

Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2011/2307(INI)	Procedure completed
Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020		
Subject 3.70.01 Protection of natural resources: fauna, flora, nature, wildlife, countryside; biodiversity		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety		27/09/2011
		ALDE GERBRANDY Gerben-Jan	
		Shadow rapporteur	
		PPE SONIK Bogusław	
		S&D ESTRELA Edite	
		Verts/ALE BÉLIER Sandrine	
		Verts/ALE EICKHOUT Bas	
		ECR GIRLING Julie	
		Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion
	ITRE Industry, Research and Energy		26/10/2011
		PPE JORDAN Romana	
	REGI Regional Development		06/10/2011
		ALDE BEARDER Catherine	
	AGRI Agriculture and Rural Development		20/12/2011
		S&D DĂNCILĂ Viorica	
	PECH Fisheries		10/10/2011
		PPE RIVELLINI Crescenzo	
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	Environment	3139	19/12/2011
European Commission	Commission DG	Commissioner	
	Environment	POTOČNIK Janez	

Key events			
03/05/2011	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2011)0244	Summary
15/12/2011	Committee referral announced in		

	Parliament		
19/12/2011	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		Summary
21/03/2012	Vote in committee		
03/04/2012	Committee report tabled for plenary	A7-0101/2012	Summary
20/04/2012	Results of vote in Parliament		
20/04/2012	Debate in Parliament		
20/04/2012	Decision by Parliament	T7-0146/2012	Summary
20/04/2012	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

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Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document		COM(2011)0244	03/05/2011	EC	Summary
Committee draft report		PE478.540	19/12/2011	EP	
Committee opinion	PECH	PE476.103	25/01/2012	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE480.669	01/02/2012	EP	
Committee opinion	ITRE	PE478.435	07/02/2012	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE480.679	14/02/2012	EP	
Committee opinion	REGI	PE478.368	02/03/2012	EP	
Committee opinion	AGRI	PE480.548	05/03/2012	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A7-0101/2012	03/04/2012	EP	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T7-0146/2012	20/04/2012	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary		SP(2012)487	19/09/2012	EC	
Follow-up document		COM(2015)0478	02/10/2015	EC	Summary
Follow-up document		SWD(2015)0187	02/10/2015	EC	

Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020

PURPOSE: to provide a framework for action to enable the EU to reach its 2020 biodiversity target and set it on the right path to attain the

2050 vision.

BACKGROUND: biodiversity loss is the most critical global environmental threat alongside climate change and the two are inextricably linked.

Current rates of species extinction are unparalleled. Driven mainly by human activities, species are currently being lost 100 to 1000 times faster than the natural rate: according to the FAO, 60% of the world's ecosystems are degraded or used unsustainably; 75% of fish stocks are over-exploited or significantly depleted and 75% of the genetic diversity of agricultural crops has been lost worldwide since 1990.

An estimated 13 million hectares of tropical forests are cleared each year and 20% of the world's tropical coral reefs have already disappeared, while 95% will be at risk of destruction or extreme damage by 2050 if climate change continues unabated.

In the EU, only 17% of habitats and species and 11% of key ecosystems protected under EU legislation are in a favourable state. This is in spite of action taken to combat biodiversity loss, particularly since the EU 2010 biodiversity target was set in 2001.

The EU mandate: in March 2010, EU leaders recognised that the 2010 biodiversity target would not be met despite some major successes, such as establishing Natura 2000, the world's largest network of protected areas. They therefore endorsed the long-term vision and ambitious headline target proposed by the Commission in its Communication Options for an EU vision and target for biodiversity beyond 2010.

- 2050 vision: by 2050, European Union biodiversity and the ecosystem services it provides its natural capital are protected, valued and appropriately restored for biodiversity's intrinsic value and for their essential contribution to human wellbeing and economic prosperity, and so that catastrophic changes caused by the loss of biodiversity are avoided.
- 2020 headline target: halting the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services in the EU by 2020, and restoring them in so far as feasible, while stepping up the EU contribution to averting global biodiversity loss.

The global mandate: the tenth Conference of the Parties (CoP10) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), held in Nagoya in 2010, led to the adoption of a global Strategic Plan for biodiversity 2011-2020, the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilisation (ABS Protocol), and a strategy to mobilise resources for global biodiversity. The EU 2020 biodiversity strategy responds to both mandates, setting the EU on the right track to meet its own biodiversity objectives and its global commitments.

