

PRACTICAL GUIDE

WHISP

Analysing the risk of deforestation and forest disturbance on the plots where timber comes from

For ATIBT and UICCB members

November 2026

Accompanies the EUDR webinar of 12 November 2026

atibt
THE LEADING AUTHORITY ON TROPICAL TIMBER

UICCB
UNION DES INDUSTRIES DE LA CONSTRUCTION ET DU COMMERCE DU BOIS

This guide is neither official WHISP or Open Foris documentation nor a certificate of compliance with the EUDR (Regulation (EU) 2023/1115).

About this guide

This practical guide was produced by **ATIBT and UICCB** to help timber companies use WHISP as part of their work under the **EU Regulation on deforestation-free products (EUDR)**.

It is **neither an official WHISP guide nor a certificate of compliance with the EUDR**. It offers a simplified method for a first review of the plots where timber comes from, whether in natural forest, plantations or other production areas.

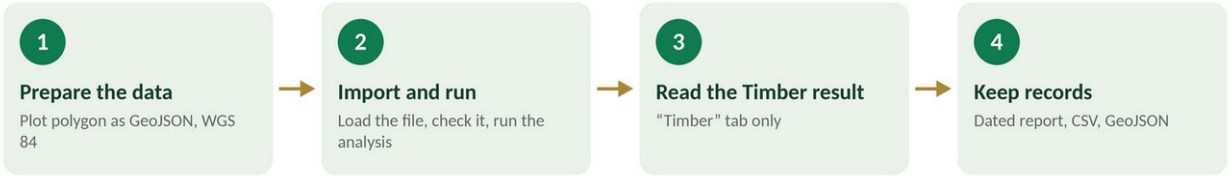
What is WHISP?

WHISP ("What is in that plot?") is a free, open-source tool developed by the **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)** under the Open Foris programme. The European Commission cites it among examples of tools that can be used (EUDR FAQ 9.10.6).

It analyses a plot using many public maps and satellite datasets to detect signs of deforestation, forest disturbance and agricultural land use. It distinguishes the situation **before and after 31 December 2020**, the EUDR cut-off date. The tool combines these sources using a **"convergence of evidence"** approach to produce a risk level.

Key point: WHISP helps identify the plots that need further checks. It does not replace the due diligence required by the EUDR.

The process in four steps



Where does WHISP fit?



Useful links

Resource	Link
WHISP application	whisp.openforis.org/
WHISP, FAO presentation and guides	www.openforis.org/whisp/
WHISP, official FAQ	www.openforis.org/whisp-faqs/

Resource	Link
Open Foris, tools and resources	www.openforis.org/
Mapshaper, file preparation	mapshaper.org/
European Commission, EUDR implementation	green-forum.ec.europa.eu/nature-and-biodiversity/deforestation-regulation-implementation_en

See also the ATIBT and UICCB **Mapshaper practical guide**, to prepare and convert geographic files.

PART 1

Prepare the plot data

What is this part for?

WHISP analyses geographic areas. You therefore need a file that precisely locates the plots where the timber comes from.

1 STEP 1 Collect the data from the supplier

- Ask for the **geographic coordinates of the plots where the timber comes from**, for example the annual cutting area (AAC) the logs come from.
- Prefer **polygons** showing the full outline of the plots. The EUDR requires them for plots of more than 4 hectares; a single point is only allowed for smaller plots.

2 STEP 2 Prepare the geographic file

- Preferably prepare a **GeoJSON file in WGS 84 (EPSG:4326)**, with at least six decimal places.
- If the data are in another format or in metric coordinates (UTM), convert them with **Mapshaper**, following the ATIBT and UICCB Mapshaper practical guide.

```
-o format=geojson geojson-type=FeatureCollection precision=0.000001
```

> **Good to know:** according to the WHISP FAQ, the analysis is limited to 10 MB per upload and 100 000 ha per plot: a whole concession may exceed this limit, an AAC will not.

> **Key point:** WHISP results depend on the quality of the geographic data imported. Check the plot boundaries before running the analysis.

