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Presentations	Session 2.3	<i>Individual presentations: Forest trade and legality.</i>

Abstract Session 2.3 – International trade of forest products - how can it be used to study policy effects?

Studying effects and evaluation of forest-focused and forest-related policies is usually based on a combination of document analysis and collection of primary data through interviews and surveys. These types of approaches intrinsically yield qualitative results. However, there is a quantitative, validated and globe-encompassing data set which is rarely used for these purposes; international trade data as collected by UN Comtrade. In this study we present various examples of relations between international trade of forest products and policies. Examples focus on taxation, tariffs, EU Timber Regulation, FLEGT (Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade) Voluntary Partnership Agreements, illegal trade, corruption and certification. Results show that it is possible to frequently yield statistically significant effects between trade and policies. However, interpretation of results is not straightforward due to (I) multiple interaction effects, many of which are not usually accounted for and (II) assigning clear qualitative meaning to the elements of analysis. The first problem can be partially tackled with an in-depth model specification, while the second problem requires quantitative data to be supplemented with qualitative interpretations by key experts.