



Summary of the Public Consultation Stepping up EU Action against Deforestation and Forest Degradation

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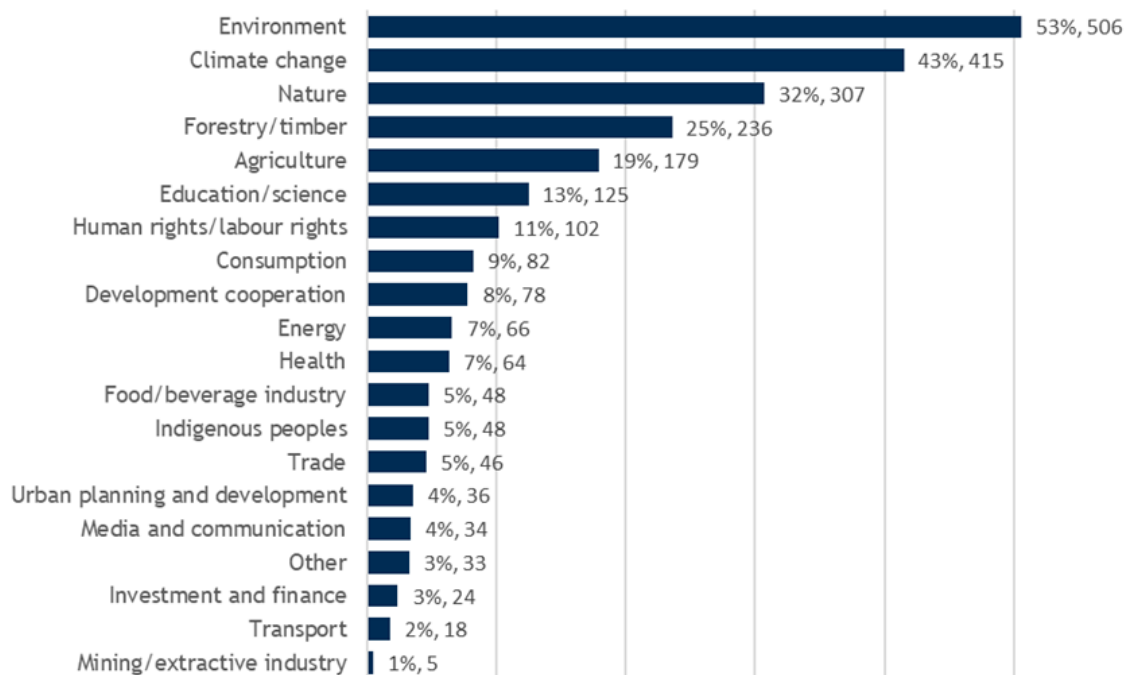
The public consultation was open from 14 January 2019 until 25 February 2019. It received 955 responses, including 97 attachments. This summary report presents the headline results from the public consultation, under each section of the survey questionnaire.

Section I. Specific information about the respondent

Most respondents answered as EU citizens (60%). The next largest categories were non-governmental organisation (10%), company/business organisation (10%), forester (4.4%), environmental organisation (4.1%), academic/research institution (3.9%), public authority (2.1%), non-EU citizen (2%), EU farmer (1%) and other respondent (0.3%).

The top represented countries were Germany (14%), France (12%), Poland (10%), Belgium (8%) and Italy (7%). The main fields of activity or interest selected by respondents were the environment (53%), climate change (43%), nature (32%) and forestry/timber (25%)¹, as shown in Figure 1.

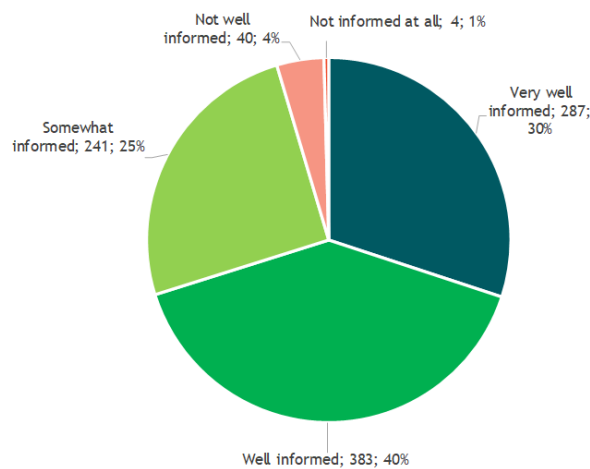
Figure 1. Main field of activity or interest of respondents



¹ Respondents could select up to 3 fields of activity or interest. Note: results are given in % and number of responses

Figure 2 shows that the majority of respondents (70%) felt they were well to very well informed about the problem of deforestation and forest degradation.

