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Agriculture/ Land Use

[Food security and ecosystem resilience: Commission boosts action on pollinators](#)

The Commission has presented '[A New Deal for Pollinators](#)' to tackle the alarming decline in wild pollinating insects in Europe, revising the [2018 EU Pollinators Initiative](#). Citizens have been increasingly calling for decisive action against pollinator loss, also through the recent successful European Citizens' Initiative '[Save Bees and Farmers](#)'. The renewed initiative sets out actions to be taken by the EU and the Member States to reverse the decline of pollinators by 2030 as today, one in three bee, butterfly and hoverfly species are disappearing in the EU.

[Field to fork: global food miles generate nearly 20% of all CO2 emissions from food](#)

Food trade is key to achieving global food security, with internationally traded food making up 19% of consumed calories worldwide. But what is the environmental impact of this trade? With growing demand for diverse food products, transportation has emerged as a key link in worldwide food supply chains. This study estimates the carbon footprint of food miles, using a global multi-region accounting framework.

[Carbon farming co-benefits: Approaches to enhance and safeguard biodiversity](#)

This report, co-authored by Ecologic and IEEP, demonstrates that despite both the potential benefits and risks of carbon farming for biodiversity, most of the current carbon farming mechanisms fail to incorporate sufficient protections to ensure net positive biodiversity impact. The report identifies challenges and opportunities for implementing standards for biodiversity into carbon farming mechanisms and proposes requirements to ensure that carbon farming standards enhance and safeguard biodiversity, alongside delivering climate mitigation.

[IEEP UK - Core Environmental Standards for UK imported Agri Food Products](#)

This paper examines the role of core environmental standards in the UK's post Brexit trading relationships in relation to imported agri-food products (specifically in relation to pesticide and fertiliser use) and how we maintain those standards to protect the environment both at home and abroad.

[Commission hosts first European Citizens' Panel on food waste reduction](#)

The Commission hosted the first European Citizens' Panel in Brussels allowing citizens to provide their input on how to step up action to reduce food waste in the EU. This is the first of a new generation of Citizens' Panels launched as a follow-up to the Conference on the Future of Europe, embedding participatory and deliberative practices in the European Commission's policy-making process on certain key policy areas.

Biodiversity/ Nature

[Nature beyond biodiversity: why restoration matters](#)

Nature restoration: The biodiversity and climate emergencies must be addressed as one. Restoring nature, while implementing climate adaptation and mitigation strategies, is a win-win strategy to tackle these crises together. Bringing back damaged ecosystems can provide benefits that go beyond the ecological dimension; delivering social, economical and health improvements.

[Nature-based Solutions can generate 20 million new jobs, but "just transition" policies needed](#)

Twenty million jobs could be created by further harnessing the power of nature to address major challenges facing society, such as climate change, disaster risk, and food and water insecurity.

[Nature restoration as a driver for resilient food systems](#)

This report explores how nature restoration can contribute to improving the resilience of food production by enhancing ecosystem services and reducing negative impacts of extreme weather events linked to climate change.

[Sports organisations commit to safeguard nature under new framework](#)

More than twenty sports organisations, including the International Olympic Committee (IOC) as a founding partner, and the Olympic and Paralympic Games Paris 2024, signed the first-ever Sports for Nature Framework. Signatories pledge to adhere to four key principles that will safeguard nature and contribute to the new global goals for biodiversity,

Climate Action

[Opportunities for health engagement in European climate policies](#)

While climate change is established as a growing global crisis, the impact on human health and well-being are only more recently being explored. The World Health Organisation is creating momentum in this regard, with a recently issued health-driven call for climate action. However, there is a potential to strengthen the synergies between health and climate in the EU policies and measures.

[Synergising climate and biodiversity agendas is an imperative challenge for the century](#)

The restoration of ecosystems is crucial to achieving climate mitigation targets, and this is reflected in the recent global and EU ambitions for nature restoration. As a major contributor to biodiversity loss, agriculture in the EU must shift to restore agroecosystems so that they can provide benefits for biodiversity and climate. Carbon farming can help achieve this goal if standards integrate adequate safeguards and ensure net positive biodiversity impacts.

