

Union environment action programme (2021-2030)

2020/0300(COD) - 17/06/2021 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety adopted the report by Grace O'SULLIVAN (Greens/EFA, IE) on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on a General Union Environment Action Programme to 2030.

As a reminder, the Commission published its proposal for a General Union Environment Action Programme to 2030 (8th EAP) in 2020, a year that was marked by a global health and environment emergency in the form of a devastating pandemic and a deepening ecological crisis.

Subject matter

The proposed Decision sets out a general action programme in the field of the environment for the period up to 31 December 2030 (8th Environment Action Programme). It lays down its priority objectives, identifies enabling conditions as well as actions necessary for the achievement of the enabling conditions. It sets a monitoring framework to measure and evaluate progress of the Union and its Member States towards the achievement of the priority objectives. It also establishes a governance mechanism to ensure full achievement of the priority objectives.

The 8th EAP aims at accelerating the transition to a climate-neutral, sustainable, non-toxic, resource-efficient, renewable energy-based, resilient and competitive circular economy in a just, equitable and inclusive way, and at protecting, restoring and improving the quality of the environment, including air, water and soil, as well as protecting and restoring biodiversity and ecosystems. It builds on and promotes the achievement of the objectives of the **European Green Deal** and its initiatives.

Thematic priority objectives

It is proposed that the 8th EAP should have the following **six interlinked thematic priority objectives**, to be achieved by 2030 at the latest:

- 1) swift and predictable reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and, at the same time, enhancement of removals by natural sinks in the Union, to attain the 2030 greenhouse gas emission reduction target, in line with its climate and environment objectives whilst ensuring a just transition that leaves no one behind;
- 2) continuous progress in enhancing and mainstreaming adaptive capacity, including on the basis of ecosystem approaches, strengthening resilience and adaptation and reducing vulnerability of the environment and of society as well as all sectors of the economy to climate change, while improving prevention of, and preparedness for, natural disasters;
- 3) advancing towards a **sustainable well-being economy** that gives back to the planet more than it takes, and ensuring the transition to a non-toxic circular economy where growth is **regenerative** and resources are used efficiently in line with the waste hierarchy;
- 4) pursuing zero-pollution in order to achieve a toxic-free environment, including for air, water, soil as well as in relation to light and noise pollution, and protecting the health and well-being of people, animals and ecosystems from environment-related risks and impacts, including by applying and promoting the **'One Health' approach**;

5) protecting, preserving and restoring biodiversity, including by halting and reversing its loss both inside and outside protected areas, and improving the health of the environment, notably air, water and soil, as well as tackling the degradation of marine and terrestrial ecosystems, in particular by implementing the targets outlined in the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 as well as those laid down in relevant Union legislation;

6) ensuring environmental sustainability, and significantly reducing key environmental and climate pressures related to the Union's production and consumption footprint, including Union-driven global deforestation, in particular in the areas of energy, industrial development, buildings and infrastructure, mobility, tourism, international trade and food chains, including agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture, while internalising climate and environmental externalities.

Indicators, monitoring framework and governance

Members proposed establishing an overarching Union framework to measure and establish progress towards a sustainable wellbeing economy that is in line with the SDGs, the Paris Agreement and the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, without prejudice to the European Semester. They also called on the Commission to ensure that the information resulting from the monitoring, assessment and reporting is publicly available and easily accessible, thereby ensuring effective monitoring of progress made.

Following a consultation process with all relevant stakeholders, the Commission should, by 31 December 2021, present a streamlined framework in the form of a single scoreboard, including headline indicators, to monitor and track progress towards the achievement of the priority objectives.

The European Parliament, the Council and the Commission should **exchange views annually** on the assessment and should identify, as part of the Union's annual programming, additional legislative and non-legislative measures and actions when progress towards the achievement of the priority objectives is considered to be insufficient or in order to overcome barriers which are identified.

Evaluation and ensuring continuity of the European Green Deal 2030

In order to ensure that the next Commission takes ownership of the 8th EAP, Members proposed a mid-term review by 31 March 2024 to take stock of the progress made so far.