

First Vice-President Frans Timmermans and Vice-President Jyrki Katainen
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
B-1049 Brussels, Belgium

CC: President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker, High Representative Federica Mogherini, Vice-President Andrus Ansip, Vice-President Maros Šefčovič, Vice-President Valdis Dombrovskis, and Members of the European Commission Günther H. Oettinger, Johannes Hahn, Cecilia Malmström, Neven Mimica, Miguel Arias Cañete, Karmenu Vella, Vytenis Andriukaitis, Dimitris Avramopoulos, Marianne Thyssen, Pierre Moscovici, Christos Stylianides, Phil Hogan, Violeta Bulc, Elżbieta Bieńkowska, Věra Jourová, Tibor Navracsics, Corina Crețu, Margrethe Vestager, Carlos Moedas, Julian King, Mariya Gabriel

21/03/2018

Subject: Urgent call for an ambitious Action Plan to halt deforestation and forest degradation

Dear First Vice-President Timmermans, dear Vice-President Katainen,

As you will be aware, protection of the world's forests is crucial to achieving the Paris Climate Agreement and UN Sustainable Development Goals. Halting deforestation and forest degradation could stop billions of tons of carbon dioxide from being released and play an essential role in tackling climate change.ⁱ As part of the new global agenda on sustainable development, the EU and member states of the United Nations have formally agreed to halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation by 2020. The EU must lead the way and take immediate measures to deliver on these commitments.

A 2013 study funded by the European Commission estimated that, between 1990 and 2008, the EU imported at least one third of all deforestation caused by crop and livestock products trade between regions.ⁱⁱ The European Commission has a responsibility to act now to cut the EU's impact on forests. By this letter, we would like to reiterate our call on the Commission to press ahead with developing an EU action plan on deforestation and forest degradation, which would include concrete regulatory measures to ensure that no supply chains and financial transactions linked to the EU result in deforestation and forest degradation or human rights abuses.

The European Parliament has repeatedly asked the European Commission to develop an ambitious Action Plan to halt deforestation and forest degradation. In 2013, this demand was made in the context of the 7th EU Environment Action Programme, and we reiterated this request in April last year in a resolution on palm oil and the deforestation of rainforests. Our calls were echoed by the Council of the EU in 2013 and by individual Member States most recently at the Environment Council meeting on 5 March.ⁱⁱⁱ

As Members of the European Parliament, we therefore urge you and other Commissioners to show political will and leadership by committing to deliver an ambitious action plan, including legislative proposals, as soon as possible before the end of this Commission's mandate.

We thank you for your consideration of this request and would welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter further.

Yours sincerely,

Seb Dance S&D
Eric Andrieu S&D
Carolina Punset ALDE
Ivica Tolić EPP
Maria Gabriela Zoană S&D
Sirpa Pietikäinen EPP
Kateřina Konečná GUE /NGL
Claude Turmes Greens
Karl-Heinz Florenz EPP
Wajid Khan S&D
Maria Arena S&D
Jose Inacio Faria EPP
Molly Scott Cato Greens
Florent Marcellesi Greens
Louis Michel ALDE
Nessa Childers S&D
Kostas Chrysogonos GUE / NGL
Karin Kadenbach S&D
Alex Mayer S&D
Benedek Jávor Greens
Ana Gomes S&D
Liadh Niriada GUE /NGL
Lynn Boylan GUE /NGL
Matt Carthy GUE /NGL
Martina Anderson GUE /NGL
Patricia Lalonde ALDE

Maria Noichl S&D
Carlos Zorrinho S&D
Julie Ward S&D
Anne-Marie Mineur GUE / NGL
Theresa Griffin S&D
Pascal Durand Greens
Jiří Pospíšil EPP
Merja Kyllönen GUE / NGL
Tibor Szanyi S&D
John Howarth S&D
Claudiu Ciprian Tanasescu S&D
Liliana Rodrigues S&D
Stefan Eck GUE / NGL
Guillaume Balas S&D
Cecile Kyenge S&D
Georgi Pirinski S&D
Alex Mayer S&D
Paul Brannen S&D
Mary Honeyball S&D
Bas Eickhout Greens
Edouard Martin S&D

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- ⁱ Center for Global Development (November 2014) [Why Maintaining Tropical Forests Is Essential and Urgent for a Stable Climate - Working Paper 385](#)
- ⁱⁱ European Commission (2013) [The impact of EU consumption on deforestation: Comprehensive analysis of the impact of EU consumption on deforestation](#)
- ⁱⁱⁱ French, Danish, German, Netherlands and United Kingdom delegations (February 2018) [Amsterdam Declarations – Combating imported deforestation](#)