



2024

ACTIVITY REPORT



THE LEADING AUTHORITY ON TROPICAL TIMBER

www.atibt.org

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ACRONYMS

ACNP: NDF - Non-Detriment Finding (<i>Avis de Commerce Non Préjudiciable</i>)	IDH: Sustainable Trade Initiative
ADEFAC: Support for the Development of Continuing Education in the Forest-Timber Sector in Central Africa (<i>Appui au développement de la formation en Afrique Centrale</i>)	IFL: Intact Forest Landscape
AEIM: Spanish Association of Timber Importers (<i>Asociacion Española de Importadores de Madera</i>)	ITTO - OIBT: International Tropical Timber Organization (<i>Organisation Internationale des Bois Tropicaux</i>)
AFD: French Development Agency	IUCN: International Union for Conservation of Nature
ANAFOR: National Agency for Forest Development Support (<i>Agence Nationale d'Appui au Développement Forestier</i>)	KFW: German Development Bank (<i>Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau</i>)
ATIBT: International Technical Association for Tropical Timber (<i>Association Technique Internationale des Bois Tropicaux</i>)	LCB: Le Commerce du Bois
ASP: Private Sector Support (<i>Appui Secteur Privé</i>)	LKTS: Lesser Known Timber Species
CAFI: Central African Forest Initiative	MEF: Ministry of Forest Economy (Republic of Congo)
CBFP-PFBC: Congo Basin Forest Partnership	MIB: Domestic Timber Market (<i>Marché Interieur du Bois</i>)
CEI bois: The European Confederation of Woodworking Industries	MINEF: Ministry of Water and Forests (<i>Ministère des Eaux et Forêts</i>) (Gabon)
CEMAC: Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (<i>Communauté Économique et Monétaire de l'Afrique Centrale</i>)	MINFOP: Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife (<i>Ministère des Forêts et de la Faune</i>) (Cameroon)
CEPF: European Confederation of Private Forest Owners (<i>Confédération Européenne des Propriétaires Forestiers Privés</i>)	MO: Project Management (<i>Maitrise d'Ouvrage</i>)
CFT: Forest Transformation Company (<i>Compagnie Forestière De Transformation</i>)	MOD: Delegated Project Management (<i>Maitrise d'Ouvrage Déléguée</i>)
CIB: International Wood Fair (<i>Carrefour International du Bois</i>)	OBC: Organization for Biodiversity Certificate
CIRAD: Center for International Cooperation in Agricultural Research for Development (<i>Centre de Coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement</i>)	OMD: World Customs Organization (<i>Organisation Mondiale des Douanes</i>)
CITES: Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora	ONFI: National Forestry Office International (<i>Office National des Forêts International</i>)
COMIFAC: Central African Forest Commission (<i>Commission des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale</i>)	ONG: Non-Governmental Organisation
COP: Conference of the Parties	PAFC: Pan-African Forest Certification
CRCF: Carbon Removal Certification Framework	PEFC: Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification
CST-AFD: Scientific and Technical Committee (<i>Comité Scientifique et Technique</i>)	PES: Payments for Environmental Services
CTWPDA: China Timber & Wood Production Distribution Association	PFBC: Congo Basin Forest Partnership
DGENV: Directorate-General for the Environment (<i>Direction Générale pour l'Environnement</i>)	PME: Small and Medium Enterprises (<i>Petites et Moyennes Entreprises</i>)
DUE: European Union Delegation	PPECF: Programme for the Promotion of Certified Forest Exploitation
EFI: European Forest Institute	RDC: Democratic Republic of Congo
EOS: European Organisation for Sawmill Industry	RESSAC: Applied Research in Ecology and Social Sciences in Support of Sustainable Management of Central African Forest Ecosystems (<i>Recherche appliqué en Ecologie et en Sciences Sociales en appui à la gestion durable des écosystèmes forestiers d'Afrique Centrale</i>)
ETTF: European Timber Trade Federation	RIFFEAC: Network of Central African Forestry and Environmental Training Institutions (<i>Réseau des Institutions de Formation Forestière et Environnementale de l'Afrique Centrale</i>)
Eustafor: European State Forest Association	SFEB: French Society of Timber Experts (<i>Société Française des Experts Bois</i>)
EUTR - RBUE: European Union Timber Regulation (<i>Règlement Bois de l'Union Européenne</i>)	SPIB: Syndicate of Industrial Timber Producers (<i>Syndicat Des Producteurs Industriels Du Bois</i>)
FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	STTC: Sustainable Tropical Timber Coalition
FEP - EPF: European Parquet Federation	SVL: Legality Verification System
FFEM: French Global Environment Facility (<i>Fonds Français pour L'environnement Mondial</i>)	SW4SW: Sustainable Wood For Sustainable World (FAO)
FIB: Federation of Timber Industries (<i>Fédération des industries du Bois</i>) (RDC)	TTF: Timber Trade Federation (UK)
FLEGT: Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade	TTT: Tropical Timber Trade
FSC: Forest Stewardship Council	UE: European Union
GFBC: Cameroon Wood Sector Group (<i>Groupe de la Filière Bois du Cameroun</i>)	UFA: Forest Management Unit (<i>Unité Forestière d'Aménagement</i>)
GGSC: Global Green Supply Chain	UFIGA: Union of Foresters and Wood Industrialists of Gabon (<i>Union des Forestiers et Industriels du Bois du Gabon</i>)
GIZ: German Society for International Cooperation (<i>Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit</i>)	ULG: University of Liège
GNFT: National Group for Tropical Forests	UNICONGO: Union of Industrialists and Traders of Congo
GTI: Global Timber Index	VVNH: Association of Dutch Wood Enterprises (<i>Vereniging Van Nederlands Houtondernemingen</i>)
	WRI: World Resources Institute



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ATIBT, THE ASSOCIATION DEDICATED TO TIMBER AND THE SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF TROPICAL FORESTS



EDITORIAL

FRANÇOISE VAN DE VEN - PRESIDENT OF ATIBT
BENOÎT JOBBÉ-DUVAL - MANAGING DIRECTOR OF ATIBT

We are pleased to present ATIBT's 2024 annual report.

Like the diversity that characterises us, with our ever-growing membership ranging from certified forest companies to civil society organisations, including donors and sector experts, our commitment remains unwavering: to work for a future where tropical forests are both preserved and harvested responsibly, for the benefit of future generations.

The year 2024 was full of challenges, as we anticipated in our editorial 12 months ago. Sustainable forest management and its corollary - employment and value creation in the sector, preservation of biodiversity and fragile ecosystems - continued to be at the heart of our actions. ATIBT, faithful to its role as a technical organisation, continued to support the development of best practices to guarantee forest harvesting that is respectful of sustainability and conservation principles. Encouraging the adoption of FSC and PAFC certifications remains a priority, as does supporting our Fair&Precious community, which illustrates the common commitment of loggers and processing companies.

2025 must be a "Fair&Precious" year!

The fight against deforestation and the degradation of tropical forests took on particular urgency with the preparation for the EUDR (European Regulation

against Deforestation) which will be a reality at the end of 2025. The same will apply to the implementation of the annex 2 listings of CITES, adopted during the 2022 CITES COP meeting in Panama.

These major challenges for our sector required intense efforts by ATIBT, in close collaboration with its members and governments of producing and importing countries, in order to develop sustainable management strategies and support compliance.

Like the global forest-timber sector, which is gradually adapting its trades to climate hazards, our sector must show resilience and adaptation in response to these new regulations.

Continuing its 2023 efforts, ATIBT pursued support for Central African producing countries and provided assistance, particularly to Cameroon, the Republic of Congo, Gabon, and also to COMIFAC in response to changes. In the "2024 at a glance" chapter, you will see how numerous and diverse the commitments have been to these countries, the PFBC, CITES, among others. And of course, we were pleased with the success of our Antwerp forum.

Let us also emphasise that ATIBT has also responded to numerous information requests from many different origins, which were formulated by both individuals and professionals.



The CITES programme, implemented at the beginning of 2023, made it possible to gather crucial information to assess the impact of trade on protected species, to raise awareness among stakeholders, and to strengthen control capacities. Our active participation in CITES plant committee meetings testifies to our constant commitment. We do regret, however, the laborious implementation of compliance controls that too often result in the undue blocking of goods.

We must not forget our role for companies that market tropical timber in national or international markets. The evolution of the timber processing industry in the Congo Basin, marked by the gradual cessation of log exports and the development of special economic zones (SEZs), emphasizes more than ever the necessity of professional training to maintain employment in this essential sector. Therefore, it is with great optimism that we wish to continue our commitment - with the RIFFEAC - to professional training in the Congo Basin.

In 2024, our association continued to intensify its ties with Latin American countries, mainly with Brazil and Peru, but also by initiating field actions with the community forests of Selva Maya in Guatemala and Mexico.

Despite advances, pressures exerted on tropical forests by agricultural expansion, mining exploitation, urbanisation, and illegal stakeholders remain significant threats. The effects of climate change, exacerbating fire risks, remind us of the urgency to act. Faced with these persistent challenges, it is imperative that we strengthen our collaboration with our national and international partners to develop effective and sustainable solutions. Like SEFB and other technical associations that advocate for working together and exchanging ideas, ATIBT (notably through its commissions) is convinced that it is together that we will be able to make progress.

The year 2024 may have been difficult, but it was also a year of commitment and adaptation. Strengthened by our committed members and our initiatives, ATIBT is resolutely oriented toward the future. This annual report is intended as a testimony to collective efforts and achievements made. We want to thank here all of our members, partners, and donors who support us in this essential mission and whom we listen to attentively.

We particularly want to thank those among our members who lead and participate in the commissions!

Together, with a long-term vision and mutual trust, we will continue to move forward, always relying on the recognised expertise of ATIBT and its partners.

ATIBT GOVERNANCE

ATIBT consists of a board of directors, a General Assembly and an Executive Bureau. ATIBT's objectives and strategy are decided by the Board of Directors and approved by its Assembly.

Board of Directors | *Executive board | **States

POSITION	NAME	ORGANISATION		ADDRESS / EMAIL	SECTOR - WEBSITE
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Managing Director of the Association: Benoit **JOBBÉ-DUVAL** (15/03/2016)

PROCEDURAL IMPROVEMENTS

| PROCESSUS D'ACCRÉDITATION CAFI

The year 2024 marks a key step for ATIBT with our entry into the **Central African Forest Initiative** (CAFI) accreditation process. This accreditation, which represents a guarantee of rigour and transparency, is part of our continuous approach to improving practices and compliance with international standards.

During the year, intensive work was carried out to upgrade our internal procedures to meet the specific requirements of CAFI and our donors.

These efforts don't just allow us to strengthen the credibility of our actions, they also help us to optimise our internal processes, with a direct impact on the quality of our projects.



| MONITORING OF THE POLICY FOR THE PREVENTION AND HANDLING OF HARASSMENT SITUATIONS

As part of the implementation of our **SEAH (Situations of Exclusion, Abuse and Harassment) procedure**, for the year 2024, **no alert or report was recorded** within the association. However, to ensure the effectiveness of the protocol, **internal tests were carried out**, confirming the

functionality of the alert and processing mechanisms defined in the procedure.

This annual monitoring is part of our commitment to ensure a healthy, respectful, and secure work environment for all ATIBT members and collaborators.

ATIBT MEMBERS | IN 2024

The arrival of new members is always welcomed through our newsletter.
The member directory is available on our website.



LIST OF MEMBERS

HONORARY MEMBERS

1998 - M. Dr. STOLL (Germany)
2001 - M. LANDROT (France)
2006 - M. DELVINGT (Belgium)
2011 - M. CRETÉ (France)
2012 - M. LOYER (France)
2015 - M. HUNINK (Netherlands)
2019 - M. SERRANO (Costa Rica)

DONORS & FUNDERS

AFD - FRENCH DEVELOPMENT
AGENCY
EUROPEAN UNION
FAO - FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
ITTO - INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL
TIMBER ORGANIZATION

STATES

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC
REPUBLIC OF CONGO
REPUBLIC OF CÔTE D'IVOIRE

PRODUCERS

AFRICAN EQUATORIAL HARDWOODS
(AEH)
ALPICAM
BONUS HARVEST
CIB - CONGOLAISE INDUSTRIELLE
DES BOIS
IFCO
INPROBOIS
INTERHOLCO (IFO)
LIKOUALA TIMBER
MADERACRE
MADERERA BOZOVICH S.A.C.
MIL MADEIRAS PRECIOSAS
MOKABI SA (GROUPE ROUGIER)
NSD'A
PALLISCO CIFM
PRECIOUS WOODS GABON - CEB
ROUGIER GABON
SEEF
SEFECCAM
SOMIVAB
STS GUYANA
THANRY CONGO (STC)
TRANCHIVOIRE

MARKET SUPPLIERS

ADENTRA
BAILLIE LUMBER
BASSO LEGNAMI
BOUYGUES CONSTRUCTION

CABD - COMPAGNIE ATLANTIQUE DES
BOIS ET DÉRIVÉS
CIBM - SAINT-GOBAIN
CID
CORÀ DOMENICO & FIGLI SPA
CROSS TRADE
DENDERWOOD
DUURZAAM HOUT BV
ECOCOA
ETS. PIERRE HENRY & FILS
ETT FINE WOODS
EXOTT
F.JAMMES
FIBRES INDUSTRIES BOIS SAS
FRITZ OFFERMANN KG
GIESELMANN GMBH & CO KG
GILMOUR & AITKEN
GLOBAL TIMBER
HERMPAC
HUPKES WIJMA B.V.
IMPEXO INTERNATIONAL GMBH
INTERHOLCO AG
JAF GROUP
KEFLICO
LATHAM
LUMBER UNIPRESSOAL LDA
MILLET
MOURAO WOOD UNIPRESSOAL LDA
NHG TIMBER
OLAM GLOBAL AGRI PTE. LTD.
PASQUET MENUISERIES
PELTIER BOIS
PRECIOUS WOODS HOLDING AG
RAIL EUROPE
REGALIS FZCO
ROUGIER AFRIQUE INTERNATIONAL
SCBT - SOCIÉTÉ DE COMMERCIALI-
SATION
DES BOIS TROPICAUX
SFM - SOCIÉTÉ FORESTIÈRE DU
MAINE
SORIEL S.L.
STOCKMANS WOOD PRODUCTS BVBA
- SWP
SYLVACO GROUPE MALVAUX
THE PENROD COMPANY
TIMBER REX
TIMTRADE SRL
TOUBOIS
TRADELINK
VANDECASTEELE HOUTIMPORT
VASTO LEGNO

SERVICE PROVIDERS AND RESEARCH FIRMS

11FOUNDRY
ADRYADA
AETS Afrique

BFCONSULT
BOCS
BUREAU VERITAS
DUBAI WOODSHOW
ETICWOOD
FORÉZIENNE MFLS
FRM INGÉNIERIE
GLOBAL FOREST ENVIRONMENT
CONSULTING (GFEC)
GREEN CONSULTTECH
GSEZ
IED INVEST
JMN CONSULTANT
KINOMÉ
MINKADEV
NATURE +
ONF INTERNATIONALE
ORÉADE-BRÈCHE
PREFERRED BY NATURE
SNCF RÉSEAU
SOLICAZ
STRATEMARK
TEREA
TIMBERID

ASSOCIATIONS & SYNDICATES

AEIM
AIMEX
CSFI
ETTF - EUROPEAN TIMBER TRADE
FEDERATION
FEDERLEGNOARREDO - FEDECOMLE-
GNO
FEDUSTRIA
FEP - FÉDÉRATION EUROPÉENNE DE
L'INDUSTRIE DU PARQUET
FIB - FÉDÉRATION DES INDUSTRIELS
DU BOIS
GD HOLZ - GESAMTVERBAND
DEUTSCHER HOLZHANDEL E.V.
GFBC - GROUPEMENT DE LA FILIÈRE
BOIS DU CAMEROUN
LCB - LE COMMERCE DU BOIS
SPIB - SYNDICAT DES PRODUCTEURS
INDUSTRIELS DE BOIS
SYNEFOR
TTF - TIMBER TRADE FEDERATION
UFIGA - UNION DES FORESTIERS ET
INDUSTRIELS DU BOIS DU GABON
UNICONGO (UNION PATRONALE ET
INTERPROFESSIONNELLE DU CONGO)

NGOS

FSC® INTERNATIONAL
IUCN - UNION INTERNATIONALE
POUR LA CONSERVATION DE LA
NATURE

PEFC COUNCIL
PRECIOUS FORESTS FOUNDATION
FONDATION PRINCE ALBERT II DE
MONACO
PROBOS
RAINFOREST ALLIANCE
WCS - WILDLIFE CONSERVATION
SOCIETY
WORLD FOREST ID
WRI - WORLD RESSOURCES INSTI-
TUTE
WWF - WORLD WIDE FUND FOR
NATURE

RESEARCH AND TRAINING CENTRES

CIRAD - CENTRE DE COOPÉRATION
INTERNATIONALE EN RECHERCHE
AGRONOMIQUE POUR LE DÉVELOP-
PEMENT
ENSTIB - ÉCOLE NATIONALE SUPÉ-
RIEURE
DES TECHNOLOGIES ET
INDUSTRIES DU BOIS
ÉRAIFT - ÉCOLE REGIONALE POSTU-
NIVERSITAIRE
D'AMÉNAGEMENT ET
DE GESTION INTÉGRÉS DES FORÊTS
ESB - ÉCOLE SUPÉRIEURE DU BOIS
RIFFEC
UNIVERSITÉ DE LIÈGE / GEMBOUX
AGRO-BIO TECH

EXPERTS - INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

ALAIN LEMAIGRE - ALCEBOIS
ANTOINE DE LA ROCHEFORDIERE
BAPTISTE MARQUANT
BENOÎT GOMMET - FRANCE TIMBER
CD CONSEILS
CHRISTIAN MORASSO
EDOARDO GIVONE
EMMANUEL GROUTÉ - WALE
FRÉDÉRIC ANQUETIL - A.F. BOIS
ISIDORO BLANCHI - FERIMEX
JULIE BERTILLE LANDRY
LACERDA PARTNERS
NICOLAS JAMET
NICOLAS PERTHUISOT
OLIVIER BONNEAU - OBBOIS
OLIVIER DEVILLARD
OLIVIER MEGARD
PIERRE-YVES LE FLECHER
RICHARD FAYS - FAYSWOOD
SOTOMAR
VINCENT PELÉ - EKWATO

| MEMBER TYPOLOGY

In 2024, ATIBT confirmed its attractiveness thanks to balanced management of member renewal. The association recorded **7 departures** and welcomed **7 new members**, bringing the number of **dues-paying members to 165** as of

31 December. Along with **9 honorary members**, ATIBT therefore brings together a community of **174 members**, reflecting a diverse and committed network serving its missions.

| LES MEMBRES QUI NOUS ONT REJOINT EN 2024



Chamber of Musical Instrument Making (CSFI - *Chambre Syndicale de la Facture Instrumentale*), an ATIBT member in 2024, brings together all players of the musical instrument sector in France: manufacturers, craftsmen, restorers, distributors, exporters, retailers, as well as five professional associations and specialised organizations like Europiano France. It represents the profession to public authorities and to both national and international bodies, promoting French expertise and defending the craft of instrument making.



The IED Group (Innovation Energy Development), an ATIBT member since 2024 in the Service Providers and Research Firms category, has been working for over 30 years for access to sustainable electricity in both Africa and Asia. Its subsidiary, **IED Invest**, designs and develops decentralised, autonomous power generation units based on renewable energy, primarily in sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia, where the group has a strong presence



TERRATIMBER, once again an individual ATIBT member in 2024, is a wholesaler and broker in timber products. Active on a global scale, it supports the forestry industry through an extensive network of suppliers in the Americas, Asia, Africa and Europe. TERRATIMBER facilitates direct shipments between producers and professional users. Its mission: to promote sustainable forestry through the trade of certified and traceable products.



Minkadev is a research firm and ATIBT member since 2024, based in Mexico, Colombia, and Spain. The company specialises in developing fair and sustainable commercial strategies, with a particular focus on stakeholders in the timber sector.

As part of a project led by ATIBT, Minkadev is working closely with community forests in southern Mexico. The aim is to support these communities in marketing their timber, taking into account the requirements of the European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR), over a two-year period.



Timber REX, a market supplier and ATIBT member since 2024, is a recognised player in the timber sector with over 15 years of experience. Specialised in the marketing of sawn and processed tropical timber, the company provides its clients with a wide range of quality products tailored to the needs of international markets.

Its supplier network is primarily based in South America, with a strong presence in Brazil, which is its main source of supply.



Jeanicolau de Lacerda

An individual member of ATIBT in 2024, Jeanicolau Simone de Lacerda (JSL) is a forestry engineer with **37 years of experience** in silviculture and the sustainable management of forestry companies. He has led teams in the fields of mapping, biodiversity, reforestation, management plans, and projects related to carbon and sustainability. He has held executive positions at **Brasil Florestas** and **IBIO**, and served as a **legal expert** on land and environmental matters in the state of São Paulo. As a **consultant**, he has advised major players such as Vale, TNC Brasil, Votorantim, Total Energies, and investment funds. He has also developed methods for **biodiversity quantification**. **Currently**, he serves as **Chairman of the Board of PEFC Brazil**.



A producer member of ATIBT in 2024, STS is a small but growing Guyanese company and a close partner of Gilmour & Aitken (Scotland). Its team of qualified foresters is involved across the entire supply chain, from harvesting to export. STS works closely with the **Guyana Forestry Commission (GFC)** and a network of community forest producers. Thanks to its **FSC™ Chain of Custody, Controlled Wood** and **FSC™ SLIMF** certifications, it supports these small producers in promoting responsible forest management and ensuring a sustainable income.

ATIBT'S REPRESENTATION IN THE TROPICAL TIMBER SECTOR

A survey conducted among the Association's members at the beginning of 2025, aimed at gathering feedback on the year 2024, indicated that ATIBT is perceived as a central and influential player in the tropical timber sector, playing a key role in both strategic and operational support. It stands out for its ability to drive discussions forward, foster collective momentum, and lead structuring projects for

the sector's future. Through its actions, it helps to profoundly reshape the image of the sector, working alongside NGOs as guarantors of forest conservation. Despite limited resources, ATIBT's unwavering commitment positions it as a true catalyst for ideas, initiatives and alliances, in support of both sustainable and responsible forest resource management.

OUR TEAM

At ATIBT, we firmly believe that collaboration and knowledge sharing are key to our success. Each member of our team brings unique expertise, creating a dynamic environment where innovation can thrive. Our offices are designed to encourage interaction and exchange, strengthening our cohesion and our ability to meet challenges together.

The ATIBT team is much more than a group of professionals. Committed and dedicated to the sustainable management of tropical forests and the promotion of certified timber, the association actively supports the development of best practices and the well-being of local populations.

Françoise VAN DE VEN, *President of ATIBT*



The president of ATIBT is a recognised expert in the tropical forestry sector, with extensive experience gained in Central Africa, particularly in the DRC and Gabon. As President of ATIBT since 2022, she works to promote sustainability, legality and traceability in the international trade of tropical timber. Actively engaged in international forums, she connects governance, certification and forest policy to strengthen responsible forest management and support stakeholders of the timber sector. She is also highly involved in the CITES task force's efforts.

FRANCE TEAM



BENOÎT JOBBÉ-DUVAL

Managing Director

At the helm of the organisation's leadership. Attentive to both members and partners, Benoit's role is to steer activities and teams, to identify the sector's best experts, and to guide ATIBT's strategy while adhering to the orientations outlined by both the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee. His leadership and expertise ensure that the organisation's actions are aligned with the best practices of forest resource management.



Caroline DUHESME

Director of Innovation and Strategy

An internationally recognised certification and EUDR expert, her role is key in developing innovative strategies that promote sustainable forestry. Caroline helps strengthen ATIBT's impact and promotes sustainable practices within the sector through her public engagement, awareness-raising efforts, and training activities. She also leads the Certification and Regulation Commission and initiated the creation of the Carbon and Biodiversity Commission.



Sandra BLIAULT

Administrative and Financial Manager

A specialist in corporate finance and risk control, her role is to supervise the management of human, material, and financial resources. Sandra oversees the preparation of budgets, cash flow management, and the year-end closing of accounts, while implementing internal control procedures to ensure compliance and optimise processes. She contributes to the organisation's operational efficiency and long-term sustainability.



Maylis BORELLI

Project Compliance Manager (new position)

An expert in project management, her role is to ensure the integrity and transparency of ATIBT's operations. Maylis supports the successful implementation of projects by assisting project managers with monitoring indicators, managing procurement procedures, and the overseeing of budgets. She is also involved in negotiating and designing upcoming projects, as well as in recruiting for ATIBT's team. She has a keen interest in biodiversity issues and seeks to integrate them into ATIBT's strategic thinking and actions.



