

Positioning Malaysia as a Low-Risk Country: An Evidence-Based Case for EUDR Classification

CHIEW WEI PUAH* AND MEILINA ONG ABDULLAH

The publication of the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2025/1093 on 23 May 2025, which excluded Malaysia from the list of low-risk countries under the European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR), has raised concerns among Malaysian stakeholders. The benchmarking methodology appears oversimplified and does not adequately reflect available evidence that supports Malaysia's qualification as a low-risk country. While due diligence obligations remain applicable to all countries, low-risk classification enables operators to benefit from simplified procedures under Article 13, without the need to fulfil risk assessment and mitigation requirements set out in Articles 10 and 11. The EUDR stipulates that relevant commodities must not be produced on land deforested after 31 December 2020. However, the quantitative assessment relies on datasets such as the Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020, which do not capture post-2020 land use changes. The inconsistency undermines the accuracy and policy relevance of the classification. This paper presents evidence demonstrating the absence of expansion of oil palm and rubber plantations, alongside a declining trend in timber production in Malaysia after 31 December 2020. These findings support the case for Malaysia's classification as a low-risk country under the EUDR framework.

Keywords: Deforestation, due diligence, EUDR, low-risk country, palm oil