CONTENT: this strategy is aimed at reversing biodiversity loss and speeding up the EU's transition towards a resource efficient and green economy. It is an integral part of the Europe 2020 Strategy, and in particular the resource efficient [Europe flagship initiative](#).

The 2020 Biodiversity strategy includes six mutually supportive and inter-dependent targets that respond to the objectives of the 2020 headline target. Each target is broken down into a package of actions designed to respond to the specific challenge addressed by the target.

Target 1: Conserving and restoring nature: to halt the deterioration in the status of all species and habitats covered by EU nature legislation and achieve a significant and measurable improvement in their status so that, by 2020, compared to current assessments: (i) 100% more habitat assessments and 50% more species assessments under the Habitats Directive show an improved conservation status; and (ii) 50% more species assessments under the Birds Directive show a secure or improved status.

Target 2: Maintaining and enhancing ecosystems and their services: this target incorporates the global target agreed by EU Member States and the EU in Nagoya to restore 15% of degraded ecosystems by 2020.

Target 3: Ensuring the sustainability of agriculture, forestry and fisheries:

- **Agriculture:** by 2020, maximise areas under agriculture across grasslands, arable land and permanent crops that are covered by biodiversity-related measures under the CAP so as to ensure the conservation of biodiversity and to bring about a measurable improvement in the conservation status of species and habitats that depend on or are affected by agriculture and in the provision of ecosystem services as compared to the EU2010 Baseline, thus contributing to enhance sustainable management.
- **Forests:** by 2020, Forest Management Plans or equivalent instruments, in line with Sustainable Forest Management (SFM), are in place for all forests that are publicly owned and for forest holdings above a certain size (to be defined by the Member States or regions and communicated in their Rural Development Programmes) that receive funding under the EU Rural Development Policy so as to bring about a measurable improvement in the conservation status of species and habitats that depend on or are affected by forestry and in the provision of related ecosystem services as compared to the EU 2010 Baseline.

Target 4: Ensuring the sustainability of fisheries: the aim is to achieve Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) by 2015. Achieve a population age and size distribution indicative of a healthy stock, through fisheries management with no significant adverse impacts on other stocks, species and ecosystems, in support of achieving Good Environmental Status by 2020, as required under the [Marine Strategy Framework Directive](#).

Target 5: Combating invasive alien species: by 2020, Invasive Alien Species and their pathways are identified and prioritised, priority species are controlled or eradicated, and pathways are managed to prevent the introduction and establishment of new IAS.

Target 6: Addressing the global biodiversity crisis: the EU has pledged to meet the international 2020 biodiversity goals and objectives agreed to under the CBD. This requires taking action within the EU, but also at global level since the EU derives significant benefits from global biodiversity and is at the same time responsible for some of the loss and degradation that occurs beyond its borders, notably due to its unsustainable consumption patterns. Through this strategy, targeted efforts will strive to alleviate pressure on biodiversity emanating from the EU while contributing to greening the economy in line with EU priorities for the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. The EU will also need to meet specific COP10 commitments relating to resource mobilisation and implement the Nagoya Protocol on ABS if it is to continue to lead international biodiversity policy.

Follow-up: this strategy provides a framework for action to enable the EU to reach its 2020 biodiversity target and set it on the right path to attain the 2050 vision. It will be subject to a mid-term review in early 2014, so that results can feed into the preparation of the EU's fifth National Report as required under the CBD. The targets and measures will be reconsidered as new information becomes available and progress is made on the objectives set in the strategy.

Because many of the actions taken today to safeguard biodiversity and enhance our natural assets will take a long time to bring about real improvements, implementation of this strategy needs to begin now for the EU to meet its 2020 headline target.

Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020

The Council had an exchange of views and adopted conclusions on the implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020.

Following the Environment Council conclusions of June 2011, endorsing the Strategy as proposed in the Commission's communication, the present conclusions constitute the second political response of the Council, intervening in the context of ongoing negotiations on the Multiannual Financial Framework for the period 2014-2020 and at a time when other EU policies which are relevant to the achievement of the EU biodiversity headline target by 2020 - in particular the Common Agricultural Policy, the Common Fisheries Policy and the Cohesion Policy are undergoing a reform process.

