

Vietnam Customs Data

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Customs data in Vietnam

- US\$7 billion in forest product exports (2015)
- US\$1.5 billion in forest product imports (HS 4403, 4407)
- VN customs produces monthly newsletter on exports market and value
 - Lack of dynamics (e.g. trends, changes)
 - Not enough information to identify risks
- VN Customs import data on value
 - Value of the import
 - Lack of dynamics (trends, changes, species)

Forest Trends customs data analysis

- Need for analysis of detail that VN customs actually collecting (but is not being reported)
- Government of Vietnam does not trust UNCOMTRADE or FAO trade data.
- Need for further clarification of poor data (Forest Trends can go back to customs or companies to clarify or supply missing information)
- Input into VPA negotiations, other donor programs
- Timber associations wanting this information to better understand their markets, their risks, their input into VPA process

Vietnam customs data

- Data collected at border crossings (possible to obtain)
- Vietnam General Dept of Customs' Information Center compiles customs data from across the country
- Not publicly available
 - Forest Trends partnership with Vietnamese trade associations and government agencies which are allowed to access it.
 - VIFORES access to customs data

Memorandum of Understanding

- VIFORES, HAWA, FPA Binh Dinh and Forest Trends
 - 3 largest timber associations in Vietnam with 1000s of members
- VIFORES access to national customs data
- Forest Trends provides \$\$ to access to data
- Two tiered governing systems
 - Advisory team: provide advice on what to do
 - Technical team: Analyse data and compile report
- Sharing info (e.g. data) must be agreed by all organizations
- Use of data by one organization must be allowed by the other organizations

Vietnam customs data

- Company names
 - 30 companies import from Africa
- Species names within product descriptions, as provided by companies on custom forms
 - mixing Latin, local, English names or none at all.
 - Confident about list of species
 - Not confident about value listed on customs forms (used only for reference)
 - Confident that there is purposeful misclassification of species
 - When species X was listed on Annex 2, volumes dropped but traders told us that they were just changing the name.
 - Customs data tells us which companies are importing which species, but we cannot publicize this and we cannot ask them directly if they are misclassifying (Vietnam law).

Vietnam customs data

- Species names within product descriptions, as provided by companies on custom forms
 - Weird things happen
 - African species being imported from Laos and Cambodia.
 - Re-export or mistakesk by customs or companies?’
 - Don’t have answers yet
- Forest Trends could do some “cleaning up” of the species information, but hesitant:
 - Want GoVN to realize that they need to do something about quality of information being provided, or do some higher level testing (e.g. DNA testing).
 - Don’t want to be seen changing any data

Vietnam customs data

- Forest Trends can do a validation process, going back to companies (via timber associations) to get clarification or missing data.
 - Easier to do with historically important trade patterns: more familiar with the species and the companies.
 - African species are relatively new to Vietnam
 - *A lot depends on the nature of the relationship / trust between companies, trade associations and Forest Trends.*

What we do

Export

- Analysis of HS 44 and 94 products between Vietnam and export markets
- Product lines, volume and value and changes
- Identify risks at two levels: Timber species and product groups
- Analysis so far: EU, US, Australia, Japan, Korea, and China
- Reports widely share in Vietnam and beyond
- Gaps:
 - No guarantee if the species listed by the export company is correct
 - Customs do not have capacity to check the name
 - Many products do not have species name

What we do

Import

- Focus on HS 4403 and 4407: the most important import in terms of volume and value
- Analysis: Imported sources, timber species, volume and value
- Identify species risks: Mekong countries, Africa countries.
- List of the imported species provided to the Vietnamese government
- Reports widely share in Vietnam in beyond
- Gaps:
 - No guarantee that the name of the species imported is correct
 - Local names of the imported species diverse
 - Technical problems with the data recording (e.g. Laos timber imported into Vietnam through border pass in Cambodia; Cambodia timber imported into Vietnam through border pass in Laos)

What we will do

- Customs data analysis (continue):
 - Export market: Update
 - Import market: Update, and new (African countries/VPA – non VPA sources)
- Combine two levels of analysis:
 - Customs data
 - Enterprise survey (e.g. timber species, but also labour, technologies, environment compliance)
- Analysis of import – domestic – export dynamics
- FLEGT VPA: signed at the end of 2016(?):
 - Impacts /costs of compliance ?
 - Domestic market ?
 - SMEs ?