

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000753/25
to the Commission
Saskia Bricmont (Verts/ALE), Catarina Vieira (Verts/ALE)
(19 February 2025)**

Subject: The human rights factor in the country benchmarking methodology annex of the EU Deforestation-free Products Regulation

As provided for in Article 29(4)(c) and (d) of the EU Deforestation-free Products Regulation (EUDR) ⁽¹⁾, the Commission can evaluate whether the production of covered commodities and derived products may be in violation of human rights and relevant national laws. However, the General Principles Annex on the country benchmarking methodology published on 2 October 2024 indicates that the Commission will only consider illegality and rights violations in a ‘further assessment’ which is ‘possible’ but not required. This approach would fail to take into account human rights violations and illegality in areas at low risk of deforestation, and would fail to inform traders and competent authorities about risks of non-compliance with Article 3(b) EUDR.

1. Can the Commission clarify how the benchmarking process will assess illegality and human rights violations as part of its risk assessment in order to inform competent authorities, traders and operators about the risk of non-compliance with Article 3(b) EUDR?
2. To what extent will local and international stakeholders be involved?

Submitted: 19.2.2025

**Answer given by Ms Roswall on behalf of the European Commission
(8 May 2025)**

1. The annex to the Strategic Framework for International Cooperation Engagement ⁽¹⁾ presents the general principles of the benchmarking methodology. It relies on quantitative criteria based on scientific evidence and internationally recognised latest available data, primarily from the Global Forest Resources Assessment by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations.

The benchmarking methodology allows to have a specific approach to the countries which are at the lower or higher end of the standard risk category, and that these countries will be a priority for the Commission to engage with. A qualitative methodology will support the dialogues that will be conducted with these countries, based on EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) ⁽²⁾ Article 29 (4) criteria such as existence and implementation of laws protecting human rights, the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities and other customary tenure rights holders.

2. In the framework of this exercise, the EUDR Article 29 (4) also states that information submitted by non-governmental organisations and third parties, including indigenous peoples, local communities and civil society organisations may be taken into account and therefore be part of such assessment.

¹ Regulation (EU) 2023/1115 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 May 2023 on the making available on the Union market and the export from the Union of certain commodities and products associated with deforestation and forest degradation and repealing Regulation (EU) No 995/2010, OJ L 150, 9.6.2023, p. 206, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/1115/oj>.

⁽¹⁾ https://green-business.ec.europa.eu/document/download/98053bb7-bb73-4157-bf35-a9ffa35e2ee2_en?filename=Annex%20to%20Communication%20Strategic%20Framework%20for%20International%20Cooperation%20EUDR.pdf

⁽²⁾ Regulation (EU) 2023/1115 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 May 2023 on the making available on the Union market and the export from the Union of certain commodities and products associated with deforestation and forest degradation and repealing Regulation (EU) No 995/2010, OJ L 150, 9.6.2023, p. 206-247.