

MAKING THE EU FIT FOR THE FUTURE:

What the German environmental associations want from the European Green Deal



**NATURE CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT AND BIO-DIVERSITY AND INTEGRATING ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS IN SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS**



The European Commission sees the European Green Deal (EGD), presented in December 2019, as a new growth strategy to help achieve the transition to a resource-efficient, competitive and sustainable economy. In the current Corona crisis, in addition to the already noticeable impacts of the combined climate and biodiversity crisis, the vulnerability of our economic, health and social model is becoming clearer than ever before. The political response must be to make our economic system more resilient. The pathway out of the combined health and economic crisis must remain within the planetary boundaries and must be guided by European and international solidarity. Although the EGD does not yet go far enough in many areas, it offers promising opportunities to help the European economy get back on its feet after the pandemic and at the same time to make the EU more resilient and sustainable.

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THE BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY FOR 2030

The **Biodiversity Strategy for 2030** adopted in May 2020 proposes ambitious EU measures and commitments to halt the global loss of biodiversity. At least 30% of the EU's land area and 30% of its sea areas are to be protected, with 10% of the EU's land and 10% of its seas subject to strict protection requirements yet to be specified. These areas are to form a genuine trans-European nature protection network with ecological corridors. The Communication also includes an EU nature restoration plan. Since nature restoration in the Member States has „significant implementation and regulatory gaps“, the European Commission intends to present **legally binding EU targets for nature restoration** in 2021. In addition, efforts to protect soil fertility, reduce soil erosion and increase soil organic matter must be stepped up. In 2021 the EU Commission wants to update its **Thematic Strategy for Soil Protection** in the EU. 20 billion euros are to be made available annually for biodiversity conservation. **Measures to combat the main causes of biodiversity loss** are to follow from 2021 onwards.

The signatory associations welcome the EU Biodiversity Strategy and emphasise that the biodiversity crisis requires action under three pillars, namely sustainable land use as widely as possible, effective protected areas and a nature restoration agenda. The associations call for:

- ▶ The EU Member States must prepare the implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy in a timely manner, and in some respects in parallel with the process of agreeing indicators and criteria, in order to be able to use the remainder of the decade up to 2030 to protect biodiversity.
- ▶ In order to conserve biodiversity, the targets adopted must be broken down into specific measures for each sector, with measurable indicators of success and defined responsibilities. Failure to achieve the targets must be subject to sanctions.
- ▶ The EU, driven by its Member States, must take the lead in negotiating a global biodiversity strategy within the framework of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP 15) and must support commitments to tackle the direct and indirect drivers of biodiversity loss by setting measurable targets and providing adequate funds for their achievement.

- ▶ In the European Green Deal, the European Commission has committed itself to the principle of „do no harm“. By the end of 2021, a binding plan for the reduction of environmentally harmful subsidies by 2030 must be presented.
- ▶ Two-yearly reporting obligations with intermediate targets must serve to enable timely intervention and necessary corrections. This should preclude any failure to meet the targets in 2030.

PROTECTED AREAS

With regard to the requirements for protected areas, the signatory associations call for:

- ▶ Firstly, in the area of nature and site protection, the focus must be on effective management of all protected areas in order to improve the conservation status of protected habitats and species and to avoid „paper parks“. Monitoring (of protected assets) must therefore be further expanded and a suitable and, above all, transparent methodology must be developed to ensure that the effectiveness of management measures can be evaluated. Appropriate personnel resources must be made available for this purpose.
- ▶ Germany must commit to the goal of putting 30 percent of its total land area, both on land and in marine areas, under legal protection by 2030 at the latest. In view of the fact that the marine areas have already been designated, effective management is particularly important there.
- ▶ The EU requirement for „strict“ protection of 10 percent of land and sea areas must also be tackled swiftly by Germany. This includes implementing the existing two percent wilderness target. In these areas, the widespread cessation of land use is necessary to allow natural processes to proceed undisturbed. In addition, 50 percent of marine protected areas should be designated as „no-take zones“.
- ▶ The overall aim is to select sites in such a way as to improve the coherence and connectivity of the existing Natura 2000 network. Species and habitat types for which Germany bears particular responsibility and areas for the special protection of pollinators must also be selected. Gardens, golf courses and temporary fallow land are not suitable for use as protected areas.
- ▶ In the short to medium term, it will be crucial for the creation of a coherent interconnected network within Europe to push ahead with cross-border coordination processes. In Germany, the regional plans, which are drawn up on a scale of 1:50,000, are a suitable tool for this purpose. These plans must define and prioritise the most suitable connection points at (federal) state borders for an interconnected system. The coordination of biotope network areas and axes, their development and maintenance, if necessary, must be agreed with all adjoining landowners, including at the implementation level.

