



Ombudsman inquires into why Commission did not finalise sustainability assessment before Mercosur-EU trade agreement concluded

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The Ombudsman has opened an inquiry into why the European Commission did not finalise an updated Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA) before the conclusion of the Mercosur-EU trade agreement in June 2019.

The complainants - five civil society organisations - argue that by not taking this step the Commission disregarded its own guidelines on SIAs and breached the EU Treaty, which contains sustainability goals for all EU trade.

The complainants also raised concerns about the fact that the interim impact assessment was not published when public consultations on the trade negotiations were ongoing and that when it was published it did not contain the latest information.

The Ombudsman decided to use the inquiry to put further questions to the Commission, including how it intends to use the final report and whether the standard procedure for SIAs was followed.

The Ombudsman has asked the Commission to respond within three months.