The role of development policy in the response to biodiversity loss in developing countries, in the context of the achievement of the 2030 Agenda

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The Committee on Development adopted an own-initiative report by Michèle RIVASI (Greens/EFA, FR) on the role of development policy in the response to biodiversity loss in developing countries, in the context of the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

Policy coherence for development

Members consider that the effectiveness of EU external biodiversity policy depends on policy coherence between biodiversity and other key EU external policies, such as trade and investment agreements.

Concerned that the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services is undermining progress towards around 80% of the measurable Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets, Members called on the EU to comprehensively **address the root causes of biodiversity loss** and to mainstream obligations on conservation, the sustainable use of resources and the restoration of ecosystems into its external development cooperation policy and partnerships.

The report urged that the EU's biodiversity targets be based on sound science knowledge and fully integrated into its external action, including in the context of partnership strategies and agreements, such as fisheries agreements with developing countries.

The EU is called upon to strengthen its financial and technical support to developing countries to achieve the new global target and to introduce the right to a **safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment** in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and to advocate for its global recognition as a human right.

The report stressed the importance of planning and monitoring the EU's Global Biodiversity Initiative if the EU is to meet its global biodiversity targets, pointing out that the instrument will contribute to the ambition that 7.5% of annual spending under the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) in 2024, and 10% from 2026 onwards, should be devoted to biodiversity targets. Members called for a **significant increase in funding** for biodiversity conservation, in line with the MFF agreement, and for technical assistance to create additional resource mobilisation instruments.

Members welcomed the Commission's commitment to develop a **legislative proposal on a binding human rights and environmental due diligence** for companies at all stages of their supply chains. They called on the Commission to come forward urgently with a proposal for an EU legal framework to halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation for which the EU is responsible globally, including due diligence for companies.

Integrating biodiversity into all policy areas

The report urged the EU to mainstream biodiversity and ecosystem services into all related policy areas, in particular agriculture, fisheries, forestry, energy, mining, trade, tourism and climate change, and in its policies and actions for development and poverty reduction.

The EU’s development policy should, *inter alia*:

- provide financial incentives and voluntary as well as regulatory actions to encourage the adoption and implementation of biodiversity and environmentally beneficial practices by farmers

- take account of the EU's obligations under international agreements and ensure that development aid is not used to promote genetically modified technologies in developing countries;

- support intellectual property rights regimes that promote the production of locally adapted seed varieties and farmers' seeds;

- support developing countries in their efforts to strengthen pesticide risk regulation;

- improve partnership agreements in the field of sustainable fisheries;

- take all necessary steps to address the root causes of marine pollution and depletion of fisheries resources in a comprehensive manner;

- carefully assess the impacts of trade agreements on deforestation, biodiversity loss and human rights as part of sustainability impact assessments, based on scientific evidence;

- increase focus on health care, disease prevention and access to medicines in developing countries and strengthen EU action against pandemics and other health threats, taking into account the links between zoonotic pandemics and biodiversity loss;

- pay particular attention to projects and agreements that may have an impact on the lands, territories or natural resources of indigenous peoples and local communities

- combating environmental crime (including wildlife trafficking) which poses a global threat to nature conservation, sustainable development, stability and security.

The EU and its Member States are invited to include **ecocide** and the right of future generations in international environmental law