Energy

[Pre-regulation wind turbines may cause substantial bat mortality](#)

From 2011 Germany passed regulations to minimise bat collisions with wind turbines. But turbines installed earlier continue to operate without mitigation measures. This study assesses the potential impact of these facilities on bat populations. Based on a small-scale survey, the researchers estimate that bat fatalities (killed bats) across the country could exceed 200 000 per year. The researchers argue that these annual losses of bats are likely to eventually lead to a decline of the populations of the species at high risk of collision.

Forestry/ Woodland

[Most forests are less able to cope with hazards under climate change](#)

Climate change is weakening forests around the world, a new study concludes. Increased climate variability and water shortages have made forests in warmer regions less able to recover from natural and anthropogenic disruptions. The study also suggests that climate change has pushed 23% of the world's natural boreal and tropical forests close to their ecological tipping point – meaning that they may not survive future disturbances.

[Under the looking glass: Leaving no one behind in the new EU deforestation-free legislation](#)

Last December, the EU institutions reached a political agreement on the much anticipated deforestation-free value chains regulation, that aims to minimise deforestation and forest degradation embedded in products sold on the EU market.

Freshwater/ Water

[Water: Commission decides to refer IRELAND to the Court of Justice for failing to correctly transpose Water Framework Directive protecting waters from pollution](#)

The Directive establishes a framework for protecting inland surface waters, transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwater by preventing their further deterioration, preventing pollution as well as protecting and enhancing water dependent ecosystems and water resources. It requires that all inland and coastal waters reach at least good status by 2027 at the latest.

[Restored floodplains could remove 38.000 tons of nitrate pollution in the Danube river basin](#)

Reconnecting cut-off water bodies and floodplains with the Danube River and its tributaries could aid nitrate removal and contribute to water quality improvements, shows a new large-scale modelling study. The

Danube river basin, flowing through 10 countries in central and eastern Europe, has long been affected by elevated nitrate (NO₃) levels, from agricultural run-off and other sources, causing eutrophication

[Human demand for water-based ecosystems services in the Netherlands under COVID-19: what lessons for their management?](#)

The COVID-19 pandemic led to an ‘anthropause’ – or an abrupt alteration in typical human activities – such as less travel and more recreation in natural spaces. This study suggests that the effects on urban water systems in the Netherlands could provide lessons for management – for example, restricting boat traffic in canals may improve underwater habitat, say researchers.

[Climate warming may increase algal blooms caused by sediment nutrient release in lakes – management must adapt](#)

A record-setting algal bloom in Hungary’s Lake Balaton, in 2019, led researchers to investigate the cause. Their findings suggest that the ecological stability of large, shallow lakes is susceptible to the effects of climate change. As in many lakes, the pressure of growing human populations and fertiliser run-off from intensive agriculture (among other stressors such as industrialisation and species invasion) has previously caused eutrophication in Balaton – the largest lake in Central Europe.

Governance

[Justice not profit must shape new rules for business](#)

No more business as usual: As a self-proclaimed leader for human rights and sustainability, Europe must critically look at the activities of its companies. To produce the products we need without harming the people or the planet in the process, we need new rules for business. But corporate resistance stands in the way.

[Benefits of nature restoration: A new series of policy briefs](#)

IEEP and the Ecologic Institute, as part of the Think Sustainable Europe network, have prepared a series of thematic policy briefs to inform policymakers of the crucial importance of nature restoration.

Health/ Well-being

[Austria's New Year's resolution: wellbeing within planetary boundaries](#)

Good news: Nothing says 'Happy New Year!' like a bold and much-needed resource use reduction target. Following the Finnish and Dutch lead, the Austrian government is setting a New Year's resolution for 2023 (and the decades to come) to systematically trim down material footprint, moving towards a wellbeing economy!

Marine

[Global horizon scan reveals the 15 issues that are expected to impact marine and coastal biodiversity conservation in the near future](#)

Marine and coastal habitats are experiencing unprecedented environmental change – with some of the drivers of change due to overlooked and emerging issues in the areas of resource-exploitation, new-technology and ecosystem issues. This study assembled a panel of 30 experts – including scientists, policymakers and conservation practitioners – to identify issues that are likely to significantly impact the functioning, and conservation, of marine and coastal ecosystems in the next 5–10 years.

Transport

[Will more frequent river floods cause widespread malfunction of European road networks?](#)

More frequent river flooding is a climate hazard in Europe, threatening its road transport infrastructure. This study investigates whether the potential level of disruptive impact on the road networks of European countries could reach a socio-economic tipping point – with an abrupt and large loss of road-network function. [Click here to read more](#)