NATIONAL REPORT OF GREECE CONCERNING
THE ILLEGAL LOGGING AND THE TRADE OF
THE ILLLEGALLY PRODUCED FOREST PRODUCTS

(Prepared by the General Directorate for the Development
and Protection of Forests and Natural Environment, Ministry
of Rural Development and Food)

Summary

Illegal logging does not form a great problem for the forests in Greece. The percentage of illegal logging to the annual production is less than 1%.

The estimation of infringements is based on legal facts and records of forest authorities.

Most infringements for illegal logging concern a small amount of wood, usually for personal use, with greater percentage in broad-leaf forest species.

The training of forest staff in management or continuous overlooking in logging as well as frequent patrols of forest staff restrict all illegal logging to a large extent.

Rendering of work to all Forest Co-operatives, to citizen living near forest areas, the information on subjects concerning environment and the disposal of forest products under favourable terms to the mountain population is contributing to the increase of their income and to the minimization of infringement. Forest law provides strict penalties as a dissuasive factor on illegal logging as well.

Cases of illegal trade of forest products (import-export) are not registered during last years.

Greek forests are distinguished in public and non-public property; 65% from these ones constitute public property and the rest 35% is non-public property, belonging to municipalities or communities, to the church, the monasteries, private forest owners and other bodies.

The standing volume of the country according to the last inventory of this decade comes to 152.000.000 m³. The net annual increment of the standing volume according to the same
inventory is about 3,800,000 m³. The species percentage between coniferous trees and broadleaved is 50.3% and 49.70% respectively. The trading timber volume consists of coniferous by 5/9 and broadleaved by 4/9.

The average total annual production of the country in timber products during the last decade reached 2,300,000 m³. This timber harvest is smaller than the annual increment aiming to improve the forests and to maintain the yield sustainability. More particularly, the appropriate forestry treatments, as selective cutting and regenerating loggings, are applied for the improvement of the productive forests.

For the management and exploitation of every productive forest of the country, Forest Management Plans are compose every 10 years according to the Forest Law, where among all, the forestry treatments to be applied and the expected timber volume to be cut by place and time are laid down. For the legal production, transportation and trade of the produced wood products, the National Forestry Law in force, provides for a continuous logging monitoring and the issue of the documents mentioned below:

1) Logging licence issue.  
2) Logger’s installation register in the forest.  
3) Control and counting of the produced forest products register.  
4) Final Forest inspection register.  
5) Timber transport note for its trading to the consumption centers.

Additionally all logs are counted and marked by the Forest Service seal. All timber products treads without all above requirements are illegal. During the last 5 years, in a representative number Regional of Forest Services, several violation of the Law are registered as below:
1. **ILLEGAL LOGGING**

1.1. Categories of illegal logging.

1.1.1. Logging without licence or not granted by public forests.
Number of illegal loggings 948 – Standing volume 2,450 m³.

1.1.2. Timber cutting or illegal logging from private forests.
Number of illegal loggings 83 – Standing volume 34 m³.

1.1.3. False logs, species, price declaration of false originating of the definite timber.
Number of breaches 2 – Standing volume 18 m³.

1.1.4. Logging in protected areas, such as the national parks.
Number of breaches 6 – Standing volume 12 m³.

1.1.5. Logging in prohibited areas.
Number of breaches 17 – Standing volume 490 m³.

1.1.6. Removal of very big or very small trees.
Number of breaches 16 – Standing volume 20 m³.

1.1.7. Logging approval through briberies.

1.1.8. Mortality or tree burning to be logged.

1.2. In order to reduce the number of illegal logging, the Forest Service, continuously patrols and regularly attends the current logging work. Also, according to the Forest Legislation, timber products can be available in reduced prices to populations who are settled near the forests, for their own personal use.

1.3. Volume of illegally cut timber in Greece.

1.3.1. The volume of the illegally cut timber is less than 1% of the total cut;
This estimation is based on:

1.3.2.3. Judicial documents and records.
1.3.2.4. Estimations and reports of the forest authorities.

1.4. According to the previous report, we come to the conclusion that the problem of illegal logging in Greece is actually unimportant.

2. **Trade of illegal logging products**

2.1. The Department of Customs in the Ministry of National Economy & Finance is the Service responsible for checking the imported and exported timber products. As we have been informed, during the last few years illegal trade (import – export) of timber products actually does not exist.

2.2. There are Custom Offices and their checking services. In order to select the checking proceeding, those services are based on a risk analysis system. More specifically, checking is operated on natural products or their accompanying documents to be further compared to those declared, or presented; They also check if the merchandise is harmless and consequently, free to be transported.

3. **Legislation enforcement, governance and commercial policies for the forests.**

3.1. Custom office checking’s are based on the regulations of the Community Custom Code (E.C. 2913/92)

3.2. According to the provisions of Forest Legislation, the Forest Service, in order to increase the low income of the by forest populations and reduce to the limit illegal logging, operates specific proceedings.

a) The utilization of public forests is granted to Forest Cooperatives which pay on behalf of the Public
Authorities and the Municipalities a percentage of the income arisen from the sale of wood products.
b) The harvesting operations of the forests by self-supervision, is committed by the Forest Associations.
c) Wood products are available to mountain populations in low prices for their own personal use.

3.3. In cases of illegal logging, according to the Forest Legislation, the Forest Service fills a law suit against the law-breaker. In addition, illegally cut timber and the means of harvest and transport (such as machinery, trucks etc) are also seized. For all these reasons, illegal logging and transportation of illegal wood products is usually prevented.