



## **Helveta supports EU extension of FLEGT legislation** *Importing illegal wood products into the EU to become an offence – Announcement to be made by the European Commission on 17 October 2008*

### **Brussels and Oxford, United Kingdom, 17th October 2008:**

Helveta, the provider of the timber tracking application CI World™, firmly supports the European Commission's decision to make it an offence to import illegal timber and wood products into the EU. On 17 October 2008, the European Commission publishes a Draft Framework Regulation on illegal logging that would make it an offence to import illegal timber into the EU. Individual member states would decide on whether they would make it a civil or criminal penalty.

The Draft Framework Regulation represents a significant development of the FLEGT (Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade) action plan and will deliver powerful legal tools to help combat the trade in illegal timber. Helveta recognizes this Draft Framework Regulation as a significant strengthening of EU policy and expects that it will provide all stakeholders across the timber supply chain with a far greater incentive to actively engage in combating illegal timber imports to the EU.

Through the FLEGT action plan the European Union has developed measures to combat illegal logging and the trade in illicit forest products. Measures include support for improved forest governance in wood producing countries, coupled with Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs) between the EU and wood producing countries which will ensure that only legally harvested timber enters the EU. The EU's Draft Framework Regulation would provide the legal tools with which to enforce VPA commitments.

Patrick Newton, CEO of Helveta commented "Helveta's CI World system provides the backbone for timber supply chain traceability initiatives around the world. We are increasingly seeing producer nations prepared to make firm commitments to remotely verifiable timber traceability. In the Congo and Amazon basins and in South East Asia, Helveta technology is being used to remotely audit and verify the provenance of timber shipments right back to the original standing trees in the forest. We welcome the legislative changes contemplated by this Framework as they provide firm legal standing and enforceability to the real time traceability we provide for our clients. This announcement is a welcome addition to the regulatory landscape, as it will help ensure buyers and suppliers commit to implementing systems that ensure the legality of timber products across their supply chains."

Chris Beeko VPA Coordinator of the Forestry Commission of Ghana said: "If the implementation of the legislation is properly coordinated with initiatives in the producer countries, it will go a long way to reduce illegal logging."

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### **About Helveta**

Helveta was incorporated in 2004 and is the developer of the CI World™ software platform. CI World is a unique technology providing fully auditable traceability and chain of custody control for extended supply chains in the Forestry and Agribusiness sectors. CI World and its components – including CI Earth™ and TracElite™ - have won a number of awards as innovative technologies for the timber sector. Helveta is privately held.

### **For further information, please contact:**

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