NATURE RESTORATION PLAN

The **renaturation initiative (Nature Restoration Plan)** announced for 2021 will propose a legally binding restoration target: a significant number of previously damaged habitats of considerable significance for carbon emissions are to be restored by 2030. The signatory associations call for:

- ▶ The binding EU targets for the restoration of damaged ecosystems must be swiftly framed as EU legislation and implemented. These targets must be formulated in a precise and enforceable way. However, this objective should not be expressed in unspecific terms such as „damaged ecosystems“, but in measurable units such as percentage of land area, square kilometres, etc. For this purpose, the existing restoration requirement of 15 percent can be used as a model. The EU legislation must set the Member States clear deadlines.

- ▶ In selecting the areas to be restored, emphasis should be placed on areas that also contribute to climate protection. These are, for example, peatlands, species-rich grassland, old natural forests, riparian forests, etc. Other terrestrial cultivated areas and biotopes with high species diversity must be designated and similarly supported. To this end, innovative methods must be developed across the board to identify landscapes significant either in the past or the present for biodiversity and to assess them in terms of their restorability. The spreading/migration radii of various animals, including insects, should serve as a measure for their suitability for the reintroduction of closer-to-nature landscape elements.
- ▶ The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) must also be adapted to support, in particular, the re-wetting of peatlands, wet grassland, the restoration of species-rich and nutrient-poor grasslands, and open and semi-open extensive pastures. This can trigger synergies with watercourse development and flood protection, especially in floodplains. CAP payments should be set in such a way that they support or at least do not jeopardise the objectives of climate protection and of the Biodiversity Strategy for 2030. Here too, progress must be monitored using indicators such as target species. Agricultural practices which are particularly conducive to biodiversity, such as extensive (year-round) pasture, woodland pasture and herding, must be promoted in a results-oriented manner and facilitated by supporting framework conditions (e.g. in the area of veterinary requirements). In addition, the definition of eligible grassland needs to be adapted to include dwarf shrubs, reeds, rushes, sedges and other plants of limited value for animal feed. Furthermore, an agricultural land category or use code of „nature conservation“ should be introduced to facilitate support measures for grazing land.
- ▶ A technical framework for the designation of development corridors, based on the minimum natural oscillation space of the water bodies, should be drawn up and established in the planning system through the designation of priority areas, and a programme for securing these areas should be set up. This should include the establishment of mandatory minimum distances, management requirements and subsidies for land users and landowners to ensure that it pays to make areas available for watercourse restoration and extensions and to adapt usage to the watercourse requirements. Subsidies for uses that conflict with the objectives of the Water Framework Directive, such as arable farming in flood plains, must be discontinued.
- ▶ The restoration of at least 25,000 kilometres of free-flowing rivers by 2030, as proposed in the Biodiversity Strategy, must be taken forward as quickly as possible, supported by a programme of concrete measures and by funding, and must be integrated into other activities. Because this is not sufficient to meet the goals of the Water Framework Directive and the restoration target of 15 percent of ecosystems. The focus must be on achieving in full the goals of the Water Framework Directive up to 2027. This can only be done by ensuring coherence with other European policy areas, in particular transport, agriculture and chemicals, which must be adapted to the objectives of the Water Framework Directive.
- ▶ Progress in restoration must be tracked by means of effective and appropriate monitoring programmes. These should include progress reports on reducing trophic pressures and livestock densities and on animal welfare.

