



EU Green public procurement: towards upwards harmonisation ?

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The campaigning NGO for greater environmental and social justice, with a focus on forests and forest peoples rights in the policies and practices of the EU



Public procurement in EU and Member States

- EU started to highlight the potential of green public procurement (GPP) in 2003 through its Communication on Integrated Product Policy
- In 2004, two EU Directives clarified how public purchasers can include environmental considerations in their procurement procedures
- Currently the UK, Denmark, Germany, Belgium, The Netherlands, France, Spain and Italy have procurement policies applied to wood products ; Sweden and Luxemburg are in the process



EU Communication on GPP

Objectives :

- Increase understanding of the benefits and political support for GPP
- Reduce legal barriers to GPP
- Provide new, and support the provision of existing implementation tools
- Increase similarities between GPP criteria across the EU to guarantee a true internal market and reduce administrative costs



Core criteria

- Core criteria : are designed to allow easy application of GPP, focussing on key areas of environmental performance of a product and aimed at keeping administrative costs for companies to a minimum
- The EU-wide GPP target is based upon the core criteria : by 2010, 50 % of all tendering procedures should be compliant with endorsed core criteria



Advanced criteria

- Advanced criteria : take into account more aspects or higher levels of environmental performance, for use by authorities that want to go further in supporting environmental and innovation goals



Criteria for wood

- Where materials (such as wood) are addressed within context of several product groups, one coherent set of criteria will be developed (core and advanced).
- A working group developing the coherent set of criteria for wood will start beginning of 2009.



Discussion about criteria already ongoing

- A GPP Training toolkit has been developed and includes criteria for paper
- Recent consultation on GPP criteria for window frames



Concerns about current criteria on paper and windows

- Harmonisation should not equal a race to the bottom.
- Current criteria have been inspired by the EU ecolabel criteria which are weak.
- Current set of core and advanced criteria for wood are the same
- *technical specifications* : wood is coming from legal sources ; sustainability is only encouraged in the *award criteria*.
- Definitions of legal and sustainable timber and verification tools leave the door open for statements that allow any kind of timber products. The current criteria are not able to exclude illegal timber.
- Social criteria are not completely covered.



Example : Paper – technical specifications

Technical Specifications :

- The virgin fibre for pulp production shall come from legal sources.

Verification:

- Certificates of chain of custody for the virgin fibre certified as FSC, PEFC or any other sustainable forest management standard where the percentage of certified wood is indicated, will be accepted as proof of compliance for that percentage.
- The legal origin of wood can also be demonstrated with a tracing system being in place. **These voluntary systems may be 3rd party certified**
- If wood stems from a country that has signed a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) with the EU, **the FLEGT license may serve as proof of legality.**
- For the non-certified virgin fibre, bidders shall indicate the types (species), quantities and origins of fibres used in the pulp and paper production, together with a **declaration of their legality.**



FERN demands timber public procurement

1. Legality is a precondition to be allowed on the market.
2. Timber public procurement policies should go beyond legality and have sustainability as a target.
3. Policies should only refer to credible certification schemes.
4. Certification schemes should not only be evaluated on the basis of stated policies and procedures but also on practice on the ground.
5. Legal timber should be defined through a national or regional participatory process (FLEGT VPA process)
6. Social criteria should be integrated in procurement policies.



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