



EUROPEAN
COMMISSION

Brussels, 17.10.2024
C(2024) 7378 final

COMMISSION DECISION

of 17.10.2024

**on the signature on behalf of the European Union of the Memorandum of
Understanding on a Forest Partnership between the European Union and the Republic
of Gabon**

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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Whereas:

- (1) Article 17(1) of the Treaty on European Union lists the powers of the Commission and provides in particular that the Commission is to ensure the Union's external representation, with the exception of the common foreign and security policy and other cases provided for in the Treaties.
- (2) In May 2003, the Commission adopted the Communication to the Council and the European Parliament Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) EU action plan¹, which called for measures to address illegal logging through improved governance and regulatory framework.
- (3) In July 2019, the Commission adopted the Communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on Stepping up EU Action to Protect and Restore the World's Forests², which called for working in partnership with producing countries to reduce pressures on forests and fight deforestation.
- (4) In 2021, the European Union and the Republic of Gabon identified forest as one of the priority sector of their cooperation. A Forest Partnership, in the form of Memorandum of Understanding, will strengthen the policy dialogue on forest and accelerate the achievement of EU and Gabon's respective commitments towards the Agenda 2030, the Paris Agreement, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the reduction of poverty.
- (5) In March 2023, discussions took place between representatives of the Commission and of the Republic of Gabon Ministry of Water, Forests, Sea and Environment with a view to drawing up a non-binding instrument setting out political commitments with regard to the development of the forest sector in Gabon. The Memorandum of Understanding on a Forest Partnership is the result of those discussions.
- (6) The Council has been kept informed of the discussions and of the envisaged date for signature.
- (7) The Memorandum of Understanding on a Forest Partnership does not, nor is it intended to, create any legal obligations on either side under domestic or international law.

¹ COM(2003) 251.

² COM/2019/352 final

- (8) Given the interest of the Union in the development of the sustainable forest sector in Gabon, it is appropriate to sign the Memorandum of Understanding on a Forest Partnership.
- (9) It is necessary to submit the Memorandum of Understanding on a Forest Partnership to the Council for endorsement, prior to its signing by the Commission on behalf of the Union,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

The Memorandum of Understanding on a Forest Partnership between the European Union and the Republic of Gabon, as attached to this Decision, is approved.

The text of the Memorandum of Understanding on a Forest Partnership between the European Union and the Republic of Gabon is submitted to the Council for endorsement.

Article 2

The Member of the Commission responsible for International Partnerships or the person designated by her is authorised to sign the Memorandum of Understanding on a Forest Partnership on behalf of the Union, after its endorsement by the Council.

Done at Brussels, 17.10.2024

For the Commission
Jutta URPILAINEN
Member of the Commission