



[ABC Online](#)

G8 vows action on logging, climate change. 19/03/2005. ABC News Online

[This is the print version of story <http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200503/s1327264.htm>]

Last Update: Saturday, March 19, 2005. 2:49pm (AEDT)

G8 vows action on logging, climate change

A Group of Eight (G8) ministerial meeting has wrapped up with the promise of action on illegal forestry and help for African countries likely to bear the brunt of climate change.

In a statement issued at the end of a two-day gathering in central England, G8 environment and development ministers agreed to help poor countries combat illegal logging and trade in poached timber.

"We will share our technical knowledge, help develop tools and build the capacity to detect and prevent illegal logging and apprehend and prosecute offenders," the statement said.

"This will include remote sensing, geographical information systems and other systems to monitor forest activities and conditions."

The statement says the eight industrialised countries would "take steps" to halt the import and marketing of illegal timber.

But the communique makes no specific pledge of money.

It adds "each country (will be) acting where it can contribute most effectively" and national actions on imports would be "consistent" with the rules of the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

The wording appears to have been a compromise between European G8 members, which pushed for an international agreement among countries that consume tropical timber for halting imports of illegally forested wood, and the United States, which strongly opposed this idea.

Green activists who followed the meeting said the talks had to be extended by a couple of hours to bridge this divide.

"This is a fairly weak statement. We are disappointed," Patrick Venditti, Greenpeace UK's forestry spokesman said.

"This is a global problem which needs a global response."

On global warming, the G8 statement said: "Further international action is required to address climate change".

It vowed to help countries, especially those in Africa, that are particularly vulnerable to it.

The main focus will be on providing equipment and training for African scientists so that countries can "understand and manage" climate risks.

Poor tropical countries are predicted by scientists to bear the brunt of climate change.

The main risk is through changes of rainfall patterns that will translate into drought and flood, as well as more frequent and more severe storms.

Most African nations lack the money and human resources to adapt to this threat.

The communique did not mention the Kyoto Protocol, the UN treaty to combat the fossil-fuel gases that are causing the problem.

The protocol entered force in February after a marathon effort to decide its complex rule book, and surviving a walkout by the United States, which says its provisions are too costly for its oil-dependent economy.

The G8 is chaired by Britain this year, under a rotating presidency.

Its other members are Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia and the United States.

- **AFP**

© 2005 Australian Broadcasting Corporation
Copyright information: <http://abc.net.au/common/copyrigh.htm>
Privacy information: <http://abc.net.au/privacy.htm>