

PRESS RELEASE

Launch of the Community of Practice on the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR)

The EU Sustainable Supply Chains Coalition (EU SSCC) and the European Forest Institute (EFI) announce today the launch of the **Community of Practice (CoP) on the EU Regulation on Deforestation-Free Products (EUDR)**. This new public-private initiative aims to strengthen collaboration, enhance operational readiness, share best practices and support the practical implementation of the EUDR across global supply chains.

The landmark EU deforestation law is set to enter into force at the end of 2026. Bringing together companies, producers, civil-society organisations, EUDR Competent Authorities, and the European Commission, the Community of Practice aims to strengthen EUDR preparedness and facilitate the Regulation's effective implementation, once it becomes applicable.

Introduced for the first time, this initiative will provide a unique technical forum that will help identifying implementation challenges, test practical solutions, and exchange knowledge to facilitate the application of the regulation.

Supporting practical implementation during a crucial phase

Across agricultural and timber value chains, public and private actors – including companies, producers and national authorities - have made substantial investments in traceability, risk-management systems, digital data infrastructure and national monitoring mechanisms in preparation for the EUDR. These efforts reflect a strong commitment to meeting the regulation's requirements and sustaining access to EU markets.

The Community of Practice responds to the widespread need for technical support, **providing a forum for open, constructive discussions** where stakeholders can address remaining challenges, test practical solutions, identify best practice and build a shared understanding of the Regulation's requirements and ways to address them. A particular priority is ensuring that smallholder farmers and other stakeholders benefit from practical guidance and targeted capacity-strengthening, helping EU operators and their supply chains achieve effective and inclusive EUDR compliance.

Open introductory session of the Community of Practice

The Community of Practice was officially launched today during a session attended by a wide range of stakeholders, including representatives from the European Commission, EU Member State Competent Authorities, companies, civil-society organisations, producer-country partners and technical experts.

The session opened with welcome and introductory statements from the organisers and key institutional partners, highlighting the shared commitment to advancing practical EUDR implementation.

EFI then presented **examples of key implementation challenges and emerging best practices** identified through recent EUDR dry runs. These examples helped illustrate the types of operational challenges and solutions the CoP will explore during its technical sessions, including traceability and geolocation requirements, smallholder inclusion, data quality, and interoperability between tools.

Participants were invited to contribute through an **interactive survey**, gathering early insights on priority themes, common challenges and expectations for the CoP's work programme. The survey results will help structure the technical agenda for 2026, ensuring it aligns with the real needs expressed by companies, Competent Authorities and producer-country partners.

How the Community of Practice works

The CoP will convene a **core group of up to 25 technical members** representing the seven EUDR commodities, SMEs, EU operators, NGOs, certification initiatives and EUDR competent authorities. This group will meet for technical sessions between March and December 2026. Sessions will follow a hands-on approach and will be co-facilitated by the Coalition and EFI, leveraging its technical expertise and its work in more than 20 partner countries.

Key insights will be captured in **publicly available reports** to ensure transparency and broader knowledge-sharing across the wider stakeholder community. These insights will also feed into practical outputs and development of best practices and other resources, helping stakeholders address challenges, strengthening EU operators' due diligence systems and informing EU policy makers on EUDR implementation across supply chains.

To stay informed on progress and upcoming outputs, interested individuals can [sign up to receive updates](#) from the Community of Practice.

Quotes

Francesco Tramontin, Vice President Global Public Affairs at Ferrero

"Ferrero has long invested in responsible sourcing and traceability, and we fully support the ambition of the EUDR. What companies need now is a space to jointly understand challenges, pilot solutions, and share what works. The Community of Practice provides exactly that. We see it as a valuable opportunity to collaborate across sectors and with authorities, ensuring that compliance efforts translate into real, on-the-ground impact that benefits farmers, forests, and consumers."

Antonie Fountain, Sustainability Leader, VOICE Network (cocoa) & VOCAL Alliance (coffee)

"For years we have advocated for supply chains that are not only deforestation-free but also fair for farmers. The EUDR represents a major step forward. A Community of Practice built on transparency, shared learning, and technical problem-solving is exactly what is needed. I welcome this initiative, and I hope it becomes a space where difficult questions can be asked, innovative solutions can be tested, and the voices of producers are heard."

Marta Angoloti Benavides, Head of Unit, Ministry for the Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge (MITECO)

"Spain has been fully committed to advancing the effective implementation of the EUDR since its approval in 2023 with the creation of an informal technical group at EU level. Having a common understanding of the text and fostering the alignment and coordination of Competent Authorities is essential to have a level playing field. To continue with this approach, a platform like the Community of Practice is extremely valuable, as it allows us to exchange technical insights and to identify common implementation challenges in a transparent and constructive manner".

Kathelijne De Ridder, coordinator of the EUTR/EUDR inspection team, Directorate-General for the Environment, Federal Public Service Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment (Belgium)

"By working together with companies, NGOs and other competent authorities, with the support of the European Commission, we aim to clarify several outstanding issues and find common solutions to effectively implement the EUDR and achieve its goals while providing legal certainty and clarity. This joint approach should lead to broadly supported outcomes."

Robert Mavsar, Director of the European Forest Institute

"The EU Deforestation Regulation marks an important shift in how global value chains operate. Sustainability is no longer a niche concern but a core condition for market access and long-term

competitiveness. The success of the EUDR will depend on practical, real-world implementation and on building trust through transparent, evidence-based systems. By convening this Community of Practice, EFI aims to create a trusted space where companies, authorities, civil society and producer countries can work together to address challenges, share solutions and ensure that the transition to deforestation-free supply chains delivers real benefits for forests, farmers and markets.”

Background

About the European Forest Institute (EFI)

The **European Forest Institute** is an international organisation conducting forest-related research, policy support and knowledge exchange. EFI brings together a diverse network of member organisations, including research institutes, universities, public bodies and civil-society organisations from across Europe and beyond. EFI also hosts the Technical Facility on Deforestation-free Value Chains, which supports partner countries in strengthening governance, improving traceability, and building capacity for sustainable, deforestation-free commodity production.

www.efi.int

About the EU Sustainable Supply Chains Coalition (EU SSCC)

The **EU Sustainable Supply Chains Coalition** is a grouping of companies, NGOs and multi-stakeholder organisations working across cocoa, coffee, palm oil, rubber, timber, soy and beef supply chains. Its mission is to support sustainable, inclusive agricultural and timber commodity supply chains, with a focus on smallholder farmers, responsible sourcing, living incomes, and the prevention of deforestation, environmental degradation and human rights abuses.

<https://voicenetwork.cc/sscc/>

Contact

Duncan Brack, freelance Environmental Policy Analyst and Adviser, and facilitator of the EU Sustainable Supply Chains Coalition, dbrack@dbrack.org.uk
