



**Petition to the European Parliament
(Registered by the EP under No.: 435/2007 on 20th June 2007)**

Petition to rescue the last remaining forests in Sub-Saharan Africa.

This petition is directed to the European Parliament and to the European Council. The aim of this petition is to warn European Authorities against the danger of charcoal imports from Sub-Saharan Africa. The petition is supported and put forward by Domenica Schiel and Rafael Schiel, founders of the charity First Focus Foundation (Reg. Nr. 1116518) Address: PO Box 607, Stockport, SK44WG, U.K.

We and all who have been informed by us about the current situation in Sub-Saharan Africa, are concerned that the present laws in Europe are not sufficient to save the shrinking forests in the region. We are surprised and concerned that there are no coherent laws which regulate the import of charcoal. In particular, we do not understand that a simple invoice is all that is required to gain permission to import charcoal to Europe and that there is no additional duty for specific countries. The current duty-free imports of charcoal into the EU member states attract many who wish to increase their profits without concern about the environment.

We call for an embargo on imports of charcoal from countries which do not have a policy on reforestation and from countries in which the sale of timber and charcoal could lead to a complete and irreversible disappearance of forests, as is especially the case in Sub-Saharan countries.

Problem: The greatest share of charcoal originating in these countries comes from illegal logging. This profitable business leads to shrinkage of forests and consequently facilitates desertification.

Solution: We find that in order to reduce the destruction of the environment, it is necessary for imports of charcoal to undergo strict controls.

We therefore call for the following:

1. An obligatory submission of import documentation, in order to guarantee that the import of charcoal is only permitted with a certificate of origin.
2. A regulation for every distributor of charcoal to clearly label the packaging of charcoal with information which informs the end-user about the origin of the charcoal.

This legislation would provide the end-user with the opportunity to know exactly from which forests the charcoal which he/she uses for example for barbeques, comes from.

Due to the fact that those laws are very important for the salvation of forests and so far have mostly been ignored, we intend to propose them internationally, to include USA, China, Russia, Canada, Switzerland and Japan. The petition is directly supported by WAPPES (West-African Preservation Programme for Endangered Species, Ngaraparou, Senegal), but also by many European Companies and Non-Profit associations, whose written support we will send to you by post.

Every day counts in the rescue of the last remaining forests in Sub-Saharan Africa from complete annihilation. Consequently we ask you to give our petition the highest priority.

Signed:
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First Focus Foundation