Nathalie BOUVILLE

Communication Manager

A specialist in communication, her role is crucial in ensuring that our messages reach a wider audience. Nathalie also plays a key role in building strong relationships with our partners, by fostering open and constructive dialogue. Thanks to her efforts, we are improving our visibility and impact. In addition, her skills in public speaking and moderation help facilitate our discussions, creating an environment conducive to the exchange of ideas and collaboration. She also coordinates ATIBT's Marketing Commission.



Jessica DELEKIAN

Administrative and Financial Assistant

With a background in administrative management, Jessica ensures the coordination of administrative, accounting and event-related initiatives while maintaining direct relationships with members. Thanks to her expertise in event management, demonstrated with the Forum and the CIB, as well as her support for the development of the MTT website, she contributes to the optimising of our operations and fosters an environment that is conducive to innovation and the exchange of ideas.



Elise MAZEYRAC
ADEFAC Project Coordinator

Since 2020, Elise has been coordinating the ADEFAC project from the main office. With nearly 15 years of experience in training project management for Central Africa's forest-timber-environment sector, she supports the ADEFAC teams in all areas related to training engineering and project management. Elise actively contributes to the design, development and implementation of all activities and projects that include a "training" component, notably through her leadership of the ATIBT Training Commission.



Paul CUVEILLIER
*Technical specialist in timber sciences
and digital logistics manager*

With a technical background, Paul supports knowledge-sharing in tropical timber science and project management. He also handles ATIBT's digital logistics, managing website updates and producing audiovisual content (video editing, event photography). In addition, he coordinates ATIBT's Timber & Standardisation Commission.



Elise CAMBIER
Project Assistant (work-study placement)

Élise Cambier joined ATIBT as part of a two-year work-study placement. While pursuing a dual degree from AgroParisTech and Gembloux Agro-Bio Tech (U-Liège) in Forest Management, she is working on her dissertation, which focuses on the forest management practices of Asian concessionaires in Gabon.



Alessandra NEGRI
Timber promotion actions coordinator

A specialist in timber flows and due diligence at LCB, Alessandra supports ATIBT through a strategic partnership between LCB and ATIBT, particularly via the Dryades and ASP Cameroon projects. Her expertise helps ensure sustainable and responsible practices in forest resource management.

BELGIUM TEAM



Franck MONTHE KAMENI

CITES Programme Manager

Holding a PhD in genetics and tropical forest ecology (Université libre de Bruxelles), Franck applies his expertise to the sustainable management of Central Africa's forests. He leads the CITES programme within ATIBT, with the aim of strengthening the links between science, forest governance, and the challenges of international tropical timber trade. He supports both authorities and loggers in implementing non-detriment findings (NDFs) and CITES-related obligations, thereby contributing to the sustainable regulation of timber species.



Philippe Joseph NKENNE TIKENG

CITES Assistant

Philippe is a second-year Master's student at Gembloux Agro-Bio Tech. As part of his final year project, he is working to optimise the methodology for analysing the vulnerability status of harvested species. In 2024, he was involved in the project supporting Congo Basin countries in developing their non-detriment findings (NDFs) for the commercial tree species listed in Appendix II of the CITES.

REPUBLIC OF CONGO TEAM



Alain TIOTSOP

A forest engineer based in Brazzaville, Alain coordinates ATIBT's office in the Republic of Congo. He leads the implementation of the association's strategic projects in the country, such as ASP Congo, ADEFAC and MIB. With solid experience in mapping, forest inventories, data processing, the development and implementation of forest management plans, auditing and forest certification, and project management, he helps Congolese forestry players achieve sustainable management that meets both national and international requirements.



Monique NGOMA

Administrative, Accounting and Logistics Assistant

Monique ensures the smooth daily operation of activities, supporting the financial, administrative and logistical management of field operations. Meticulous in her work, she plays an important role in monitoring internal procedures in the Republic of Congo.



Achille MONKA

Driver

Achille oversees staff transportation during field missions across the country and plays a key role in day-to-day logistics. He also acts as a courier for deliveries and local administrative tasks.



Armand Blaise DIAMVINZA

Principal technical assistant for the MIB Congo project

CAMEROON TEAM



Germain YENE

ASP Green Pact project manager

Germain is a Forest and Water engineer with over 20 years of experience in forest and agro-industrial management in both Central and West Africa. From 2019 to 2023, he coordinated the PAFC project for the Congo Basin. At ATIBT, he serves as project manager for the ASP GREEN PACT in Cameroon, under the PAMFOR programme. He currently works to strengthen the involvement of the private forestry sector in Green Pact dynamics and sustainable governance. He also coordinates ATIBT's partnerships in the field in Cameroon.



Yanick NKOULOU

UFA-Reforest project manager

A specialist in plantation-related issues at ATIBT, Yanick coordinates the Agroforestry and Plantation Commission and has been the project manager for UFA-Reforest since 2022. In this role, he leads the EU-supported project aimed at strengthening reforestation practices within Cameroon's Forest Management Units, contributing to a more sustainable and resilient forest management. He also coordinates the various actions carried out by the project's partners.



Hortense ELLA-MENYE BATINDEK

ADEFAC communication and monitoring-evaluation manager

Since April 2020, Hortense has been a Technical Assistant at ATIBT as part of the ADEFAC project. Since June 2022, she has also served as Vice-President of the Cameroon Development Evaluation Association (CaDEA). Her scientific research focuses on education and training, socialisation, and gender dynamics in the workplace.

GABON TEAM



Jacqueline LARDIT-VAN DE POL

ADEFAC Project Coordinator

An expert in technical and administrative management of multi-stakeholder projects, Jacqueline - now based in Gabon - has been the manager of ADEFAC's professional training project (Cameroon, Gabon, Republic of Congo, and Democratic Republic of Congo) since April 2020. Jacqueline is also head of ATIBT's forest-industry commission and she oversees discussions on second-generation management plans with ATIBT members.



OUR RELAY IN LATIN AMERICA



Jeanicolau Simone de Lacerda

Forest-environment expert

Jeanicolau is based in São Paulo and has been ATIBT's representative for both Brazil and Peru since 2024. In particular, Jeanicolau monitors issues relating to the EUTR and CITES.



DEPARTURES IN 2024

WE WARMLY THANK OUR FORMER COLLEAGUES

- **Josépha COACHE,**

Communication and project coordination support – CSR project officer
Departed in June 2024

- **Marion VAQUIN,**

Administrative and financial manager
Departed in October 2024

- **Donation NZALA,**

Forest governance expert for the ASP Congo project
Departed in July 2024

- **Ruth Prudence KOUSSINGOUNINA,**

Administrative, accounting and logistics assistant at the ATIBT office in Brazzaville
Departed in March 2024

WELCOMED IN 2025



Armand Blaise DIAMVINZA

Principal technical assistant for the MIB Congo project

Armand obtained his degree as a Water and Forestry Engineering Technician from the National School of Water and Forestry in Cap Estérias (Gabon – Omar BONGO University). After eight years in the Congolese civil service in various management positions, he continued his studies in France, where he earned a postgraduate diploma (DESS) in Timber Technologies (1993) and a Master of Advanced Studies (DEA) in Industrial Systems Engineering (1994).

He spent many years working in the private sector, notably with FORALAC and then AFRIWOOD INDUSTRIE, where he held various management positions in timber processing and forest operations.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SITE

© ATIBT



ATIBT is headquartered within the [Cité du Développement Durable in Paris](#). The Site is a unique hub bringing together organisations representing the diverse range of players involved in sustainable development and ecological transitions: research bodies, training centres, consultancy firms, endowment funds, consultation

collectives, social and solidarity economy enterprises, etc.

Together, these stakeholders and their international partners work towards producing and widely sharing knowledge on the challenges of sustainable development, as well as promoting innovative solutions.

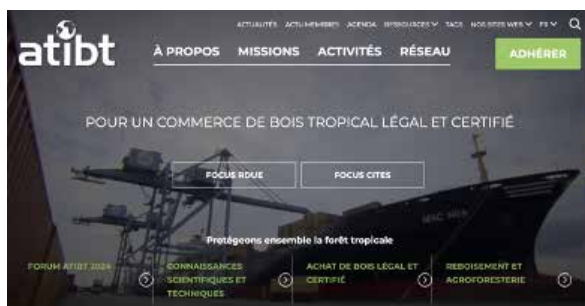
In response to the need to initiate new development pathways linking territories here and elsewhere, which question our lifestyles and organisational methods, the members of the Site commit to breaking down the barriers between their respective specialties and research to foster unprecedented collaborations.

ATIBT's agroforestry and plantation commission includes members of the Site. ATIBT also contributes at the level of the Master's programme at the Institut d'Études du Développement de la Sorbonne (IEDES), which is based within the Site.

ATIBT'S VISIBILITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

| ATIBT'S WEBSITES

**ATIBT's visibility and information sharing
A reminder of ATIBT's existing websites**



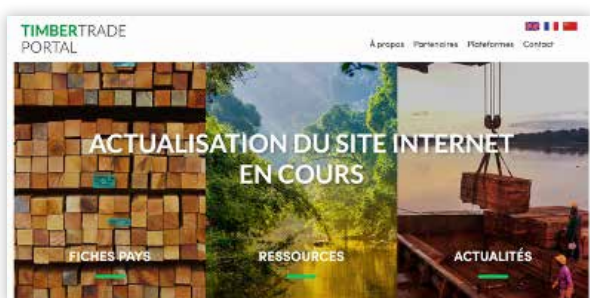
atibt.org

ATIBT's official platform brings together a source of technical, scientific and regulatory information on species, sustainable management practices, international trade, as well as the environmental and socio-economic issues linked to the sector. Each week, ATIBT publishes its newsletter and updates information related to events organised by the association.



Fair&Precious.org

The Fair&Precious website is an initiative led by ATIBT to promote the sustainable management of certified tropical forests. Through its 10 commitments, the Fair&Precious programme targets the general public, professionals and policy-makers. It highlights the commitments of certified companies, provides awareness-raising tools and offers educational content to encourage responsible consumption of tropical timber.



Timber Trade Portal – currently being updated – ATIBT is seeking funding to update the country profiles and integrate the EUDR's requirements.

My Tropical Timber - currently being updated – A complete redesign of this website began in 2024 and will be accessible during 2025. The main goal of the MTT site, www.mytropicaltimber.org, is to promote sustainable development and responsible trade within the tropical timber sector. Its aims are to:

- Map, country by country, the main players of the tropical timber value

chain: unions, producers, processors, traders, importers, etc.

- Facilitate the trade of tropical timber by connecting the various players within the sector.
- Raise awareness regarding the importance of sustainably managing tropical forests, by highlighting certified companies.
- Inform the public about certified tropical timber, its origins, and its uses.

While the first version of the website targeted European stakeholders, the new platform will now bring together tropical forest and timber sector players at an international scale.



Bois-Congo.org

Launched in July 2024, the Bois Congo website was developed by ATIBT as part of the Support to the Private Sector (ASP) Congo project. This site positions itself as a key platform for all stakeholders involved in the management, processing, and trade of sustainably managed Congolese tropical timber.

| SOCIAL NETWORKS

THE INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT



The Fair&Precious program has an Instagram page.

Key figures:

- 4,670 subscribers as of December 31, 2024.
- Accounts reached in 2024: 512,596

THE LINKEDIN PAGES



The number of followers and overall reach have continued to grow on both accounts. As of 31 December 2024, ATIBT's LinkedIn page reached 4,000 followers, while the Fair&Precious page climbed to 2,180 followers.

Key figures for the Fair&Precious page:

- 2,180 followers (as of 31 December 2024)
- 13,420 impressions (reach)
- 264 reactions
- 15.5% engagement rate

Key figures for the ATIBT page:

- 4,000 followers (as of 31 December 2024)
- 70,237 impressions (reach)
- 1,761 reactions
- 25.5% engagement rate

ATIBT'S NEWSLETTERS



In 2024, a total of 74 newsletters and newsflash updates were sent out. The weekly newsletter is issued every Friday afternoon and, in the event of urgent updates, is supplemented by newsflash items, usually focused on a single topic. These newsletters and newsflash updates enabled the wide dissemination of 173 articles.

Project-related content included:

- 3 articles on ASP Cameroon
- 5 articles on UFA Reforest
- 10 articles on ASP Congo
- 12 articles on the EUDR
- 15 articles on CITES
- 2 articles on the Themis and Dryades projects
- 11 articles on vocational training and the ADEFAC project

2024 PUBLICATIONS



In 2024, numerous documents were published on the ATIBT website:

- [12 new booklets](#) presenting guidance and recommendations on the uses of tropical timber in international trade.
- A new guide entitled "[Local Use of Central African Timber](#)", intended for producer countries. This guide was developed as part of the ADEFAC vocational training project and funded by the French Development Agency (AFD). It is the follow-up to the 2017 guide, which focused on the use of certified tropical timber in Europe.

- Completion of the [EHPVAL project](#) (High-Potential Timber Species for High-Value Use). In this project, the University of Liège – Gembloux Agro-Bio-Tech brought together diverse areas of expertise to meet the needs expressed by partner companies, so as to enhance the value of lesser-used species. The PPECF, along with industrial, academic, and NGO partners, were thanked by the project leaders for their contributions.
- Publication of [occupational profiles](#) as part of the ADEFAC project. Through this initiative, ATIBT promotes the tropical timber sector by publishing clear, educational job sheets on the association's website.

All of these publications, along with those from previous years, are available on the Association's website.

2024

EVENTS CALENDAR

JANUARY

- **January 16** - LCB tropical timber commission
- **January 18** - Webinar on the EUDR's impacts on the American timber sector
- **January 19** - Celebration of 70 years of Gabon's National School of Water and Forests
- **January 24** - EUDR webinar for PEFC members
- **January 25** - ATIBT [EUDR webinar](#)

FEBRUARY

- **February 6-9** - **EUROBOIS** - The trade show for timber, processing technologies, and interior fittings
- **February 19** - Webinar on the FSC regulation module
- **February 20** - Webinar on FSC risk analyses
- **February 27** - PEFC webinar on the EUDR

MARCH

- **March 6-7** - International Conference on Preserving tropical forests through sustainable management (Kuching, Malaysia)
- **March 7-8** - [World Impact Summit - Bordeaux \(France\)](#)
- **March 11-15** - Conference on nature-based solutions - Mosi-Oa-Tunya (Zambia): Accelerating sustainable forest management in Africa through FSC solutions: Markets and policy solutions
- **March 13-15** - Workshop on the generalisation of certification in Gabon
- **March 25** - ATIBT Think Tank 6: lobbying and innovative finance
- **March 27** - PEFC webinar on the PEFC EUDR DDS standard module

APRIL

- **April 4 - Conference:** "Combating imported deforestation: Public and private stakeholders confront the new European regulation on deforestation-free products"
- **April 10** - IWPA World of Wood Convention - San Diego
- **April 24** - Webinar on fair trade and Analog Forestry by CST Forêt
- **April 29-May 3** - [Conference on forest governance and policies](#) - WRI

MAY

- **May 13-16** - PEFC Week and PEFC General Assembly - Paris
- **May 17** - Board of Directors meeting
- **May 24** - 40 years of CITES in Belgium - Brussels
- **May 28-30** - ATIBT at the *Carrefour International du Bois* trade fair
- **May 29** - France-Gabon business forum - Paris

JUNE

- **June 3-5** - [20th Meeting of the Parties of the CBFP](#) - Kinshasa (DRC)
- **June 7** - ATIBT General Assembly
- **June 12-14** - African Conference on eco-materials in Libreville
- **June 14** - ETTF General Assembly in Amsterdam
- **June 14** - FEP General Assembly in Vienna
- **June 18** - ATIBT / ETIC EUDR webinar

JULY

- **July 2-5** - 1st Conference on Reforestation and Afforestation in Brazzaville
- **July 3** - FSC Aligned for EUDR
- **July 8-12** - 27th session of the CITES Plants Committee in Geneva
- **July 22-26** - FAO COFO in Rome

SEPTEMBER

- **September 2-6** - Regional CITES workshop: capacity building for the range states of rosewood *Pterocarpus erinaceus*
- **September 11-12** - Global Legal and Sustainable Timber Forum (GLSTF 2024), Macau
- **September 11-12** - 2024 Global Forum on legally and sustainably sourced timber
- **September 25** - English-speaking members' meeting (LHC / TDUK) in London

OCTOBER

- **October 2** - ATIBT General Assembly in Antwerp
- **October 2** - EUDR Compliance Countdown: How FSC Can Support
- **October 3-4** - ATIBT Forum in Antwerp
- **October 7** - 3rd conference on forest conservation, Paris City Hall
- **October 16** - ETTF general assembly in Taormina, Italy ahead of the "International Softwood Conference"
- **October 21-November 1** - COP16 meeting on biodiversity - Colombia
- **October 23** - Workshop: Classification of forest and woodland ecosystems and assessment of their degradation as part of efforts to curb imported deforestation – CST forêt
- **October 23** - WRI webinar Bigger and Better in Baku: Scaling Up Climate Finance for Developing Nations
- **October 29** - BRMC Forum 2024, Ghana
- **October 31** - FSC Amazon Business Encounter

NOVEMBER

- **November 7-8** - International Hardwood Conference - Vienna
- **November 11-19** - COP 29 in Baku, Azerbaijan
- **November 16-18** - COP29 side event: Biodiversity, trade, solidarity and climate change
- **November 18** - COP 29 - Side event - regulation and beyond
- **November 25** - CCMO FLEGT VPA, Abidjan
- **November 28** - AIMMP Congress and General Assembly, Luso - Portugal
- **November 28** - Cairo Woodshow

DECEMBER

- **December 1** - 60th Session of the International tropical timber Council and associated Committee sessions
- **December 3-5** - Conexion Verde, AL Invest, Belem, Brazil
- **December 5** - UMB-FFB Board of Directors meeting
- **December 6** - ATIBT Board of Directors meeting
- **December 12** - ETIC conference on biodiversity at the European parliament, Brussels

A person wearing an orange shirt and a white helmet is visible in the background, partially obscured by dense green foliage. The scene appears to be a wet forest or jungle, with water droplets on the leaves. A large green semi-transparent rectangle is overlaid on the bottom half of the image, containing the page number and title.

2

THE SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL AND ATIBT'S COMMISSIONS, THE ASSOCIATION'S TECHNICAL BODIES

ATIBT must remain closely attuned to the realities in the field and the challenges facing the sector. The actions carried out by the Association, mainly through its projects, must align with the wishes of its members. To this end, ATIBT has established various **thematic working groups** - ATIBT's Commissions - which bring together Association members who wish to contribute to **discussions on key issues affecting the tropical timber sector**, sometimes with external contributors. Thanks to the commitment of active members within the various commissions, ATIBT plays an active role in international debates on the tropical forest and timber sector. These collective efforts are key to maintaining an innovative sector that is compliant with international standards and is economically viable. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the members who bring our commissions to life!

THE SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL

A platform for critical analysis and technical dialogue, ATIBT's Scientific Council brings together researchers and experts from institutions located in both Northern and Southern countries. Its mission is to ensure the scientific robustness of the Association's positions, tools, and projects, in connection with the major issues affecting sustainable tropical forest management. It supports ATIBT's programmes by offering methodological guidance, scientific monitoring, and advice based on the best available knowledge.

In 2024, members of the Scientific Council contributed to discussions on topics of great importance to ATIBT:

- Some participated in the development of a concept note on assessing the implementation of forest management plans.
- Others supported the drafting and review of strategic documents related to CITES, particularly on NDFs (Non-Detriment Findings), and helped raise awareness regarding technical issues encountered in the field.
- Many supported ATIBT's scientific participation in the CITES Plants Committee, providing insights drawn from both research and forestry practice.

- Several members were involved in analysing the vulnerability of timber species harvested in Central Africa, as part of their assessment by the IUCN. This work helped clarify the conservation status of certain commercial species and contributed to discussions regarding their potential listing in the CITES Annexes.

Challenges and outlook for 2025:

- Strengthen scientific support for preparation of the CITES CoP20 meeting;
- Finalise a methodological framework to assess forest management plans in Central Africa;
- Consolidate the scientific basis for vulnerability assessments of forest species within the IUCN framework;
- Improve the dissemination of scientific findings to logging companies, decision-makers, and technical partners.

Contacts :

President: Jean-Louis Doucet (Gembloux Agro-Bio Tech University)

Secretary : Franck Monthe (franck.monthe@atibt.org), ATIBT.

THE COMMISSIONS

| THE MARKETING & COMMUNICATION COMMISSION

The aim of the Marketing & Communication Commission is to strengthen the visibility of sustainable tropical timber on international markets. It supports sector stakeholders in their communication efforts, in commercial differentiation, and in expansion into new markets.

Topics that are specifically addressed:

- Market developments and trends
- An overview of marketing activities
- Ongoing projects
- The presentation of indicators (websites, newsletters, social media)
- The presentation of communication campaigns
- Discussion on the evolution of the Fair&Precious marketing programme
- A review of opportunities and outlook for the coming months

Why participate? "Doing things well is one thing. Letting people know about it is another." Commission meetings are an opportunity for members to influence decisions related to marketing activities. They contribute their knowledge and expertise to the design of collective campaigns promoting the benefits of tropical timber.

Activities monitored by this commission in 2024:

- Major events (the CLB and the Antwerp Forum)
- New website (*Bois Congo*)
- Monitoring of the Fair&Precious brand

Challenges and areas to focus on in 2025:

In 2025, the highlights will be the organisation of the Racewood meeting, a new visibility campaign and the re-launch of Fair&Precious.

Contact : Chair: To be appointed
Secretary: Nathalie Bouville, ATIBT

| THE CERTIFICATION & REGULATION COMMISSION AND ITS WORKING GROUPS



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The Certification & Regulation Commission (and its sub-groups) serves as a strategic forum to support members in their certification processes and help them anticipate regulatory developments. It works to enhance the value of

sustainable tropical timber on the international markets by facilitating dialogue among companies, certifiers, experts and stakeholders.

Topics that are specifically addressed:

- The monitoring of certification developments in the Congo Basin (FSC, PAFC, legality certification, etc.)
- Updates on audit processes, standards, field practices and dialogue with the certification bodies (FSC and PAFC/PEFC)
- Surveillance and interpretation of European regulations (EUTR/EUDR, Green Claim, CRCF, etc.) and international regulations (CITES, in coordination with the forest-industry commission)

- Discussions on related initiatives: FSC Motion 23 on Intact Forest Landscapes (IFLs), PPECF, carbon projects, Green Claims, etc.
- Presentation of capacity-building projects and tools (Tashmetum, toolbox certification, etc.)
- Updates on developments among sector stakeholders (certification bodies, ongoing accreditations)
- Collective positioning and advocacy (EUDR, CITES, certification in Gabon, IFL dialogue, etc.)

Why participate?

"To turn certification into a management tool, not a box to tick"

The Commission offers a platform to share field challenges, co-develop appropriate responses, and better anticipate regulatory changes. It also provides a means for certified companies to make their voices heard by certification bodies and institutions.

Key developments in 2024:

- Monitoring and contributions to discussions on EUDR implementation (deadlines, GPS, information systems)
- Technical dialogue on FSC Motion 23 and the IFL pilot project in the Republic of Congo
- Launch of the Tashmetum portal (certification toolbox)
- Monitoring of developments in legality certifications and their alignment with the EUDR
- Involvement in the revision of OLB standards and launch of the new "PBN Certification" label

Challenges and outlook for 2025:

- Anticipating the implementation of the EUDR despite EU delays
- Strengthening the credibility of certificates and preventing opportunistic misuse
- Completing the IFL pilot and proposing suitable local indicators
- Finalising the revision of standards (PAFC, FSC, OLB) and supporting their implementation
- Preparing for and attending the FSC General Assembly in October 2025 in Panama

Contacts :

President: Nicolas Perthuisot

Secretary: Caroline Duhesme, ATIBT

| THE TRAINING COMMISSION



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The Training Commission is a network of sector and/or training professional stakeholders, whose main objectives are to exchange on education, training, skills and jobs issues related to the tropical forest-timber sector.

Topics that are specifically addressed:

- Training offers and activities proposed by ATIBT members
- Current skills needs among professionals and anticipated future developments
- Ongoing or upcoming projects related to education or training in the tropical forest-timber sector
- The visibility and attractiveness of careers in the tropical forest-timber sector
- Any activity that enables ATIBT to contribute, as a technical and strategic player, to the improvement of education and training systems in the sector.

Why participate? The forest has its talents – let's help them grow.

What was launched in 2024:

Discussions regarding "ATIBT timber classification" training and the need to re-launch these training courses

Outlook for 2025: recognition by ATIBT of "classification" training courses rolled

out in Central Africa and/or deployment of ATIBT-led training; communication and promotion of training opportunities offered by ATIBT's various members; completion of the ADEFAC project and preparation for its second phase.

