

Thursday 23 April 2009

Deforestation and forest degradation

P6_TA(2009)0306

European Parliament resolution of 23 April 2009 on addressing the challenges of deforestation and forest degradation to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss

(2010/C 184 E/08)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission Communication of 17 October 2008 entitled 'Addressing the challenges of deforestation and forest degradation to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss' (COM(2008)0645),
 - having regard to the decisions taken at the Fifth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe held in November 2007 in Warsaw, Poland on assessing the effects of climate change on the state of forests and on a policy for a sustainable forest economy,
 - having regard to Rule 103(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
 - A. whereas the EU wishes to limit global warming to 2 °C and to halve biodiversity loss; whereas the Eliasch Review estimates that USD 17-33 billion will be required annually to halve deforestation by 2030,
 - B. whereas a sustainable forest economy is of vital importance in combating deforestation and is an essential aspect of economic development,
 - C. whereas deforestation accounts for some 20 % of global greenhouse gas emissions, is a major driver of biodiversity loss and constitutes a serious threat to development and, in particular, to the livelihoods of the poor,
 - D. whereas deforestation occurs at the alarming rate of 13 million hectares per year, primarily in tropical forests, but also to a certain extent in Europe, especially Central and Eastern Europe,
 - E. whereas deforestation results in environmental damage which is hard to reverse, such as long-term disruption of water conditions, steppe-formation and desertification, and biodiversity loss, the overall economic costs of which far exceed expenditure on protection and improvement measures,
 - F. whereas forest degradation takes different forms and is difficult to define, but has major impacts on climate, biodiversity and goods and services,
 - G. whereas a significant deviation from 'business-as-usual' emissions growth in developing countries, including a reduction in emissions related to deforestation, needs to be achieved in addition to a 25-40 % reduction in industrialised countries by 2020 compared to 1990 to limit global warming to 2 °C, according to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change,
 - H. whereas reducing deforestation will play an important role as regards not only climate change mitigation but also adaptation to climate change,
1. Stresses the need for more coherence between forest conservation and sustainable management policies and other EU internal and external policies; calls for a quantified evaluation of the impact on forests of EU policies such as energy (especially biofuels), agriculture, sustainable production and consumption, procurement, trade and development cooperation;

Thursday 23 April 2009

2. Calls on the Commission to present to Parliament and the Council proposals for stringent Community sustainability requirements for all timber and timber products sourced from forests;
3. Calls on the Commission to publish by the end of 2009 a comprehensive study assessing the impact of EU production, consumption and trade in both food and non-food commodities on deforestation and forest degradation; calls for the study to evaluate and specify any negative contribution by different industry sectors and make recommendations for further policy and innovation, in order to reduce such impacts;
4. Points out that problems relating to water conditions must be dealt with carefully in the context of the forest economy, and points to the vital need for joint development of forest and water resources and harmonisation of the relevant EU policies, with a view to restoring and improving the water retention capacity of ecosystems;
5. Welcomes green public procurement (GPP) policies and the promotion of instruments such as eco-labelling and forest certification schemes; calls for the swift adoption and implementation of GPP policies for wood products across the EU; calls on the Member States to base their public procurement policy on high sustainability standards and accordingly to set realistic targets in relation to such standards;
6. Considers that significant financial support must be provided to developing countries to halt gross tropical deforestation by 2020 at the latest, and that demonstration of commitment to this will be decisive in the international negotiations for a comprehensive global post-2012 climate agreement;
7. Recognises that mobilising sufficient funding under a global climate deal will be absolutely crucial for halving and eventually halting global deforestation; supports, in this context, the Commission's proposal to create a Global Forest Carbon Mechanism (GFCM) within the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, based on a permanent financing scheme; calls on Member States to back up their commitment to halting global deforestation and forest degradation by earmarking a significant part of the auctioning revenues from the EU emissions trading scheme (ETS) for reducing deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries and by focusing the negotiations on funding sources as outlined in the Commission Communication of 28 January 2009 entitled 'Towards a comprehensive climate change agreement in Copenhagen' (COM(2009)0039); calls on Member States to support the Commission's proposal to embrace the funding proposal made by Norway and to allocate part of future revenues from auctioning of Assigned Amount Units to the GFCM;
8. Advocates that the support provided via the GFCM should be performance-based and provided on the basis of verified results in terms of reduction of gross deforestation and forest degradation; stresses that this support should also provide co-benefits in terms of biodiversity protection, increased resilience, and improved livelihoods in forest regions;
9. Emphasises the need to fully respect the rights of local forest people including indigenous peoples' right to free, prior and informed consent to the use of forests customarily used by them; considers it essential that local communities and indigenous peoples are involved in a meaningful and comprehensive way at all stages when measures for reduced emissions from forest degradation and deforestation are being assessed, planned and implemented;
10. Stresses that any mechanism under the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries that is concluded as part of the post-2012 international climate agreement should first and foremost ensure that old-growth forests are protected;
11. Notes that the process of deforestation in Eastern Europe is contributing to the degradation of the natural environment and also affecting, inter alia, quality of life;

Thursday 23 April 2009

12. Notes that forest credits in the carbon market could, in the medium and long term, be part of a mix of policies addressing deforestation, if accurate forest carbon accounting methodologies and reliable monitoring mechanisms can be ensured; stresses that a final decision regarding the inclusion of forest credits in the ETS should be taken following a rigorous analysis of the feasibility of all potential funding mechanisms and an evaluation of the outcome of the Copenhagen Conference of the Parties and of the conclusions drawn from the pilot projects;

13. Recalls that any credits from forest projects that are used to offset greenhouse gas emissions in industrialised countries cannot be double-counted towards the deviation targets from 'business as usual' that developing countries are expected to commit to in the post-2012 international climate agreement;

14. Points out that any system of compensation for reducing deforestation and forest degradation under a future climate regime must take into account not only carbon sinks but also the ecosystem services and social benefits provided by forests;

15. Calls on the EU to promote strong social and environmental standards for reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation (REDD); calls on the EU to advocate REDD mechanisms that go beyond the current Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) project approach and address underlying causes of deforestation, such as poor governance, poverty, corruption and lack of law enforcement, by supporting policy and institutional reform at both local and national levels;

16. Regrets that the Communication, contrary to its title, does not deal with forest degradation; calls on the Commission to develop action plans and pilot projects and to show commitment in its own forestry policy to stopping not only deforestation but also forest degradation (including in the European Union) by also developing and establishing proper monitoring systems in order to obtain appropriate data on soil and biomass in forests;

17. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission and to the governments and parliaments of the Member States.

Action plan on urban mobility

P6_TA(2009)0307

European Parliament resolution of 23 April 2009 on an action plan on urban mobility (2008/2217(INI))

(2010/C 184 E/09)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission Green Paper of 25 September 2007 entitled 'Towards a new culture for urban mobility' (COM(2007)0551),
- having regard to the Commission White Paper of 12 September 2001 entitled 'European transport policy for 2010: time to decide' (COM(2001)0370),
- having regard to the Commission Communication of 18 October 2007 entitled 'Freight Transport Logistics Action Plan' (COM(2007)0607),
- having regard to the Commission Communication of 17 September 2007 entitled 'Towards Europe-wide Safer, Cleaner and Efficient Mobility: The First Intelligent Car Report' (COM(2007)0541),