

Ursula von der Leyen  
President of the European Commission

Maros Sefcovic  
Executive Vice-President for European Green Deal, Interinstitutional Relations and  
Foresight

Brussels, 19 September 2024

*Subject: Timely and effective implementation of the EU Deforestation Regulation*

Dear President von der Leyen,  
Dear Executive Vice-President Sefcovic,

We write to you regarding the implementation of the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR). We believe it is imperative to convey our strong support for its timely and effective implementation, and call upon the European Commission to urgently present supporting measures as foreseen by the regulation.

The European Union bears a significant responsibility for the protection of forests worldwide. The adoption of the EUDR was a milestone in our commitment to nature protection, setting a global precedent for environmental stewardship. Now, the regulation must deliver on its promise, ensuring that our actions match the ambition of our policies.

We would like to emphasise that the adoption of the EUDR was preceded by extensive deliberations among Members of the European Parliament, Member States, and EU institutions, and countless consultations with affected producer countries, industries and environmental and human rights civil society organisations. These efforts culminated in a balanced compromise that garnered overwhelming support from all democratic political groups in the European Parliament and the Council.

Now, some companies and producer countries still have open questions for the practical implementation of the EUDR and call for the postponement of its implementation. These questions should be answered urgently. It is crucial that the EUDR is applied without any delay. Rather than delaying and watering down the regulation, as S&D Group we are convinced we should shift our full focus on supporting the smooth and timely implementation of the EUDR by affected companies, producer countries and enforcement authorities.

To that end, we urge the Commission to immediately finalise the work on elements such as comprehensive guidelines and an FAQ document on the interpretation and

clarification of key provisions and flexibilities within the EUDR, and a functioning and user-friendly IT system for companies to submit necessary compliance documents. These measures would provide for more legal certainty, answer many of the open questions by affected industries, and facilitate the implementation by companies, national enforcement authorities and producer countries by the deadline enshrined in the regulation. Moreover, the work on a robust framework for partnerships with producer countries to create proper conditions on the ground and on the benchmarking of producer countries should be sped up.

The empowerment to adopt those measures are already enshrined in the regulation and would not need lengthy legislative procedures. Now it needs the political will to adopt them and ensure a timely and effective implementation of the EUDR. We are aware that on these elements, the preparatory work within the Commission has well advanced and we are hopeful that you will expedite the internal processes within the Commission to adhere to the law and its timelines that was democratically adopted with a clear majority.

Adhering to the adopted timelines in face of the pressing environmental urgency of imported deforestation and forest degradation is a matter of seriousness, reliability and predictability of decision-making of the EU. It is also a question of guaranteeing planning and investment security and of honouring the thousands of companies and the many producer countries that have already heavily invested in the processes and infrastructures to fulfil the EUDRS's requirements by the end of the year. Delivering on these measures will reinforce the EU's leadership in global environmental protection, while facilitating companies' compliance with the law.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to your continued support and decisive action in ensuring the EUDR achieves its intended goals.

Yours sincerely,

**Tiemo Wölken**, S&D ENVI Coordinator

**Brando Benifei**, S&D INTA Coordinator

**Delara Burkhardt**, S&D Group ENVI Shadow Rapporteur on EUDR