Without prejudging the outcomes of these negotiations, the Council stressed the need to integrate biodiversity concerns into all EU and national sectoral policies, in order to reverse the continuing trends of biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation. It confirms the importance of mobilising both EU and national financial resources from all possible sources as appropriate, including innovative financial mechanisms, in order to ensure adequate levels of funding towards meeting biodiversity objectives for example by providing incentives to attract private sector investments.

The conclusions concern in particular the measures required to reach the main objectives of the Strategy:

Target 1: Fully implement the Birds and Habitats Directives: the Council encourages the Member States to complete, in a timely manner, the establishment of the Natura 2000 network, develop and implement management plans or other equivalent instruments which set out conservation objectives, as well as if appropriate, restoration measures for Natura 2000 sites, including in the marine environment, thereby establishing a solid basis for strategic planning with a view to the subsequent implementation of the MFF 2014-2020.

Target 2: Maintain and Restore Ecosystems and their Services: the Council stresses the need of maintaining, restoring as far as feasible and enhancing ecosystems and their services. They call on the Commission to consider, within the scope of the Green Infrastructure Strategy under preparation, among others, the following issues:

- possible scope and key components of GI;
- possible framework for GI implementation based on existing experience, particularly in spatial planning, including coastal;
- methodological issues related to GI, including with regard to spatial connectivity between protected areas and basic requirements for the delivery of the necessary ecosystem services;
- options to integrate GI in existing policy instruments and importance of GI in terms of climate change adaptation;
- identifying opportunities for financing GI;
- communication and promotion of GI targeting different stakeholders and sectors, and in particular local authorities.

The Council stresses the importance of ensuring appropriate funding at EU and Member States level for maintenance and restoration of ecosystems and their services. It agrees that a common approach is needed for the implementation in the EU of the no net loss principle.

Target 3: Increase the contribution of Agriculture and Forestry to maintaining and enhancing biodiversity: the Council encourages conservation and sustainable use of all genetic resources, especially genetic resources for food, agriculture and forestry. It calls on the Member States to encourage the widespread adoption and implementation of Forest Management Plans or equivalent instruments, inter alia, through effective application of rural development measures, and stresses the importance to include in forest management plans or equivalent instruments appropriate measures for conservation and recovery of protected species and habitats within as well as beyond Natura 2000 areas.

Target 4: Ensure the sustainable use of Fisheries Resources: the Council supports the ongoing efforts to protect and sustainably use of fish populations and aquatic genetic resources in seas and inland waters, including aquaculture. It calls on the Commission and Member States to strengthen efforts for the collection of scientific data on fish populations, where these are deficient, in order to provide stronger scientific advice.

The Member States are called upon to make sure that their activities comply with the requirements for achieving favourable conservation status of species and habitats in the Birds and Habitats Directives as well as for achieving good environmental status of the marine environment in accordance with the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

Target 5: Combat Invasive Alien Species (IAS): the Council reiterates the need for an EU strategy on IAS including a dedicated legislative instrument on IAS by 2012, which should consider all aspects of the challenge posed by IAS, including their identification and prioritisation, control and eradication as well as management of their pathways following a risk-based approach and in a proportionate and cost-effective manner.

Target 6: Help Avert Global biodiversity loss: the Council considers it necessary for the Commission and Member States to develop specific initiatives to reduce the negative impacts on natural resources of the EU consumption and production patterns, and to ensure that biodiversity concerns are systematically reflected in all relevant trade agreements concluded by the EU, where appropriate, and in the Union's development cooperation actions and programmes.

The Commission is called upon to:

- include, as part of its work to reform, reorient and/or eliminate environmentally harmful subsidies by 2020, criteria for identification of subsidies harmful to biodiversity at EU level, and to prepare a road map for the achievement of this objective, taking into account the specificities of each Member State;
- deliver on the commitments made at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP 10) in Nagoya;
- present a proposal, based on the results of the impact assessment and as regards matters falling within EU competence, for the timely ratification and implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilisation on behalf of the EU in preparation for the first Meeting of the Parties;
- continue promoting a common approach to nature conservation in the whole EU territory, including Member States' outermost regions and overseas territories which are home to several important global biodiversity hotspots.

