocumented timber—the most critical control point given the estimated 40-47% illegality rate in Colombia's domestic market.

Illegal Logging & Deforestation Monitoring

EUDR Context

Field	Value
eudr_commodity	wood
country_focus	Colombia
deforestation_risk	high
last_updated	2026-05-26

Overview

Illegal logging is one of the most persistent and structurally embedded drivers of deforestation in Colombia. IDEAM estimates that logging drives approximately 10% of national deforestation, while FAO and IDEAM jointly estimate that 40-47% of all timber circulating in Colombia's domestic market originates from unauthorized harvesting or extraction from forest reserve zones. Between 2008 and 2019, more than 40% of the country's forest product exports were assessed as having illegal origin. This systemic illegality represents the most significant EUDR compliance barrier for Colombian timber entering EU markets.

The geography of illegal logging in Colombia closely tracks the country's deforestation hotspots: the Pacific coast (Chocó bioregion), the Amazonian arc of deforestation (Caquetá, Guaviare, southern Meta), and increasingly the Catatumbo region (Norte de Santander). These areas share common enabling factors: weak institutional presence, armed group control, poverty-driven participation by rural communities, and high-value timber species that incentivize extraction.

Between 2000 and 2020, Colombia lost approximately 3 million hectares of natural forest, with deforestation peaking in 2017 at over 220,000 hectares annually. The government's Comprehensive Deforestation Containment Plan (2023-2026) has contributed to declining rates—preliminary data suggests continued reductions through 2025—but the structural drivers of illegal logging persist in remote, conflict-affected territories.

Colombian Context

Three critical deforestation and illegal logging hotspots define the compliance landscape:

- **Chocó / Pacific Coast (Critical Risk)**: The Chocó bioregion is one of the world's most biodiverse ecosystems and a primary source of high-value tropical hardwoods. EIA investigations documented that species like Dipteryx odorata (cumarú/choibá) are harvested illegally from the Atrato watershed

and Pacific coast forests, processed through intermediary sawmills, and exported to the US and EU for use in decking and flooring. Local Afro-Colombian and Indigenous communities participate in extraction under economically coercive conditions with few legal alternatives.
- **Amazon Arc / Caquetá-Guaviare (Critical Risk)**: The Colombian Amazon deforestation arc stretches from Caquetá through Guaviare into southern Meta. While cattle ranching is the primary driver, illegal logging often precedes or accompanies land clearing, with valuable timber extracted before pasture conversion. MAAP satellite analysis has documented deforestation encroaching into Chiribiquete National Park and the Llanos del Yarí Indigenous Reserve, with 148 hectares cleared in 2024 and 198 hectares in early 2025 within park boundaries.
- **Catatumbo / Norte de Santander (High Risk)**: Armed group presence and coca cultivation drive deforestation in this region, with timber extraction forming part of the conflict economy. Cross-border dynamics with Venezuela complicate enforcement.

Colombia's monitoring infrastructure centers on IDEAM's Forest and Carbon Monitoring System (SMByC), which produces annual deforestation statistics and quarterly early warning bulletins (Alertas Tempranas de Deforestación). The system uses Landsat and Sentinel-2 imagery to detect forest cover change at 30m resolution. Global Forest Watch provides additional near-real-time alert data. However, monitoring detection is not equivalent to enforcement—detected deforestation events frequently go unaddressed due to limited institutional capacity in remote areas.

EUDR Compliance Requirements

Addressing illegal logging risk for EUDR compliance requires:

- **Supply chain mapping to forest of origin**: Identify the specific forest compartment where each timber batch was harvested, with GPS coordinates, CAR jurisdiction, and permit numbers. This is the most critical and most difficult step given the long and opaque timber supply chains in Colombia.
- **Red-flag screening**: Implement supply chain screening for known high-risk origins (Chocó, Caquetá, Guaviare, Catatumbo), species (Dipteryx, mahogany, cedar), and intermediaries. Any sourcing from these areas requires enhanced due diligence.
- **Satellite-based harvest verification**: Cross-reference claimed harvest locations against satellite imagery to verify that (a) the area was forested at the time of claimed harvest and (b) no clear-cut deforestation occurred—only selective, sustainable extraction consistent with the approved management plan.
- **IDEAM data integration**: Use IDEAM deforestation alerts and annual monitoring data as a primary evidence source in due diligence reports, supplemented by higher-resolution commercial imagery for specific verification.
- **Pacto Madera Legal alignment**: Leverage Colombia's Intersectoral Pact for Legal Timber (PIML), which involves 70 public and private organizations committed to legal timber sourcing, as a governance framework for supply chain compliance. While membership in the PIML does not guarantee EUDR compliance, it signals commitment to the legality verification processes the regulation requires.