PART 2

Import the plots into WHISP

1 STEP 1 Open WHISP

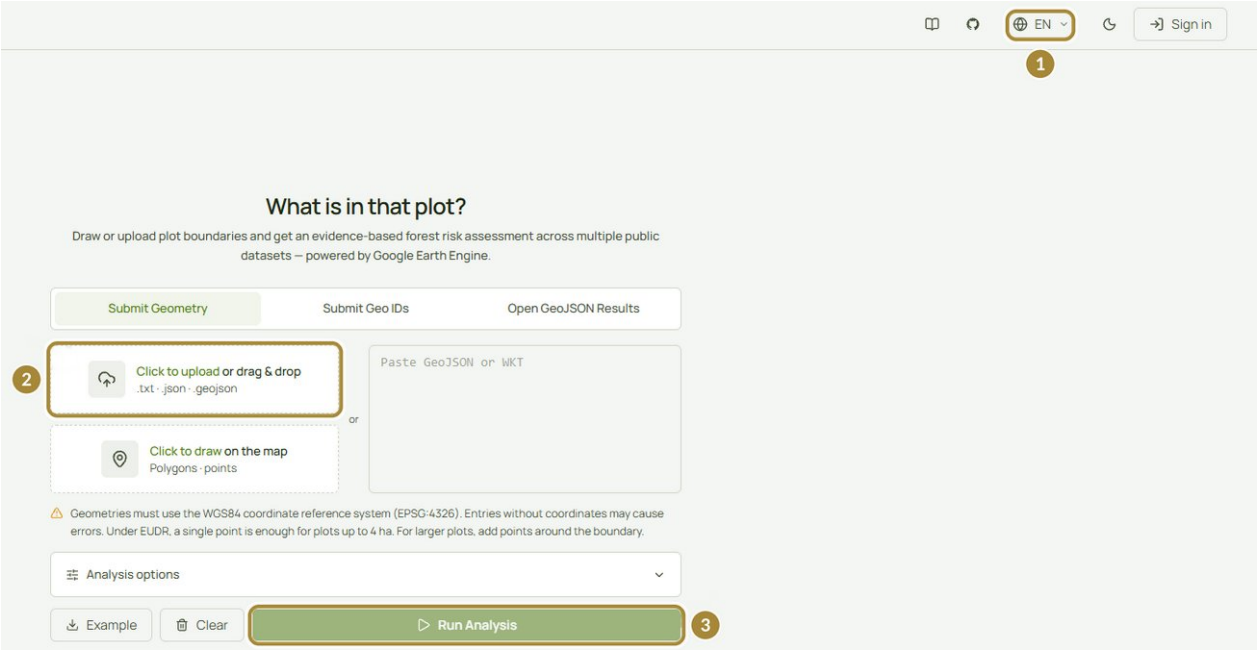
Go to the application: whisp.openforis.org. Choose the language (FR or EN) at the top right. You do not need to log in for a simple analysis.

2 STEP 2 Import the file

1. In the **"Submit Geometry"** tab, click **"Click to upload or drag & drop"**, then select the prepared GeoJSON file.
2. The application accepts **.geojson, .json and .txt** files, provided the coordinates are in WGS 84 (EPSG:4326). You can also paste the file content into the **"Paste GeoJSON or WKT"** box, or draw a plot with **"Click to draw on the map"**.
3. Check that the file is accepted ("1 feature" for one plot) and, using the option to edit it on the map, that the plot falls in the right place.

3 STEP 3 Run the analysis

Click the green **"Run Analysis"** button, below the upload area, and wait while it runs (usually less than a minute for an AAC). Leave the **"Analysis options"** at their default settings.



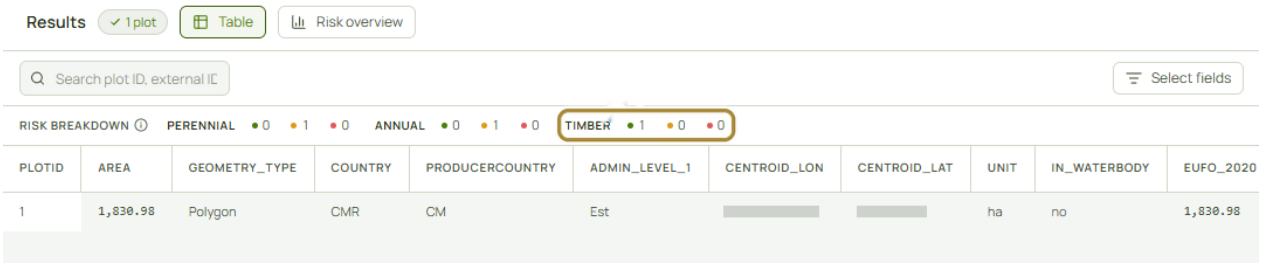
(1) language choice; (2) file upload; (3) "Run Analysis" button.

