



*March 2020*

### **Agriculture**

#### [NGOs urge EU to tackle meat consumption 'problem'](#)

Greenpeace, the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and a dozen of other environmental NGOs have urged the European Commission to tackle the overconsumption of meat, dairy and eggs in the EU. The call aims to reduce the negative impact of industrial animal production on the environment, human health, animal welfare and rural communities.

### **Air Quality**

#### [Air pollution goes down as Europe takes hard measures to combat coronavirus](#)

The European Environment Agency's data confirm large decreases in air pollutant concentrations - of nitrogen dioxide concentrations in particular - largely due to reduced traffic and other activities, especially in major cities under lockdown measures. Reductions of around half have been seen in some locations. The data are measured hourly, at about 3,000 monitoring stations across Europe.

#### [Citizen science projects on air quality produce useful information and raise public awareness](#)

Air pollution is the biggest environmental health threat in Europe and more and more people are taking action to claim their right to clean air. A new European Environment Agency report provides an overview of low-cost devices that citizens and NGOs can use to measure local air quality.

### **Biodiversity**

#### [European Commission launches global coalition for biodiversity](#)

On the occasion of the [World Wildlife Day](#), the European Commission launched a new global coalition for biodiversity. With this communication campaign, the Commission is calling for stronger mobilisation in raising awareness about the need to protect biodiversity.

#### [Alien invasions are rising: study shows location-level factors are the main drivers of success for invading bird species worldwide](#)

Invasions of alien species are rising at an alarming rate, largely due to growing global trade and transport routes. Preventing the successful establishment of alien species by better understanding the factors determining success is a step toward limiting the threat of future biological invasions. Statistical modelling using observed bird invasion data — including location-, event- and species-level factors — showed which factors were key to successful establishment by the alien species.

#### [Glasgow joins CitiesWithNature to enhance value of nature in urban spaces](#)

ICLEI member Glasgow (United Kingdom) has joined CitiesWithNature, a group of 129 cities in 45 countries committed to enhancing and protecting nature in and around urban spaces. Glasgow aims to benefit from CitiesWithNature's knowledge hub and its platform for cities and their partners to connect, engage and learn with their peers, working with shared commitment towards urban sustainability policies as it starts implementing the city's new Open Space Strategy

### **Circular Economy**

#### [Changing how we produce and consume: New Circular Economy Action Plan shows the way to a climate-neutral, competitive economy of empowered consumers](#)

The European Commission has adopted a new [Circular Economy Action Plan](#) - one of the main building blocks of the [European Green Deal](#), Europe's new agenda for sustainable growth. With measures along the entire life cycle of products, the new Action Plan aims to make our economy fit for a green future, strengthen our competitiveness while protecting the environment and give new rights to consumers.

### **Climate Action**

#### [World's glaciers melting fast: 9.6 trillion tonnes of ice lost in last 50 years](#)

The most comprehensive glacier assessment yet reveals that glacier melt was responsible for 27 mm of sea level rise between 1961 and 2016. Ice loss from glaciers is now the second biggest contributor to rising sea levels after warming water. If glaciers continue to melt at current rates, most — including many in central Asia, central Europe, western Canada and the USA — will vanish during the second half of this century.

#### [Position paper on Just Transition for those depending on fossil resource extraction and combustion](#)

Climate Action Network Europe (CAN Europe) is Europe's largest coalition working on climate and energy issues. This must include timely action that will contribute to achieving its fair share a net-zero greenhouse gas emissions economy by 2040 in the EU and globally by 2050 while ensuring that the transition is happening with the support of local communities and that it will create new, decent and sustainable jobs.

#### [Committing to climate-neutrality by 2050: Commission proposes European Climate Law and consults on the European Climate Pact](#)

The Commission has presented a proposal to enshrine in legislation the EU's political commitment to be climate neutral by 2050, to protect the planet and our people. The European Climate Law sets the 2050 target and the direction of travel for all EU policy, and gives predictability for public authorities, businesses and citizens. At the same time, the Commission is launching a public consultation on the future European Climate Pact. Through this consultation the public will be involved in co-designing this instrument.

