

## SECTORAL POLICIES / BIODIVERSITY

MEPs say EU should promote global climate agreement similar to Paris climate agreement at COP15 in 2020

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One million species are threatened with extinction, according to an assessment by the IPBES: Members of the European Parliament's Environment Committee, alarmed by the catastrophic situation facing global biodiversity, all recognised on Wednesday 6 November in Brussels, the urgent need for action to ultimately preserve this essential resource for life on earth.

There was almost unanimous agreement on the need for the EU to use the occasion of COP15 of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (Kungming, China, October 2020) to ensure that the post-2020 global framework results in a clear roadmap with ambitious, binding, measurable targets, as well as performance and monitoring indicators. All political groups, with the exception of the ID Group, support the draft resolution that has been discussed. This project is of the opinion that the EU must set an example for the future Kungming Agreement to be for biodiversity, what the Paris Agreement is for climate change – two interdependent phenomena (see EUROPE B12322A10).

This implies, they say, a radical shift in approach to finding nature-based solutions, measuring the value of terrestrial and marine biodiversity and the ecosystem services it provides, ensuring the coherence of EU policies, and combating global deforestation.

The deadline for tabling amendments is Thursday 7 November. The vote in committee is scheduled for 2 or 3 December; with the vote in plenary scheduled for January 2020 (to be confirmed). The Council of the EU could then adopt its conclusions either at the end of the year or in early 2020 (see EUROPE B12294A4).

“We have only one heartbreaking report to present. No targets have been met: neither the Aichi global targets, nor the European 2020 targets. There is an urgent need for biodiversity conservation to become an absolute priority, just has been the case with the fight against global warming”, said Agnès Evren (EPP, France).

According to César Luena (S&D, Spain), nature-based solutions could help reduce emissions by more than 30% by 2030. He has called for a greater level of ambition in terms of sanctuary areas, with a target of 30% by 2030 and 50% by 2050, and for “the sector to pay up”.

According to María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos (Renew Europe, Spain), the key point is to find solutions that are based on nature, and which help to mitigate climate change. She was adamant that the focus should be on land usage. “We must work within a comprehensive, binding, inclusive and ambitious framework, putting in place implementation, monitoring and accountability mechanisms.”

According to Ville Niinistö (Greens/EFA, Finland), there is an urgent need for climate and biodiversity. With the sixth massive extinction of species right on our doorstep, we need to “change our production and consumption patterns”. According to him, the ongoing CAP reform does not sufficiently take into account biodiversity issues: “agriculture and forestry must be factors used for protecting biodiversity, not destroying it. The EU must also adopt a progressive and global approach to deforestation”.

Hence Sylvia Modig's (GUE/NGL, Finland) hope that the Environment Committee “will be involved in the reform of the CAP, because if we only listen to agricultural and forestry lobbies, we will not make any progress”.

Alexandr Vondra (ECR, Czech Republic) said his group was willing to move forward, because “protecting biodiversity is a conservative act”. He emphasised the importance of integrating biodiversity objectives into sustainable development goals, providing implementation mechanisms at all levels, and technology transfers.

The Commission representative noted that the Green Deal announced by Ursula von der Leyen is intended to make the EU the world's leading climate-neutral continent and includes a biodiversity strategy by 2030 in order for the EU to take the lead at COP15.

According to him, one issue remains: whether the Convention on Biological Diversity might introduce a new concept of contributions determined at a national level, with a view to creating a new element of measurability, which would be verifiable through a system to be put in place. (Original version in French by Aminata Niang)