

PUBLIC SUBMISSION

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Docket: [APHIS-2010-0093](#)

Notice of Request for Extension of Approval of an Information Collection; Lacey Act Declaration Requirement; Plants and Plant Products

Comment On: [APHIS-2010-0093-0001](#)

Notice of Request for Extension of Approval of an Information Collection; Lacey Act Declaration Requirement; Plants and Plant Products

Document: [APHIS-2010-0093-0005](#)

Comment from Cary Moon

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General Comment

APHIS-2008-0119

Regulatory Analysis and Development

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Comments regarding the Lacey Act amendments (section 8204 of the Food Conservation and Energy Act of 2008), Federal Register Docket APHIS-2008-0119

The Hardwood Federation is the largest forest products industry association in the United States representing thousands of businesses and one million hardwood families across the nation. The Federation represents the majority of organizations engaged in the manufacturing, wholesaling, or distribution of North American hardwood lumber, veneer, plywood, flooring, pallets, and related products. In 2004 the visionary leaders of the Hardwood Federation came together to form a partnership to help protect and promote the hardwood industry's interests in the public policy arena. Our mission is four fold:

- To promote and represent the common business interests of and improve business conditions among members of the hardwood industry.
- To maintain a healthy business environment for family businesses and small companies in the hardwood industry.

- To maintain commercial access to federal and private hardwood timberlands.
- To maintain and improve the health of public and private hardwood forests through effective legislation.

Illegal logging and anti-Lacey Act activity on a national and international scale are direct detractors to our mission and to the rights of the American businesses and families whose interests we represent. When our industry's competitiveness is compromised it is a burden that falls directly on the American people. Illegal imports impact both jobs and the economic stability of legally operating businesses.

The Lacey Act amendment is a priority for our industry. We have worked diligently with a broad group of ENGO's, administrators, and the hardwood industry to address not only competitive concerns, but also environmental degradation caused by illegal practices. It is vital that the law is effective and that agencies are equipped with the funding necessary to implement Lacey and to keep on the cutting edge, both through an advanced database and also through heightened, but traditional trade practices. The Hardwood Federation also recognizes the importance of streamlining the overall process where possible. We have been a key participant in coalitions with other stakeholders to identify opportunities for efficiencies. (Please see enclosed copy of the consensus statement)

The critical nature of the Lacey Act, in particular the achievement of the declaration, cannot be understated as it applies to the national and international wood trade. Part of our intent on supporting the implementation of the Lacey Act amendments has resulted in the creation of a consensus statement developed with a number of other leading industry and environmental groups. Specifically, the collection of scientific name, country of harvest, value, and volume is important and necessary for curbing the trade in illegal wood. The declarations serve to support the enforcement abilities of the implementing agencies, collect trade data to support policy making, and increase transparency in supply chains.

The Hardwood Federation commends the recent efforts to adopt changes to address many of the efficiencies identified in our earlier consensus statement. Specifically, we appreciate the agency's efforts to develop interim solutions to deal with composite products. We continue to emphasize the importance of the Administration conducting a review within 3-5 years to determine a timeframe to phase out exclusions for these products. In addition, we appreciate the efforts of APHIS in addressing species groupings and willingness to work with the industry leaders to come up with reasonable listings and support the definition and use of logically coherent groupings of plant species.

We encourage continued efforts that will improve the implementation process of the Lacey Act. This law will facilitate necessary change to improve the U.S. hardwood industry's ability to compete on a level playing field.

Attachments:
Second Consensus Statement

Attachments

[APHIS-2010-0093-0005.1](http://www.regulations.gov/search/Regs/contentStreamer?objectId=0900006480ba8725&d...) Comment from Cary Moon