Contacts :

President: Arnaud Besserer, ENSTIB

Secretary: Elise Mazeyrac, ATIBT

| THE TIMBER MATERIALS & STANDARDISATION COMMISSION



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The objective is to create a network of experts to discuss collective developments and strategies to establish and meet standards. CIRAD provides technical support to ATIBT and its members on various issues related to tropical timber. The meetings offer an opportunity to examine potential updates to ATIBT's technical documents.

Why participate? Member participation helps identify existing needs so that responses or relevant actions can be developed accordingly. Each year, the commission addresses topics related to scientific and technical analyses, properties, uses, durability, pathologies, manufacturing, and regulations.

In 2024, CIRAD's Tropical Timber team contributed to cooperative actions defined in the partnership agreement signed with ATIBT for the year:

1. Publication of technical documents developed as part of the Technical Commission

- Finalisation of the French and English versions of the 12 booklets from the study entitled "Guidelines and Recommendations on Contracts and Uses in the International Trade of Tropical Timber".
- Summary factsheet on mahoganies and species of the *Khaya* genus from continental Africa.
- Drafting of the "Performance and Functional Requirements Guide for Structures Using African Tropical Timber", developed as part of the PPECF's project (finalised in January 2025).

2. Other actions carried out or ongoing (2024):

- Participation in the ATIBT / IWPA (International Wood Products Association) webinar: *"African lumber, a world of opportunities for the US market"*.
- ATIBT stand at the Carrefour International du Bois in Nantes.
- ATIBT Forum in Antwerp: participation in the roundtable *"The evolution of forest management plans: from harvesting to silviculture and the role of LKTS"*.
- *Gluing applied to solid timber: a technological lever to support African tropical*

cal timber. Adding value to LKTS and to co-products of the production-processing chain, and improving material yields: ongoing study (as part of the ASP Cameroon project).

The first meeting of the year was held on 24 March 2025, and the second will take place in mid-October 2025.

Contacts:

- President: Emmanuel Groutel, Wale
- Secretariat: Jean Gérard, Cirad
- Coordination: Paul Cuveillier, ATIBT

| THE FOREST & INDUSTRY COMMISSION



A strategic forum for exchange, the Forest & Industry Commission connects members (logging companies, industrial players, research firms, professional associations, importers) in relation to major issues ranging from forest management to industry. Since 2024, the Directors of Forestry from the relevant Ministries in producer countries have been systematically invited to the commission meetings.

Members share their perspectives on key issues, stay closely connected to regulatory developments, report back from the field, and collaborate in co-developing tools that benefit all stakeholders.

In 2024, the commission met twice, and several additional activities and meetings were held in relation to the topic of CITES:

- Each meeting included an update on CITES: sharing of documents, issues encountered by administrations and businesses, proposed solutions, and the calendar of upcoming CITES workshops and meetings.
- A conceptual note for evaluating the implementation of forest management plans was further developed, thanks to the support of Elise Cambier, who joined ATIBT as an intern. The environmental and social components were expanded, and a list of criteria to be assessed and stakeholders to consult was drawn up. Several potential sources of funding for this evaluation were also identified, although no concrete results have materialised yet.

Challenges and next steps for 2025:

- Mobilising producer countries for the organisation of the CITES CoP20 meeting.
- Conclusion of the first forest management plan in Gabon.
- Securing funding for the evaluation of forest management plan implementation in Central Africa.

Contact:

President: Nicolas BAYOL, FRMi
Secretariat: Jacqueline LARDIT, ATIBT

THE CARBON & BIODIVERSITY COMMISSION



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The Carbon & Biodiversity Commission (CC&B) is a strategic forum for reflection, intermediation and influence aimed at connecting forestry players with the opportunities and challenges related to the carbon markets, climate finance and biodiversity. It acts as a bridge between the field, research, finance and international policy, with the goal of securing recognition for sustainable tropical forest management as a key catalyst for the climate, biodiversity and local development.

Topics that are specifically addressed:

- **Monitoring and information sharing** on climate, carbon, biodiversity and public policy updates (COP and other international events, funding initiatives - such as Country Packages - and updates on standards such as VERRA and OBC, etc.)
- **Participation in international events**, representing the tropical forest-timber sector in forums often dominated by technological approaches, where nature-based solutions are still in the minority despite being key, and where
- the sector remains underrepresented (COP28 and 29 and upcoming COP30 meeting on Climate, COP16 meeting on biodiversity in Cali).
- **Dialogue with players involved in climate and biodiversity funding:** identifying relevant mechanisms (REDD+, IFM, ARR, biodiversity certificates, green bonds, public and private funds...), clarifying requirements, and sharing feedback.
- **Support for the emergence of pilot projects** (e.g. biodiversity credits in Gabon, adding value to certified areas) and guidance for forestry players in developing credible, methodologically robust and fundable projects.
- **Reflection on standards that are adapted to the Congo Basin**, particularly to demonstrate the additionality of existing sustainable practices (RIL-C, certification, biodiversity preservation).
- **Advocacy for better representation of the Congo Basin** in international events and funding mechanisms.

Why participate?

"Promoting sustainable forest management given current climate and biodiversity challenges."

The Commission allows its members to better understand a complex environment (carbon and biodiversity funding, standards, political constraints, emerging mechanisms), to make their voices heard on the international stage, and to access economic opportunities associated with sustainable management. It also promotes coordination among private and public players as well as civil society.

What was launched in 2024:

- **Organisation of the "innovative funding" session of Think Tank VI** in Nogent-sur-Marne, bringing together public donors (CAFI, AFD/FFEM, Green Climate Fund, etc.), private investors (Livelihoods, aDryada, WWF, etc.) and forestry companies. Objective: to clarify possibilities for alternative funding for timber products, identify obstacles and build a common agenda.
- Participation in the "Lobbying for the tropical forest and timber sector" session **of Think Tank VI** in Nogent-sur-Marne, with feedback from the commission's participations in the COPs meetings.
- **Participation in the ATIBT forum in Antwerp, and organisation of sessions dedicated to innovative funding** for the forest-timber sector: Round Table 3.1 - sustainable forest management as a vector for biodiversity preservation in the Congo Basin's tropical forests and Round Table 3.2 - an update on forest carbon projects in Central Africa.
- **Organisation of an end-of-year Commission meeting**, to provide members with "feedback" from the COP16 Biodiversity and COP29 Climate meetings.

• Participation in the COP meetings:

- COP16 Biodiversity meeting in Cali: discussions on the role of indigenous populations, the structuring of biodiversity credits, the launch of the Cali Fund, the emergence of "Country Packages" (Gabon, Congo, DRC, etc.).
- COP29 Climate meeting in Baku: discussions on the revision of Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, opportunities for voluntary/regulated carbon markets, IFM methodology, the importance of the role of the private forestry sector.
- **Launch of the OBC's (Organisation for Biodiversity Certificates) "Tropical Forest" group** which will, in particular, structure the supply of biodiversity credits specific to tropical ecosystems.
- **Dialogue with Congo Basin foresters** to better identify needs and define a shared roadmap. Proposal for a pilot project and reflection on additionality indicators (e.g. biodiversity).

Challenges and outlook for 2025:

- **Structuring a credible offer** of carbon and biodiversity projects adapted to the context of the Congo Basin (especially for sustainably certified companies).
- **Supporting the OBC group's progress on tropical forests**, with the identification of practices with positive impacts on biodiversity, and the launch of pilot projects (Cameroon, Gabon) within the framework of an ongoing FFEM project.
- **Supporting the sector's participation in the COP30 Climate meeting** in Brazil, by preparing sufficiently early and by both ensuring proactive communication and organising side events on site.

- **Defining a strategy of argumentation and narration** ("storytelling") on the multiple benefits of sustainable forest management (climate, social aspects, biodiversity), with a view towards both investors and donors.
- **Encouraging greater commitment by the African States** to support projects from the sustainable sector within international mechanisms (funds, frameworks, funding).

Contacts:

Presidency: COMIFAC

Secretariat: Coline Seyller and Pierre Schueller, secretariat is handled by TERE

ATIBT Coordination: Caroline Duhesme

THE SEARCH FOR INNOVATIVE FUNDING MECHANISMS

OBC biodiversity certificates: the work has begun!

In 2024, the Organization for Biodiversity Certificates (OBC) reached a major milestone in building a market-based approach for biodiversity certificates. This tool aims to mobilise private funding for the restoration and preservation of ecosystems, especially forest ecosystems, while ensuring scientific rigour and a genuine impact on biodiversity. ATIBT became involved in this initiative very early on (in 2022), with a strong commitment to achieving recognition and promoting the value of **sustainably managed tropical forests** as a key lever for contributing to global biodiversity.

In the face of growing criticism of conventional **compensation** mechanisms – accused of allowing companies to continue degrading here while claiming to restore elsewhere – the OBC advocates an alternative approach, focused on a **voluntary contribution**. The point is no longer to "offset a loss", but to **actively support positive practices for biodiversity**, whether in forestry, agriculture or land manage-

ment. This vision, shared by ATIBT, places actions in the field and ecological integrity at the heart of the system.

Our commitment takes concrete form through active participation in the OBC's "tropical zone" project, launched in 2024, which aims to identify the forest management practices that are most beneficial to biodiversity in the forests of Africa, Asia and Latin America. The ambitions are clear: to define a framework of impact-measurable actions, to support the development of value chains around pilot forestry projects, and to strengthen recognition of sustainable management approaches in international biodiversity policies.

ATIBT sees this as a tremendous opportunity to concretely highlight sustainable management practices in tropical forest concessions, which are often pioneers in terms of certification and biodiversity preservation. Through the OBC, these efforts can be better recognised, financially supported, and integrated into national and international pathways for contributing to the Kunming objectives.

The year 2024 also marked an important political milestone with the **OBC's presence at COP16 meeting** in Cali (Colombia), where its contribution-based and territorial approach was highlighted, particularly during a round table alongside the IAPB (International Advisory Panel on Biodiversity Credits). This international recognition confirms the relevance of the project, whose cornerstones are scientific rigour, inclusiveness, and pragmatism.

In 2025, the ATIBT will take over coordination of the OBC's "tropical forests" working group, thereby consolidating its leading role in methodological and strategic discussions on the development of certificates in these regions. This is also a way of advocating for a contribution-based vision that is rooted in real-world conditions, as opposed to approaches that are sometimes overly focused on compensation.

By supporting a **contribution-based approach that is aligned with the Kunming objectives**, ATIBT affirms that tropical forests should not be seen solely as carbon sinks or sanctuaries to be compensated for, but as living territories that should be supported. This dynamic presents a real opportunity for our members, and a tangible catalyst to reconcile economy, climate and biodiversity.

OPEN LETTER TO EUROPEAN AUTHORITIES ON THE PROPOSED CARBON REMOVAL CERTIFICATION FRAMEWORK (CRCF)

The **CRCF** (Carbon Removal Certification Framework), a European framework project that aims to certify carbon removals, gives a predominant role to **carbon capture and storage technologies**, to the detriment of **nature-based solutions (NBS)**, in particular **forest-based projects**. The latter are deemed less reliable due to the risk of non-permanence, despite their environmental and social co-benefits.

In response to this direction, **ATIBT**, through its **Carbon & Biodiversity commission**, joined the **NBS Coalition**, which brings together stakeholders committed to forest carbon projects. Together, they are alerting European authorities to the risk of excluding NBS projects, particularly in the global South, and calling for **fair recognition** of their contribution to climate, biodiversity and local development.

An **open letter** and a **memo dedicated to tropical zones** were submitted to the European Commission and to IUCN France, while ongoing dialogue has been initiated in Brussels. ATIBT is thus actively engaged in **defending the role of forests in European carbon regulation**.

The 6th ATIBT Think Tank – A dual reflection on the future of the tropical forest-timber sector, Nogent, 24-25 March 2024.

On 25 and 26 March 2024, ATIBT organised its sixth Think Tank at the *Jardin d'Agronomie Tropicale* in Nogent-sur-Marne, bringing together around 30 in-person participants and about 40 online attendees each day. A genuine platform for debate and foresight, this meeting initiated strategic discussions on two major topics: **lobbying for sustainable management of tropical forests and innovative funding for the sector**.

Day 1: Reasserting the sector's role in international debates

The first day was dedicated to the political and media visibility challenges of the tropical forest-timber sector. Too often marginalised in high-level discussions (Climate COPs, CITES, EUDR), this sector nevertheless plays a crucial role in combating deforestation and preserving biodiversity. In the session entitled "Lobbying", the Carbon and Biodiversity Commission (represented by Pierre Schueller and Coline Seyller [Terea]) shared their experiences regarding difficulties and action catalysts that can be used to improve representation of the Congo Basin, which remains largely invisible in the major international forums.

The discussions highlighted the gaps in visibility between the tropical forest basins, with the Amazon Basin being over-represented compared to the near-invisibility of the Congo Basin. Participants emphasised the need to increase the sector's participation in international events through better planning, increased communication, and reinforced political and financial support.

| THE AGROFORESTRY & PLANTATIONS COMMISSION



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The Agroforestry and Plantations Commission aims to make the model of forest concessions evolve in order to make the humid tropical forest a sustainable catalyst for the development of both local populations and territories.

Topics that are specifically addressed:

- Deliberations on forestry planter/logger partnerships to generate an opportunity for income diversification that is ecologically acceptable and socially highly positive within forest concessions' agricultural zones;

- The consideration of innovative partnerships between companies;
- The sharing of experiences gained by ATIBT members;
- Discussions on innovative methods and techniques.

Contact:

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Secretariat: Crispin ILUNGA-MULALA
MUSHAGALUSA (Gembloux)

ATIBT Coordination: Yanick Nkoulou

KEY FIGURES REGARDING ATIBT AND THE SECTOR

3

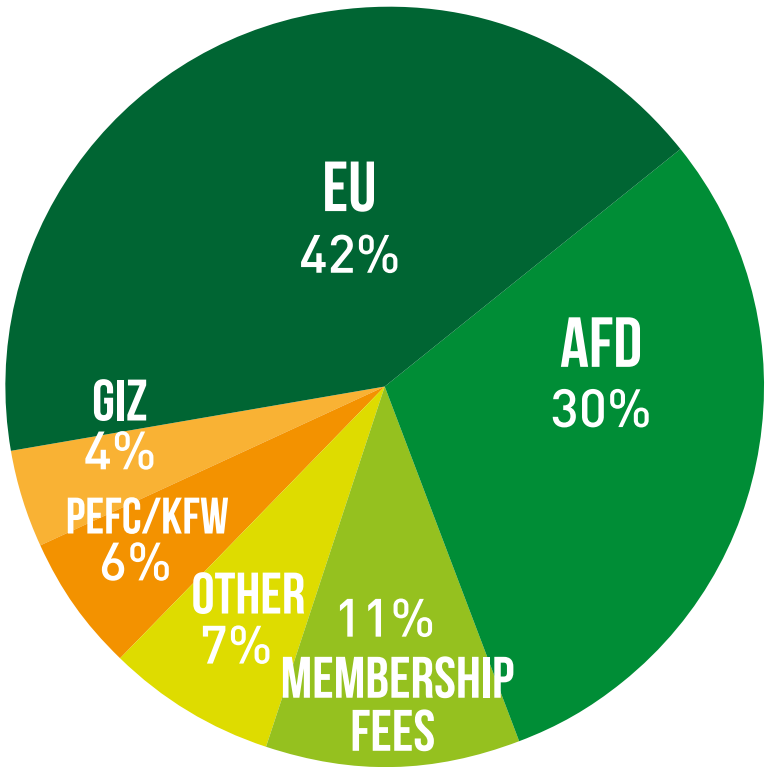


ORIGIN OF ATIBT'S RESOURCES FOR 2024

ATIBT's budget stood at €2,542K for 2024, representing a significant increase of €1,067K compared with 2023. This increase includes a 6% progression in annual membership fees, which now amount to €284K, testifying to members' growing commitment. Additionally, exceptional contributions were provided to facilitate the organisation of two major events: the CIB and the FORUM.

Regarding grants, we reached a total of €1,999K. This amount results from the advancement of several ongoing projects, which allowed us to request new funding tranches. Moreover, the launch of new projects, such as MIB Congo funded by the European Union, is also part of this dynamic.

Resources in K€	2024	2023	Variation	Variation %
Membership fees and private partnerships	284	268	16	6%
Project grants	1999	1207	792	66%
Exceptional contributions	259	0	259	-
TOTAL	2542	1475	1067	72%



WHAT ARE YOUR MEMBERSHIP FEES USED FOR?



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The membership fees portion usually represents one-fifth of our budget; however, this proportion is slightly diluted this year in favour of a greater proportion from grants. Membership fees constitute a regular and stable source of income, which provides appreciable security to our financial partners. Thanks to member support, ATIBT can effectively respond to its working capital needs by covering part of its operational expenses, such as rent, insurance, subscriptions, as well as accountant and auditor fees.

These contributions are also crucial to fund certain services, notably the agreement signed with the CIRAD, which provides technical support on "timber technique" topics, one of ATIBT's historic commitments to its members.

Furthermore, membership fees allow us to operate ATIBT's Commissions,

a genuine meeting platforms for all members, around crucial subjects such as standardisation, timber knowledge, certification, training, agroforestry and plantations, marketing, forest industry, as well as issues related to carbon and biodiversity, not to mention ATIBT's Scientific Council.

These fees represent essential support for project instruction, which subsequently give rise to concrete actions in the field or significant institutional initiatives. Although actions are often funded by donors, the preparatory phase, which can extend over several months, is entirely at our expense. Moreover, the co-funding required for certain actions, which can reach 15 to 20%, is also covered by these membership fees, as are certain targeted advocacy efforts. Lastly, the fees cover recurring matters that ATIBT oversees, such as the nomenclature of tropical timber, project mapping, the monitoring of certified areas, newsletters, and the update of websites.

Exceptional membership fees also play a key role. They allow us to fund specific initiatives that may require additional resources, thereby contributing to our projects' visibility and impact. Thanks to these contributions, ATIBT is able to organise meetings, seminars and other events that encourage the exchange of ideas and raise awareness on specific subjects. With this in mind, we would like to express our gratitude for the exceptional collective effort that was furnished this year, particularly for the CIB and the FORUM. These events would not have been possible without the support of our partners, and we warmly thank them for their valuable contributions.

ATIBT'S FINANCIAL SITUATION AT THE END OF 2024

The year 2024 was particularly rich in activities, with numerous missions and dynamic representation. This intense commitment, both in the field and within our support functions, was remarkable. We are pleased to note that these collective efforts are bearing fruit. ATIBT closes its accounts with a net result that is over €40K, a solid financial performance that allows it to reinforce its cash on hand and therefore its financial stability.



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SOME FIGURES ABOUT THE SECTOR IN THE CONGO BASIN AND IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Summary table by ATIBT presenting key data on the forest-timber sector in the Congo Basin and in Côte d'Ivoire. Updated with contributions from OFAC-COMIFAC.

Elements of comparison	Cameroon	Gabon	Congo	DRC	CAR	Equatorial Guinea	Côte d'Ivoire
Forest and harvesting							
Humid and dense forest area	20,3 million ha ^[1] 19,8 million ha (OFAC 2023)	23,5 million ha ^[1] 23 million ha (OFAC 2023)	21,9 million ha ^[1] 24 million ha (OFAC 2020)	126,1 million ha ^[1] 155 million ha (OFAC 2023)	22,3 million ha ^[1] 22,3 million ha (OFAC 2022)	2,45 million ha ^[1] 2,45 million ha (OFAC 2022)	2,97 M ha (MEF 2022)
Area allocated to industrial exploitation, excluding communal forests^[2]	9,4 million ha (OFAC 2023)	19,55 million ha (OFAC 2022)	14,8 million ha (OFAC 2020)	15,4 million ha ^[2] 14,98 million ha (OFAC 2022)	3,7 million ha (OFAC 2022)	0,82 million ha (OFAC 2022)	1,7 M ha (MEF 2022)
Total certified areas^[3] of which	2,918 million ha (ATIBT 2025)	4,737 million ha (ATIBT 2025)	4,598 million ha (ATIBT 2025)	0,264 million ha (ATIBT 2025)	0 ha (ATIBT 2025)	0 ha (ATIBT 2025)	1,773 million d'ha (ATIBT 2025)
Sustainable Management (FSC FM, PAFC/PEFC) ^[4]	0,844 million ha	2,923 million ha	3,082 million ha	0 ha	0 ha	0 ha	0 ha
Legality (OLB, LS, TLV) ^[4]	2,6 million ha	2,069 million ha	2,676 million ha	0,264 million ha	0 ha	0 ha	1,773 million d'ha
Number of companies holding concessions	Approx. 60	Approx. 40	Approx. 30	Approx. 20 (of which 6 are inactive)	Approx. 10	Approx. 10	119 (MEF 2022)
Formal log production ^[5]	2,9 million (2022)	4,037 million (OFAC 2023)	1,7 million (2020)	0,25 million (OFAC 2022)	0,64 million (OFAC 2022)	0,09 million (OFAC 2024)	1,4 million m ³ (MEF 2023)
Of which FSC (m ³)	176 000 (7%)	707 000 (23%)	517 000 (30%)	0	0	0	
Share of the top 4 producers in log production ^[6]	46,6% ^[13] [part d'exportation 2022]	36% (OFAC 2023)	58% (2018)	81,4% (OFAC 2022)	77% (OFAC 2022)	69% (OFAC 2024)	
Estimated informal artisanal production (in log equivalent) ^[7]	2,4 million	0,3 million	0,3 million	3,4 million	0,1 million		
Main species harvested by the industry	Ayous, Sapelli, Tali, Limba, Okan, Azobé, Iroko, Ilomba, Dabéma, Padouk	Okoumé (Env. 50%), Awoura (4%) Azobé (2%), Okan (2%)	Sapelli, Okoumé, Okan, Tali, Kosipo, Padouk, Wenge, Iroko	Wenge, Afrormosia, Tali, Sapelli, Acajou	Sapelli, Ayous, Mukulungu, Iroko, Doussié, Padouk, Tali, Sipo, Nieuik	Okoume (82%), Padouk, Tali	Acajon, Iroko, Fraké, Framiré, Tiama, Sipo, Sapelli, Azobé
Share of the top 3 species in production ¹⁰	48,6% (OFAC 2023)	56% (OFAC 2023)	57% (2018)	37% (2020)	66,7% (OFAC 2022)	89,2 (OFAC 2022)	
Artisanally harvested species⁷	Ayous, Movingui, Iroko, Sapelli, Bilinga, Moabi	Okoumé, Bilinga, Izombé	Okoumé, Limba (Sud), Sapelli, Sipo (Nord)	Afrormosia, Wenge, Sapelli	Ayous (90%) et Sapelli (10%)		Ayous, Makoré, Niangon, Bété
Log exports ^[8] in m ³	366 806 (OFAC 2022)	0	325 630 (OFAC 2023)	131 986 (2021)	277 872,92 (OFAC 2022)	56 164 (OFAC 2022)	0 (MEF 2022)
Log exports to China ^[9] in m ³	215 408 (OFAC 2022)	890,668.81 To Asia (OFAC 2023)	298 209 (2023)	41% (Congolese Control Office 2021)	Slightly under 40% (CIFOR, 2021 ^[10])		0 (MEF 2022)
Contribution of the forest-timber sector to GDP ^[11]	4,9% (OFAC 2022)	3,9% (2023)	4,9% (2014)	0,15% (2016)	2.7% (2020)	0,29 (OFAC 2022)	< 1 % (DEIF)
Timber processing							
Number of industrial processing plants (primary to tertiary processing) ^[12]	227 (2021)	180 (OFAC 2023)	29 (2018)	5 (2018)	5 (2018)		221 (MEF 2022)
Productions (m³)^[13]		(OFAC 2023)	(MEF, 2020)	ND	(OFAC 2022)		0,9 M m ³ (MEF 2022)
• of sawn timber	984 412 (2021)	666 547	320 000		63 427		
• of plywood	121 024 (2017)	1 235 119	7 000		0	698	
• of veneers	8 000 (2017)	568 572	15 500		0		
Exportations (m³)^[14]	OFAC 2022	(OFAC 2023)	(2019)	(2021)	(OFAC 2022)		0,23 M m ³ (MEF 2022)
• of sawn timber	644 712	666 547	254 838	26 943	33 232		
• of plywood	10 917	1 235 119	ND	0	0		
• of veneers	77 406	568 572	25 893	0	0		
Sawn timber exports to China ^[15] in m ³	87 613 (2021)	524 700 (2018)	38 600 (2018)	41% (Congolese Control Office, 2021)	Slightly over 20% in 2021 (CIFOR, 2021 ^[14])		
Artisanal processing (sawn timber) ^[17]	715 000 m ³ (2010)	50 000 m ³ (2010)	Approx. 100 000 m ³ (2011)	Approx. 1 million m ³ (2014)	33,000 to 34,000 m ³ consumed per year in Bangui and nearly 5,000 m ³ exported to Chad (CIFOR, 2014)		
Other information	Existence of a domestic timber market that is slow to materialise	Nkok SEZ (Special Economic Zone) Over 50 timber processing plants Over 1 million m ³ logs processed/year (2022) ^[18]	PIC SEZ created in Pointe Noire, a first Eucalyptus veneer mill installed. Discussions underway on a production sharing system	Maluku SEZ in which 1 timber processing plant is installed. Kin Malebo SEZ under development			Domestic timber market developing strongly

