

# Resolution 'Green Infrastructure - Enhancing Europe's Natural Capital'

2013/2663(RSP) - 12/12/2013 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted [a resolution on Green Infrastructure – Enhancing Europe’s Natural Capital](#). The resolution was tabled by the EPP, ECR, S&D, ALDE, Greens/EFA, and GUE/NGL groups. It welcomed the communication on green infrastructure and stressed the contribution that the latter could make to the Union’s multiple 2020 objectives, and to international commitments under the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. It urged the Commission to finalise, the support guidance material announced in the communication by the end of 2013.

**Integration into different policy areas:** Members highlight the urgency of integrating green infrastructure into all the EU’s sectorial policies and the corresponding financing arrangements, using the Member States’ best practices as examples. It notes the contribution that such infrastructure could make to: (i) clean air and flood protection; (ii) the Natura 2000 network, maintaining the delivery of ecosystem services estimated at several hundred billion euros per year; (iii) spatial and land-use planning, with the Commission supporting guidance and benchmarking in this area; (iv) carbon stocks and greenhouse gas balances; (v) transport schemes; (vi) climate policy; (viii) natural disaster resilience; (ix) the prevention of erosion and the preservation of the water table; (x) the protection of bees and hence for the effective functioning of pollination.

Members stressed that **all EU financing instruments must be used**, including those under the cohesion policy and the common agricultural policy, especially Ecological Focus Areas, to promote green infrastructure. They called on the Commission to **report regularly to Parliament on the use of CAP funds** to support green infrastructure.

**Development of a green infrastructure strategy:** noting that green infrastructure investment normally yields a high return, Parliament stressed the need to **enhance private sector involvement** in green infrastructure investments. Both the Commission and the EIB were asked to **establish a financing facility including innovative financing mechanisms** to support green infrastructure investments. Further financing sources at local, regional and national level would also need to be explored. Parliament called on the Commission to:

- make sure that the Union strengthens its capacity in relation to the mapping and assessment of ecosystems and the associated ecosystem services and that this information and knowledge is properly taken into account in the **planning and delivery of EU co-funded projects;**
- promote research, innovation, capacity building, education, dissemination, awareness-raising and public information projects in this field and to support the exchange of information and best practices.

Parliament stressed the **key role that SMEs can play** in this field, pointing out that common standards, certification and labelling should act as a support for green infrastructure investments and create the necessary room for first movers. It also highlighted the need to work with the European Environment Agency, landowners and managers, civil society organisations, citizen/crowd science.

Parliament looked forward to the **review of the biodiversity strategy in 2015**, the subsequent review of the green infrastructure communication in 2017 to further anchor green infrastructure in relevant planned investments at EU level and the mid-term review of the relevant policy areas (such as CAP health check, REGIO mid-term review).