Timber legality is a contemporary mechanism to address forest degradation, and to some, deforestation, which are problems at a global scale and integrally tied to both climate change and the lives of people who rely on timber and wood products for their livelihoods. The challenge with such a global issue is how to frame it, and how to determine whose voices are heard in determining what is right and wrong, sustainable and unsustainable, legal and illegal. We analysed data from a three-year study in which nearly 600 actors from the wood production networks were interviewed in Ghana, Indonesia, Vietnam and Europe with a specific focus on the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) initiative of the European Union. We use an environmental justice framing to understand the claims that actors are making around confusion around it; (2) some notions of timber legality are backed by more powerful actors and therefore any contradiction these understandings is somehow framed as ‘evil’, compelling actors to fall in line with global notions of timber legality; and (3) notions of legality taken up at global levels are rooted in Westphalian, colonial and state-making imaginaries, which are imposed on actors at many levels of production through hegemonic notions of governance. These findings are important as global assemblages of actors determine what the rights and wrongs are of global forest production network governance and take into the accounts of some, while omitting others. Our findings are useful not only for policy makers related to FLEGT, but other international and supranational initiatives in which decisions are made at one level, and the impacts experienced at another. Cam_Challenging assumptions in FLEGT