

Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences
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Department of Forest Products, Uppsala

**The impact of the EU Timber Regulation on
the Bosnia and Herzegovinian export of
processed wood**

*Effekterna av EU:s förordning om timmer på exporten
av träprodukter från Bosnien och Herzegovina*



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Keywords: EU, EUTR, European Union Timber Regulation, Bosnia and Herzegovina, illegal logging, institutions, policy, export

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Abstract

Illegal logging and its related trade is of great concern around the world. The European Union Timber Regulation (EUTR) is a regulatory approach by the EU to prevent illegal timber and timber products to be placed on the European Union inner market. This means the regulation affects both actors in the member countries as well as the actors exporting timber and timber products to the EU from non EU member countries. This study aims to study the implementation process of the EUTR in Bosnia and Herzegovina (B-H), and its preconditions. Institutional theory is used to understand and explain how the EUTR affects B-H organisations' business environment, and how the organisations choose to respond to the EUTR. Methodologically, the study is based on qualitative interviews with representatives from the B-H exporting industry of processed wood products, authorities and research institutions.

The pressure from the EUTR is realised in B-H on different governmental levels, and there is no responsible authority chosen for the implementation. However, the knowledge of the EUTR is somewhat spread among the respondents, and is expected increasing with time. The respondents' perception of the EUTR is overall positive, and the EUTR is believed to reduce illegal activities related to forest trade in the region in the future. The lack of human and monetary resources together with an unfair market competition from organisations using illegal wood reduce the legal organisations' capacity to implement the EUTR. So far, respondents from the authorities and the research institution has responded to the EUTR for example by arranging seminars aiming to spread the knowledge of the EUTR, and more organisations are starting to respond the institutional pressure from the EUTR.

The implementation of the EUTR is hampered by a complicated administration and a lack of funding and knowledge. There is however a positive attitude towards the regulation among the respondents, as they are taking the issue seriously, and believe the EUTR will contribute to a reduction of illegal activities in the future.

Keywords: *EU, EUTR, European Union Timber Regulation, Bosnia and Herzegovina, illegal logging, institutions, policy, export*

Sammanfattning

Illegal avverkning och handel är av stor vikt runt om i världen. European Union Timber Regulation (EUTR), EU:s förordning om timmer, är en förordning med syfte att förhindra illegalt timmer och produkter från illegalt timmer att placeras på den EUs inre marknad. Det innebär att förordningen påverkar både medlemsländerna i EU och icke EU-länder som exporterar timmer och produkter från timmer till ett EU-land. Den här studien syftar till att studera den pågående implementeringsprocessen av EUTR i Bosnien och Herzegovina (B-H) och förutsättningarna för detta. Institutionell teori används för att förstå och förklara hur EUTR påverkar organisationers företagsklimat och hur organisationerna väljer att reagera på EUTR. Studien baseras på kvalitativa intervjuer med representanter från den bosniska exportindustrin av träprodukter, myndigheter och forskningsinstitutioner.

Resultatet visar att EUTR realiseras i B-H på olika styrande nivåer och det finns just nu ingen myndighet som är ansvarig för implementeringen av EUTR. Kunskapen om EUTR är däremot relativt utspridd bland respondenterna i studien, och förväntas öka med tiden. Respondenternas uppfattning av EUTR är positiv och förordningen anses kunna bidra till en minskad illegal aktivitet relaterad till skogsindustrin i landet. Bristen på kompetent arbetskraft och finanser tillsammans med en osund marknadskonkurrens från företag som använder illegalt virke minskar de legala företagens förmåga att implementera EUTR. Hittills har respondenterna från myndigheter och forskningsinstitut svarat på pressen från EUTR genom att arrangera seminarier som ska sprida kunskaperna om förordningen och allt fler organisationer börjar svara på den institutionella pressen från EUTR.

Implementeringen av EUTR hämmas av en komplicerad administration och brister i finansiering och kunskap inom ämnet. Det finns ändå en positiv syn på EUTR bland respondenterna, då många tar frågan på stort allvar och tror att EUTR kommer bidra till att minska användningen av illegala metoder i framtiden.

Nyckelord: EU, EUTR, European Union Timber Regulation, Bosnia och Herzegovina, illegal avverkning, institutioner, policy, export

Preface

This paper was written as the Master thesis at the forester program for the Swedish University of Agricultural Science. Most of the study was conducted in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina with the financial support from Sida, Minor Field Studies, of which I am deeply grateful for giving me this opportunity. The study was made possible with the valuable help from the Forest Faculty at the University of Sarajevo, and I would like to thank especially Professor Mersudin Avdibegovic for the support and aid during my stay in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Finally, I would like to thank my supervisor at SLU, Department of forest products, Sara Holmgren, for the guidance and support given during the whole process.

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1 Introduction

Illegal logging and its related trade is of great concern around the world. It is seen as one of the most important forest-related issues today (Becirovic, et al., 2014). Illegal logging as a term has many different meanings, depending on by whom it is used (Ottitsch, et al., 2007). In this paper, it is defined as the European Commission defines illegal logging,

“...when timber is harvested and sold in violation of national laws”
(Commission of the European Communities, 2003)

Illegal activities and corruption leads to decreased national profit and a lack of financial and social benefit for the country (Hirschberger, 2008). Knowledge of illegal activities is important in the process of combating it. All organisations acting in the export industry of processed wood products chain need a higher level of understanding of the cause of, and how to prevent, illegal logging and trade in order to face these issues (Becirovic, et al., 2014).

The European Union Timber Regulation (EUTR) is a regulatory approach by the EU to prevent illegal timber and timber products to be placed on the EU inner market (The European Parliament and the Council of the EU, 2010). This means the regulation affects both actors in the member countries as well as actors exporting timber and timber products to the EU from non EU member countries. The impact goes from the importing EU member country, through the exporting company, the wood processing company, to the forest companies making the logging. In each of these steps, there could be illegal activities present, such as illegal logging, falsification of paperwork and illegal trade.

Bosnia and Herzegovina (B-H) is a country with an economy in transition (Becirovic, et al., 2014; Hoskisson, et al., 2000). The export of wood products from B-H is one of the most important exporting businesses and plays an important role in the B-H national economy (European Commission, 2014). At the same time, the country suffers from illegal logging activities (Hirschberger, 2008). It is difficult to know how spread these activities are, since there is a lack of information on illegal activities throughout the Balkan region (Ottitsch, et al., 2007). The lack can partly be explained through the low concern for illegal activities in the sector among the governing authorities. Recent conflicts during the 1990s created major economically and socially concerns for the countries in former Yugoslavia. These issues from the war are still present, giving less public concern to issues such as illegal activities in the wood sector among the authorities and the industry (Ottitsch, et al., 2007).

Much of the EUTR focus is on the use of tropical wood (Giurca, 2013), and the regulation was designed according to the requirements of the trade with tropical timber (The European Parliament and the Council of the EU, 2010). Therefore, a view on the effect it has on a non-tropical country such as B-H is missing. Also, in B-H's journey towards becoming an EU member country, this study can show one aspect of B-H – EU integration, and how far the B-H forest and wood processing industry have come in this regard.

The aim of this thesis is to describe the implementing process of the EUTR in B-H, and the preconditions for the country to implement the EUTR. To understand this, the study investigates firstly how the pressure from the EUTR on B-H to follow the regulation is realised, secondly how the EUTR affects the business environment for the B-H exporting industry of processed wood products by exploring the perceptions of EUTR among the respondents in this study, and thirdly how different organisations consider responding to the EUTR. The thoughts and opinions of representatives from organisations such as wood processing companies, authorities, and research institutions have been studied to fulfil the aim of the study.

2 Background

2.1 The European Union Timber Regulation

The European Union Timber Regulation (EUTR) is a legal act taken into force on the 3rd of March 2013 (The European Parliament and the Council of the EU, 2010). The foundation of the decision lies in the EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan, invented through a 2003 communication (The European Parliament and the Council of the EU, 2010). The FLEGT works for the solvation of illegal logging and its connected trade within member countries of the European Union, and was adopted in 2003 to reduce and prevent illegal logging (Commission of the European Communities, 2003). The FLEGT Action Plan consists of several parts, where the EUTR is one of them.

The effect of the EUTR on European wood trade depends on the definition of “illegal logging”, for example if health and safety regulations are considered part of the illegal definition (Florian, et al., 2012). If the national health and safety legislation is included in the EUTR, Eastern Europe is specially affected, as the law fulfilment is significantly low in this region (ibid.).

The EUTR uses the term Due Diligence system to describe the obligations from the exporting operators. All operators placing wood and wood products for the first time on the European Union inner market are obliged to show due diligence through minimizing the risk of illegal wood harvest and trade (The European Parliament and the Council of the EU, 2010). The due diligence system consists of three parts.

- Information access,
- Making a risk assessment,
- Reducing the established risk if such exists,

The accessible information should contain the names and contact details of sources and suppliers in the chain, as well as other relevant information such as compliance with the national legislation, where the timber was harvested, tree species, and the amount harvested (The European Parliament and the Council of the EU, 2010). From that information, a risk assessment of illegality is made. When the risk is determined, the operators should work on reducing that risk in proportion of its size, in order to prevent illegally harvested wood and wood products to be released onto the EU inner market (The European Parliament and the Council of the EU, 2010). The final step with risk reducing is only applied if the risk assessment shows any weaknesses that need to be taken care of.

The EUTR includes the possibility to use existing certification frameworks as an option for validating the handling of legal wood and wood products (The European Parliament and the Council of the EU, 2010). This is however not yet applied, since there are still issues around it to resolve concerning practical use and scope (IHB, the timber network, 2015). Sikkema et al. (2014) conducted a study on different existing certification frameworks' coverage of the EU Timber Regulation when exporting woody biomass for energy into the EU. The study found that Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) covered the requirements of the EU Timber Regulation in woody biomass for energy, and therefore should be able to function as proof of legality for the EUTR. The difficulty lies in the lack of alignment in terms and definitions between the Certification programs and the EUTR (Sikkema, et al., 2014).

Table 1 shows the included products the EUTR comply for. The regulation do not cover recycled products. Neither does it cover packaging material in use with other imported goods nor products made of bamboo (The European Parliament and the Council of the EU, 2010)

Table 1. Products concerned with the EUTR. Source: (The European Parliament and the Council of the EU, 2010)

Code	Name
4401	Fuel wood
4403	Wood in the rough
4406	Railway or tramway sleepers of wood
4407	Shipped or sawn wood with thickness exceeding 6 mm
4408	Sheets for veneering, plywood or other laminated wood with thickness not exceeding 6 mm
4409	Wood continuously shaped
4410	Particle board, OSB and similar board of wood
4411	Fibreboard of wood or other ligneous materials
4412	Plywood, veneered panels and similar laminated wood
4413	Densified wood
4414	Wooden frames for paintings, photographs etc.
4415	Packaging cases, boxes, crates, drums and other packaging of wood
4416	Casks, barrels, vats, tubs and other coopers' products and parts of them of wood
4418	Builders' joinery and carpentry of wood
9403	Pulp and paper, except bamboo
9403	30, 40, 50 00, 60, 90 30 Wooden furniture
9406	00 20 Prefabricated buildings

2.2 Bosnia and Hercegovina

Bosnia and Hercegovina (B-H) is situated on the Balkan peninsula with 3.8 million inhabitants (Embassy of Sweden, 2013). It is bordered by Croatia, Serbia, and Montenegro, with almost no coastline, except for a small strip of land towards the Adriatic Sea (Alibegovic-Grbic, 2009). Half of the land area is covered by forest (Avdibegovic, et al., 2014; Alibegovic-Grbic, 2009). Figure 1 shows the neighbouring countries and the location of the forests. Dark green indicates closed forests and lighter green indicates more open and fragmented forest land.



