



OPEN TIMBER PORTAL

Independent Monitor Tutorial

Introduction

All Independent Monitoring (IM) organizations that wish to upload information need to register for an account on the Open Timber Portal. Users that want to view information do not need to register. This tutorial provides step-by-step instructions on how to set up an account, edit your profile, and upload and manage reports and observations.

Reports are formal documents that independent monitors submit at the end of their field investigation. The report format is specific to each IM. Observations are descriptions of suspected non-compliances made by independent monitors in their reports that relate to either an issue of governance or an issue under the control of a producer.

For any questions, please e-mail opentimberportal@wri.org

The OTP makes public previously inaccessible information about on-the-ground management practices and compliance with timber legality requirements. It compiles information from three different sources: official concession boundaries and the list of registered forest operators from the government; documents uploaded voluntarily by forest operators to demonstrate compliance; and observations by third party forest monitors. The OTP was designed by the World Resources Institute (WRI) in consultation with government, private sector and civil society actors. The OTP will initially focus on the Congo Basin and will progressively expand coverage to other relevant timber producing countries.

**The Open Timber Portal is a project of the
World Resources Institute's Forest Legality Initiative**



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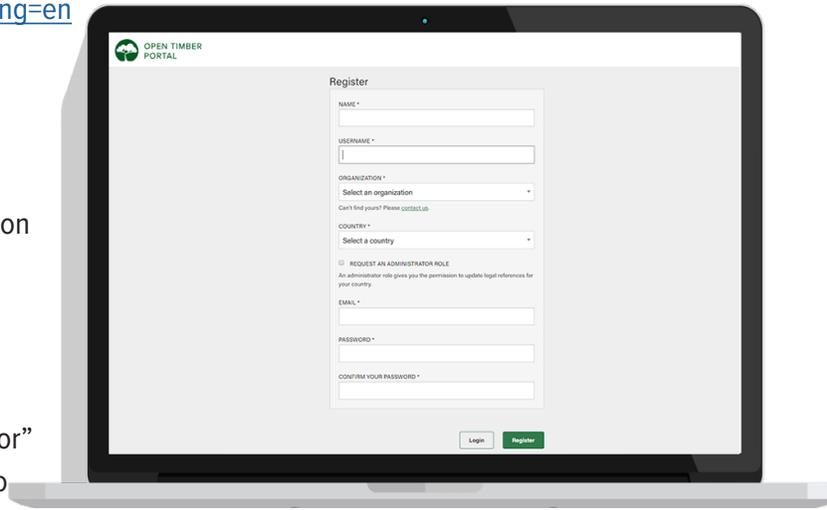
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Getting Started

Creating an Account

1. Go to <http://www.opentimberportal.org/observations-tool/?lang=en>
2. Click “Register”
3. You will be asked to enter the following information:
 - a. Name
 - b. Username (only letters/no spaces)
 - c. Select your Organization from the menu (if your organization is not listed, contact opentimberportal@wri.org).
 - d. Country
 - e. E-mail
 - f. Password (at least 8 characters long)
 - g. You will also be able to request access as an “administrator” to the observations tool, which means that you will be able to update legal references for your country.
4. Once you have submitted the form, your account will be reviewed by the OTP team.
Once activated, you can begin uploading observations.



Logging In

1. Go to <http://www.opentimberportal.org/observations-tool/?lang=en>
2. Enter your username and password and click “Login”

Your Reports

Navigating to Your Report Library

1. Once logged into the OTP click on “My OTP”
2. Click “Report Library”. You will find all the reports you have created and can open or download existing reports.

Uploading a New Report

1. In the “Report Library”, click “New Report” at the top on the righthand side of the report table.
2. Enter the title of the report, upload the full report from your mission, and the publication date. This report will become available both in the report library and in the form used to record a “New Observation” on the dropdown menu listing the existing reports.

Your Observations

Viewing Observations

1. Click “Observations” in the top menu, next to “My OTP”
2. This section of the portal shows you all the observations your organization has made. You can filter them by adding a filter and combining a variety of attributes in the filter menu:
 - a. Type of Observation
 - b. Country
 - c. Category
 - d. Government Entity
 - e. Report
 - f. Status
 - g. Producer
 - h. Observer
 - i. Forest Management Unit

A laptop displaying the Observations page on the Open Timber Portal. The page shows a table of observations with columns for ID, DATE, COUNTRY, PRODUCER, CATEGORY, SUBCATEGORY, OBSERVERS, OBSERVATION, SEVERITY, and ILLEGALITY AS WRITTEN BY LAW. There are two rows of data visible. A filter menu is open at the top, showing 'Add filter +' and 'Producer'. A 'New observation' button is in the top right corner.

