

EU MATTERS

NIEL's Monthly European Environmental News



Agriculture

[The post-2020 CAP can play a crucial role in restoring nature](#)

Intensive farming is a major driver of biodiversity loss, but as a series of LIFE projects shows, it is possible to restore intensively farmed land and support the recovery of natural habitats and species.

[German cabinet agrees on plan to ban glyphosate, increase insect protection](#)

The German government wants to protect insects better and completely ban the controversial weedkiller glyphosate by 2023. It also intends to introduce an animal welfare label and unlock additional funds for environmentally friendly CAP measures. EURACTIV Germany reports.

[How school meals can drive local and regional change](#)

How to link sustainable food procurement with strategic policies or climate change actions? How to overcome public procurement issues related to purchasing "local & regional food"? If 1€ invested in sustainable school meals brings up to 6€ in social return in investment imagine the impact of sustainable school meals all across Europe!

[How can the EU avoid actually importing deforestation?](#)

Deforestation and EU imports of agri-food products - The recent forest fires in the Amazon have put a renewed focus on the loss of forests at a global level, and on its connection to the EU's international trading policy on importing various agri-food products that are linked to deforestation.

Air Quality

[More than half of EU governments fail to deliver a plan to cut Air Pollution](#)

Five months past the deadline, EU officials are still waiting for fifteen member states to detail their programmes to improve air quality. National governments were due to submit comprehensive detailed plans to reduce their national emissions of dangerous pollutants – the so called 'National Air Pollution Control Programme (NAPCP)' – by April 2019, but five months later less half of them have delivered.

Biodiversity

[Putting nature at the heart of Europe's climate fight](#)

Calls for EU decision makers to act more decisively against climate change and ecosystem degradation are growing stronger. But what are the big policy choices to make in a new Green Deal benefitting both climate and nature? Drawing on its experience in EU climate, food, water and biodiversity policy, IEEP has provided some pointers on where action is needed most.

[Forest protection likely to be new priority for EU Parliament](#)

Large areas of forest are being cleared worldwide for the agricultural industry. Although the EU requires its contracting partners to protect the environment, it lacks the means for enforcement. Environmentalists and the European Parliament see an urgent need for action. EURACTIV Germany reports.



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

Circular Economy

[Manufacturers should stress 'green' packaging qualities to educate consumers on real impact](#)

Consumers in France, Germany and the USA perceive 'environmentally friendly' packaging to be reusable, recyclable and 'biodegradable'¹, finds a new study. These results suggest that producers should emphasise the end-of-life merits of packaging to appeal to consumers' environmental concerns, and design packaging that is reusable, recyclable and 'biodegradable'. However, they also indicate a need to raise public awareness of packaging's true life-cycle environmental impacts, such as those during production and transport, which are greater than consumers generally perceive them to be.

[Incineration is getting in the way of recycling and zero waste](#)

EUNOMIA's report urges Nordic countries to steer away from waste incineration in order to meet EU recycling targets.

Climate Action

[European mayors call for urgent climate action as global strike kicks off](#)

Mayors representing 8,000 European cities have called for urgent action to meet the EU's commitments under the Paris Climate Agreement. The demand came just ahead of a "global climate strike" on Friday 20 September when millions of people around the world, many inspired by young Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg, were expected to come out on to the streets urging political leaders to intensify climate action.

[New report for cities, by cities translates IPCC 1.5 degrees report into action points](#)

The goal, as outlined in the IPCC Special Report on 1.5 Degrees released in October 2018, is clear - global warming needs to be limited to 1.5 degrees and this requires rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society. In an attempt to translate the report's key scientific findings and policy observations for officials and policymakers of the world's cities and urban areas, a collection of academics, cities, city networks and civil society organisations from across the world joined forces and produced a summary for urban policymakers report.

[Carbon Capture and Storage technology could solve EU decarbonisation issues](#)

THE European climate commissioner discussed the EU's plans to reduce CO2 emissions and the role carbon-capture and storage technology (CCS) can play. So far, efforts to reduce emissions have focused on increasing the uptake of renewables to make the clean energy transition. In recent years, the Commissioner said the EU has put in place "the most advanced regulatory framework in the world" and noted that important technological advancements have been made.

[The European Union continues to lead the global fight against climate change](#)

The Commission has adopted a Communication reaffirming the EU's commitment to accelerated climate ambition. The Commission recalls that the EU has been at the forefront of global climate action, negotiating an inclusive international framework to respond to this challenge, while acting domestically with unity, speed and decisiveness. The EU has put concrete actions behind its Paris Agreement commitments, in line with the Juncker Commission priority of establishing an Energy Union with a forward-looking climate change policy.

Environmental Governance

[Achieving sustainable transition requires major changes to Europe's current governance system](#)

Europe's 2020 strategy and the 7th Environmental Action Plan were conceived before the SDGs, the Paris agreement and before some of the recent advances in scientific understanding of planetary boundaries, and of the scale of interconnected challenges to come. In light of the severity and urgency of risk identified by experts around the world, a new approach is now needed.

Land Use

[Critical transitions required to transform food and land use](#)



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Following the IPCC Special Report on Climate and Land Use (which demonstrated the necessity to transform our land use and food production approaches if we hope to keep global warming within 1.5oC), Growing Better: Ten Critical Transitions to Transform Food and Land Use, The Global Consultation Report of the Food and Land Use Coalition, provides evidence of the economic cost to people and planet if we fail to transform. The report provides ten key transitions to unlock new business opportunities and save costs, proving it is not just possible but actually economically attractive to feed the global population with nutritious diets within planetary boundaries.

Plastics

[Collecting litter and data to combat plastic pollution](#)

More and more communities around the world are working against marine litter and plastic pollution. A Danish initiative mobilises schoolchildren to collect plastic waste and research data that will become part of the European Environment Agency's (EEA) database on marine litter. Better data on plastic pollution helps inform policies and tackle the problem.

[WHO says microplastics in water not a health risk, more research needed](#)

Plastic pollutant nanoparticles in both tap and bottled water do not pose an apparent health hazard, according to a World Health Organisation (WHO) report. However, the UN body acknowledges more research and evidence is needed.

Sustainable Development

[Independent Group of Scientists: The state of global sustainable development is serious, solutions exist](#)

The Independent Group of Scientists appointed by the UN has assessed the state of global sustainable development as worrying. Although positive developments can be found in the world, certain issues may prevent further progress. The Independent Group of Scientists has identified six key issues and the means necessary to improve the direction.

[Making sustainability fashionable](#)

Our apparently insatiable appetite for clothes is stripping the environment bare and leaving many ecosystems hanging by a thread. Despite the massive environmental impact of the textiles sector, a cloak of ignorance conceals this harm from the public eye.

[How to accelerate change towards sustainability?](#)

There is growing recognition that achieving prosperity within environmental limits requires fundamental changes in core systems of production and consumption. A new European Environment Agency (EEA) report identifies ten focus areas for enabling sustainability transitions.



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