

**Question for written answer E-005243/2014
to the Commission**

Rule 117

Yannick Jadot (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Cameroon-EU bilateral agreement on forest law enforcement, governance and trade (FLEGT) - case of concession to SG Sustainable Oils Cameroon (SGSOC)

According to information obtained through numerous reports, a palm oil project developed by the US-owned company Herakles Farms and its local subsidiary SG Sustainable Oils Cameroon (SGSOC) will lead to the conversion of a vast area of rainforest for palm oil, impacting thousands of people dependent on the forest for their livelihoods, and violating national and international law. Evidence has been presented of illegal logging in the concession area allocated to SGSOC. Logs are reportedly being marked in a way that indicates they are intended for commercial sale and eventually for export to foreign markets.

1. Does the Commission think that the Herakles Farms/SGSOC case undermines the Cameroon-EU bilateral agreement on FLEGT and violates the spirit and the text of this bilateral agreement?
2. What action will the Commission take in regard to the Herakles Farms/SGSOC case to ensure that the credibility of the VPA signed with Cameroon will not be affected?
3. Will the Commission ask Cameroonian authorities to undertake a full investigation to identify infringements? What will the Commission do if the Cameroonian authorities do not react positively to this request in a reasonable time? What action will the Commission take if the investigation concludes that infringements to the FLEGT bilateral agreement have occurred?
4. In the short term, what do the Commission and Member States plan to do to ensure that timber that was illegally harvested in the Herakles Farms/SGSOC concession is not commercialised and exported to the EU or other international markets?
5. Is the Commission satisfied with the pace of reform and details of the implementation of the FLEGT partnership agreement in Cameroon? Is the participation and involvement of civil society organisations in this phase of the process sufficiently secured?
6. More generally, can you tell us what concrete measures have been taken to reduce the risk of forest conversion and verify the legality of conversion timber in VPA countries?