Figure 2. Level of information about the problem of deforestation and forest degradation

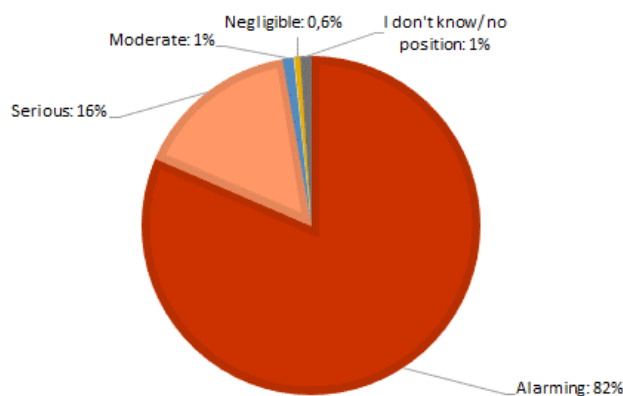


Section II. The role of forests and the problem of deforestation and forest degradation

Overall, an important proportion of respondents considered that the various roles of forests listed in Question 5² were indispensable. Respondents almost unanimously (94%) considered the role that forests play in natural systems as indispensable, followed by the importance of protecting forests for future generations (90%), the importance of forests for human well-being (90%) and their importance to absorb CO₂ and prevent global warming (86%).

As shown in Figure 3, a large majority of respondents (82%) noted that the problem of deforestation and forest degradation was alarming while 16% considered it serious. 1% of the total stated it was moderate, 1% did not know or had no opinion and 0.6% stated it was negligible.

Figure 3. Perception of the severity of the problem of deforestation and forest degradation



The direct drivers of deforestation and forest degradation selected by most respondents as important or very important were the expansion of large-scale commercial agriculture (93%³), followed by industrial logging/industrial forest products extraction (83%) and illegal logging (81%).

² The role of forests in natural systems, the importance of protecting forests for future generations, their importance for human well-being, to absorb CO₂ and prevent global warming, for the environmental, social and economic services they provide, the importance of protecting forests for their intrinsic and cultural value, their importance for the sustainability of rural livelihoods and for our food security.

³ Respondents could select either “very important”, “important”, “relatively important”, “not important” or “I don’t know/no opinion” for each driver. The percentage corresponds to the answers “very important” and “important”.

Among the indirect drivers, 92% of the respondents perceived weak governance of land and weak enforcement of law as important or very important, followed by weak forest protection law and adequate enforcement (90%), poor forest and land management practices (85%), the high consumption levels of forest risk commodities (83%) and increasing demand for these commodities due to population growth and increasing standards of living (83%).

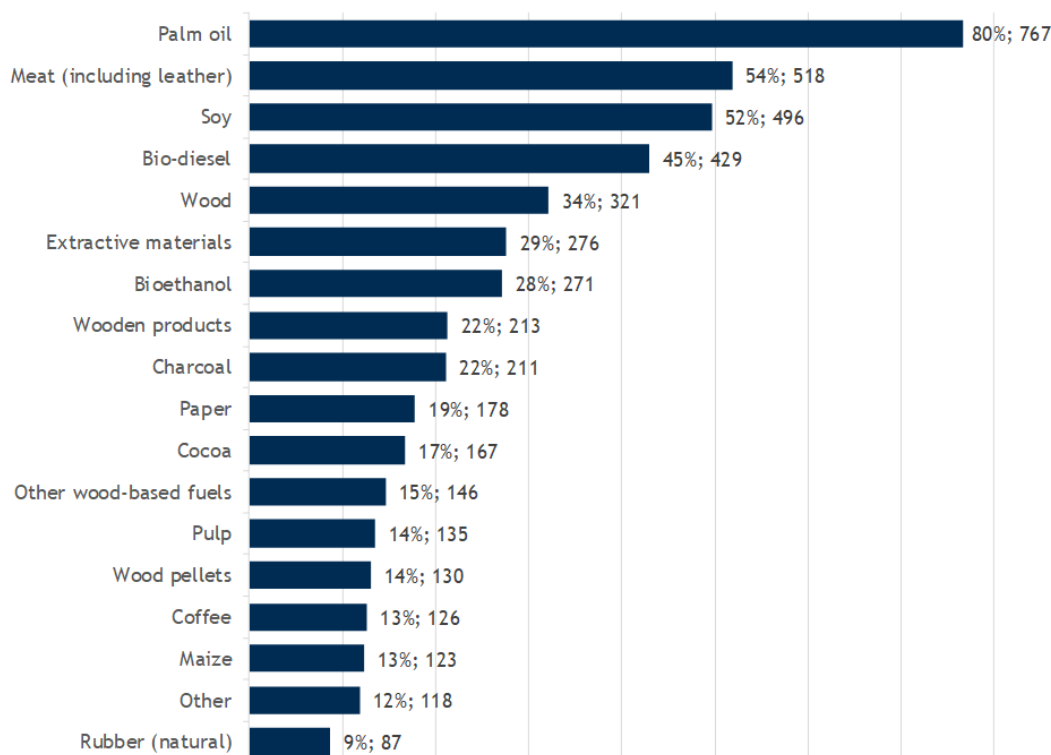
Section III. How to address the problem of deforestation and forest degradation

