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## Vietnam illegally logging Laos forests

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22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2008

## THE ARTICLE

Vietnam is illegally logging vast areas of rainforest in neighboring Laos and turning it into furniture for consumers in the US and Europe. This is the claim of the UK-based Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA), which stated: "Vietnam's booming economy and demand for cheap furniture in the West is driving rapid deforestation in Laos." There are estimates that the timber illegally crossing into Vietnam is worth billions of dollars. This now makes Vietnam a world centre for logging. Loggers pay huge bribes to smuggle the logs across the border. The EIA's head of forest campaigns Julian Newman pointed out that poor villages suffer most: "The cost of such...greed is [paid] by poor rural communities in Laos who are dependent on the forests for their traditional livelihoods," he said.

The EIA said it was up to Western governments to act to stop the deforestation in Laos. EIA spokeswoman Faith Doherty said the US Congress was taking steps to ban the import of illegal wood products. She also said the European Union was creating a certificate system to make sure of the origin of all wood products. Newman agreed, stating: "The ultimate responsibility for this dire state of affairs rests with the consumer markets which import wood products made from stolen timber." The report says actions taken by the West have not worked: "The stark reality is 'business as usual' for the organized syndicates looting the remaining precious tropical forests for a quick profit," authors say. They add that Thai and Singapore traders are also "cashing in" by exploiting their northern neighbour.

## WARM-UPS

**1. WOOD:** Walk around the class and talk to other students about wood. Change partners often. After you finish, sit with your original partner(s) and share what you found out.

**2. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

*logging / furniture / consumers / bribes / smuggling / greed / forests / livelihoods / banning imports / certificates / looting / cashing in / neighbours*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

**3. CHEAP PRICE:** With your partner(s), decide which of these are worst. What are the alternatives? Would you pay double the price to make sure these practices are stopped? Change partners and share your ideas.

Name	Alternatives	Pay double?
illegal logging		
child labour to make cheap clothes		
pirated CDs, DVDs and software		
fake brand goods		
using coal for cheap energy		
fur products		

**4. GUILTY:** A lot of furniture sold in shops comes from wood from illegal logging. Who is most guilty? Talk about this with your partner(s). Give a score from 10 (very guilty) to 1 (totally innocent). Change partners and share your ideas.

- \_\_\_\_\_ the guy who cuts down the tree
- \_\_\_\_\_ the boss of the timber company
- \_\_\_\_\_ the leader of the country where logging takes place
- \_\_\_\_\_ the leader of the country in which the furniture is sold
- \_\_\_\_\_ the shop in Europe or the US that sells the furniture
- \_\_\_\_\_ the customer who buys the furniture

**5. FOREST:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'forest'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

**6. QUICK ROLE PLAY:** Students A **strongly** believe that logging is not such a problem and the forests will recover; Students B **strongly** believe that logging will eventually destroy the Earth. Change partners again and talk about your roles and conversations.

## BEFORE READING / LISTENING

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- a. Vietnamese shoppers are buying furniture from illegally cut wood. T / F
- b. The trade in illegal logging in Laos is worth almost \$1 billion. T / F
- c. Loggers have to pay taxes at the Vietnam-Laos border. T / F
- d. Poor villagers are the ones who suffer most from logging. T / F
- e. An environmental agency said the West needs to act to help Laos. T / F
- f. The EU will require all imported wood to have a certificate of origin. T / F
- g. A report said actions taken by the West have worked very well. T / F
- h. Thailand and Singapore are also involved in logging in Laos. T / F

