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Australia's illegal logging laws

Your responsibilities as a processor

This factsheet provides an overview of your responsibilities under Australia's illegal logging laws. It is up to you to understand the full extent of your responsibilities as a processor of Australian-grown raw log/s. Reliance on this document alone is unlikely to provide that full understanding.

Illegal logging, the law and you

Australia has laws in place to combat illegal logging and promote trade in legally sourced timber and timber products. These laws are set out in two pieces of legislation:

- [Illegal Logging Prohibition Act 2012](#) (Act)
 - Contains a general prohibition on processing domestically grown raw logs in Australia.
 - Sets out offences and civil penalty provisions which require processors to conduct due diligence prior to processing.
 - Allows the department to conduct assessments, audits and issue Requirement to Give Information and Produce Documents notices to assess your compliance with the due diligence requirements.
- [Illegal Logging Prohibition Rules 2024](#) (Rules)
 - Details the specific due diligence requirements set out in the Act.

If you process Australian-grown raw log/s, you may have legal responsibilities and need to know your obligations.

Under Australian law, illegal logging refers to the harvesting of timber in breach of the laws of the place where the timber is harvested.

This includes a wide range of activities, such as:

- logging of protected species
- logging in protected areas
- logging with fake or illegal permits
- using illegal harvest methods.

By complying with the laws, you can help combat the destructive trade in illegally logged timber. You will also be supporting local investment, profitability and jobs.

Your responsibilities

As a processor of Australian-grown raw logs, it is your responsibility to:

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- **Not process** Australian-grown raw logs that have been illegally logged. You may commit an offence and be liable for a civil penalty if you process illegally logged timber in Australia. **Do due diligence** prior to processing Australian-grown raw log/s by actively managing the risk that they could be illegally logged.

If you do process Australian-grown raw log/s that have been illegally logged, you may commit an offence and be liable to a civil penalty. you could face significant financial penalties. and even prison time.

Managing your risk

Prior to processing Australian-grown raw log/s, you are required by law to assess and mitigate the risk that it may have been illegally logged. This process is called 'due diligence.'

The Rules set out the steps you must take to comply with your due diligence obligations. **Prior to processing, you must:**

- **Establish a due diligence system**
 - You must have a **written** due diligence system in place before processing your raw log/s. This system must:
 - include certain information relating to your business and the person responsible for maintaining the system
 - set out the due diligence process you will undertake.
- **Meet your due diligence requirements in four steps**
 - 1) Gather information and evidence
 - You must gather certain information about the raw log/s and your supplier, as set out in the Rules.
 - 2) Assess the risk
 - Using the information you gather, you must conduct a reasonable risk assessment on whether your raw logs were illegally logged.
 - 3) Mitigate the risk
 - If you identify a 'not low' risk that your raw log/s were illegally logged, you must conduct a reasonable and proportionate risk mitigation process.
 - 4) Maintain written records
 - You must keep records of all the steps you took in the due diligence process for at least five years. This includes records of all information and evidence gathered as part of your due diligence.

Exemptions

Processors are exempt from the due diligence requirements in circumstances where the processor was also the harvester of the raw logs.

More information

More detailed [due diligence information](#) and [guidance material](#) is available on the [department's website](#).

You can also email us IllegalLogging@aff.gov.au

Acknowledgement of Country

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We acknowledge the continuous connection of First Nations Traditional Owners and Custodians to the lands, seas and waters of Australia. We recognise their care for and cultivation of Country. We pay respect to Elders past and present, and recognise their knowledge and contribution to the productivity, innovation and sustainability of Australia's agriculture, fisheries and forestry industries.

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