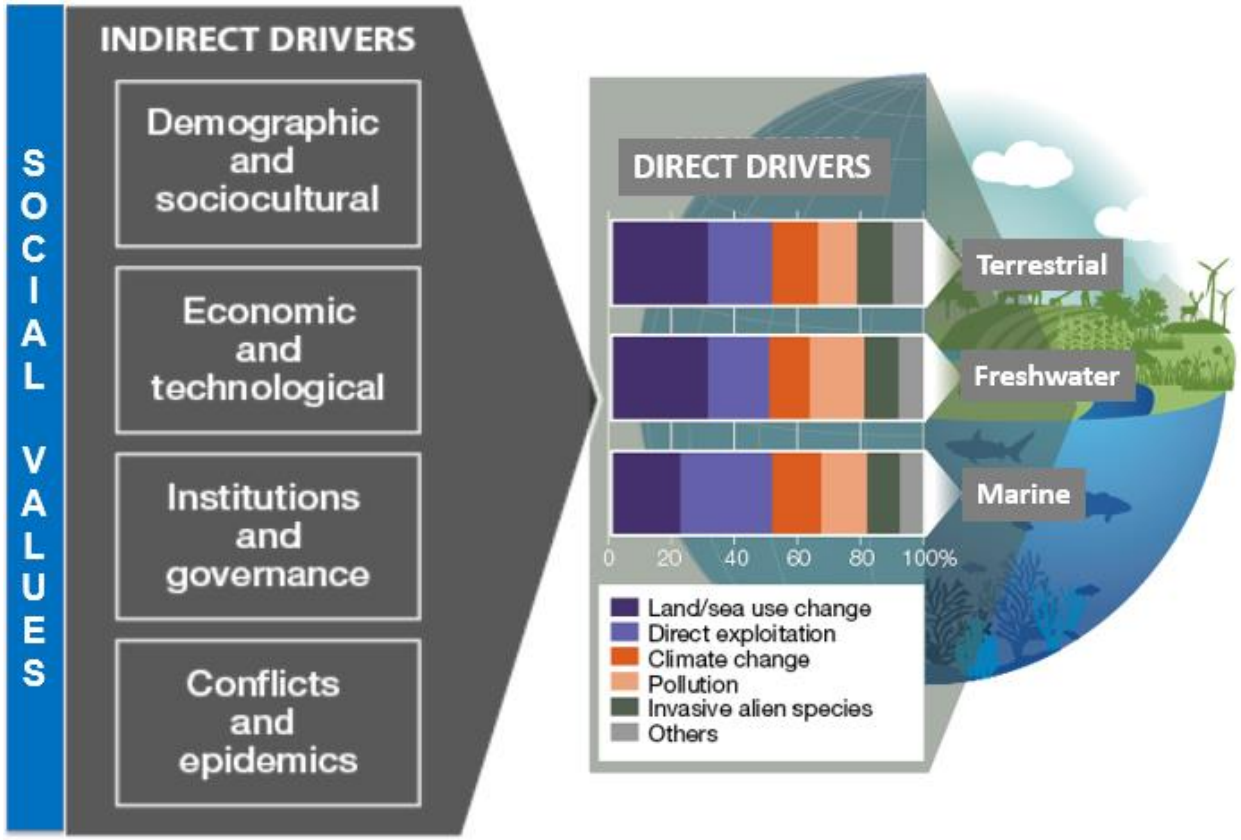
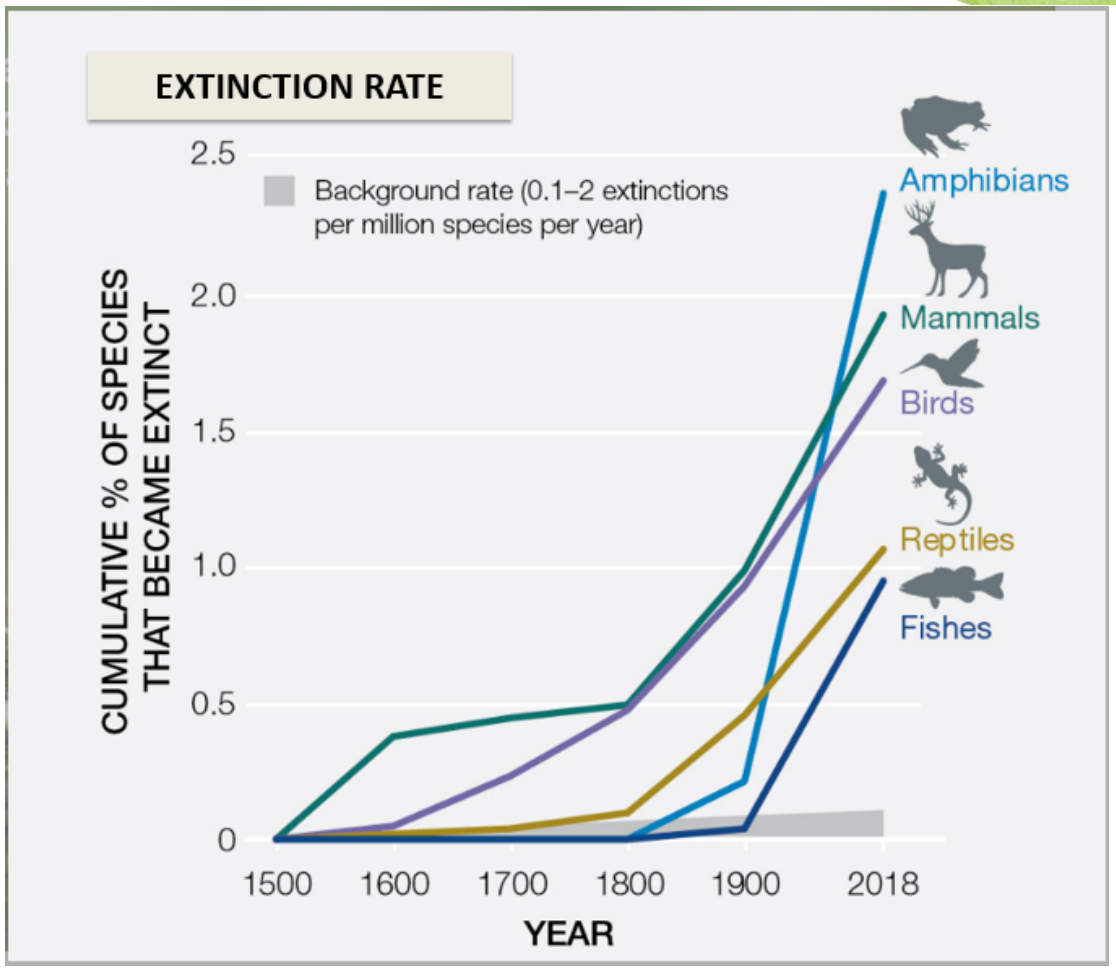
Il Regolamento UE 2024/1191 sul ripristino della natura: genesi, contenuti e prospettive di attuazione