Lastly, the Council invites the Commission to develop and agree with Member States a common implementation framework to underpin the effectiveness of the Strategy. It calls on the Commission to report back on the progress on the development of the common implementation framework to the Council in early 2012.

Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety adopted the own-initiative report drafted by Gerben-Jan GERBRANDY (ADLE, NL) in response to the Commission communication entitled *Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020*.

The committee deplores the fact that the EU failed to meet its 2010 biodiversity target. It supports the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020, including all its targets and actions and takes the view, nevertheless, that some actions may have to be strengthened and specified more clearly, and that more concrete measures should be deployed in order to ensure effective implementation of the strategy.

Mainstreaming biodiversity in all EU policies: Members highlight the importance of mainstreaming biodiversity protection and conservation in the development, implementation and funding of all other EU policies including those on agriculture, forestry, fisheries, regional development and cohesion, energy, industry, transport, tourism, development cooperation, research and innovation in order to make the EUs sectoral and budgetary policies more coherent and ensure that it honours its binding commitments on biodiversity protection.

The report states that:

- the EU Biodiversity Strategy should be fully integrated into the strategies for the mitigation of, and adaption to, climate change;
- protecting, valuing, mapping and restoring biodiversity and ecosystem services is essential in order to meet the goals of the [Roadmap to a Resource-Efficient Europe](#), and calls on the Commission and the Member States to consider, as part of specific measures, presenting a timetable for mapping and assessing ecosystem services in the EU which will enable targeted and efficient measures to be taken to halt the degradation of biodiversity and ecosystem services;
- given that the loss of biodiversity has devastating economic costs for society, the Commission and the Member States should value ecosystem services and to integrate these values into accounting systems as a basis for more sustainable policies.

Conserving and restoring nature: the report emphasises the need to halt the deterioration in the status of all species and habitats covered by EU nature conservation legislation and achieve a significant and measurable improvement in their status at EU level.

Regretting that, in the EU only 17 % of habitats and species and 11 % of key ecosystems protected under EU legislation are in a favourable state, Members call on the Commission to analyse, as a matter of urgency, why current efforts have not yet succeeded and to consider whether other, potentially more effective instruments are available.

Members call on the Commission and the Member States to undertake to adopt integrated strategies in order to identify each geographical areas natural values and the features of its cultural heritage, as well as the conditions necessary for maintaining them. They stress that, in order to establish a clear pathway to achieving the 2050 vision, at least 40 % of all habitats and species must have a favourable conservation status by 2020. The report recalls that, by 2050, 100 % (or almost 100 %) of habitats and species must have a favourable conservation status.

In this regard, the report:

- urges the Member States to ensure that the process of designating Natura 2000 sites is finalised by 2012; the Commission and the Member States are called upon to ensure proper conservation of the Natura 2000 network through adequate funding for those sites;
- highlights the urgent need to step up efforts to protect oceans and marine environments, both through EU action and by improving international governance of oceans and areas beyond national jurisdiction;
- underlines the need to organise biodiversity awareness and information campaigns for all ages and social categories, on the understanding that awareness campaigns for children and adolescents should, as a priority, be organised at school ;
- recommends extending governance to the mobilisation of citizens, and also to non-profit organisations and economic actors, with the emphasis, in the case of the latter, being on integrating biodiversity into company strategies.

Members stress the need to invest more in research on biodiversity, including in relation to one or more of the relevant societal challenges addressed by Horizon 2020.

Maintain and restore ecosystems and their services: the report notes the requirement under the CBD to restore 15 % of degraded ecosystems by 2020. Members regard this as a minimum, however, and wish the EU to set a considerably higher restoration target reflecting its own more ambitious headline target and its 2050 vision, taking into account country-specific natural conditions. Members recognise, however, that it is unlikely that a more ambitious EU target for the restoration of degraded ecosystems will be a stimulus to more ambitious international and national commitments, within or outside the CBD.

