

Holzindustrie Schweighofer refutes all of the EIA organization's accusations

A comprehensive check of the facts and a detailed 'counter-report' confirms that there is not any illegal processing of timber. Various other accusations are also incorrect as well as factually unsubstantiated and they are refuted by both the facts and documents. Holzindustrie Schweighofer regrets the EIA's dubious course of action and requests it to withdraw all of the allegations and to stop its campaign against the company in the media.

Vienna, 17th February 2016. The EIA, which is an American environmental organization, made a huge number of accusations against Holzindustrie Schweighofer in a report at the end of 2015, in connection with the ostensible processing of illegally felled timber in Romania.

A precise check and reappraisal of the EIA report's contents has clarified meanwhile that no single accusation against the company is true or verifiable from the facts. Holzindustrie Schweighofer has published a comprehensive 'counter-report' today, in which the EIA's accusations are refuted by means of additional research, documents, information about both the market and law, case numbers, excerpts from maps, official statistics, etc. The EIA's report falsely referred to real estate which does not exist at all; it published manipulative figures about both the market and areas; it also mixed up companies or simply further disseminates malicious rumours, for which there is no provable factual basis at all.

"We hope that we have now been able to conclusively clarify through our comprehensive 'counter-report' that Holzindustrie Schweighofer is not connected in any way with the problem of illegally felled timber in Romania. The matter of the so-called 'EIA Report' concerns a hotchpotch of false information and rumours, which systematically seek to damage our company by making inferences about the matter. We – as the market-leader – are being used in order to generate attention in the media to a problem, for which we are not responsible as a sustainable working company. The American NGO's course of action is in any case extremely immoral and regrettable: it is also legally questionable", commented Mr. Georg Erlacher, who is a member of Holzindustrie Schweighofer's managing board.

Holzindustrie Schweighofer operates three sawmills in Romania, as well as one blockboard factory and one glued & laminated timber factory; it processes about 11 % of the Romanian timber stock nowadays. The company is expecting in 2016 that about half of the processed timber will be imported from other European countries and therefore that it will not come from Romanian forests. Almost 3,000 jobs have been created there in Romania up to now through making investments of about € 800,000,000.

The company has strictly rejected every participation in the illegal processing of timber from the beginning onwards. The proper origin of all the delivered timber is ensured by means of choosing the suppliers carefully and through applying comprehensive, technical, inspecting mechanisms when accepting the goods all of the works.



In addition, Romania has one of the strictest state inspection systems for forestry worldwide, as well as a central approving and notifying authority for all felled timber. The Romanian authorities monitor the special foreign investors and large industrial companies particularly strictly. There are about 6,500 sawmills in Romania, besides a few larger timber-processing companies, which include Holzindustrie Schweighofer.

Even the request from NGOs for independent institutions to make multiple checks of all the existing certifications of quality and origin has shown that all deliveries of timber are being seamlessly documents and that they come from inspected sources. The renowned FSC® Certificate was been recently renewed and it now covers all of the company's timber-processing locations in Romania, Austria and Germany. All of the external timber suppliers have been integrated into the strict FSC® inspecting system while doing so. (FSC® Mix Credit - QA-CoC-0073/0, FSC® Controlled Wood - QA-CW-0073/0).

“Our company has been in recent months – as has been substantiated many times meanwhile – the utterly unjust victim of a worldwide defamatory campaign, which emanates from the EIA organization. It is now unmistakably confirmed by the comprehensive and written documentary refutation of all the accusations, as well as according to the numerous external inspections, that the campaign against HolzindustrieSchweighofer is unfair and factually unjustified. Therefore, the EIA should withdraw all of its accusations swiftly”, commented Mr. Erlacher afterwards.

The Vienna Chamber of Commerce took the first step a few days ago to issue an interim injunction against the Romanian environmental organization called ‘New Way’, which prohibits it from further disseminating the untrue accusations against Holzindustrie Schweighofer in the media. The organization could not comply in any single case with the legal request to substantiate the assertions, which are very similar to those that the EIA is making.

The ‘counter-report’ that Holzindustrie Schweighofer has drawn up, in which all of the accusations against the company are factually rebutted, is available for downloading: <http://schweighofer-initiative.org/en/?p=1499&preview=true>

The EIA's original report can be found at:

http://eia-global.org/images/uploads/EIA_2015_Romania_Report_Final_low_res.pdf

Further up-to-date information is available at www.schweighofer-initiative.org.

Holzindustrie Schweighofer

Holzindustrie Schweighofer is part of the Schweighofer Gruppe and it is rooted in a traditional, Austrian, family-owned company that has more than 400 years of experience in timber processing. The group is primarily active in the timber industry nowadays but it is also working in cellulose production, forestry, generation of bio-energy and in the real-estate area. Holzindustrie Schweighofer put its first sawmill in Romania into operation in 2003. Schweighofer has become the leading company in the European timber-processing industry meanwhile and it currently has a



workforce of about 3,000 employees in the factories in Romania: namely, three sawmills, one blockboard factory and one glued & laminated timber factory. A sawmill in Germany has also been part of the group since October 2015. Schweighofer Fiber manufactures viscose cellulose in Hallein. Holzindustrie Schweighofer exports its products to about 70 countries worldwide.

Advice about making queries

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