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Press release | 14.11.2024

EPP creates chaos: Greens/EFA call on von der Leyen to withdraw weakened Deforestation Regulation

Deforestation Regulation

Today, amid a dramatic breakdown of the electronic voting system which brings the vote into question, Members of the European Parliament voted on the Commission proposal to delay the Deforestation regulation. It's deeply concerning that the EPP amendments were adopted as they eviscerate the EU's deforestation regulation. To avoid a complete gutting of the law, as well as further uncertainty for stakeholders,the Greens/EFA calls on Ursula von der Leyen to withdraw her proposal.

Marie Toussaint MEP, Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur on the deforestation regulation, comments:

"The worst amendments adding a zero risk category have been adopted, along with the Commission proposal to delay implementation by one year. Today's vote in favour of the EPP's disruption is a step backward for Europe's commitments to protect global forests. The European Right has demonstrated its willingness to ally itself with the far-right parties to create majorities against nature.

"Adding exemptions and deleting due diligence requirements for products from so-called 'no-risk' countries, opens up loopholes that invite further destruction of our precious forests and an erosion of the Green Deal itself. It's shameful that the EPP has acted this recklessly and teamed up with the far right in order to push these amendments through.

"We call on the Council and Commission to stand strong against any attempts to erode the critical protections that the regulation initially set out. We condemn the opening up of EU law already in force, that all parties, including EPP, recently agreed upon. Ursula Von Der Leyen needs to clarify her position: is she holding the course for the Green Deal with the pro-EU middle ground, or courting fascists? While fraught negotiations on the composition of the European Commission are ongoing, Von Der Leyen's ability to keep any of her promises is being put to the test - we call on her to withdraw her proposal."

Virginijus Sinkevičius, Greens/EFA MEP and former Commissioner responsible for the file, comments:

"The world's forests are on the brink of collapse, climate scientists are sounding the alarm and the EPP inside and outside the parliament is taking an axe to the most important law for the protection of forests. The deforestation law was designed to address the severe environmental, social, and human rights impacts of EU-

driven deforestation. The adoption of EPP amendments represent a major setback. They put at risk both our global leadership and the rights of indigenous communities who are most affected by deforestation. The attempt to exempt states from the rules through very weak criteria will backfire and make the regulation incompatible with the WTO."

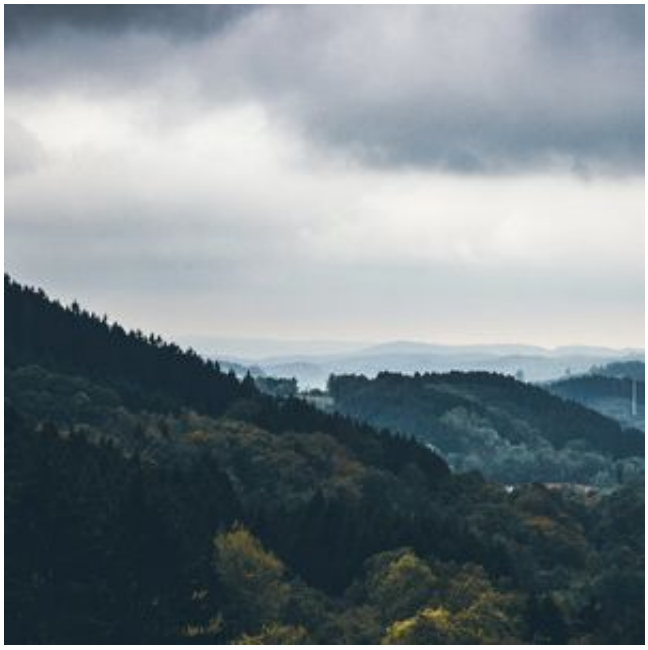
More:

The approved amendments propose new loopholes that create a new category on the country benchmarking system : a so-called “no risk” category. It would exclude products from many countries from being subject to due diligence requirements.

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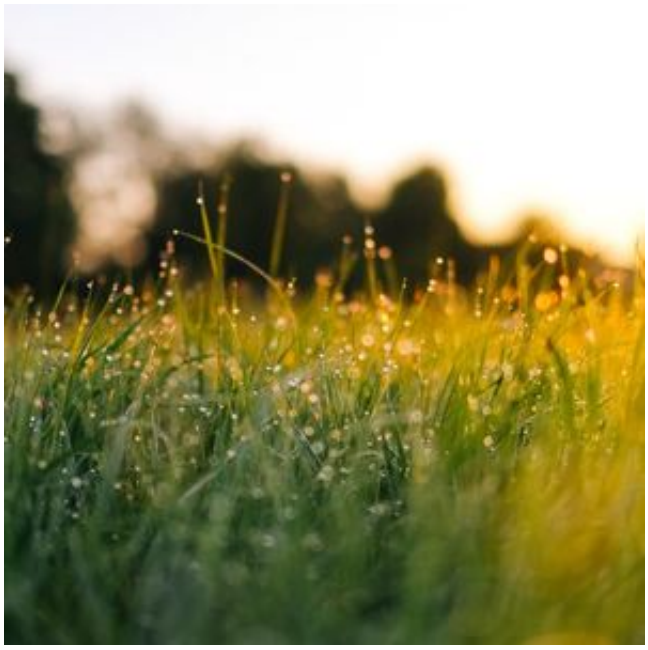
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