Figure 1. Map of Bosnia and Hercegovina, showing forest cover and neighbouring countries. Source: (FAO, 2013)

The commercial growing stock of forest is economically and socially essential for the region (Avdibegovic, et al., 2014), with Beech as the dominant species. Other species with commercial value are Silver fir, Spruce, Oak and Pine. Forests in Western Balkans, including B-H, have been stately owned for almost fifty years, until recent political changes together with the division of the former Yugoslavia in the 1990's turned the forest sector into a free market economy (ibid.). An estimation states that about 38 % of the high forest is privately owned. (FAO, 2015) In regards to more degraded forests such as coppice forests, the part privately owned is higher, around 62 %. The National Forest Inventory in B-H shows that 20 % of the total forestland area is privately owned (FAO, 2015).

The wood processing industry has also changed in structure and ownership during the last decades (FAO, 2015). Before the war in the 1990's, a few large stately owned companies accounted for most of the processing of wood products. After the war, the large dominant companies were disintegrated and sold off in a reach for privatization. Today, there are over 1700 wood industry facilities in B-H, most of them sawmills. Many of the facilities do not have the required licence from the government to make business, are small, and produce mainly for the local market. The larger sawmills are often from before the war with old and obsolete technology. However, the industry is increasing its revenues and export quantities, especially in higher added-value goods such as furniture and prefabricated houses (FAO, 2015). Figure 2 shows the structure of export of the wood processing industry in 2011. The major part of the value of export consists of furniture and sawmill products. However, other product segments such as prefabricated houses and joinery are also growing rapidly. The export of unprocessed wood for fuel is not presented here. It consists of a significant amount of wood, but with little value (FAO, 2015).

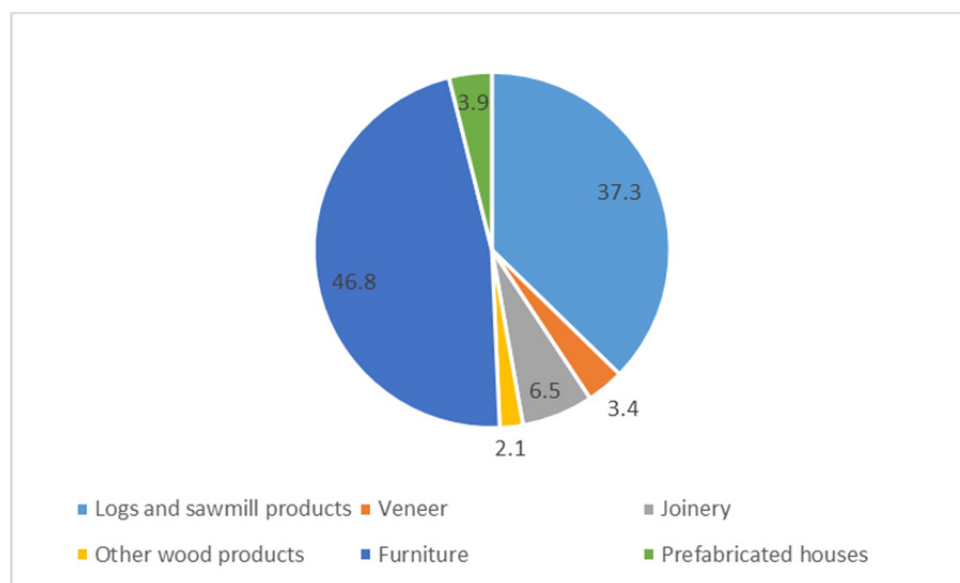


Figure 2. The structure of export of different wood product segments in 2011, shown in percentage share of total wood processing industry export value. Source: (FAO, 2015)

B-H is a net exporter of wood products, exporting mostly within Europe. The six countries with the largest import of B-H wood products between 2008 and 2013 are shown below in Figure 3 (FAO, 2015). These countries are Austria, Croatia, Germany, Italy, Serbia and Slovenia. All countries except Serbia are members of the EU (European Commission, 2014). However, Serbia is a candidate country for joining the EU. Together, these six countries held in 2013 for 74 % of the total value of export of wood products from B-H. (FAO, 2015) Italy

was the biggest importer in 2013, followed by Slovenia, due to a big increase since 2012. Serbia lost much of its import value in the financial crisis, and is still lying on that same level in 2013. However, Serbia is still an attractive export region for the B-H wood sector, especially for the eastern parts of the country, partly because of the greater accessibility through better roads than towards the coast (Avdibegovic, 2015).

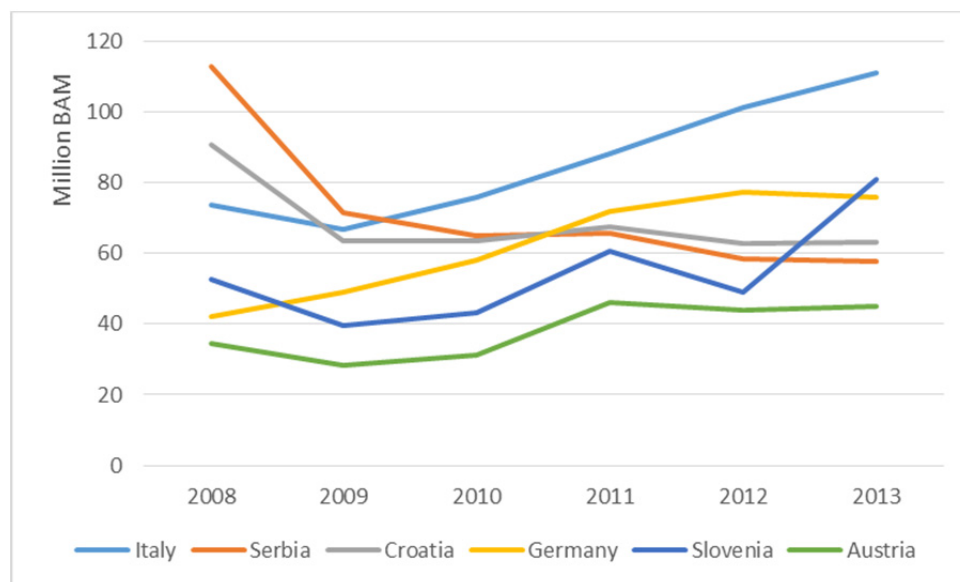


Figure 3. The six countries with the highest value of import of wood products from B-H between 2008 and 2013, showing the value in BAM (Bosnian Convertible Mark) of each year and country. Source: (FAO, 2015)

2.3 National forest regulation

After the end of the war in 1995, B-H experienced a strong economic growth and reconstruction due to large international aid (European Commission, 2014). In spite of this, the country is still struggling in some aspects such as privatisation and in managing the transition from communism to capitalism, implementing structural reforms and in the creation of a functioning legal system, and high unemployment. (European Commission, 2014)

The regulation of forest management and wood processing in B-H is complex. It still suffers from post-war lack of central legislation, and there is no overall state legislation on forestry and wood processing. B-H consists of two entities created after the war, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FB-H) and the Republic of Srpska (RS) (FAO, 2015). The two entities are self-ruling in many aspects, for example in matters concerning the handling of natural resources. Therefore, forestry seen as a natural resource is differently regulated in the different entities (FAO, 2015).

The structure of the administration in FB-H is decentralized into smaller cantonal divisions, responsible for the local forest resources, in lack of an overall law on forestry on entity level (Avdibegovic, et al., 2010). The cantonal divisions are top-down controlled with little or no influence from concerned stakeholders such as the wood processing industry. The RS is not divided into cantons, but consists of smaller municipalities. The management of forests in RS is mostly seen to on entity level. However, some matters are regulated on municipality level (Avdibegovic, et al., 2010).

2.4 State of the art

Since the EUTR was set into force in 2013, articles focusing on the issue are limited in numbers.

Becirovic et al. (2014) found that forest industry employees in FB-H were not fully aware of the regulation. Some people, especially in the older generation with more working experience knew about the EUTR fairly well, while some people, especially younger, knew very little or nothing about the EUTR and its meaning (Becirovic, et al., 2014).

A study of the impact of the EUTR on the market of tropical timber suggests that the regulation has affected the import ratio between tropical and temperate hardwood on the EU market (Giurca, 2013). The study indicates there has been a decline in import of tropical hardwood in the EU during the last few years because of an increased demand for temperate hardwood from especially Eastern Europe. This was explained with the buyers' preference of wood coming closer from home as it is considered safer and more likely to have been cut in a sustainable manner. Another reason mentioned by Giurca (2013) for the increase in demand of temperate wood from Eastern Europe is an increased demand in fashion for oak wood, especially for floors.

A Romanian view on the EUTR was investigated through questionnaires to both state and business stakeholders (Nichiforel & Nichiforel, 2011). The study identified significant problems with illegal logging in the Romanian forest sector, and nearly half of the respondents from both the state and the industry did not know about the EUTR. The weakness seen in the EUTR by Nichiforel and Nichiforel (2011) was the lack of involvement by the relevant stakeholders in decisions regarding the practical implementation.

ZhongHua et al (2011) discusses the impact the EUTR could have on the Chinese export of wood products to the European Union market. In a short term perspective, the regulation could function as a barrier for trade and affect the international forest product export negatively. In a long term perspective, it could promote the use of legal timber on the international market as well as the protection of forest resources, and benefit the global environment. It could also optimize the conditions for other timber trade systems in the world by creating a standard. ZhongHua et al (2011) end their conclusions with an appeal to the Chinese government to establish a Voluntary Partnership Agreement through FLEGT with the EU to secure the legal trade and benefit cooperation and exchange between the regions.

An implementation of the EUTR on the Swiss wood export to the European market was investigated by Pfannkuch and Zabel (2014). Interviews were made with expert representatives from the industry, ministries, and trade organizations about what the regulation have meant so far for the interviewed, and what the possible outcomes might be for the Swiss timber export sector. The result was that four possible handling strategies for the sector were identified;

1. Putting the EUTR in the national regulation of wood and wood products
2. Making a Swiss Timber Regulation in the national environmental protection law
3. Provide information without changing the laws
4. Put up a guarantee from the government on Swiss wood

Some suggestions in research has been made on what the EUTR might mean when it comes into force as a prediction of the future. However, research on the implementation process of the EUTR after it came into force in 2013 is limited. It is also of interest to look at the effects

of the EUTR in a country such as B-H from an outsider's point of view. This study explores different actors' view of the EUTR as to understand the effect the EUTR have had on the organisations' business environment. It also studies the industry's preconditions for implementing the EUTR. According to the literature, a successful implementation of the EUTR is suggested best done through a deeper relationship for trade through a VPA agreement with EU (ZhongHua, et al., 2011), a higher involvement in the implementation process by relevant stakeholders (Nichiforel & Nichiforel, 2011), and making the EUTR a part of the country's regulation (Pfannkuch & Zabel, 2014).

3 Theoretical framework

This part of the thesis describes the theoretical view of the study. It guides the research questions and helps in the interpretation of the findings. First, some basic concepts used in the framework are presented concerning organisations and institutions. Second, a model for describing the process of the effects of the EUTR in B-H is presented. This model gives the continuing structure of the empirical work.

3.1 Organisations

Organisations are essential bodies in this study, and representatives from them are the sources of empirical data. Here, the organisations studied are formal groups of people taking part in the B-H exporting industry of processed wood, authorities and research institutions. Greenwoods and Hinings (1996) define organisations as

“...heterogeneous entities composed of functionally differentiated groups pursuing goals and promoting interests”

Organisations differ from each other in their internal dynamics, and that is what makes them unique (Greenwood & Hinings, 1996). Greenwald (2008) define organisations in a more basic way, as formal groups of people working together to achieve common goals. The organisations create stability and structure to the people in it over time, as they often have a mutual understanding of an issue (Greenwald, 2008). Groups of people can also be informally organised, for example a group of friends going to a dinner (ibid.). Informal organisations are not considered in this thesis.