Public procurement	Decree signed on 15/12/2020: obligation to use legally sourced timber in public procurement	N/A	Discussion ongoing	N/A			N/A
Socio-economic data							
Number of jobs in the industrial forestry sector	Approximately 15,000 ^[19] (9,000 in logging and 6,000 in the processing industry)	13,182 jobs in the timber industries ^[20]	7,500 (4,250 in forest logging and 3,250 in the processing industry)	4,523 ^[21]	8,000 in 2010 (CIFOR, 2014 ^[22])		Approx. 50,000 direct jobs
Number of jobs in artisanal sawmilling	40 000	1000 ^[23]	2 000	9,000 to 15,000 ^[24] but probably many more (50,000 jobs according to Les-cuyer in 2014)	1,600 steady jobs around Bangui and 420 in the urban markets (CIFOR, 2014)		
Indirect jobs	150 000	Between 2 000 and 5 000 ^[14]	500 016	N/A	N/A		
Professional associations in the forest-timber sector	<p>GFBC (11 forestry and industrial companies)</p> <p>SYNEFOR (5 forestry and industrial companies)</p> <p>FECAPROBOIS (200 SMEs and artisans)</p> <p>ANCOVA (450 SMEs and artisans in Yaoundé) Inter-syndicate relaunched in 2024 with support from the ASP project (ATIBT)</p>	<p>UFIGA (15 forestry and/or industrial companies)</p> <p>SIAG (6 forestry and/or industrial companies)</p> <p>UFIAG (11 forestry and/or industrial companies)</p> <p>UAMEES (25 SMEs and artisans in Libreville)</p> <p>CAMMA (20 SMEs and artisans in Franceville)</p> <p>KOUMU (18 artisans in Lastoursville and Koulamoutou)</p> <p>UFIGA acts as the permanent secretariat of the Inter-syndicate</p>	<p>UNICONGO (6 forestry and industrial companies)</p> <p>UNIBOIS (15 SMEs, of which 6 are active)</p> <p>ACM (approx. 100 SMEs and artisans, of which 15 are active)</p> <p>AMC (500 SMEs and artisans, including 300 in Pointe-Noire)</p> <p>FBET (17 SMEs and artisans)</p>	<p>FIB (8 forestry and industrial companies)</p> <p>CEFA (1,400 SMEs and artisans)</p> <p>Many SMEs and micro-companies are not members of any union. A huge role and potential for the FIB and the ACEFA</p>			<p>SPIB - Ivorian Timber Producers' Union</p> <p>SENBCI - Union of Timber Exporters and Traders of Côte d'Ivoire</p>
Involvement in FLEGT	<p>VPA signed in 2010. Discussions underway between Cameroon and the EU to end the VPA and replace it with a forest partnership.</p> <p>Deployment of SIGIF II underway and regulatory framework improvements is underway by the Cameroonian portion.</p>	<p>VPA not signed.</p> <p>National traceability system is currently being rolled out.</p> <p>Gabon has committed to mandatory certification for forestry companies as of 2024.</p>	<p>VPA signed in 2010.</p> <p>Preparation is underway for implementation</p> <p>Deployment of the SIVL is underway</p>	<p>VPA negotiations have halted</p>	<p>VPA signed on 28 November 2011.</p> <p>Implementation has slowed since 2012.</p>		<p>2024: VPA signed between the EU and Côte d'Ivoire.</p> <p>2028: Target year for the FLEGT licensing scheme between the EU and Côte d'Ivoire.</p>

- [1] FAO, Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020.
- [2] Cameroon: MINFOF 2021; Gabon: MEFMEPCPAT Sept 2020; DRC: BD FRMi
- [3] Surface areas with dual certification (e.g. legality+ and sustainable management) are counted only once
- [4] Surface areas with dual certification (FSC FM and PAFC/PEFC or TLV, OLB) are counted only once
- [5] Congo: MEF; Cameroon: MINFOF; Gabon: Economic Dashboard, 2021; DRC: MEFDD; CAR: CDF
- [6] AfDB/FRMi Report - Strategic vision and industrialisation of the timber sector in Central Africa, 2018, except Cameroon, DRC and CAR: OFAC 2023
- [7] Various CIFOR reports
- [8] OFAC except CAR: CDF and DRC: Congolese Office of Control
- [9] Cameroon: MINFOF 2021, Gabon and Congo: CTWPDA Data 2018. Note that Equatorial Guinea's log exports to China reached 1,114,700 m³ in 2018.
- [10] State of the Forest-Timber Sector in CAR (2021): <https://flegtvpafacility.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Rapport-Etat-du-secteur-foret-bois-en-Republique-Centrafricaine-2021.pdf>

- [11] OFAC data, except CAR: CIFOR et al., 2021 (State of the forest-timber sector in CAR)
- [12] OFAC data (MINFOF, Statistical Directory 2021 for Cameroon); for some countries, it only includes primary processing companies
- [13] OFAC data
- [14] OFAC data - CAR: CDF
- [15] CTWPDA Data 2018
- [16] State of the forest-timber sector in CAR (2021)
- [17] Various CIFOR reports
- [18] 2022 Annual Activity Report, Tracer Nkok
- [19] AfDB 2018
- [20] Economic dashboard 2019, Ministry of the Economy and Recovery
- [21] Source: FIB
- [22] The domestic market for artisanal sawn timber in CAR (CIFOR, 2014)
- [23] CIFOR, 2011
- [24] Nguinguiri et al., 2006

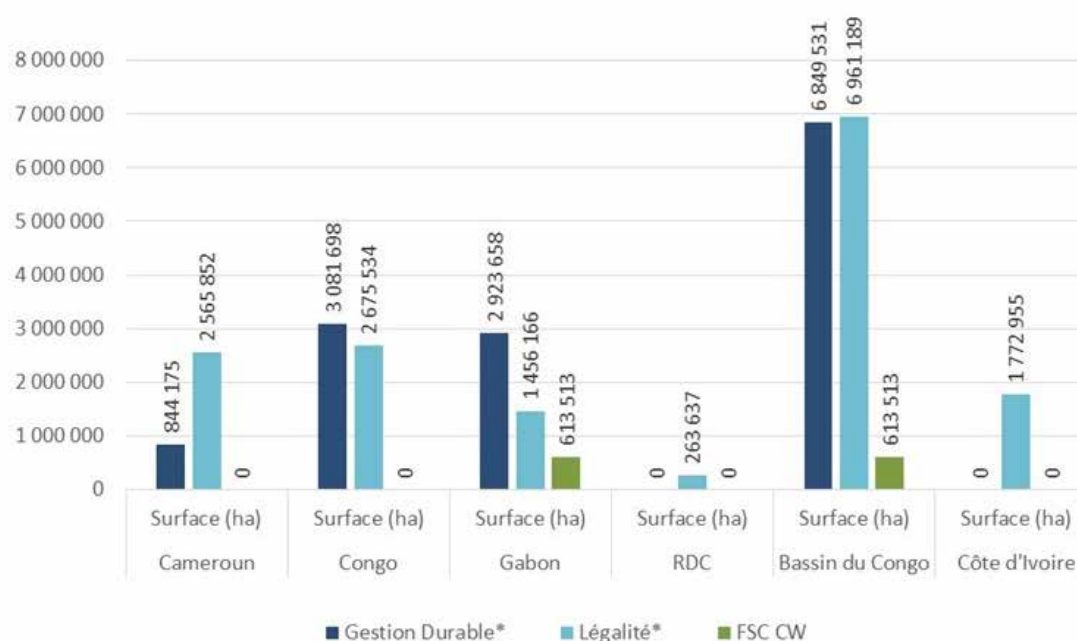
MONITORING OF DATA ON CERTIFICATION IN THE CONGO BASIN AND IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE

SURFACE AREAS CERTIFIED AS STABLE IN 2024

At the end of 2024, there were **12,517,120 ha of forests certified** for sustainable management¹ (FSC, PAFC/PEFC), legality (OLB, TLV, LS/PBN certification) and/or other (FSC CW)¹ in the **Congo Basin**, representing an additional surface of over 1.2 million ha, an 11% increase.

In **Côte d'Ivoire**, the total certified surface is **1,772,955 ha**, exclusively legal (OLB and TLV), with a recent progression of over 50% of this certified surface.

Certified surface areas in the Congo Basin (and in Côte d'Ivoire) in hectares, by type of certification, in 2024



Sustainable management certification in the Congo Basin (FSC and/or PAFC) reached **6.85 million ha** at the end of 2024¹, a net increase* of 629,229 ha in 1 year, a 10% rise. Several companies obtained new sustainable management certificates: IFO (Congo) already FSC certified, SEEF (Cameroon) and SFIK (Gabon) obtained a PAFC certificate, bringing the PAFC Congo Basin surface to over 2.3 million ha. EGG (Gabon) obtained FSC certification.

Legality certifications (OLB, Legal Source and TLV) in the Congo Basin represent nearly **7 million ha**¹, a net increase* of 8% (0.5 million ha) since 2023, despite certificate suspensions. There were two new legality certificates in 2025 (TTIB in OLB as well as SNBG (GSEZ) and Mokabi (Rougier) according to PBN certification), demonstrating renewed momentum for these certifications. Please note that Preferred by Nature's Legal Source system has been replaced by PBN certification, developed to meet, among other things, the EUDR's requirements.

^[1] Surface areas with double certification [e.g. FSC FM + PAFC BC or OLB + TLV] are only counted once in the overall total, in order to avoid any double counting.

Lastly, it is worth noting the presence of 4 FSC Controlled Wood certificates (FSC CW forest), all located in Gabon, which we do not consider as a separate type of certification.

In terms of distribution by country, Gabon and Congo share nearly equally a total of 6 million hectares, while Cameroon accounts for 0.8 million certified hectares – a figure that can be explained in particular by the smaller average size of concessions compared to its neighbours.

Type de Certification	Surface (ha)	Nb certificat	Surface (ha)	Nb certificat	Surface (ha)	Nb certificat	Surface (ha)	Nb certificat	Surface (ha)	Nb certificat	Surface (ha)	Nb certificat
Gestion durable												
FSC FM	695 096	2	3 081 698	5	2 497 734	8	0	0	6 274 528	15	0	0
PAFC BC	149 079	1	1 159 643	1	1 022 746	3	0	0	2 331 468	5	0	0
Gestion Durable*	844 175	3	3 081 698	6	2 923 658	11	0	0	6 849 531	20	0	0
Certification légalité												
OLB	2 565 852	10	929 561	2	636 593	2	0	0	4 132 006	14	1 129 506	3
LS	0	0	0	0	128 000	1	263 637	1	391 637	2	0	0
TLV	0	0	1 159 643	1	329 930	2	0	0	1 489 573	3	643 449	1
Légalité*	2 565 852	10	2 675 534	3	1 456 166	5	263 637	1	6 961 189	19	1 772 955	4
Autre certification												
FSC CW	0	0	0	0	613 513	4	0	0	613 513	4	0	0
Total global*, **	2 919 240	13	4 597 589	9	4 123 141	20	263 637	1	11 903 607	43	1 772 955	4
Total avec FSC CW	2 919 240	13	4 597 589	9	4 736 654	24	263 637	1	12 517 120	47	1 772 955	4

*Certified surface areas in the Congo Basin (and in Côte d'Ivoire)
in hectares, by type of certification, in 2024*

**please note that a net increase or decrease takes into account new certificates and extensions, as well as the withdrawal or suspension of certificates.*

As a reminder, the sustainable forest management certifications present in both Central and West Africa are the FSC and PAFC Congo Basin certifications (recognised by the PEFC).

The legality certifications are:

* OLB (Timber Origin and Legality), provided by Bureau Veritas;

* Legal Source: provided by Preferred by Nature, and replaced at the end of 2024 by the new PBN certification;

* TLV (Timber Legality Verification), provided by Control Union.

THE TROPICAL TIMBER MARKET IN 2024

GLOBAL MARKET TRENDS THROUGHOUT 2024



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The Global Timber Index (GTI) reports for 2024 reveal a year of gradual recovery amidst ongoing challenges in the tropical timber market. During the first two months of 2024, key performance indicators in major markets such as China pointed to continued contraction, marked by low demand, reduced production, and ongoing operational difficulties.

By mid-2024, a turning point had been reached, as all countries monitored by the GTI Index¹ reported improvements – with Thailand and Indonesia in particular

driving increases in production and export orders. Meanwhile, China's recovery remained limited due to declining demand and rising shipping costs. Overall performance remained relatively weak, although some positive trends were observed, such as increased production in Indonesia, offset by a slowdown in Malaysian exports. In August, the Indonesian and Thai markets began to stabilise, though contraction persisted in other regions. During this period, companies sought innovative products and new sales channels amidst currency concerns, and African regulators took steps to both improve traceability and control logging activities.

By the end of 2024, the overall trend was slightly positive – with Ghana and Thailand showing marked improvements.

However, Gabon experienced a continued decline in production throughout 2024, due to stagnant international demand in key markets, particularly China, since the beginning of the year, and a significant increase in power outages in late 2024. Ongoing logistical disruptions over the past few years, notably affecting the transport of logs, have further undermined the economic stability of forestry and industrial players.

Sustainability efforts have also progressed in Africa, driven by initiatives such as Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire preparing to export FLEGT-licensed timber to the EU, as well as by the commitment of several forestry companies to shift towards certification, resulting in a significant increase in certified surface areas. December saw a decline in log production due to generally weak demand.

In the United States, the tropical timber market in 2024 was shaped by three key developments: (1) greater enforcement of the Lacey Act, with US authorities increasing customs inspections and traceability investigations, particularly in relation to timber from Central Africa and Southeast Asia. Several shipments were blocked in the first half of 2024, prompting importers to favour certified supply chains or those with robust documentation. (2) Ongoing logistical tensions, including disruptions in supply chains - especially around the Gulf of Guinea - which led to increased demand for tropical timber from Latin America, seen as more accessible. (3) Growth

in the use of lesser-known and certified species: under pressure from distributors and major retail chains like Home Depot, importers have begun to shift towards FSC- and PAFC-certified tropical timber and are increasingly open to secondary species (e.g. tali, garapa). This trend addresses both regulatory demands and ESG criteria set by procurement bodies.

Lastly, the International Wood Products Association (IWPA) stepped up its lobbying and training efforts in 2024 to support its members in meeting these evolving requirements.

SOURCE :

<https://www.itto.int/gti/>
Various sources

THE EUROPEAN TROPICAL TIMBER MARKET IN 2024

In 2024, as in 2023, the European tropical timber market experienced both volatility and contraction, particularly in consumption and imports in the main user countries. This trend is largely due to construction sector weakness, economic uncertainty, and regulatory pressures such as the European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR). Most European countries reported a decline in the import and consumption of tropical timber, with slight recoveries or stabilisations anticipated in 2025.

European imports of tropical timber - which include logs, plywood, sawn timber, and veneers - fell by 10% in terms of monetary value, reaching a total of around \$1.7 billion (USD) by the end of 2024 (preliminary data, figure 1). Tropical log imports saw the steepest drop (-55%, compared with 2023), followed by sawn timber (-12%), plywood (-7%), and veneers (-5%) (figure 2).

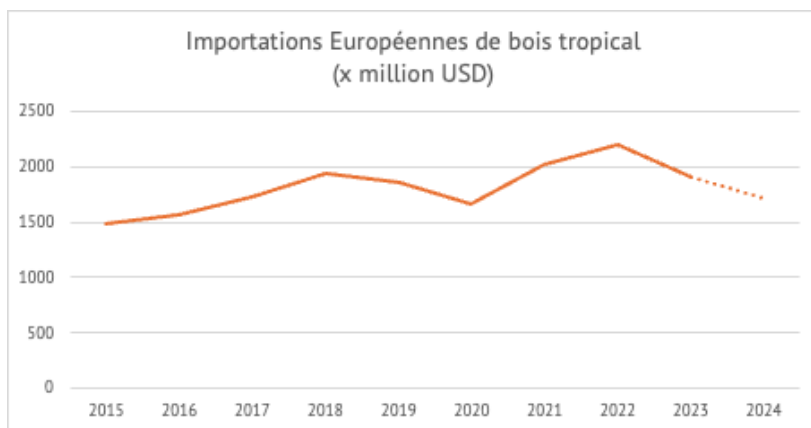


Figure 1. Monetary value [USD]^[2] of tropical hardwood imports (logs, plywood, sawn timber, and veneers), aggregated for all European countries. Data for 2024 were extrapolated using figures available from January to November 2024 [Source: Sustainable Timber Information Exchange, edited by Probos].

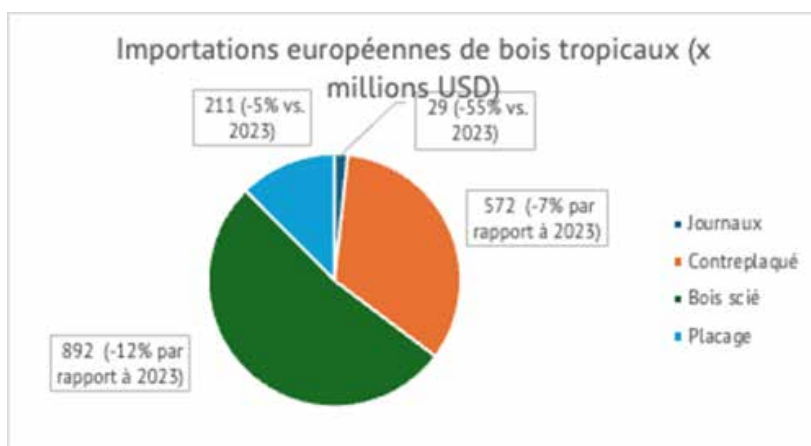


Figure 2. Monetary value [USD]² of imports by product group, aggregated for all European countries. Data for 2024 were extrapolated using figures available from January to November 2024 [Source: Sustainable Timber Information Exchange, edited by Probos].

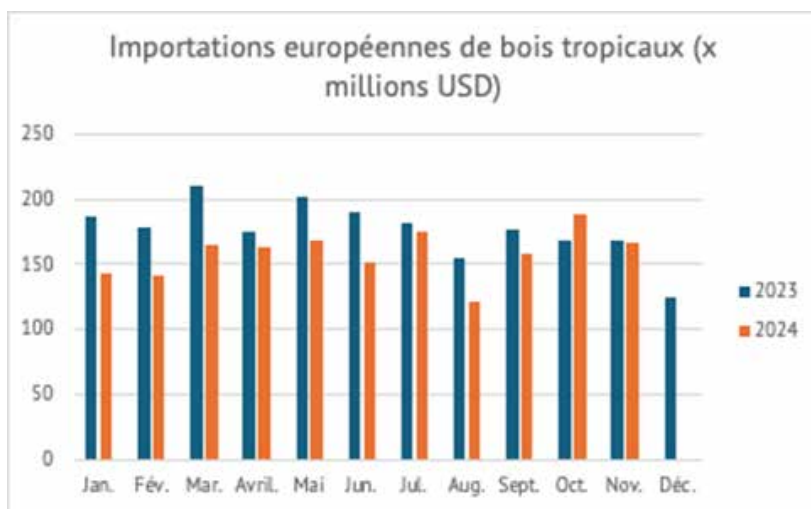


Figure 3. Monetary value [USD]² of tropical hardwood imports (logs, plywood, sawn timber, and veneers), aggregated by month for all European countries [Source: Sustainable Timber Information Exchange].

In Belgium, imports of tropical hardwood logs decreased slightly by 9% between 2023 and 2024 (from 55,000 m³ to 50,000 m³). Imports of tropical sawn timber remained relatively high, decreasing only marginally from 213,000 m³ to 210,000 m³ [-1%]. Nevertheless, demand is declining due to a slowdown in the construction sector and in industry. According to the Probos Thémis timber market survey

conducted among importer members of the Fedustria trade federation, there is a slight upward trend in the share of sustainably sourced tropical timber and certified tropical plywood (FSC/PEFC). The most recent survey figures for 2023 show that around 32% of tropical timber was certified as sustainable, along with just over 80% of tropical plywood. The overall share of sustainably certified timber, including

softwood, is increasing year on year and currently stands at around 72%.

In the Netherlands, imports of tropical hardwood sawn timber fell by 10% between 2023 and 2024 (from 172,000 m³ to 155,000 m³). In recent years, several tropical sawmills ceased their operations in the Netherlands, ensuring that imports of tropical hardwood logs remain marginal. Consumption of tropical hardwoods has continued to decline, reflecting a broader contraction within the industry. However, the Dutch tropical hardwood market remains optimistic regarding medium-term prospects. Productivity in the construction sector is recovering and showing upward momentum, leading to increased demand. The Probos Thémis timber market survey among importer members of the Netherlands Timber Trade Association indicates a slight increase in the share of sustainably sourced tropical timber and certified tropical plywood (FSC/PEFC). The latest figures from the 2023 survey show that around 66% of tropical timber was sustainably certified, compared with approximately 94% for tropical plywood. The overall share of certified sustainable timber, including softwood, has declined slightly in recent years and currently stands at around 89%. However, based on Probos' market assessment of sustainably certified timber across the Dutch market, around 70% of tropical timber was sustainably certified in 2023 – a slight increase from the last recorded figures in 2017.^[3]

In Italy, imports of tropical hardwood logs dropped by 64% between 2023 and 2024 (from 11,000 m³ to 4,000 m³). Imports of tropical sawn timber declined from 154,000 m³ to 111,000 m³ (-28%). In 2024, the construction sector contracted sharply, contributing to the reduction in imports.^[4]

In Spain, imports of tropical hardwood logs increased slightly (+1%) between 2023 and 2024 (from 73,000 m³ to 74,000 m³). Imports of tropical sawn timber remained stable at 6,000 m³.

In Germany, imports of tropical hardwood logs fell by 40% between 2023 and 2024 (from 5,000 m³ to 3,000 m³). Sawn timber imports dropped from 56,000 m³ to 43,000 m³. Demand was dampened by high costs and weak overseas sales. The EUDR and global conflicts significantly influenced trade patterns.

In Denmark, imports of tropical hardwood logs declined by 29% between 2023 and 2024 (from 7,000 m³ to 5,000 m³). Sawn tropical timber imports fell from 48,000 m³ to 39,000 m³ (-19%). Demand for hardwoods in the furniture and kitchen sector dropped by at least 40%, mainly due to high inventory levels among manufacturers and reduced consumer demand. In contrast, demand for hardwoods in the window industry has remained stable. Meanwhile, demand for hardwoods for use in decking, façades, and construction projects remains moderately stable, with some signs of growth. The private and DIY market remained moderate, but with the expected decline in interest rates, a slow recovery is anticipated. The latest figures from the 2023 Probos Thémis timber market survey among importer members of the Danish Timber Trade Association show an overall share of 97% certified sustainable timber (FSC/PEFC), which includes softwoods. Sustainably certified tropical timber accounted for around 70%, and certified tropical plywood reached 100% in 2023.

In Austria, volumes remain very low. Imports of tropical hardwood logs and sawn tropical hardwoods remained stable between 2023 and 2024, at 1,000 m³ and 4,000 m³ respectively.

In France, the tropical timber market continued to be shaped by a complex environment marked by a regulatory transition, environmental pressures, and changing demand patterns. As in other countries, the upcoming implementation of the EU Regulation against imported deforestation (EUDR) is prompting importers to strengthen traceability and compliance in their supply chains, increasing demands on producer countries. Some importers have anticipated the EUDR by purchasing certified timber in advance.

French demand remains relatively low compared to previous years but stable in certain segments, particularly in construction and outdoor applications (such as decking, cladding, and joinery), where tropical timber's technical properties – natural durability and dimensional stability – are especially valued. However, competition from temperate timber species and alternative materials, often perceived as more sustainable or locally sourced, influences the preferences of design professionals. Loggers also foresee a growing role for public procurement, which could serve as a catalyst to promote sustainable tropical timber.

According to the Probos Thémis timber market survey conducted among importer members of the Le Commerce du Bois federation, there is a rising trend in terms of the share of sustainably certified tropical timber and plywood (FSC/PEFC). The latest figures from the 2023 survey indicate that around 40% of tropical timber was sustainably certified, and over 90% for tropical plywood. The overall share of certified sustainable timber, including softwood, continues to rise year after year and currently stands at around 90%.

Conclusion on the European Market

While the long-term potential of the European market for tropical timber remains promising – supported by environmental policies and a rebound in the construction sector – short-term prospects are fragile. Regulatory uncertainty surrounding the EUDR, coupled with economic stagnation and supply constraints, pose significant challenges. However, national initiatives, such as green economy strategies and awareness campaigns, could help drive demand for sustainably certified tropical timber.

