

LEGISLATIVE EVOLUTION IN THE FORESTRY FIELD IN THE PERIOD 2000-2025 IN ROMANIA

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Abstract

The forestry sector plays a crucial role in maintaining ecological balance and ensuring the natural resources necessary for sustainable development. The legislative evolution in the forestry field between 2000 and 2025 reflects the authorities' efforts to adapt the legal framework to new challenges related to forest protection, combating illegal logging, and promoting sustainable management of forest resources.

The paper analyzes the main legislative acts adopted during this period, highlighting the direct impact of legislation on biodiversity conservation, the economic development of the forestry sector, and the implementation of European strategies regarding sustainability. It also presents the challenges and future legislative perspectives, considering the new objectives regarding ecological transition and climate change.

Keywords: forestry legislation, sustainability, sustainable development, legislative challenges

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INTRODUCTION

Forests in Romania play an important role in environmental protection, biodiversity conservation, and supporting the economy. Between 2000 and 2025, forestry legislation in the country underwent significant changes, largely due to integration into the European Union and the implementation of international regulations regarding environmental protection.

These changes aimed both at protecting forest resources and promoting their sustainable management, in the face of growing economic and ecological challenges.

The adoption of new regulations, including strict measures to combat illegal logging and protect forests from the effects of climate change, has been essential for ensuring efficient and transparent management of forest resources. In this context, the present paper

aims to analyze the main legislative changes in the forestry field between 2000 and 2025 and their impact on the forestry sector in Romania.

We will analyze how legislation has contributed to more sustainable forest management and how it has responded to new ecological and economic challenges.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The materials used to write this work consist of normative acts. The methods used are legal, namely the formal method, the comparative method, the logical method and the analytical method. The use of these methods had the role of carrying out a systematic analysis of the information from the studied sources in order to elaborate the points of view, the results of the research carried out and the conclusions.

hectares of forests, Romania is one of the countries with a significant forest resource in Europe. In this context, forestry legislation has had to respond to challenges related to the management of forest resources, biodiversity protection, combating illegal logging, and promoting sustainable management.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. The General Context of Forestry Legislation in Romania

Forestry legislation in Romania operates in a dynamic context, influenced by the need to protect the environment, comply with international commitments, and meet economic requirements. With approximately 6.5 million

2. The main Legislative Acts and significant changes

2.1 The Forestry Code (Law 331/2024)

The law regulates the administration, protection, and exploitation of forests in Romania, with an emphasis on sustainability and combating illegal deforestation.

Main changes :

- **Stricter management** of public and private forest land.
- **Tougher penalties** for illegal logging and abusive exploitation.
- **New obligations** for reforestation and protection of degraded areas.
- **Clear rules** for wood exploitation and transportation.
- **Financial support** for owners who protect forests.

The purpose of the law is to protect forests by reducing illegal logging and promoting responsible management of forest resources. [1]

2.2 Law no. 1/2000

Law no. 1/2000 regulates the process of restoring property rights over agricultural and forest lands that were taken by the state or agricultural cooperatives during the communist regime. It provides:

Beneficiaries – Individuals and legal entities who were deprived of their lands, as well as their heirs.

Restored Area – Lands can be restored within the limits established by Law no. 18/1991 and other prior regulations.

Local and County Commissions – They are responsible for reviewing applications and issuing property titles.

Required Documents – Applicants must submit supporting documents, such as previous property deeds and documents proving expropriation.

Restoration Procedure – It includes stages for validation, identification of available lands, and issuance of property titles.

Special Rules for Forests – The restitution of forests to former owners is also foreseen, with certain restrictions for environmental protection.

Compensations – If restitution in kind is not possible, equivalent compensations are offered.