PART 3

Read the results for timber

1 STEP 1 Access the results

Once the analysis is complete, WHISP shows a **"Table"** of the plots analysed (area, country, region, indicators) and a **"Risk overview"**, which shows the breakdown of risk levels, the **"Risk indicators"** used and the **"Risk path"**.



PLOTID	AREA	GEOMETRY_TYPE	COUNTRY	PRODUCERCOUNTRY	ADMIN_LEVEL_1	CENTROID_LON	CENTROID_LAT	UNIT	IN_WATERBODY	EUFO_2020
1	1,830.98	Polygon	CMR	CM	Est			ha	no	1,830.98

(1) "Risk breakdown", TIMBER column: one plot at low risk. Centroid coordinates hidden.

2 STEP 2 Select the "Timber" tab

WHISP shows results for three product categories: **Perennial crop**, **Annual crop** and **Timber**. For a plot where timber comes from, select the **"Timber"** tab. This result is called **risk_timber** in the result files.

> **Caution:** the "Perennial crop" and "Annual crop" tabs concern agricultural commodities (cocoa, coffee, oil palm, soya...). They must not replace the "Timber" tab when assessing a timber supply.

Why do some agricultural results appear in orange?

The same plot can be classified differently depending on the commodity. In our example, WHISP detects forest in 2020 and no crop or plantation afterwards: for agricultural commodities, its criteria then lead to **"More info needed"** (orange). **This result does not mean that deforestation or agricultural activity has been detected.** For a forest plot used for timber production, the **Timber** tab is the one to read.

> **Key point:** for the timber sector, read the **Timber** result (risk_timber). Agricultural results must not be confused with the risk calculated for timber.

PART 4

Read and understand the risk level for timber

In the Timber tab, WHISP places each plot in one of three levels:

Level	What it means	What to do?
Low risk (green)	The data lead WHISP to a low risk according to its criteria. This is an encouraging result, but it does not on its own guarantee compliance with the EUDR.	Keep the result and complete it with the supplier's documents

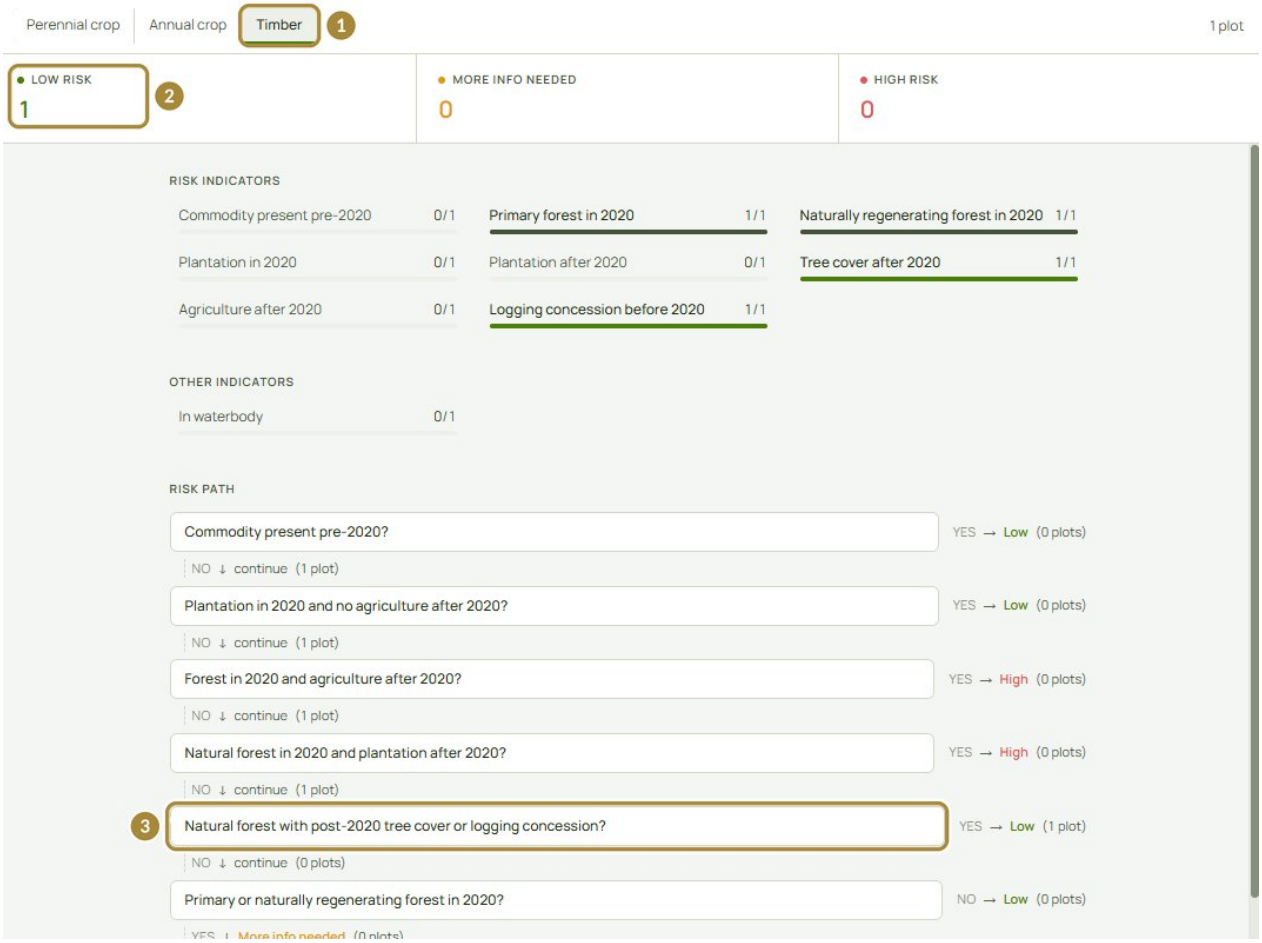
Level	What it means	What to do?
More info needed (orange)	The data do not allow a conclusion. **This is not detected deforestation.**	Ask the supplier for documents; look at before / after images
High risk (red)	WHISP detects forest in 2020 then agriculture or a plantation after 2020: a possible sign of deforestation or forest degradation.	Check in depth (images, documents, field) before drawing any conclusion; exclude the plot if the change is confirmed