ID	DATE	COUNTRY	PRODUCER	CATEGORY	SUBCATEGORY	OBSERVERS	OBSERVATION	SEVERITY	ILLEGALITY AS WRITTEN BY LAW
1634	3 Dec 2018	Gabon	Monsieur Teddy OSSEY	Right to exploit	Operating without a title	Conservation Justice	M. Teddy OSSEY n'a pas pu produire son contrat avec l'Etat. Emploi de manoeuvres frauduleuses	3	Exploitation sans titre
1633	3 Dec 2018	Gabon	Bois et Scierie de l'Ogouou	Timber harvesting	Fraudulent behavior	Conservation Justice	BSO ne respecte pas certaines mesures du PA et emploie des manoeuvres frauduleuses	2	Emploi de manoeuvres frauduleuses

Creating an Observation

1. Click “Observations”, then click “New Observation” in the top right corner.
2. You will then select the type of observation between “Producer” or “Governance”. Once you chose, a full form with mandatory fields indicated with * will open.
 - a. Choose “Producer” when your observation is related to a logging company. You will be asked to fill out a form based on the independent monitor’s mission report. You’ll have 24 data entry fields, including some mandatory fields marked with “*”.
 - b. Choose “Governance” if your observation is related to a suspected non-compliance in the enforcement of the forest law by the government agencies or a wider governance issue. Governance observations include corruption issues, lack of control, and more. For observations relating to governance, there are 14 data entry fields, including some mandatory fields marked with “*”.

Producer Observations

1. **Find** the report your observation is related to in “Existing Report” – “Select a report”. A list of available reports will open. In the case your report is not on that list, you need to upload it (see Upload a Report on page 1).
2. **Select** the country related to your observation. By default, the system will select the country you selected during the creation of your account on OTP.
3. **Choose** between “Existing Producer” and “New Producer”.
If you create a new producer, it will have to be approved by WRI and will not be immediately available.
4. **Add** an “additional monitor” if another monitoring organization joined the mission and/or contributed to the report.
5. **Select** the sub-category of infractions corresponding to your observation (see annex 1). Depending on the sub-category you chose, the broader category will filled automatically in the field named “Due Diligence Category”
6. **Adding the Observation’s Location:** Not all the types of observations can be tied to a location. Trees cut beyond the boundaries of the forest management unit can be located, but a default on tax payment cannot be positioned on a map. You need to check either “Yes” or “No” depending on whether your observation occurred in a physical place.

If your answer is **yes**, you will be asked to add the **exact location**. If your answer is **no**, several options are available:

- a. The **best** option is for you to fill in the latitude and longitude based on your GPS point recorded in the field in decimal degree.
- b. If you don’t have the **GPS point**, you can upload a georeferenced photo taken at the exact place of the observation.
- c. If you **don’t** have a **GPS point** or **georeferenced** photo, the last, but **least preferred**, option is for you to zoom in on the map and click on the exact place of the observation. The system will extract the corresponding GPS coordinates. *Once the GPS coordinates are filled in, make sure you don’t accidentally click on the map as it will change the coordinates.*

The screenshot shows the 'New observation' form in the Open Timber Portal. The 'Type' is set to 'Producer'. The form is divided into two main sections: 'REPORT' and 'PRODUCER'. The 'REPORT' section has two columns: 'Existing report' with a 'Select a report' dropdown, and 'Upload Report' with a 'Choose File' button, 'TITLE' field, and 'PUBLICATION DATE' field. The 'PRODUCER' section has two options: 'Existing producer' with a dropdown, and 'New Producer' with a description. The form includes a 'COUNTRY' field and a 'Description for the type field of the observation form' instruction.

The screenshot shows the 'LOCATION' form in the Open Timber Portal. It features a 'FOREST MANAGEMENT UNIT' dropdown with the instruction 'Select a FMU (please select a producer to access the list of corresponding FMUs)'. Below this is a 'GPS COORDINATES' section with a world map for selection. The map includes a zoom-in (+) and zoom-out (-) button. The bottom right of the map area contains the text 'Leaflet | © OpenStreetMap contributors'.