3.2 Institutions

Institutions are playing an important part in this study. Institutions give the conditions for the being of an organisation (North, 1991; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Institutions also create a framework around organisations to help them interact with each other in a business environment (North, 1991). Peters (2011) presents three criteria that distinguishes an institution. The first is that it involves a social or political agenda. The second is that if something happens or exist in a form of stability over time, it is an institution. Last criteria that distinguishes an institution according to Peters (2011) is that institutions has an effect on the behaviour of individuals. The EUTR can be considered an institution according to these criteria. First, the social and political agenda of the EUTR is to decrease the trade of illegal wood and wood products in the European Union market (The European Parliament and the Council of the EU, 2010). Second, the regulation is stable through its participation in the FLEGT program, and its legitimacy through the European Commission. Third, the EUTR is supposed to have an effect on both exporting companies as well as the receiving countries in terms of control and compliance (The European Parliament and the Council of the EU, 2010). The third criteria is focused on in this thesis.

Institutions can be divided into formal and informal institutions (Pahl-Wostl, 2009). Formal institutions are found through official governmental bodies, are legally binding, and are often presented in a regulatory framework (ibid.). In this thesis, the EUTR is approached as a formal institution. Informal institutions on the other hand refer to cultural and social norms (Pahl-Wostl, 2009). They are not found in any written form, and are not enforced in any legal regulation (ibid.).

There can either be a coherence between the formal and informal institutions if they work towards the same goals, or they can work against each other (Pahl-Wostl, 2009). An example of the latter is the use of bribes and corruption, which is common in countries with a strong regulatory framework on this, but with a weak implementation (Pahl-Wostl, 2009). The relationship between the formal and informal institutions' pressure through power and spread usage is important for studying the response to a governmental force (ibid.).

Formal and informal institutions can also be seen as standing on three legs; the regulative (what is allowed), the normative (what is seen as right or wrong) and the cognitive (what is thinkable) (Scott, 2001). The EUTR is in this thesis considered belonging to the more formal regulative approach. The three legs also differ from each other when it comes to the way they change (Pahl-Wostl, 2009). Regulative institutions can only be changed through an active decision. Both the normative and the cognitive institutions are informal, and their change is more gradual and rarely through an active choice (ibid.).

3.3 The Pressure-State-Response Framework

Organisations and institutions interact within the context of a model. The model of this study is inspired by the Pressure-State-Response (PSR) framework. The PSR framework is a tool created by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in the 1990's (OECD, 1993). The PSR framework was first created for research on how human activities affect climate change and make changes in the natural environment, and how society respond to that change. Since created, it has been widely used, adapted, and revised by many users such as environmental agencies and other institutions (LEAD, 1999). The PSR framework helps the understanding of what happens when the environment and the organisations in it are exposed to some kind of pressure. The PSR framework suggests there is a change in the state of the environment when it is exposed to pressure of some kind. The change in the environment affects the organisations acting in the environment, and makes them respond to the pressure (OECD, 1993).

The PSR framework as created for natural environmental research, has the potential of also being integrated and used in economic research (OECD, 1993). Therefore, the use of the term environment refers in this study to the business environment in which the organisations of the exporting industry of processed wood products from B-H are functioning. Institutional theory has also been integrated into the model to describe the kind of pressure the EUTR puts on the business environment and the organisations in it.

Figure 4 shows an adapted version of the PSR framework with the ways of describing each part explained in the following chapters. The model shows the three parts of the PSR framework, institutional Pressure, State of the business environment and the strategic Response. When it was first created, the PSR framework was seen as a linear set of events, where the pressure appeared first, and affected the state of the environment and indicated a response (OECD, 1993). Later, it has been understood that the model can be more dynamic in its form than that (LEAD, 1999). The more dynamic view is the one used in this thesis, and is modelled in Figure 4. The arrows indicate how the three parts of the model primarily affect each other. However, as the effect is seen as a continuing loop, the three parts can all affect each other through information, pressure and response.

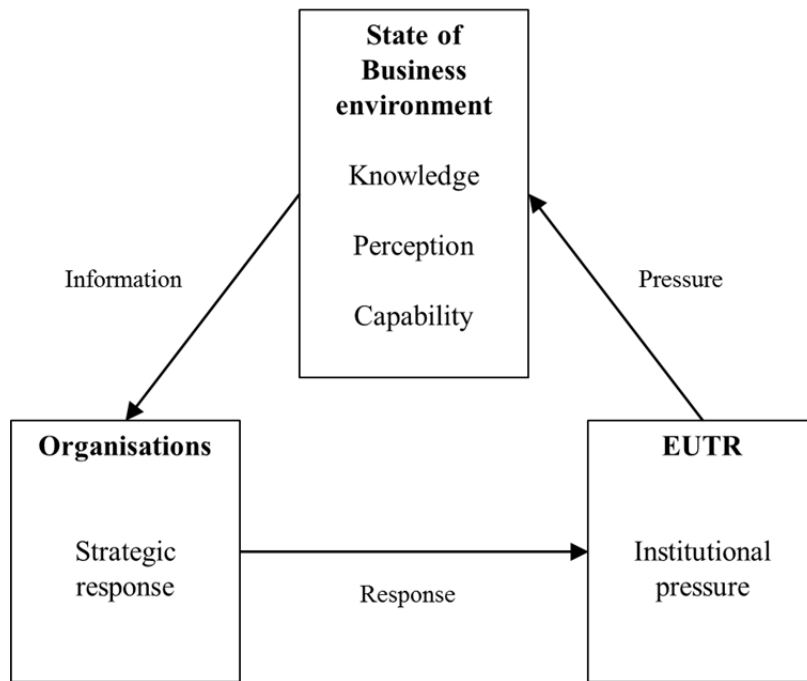


Figure 4. The model describing the theoretical approach of the study, inspired by the PSR framework by OECD (1993). The model has been adjusted to suit economic research and the aim of this study.

The studied area or phenomenon in this thesis is the EUTR as a formal institution that is putting pressure on the business environment and its organisations. To understand and describe the changes in the business environment, three different research areas have been studied. From political science, Haas (1992) work on Knowledge was found to be a part of the changes in the business environment. In social and political science, Perri 6 (2005) describes the importance of Perceptions in the business environment. Finally, business economics and economic science described by Kogut & Kulatilaka (2001), and Porter (1998) was used to understand the Capabilities of an organisation in its business environment. These three found aspects of the changes in the business environment, knowledge, perception and capability, are described in detail in chapter 3.3.2. The following three chapters together describe the three parts of the model in detail.

3.3.1 Institutional pressure from the EUTR

In this thesis, the EUTR is impacting the B-H export industry of processed wood by putting pressure on the business environment and the organisations in it to follow the regulation and show due diligence. The pressure is institutional, since the EUTR is considered an institution. The EUTR demands organisations to implement the regulation and prove legality when the organisations export wood and wood products to the EU inner market (The European Parliament and the Council of the EU, 2010). This is in this thesis considered a type of pressure. The pressure is also considered in a wider perspective, as affecting authorities and research institutions in B-H since they are considered contributing to the overall knowledge and implementation of the EUTR in the country.

A regulative formal institution can put pressure on different levels (Pahl-Wostl, 2009). The EUTR is governed on a multi-state level though the EU. The regulation is further down based on the national law on illegal timber and trade in the country of origin of the wood (The European Parliament and the Council of the EU, 2010). However, it does not end there. As described earlier in chapter 2.3, B-H forest and wood processing industry is governed on several lower levels, such as entities, cantons and municipalities, which makes the analysis of

EUTR pressure more complicated. Governing on lower levels is characterised by independence and a certain degree of freedom (Pahl-Wostl, 2009). The lower levels of governing often have a strong hierarchy in decision making and a high complexity. One of the advantages with ruling on lower levels is the high ability to adapt to changes in the business environment, and not to be so affected by failures in different parts of the system (Pahl-Wostl, 2009).

3.3.2 State of the business environment

The state of the business environment in Central and Eastern Europe countries is considered changing fast (Hoskisson, et al., 2000). Therefore, it is good to study the changes a regulation creates in the business environment, since it can be an indicator of how an organisation might act in the future (Oliver, 1991). To understand the state of the organisations' business environment and the changes in it created by the EUTR, the organisations' framing of the regulation is investigated. Framing an issue means how an issue is viewed upon, and in what context (Perri 6, 2005). Frames also affect the behavioural response of an organisation (Perri 6, 2005; Schön & Rein, 1994, p. 26). Three different aspects of framing of the business environment are considered in this study, as described in chapter 3.3. The three parts describe how the state of the business environment change from the institutional pressure of the EUTR.

- The knowledge of the EUTR among the representatives of the studied organisations
- Their perception of the EUTR in sense of attitude and framing
- Inner resources and external environment affecting the organisations' capability to implement the EUTR

The aspects of knowledge and capability are both part of the organisations' framing of an institutional pressure, together with the principles and believes of the issue, here called perception (Haas, 1992).

Knowledge and the control of information is important for an organisation when deciding how to respond to institutional pressure, since it is part of the organisation's frame (Haas, 1992). It is in what is unknown, and in how the known information is being interpreted that there can be a difference between different actors. Organisations are not always aware of their own amount of knowledge, or the lack of it. Finding out that their own knowledge is much less than they anticipated can lead to two things (Haas, 1992). First, a sense of uncertainty on how to respond to pressure appears. Second, this uncertainty can lead to new ways of responding to pressure. The lack of knowledge, and uncertainty of best practise can lead to new patterns of actions not at all like the ones expected by the pressuring institution in the first place (Haas, 1992).

Perception is an essential part of an organisation's framing, and is closely linked with it (Lindahl & Westholm, 2012; Schön & Rein, 1994, p. 23). Depending on an organisation's goals and reason for existence, it perceives institutional pressure differently (Perri 6, 2005). For example, an organisation working with wood processing and a state authority has not the same goals and reasons for existing, and are therefore not expected to have the same perceptions. The perception of an institution and its pressure also influence an organisation's response to the pressure (Lindahl & Westholm, 2012).

Another important aspect connected to the business environment is the organisations' capability of responding to pressure or changes in their business environment (Kogut & Kulatilaka, 2001). Different organisations have different opportunities that affect their

capability. The amount of human resources and physical assets in an organisation affect the ability to respond to an event. The more resources an organisation have, the easier it has to respond in a beneficial way (Kogut & Kulatilaka, 2001). Also, the decision of how to invest the organisation's assets is a complicated matter, since it is difficult to know the long-term effects of an investment (ibid.).

It is not only the inner resources in the organisation that affects their capability to respond to pressure, but also in what environmental context an organisation is situated (Oliver, 1991). The environmental external factors are the ones coming from the industry and business environment around the organisations (Porter, 1998). The external factors can be divided into the impact of the competitive market from other organisations, and societal expectations in terms of governmental policies and societal norms (Porter, 1998). So, in all, the inner resources of the organisation together with the external business environment gives a picture of the organisation's capabilities to respond to pressure. (Kogut & Kulatilaka, 2001)

3.3.3 Strategic response

The third part of the model inspired by the PSR framework describes how an organisation can respond to pressure. Since this study looks into how the EUTR puts pressure on organisations, this chapter describes how organisations respond to that pressure. The response from organisations chosen to be studied in this thesis is the strategic response. A reason for choosing strategic response is that it is a common way of describing a response when using institutional theory, as described by Oliver (1991), Wright et al (2005), and Greenwood (2008) among others.