The Commission is urged to:

- adopt a specific Green Infrastructure Strategy by 2012 at the latest, with biodiversity protection as a primary objective; underlines that this strategy should address objectives relating to urban as well as rural areas;
- develop an effective regulatory framework based on the No Net Loss initiative, taking into account the past experience of the Member States while also utilising the standards applied by the Business and Biodiversity Offsets Programme;
- devote particular attention to species and habitats whose functions are of priceless economic value.

The report recognises the need to promote green infrastructure, eco-innovation and the adoption of innovative technologies in order to create a greener economy, and calls on the Commission to draw up good practice guides in this area.

Agriculture: the committee stresses that the CAP is not confined to the aim of food provision and rural development, but is a crucial tool for biodiversity, conservation, mitigation of climate change, and maintenance of ecosystem services. It considers it regrettable, however, that these measures have so far failed to halt the overall decline in biodiversity in the EU and that farmland biodiversity is in continued decline. It calls therefore, for a reorientation of the CAP towards the provision of compensation to farmers for the delivery of public goods, since the market is currently failing to integrate the economic value of the important public goods agriculture can deliver.

Members call for the greening of Pillar I of the CAP in order to ensure the conservation of biodiversity in the wider farmed landscape, improve connectivity and adapt to the effects of climate change. The report calls for:

- all CAP payments, including those made from 2014, to be underpinned by robust cross-compliance rules which help to preserve biodiversity and ecosystem services, covering the Birds and Habitats Directives (without watering down the current standards

- applicable from 2007 to 2013), pesticides and biocides legislation and the Water Framework Directive;
- a strengthening of Pillar II and for drastic improvements in all Member States to the environmental focus of that pillar and to the effectiveness of its agri-environmental measures, including through minimum mandatory spending on environmental measures such as agri-environmental measures, Natura 2000 and forest environment measures and support for High Nature Value and organic farming;
- the inspection of agricultural practices to be strengthened in order to prevent biodiversity loss; maintains, in particular, that discharges of slurry should be controlled and even prohibited in the most sensitive areas in order to preserve ecosystems.

The committee calls on the Commission, in the context of the new CAP reform, to step up its efforts in support of agricultural sectors which make a proven contribution to preserving biodiversity, and in particular the bee-keeping sector.

As regards forestry, the report calls for specific action with a view to achieving Aichi Target 5, whereby the rate of loss of all natural habitats, including forests, should be at least halved by 2020 and where feasible brought close to zero, and degradation and fragmentation significantly reduced.

Members welcome the Commissions proposals for the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy, which should guarantee the implementation of the ecosystem approach and the application of updated scientific information serving as the basis for long-term management plans for all commercially exploited fish species. They emphasise that only by securing the long-term sustainability of fish stocks can we ensure the economic and social viability of the European fisheries sector.

In addition, they call on the Commission and the Member States to ensure that measures are taken to prevent both the entry of new invasive alien species into the EU and the spread of currently established invasive alien species to new areas. They urge the Commission to come forward in 2012 with a legislative proposal which takes a holistic approach to the problem of invasive alien plant and animal species in order to establish a common EU policy on the prevention, monitoring, eradication and management of these species and on rapid alert systems in this area.

Financing: the committee calls on the Commission and the Member States to identify all existing environmentally harmful subsidies, according to objective criteria, and calls on the Commission to publish, by the end of 2012, an action plan (including a timetable) on how to phase such subsidies out by 2020 in line with the Nagoya commitments.

The report also emphasises:

- the importance of mobilising both EU and national financial support from all possible sources, including the creation of a specific instrument to finance biodiversity, and of developing innovative financial mechanisms in particular habitat banking in conjunction with offsetting in order to reach the targets set in the area of biodiversity;
- the imperative need to ensure that the next Multiannual Financial Framework (2014-2020) dedicates at least 1 % of resources to environmental protection and supports efforts to achieve the six targets set out in the Biodiversity Strategy, and that funding for the LIFE programme is stepped up.

Members note, furthermore, that the enormous economic value of biodiversity offers a worthwhile return on the investment in its conservation. They call, therefore, for an increase in funding for nature conservation measures.

Lastly, the committee calls on the Commission and the Member States, with a view to ensuring adequate financing of the Natura 2000 network, to ensure that at least EUR 5.8 billion per year is provided through EU and Member State funding.

Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020

The European Parliament adopted by 452 votes to 172, with 36 abstentions, a resolution in response to the Commission communication entitled *Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020*.