SOURCE :

<https://ihc2024.at/downloads/presentations/market-report-2024-web.pdf>

<https://www.stix.global/>

Thémis, timber market survey

[1] Indonesia, Malaysia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Brazil, Mexico, China and Thailand.

[2] The monetary value is given to maintain consistency of units between the various product groups. It is therefore important to note that import value dynamics cannot be attributed solely to volume fluctuations, but also to unit prices, for example.

[3] <https://www.probos.nl/en/publications/reports/284-reports-2025/3813-market-measurement-sustainably-produced-timber-on-the-dutch-market-2023>

[4] <https://www.federlegnoarredo.it/it/associazioni/fedecomlegno/approfondimenti-news>

OVERVIEW OF THE SECTOR BY COUNTRY IN 2024



REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Legal and Regulatory Framework

After several years of consultations and discussions with all stakeholders, a new forestry law (Law 33-2020 of 8 July 2020 establishing the forest code) was adopted and promulgated on 8 July 2020. Among the key reforms in this law are: i) A ban on log exports, with exceptions made for hardwoods and heavy timber species whose processing requires specific technology (article 97); ii) The creation of community forests (articles 15 - 21); iii) A production-sharing scheme (article 104); iv) Domestic exploitation permits (articles 139-142). A ministerial note prohibiting the export of timber in log form was issued by the Minister of the Forestry Economy in August 2023. A Multi-Stakeholder Working Group (GTMA - *Groupe de Travail Multi-Acteurs*) tasked with reviewing draft regulatory texts was set up by the Minister of the Forestry Economy. However, the slow pace of drafting and publishing implementing regulations has significantly hindered the effective implementation of these reforms.

State of mind among companies in the timber sector

Since 2014, ATIBT has supported the Republic of Congo's trade unions and forestry companies through various projects focused on the sustainable management of forest resources, particularly within the framework of the FLEGT process. In 2024,

this dynamic was reinforced thanks to support for inter-union exchanges, while also involving non-affiliated companies, in compliance with the projects' objectives.

Despite a challenging context, companies that are certified - or in the process of obtaining certification - have generally maintained their commitment to sustainable management. However, several constraints are hindering their progress, including: i) changes in the regulatory framework, and delays in the process of drafting the implementing texts of the forestry law; ii) the log export ban: although announced as an incentive for local processing, this measure has had negative effects on companies' liquidity and investment capacity; iii) delays in the implementation of the SIVL (Computerised System for the Verification of Legality): by the end of 2024, no FLEGT legality certificate had yet been issued and training on the traceability module had not yet started. All of these delays have contributed to slowing down certain priority actions under the Private Sector Support project (advocacy on regulatory developments, support for the conversion of CTIs, legality and traceability coaching for companies, support for the revision of the legality grid, etc.). Some companies have expressed concerns regarding their ability to invest sustainably, due to an unfavourable economic environment.

Taxation

Forestry taxation in the Republic of Congo remains a point of tension for loggers. Companies express recurring concerns regarding the evolution and unpredictability of the tax system, which is often seen as a hindrance to competitiveness and the formalisation of the sector due to the gradual increase in forestry taxes. Added to this are difficulties in obtaining loans and a banking environment that is poorly suited to financing the forestry sector, particularly for SMEs.

Domestic timber market (MIB - *Marché intérieur du bois*)

The development of the domestic timber market is now recognised as a strategic catalyst for the sector. In this context, ATIBT, in partnership with the EU Delegation, launched the **ASP-MIB** (Private Sector Support – Domestic Timber Market) project in the second half of 2024. This project aims to strengthen the competitiveness and sustainability of the domestic timber sector, with a particular focus on supporting small and medium-sized companies. It includes capacity-building for domestic timber market players in technical, organisational and financial areas, as well as improving sustainable management mechanisms at this level.

CITES and EUDR

As in the sub-region's other countries, the requirements set by CITES and the European Union Timber Regulation (EUTR) remain central concerns for the Republic

of Congo's loggers. These regulations heavily condition access to international markets and require significant investments in traceability, data management and legal compliance. Their effective implementation remains complex, notably due to regulatory uncertainties and a lack of clarity on certain national processes.

Support programmes for the timber sector

In 2024, several support initiatives for the timber sector were implemented or launched in the Republic of Congo.

Through the Private Sector Support (ASP - *Appui Secteur Privé*) project, ATIBT Congo continued to provide technical support to forestry companies via the forest-timber sector federations, particularly regarding their involvement in the FLEGT-VPA process, thereby contributing to improved forest governance (inclusive and transparent management of forest resources).

In addition to the **ASP-MIB** project mentioned above, ATIBT is pursuing its efforts to lead and support professional organisations (through the ADEFAC project). These programmes aim to strengthen the structuring of the sector, improve sustainable forest management, and facilitate market access. However, their impact remains dependent on both political and institutional commitment to advancing the necessary reforms, particularly at the regulatory level.



GABON - INFORMATION FROM UFIGA

State of Mind in the Sector

The forest-timber sector in Gabon is facing both structural and cyclical challenges. Technological developments and the specific demographic context are affecting production, the value chain, and consumption habits. More than ever, producers must offer goods that combine attractiveness, competitiveness, accessibility, profitability, economic efficiency, legality, sustainability, and efficiency. Production is influenced by multiple factors. In Gabon, it was impacted by the collapse of the Asian market, rising industrial diesel costs, and the growing appeal of engineered products from plantation timber or innovative processing techniques. In this context, associative work is key. Two major companies have recently joined UFIGA, and the union continues to play an essential role in institutional dialogue. Its Managing Director is committed to maintaining group momentum and, above all, to drawing on the best available expertise to address the growing complexity of new challenges.

Several cases handled by UFIGA have led to concrete results, notably regarding industrial fuel, with a revised price structure introduced in July 2024. The handling of VAT refund claims resulted in payments to the RPI account in 2024, but only during the first half of the year; after that, the RPI was no longer able to reimburse VAT credits, which are now estimated at nearly 11 billion XAF. On the logistics front, years of advocacy - not just by forestry operators - have been met with a favourable response. The government has recently launched a road rehabilitation programme.

Legal and Regulatory Framework

In 2024, the sector succeeded in implementing article 106 of the Forest Code, with the issuance of the first decree granting a CFAD in the Republic of Gabon. Moving into the second rotation of UFAs - and thus of permits - is now a priority, although this is still pending.

Taxation

Part of the economic fabric is under pressure due to a VAT regime on timber products that creates an imbalance between collected VAT and deductible VAT, leading to credit claims for which reimbursement mechanisms are ineffective - so much so that they drain company cash on hand and risk pushing some firms to the brink of bankruptcy. Added to this VAT burden are the EPAs on plywood exported to Europe.

VAT reimbursement is thus a major concern. The debt increases each month and has become a significant source of worry for businesses.

The market

After peaking at 4.3 million m³ in 2022, Gabon's forest production declined in both 2023 and 2024. In fact, the sector faced numerous difficulties throughout 2024. Its main market - the construction sector in China, which accounts for 60 to 70% of processed timber exports - collapsed and has not recovered. Several companies, particularly those located in the Nkok SEZ and in the central regions of the country, have experienced periods of temporary closure.

CITES and EUDR

The sector is struggling with the difficulties surrounding the issuance of CITES import permits in Europe, even for timber certified under FSC and/or PEFC/PAFC systems, and despite the existence of NDFs and export permits issued by the forestry administration. This has further weakened the already fragile economic situation of many companies.

As in other countries, certification is seen as a key tool to navigate the implementation of the EUDR, scheduled to begin in early 2026.

Programmes to support the timber sector

There are too few support programmes specifically dedicated to Gabon's timber sector. Structurally, the decision to ban log exports in favour of developing a local industrial base was likely necessary. However, a diagnosis of how Gabon's forest-timber sector operates reveals numerous obstacles to its growth, such as:

- An energy deficit – most companies in the sector must generate the energy required for their operations themselves;
- The poor condition of the national road and rail network – their age and lack of maintenance pose risks to general activity and significantly affect production schedules, product evacuation, and timely distribution;

- An excessive administrative burden – the high number of administrative contacts and procedures linked to sector activities slows economic performance and exposes users to potential subjectivity if procedures are not managed objectively;
- Perceived favouritism – there are suspicions of preferential treatment in the form of tax exemptions and other benefits granted to operators in Special Economic Zones (SEZ), who ultimately market their products in the same markets as those outside of these zones;
- A mismatch between available timber resources and processing capacity – the sector suffers from a disconnect between the volume of harvestable timber and the country's actual industrial capacity to process it;
- Emerging issues – certification, EUDR, CITES, carbon, biodiversity, and ecosystem services all come with financial implications and require a rethinking of profitability parameters, raising questions about the forestry model of the future;
- Regulatory insecurity – the lack of effective application of regulations, both in substance and form, has created a climate of uncertainty.



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO - INFORMATION FROM THE FIB

State of mind in the sector

The DRC's formal forestry sector is going through a very tumultuous period, primarily due to the attitude of the current Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development, who prioritises conservation at the expense of timber production.

This attitude is marked by indifference and a lack of attention to issues affecting the timber production sector, which is currently facing a wide range of difficulties and challenges. The sector also suffers from a lack of leadership at the head of the ministry.

In this context, the Federation of Timber Industries (FIB - *Fédération des Industriels du Bois*), which had 17 members at its founding in 2006, now only has 7 members.

Legal and regulatory framework

The forest policy is currently under development. The first draft has been produced, and the next step is to begin the consultation phase with various stakeholders at both the national and provincial levels.

For the forestry sector, it is key to establish a platform for dialogue involving all players (timber operators, conservationists, tourists, hunters, bio-prospectors, biodiversity experts, etc.) in order to exchange views on the future direction of forest policy.

Moreover, the forestry sector faces serious issues regarding the payment of certain taxes, particularly the tax on incentives for local timber processing, the loading and unloading tax, the surface area fee for allocated concessions, and the surface area tax on forest concessions.

Taxation

In terms of the tax incentives for local processing and the taxes on timber loading and unloading, advocacy actions should be considered with provincial authorities, or failing that, recourse to the courts.

Regarding the surface area fee for allocated concessions and the surface area tax on forest concessions, logging companies are facing double taxation, which is contrary to the law. Even though the triggering events for one or the other are different (timber harvesting and concession contracts), both are based on the same tax base: the hectare. Hence, a case of double payment.

Advocacy efforts carried out so far with the relevant authorities have yet to yield results, and companies continue to bear the consequences.

A clarification and harmonisation of the fiscal regime that is applicable to forest areas is necessary.

Context and issues

For several years, the DRC's industrial logging sector has faced recurring disputes related to the taxation of forest surface areas. Two legal frameworks appear to contradict each other:

- The **forest code** provides for the levying of a fee on forest surface areas, without clearly specifying whether it goes to the central government or the provinces.
- The **law on the free administration of provinces**, on the other hand, includes the forest area tax among the provinces' own-source revenues.

In 2018, ordinance-laws no. 003 and no. 004 respectively introduced a surface area fee for the central government and a surface area tax for the provinces. Although these texts differentiate the legal basis for the charges, in practice the shared tax base leads to a disguised double taxation for forest concession holders.

Current Situation

Faced with growing conflicts between central and provincial administrations – especially with companies being charged by both – the administration, through the 2025 finance law, has adopted a three-part distribution of the forest surface fee:

- **60%** for the central government,
- **25%** for the provinces,
- **15%** for decentralised entities (which nevertheless lack a financial authority).

However, this measure doesn't mention the "tax" on forest surface areas, leading the provinces to consider that the latter remains applicable in addition to their 25% share from the fee.

Recommendations from the private forestry sector

In light of the legal confusion and the negative economic consequences for the sector, the following is recommended:

Harmonisation of the legal framework

It is essential to revise the legal framework to remove the ambiguity between the fee and the tax on forest surface areas. Clarifying the respective responsibilities of the central government and the provinces would prevent double taxation and provide legal certainty for all sector stakeholders.

Dialogue and consultation

Organise a round table bringing together representatives from both central and provincial administrations, as well as players from the forestry sector, to discuss applicable taxation arrangements and identify solutions suited to the sector's economic and operational realities.

Economic impact and competitiveness

The persistence of a dual tax mechanism negatively affects the sector's competitiveness and hinders investment in an area that is vital for both economic development and sustainable forest resource management.

Request for government intervention

The private sector calls for the intervention of the Head of Government to urgently revise the regulations and harmonise the fiscal treatment of forest surface areas. Such a measure would help restore investor confidence and ensure responsible

and economically viable use of forest resources.

The market

The export market for tropical timber still holds considerable potential due to the country's vast forest areas, but remains fairly limited. The DRC mainly exports logs and sawn timber, primarily to China, Europe, and some African countries. However, this market still faces many challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, weak forest governance, and illegal practices. Local value addition remains low, as few loggers process timber on site. Nevertheless, exports remain an important source of foreign currency, though reforms are needed to ensure sustainability, traceability, and competitiveness.

CITES, EUDR, and Certification

The tendency to list more species under the CITES appendices has a negative impact on cash flow (preparation of NDFs, export quota systems limiting company capacities, implications for the social clauses in the terms of reference, with a risk of conflicts between concession holders and local communities, etc.).

The issue of regeneration rates required by the EU remains a concern despite the work that ATIBT has done in this regard.

The CITES process also imposes additional costs on companies. Therefore, support is necessary to enable the national CITES coordination to meet these expenses.

In this context of alignment with the EUDR, forest certification requires capacity building in the areas of awareness-raising, training and information. For companies already engaged in the process, guidance in the form of support and reinforcement is essential.

In addition, it is also important to convince Chinese companies operating in the DRC of the benefits of certification, and the FIB is counting heavily on the implementation of the TTT project.

As in the past, the FIB is committed to promoting forest certification in the DRC and it emphasises the need to establish the PAFC/DRC National Forum.

Support programmes for the timber sector

In 2024, the DRC had 43 forest concession titles or contracts, representing 8,783,864 ha.

The country is demonstrating an increasing interest in conservation. Concessionaires holding timber production concessions are shifting towards conservation activities by converting their concessions

into conservation concessions. This has led to a significant reduction in the total area allocated to timber production and an increase in illegal logging by artisanal loggers. Several applications are currently being processed by the Minister of the Environment and Sustainable Development's office for new changes in the designated use of concessions. It is highly likely that further conversions will take place, which will further reduce the allocated area.

Getting back to the subject of the FIB situation, as members' contributions are calculated according to the surface area that they manage, it is logical that with the ongoing shift towards conservation, members are no longer able to ensure the proper functioning of the union.



CAMEROUN

State of mind of companies in the timber sector

Member companies and certain firms working with ATIBT within the framework of various projects have generally remained committed to certification by obtaining their sustainable management certificate, undergoing pre-audits for sustainable management certification, or by engaging in the initial steps of the sustainable forest management certification process. Despite a difficult fiscal context and a slowdown of the sector due to a decrease in activity or the closure of some companies (difficulties acces-

sing the timber resource, rising production costs, etc.), a few non-certified SFM (sustainable forest management) companies still demonstrate the will to continue progressing towards sustainable management. The same applies to other companies in the sector.

Moreover, many companies consider that the overall environment at both national and international levels (taxation, energy shortages, banks not aligned with investments or financing sustainable forest operations, market conditions, etc.) is not conducive to making new investments in the sector.

Legal and regulatory framework

After several years of consultations and dialogue, the law governing the forest regime was passed by the National Assembly and promulgated by the Head of State in July 2024. This new law introduces several innovations, notably the ban on all log exports, the obligation for processing units to transform all that is harvested, the establishment of regional forests, and community-protected areas. The implementing decree remains to be seen, but work on its drafting continued through the end of 2024.

Taxation

Despite a general status quo in forest taxation in 2024, there was a 15% increase in export duties on logs (based on the FOB value of each species), rising from 60% in 2023 to 75% in 2024. Taxation remained a significant cost for companies in the timber sector. It is still the highest in the CEMAC zone, according to various data from studies and highlighted in the economic report presented by timber industry associations to various institutional stakeholders (General Directorate of Taxes, General Directorate of Customs, Prime Minister's Office), with support from the ASP PV project.

The Market

Regarding the domestic timber market, the upward trend in demand appears to be continuing. However, this increase is largely driven by timber from production processes whose legality is not always

verified. Competition between the export and domestic markets for so-called traditional species remains. Nonetheless, discussions with companies and other domestic timber market players (furniture and door manufacturers, MINFOF...) suggest that this issue is increasingly being taken into account in their planning. As part of the LKTS initiative, the ASP PV project, in collaboration with key stakeholders, initiated a process to identify actions promoting and marketing LKTS on the domestic market.

CITES and EUDR

Throughout 2024, both the CITES and EUDR remained among the main concerns of companies and other players within Cameroon's timber sector. These two regulations were central to most of the discussions relating to the timber industry.

Support Programmes for the Timber Sector

In 2024, new initiatives to support the timber sector were launched in Cameroon. These include the GIZ's TTT programme and, to a lesser extent, the Broad Recognition Market Coalition (BRMC) initiative - funded by the UK - which is currently in progress. Two other support programmes for the timber sector are either being launched (the world bank programme) or in the final planning stages before implementation begins (EU programme). Moreover, the PPECF programme continued with its third phase, which is scheduled to conclude in 2025.

State of mind in the sector

Although in decline, the timber sector in Côte d'Ivoire remains a major provider of employment, with several tens of thousands of jobs.

While forest areas only officially amount to 2.97 million hectares, of which under 0.1 million hectares are reforestations, the timber processing industry remains a valuable asset for the future.

Declarations of timber production entering processing units totalled 1.4 million m³ in 2023, resulting in 0.9 million m³ of primary processed timber products and 0.23 million m³ that were exported. The 119 loggers, 221 processing workshops, and 68 formally registered timber exporters in 2023 demonstrate that the forestry sector remains active.

Legal and regulatory framework

On Monday, 19 February 2024, at the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, Mr. Laurent TCHAGBA, the Minister of Water and Forests, Mr. Willem van de VOORDE, the Ambassador representing the EU Council Presidency, and Ms. Jutta URPILAINEN, the European Commissioner for International Partnerships, signed the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA-FLEGT) on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade in timber and derived products. The implementation of the VPA aims to eradicate all illegal timber and timber products from trade and to improve governance in the forest and timber sector. Legal reforms are also expected to complement the Ivorian regulatory framework more broadly,

particularly with respect to enhanced incentive-based measures for forest cover restoration, as well as rules relating to exports, imports, and the domestic market.

Taxation

In addition to necessary tax adjustments - particularly regarding the taxation of non-dried timber, as technically Côte d'Ivoire is not subject to that requirement - further tax reforms are anticipated.

Regarding the drying of hydraulic timbers, there is a justification for the non-requirement to impose drying on certain types of timber, particularly azobé (*Lophira alata*), but also badi (*Nauclea diderrichii*) and tali (*Erythrophleum ivorense*), for various reasons. First, it is important to recognise that these timber species, known as "hydraulic timbers" due to their frequent use in maritime works, are valued for their natural density and durability. These species are widely used in the construction of marine infrastructure, bridges, railway sleepers (especially in the case of azobé), piles, and other structures requiring exceptional durability in harsh environmental conditions. Due to this natural resistance - besides the fact that drying is extremely difficult - the drying process becomes largely unnecessary in many applications. Unlike other types of timber that are more sensitive to moisture and deformation, azobé, for example, retains its mechanical and dimensional properties without the need for pre-drying treatment. In fact, imposing such a process could even compromise the intrinsic qualities of the timber and result in reduced strength and durability (cracks, splits, warping).

Tali and badi share similar characteristics in terms of density, strength, and natural durability.

Regulatory texts confirm that other countries producing these same species have also adopted similar measures.

- Decree 0449 ratified on 5 September 2016 by the President of the Gabonese Republic
- Ministerial Order 156 ratified on 18 July 2017 by the Gabonese Minister of Forests

The Market

Today, Côte d'Ivoire mainly exports semi-finished and finished products such as sawn timber, veneers, and plywood, primarily to Europe, Asia, and neighbouring West African countries. The FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) will, of course, first aim to issue FLEGT licences for timber exports to the EU. Moreover, the country's economic growth and the construction boom have made the domestic market increasingly attractive.

CITES and EUDR

Côte d'Ivoire faces significant challenges in meeting both CITES and EUDR requirements. For species listed under appendix II, the lack of technical capacity complicates the issuance of export permits. Meanwhile, the EUDR demands rigorous traceability down to the plot level – which is complicated in a context marked by complex land governance.

Proving legality and deforestation-free status is another major challenge, particularly for small local companies. The country must also strengthen efforts against illegal trade and improve supply chain transparency. Structural reforms and technical support are essential to meet these requirements while maintaining access to the European market.

Support programmes for the timber sector

The upcoming PASSAD-Forests project will involve the SPIB, ATIBT, and Côte d'Ivoire's private sector. Key components will include the development of a gender strategy for the forestry sector, institutional strengthening of national implementation structures, the development of the National Legality and Timber Traceability Verification System (SNVLT), and pilot projects for forest cover restoration which will be led by women's associations.

The strengthening of direct participation of private sector companies that regularly export timber and timber products to the EU is also planned. This approach will facilitate the development and implementation of the LVS (legality verification system) and the issuance of FLEGT licences, with a target set for 2028.

MAIN ACTIONS CARRIED OUT IN 2024

4

THE DOMESTIC MARKET FOR LEGAL TIMBER IN PRODUCER COUNTRIES

SUPPORT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ACTION BY MINFOF IN CAMEROON



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The Ministry of Forests and Wildlife (MINFOF)'s hand-on support to improve the organisation and functioning of the domestic timber market (MIB - *Marché Intérieur du Bois*) - via the ASP PV Cameroon project - continued in 2024, with activities focused on five areas: the establishment of the physical MIB timber market site in Ngaoundéré; training in the management of physical MIB sites; the charcoal value chain using sawmill residues; updating and operating of a web platform for the MIB; and the promotion and marketing of lesser-known timber species (LKTS).

Regarding the establishment of the Ngaoundéré physical MIB timber site, the Basic Pre-Project studies (APS - *Avant-Projet Sommaire*) and Detailed Pre-Project studies (APD - *Avant-Projet Détaillé*) were updated and approved by the Ministry of Public Works (MINTP, the MINFOF's technical engineer) and the MINFOF. The environmental impact study was launched, and the report was expected in February 2025, paving the way for the start of construction of the infrastructure defined as part of the ASP PV project's support.

As for training in the management of physical MIB sites, a session was held for managers of MIB physical sites from the South and East regions. This training was provided by a team of senior staff from the Directorate for the Promotion and Processing of Timber and Non-Timber Forest Products (DPT - *Direction de la Promotion et la Transformation*), on the basis of applicable regulatory provisions.

With regard to the charcoal value chain using sawmill scraps, a baseline study was conducted in the South, the Littoral, and the Centre regions, in collaboration with the GIZ and facilitated by the MINFOF (DPT), in order to assess the current situation. The study report has been validated, and the development of a national charcoal strategy is now under consideration.

On the topic of the MIB web platform, the updating of the existing application dedicated to timber marketing on the domestic market (which was created a few years ago but remains non-operational) was initiated through a series of working sessions with relevant MINFOF departments. MINFOF's IT unit was tasked with drafting/updating the related terms of reference.

Regarding the activity on the promotion and marketing of LKTS, consideration relating to domestic market strategies was initiated. A workshop was organised with the main local players to discuss the promotion and marketing of LKTS on the domestic market. At the end of the workshop, a set of actions to be implemented was identified, and their feasibility was examined.

LAUNCH IN CONGO OF THE “DOMESTIC TIMBER MARKET” PROJECT, OR MIB-CONGO



The International Tropical Timber Technical Association (ATIBT) launched a major initiative for the Congolese forestry sector with the start of the “Support to the Private Sector of the Domestic Timber Market” (ASP MIB Congo) project during the fourth quarter of 2024, marking the beginning of an ambitious four-year programme.

Backed by €2 million in funding from the Delegation of the European Union, this project addresses a critical challenge: the structuring and modernisation of the domestic timber sector, which is currently marked by a high level of informality, undermining the sustainability of forest resources and state revenues.

The project is built around two key strategic pillars: i) Improving mechanisms for the sustainable management of the timber sector, and ii) Strengthening the technical and financial capabilities of local stakeholders.

Two main actions were undertaken at the end of 2024: i) The hiring of the Chief Technical Advisor, and ii) The development of the modernisation plan, which breaks down activities into sub-activities, deliverables, indicators, and responsibilities.

PREPARATION FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUDR

EVOLUTION OF THE EUDR IN 2024: POSTPONEMENT, CLARIFICATIONS AND PREPARATION FOR STAKEHOLDERS

The year 2024 was marked by significant advances regarding Regulation (EU) 2023/1115, referred to as the EUDR, which aims to prohibiting the introduction onto the European market of products leading to either deforestation or forest degradation. Initially scheduled for 30 December 2024, its official date of application was postponed to 30 December 2025 for large companies, and 30 June 2026 for micro and small companies, following a European Commission proposal that was approved by the Council and European Parliament in December 2024.

