# EU MATTERS
## NIEL's Monthly European Environmental News

October 2018

## Agriculture

[Land system at European level — analytical assessment framework](#)

Land and soil provide vital resources to society such as food, feed, fuel, fibres and shelter. They also provide ecosystem services that support production functions, regulate the risk of natural hazards, and provide cultural and spiritual benefits. By using land, society alters and modifies the quantity and quality of these services, and the intrinsic potential for land benefits to mankind. To better manage its use of land and associated processes, society needs a systems ted) view on land. This briefing proposes an analytical framework that aims at developing a strategy for monitoring and integrated assessment of the state of land and its key resources.

## Biodiversity

[Knowledge alone is 'not enough' to prepare for future climate risks: the case of Swedish forestry](#)

Invasive alien species (IAS) pose a threat to native European biodiversity and cost the EU annual damages worth EUR 12 billion as a result of IAS effects on human health, damaged infrastructure, and agricultural losses. IAS are the focus of Target 9 of the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) and Target 5 of the EU Biodiversity Strategy. The EU framework for action against IAS is set out in a Regulation adopted in 2014. This provides for the adoption of a list of IAS of Union concern that will be subject to restrictions across the EU. The first step in order to consider a species for listing is to undertake a risk assessment.

## Circular Economy

[Electronic waste is an environmental time bomb, NGOs warn in new video](#)

E-waste is estimated to reach a record high in 2018. Tech companies must be held accountable for profiteering from short product lifespans and a "throwaway" culture, NGOs say. The world is on track to produce [a record 50 million metric tons of potentially toxic e-waste](#) in 2018 – that's equivalent to almost 5,000 Eiffel towers, in just one year. E-waste has increased as the lifespan of our electronic devices has fallen. By reducing the lifespan of a product companies may drive sales, but this comes at the expense of citizens and the planet, said the European Environmental Bureau (EEB).

## Climate Action

[Knowledge alone is 'not enough' to prepare for future climate risks: the case of Swedish forestry](#)

Understanding the social context of forestry is key to understanding how the sector could be persuaded to move beyond 'business-as-usual' practices, to prepare for future climate risks, says a new study.

[Commissioners welcome the UN climate change report on 1.5° C global warming limit](#)

European Commission - Statement The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has issued its Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways.

[Climate ambition of 1.5°C demands urgent legal and accounting work](#)

World governments are "nowhere near on track" to avoid breaking through international carbon budgets.

[The Long Term Strategy for decarbonisation needs to address the whole economy, as a whole](#)

Current policies are not enough to deliver the Paris Agreement ambition to limit warming to 1.5 degrees. Preparation of a European strategy on long-term decarbonisation of the economy is a critical opportunity for a step change. To seize it, we need a strategy which considers the economy as a whole, and draws the lessons for early action and investment in each sector. (IEEP)

**Northern Ireland environment link**

**Brexit:** *Updates on NIEL's EU Policy work after the UK Referendum decision can be found [here](#).*

## Energy

### Towards the Battery of the Future

This Future Brief from Science for Environment Policy provides an overview of technical aspects of battery design and production which enable the environmental footprint of batteries to be lowered. It also highlights how battery technologies are evolving to deliver better performance.

### EU fuel labelling: clearer information for consumers and operators

A new harmonised set of fuel labels will appear across Europe. They will give drivers better information on the suitability of fuels for their vehicles wherever they travel in the EU, helping them avoid misfuelling and informing on the environmental impact of their choice.

## Environmental Governance

### Access to justice update from ClientEarth and Justice and Environment

Find out more about the People's climate case, a new project and a citizen's guide on access to justice.

### Environmental regulations: Far more than red tape

Leading up to IEEP's Think 2030 conference, experts express their views on Europe's most pressing sustainability issues in the *Think 2030 blog series, Pathways to 2030*. The tenth edition features Nick Molho, Executive Director of the Aldersgate Group. The next European Commission must adopt a more positive stance on the value of regulations. Far from being a drag on the economy, well-designed environmental regulations can increase business investment in innovation and skills and drive competitiveness, he argues.

## Freshwater

### Disinfection by-products in drinking water: new detector may meet need for wider monitoring and detection

The presence of disinfection by - products (DBPs) in drinking water is an emerging health concern. DBPs come in many classes and are chemically diverse, making them challenging to monitor. Swedish researchers have evaluated a new method for the simultaneous determination of a broader range of DBPs than typically possible using other available technique.

## Marine

### Sustainable fishing at risk after catastrophic European Union vote

The health of Europe's fisheries in the north-east Atlantic is at stake after a European Parliament committee decided to postpone the recovery of fish stocks in that area.

### MEPs fight to curb plastic pollution but miss key opportunity on microplastics

While WWF welcomed a European Parliament Committee's vote on the Commission's single-use plastic proposal, it believes the definition of "biodegradable plastics" adopted by the vote does not go far enough to prevent these kinds of plastics degrading in to microplastics, a key issue in our ocean's food web with implications for both wildlife and human health.

## Sustainable Development

### High-level platform urges stronger implementation of SGDs in Europe

The high-level platform's contribution to the Commission's reflection paper 'Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030' has been welcomed. The platform calls for a strengthening of policy coherence for development, e.g. by aligning the European Semester process, EU public finances and financial regulations, and the EU's long-term decarbonisation plans with the SDGs. Platform members also proposed ideas in policy areas considered vital for achieving the SDGs e.g. social inclusion, sustainable consumption/ production, climate & energy, food, farming & land-use, and cohesion.

## Other

### Environment Council to define global EU leadership on biodiversity and climate

On 9 October, the Environment Council met to develop EU recommendations ahead of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change's Conference of the Parties (UNFCCC COP24, 3-14 December in Katowice, Poland), and to finalise conclusions on the preparations for the COP 14 meeting of the UN's Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP15, 17-29 November 2018, Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt).



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