

Fight Climate Change in Our Communities and Globally While Promoting Justice



Support the New York Tropical Deforestation-Free Procurement Act

Climate Justice Demands that We Act

Due to the global nature of climate change, and despite the passage of the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act and other vital initiatives, New Yorkers are in harm's way of deadly heat waves, life-threatening storms, and severe economic climate impacts. New Yorkers are also impacted by the interconnected global biodiversity and justice crises. Making matters worse is the horrifying reality that people of color, the poor, and Indigenous Peoples both within and outside of the Empire State are the most impacted by these crises.

The time has come to ensure that the commodities New York purchases with taxpayers' dollars are not exacerbating the climate, biodiversity, and justice crises. A first logical step is to protect tropical rainforests. Without tropical rainforests, we are unlikely ever to stabilize our climate and maintain global biodiversity.

Moreover, there is a direct link between tropical deforestation and human rights violations that flow from the production of commodities like tropical lumber, soy, palm oil, and chocolate. New York should move from being complicit with the purchasing of harmful commodities to taking climate justice leadership for New Yorkers and the world.

We Urge Your Support for S.4859/A.5682, the New York Tropical Deforestation-Free Procurement Act

For decades, New York has been successfully implementing common-sense procurement reforms, from labor protections to buying cleaner vehicles. In short, S.4859/A.5682 will ensure that state and local government procurement does not drive tropical deforestation, tropical primary forest degradation, or associated abuses of the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local tropical communities. Similar legislative efforts are occurring in jurisdictions worldwide, including deforestation-free regulations enacted in the European Union in December 2022.

S.4859/A.5682 is Common-Sense Legislation

Bill highlights:

- Requires state contractors who deal in forest-risk commodities to certify that their products don't drive tropical deforestation or degradation by providing data to the state and the public demonstrating supply chain due diligence to their products' points of origin.
- Closes loopholes in a 30-year-old state law limiting the government's use of tropical hardwoods.
- Gives a bidding preference to small, medium-sized, and minority-and-women-owned businesses.
- Creates a supply chain transparency assistance program to support New York-based small, medium-sized, and women and minority-owned enterprises to achieve ethical supply chains for forest-risk products. This program will be administered by Empire State Development.
- Requires a minimum of two representatives from indigenous tropical communities within the relevant geographic areas, along with representatives from business and civil society, to be part of a Stakeholder Advisory Group to ensure robust implementation.
- Defines "forest-risk commodities" to include soy, beef, palm oil, coffee, cocoa, wood pulp, paper, and wood products, with other commodities considered over time by the Office of General Services.

Global Justice

The impacts of tropical deforestation are felt most acutely by Indigenous Peoples whose lands, cultures, and livelihoods are inextricably linked to the forests where they live. This bill would require suppliers to New York State agencies and authorities to ensure that their supply chains are not linked to abuses of Indigenous Peoples' rights. Most large contractors in the sectors covered by this bill have already adopted commitments to adhere to global standards of Free Prior and Informed Consent in their operations. This bill would help ensure those commitments are upheld.

Supply-Chain Transparency

By creating a statute to require state contractors to certify that they are not contributing to tropical forest degradation or deforestation directly or through their supply chains, the New York Tropical Deforestation-

Free Procurement Act will boost growing supply-chain transparency efforts in the affected industries and close loopholes in existing statutes that limit the purchase of tropical hardwoods by the state and local governments.

New York Should Be a Leader

Keeping tropical forests standing is essential to countering the climate crisis, which is crucial to save New Yorkers from superstorms, floods, heatwaves, and more. These forests are also home to irreplaceable cultures and countless species at risk of extinction. By ensuring that the products New York State buys do not contribute to the destruction of Earth's most vital ecosystems and the communities that depend on them, NY procurement can help save global forests. In turn, global forests can save New Yorkers – and the rest of humanity.

