Basic information

2022/0142M(NLE) NLE - Non-legislative enactments	Procedure completed
EU/Guyana Voluntary Partnership Agreement: forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber products to the EU Accompanying procedure 2022/0142(NLE) **Subject** 3.10.11 Forestry policy 3.70.01 Protection of natural resources: fauna, flora, nature, wildlife, countryside; biodiversity 3.70.18 International and regional environment protection measures and agreements 6.20.02 Export/import control, trade defence, trade barriers 6.20.03 Bilateral economic and trade agreements and relations 6.30.02 Financial and technical cooperation and assistance **Geographical area** Guyana	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
INTA International Trade	KARLSBRO Karin (Renew)	16/06/2022
	Shadow rapporteur WARBORN Jörgen (EPP) KUMPULA-NATRI Miapetra (S&D) HAUTALA Heidi (Greens/EFA) TARCZYŃSKI Dominik (ECR) MAUREL Emmanuel (The Left)	

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
DEVE Development	RIVASI Michèle (Greens/EFA)	13/07/2022

Council of the European Union

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner

International Cooperation and Development	URPILAINEN Jutta

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
20/10/2022	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
24/01/2023	Vote in committee		
01/02/2023	Committee report tabled for plenary	A9-0018/2023	Summary
14/02/2023	Decision by Parliament	T9-0034/2023	Summary
14/02/2023	Results of vote in Parliament		
14/02/2023	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2022/0142M(NLE)
Procedure type	NLE - Non-legislative enactments
Procedure subtype	Motion for a resolution under consent procedure
Amendments and repeals	Accompanying procedure 2022/0142(NLE)
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 107-p2
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	INTA/9/10084

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE736.518	15/09/2022	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE737.307	13/10/2022	
Committee opinion	DEVE	PE735.508	14/10/2022	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A9-0018/2023	01/02/2023	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T9-0034/2023	14/02/2023	

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2023)228	12/05/2023	

Additional information		
Source	Document	Date
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

EU/Guyana Voluntary Partnership Agreement: forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber products to the EU

2022/0142M(NLE) - 14/02/2023 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 575 votes to 9, with 61 abstentions, a non-legislative resolution on the draft Council decision on the conclusion of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Co-operative Republic of Guyana on forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber products to the European Union.

In November 2018, the European Union and Guyana concluded their negotiations on a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT). On 10 March 2022, Guyana and the EU agreed on an updated Joint Implementation Framework (JIF), a detailed roadmap for the implementation of the VPA, which aims to improve forest governance and enable the monitoring of legal timber trade.

Benefits of VPA

Parliament strongly supports the conclusion of the FLEGT VPA negotiations between the EU and Guyana which has great significance for the country, as well as potential for boosting EU-Guyana trade relations.

The VPA will ensure that only legally harvested timber is imported into the EU from Guyana, **promote sustainable forest management practices and sustainable trade in legally produced timber**, improve forest governance, law enforcement (including labour and occupational health and safety obligations), human rights, transparency, accountability and institutional resilience in Guyana.

Members recalled that approximately 84 % of Guyana's land is covered by forests. Moreover, Guyana has one of the highest levels of biodiversity in the world with Guyana's forests are estimated to be home to around 8 000 plant species and over 1 000 species of terrestrial vertebrates. The VPA will protect **biodiversity** and help achieve sustainable development goals, while contributing to improved trade relations between Guyana and the EU. The VPA also provides an excellent opportunity to **stimulate job creation** in the forestry sector.

Multi-stakeholder involvement

The resolution stressed that the implementation and monitoring stages require genuine consultation and multi-stakeholder involvement, including the meaningful participation of civil society, business representatives, workers' organisations and local and indigenous communities in decision-making to guarantee respect of land tenure rights and the 'free, prior and informed consent' principle.

Tackle fraud and corruption

Stressing that poor governance and corruption in the forestry sector accelerate illegal logging and forest degradation, Members consider that the success of governance, trade and law enforcement in forestry is also dependent on combating corruption and fraud of all kinds throughout the timber supply chain. They called on the Government of Guyana to improve data collection to better implement the traceability system and to continue its efforts to stop widespread corruption and combat other factors fuelling illegal logging and forest degradation. They also stressed the need to **end impunity** in the forestry sector by protecting environmental human rights defenders and whistleblowers and ensuring effective remedies for human rights violations.