THE FINANCING OF NATURE CONSERVATION

The Biodiversity Strategy envisages an annual budget of €20 billion for **nature conservation financing**. Priority is to be given to green infrastructure and Natura 2000.

- ▶ The signatory associations recommend that this sum should be directly included in the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF). Simply stating the financing requirements in the EU Biodiversity Strategy is not enough to mobilise the funds. It must be backed up by a plan for how the funds are to be used, one which meets the specific individual requirements for training, technical and human resources, planning, implementation, monitoring and administration of measures and areas, etc..

- ▶ In addition, due to the significance of the climate and biodiversity crisis for society as a whole and the global challenges it poses, the 20 billion euros promised in the Biodiversity Strategy for the implementation of measures are not enough to achieve the plans and goals envisaged. This is particularly true if the long-term management requirements for an expanded network of nature reserves and Natura 2000 sites are taken into account as well as the new restoration measures.
- ▶ All subsidies harmful to biodiversity and the climate must be discontinued as soon as possible. The EU Commission must identify such subsidies by 2023 at the latest and take forward the appropriate legislative changes, particularly to the CAP and the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). Harmful subsidies must be phased out completely by 2030 at the latest, and sooner than this for subsidies which lead to the pollution of the climate or of groundwater bodies and/or to the destruction of relevant ecosystems, especially peat soils, species-rich permanent grassland and surface waters with their alluvial zones. This also involves starting the complete transformation of flat-rate area payments into targeted payments for public services provided by farmers and completing this process by 2027. In addition, support for small hydroelectric power installations on watercourses, and for all hydroelectric power in protected areas, must cease. When flood protection measures are funded, the activation of natural retention areas must be especially encouraged.

MONITORING AND GOVERNANCE MODEL

A new **monitoring/governance model** is to be used to monitor the achievement of biodiversity targets. This will include a set of indicators designed to map progress towards greater species diversity. The signatory associations welcome the introduction of a new governance model focusing on biodiversity and ecosystem services. The signatory associations call for the following:

- ▶ For the governance framework to be effective, it must be legally binding and must enable NGOs to insist on compliance. The European Commission must be empowered to impose sanctions on Member States for non-compliance.
- ▶ Indicators must be selected to accurately reflect the drivers of biodiversity loss and to ensure that they can be effectively monitored. The focus should be primarily on indicators which have not yet been used (e. g. by the EU nature conservation directives). Overall, a more streamlined legal framework is desirable, one which, in addition to the indicators, provides clear interim targets and timelines as well as the power to monitor and sanction. Efforts should be made to harmonise the various reporting obligations and to make data publicly available and easily accessible in digital form.
- ▶ Spatial (planning) decisions were and are still generally made in favour of use. As a result, bad decisions made in the past still impact on us today. In order to ensure that nature and environmental protection concerns are properly taken into account in such decision-making processes, the necessary conditions must be created for the availability of data in uniform quality and with a high level of detail.
- ▶ Communicating projects and planning proposals to stakeholders and the general public must start early and be participatory, so that opposition and conflicts over use can be avoided in the course of the project.

THEMATIC STRATEGY FOR SOIL PROTECTION

The EU has already recognised the need for a uniform European soil protection regime in the 6th and 7th Environment Action Programmes. However, an EU framework directive on soils has so far failed to materialise due to the resistance of certain Member States, among them Germany. With regard to the update of the Thematic Strategy for Soil Protection scheduled for 2021 under the Biodiversity Strategy, the signatory associations call for the following:

- ▶ Soil protection within a legally binding European framework is urgently needed across Europe and must be put into effect through a European soil framework directive, for example.
- ▶ The protection of soil biodiversity, which has been neglected until now, and the preservation and enhancement of soil ecosystem services in general must be integrated into all policy areas. The long-term preservation of soil life and soil fertility must be given priority over short-term productivity gains, soil compaction and excessive sealing. A soil protection strategy must take proper account of the diversity of natural soils and not only focus on agriculturally productive soils. It is precisely the biological diversity of soils in marginally productive locations that is threatened by the harmonisation of site requirements. Soil erosion must be prevented in the long term, including with regard to its negative impact on neighbouring ecosystems, especially on water bodies.
- ▶ In order to obtain comparable data on changes to the soil across the EU, permanent observation and monitoring plots should be established across the whole territory. This will help to close gaps in our knowledge with respect to soil protection. The standardisation of soil biology data can be achieved by means of a „soil biodiversity standard“. The collection of data can be effectively monitored by introducing a soil passport, for example.
- ▶ The Thematic Strategy for Soil Protection must contain specific binding targets for good ecological soil health and regulations on land use, measures and support programmes. Specifications for EU-wide quality requirements, e.g. with regard to pollution, sealing, humus content, microplastics and biodiversity, with implementation deadlines, must be linked to precautionary measures. In addition, a legally enforceable definition of „good professional land use“ must be established.
- ▶ Preventive measures for soil protection are more cost-effective than the removal of pollutants, contaminants and pesticides. It is therefore important to prevent soil contamination and avoid soil degradation. Damaged soils must be restored.
- ▶ Public awareness of the need for soil protection should be raised.
- ▶ The principles of good farming practice must be adapted throughout the EU, and set out in the Common Agricultural Policy, in such a way that they ensure sufficient protection of the environment, and in particular of soil biodiversity. Locally appropriate soil management must be based on a diverse crop rotation pattern, water absorption and retention capacity, erosion control measures such as year-round soil cover, a drastic reduction in pesticide use, prioritisation of organic fertilisers and an increase in organic farming. Incentives for the expansion and preservation of grassland and permanent pasture should be created. The conversion of arable land back into species-rich permanent pasture and the extensive grazing of grassland should be encouraged in suitable locations (e.g. on slopes, and on soils with a soil rating of less than 30 points).
- ▶ Any form of land use that leads to humus depletion must be avoided, not only in order to protect the climate. This applies above all to agriculture on organic soils. Drainage, breaking up and use irreversibly destroy these soils, and at the same time release up to 40 t CO₂ per hectare per year.

MARINE ECOSYSTEMS

The Biodiversity Strategy only touches on **marine ecosystems**. The Strategy states that, where necessary, restrictions should be imposed on bottom trawling nets and some other forms of fishing tackle. Here the Strategy does not go far enough. In the **reformed Common Fisheries Policy (CFP)** of 2014, as well as in the UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDS) 14.4. and the **Marine Strategy Framework Directive**, the EU has committed itself to ending overfishing and achieving Good Environmental Status (GES) in European seas. Nevertheless, 40 percent of all commercially exploited fish stocks in the EU are overfished. This weakens marine ecosystems and leads to a continuing loss of marine biodiversity. The Biodiversity Strategy requires that at least 30 percent of the EU's seas are protected in order to preserve marine biodiversity and the ecosystem services of marine ecosystems and to increase the resilience of the seas in the face of prevailing climate change. At least 10 percent of the EU's marine areas must be provided with strict protection rules. The signatory associations call for:

- ▶ The CFP and a sustainable fisheries management policy must ensure that fish stocks recover. This must be included in the EGD and taken forward by the European Commission. Only healthy marine ecosystems can maintain their core system services and help us to fight the climate crisis.
- ▶ All EU fish stocks, and those fished by EU fleets, must be managed according to scientific recommendations on catch levels. This will require the introduction of measurable targets, backed up by a Regulation.
- ▶ The new guidelines for sustainable fisheries planned by the European Commission must influence the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) to put an end to overfishing and improve animal welfare. At least 25 percent of the funds must be available for marine nature conservation.
- ▶ A general ban on bottom trawling and bottom-set gillnets in Natura 2000 network protected areas should be introduced to reduce bycatch of strictly protected non-target species such as marine mammals and seabirds.
- ▶ In order to maintain marine biodiversity, anthropogenic exploitation must be excluded from at least 50 percent of marine protected areas (no-take/no-go), especially in Natura 2000 protected areas. Options for achieving this include marine spatial planning and protected area management.

