

Call for Exclusion of Downstream Composite Rubber Products from Annex I pursuant to the Draft Delegated Regulation - Ares(2026)4548384

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VDMA expressly welcomes the pragmatic approach taken by the European Commission in the draft delegated act of May 2026 to exclude additional products from the scope of the EUDR. In Recital 9, the Commission correctly concluded that used and retreaded tyres must be excluded from the scope of the Regulation. With regard to exemptions for leather, the Commission convincingly argued in Recital 5 that, in highly downstream and circular processes, the original geolocation data are lost and that European market operators lack the necessary market power to subsequently enforce traceability.

These considerations apply to a substantial share of rubber-based products. For reasons of legal coherence and equal treatment, it is therefore necessary to apply precisely the same logic to technical rubber components. Many supply chains for rubber-containing product groups exhibit the same traceability gaps and the same lack of enforcement power as those identified for leather. Moreover, many products are manufactured using recycled rubber. Regulating such components would also place the circular economy at a disadvantage.

From the perspective of VDMA and its member companies, these products should therefore be excluded from the scope of the EUDR. The following product groups may serve as illustrative examples:

1. Ex CN 4016: Other articles of vulcanised rubber

This tariff heading covers typical “C-parts” in mechanical engineering, such as O-rings, seals, vibration dampers, machine feet and rubber sleeves.

Justification for an exemption:

In the manufacture of seals, natural rubber is often vulcanised in minimal proportions together with synthetic rubbers (EPDM, NBR), carbon black and curing agents. Following this irreversible chemical process, physical traceability to a geolocation polygon is virtually impossible. In addition, many vibration dampers or heavy-duty machine feet are made from recycled rubber granulate (often derived from end-of-life tyres). As the Commission intends to exclude retreaded tyres from the scope of the EUDR to promote recycling, this approach should also apply to recycled-material components under CN 4016. Finally, the market power of machinery manufacturers is too limited, relative to the overall market, to influence the deforestation-free nature of the supply chain.

2. Ex CN 4010: Conveyor belts and transmission belts or belting

This category includes V-belts, timing belts and heavy-duty conveyor belts used for power transmission in a wide range of industrial installations.

Justification for an exemption:

Transmission belts are not pure rubber products. They are highly complex sandwich structures consisting of steel cords, Kevlar or textile fabrics embedded in a matrix of various (predominantly synthetic) rubbers. Traceability is likewise not feasible in such cases. Furthermore, natural rubber often serves merely as an adhesion agent between the steel cords and the synthetic rubber. Imposing a geolocation data reporting obligation on a component whose mass consists to 95% of steel and petroleum-derived materials would be contrary to the principle of proportionality.

3. Ex CN 4008: Plates, sheets, strips and profile shapes

This category includes industrial insulation mats, machine linings for noise reduction, and similar applications.

Justification for an exemption:

Many of these products consist largely of recycled rubber granulate, including shredded end-of-life tyres. As the European Commission proposes an exemption for used tyres to promote the circular economy, legal coherence requires that a corresponding exemption also be granted for these products.

About VDMA

The VDMA represents over 3,500 mechanical engineering companies in Germany and Europe. The industry stands for innovation, export orientation and medium-sized companies and employs around three million people in Europe, more than 1.2 million of them in Germany alone. This makes the machinery and equipment manufacturers the largest employer among the capital goods industries, both in the EU-27 and in Germany. It accounts for an estimated turnover of 910 billion euros in the European Union.

The basis for the international success of the machinery and equipment manufacturing industry is a strong global network with efficient and innovative suppliers and customers all over the world. Around a third of the machines and systems produced in the EU are sold outside the EU. From the machines sold in the EU domestic market, around 80 per cent comes from an EU production facility. Conversely, this means that a fifth of the machinery sold is imported from a non-EU country. China, the USA, Japan and the United Kingdom are the most important countries of origin here. By cooperating with companies in almost all regions of the world, the European machinery and equipment manufacturing industry makes an important contribution to prosperity and growth. Global value chains are an important factor in the success of the European machinery and equipment manufacturing industry.

Numerous regulations of the Green Deal - especially those that are now to be adapted through the omnibus regulation - affect European mechanical engineering companies particularly strongly due to the medium-sized structure of the industry (60 per cent of VDMA member companies have a turnover of less than 50 million euros per year) and the strong integration into global value chains. The implementation of the regulations is particularly resource-intensive for SMEs and worsens their competitive position on international markets, too.



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