Understanding the results of our example

Our example is an AAC in Cameroon, used for timber production, with an area of about **1 831 hectares** according to WHISP. **WHISP classifies it as low risk (green) for Timber.** Under **"Risk indicators"**, the tool records:

- presence of **primary forest in 2020** and of **naturally regenerating forest in 2020**;
- **tree cover after 2020**;
- a **logging concession before 2020**;
- no plantation in 2020 or after, and no agriculture after 2020.

These are presence indicators: one plot can have several of them. The **"Risk path"** shows how WHISP reaches its result: it asks questions in order. Our plot answers no to the first four and yes to the fifth, **"Natural forest with post-2020 tree cover or logging concession?"**, which places it at low risk.



(1) "Timber" tab; (2) result: low risk; (3) step of the risk path that leads to the "Low" classification.

Points to watch: The classification here relies partly on the presence of a **known logging concession**: this is an assumption of the tool, not an EUDR rule.

The area calculated by WHISP may differ from the official area (here 1 788 ha in the annual permit). A difference of a few percent is common, but the supplier should explain it.

Key point: in our example, WHISP classifies the plot as **low risk for Timber**. This is useful for the EUDR analysis, to be completed with the management, harvesting and traceability documents.

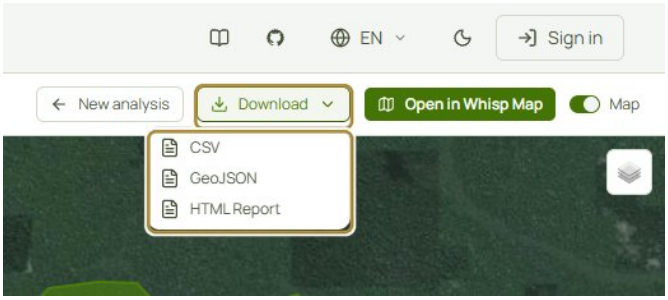
PART 5

Download and keep the results

1 STEP 1 Download the results

Click **"Download"**, at the top right. Three formats are offered:

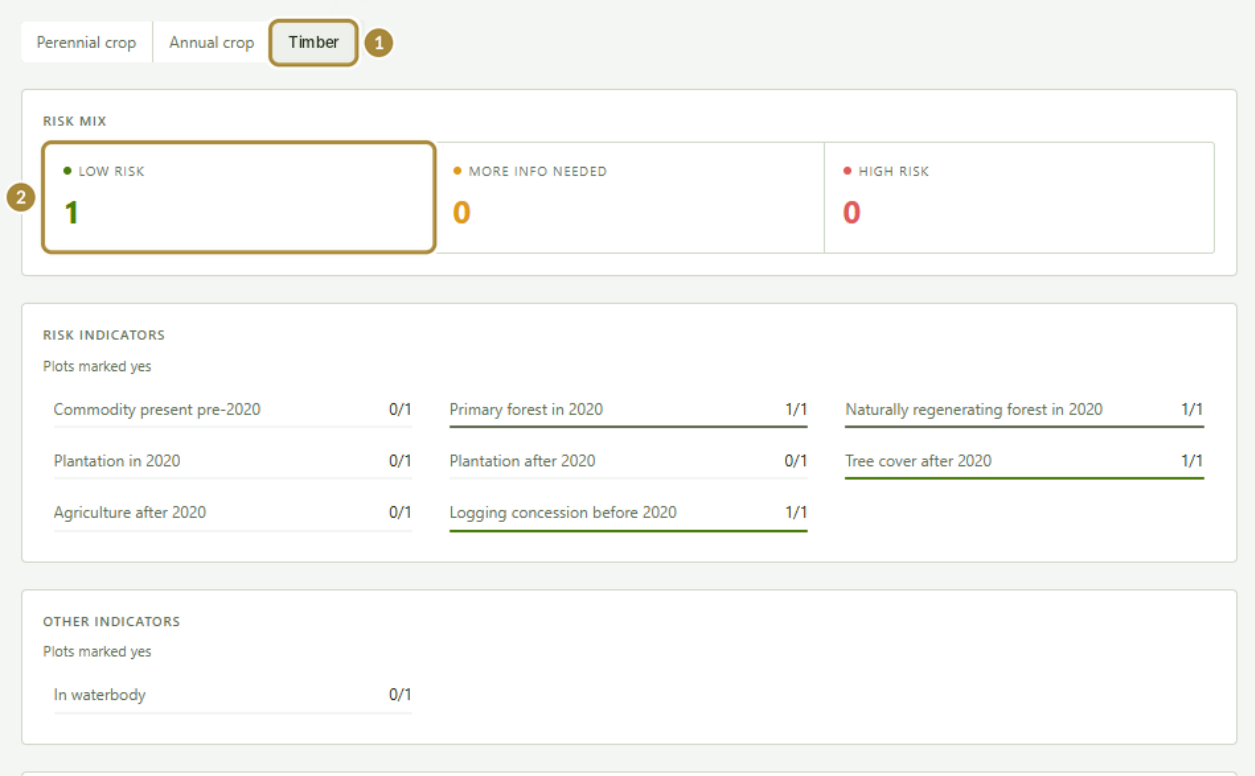
Format	Use
HTML Report	Readable version, to add to the due diligence file
CSV	Results table, useful for analysing many plots
GeoJSON	Polygon and results: can be reopened in WHISP (**"Open GeoJSON Results"** tab) without running the calculation again



"Download" menu: CSV, GeoJSON or HTML Report.

2 STEP 2 Look at the "Timber" result in the report

Open the HTML report. It also has three tabs: **Perennial crop**, **Annual crop** and **Timber**. For a timber supply, look at the **Timber** tab. The report shows in particular the **Risk mix**, the result ("Low risk") and the **Risk path**.



HTML report: (1) "Timber" tab; (2) risk mix: plot classified as low risk.

3 STEP 3 Keep the documents

- Save the original geographic file, the WHISP report and the results table.
- Note the **date of the analysis** and the **application version** (shown at the bottom of the page, for example "App v2.31"): data layers are updated, and the same polygon can get a different result.
- Keep the plot references and your observations.

4 STEP 4 Document the additional checks

When results need explanations, compare them with the production maps, the traceability data and the supplier's supporting documents. Note any anomalies and the answers received.

Key point: keeping the results documents the checks carried out and makes it possible to find the information used in the analysis.

KEY POINTS FOR THE EUDR

WHISP guides, it does not conclude

- **WHISP does not issue a certificate of compliance with the EUDR.** The analysis must be completed with the supplier's documents, the traceability data and other relevant information.
- **Low risk** is not proof of compliance; an **orange** result is not a rejection; **high risk** calls for checks, not automatic exclusion.
- WHISP relies on global maps, which are not authoritative at plot level (EUDR FAQ 9.10). It checks neither the harvest, nor legality, nor the detail of what happens inside the plot.

In short: collect the GPS data → prepare the GeoJSON → import the plot → run the analysis → read the Timber tab (risk_timber) → download and keep the results.