Significant changes :

- a) **Extension of the Right to Restoration** – The law allows the restoration of

property rights for areas larger than those provided by Law no. 18/1991, under certain conditions.

b) **Restitution of Forests** – The law introduces the possibility of fully restoring forests to former owners or their heirs, including for areas expropriated by the state before 1945.

c) **Property Titles for Individuals and Legal Entities** – The situation of legal entities that can benefit from the restoration of property rights is clarified, as well as the rights of heirs.

d) **Local and County Commissions with Expanded Responsibilities** – Commissions responsible for implementing the law are given additional duties in the process of verifying and validating applications.

e) **Clarification of Rules for Cooperativized Lands** – The law specifies how lands abusively taken by agricultural cooperatives are restored, including for individuals who were not granted land under Law no. 18/1991.

f) **New Rules for Lands That Can No Longer Be Restored** – If restitution in kind is not possible, the law introduces compensation mechanisms through equivalent value or by allocating other available lands. [2]

2.3 Law no. 171/2010

Law no. 171/2010 was adopted to combat illegal logging by introducing harsher penalties for violations of forestry regulations. In practice, this law established a clear framework for punishing illegal logging, undocumented timber transport, and non-compliance with forest management rules.

Over time, the law has been amended to address new challenges. For example, with Law no. 150/2015, fines were significantly increased, and economic operators were required to comply with stricter rules regarding timber traceability. Later, through Emergency Ordinance no. 51/2016, the measure of confiscating transport means used for the illegal transport of timber was introduced, an important step in discouraging illegal exploitation.

Another important amendment came in 2020, when Law no. 197 established tougher penalties for companies that fail to comply with forestry exploitation rules and imposed additional restrictions on timber exports. Moreover, in 2021, through Emergency Ordinance no. 85, the SUMAL 2.0 system was strengthened, so that all timber transport could

be digitally monitored in real time, improving transparency and control over forestry operations.

These changes have had a positive impact on combating illegal deforestation and increasing control over the timber industry.

However, the effective enforcement of penalties remains a challenge, particularly due to corruption and the lack of sufficient resources for regulatory authorities. [3]

2.4 Law no. 18/1991

Known also as the Land Fund Law, it had a significant impact on the restoration of property rights over land, including forests. It established the legal framework for the restitution of agricultural and forest lands to former owners or their heirs, after the nationalization period under the communist regime.

Essential Aspects of Law no. 18/1991 in the Context of the Forestry Sector:

Restoration of Property Rights Over Forests

- The law allowed former owners and their heirs to reclaim forest land confiscated by the state before 1945.

- It established local and county commissions for implementing the restitution process.

Impact on Forest Management

- With the restoration of property, many forests transitioned from state management (through Romsilva) to private individuals and legal entities.

- The new owners did not always have the capacity or interest to manage the forests sustainably, which led to excessive exploitation and uncontrolled deforestation.

Subsequent changes and additions

- Later, the law was amended several times, including by Law no. 1/2000 and Law no. 247/2005, to clarify aspects related to the areas that could be restituted and succession rights.

- To counter illegal logging, protective measures were introduced through the Forestry Code (amended in 2008 and 2015).

Thus, Law no. 18/1991 was a necessary step in restoring property rights, but it also generated issues in forest management, requiring subsequent legislative interventions to protect the national forest fund. [4]

2.5 Law no. 56/2010

It was adopted to improve the management and protection of the forest fund, with the main goal of ensuring the sustainable management of forests and preventing illegal logging. In the context of Romania facing an alarming increase in deforestation, this law introduced strict measures for controlling exploitation and holding forest owners accountable, whether in the public or private sector.

One of the most important aspects regulated by the law was the mandatory implementation of sustainable management plans, ensuring the regeneration of exploited areas and compliance with environmental protection standards. Thus, forest managers, whether public institutions or private individuals, were subject to clear obligations regarding exploitation and replanting.

Additionally, Law no. 56/2010 brought greater transparency to the forestry exploitation process, imposing severe penalties for violations of the regulations. These included high fines for illegal logging and unauthorized timber transport, as well as the confiscation of timber obtained through illegal practices. Another key element was the expansion of the responsibilities of control authorities, such as the Forest Guard, which was given enhanced powers to inspect operations and enforce penalties.