This postponement was motivated by concerns expressed by several EU Member States and partner countries, notably in

Africa, Asia, and Latin America, regarding the complexity of implementing the Regulation and the need for additional time to comply with the new requirements. It was also driven by the delay on the part of the European Commission in developing the necessary tools and systems for the application of the EUDR (information system delivered late, outcome of the country risk assessment, interpretative documents). The postponement was generally well received by stakeholders of the forest-timber sector. This additional time is seen as an opportunity to strengthen due diligence systems and integrate the digital tools proposed by the European Commission, such as the dedicated information system.

However, certified tropical timber loggers, especially those in Africa, were already well prepared to meet the EUDR's requirements. Their experience in forest certification, advanced traceability, and compliance with national regulatory frameworks put them in a favourable position to comply with the new obligations.

At the same time, in November 2024 the European Commission published a third version of its frequently asked questions (FAQ) and a guidance document, providing clarifications on key aspects of the regulation, such as due diligence, the management of bulk and composite products, and the implications for subsidiaries and corporate groups.

In October 2024, a strategic cooperation framework was published, highlighting the principles and methods of international action to support non-EU countries' efforts against deforestation in the context of the EUDR.

Lastly, the European Commission announced that the country risk assessment, initially scheduled for December 2024, would be published by 30 June 2025 at the latest, to enable loggers to better anticipate their due diligence obligations. This classification will allow for simplified due diligence when supplies originate from low-risk countries.

| ATIBT ACTIONS TO SUPPORT THE SECTOR WITH EUDR IMPLEMENTATION

In 2024, ATIBT actively supported its members and partners in understanding and anticipating the implementation of the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR). As early as January, an open information webinar was held on 25 January 2024 to explain the scope of the regulation, its practical implications, and the new responsibilities it imposes upon loggers and merchants in the timber sector. Throughout the year, numerous webinars and technical sessions were offered to ATIBT members and partners with the aim of building knowledge and strengthening technical capacity.

ATIBT also actively represented the sector at major international events, including the IWPA Convention, the Macao Forum, and the general assemblies of federations such as the FEP, the UMB, and the FFB. During these forums, ATIBT emphasised that certified tropical timber is well positioned to meet the EUDR's requirements. The association highlighted the fact that the sustainable management of tropical forests -

which excludes land-use conversion and is based on very low harvesting rates (1 to 3 trees per hectare every 25 to 30 years) - is itself a concrete solution to combat deforestation and forest degradation.

It also pointed out that the regulatory frameworks of producer countries are comprehensive, and that their enforcement is strengthened by regular audits under certification schemes. In addition, certified tropical timber supply chains now feature some of the most advanced traceability systems in the world, capable of tracking logs down to the stump of each felled tree.

Moreover, ATIBT engaged in frequent dialogue with representatives of the European Commission and members of the European Parliament to convey on-the-ground realities, warn of the potentially counterproductive effects of misinterpreting or misapplying the EUDR, and advocate for clear and positive recognition of forest certification within the regulation's compliance mechanisms.

IMPLEMENTATION OF CITES DECISIONS: SUPPORT FOR STATES AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN 2024

In 2024, ATIBT continued its commitment to the legal, sustainable, and scientifically regulated trade of tropical timber through several key areas of intervention under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

TECHNICAL SUPPORT FOR CENTRAL AFRICAN COUNTRIES IN DRAFTING NDFS



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In 2024, as part of the "NDF" project backed by the PPECF, ATIBT continued to provide technical support to Central African countries and certified companies for the implementation of CITES requirements. This support focuses on the preparation of Non-Detriment Findings (NDFs), the definition of export quotas, and the issuing of permits required for the legal export of species listed in Appendix II of the Convention. The aim is to strengthen national capacities to ensure sustainable management that is in line with international standards.

However, despite these efforts, many obstacles to imports into the European

Union persist due to a lack of transparency regarding the assessment criteria used by the scientific authorities of Member States. In response to these challenges, ATIBT coordinated a collective response by rallying together the Forest & Industry Commission, the Scientific Council and several independent experts. This joint effort led to the drafting of a position paper on the sustainability criteria applied by the EU and to an official letter from certified companies, denouncing the obstacles encountered during the importation process.

In parallel, ATIBT worked on the development of technical tools to facilitate the preparation of NDFs and to harmonise practices among producer countries. These tools include a standard NDF template, a regeneration rate calculation tool integrating both national and European methodologies, a summary of national regulations, and a simplified quota monitoring system. A regional workshop to present and discuss these tools with stakeholders from the relevant countries will be held in Douala from 17 to 20 March 2025.

SUPPORT FOR CENTRAL AFRICAN COUNTRIES IN RESPONDING TO THE EU CONSULTATION REGARDING THE LISTING OF NEW SPECIES IN CITES



In November 2024, as part of the preparations for 20th Conference of the Parties (CoP20) of the CITES, ATIBT supported Central African countries in responding to the official consultation launched by the European Union. This consultation pertained to the possible inclusion in Appendix II of the CITES of species from the *Entandrophragma* spp. genus as well as Okoumé. The aim of this support was to enable producer countries to present a coherent and technically substantiated position that is in line with their forest management realities. To this end, ATIBT rallied together a wide network of experts: CITES scientific authorities and management bodies, institutional partners, and specialised research firms. The arguments presented were based in particular on available field data, harvested volumes,

traceability systems, and existing commitments relating to sustainability, certification, and forest management planning.

This collective effort enabled the involved countries to make their voices heard by defending a balanced approach to regulating the international trade in tropical species that are key to their forest economies. Following this consultation, and after the meetings of the Scientific Review Group (3-4 December 2024) and the CITES Management Committee (5 December 2024), the European Union informed its delegations in Central African countries of its decision **to not submit a formal proposal to list these taxa at the CoP20 meeting. However, as of this writing no official communication from the Directorate-General for the Environment has been published.**

The year 2024 was also marked by strong engagement on the international stage, notably through active participation in the CITES bodies (see the section entitled Major ATIBT events in 2024 - A year of international visibility).

VOCATIONAL TRAINING

In 2024, vocational training was mainly addressed through two projects: the ADEFAC project, jointly managed with the RIFFEAC, which aims to contribute to the sustainable management of tropical forests by supporting the development of a continuing vocational training offer, and the Forest-Timber Sector Support Project (PAFFB - *Projet d'Appui à la Filière Forêt-Bois*) in Gabon.

As part of the PAFFB, 60 officers from the Gabonese Water and Forestry Department and from Customs were trained in the identification of sawn timber from over 30 tree species, as well as in the measurement and grading of sawn timber. These training sessions were led by Jean Gérard and Patrick Langbour from the CIRAD, along with Lambert Ondo and Sylvie Obame from the ENEF in Cap Esterias, Gabon.

In 2024, the ADEFAC project delivered several key activities and results, including:

- 3 1-hour webinars for company managers and HR officers on the following topics: 1) workforce planning and management with the GPEEC management tool; 2) optimising work organisation; and 3) skills in support of performance.
- A final training-of-trainers session held in Brazzaville, bringing the total number of continuing vocational training instructors trained by the project to 198 (including 31 women).
- A regional meeting of Thematic Working Groups on continuing vocational training in Brazzaville, along with the joint development of a "labelling guide" for training modules.
- 10 action-training courses held for 125 apprentice-trainers on the following subjects: maintenance, timber measurement and grading, carpentry (2 sessions), 5S/Kaizen methodology, forest botany, artisanal sawing and drying, forest management, and timber finishing (2 sessions).
- 10 continuing vocational training modules delivered by partner training centres/institutions:
 - ENEF in Mbalmayo - Cameroon: 3 modules ("negotiating social clauses", "forest mapping for geo-referenced operational inventories", "the use of participatory research and planning tools")
 - ISEA in Tshéla - DRC: 1 module ("managing forest land conflicts")
 - *Artisans au féminin* (Female artisans group) - Cameroon: 3 modules ("responsible business leadership", "business management", "digitalising timber processing activities")
 - Don Bosco Ebolowa - Cameroon: 1 module ("generating value from logging and sawmill scraps in Cameroon")
 - CFEP Bois-BTP - Gabon: 1 module ("5S/Kaizen method")
 - Cluster Brazzaboïs - Congo: 1 module ("artificial timber drying")
- Publication of the "Guide for the Local Use of Central African Timber"
- Participation in several national and international events: the GIZ TTT meeting in Guangzhou, China in March; the FAO workshop on "Women's entrepreneurship in forestry: challenges and opportunities" in Rome in March; the TRAFFIC workshops for module development in Dschang, Mbalmayo, Brazzaville, and Douala in May; the "Made in Cameroon" furniture fair from 22 June to 2 July 2024 in Yaoundé; the PFBC parties' meeting in Kinshasa in early June 2024; the 42nd WorldSkills competition in Lyon, France in September 2024 (with members of the thematic groups); the ATIBT Forum in Antwerp, Belgium from 3-4 October 2024; and the MOSALA project caravan (in both Pointe Noire and Ouessou, Congo) in November 2024.

The year 2025 will mark the completion of the ADEFAC project. By the end of June 2025, over 20 continuing vocational training modules are expected to be deployed by the project's partners.

The RACEWOOD 2025 conference in Pointe-Noire and the first edition of the Central African Cabinetmaking Grand Prize will be the major highlights of the year. 2025 will also be dedicated to preparing the project's 2nd phase, scheduled to begin in 2026, with the continued support and trust of the French Development Agency (AFD).

SUPPORT FOR SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION

| THE ASP-GREEN PACT CAMEROON PROJECT, A BOOST FOR COMPANY CERTIFICATION

Implementation of the "Support for the Private Forestry Sector and the timber Industry in Cameroon for the Green Pact [ASP CAM PV]" project, which began in 2023, continued throughout 2024.

As a reminder, and in general, this project aims to contribute to the development of a green economy that generates local employment and is resilient to climate change. This multi-faceted support targets companies across the timber industry, professional associations in the sector, and specific assistance for certified companies, with the objective of promoting and encouraging sustainable management and forest certification. Support is also directed towards the Ministry of Forests and Wildlife (MINFOF) in its activities related to the Domestic Timber Market (MIB - *Marché Intérieur du Bois*), and towards certain actions linked to forest operations, forest management, and the implementation of CITES' decisions.

The main activities carried out in 2024 included:

- Support for the certification of certain companies through staff training on certification standards and the PAFC scheme, as well as the funding of a PAFC pre-audit;
- Support for private sector advocacy, with contributions to the drafting of the 2024 economic bulletin and the presentation of said bulletin to relevant authorities and administrations;
- The marketing of Lesser-Known Timber Species (LKTS) in European markets through the development of an initial short list of LKTS for testing and the updating of related information, along with a study on the adhesives used in timber products;
- Development of the domestic timber market, with support to the MINFOF, promotion of LKTS on the MIB, and improved knowledge of the charcoal value chain;
- Support to CITES bodies (the management body and the scientific authority) through capacity-building efforts and especially through simplified exchanges between CITES bodies in COMIFAC countries, assisting these countries in advocacy at CITES events, and holding discussions with the SRG (Scientific Review Group) and the scientific authorities of various EU countries;
- Support for the sector in relation to the EUDR, through the organisation of webinars, the production of EUDR-related documentation, advocacy with EU organisations, and preparation of an impact study on the EUDR's effects on the timber industry;
- Promotion of Cameroonian timber on the European markets, with support for companies to participate in the CIB 2024 fair, the facilitation of exchanges between producers and importers, the organisation of business trips for importers to Cameroon, and participation in the World of Wood trade show in the United States.

| FSC: IMPLEMENTATION OF MOTION 23

LAUNCH OF PILOT PROJECTS FOR THE PROTECTION OF INTACT FOREST LANDSCAPES (IFL)

Since the 2022 FSC General Assembly, the implementation of Motion 23/2022 has taken a decisive step forward with the development of a new procedure (FSC-PRO-60-004) and an accompanying guide document (FSC-GUI-60-004a). This motion aims to promote landscape-level management approaches tailored to local contexts in order to better protect Intact Forest Landscapes (IFL), while also enhancing the role of national Standard Development Groups (SDGs).

With support from the Focus Forest Advisory Group (FFAG), of which ATIBT is actively involved, these documents have been designed as a reference framework for pilot projects, allowing SDGs to develop IFL protection indicators specific to their national contexts. On 28 March 2024, five of the six FFAG members approved the launch of the pilot phase. One point of discussion remains regarding the absence of explicit "safety thresholds" for protection levels, but a consensus was reached

regarding their contextual integration on a case-by-case basis, according to local landscape realities.

FSC national groups - particularly those in Brazil, Peru and the Congo Basin - have expressed strong interest in this approach. The guidance document that was tested was co-developed by a research consortium led by professor Claude Garcia (Bern University of Applied Sciences), in collaboration with FSC staff, and draws inspiration from initiatives such as The Forest Dialogue.

A webinar held on 11 July 2024 provided a detailed presentation of the pilot project framework, clarified the implementation procedures for FSC-PRO-60-004 and FSC-GUI-60-004a, and addressed stakeholders' questions. This session helped enhance approval across the FSC network for the initiative and clarified the next steps for SDGs wanting to get involved in the process.

PILOT PROJECT IN CONGO: PROPOSAL OF LANDSCAPE-LEVEL INDICATORS

In this context, a pilot project is being set up in the Republic of the Congo, with initial discussions scheduled to be held in January 2025. This process relies on the local commitment of stakeholders and aims to adapt the indicators to the Congolese

forest context, taking into account the specific features of the region's intact landscapes. ATIBT is strongly involved in coordinating this project, in collaboration with both forestry sector players and FSC representatives.

>> More information on this launch: [ATIBT link - Motion 23 in Congo](#)

PAFC DEVELOPMENTS IN 2024: A YEAR OF EXPANSION AND CONSOLIDATION

The year 2024 marked a decisive step in the development of the PAFC Congo Basin certification scheme, with significant progress both in terms of certification and regional structuring.



GROWTH OF CERTIFICATION IN THE THREE COUNTRIES



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- The *Société d'Exploitation des Établissements Fombelle* (SEEF) became the first company in Cameroon to obtain PAFC certification, covering 149,079 hectares of forest and two processing plants.
- The *Société Forestière et Industrielle de la Komo* (SFIK) obtained certification in Gabon.
- *Industrie Forestière de Ouessou* (IFO), a subsidiary of the Interholco group, was certified in the Republic of the Congo, becoming the country's first company to obtain PAFC Congo Basin certification.

Three major companies obtained PAFC certification in 2024, thereby strengthening the scheme's presence in the sub-region:

These certifications bring the total certified area to over 2.5 million hectares, with seven chain of custody (CoC) certificates issued.

REINFORCED AUDIT CAPABILITIES

In February 2024, Control Union obtained accreditation from the Tunisian body TUNAC to carry out PAFC forest certification audits in the Congo Basin, covering Gabon, Cameroon and the Republic of the Congo. This accreditation is in addition to that of Bureau Veritas Cameroon, thereby providing companies an alternative choice of certification body.



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SUPPORT TOOLS DEVELOPED BY ATIBT

To facilitate understanding and ownership of the PAFC Congo Basin certification requirements, ATIBT has developed several tools that companies and auditors can use:

- A detailed interpretation guide: This guide provides a requirement-by-requirement explanation of the PAFC sustainable forest management standard, offering valuable assistance for the practical implementation of the certification's criteria.
- A PAFC BC / FSC convergence guide: This document compares the requirements of the PAFC Congo Basin and FSC schemes, helping companies that are already FSC-certified - or considering dual certification - to better understand the similarities and differences between the two systems.

These tools are designed to support companies in their certification efforts, providing clear and practical resources to meet the requirements of the PAFC Congo Basin scheme.

ENHANCED REGIONAL GOVERNANCE



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[The opening of the PAFC Congo Basin regional coordination office](#) in Libreville at the end of 2024, with the arrival of Lucas Millet as regional coordinator, strengthened the momentum of cooperation among the member countries.

In December 2024, workshops were held in Brazzaville, Douala and Libreville, brin-

ging together local players to discuss updates on PAFC developments and gain a greater understanding of environmental, social, and management best practices.

The year 2024 was therefore a pivotal one, laying the foundations for the sustainable expansion and added international recognition of the PAFC Congo Basin scheme.

SUPPORT FOR THE CERTIFIED TROPICAL TIMBER MARKET

| LIFE CYCLE ANALYSIS AND RESULTS



Following the publication of life cycle analyses and Environmental Product Declarations (FDES - *Fiche de Déclaration Environnementale et Sanitaire*) in 2023, funded by the industry and by the Programme for the Promotion of Certified Forest Exploitation (PPECF), advisory support to companies has been maintained and will remain available throughout 2025.

The current challenge is to reassure users about the environmental qualities and the competitiveness of certified tropical timber, particularly in light of the implementation of European environmental regulations such as France's RE 2020.

| THÉMIS (TIMBER MARKET SURVEY)

The Thémis project was led by the Dutch PROBOS institute and funded by the Programme for the Promotion of Certified Forest Exploitation (PPECF) and the "IDH Sustainable Trade Initiative" foundation. The project consisted of developing a data collection tool on timber purchases by European federation member companies. This tool takes the form of an online portal, where companies are asked to report their data once a year.

Three federations are directly involved in the project: Fedustria in Belgium, LCB in France and ATIBT at the European level. Other European federations have also expressed interest in the platform. Since 2021, companies that are members of these federations have been invited - currently on a voluntary basis - to report their data on the Thémis portal once a year.

ATIBT closely monitors how LCB uses the platform, particularly as it is now integrated into LCB's new environmental charter.

The survey requests the following information from companies:

- Certification of their chain of custody
- Categories of products purchased/imported
- Total volumes purchased/imported
- Categories of timber purchased/imported (non-tropical, tropical)
- Certified volumes that are purchased/imported, and under which certification(s)
- Countries of origin (production and processing)

The portal takes into account the following certification and regulatory systems:

- CoC Certification: FSC, PEFC, LegalSource, OLB, LegalTrace, LegalHarvest Verification, TLV, STIP, and Keurhout (with the option to indicate another scheme).
- Timber Certification: FSC, PEFC, FLEGT licences, SourceUp, CITES permits, FSC CW, LegalHarvest, LegalSource, TLV, LegalTrace, OLB, and PEFC Controlled Sources.

In 2024, 6 ATIBT member companies responded to the survey (out of around 30 relevant members); they are based in France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, Italy and Switzerland. As in every year, a webinar was held jointly with LCB at the beginning of 2024 to launch the data collection, and a results feedback workshop brought together willing members of ATIBT and LCB at the end of September.

| FAIR&PRECIOUS



The Fair & Precious programme, whose members/loggers are Pallisco CIFM, Rougier Gabon, Precious Woods, CIB Olam, IFO Interholco, Mil Madeiras Preciosas, Maderacre, Alpicam) received no funding in 2024 beyond contributions from the collective's member companies and ATIBT's internal resources. Work continued, notably through posts on social media via LinkedIn (2,185 followers) and Instagram (4,531 followers). We maintained our promotional efforts for certification and sustained ongoing contact with Programme partners. The Fair&Precious website was updated. Internally, we held brainstorming sessions to explore ways of re-launching the programme in light of future funding opportunities.

The brand's communication tools were used by various members.

It should be noted that in 2024, Nathalie Bouville joined our association. She is a

communication professional with extensive knowledge of our sector, having worked with many organisations (FSC, WFID, EIA, etc.).

Having proven its relevance over the years, it is essential that the brand regains momentum in the coming years.

Certain key points need to be addressed.

Clarification of Fair&Precious' value proposition

- Reaffirm what Fair & Precious stands for: a guarantee of sustainable forest management, traceability, respect for human rights, and efforts to combat deforestation.
- Highlight members' measurable commitments (certification, social impact, biodiversity, etc.).

Update the narrative identity

- Refresh language elements to better reach professional, institutional, and public audiences.
- Adapt messages to align with current environmental and regulatory concerns (EUDR, CITES, carbon neutrality, etc.).



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Enhance digital visibility

- Revamp the website: UX design, SEO, and multilingual availability (notably French, English, and Mandarin).
- Deploy a content strategy across LinkedIn, YouTube, etc.: profiles of committed companies, educational videos and visual summaries. It is worth noting the preparation of a communication campaign to challenge common misconceptions, scheduled for launch in 2025.
- Create a digital mini-label (badge) that members can use on their own media

Rally both members and partners

- Appoint a Fair&Precious ambassador working on behalf of the collective. This point has been considered and discussed with certain members of the collective.
- Organise a re-engagement campaign for member companies (both partners and loggers) for a 2025-2026 pact.

- Integrate Fair&Precious into advocacy efforts, institutional communication, and participation in trade fairs (e.g. Carrefour du Bois, Interzum, FSC/PEFC Congress, etc.).

Align Fair&Precious with international regulatory challenges

- Position the brand as a tool for enhanced voluntary compliance, in support of the EUDR, the Lacey Act, etc.
- Develop alignment sheets mapping F&P commitments to regulatory requirements.

Strengthen external recognition

- Initiate dialogue with public buyers, NGOs, donors, and professional federations (e.g. ETTF, CEI-Bois).
- Consider formal recognition of the brand as a sectoral benchmark.

SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH



As in previous years, scientific research activities remained a central pillar of ATIBT's work in 2024.

As part of the **UFA-REFOREST** project, an evaluation of the performance of forest plantations is underway using three approaches: gap planting, park-like plantations, and full-plot plantations. A first synthesis, based on 45 studies covering over 89 species, shows that both height and diameter growth depend on the planting methods and functional groups of species. Pioneer species, non-pioneer heliophiles, and sciaphilous species show significantly better diameter growth when planted in degraded areas or clear-cut zones. Pioneer species, in particular, demonstrate markedly higher growth rates under high light conditions. These results highlight the strategic importance of matching *species types with canopy openings* to optimise silvicultural enrichment interventions in forest environments.

The project's scientific component was also strengthened through several complementary initiatives:

- Two projects funded by the RESSAC programme focusing on ecological

subjects: the first one aims to develop a better understanding of the growth dynamics and ecology of seedlings of key commercial species in Cameroon's production forests; the second one is dedicated to assessing the carbon balance of silvicultural enrichment in these same forests.

- The ARM+ project, backed by the PPECF, aims to boost the production of quality seeds for reforestation programmes in Central Africa. It contributes to supplying nurseries with high-performance plant material by studying, on the one hand, the rooting capabilities of forest species with a view to establishing seed orchards, and on the other hand, the optimal storage conditions for seeds.
- (ii) Another research initiative, focusing on socio-economic aspects and also backed by the **RESSAC** programme, addresses **the evaluation of the economic and social impacts of international timber trade regulations in Central Africa, examining the case in Cameroon and Gabon of species listed in CITES Appendix II.**

SUPPORT FOR TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT



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With a view towards supporting technological advancement, ATIBT, with the backing of the CIRAD and its Timber Material & Standardisation Commission, accompanies numerous developments. In a context where the Congo Basin countries are increasingly moving towards a halt on log exports, products from secondary processing are becoming more widely marketed from within these countries. Timber processing therefore requires better resource management, particularly in terms of improving yields both at the factory and in the forest.

One avenue being explored is the adding of value to timber - particularly to lesser-used or lesser-known species (LKTS) - through reconstituted timber techniques using glue. With support from the CIRAD and the WALE company, and within the framework of the ASP-Green Pact Cameroon project, ATIBT is conducting a study on gluing as applied to solid tropical timber. This study aims to provide an overview of current knowledge (terminology, adhesive types, classifications and standards, quality marks and certifications) and to identify the opportunities these techniques offer for African tropical timber.

In addition, with support from ITTO, the publication of 12 booklets entitled "*Guidelines and recommendations on contracts and uses in the international trade of tropical timber*" provides technical and normative reference points that are useful for sector stakeholders.

Lastly, the drafting of a guide on the performance and functional requirements of structures made using African tropical timber began in mid-2024. Its goal is to support the integration of tropical timber species into public procurement markets. The development of this Guide follows requests from project owners, especially architects, who wish to use tropical timber in public projects due to its unique performance characteristics, but who sometimes encounter difficulties in drafting the technical specifications document (CTP - *cahier des clauses techniques particulières*). This guide was written by the CIRAD (Jean Gérard) with financial support from the PPECF (Programme for the Promotion of Certified Forest Operations), and it also benefited from contributions by LCB (*Le Commerce du Bois*).

THE SEARCH FOR INNOVATIVE FUNDING MECHANISMS

| OBC BIODIVERSITY CERTIFICATES: WORK HAS BEGUN!



In 2024, the Organization for Biodiversity Certificates (OBC) reached a decisive milestone in developing a market-based approach for biodiversity certificates. This tool aims to attract private funding for the restoration and preservation of ecosystems - particularly forest ecosystems - while ensuring scientific rigour and a genuine, measurable impact on biodiversity. ATIBT became actively involved in this initiative early on (in 2022), with a strong commitment to gaining recognition for **sustainable tropical forest management** as a key catalyst that contributes to global biodiversity.

