

BREXIT HUB

Importing and exporting timber and timber products

Introduction

The transition period between the UK and the EU will end on 31 December 2020. This means that the UK will no longer be a member of the EU's Single Market nor the Common Customs Union. These changes will result in a series of significant, and depending on the timing, abrupt changes to how rural businesses operate. Arrangements for the trade in timber and timber products will change.

This briefing note, and others on different subjects that can be found on the CLA Brexit Hub - <https://www.cla.org.uk/brexit> - provides rural business owners with a detailed framework for the steps which will need to be taken and where you can find more information relating to the import and export of timber and timber products and has been independently compiled by CLA experts. It covers:

- The import of timber from the EU;
- The export of timber to the EU;
- Due diligence;
- Standards and enforcement.

Of course, the decision about what actions to take will be unique to every businesses' needs. This guidance is not intended to make a judgement on the specific activities you should be undertaking, or about the longer-term effects of the UK's exit from the EU.

How do I import timber from the EU after 31 December 2020?

At the end of the transition period on 1 January 2021, the European Timber Regulation and Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) will no longer apply in Great Britain and will be replaced by the UK Timber Regulation and UK FLEGT.

However, this will still mean that due diligence will need to be undertaken to confirm that timber is legally harvested if you are a:

- business importing from non-EU or EEA countries;
- GB producer placing timber on the GB market for the first time.

From 1 January 2021, a business will need to show imports from the EU and the European Economic Area (EEA) have been legally harvested.

To show that the imported timber has been legally harvested timber, you will need to carry out due diligence. This means you will need to:

- gather information on the timber - its species, quantity, supplier, country of harvest and how it complies with relevant laws;
- assess the risk of illegally harvested timber entering your supply chain;
- mitigate any identified risk to negligible by gathering more information or implementing further actions.

Timber will be recognised as legally harvested if one of the following applies:



- it has a Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) import permit;
- it is accompanied by a valid FLEGT licence.

More details on FLEGT licences can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/eu-timber-regulation-guidance-for-business-and-industry>

You will not need to carry out due diligence on this timber.

Are there any changes to rules for exporting timber to the EU?

If you are exporting timber to the EU, it is very likely that you have to supply documentation about the source and legality of the timber in order to comply with EU due diligence rules.

Timber will be recognised as legally harvested if one of the following applies:

- it has a CITES import permit;
- it is accompanied by a valid FLEGT licence.

You will not need to carry out due diligence on this timber.

Will standards and enforcement change?

The Office for Product Safety and Standards' (OPSS) work will be unchanged and the Government is working to ensure that Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade (FLEGT) licences are still recognised.

The UK will still recognise monitoring organisations based in the UK, but will not automatically recognise those based in the EU. The EU will no longer recognise monitoring organisations based in the UK.

More information on the OPSS can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-for-product-safety-and-standards>

How will moving wood packaging change?

All wood packaging material moving between the UK and the EU will need to undergo heat treatment and marking to meet international standards. For more information on these standards, go to:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-for-product-safety-and-standards>