Parliament deplores the fact that the EU failed to meet its 2010 biodiversity target. It supports the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020, including all its targets and actions and takes the view, nevertheless, that some actions may have to be strengthened and specified more clearly, and that more concrete measures should be deployed in order to ensure effective implementation of the strategy.

Members welcome the Commission communication on Biodiversity 2020, and note that climate change, biodiversity loss, threats from invasive species and overconsumption of natural resources are transnational and transregional challenges which affect every EU citizen, whether living in an urban or a rural area, and that urgent action is needed at every level of government local, regional and national in order to mitigate these effects. Member States are invited, therefore, to integrate the strategy into their plans, programmes and/or national strategies.

The main recommendations made by the European Parliament are as follows:

Mainstreaming biodiversity in all EU policies: Parliament highlights the importance of mainstreaming biodiversity protection and conservation in the development, implementation and funding of all other EU policies including those on agriculture, forestry, fisheries, regional development and cohesion, energy, industry, transport, tourism, development cooperation, research and innovation in order to make the EUs sectoral and budgetary policies more coherent and ensure that it honours its binding commitments on biodiversity protection.

The resolution states that:

- the EU Biodiversity Strategy should be fully integrated into the strategies for the mitigation of, and adaption to, climate change;
- protecting, valuing, mapping and restoring biodiversity and ecosystem services is essential in order to meet the goals of the [Roadmap to a Resource-Efficient Europe](#), and calls on the Commission and the Member States to consider, as part of specific measures, presenting a timetable for mapping and assessing ecosystem services in the EU which will enable targeted and efficient measures to be taken to halt the degradation of biodiversity and ecosystem services;
- given that the loss of biodiversity has devastating economic costs for society, the Commission and the Member States should value ecosystem services and to integrate these values into accounting systems as a basis for more sustainable policies.

Conserving and restoring nature: the resolution emphasises the need to halt the deterioration in the status of all species and habitats covered by EU nature conservation legislation and achieve a significant and measurable improvement in their status at EU level.

Regretting that, in the EU only 17% of habitats and species and 11% of key ecosystems protected under EU legislation are in a favourable state, Members call on the Commission to analyse, as a matter of urgency, why current efforts have not yet succeeded and to consider whether other, potentially more effective instruments are available.

Parliament calls on the Commission and the Member States to undertake to adopt integrated strategies in order to identify each geographical areas natural values and the features of its cultural heritage, as well as the conditions necessary for maintaining them. It considers it necessary to have digitised, accessible maps containing accurate information about the principal natural resources, protected areas, land uses, water bodies and areas at risk, in order to facilitate compliance by regional and local authorities with environmental legislation, especially that relating to biodiversity.

The resolution also stresses that, in order to establish a clear pathway to achieving the 2050 vision, at least 40 % of all habitats and species must have a favourable conservation status by 2020. It recalls that, by 2050, 100 % (or almost 100 %) of habitats and species must have a favourable conservation status.

In this regard, the resolution:

- urges the Member States to ensure that the process of designating Natura 2000 sites is finalised by 2012; the Commission and the Member States are called upon to ensure proper conservation of the Natura 2000 network through adequate funding for those sites. It also calls on the Commission and the Member States to ensure proper conservation of the Natura 2000 network through adequate funding for those sites; calls, in particular, on the Member States to develop binding national instruments in cooperation with the different stakeholders, through which they define priority conservation measures and state the relevant planned source of financing (whether from EU funds or Member States' own budgets);
- highlights the urgent need to step up efforts to protect oceans and marine environments, both through EU action and by improving international governance of oceans and areas beyond national jurisdiction;
- underlines the need to organise biodiversity awareness and information campaigns for all ages and social categories, on the understanding that awareness campaigns for children and adolescents should, as a priority, be organised at school ;
- recommends extending governance to the mobilisation of citizens, and also to non-profit organisations and economic actors, with the emphasis, in the case of the latter, being on integrating biodiversity into company strategies.

Members stress the need to invest more in research on biodiversity, including in relation to one or more of the relevant societal challenges addressed by Horizon 2020.