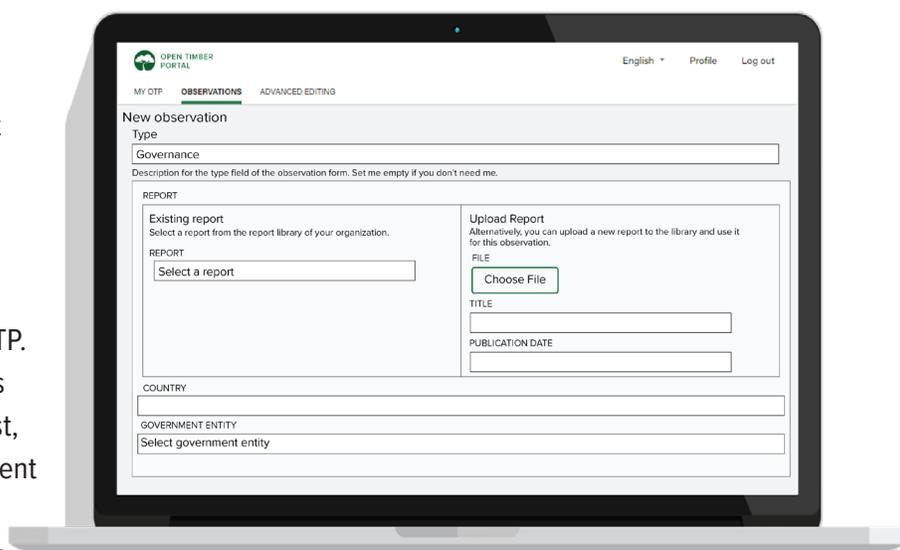
Producer Observations

- 7. Fill** in the observation details. The details of observations should not be a complete paragraph explaining the observations process and findings. Instead, it should be a short and straight forward summary with the key points extracted from the narrative description from the report.
- 8. Choose** one or several files to upload as evidence and name them. Click on “add to list” for each file you want to add. There are several accepted file formats, these include: Word, JPG and PDF.
- 9. Determining Severity:** When entering the severity of the observation you will select one of the options listed in the dropdown menu. The options proposed depend on the sub-category you selected in step 5. The options may not perfectly match your observations, but it is important you use your best judgment in selecting the severity. Severity is measured on a scale of 1-3. If the report does not give enough information about the observation to determine the severity, you should either contact the monitor who created the report for further information or contact WRI for advice. The severity level 0 (Not Specified) will only be chosen when running out of other options.
- 10. Indicate** in the field “Actions Taken By Government” if the ministry issued any fine or citation based on your observation.
- 11.** In the field, "Comments from the Producer", **record** any comments made by the producer during the reading committee meetings. Only comments included in the final report will be accepted.
- 12. Indicate** any references to a citation issued as a follow up to your observation in the “Citation” field.
- 13. Indicate** the litigation status, that is to say the status of the legal case (i.e. has a fine been paid? If yes what % of the fine that has been paid to date?)
- 14.** In the “Legal” box, **indicate** the illegality according to the law choosing from the dropdown menu options. The other fields of the “Legal” box will fill in automatically. If any of these automatically generated fields are incorrect, please contact opentimberportal@wri.org.
- 15. Enter** the publication date. The publication date should be the date when the observation was made public (usually the publication date of the report).

*See page 5 for what to do once you have completed all fields.

Governance Observations

- 1. Find** the report your observation is related to in “Existing Report” – “Select a report”. A list of available reports will open. In the case your report is not on that list, you need to upload it (see Upload a Report on page 1).
- 2. Select** the country related to your observation. By default, the system will select the country you selected during the creation of your account on OTP.
- 3. Choose** the government entity your observation is related to. If the government entity is not in the list, first go to “advanced editing” and then “government entities”, click on “new government entity” and create it. Come back to the new observation form.
- 4. Select** the governance problem you are reporting in the drop-down menu
- 5. Indicate** the name of the “relevant producers”, if the observation can also be related to a logging company.
- 6. Add** an “additional monitor” if another monitoring organization joined the mission and/or contributed to the report.
- 7. Fill in** the observation details. The details of observations should not be a complete paragraph explaining the observations process and findings. Instead, it should be a short and straight forward summary with the key points extracted from the narrative description from the report.



The screenshot shows the 'New observation' form on the Open Timber Portal. The form is titled 'New observation' and has a 'Type' dropdown menu set to 'Governance'. Below this is a description field. The form is divided into two main sections: 'REPORT' and 'Upload Report'. The 'REPORT' section has an 'Existing report' dropdown menu set to 'Select a report'. The 'Upload Report' section has a 'Choose File' button, a 'TITLE' text input field, and a 'PUBLICATION DATE' text input field. Below these sections are fields for 'COUNTRY', 'GOVERNMENT ENTITY', and 'Select government entity'.

