

Dear Commissioners,

The biodiversity crisis is upon us. One million species are threatened with extinction; the vast majority will be affected within the current human generation (IPBES Report 2019).

The analysis of the European Environment Agency's report on the State of the Nature (SOER 2020) clearly shows that the targets of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 have not been achieved. In fact, not only improvement is missing at large scale, but also populations and habitats are deteriorating.

To counteract these trends, the Commission proposed its Biodiversity strategy for 2030 and should now walk the talk and follow up with substantial proposals to remedy the shortcomings of the past, such as the nature restoration law. This is the first real nature legislation since more than two decades.

Referring to our report on the EU Biodiversity Strategy ([link](#)), and the commitments the Commission itself made in the strategy, we, MEPs from several groups, urge the Commission, particularly Commissioners Timmermans and Sinkevicius, with regards to the announced date of 14 December, to put forward binding EU Restoration Legislation, thereby following certain criteria:

- Focus on peatland, wetland, forests, grasslands, marine and coastal areas and other ecosystems relevant either for interconnectivity of N2000 or climate protection; Given the urgency of both the biodiversity and climate crises, the nature restoration targets need to be focused and directly actionable.
- Bring forward sharp area based targets (in hectares, with a solid number for the above mentioned key ecosystems); in our report a broad majority of MEPs called for at least 30% of EU's land/sea area to be restored.
- Set binding targets that do not undercut the targets of the Biodiversity Strategy, the nature restoration targets must be clearly additional and go beyond already existing restoration requirements in the Birds and habitats and Water Framework Directive. Adding a deadline to the obligations of the existing directives is not enough.
- The sole focus on Annex 1 habitats covers only about 10% of the European land area.
- Pull goals into the present. Most actions need to be taken as soon as possible to solve the biodiversity crisis.
- The river restoration target is one that was already concretely announced in the Biodiversity Strategy. There is no excuse to delay a concrete target, as there is sufficient data to support a minimum 25.000km target as mentioned in the biodiversity strategy.
- It is imperative to include also the connectivity guidelines to allow species to travel and form stable populations
- Include criteria for better and standardised monitoring of pollinators, their protection, the restoration of their habitats and systematic reporting of data.
- Bring forward binding criteria for MS restoration plans, regularly check that the sum of the activities also corresponds to the European objectives and implement the right and duty of the European Commission to approve them.

If an ambitious and forward-looking law needs a few months more time, please use additional time while keeping in mind the urgency to reverse the loss of biodiversity effectively. We can ensure that you will have the full support of us MEPs for such a law that would be a game changer in the fight against the biodiversity and climate crisis

Sincerely yours,
Jutta Paulus

Co-signatories:

Maria Arena
Benoît Biteau
Biljana Borzan
Saskia Bricmont
Delara Burkhardt
Pascal Canfin
Catherine Chabaud
Rosa D'Amato
Anna Deparnay-Grunenberg
Eleonora Evi
Bas Eickhout
Sven Giegold
Martin Häusling
Martin Hojsik
Pär Holmgren
Cesar Luena
Ville Niinistö
Grace O'Sullivan
Sirpa Pietikäinen
Manuela Ripa
María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos
Caroline Roose
Günther Sidl
Nicolae Ștefănuță
Sarah Wiener
Michal Wiezik