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |                |                     |
|----------------|---------------------|
| 1. illegally   | a. terrible         |
| 2. vast        | b. quick            |
| 3. rapid       | c. hurt             |
| 4. suffer      | d. taking advantage |
| 5. dependent   | e. unlawfully       |
| 6. steps       | f. valuable         |
| 7. origin      | g. reliant          |
| 8. dire        | h. source           |
| 9. precious    | i. huge             |
| 10. cashing in | j. action           |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- |  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. Vietnam is illegally logging vast       | a. poor rural communities    |
| 2. demand for cheap furniture              | b. tropical forests          |
| 3. Loggers pay huge bribes                 | c. illegal wood products     |
| 4. The cost of such greed is paid by       | d. in the West               |
| 5. dependent on the forests for their      | e. of all wood products      |
| 6. it was up to Western governments to act | f. areas of rainforest       |
| 7. taking steps to ban the import of       | g. to stop the deforestation |
| 8. make sure of the origin                 | h. traditional livelihoods   |
| 9. looting the remaining precious          | i. northern neighbour        |
| 10. "cashing in" by exploiting their       | j. to smuggle the logs       |

## WHILE READING / LISTENING

**GAP FILL:** Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Vietnam is illegally logging \_\_\_\_\_ areas of rainforest in neighboring Laos and turning it into furniture for consumers in the US and Europe. This is the \_\_\_\_\_ of the UK-based Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA), which stated: "Vietnam's \_\_\_\_\_ economy and demand for cheap furniture in the West is driving rapid deforestation in Laos." There are estimates that the \_\_\_\_\_ illegally crossing into Vietnam is worth billions of dollars. This now makes Vietnam a world centre for logging. Loggers pay huge \_\_\_\_\_ to smuggle the logs across the border. The EIA's head of forest campaigns Julian Newman pointed out that poor villages \_\_\_\_\_ most: "The cost of such...\_\_\_\_\_ is [paid] by poor rural communities in Laos who are dependent on the forests for their traditional \_\_\_\_\_," he said.

*suffer*  
*booming*  
*greed*  
*timber*  
*vast*  
*livelihoods*  
*bribes*  
*claim*

The EIA said it was up to Western governments to \_\_\_\_\_ to stop the deforestation in Laos. EIA spokeswoman Faith Doherty said the US Congress was taking \_\_\_\_\_ to ban the import of illegal wood products. She also said the European Union was creating a certificate system to make sure of the \_\_\_\_\_ of all wood products. Newman agreed, stating: "The ultimate responsibility for this dire state of \_\_\_\_\_ rests with the consumer markets which import wood products made from \_\_\_\_\_ timber." The report says actions taken by the West have not worked: "The stark reality is 'business as \_\_\_\_\_' for the organized syndicates looting the remaining precious tropical forests for a \_\_\_\_\_ profit," authors say. They add that Thai and Singapore traders are also "\_\_\_\_\_ in" by exploiting their northern neighbour.

*quick*  
*affairs*  
*steps*  
*usual*  
*stolen*  
*origin*  
*act*  
*cashing*

**LISTENING: Listen and fill in the spaces.**

Vietnam is illegally logging \_\_\_\_\_ rainforest in neighboring Laos and turning it into furniture for consumers in the US and Europe. This is \_\_\_\_\_ UK-based Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA), which stated: "Vietnam's \_\_\_\_\_ demand for cheap furniture in the West is driving rapid deforestation in Laos." There are estimates that the timber illegally crossing into Vietnam \_\_\_\_\_ dollars. This now makes Vietnam a world centre for logging. Loggers \_\_\_\_\_ smuggle the logs across the border. The EIA's head of forest campaigns Julian Newman \_\_\_\_\_ poor villages suffer most: "The cost of such...greed is [paid] by poor rural communities in Laos who are dependent on the \_\_\_\_\_ traditional livelihoods," he said.

The EIA said it was up to Western governments \_\_\_\_\_ the deforestation in Laos. EIA spokeswoman Faith Doherty said the US Congress was taking \_\_\_\_\_ import of illegal wood products. She also said the European Union was creating a certificate system to \_\_\_\_\_ origin of all wood products. Newman agreed, stating: "The ultimate responsibility for this \_\_\_\_\_ affairs rests with the consumer markets which import wood products made from stolen timber." The report says \_\_\_\_\_ the West have not worked: "The stark reality is 'business as usual' for the organized syndicates looting the remaining precious tropical forests \_\_\_\_\_," authors say. They add that Thai and Singapore traders are also "\_\_\_\_\_ " by exploiting their northern neighbour.

