

Chair Report

Forum: Environmental Council

Issue: The Issue of Limiting Deforestation Due to Commercial Interest

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Introduction

Deforestation is one of the most urgently discussed topics among the concerns of climate change. While it is a very much-known fact that deforestation is a critical issue affecting the environment, the ways in which humans, businesses, and governments manage and utilize forest resources is a crucial and negotiable issue to be addressed.

Although deforestation is considered as a salient issue to the environment amongst society, ensuring security for the world's forests plays an integral role in fighting climate change as just the Amazon rainforest is capable of consuming 2.4 billion metric tons of CO₂ each year.

Despite the benefits of maintaining healthy forests across the world, we will yet have to face the reality of the growing population, businesses' refusal to abandon such resources, and the lack of agreements or programs to stop the destruction of forests.

Definition of Key Terms

Hypothesis:

"a supposition or proposed explanation made on the basis of limited evidence as a starting point for further investigation."

Estimate:

"roughly calculate or judge the value, number, quantity, or extent of."

Sustainable:

"able to be maintained at a certain rate or level."

27-nation bloc:

"The political and economic union of 27 member states located in Europe (The EU)"

Legislation:

“laws, considered collectively.”

Background Information

Through many scientific hypotheses, it is estimated that the world’s rainforests will be gone by 2100. To this, companies became more aware of the issues surrounding deforestation, and zero-deforestation commitments. However, despite the countless attempts that have been implemented, the complexity and shallow supply chains revolving around businesses slackened actual improvements. Companies must find other sustainable and alternative supplies to operate with in order to prevent turnovers that could reach billions of dollars in the future. Estimations have been made that over US\$906 billion in turnovers could occur annually.

Other aspects of commercial interest affecting deforestation includes illegal logging. Due to their warmth, texture, and cultural heritage, trees are one of the most targeted among manufacturers and local furniture businesses for commercial benefits making it very difficult to persuade member nations involved in this sector to transition to other materials with no specific plan or cooperation. So far, the UN Environment Programme has presented reports where estimates of twenty to forty percent of global timber trade are derived from illegal sources. This will eventually affect one in four people around the world who rely on forest resources for other purposes as well as economic losses which can range from US\$30-\$100 billion dollars.

This agenda can also intertwine with the 3rd topic “The Issue of Protecting Biodiversity in Natural Environments” as over 80% of the world’s remaining biodiversity relies on forests.

Major Parties Involved

EU:

Pledge of halting forest loss and land degradation in 2030 by the EU at the Glasgow Climate Change Conference. Approvements from the European Parliament are still in the waiting, however, plans are already being constructed as it is expected to be implemented by May or June 2023.

However, there have been concerns surrounding the regulations proposed by the EU such as restricting trade products worldwide. Canada pointed out how such requirements will create walls for Canadian exporters, therefore affecting the economy. To this, the EU has been negotiating the submitted legislation that was highly encouraged and supported by the EU parliament and presented that the Regulation will include enforcing solutions where companies and trade partners will be able to verify that their products are deforestation-free and imported to 27-nation blocs.

US:

Different aspects of Laws such as the Endangered Species Act, the Wilderness Act, the Lacey Act and the Roadless Rule have been presented by the US to protect the forests and to prevent illegal wood production and products to set foot in the U.S Marketplace.

Lacey Act (US): The original Act bans trafficking in illegal wildlife; the amended Act is the world's first law to ban the trade in illegally sourced wood products. This will naturally discourage member nations to collect illegal materials such as wood due to the existence of an official law of illegalizing illegally sourced products.

Roadless Rule regulation was designed in 2001 consisting of Forest Service regulations prohibiting most timber extraction and road developments. Large-scale logging and mining are also included in the policy and are implemented on 58 million acres in the US's national forests.

Brazil:

Brazil historically holds the highest deforestation rate in the world since the 1970s as they have lost over 17 percent of the Brazilian Amazon since. However, Brazil faces the conflicts of two sides between member nations who rely on commercial farming/mining for living and indigenous communities who live in the Amazon fighting for rainforest rights and security.

To this, Brazil's government has been creating Action Plans for the Control of Deforestation as but not limited to enhancing environmental monitoring through enhanced data and rates to reduce time lags ensuring more accuracy in information.

Timeline of Key Events

Date	Event
1950	Transamazon Highway developments Major clearing of trees occurs as the Belem-Brasilia Highway opens. The highway opened up paths for small farmers to settle, soon bringing in other federal governments that started official projects.
1994	Establishment of UNCCD to protect and restore land Framework set to address desertification was established to reverse ruined properties, ensure security and protect the lands
2003	EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade Action Plan This enforcement set to focus on developing countries, controlling illegal logging and reducing the trade in illegal timber. The conventions are built around participation, partnership, and decentralization. Commitments to take records of the impacts of land degradation in order to provide food, water, and other survival necessities to everyone.

2007 April 28	UN's adoption of new International Agreement to protect world's forests After long discussions of 15 years, a landmark agreement is established on international forest policy and cooperation
2019 Dec 2 - 13	UN agencies commit to turn the tide on deforestation Set goals of helping countries reduce deforestation and emphasized the crucial aspects of promoting sustainable management of all types of forests.
2021 Oct 31- Nov 12	COP26 held promising to reverse deforestation by 2030. Governments of 28 countries committed to removing deforestation from the global trade of food. Pledges have been signed by Canada, Brazil, Russia, Indonesia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, The US, the UK, and 138 other countries.

Related UN Treaties and Events

- Glasgow Climate Pact (Out come of COP26 concerence)
- Paris Agreement 2015
- The International Arrangement on Forests (IAF)
- ECOSOC Resolution on International Arrangement on Forests beyond 2015

Possible solutions/Past Actions

- Implementing and funding to Space technology
 - Latest versions of free piece software: Management Effectiveness Tool
 - Trains managers involved in movements for fighting against deforestation
 - Collect good data + analyzing data to make better decisions
 - FAO's Framework for Ecosystem Monitoring (Ferm)
 - Use of satellite images to identify changes to forests around the world.
 - Accessible to anyone with access to internet
- Promoting products made of sustainable materials.
 - Public awareness campaigns through electronic and print media as well as educational institutions encouraging the public to minimize purchase of timber, palm oil using products
- Collaboration with a not-for profit charity or organization such as CDP (Disclosure Insight Action)
 - L'Oreal, worldwide cosmetic company commits to using 100% renewable raw materials.
 - McDonalds' using geospatial mapping to track origins of beef sourced in Brazil all the way to the last farm. CDP's support enhanced this system of providing support to the suppliers to improve their practices.

- Encourage other worldwide companies to communicate and work with suppliers
- Ensure timely and fair compensating laws in an appropriate matter for those involved in illegal logging activities.
 - Complicated and long-term negotiating needed between countries, companies and consumers

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