To respond to new challenges in the forestry sector, the law has been amended several times. Law no. 133/2015 strengthened the rules regarding timber traceability, requiring that each timber transport be more strictly monitored and verified. Additionally, Emergency Ordinance no. 32/2017 established harsher penalties for economic operators who fail to comply with rules regarding the record-keeping of exploitations, while Law no. 201/2020 reinforced the use of the digital SUMAL 2.0 system to monitor timber transports.

These amendments had a positive impact, improving the traceability of timber and reducing cases of illegal exploitation. However, the effective enforcement of penalties remains a challenge, as corruption and the lack of resources for thorough checks have continued to allow illegal activities.

Law no. 56/2010 was an important step toward the protection of forests in Romania, and its amendments have contributed to the

improvement of control mechanisms. However, for its effects to be felt in the long term, a firm application of its provisions is necessary, alongside additional investments in monitoring and digital surveillance of forestry operations. [5]

2.6 Law no. 100/2010

It was adopted to improve the legal framework for the sustainable management of forests, aligning with European standards on environmental protection and the responsible exploitation of forest resources. It brought significant changes to forest fund management, regulating exploitation, conservation, and protection of forests.

Key Provisions of Law no. 100/2010:

Strengthening Forest Protection Regime

- Introduction of strict measures to prevent illegal deforestation and control forest exploitation.
- Expansion of areas where logging is prohibited or restricted, especially in virgin and near-virgin forests.

Sustainable Management of Forest Resources

- Promotion of selective logging to maintain ecological balance.
- Increased requirements for reforestation and natural regeneration of areas affected by logging.

Improvement of Control and Sanctioning Mechanisms

- Toughening of penalties for illegal logging and unauthorized timber transport.
- Introduction of additional measures for monitoring forestry activities through the use of digital technologies.

Alignment with European Union Standards

- The law was drafted to comply with the EU Forest Policy, in line with European directives on biodiversity and forest protection.
- It encouraged forest certification through international standards, such as FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) and PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification).

Therefore, Law no. 100/2010 was an important step toward forest protection and sustainable exploitation, but its effective implementation faced difficulties due to administrative challenges and economic interests in the timber industry. [6]

2.7 Law no. 107/2011

It was adopted to amend and supplement the existing legislation in the forestry and environmental protection sectors, with the main goal of strengthening conservation measures for natural resources and improving their management.

This law brought significant changes in the administration of forest resources, the responsibilities of authorities, and the penalties for violating environmental protection norms.

One of the main changes brought by Law no. 107/2011 was the introduction of stricter regulations regarding the protection of water and forest ecosystems, considering that forest degradation had a direct negative impact on water quality and biodiversity. In this sense, new obligations were established for forest owners and local authorities, who were made responsible for preventing deforestation and managing resources sustainably.

Another important aspect of the law was the increase in transparency in the management of the forest fund by imposing stricter requirements for reporting and authorizing forestry operations. This was a necessary measure in the context of Romania facing a high level of illegal exploitation, where the lack of effective monitoring mechanisms facilitated illegal practices.

Over time, Law no. 107/2011 was amended to better address the challenges in the forestry sector. One of the most significant amendments was made through Emergency Ordinance no. 68/2016, which imposed stricter penalties for illegal logging and strengthened the powers of the Forest Guard regarding the verification of forestry activities. Through this ordinance, authorities gained more effective tools for monitoring timber transport and penalizing companies that violate the law.

Another important amendment took place in 2020 with Law no. 234/2020, which complemented previous provisions by introducing clear rules on timber exploitation and forest regeneration. This law established that every forestry operation must be followed by reforestation measures, and owners who fail to comply with these obligations can face severe penalties. Additionally, clearer criteria were introduced for assessing the environmental impact of logging activities, which allowed for better resource management.