- 8. Choose** one or several files to upload as evidence and name them. Click on “add to list” for each file you want to add.
Several file formats are accepted including: Word, JPG and PDF.
- 9. Determining Severity:** When entering the severity of the observation you will select one of the options listed in the dropdown menu. The options proposed depend on the sub-category you selected in step 4. The options may not perfectly match your observations, but it is important you use your best judgment in selecting the severity. Severity is measured on a scale of 1-3. If the report does not give enough information about the observation to determine the severity, you should either contact the monitor who created the report for further information or contact WRI for advice. The severity level 0 (Not Specified) will only be chosen when running out of other options.
- 10. Indicate** in the field “Actions Taken By Government” if the ministry issued any fine or citation based on your observation.
- 11. In the field, "Comments from the Producer", **record** any comments made by the producer during the reading committee meetings. Only comments included in the final report will be accepted.**
- 12. Enter** the publication date. The publication date should be the date when the observation was made public (usually the publication date of the report).

Creating an Observation *continued*

Click “Create” when you have completed all required fields. Once created, the observation will become available in the section “my observations” (See Viewing observations instructions) where it can be further edited if needed.

Once the observation is complete, we suggest that you carry out an internal quality control by asking one of your colleagues to review the observations you created. If you want some guidance on how to carry out this internal quality control, please contact opentimberportal@wri.org. As soon as you feel an observation is ready to be published, open it, scroll down the bottom of the page and hit “submit for review”. Please note that your observation cannot be submitted for review until you fill in all the mandatory fields. If you hit the “Submit for review” button with some of the mandatory fields still pending, the system will highlight the missing fields in red.

Once submitted for review, the observation is no longer editable. It is sent to the OTP team for review. If it passes all the stages of review and quality assurance, it is published on the OTP. Otherwise the OTP team will come back to you to ask for clarification and will unlock the observation to allow you to edit it from your “my observations” section. Once done you will “Submit it for Review” again to send it to the OTP team for another review round.

Annexes

Annex 1: Observation Categories and Sub-Categories

Categories	Sub-Categories
Payment	Default on payments
	Default on tax payments
	Export duty unpaid
Right to Exploit	Company not registered according to regulations
	Harvesting without required permit
	Irregular subcontracting/transfer of shares
	Operating without a convention
	Operating without a title
	Operating without a valid license
Social aspects	Human rights violation
	Insufficient consultation of local/indigenous populations
	Nonfulfilment of contractual obligations
	Recruitment/management of workers in breach of labour laws
Timber harvesting	Abandonment of timber
	Cutting outside permit boundaries
	Cutting trees below minimum diameter
	Default on demarcation of cutting permit boundaries
	Default on maintenance of exploitation documents
	Default on markings on logs, stumps, other wood products
	Default on transmission of documents to relevant authorities
	Deforestation without authorization
	Exploitation or transport of wood outside of authorized timeframe
	Fraudulent behavior
	Harvesting in a protected area or other area where logging is prohibited
	Harvesting nonauthorized species
	Illegal timber storage
	Nonrespect of management plan
	Nonrespect of norms for reduced impact logging or environmental regulations
	Nonrespect of procedures related to impact assessments or inventories
	Nonrespect of requirements related to conversion of forest to agriculture
	Obstacles to checks by forest law enforcement officials
	Overharvesting
	Timber laundering
Timber processing	Default on timber processing documents
	Processing timber without authorization
	Processing wood of fraudulent or untraceable origin
Timber transport/trade	Export of CITES species without authorization
	Nonauthorized exportation of timber
	Nonrespect of quotas on processed wood
	Origin of timber transported not traceable or timber not identified
	Transport regulations breached (registration of vehicle, authorization of transport...)

Annex 2: Governance categories and problems

Governance category	Governance problem
Law enforcement	Corruption leading to illegal activity/poor enforcement
	Poor application of sanctions
	Poor control
	Poor reporting of enforcement
	Poor tax and fine collection
	Poor distribution of law enforcement means
	Non respect of procedures - management of seized goods
Planning and decision making	Lack of interagency cooperation
	Lack of transparency on use of forestry revenues, including taxes and fines
	Non respect of procedures - attribution of right to exploit, trade or transport CITES species
	Non respect of procedures authorizing harvesting of forest resources
	Non respect of procedures authorizing transport or export of forest resources
Non respect of procedures granting access to forest resources	
Policy framework	Policy gaps
Transparency	Information not made public as required by law, including the VPA