

Jessika Roswall
EU Commissioner for Environment, Water Resilience and
a Competitive Circular Economy
Rue de la Loi / Wetstraat 200
1049 Brussels

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Protection of Romanian primary and primeval forests – status of infringement proceedings and use of satellite-based monitoring

Dear Commissioner Roswall,

Romania is home to a significant proportion of the European Union's last remaining large areas of primary and primeval forests. These ecosystems are of paramount importance for biodiversity, climate protection and the long-term resilience of our natural resources. Nevertheless, numerous reports, scientific analyses and civil society research indicate that illegal logging continues on a significant scale, including in some Natura 2000 areas.

In February 2020, the European Commission launched infringement proceedings against Romania for breaches of EU environmental law. However, given the continuing reports of illegal logging, the question arises as to how effective the existing instruments are and whether additional measures are needed to ensure the enforcement of European environmental law.

Against this background, we would ask you to answer the following questions:

1. Does the Commission systematically use satellite imagery as evidence in environmental infringement proceedings? If so, is this instrument also being used in the ongoing proceedings against Romania?
2. If satellite data is used, from which sources does the Commission accept such information? Is only government data taken into account, or also data from non-governmental organisations and independently evaluated data, such as from the European Earth observation programme Copernicus?
3. What other investigative and control instruments is the Commission using in the proceedings? Are its own on-site inspections, audits or independent investigations being carried out?
4. What factors have led to the infringement proceedings dragging on for several years? What specific next steps and what timeframe are planned to ensure the full implementation of EU environmental law in Romania?

The protection of European forests is a core concern of European biodiversity and climate policy. The credibility of the European legal framework depends largely on the consistent prosecution and sanctioning of infringements. We therefore request a transparent presentation of the current status and the planned further measures.

Yours sincerely,



Chantal Kopf, Member of the German Bundestag (Alliance 90/The Greens)



Martin Häusling, Member of the European Parliament (Greens/EFA, Germany)



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