Marco Onida, DG ENV, Commissione Europea

23 maggio 2025

The global biodiversity crisis

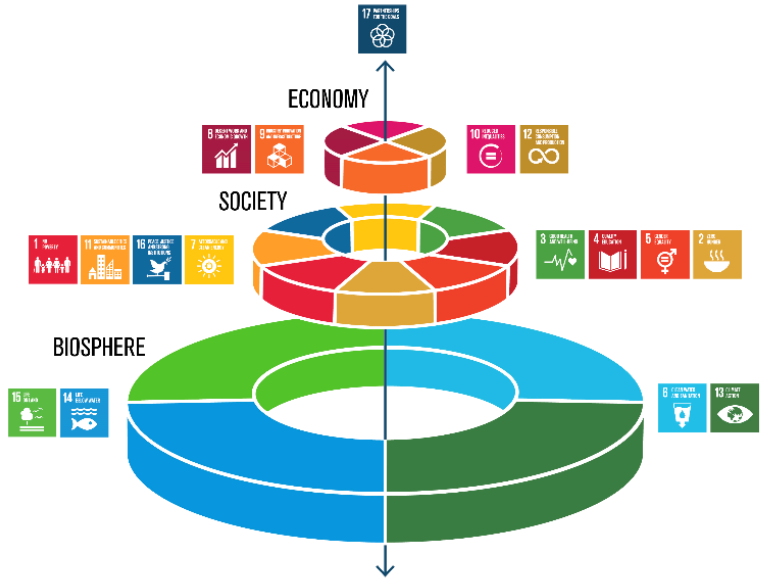




Source: IPBES Global assessment 2019

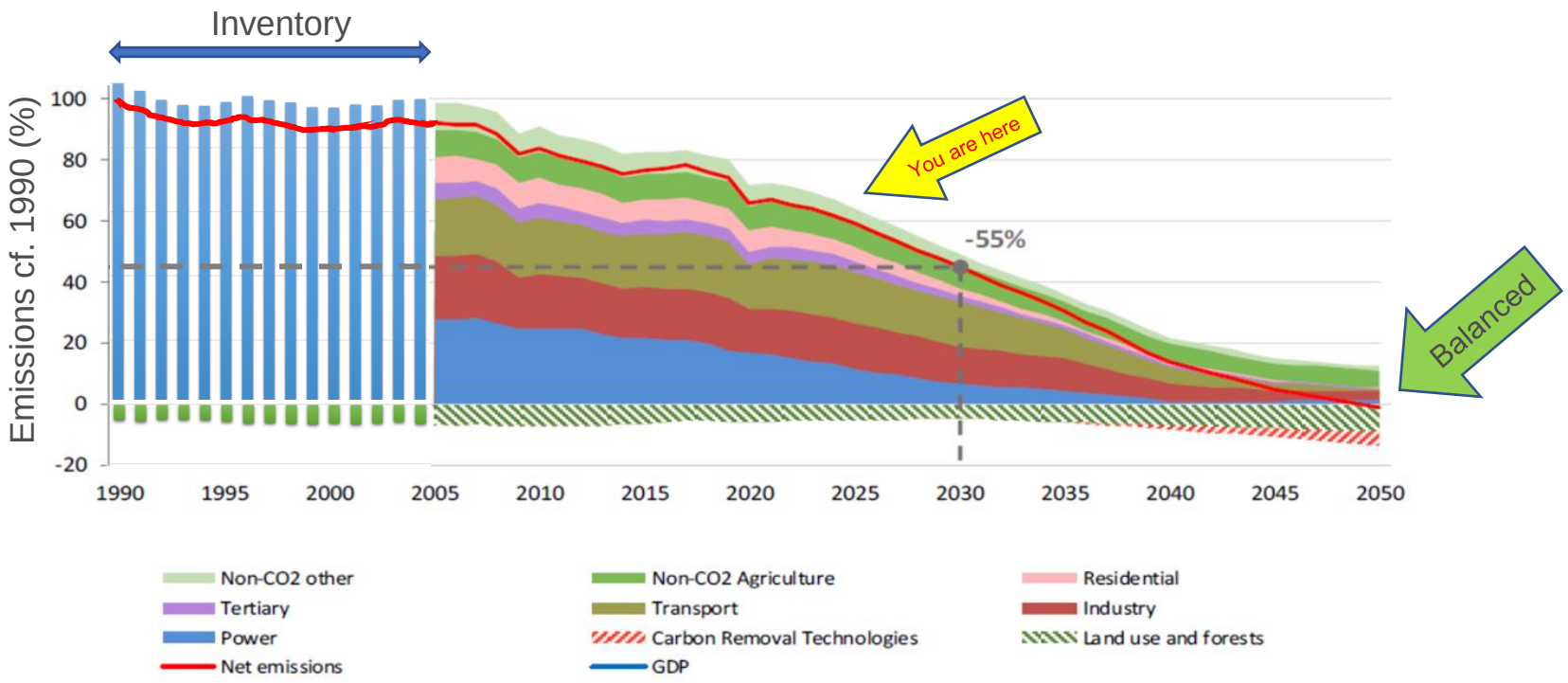
Biodiversity underpins sustainable development