Organisations normally accede to institutional pressure for one reason or another, but in some cases, the institutional pressure is not responded to in the way the institution was intended for (Oliver, 1991). The EUTR is a formal regulative institution that the B-H exporting industry of processed wood is expected to implement when exporting goods to an EU member country (The European Parliament and the Council of the EU, 2010). However, the regulation is not expected to be implemented immediately, but the exporting companies are given some time for adjustment.

Oliver (1991) proposes five different strategic responses to institutional pressure, situated on a scale of compliance. These strategic responses have each three different ways of acting out the strategies in tactics, see Table 2. The strategies range from following the institution, **acquiescing**, through four more ways of acting towards **manipulation** as the one furthest away from acquiescence. All the different strategic responses suggested by Oliver (1991) can be acted out in a passive or an active way. So, for example, if the regulation is not followed, this could be done by an active choice or as a passive reaction through culture and habits (Oliver, 1991).

Table 2. The strategic responses, and tactics, to institutional pressure according to Oliver, interpreted and revised by author. Source: (Oliver, 1991).

Strategies	Acquiesce	Compromise	Avoid	Defy	Manipulate
Passive:	Habit	Balance	Conceal	Dismiss	Co-opt
Tactics	Imitate	Pacify	Buffer	Challenge	Influence
Active:	Comply	Bargain	Escape	Attack	Control

Acquiesce in an institutional pressure is not always done as a strategic choice, but as a passive tactic through culture and personal values, simply made as a *habit* (Oliver, 1991). The response to a regulative institution can be to follow it without reflecting, because following the law is a way of habit. Acquiesce could also act out as an active choice made through *compliance*.

Compromising with an institution is a way of conforming to it, although the compliance is only partial, and the organisation is showing its interests more actively than when acquiescing in an institution (Oliver, 1991). Sometimes, different institutional pressures are conflicting, and an organisation must choose which to follow. Then a compromise through a passive or active tactic might suit (Oliver, 1991). For example, if the EUTR conflicts with the interests of the organisation's decision makers, the organisation can choose to conform to some parts of the EUTR, and conform to the decision makers wishes on other parts.

To **avoid** an institution is to preclude an institutional regulation (Oliver, 1991). This can be done through *concealing* the fact that the organization is not following the institution, or by avoiding being controlled by the outside. A more drastic and active approach is to leave the domain where the institution is putting pressure (Oliver, 1991). The organisations dealing with illegal forestry and wood processing can be seen as **avoiding** the EUTR. Organisations dealing with illegal activities *conceal* the fact that they deal with illegal products, or they decide not to export to the EU region, and *escape* the regulation.

Defiance is an overall more active approach to an institution (Oliver, 1991). It can be done through ignoring or *dismissing* a regulation, either because it conflicts with other institutional pressures, or there is a lack of penalty for not following it. For example, when there is a lack of penalty for not following the EUTR, organisations can decide to *dismiss* it if they consider it no risk for them to be punished. Defying a pressure can also be done through a more active approach by challenging or *attacking* the institution. This is more common when the regulation is considered wrong or unjust, and when there is an urge for a demonstration against the institution (Oliver, 1991).

The most defiant form of strategic response to an institution is **manipulation** (Oliver, 1991). It is also the most active response, since it sets out to change the content of either the pressure or the source of the pressure. If the organisations affected by an institution get involved in the design of the institutional pressure, the compliance with and the effectiveness of the institution is expected to increase (Pahl-Wostl, 2009). Manipulation is more likely to happen when the institution or its maker is small and weak (Oliver, 1991). One way of **manipulating** the EUTR is to make changes to the national regulation, since the EUTR is based on those regulations. The change of the national laws on forest and wood processing is however a relatively passive way of **manipulation**, since the organisations in B-H have no *control* over the EUTR directly as a non EU member country.

3.4 Research questions

Based on the aim of the study, following the research model inspired by the PSR framework, four specific research questions were found:

- How is the pressure from the EUTR realised in B-H?
- What is the knowledge and perception of the EUTR among the organisations part of the B-H exporting industry of processed wood products, authorities and research organisations?
- What are the internal and external issues affecting the organisations' capability to legally export to the EU in accordance with the EUTR?
- What is the strategic response to the EUTR so far among the studied organisations?

4 Methods and material

Qualitative or quantitative method is the choice of research most researchers face when initiating a study (Bryman & Nilsson, 2011). The choice of method for collecting data is not an issue of which is good and which is bad, but a question of the most suitable for the research purpose (Silverman, 2005). As a guideline, qualitative data answers the question “*How?*”, whereas quantitative data answers to the question “*How many?*” (Silverman, 2005). This study used qualitative face to face interviews to investigate the respondents view, thoughts, and feelings about the implementing process of the EUTR as well as their experienced preconditions for an implementation of the EUTR. The type of qualitative method chosen for this study is interpretive method. Interpretive method means that data was interpreted through the researchers’ experiences (Yanow, 2007). When doing interviews, the researcher is never able to be fully objective. Therefore, the researcher’s background, personality, education and interviewing language affects the interpretation, and the presented result of the study (Yanow, 2007). In this study, the respondents’ thoughts and opinions of the EUTR have been taken in consideration by the author. The thoughts and opinions have then been interpreted and are presented in the results chapter.

4.1 Population and sampling process

When doing a policy-related research on the implementation of a certain policy or regulation, it is preferred to make understanding on both sides of the policy, the implementing organisation as well as the organisations directly affected by the regulation (Yanow, 2007). Therefore, this study is conducted through the collection of views from respondents representing different organisations affected by and with knowledge of the EUTR such as organisations in the wood processing and exporting industry, authorities on different levels, and research institutions. The EUTR legal text was studied to find the organisations affected by the regulation. The EUTR is a new regulation with little evaluation so far, and it is still evolving in its scope and effect on different organisations (Jonsson, et al., 2015). Therefore, the actual organisations affected by the EUTR may not be the same as the ones the regulation were intended for. It is also plausible to believe the affected organisations are not the same in all countries exporting to the EU. However, since the EUTR has not yet been evaluated further (Jonsson, et al., 2015), the organisations the EUTR was originally intended for are still the main study of this thesis. The conclusion from the EUTR legal text was that all organisations taking part in the chain of export of wood products to an EU member country are affected by the EUTR. Also, since the EUTR is implemented through the laws on forest and wood processing in each exporting country, the agencies responsible for the implementation of national regulation were also considered affected by the EUTR, and of interest for this study.

The respondents interviewed in this study represented

- Chamber of foreign trade, Department of forestry and wood industry (state level)
- Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations (state level)
- Ministry of forest and wood processing (entity level)
- Chamber of economy (entity level)
- Forestry academic and research institution (research institution)
- Export oriented wood processing industry (wood processor)
- Exporter of wood and wood products (wood exporter)
- Wood processing industries’ association (wood association)

Only two representatives from wood processing companies were interviewed. An option could have been to focus the whole study on this group of organisations. This was however not done, due to the wish to cover different types of organisations, and the difficulty of finding respondents willing to make an interview among the wood processing companies, as they are very busy and hesitant to let in any outsiders in their business (Avdibegovic, 2015). The studied organisations are the ones primarily affected by the EUTR, and were possible to contact.

The selection of respondents was based on purposive sampling. Purposive sampling compared to random sampling is done through actively choosing respondents in order for them to fit the aim of the study (Silverman, 2005, p. 141). A country with a transition economy is difficult to make contact and do sampling in, in a conventional way (Hoskisson, et al., 2000). One reason for that in this study was the lack of accuracy in electronic or publicly accessible data due to a fast change in the market making the data outdated quickly. The war in the 1990's also destroyed a lot of the earlier data from before the war. Therefore, sampling of the specific respondents to represent the organisations in this study was done through consulting a professor in forest economics, policy and organisation at the Forest Faculty at the University of Sarajevo. Using the professor also contributed to a greater influence on the respondents to make the interview. If the respondents would have been contacted directly by the researcher, the respondents might have been hesitant, since they do not know who the researcher is and if that person is trustworthy. As noted by Avdibegovic (2015), trusted institutions are essential for respondents to accept interviews in B-H. The down side of using the help from the professor was that the population was restricted to individuals the professor had contact with. Respondents from organisations affected by the EUTR, but unknown to the professor were therefore lost. However, as the interviews progressed, the respondents were asked about possible contacts they had that could be of interest in this study. This way, the specific respondents from the wood processing industry and exporting company were found.

The respondents from each organisation most likely to know about the EUTR were contacted by phone. They were asked if they had any contact with the EUTR, or if someone else within their organisation is better suited to answer questions about the regulation. The purpose of the study was considered fulfilled without interviewing representatives from all organisations in the population.

A total of nine interviews were conducted. The names put in brackets in the above list are the terms used when describing the organisations in the result chapter. The representatives interviewed from the authorities on state and entity level were all responsible for forest and wood processing issues. The respondents from entity level authorities were both from the FB-H, since they are stationed in Sarajevo, unlike the entity authorities in RS, placed in Banja Luka 200 kilometres from Sarajevo. Therefore, the specific opinions from the entity authority in RS are not presented in this study. This may have biased the result to more represent the views of the FB-H than the RS. However, this was known before the interviews were done, and was taken in consideration during the interviews by asking the respondents to consider the questions from the whole countries' perspective, and not only in the perspective of the entity have they appeared in.

The representatives interviewed from the wood processing industry were export oriented companies selling their products either through a middle hand company or directly to foreign companies in the EU. The wood exporting company buys wood products from companies in the Balkan region and exports to both Europe and Middle East. The respondent from the wood

exporting company was asked to only consider their business aimed towards countries in the EU.

Since the EUTR is seen as favouring legal organisations, and do the opposite to illegal ones, it suggests there is a difference of perception of the EUTR between legal and illegal organisations. However, the illegal organisations in forms of wood processing industries handling illegal wood and wood products were too difficult to find for interviews, and were also considered too unsecure to come in contact with, so they were not part of this study. Therefore, a view from a wood processing company disadvantaged by the EUTR is not presented here.

4.2 The interviews

The interviews were conducted at the respondents' workplaces or at the faculty of forestry at the University of Sarajevo. Some of the respondents interviewed spoke English, some did not. Therefore, a translator was present during some of the interviews. The questions were asked in English and if necessary translated into Bosnian. Then the respondent could choose to answer in English or Bosnian. The problem with using a translator during the interviews was the issue of correctness in the translations. The risk of mistranslation was greater when the respondent spoke very fast and in long sections without pausing. The translator sometimes also made its own interpretation of the data, which made it difficult for the interviewer to know what the opinion of the respondent was and what was added by the translator. These problems were dealt with by making them visible to the translator, and encouraging the translator to only translate what is being said and not adding or changing anything. Sometimes however, the interpretation of the translator was an advantage, for example when the translator understood the underlying meaning of a saying that was not picked up by the interviewer.

Since the interviewer and the interviewees came from different cultural backgrounds and had different bases of knowledge about the EUTR, there was a risk of misunderstandings. When a respondent did not understand the terms used and the context in which the interviewer's questions were asked, it contributed to the difficulties with getting reliable data. Therefore, face to face interviews were used so that the interviewer can react to the respondent's insecurity or misinterpretations. The translator also contributed if detecting a misunderstanding or a different use of words between the respondent and the interviewer. During the interviews in this study, all respondents were explained the conditions of their participation thoroughly, and the use of a translator made sure there were no linguistic concerns.

A stricter form of semi structured interviews were used to collect data. The stricter form meant more prewritten questions, and asking the questions in roughly the same order during every interview. The reason for the interviews to have a stricter form was because of the use of a translator. It gave the translator a chance to study the questions in advance, and be better prepared during the interview. The respondent was left free to speak his or her mind without interruptions. Additional questions that came up during the interview were also used. If the respondent was self-going in the talking, fewer additional questions were used. If the respondent gave short and not very descriptive answers, or if the respondent seemed to not have understood the question, additional questions were used.

