



WWF

ACTION PLAN

EU

2014



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People need to be surrounded by vibrant nature, not only to live, breathe or eat healthy, but also for our socio-economic well-being.

WWF's engagement in protecting Europe's natural treasures has been and is invaluable. All stakeholders, including the European institutions and Member States should commit to keep up the positive and internationally recognised European system of nature protection, and enhance its political and financial support.

Jutta Haug –

Former S&D MEP and rapporteur on the 'Programme for the environment and climate action, LIFE 2014-2020'

HALT THE LOSS OF NATURE

Nature is being lost at an alarming rate both in Europe and globally. This also poses a serious risk for human wellbeing as the ecosystem services nature provides, such as pollination and clean water, underpin most human activities. The loss of nature results in serious social and economic costs: 15 million jobs in Europe are closely linked to biodiversity and highly dependent on the delivery of ecosystems services¹.

Aware of this threat, in 2010 EU leaders committed to halt biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation by 2020. In 2011, the European Commission adopted the 'EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020', which has been welcomed by the Council and Parliament. However, in practice neither this positive policy framework, nor the Birds and Habitats Directives – the cornerstone policies of EU nature conservation – have been properly implemented. More effort is needed at both EU and national level, to effectively protect and value our nature for our well-being and that of future generations.

HOW CAN MEPs IMPROVE THIS POLICY?

- Urge Member States to fully implement nature protection policies, in particular the Birds and Habitats Directives.
- Ensure at least €5.8 billion per year is allocated to the management and restoration of Natura 2000 areas, Europe's network of nature protected areas covered by the Birds and Habitats Directives.
- Ensure nature conservation is integrated in all relevant EU policies and the environment is properly valued.

75%

of Europeans agree that if we do not halt the loss of nature, Europe will get poorer economically²

YOUR ACTION PLAN

- 1 Raise parliamentary questions to the Commission and Council regarding the implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020, in particular on the need to ensure a swift and adequate implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives.
- 2 Urge Member States to use their EU allocated funds to finance the management needs of the Natura 2000 network, and make use of the mid-term review of the current EU Budget in 2017 to create additional funding opportunities.
- 3 Demand increased financial support of at least €5.8 billion per year for Natura 2000 in the Parliament's own-initiative reports on the future EU budget post 2020, for which Commission proposals are expected in 2018-2019.
- 4 Collaborate across Parliamentary Committees when drafting reports, to integrate nature conservation in all relevant EU policies and especially those dealing with spatial planning, such as agriculture, fisheries, regional development, water, transport and energy infrastructures.
- 5 Promote the economic value of natural capital with decision makers and stakeholders, and demand beyond GDP indicators to be included into reporting and decision systems at EU and national level by 2020. In this context, the Commission must be urged to introduce a new module to the 'EU Regulation on environmental economic accounts' to account for ecosystems and their services.

WE MUST ACT NOW!

- The cost of inaction in not implementing biodiversity and nature conservation legislation in the EU could be up to €50 billion a year³.
- Nature conservation ensures a high return on investment for our economy, our health and well-being. Investing €5.8 billion per year to maintain Europe's natural capital in good conservation status will provide an estimated €200-300 billion per year in services and benefits to society and the economy⁴.
- Natura 2000, the EU network of protected areas covered by the Birds and Habitats Directives, has proved to be successful and it currently accounts for over 18% of EU land⁵.
- A recent European assessment of the conservation status of around 6000 European species undertaken by IUCN revealed that up to 25% of European animal species are now threatened with extinction⁶.

TIMELINE

Mid 2015:
Commission proposal for the EU Biodiversity Strategy mid-term review

2017:
mid-term review of the current EU Budget

2018-2019:
Commission proposal for the post 2020 EU Budget

2019:
Commission proposal expected for a future EU Biodiversity Strategy beyond 2020



50bn

the cost of inaction in not implementing biodiversity and nature conservation legislation in the EU

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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