

LegalSource™ Services for Forest Managers

Service information

The persistence of illegal logging throughout the world's forests undermines conservation and hinders the economic development of some of the world's poorest countries. As a response, international markets are increasingly demanding better assurance of the legality of wood products: of their origin, harvest, trade and transport. This can be seen through the implementation of legislative measures such as the EU Timber Regulation (EUTR), the US Lacey Act amendments and the Australian Illegal Logging Prohibition Act.

Via our LegalSource Programme, NEPCon provides certification and support services that assist forest managers to meet the demands of their markets to demonstrate the legality of your forest management and timber production.

Support services

Our LegalSource services are structured to guide and support you to meet your legal obligations as a forest manager.

We can support you by providing a range of services, such as training of staff and contractors, assistance in developing clear procedures, and guidance that facilitates each step of your progress towards legal certification.

Gap analysis and action plan

By conducting a Gap Analysis, we outline the strengths and weaknesses in your management system and identify any potential legal risks. Our Action Plan provides you with a prioritised list of recommendations to address any potential shortcomings which have been identified. The Action Plan:

- Outlines gaps, weaknesses of your current system and performance.
- Provides a roadmap for your further work, effectively unblocking your path to full implementation of your due diligence system.
- Outlines tailored solutions to the challenges that your organisation faces.

Verification of legal compliance

LegalSource evaluation involves assessing your operations and forest management systems to evaluate if they meet

applicable legal requirements related to timber harvesting, transport and trade.

The NEPCon LegalSource Standard provides you with a high quality evaluation of legal compliance of your forest operations. The LegalSource standard has been recognised by the EU Commission as meeting the requirements for Monitoring Organisations operating under the EUTR (see the [LegalSource Standard](#)). The assessment of forest operations includes evaluation of compliance against the following set of criteria:



Legal rights to harvest



Taxes and fees



Timber harvesting activities



Third parties' rights



Trade and transport

Since the LegalSource Standard applies a risk-based approach, the scope of the on-site assessments will be based on risk assessments, which allow you to focus on areas identified as having risks; thereby increasing efficiency.

Obtaining LegalSource certification

The process of getting certified may take different shapes depending on the scope of your operations and the readiness of your staff. In some cases, it will be necessary to start the process with a Gap Analysis and Action Plan, before moving to a full assessment. Alternatively, you may be ready to go directly to a full assessment without any preparatory work. We strive to provide you with the most cost-efficient route to certification.

Our qualified auditors will conduct assessments and subsequent audits and will include the following activities:

- Interviews with staff;
- Evaluation of compliance with applicable legislation;
- Stakeholder consultation (if applicable);
- Evaluation of management systems;
- Review of records;
- On-site visits to operational sites.

The process to get certified takes the following route:



Once you submit the [application form](#) NEPCon provides you with a cost proposal and outline of the suggested services based on discussion and agreement with you. The process may include activities such as gap analysis, support services or pre-assessments; or simply a full assessment.

Once the agreement to work with NEPCon has been signed, you need to prepare by ensuring compliance with the applicable legislation and LegalSource requirements. Among other actions, this entails assigning responsibilities, evaluating legal compliance of your operations and addressing potential shortcomings. NEPCon assigns an expert who will respond to your questions throughout the process.

Prior to the audit, we review procedures and other relevant documents in order to prepare for on-site evaluation activities. The more complete the information that we have prior to audit, the easier it is to verify your legal compliance. We inform you about potential gaps and recommend that you address these prior to the on-site evaluation.

We conduct the LegalSource evaluation of your operation on-site. The visit entails document reviews, auditing of operations, stakeholder consultation and staff interviews.

After the on-site assessment, we prepare a written report describing the results. Any identified non-conformities are presented. Note that major issues need to be corrected before a certificate can be issued. The draft report is quality reviewed by our expert reviewers and sent to you for comments prior to its completion.

Only applicable for full assessment: Upon a positive certification decision, LegalSource certificates are issued for a five-year period. Following certification, annual audits are required to maintain the certificate.

Access to LegalSource claims

For material covered by LegalSource certification, companies may use the "LegalSource™ Certified" claim. Claims can be used business-to-business on sales and transportation documents. On-product labelling is not permitted. You may make public claims about your LegalSource certified status. Any public usage of LegalSource claims requires prior approval by us.

Expertise matters

We are an international non-profit organisation working to build capacity and commitment for mainstreaming sustainability. We do this by supporting other organisations to take responsible approaches such as sourcing only legal timber.

We are specialists in verification and the responsible timber trade. With over 20 years' experience, we have certified around 1,500 timber industry organisations. Our customers range from forest managers to retailers. We are actively involved in a number of international initiatives and projects supporting the legal timber trade.

Based on our LegalSource Due Diligence System and our auditing competencies, we are formally recognised by the European Commission as an EUTR Monitoring Organisation (MO).

Take the next step

Contact us to learn more or engage in this service:



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