

Procedure file

Basic information	
COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure) 2020/0300(COD) Decision	Procedure completed
Union environment action programme (2021-2030) Subject 3.70 Environmental policy 3.70.18 International and regional environment protection measures and agreements 3.70.20 Sustainable development Legislative priorities Joint Declaration 2021	

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	 Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	 O'SULLIVAN Grace Shadow rapporteur  EVREN Agnès  PAPADAKIS Demetris  RODRÍGUEZ RAMOS María Soraya  BEIGNEUX Aurélia  ZALEWSKA Anna	25/11/2020
	Committee for opinion  Budgets	Rapporteur for opinion The committee decided not to give an opinion.	Appointed
	 Industry, Research and Energy	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	 Transport and Tourism		13/11/2020
	 PLUMB Rovana		
	 Agriculture and Rural Development		30/11/2020
	 Fisheries	 HOLMGREN Pär The committee decided not to give an opinion.	

Council of the European Union
European Commission

Commission DG

[Environment](#)

Commissioner

SINKEVIČIUS Virginijus

European Economic and
Social Committee
European Committee of the
Regions

Key events

14/10/2020	Legislative proposal published	COM(2020)0652	Summary
11/11/2020	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 1st reading		
15/06/2021	Vote in committee, 1st reading		
17/06/2021	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading	A9-0203/2021	Summary
07/07/2021	Debate in Parliament		
08/07/2021	Decision by Parliament, 1st reading	T9-0352/2021	Summary
08/07/2021	Matter referred back to the committee responsible		
13/01/2022	Approval in committee of the text agreed at 1st reading interinstitutional negotiations	PE704.561	
09/03/2022	Debate in Parliament		
10/03/2022	Results of vote in Parliament		
10/03/2022	Decision by Parliament, 1st reading	T9-0067/2022	Summary
29/03/2022	Act adopted by Council after Parliament's 1st reading		
06/04/2022	Final act signed		
12/04/2022	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2020/0300(COD)
Procedure type	COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure)
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Decision
Legal basis	Treaty on the Functioning of the EU TFEU 192-p3
Mandatory consultation of other institutions	European Economic and Social Committee European Committee of the Regions
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ENVI/9/04390

Documentation gateway					
Legislative proposal		COM(2020)0652	14/10/2020	EC	Summary
Committee draft report		PE680.827	03/02/2021	EP	
Committee of the Regions: opinion		CDR5234/2020	05/02/2021	CofR	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE689.633	11/03/2021	EP	
Committee opinion	TRAN	PE661.992	19/04/2021	EP	
Committee opinion	AGRI	PE663.278	03/06/2021	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A9-0203/2021	17/06/2021	EP	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, partial vote at 1st reading/single reading		T9-0352/2021	08/07/2021	EP	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T9-0067/2022	10/03/2022	EP	Summary
Draft final act		00083/2021/LEX	06/04/2022	CSL	
Commission response to text adopted in plenary		SP(2022)180	08/04/2022	EC	

Final act
Decision 2022/591 OJ L 114 12.04.2022, p. 0022

Union environment action programme (2021-2030)

PURPOSE: to establish a general Union environmental action programme for the period up to 31 December 2030 (the 8th EAP).

PROPOSED ACT: Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the European Parliament decides in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure and on an equal footing with the Council.

BACKGROUND: the report on the European Environment - State and Outlook 2020, presented by the European Environment Agency (EEA) on 4 December 2019, identified the unprecedented scale and urgency of the environmental, climate and sustainability challenges facing Europe today. These challenges require immediate and concerted action and urgent systemic solutions.

The European Commission has responded to these challenges by adopting the [European Green Deal](#), which aims to make the EU the first climate-neutral continent by 2050. Following the debate on the communication *A clean planet for all*, in March 2020 the EU presented its long-term strategy under the Paris agreement on climate change, committing the EU to becoming a climate-neutral economy by 2050. The Commission has proposed enshrining this target in [EU climate law](#).