Sustainable Forestry & Certification

EUDR Context

Field	Value
eudr_commodity	wood
country_focus	Colombia
deforestation_risk	high
last_updated	2026-05-26

Overview

Sustainable forestry certification represents the most viable pathway for Colombian timber to access EU markets under the EUDR. While certification alone does not satisfy the regulation's requirements (operators must still provide geolocation data and specific deforestation-free proof), certified timber operations have the management systems, documentation practices, and third-party audit infrastructure that closely align with EUDR due diligence obligations. Colombia's sustainable forestry sector is small but growing, and scaling it up is both a commercial opportunity and a conservation imperative.

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is the primary international certification standard operating in Colombia. FSC-certified operations exist in both the planted forest sector (teak, pine, eucalyptus plantations) and—more critically for EUDR purposes—in natural forest management by community concessions. Community forestry initiatives in the Pacific coast and Amazon have achieved FSC certification through multi-year capacity-building programs supported by international cooperation, demonstrating that even in high-risk regions, sustainable, legal, and traceable timber production is achievable.

The EU's FLEGT (Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade) Action Plan, while distinct from the EUDR, has influenced Colombia's forestry governance framework. Although Colombia does not have a FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA), the principles of FLEGT—legal verification, stakeholder participation, and trade transparency—have informed domestic initiatives like the Pacto Intersectorial por la Madera Legal (PIML).

Colombian Context

Colombia's sustainable forestry landscape includes several distinct pathways:

- **Plantation forestry**: Approximately 427,000 hectares of planted forest (primarily teak, pine, eucalyptus, and acacia) represent the lowest-risk timber supply for EU markets. These operations are

typically well-documented, many are FSC-certified, and the plantation context means the EUDR's deforestation-free requirement is straightforward to verify (the land was converted to plantation before the 2020 cutoff, or was previously non-forested).
- **Community forest management**: Colombia's territorial governance structure gives Afro-Colombian community councils and Indigenous resguardos legal authority over vast forest areas. Successful community forestry programs—supported by organizations including WWF, USAID, and FAO—have built sustainable harvesting practices, low-impact harvesting techniques, and value chain development. Some community operations have achieved FSC certification, though the process is resource-intensive.
- **PIML and the legal timber culture**: The Pacto Intersectorial por la Madera Legal, launched in 2009, brings together 70 public and private organizations to promote legal timber sourcing throughout Colombia's domestic market. The PIML has driven adoption of timber legality verification systems, promoted inter-institutional coordination, and supported the development of a "legal timber culture" among producers, processors, and consumers.

The Colombian government's ambition to become Latin America's second forestry powerhouse (after Chile or Brazil) depends on expanding planted forest area while simultaneously improving governance in natural forest extraction. The 223 forestry companies and 400,000 sector jobs represent a base that could grow significantly if legal, sustainable, and EUDR-compliant supply chains are scaled.

EUDR Compliance Requirements

Certification and sustainable forestry practices contribute to EUDR compliance through:

- **FSC certification as compliance foundation**: FSC-certified operations provide management plans, chain-of-custody documentation, annual audits, and stakeholder consultation records that address most EUDR due diligence elements. Operators must supplement FSC data with EUDR-specific geolocation requirements and the December 2020 cutoff date verification.
- **Community forestry formalization**: Community-managed forests must demonstrate that harvesting occurs under valid permits issued by the relevant CAR, within approved management plan parameters, and with documented free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) from the governing community council or cabildo.
- **Timber legality verification**: Implement or adopt a timber legality assurance system aligned with PIML standards, ensuring that every batch of timber can be traced from forest of origin through processing to export with complete documentation.
- **Sustainable yield documentation**: Demonstrate through forest inventory data and management plan calculations that harvesting rates do not exceed sustainable yield thresholds, ensuring that the harvested forest maintains its status as forest (avoiding degradation below EUDR forest definition thresholds).
- **Multi-stakeholder governance**: Engage with PIML, CARs, community organizations, and international certification bodies to build the institutional infrastructure needed for long-term EUDR compliance across the Colombian timber sector.