## AFTER READING / LISTENING

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words '**dire**' and '**state**'.

<b>dire</b>	<b>state</b>

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. GAP FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• vast</li><li>• claim</li><li>• booming</li><li>• estimates</li><li>• bribes</li><li>• dependent</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• act</li><li>• steps</li><li>• certificate</li><li>• stark reality</li><li>• quick</li><li>• cashing in</li></ul>
---	--

## STUDENT LOGGING SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about logging in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1	STUDENT 2	STUDENT 3
	_____	_____	_____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.



## **DISCUSSION**

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
  - b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'logging'?
  - c) What are your feelings about this story?
  - d) Do you think illegal logging will ever stop?
  - e) Should consumers ask more questions about the wood products they buy?
  - f) How can the Vietnam government not know about this multi-billion-dollar business?
  - g) Should the world take action against Vietnam's government for not stopping the illegal logging?
  - h) How do poor rural communities suffer because of illegal logging?
  - i) Will you be more careful the next time you buy wooden furniture?
- 

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Is it totally up to Western governments to stop deforestation in Laos?
- c) Do you think the actions taken by the US Congress and European Union will work?
- d) Do you think huge stores do enough to check the origin of the wood products they sell?
- e) What happens when the precious tropical forests have gone?
- f) What punishment should be given to those involved in logging?
- g) Would you buy a really, really beautiful piece of furniture that was really, really cheap if you knew it came from illegal logging?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the loggers?
- i) Did you like this discussion?

## LANGUAGE

**CORRECT WORD:** Put the correct words from a–d below in the article.

Vietnam is illegally logging (1) \_\_\_\_\_ areas of rainforest in neighboring Laos and turning it into furniture for consumers in the US and Europe. This is the (2) \_\_\_\_\_ of the UK-based Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA), which stated: "Vietnam's booming economy and demand for cheap furniture in the West is driving (3) \_\_\_\_\_ deforestation in Laos." There are estimates that the timber illegally crossing into Vietnam (4) \_\_\_\_\_ worth billions of dollars. This now makes Vietnam a world centre for logging. Loggers pay huge bribes to smuggle the logs across the border. The EIA's head of forest campaigns Julian Newman pointed (5) \_\_\_\_\_ that poor villages suffer most: "The cost of such...greed is [paid] by poor rural communities in Laos who are dependent (6) \_\_\_\_\_ the forests for their traditional livelihoods," he said.

The EIA said it was (7) \_\_\_\_\_ to Western governments to act to stop the deforestation in Laos. EIA spokeswoman Faith Doherty said the US Congress was taking steps to (8) \_\_\_\_\_ the import of illegal wood products. She also said the European Union was creating a certificate system to make sure of the (9) \_\_\_\_\_ of all wood products. Newman agreed, stating: "The ultimate responsibility for this dire state of affairs rests with the consumer markets which import wood products made from (10) \_\_\_\_\_ timber." The report says actions taken by the West have not worked: "The stark reality is 'business as (11) \_\_\_\_\_' for the organized syndicates looting the remaining precious tropical forests for a quick profit," authors say. They add that Thai and Singapore traders are also "cashing (12) \_\_\_\_\_" by exploiting their northern neighbour.

- |     |               |             |              |              |
|-----|---------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1.  | (a) vast      | (b) fast    | (c) vest     | (d) vats     |
| 2.  | (a) climb     | (b) clam    | (c) claim    | (d) clamp    |
| 3.  | (a) rabid     | (b) rapid   | (c) tepid    | (d) cupid    |
| 4.  | (a) will      | (b) are     | (c) be       | (d) is       |
| 5.  | (a) left      | (b) under   | (c) out      | (d) in       |
| 6.  | (a) on        | (b) in      | (c) to       | (d) with     |
| 7.  | (a) so        | (b) on      | (c) to       | (d) up       |
| 8.  | (a) burn      | (b) ban     | (c) bin      | (d) brand    |
| 9.  | (a) originate | (b) origami | (c) origin   | (d) original |
| 10. | (a) stolen    | (b) steals  | (c) stealing | (d) stole    |
| 11. | (a) unusual   | (b) usual   | (c) usually  | (d) useful   |
| 12. | (a) off       | (b) out     | (c) on       | (d) in       |