- Biodiversity loss: key threats for humanity
- Almost half of global GDP is linked to nature
- Connections between biodiversity loss, climate change and pandemics
- Restoring biodiversity core part of recovery

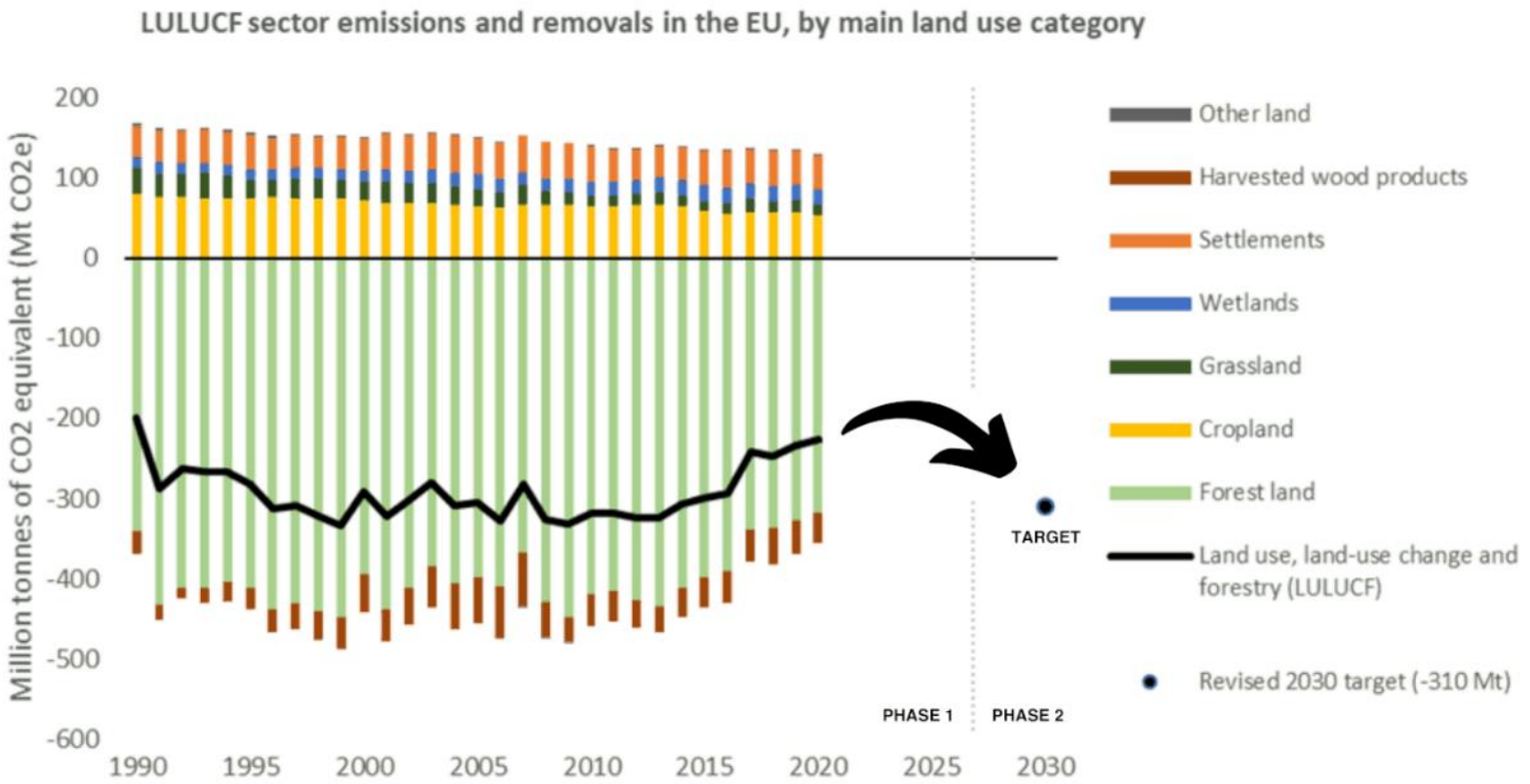


Graphics by Jerker Lokrantz/Azote

Il cammino verso la neutralità climatica



Emssioni del settore LULUCF



Derived from the European Environment Agency, 2022

Forestry - Loss of carbon and biodiversity

La risposta: the European Green Deal (2019)

- Reach climate neutrality by 2050
- Decouple economic growth fron the use of natural resources
- Climate change and biodiversity loss, two faces of the same coin
  - IPBES Global Assessment on Biodiversity and Ecosystems (2019)
  - IPCC Special report on Climate Change and Land (2019)

The European Green Deal

CLIMATE PACT AND CLIMATE LAW

INVESTING IN SMARTER, MORE SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

STRIVING FOR GREENER INDUSTRY

ELIMINATING POLLUTION

ENSURING A JUST TRANSITION FOR ALL

FINANCING GREEN PROJECTS

MAKING HOMES ENERGY EFFICIENT

LEADING THE GREEN CHANGE GLOBALLY

FROM FARM TO FORK

PROTECTING NATURE

PROMOTING CLEAN ENERGY

Elements of the EU Biodiversity Strategy

Protect Nature

Enable Transformative Change

Restore Nature

EU For An Ambitious Global Agenda

Protect Nature

Protect 30% of EU land and sea

- Based on Natura 2000 and nationally designated areas
- EU wide target, take into account specific situation in MS
- Integrate ecological corridors to build coherent network

Strictly protect a third of these areas

- Covering areas of very high biodiversity value & important for mitigation and adaptation to climate change, including all primary and old growth forest

