

## Preface

For the past decade or so, developing countries have engaged in a variety of new international initiatives aiming at improving forest management and governance. The prevailing international forest initiatives at the moment are FLEGT and REDD+. FLEGT focuses on combating illegal logging; REDD+ aims to reduce deforestation and forest degradation and enhance carbon stocks. These initiatives offer innovative approaches to longstanding challenges in the land-use sector for policy-makers and forest stewards in developing countries.

Although FLEGT and REDD+ use different approaches and methods, they both aim to address the drivers of forest loss in tropical countries. Increased cooperation between the initiatives at the national level could advance forest governance reforms, strengthen stakeholder engagement and balance competing interests, such as using forests for local development, generating revenue and income, biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration.

Both initiatives are relatively new and still being developed. Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs), the keystone of the EU FLEGT Action Plan, are not yet fully implemented. REDD+ is still in the planning stage and only recently started piloting performance-based projects. These initiatives are expected to demonstrate their potential in the next few years and may well foster real change in the land-use sector. As REDD+ and FLEGT initiatives continue to develop and accumulate experience, it is vital to learn from this and share the lessons learned.

This issue of ETRN News is timely. It contributes to a better understanding of the existing and potential linkages between various forest initiatives, and of how positive linkages can be fostered for better coordination and more efficient implementation. This will benefit both the forests and the people who depend on them.

This issue has been developed and produced under the guidance of a sounding board comprised of experts in the field: Christophe Van Orshoven (European Forest Institute), Flip van Helden, Emilie Goransson (European Commission), Ragna John (GIZ) and Ewald Rametsteiner and Robert Simpson (FAO).

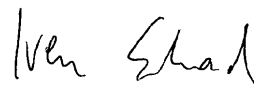
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René Boot  
Director  
Tropenbos International  
Chair, ETRN



Heiko Liedeker  
Head of Unit  
EU REDD and FLEGT Facilities  
European Forest Institute



Iven Schad  
Division Environment and  
Sustainable Use of Natural  
Resources, German Federal Ministry  
for Economic Cooperation and  
Development (BMZ)