

Fact Sheet

Team Europe Initiative on Deforestation-free Value Chains

Background

Covering 31% of the Earth's surface, forests are one of the most important ecosystems for people and planet. However, despite the global commitment to end deforestation, the results are still falling short. Between 2000 and 2020, the UN estimates that 100 million hectares of forest have been lost. Approximately 90% of global deforestation is driven by agricultural expansion.

Protecting and restoring the forests of the world are central to the SDG's (1, 2, 8, 13 and 15), the Paris Agreement and the goals of the Global Biodiversity Framework (the Kunming-Montreal Agreement). Furthermore, The EU and its member states, together with more than 140 countries, are signatories of the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration, and thus jointly committed to the goal of halting and reversing forest loss and land degradation by 2030, while delivering sustainable development and promoting an inclusive rural transformation.

Aligned with the [Global Gateway](#) strategy, the Team Europe Initiative on Deforestation-free Value Chains will focus on supporting partner countries, including public and private sector stakeholders, in achieving this goal and contribute to an inclusive transition to sustainable, deforestation-free and legal value chains.

As part of the European Green Deal, the EU regulation on deforestation-free products (EUDR) aims to minimise the EU's contribution to deforestation and forest degradation worldwide. It will require companies to ensure through due diligence that soy, beef, palm oil, wood, cocoa, coffee, rubber and derived products, such as e.g. leather, chocolate, tyres, or furniture, are (a) produced without deforestation or forest degradation after 31 December 2020 and (b) in compliance with relevant legislation of the country of production. The Regulation will enter into full application from 30 December 2024 for operators and traders of the relevant commodities (30th June 2025 for SMEs). To support the implementation of the regulation and engage in inclusive partnerships with producing countries to halt and reverse forest loss, a global Team Europe Initiative on Deforestation-free Value Chains has been launched at COP 28.

Strategic Goals of the TEI

The main goal of the Team Europe Initiative is to build inclusive partnerships on deforestation-free value chains to support third countries in their commitments as outlined in the Glasgow Leader's Declaration on Forests and Land Use from COP26, to halt and reverse forest loss by 2030.

The TEI will support an inclusive transition to sustainable, deforestation-free and legal supply chains and facilitate the trade of a number of commodities with the EU by minimising deforestation and forest degradation.

Structure of the TEI

In order to facilitate an inclusive transition to sustainable and deforestation-free production in partner countries, the global Team Europe Initiative on Deforestation-free Value Chains will be built on the following pillars:

- **Enhanced technical assistance and capacity building for partner governments, companies and producers** – This will be delivered through the Sustainable Agriculture for Forest Ecosystems (SAFE) programme and a new dedicated Technical Assistance Facility.

The **SAFE** programme is co-financed by the European Commission’s Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA) and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and will be scaled up with new financial contributions by the Netherlands. SAFE is currently operational in Brazil, Ecuador, Indonesia and Zambia, with activities to be launched in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Vietnam in 2024. The SAFE project focusses on support to smallholders in their transition to sustainable and deforestation-free value chains and assisting producing countries in creating an enabling environment to ensure access to the EU market.

A new **Technical Assistance Facility on deforestation-free value chains** will be launched in 2024. This is intended as a flexible instrument which will provide on-demand expertise and technical support based on the needs in partner countries. Expected areas of work include needs assessments, geolocation, land-use mapping and traceability systems.

- **Team Europe Hub on Deforestation-free Value Chains:** The TEI will establish a “Zero Deforestation Hub” - hosted under SAFE – that will provide information to all stakeholders involved on inclusive partnerships for deforestation-free value chains and enhance coordination of existing and future actions in this domain.