## WRITING:

Write about *logging* for 10 minutes. Correct your partner's paper.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

## **HOMEWORK**

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find out about the Environmental Investigation Agency. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

**3. LOGGING:** Make a poster about the scale and effects of logging around the world. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

**4. TRADITIONAL LIVELIHOODS:** Write a magazine article about the effects logging has on small rural communities in rainforests. Include imaginary interviews with the villagers and the loggers.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down new words and expressions.

**5. LETTER:** Write a letter to Vietnam's environment minister. Ask him/her three questions about the illegal logging in Laos. Give him/her three pieces of advice on what he/she should do to stop the logging. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

**6. DIARY / JOURNAL:** Imagine you are a logger in a tropical rainforest. Write your diary / journal entry for one day in your life. Read your entry to your classmates in the next lesson.

## ANSWERS

### TRUE / FALSE:

a. F      b. F      c. F      d. T      e. T      f. T      g. F      h. T

### SYNONYM MATCH:

- |                |                     |
|----------------|---------------------|
| 1. illegally   | a. unlawfully       |
| 2. vast        | b. huge             |
| 3. rapid       | c. quick            |
| 4. suffer      | d. hurt             |
| 5. dependent   | e. reliant          |
| 6. steps       | f. action           |
| 7. origin      | g. source           |
| 8. dire        | h. terrible         |
| 9. precious    | i. valuable         |
| 10. cashing in | j. taking advantage |

### PHRASE MATCH:

- |  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. Vietnam is illegally logging vast       | a. areas of rainforest       |
| 2. demand for cheap furniture              | b. in the West               |
| 3. Loggers pay huge bribes                 | c. to smuggle the logs       |
| 4. The cost of such greed is paid by       | d. poor rural communities    |
| 5. dependent on the forests for their      | e. traditional livelihoods   |
| 6. it was up to Western governments to act | f. to stop the deforestation |
| 7. taking steps to ban the import of       | g. illegal wood products     |
| 8. make sure of the origin                 | h. of all wood products      |
| 9. looting the remaining precious          | i. tropical forests          |
| 10. "cashing in" by exploiting their       | j. northern neighbour        |

### GAP FILL:

#### Vietnam illegally logging Laos forests

Vietnam is illegally logging **vast** areas of rainforest in neighboring Laos and turning it into furniture for consumers in the US and Europe. This is the **claim** of the UK-based Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA), which stated: "Vietnam's **booming** economy and demand for cheap furniture in the West is driving rapid deforestation in Laos." There are estimates that the **timber** illegally crossing into Vietnam is worth billions of dollars. This now makes Vietnam a world centre for logging. Loggers pay huge **bribes** to smuggle the logs across the border. The EIA's head of forest campaigns Julian Newman pointed out that poor villages **suffer** most: "The cost of such...**greed** is [paid] by poor rural communities in Laos who are dependent on the forests for their traditional **livelihoods**," he said.

The EIA said it was up to Western governments to **act** to stop the deforestation in Laos. EIA spokeswoman Faith Doherty said the US Congress was taking **steps** to ban the import of illegal wood products. She also said the European Union was creating a certificate system to make sure of the **origin** of all wood products. Newman agreed, stating: "The ultimate responsibility for this dire state of **affairs** rests with the consumer markets which import wood products made from **stolen** timber." The report says actions taken by the West have not worked: "The stark reality is 'business as **usual**' for the organized syndicates looting the remaining precious tropical forests for a **quick** profit," authors say. They add that Thai and Singapore traders are also "**cashing** in" by exploiting their northern neighbour.

### LANGUAGE WORK

1 - a    2 - c    3 - b    4 - d    5 - c    6 - a    7 - d    8 - b    9 - c    10 - a    11 - b    12 - d