

Brussels, 24th May 2023

Honourable Prime Minister Kristersson,

Honourable President von der Leyen,

Honourable Commissioner Dombrovskis,

We urge you to re-open the EU-Mercosur Trade Agreement; this is the only way to ensure that the environment and human rights will be put at the center of the deal.

Four years of Jair Bolsonaro's destructive environmental and social policies have left Brazilian ecosystems and human rights protections in a precarious state: Deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon grew by almost 60%<sup>1</sup>, 26% of the forest show severe signs of degradation, while 20%<sup>2</sup> have already suffered irreversible losses. The election of Luiz Inácio da Silva as Brazil's new president offers hope and an enormous opportunity for fundamental social-ecological transition. The European Union could and should aid the transition to overturn Bolsonaro's brutal legacy. However, we are concerned that instead, Lula's options to seriously protect climate and human rights standards are limited and that his victory is being used to push the EU-Mercosur trade deal quickly over the line and increase the trade of the same commodities that have driven the Amazon and other ecosystems to a tipping point.

This EU-Mercosur agreement in its current form would be a disaster for sustainable agriculture, for the European Green Deal, the Paris agreement and for people on both sides of the Atlantic. An increase in imports of beef, poultry and sugar threatens to increase intensive agriculture in the Mercosur region and undermine local and regional agricultural production models in rural areas, particularly small and medium scale food producers. It would also have dramatic repercussions on European agriculture and create an unfair playing field for European producers.

In addition, by promoting massive exports of pesticides to Mercosur countries, including pesticides banned in the EU, the deal goes against the EU's own Farm to Fork strategy which aims to radically reduce the use of chemical pesticides.

The EU-Mercosur agreement would also affect food safety and consumers in the EU, as EU's precautionary principles are not incorporated in the chapter on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS): on the contrary, the chapter fast-tracks the approval of animal products intended for export. This weakens import controls, and increases public health risks.

At the same time, economic studies<sup>3</sup> show the deal would likely cause job losses in the manufacturing sector in Mercosur countries, leading to more social and economic inequality. Even the European Commission's own sustainable impact assessment admits this deal is unlikely to add a significant number of jobs in the EU. Studies<sup>4</sup> have also shown that GDP increase from the deal is negligible.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.google.com/url?q=https://oeco.org.br/noticias/amazonia-perdeu-115-mil-km%25C2%25B2-de-floresta-em-2022-aponta-inpe/&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1683810874799267&usq=AOvVaw3z7h9CCrtu827-jj1mLoA>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.google.com/url?q=https://amazonia80x2025.earth/amazonia-against-the-clock/&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1683810906284684&usq=AOvVaw2lWBspF9gKRd1gf9vzqb40>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.bu.edu/gdp/files/2021/06/GEGI\\_WP\\_052\\_FIN.pdf](https://www.bu.edu/gdp/files/2021/06/GEGI_WP_052_FIN.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

The EU-Mercosur agreement is a dinosaur deal from the last century, concluded with the Bolsonaro government. It reflects the very thinking that created the social-ecological crisis in the first place and will boost products that are driving the climate crisis. It is too late for a joint additional instrument to address the structural problems promoted by the deal that aims to increase exports of agricultural products that drive deforestation, GHG emissions and biodiversity loss.

These serious concerns shown by governments, national parliaments, farmers, environmentalists and consumers across the EU should not be bypassed via a splitting maneuver. Splitting the agreement into a trade and a political pillar poses a severe threat to our democratic processes. A full approval by all EU governments and national parliaments is a crucially important act of democracy.

We therefore urge you to refrain from splitting the EU-Mercosur deal, adopting a joint additional instrument and call on you to ensure full transparency and participation of parliamentarians and civil society by re-opening this trade agreement between the EU and Mercosur and to ensure it puts the environment and human rights at center rather than on the sideline.

Lula's presidency will not last forever, but this EU-Mercosur deal would have an impact for decades and future generations.

Yours sincerely,

MEP Thomas Waitz, Greens/EFA

MEP Yannick Jadot, Greens/EFA

MEP Anna Cavazzini, Greens/EFA

MEP Saskia Bricmont, Greens/EFA

MEP Tilly Metz, Greens/EFA

MEP Manuela Ripa, Greens/EFA

MEP Grace O'Sullivan, Greens/EFA

MEP Andreas Schieder, S&D

MEP Eric Andrieu, S&D

MEP Pascal Durand, S&D

MEP Miguel Urban Crespo, The Left

MEP Helmut Scholz, The Left

MEP Malin Bjork, The Left

MEP Mick Wallace, The Left

MEP Clare Daly, The Left