In response to the coronavirus crisis, the Next Generation EU recovery plan proposed by the European Commission on 27 May 2020 and endorsed by the Extraordinary European Council of July 2020 underlines the importance of the European Green Deal.

As a follow-up to the Seventh Environment Action Programme (7th EAP) which shall expire on 31 December 2020, the Commission is presenting a proposal for an 8th EAP, with a long-term vision and priority environmental objectives to support the EU's common commitment to achieve a green recovery.

CONTENT: the proposal for a decision establishes a general action programme in the field of the environment for the period up to 31 December 2030 to accelerate the Union's transition towards a climate-neutral, clean, resource-efficient and circular economy in a fair and inclusive manner.

The 8th EAP shall support the environment and climate action objectives of the European Green Deal in line with the long-term objective to live well, within the planetary boundaries by 2050, which is already established in the 7th EAP. It shall contribute to achieving the United Nations 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals.

Priority objectives

The proposed 8th EAP sets thematic priority objectives in the areas of climate neutrality, adaptation to climate change, protection and restoration of biodiversity, aiming at zero pollution and reducing the pressures of production and consumption on the environment. It also sets

out the conditions for achieving the long-term objectives and priority thematic objectives for all actors involved.

Monitoring framework

One of the key actions of the 8th EAP, announced by the European Green Deal, is a new monitoring framework to measure the progress made by the EU and its Member States in implementing the programme's priority objectives.

The 8th EAP monitoring framework shall provide the environment and climate input to the EUs overall efforts to measure progress towards sustainability and shall inform policy makers and stakeholders if the Union and the Member States are on track to achieving a systemic transformation.

The process to develop an 8th EAP monitoring framework shall provide an opportunity to explore the potential of the ongoing workstream on the planetary boundaries (e.g. freshwater use, land use change, ocean acidification) and on the Union consumption footprint, including deforestation and forest degradation in third countries.

Key indicators

The 8th EAP monitoring framework should comprise a limited number of key indicators for high-level communication, which tell a coherent story about the state of the environment, the main pressures and the effectiveness of our response.

On the basis of a consultation process with the other EU institutions, Member States and stakeholders, the Commission intends to present a set of key indicators for the 8th EAP by the end of 2021.

Budgetary implications

This proposal has been developed in line with the Commission proposal for the EU Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027. It introduces the need for additional resources in the European Environment Agency (EEA) and in the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) in supporting the new monitoring, measuring and reporting framework of this Programme.

The estimated impact on operational expenditure for the period 2021-2027 is estimated at EUR 23.379 million for the EEA and EUR 2.369 million for ECHA.

It is expected that Heading 3 of the MFF Natural Resources and Environment shall maintain neutrality and shall not be impacted by this proposal. The resources needed for the EEA and ECHA shall be deducted from the LIFE budget according to a split of 2/3 of the costs for DG Environment and 1/3 of the costs of DG Climate Action for the EEA, while the resources needed for ECHA shall be fully covered by DG Environment.

Union environment action programme (2021-2030)

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety adopted the report by Grace O'SULLIVAN (Greens/EFA, IE) on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on a General Union Environment Action Programme to 2030.

As a reminder, the Commission published its proposal for a General Union Environment Action Programme to 2030 (8th EAP) in 2020, a year that was marked by a global health and environment emergency in the form of a devastating pandemic and a deepening ecological crisis.

Subject matter

The proposed Decision sets out a general action programme in the field of the environment for the period up to 31 December 2030 (8th Environment Action Programme). It lays down its priority objectives, identifies enabling conditions as well as actions necessary for the achievement of the enabling conditions. It sets a monitoring framework to measure and evaluate progress of the Union and its Member States towards the achievement of the priority objectives. It also establishes a governance mechanism to ensure full achievement of the priority objectives.

The 8th EAP aims at accelerating the transition to a climate-neutral, sustainable, non-toxic, resource-efficient, renewable energy-based, resilient and competitive circular economy in a just, equitable and inclusive way, and at protecting, restoring and improving the quality of the environment, including air, water and soil, as well as protecting and restoring biodiversity and ecosystems. It builds on and promotes the achievement of the objectives of the European Green Deal and its initiatives.

