

**Question for written answer P-001789/2019  
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: Myanmar teak and enforcement of the EU Timber Regulation

Since 2017, a Commission Expert Group<sup>1</sup> has concluded, in respect of teak from Myanmar, that 'none of the assurances that the Member State competent authorities have received can be relied upon as sufficient for demonstration of compliance with the EUTR'. Despite this, a Myanmar official recently proclaimed that the country has exported 77 199 tons of teak, with the European Union taking all of it.

A recent Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) report<sup>2</sup> exposes high-level corruption in Myanmar's teak trade, and how EUTR enforcement in countries such as Germany and Belgium has prompted teak importers to re-route shipments via Italy, where enforcement is perceived as weaker. Numerous operators reportedly use middlemen to import for them in a bid to evade EUTR liabilities, but their role in procuring and placing the wood has not otherwise changed. EIA also recently filed a formal substantiated concern against a German importer.

How much teak was imported from Myanmar into the EU by Member States in 2018, and how do these imports compare to 2017?

How is the Commission ensuring that Member States work together to prevent operators from evading EUTR enforcement by re-routing imports through other Member States?

How will the Commission assess whether Member States are also applying the EUTR to those operators found to be re-routing their shipments via Italy?

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<sup>1</sup> Commission Expert Group on the EU Timber Regulation (EUTR) and the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade Regulation (FLEGT).

<sup>2</sup> 'State of Corruption: The top-level conspiracy behind the global trade in Myanmar's stolen teak', February 2019.