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Agriculture/ Land Use

[Monitoring soil threats in Europe](#)

Soil is a vital component of natural capital, hosting rich biodiversity and providing critical ecosystem services, such as food production, water purification and carbon storage. However, European soils are under increasing pressure and comprehensive monitoring to assess soil health is lacking. A European Environment Agency (EEA) report presents a core set of soil indicators and critical limits for soil health.

[France needs to review plan for agriculture to match the scale and urgency of the climate & biodiversity crisis](#)

The current European Union food system is responsible for an estimated 30% of the continent's GHG emissions. The agriculture sector also puts immense pressure on biodiversity, as it contributes significantly to soil degradation and reductions in water quality and availability. Environment and climate assessment of France's CAP Strategic Plan. This report is part of a series of environmental and climate assessments of CAP Strategic Plans, in Member States with large agriculture sectors. It covers climate mitigation and adaptation, natural resources, and biodiversity protection, in this case for France.

[Real pesticide action: our moment to ally politics, people and nature](#)

The excessive use of synthetic pesticides is seriously harming human health and biodiverse ecosystems on, and beyond, European farms. These indiscriminate practices are also undermining the foundations of European food production. As discussions on pesticide regulation come to a head, let's remember the need to apply existing EU law, and the urgent need for ambitious targets to protect farmers, nature, citizens and food security.

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

This report proposes requirements to ensure that carbon farming standards enhance and safeguard biodiversity, alongside delivering climate mitigation.

Air Quality

[This Valentine's Day, love was not in the air](#)

Air pollution: Late last year the European Commission proposed a revision of its air quality plans to improve ambient air for all citizens. The proposal would set interim 2030 EU air quality standards and align more closely with World Health Organization guidelines. But with continued cases of polluted cities and the proposed legislation facing the risk of being diluted - will clean European air ever be realised?

Biodiversity/ Nature

[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.

Circular Economy

[Sustainable smartphones? Modular design promotes do-it-yourself repair to extend device life](#)

Modular design – where product parts can be replaced and upgraded – is a promising way of extending product lifetimes. However, to realise this potential, it is vital that people are willing to repair their devices. A new study has explored how modular smartphones promote user repairs. Much of the environmental impact of smartphones lies in their manufacturing and materials – for example energy use and precious metals as well as the environmental impact of long supply chains.

Climate Action

[We need to get behind the smoke and mirrors of climate finance](#)

Climate finance: While the international community works to put conquest and colonialism in the past, the Global South continues to be subject to neocolonial mechanisms that exacerbate the debt and climate crises. To change the status quo, the global climate finance landscape must be significantly reshaped. LATINDADD's new report outlines several promising alternatives to begin with

[EU Member States make progress in climate adaptation to boost resilience, EEA review finds](#)

EU Member States recognise the importance of adapting to impacts of heatwaves, droughts, floods, heavy precipitation and changing temperatures and of mainstreaming climate change adaptation to a wide range of affected areas like agriculture, or water and disaster risk management. These are key findings of a European Environment Agency (EEA) report which assesses the state of national adaptation actions in 2021.

[Circular building design: assessment of two versions of the same residential building highlights benefits of adaptable buildings](#)

How different are the environmental impacts of conventional buildings versus adaptable structures designed along circular principles? Researchers investigated two outwardly similar buildings through lifecycle assessment. In the EU, 37% of all waste generated comes from construction and demolition. Worldwide, meanwhile, building construction and operation accounts for about a third of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and energy consumption.

Education

[Highlights and Next steps for Greening School Grounds and Outdoor Learning](#)

Since November 2021, the Children & Nature Network, in partnership with Salzburg Global Seminar, the International School Grounds Alliance, IUCN Commission on Communication and Education (CEC), #NatureForAll, National League of Cities Institute for Youth, Education and Families, engaged global leaders to identify and disseminate successful approaches to school ground greening and outdoor learning from around the world. A cohort of fellows from across sectors and from around the world, many of them CEC and #NatureForAll members, came together over the course of a year to identify and codify [Global Lessons on Greening School Grounds and Outdoor Learning](#), develop the *Salzburg Statement*, a Global Action Agenda and 13 case *studies* highlighting geographically and culturally diverse greening school grounds programs.

