



COP Presidency Roadmap on Halting and Reversing Deforestation and Forest Degradation by 2030

Contribution by Earthsight

[Earthsight](#) is a non-profit organisation that uses in-depth investigations to expose environmental and social crime, injustice and their links to global consumption. We believe in the unique power of primary investigative research and reporting to bring attention to pressing issues of human rights and environmental justice.

This contribution addresses the first two questions for input:

- a. What are the most critical barriers — whether physical, economic, financial, institutional, technological or social — preventing the halting and reversing of deforestation and forest degradation?
- b. What potential levers, whether economic, financial, institutional, social or technological, exist for accelerating the implementation of the commitment to halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation?

Consumption of forest-risk commodities by high-income countries

Commodity production is a leading cause of tropical deforestation. In the past decade, agriculture was responsible for an average of 86 per cent of annual global deforestation.¹ A significant share of global agricultural and timber production is destined for consumption in high-income countries, including Europe, the UK and the US, with up to 39 per cent of deforestation-related emissions driven by international trade in commodities.² Consumption in G7 countries of forest-risk commodities - including cattle, soybeans, coffee, cocoa, palm oil, rubber and timber - is estimated to cause an average loss of 3.9 trees per person per year.³

Investigations have directly linked commodities sold in high-income countries to deforestation. Over the past decade, Earthsight's investigations have demonstrated how the supply chains of timber, food and consumer products sold in Europe, the UK and the US are linked to deforestation and related human rights abuses across the globe. For example, our 2025 investigation, *Risky Business*, traced timber from the clearance of some of Indonesia's last remaining orangutan strongholds to European supply chains. It found that 43 per cent of all wood from forest clearance or land preparation in plantation concessions consumed by Indonesian timber mills in 2024 was used by just five companies, all of which sell their products to Western markets.⁴ A 2024 investigation traced soy linked to illegal deforestation, land grabbing and corruption in the Brazilian Cerrado to animal feed exports, and ultimately to chicken

¹ Forest Declaration Assessment Partners. (2025). *Forest Declaration Assessment 2025*. Climate Focus (coordinator and editor). Accessible at <https://forestdeclaration.org/resources/forest-declaration-assessment-2025/>

² Florence Pendrill, U. Martin Persson, Javier Godar, Thomas Kastner, Daniel Moran, Sarah Schmidt, Richard Wood, "Agricultural and forestry trade drives large share of tropical deforestation emissions", *Global Environmental Change*, 2019, 56: 1-10 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2019.03.002>

³ Nguyen Tien Hoang and Keiichiro Kanemoto, "Mapping the deforestation footprint of nations reveals growing threat to tropical forests", *Nature Ecology and Evolution*, 2021, 5: 845-853.

⁴ Earthsight, *Risky Business: EU timber imports linked to the destruction of Borneo's forests*, 2025, available at: <https://www.earthsight.org.uk/risky-business>

sold by leading European supermarkets and McDonald's.⁵ Earlier investigations showed that global furniture giant Ikea had sold furniture made from wood linked to vast illegal logging in protected forests in Russia and Ukraine,⁶ traced leather from illegal cattle ranching in Brazil and Paraguay to the supply chains of handbags and car seats,⁷ and linked cotton used by the world's largest fashion brands to land grabbing, illegal deforestation, violence and corruption in Brazil.⁸

Voluntary measures to curb deforestation have failed. Of the top 500 companies trading in forest-risk commodities, 97 per cent have a weak or partial commitment to address deforestation or no commitments at all.⁹ Most major forest-risk commodities have voluntary certification schemes designed to incentivise sustainable production by certifying products that are responsibly produced. However, Earthsight's investigations have uncovered numerous instances of certification schemes failing to detect or eliminate illegal commodities – including leather, cotton, soy and timber – from being traded under a green label. Most recently, we exposed how sustainable timber scheme PEFC had certified products from some of Indonesia's largest deforesting companies, and how \$10 - \$30 billion in fraudulently certified timber products are being sold under the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) green label each year.¹⁰

Regulatory action in high-income countries is urgently needed. Curbing the impact of forest-risk commodities on global deforestation requires action in consumer markets for those commodities. Some markets are already taking action, notably the EU, whose Deforestation Regulation is due to take effect at the end of 2026.¹¹ This regulation will ban the import or trade in commodities that produced illegally or on deforested land. However, shifting government priorities have stalled or slowed this and similar regulatory efforts in the US and UK. Regulating the trade in forest-risk commodities should be a shared global priority, with regulations enacted across all major consumer markets.

Recommendation: the Deforestation Roadmap should call on states to enact and implement laws to regulate the import and trade in forest-risk commodities. Such laws should require businesses importing or trading in forest-risk commodities to ensure that these commodities have not been grown on deforested land, are not being traded illegally, and that their production has not involved land grabbing or other human rights abuses.

⁵ Earthsight, *Secret Ingredient*, 2024, available at: <https://www.earthsight.org.uk/secretingredient-summary>

⁶ Earthsight, *Ikea's House of Horrors*, 2021, available at: <https://www.earthsight.org.uk/investigation/ikea-house-of-horrors>; Earthsight, *Flatpacked Forests*, 2020, available at: <https://www.earthsight.org.uk/investigations/flatpacked-forests>

⁷ Earthsight, *The Hidden Price of Luxury*, 2025, available at: <https://www.earthsight.org.uk/investigations/hidden-price-of-luxury>; Earthsight, *Grand Theft Chaco*, 2022, available at: <https://www.earthsight.org.uk/investigations/grand-theft-chaco>

⁸ Earthsight, *Fashion Crimes*, 2024, available at: <https://www.earthsight.org.uk/investigations/fashion-crimes>

⁹ Global Canopy, *Forest 500: Companies profit, forests fall: everyone pays the price*, 2025, available at: https://forest500.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Forest500_Report_2025.pdf

¹⁰ Earthsight, "The PEFC paradox: One of Indonesia's worst deforesters certified as 'sustainable'", 2026, available at: <https://www.earthsight.org.uk/news/pefc-certifying-deforesters>; Earthsight, "Will FSC act on the billion dollar fraud at its heart?", <https://www.earthsight.org.uk/news/FSC-billion-dollar-fraud>

¹¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:02023R1115-20251226>