Maintain and restore ecosystems and their services: the resolution notes the requirement under the CBD to restore 15 % of degraded ecosystems by 2020. Members regard this as a minimum, however, and wish the EU to set a considerably higher restoration target reflecting its own more ambitious headline target and its 2050 vision, taking into account country-specific natural conditions.

The Commission is urged to:

- adopt a specific Green Infrastructure Strategy by 2012 at the latest, with biodiversity protection as a primary objective; underlines that this strategy should address objectives relating to urban as well as rural areas;
- develop an effective regulatory framework based on the No Net Loss initiative, taking into account the past experience of the Member States while also utilising the standards applied by the Business and Biodiversity Offsets Programme;
- devote particular attention to species and habitats whose functions are of priceless economic value.

The resolution recognises the need to promote green infrastructure, eco-innovation and the adoption of innovative technologies in order to create a greener economy, and calls on the Commission to draw up good practice guides in this area.

Agriculture: Parliament stresses that the CAP is not confined to the aim of food provision and rural development, but is a crucial tool for biodiversity, conservation, mitigation of climate change, and maintenance of ecosystem services. It considers it regrettable, however, that these measures have so far failed to halt the overall decline in biodiversity in the EU and that farmland biodiversity is in continued decline. It calls therefore, for a reorientation of the CAP towards the provision of compensation to farmers for the delivery of public goods, since the market is currently failing to integrate the economic value of the important public goods agriculture can deliver.

Members call for the greening of Pillar I of the CAP in order to ensure the conservation of biodiversity in the wider farmed landscape, improve connectivity and adapt to the effects of climate change. The resolution calls for:

- all CAP payments, including those made from 2014, to be underpinned by robust cross-compliance rules which help to preserve biodiversity and ecosystem services, covering the Birds and Habitats Directives (without watering down the current standards applicable from 2007 to 2013), pesticides and biocides legislation and the Water Framework Directive;
- a strengthening of Pillar II and for drastic improvements in all Member States to the environmental focus of that pillar and to the effectiveness of its agri-environmental measures, including through minimum mandatory spending on environmental measures such as agri-environmental measures, Natura 2000 and forest environment measures and support for High Nature Value and organic farming;
- the inspection of agricultural practices to be strengthened in order to prevent biodiversity loss; maintains, in particular, that discharges of slurry should be controlled and even prohibited in the most sensitive areas in order to preserve ecosystems.

Parliament calls on the Commission, in the context of the new CAP reform, to step up its efforts in support of agricultural sectors which make a proven contribution to preserving biodiversity, and in particular the bee-keeping sector.

Forestry: the resolution calls for specific action with a view to achieving Aichi Target 5, whereby the rate of loss of all natural habitats, including forests, should be at least halved by 2020 and where feasible brought close to zero, and degradation and fragmentation significantly reduced.

Fisheries: Members welcome the Commissions proposals for the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy, which should guarantee the implementation of the ecosystem approach and the application of updated scientific information serving as the basis for long-term management plans for all commercially exploited fish species. They emphasise that only by securing the long-term sustainability of fish stocks can we ensure the economic and social viability of the European fisheries sector.

Invasive alien species: in addition, they call on the Commission and the Member States to ensure that measures are taken to prevent both the entry of new invasive alien species into the EU and the spread of currently established invasive alien species to new areas. They urge the Commission to come forward in 2012 with a legislative proposal which takes a holistic approach to the problem of invasive alien plant and

animal species in order to establish a common EU policy on the prevention, monitoring, eradication and management of these species and on rapid alert systems in this area.

Financing: Parliament calls on the Commission and the Member States to identify all existing environmentally harmful subsidies, according to objective criteria, and calls on the Commission to publish, by the end of 2012, an action plan (including a timetable) on how to phase such subsidies out by 2020 in line with the Nagoya commitments.

The resolution also emphasises:

- the importance of mobilising both EU and national financial support from all possible sources, including the creation of a specific instrument to finance biodiversity, and of developing innovative financial mechanisms in particular habitat banking in conjunction with offsetting in order to reach the targets set in the area of biodiversity;
- the imperative need to ensure that the next Multiannual Financial Framework (2014-2020) dedicates at least 1 % of resources to environmental protection and supports efforts to achieve the six targets set out in the Biodiversity Strategy, and that funding for the LIFE programme is stepped up.