FISHERIES POLICY

In addition to more effective protected areas, attention should also be paid to the fishing industry itself. In May 2018, the EU Commission initiated a **revision of the fisheries control system** with the aim of enabling full documentation of all fishing activities and the modernisation of monitoring to ensure compliance with the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). This is crucial for the recovery of fish stocks and for the fight against illegal fishing. An essential element of the Regulation is ensuring the monitoring of the obligation to land catches through the use of an electronic logbook, and effective monitoring of fishing activities at sea through remote electronic and camera surveillance. The associations call for:

- ▶ Compulsory remote electronic monitoring systems (REM) should be progressively introduced for all fishing vessels over 12 metres and also for those under 12 metres which, according to the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA), have a high or very high risk of breaching the obligation to land catches.
- ▶ The digitalisation of traceability along the entire supply chain must be strengthened in order to combat illegal fishing.
- ▶ The frequency of reporting by Member States on the enforcement of the Control Regulation needs to be increased in order to create more transparency.
- ▶ All harmful fisheries subsidies must be ended, and their reintroduction through the back door must be prevented, especially those which have the potential to increase catching capacity and thus contribute to overfishing. Public funds must be used to support public goods.

THE TRADE IN SPECIES AND WILDLIFE

According to a report by the World Biodiversity Council (IPBES, 2019), the direct exploitation of nature is one of the biggest causes of species extinction. The EU is one of the largest markets for wildlife products and live wild animals. The EU Commission has announced in its Biodiversity Strategy that it will take measures to combat the **illegal trade in species**. However, the Strategy lacks a clear stance on the growing **legal trade in wild animals** and the resulting risks. This trend poses risks both for the preservation of biodiversity and animal welfare and for the health of EU citizens, as we are currently experiencing with the Corona pandemic. In addition, if exotic pets are abandoned or escape, they often pose a threat to the native flora and fauna. The associations call for:

- ▶ The trade in wildlife needs to be more strictly regulated. The massive overexploitation of nature and the suffering caused by the trade in captured wildlife must be stopped. The aim is to put an end to the illegal wildlife trade within and through the EU, and to restrict the legal trade in wildlife to a level that prevents the depletion of wildlife populations through removal from the wild and the spread of zoonoses and invasive species.
- ▶ A uniform EU-wide positive list should be introduced defining which animals are suitable as pets from the point of view of animal welfare, nature conservation and species protection, but also on grounds of public safety and health. Such a preventive instrument will prevent harm to animals, nature and humans. In addition, private owners of wild animals must be subject to a compulsory registration and expert knowledge requirement.
- ▶ A ban on the keeping of all wild animals by circuses must be imposed immediately.

THE IVORY TRADE AND HUNTING TROPHIES

The Commission has also announced in the Biodiversity Strategy that it will strengthen the rules governing **the trade in ivory** in the EU in 2021. The EU is also one of the largest importers of hunting trophies from endangered species. The signatory associations call for:

- ▶ A comprehensive trading ban on ivory. Exceptions should be narrow and clearly defined, for example possibly for antique items containing a small amount of ivory, e. g. in musical instruments or as inlays in furniture.
- ▶ The EU must investigate the trophy hunting of animals from protected species for corruption, lack of transparency, illegal hunting practices and, in some cases, sharply declining stocks, and must draw conclusions for the import of hunting trophies. The EU should promote the development of alternative sources of income through non-consumptive use.

FOREST STRATEGY

The EU Forest Strategy planned for the first quarter of 2021 is intended to help mitigate climate change. Besides their function as natural carbon sinks, forests provide a range of ecosystem services. The main objectives of the new EU Forest Strategy are effective afforestation and conservation and restoration of forests in the EU to increase their potential to absorb and store CO₂, to promote the bio-economy and to reduce the impact and extent of fires, while protecting biodiversity. The associations call for:

- ▶ Reforestation and forest restructuring measures must be geared to nature conservation objectives. It is important to avoid non-native stands and to prevent the afforestation of protected biotopes.