All respondents' answers were treated with confidentiality. This was explained thoroughly for the respondent before the interview. The respondents were also asked if they gave the permission to record the interview in order to make sure nothing was missed by the researcher

during the interview. All respondents except one gave permission to record. Notes were taken during all of the interviews as a precaution and help during later analysis. After the interviews, the recorded material was transcribed into written text. Unfortunately, due to a technical error, three of the recordings were damaged, and could not be transcribed properly. In those cases, as much as possible was transcribed from the damaged recordings, and then the notes taken during the interviews were used as data instead.

The interview guide used in this study was designed with suggestions made by Creswell (2009, p. 183). It can be found in Annex 1. The interview guide started with date, place and who is being interviewed. Then some questions followed to start the interview with concerning the respondents work position and contact details. The subsequent part was divided into themes developed from the theoretical framework. The first three themes were based on the three ways of change in the state of the business environment; knowledge, perception, and capability of the organisation. The fourth theme considered the organisation's strategic response to the EUTR. The respondents representing the authorities and the research institution were also asked about how the pressure from the EUTR was realised in B-H. Sometimes it was found in the first theme concerning knowledge that the respondent did not know about the EUTR. Then the questions in the following themes were focused on illegal activities instead as a way of coming around the term and focus on the meaning of the EUTR.

The interview guide was tested on the academic staff at the forest faculty at the University of Sarajevo, who helped adjust the questions. The questions were formulated as simple and short as possible without losing their meaning. The formulation of the questions was extra important because of the use of a translator. One test interview was also done in order to test the interview guide and the use of a translator.

The English term and the abbreviation of EUTR was used when asking about the regulation, also when the rest of the question was translated into Bosnian. If the respondent seemed hesitant about the meaning of the English term, the Bosnian term was used instead.

Finally, the questions were formulated in a way that did not accuse the respondent of illegal activity, or in any other way imply anything that could offend. However, if there was illegal activity in the supply chain, the respondents still got the chance to mention and talk about it. The difficulty here lied in knowing the difference between the absence of illegal activity and the respondent reluctant to mention it.

All of the asked respondents were positive to take part in this study. In the same time, the overall interest of the study during the interviews was not very high. This can be explained with the fact that many of the respondents had been interviewed on several occasions earlier during other studies since the end of the Bosnian war in 1995 (Avdibegovic, 2015). In the start of the build-up of the country after the war, much information that was lost during the war was recollected through interviews as the only available source. The recollection of information and research data is still being done in the same way by both domestic and international projects, and takes up a lot of the respondents' time (Avdibegovic, 2015).

4.3 Data analysis

The method chosen for data analysis was coding the data and collecting it in to themes from the theoretical framework. The processing and analysis of the collected data was conducted in several steps, roughly adapted from the suggestions made by Creswell (2009, p. 185). First, the raw recorded data was prepared for analysis through transcribing the parts in English into

written text. The field notes were also copied out, arranged, and prepared for analysis. The transcriptions were read through and checked for obvious mistakes in the interpretation during the transcription, as suggested by Creswell (2009, p. 190). The translator who helped during the interviews listened through the recordings to see if anything was missed in the translation during the interviews. If the translation was considered lacking by the translator, the recorded material in Bosnian was translated and transcribed into written English by the translator. Next step was to read through all collected material to create an understanding of the data and its general sense. The aim of the study was reflected upon in this step.

Now the more detailed analysis started with a segmenting process. The material was organised into different segments, and each segment was labelled with a term that described the material in it. Suitable segments were for example what the respondents knew about the EUTR, and positive aspects of the EUTR mentioned by the respondents. The theoretical framework was also considered in order to find suitable segments, as suggested by Creswell (2009, p. 187). In this study, 24 different segments were found. The segments were however closely linked with each other, and later on, some of the segments were presented together in order to create a red thread through the empiric work.

The segments of data were then placed under different themes, as described by Creswell (2009, p. 189). Themes represent patterns between answers by linking them to overarching ideas (Van Gorp, 2010). The themes used were the three parts from the theoretical model inspired by the PSR framework: institutional pressure, state of the business environment, and strategic response. These three themes were also used as the major headings in the result section of this thesis.

The final step was the analysis of the data presented in the result section. The analysis was done through comparing the empirical data with the theory used as a framework for the study. The personal reflections from the researcher were also put in context with the theory. The findings from this step is presented in chapter 6. The comparison and interpretation created new questions and areas interesting for further study. They are presented in chapter 7.

4.4 Reliability and validity

Reliability is an important aspect to consider when doing research. It is more relevant in quantitative research than in qualitative research, but issues such as sample size is still important in a qualitative study (Sadovnik, 2007). Qualitative reliability is about making sure the approach of the study is consistent between different researchers and can be applied in different projects (Creswell, 2009, p. 190).

When collecting subjective data, what a person thinks or does, there is the risk of jeopardizing the reliability of the data (Hoskisson, et al., 2000). Directors and CEOs in Central and Eastern Europe tend to limit the information leaving the company, and restrict information flows coming out from the organisation more than their Western colleagues tend to (Hoskisson, et al., 2000). Therefore, it was important in this study to collect information from as many different sources as possible, and consider the previous statement by Hoskisson et al (2000) about restricted information flows, in order to get reliable data.

Some issues were considered during the interviews, suggested by Trost (2010, p. 61) regarding reliability. A simple language was used during the interviews with short sentences and no negations so that the respondents had a greater chance of understanding the questions. The simple language also contributed to the respondents all perceiving the questions in the

same way. If there seemed to be a misunderstanding, it was corrected through follow up questions until the context was understood. Enough interviews were made to get sufficient data for making an analysis. Finally, chapter 4 of this study contains detailed descriptions of the making of this study, including the data analysis, which contributes to the transparency of the study.

Validity is one of the strengths with qualitative data, and concerns the trustworthiness and credibility of the data collected (Creswell, 2009, p. 191). A way of checking the validity is to consider the chosen method for collecting the data (Creswell, 2009, p. 191). As there is very little written on the EUTR or of other matters concerning export of wood and wood products in B-H (Avdibegovic, 2015), a literature review was not an option for this study. Another method for collecting data could have been through mere observation of the industry. It is hard though to find the inner thoughts and opinions through only observing a behaviour. This may take a considerable amount of time as well (Kvale, 1997). Therefore, qualitative interviews were chosen as data collection method.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, this study has taken the subjectivity of the writer in consideration as a part of the research. This is important to clarify in order to validate the study (Creswell, 2009, p. 192). The interpretations made by the author has been explained and anchored in the findings from the interviews in order to validate the results.

The use of theory to explain results is a way of proving the validity of the study, since it provides the study with a framework validating the research (Creswell, 2009, p. 192). A theoretical framework has been a major part of the outlining of this study. It was also important to present possible findings that contradict the theories used in the study in order to show the whole picture.

To carefully describe the setting of the study contributes to the validity, since the reader can set the results in perspective and make their own judgement of the findings (Creswell, 2009, pp. 191-192). The background chapter in this study describes the country and its political positions thoroughly in order to give the reader a clear picture of the setting, and create transparency.

5 Results

This section of the thesis is divided in accordance with the theoretical model inspired by the PSR framework, into the chapters called Institutional pressure, State of the business environment, and Strategic response. The result presented under each chapter sometimes overlap and can be seen with close interlinkages as described in the theoretical model in chapter 3.3. The result is based on the qualitative interviews conducted and reflects the opinions and thoughts of the respondents.

5.1 Institutional Pressure

This part of the result concerns how the respondents view the institutional pressure the EUTR puts on the business environment and the organisations in it, and what authority they think the EUTR should be channelled through in B-H. Since the EUTR is putting pressure on the business environment and the organisations in it through the national laws on forestry, the opinions of the law on forestry and its different levels in the country was also a part of the study.

5.1.1 Institutional pressure on different levels

The fact that there is no law on forestry on state level was mentioned by several respondents as hindering the implementation of the EUTR. The respondents from organisations active in the FB-H such as the authorities on entity level and the wood processing companies also complained about the lack of law on forestry on entity level. The respondents explained that the jurisdiction is applied on cantonal level in the FB-H, and that the RS have an entity law on forestry that is working. A respondent from state level authority believed that the forest is a natural resource that should benefit the whole country. Therefore, forestry should not be regulated on entity or cantonal level, but on state level. A respondent from state level authority had a positive view of the future and expected the FB-H law on forestry on entity level to be put in force soon. A representative from the wood processing industry mentioned that some of the wood processing industries in the FB-H have together handed in a petition to the state authority demanding that a stronger law on forestry should be set into force as soon as possible, in order to make it more difficult for illegal and unregistered companies to compete on the market. They hoped the petition would make some difference, but believed it would take time before there is a law on forestry on state level.

The representative from the state authority receiving the petition also believed there should be a stronger law on forestry. The representative continued saying that the forest should be regulated on state level, but that is not at all possible since the entities do not allow any more power to be taken from them and put on state level, due to their want for self-ruling. This was according to the respondent especially true in the RS, where they do not allow any regulation to be handled over their head. The respondent from authority on state level continued with explaining one of the reasons for that. The agreement of self-ruling of the two entities is an agreement from the war. It is not efficient or the best practise, but it keeps the peace, and at least there is no war going on. The agreements set after the war are still very sensitive. The war has cost the country a lot paid in money, in terms of lack of income from the industry and destroyed infrastructure, but the biggest price was not paid in monetary funds, but in blood. That is a too high price to pay again for the potential increase of money with a more efficient industry. Therefore, the country is settled in peace with two entities and with a monetary costly and inefficient administration, as explained by the respondent from the state authority.

The administration of the national laws concerning forestry and wood industry was considered complicated by many of the respondents. A conclusion drawn from the interviews was that all organisations on all levels want to care for their own interests, and that creates tension between the levels. The many levels of ruling were considered having both positive and negative attributes. It gave the smaller stakeholders a voice among the bigger ones, and saw to more different interests than if it was all regulated on one level. At the same time, the governing on many different levels was perceived to make the process of administration slow and unsmooth, to the point that it can make implementation of EUTR impossible on a larger scale, and the institutional pressure from the EUTR on B-H to follow the regulation weaker.

5.1.2 Responsible authority

Every respondent was asked what authority on what level they think should be responsible for the implementation of the EUTR in B-H. That is, how the institutional pressure from the EUTR should be channelled. Most of the respondents agreed that the pressure from the EUTR should be handled on state level. A representative from the state authority believed it should be handled on state level but not by their department, so there should be created a new ministry that takes care of these forest issues concerning the EU, as there is none now strong or competent enough. A respondent from entity authority believed that if there should be an authority responsible for the implementation of the EUTR, it should be within the Chamber of foreign trade. However, the respondent continued saying that the responsibility should really not lie within B-H at all, but on the importing countries in the EU, buying wood products from B-H.

A representative from the wood processing industry points out that if the implementation of the EUTR cannot be handled on state level, it should at least be handled on entity level. A respondent from the forest research institute said that since 80% of the forest is owned by the state, the implementation should be handled on state level by the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, the institution where the issues of agriculture and forestry probably will be handled in the future. However, the respondent thought the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations was not recognised as such authority now, nor did they have the capacity for it. The respondent from the research institution continued explaining why it is like that. There are too few people working with forest issues in the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, and there is no department of its own concerning forest and wood processing industry. However, the ministries on entity level would probably criticise such department, and claim they are the ones responsible for forestry matters, making the creation of such department more difficult.

5.2 State of the business environment

In the theoretical framework, the state of the business environment is described in three different ways; knowledge, perception and capability of the respondents. These were the foundation of the interview guide used. The thoughts and feelings of the representatives from the organisations acting in the business environment concerns the three ways of description.