In response to growing criticism of traditional **compensation** mechanisms - which are often accused of allowing companies to continue degrading one area while claiming to restore another area - the OBC champions an alternative approach that is focused on a **voluntary contribution**. The idea is no longer to "offset a loss" but to **actively support positive biodiversity practices**, whether in forestry, agriculture, or territorial management. This vision, shared by ATIBT, places field-based action and ecological integrity at the heart of the system.

Our commitment is reflected in our active participation in the OBC's "tropical zone" project, launched in 2024. The project aims to identify the forestry management practices most beneficial to biodiversity in Africa, Asia, and Latin America's forests.

Its ambition is clear: to define a framework of measurable-impact actions, support the development of value chains for pilot forestry projects, and enhance the recognition of sustainable management efforts in international biodiversity policies.

ATIBT sees this as a significant opportunity to bring concrete value to sustainable management practices in tropical forest concessions - practices that are often pioneering in terms of certification and biodiversity preservation. Through the OBC, these efforts can gain greater recognition, financial support, and integration into national and international biodiversity contribution strategies, particularly in relation to the Kunming targets.

The year 2024 also marked a key political milestone with the **OBC's presence at the COP16** conference in Cali, Colombia, where its contribution-based and territorial approach was showcased - notably during a round table with the International Advisory Panel on Biodiversity Credits (IAPB). This international recognition affirms the relevance of the OBC's model, which is grounded in scientific rigour, inclusiveness, and pragmatism.

In 2025, ATIBT will take over the coordination of the OBC's "tropical forests" working group, further consolidating its leading role in the methodological and strategic discussions on the development of biodiversity certificates in these regions. This also represents a way to promote a contribution-based vision that is rooted in real-world conditions - in contrast to approaches that are sometimes overly focused on compensation.

By supporting a **contribution-based approach that is aligned with the Kunming objectives**, ATIBT affirms that tropical forests should not be seen solely as carbon sinks or sanctuaries that should be compen-

sated, **but as living landscapes that must be supported**. This dynamic represents a genuine opportunity for our members and a tangible catalyst that can reconcile economy, climate, and biodiversity.

| OPEN LETTER TO EUROPEAN AUTHORITIES ON THE PROPOSED CARBON REMOVAL CERTIFICATION FRAMEWORK (CRCF)



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The **CRCF** (Carbon Removal Certification Framework), a draft European framework for certifying carbon removals, places significant emphasis on **carbon capture and storage technologies**, to the detriment of **nature-based solutions (NBS)**, particularly **forest projects**. The latter are considered less reliable due to the risk of non-permanence, despite their **environmental and social co-benefits**.

In response to this direction, **ATIBT**, through its **Carbon & Biodiversity Commission**, has joined the **NBS Coalition**, which brings together stakeholders involved in

forest carbon projects. Together, they are raising concerns with European authorities regarding the **risks of excluding NBS projects**, especially in the global South, and are calling for **fair recognition** of their contribution to climate action, biodiversity, and local development.

An **open letter** and a **memo focusing on the tropical regions** were submitted to the European Commission and IUCN France, while ongoing dialogue is underway in Brussels. Through these efforts, ATIBT is actively committed to **defending the role of forests in European carbon regulation**.

SUPPORT FOR FOREST GOVERNANCE AND THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN SECTORAL DIALOGUE

| CONTINUATION AND COMPLETION OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR SUPPORT (ASP - *APPUI SECTEUR PRIVÉ*) CONGO PROJECT



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ATIBT Congo, through the Private Sector Support (ASP) project, pursued its technical assistance actions for forestry companies, via the timber industry federations, for their involvement in the VPA-FLEG process, thereby contributing to inclusive and transparent management of forest resources. Key achievements of this project include: i) Drafting and Implementation of a strategy and communication plan for the entire forest-timber sector; ii) Updating of legal and informational monitoring; iii) Advocacy actions on VPA-FLEG draft regulatory texts and documents; iv) Awareness-raising and coaching actions for companies to bring them up to standard on "legality" and "traceability" modules upstream of the SIVL (*Système Informatisé de Vérification de la Légalité* - Digital Legality Verification System). For reasons mentioned above, some results of this project could not be fully achieved, notably the advocacy and company coaching actions. This project ended in July 2024, after obtaining a three-month extension.

On Wednesday 24 April 2024, ATIBT held the closing meeting of the Private Sector Support (ASP) project in the Republic of Congo. The meeting was attended by around 20 stakeholders and partners (forestry companies, representatives of timber industry professional associations, the EU Delegation, civil society, and the Ministry of Forest Economy) who took the opportunity to express wishes for the launch of a phase II.

This project, established with the aim of effectively contributing to the improvement of forest governance in the country through a strengthening of the forestry companies' ability to conduct inclusive and transparent sustainable management of forest resources, has therefore concluded. It will have enabled intense activities within the framework of the Republic of Congo's evolving regulatory framework, highlighting key reforms such as law 33-2020 of 8 July 2020 of the Forest Code and the VPA-FLEG process.

On this matter, Mr Alain Bertin TIOTSOP, representative of ATIBT Congo, welcomed the coaching activities provided to forestry companies, which have helped to boost their ability to engage in the implementation of the FLEGT process, particularly with regard to meeting both legality and forest traceability requirements.

"It is important for ATIBT to support forestry companies during the process of gathering and preparing verification documents, which will later be integrated into the digital legality verification system and will enable companies to obtain FLEGT legality certificates", stated the ATIBT representative.

During this meeting, which was enthusiastically attended by the European Union's delegation, the VPA-FLEGT facilitator, the Ministry of Forest Economy, partners from the UNICONGO timber federation, UNIBOIS, unaffiliated companies and civil society, ATIBT presented the other main results of the project, the major challenges encountered, and its future outlook, including:

- Continuing to organise webinars on various cross-cutting topics relevant to the forest-timber sector;
- Continuing the implementation of the communication strategy and action plan;
- Intensifying support for partners (UNICONGO and UNIBOIS) so that they fully take advantage of the "*FILIERE BOIS CONGO*" website;
- Contributing to the dissemination of the "Guide for verifying the legality grid of timber from natural forests using the SIVL";
- Continued coaching to companies on legality and traceability ahead of their integration into the SIVL;
- Contributing to improvements of certain implementing texts with the re-launch of the GTMA.

| ATIBT'S INVOLVEMENT WITHIN THE CBFP

The Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP) was launched during the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002, in response to UN General Assembly Resolution 54/214, which called on the international community to support the efforts to preserve and sustainably manage the Congo Basin forests, as expressed in the Yaoundé Heads of State Declaration of 1999.

Over the past 10 years, ATIBT has led the CBFP's private sector college. This college is one of the CBFP's seven colleges. It serves as a platform for expressing and discussing issues and concerns of common interest with the CBFP's Governing Council and/or during its Meeting of Parties.

The college contributes to the development of the CBFP's intervention strategy. This strategy is outlined in a roadmap that includes the college's priorities and the actions to be undertaken to achieve them.

The intervention strategy and the associated roadmap are the result of recommendations made by CBFP members during the Meetings of the Parties.

The college is accountable to CBFP's members for the implementation of these recommendations and for the monitoring of their progress.

MAINTAINING FOREST SPECIES BALANCE IN FOREST MANAGEMENT UNITS - UFA-REFOREST



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The year 2024 marks the third year of implementation of the UFA-REFOREST project. Activities aimed at maintaining the balance of forest species in the UFAs continued, notably in terms of seedling production in nurseries and the establishment of plantations in a participatory and inclusive manner. Overall, the total nursery capacity of the four companies involved in the project has remained unchanged since 2023, standing at 170,000 seedlings. In 2024, approximately 130,000 seedlings were produced, from 37 local species. During this year, 31.74 hectares were reforested through full plantation activities and 341.85 hectares of forest were enriched through planting in felling gaps and parks. In total, 84,437 trees were planted.

Cumulatively, and over the first three years of the project, 75.31 hectares of degraded forest were enriched - equivalent to 75.3% of the overall target. A total area of 890.67 hectares of forest were enriched through planting in felling gaps and parks. In all, 16,308 gaps and parks were enriched - representing 76.5% of the project's overall target. The total number of trees planted during the first three years of the project across all UFAs of the participating companies is 194,765 trees - equivalent to 80.7% of the overall target. The average implementation rate of planting targets at the end of the project's third year stands at 78%. To carry out these reforestation activities, 27 communities living near the forest concessions took part in the field-

work. These communities were involved in the gathering of seeds, nursery work, and planting activities. Recruitment for the teams took into account the inclusion of both women and indigenous peoples.

With a view toward harmonising plantation monitoring, the enrichment monitoring system established within the companies is frequently updated, and the databases are regularly revised and archived. A researcher from Gembloux Agro-Bio-Tech - who is funded by the project - is working on the evaluation of plantation performance under different configurations: gaps, parks, and full-plot plantations (or parcels). As part of project monitoring, a DICOSE session was held at the industrial site of the PALLISCO forestry company. This session was combined with a field visit. The purpose was to observe the project's achievements (nurseries and plantations) and to reflect on the challenges encountered in the implementation of field activities.

Consideration is currently underway on the implementation of incentive measures

to support reforestation efforts at the national level. To this end, two workshops dedicated to reforestation in Cameroon have been organised. The private forestry sector actively participated in these discussions.

Despite these significant advances, the initiative has nevertheless encountered several challenges. Firstly, the supply of seeds to the nurseries remains a fundamental issue, which the joint ARM+ and RESSAC projects are attempting to address. The availability of machinery for plot preparation is also a major concern, given the associated costs for the partner companies; as a result, plot preparation is often carried out manually (this less efficient approach nonetheless has positive aspects, as it creates more employment). Lastly, the lack of logistical resources to transport the teams and seedlings to the field is an issue that the initiative is helping to resolve through the purchase of suitable equipment and the establishment of an effective organisational framework.



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5

MAJOR ATIBT EVENTS IN 2024 A YEAR OF INTERNATIONAL VISIBILITY

In 2024, ATIBT stepped up its participation in numerous international events, asserting its role as a spokesperson for the responsible tropical timber sector. These gatherings provided opportunities to showcase flagship projects, strengthen strategic alliances, and actively contribute to global discussions on forest policy. What follows is a look back at the year's key highlights.

THE 6TH ATIBT THINK TANK

A DUAL REFLECTION ON THE FUTURE OF THE TROPICAL FOREST-TIMBER SECTOR, NOGENT, 24-25 MARCH 2024

On 25 and 26 March 2024, ATIBT held its sixth Think Tank at the *Jardin d'Agronomie Tropicale* in Nogent-sur-Marne, bringing together around 30 participants in person and around 40 remotely each day. As a genuine setting for debate and forward-

looking thinking, the meeting enabled strategic discussions to be opened on two major topics: **lobbying for sustainable tropical forest management, and innovative finance in service of the sector.**

| DAY 1: REAFFIRMING THE SECTOR'S ROLE IN INTERNATIONAL DISCUSSIONS

The first day focused on the political and media visibility challenges facing the tropical forest-timber sector. Too often marginalised in high-level discussions (Climate COPs, CITES, EU Deforestation Regulation), this sector nonetheless plays a crucial role in combating deforestation and preserving biodiversity. Through the session entitled "Lobbying - where does it happen? At the COPs? In the media?", the Carbon & Biodiversity commission, represented by Pierre Schueller and Coline Seyller (Terea), shared its experiences regarding the difficulties and catalysts of action to be used in order to improve the representation of the Congo Basin, which remains largely overlooked in major international forums.

The discussions highlighted the disparity in representation among tropical forest basins, with the Amazon being overrepresented while the Congo Basin remains virtually invisible. Participants stressed

the need to strengthen the sector's presence at international events through better planning, increased communication, and stronger political and financial support.

Recommended actions:

- Develop a **strategic lobbying plan** targeting major international gatherings (COP29, COP16, etc.).
- **Strengthen alliances with the African states and networks** to build collective representation.
- Launch a **communications campaign dedicated to the Congo Basin**, highlighting its unique characteristics and contributions to global climate goals.
- **Mobilise institutional funding** to ensure of the sector's presence at international forums.

| DAY 2: EXPLORING INNOVATIVE FUNDING AS A CATALYST FOR SUSTAINABILITY

The second day was dedicated to innovative funding, with a panel of speakers ranging from private investors to public donors, as well as NGOs and forestry companies. The debates revealed a strong demand for investments in projects with multiple impacts - environmental, social, and economic - particularly in sensitive areas such as the Congo Basin. Yet, despite significant potential, there are numerous barriers: the complexity of financial instruments, country risk challenges, and profitability requirements.

This Think Tank laid the groundwork for collective reflection on nature-based solutions and carbon markets. It also highlighted the need to harmonise the expectations of both the sector and investors, to develop a clear typology of available instruments, and to strengthen the voice of the sector through joint advocacy - notably via the country packages promoted by France and other donors.

Recommended actions:

- Produce a typology of funding options that are available for loggers in the Congo Basin, beyond carbon.

- Launch a prospective study on the value of the region's natural forests, to raise awareness among both policymakers and donors.
- Create a reference framework for measurable added-value indicators (biodiversity, social, climate).
- Identify a pilot company for a carbon project on a certified concession, to demonstrate operational feasibility and attract funding.
- Strengthen coordination between concession holders to create a common and credible roadmap for investors.

This Think Tank confirmed ATIBT's strategic role as a catalyst for reflection, dialogue and concrete actions in support of a strong, visible, and sustainably funded tropical forest-timber sector. The challenge now is to build on this momentum and embed these recommendations in future initiatives, in collaboration with international bodies and regional partners.

APF CONFERENCE ON COMBATING IMPORTED DEFORESTATION: ATIBT ALONGSIDE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EUROPEAN STAKEHOLDERS - PARIS, 4 APRIL 2024

On **4 April 2024**, ATIBT, represented by **Caroline Duhesme**, Director of Innovation and Strategy, took part in a conference and workshops held at the **headquarters of the Île-de-France (Paris and its suburbs) Region**, organised by the Alliance for the Preservation of Forests (APF). The topic of this event was: "*Public and private players in light of the new European regulation on deforestation-free products (EUDR)*."

A GLOBAL ALERT ON DEFORESTATION

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This event coincided with the release of 2023 data from the **Global Forest Watch** and the **World Resources Institute**, which highlighted a **general increase in deforestation**. However, notable progress in **Brazil and Colombia** illustrated the positive impact of **ambitious public policies**, as noted by **Claude Garcia (ETH Zurich)**.

A CALL FOR DIALOGUE AND COLLECTIVE ACTION

The discussions brought together **policymakers, researchers, businesses, NGOs, and institutions**, all called upon to join forces to strengthen the implementation of the **EUDR**, while remaining mindful of realities in the field. **Guillaume Reveilhac**, President of the Alliance, stressed the importance of supporting the European Commission in the rollout of this regulation, in order to build a fairer, more inclusive, and adaptive framework.

THREE PARTICIPATORY WORKSHOPS TO CONSIDER EUDR IMPLEMENTATION

Workshop 1 - Hosted by **Laure Grégoire** (Alliance) and **Lucile da Costa** (Audencia): The challenges of the EUDR: Five major obstacles were identified - tensions with producer countries, a lack of information-sharing, the complexity of traceability, inconsistency in inspections, and insufficient funding. A differentiated tax policy was suggested as a potential support mechanism.

Workshop 2 - Moderated by **Élise Rebut** (Conservation International) and **Isaline Masson** (Audencia): Possible solutions: Discussions highlighted key catalysts for action - obtaining a better understanding of local contexts, improving risk assessment, providing tailored traceability tools, and strengthening collaboration with suppliers.

Workshop 3 - Led by **Claude Garcia** (ETH Zurich) and **Matteo Courpotin** (Audencia): Anticipating negative outcomes: Four potential adverse scenarios were explored - weakening of the regulation, European

isolation, emergence of a two-tier economy, and the exclusion of small producers. There was broad consensus on the need for support measures and constructive dialogue to prevent these risks.



WORLD OF WOOD CONVENTION

SAN DIEGO, 10-12 APRIL 2024



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ATIBT participated in the **68th edition of the World of Wood Convention**, organised by the **International Wood Products Association (IWPA)** in San Diego (United States). The association was represented by Caroline Duhesme, Director of Innovation and Strategy, and **Nathalie Bouville**, ATIBT Representative for the United States.

| A KEY EVENT FOR THE NORTH AMERICAN TIMBER INDUSTRY

This annual event, which brought together over 200 international players from the timber sector - including producers, distributors, government officials, brokers, and

consultants - serves as a strategic platform for information-sharing, training, and networking in relation to the stakes faced by the legal and sustainable timber trade.



| STRENGTHENING TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS

ATIBT's participation further strengthened its **strategic ties with the IWPA**, particularly regarding shared themes such as:

- The **European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR)**,
- **CITES** and its commercial implications

Informal and productive discussions also took place with ATIBT members based in the United States (Adentra, Baillie Lumber, ETT Fine Woods), as well as with other international stakeholders (Bozovich, Tradelink, Interholco, CIB Olam, Rougier, etc.).

Promoting sustainable Cameroonian timber

As part of the **ASP Green Pact Cameroon** project, ATIBT took advantage of this opportunity to promote sustainably sourced Cameroonian timber. Brochures featuring **four Cameroonian companies** committed to responsible practices were distributed, helping raise their visibility in the North American market.

| ATIBT'S INTERNATIONAL VISIBILITY

Caroline Duhesme participated in an **international panel** to present the EUDR and the ways in which ATIBT is supporting its members in adapting to this new regulatory framework. She emphasised the importance of **FSC** and **PEFC** certifications as tools for compliance. Her remarks drew significant interest, particularly in light of feedback from the American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC) and the Malaysian Timber Council (MTC).

| OUTLOOK

Participation in this event helped **reinforce ATIBT's presence in the United States, enhance its visibility, and spark interest in potential new memberships**. The association is already preparing for the next edition, scheduled for **April 2025 in New Orleans, Louisiana**.

ATIBT'S PARTICIPATION IN THE CARREFOUR INTERNATIONAL DU BOIS NANTES, 28-30 MAY 2024



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ATIBT actively took part in the 2024 edition of the **Carrefour International du Bois (CIB)** in Nantes, now recognised as the leading European trade fair dedicated to the timber industry. The event brought together **approximately 640 exhibitors** and **13,000 visitors, 39% of whom were international.**

| A STAND DESIGNED FOR DISCUSSIONS AND TO PROMOTE OUR ACTIONS

The association had a **large exhibition stand, structured into two key areas:**

- An **agora** designed to host roundtable discussions,
- A **B2B area** dedicated to meetings with members and partners

The stand, largely funded by ATIBT's projects, reflected the strategic priorities of those initiatives - particularly the **ASP Green Pact project**, which was launched in Cameroon with support from the European Union.

| INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT AND PARTNERSHIPS

ATIBT's participation was **backed by the ITTO** (represented by Mr Nurudeen IDDRISU), **PEFC International**, and several **official representatives** from partner countries:

- **Cameroon:** Mr. DJOGO and Mr. KAFFO
- **Congo:** Mr. TATY (Chief of Staff to Minister Rosalie MATONDO) and Miss EBINA TARAGANZO
- **Gabon:** Mr. SIMBA
- **Mexico:** Mr. CHARGOY, Deputy Minister for Development in Quintana Roo

A rich and committed programme

The 2024 edition was marked by:

- 16 roundtables hosted on the ATIBT stand
- 2 major conferences on the European regulation on deforestation (EUDR), co-organised with both the AHEC and FNB

Key topics that were addressed included:

- Cameroon's forest-timber sector
- Cooperation activities in Central America, particularly in Mexico and Guatemala, around the Selva Maya
- The value of certification in European markets in a shifting regulatory context (EUDR, CITES, log export bans)
- The promotion of lesser-known timber species

| COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

The stand also enabled us to showcase several of the association's initiatives: CITES monitoring, updating of the "Contracts & Uses" sheets, and to contextualise timber use in European constructions.

This participation helped strengthen **ATIBT's visibility**, **foster dialogue among tropical timber stakeholders**, and make progress in terms of the **goals of ongoing projects in partner forest basins**.

VISUALISER LE RAPPORT



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1ST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON AFFORESTATION AND REFORESTATION (CIAR1) BRAZZAVILLE, 2 TO 5 JULY 2024

On the occasion of the **1st International Conference on Afforestation and Reforestation (CIAR1 - 1^{ère} Conférence Internationale sur l’Afforestation et le Reboisement)**, held in Brazzaville in July 2024, ATIBT showcased the results of the UFA-Reforest project, funded by the European Union in Cameroon. Two technical roundtables provided an opportunity to present:

- the **enrichment of felling gaps** and **full plantations** (Yanick Nkoulou Nkoulou, Project Manager);
- the **long-term monitoring of plantations** (Crispin Ilunga-Mulala, PhD candidate at the University of Liège - Gembloux Agro-Bio Tech)

ATIBT also ensured a strong visual presence thanks to various **communication materials** (roll-up banners, flyers) on the European Union’s stand. Several members - CIB Olam, IFO, FRMi - presented their activities on dedicated stands.



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| KEY ISSUES ADDRESSED AT THE CIAR1

- **Urgency of new plantations:** With 3.9 million hectares of forest lost each year in Africa, the conference highlighted the urgent need to rapidly develop **70 million hectares of plantations** (40 Mha for timber, 30 Mha for fuelwood).
- **Growth in global timber demand:** Driven by demographics, the energy transition, and innovative uses, demand is expected to rise by **40% for timber and 30% for fuelwood** by 2050. The rapidly expanding **carbon market** represents a key financial lever.
- **Innovative funding and public-private partnerships:** Funding needs are estimated at between **\$200 and \$300 billion (USD)**. New mechanisms are emerging: **carbon finance, PES, PPPs**, with growing private sector commitment to flagship projects such as the **"great green wall"**.
- **Integrated socio-environmental models:** Agroforestry, multifunctional plantations, and the involvement of **local and indigenous communities** emerged as cornerstones of sustainable reforestation, with successful case demonstrated in both Rwanda and the DRC.
- **Research and technological innovations:** The conference emphasised the importance of **applied research** on silvicultural models, **bioenergy, geospatial technologies**, and **long-term ecological monitoring**.

| INSTITUTIONAL MESSAGES AND POLITICAL ROADMAP

- The opening address highlighted the central role of trees in light of climate and environmental disruption.
- The UNDP, FAO and ECCAS called for better alignment between reforestation, economic development and public policy.
- 12 African countries (DRC, Congo, Gabon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Rwanda, etc.) announced their ambition to quadruple planted areas by 2035.

| CONFERENCE RECOMMENDATIONS (SUMMARY BY PAUL BERTAUX - FRMID)

- Strengthen international cooperation to share both practices and technologies.
- Develop robust and incentive-based policies and regulatory frameworks.
- Mobilise innovative funding: carbon, PPPs, PES, etc.
- Fully involve local and indigenous communities, with appropriate training and resources.
- Promote nature-based solutions (timber energy, agroforestry).
- Establish strong monitoring and evaluation systems at all levels.
- Create a DAMAR distinction to reward exemplary reforestation initiatives.

ATIBT'S PARTICIPATION IN THE 27TH SESSION OF THE PLANTS COMMITTEE

GENEVA, 8 AND 9 JULY 2024



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Active participation in the 27th session of the CITES Plants Committee (July 2024). ATIBT organised two side events: (i) on **8 July**, a roundtable on the principles and regulations guiding sustainable management in the tropical regions of Central and West Africa, the Amazon and Asia, highlighting similarities and differences in global practices; (ii) on **9 July**, a session focused on the challenges of implementing CITES appendices in Central Africa,

particularly in Cameroon and the DRC, addressing legal compliance, the implementation of sustainability principles, and traceability tools. In addition, the Ebony Project in Cameroon was presented by Mr Scott Paul, showcasing concrete actions in sustainable sourcing. ATIBT's participation in this session further strengthened its role as a recognised technical authority in the implementation of CITES in Central Africa.

PARTICIPATION IN THE FAO'S ACSFI (ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE FOREST-BASED INDUSTRIES)

The FAO's ACSFI Committee is a statutory body of the FAO made up of senior executives from the global private sector. It meets annually with the primary goal of providing guidance on the activities and work programme of the FAO Forestry Division on issues relevant to the forest and paper industry, in support of member

countries' efforts towards sustainable development.

Two meetings were held in 2024, on 21 July 2024 in Rome at FAO headquarters: the 65th ACSFI meeting (annual meeting), and on 6 November 2024 in Brussels at the CEI-Bois office.

