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Business and Biodiversity

**Last updated in April
2010**

Latest Developments

On 7 April, the Greens in the European Parliament organised a conference on *How much for Biodiversity*. This event marked the beginning of a series of five workshops on biodiversity focusing on the marine environment, agriculture and climate change.

The conference was organised by MEP Sandrine Bélier (France, Green) member of the Environment committee. Speakers were from the European Parliament, the European Commission (DG ENVI), Brussels based NGOs and agencies. Speakers focused on the issue of measuring the value of biodiversity, the need to integrate the conservation of biodiversity into economic and climate change policies and provided an overview of the existing biodiversity policies, their weaknesses and future initiatives.

The Commission in their Work Programme 2010 announced to publish a Communication on a new post-2010 EU biodiversity policy and strategy by the end of this year. The Communication will set out the commitments that the EU should consider in the context of international efforts and in the light of the pressure on the ecosystems. The strategy will establish a number of sub-targets on the basis of which action will be undertaken. The analysis will cover the following aspects: over-exploitation; climate change; land-use change/fragmentation; invasive species) and ecosystems (forest, water, marine, etc). However, emphasis will be on the main biodiversity components or pressures exerted at EU level by specific sectors (incl. agriculture and fisheries), to ensure focus and more effective delivery.

[European Commission work programme 2010](#)

The Commission's DG Environment Biodiversity Unit is also working with stakeholders to develop a Business and Biodiversity platform where stakeholders can share their activities in the field of biodiversity. The platform aims to support all businesses integrating biodiversity into their core activities. B@B Platform will facilitate information and knowledge exchange among different actors, will host a resource centre, provide links to information available on the topic and outline existing best practices. It will also liaise with other related ongoing Business and Biodiversity initiatives. The website will be frequently updated and will publish all materials delivered throughout the B@B Platform. The work will be divided into six sectors: agriculture, food supply industry, forestry, extractive industries, financial sector and tourism. The Commission believes that the golfing industry will most fit into the tourism sector.

The platform will be launched in June 2010 and in May workshops will be organized for each sector group.

[B@B platform](#)

In parallel, the Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP): Economics of Biodiversity has been working on the Economics of Ecosystems Initiative (TEEB, 2008-2010) in order to



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demonstrate the value of biodiversity to individuals and businesses and emphasise the need for action. The conclusions of the TEEB will be published in October 2010.

[Institute for European Environmental Policy \(IEEP\) website](#)

In addition, Esther de Lange (Dutch, EPP) will issue a report on the implementation of EU legislation aiming at the conservation of biodiversity in the next weeks in the European Parliament.

Impact on golf

- Course management
- Role of enhancing biodiversity

Background

Last updated in February 2010:

2010 is the International Year of Biodiversity. It is a global initiative launched by the United Nations for 2010 to help raise awareness on the importance of biodiversity and to encourage worldwide action to conserve plants and animals and the environments in which they live in.

On 26 February, Karin Kadenbach to the Commission posed an oral question to the European Commission on the EU 2020 and biodiversity.

He asked the Commission please advise on how the future 'EU 2020' strategy will foster sustainability for rural economy and agriculture and ensure coherent EU investments for preservation and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystem services?

Due to this, PUMA and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), announced a strategic partnership to support biodiversity worldwide and specific initiatives in Africa. The 'Play for Life' partnership will support the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity by raising awareness about habitat and species conservation among football fans and the general public during worldwide football events, including the Orange Cup of African Nations in Angola later this month and international friendly games leading up to the FIFA World Cup 2010 in South Africa.

On the European front, there is also an initiative to prioritize biodiversity in 2010. Europe has set an ambitious target for halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010. Recent European Environmental Agency (EEA) assessments however concluded that the 2010 target will not be met. New "post 2010" targets will be set in the course of 2010. Biodiversity loss is inextricably linked to the degradation of ecosystem services that support life on earth.

[2009 Biodiversity assesment report](#)

In this context, the European Commission's Green Week will be dedicated to Biodiversity.

New Environment Commissioner Elect, Janez Potocnik, in his speech before the European



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Parliament recognizes that biodiversity loss is becoming clearer and the failure to meet interim goals on biodiversity loss cannot continue. He spoke about the real value of biodiversity and ecosystems and the importance of soil, water, land use and forestry and underlined them as his priorities.

On 15 March, the Environment Council will adopt the Council Conclusions on Biodiversity.

Last updated in October 2009:

On 15-17 October, the 1st European Conference on Golf Courses: *Development Ensuring a sustainable future* will be hosted by the Fundación Comunidad Valencia in Alicante, Spain. Golf courses managers, European and regional public authorities, civil society representatives will discuss together best ways to assure sustainable development and tourism at golf courses in the frame of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation. The El Plantío Golf Course will be the case study that attendants will examine. They will look at the best practices carried out at golf courses: water saving, protection of natural life and integration of disadvantage people. Moreover, this is the only golf course in Europe considered by the European Commission official partner of the European Sustainable Development Campaign.