- ▶ In line with the EU Biodiversity Strategy, the implementation of the targets for at least 30 percent protected areas and 10 percent strictly protected areas should involve a particular focus on forests. This emphasis must also be taken into account in Germany, so that protection is spread across all natural areas.
- ▶ The planting of at least three billion new trees in the EU by 2030, as announced in the Biodiversity Strategy, must be carried out in line with ecological principles. Only indigenous and site-appropriate tree species should be planted. Protected biotopes must also be excluded from planting in areas designated as forests. Overall, planting should focus on urban and peri-urban areas.
- ▶ The maintenance of protected special biotopes in the forest, e.g. cutting back of young trees or grazing of heaths, nutrient-poor grasslands, moors, etc., must also be possible in the future without replacement afforestation.
- ▶ During afforestation, care must be taken to ensure that closer-to-nature stands are created. In the case of new forests, for example, attention must be paid to loosely defined forest edges with a species-rich shrub layer. In commercial forests, too, at least 20 percent of the newly established forest areas should develop through natural regeneration.
- ▶ The EU needs to improve the quantity, quality and resilience of its forests, in particular through biodiversity-enhancing methods such as nature-based forestry practices. Natural regeneration must be given priority over planting in site-appropriate forests. The population of wildlife species that cause damage through browsing must not be artificially maintained by the provision of additional feed. Soil protection is one of the foundations of closer-to-nature forestry. Compaction of the soil by heavy machinery must be avoided.
- ▶ Traditional forms of forest management particularly conducive to biodiversity, such as coppicing or compound coppicing and pasture woodland, should be supported and encouraged.
- ▶ All remaining old-growth and primeval forests in the EU must be monitored and strictly protected.
- ▶ As a contribution against global warming, intact forests with little felling and dead wood left lying around can contribute to cooling, because decayed wood stores a lot of water and the canopy reduces evaporation from the soil.
- ▶ Inputs of pesticides and nitrogen, which have been a major burden on forests for decades, must be reduced; here too, the reduction target of 50 percent by 2030 applies.
- ▶ The role of forests in the regional water balance must be regenerated and restored. Existing drainage ditches, especially in carrs and humid forests, should be actively dammed. Drainage-free depressions, forest moors and small water bodies in forests should be restored to their natural state. The restoration and reactivation of riparian forests must also be pursued, thereby creating synergies between climate protection, water and nature conservation, forestry and flood protection.

FARM TO FORK

The „Farm to Fork“ (F2F) strategy for sustainable food, published in May 2020, **focuses on the food process chain and thus also takes into account the upstream and downstream areas such as production and trade.** In line with the biodiversity strategy, it aims to reduce the use and risk of pesticides by 50 percent by 2030. The use of fertilisers is to be reduced by at least 20 percent and the sale of antimicrobials for farm animals and aquaculture by 50 percent by 2030. At least 10 percent of agricultural land should be re-designed using landscape elements supporting diversity such as hedges and flower strips by 2030, and 25 percent of agricultural land should be organically farmed. At the same time the consumption of animal products is to be reduced. The Commission also proposes measures to make it easier for consumers to find out more about healthy and sustainable food. Furthermore, the compulsory use of digital catch certificates and the introduction of harmonised and compulsory nutritional labelling have been announced. However, in the F2F proposal on biotechnology, the Commission also opens the door to new genetic engineering methods and links this to pesticide reduction in the chapter on climate adaptation and plant health.

