

Proposal for a delay is a welcome step to enable implementation of the deforestation regulation.

EuroCommerce has welcomed the proposed amendment, announced today by the European Commission, to postpone the application date for the EU deforestation regulation by one year, and call on the Parliament and Council to swiftly endorse it. A delay has been requested by us and many other sectors affected by the regulation to allow more time for proper preparation, including working with our suppliers in Europe and overseas. We can only repeat our full support for the objectives of the regulation and are grateful that the Commission acknowledges our concerns regarding compliance and possible supply chain disruptions.

More clarity is especially important for the retail and wholesale sector at the end of the supply chain, daily trading hundreds of thousands of products in scope, and working with hundreds of suppliers at company level. We will carefully analyse the guidance document and updated FAQ published today, which should give our members the much-needed direction for the application of the rules. Nevertheless, the need to accelerate preparation and early access to the information system remains to allow full integration in, and testing of the business systems and to conduct the necessary training. We ask the Commission to continue to work closely with stakeholders to make sure the rules and systems are practicable and proportionate to the objectives sought.

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EuroCommerce is the principal European organisation representing the retail and wholesale sector. It embraces national associations in 27 countries and 5 million companies, including leading global players and many small businesses. Over a billion times a day, retailers and wholesalers distribute goods and provide an essential service to millions of business and individual customers. The sector generates 1 in 7 jobs, offering a varied career to 26 million Europeans, many of them young people. It also supports millions of further jobs throughout the supply chain, from small local suppliers to international businesses. EuroCommerce is the recognised European social partner for the retail and wholesale sector.