



2026/1771

21.7.2026

COUNCIL DECISION (EU) 2026/1771

of 10 July 2026

on the termination of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Liberia on forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber products to the European Union

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 207(4), first subparagraph, in conjunction with Article 218(6), second subparagraph, point (a)(v), thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

Having regard to the consent of the European Parliament ⁽¹⁾,

Whereas:

- (1) On 21 May 2003, the Commission adopted a Communication to the Council and the European Parliament entitled 'Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) – Proposal for an EU Action Plan' aimed at contributing to the global efforts to tackle illegal logging and its associated trade. The Council adopted conclusions on the FLEGT action plan on 13 October 2003, and the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the subject on 11 July 2005 ⁽²⁾.
- (2) A central element of the action plan was the conclusion of voluntary partnership agreements with timber-producing countries to ensure that timber and timber products exported to the Union are legally produced and acquired.
- (3) In accordance with Council Decision 2011/475/EU ⁽³⁾, the Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the Union and the Republic of Liberia (VPA) on forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber products to the Union was signed on 27 July 2011.
- (4) In accordance with Council Decision 2012/373/EU ⁽⁴⁾, the VPA was concluded on behalf of the Union and, following its conclusion by the Republic of Liberia, entered into force on 1 December 2013.
- (5) The VPA has an indefinite duration, as provided for in Article 28 thereof. Article 29 provides that, notwithstanding Article 28, either Party can terminate the VPA by notifying the other Party in writing. The VPA ceases to apply 12 months after the date of such notification.

⁽¹⁾ Consent of 17 June 2026 (not yet published in the Official Journal).

⁽²⁾ OJ C 157 E, 6.7.2006, p. 482.

⁽³⁾ Council Decision 2011/475/EU of 22 July 2011 on the signing, on behalf of the Union, of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Liberia on forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber products to the European Union (OJ L 196, 28.7.2011, p. 2, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2011/475/oj>).

⁽⁴⁾ Council Decision 2012/373/EU of 14 May 2012 on the conclusion of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Liberia on forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber products to the European Union (OJ L 191, 19.7.2012, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2012/373/oj>).

- (6) Despite multiple proposed extensions of implementation timeframes, the core objective of the VPA, namely the establishment and operationalisation of a FLEGT licensing scheme aimed at verifying and attesting by means of a FLEGT licence that timber and derived products exported to the Union are legally produced or acquired, has not been reached. Given the state and progress of implementation of the VPA since its entry into force on 1 December 2013, there is little prospect of the FLEGT licensing scheme being fully established and operational within a reasonable timeframe. Therefore, the Commission believes that the VPA will not enable timber and timber products from the Republic of Liberia to benefit from the provisions of Article 3 of Regulation (EU) No 995/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽⁵⁾ and, as of 30 December 2025, of Article 10(3), in conjunction with Article 3, point (b), of Regulation (EU) 2023/1115 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽⁶⁾.
- (7) It is therefore appropriate to terminate the VPA with the Republic of Liberia. To that effect, in accordance with Article 29 of the VPA, the European Union should notify the Republic of Liberia of its decision to terminate the VPA in writing.
- (8) The termination of the VPA should be approved on behalf of the Union,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

The termination of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Liberia on forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber products to the European Union is hereby approved on behalf of the European Union.

Article 2

This Decision shall enter into force on the day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

Done at Brussels, 10 July 2026.

For the Council

The President

S. HARRIS

⁽⁵⁾ Regulation (EU) No 995/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 October 2010 laying down the obligations of operators who place timber and timber products on the market (OJ L 295, 12.11.2010, p. 23, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2010/995/oj>).

⁽⁶⁾ Regulation (EU) 2023/1115 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 May 2023 on the making available on the Union market and the export from the Union of certain commodities and products associated with deforestation and forest degradation and repealing Regulation (EU) No 995/2010 (OJ L 150, 9.6.2023, p. 206, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/1115/oj>).