5.2.1 Knowledge

All respondents were asked if they know about the EUTR, and also if they think other organisations involved in the export industry know about it. The answers given during the interviews were interpreted by the author, together with the overall impression of the knowledge expressed by the respondents during the interviews. The use of the term EUTR also differed. Some respondents were used to the English term, while others were used to the Bosnian term. Several of the respondents, particularly in the industry and export considered

the EUTR a standard or certification. A respondent from the wood association stopped using the term EUTR as the interview went along, and started to use “FCS” or “standard” instead, when talking about the EUTR.

One representative from authority on state level had heard about the regulation, but did not know the purpose of it, or its full meaning. This lack of knowledge was explained by the respondent as it is not their area of responsibilities, since all the work of implementation of the EUTR is done on entity level. Another representative on state level knew the EUTR very well, and worked with spreading the knowledge of it down to the entities as well as the industry. However, this respondent also pointed out that the responsibility of implementation of the EUTR now lies on entity level. The respondent from entity authority was well aware of the EUTR, its purpose and the implementation of it, in accordance with the responses given by the representative from one of the respondents from the authority on state level.

The representative from the research institution knew about the EUTR in full, and had several research projects on the subject. The research institution was also involved in the spreading of knowledge about the EUTR together with one state authority. The respondent from the wood association was aware of the EUTR, but did not deal with it in the daily work, since the responsibility for implementation was delegated to the forest and wood processing industry itself. As a representative of the wood processing industry, the respondent from the wood association considered the implementation of the EUTR to lie with the forest industry, not the wood processing industry. Alas, there was considered being a separation between the forest industry and the wood processing industry.

The respondents often made a distinction between the forest industry and the wood processing industry, since these two different parts are separated in type of ownership in B-H. The forest industry refers to the state companies owning and harvesting the forest land. The wood processing industry include private companies processing raw wood material from the forest, such as sawmills and furniture factories.

The knowledge about the EUTR among the wood processing industry and the exporting company was not well distributed. They said they had probably heard about it, but did not implement it in any special way. Their focus lied in following the current law in their region and being FSC certified. According to the representatives from the wood processing companies, the overall knowledge of the EUTR in the wood processing industry is well spread, but the companies takes the EUTR various seriously, and therefore have different knowledge about it. According to the respondents, the overall knowledge is higher among the export oriented companies, than those working towards the domestic market.

An overall impression of the knowledge of the EUTR among the respondents is that they all believe they know enough, and there is no need for themselves to learn more about the EUTR at the moment. The authorities believe they have enough knowledge themselves, but the private companies need to learn more about the EUTR, in order to be able to fully implement it.

5.2.2 Perception

The overall opinion of the EUTR is positive among the respondents. They considered the regulation important, since it is dealing with the very urgent issue of illegal activities in the forest and wood processing industry. One authority on state level pointed out that, while the regulation is a good step towards a legal industry, it is not fully working in B-H. The

respondent continued that the EUTR is not being implemented in B-H right now since there is no state law on forestry, and no law on forestry on entity level in the FB-H. There was however an overall positive attitude towards the future of the EUTR among the respondents, in terms of successful function and implementation in B-H. The implementation of the EUTR in B-H was also considered increasing by all the respondents.

The representative from the authority on entity level gave a practical view of the implementation of the EUTR. The representative considered the EUTR a very positive thing since it is helping the local industry get sustainable resources of wood and reduces the illegal activities. It is helping, since the registered wood processing companies who are trying to be legal now have an opportunity to increase their production and their number of employment, as the EUTR makes it more difficult for the unregistered illegal companies to operate internationally.

The perception that the EUTR does not lie within their responsibility was found in many of the respondents, both authorities and companies. All representatives from state authority considered their authority not responsible for the implementation, and the general perception among the respondents was that the regulation is foremost a matter for the forest companies who own and cut the forest. The representatives from the wood exporter and the wood association believed that if the wood leaves the forest companies with legal paperwork, there is no need to investigate the legality further, even if there are reasons to believe false papers are used in the industry. The respondents claimed that the wood might be illegal even if the paperwork is correct, but it is not the exporters' or the wood processors' responsibility to look in to it further. When finding out about some illegal activity, representatives from the wood processing industry said they contact the police, and leave the responsibility to them and the inspectors employed to look into this type of actions.

The representative from the wood exporter talked about the use of international regulation and certificates in a broader view, not only the EUTR. The respondent considered it impossible for international regulation and certificates to demand the same thing from countries as Sweden and Germany, as they do from less developed countries such as B-H. The respondent believed that is also the reason why there still is illegal activities in B-H; less developed countries such as B-H does not have the same capacity to follow the international regulations as more developed countries. At the same time, the respondent from the wood exporter stressed that the illegal activities only stands for a fraction of the total industry in B-H, and that the majority of the illegal wood stays on the domestic market.

The respondent from the research institution discussed the weaknesses of the EUTR. The respondent said the EUTR can be seen as an obstacle for export oriented companies because of its extensive demand for documentation and ways of proving legality. The production of such paperwork is a financial issue that many companies in B-H cannot afford, according to the respondent. At the same time, the respondent thought the EUTR is an innovative action, since it is especially good for those parts of the world where the issue of legality is more spread than in B-H. The respondent also believed the EUTR is a way for the EU to articulate itself as a big forest policy player on a global scale, which is important since the EU so far doesn't have any common perception and regulative forces in the area of forestry. In that sense, the respondent from the research institution believed the EUTR symbolises a united EU approach towards global forestry challenges such as illegal logging. The respondent thought the EUTR is a very innovative step towards legality, and will play a bigger role in the future in B-H, when the country will approach the EU as a member candidate. Then, the EUTR could

be used as a way of showing the EU that B-H is ready to become a candidate, or as a requirement from the EU on B-H becoming a candidate country.

The summary of the perceptions of the EUTR among the representatives from the different representatives interviewed is that they are positive and are mostly accepting the EUTR, but still have room for improvement in the implementation process of the EUTR.

5.2.3 Capability

There are many things affecting the capability of the B-H wood industry to export legal processed wood to the EU inner market. From the theoretical framework, and the description of the capability there, both the inner resources and the surrounding business environment affect the organisations capability. The respondents mentioned both issues concerning the companies' own resources, and issues in the surrounding business environment to impact their capability to implement the EUTR.

Inner resources

Three different types of inner resources were mentioned by the respondents as affecting their implementation of EUTR; money, raw material, and human resources. They are explained further here, together with how and why they affect the implementation. The EUTR only concerns wood and wood products entering the EU inner market. That means not all illegal activities in B-H are an issue for the EUTR, as illegal wood meant for the domestic market is not a concern directly for the EUTR. However, since wood and wood products on the B-H market are considered hard to trace, and difficult to know if they are meant for export or not by the respondents, the respondents sometimes decided to talk about all illegal activities in the forest and wood processing industry rather than specify for the wood going to the EU market.

Resources in terms of money was mentioned by many of the respondents as one of the reasons why illegal activities occur in the forest and wood processing industry. One example is the issue of poverty, here described by the representative from the wood association.

*“Small men go into the wood and saw one cubic meter of the beech wood. Purpose is for heating, because they don't have any income”
-Wood association*

The respondent here suggests small scale illegal cutting of fuel wood for private use where the wood is likely to stay in the country, and is therefore of no concern for the EUTR. However, as mentioned in chapter 2.2, much of the export of wood from B-H to the EU is in the form of fuel wood. Therefore, not all the illegally cut wood meant for fuel wood can be considered staying on the domestic market, outside the reach of the EUTR.

According to the answer from the wood exporter, the research institution and the authority on entity level, the lack of monetary funds is also a reason for dealing with illegal wood on a bigger scale in the exporting industry. The representative from the wood exporter complained about very high taxes and other fees to the government that makes it very expensive to be a registered and fully legal company. The respondent from the research institution explained that the companies starting up business in the region are nearly all privately funded, and therefore has a limited amount of capital to spend. The respondent said this makes it tempting for them to buy illegal timber as raw material, since it is cheaper and easier to access.

The respondents from the wood processing industry discussed the lack of legal raw material as a resource. They said they have trouble with suppliers trying to sell illegal wood raw material to their companies. They claim however, that they never buy illegal wood even though it is hard to find enough legal raw material. Instead, they import from Croatia and other neighbouring countries to be able to keep up with the production. One wood processing company bought as much as half of its raw material from abroad.

The representative from the wood association talked about their view of the lack of legal raw material more. The representative explained that B-H is a net exporter of wood and wood products. However, the respondent says it is not so simple. If you look at the amount of wood cut every year in B-H, count in the predicted amount of illegal logging and the amount of wood imported, it still does not come near to add up to the amount of wood exported. The respondent from the wood association explained this with a high amount of unregistered illegal import of raw wood material into the country. The respondent explained the high amount of imported raw material with a very cheap labour force and cheap factories, making it beneficial for companies to import cheap illegal wood to B-H, and then use the labour force and factories within the country. The respondent continued with explaining that the domestic companies importing raw material illegally does not declare themselves as an official importer, but declare the wood being from fake foreign distributors. Then the importing companies claim they have nothing to do with the import, since it is not they who declare the goods, but the foreign distributor. So in the end, the respondent explains, the goods are never declared.

The representative from the wood association mentioned another reason for the lack of raw material. The representative explained that the existence of land mines in the forest lands all over the country is making big areas of forest unusable for production. In order to take out the trees, you would need to first clear the mines, and that is very expensive. According to the respondent from the wood association, different actors are still discussing who should be responsible for clearing those mines.

Many respondents mentioned the lack of knowledge and human resources in forestry and wood processing as very evident today, and is hindering forest and wood processing companies as well as authorities to implement the EUTR. The respondent from the wood association said that the many people who fled the country during the war or were killed created a gap in knowledge and competent work force, which is still evident today.

“...there are no people. No workers who can work. They are not still familiar with industry processing, they are not familiar with design... And of course machines. Wood processing engineers at the Technical Faculty are very poor. They have no more than five students, because nobody is ready to pay fee for it”
-Wood association

The respondent explained that the reason for the knowledge gap to still exist today is that going to university is expensive and few people care to put their money and time on education in areas such as wood processing engineering. According to the respondent, wood processing companies are forced to hire people without education and experience that cost money to train, money they do not have in the first place.

At the authority on state level, the interest in forest and wood processing industry is limited, according to the respondents from the forest research institution and the wood association.

They claimed that the lack of interest in forestry among the authorities makes the human resources within forestry and wood processing scarce, and there are not enough people working with issues such as forest regulation and the EUTR to help the country implement it.

External business environment

Both market competition and societal expectations are in the theoretical framework said to affect the organisations' capability to respond to pressure as part of the external business environment. Market competition was in this study seen by the respondents as illegal wood and wood products competing against legal wood and wood products on the B-H market and the international export market.

Illegal activity in the forest and wood processing sector was recognized by all the respondents. There are different opinions among the respondents about how much of the activities that are illegal, from 25 percent to a very small fraction of the total wood processed. A representative from the entity authority suggested that the biggest and most important reason that illegal activities exist is that there is a market for it, since the demand for processed wood is bigger than the legal supply.

The respondent from the wood exporter pointed out that there is a difference in the amount of illegal activities between the whole B-H industry and the exporting industry. The respondent said the amount of illegal wood is much lower in the exporting market than in the domestic. The respondent from the wood exporter suggested that the difference is due to strong regulation and border control when exporting to other countries, especially to the EU.

One representative from the wood processing industry looked at the market competition from illegal wood and wood products on a bigger scale. The respondent claimed that the biggest problem with companies competing with illegal and cheaper products on the EU market was not the products coming from B-H, but the cheap illegally harvested and processed wood coming from Ukraine and Romania. The respondent explained further that the political instability in Ukraine has made supervision and control of logging and exporting scarce, and much timber is illegally harvested and shipped across the border to Romania. The border between the countries is long and unchecked which makes it easier for the illegal timber to be exported, according to the respondent. The respondent continues that in Romania, the logs are processed and receive all the paperwork needed to make it further sellable on the EU market.

