



European Parliament

Brussels, 21<sup>st</sup> of March 2023

**To:**

Frans Timmermans, Executive Vice-President, European Commission  
Virginijus Sinkevičius, Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, European Commission  
Florika Fink-Hooijer, Director General of DG Environment, European Commission

**Illegal Logging in Romania needs to be stopped quickly**

Dear Vice President Timmermans,  
Dear Commissioner Sinkevičius,  
Dear Director General Fink-Hooijer,

Every second tree in Romania is being logged illegally. This alarming fact has again been brought into spotlight by the recent media reporting by the [International Consortium of Investigative Journalists \(ICIJ\)](#).

One cannot but conclude that the infringement proceedings against Romania for illegal logging that the European Commission has initiated in February 2020 are not taken seriously. Neither by the Romanians nor by the European Commission itself.

The loss of Romanian natural forests continues, contrary to the provisions of Natura 2000 and the requirements of the European Commission - resulting in irreparable and significant deterioration of protected habitats and species. Logging of valuable primary and old-growth forest goes on, day by day, as if there was no infringement procedure.

According to environmental protectors 20 million cubic meters of timber a year have been illegally logged in Romania in the time period between 2013 and 2018. There are no more recent numbers but satellite images display the damages caused.

In Moldovița, a particularly valuable piece of forest with almost 2000 170-year-old trees has recently been illegally cleared, even though the forest was part of a Natura 2000 area. Clear-cutting is practiced illegally in protected areas with fatal consequences for the functionality of ecosystems. International companies are pushing ahead with the exploitation of Romania's forests. Mafia-like structures keep the timber coming, the Romanians speak of a 'wood mafia'. Activists who try to stop illegal logging are in danger. At least six Romanian foresters have been murdered.

Romania's primary and old growth forests are among the most valuable natural ecosystems of the entire EU. If Romania was to carry on with destructive logging of high biodiversity value forests in protected areas all nature protection ambitions and the credibility of the EU as a whole will be undermined.

We urge you instantly to act on Romania's disregard of the infringement procedures. Sending letters is not sufficient.

We are expecting your response what you will do.  
Yours sincerely,

*Martin HÄUSLING*  
*Delara BURKHARDT*  
*Anna DEPARNAY-GRUNENBERG*  
*Michal WIEZIK*