Members note, furthermore, that the enormous economic value of biodiversity offers a worthwhile return on the investment in its conservation. They call, therefore, for an increase in funding for nature conservation measures.

Lastly, Parliament calls on the Commission and the Member States, with a view to ensuring adequate financing of the Natura 2000 network, to ensure that at least EUR 5.8 billion per year is provided through EU and Member State funding.

Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020

The Commission presents the mid-term review of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020, which takes stock of progress in implementing the EU biodiversity strategy against the 2010 baseline.

The report recalls that the opportunity cost of not reaching the 2020 EU biodiversity headline target has been estimated at up to EUR 50 billion a year. One in six jobs in the EU depend to some extent on nature. At around EUR 5.8 billion, the annual costs of maintaining the EU Natura 2000 network, established under the [Habitats Directive](#), are but a fraction of the economic benefits generated by the network through services such as carbon storage, flood mitigation, water purification, pollination and fish protection, together worth EUR 200-300 billion annually.

Summary of progress since 2011: the mid-term review assessing progress under the EU biodiversity strategy shows that the 2020 biodiversity targets can only be reached if implementation and enforcement efforts become considerably bolder and more ambitious.

- Overall, as compared with the EU 2010 biodiversity baseline, biodiversity loss and the degradation of ecosystem services in the EU have continued, as confirmed by the [2015 European environment - state and outlook report](#). This is consistent with global trends and has serious implications for the capacity of biodiversity to meet human needs in the future. While many local successes demonstrate that action on the ground delivers positive outcomes, these examples need to be scaled up to have a measurable impact on the overall negative trends.
- Since the last reporting period, the number of species and habitats of EU importance with secure/favourable or improved conservation status has increased slightly. Populations of some common birds appear to be stabilising but other species linked to fragile freshwater, coastal and agricultural ecosystems continue to decline. 70 % of EU species are threatened by habitat loss. While some ecosystem services (in particular provisioning) are increasing, others such as pollination are decreasing.
- The key threats to biodiversity habitat loss (in particular through urban sprawl, agricultural intensification, land abandonment, and intensively managed forests), pollution, over-exploitation (in particular fisheries), invasive alien species and climate change continue to exert pressure causing loss of species and habitats and resulting in ecosystem degradation and weakening ecosystem resilience. The EU-28 footprint is still over twice its biocapacity and this compounds pressures on biodiversity outside Europe.
- The report also notes that favourable conservation status assessments of forest habitats of European importance have decreased from nearly 17 % to about 15 % in the latest assessment. The vast majority of assessments remain unfavourable (80 %) but results vary considerably across Europe's biogeographical regions, with the highest proportion of favourable assessments being found in the Mediterranean region.

Outlook: the Commission makes the following points:

- progress has been made in establishing important policy frameworks: the new Common Fisheries Policy, the [Invasive Alien Species](#) (which cause damage of at least EUR 12 billion a year to EU sectors) and [Timber Regulation](#), and the introduction of biodiversity provisions in bilateral trade agreements, to name just a few.
- The reformed Common Agricultural Policy provides opportunities for enhanced integration of biodiversity concerns but the extent of take-up by Member States will be decisive for success.
- The Commission has supported efforts made by Member States, regional and local authorities and stakeholders in enforcing environmental legislation, addressing policy gaps, providing guidelines, funding, promoting partnerships and fostering research and the exchange of best practice.

It is now urgent to intensify the implementation of measures across all targets and to ensure that the principles included in the policy frameworks are fully reflected on the ground.

Achieving the 2020 biodiversity objectives will require strong partnerships and the full engagement and efforts from key actors at all levels, in particular with respect to completing the Natura 2000 network for the marine environment, ensuring effective management of Natura 2000 sites and implementing the Invasive Alien Species Regulation, and considering the most suitable approach for recognizing our natural capital throughout the EU.

Achieving this target will also require more effective integration with a wide range of policies, by setting coherent priorities underpinned by adequate funding in particular in the sectors of agriculture and forestry which together account for 80% of land use in the EU, as well as marine, fisheries and regional development. EU financing instruments can assist in the process. Achieving biodiversity objectives will also contribute to the growth and jobs agenda, food and water security, and to quality of life, as well as to the implementation of sustainable development goals globally and in the EU.

