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Biodiversity

Absence of new ideas in EU strategy on halting biodiversity loss

The European Commission today presented an EU strategy* aimed at fulfilling the EU goal of halting biodiversity loss by 2020, agreed by EU leaders last year. The Greens expressed regret that the strategy offers few concrete commitments for achieving this goal and sub-targets that are inconsistent with the overall goals. Commenting on the strategy, Green MEPs **Bas Eickhout** and **Sandrine Bélier** said:

"The EU biodiversity strategy regrettably fails to live up to its title. The rhetoric on the importance of protecting biodiversity has not been translated into concrete proposals for achieving that objective. The strategy could and should have been a detailed policy blueprint for meeting the EU's revised goal of halting biodiversity loss by 2020, instead it is distinguished by unambitious sub-targets and a lack of concrete commitments to fulfil the goal of halting biodiversity loss."

Bas Eickhout added:

"Action is urgently needed if the EU is to achieve its goal of halting biodiversity loss by 2020. Biodiversity needs to become a core priority in all relevant EU policies, like the Common Agricultural and Fisheries Policies, otherwise the 2020 goal will become an empty promise, as the earlier goal of halting biodiversity loss by 2010 was."

Sandrine Bélier concluded:

"The real test of the Commission's commitment to halting biodiversity loss will now be the proposals it presents this year across different policy areas. The next EU budgetary cycle will also be crucial and the EU should ensure all its programmes contribute to biodiversity protection rather than loss. The commitment to ensure that direct payments under the CAP are linked to biodiversity protection is a welcome development to this end. Any EU funding must be conditional on consistency with and full implementation of EU biodiversity and water legislation in the regions concerned."

* Strategy available at:

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/comm2006/pdf/2020/1_EN_ACT_part1_v7\[1\].pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/comm2006/pdf/2020/1_EN_ACT_part1_v7[1].pdf)

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Bas Eickhout

Co-President

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