### **Economy**

#### [New combined-analysis technique explores environmental impact of European trade](#)

The global production, trade and use of goods and services has a significant impact on the environment — and rates of consumption are rising. A new study combines two assessment methods to quantify the impact of European trade on the environment. It finds that, overall, the EU was a net importer of environmental impact from 2000 to 2010, that machinery, equipment and vehicles contributed most to the EU's export impacts and that the EU's trade balance (import impact minus export impact) is increasing over time. The two assessment methods complement one another well and could form the basis for future country- or region-wide studies, suggest the researchers, by enabling a detailed analysis of individual steps within a product's trade flow, while also providing a larger picture of the overall process.

### **Energy**

#### [New Energy Performance of Buildings Directive kicks in](#)

EU Member States are required to transpose new EU rules on the use of energy in buildings into national law by 10 March, thereby helping citizens to consume less energy, save money and live in healthier buildings.

#### [In focus: Renewable energy in Europe](#)

Renewable energy is key to achieve the goal of being carbon-neutral by 2050. By 2000, Europe accounted for more than 70% of all wind power installed in the world and 20% of global solar photovoltaics installations

### **Freshwater**

#### [World Water Day 2020: water and climate change](#)

European Federation of National Associations of Water Services

Our changing climate means more flooding and more droughts. But what else does it mean for our water, and what should we do now to ensure we all have safe, clean and affordable water in the future?

#### [Healthy floodplains have a key role to play in improving our environment](#)

The preservation and restoration of Europe's largely degraded floodplains, must be better prioritised according to a European Environment Agency. The report says floodplains have a key role to play in improving biodiversity, water, and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

### **Marine**

#### [Oceans can be successfully restored by 2050, say scientists](#)

Despite being treated as humanity's rubbish dump for decades, the oceans of the world are proving remarkably resilient, says a [new scientific review](#). Building on that resilience could lead to a full recovery within three decades, the researchers argue.

### [As the ocean warms, marine species relocate toward the poles](#)

Since pre-industrial times, the world's oceans have warmed by an average of one degree Celsius (1°C). Now researchers report that those rising temperatures have led to widespread changes in the population sizes of marine species. The researchers found a general pattern of species having increasing numbers on their poleward sides and losses toward the equator.

### [Ecological effects of deep-sea mining experiment still evident 26 years later](#)

In 1989, researchers dragged a plough harrow across the seafloor of the Peru Basin to recreate some of the effects of deep-sea mining. Twenty-six years later, a new team of researchers returned to the site to assess whether there were any long-term ecological effects. They found that the seabed ecosystem remained disrupted, with significantly fewer suspension feeder species, such as anemones and sea sponges, than in undisturbed areas of seafloor. This suggests that deep-sea mining could cause irreversible changes to marine food webs in highly disturbed areas.

## **Transport**

### [Cities and regions need to switch to a low-emission transport system](#)

The Green Deal and the role of cities and regions in the switch to cleaner transport was the focus of discussion in a joint meeting between the European Parliament. The Green Deal and the role of cities and regions in the switch to cleaner transport was the focus of discussion in a joint meeting between the European Parliament's Committee for Transport and Tourism (TRAN) and the Commission for Territorial Cohesion Policy and EU Budget (COTER) of the European Committee of the Regions .

### [Luxembourg is first country in world to make public transport free](#)

Luxembourg is Europe's richest country, where the car is king. But it has become the first in the world to make public transport free. There are already cities that have introduced such measures—Tallinn—but Luxembourg is the only to do it for a whole country. It will apply to all trams, trains and buses and—unlike Estonia's capital—will be available to tourists as well as residents.

## **Woodland**

### [Deforestation and forest degradation: IEEP's response to European Commission's public consultation](#)

In its efforts to deliver on the EU Green Deal and to step up EU action, the European Commission launched a public consultation on deforestation and forest degradation. The main aim was to assess the types of regulatory and non-regulatory measures to address these issues, with a legislative initiative expected to be rolled out in 2021.