CAPACITY-BUILDING WORKSHOP ON ROSEWOOD

DOUALA, FROM 2 TO 6 SEPTEMBER 2024



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From 2 to 6 September 2024, a regional workshop on the sustainable and legal management of trade in *Pterocarpus erinaceus* (African rosewood) was held in Douala, Cameroon. Jointly organised by the CITES Secretariat, MINFOF and ATIBT, with support from the European Union, the event brought together 63 participants from 18 African countries and eight organisations. The workshop's main objective was to strengthen the capacity of range States to develop **Non-Detriment Findings (NDFs)** and **Legal Acquisition Findings (LAFs)** that comply with CITES requirements. The workshop's contents were based on the new guidelines of **module 10** of the CITES guidance, dedi-

cated to tree species. The event alternated between theoretical sessions, experience sharing and practical exercises, including a visit to the autonomous port of Douala to illustrate customs controls and export procedures. Participants also discussed funding opportunities through the CITES Tree Species Programme (CTSP). The workshop reinforced regional coordination among CITES authorities and laid the groundwork for concerted participation at the CoP20 conference. The invitation from the CITES Secretariat confirms ATIBT's role as a leading technical reference in Central Africa in support of the Convention's implementation.

GLOBAL LEGAL AND SUSTAINABLE TIMBER FORUM - GLSTF 2024

MACAO, 11 AND 12 SEPTEMBER 2024



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ATIBT actively participated in the **2024 GLSTF**, organised by **the ITTO, GGSC and IPIM**, with the objective of strengthening

the reliability and sustainability of global timber supply chains in a persistently challenging market context.

| ATIBT SUB-FORUM: SUSTAINABLE TRADE, MARKETS AND RESOURCES

Together with the **China Timber & Wood Products Distribution Association**, ATIBT co-organised a sub-forum dedicated to sustainable trade, with focus on:

- The strategic importance of timber in the European bioeconomy, with a growing role in construction (target: 35% market share according to the CNDB).
- The key role of **African markets** and **Special Economic Zones (SEZs)** in local timber processing and economic development.
- The impact of **log export bans** on the structuring of the sector in producing countries (Congo, Cameroon, and Gabon).



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| SUSTAINABILITY, REGULATION AND CERTIFICATION

The forum highlighted the need for **robust traceability systems** to meet the requirements of the **EUDR** and the **Lacey Act**,

as well as the growing importance of **FSC and PEFC certifications** to enhance companies' credibility and reduce risks.

| INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES AND ENGINEERED TIMBER

ATIBT emphasised the potential of reconstituted solid timber to:

- Optimise the use of **lesser-known timber species (LKTS)**.
- Reduce waste and improve material yields.
- Address the challenges of 2nd and 3rd-rotation forest cycles.
- Offer new commercial opportunities in **the joinery, furniture, and construction industries**.

This innovative "product" approach makes it possible to add value to lower-grade timber and boost the competitiveness of tropical timber in the international markets.

ATIBT'S PARTICIPATION IN THE TIMBER DEVELOPMENT UK (TDUK) MEETING

LONDON, 25 SEPTEMBER 2024



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With a focus on the prospects for tropical timber in the UK market and a presentation of ATIBT's activities, the London Hardwood Club held its quarterly meeting at the Globe restaurant in London on 25 September 2024.

The ATIBT team consisted of Caroline Duhesme, Head of Strategy and Innovation, Franck Monthe, CITES Project Manager, Paul Cuveillier, Head of Technical Documentation, and Nathalie Bouville, Head of Communications. The team introduced the association and its main areas of work to an audience of around 40 UK timber professionals. Caroline provided an update on the EUDR, while Franck shared insights on CITES requirements. Paul presented the full range of technical resources available to ATIBT members, while Nathalie focused her talk on the promotional aspects of ATIBT's mission,

particularly via the Fair and Precious initiative.

The participants appreciated the presentations and were particularly keen to learn more about **the EUDR, wondering whether the regulation would actually be enforced in January 2025, which Caroline suggested was unlikely** ([as implied in this article](#)). Many questions pertained to GPS data collection and information related to due diligence. Caroline was able to offer reassurance regarding the level of preparedness among certified forest managers in the tropical regions.

The meeting provided ATIBT with an opportunity to reconnect with the UK market and to meet again with members such as Danzer, NGH, Tradelink, Gilmour & Aitken, Latham, and others.

2024 ATIBT FORUM

ANTWERP, OCTOBER 3 & 4



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ATIBT held its annual forum in Antwerp on 3 and 4 October 2024, bringing together numerous players from across the forest-timber sector, including private stakeholders, partner institutions, and both producer and consumer countries. The event drew strong interest and received highly positive feedback, highlighting the quality and depth of the discussions.

| EUDR: A REGULATION SUBJECT TO MUCH DEBATE

The discussions largely focused on the implementation of the EU Regulation combating deforestation (EUDR). Although its enforcement has been postponed, this delay is seen as an opportunity to:

- Enhance the **private sector's preparedness**,
- Clarify ambiguous aspects of the text (e.g. the definition of degradation, traders' obligations),

- Maintain **company commitment** and provide technical support, notably through training on the EUDR information system.

Exporting countries emphasised the need for **greater transparency** from the EU and for an **enhanced collaboration** to ensure that implementation is adapted to local realities.

| TRADE IN SPECIES AND ENHANCEMENT OF CITES CAPABILITIES

The presence of both the **CITES Secretary-General** and representatives from the Congo Basin provided an opportunity to dive deeper into discussions on the issues surrounding **species listed in appendix II**. A shortage of qualified personnel and resources - both in Central Africa and in Europe (notably among Belgian customs) - continues to hinder effective implementation.

The discussions highlighted:

- The importance of **targeted financial support** to build the capacities of producer countries,
- The need for **clear EU guidelines** to facilitate compliant exports,
- The **potential benefits** of a CITES listing, provided that the principles of the Convention are upheld.



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| PREPARATION FOR THE 2025 CITES COP

Discussions also focused on the regional gathering of forces in preparation of the CITES CoP conference scheduled in December 2025. There is hope for greater coordination between Congo Basin countries in order to better advocate for regional interests in international negotiations.

Forest management: towards a second rotation

Special attention was given to second-rotation forest management plans, with the following key observations:

- The overall outcome of the first rotation is positive, though challenges remain: **species diversification** and adapting to current **social and environmental issues**.
- A "**product-based approach**" is preferred to enhance the value of lesser-known species (LKTS), requiring technical research, thermal treatment, inventories, and staff training.
- Greater integration of **silviculture and reforestation** is encouraged to ensure of the **regeneration** and long-term viability of harvested species.

| INNOVATIVE FUNDING AND CARBON PROJECTS

The forum highlighted **forest carbon projects** and **innovative funding** as key catalysts to ensure that sustainable management models progress, particularly in the context of a **paradigm shift**.

While the carbon market is well-established - though at times criticised - the **biodiversity market remains nascent** but full of promise.

| AGREEMENT WITH COMIFAC AND PREPARATION FOR THE COP CONFERENCES

The intention **expressed by COMIFAC** to conclude a **new agreement with ATIBT** paves the way for **better coordination** in the lead-up to upcoming **Climate and Biodiversity COPs**.

Vocational training: achievements and challenges

The **ADEFAC project** has helped enhance capabilities in several Central African countries. However, sustaining these achievements will depend on:

- The **mobilisation of both local and international funding**,
- The **structuring of recognised training systems**,
- The development of **appropriate and validated modules** to meet the sector's evolving needs.

[VISUALISER LE RAPPORT](#)



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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON FOREST CONSERVATION

PARIS, 7 OCTOBER 2024



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In the lead-up to the **COP 30 conference in Belém**, ATIBT took part in the **3rd edition of the International Conference on Forest Conservation**, organised by the **City of Paris**, the **AIMF** and **Cities4Forest**. The meeting was held at the Pavillon de l'Arsenal, with the participation of high-level figures such as **Laurence Tubiana**, **Laurent Tchagba** (Ivorian Minister of Water and Forests) and **Anne Hidalgo**.

| SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT AND CERTIFICATION AT THE HEART OF THE DISCUSSIONS

ATIBT, present along with its partners (FSC, PEFC, Rainforest Alliance, SEEF Cameroon, Preferred by Nature, Precious Woods...), reiterated the fact that **sustainable forest management (SFM)** is a **key response to deforestation driven by agriculture**. Referred to as the "sister of conservation", SFM enables the reconcili-

ation of **ecosystem conservation** with **local socio-economic development**.

Forest certification, reinforced by ambitious public policies, was widely recognised as a **key catalyst** to promote sustainable timber sectors, especially tropical ones.

| TOWARDS MORE EXEMPLARY PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

A central focus of the conference was **public procurement**: integrating **sustainability criteria** that favour certified tropical timber is key to ensure equitable access to markets. This would help avoid

unfair competition with other types of timber and promote the use of the "**right timber for the right use**", particularly in construction.

| ONGOING MOBILISATION UP UNTIL THE COP 30 CONFERENCE

The event followed on from previous editions (Paris 2021, Abidjan 2022). ATIBT reiterated its commitment, particularly through its position statements against the boycott of tropical timber in public construction projects. It is currently contributing to the **drafting of the Paris**

Declaration for Tropical and Boreal Forests, which will be presented at **the COP30 conference**. The association will play a **strategic advisory role**, reaffirming its central place in international discussions on **certified tropical forests** and **responsible trade**.



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INTERNATIONAL HARDWOOD CONFERENCE

VIENNA, 7 & 8 NOVEMBER 2024



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ATIBT took part in the **10th edition of the International Hardwood Conference**, held at the Hilton Vienna Park in Vienna, Austria. The event, co-organised by the **Fachverband der Holzindustrie Österreichs**, the **EOS** (European Organisation of the Sawmill Industry) and the **ETTF** (European Timber Trade Federation), brought together **nearly 150 participants from 26 countries**.

| INDUSTRIAL VISITS AND ECONOMIC OPENNESS

On 7 November, attendees visited three innovative companies: **Weitzer Parkett** (flooring), **Mühlbauer Holz** (timber trading) and **TEAM 7** (high-end solid timber furniture).

On 8 November, the conference opened with an **economic analysis** highlighting global uncertainty and cost challenges for the hardwood sector, while also identifying **emerging opportunities linked to**

AI. There was also a focus on the condition and adaptive management of **European hardwood forests** in response to climate change and pests.

State of global markets and the "tropicalisation" of trade

Speakers from the United States, China and Europe shared their market analyses:

- **United States:** Continued decline in production and weak domestic demand.
- **China:** Exploration of new marketing channels via social media.
- **Tropical timber:** Stable share in global production (13-15%), according to

Jean-Christophe Claudon (ITTO).

The **flooring sector**, a major outlet for hardwoods, is facing challenges but is moving towards **product innovations** such as acoustic, water-resistant and smart flooring.

| SUSTAINABILITY, EUDR AND CERTIFICATION

The **European Union deforestation regulation (EUDR)** featured prominently in the debates. A delay of its entry into effect, welcomed by professionals, provides additional time to achieve compliance. **The FSC and PEFC certification systems** were highlighted for their key role in:

- Ensuring product **traceability**,
- **Risk assessment**,
- Providing **documentary assurances** that are compatible with EUDR requirements.

Innovation and the future of the sector

The conference highlighted the key **role of innovation** in revitalising the hardwood sector, especially in:

- **Timber construction** (including hybrid structures),
- **High-end furniture**,
- The exploration of **new materials** derived from hardwoods.

Discussions emphasised the need for **better promotion of these products**, particularly among younger generations attuned to sustainable materials.

| OUTLOOK

As the sector is going through a period of instability, speakers emphasised the importance of:

- **Greater dialogue with policymakers**,
- A **coherent European legislative framework**,
- And **active support for both innovation and communication** to position hardwood as a material of the future.

[MORE INFORMATION](#)

A man wearing an orange long-sleeved shirt, an orange helmet with a headlamp, and blue gloves is standing in a dense forest. He is looking up and touching the bark of a tree with his right hand. The background is filled with thick foliage and tree trunks.

6

2025, OTHER VERY REAL CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

SUPPORT IN RELATION TO CITES AND EUDR REGULATIONS

2025 CITES OUTLOOK



Among the major challenges for 2025, continued support for the implementation of CITES decisions and work on the vulnerability of forest species must remain a priority.

The main areas of focus are:

- The organisation of a regional NDF workshop in Douala (March 2025);
- Support for preparations ahead of the CITES CoP20 meeting, scheduled to take place in Uzbekistan (November-December 2025), with special attention in late June 2025 to identify the final list of species proposed for inclusion in appendix II of the convention;
- Consolidation of the tools for the calculation and analysis of quotas;
- Enhancing the collaboration with the IUCN and Central African countries to ensure robust assessments of the conservation status of tree species.

2025 EUDR OUTLOOK



In 2025, ATIBT will pursue and intensify its efforts by launching targeted communication campaigns aimed at European policymakers, to raise awareness of the tangible benefits of sustainable tropical forest management. The association will continue advocating for certification to be fully recognised as a tool for compliance and will ensure that the specific circumstances of tropical countries are duly considered in the operational implementation of the regulation. It also aims to strengthen sectoral coordination and further engage producer country authorities to build a shared and coherent voice at the international level.

ATIBT WILL STRENGTHEN ITS TIES WITH THE LATIN AMERICAN FORESTRY SECTOR

ATIBT's members in Latin America now form a significant group of stakeholders. Activities in the field are also being initiated in several countries, such as Mexico and Guatemala. As part of this momentum, a mission was carried out in Brazil by ATIBT Director Benoît Jobbé-Duval from 20 November to 8 December 2024. The primary objective was to strengthen ties with local players, meet with several institutions, and prepare ATIBT's potential participation in the COP 30 conference in Belém.

The collaboration with Jeanicolau Simone de Lacerda, an ATIBT member and the association's representative in Brazil, was formalised. Several meetings were held in São Paulo, Manaus and Belém, revealing major disparities in sustainable forest and sawmill management across the various Amazonian states.



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Meeting with AIMEX in Belém

This mission in Brazil provided a clearer understanding of the complexity of the country's forest sector, enabled us to establish key contacts, and laid the groundwork for ATIBT's next steps, especially in view of the COP 30 conference.

Obviously, not all potential ATIBT partners could be met during this visit, such as IMAFLORA, with whom discussions on IFLs are ongoing in preparation for the FSC General Assembly to be held in Panama from 26 to 31 October 2025. One of the major challenges remains the need to increase the area of certified forests, particularly in the Mato Grosso and Pará states.

There is also a need to intensify collaboration with both the Brazilian private and public sectors in order to work together on CITES-related issues and facilitate trade of species listed in appendix II, since the objective of such listings is not to block trade.

Understanding of the EUDR, which is due to enter into effect at the end of 2025, is also a critical issue for Brazil's forestry sector. Further exchanges with ATIBT will take place in the coming months to help facilitate understanding of the new regulation.

Lastly, investments in Brazil's forestry sector remain too low. It may be necessary to help shift the perception held by the BNDES (the Brazilian Development Bank), which currently sees natural forests as a burden rather than an asset - a major obstacle to accessing government funding that theoretically already exists for SFMs.

Advocacy in this direction should be possible.

REINFORCING ADVOCACY AND LOBBYING ACTIVITIES

| 2025 OUTLOOK

In 2025, ATIBT aims to consolidate its role as an **international reference for sustainable tropical forest management** by strengthening its advocacy efforts, deepening its scientific partnerships, and continuing to promote certified tropical timber on the international markets.

| STRUCTURING OUR ADVOCACY EFFORTS

In response to major regulatory developments (EUDR, CITES) and a persistently biased perception of tropical forestry, ATIBT will adopt a clear and structured advocacy strategy. A **dedicated task force**, combining in-house expertise, the network of members and institutional partners (COMIFAC, PFF, FSC, PEFC), will enable the organisation to better anticipate deci-

sion-making processes, defend the interests of a responsible forestry sector, and act within a coherent, ethical and transparent framework. The year will be marked by a **stronger presence in Brussels**, particularly in connection with the implementation of the EUDR and preparations for the next CITES COP conference.

| RENFORCEMENT DE NOTRE LÉGITIMITÉ SCIENTIFIQUE

To give weight to our messages, ATIBT will reinforce its **Scientific Council**, which safeguards the rigour and independence of the knowledge that it mobilises. This body will contribute to the production of technical data on the genuine impacts of sustainable

forest management, post-harvest regeneration, and the potential of lesser-known species. This work will be carried out in collaboration with academic partners and ongoing technical projects, following a logic of **evidence-based forest diplomacy**.

| PROMOTING A POSITIVE NARRATIVE ON SUSTAINABLE TROPICAL TIMBER

ATIBT will also intensify its **strategic communication efforts** to counter misconceptions about tropical timber and assert its role in combating deforestation. A **new communication campaign** will be launched in 2025, structured around an **educational brochure on sustain-**

able forest management, a clear set of arguments aimed at specifiers, and the creation of a **network of technical and commercial ambassadors** in key European countries. The objective: to reposition certified tropical timber as a **responsible climate, social and economic solution**.

| TOWARDS A MORE AGILE AND PROACTIVE ORGANISATION

In parallel, ATIBT will pursue its internal structuring efforts: lobbying governance, coordination of its commissions, development of partnerships and fundraising will back this dynamic of sustainable transformation. The link between **advocacy, technical projects and the member network** will be enhanced to ensure of the cohe-

rence of our messages and the impact of our actions in the field.

In 2025, and more than ever, ATIBT will champion a committed, innovative and legitimate sector, for the preservation of tropical forests and the development of the territories that depend on them.

OUR UPCOMING PROJECTS

ATIBT continues its commitment to sustainable, inclusive and innovative management of tropical forests through the development of new structuring projects, in partnership with both international donors and players across the sector. These projects, currently under preparation or soon to be structured, will add to the current momentum, support public policies, and assist our companies in their technical and social transformation as well as in their market positioning.

| ADEFAC 2

Following phase 1 of ADEFAC (*Appui au Développement de la Formation Continue dans le secteur forêt-bois en Afrique Centrale* - Support for the Development of Continuing Vocational Training in the forest-wood sector in Central Africa), the new phase will aim to build upon recent

achievements, reinforce recognised vocational training systems in the sub-region, and boost the autonomy of the local training centres. Emphasis will be placed on capitalisation, knowledge transfer and institutional anchoring.

| THE G2D2I PROJECT

Led by the ATIBT, this project funded by the **French Facility for Global Environment** (FFEM - *Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial*) is entitled "Sustainable, Diversified, Integrated and Inclusive Management of Forest Concessions". The project's overall objective is to improve the sustainable forest management model by

introducing an innovative approach. The Congo Basin's forest concession model will thus be reinforced and will ensure economic viability by enhancing social and environmental co-benefits. Currently under development, it will run for 30 months and is funded by the FFEM (€2,000,000).

PASSAD (SUPPORT PROGRAMME FOR THE FORESTRY SECTOR FOR AN ADAPTED AND SUSTAINABLE STRATEGY)

This project, backed by the European Union, aims to assist the Ivorian private forestry sector in the effective implementation of the FLEGT Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) signed between the EU and Côte d'Ivoire. ATIBT, in partnership with the SPIB (*Syndicat Des Producteurs Industriels*

Du Bois - Industrial Timber Producer's Syndicate), plays a central role in ensuring the integration of the private sector within forest governance structures. The project is part of the PASSAD-Forests programme (implemented by the EFI) and spans four years, with a budget of €960,000.

CAFI (CENTRAL AFRICAN FOREST INITIATIVE)

ATIBT is currently going through the accreditation process with CAFI, with the promise of a €5,000,000 project to be developed from 2026 onwards.

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This project is expected to start in 2025 for a maximum duration of 18 months, with €1,500,000 in grant funding. Several actions are currently under discussion: dialogue workshops between African governments and Chinese companies, follow-up on Motion 23 regarding intact

forest landscapes, the re-launch of the Fair&Precious programme, CITES' advocacy for Padouk, technical training (traceability, inventories, species), support for NDFs in the Central African Republic and Equatorial Guinea, and a revision of the Timber Trade Portal strategy.



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2025: A YEAR OF MAJOR EVENTS!

| WORLD OF WOOD



The IWPA (International Wood Products Association) is North America's leading trade association promoting the development of responsible, ethical and sustain-

nable forest products from around the world, while supporting communities, trade and consumers. Each year, the IWPA organises the World of Wood Convention, where professionals from the US, Latin America, Asia and Africa come together to discuss key industry issues and establish commercial connections. In 2025, the World of Wood's 69th edition took place from 26 - 28 March 2025 in New Orleans, Louisiana.

| RACEWOOD



The **Racewood 2025** Forum will be held in Pointe-Noire, Republic of the Congo, on 1 and 2 July 2025. We consider the **Racewood 2025** to be the exclusive gathering for all players of Africa's tropical timber value chain, with around 150 parti-

cipants expected, including approximately 100 European and African companies seeking economic, technological and environmental partnerships. This event is part of the implementation of the "Support to the Private Sector - Domestic Timber Market" project funded by the European Union's Delegation. Alongside the **Racewood**, a visit to the Special Economic Zone is planned, as well as the organisation of the first Central African carpentry competition.

| CITES COP20



CITES' 20th Conference of the Parties (CoP20) will take place in **Samarkand, Uzbekistan, from 24 November to 5 December 2025**. This major event will bring together the 184 Parties to the Convention to review new proposed listings or amendments of protected species, to assess implementation mechanisms, and to debate on technical and policy recommendations.

For ATIBT, the CoP20 conference represents a **strategic priority**:

- **Ensuring that the voice of producer countries is heard** by advocating for the regulation of tropical timber trade based on sound scientific data and the realities in the field;
- **Highlighting the efforts undertaken in terms of sustainability, certification and responsible forest management**;

- **Enhancing the capacities of Central Africa's states** in preparing and presenting coordinated positions in response to importing Parties;

- **Safeguarding the access to international markets** of tropical species while ensuring their long-term conservation.

ATIBT will play a central role in the **technical preparation, political advocacy and regional coordination** both before and during this Conference.

| COP 30

ATIBT's participation in the upcoming COP 30 conference on climate is also on the association's agenda.

The COP 30 will take place from 10-21 November 2025 in Belém, Brazil, the gateway to the Amazon.

A strong collective effort consisting of

both civil society and environmental organisations is expected, particularly around forest-related issues.

Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva has already expressed his commitment to environmental protection, notably through a pledge to achieve zero deforestation in his country by 2030.

| FSC GA 2025: CONTRIBUTING TO THE EVOLUTION OF THE FSC SYSTEM AND TO THE CONSIDERATION OF TROPICAL FOREST REALITIES

In 2025, ATIBT will continue to closely monitor the implementation of Motion 23 on Intact Forest Landscapes (IFLs), while actively engaging in the promotion of other motions related to intact forests and following – and even influencing – structural reforms to the FSC system.

The year 2025 promises to be strategic for ATIBT, both in terms of issues related to the preservation of intact forest landscapes (IFLs) and the broader evolution of the FSC system. Our active participation in the pilot project in the Republic of the Congo will provide concrete insights into how FSC indicators can be adapted at the landscape level. These lessons from the field will directly shape our contribution to discussions at the 2025 FSC General Assembly, during the motion prioritisation phase at the end of 2024.

Beyond Motion 23, ATIBT will work to support or propose other motions to ensure that future FSC directions are realistic, context-specific, and better aligned with tropical realities. We will also closely follow all motions related to FSC system reforms: governance, credibility, access for loggers in the global South, and the effectiveness of national standards.

Our objective: to ensure that the specific challenges faced by tropical forest managers are heard and fully integrated into the FSC system's structural decisions.

Preliminary information on the 2025 FSC General Assembly:

- [ATIBT Announcement – First details on the 2025 FSC GA](#)
- [ATIBT Announcement – Motion prioritisation for the 2025 FSC GA](#)

| PEFC GA 2025: AN EVENT TO FOLLOW FOR THE EXPANSION OF THE PAFC CONGO BASIN

The year 2025 was also marked by the 32nd PEFC General Assembly, scheduled for 7 May in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, as part of the PEFC Forest Forum. Although ATIBT was not represented at this year's event, it remained a key occasion to track developments in international standards, particularly in connection with European regulations such as the deforestation regulation (EUDR).

In parallel, ATIBT will continue to actively support the PAFC Congo Basin regional office, based in Libreville. In 2025, coordination efforts will focus on stakeholder training, strengthening institutional partnerships, and adapting standards to meet new requirements. This work will contribute to firmly establishing PAFC as a benchmark for forest management within the sub-region.

THANKS

Beyond the donors mentioned above, ATIBT also extends its thanks to the various African and European authorities with whom frequent exchanges took place throughout 2024, in the implementation of projects and activities carried out in Cameroon, the Republic of the Congo, and across the Congo Basin, notably through the ADEFAC project.

We would particularly like to thank the **MINFOF** (Ministry of Forests and Wildlife of Cameroon), the **MEF** (Ministry of Forest Economy of the Republic of the Congo), the **COMIFAC** (Central African Forests Commission), the **MTES** (Ministry for the Ecological Transition and Territorial Cohesion), the **MEAE** (Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs), along with many others who supported ATIBT in its mission.



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