



*August 2020*

## ***Agriculture***

### [Green groups demand CAP now aligns with EU Green Deal](#)

Green NGOs urge the EU Commission to align its reform of the Common Agriculture Policy with the ambitions set in the EU Green Deal. The commission wants member states to reach an agreement.

### [EU's No-Strings Commitment To Agricultural Reform Must End](#)

EU farm ministers met recently to discuss the environmental aspects of the future Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), but the talks failed to address the crucial transformation needed in EU farming. The meeting of the EU's Agriculture and Fisheries Council was officially focused on the environmental dimension of the future CAP, but in practice the real focus was on "flexibility", with farm ministers calling for flexibility in response to everything and anything.

### [Rethinking the European food system of the next decade](#)

Modern aquaponics systems allow for a very high level and control of food safety, optimal resource rationalisation and maintenance of desirable levels of environmental sustainability.

### [Five recommendations for achieving healthy soils by 2030 through Horizon Europe](#)

The Horizon Europe mission on Soil Health and Food has set the ambitious target for 75% of soils in the EU to be healthy – within 10 years. Here are five recommendations for achieving this. The upcoming Horizon Europe research and innovation framework programme aims to advance research through five missions that deliver solutions to current and future challenges, including the mission on 'Soil Health and Food'.

## ***Air Quality***

### [Covid-19 Must Inspire Us to Clean Up the Air We Breathe](#)

Poor air quality can make us more vulnerable to pandemics. That is why taking on air pollution today will help us make the post-corona world of tomorrow healthier, safer and more resilient. As researchers across the world investigate the link between air pollution and the spread of Covid-19, a growing body of evidence suggested that people living in polluted cities are more at risk from the coronavirus.

### [Oxford unveils plans for UK's first local air pollution targets](#)

Oxford City Council has set out plans to introduce more ambitious air quality targets than the UK's current, legally binding goals, in what it claims is a national first.

## ***Biodiversity***

### [EU 'failed to protect bees and pollinators', report finds](#)

Key EU policies intended to protect and halt the decline of pollinators across the bloc have been largely inefficient, according to a new report of the European Court of Auditors. The commission estimates that nearly €15bn of EU annual agricultural output is attributed to pollinators such as bees, wasps, butterflies, moths and beetles.

### [Connecting protected areas with green infrastructure would strengthen Europe's ecosystems](#)

The EU's network of protected sites could be further connected with green infrastructure to create a trans-European nature network. Highways and other infrastructure currently disconnect about 15 % of the Natura 2000 sites from other nature areas, reducing their capacity for ecosystem services.

## ***Circular Economy***

### [Doubling recycling across Europe is feasible, for certain waste streams](#)

There is significant potential to increase recycling across Europe for municipal, construction and electronic waste according to a European Environment Agency briefing. Compared to current recycled amounts, this potential can double recycling for municipal and electronic waste and increase it by 30 % for construction and demolition waste.

### [Chemical recycling 'promising' for circular economy, EU official says](#)

While chemical recycling opens new possibilities for the circular economy, only a full lifecycle approach will be able to determine the real environmental benefits in terms of saved energy and global warming emissions, a senior EU official has said. Dealing with toxic substances contained in old plastic products – or “legacy chemicals” – is seen by many as the next frontier in recycling, if not the Holy Grail.

### **Climate Action**

#### [Insurers call for more proactive EU climate change adaptation plans](#)

The EU's strategy to adapt to the risks of climate change needs to be much more proactive and ambitious in order to reduce the risk of natural disasters such as flooding insurers have said.

#### [Higher EU climate target 'economically feasible'](#)

The EU's plan to reduce the bloc's greenhouse emissions by 55 percent by 2030 is "technically and economically feasible," according to a new report by German think-tank Agora Energiewende and environmental research institute Öko-Institut.

#### [Warming Greenland ice sheet passes point of no return](#)

Even if the climate cools, study finds, glaciers will continue to shrink. Nearly 40 years of satellite data from Greenland shows that glaciers on the island have shrunk so much that even if global warming were to stop today, the ice sheet would continue shrinking.

### **Covid-19**

#### [Recovery plan slammed for failing to tackle climate crisis](#)

EU leaders agreed that about a third of the €750bn recovery package and the €1.074 trillion seven-year budget will be invested in projects contributing to climate action. However, environmental activists said that the package falls short on climate safeguards.

### **Energy**

#### [Germany launches first 'green' bonds](#)

Germany has announced details of its first “green” bond placing, tapping financial markets to fund environmental projects for the first time. The finance ministry said it would raise up to €11 billion in 2020 to support climate-related projects. The first issue in September of a 10-year bond, or Bund, will have a minimum of €4 billion in volume. The German government announced late last year that it would launch the bonds in the second half of 2020 as part of its efforts to combat climate change.

### **Marine**

#### [Europe's seas face uncertain future if urgent, coherent action not taken](#)

Faced with the increased threats posed by overexploitation of marine resources, pollution and climate change, urgent action is needed to bring Europe's seas back to good condition. According to the European Environment Agency's report on Europe's marine ecosystems, we are running out of time to reverse decades of neglect and misuse.

### **Plastics**

#### [Better awareness of biodegradable, compostable plastics disposal would help tackle Europe's plastics problem](#)

Biodegradable, compostable and bio-based plastic products like shopping bags, packaging or drinking cups are being increasingly promoted as greener solution than traditional plastic products for consumers. But how environmentally-friendly are they? A recent briefing says clearer labelling and better public awareness will improve the correct disposal of these plastics so that they don't end up doing more harm than good.

### **Sustainable Development**

#### [Making Sustainability the New Normal](#)

The crisis triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic has shown us that things can and must be done differently. EEB Secretary General Jeremy Wates invites us to dare to create a new and better normal that respects people's quality of life and the environment.