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.

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