

# OPEN LETTER – Ending the destruction of Romanian forests

September 11, 2023

Dear Commissioner Sinkevičius,

**With less than a year before you leave office, we ask that you make a difference for Romanian primary and old-growth forests.**

The 10<sup>th</sup> of September 2023 marks four years since the environmental NGOs, EuroNatur, Agent Green, and ClientEarth, alerted you to the destruction of protected forests in Romania (complaint registered under reference number CHAP(2019)02656). Over the last four years, we have spent countless hours demonstrating the lack of effort the Romanian government has placed in solving this issue through life-threatening on-the-ground investigations, detailed data analysis, and legislative scrutiny. We have sent you numerous letters and reports detailing our findings. In the last two years, [only looking at 0.01% of logging permits](#), already showed that more than 60,000 cubic meters of trees were removed within 5 Natura 2000 protected areas – equivalent to 420 football fields.

Regrettably, even today, primary and old-growth forests, are still being cut without regard to their ecological, conservation and climate change relevance, without assessing the impact of the logging, and without full disclosure of these activities or their legality.

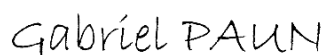
Over the last four years, you have moved through with a letter of formal notice (INFR(2020)2033) and a reasoned opinion (INFR(2020)2033), but Romania has yet to be referred to the Court of Justice of the European Union for its ongoing destruction of protected forests. Given the systemic problem, the issue will not be resolved by only conversing with Romanian authorities or trusting that they will make the needed changes; they must be held legally accountable.

We continue to implore you to impose a moratorium on ongoing logging in protected areas in Romania until all legal requirements are met. We also urge you to take this case to the Court of Justice of the European Union as soon as possible. Your term as Commissioner for the Environment will come to an end in less than a year. **It is still not too late for you to make a difference, and to end the destruction of Romanian forests.**

Kind regards,



Gabriel Schwaderer  
Executive Director  
EuroNatur



Gabi Paun,  
Executive Director  
Agent Green



Anais Berthier  
Head of ClientEarth Brussels  
ClientEarth