[Link to agenda](#)

On 7-9 September, Environment ministers and senior officials of the EU were invited to a meeting on biodiversity, ecosystem services and climate change in Strömstad (Sweden).

The objective of the meeting was to prepare stakeholders for the revision of the Strategic Plan for the Convention on Biological Diversity and, in particular, the development of new biodiversity visions and targets following the evaluation of the 2010 Biodiversity Target.

Special attention was given to the links between biodiversity, ecosystem services, climate change and human well-being.

The meeting was held back-to-back with the centenary celebrations of the designation of the first national parks in Europe and the inauguration of the transboundary national parks, Kosterhavet (Sweden) and Ytre Hvaler (Norway), by His Majesty King Carl XVI Gustaf and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Haakon on 9 September.

[Chair's conclusions from the High-Level Meeting in Strömstad, 7-9 September](#)

[Conference Programme](#)

[Background report: Biodiversity, Ecosystem Services and Resilience](#)

[European Commission - Towards a Strategy on Climate Change, Ecosystem Services and Biodiversity](#)

On 17 September, the European Commission's DG Environment published an article on the role of ecosystems in climate mitigation and carbon storage. The article covers how the ability of the Earth's living systems to store carbon could play a vital role in the mitigation of climate change.

The article is based on a [United Nation's report on the Role of Ecosystems in Climate Mitigation](#) and suggests that in coming decades, safeguarding and restoring carbon in ecosystems has the potential to prevent over 50 gigatonnes of carbon entering the atmosphere. Moreover, the article concludes that people need to change the perception of the natural world from an offset mechanism to a sector capable of real reductions in emissions.



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[European Commission: Using nature's resources to store carbon](#)

Previous Updates:

The European Commission conference on '**Biodiversity Protection – Beyond 2010**' took place in Athens on 27-28 April 2009. The key findings of the conference include a plan for nature protection which includes:

- a vision of why biodiversity matters, through the communication of the tangible benefits ecosystems offer towards our economic and social well-being,
- a better understanding of the state and trends of biodiversity,
- a fully functioning network of protected areas,
- the integration of biodiversity in other policy areas,
- the insurance of adequate funding
- the simultaneous tackling of climate change and biodiversity loss.

The Conference reaffirmed that though progress has been made the EU's target of halting biodiversity by 2010 is unlikely to be met.

EU Environment Commissioner Stavros Dimas said: "The Message from Athens underlines that biodiversity needs to become a universal political priority, because only then will we have a realistic chance of stopping biodiversity loss".

The European Union Environment Council on 25 June 2009 adopted **Council Conclusions on a mid-term assessment of implementing the EU Biodiversity Action Plan and Towards an EU Strategy on Invasive Alien Species.**

The Council expressed its deep concern over the Commission's assessment that the EU is unlikely to meet its 2010 target of halting biodiversity decline and stressed the need to emphasize and communicate the intrinsic value of biodiversity and the vital ecosystem services it provides, for the insurance of a healthy environment, human well-being, food security and long-term sustainable development. The Council strongly emphasized the need for urgent action to reverse the trend of biodiversity loss and the need to establish by mid-2010, at the latest, a vision and targets beyond 2010 for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

The Commission urged Member States to integrate biodiversity into relevant sectoral policies such as fisheries, agriculture and development, to complete the terrestrial part of the NATURA 2000 network by 2010, finalize the network at sea by 2012 and to respond in a timely and effective manner to the growing threats and impacts of invasive alien species causing biodiversity loss and damage to the environment.

The preliminary results of the Study on the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) which promote a better understanding of the true economic value of biodiversity were also referred to and lastly, the Council emphasized the need for a better understanding of the critical connection between biodiversity and climate change since ecosystems act as a major buffer against the impact of climate change.

Biodiversity will also be one of the priority dossiers during the European Parliament's next legislature (2009-2014). The European Commission is expected to present the European Council and Parliament with a communication providing an assessment of EU action to halt biodiversity loss and a proposal establishing new objectives by the end of 2010.



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Please find attached DG ENV's article about the role of **ecosystems** in climate mitigation and **carbon storage**. Might be relevant for ACE as well as for the energy team. And maybe EPAGMA and R&A, but I am not sure on this.

Please tell me if it is not relevant.
Thanks

Summary:

The ability of the Earth's living systems to store carbon could play a vital role in the mitigation of climate change. A new report suggests that, in coming decades, safeguarding and restoring carbon in ecosystems has the potential to prevent well over 50 gigatonnes (Gt) of carbon entering the atmosphere.

<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/integration/research/newsalert/pdf/165na4.pdf>

Links

Link to **Council Conclusions on a mid-term assessment of implementing the EU Biodiversity Action Plan and Towards an EU Strategy on Invasive Alien Species.**

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/envir/108747.pdf

Link to the '**Biodiversity Protection – Beyond 2010**' Conference The Message from Athens

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/conference/pdf/message_final.pdf

Link to European Commission Press Release "Commission calls for a shakeup in EU biodiversity policy"

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/649&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>