Thematic priority objectives

It is proposed that the 8th EAP should have the following six interlinked thematic priority objectives, to be achieved by 2030 at the latest:

- 1) swift and predictable reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and, at the same time, enhancement of removals by natural sinks in the Union, to attain the 2030 greenhouse gas emission reduction target, in line with its climate and environment objectives whilst ensuring a just transition that leaves no one behind;
- 2) continuous progress in enhancing and mainstreaming adaptive capacity, including on the basis of ecosystem approaches, strengthening resilience and adaptation and reducing vulnerability of the environment and of society as well as all sectors of the economy to climate change, while improving prevention of, and preparedness for, natural disasters;
- 3) advancing towards a sustainable well-being economy that gives back to the planet more than it takes, and ensuring the transition to a non-toxic circular economy where growth is regenerative and resources are used efficiently in line with the waste hierarchy;
- 4) pursuing zero-pollution in order to achieve a toxic-free environment, including for air, water, soil as well as in relation to light and noise pollution, and protecting the health and well-being of people, animals and ecosystems from environment-related risks and impacts, including by applying and promoting the One Health approach;
- 5) protecting, preserving and restoring biodiversity, including by halting and reversing its loss both inside and outside protected areas, and improving the health of the environment, notably air, water and soil, as well as tackling the degradation of marine and terrestrial ecosystems, in particular by implementing the targets outlined in the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 as well as those laid down in relevant Union legislation;

6) ensuring environmental sustainability, and significantly reducing key environmental and climate pressures related to the Unions production and consumption footprint, including Union-driven global deforestation, in particular in the areas of energy, industrial development, buildings and infrastructure, mobility, tourism, international trade and food chains, including agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture, while internalising climate and environmental externalities.

Indicators, monitoring framework and governance

Members proposed establishing an overarching Union framework to measure and establish progress towards a sustainable wellbeing economy that is in line with the SDGs, the Paris Agreement and the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, without prejudice to the European Semester. They also called on the Commission to ensure that the information resulting from the monitoring, assessment and reporting is publicly available and easily accessible, thereby ensuring effective monitoring of progress made.

Following a consultation process with all relevant stakeholders, the Commission should, by 31 December 2021, present a streamlined framework in the form of a single scoreboard, including headline indicators, to monitor and track progress towards the achievement of the priority objectives.

The European Parliament, the Council and the Commission should exchange views annually on the assessment and should identify, as part of the Unions annual programming, additional legislative and non-legislative measures and actions when progress towards the achievement of the priority objectives is considered to be insufficient or in order to overcome barriers which are identified.

Evaluation and ensuring continuity of the European Green Deal 2030

In order to ensure that the next Commission takes ownership of the 8th EAP, Members proposed a mid-term review by 31 March 2024 to take stock of the progress made so far.

Union environment action programme (2021-2030)

The European Parliament adopted by 518 votes to 130, with 47 abstentions, amendments to the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on a General Union Environment Action Programme to 2030 (8th Environment Action Programme).

The matter was referred back to the competent committee for inter-institutional negotiations.

The main amendments adopted in plenary are as follows

Overall objectives of the programme

As the EU's overall action programme for the environment, the 8th EAP should build on the European Green Deal, in line with the long-term objective live well, within the planetary boundaries by 2050. It should also be consistent with the UN 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and enable a systemic shift towards a sustainable welfare economy where climate neutrality is ensured and inequalities have been reduced.

The 8th EAP aims at accelerating the transition to a climate-neutral, sustainable, non-toxic, resource-efficient, renewable energy-based, resilient and competitive circular economy in a just, equitable and inclusive way, and at protecting, restoring and improving the quality of the environment, including air, water and soil, as well as protecting and restoring biodiversity and ecosystems. It builds on and promotes the achievement of the objectives of the European Green Deal and its initiatives.

