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Polish Presidency of the European Union (July-December 2011)

Last updated in October 2011

Latest Developments

From 1 July to 30 December 2011, Poland is holding the six-month rotating presidency of the European Union. The Polish Presidency will have four priorities in field of environment policy:

- Resource Efficiency
- Biodiversity
- Water
- Climate Change: Rio +20 discussions

Specifically on biodiversity, the task of the Presidency will be to continue working on implementing the EU Biodiversity Action Plan. The Presidency intends to hold a discussion in the autumn on the subject of funds devoted to the conservation of biological diversity. The Presidency intends to work on developing instruments that could help prevent the loss of biodiversity, such as spatial planning and sustainable forest management.

In addition, the Presidency will hold a discussion at the informal Council in July on the transition to a resource-efficient Europe and will work on a Road Map to plan EU actions in this area.

On 13 July, the Polish Environment Minister, Mr. Andrzej Kraszewski, addressed the Environment Committee in the European Parliament. He confirmed that Poland is eager to continue the discussions on biodiversity as it is one of the presidency's key priorities. Mr. Kraszewski noted that Poland has been very successful in maintaining biodiversity in many of its forests. In addition, he confirmed that the EU needs to allocate more funds for halting biodiversity loss. Moreover, the presidency will also tackle resource efficiency as Mr. Kraszewski believes that this is another essential area that needs to be addressed as soon as possible. The Polish Presidency will hold conferences in the next six months on both of these issues.

On October 10 the Environment Council met for the first time during the Polish Presidency. A busy agenda included discussions on the Durban Climate Conference, the sixth Environmental Action Plan (6EAP) and the Rio+20 summit, the latter being the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD), which will take place in June next year. Information was also presented about two biodiversity-related issues: a roadmap for the ratification of the ABS (access and benefit sharing) protocol adopted at Nagoya last year, and recent developments regarding the outcome of the first plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) in Nairobi, Kenya.

[Council Press Release](#)



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Impact for golf management

- Biodiversity
- Water

Background

Last updated in July 2011:

On 23 February, EU Sports Ministers convened for an informal meeting in order to discuss the role of sport in the EU and the fight against doping. The Hungarian State Minister for Sports, Attila Czene, called for an EU sports framework programme to be established by 2014 and a better representation of the EU in the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA).

Article from the Hungarian Presidency

On January 26 the Hungarian Minister for Rural Development, Sándor Fazekas, stated at the European Parliament's Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety meeting that the Hungarian Presidency will focus on water and waste management and aims at reaching a Council conclusion on the importance of biodiversity in accordance with the Nagoya Protocol.

Article from the Hungarian Presidency

In December, the Belgian Presidency held the closing event for the Year of Biodiversity "Better understanding and communicating the socio-economic value of biodiversity – The future and ecological advantages for all - Biodiversity and social responsibility".

In anticipation of the 2011/2020 UN Decade of Biodiversity, a number of major ideas were generated at the Conference including:

- An in-depth study of biodiversity with an approach that is both integrated and sector specific,
- The recognition of the direct influence of climate change on biodiversity and the necessity of mutually supportive action in both domains and
- Actions halting biodiversity loss should be implemented at national and regional level.

[Article of the Belgian Presidency on Close of the International Year of Biodiversity Conference](#)

On 20 December, EU Environment Ministers adopted the conclusions of the Environment Council. They called for a 7th Environment Action Programme (EAP) that is sufficiently ambitious and concrete to take over from the 6th programme which expires at the end of 2012. However, the European Commission considers this decision premature and prefers carrying out a detailed assessment of the results of the 6th EAP before taking a stance.



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Among its priorities, the Council cited climate change, biodiversity, effective and sustainable use of resources, the urban environment, prevention and the reduction of environmental pollution, improved quality of life and human health. The importance of promoting eco-innovation especially via norms likely to promote speedier market acceptance, was also emphasised.

[Article on December Environment Council](#)

During the Environment Council, Member State delegations also adopted conclusions on the Convention of Biological Diversity which took place in Nagoya, Japan. The Council welcomed the outcome of the Convention and urged for the speedy implementation of the measures agreed. The conclusions also highlight the importance of cooperating with the business sector in halting biodiversity loss.

[December Environment Council Conclusions](#)

Hungary which assumed the rotating Council Presidency in January 2011 communicated the priorities it aims to pursue throughout its 6 month term. Hungary will place particular focus on the following issues:

- Energy security and energy efficiency,
- Regional and cohesion policy,
- The Eastern Partnership,
- The European strategy on Roma integration and
- Completion of accession negotiations with Croatia

The Hungarian presidency has also indicated that their environmental priorities will include looking at integrated water management, adopting the post 2010 Biodiversity strategy and discussing resource efficiency.

[Article on Hungarian presidency priorities](#)

[Article on environmental priorities](#)

On 8 September, ahead of the Summit on the Convention of Biological Diversity in Nagoya, Japan (18-29 October), the Belgian Environment Minister and Environment Council President-in-Office Joke Schauvliege invited European decision-makers, NGOs, scientists and other European players to a two-day conference to set out their expectations for the Summit. The result of their discussions was the "Message from Ghent" which calls for:

- Integrating the biodiversity approach into all policies at every level (international, European and national);
- Taking into account the impact of biodiversity on economic systems and climate change;
- Cooperating with all parties concerned, especially the private sector to counter biodiversity



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loss;

- Allocating more financial resources to combat biodiversity loss;
- Improving and consolidating research into biodiversity loss in order to make good policy choices and
- Investing more in making the public at large more familiar with the consequences of biodiversity loss

[Message from Ghent for Biodiversity post-2010](#)

On 19 November, the Belgian presidency is hosting a closing event to the Year on Biodiversity in Brussels. The event will aim to present the Belgian public with the new undertakings which will be made in Nagoya. The main message of the event is to highlight that biodiversity is far more than nature conservation and that it is a part of our daily life.

[Belgian Presidency closing event on Biodiversity](#)

Links

Link to December Environment Council press release:

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/envir/118652.pdf

Link to the December Environment Council Biodiversity Diversity Convention conclusions:

<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/10/st17/st17150.en10.pdf>

Link to the Belgian Presidency press release on Biodiversity Summit in Nagoya:

<http://www.eutrio.be/pressrelease/biodiversity-summit-nagoya-drop-business-usual-mindset>

Link to the Hungarian Presidency website:

<http://www.eu2011.hu/priorities-hungarian-presidency>