



Frans TIMMERMANS
First Vice-President of the European Commission

Jyrki KATAINEN
Vice-President of the European Commission

Brussels, **26 JUL. 2019**

Dear Honourable Member,

Thank you for your email of 12 July 2019 and warmest congratulations on your re-election.

The Commission recognises the need to step up action to tackle deforestation and forest degradation and has published a Communication to protect and restore the world's forests.

The Communication adopted on 23 July 2019 proposes ways to reinforce EU action to protect forests, in particular primary forests, and regenerate forests in a sustainable and responsible way. The overall aim is to increase the world's forest cover, to improve people's health and livelihoods and ensure a healthy planet for future generations.

We recognise that primary forests require special attention as they are particularly affected by deforestation. While afforestation and restoration of degraded forestlands can help to reduce the pressure on natural forests and be an effective additional defence in our battle against climate change, they cannot replace primary forests, which have high carbon sink, and are characterised by their great age, unique ecological features and the established protection they provide to biodiversity. This is why the fight against deforestation and forest degradation remains the central element of the Communication.

We look forward to continuing our work with the European Parliament on this important matter.

Yours faithfully,

Frans Timmermans

Jyrki Katainen

Ms Heidi Hautala, MEP
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