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Joint UNECE/FAO Workshop on Illegal Logging
and Trade of Illegally-Derived Forest Products
in the UNECE Region

Geneva, Switzerland, 16-17 September 2004

THE NATIONAL REPORT ON ILLEGAL LOGGING

(Prepared by the Forestry Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment, Cyprus)

Summary*

The forests of Cyprus cover an area of 172.595 ha or 18,65% of the total area of the island (9251 km²). Out of this area, 106.781 ha, are state forests, whereas the rest, 65.814 ha, are smallholdings belonging to private individuals, churches and monasteries. The state forests are managed on a sustainable basis and for multiple use, to protect and enhance the island's natural environment and national heritage while also promoting recreation and tourism.

Cyprus is a minor timber producing country. While the annual yield was set to 8.000 m³, the country imported 530.000 m³ of wood and wood products to cover the local market requirements for 2001. Illegal felling was considered as a serious problem especially during the beginning and until the mid of the last century. It was carried out by the inhabitants of small forest communities as a form of unemployment and poverty relief and with main aim to cover their domestic needs for heating and cooking. Today, the volume of illegally cut timber compared to the scale of legal felling operations is insignificant (much below 1% of the total removals).

Cyprus, as a net wood importing country, might import illegally harvested wood either in the form of finished wood products or in the form of unprocessed wood, since 20.000 m³ of imported wood in 2001 came from high-risk counties. However the majority of the imports, during the same year, came from safer places. Cyprus has been involved in FLEGT since 2003. In an effort to resolve the problem of illegal felling, Cyprus strongly supports the introduction and adoption of an international legislation aiming at halting the imports and trade of illegally sourced timber and, the introduction of appropriate certification and licensing for the exportation and shipping of wood and wood products.

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- This document has been submitted late due to late receipt from source.