Restore Nature

EU Restoration Plan with 2030 commitments (1):

- ✓ Legally binding targets to be proposed in 2021
- ✓ No deterioration of any protected habitats and species by 2030: trend to be positive for at least 30%
- ✓ Agroecology: Organic farming >25%
- ✓ Biodiverse landscape features >10%
- ✓ 50% reduction of use and risk of pesticides
- ✓ Reduction of pollution from fertilisers by 50% and by 20% their use
- ✓ Plant 3 billion additional trees respecting ecological principles
- ✓ Reverse decline in pollinators

Restore Nature

EU Restoration Plan with 2030 commitments (2):

- Remediate contaminated soil sites
- Restore 25,000km free flowing rivers
- New Urban Greening Platform: the Green City Accord
- Halve the number of ‘red list’ species threatened by Invasive Alien Species
- Reduction of damage to seabed, bycatch

Art. 191(1)TFUE

1. La politica dell'Unione in materia ambientale contribuisce a perseguire i seguenti obiettivi:

— salvaguardia, tutela e miglioramento della qualità dell'ambiente,

— protezione della salute umana,

— utilizzazione accorta e razionale delle risorse naturali,

— promozione sul piano internazionale di misure destinate a risolvere i problemi dell'ambiente a livello regionale o mondiale e, in particolare, a combattere i cambiamenti climatici

Legislative process NRR

- 22 June 2022 – Commission proposal for a Nature Restoration Regulation

- 20 June 2023 – Council's general approach
- 12 July 2023 – Parliament's amendments

- 9 November 2023 – 3rd trilogue: political agreement reached
- 27 February 2024: adoption of the text by Parliament (plenary)

Next:

- Vote/Adoption in Council (expected April 2024, voted 17 June 2024)
- Publication in the Official Journal 29 July 2024
- Entry into force 18 August 2024

Final vote 17 June 2024

- Against: Sweden, Finland, the Netherlands, Italy, Poland and Hungary
- Abstained: Belgium

- Majority of 20 countries, representing 66.07% of the population

Official Journal
of the European Union

EN
L series

2024/1991

29.7.2024

REGULATION (EU) 2024/1991 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL

of 24 June 2024

on nature restoration and amending Regulation (EU) 2022/869

(Text with EEA relevance)

- Published in Official Journal on 29 July 2024
- Entry into force: 18 August 2024

Nature Restoration Regulation

Overarching objective

Restoration targets

Implementation framework

Financing

General objectives

- Long-term and sustained recovery of **biodiverse and resilient ecosystems** through the restoration of degraded ecosystems
- Contribute to climate change **mitigation**, climate change **adaptation** and **land degradation neutrality**
- Enhance **food security**
- Meeting the EU's **international commitments**

Commitment to put restoration measures

- On 20% of EU's land and sea areas **by 2030**
- On all ecosystems in need of restoration **by 2050**

Article 3(3): 'restoration' means the **process of actively or passively assisting the recovery** of an ecosystem *in order to improve its structure and functions with the aim of conserving or enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem resilience […]*

Specific restoration targets

- Protected Habitat Types

- Habitats of protected species

- Marine Habitats

- Urban ecosystems

- River connectivity

- Pollinators

- Agro-ecosystems

- Forest ecosystems

- 3 billion additional trees by 2030

Terrestrial, coastal and freshwater ecosystems (Art. 4)

Annex I habitats as under the Habitat Directive

- Over 230 habitats in 7 groups
  - wetlands (coastal and inland); grasslands and other pastoral habitats; river, lake, alluvial and riparian habitats; forests; steppe, heath and scrub habitats; rocky and dune habitats

Improvement to good condition of area not in good condition

- 2030 – at least 30% of total area of all groups
- 2040/2050 – at least 60%/90% of each group

Re-establishment for reaching favourable reference area

- 2030/2040/2050 – 30%/60%/100% of additional area for each group

Restoration of habitats of species

- Quality, quantity, connectivity

Knowledge gap filling

- 2030 – 90% of total area of all groups
- 2040 – all areas of all habitat types
- Best available knowledge and the latest scientific evidence

Non-significant deterioration requirement

- Area where good condition has been reached
- Area in good condition or necessary to reach restoration targets

Derogations and flexibilities

- Very common and wide-spread habitats
- Re-establishment at 90% if 100% not possible
- Non-deterioration: national biogeographic option,
- Non-deterioration: derogation for force-majeure, unavoidable habitat transformations directly caused by climate change, overriding public interest, action or inaction of third country
- Further derogation for renewable energy and defence activities

Marine ecosystems (Art. 5)

Restoration of seabed habitats (Annex II) important for biodiversity and climate

- Groups 1 to 6: seagrass beds; macroalgal forests; shellfish beds; maerl beds; coral, sponge and coralligeneous beds; vents and seeps (mainly overlapping with Habitats Directive)
- Group 7: soft sediment (not deeper than 1000 metres of depth) (mainly overlapping with broad benthic habitat types of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive)

Improvement to good condition of area not in good condition

- 2030 – at least 30% of total area of all groups 1 to 6
- 2040 – at least 60% of each group from 1 to 6, 2/3 of a percentage so as not to prevent good environmental status (MSFD) for group 7
- 2050 – at least 90% of each group from 1 to 6, a percentage so as not to prevent good environmental status (MSFD) for group 7

Re-establishment for reaching favourable reference area

- 2030/2040/2050 – 30%/60%/100% of additional area for each group from 1 to 6

Restoration of habitats of species

- Covered by the Birds and Habitats Directives + additional species (Annex III)
- Quality, quantity, connectivity