Law no. 107/2011 and its amendments represented an important step towards sustainable forest management and

environmental protection, but its rigorous application depends on better collaboration between authorities, increased investment in monitoring, and the strengthening of penalties for those who do not comply with forestry legislation. [7]

2.8 Law no. 192/2010

It was adopted with the goal of improving the legislative framework regarding the management and protection of the forest fund, establishing stricter rules for the exploitation, conservation, and regeneration of forests. This came as a response to major issues caused by illegal deforestation and the poor management of forest resources, aiming to create a balance between economic exploitation and the need to protect the environment.

One of the central elements of the law was the introduction of harsher penalties for illegal logging, as well as for the transportation and commercialization of timber without origin documents. Additionally, the law brought changes regarding the obligations of forest fund managers, imposing stricter requirements for reporting exploitations and for implementing regeneration plans for the exploited areas.

Subsequent Amendments to Law No. 192/2010

Law no. 149/2015:

- Increased fines for illegal logging, making it harder to avoid penalties through legislative loopholes.
- Imposed stricter controls on forestry companies, requiring them to demonstrate the legality of their operations through the full traceability of timber.

Emergency Ordinance No. 51/2016:

- Introduced measures for the confiscation of transportation means used in illegal logging and timber transport activities.
- Stipulated that forests within protected areas must be managed with special regulations, limiting their exploitation.

Law no. 234/2019:

- Established the obligation that all timber transportations be electronically monitored through the SUMAL system, reducing the risk of falsifying origin documents.
- Strengthened the responsibility of control authorities, granting the Forest Guard extended powers to verify forestry activities.

Emergency Ordinance No. 102/2020:

- Introduced clear regulations regarding forest exploitation during the breeding seasons

of protected species, to minimize the impact on biodiversity.

- Toughened penalties for those who do not comply with forest regeneration rules after exploitation, obliging them to restore degraded areas within strict deadlines. [8]

2.9 Law no. 252/2018

It was adopted as part of efforts to strengthen the legislative framework regarding the protection and sustainable management of the national forest fund. This law complemented the Forest Code and other regulations in the field, with the main goal of improving control mechanisms and forest protection.

Main Amendments Introduced by Law No. 252/2018:

Strengthening Measures to Combat Illegal Exploitation

- The law introduced new sanctions for illegal logging and the unauthorized transportation of timber, tightening the contravention regime.
- It imposed stricter checks on economic operators engaged in timber exploitation, transport, and commercialization activities.

Strengthening the Forest Exploitation Monitoring System

- It established the obligation to use the SUMAL system for timber traceability, thereby preventing the falsification of origin documents.
- It introduced new criteria for assessing the impact of forest exploitation on biodiversity and the surrounding environment.

Supporting Reforestation Initiatives

- The law established clearer rules for forest regeneration after exploitation, imposing strict deadlines for restoring deforested areas.
- It created financial support mechanisms for forest owners who implement conservation and reforestation programs.

Increasing the Role of Control Authorities

- The law granted extended powers to the Forest Guard, providing it with additional competences for checking timber transport and sanctioning violations.
- It established the obligation for local institutions to collaborate with national authorities in combating illegal exploitation. [9]

2.10 Law no. 269/2018

It was adopted to improve and clarify the legal framework of the forest fund, with the main goal of facilitating access to forested land for public and private projects without compromising their protection. The

amendments introduced by this law have generated both support and controversy, with some experts perceiving it as an attempt to excessively relax forestry legislation.

Main Amendments Introduced by Law No. 269/2018:

- Permission for Permanent Removal from the Forest Fund for Public Interest
- The law modified the conditions under which certain forested lands can be permanently removed from the forestry circuit, particularly for infrastructure projects (highways, railways, utility networks). This change was justified by the need to allow the development of major projects but raised concerns about potential abuses in land allocation.
- Regulation of Compensation for Land Removed from the Forest Fund
- The normative act established the obligation for beneficiaries to provide equivalent areas for reforestation as a compensatory measure. It introduced the mechanism for evaluating the impact on the forest fund to minimize ecological losses.
- Facilities for Developing Tourist Infrastructure
- The law allowed, under certain conditions, the use of forested lands for tourism and recreational development, arguing that this measure supports the economic development of local communities. However, this amendment was criticized by environmental organizations, which warned of the risk of excessive deforestation in protected areas. [10]

2.11 Law no. 374/2006

It regulates the management of the forest fund and the protection of forests, with the main objective of ensuring a balance between the exploitation of forest resources and the need for environmental conservation. Subsequent amendments to this law have had a significant impact on the control of forestry operations, the responsibility of economic operators, and the increase of sanctions for forestry offenses.

