

# Press Release

12 months until entry into force

## EU Deforestation Regulation: new app by Plant-for-the-Planet brings hope for smallholder farmers

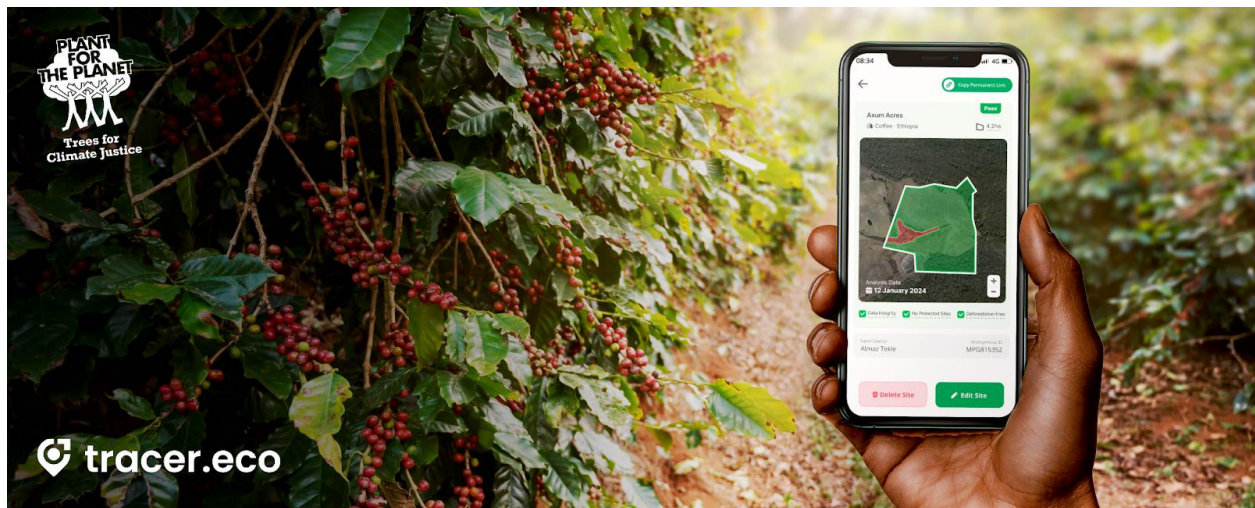
**January 24, 2024** - *"The EU regulation for deforestation-free supply chains shows that ambitious forest protection is possible! If we want to achieve our climate targets, we must do everything we can to ensure that this law is a success and that the USA and China follow the European example. But we must not forget the livelihood needs of local people!"*

- Felix Finkbeiner, founder of Plant-for-the-Planet

Many food producers in Europe have not yet found a solution for implementing the EU regulation for deforestation-free supply chains. The situation is being dramatically exacerbated by the inaction of European companies in relation to producers.

*"Companies that do not yet have a solution are jeopardizing the livelihoods of thousands of small farmers. European companies must not simply shift the responsibility onto the producers."*

- Felix Finkbeiner, founder of Plant-for-the-Planet



If companies act too late, they'll end up taking blanket measures and excluding entire cooperatives and farms from the trade, even though there are other options.

Although some companies have already developed their own monitoring systems, they do not share their data with producers, which, according to [Fairtrade](#), will lead to even more inequality in the market.

According to the [German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development](#), 90% of cocoa is grown by smallholder farmers. The land is often barely enough to secure the livelihood of farming families. However, exclusion from trade with Europe would be an economic disaster for many of these families, who are already struggling due to the consequences of global warming.

## **Tracer app from Plant-for-the-Planet offers smallholder farmers help in implementing the EUDR**

Plant-for-the-Planet is committed to ensuring that forest conservation in the Global South is always carried out together with local communities. Forest protection cannot function sustainably without taking their economic interests into account.

That is why the Plant-for-the-Planet team has been thinking about how to help small farms. The result is a new app that farmers can use free of charge.

The Tracer App gives smallholder farmers and cooperatives the opportunity to document their land themselves and to consult with their trading partners or NGOs in the event of negative results. With Plant-for-the-Planet's Tracer App, smallholder producers gain time and control over their own data and their economic fate. Cooperatives can identify potential risks themselves and take measures to ensure that they are not excluded from trade with Europe. The app can also serve as an information tool, as it provides users with the details of the new EU regulation.