Thematic priority objectives

It is proposed that the 8th EAP should have the following six interlinked thematic priority objectives, to be achieved by 2030 at the latest:

1) swift and predictable reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and, at the same time, enhancement of removals by natural sinks in the Union, to attain the 2030 greenhouse gas emission reduction target, in line with its climate and environment objectives whilst ensuring a just transition that leaves no one behind;

2) continuous progress in enhancing and mainstreaming adaptive capacity, including on the basis of ecosystem approaches, strengthening resilience and adaptation and reducing vulnerability of the environment and of society as well as all sectors of the economy to climate change, while improving prevention of, and preparedness for, natural disasters;

3) advancing towards a sustainable well-being economy that gives back to the planet more than it takes, and ensuring the transition to a non-toxic circular economy where growth is regenerative and resources are used efficiently in line with the waste hierarchy;

4) pursuing zero-pollution in order to achieve a toxic-free environment, including for air, water, soil as well as in relation to light and noise pollution, and protecting the health and well-being of people, animals and ecosystems from environment-related risks and impacts, including by applying and promoting the One Health approach;

5) protecting, preserving and restoring biodiversity, including by halting and reversing its loss both inside and outside protected areas, and improving the health of the environment, notably air, water and soil, as well as tackling the degradation of marine and terrestrial ecosystems, in particular by implementing the targets outlined in the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 as well as those laid down in relevant Union legislation;

6) ensuring environmental sustainability, and significantly reducing key environmental and climate pressures related to the Unions production and consumption footprint, including Union-driven global deforestation, in particular in the areas of energy, industrial development, buildings and infrastructure, mobility, tourism, international trade and food chains, including agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture, while internalising climate and environmental externalities.

Enabling conditions

The enabling conditions and actions proposed in the amended text relate mainly to the way in which the EU develops, assesses, implements and enforces legislation. In this respect, Parliament believes that a think sustainability first approach should guide the development of EU legislation and define, in the new list of concrete actions, the means to achieve it.

The Commission should ensure, at an early stage, that existing and future EU legislation is in line with the 8th EAP's objectives and that the

cost of inaction is systematically taken into account, as well as the possible impact of measures on social inequalities, including gender inequalities.

In addition, Members proposed actions related to building a scientific knowledge base on the planet's limits and environmental footprints. On transparency and accessibility of information, they called for impact assessments to be published as soon as they are completed, and for the Commission to systematically show how it takes into account input from stakeholder consultations.

Indicators, monitoring framework and governance

Members proposed establishing an overarching Union framework to measure and establish progress towards a sustainable wellbeing economy that is in line with the SDGs, the Paris Agreement and the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, without prejudice to the European Semester.

Following a consultation process with all relevant stakeholders, the Commission should, by 31 December 2021, present a streamlined framework in the form of a single scoreboard, including headline indicators, to monitor and track progress towards the achievement of the priority objectives.

The European Parliament, the Council and the Commission should exchange views annually on the assessment and should identify, as part of the Unions annual programming, additional legislative and non-legislative measures and actions when progress towards the achievement of the priority objectives is considered to be insufficient or in order to overcome barriers which are identified.

Evaluation and ensuring continuity of the European Green Deal 2030

In order to ensure that the next Commission takes ownership of the 8th EAP, Members proposed a mid-term review by 31 March 2024 to take stock of the progress made so far.

Union environment action programme (2021-2030)

The European Parliament adopted by 553 votes to 130, with 7 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on a General Union Environment Action Programme to 2030.

The European Parliament's position adopted at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure amends the Commission's proposal as follows:

Overall objectives of the programme

The 8th EAP aims to: (i) accelerate the green transition to a climate-neutral, sustainable, non-toxic, resource-efficient, renewable energy-based, resilient and competitive circular economy in a just, equitable and inclusive way, and (ii) protect, restore and improve the state of the environment by, inter alia, halting and reversing biodiversity loss.

The 8th EAP forms the basis for achieving the environmental and climate objectives defined under the UN 2030 Agenda and should be aligned with the goals of the Paris Agreement, the Rio Conventions and other relevant international agreements. It supports and strengthens an integrated policy and implementation approach, building upon the European Green Deal. It will be based on the precautionary principle, the principles of preventive action and of rectification of pollution at source and the polluter pays principle.