The second affecting issue in the external business environment is societal aspects. In this study, the political system from after the war, the access to fake paperwork, and the lack of suitable coding and standards are mentioned by the respondents, and are considered societal aspects affecting the organisations' capability to implement the EUTR.

The war in B-H was mentioned a few times by the respondents as still playing part in today's business. This was especially talked about by the respondent from the wood association. The respondent said that the country collapsed during the war, and when there was peace, a new political system needed to be established, but the people in B-H are still struggling with the creation of a stable and functioning political system and regulation.

The respondent from the wood association also mentioned other issues from the war that still affect the everyday business in B-H. The respondent explained that the forest and wood processing industry before the war was very different. There were a few strong state-owned industries that employed many people, exported goods to many countries, and had sales

offices all around the world. The respondent then explained that after the war in the 1990's, the wood processing industry was sold off to private owners, and the industry was scattered into small businesses with old and often damaged machinery and low investment capacity. Therefore, many of these private business does not have the capacity to export directly through their own sale offices abroad anymore, according to the respondent.

Both the respondents from the wood association and the research institution talked about how the forest as a natural resource became of political interest after the war. The respondent from the wood association claimed that veterans from the war with a political agenda often became managers of the still state owned forests, even though they had no knowledge in forestry. Therefore, the forest was not well managed. The respondent from the research institute talked about the lack of stability in the political system, and how it created an arena for corruption.

“The level of corruption is absolutely high. ... There are also a lot of problem with what we call the forest mafia. There are a lot of problems with corruption within forestry, fake papers, with the classification, with giving money to get a good job”

-Forest research institution

When the respondent from the research institution said fake papers, the respondent meant that the paperwork declaring the wood and its source are not true and have been adjusted to fit the interests of the forest mafia. In the quote about classification, it is the classification of wood that is referred to, as in quality and origin.

The respondents from entity authority and one wood exporting company mentioned the problem with illegal raw material from the forest making its way into legal wood products through fake paperwork. One example mentioned by the respondent from the entity authority is if there is a batch of legal wood to be sold on the market, it can easily be topped up with some illegal wood to go with it. The illegal wood is then being sold together with the legal wood, using the legal paperwork. Another example mentioned by the same respondent is that the same paperwork can be used several times for different batches of wood, coming from different parts of the country. The paperwork says it has all been cut in the same field, even though the amount could be way above the possible amount of wood coming from that field. The respondent from the wood exporting company described the process of fake papers as the illegal wood is cut in the forest, shipped to the wood processing industry, and out from the industry comes a legal table. The respondent said it is in the wood processing industry the traceability of the wood becomes difficult.

The representative from the authority on entity level discussed the use of coding of different wood products. B-H still uses an old code system from the Yugoslavian time period. That code system is not in terms with the code system used in the EU and in the description of wood products in the EUTR. The respondent clarified that the wood and wood products from B-H need to be declared in the EU system of coding when exported to the EU, and the codes need therefore to be translated between the two systems. The respondent says this is difficult since there are fewer codes in the Yugoslavian system than the system used in the EU.

“...we have for example a group of products in which you have several products under one code, while in the EU, they have one code for each product.”

-Entity authority

The respondent from the entity authority also mentioned the issue of standards. The standards most wood processing companies use, according to the respondent, are still the old ones used in the Yugoslavian time period, and they are not the same as the ones used in the EU. So, at the end of the day, a harmonisation in coding and standardisation would make the implementation of the EUTR easier.

5.3 Strategic response

This chapter presents the organisations' different strategic responses and changes made since the EUTR was set into force, told by the representatives. The changes and responses are considered by the respondents both inside their own organisations, as well as on a broader scale of the whole exporting industry. Sometimes the respondents meant that the changes are a direct response to the EUTR, and sometimes it is more a question of a response to the overall changes in the business environment since the EUTR was set into force. The difference is sometimes unclear during the interviews, and sometimes even for the respondent themselves, as it seems to be a matter of the hen and the egg.

There seems to be differences among the respondents of what is considered an implementation of the EUTR. One view given from the respondents from the wood processing companies, the entity authority and the research institution is that implementing the EUTR is to make sure there is no illegal activity going on in the supply chain. Another view of implementation given by the respondents from the wood exporter and one state authority is that implementation of the EUTR is a matter of having the correct paperwork making the products legal without regard to other facts. Therefore, the response to the EUTR could be to make sure that no activities are illegal, or to make sure to have the right paperwork, and both could be considered an implementation of the EUTR by different respondents.

The representatives from the authorities on state level believed there has been many changes among the forest and wood processing companies since the EUTR was set into force. They believed the forest and wood processing companies are more aware of national regulations, and try to apply the laws of the country, as well as the EUTR. One of the respondents from state authority gave an example. The respondent lives in the RS, some distance northeast of Sarajevo, but works in Sarajevo. Every weekend, the respondent goes home the same route. Along the road, there used to be a lot of logging activity during Friday and Sunday night, in the dark, out of duty hours. The respondent believed this was illegal logging activities. But according to the respondent from state authority, during the last two years, there have been much more controls of the harvesting in the region, and now the respondent hardly ever see any illegal activity when driving home and back to Sarajevo late at night. The respondent said this is a strategic response to the EUTR from the forest industry and the controlling authority.

One authority on state level says the number of certifications among the forest and wood processing companies has increased rapidly during the last two years, as the global demand for legal and environmental friendly wood products has increased. It seemed to be unclear by the respondent though, if the increase of certifications is a response to the EUTR, or to overall changes in the business environment. The respondent said the forest and wood processing companies use the FSC certificate to prove legality. The respondent is however concerned about the further implementation of the EUTR, since for the moment, there is no responsible authority which is overseeing the implementation of the regulation, and there needs to be, if B-H will succeed with the ban of illegal activities.

In contrast with the representatives from the authorities on state level, the respondent from the research institution had not seen any changes in the use of illegal wood and wood products since the EUTR was set into force. The respondents saw that when the regulation was first set in force, many companies were showing concern that the regulation would affect their business negatively. However, the respondent claims not much has been done during the last two years to implement the EUTR. The response has instead been through the use of certifications. According to the respondent from the research institution, the EUTR is not being used in the same extent as certifications, since there is no demand for the EUTR by the buyers abroad. The buyers are satisfied with standards and certifications. The respondent from the research association also stated that people in the business are having trouble with separating the EUTR from FSC certification, as mentioned in chapter 5.2.1. Another reason some companies choose not to implement the EUTR according to the representative from the research institute is that B-H have trouble making obligations towards EU when they are not a member country.

The respondents from the wood processing companies said they have no problem with implementing the EUTR, since it only requires following the national laws, something they have been doing for many years even before the EUTR was set into force. They said that the EUTR did not make much difference for their companies, since there has always been a demand from customers that the wood they buy is from a reliable source with no illegal activity. The respondent from the wood exporter claimed they respond to the EUTR in the same way as they do to other international certifications and standards that are required by their customers, by implementing it full. However, the respondent was not aware of the EUTR specifically, and believed the EUTR was equal to voluntarily certifications and standards such as FSC certification.

To make organisations more aware and increase the implementation of the EUTR, several agreements and exchanges between organisations in B-H and abroad were mentioned by the respondents as have taken and are taking place. This also seemed to be the major response to the EUTR by the representatives from the entity and state level authority.

Respondents from the research institution, the authority on entity and state level, and the wood association mentioned that two years ago, when the EUTR was set in force, the forest department in the Chamber of Foreign Trade, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), and the Forest faculty at the University of Sarajevo held a conference where they invited all organisations being affected by the EUTR. This was a part of the Fostering Interventions for Rapid Market Advancement (FIRMA) Project, created through a collaboration between USAID and Sida. The respondents said the goal with the conference was to spread information about the EUTR and create an action plan for all stakeholders on how to start implementing the regulation. The respondents also mentioned that the attendants of the conference organised a meeting with the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations to make them choose a state body that is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the EUTR. However, they said no state body was chosen.

One respondent from the wood processing industry said that since there was no authority chosen for overseeing the implementation of the EUTR in B-H, actors from the wood processing industry have gone together and created common action plans on how to increase the amount of legal wood in the industry. The respondent from the entity authority also mentioned a regional project where USAID together with the different cantons in FB-H have organised seminars on introducing the EUTR to the forest and wood processing industry, since it is the cantonal law on forestry that is the highest valid jurisdiction on forestry in the FB-H.

6 Discussion

6.1 Key findings

This paper looks at the implementing process of the EUTR in B-H, and the preconditions for the country to implement the EUTR. To understand this, the study investigates firstly how the pressure from the EUTR is realised, secondly how the EUTR affects the business environment for the B-H exporting industry of processed wood products by exploring the perceptions of EUTR, and thirdly how the organisations consider responding to the EUTR. The data was collected in qualitative interviews with key organisations such as wood processing companies, authorities, and research institutions. The key findings are

- The institutional pressure from the EUTR on B-H to follow the regulation is realised through the laws on entity and cantonal level, but most respondents wish for a law on forestry and a caring for the implementation of the EUTR on state level. However, none of the respondents from state level authority recognises that they should take this responsibility.
- The knowledge about the EUTR is varying among the respondents, depending on interest and experienced importance for the organisation. The regulation is however overall considered a good thing that should promote legal activities and benefit companies trying to be legal.
- Organised illegal activities such as illegal logging and falsification of paperwork both in B-H and in other European countries make the implementation of the EUTR more difficult through unfair market competition. Poverty and a lack of funding in B-H is also contributing to the difficulty in implementing the EUTR. Other things lacking in and around the organisations are available forest land with no mines, knowledge, and human resources.
- The strategic response by the respondents to the EUTR depended on the organisation represented. For the wood processing and exporting companies, there has been an increase in the use of certification systems. On authority level, exchanges and arranged meetings has been held to increase the awareness of the issue among the affected organisations and to promote legal activity. However, no major implementations of the EUTR has been made yet.

6.2 Discussion of the findings

6.2.1 *Institutional pressure*

The different levels of legal institutions in B-H was an important topic for the organisations interviewed. The legislation on forestry and wood processing on a state level is still under construction, and seems to be facing many challenges before it will be met in full agreement by all parts. The EUTR implies another institutional pressure apart from the already existing laws, and the reluctance from the state authorities found in the interviews to take responsibility for the implementation of the EUTR could be seen as an effect of the lack of structure in the country's own laws. The EUTR can be considered a strong and stable institution according to Peters' (2011) criteria of an institution. However, if the EUTR cannot be realised through a working legal system in the country of origin, it has no effect on the legality there per se.

Many different levels of ruling is a sign of a desire for self-ruling (Pahl-Wostl, 2009). This was very evident in B-H, not the least through the recent war for independence between

different ethnic groups. A benefit from this type of system is the flexibility and independence of the different levels if something unexpected occurs (Pahl-Wostl, 2009). This was however not recognised by the respondents interviewed in this study, perhaps because it is so obvious to the respondents that they do not care to mention it. A reason for the benefits of the existing ruling system not being recognised in this study could be the loss of opinions from respondents active in RS. People in RS value their independence higher than people from the FB-H, as suggested by Avdibegovic (2015), and opinions on the benefit of self-ruling might have gone missing in this study. One benefit of today's system was however mentioned by a respondent from state authority, as that at least no one had to get killed with this type of system. There is at least peace in the country.