Most respondents considered that efforts to address deforestation and forest degradation should be stepped up at the international (88%), EU (84%) and national (79%) levels, in comparison to regional (62%) and local (62%) levels.

Most respondents (73%) did not perceive the current EU framework for tackling deforestation and forest degradation as adequate. From this share, most stakeholders (61%) viewed the development of a coherent framework to address the issue as the best option for stepping up EU action. Another 13% of those respondents considered that the EU should explore possible new initiatives building on existing policies, and 6% were of the view that the EU should better implement existing legislation and policies.

When asked about which forest-risk commodities should be addressed by an EU initiative, 80%⁴ of all respondents selected palm oil, followed by meat (54%), soy (52%), bio-diesel (45%) and wood (34%) as shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Forest-risk commodities that should be addressed by an EU initiative



Finally, respondents could rate the importance of a range of potential actions in five different questions addressing supply-side actions, demand-side actions, finance and investment actions, actions on strengthening international cooperation and dialogue and mainstreaming actions.

The top five actions perceived as very important or important were support forest policies, sustainable forest management, better protection, conservation and restoration of ecosystems

⁴ Respondents could select at most 6 forest-risk commodities.

(95%; supply-side action), include the issues of deforestation and forest degradation into EU trade agreements signed with tropical countries (95%; mainstreaming action), ensure the EU or the European Investment Bank funding do not, even indirectly, finance projects contributing to deforestation (93%; finance and investment action) and address EU consumption of unsustainably produced forest-risk commodities (91%; demand-side action).