Main Amendments Introduced by Law No. 374/2006:

Strengthening the Sanctioning Regime for Illegal Logging

One of the most important amendments was the tightening of sanctions for illegal logging, with higher fines and more severe penalties for those who violate forestry regulations. The purpose of this amendment was to discourage illegal exploitation; however,

the application of sanctions was often hindered by the lack of resources and administrative capacity.

Increasing the Powers of the Forest Guard

The revised law provided more competences to the control institutions, especially the Forest Guard, allowing quicker interventions in case of suspicions of illegal exploitation. This measure was appreciated because it allowed better monitoring, but it faced implementation challenges due to insufficient personnel.

Obligation of Traceability for Timber

The amendments introduced the mandatory use of the electronic monitoring system for timber transport (SUMAL), so that each stage of logging, transportation, and commercialization of timber could be tracked. While this measure is effective in combating fraud, its implementation was sometimes circumvented through document falsification or illegal logging in less monitored areas.

Stricter Rules for the Regeneration of the Forest Fund

The law set clearer obligations for reforesting exploited land, including strict deadlines for restoring deforested areas. This amendment was an important step to ensure the continuity of the forest fund, but implementation proved difficult in areas where private landowners lacked resources for reforestation. [11]

2.12 Law no. 407/2006

It regulates how hunting and the management of wildlife are conducted in Romania, with the main goal of protecting the game population and preventing ecological imbalances. Over time, this law has been amended to address challenges related to species conservation, combating poaching, and reducing conflicts between humans and wildlife.

One of the important amendments concerned hunting periods for certain species, ensuring that these periods are more closely aligned with scientific data on animal populations. For example, for declining species, stricter restrictions or even bans were imposed in accordance with European regulations.

Another major change was related to poaching penalties, with increased fines and the introduction of more severe punishments for those who violate hunting rules. These measures were necessary because, in many cases, previous

sanctions did not sufficiently deter illegal activities.

Furthermore, greater emphasis was placed on the responsible management of the game population, requiring managers to take steps to protect habitats and provide food for animals during critical periods. This change was important for maintaining ecological balance and preventing the overpopulation of certain species that could become harmful.

Additionally, the revised law established clearer rules regarding the participation of foreign citizens in hunting activities in Romania, in order to prevent the exploitation of hunting resources without adhering to local regulations. These measures were introduced after cases of excessive hunting of protected species, such as the brown bear, were reported.

Lastly, the amendments included measures for managing conflicts between humans and wildlife, providing local authorities with more tools to prevent damage caused by species like bears or wild boars. Thus, faster procedures were established for intervention in case of attacks on households or agricultural crops.

The amendments to Law No. 407/2006 aimed to increase wildlife protection, prevent illegal hunting, and balance environmental interests with economic ones. However, the implementation of these changes remains a challenge, requiring additional resources for monitoring and better collaboration between authorities, local communities, and environmental organizations. [12]

3. Evolution of Forestry Legislation in Relation to European and International Regulations

Between 2000 and 2025, forestry legislation in Romania has been significantly influenced by European and international legislation. European forestry law is a complex framework consisting of European Union (EU) regulations, international conventions, and harmonized national laws, all aimed at protecting forests, promoting sustainable management, and combating illegal deforestation.

Main Pillars of European Forestry Legislation:

a) EU Forestry Policy

The EU does not have a common forestry policy but supports member states through:

- Strategies (e.g., EU Forest Strategy 2030): The EU develops common strategies to guide member states in key areas (environment, economy, energy, etc.), providing clear directions, objectives, and support (legislative, ethical, financial). The EU Forest Strategy 2023 is part of the European Green Deal, aiming at forest protection, sustainable management, and restoration.