Knowledge gap filling

- 2030 – at least 50% of total area of all groups 1 to 6
- 2040 – all areas of all habitat types in groups 1 to 6, 50% of total area of group 7
- 2050 – all areas of all habitat types in group 7

Non-significant deterioration requirement

- Area where good condition has been reached
- Area in good condition or necessary to reach restoration targets

Use of tools from the common fisheries policy (Art. 18)

- Submission of joint recommendations - 18 months before deadline targets

Derogations and flexibilities

- Re-establishment at 90% if 100% not possible
- Non-deterioration: derogation for force-majeure, unavoidable habitat transformations directly caused by climate change, overriding public interest, action or inaction of third country
- Further derogation for renewable energy and defence activities

Derogation for renewable and defence

Renewable energy projects (Article 6)

- MS can derogate more easily from the non-deterioration provisions in Articles 4&5 for renewable energy projects outside Natura 2000, which:
  - are presumed to be in the **overriding public interest**
  - may be exempted from less-damaging alternatives test if a **Strategic Environment Assessment** or **Environment Impact Assessment** has been carried out
- MS can choose to apply these conditions only to certain parts of their territory or technologies
- Same logic as provisions about Water Framework Directive and Nature Directives in Renewable Energy Directive

Defence projects (Article 7)

- **Restoration measures** (condition improvement, re-establishment, habitat of species): areas used for military activities can be exempted if there is incompatibility
- **Non-deterioration outside Natura 2000**: defence projects may be presumed to be in the overriding public interest and may be exempted from less-damaging alternatives test

Urban ecosystem targets (Art. 8)

- No net loss of urban green space at national level by 2030
- No net loss of urban tree canopy cover in urban ecosystem areas by 2030
  - Exemption possible for already very green urban ecosystems (>45% green space and >10% tree canopy cover).
- Increasing trend of urban green space at national level, until satisfactory level.
- Increasing trend of urban tree canopy cover in each urban ecosystem area, until satisfactory level.

River connectivity target (Art. 9)

- Identify and remove artificial barriers that prevent the connectivity of surface waters in order to contribute to…

  → the targets for riverine habitats & ecosystems (e.g. floodplains)

  → the objective of restoring at least 25 000 km of free-flowing rivers in the EU by 2030

Pollinator populations target (Art. 10)

- *Improve pollinator diversity* and reverse the decline of pollinator populations by 2030;
- Achieve thereafter an increasing trend *(measured at least every six years)* for pollinator populations (until satisfactory levels),
- with a methodology for annual monitoring.

Agricultural ecosystems (Art. 11)

Enhance biodiversity of agricultural ecosystems

- in addition to protected habitats (Art. 4)

Indicators at national level

- Achieve an increasing trend until satisfactory levels are reached
- At least 2 out of 3 indicators
  - Grassland butterfly index;
  - Stock of organic carbon in cropland mineral soils;
  - Share with high-diversity landscape features;

Common farmland bird index

- Specific target to enhance by 2030/40/50 at national level

Peatlands restoration and rewetting targets

- At least 30% by 2030, 40% by 2040 and 50% by 2050 of drained peatlands under agricultural use,
- 1/4 (2030) and 1/3 (2040 and 2050) of which shall be rewetted.
- Flexibilities and modalities
  - Possibility to count peat extraction sites and partly other types of drained peatlands.
  - Exemptions possible for reduced rewetting.
  - Rewetting to be incentivised, no obligation on farmers and land-owners.

Forest ecosystems (Art. 12)

Enhance forest biodiversity

- In addition to Art 4 (i.e. not only Annex I habitats)
- Taking into the risk of forest fires

Indicators-based targets

- Achieve an increasing trend at national level until satisfactory levels are achieved.
- 1 mandatory indicator
  - ***Common forest bird index***
- At least 6 out of 7 indicators:
  - ***Standing deadwood;***
  - ***Lying deadwood;***
  - ***Share of forest with uneven age structure;***
  - ***Forest connectivity;***
  - ***Stock of organic carbon;***
  - ***Share of forests dominated by native tree species;***
  - ***Tree species diversity.***

Exemption

- Large scale force majeure (incl. wildfire);
- Unavoidable habitat transformations directly caused by climate change.