Energy

[Even if green, too much hydrogen is unsustainable](#)

EU oversized plans for hydrogen: While debates on hydrogen sustainability largely focus on its colour, the dangers go beyond this. Even if renewable (or 'green'), large-scale hydrogen production requires massive investments and risks driving significant amounts of renewable electricity away from solutions that could decarbonise faster and cheaper. European Union's mammoth plans for renewable hydrogen are unrealistic and might slow down the phase-out of fossil fuels..

[Clean Energy Investment Sets \\$1.1 Trillion Record, Matching Fossil Fuels For the First Time](#)

According to the latest data release from clean energy research group BloombergNEF, 2022 was a turning point for energy; it was the first time the world invested as much in renewables as it did in fossil fuels.

[Renewable-ready: heating industry leads the clean heat transition, calls on policies to follow](#)

Leading by example: It's not everyday that industry is pushing policymakers for climate solutions, but the heating industry is paving the way. For the third year in a row, heating manufacturers show their commitment to walking the clean heat transition walk, and they are calling on the lawmakers to commit to the clean heat transition talk – starting with laws on fossil fuel phase-out.

Freshwater/ Water

[Are waste-water treatment plants failing to protect the ecological health of European streams?](#)

Less than half of the European rivers and streams are in good ecological health due to the multiple pressures from society. One pressure is the release of untreated and insufficiently treated urban wastewater, which can occur when the EU legislation on urban wastewater discharges is poorly implemented by the Member States. This study investigates how wastewater from households and small industry is presenting an increasing threat to stream ecosystems and provides strategies for future management of UWWTPs.

Governance

[Could sustainability models ignite a revolution in policy making?](#)

Future vision: Today, we are trying to learn how to live on a planet that has been altered by environmental and social crises. WILLIAM, a model designed within the LOCOMOTION project, is designed to help us navigate our way through this situation. But, we need to understand how integrated models work, what they can do, and their limits to get the most out of them.

Marine

[High time for the high seas](#)

High seas biodiversity treaty is urgently needed for the sake of present and future generations. The “High Seas Biodiversity Treaty”, also known as the “BBNJ Agreement”, is an international agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond national jurisdiction, currently under negotiation at the United Nations

[More efforts needed to address land sources of marine litter](#)

Amid a rise in plastic waste, more must be done across Europe to tackle the root causes of marine litter at its source to prevent the waste from polluting in-land rivers and making its way to our coastlines and seas, according to a European Environment Agency (EEA) web report.

[A voice from the 5th International Marine Protected Area Congress \(IMPAC5\), co-hosted by IUCN](#)

IMPAC5 has provided a unique opportunity for the global ocean community to convene and transform the Kunming-Montreal Framework from bold ambition to action, with youth and indigenous voices front and centre.

Plastics

[Nanoplastics: state of knowledge and environmental and human health impacts](#)

Plastics are highly versatile and are ubiquitous in society, fulfilling a wide array of valuable functions in our economy and daily lives. Yet plastic disposal remains a key threat to our natural environment, and the material is accumulating in our soils and seas in unprecedented amounts.

[Markets for many commonly recycled materials struggle in the EU](#)

Europe’s ambitions for a circular economy require the timely provision of good-quality recycled raw materials to manufacturers. However, according to a European Environment Agency (EEA) assessment, from the eight most common recyclables, only aluminium, paper and glass have well-functioning secondary markets. Lack of standardisation and competition with new materials are among the challenges for other markets, such as wood and textiles.

Transport

[European Green Deal: Commission proposes 2030 zero-emissions target for new city buses and 90% emissions reductions for new trucks by 2040](#)

The European Commission has proposed ambitious new CO2 emissions targets for new heavy-duty vehicles (HDVs) from 2030 onwards. These targets will help to reduce CO2 emissions in the transport sector - trucks, city buses, and long-distance buses are responsible for over 6% of total EU greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and more than 25% of GHG emissions from road transport.