- Funding through CAP (Common Agricultural Policy): CAP is the EU's primary tool for supporting agriculture and rural development, providing direct subsidies to farmers for stable and sustainable income. Member states implement CAP through national strategic plans, using EU funds.

- b) Indirect regulations (environment, climate, biodiversity)

- c) EU Forest Strategy (2021–2030)

This strategy :

- Supports the sustainable management of
- Encourages afforestation and reforestation

- Aims at digital forest monitoring (satellite technologies)

- d) Includes a legal framework for forest observation, reporting, and data collection

- e) International Conventions

- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) – adopted in 1992 at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. Its main goals are: the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of biological resources, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources. It is an international agreement signed by over 190 countries, including the EU and its member states.

- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) – adopted in 1992 at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, aiming to limit the impact of climate change caused by human activities.

- Forest Europe (Helsinki Process) – pan-European cooperation for sustainable forests. It is a voluntary cooperation process among over 40 European countries and the EU, initiated in 1990. It develops guidelines, criteria, and common indicators for the protection and responsible use of forests.

3.1 European directives on biodiversity and natural resource management have had a significant impact on how Romania has regulated and managed its forests:

- Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora played an important role in protecting species of fauna and flora in Romania's forests. [13]

- Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds introduced measures for the protection of birds' natural habitats and was implemented into national legislation. [14]

- Directive 2008/98/EC on waste management imposed rules for the handling of residues resulting from forestry activities. [15]

- Directive (EU) 2018/851 of 30 May 2018 amending Directive 2008/98/EC on waste updates the EU waste rules, promoting a circular economy. It sets more ambitious recycling targets, clarifies key definitions, and strengthens producer responsibility for products that become waste. Emphasis is placed on waste prevention—especially food waste—on separate waste collection, and on reducing environmental pollution. Member states are required to invest in efficient systems and improve monitoring of waste management. [16]

- Directive 2006/105/EC adapts several EU environmental laws to include Bulgaria and Romania, following their accession to the EU on January 1, 2007. It introduces technical and administrative changes to ensure that environmental protection legislation is also applicable in these two countries. [17]

3.2 Forest Certification

Another important aspect of the evolution of forestry legislation has been the integration of forest certification systems such as the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC), which have encouraged the adoption of sustainable forest management practices. These certifications are important both for environmental protection and for promoting international timber markets.

3.3 Regulation (EU) 2018/841 of 30 May 2018

This regulation sets out how greenhouse gas emissions and removals from land use, land use change, and forestry (the LULUCF sector) are to be accounted for within the EU's climate policies up to 2030. Its purpose is to contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the Paris Agreement, by

ensuring a balance between emissions from sources and removals by forests, soils, and other ecosystems. The regulation requires Member States to monitor, report, and ensure that, overall, this sector does not generate net emissions.

Clear rules were introduced for the accounting of land categories (afforested, deforested, cultivated, etc.), harvested wood products, and the impact of natural disturbances. The regulation also provides Member States with a certain degree of flexibility in meeting their targets. [18]

3.4 Regulation (EU) No 995/2010 of 20 October 2010

This regulation was adopted to address growing concerns about illegal logging and its impact on climate, biodiversity, and fair trade. It introduced, for the first time at the EU level, the legal obligation for operators placing timber and timber products on the internal market to ensure that they do not originate from illegal sources, through the application of a "due diligence" system.

The regulation represented a key step in the fight against illegal deforestation, complementing earlier initiatives such as the Voluntary Partnership Agreements (FLEGT) and international forestry collaborations. It established a solid framework for timber traceability and introduced official controls, sanctions, and the recognition of monitoring organizations that assist operators in implementing the requirements. Over the years, the effectiveness of the regulation has been periodically reviewed, taking into account practical experience and market needs, including those of SMEs. Although it remained a central tool of European environmental policy, it was increasingly considered insufficient in the face of new global challenges.

