

**Priority question for written answer P-000591/2023
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: What steps will the Commission take to stop the illegal export of protected oak to China?

The European Green Deal¹, the EU's biodiversity strategy² and the new EU forest strategy for 2030³ highlight the central role played by forests and foresters in protecting the environment. In 2021, the Commission pledged to plant at least 3 billion additional trees in the EU by 2030⁴. In a proposal for a regulation, it stressed that the EU's impact in terms of deforestation could be reduced by importing and exporting forest products responsibly, and it even set the ambitious goal to become 'deforestation free'⁵.

However, investigative journalists at Disclose have uncovered a vast timber-laundering network involving Chinese traders, French distributors and shell companies who have been circumventing the 'EU processed'⁶ labelling scheme to illegally ship protected oak to China^{7,8}.

1. Is the Commission aware of this investigation?
2. Is the Commission planning any measures to stop the plundering of our forest resources, which has increased since 2017 on account of the Chinese Government's decision to end intensive exploitation and commercial felling in its own natural forests?

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¹ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en

² https://environment.ec.europa.eu/strategy/biodiversity-strategy-2030_en

³ https://commission.europa.eu/document/cf3294e1-8358-4c93-8de4-3e1503b95201_en

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/environment/pdf/forests/swd_3bn_trees.pdf

⁵ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2022/06/28/council-agrees-on-new-rules-to-drive-down-deforestation-and-forest-degradation/>

⁶ https://franceboisforet.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Label-UE_Vulgarisation-V5.pdf

⁷ <https://disclose.ngo/fr/article/trafic-de-bois-etat-ferme-les-yeux-sur-le-pillage-des-forets-publiques-francaises>

⁸ <https://disclose.ngo/fr/article/infiltration-au-coeur-du-traffic-illegal-de-bois-entre-france-et-chine>