Initial tests with the Tracer software using thousands of real data sets from smallholder farms showed that around 5-10% of producers do not comply with the new EU directive. Most of the smallholder farmers who took part in test series in Ghana and Mexico had never heard of the new regulation beforehand. They do not know that they are no longer allowed to clear forest if they want to continue exporting to the EU. There is therefore an urgent need for action.



*"My name is Abena Antiwaa, I am a female farmer from Dompooase, Ghana. My farm is in Bodede. I didn't know about the new law on cocoa farming until I was approached by Plant-for-the-Planet. I am happy that my farm meets the new guidelines and that I can continue to sell my cocoa for export to the EU."*

- Abena Antiwaa, cocoa farmer in Ghana

Photo: Yussif Mohammed



*"My name is Ama Dapaah, I am a single mother of three children. I am happy that I can continue to sell my cocoa and participate in trade with Europe. This secures my income and I can provide for my children."*

- Ama Dapaah, cocoa farmer in Ghana

Photo: Yussif Mohammed



*"My impression of the app and the effects of the new regulations are It will help to increase discipline when it comes to conserving forest areas.*

*It will also help to stop or regulate agricultural activities that contribute greatly to climate destruction, such as the loss of trees and other vegetation."*

- Yussif Mohammed, agricultural extension officer, Ghana

Photo: Yussif Mohammed

## How does the Tracer app work?

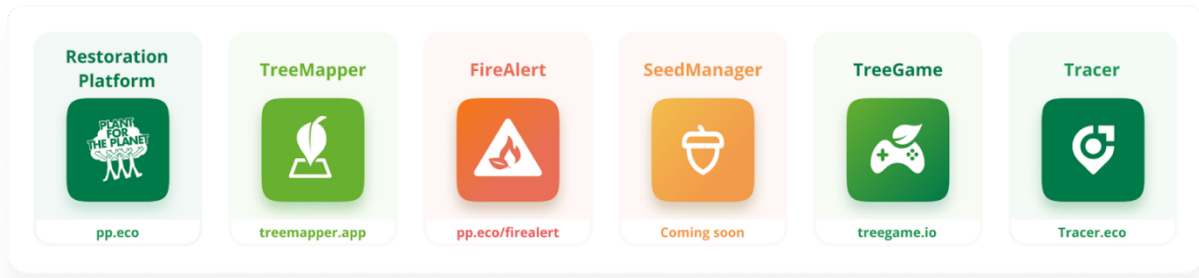
To check with Tracer, users first enter the geographical data (the polygon) of their farm into the app. The data is then checked for plausibility by a database comparison to avoid input errors. The database contains, for example, detailed information about the growing regions of the seven agricultural products concerned. ESA satellite images from today are then compared with those from before 2020 to determine that no deforestation has taken place after 2020 and that production on the plot of land is therefore EUDR-compliant. It also determines whether the farm is located within one of the world's 95,000 nature reserves.

A satellite image in the app shows which areas are not EU-compliant (see graphic above).

The data can be permanently accessed via the link and can thus be made available to trading partners.

The app can be used for all seven products covered by the new regulation, but is primarily aimed at smaller producers of cocoa and coffee.

Tracer is Plant-for-the-Planet's latest tool for forest protection and restoration. The FireAlert app was only introduced in 2023 and is now used to monitor an area larger than Brazil.



## EU regulation for deforestation-free supply chains

According to the European Union, 420 million hectares of forest have been destroyed worldwide in the three decades since 1990 - an area larger than the EU itself. The loss of forests is having a devastating impact on the climate crisis and biodiversity on Earth.

The EU regulation for deforestation-free supply chains (EUDR) is the most ambitious trade regulation for international forest protection to date. It is an essential building block in the package of measures needed to completely halt deforestation by 2030. This is an absolutely necessary step if we are still to achieve our climate targets.

The EU recognizes in the legislation that around 10% of global deforestation between 1990 and 2008 is linked to the consumption of seven agricultural products in EU countries: beef, soy, palm oil, coffee, cocoa, rubber and timber.

The EUDR makes importers in Europe responsible. From December 30, 2024, they will have to provide proof that no farmland that was cleared after 2020 or that is located in nature conservation areas is used to manufacture their products. Violations could result in import bans into the EU and severe penalties.

## About Plant-for-the-Planet

The [Plant-for-the-Planet](https://www.plant-for-the-planet.org) Foundation empowers young and old to restore forests and fight for climate justice. To do this, we [empower children and youth](#), [restore ecosystems](#), conduct [research](#), provide free [software tools](#) and [advice](#) restoration organizations around the world.