

Ursula von der Leyen
President of the European Commission

Letter sent by electronic mail from
Brasília, on 15 May 2024

Every second counts to protect global forests and ecosystems

Dear President,

The EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) formally adopted on [June 29, 2023](#) drew significant public interest, receiving 1.2 million responses during the European Commission's public consultation. The new law aims to address global deforestation and the degradation of forests tied to EU consumption, production and trade. It highlighted the **vital concern among European citizens about global deforestation** and the impact of their consumption. Most of the Brazilian civil society also mobilized and expressed [support to the EUDR proposal, asking for high ambition](#) on traceability and broader scope, including all threatened ecosystems such as the Cerrado.

Key deforestation-risk commodities including beef, cocoa, coffee, palm oil, soya, rubber, and wood, imported as well as produced in Europe now need to have their origins traced back to the plot of land using geolocation data, to prove they are not linked to any deforestation nor illegality. This groundbreaking regulation is the most ambitious legislative attempt to tackle these issues worldwide, with the potential to serve as a benchmark for similar regulations in China, India, the US, and Japan, [eliminating most of the world's commodity-related deforestation](#).

As such, the EUDR drives decisive global action on [ecosystem and biodiversity loss](#) worldwide, as well as on one of the single [largest sources of greenhouse gas](#) emissions, reminding that deforestation, conversion and loss of biodiversity seriously [hamper the capacities of ecosystems, societies, communities and individuals to adapt to climate change](#).

Since its approval, the EUDR has sparked significant efforts by companies and government offices, in Brazil and the whole planet, to implement the best response to the new requirements set to take effect in 2025.

Stepping back on putting EUDR into force would mean much worse than an attempt to address the expected political and economic pressures in an electoral year. **Postponing EUDR could discredit EU commitments to fighting climate change and biodiversity loss**, weakening its

political credibility, undermining future global negotiations, and jeopardizing our common future.

Numerous case studies highlight commodity producers who are already actively addressing the requirements. The new regulation enforcement does not create new, unachievable technical requirements, but on the contrary builds upon established transparency frameworks in many ways. Therefore, companies are not commencing from scratch but rather leverage on many existing operational elements.

Some existing monitoring tools that contribute to EUDR compliance analyses: [PRODES](#), [DETER](#), [Dynamic World](#), [Tropical Moist Forest Explorer](#), [WorldCover](#), [Global map of forest cover](#) (JRC-European Commission), [Child Labor Monitoring and Remediation System](#), [Global Forest Watch](#), [MapBiomass Brazil](#), [MapBiomass Amazonia](#), [MapBiomass Indonesia](#), [MapBiomass Chile](#), [RADD Forest Disturbance Alert](#), [SBTN](#), [OPERA](#), [Canopy Height map](#), Open Foris tools from FAO: [Ground](#), [Arena Mobile](#), [SEPAL](#), [Earth Map](#), [Whisp](#) and [Collect Earth](#), [Cocoa for Generations](#), [TechnoServe](#).

The adoption of EUDR boosts worldwide efforts and proactive investments in using these tools to establish solid private, public or mixed traceability and transparency systems.

Some existing traceability/transparency initiatives: [SeloVerde](#), SIFMA 2.0, [Ucropit](#), [ChainPoint](#), [Global Traceability](#), [Optel](#), [SouceMap](#), [SupplyShift](#), [Timber Chain](#), [Transparency-One](#), [Xylene](#), [CoC traceability system](#), [Xylem Technologies](#), [TraceX](#), [Farmerline](#), [OFIS](#), [Tony's Beantracker](#), [Double Helix](#), [Visipec](#), [FLEGT Watch](#), [Meridia Verify](#), [Agro+Sustentável](#), [Soy Moratorium](#), [Pará State mandatory program for cattle traceability](#), [Hamurni](#).

However, current speculation on delaying the EUDR enforcement is holding most current efforts to develop transparency mechanisms. Worst, if confirmed, these speculations may create a **massive rebound in deforestation and conversion of the Amazon and the Cerrado**.

As the regulation has not yet become applicable, the sad numbers of natural vegetation loss in Brazil remain at high levels, with more than [1.8 million hectares lost in 2023](#) in the Amazon and Cerrado biomes. During the same year, **an area of more than one and a half Brussels was deforested or converted every day** in these biomes.

The catastrophic deforestation figures also bear **massive human rights impacts**, including [land-grabbing](#), [forced evictions](#) and widespread [violence](#). Indigenous Peoples and Traditional Communities whose territories are being [invaded](#) by the expansion of commodities can no longer afford to wait to hold companies accountable for their production and sourcing methods. **Every second counts to protect human lives today, as well as humankind's future, avoid climate change, and stop biodiversity losses.**

The EUDR may have already helped drive down Amazon deforestation in 2023, as suggested in soon-to-be-published research by Brazilian organizations. We, as representants of the

Brazilian civil society as well as of traditional and indigenous communities, **respectfully urge you to explicitly express your unconditional support to the EUDR, and to dismiss any speculation on delaying its implementation**, supporting and acknowledging all the current efforts to establish transparency and traceability of commodities, and most certainly, preventing a massive rebound of destruction and violence, in Brazil and many other countries.

SIGNATORIES OF THE LETTER:

- 1. Articulação dos Povos Indígenas do Brasil – APIB (Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil, 8 member organizations)**
- 2. Associação Alternativa Terrazul**
- 3. Associação Soluções Inclusivas Sustentáveis – SIS**
- 4. Centro de Agricultura Alternativa do Norte de Minas – CAA**
- 5. Centro Internacional de Água e Transdisciplinaridade – CIRAT**
- 6. Coordenação Nacional de Articulação das Comunidades Negras Rurais Quilombolas – CONAQ (National Coordination for the Articulation of Black Rural Quilombola Communities – 3.500+ local Community representations from 24 subnational States)**
- 7. Fundação Ecotrópica**
- 8. Fundação Pró-Natureza (Funatura)**
- 9. Fundação SOS Mata Atlântica**
- 10. Grupo Ambientalista da Bahia – Gambá**
- 11. Instituto Cerrados**
- 12. Instituto Clima de Eleição**
- 13. Instituto Centro de Vida – ICV**
- 14. Instituto de Estudos Socioeconômicos – INESC**
- 15. Instituto Sociedade, População e Natureza – ISPN**
- 16. Instituto Socioambiental – ISA**
- 17. Kurytiba Metropole**
- 18. Mater Natura – Instituto de Estudos Ambientais**
- 19. Observatório do Clima (Brazilian Climate Observatory, 106 member organizations)**
- 20. Observatório do Código Florestal – OCF (Forest Code Observatory, 40+ member organizations)**
- 21. Observatório de Conflitos Socioambientais do Matopiba**
- 22. Rede Cerrado (Cerrado Network, more than 50 member organizations)**
- 23. Rede Mata Atlântica – RMA (Atlantic Forest Network, 121 member institutions)**
- 24. World Animal Protection Brazil**
- 25. WWF-Brasil**

