



16.11.2018

# **DRAFT OPINION**

of the Committee on Development

for the Committee on International Trade

on the Council decision on the conclusion of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam on forest law enforcement, governance and trade (2018/0272M(NLE))

Rapporteur for opinion: Jan Zahradil



## SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Development calls on the Committee on International Trade, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Strongly supports the FLEGT process with Vietnam; welcomes Vietnam's commitment to this process and the progress made so far, including the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA);
2. Underlines that halting the import of illegal timber from neighbouring countries is a major challenge and an absolute necessity for successful continuation of the process;
3. Draws attention to the crucial importance of full stakeholder involvement and of the major role that civil society must be able to play; encourages the Vietnamese Government to further develop the working methods in relation to transparency and the timely sharing of documents;
4. Calls on the Commission to continue its FLEGT-related support to Vietnam and to ensure the integrity of the FLEGT process, in particular through the stamping out of illegal timber and the full involvement of civil society in the preparation of measures and monitoring of results;
5. Points to the need to avoid disproportionate administrative burdens on household suppliers of timber, while at the same time avoiding the creation of loopholes;
6. Emphasises that radical improvement in the enforcement of the EU Timber Regulation is important for the success of the entire FLEGT initiative.