As a result, in 2023, the European Union adopted a new regulation (No 1115/2023), which provides for the progressive repeal of Regulation 995/2010 by 31 December 2028. This marks a transition to a stricter and more comprehensive system, which will regulate not only the legality but also the ecological and social impact of forestry products placed on the market. [19]

3.5 Regulation (EU) No 1115/31 May 2023

This regulation replaces Regulation (EU) No

995/2010 and aims to stop deforestation and forest degradation caused by the production

and consumption of key products (such as timber, soy, palm oil, cocoa, coffee, beef, and rubber). It prohibits the introduction into the EU market or the export of products that contribute to deforestation if they originate from land that has been deforested or degraded after 31 December 2020.

The regulation introduces a strict "due diligence" system for operators, who must

It is part of the **European Green Deal** and supports the transition to sustainable

3.6 Regulation (EU) No 3084/04 December 2024

This regulation establishes the operation of the information system required for the implementation of **Regulation (EU) 2023/1115** on the prevention of deforestation and forest degradation. This system, integrated into the TRACES platform, will be used by operators, traders, and authorities to manage and verify due diligence declarations related to products at risk of deforestation.

The regulation details the procedures for registration, user access, assignment of

3.7 Regulation (EU) No 3234/19 December 2024

This regulation amends Regulation (EU) 2023/1115, postponing by 12 months the application of obligations for operators, traders, and competent authorities. As a result, the key provisions of the regulation on the prevention of deforestation will apply from 30 December 2025, instead of 2024 as initially planned.

4. Challenges and Recent Changes

4.1 Illegal Logging

Despite legislative measures, illegal logging has continued to be a major challenge in Romania. The implementation of information systems, such as SUMAL 2.0 – a national monitoring system for logging, was a significant response to this issue. This system has allowed real-time tracking of timber transport and has been an important tool in the fight against illegal logging.

demonstrate that the products are not linked to deforestation and comply with the legislation of the countries of origin. Requirements for traceability, geolocation of the land of origin, and public reporting are imposed. Emphasis is also placed on the respect for human rights, particularly those of indigenous peoples.

and responsible trade, with a global impact on forest protection. [20]

reference numbers, risk assessment, as well as conditions for modification or rejection of declarations. It also places particular emphasis on the protection of personal data and the security of information within the system. The system will be available in all EU languages and is designed to ensure transparency, traceability, and efficient cooperation between Member States in the fight against the trade of deforestation-related products. [21]

The amendment provides more time for Member States and economic operators to prepare, including for implementing due diligence systems. At the same time, the deadline for classifying countries as low or high-risk has been postponed by 6 months, and the repeal of the old **Regulation 995/2010** has been adjusted accordingly. [22]

4.2 Climate Change and Forest Protection

Another important topic at this time is the impact of climate change on forests in Romania. Forest legislation has evolved to include measures for protecting forests from the effects of climate change by promoting more resilient and efficient management practices. As a result, additional regulations have been introduced to protect vulnerable forests and to manage them in a sustainable manner.

5. Future Perspectives of Forest Legislation

5.1 Green Legislation and the Promotion of a Circular Economy

Between 2025 and 2030, forest legislation will need to adapt to the new

challenges posed by the ecological transition and circular economies. These will require

additional regulations concerning the reuse and recycling of wood resources, as well as stricter forest protection measures.

5.2 Technological Innovations and Forest Management

Technology will play an important role in the future of forest legislation. Monitoring information systems, drones, and satellite

technologies will facilitate more efficient and sustainable forest management, and legislation will need to adapt to these new technological realities.

CONCLUSIONS

The evolution of forest legislation in Romania between 2000 and 2025 has been marked by significant progress in the regulation and protection of forests, but also by challenges in their implementation. In the coming period, legislation will need to address not only economic and ecological requirements but also the new challenges posed by climate change and the rapid development of technologies.

The continuation of reforms and the adaptation of legislation to the international and national context will be essential for the protection and efficient management of forests in Romania in the coming years.

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