



THE ZSL WILD SCIENCE PODCAST: SHOW NOTES

Episode: ZSL #049 – The forest behind your floorboards

Do you know where the wood in your floorboards comes from? Or your desk, or dining chairs? In this episode, we dig deep into the grain of a global issue that is often hidden in plain sight in our offices, our houses and our cities – tracing timber back to its source. Harriet talks to Annabelle Dodson, ZSL's Sustainable Business Project Manager, and Victor Deklerck, Director of Science at World Forest ID, about how scientists use isotopes to pinpoint where the trees behind our wood products were grown, the role of digital tracking systems in supply chains, and real-world cases where traceability has driven more responsible sourcing and enforcement. This project is funded by Fondation Lombard Odier and the EU through the ECO-SOLVE project.

This episode is part of a series showcasing ZSL's Sustainable Business and Finance work.

Please note that this podcast was recorded before the European Commission confirmed changes to the implementation timeline of the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR). Compliance requirements for micro and small enterprises have been delayed to 30 December 2026 (previously June 2026), while medium and large enterprises must still comply by 30 December 2025.

Overview

- 00:15** [Harriet McAra](#), Host of Wild Science, Episode introduction
- 02:10** [Annabelle Dodson](#), Sustainable Business Project Manager, ZSL
- 03:19** *How does illegal timber enter supply chains, and how does traceability help?*
- 05:17** *ZSL Cameroon and World Forest ID*
- 07:50** [Victor Deklerck](#), Director of Science, World Forest ID
- 09:06** *From chemical fingerprints to final verification*
- 12:36** *Implications for industry*
- 17:05** *The future of supply chain transparency*
- 19:21** *What can consumers and companies do to support traceability?*
- 20:40** Harriet McAra: summary and outro

Resources

- If there's a topic you'd like to hear on a future podcast, or if you'd like to share your thoughts, email us at: wild.science@zsl.org
- Check out our science and conservation work at: www.zsl.org/Science or www.zsl.org/conservation
- Read more about the project: www.zsl.org/news-and-events/feature/responsible-sourcing-africa
- World Forest ID: <https://worldforestid.org/>
- The Alliance for Wood ID Testing: <https://worldforestid.org/insights/partnership-with-wwf>
- ZSL SPOTT'S ESG policy transparency assessments of timber and pulp companies: <https://www.spott.org/timber-pulp/>
- Free training materials on forest-driven commodities: <https://www.spott.org/training-hub/>
- Help keep SPOTT going. Without continued funding, these assessments can't continue. Donate today at <https://donate.zsl.org/spott/> or email spott@zsl.org

- Find out more about ZSL's Sustainable Business and Finance team: <https://www.zsl.org/what-we-do/working-with-business>

Get in touch

- Email wild.science@zsl.org with your questions, comments, and thoughts for future episodes!
- Find us @ZSLScience on X or @zslofficial.bsky.social on Bluesky and use the hashtag #ZSLWildScience
- Follow us on Facebook @ZSLScienceAndConservation
- Email spott@zsl.org for questions about SPOTT assessments, methodology, or partnership.
- Follow SPOTT on LinkedIn @ZSL SPOTT or X @zslspottfor updates on ZSL's Sustainable Business and Finance Programme.
- ZSL's Sustainable Business and Finance team offers advisory services to help companies and investors take practical, science-based action for nature. Get in touch: <https://www.zsl.org/what-we-do/working-with-business/advisory-services>