

FORUM INTERNATIONAL
**ENSEMBLE VERS
LES CHAÎNES D'APPROVISIONNEMENT VERTES
AU NIVEAU MONDIAL**
UNE INITIATIVE DE L'INDUSTRIE FORESTIERE

INTERNATIONAL FORUM
**TOGETHER TOWARDS
GLOBAL GREEN SUPPLY CHAINS**
A FOREST PRODUCTS INDUSTRY INITIATIVE

共建全球绿色供应链国际论坛
-来自林产工业的倡议-

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DISCOURS / SPEECHES

22 Oct. 2019 : Cérémonie d'ouverture / *Opening Ceremony*



In English

**Mr. John LEIGH, Chairman,
International Tropical Timber Council - ITTO
Opening remarks**

Excellencies, Distinguished Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

In my role as Chair of the International Tropical Timber Council, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the opening of this important international forum—the first of its kind to be co-organized by ITTO—in the stunning city of Shanghai, China's most important tropical timber trading port.

It is also my personal pleasure to be here because the topic we will be discussing is dear to my heart. Coming as I do from Peru, a developing country, I am strongly aware that sustainable forest management and a sustainable tropical timber trade cannot be seen separately. They are

complementary, and both are essential for sustainable development and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

We know that forests, and especially tropical forests, contain extraordinary biodiversity, are crucial for efforts on climate change mitigation, and have huge cultural importance for indigenous and other traditional peoples. Yet the land they occupy is also valuable for farming, ranching, mining and urban development. To minimize the risk of losing the forests, therefore, it is imperative that they generate substantive economic returns.

This is why we need green supply chains to ensure stable supplies of legal and/or sustainable timber from sustainably managed forests.

Creating green timber supply chains requires inputs from many stakeholders at various levels, who need to interact equitably and in good faith to ensure sustainable and legal production and fair trading practices.

The private sector and operators have much to gain, not only by maintaining and growing their market share, but also by increasing their efficiency. Companies that put green supply chains in place will know exactly where their products are coming from, where those products are in the supply chain at any given time, and how they have been produced. Such information will enable them to streamline their operations and provide the confidence needed from both domestic and internal markets that they are consuming products originating from legal and/or sustainable resources. Companies adopting green supply chains will also be well placed to adapt to future market demands and policy changes, and they will be assured that their operations are contributing to forest conservation, environmental health and the wellbeing of societies.

At the other end of the line, most tropical timber-producing countries are still struggling to put universal green supply chains in place. Nevertheless, I believe that markets can be a strong driver of better forest management by enhancing demand and consumption for sustainable and legally produced timber and wood products while incentivizing good operators in the field. Public-private partnerships among all stakeholders are essential for sharing the incremental costs and ensuring the viability and equitability of green supply-chain initiatives.

That is why we are here today and why this forum is so relevant. ITTO has been working with many partners—government, private, and civil-society—for more than 30 years to promote international trade of tropical timber from legal and sustainable sources and to demonstrate the various components of green supply chains. The Organization continues to help private and public partners to put such systems in place and ultimately to make international tropical timber trade more robust.

ITTO brings together governments, the private sector and non-governmental organizations in a spirit of cooperation and mutual respect. It can help facilitate the shift towards global green timber supply chains, in partnership with people like you and the organizations you represent. Let's use this meeting to forge new partnerships and, ultimately, to find new economic opportunities consistent with sustainable development.

From my vantage point as Chair of the International Tropical Timber Council, I can tell you that the tropical world, and especially the tropical timber sector, is watching this forum closely. There is an expectation that we will spell out, in clear terms, what needs to be done to develop robust, credible, legal and sustainable global timber supply chains, and that we will identify the steps we will take for doing so as quickly and efficiently as possible.

I greatly look forward to working with you all in the coming hours and days to do this.

Thank you.