

To keep our planet healthy,
behave responsibly



Korea's regulation to promote legal timber trade



Korea's Act against illegal timber trade



- “The Act on Sustainable Use of Timbers” came into force on 1 October 2018. It seeks to promote legal timber trade by restricting the import and distribution of illegally harvested timber products in Korea.
- In accordance with the Act, importers of timber and timber products shall file an import declaration thereof with the Minister of the Korea Forest Service(KFS).
- The Minister shall require an inspection agency to inspect the relevant documents before customs clearance.
- Timber producers including importers shall retain documents verifying timber legality for a duration of five years.

Products regulated under the Act

Regulated timber products are as below. Their customs tariff codes include 149 tariff codes, identified at their 10-digit code level.

1 Log(4403)



2 Sawn Timber(4407)



3 Anti-decay wood (4407)



4 Fire retardant treated wood (4407)



5 Laminated Wood (4407)



6 Plywood(4412)

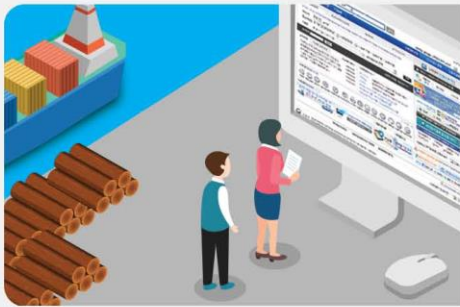


7 Wood pellets(4401.31)



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Import declaration process



An importer file an import declaration with the Minister of KFS through UNI-PASS (an electronic customs clearance system of the Korea Customs Service).



Submitted document inspect by the Inspection agency which is designated by the Minister. When the result of the document inspection is appropriate, the Minister issue a certificate of import declaration.

※ Without this certificate, customs clearance is not possible.



If the import declaration is accepted conditionally, the importer must submit supplementary documents within 30 days from the completion of customs clearance to the inspection agency.

※ The Sales or distribution of the relevant timber or timber products is prohibited until supplementary documents are confirmed.

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Requirements for Submission of Documents

- Importers shall submit any of the documents specified in the “Detailed Standards for Determining the Legality of Imported Timber and Timber Products.” Detailed Standards for determining are as follows.

- 1 A permit for felling issued pursuant to the statutes of the country of origin.
- 2 A document which is widely used internationally to certify that the relevant timber or timber product has been legally felled.

A. A Forest Management certificate or a Chain of Custody Certificate (including Controlled Wood Certificate) issued by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC);

B. A Forest Management certificate or a Chain of Custody Certificate issued by the Programme for Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC);

C. A certificate issued according to the certification system mentioned in the attached Table hereof, which is mutually recognized through bilateral consultation between countries and the PEFC;

D. A document issued in accordance with international certification systems (including a third party certification under ISO 17065) for sustainable use of biomass, which verifies whether timber has been legally felled.





- 3 A document which is mutually recognized in accordance with bilateral consultations between the Republic of Korea and the country of origin.
- A. A document issued in accordance with the forest certification system operated by the government of the country of origin or an organization delegated by said government.
- 4 Any other documents which verify that the relevant timber or timber product has been legally felled.
- A. A certificate issued in accordance with management systems established by the exporting country based on the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade–Voluntary Partnership Agreement (FLEGT–VPA) operated by the European Union;
- B. An export permit which verifies that timber or timber products have been legally felled in accordance with the statutes of the exporting country;
- C. A document with an official seal or a signature from the government of the exporting country or an agency delegated thereby that verifies the relevant timber or timber product has been legally felled, including a transportation permit and a packing list;
- D. A document written and signed by an exporter in accordance with Attached Form 1 where the exporting country has laws and systems in place to restrict illegal logging and associated trade;
- E. Any other document that can verify the legality and sustainability of timber through mutual consultation between the Republic of Korea and the exporting country.

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Penalty Mechanisms embedded in the Act

- 1 When the importer have failed to verify legality of imported timber
 - ➡ Issuance of Order to suspend sales of, return or destroy timber and timber products



- 2 When the producer fails to retain the relevant documents
 - ➡ Revocation of timber production registration or suspension of business activity
- 3 When the administrative order is not complied with
 - ➡ Violators may be fined up to \$30,000 or imprisonment up to three years

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