Priority objectives

The 8th EAP have the long-term priority objective that by 2050 at the latest, people live well, within the planetary boundaries in a well-being economy where nothing is wasted, growth is regenerative, climate neutrality in the Union has been achieved and inequalities have been significantly reduced.

The 8th EAP has six interlinked thematic priority objectives for the period up to 31 December 2030:

(1) swift and predictable reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and, at the same time, enhancement of removals by natural sinks in the Union to attain the 2030 greenhouse gas emission reduction target, in line with the Unions climate and environment objectives, whilst ensuring a just transition that leaves no one behind;

(2) continuous progress in enhancing and mainstreaming adaptive capacity, including on the basis of ecosystem approaches, strengthening resilience and adaptation and reducing the vulnerability of the environment, society and all sectors of the economy to climate change, while improving prevention of, and preparedness for, weather- and climate-related disasters;

(3) advancing towards a well-being economy that gives back to the planet more than it takes and accelerating the transition to a non-toxic circular economy, where growth is regenerative, resources are used efficiently and sustainably, and the waste hierarchy is applied;

(4) pursuing zero pollution, including in relation to harmful chemicals, in order to achieve a toxic free-environment, including for air, water and soil, as well as in relation to light and noise pollution, and protecting the health and well-being of people, animals and ecosystems from environment-related risks and negative impacts;

(5) protecting, preserving and restoring marine and terrestrial biodiversity and the biodiversity of inland waters inside and outside protected areas by, inter alia, halting and reversing biodiversity loss and improving the state of ecosystems and their functions and the services they provide, and by improving the state of the environment, in particular air, water and soil, as well as by combating desertification and soil degradation;

(6) promoting environmental aspects of sustainability and significantly reducing key environmental and climate pressures related to the Unions production and consumption, in particular in the areas of energy, industry, buildings and infrastructure, mobility, tourism, international trade and the food system.

Enabling conditions

To achieve the priority objectives, the Commission, Member States, regional and local authorities and stakeholders, as appropriate, will, inter alia:

- ensure effective, timely and comprehensive implementation of EU environment and climate legislation and strategies;
- strengthen the integrated approach to policy making and implementation, including by adopting a Think sustainability first approach and by integrating and implementing the do no harm principle;
- ensure that measures taken to protect the environment and climate are carried out in a socially fair and inclusive way;
- strengthen environmentally positive incentives and phase out environmentally harmful subsidies, in particular fossil fuel subsidies, including (i) through a binding EU framework to monitor Member States' progress in phasing out fossil fuel subsidies; (ii) by setting a deadline for phasing out fossil fuel subsidies consistent with the ambition of limiting global warming to 1.5°C;
- mainstream biodiversity action in the Union's policies and contributing to the achievement of the overall ambition of providing 7.5 % of annual spending under the multiannual financial framework 2021-2027 to biodiversity objectives in 2024 and 10 % of that annual spending in 2026 and in 2027;
- promote the sound management of chemicals at international level and replace substances of concern quickly;
- address land degradation and ensuring the protection and sustainable use of soil, including by way of a dedicated legislative proposal on soil health by 2023;
- recognise the interconnections between human health, animal health and the environment through integration of the One Health approach in policy making.

Monitoring framework and governance

The Commission will monitor, evaluate and report annually on the progress made by the Union and the Member States in achieving the objectives. Following a consultation process with all relevant stakeholders, the Commission will present a monitoring framework, based on a limited number of headline indicators, which will include systemic indicators such as the environmental-social and environmental-economic nexus. The assessment should be public, and the measures taken and to be taken should be debated annually in the European institutions.

In the light of the mid-term review of the progress made (by 31 March 2024), the Commission will, if appropriate, present a legislative proposal to add an annex to the 8th EAP for the period after 2025, containing a list of actions to achieve these objectives and a timetable for these respective actions.