Figure 5. Potential supply-side actions

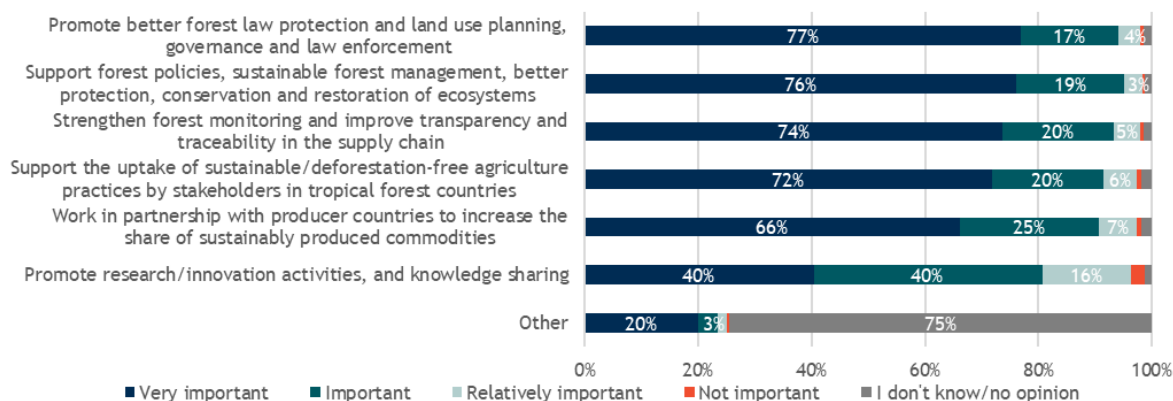


Figure 6. Potential demand-side actions

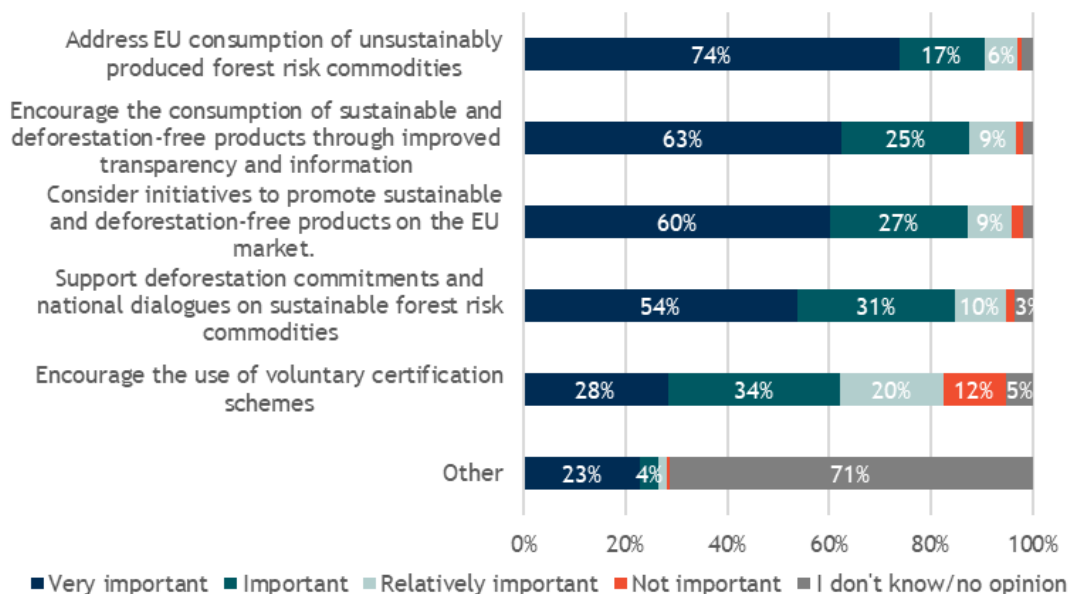


Figure 7. Potential finance and investment actions

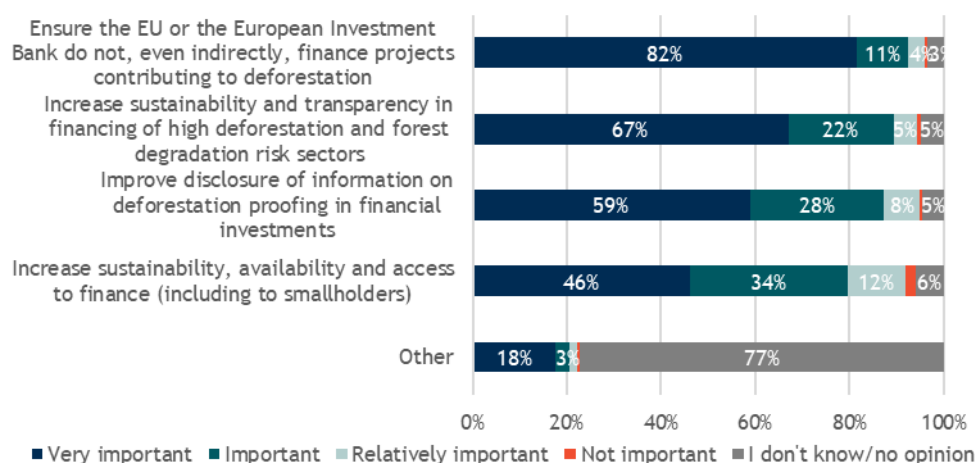


Figure 8. Potential actions to strengthen international cooperation

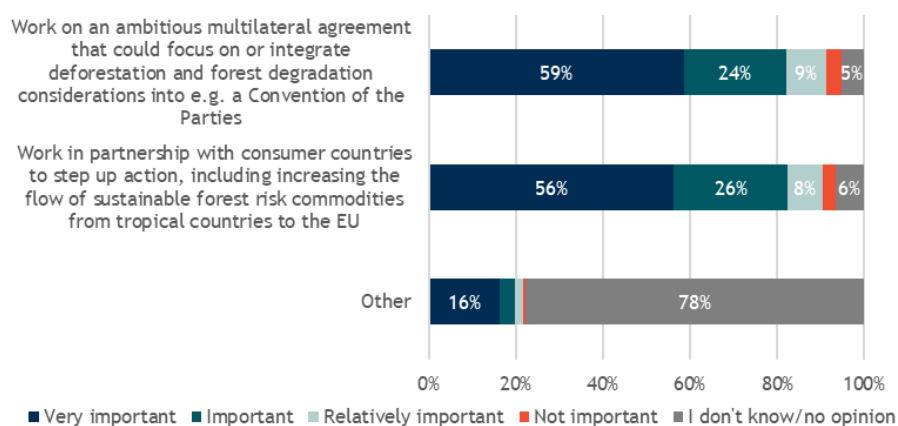


Figure 9. Potential mainstreaming actions

