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European Organisation of Agricultural, Rural and Forestry Contractors

Europäischer Zentralverband der Lohnunternehmer

PRESS RELEASE

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CEETTAR sets the fight against illegal work in forests on the agenda of the Commission

On the occasion of the meeting of the expert group on EU Timber Regulation [EUTR] and Governance and Trade [FLEGT], which took place on Friday 30 September, CEETTAR was invited by the European Commission to contribute to the debates on illegal work in the forests in Europe.

Although variously prevalent in Europe, illegal work, primarily in manual activities, is present in most Member States as recalled a survey among CEETTAR members made in spring this year.

With very concrete consequences for both companies and for the industry, as pointed out Tammouz Eñaut Helou, the CEETTAR expert present at the meeting; firstly, it is a source of unfair competition between the companies, the ones respecting their legal obligations (particularly in terms of tax and social security contributions) to the benefit of the others, a risk to the occupational safety of workers, a handicap for the sector's image and a prejudice of sustainable forest management objectives. Moreover, for the Commission, illegal work is call into question the timber trade criteria as established by Community legislation.

Therefore, as a conclusion, CEETTAR invited the Commission and Member States to amend the EU Timber Regulation so that Forestry contractors' activities are also taken into account while ensuring legality of timber put on the market and that the legality of their work are monitored and guaranteed.

After having addressed this issue in the context of trade of Civil Dialogue Group "Forest & Cork" of DG Agri, the Group of Experts of the Forest-Based Industries of DG Grow (ex DG Enterprise), CEETTAR will continue to carefully monitor the issue of unfair competition and inform Community institutions of the implications for the sector.

You can in addition access the work of the Expert Committee by clicking [this link](#).

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Note to editors:

The European Organisation of Agricultural, Rural and Forestry Contractors (CEETTAR), created in 1961, represents 150,000 independent enterprises and 600,000 employees, affiliated to 17 national organisations in 15 Member States.

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