From 2022, the European Commission is scheduled to **review the national CAP strategic plans** in the light of the goals of the European Green Deal and the Farm-to-Fork strategy. The associations welcome the proposed measures and the stronger link between agricultural, forestry and fisheries policy, which herald a paradigm shift towards more ecology and climate protection. However, the **Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)** is the key to reversing the trend in agricultural land use. The associations therefore call in particular for the following:

- ▶ The objectives of the F2F strategy must be integrated on a binding basis in the ongoing CAP reform proposals as well as in the CAP National Strategy Plans. Only in this way can farming that promotes biodiversity be established across the continent. The overall aim must be to accept the need to create or maintain at least 10 percent of habitats with a high nature conservation value, and to ensure this through the instruments of the CAP. It must also be ensured that at least 40 percent of CAP funds contribute directly to climate protection. To this end, it is necessary for all instruments and measures to demonstrate how they contribute to climate protection. Ultimately, the quality and quantity of nature conservation services provided by the CAP in Germany and the EU must be significantly higher than the current low level of ambition.
- ▶ The F2F strategy must be swiftly and comprehensively enshrined in law and implemented. It must also be backed up with concrete targets, binding measures and timetables. This applies, among other things, to reducing the toxicity and volumes of pesticides, reducing the production and consumption of food of animal origin, reducing imports of animal feed and promoting animal-free sources of protein, e.g. legumes, produced in Europe.
- ▶ The target of 10 percent of landscape elements rich in biodiversity must be specified in more detail and broken down to the level of the smallest individual units (corresponding to the farm) in order to ensure biodiversity across the entire agricultural landscape and to ensure that implementation is feasible. This target should be set at EU level if possible and implemented and monitored by the Member States.
- ▶ In Germany, complying with the requirements of the EU Nitrate Directive will be made easier by the planned expansion of organic farming to at least 20 percent of agricultural land by 2030 (or 25 percent in accordance with the Farm-to-Fork Strategy), the implementation of the 2035 Arable Farming Strategy, and the implementation of the goals of the German Sustainable Development Strategy to 2030, including the planned reduction to the annual nitrogen surplus. But the restructuring of livestock farming in line with the findings of the „Competence Network for Livestock Farming“ (the so-called Borchert Commission) also requires a targeted, demand-oriented reform of the CAP and an ambitious national CAP strategic plan.
- ▶ The F2F strategy explicitly includes reducing distances between agriculture and consumers. The EU must therefore fundamentally question the current slaughterhouse structure and ensure that innovative slaughtering systems are developed which if at all possible are carried out without animal transportation (decentralised slaughtering, mobile abattoirs). The EU must promote and prioritise this growing „premium sector“ within the meat sector.
- ▶ Along with higher animal welfare standards, there is an urgent need to reduce livestock numbers. This requires a comprehensive information campaign and an immediate stop to subsidies for food of animal origin through the programme „Promoting sales of agricultural products from the EU“. A legal framework must be created for imported food products to meet European environmental and animal welfare standards.
- ▶ A compulsory EU-wide animal welfare labelling scheme for food of animal origin must be introduced, modelled on egg labelling, and must represent a significant improvement in many aspects on existing national labelling schemes. It should also include „premium ranges“ (to reflect e.g. low nitrogen levels, stocking densities, supplementary feeds, animal welfare, slaughter methods, grassland rearing). It must also show production standards from breeding through to slaughter, including the integration of animal welfare-related criteria, in a transparent and comprehensible manner.
- ▶ An enforceable EU-wide reduction target for food waste of 50 percent by 2030 must be implemented. This must also apply to fisheries and aquaculture products.
- ▶ Innovative systemic initiatives for climate change adaptation and pesticide reduction and sustainable innovations must be promoted, rather than offering sham solutions based on new technology. All genetic engineering

procedures must continue to be examined closely in accordance with the precautionary principle and regulated under EU genetic engineering law.

- ▶ Two-yearly reporting obligations with verifiable intermediate targets must serve as a basis for timely intervention and for making any necessary corrections. This should preclude a failure to meet the targets in 2030.