Planting 3 billion additional trees (Art. 13)

- When implementing the restoration measures above, Member States must aim to contribute to the commitment of planting at least three billion additional trees by 2030 at Union level;
- in full respect of ecological principles, including
  - ensuring species and age structure diversity,
  - prioritising native tree species*
  - increasing ecological connectivity
  - be based on sustainable afforestation, reforestation and tree planting and the greening of urban areas.

*except for, in very specific cases and conditions, non-native species adapted to the local soil, climatic and ecological context and habitat conditions that play a role in fostering increased resilience to climate change.

Implementation framework

National Restoration Plans (NRP)

- **Preparation**: - quantify & map areas in need of restoration

  - identify **synergies** with climate change mitigation, climate change adaptation, land degradation neutrality and disaster prevention, **agriculture, forestry, renewable energy development**

  - identify existing **agricultural and forestry practices, including CAP interventions**, that contribute to the objectives of NRR

- **Content**: - quantify and describe restoration measures
  - non-deterioration measures & timing for implementation
  - **financing needs, support to affected stakeholders, means of intended financing, public or private**
  - interplay with climate & energy plans, CFP, **CAP**

Implementation framework

Inclusive process: public/stakeholder participation:

Art 14(20): Member States shall ensure that the preparation of the restoration plan is open, transparent, inclusive and effective and that the public, including all relevant stakeholders, is given early and effective opportunities to participate in its preparation. Consultations shall comply with the requirements set out in Directive 2001/42/EC.

Monitoring & reporting:

Member States to **monitor** and **report** on implementation of NRP, on putting in place restoration measures and results achieved

Implementation

Timeline for national restoration plans	
November 2024	Commission presents draft implementing act to establish a **uniform format**
March 2025	**Uniform format:** positive opinion of NRR Committee on 11 March 2025 - Comitology Register
20 May 2025	Publication of formally adopted uniform format
by 1 September 2026	Member States submit **draft national restoration plan**, strategic overview beyond 2032
6 months later (~1 March 2027)	Commission **assesses** draft national restoration plans
6 months later (~1 September 2027)	Member States submit and publish **final national restoration plan**
30 June 2032 and 2042	Member States **revise** national restoration plans

The implementation of restoration measures must start now and not wait until the national restoration plans have been finalised !

Deliverables of the NRR (selection)	Legal basis in NRR	Legal form	Deadline	Obligation
Guidance on a monitoring framework for high-diversity landscape features	Art. 14(7)	Commission notice C/2025/980	Published on 14/02/2025	Yes
Uniform format for National Restoration Plans	Art. 15(7)	Implementing Act	Draft by 01/12/2024, voted on 11/03/2025 Adopted 19/05/2025	Yes
Method for monitoring pollinator diversity	Art. 10(2)	Delegated Act	19/08/2025	Yes
Nature restoration financing report	Art. 21(7)	Commission Report	19/08/2025	Yes
Reporting formats	Art. 21(3)	Implementing Act	*No deadlines*	Yes
Guiding framework for satisfactory levels for urban, pollinator, agricultural, possibly for forest indicators	Art. 20(10) Art 20(11)c	Implementing Act	31/12/2028	Yes except for forest indicators: Commission discretion
Methods for monitoring agricultural indicators listed in Annex IV and forest indicators listed in Annex VI	Art. 20(11)a and b	Implementing Act	No deadlines	No
Temporary suspension (relevant provisions Article 11)	Art. 27(1)	Implementing Act	Conditional (exceptional circumstances)	

Thank you for your attention!

More info:

The EU #NatureRestoration Law