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Recognition and synergies between ASEAN MS timber legality approaches and forest certification



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Outline

1. Definitions, similarities and differences
2. Recognition of voluntary certification/
verification in VPA-TLAS (options)
3. Benefits of recognition between voluntary
certification/ verification and VPAs
4. Synergies between voluntary certification/
verification and VPA-TLAS



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Voluntary Partnership Agreement

=

Government of producer country
decides

Voluntary Certification/Verification

=

Company decides



Legality Verification

- In or outside VPA context
- Usually “regulatory” or applied to entire sector (at least exports) but can also be voluntary/private
- Verification: by government or 3rd party auditors





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Certification

- Main systems FSC and PEFC
- Usually voluntary but certification can be made mandatory (e.g. Natural forests VN)
- Goes beyond legality



Meets Rainforest Alliance
requirements for
Verified Legal Compliance



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**Sustainable
FSC or PEFC
fully certified**

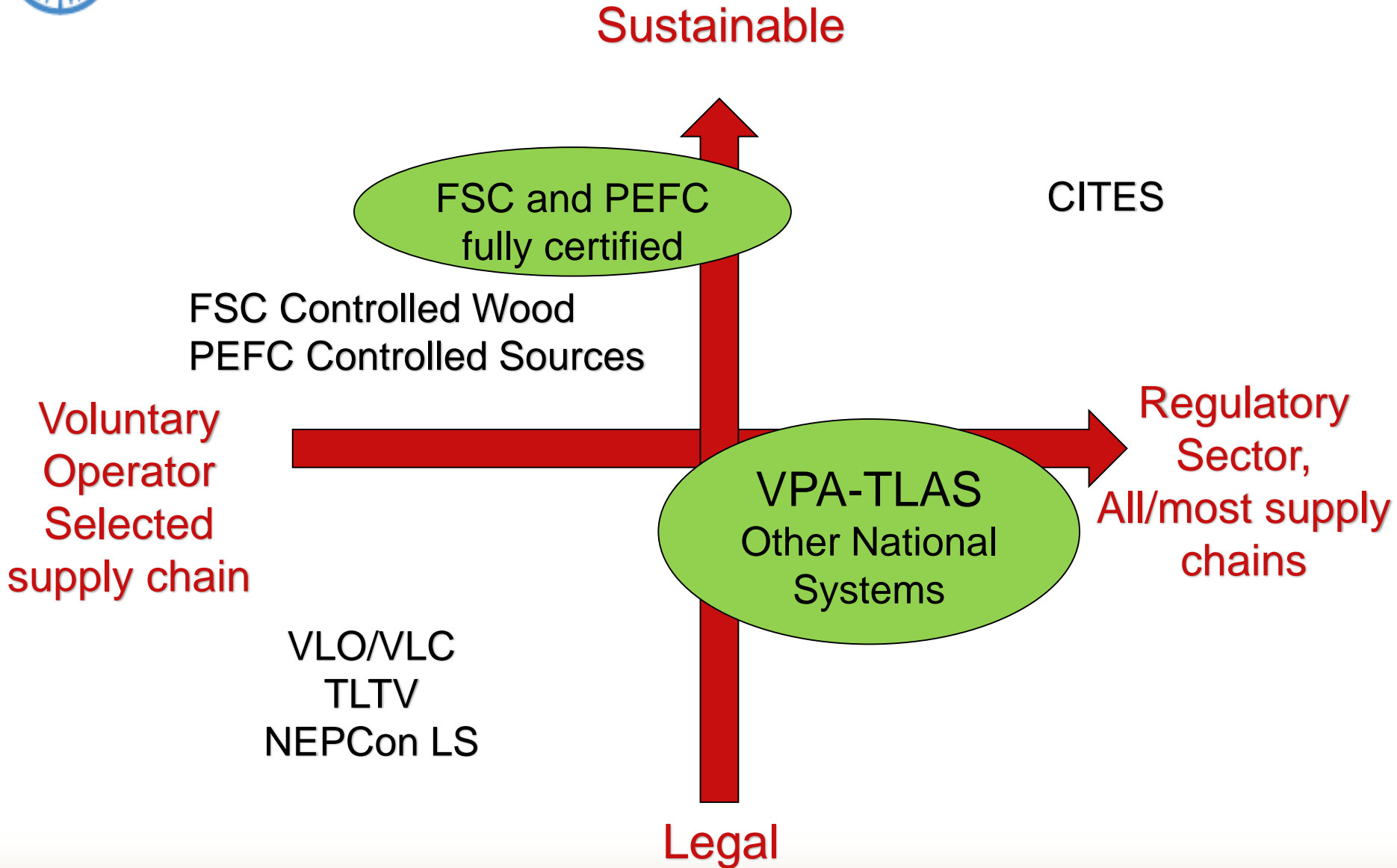
**Controlled Wood (FSC) or
Sources PEFC**

No conversion timber!

Legal



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Additional differences between VPAs and voluntary certification/ verification

- Both require multi-stakeholder consultations but VPAs have the ambition to address broader institutional and governance failures in the forest sector
- VPA TLAS is based on compliance/non-compliance to national legal framework but voluntary certification allows “acceptable” levels of non-conformities to be addressed later (flexible)
- Voluntary certification can have rapid impact but companies can opt out at any time. VPA are binding trade agreements based on broader stakeholder consensus



Recognition of voluntary certification/ verification in VPA-TLAS

- Option 1: full recognition
- Option 2: partial recognition
- Option 3: supporting risk-based legality verification

RECOGNISING DOES NOT MEAN REPLACING!



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Option #1: Full recognition: Verification of all VPA-TLAS legality and supply chain control requirements for FLEGT licensing is based on or achieved through voluntary certification/ verification (FM **and** CoC) systems (Honduras?)

“the TLAS will recognize voluntary legality, SFM and CoC certificates through a review of the principles and criteria used as well as the frequency of the verification audits by the Certification Bodies which will need to confirm that all requirements, indicators and verifiers of the Honduras Legality Definition have been met”



Option #2: Partial recognition: Some VPA-TLAS requirements are based on or achieved through voluntary certification/verification systems (FM or CoC) and issuance of FLEGT license requires additional verification or checks (**Congo, Cameroon**)

Notes (same for option 1):

- Needs TLAS conformity assessment
- Potentially leading to FLEGT licences)



Option #3: Supporting risk-based verification: use of voluntary certification/verification as an element contributing to:

- Demonstrate the legal origin of timber (DD) in the country of harvest (Vietnam and Indonesia)

Or

- Reduce the need and intensity of verification of some VPA-TLAS requirements (Vietnam?)



Benefits of recognition between voluntary certification/verification and VPAs

- Reward early movers
- Limit duplication and reduce burden on operators
- Improve cost effectiveness
- Improve market access and competitiveness (multiple rewards and options)
- Encourage move towards SFM
- Mutually reinforcing verification, monitoring and complaints mechanisms



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Synergies between voluntary certification/verification and VPA- TLAS



- **Exchange of experiences in stakeholder consultation processes** (stakeholder mapping, legal reviews, standard development)
- **Legality Definition** can strengthen legality in voluntary certification/verification standards - voluntary standards informing LD development
- **Improved sector transparency and accountability by VPA** offers improved framework for voluntary schemes
- Voluntary schemes can **inform realistic TLAS development** (traceability, due diligence systems, group certification)
- **Awareness and preparedness**
- **Skills transfer** (auditing techniques for legality verification)
- Multiple purpose audits by CBs (if VPA uses 3rd party auditing)



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Thank you

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