ANIMAL TRANSPORT

In its F2F strategy, the EU Commission announced a **revision of existing EU animal transport legislation**. The European Parliament called for this in February 2019 already. In view of animal welfare violations on transports of live animals for slaughter and breeding in third countries and slaughter practices in the destination countries, there is an urgent need for action to stop these transports. The signatory associations call for:

- ▶ A stop to live animal transports to third countries and a limit of eight hours on the transport of live animals within the EU. The transport of unweaned young animals unaccompanied by their mothers must be banned altogether, as feeding cannot take place. Other aspects, such as loading densities and temperatures, also need to be reviewed.
- ▶ Strict controls and consistent sanctions for infringements are necessary for effective implementation of the legislation. To this end, a catalogue of sanctions applicable to all Member States must be drawn up and sufficient staff must be employed to carry out checks.
- ▶ The animal transport regulation must identify alternatives such as exporting meat and semen instead of live animals in the EU.
- ▶ It must include an obligation to collect information on all transports in a common EU-wide digital database. This data must be permanently accessible to institutions, licensing authorities and their supervising (monitoring) bodies.
- ▶ For animal-friendly forms of husbandry such as year-round grazing in semi-wild herds, the requirements should be eased and transport-free slaughter should be encouraged by means of field kills and mobile facilities.

DEFORESTATION-FREE SUPPLY CHAINS FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS AND STRINGENT HUMAN RIGHTS STANDARDS FOR EUROPEAN BUSINESSES

Under the EGD, the EU Commission has announced measures to promote **deforestation-free supply chains**. Following a public consultation and the completion of an impact assessment, the Commission intends to present a regulatory proposal next year. In order to reduce both imported deforestation through imports of agricultural products such as soya, cocoa and palm oil and human rights violations along the supply chains, a combination of measures will be needed. The two initiatives should therefore be seen as complementary. The signatory associations call for:

- ▶ Voluntary action alone will not stop deforestation and human rights violations along the value chains. We need EU legislation that sets out a binding duty of care for businesses to identify, prevent and avoid environmental, social and human rights risks and impacts throughout the supply chain. This should be pursued under both the EU initiative on deforestation-free supply chains and the DG Justice initiative.
- ▶ The import of agricultural raw materials of plant origin must be linked to binding minimum environmental and social criteria, including both a ban on the destruction of natural ecosystems (including a cut-off date) and rules relating to pesticide use, labour rights, etc..

- ▶ Supply chains linked to the EU market must be sustainable, free from deforestation, forest degradation and the conversion and degradation of species-rich or high carbon stock (HCS) ecosystems. They must also comply with international standards and commitments on human rights, including the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities. Due diligence obligations must apply to all market participants, including the financial sector, who put goods or derivatives on the EU market. This would create legal certainty and a level playing field for business.
- ▶ Existing systems, such as the EU FLEGT Action Plan and the EU Timber Regulation, should be thoroughly evaluated following the „fitness check“ now planned and then revised so as to counteract imported deforestation. So far, considerable problems have arisen in this area, particularly with regard to monitoring and sanctions for infringements in the individual Member States.
- ▶ Improved traceability, transparency and consumer information can help ensure that only sustainably produced goods are consumed, but new labelling alone will not solve the problem.
- ▶ For products that have not met defined due diligence requirements or product standards, market access restrictions should be considered.
- ▶ We also need legally binding, enforceable provisions and sanctions mechanisms in EU trade agreements (FTAs) that ensure the protection of forests, ecosystems and human rights.
- ▶ Germany must make the case at EU level for both supply chain laws to be drafted with a high level of ambition.

It also intends to present a legislative proposal in 2021 on **mandatory, cross-sectoral rules obliging companies to comply with human rights and environmental standards in their supply chains.**

- ▶ To this end, we need binding uniform standards based on the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and the OECD-FAO Guidance for Responsible Agricultural Supply Chains, as well as clear definitions of deforestation and ecosystem degradation. The OECD Guidelines are as yet too imprecise with regard to deforestation and should be made more specific.

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This paper is one of a series of position papers on selected key aspects of the Green Deal. For papers on other topics, please see our homepage www.dnr.de.