Local communities and indigenous peoples

The resolution stressed the importance of ensuring effective land protection and full recognition of the customary rights of local communities and indigenous peoples, including Amerindian communities, from a social justice perspective, as well as granting them the right to give or withhold consent to any timber concessions on their lands. The EU should build upon the traditional knowledge of indigenous people and other local communities regarding sustainable forest management.

Curb mining

Members recalled the importance of mining as a major driver of tropical deforestation resulting in substantial soil erosion and contamination, increased forest fragmentation and mercury pollution of rivers and streams. Noting that Guyana is developing its oil, gas and mining industries, they called on the Guyanese government to take further steps to curb illegal mining.

Logistical and technical support

The Commission is invited to provide sufficient **capacity-building** and logistical and technical support in the framework of present and future development cooperation instruments in order to enable Guyana to fulfil the commitments under the VPA. It is also called upon to report regularly to

the European Parliament on the implementation of the agreement, to allow for an informed decision when the delegated act authorising the acceptance of FLEGT licences is proposed. Members therefore stressed that **new voluntary partnership agreements** with other partners should be promoted.

EU/Guyana Voluntary Partnership Agreement: forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber products to the EU

2022/0142M(NLE) - 01/02/2023 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on International Trade adopted a report by Karin KARLSBRO (Renew, SE) containing a motion for a non-legislative resolution on the draft Council decision on the conclusion of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the Co-operative Republic of Guyana on forest law enforcement, governance and trade in timber products to the European Union.

In November 2018, the European Union and Guyana concluded their negotiations on a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT). On 10 March 2022, Guyana and the EU agreed on an updated Joint Implementation Framework (JIF), a detailed roadmap for the implementation of the VPA, which aims to improve forest governance and enable the monitoring of legal timber trade.

The report strongly supports the conclusion of the FLEGT VPA negotiations between the EU and Guyana. The VPA will ensure that only legally harvested timber is imported into the EU from Guyana, promote sustainable forest management practices and sustainable trade in legally produced timber, improve forest governance, law enforcement (including labour and occupational health and safety obligations), human rights, transparency, accountability and institutional resilience in Guyana.

The VPA will protect biodiversity (Guyana's forests are reportedly home to some 8 000 plant species and over 1 000 species of terrestrial vertebrates) and help achieve sustainable development goals, while contributing to improved trade relations between Guyana and the EU.

The report stressed that the implementation and monitoring stages require **genuine consultation and multi-stakeholder involvement**, including the meaningful participation of civil society, business representatives, workers' organisations and local and indigenous communities in decision-making. It is important to establish partnerships and cooperation mechanisms to jointly address the issue of forest governance in all its aspects, including information sharing.

Members stressed that the success of governance, trade and law enforcement in forestry is also dependent on **combating corruption and fraud** of all kinds throughout the timber supply chain. They called on the Government of Guyana to improve data collection to better implement the traceability system and to continue its efforts to stop widespread corruption and combat other factors fuelling illegal logging and forest degradation.

They also stressed the need to end impunity in the forestry sector by protecting environmental human rights defenders and whistleblowers and ensuring effective remedies for human rights violations.

The report stressed the importance of ensuring effective land protection and **full recognition of the customary rights of local communities and indigenous peoples**, including Amerindian communities, from a social justice perspective, as well as granting them the right to give or withhold consent to any timber concessions on their lands.

Members recalled the importance of **mining** as a major driver of tropical deforestation. Noting that Guyana is developing its oil, gas and mining industries, they called on the Guyanese government to take further steps to curb illegal mining.

The Commission is invited to provide **sufficient capacity-building** and logistical and technical support in the framework of present and future development cooperation instruments in order to enable Guyana to fulfil the commitments under the VPA. It is also called upon to report regularly to the European Parliament on the implementation of the agreement, to allow for an informed decision when the delegated act authorising the acceptance of FLEGT licences is proposed. Members therefore stressed that new voluntary partnership agreements with other partners should be promoted.