

EXPERTISE CENTER FOR FORENSIC WOOD RESEARCH | ENFORCE

ABSTRACT

The ENFORCE project has established a Belgian centre of expertise for forensic timber research to combat illegal timber trade and improve compliance with biodiversity legislations. Key objectives are to provide scientific expertise services, improve existing techniques and develop new methods. ENFORCE performs wood identification through anatomical examination and chemical profiling. The centre has provided numerous expertises to various applicants such as customs and the timber industry. ENFORCE exposed false claims of timber identity and origin, the latter in collaboration with World Forest ID for provenance determination. The project participated in international forensic initiatives such as congresses and timber check operations. Outreach is provided through the ENFORCE website, various news and magazine articles and the publication of an A1 scientific paper. Recommendations include the expansion of reference databases, the application of machine learning, the development of a more extensive network of laboratories, and ensuring trained staff and funding to safeguard Belgium's compliance to international timber regulation requirements such as the upcoming EUDR.