The system of regulations and laws in B-H is considered complicated and inefficient by the respondents, in contrast with the suggested handling methods of the EUTR in Switzerland, described by Pfannkuch & Zabel (2014). The four suggested ways to deal with the EUTR in the Swiss study all seem rather distant in the B-H perspective, since they all seem to involve an integration of the EUTR into the Swiss national laws. However, this needs to be seen in the countries different contexts. If Switzerland wish to remain outside the EU, it is only logical for them to come up with a way to deal with the EUTR as a long term non EU member country. B-H is in many aspects trying to get closer to an EU membership, according to the respondents. It makes therefore no sense for B-H to adapt their regulation to fit the EUTR, since their goal is to be under it as a member.

6.2.2 State of the business environment

The knowledge of the EUTR among the different respondents differed. Knowledge affects the way organisation's respond to pressure in different ways (Haas, 1992). The respondents from the organisations knowing the regulation well seemed to also be in contact with it on a regular basis, and acting out some kind of active response to it. An example of this is the authority on entity level, in charge of the existing regulation on forestry and wood processing, and the research institution studying the regulation as well as spreading the knowledge about it to other organisations. There also seemed to be a correlation between a high knowledge and a positive attitude towards the regulation. The group of respondents with little knowledge about the EUTR, such as those from the wood processing industry and the export company seemed to be less interested in learning more about the EUTR. However, as the theoretical considerations in chapter 3.3.2 states, the respondents might not be aware of their level of knowledge about the EUTR, or the lack of it.

The earlier study made by Becirovic et al (2014) on the knowledge of the EUTR among the people working in the forest industry showed a somewhat scattered knowledge among the respondents. Now, two years later when the EUTR has been in force for some time, it is plausible to assume that the knowledge has increased. However, since the Becirovic et al study and this study have different research methods and ways of interpreting and presenting the data, it is hard to tell if there has been a difference in the amount of knowledge in the industry. All the respondents spoken to in this study knew the EUTR existed, even though not all knew what it meant in detail. This is however to be expected, since the sampling of the respondents was based upon them at least having heard about the EUTR. The two studies both contribute to the overall awareness of the EUTR in B-H by raising the issue.

There seemed to be an overall positive attitude towards the EUTR among all the respondents. The positive attitude towards it could relate to the trust in a better future found among many of the respondents, both authorities and the industry. They mentioned on several occasions that

the regulation is a positive thing now, but will be considered even more so in the future, when more organisations have been given time to work towards an implementation and legal functions. This was also recognised in China by ZhongHua et al (2011), describing the long term effects of the EUTR as benefiting legal activities before illegal on the international market.

There seemed to be many things affecting the organisations' capability to implement the EUTR. The amount of resources available for an organisation is one thing affecting it since the more resources an organisation have available, the better it can respond to a pressure in a beneficial way (Kogut & Kulatilaka, 2001). The lack of funding resources was mentioned as a reason for illegal activities by the respondents from the wood association and the research institute, both for single farmers trying to make a living, as well as for bigger organisations competing on a market where illegal companies are pushing the prices down. So, the reason for organisations doing illegal activities is according to the respondents the existence of other illegal activities, since there is a lack of resources to do otherwise.

The lack of available raw material for the wood processing industry was well recognised among the respondents from the private sector, and made it hard to only deal with legal wood and implement the EUTR. As mentioned in chapter 2.2, there is plenty of forests in B-H, with plenty of wood in them. So the shortage of raw material must lie in the harvesting of the wood. This is explained by the respondent from the wood association through the many mined forests making harvesting of the wood impossible until the mines are cleared. Harvesting of wood is also hampered by steep terrain and bad infrastructure in many areas. The problem however does not seem to be the lack of forests or raw wood material in the country but the lack of legal raw wood material. According to the respondents from the wood processing industry, it is possible to buy as much illegal wood as you need. A possible reason for this could be the complicated administration process mentioned many times by the respondents, preventing the legal forest companies to process enough wood. It could also be local forest regulation in the cantons of the FB-H limiting the amount of wood being cut legally in their area.

Human resources are mentioned by Kogut & Kulatilaka (2001) as affecting the capability for an organisation to respond to pressure. This was also recognised by some of the respondents as an important factor for the industry's capability to implement the EUTR. It was suggested by the respondent from the wood association that the lack of human resources not only applied to the industry, but also to the authorities handling forest and wood processing issues, due to the war. At the same time, the country is struggling with a high unemployment rate (European Commission, 2014), speaking against a lack of human resources. The lack is then not in human resources, but in competent human resources needed for particular tasks.

The environment around the organisation is suggested affecting their capability to respond to pressure (Kogut & Kulatilaka, 2001). The business environmental effect is discussed by the respondents in this study, for example through an unfair market competition from illegal companies from Romania pressing down the prices. The study made by Nichiforel & Nichiforel (2011) on the Romanian forest industry suggested significant problems with illegal activities in Romania.

These issues mentioned by the respondents as affecting the organisations' capability to respond to the EUTR are all affecting the capability in a negative way. Issues affecting it positively were not mentioned in the interviews at the same rate. One thing mentioned though

by the respondent from the research institute is the will of joining the EU as a member country. Promoting the adaptation of EU regulation could be seen as a proof of B-H ready to come one step closer to joining the EU. This implies that actors in the industry wants the country to become a member of the EU, which does not have to be the case.

6.2.3 Strategic response

This part of the paper describes the different strategic responses from the organisations when dealing with the EUTR in the light of the theory presented by Oliver (1991) in chapter 3.3.3, see also Table 3. The different organisations cannot all be expected to respond in the same way, since they have different tasks in the industry. Some are companies selling and buying wood and wood products, expected to follow the EUTR in one way. The authorities are expected to respond to the regulation in another way. The issue important in this study is whether the organisations are fulfilling the requirements made by the EUTR, stated in chapter 2.1, or choose to respond in another way.

Table 3. The strategic responses and tactics to institutional pressure according to Oliver, interpreted and revised by author. Source: (Oliver, 1991).

Strategies	Acquiesce	Compromise	Avoid	Defy	Manipulate
Passive:	Habit	Balance	Conceal	Dismiss	Co-opt
Tactics	Imitate	Pacify	Buffer	Challenge	Influence
Active:	Comply	Bargain	Escape	Attack	Control

The respondents from the wood processing companies interviewed in this study claimed they **acquiesce** with the EUTR simply because they already followed the law on forestry before the EUTR was set into force. It can therefore be seen as a passive response, described by Oliver (1991) as a *habit*.

The respondents from the organisations well aware of the EUTR, such as the research institution and the authority on entity level were the ones seeming to accept the regulation most actively, and can therefore be considered *complying* with the regulation. An example of these organisations contributing to the **acquiescing** of the EUTR was through the spreading of information and collaborations with other countries. The goal of these actions was according to the respondents from the research institution and entity authority to make other organisations **acquiesce** or at least **compromise** an implementation of the EUTR. The spreading of information about the EUTR can be seen as a meta-response to the regulation.

A way of **compromising** the EUTR is described by several of the respondents through the use of certifications instead of the due diligence system stated by the EUTR. The certification is used as a proof of legality instead, since that is demanded by the buyers. A reason for this could be that certifications such as FSC are better known than the EUTR, due to the longer time of acting. The EUTR has not yet been evaluated properly (Jonsson, et al., 2015), so the efficiency of the due diligence system might not be trusted by the international buyers in the EU.

As a summary, there does not seem to have been any major responses to the EUTR. This can have many reasons. One is that the regulation is new, and the companies may not have had enough time to respond. This was also expected by the European commission, stated in the EUTR act as the EUTR cannot be expected to be implemented as soon as it was set into force (The European Parliament and the Council of the EU, 2010). Another reason for the EUTR not being responded to in a larger extent could be that B-H has more pressing matters to deal

with than proofing legality in the export of wood and wood products to the EU, and that the priority of resources in the country still lies in building up their own administration, legislation, and controlling systems since after the war. The lack of national regulation and control was also mentioned by several respondents as a reason for not implementing the EUTR. A third possible reason for the low response to the EUTR is the fact that B-H is not part of the EU, or even a candidate country, and they may therefore be reluctant to put time and effort on responding to a regulation set by the EU. A fourth reason why the EUTR is not responded to in a greater extent could be that the EUTR is not strong enough as an institution outside the EU regarding spreading knowledge, performing control, and pressing consequences for not implementing the regulation. If this is the case, the criteria for the being of an institution mentioned in chapter 3.2 are not fulfilled by the EUTR in B-H.

7 Conclusions

First, the pressure from the EUTR is realised in B-H through the different levels of forest regulation in a complicated system with no responsible authority for implementation. Second, the knowledge of the EUTR among the respondents is somewhat spread, but not full. The perception of the EUTR is that it is a good thing that can contribute to the reduction of illegal wood and wood products in B-H. Third, the lack of inner resources and an unfair market competition reduce the organisations' capacity to export legally to the EU in accordance with the EUTR. Fourth, the strategic response to the EUTR in B-H so far is an increase of seminars and conferences spreading the knowledge of the regulation, and companies in the forest and wood processing industry using certifications and starting to respond to the institutional pressure from the EUTR.

The implementation of the EUTR is hampered by a complicated administration and a lack of funding and knowledge. There is however a positive attitude towards the regulation, as many organisations are taking the issue seriously, and believe the EUTR will contribute to a reduction of illegal activities in the future.

Interesting areas for further study are to investigate the views and opinions of respondents representing the organisations acting in the RS, as to widening the research perspective to scope the whole country. Also, companies from the forest industry could be of interest in order to understand the early stages in the chain of wood. The respondents often mentioned certifications such as FSC important for their industry. To investigate the effects of the certifications in contrast with the EUTR could also be studied further. This study has given the insights of the organisations inside B-H, but has left the view of the EU outside the studied area. The study of the opinions of the European Commission and the buyers in EU member countries could in future research contribute to the understanding of how the EUTR was supposed to affect other European countries who are not an EU member country exporting to the EU, and the buyers' perspective of B-H export of processed wood.

This study of the implementing process of the EUTR and its preconditions in the B-H export of processed wood can have a number of applications. The study can be a part of the evaluation of the EUTR, as giving insight of some opinions and thoughts of a timber producing country outside the EU. The European Forest Institute (EFI) are in spring 2015 asking actors considering themselves affected by the EUTR to give their opinion and thoughts of the regulation as part of an evaluation of the EUTR after two years of use (Jonsson, et al., 2015). This study gives an overall view from B-H that can contribute to the EFI evaluation.

The Swedish embassy in Sarajevo and Sida can use this study to make a better understanding of the forest and wood processing sector in B-H in an EU perspective.

Finally, this study can contribute to the overall understanding of the complicated forest and wood processing industry structure in B-H for foreign investors and buyers from the EU. It can be used as a proof of the organisations acting in the exporting industry taking the EUTR and illegal activities in the sector seriously. In a longer perspective, it could help B-H increase their export of wood and wood products to the EU inner market.

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Annexes

Annex 1. Interview Guide

Knowledge

1. Are you familiar with the EUTR?
2. Do you know the purpose of the EUTR?
3. Do you think it works in general/ in B-H?
4. Do you have much contact with wood processing industries and trade companies in B-H? Platform? Association? Information exchange or business relation? Cluster
5. Do you think the wood processing companies and trade companies in B-H are aware of the EUTR as a group?

Perception

6. What do you perceive is the general opinion of the EUTR among processing industries and traders?
7. What do you think of the EUTR? Why? Please elaborate as much as you can.

Response

8. What changes has been made in the B-H industry and trade since the EUTR was implemented?
9. Has anything around the industry or trade changed?
10. In general, what do you think could be/what are the incentives for better implementation for following the EU Timber Regulation?

Capability

11. Is there anything hindering B-H from implementing the EUTR?

Overall

12. Do you have any contact with authorities responsible for support and implementation in EU countries?
13. In what way is the supporting authority in EU countries helping B-H to follow the EUTR?
14. Who do you think is the best suited to overlook the whole system of the EUTR in B-H? At what level?

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