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Lacey Act Requires Legal Sourcing To Do Business in the U.S.

Alexandria, VA, September 9, 2009 – As a result of recent changes to the Lacey Act in the United States, most wood products imported into the United States now require a certificate of legal origin from the source country.

The Tropical Forest Foundation (TFF) has responded to a growing demand for proof of legality by making its Legal Verified program available to any wood supplier or importer that wishes to use an established, internationally recognized, system for documenting legality using an industry-standard chain-of-custody system.

The TFF Legal Verified Chain of Custody (CoC) program provides a widely recognized standard to prove that manufacturers have performed due diligence and buyers can be assured that their products are legally sourced. TFF's Legal Verified with CoC mark is granted when a company meets entry-level requirements including a third-party verification of legality and CoC systems from an internationally recognized auditor and an action plan to implement reduced impact logging as a means to reduce unnecessary deforestation and achieve long-term sustainability. All parties pursuing TFF's Legal Verified mark are required to have systems in place which identify, document and separate the flow of logs and derived products from a legal source from logs and products from a non-verified system.

"The system has been tested extensively in Indonesia and proven to be very workable for forest industries there" said Keister Evans, President of TFF when asked if the Legal Verified certificate provided by TFF has a track record of success. TFF is well known for working closely with forest product industries in developing tropical countries, including Indonesia, Gabon, Brazil and Guyana.

"Although these industries collectively are often blamed for deforestation, the companies and communities working with TFF have proven that the industry is changing and long-term sustainability can be achieved, balancing the livelihoods of local communities with the global need to eliminate deforestation" said Jeff Waldon, Conservation Management Institute, Virginia Tech and advisor to TFF.

TFF's Legal Verified program is often considered as the first step towards larger certifications like TFF's own Reduced Impact Logging (RIL) Verified program, as well as FSC certification. To further support efforts to provide verification of legality to tropical wood products, TFF offers a market-linking program to assist in developing business-to-business relationships between suppliers and purchasers by linking major corporations that purchase tropical wood products with buyers that have committed to sustainability through our own RIL Verified certification or other certification programs.



For more information and photography please see our electronic press kit at <http://tff.icpresskit.com>.

Tropical Forest Foundation

TFF is an international nonprofit dedicated to sustainability in the tropics. TFF consists of a unique combination of leaders from major environmental organizations, large international companies, wood products companies in developing countries, and government observers. TFF supports training, outreach, and research pertaining to sustainable forestry management in tropical regions around the world.

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