Basic information

2006/2233(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
Halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010 **Subject** 3.70.01 Protection of natural resources: fauna, flora, nature, wildlife, countryside; biodiversity	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	ADAMOU Adamos (GUE/NGL)	13/07/2006

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
DEVE Development	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
ITRE Industry, Research and Energy	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
AGRI Agriculture and Rural Development	BERMAN Thijs (PSE)	11/09/2006
PECH Fisheries	GKLAVAKIS Ioannis (PPE-DE)	27/09/2006

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
General Affairs	2770	2006-12-11
Agriculture and Fisheries	2763	2006-11-20
Agriculture and Fisheries	2758	2006-10-24
Environment	2773	2006-12-18

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Environment	DIMAS Stavros

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
22/05/2006	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2006)0216	Summary
28/09/2006	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
24/10/2006	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		
20/11/2006	Debate in Council		Summary
11/12/2006	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		
18/12/2006	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		Summary
21/03/2007	Vote in committee		Summary
28/03/2007	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0089/2007	
21/05/2007	Debate in Parliament		
22/05/2007	Decision by Parliament	T6-0195/2007	Summary
22/05/2007	Results of vote in Parliament		
22/05/2007	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2006/2233(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ENVI/6/37377

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE378.721	18/12/2006	
Committee opinion	AGRI	PE378.840	19/12/2006	
Committee opinion	PECH	PE378.750	25/01/2007	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE378.729	13/02/2007	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A6-0089/2007	28/03/2007	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T6-0195/2007	22/05/2007	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(2006)0216	22/05/2006	Summary
Document attached to the procedure	SEC(2006)0607	22/05/2006	
Follow-up document	COM(2008)0864	16/12/2008	Summary
Follow-up document	SEC(2008)3042	16/12/2008	
Follow-up document	SEC(2008)3043	16/12/2008	
Follow-up document	SEC(2008)3044	16/12/2008	
Follow-up document	SEC(2008)3045	16/12/2008	
Follow-up document	COM(2009)0358	13/07/2009	
Follow-up document	COM(2010)0548	08/10/2010	Summary
Follow-up document	SEC(2010)1163	08/10/2010	Summary
Follow-up document	SEC(2010)1164	08/10/2010	
Follow-up document	SEC(2010)1165	08/10/2010	Summary

National parliaments

Document type	Parliament /Chamber	Reference	Date	Summary
Contribution	PT_PARLIAMENT	COM(2010)0548	11/04/2011	

Halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010

2006/2233(INI) - 08/10/2010 - Follow-up document

This Commission Staff Working comprises a **consolidated profile** which accompanies the report on the 2010 assessment of the implementation of the EU biodiversity action plan.

The consolidated profile presents a comparative factual assessment of progress at both Community and Member State levels in the implementation of the EC Biodiversity Action Plan. It is intended to complement the information given in the Communication, providing a more detailed analysis, and presenting key comparative data underpinning the assessment.

It is based on information collected for the country profiles as well as the Community level assessment and is organised according to the four main policy areas, ten objectives and four supporting measures set out in the Biodiversity Action Plan.

It should be noted that some data, including those relating to allocations of funds to nature and biodiversity under different Community programmes are preliminary and will require further evaluation.

Halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010

2006/2233(INI) - 08/10/2010 - Follow-up document

This Commission impact assessment aims to analyse the impact of the Communication on Halting the Loss of Biodiversity by 2010 – and Beyond (Sustaining ecosystem services for human well–being). It provides the European institutions and public with information on the impacts of biodiversity loss and of proposed measures to halt this loss and secure the longer-term recovery of biodiversity.

Section 1 provides a review of the use of consultation and expertise in the preparation of the Communication. This includes a year-long stakeholder review of progress in implementation, effectiveness and appropriateness of the European Community Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans.

Section 2 reviews the problem of biodiversity loss – at the levels of ecosystems, species and genes - and the closely related problem of decline in natural capital and ecosystem services, both within the EU and globally.

Section 3 presents the aims of the Communication and their consistency with other EU policies.

Section 4 presents three possible policy approaches. The preferred option being to develop a focused EU Action Plan to 2010 and Beyond. The approach is elaborated through four key policy areas for action and ten related priority objectives, and four key supporting measures. Section 5 analyses the impacts of those few actions in the Action Plan which are new or accelerated beyond already agreed timetables.

Section 6 refers to the differentiation of Community and Member State responsibilities for each action.

Lastly, Section 7 presents plans for monitoring and evaluation, including the establishment and implementation of a headline set of biodiversity indicators.

Halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010

2006/2233(INI) - 22/05/2007 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted by Adamos **ADAMOU** (EUL/NGL, CY) in response to the European Commission's communication entitled 'Halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010 - and beyond: sustaining ecosystem services for human well-being'. It welcomed the Communication, seeing it as a good starting point for a more focused approach to achieving the 2010 biodiversity target. However, Parliament expressed profound concern at the continuing loss of biodiversity and the related decline of ecosystem services, stressing that climate change and biodiversity loss are closely linked and are equally important. It recognised the potential importance of the emerging concept of ecosystem services promoted by the Commission Communication as a tool for incorporating the economic value of biodiversity into other policy areas, and suggested that the maintenance of ecosystem services should become a fundamental goal of all EU horizontal and sectoral policies. Parliament warned, however, against reducing the value of biodiversity to the benefits humans could derive from it, or viewing the loss of biodiversity as only an economic concern. Whilst welcoming the "EU Action Plan to 2010 and Beyond", Parliament felt that the Action Plan would be insufficient to conserve biodiversity and sustain ecosystem services in the longer term. Accordingly, it asked the Commission to start developing a long-term EU vision for biodiversity, as a framework for further policy development.

Most important habitats and species (Objective 1): Parliament stressed the vital role played by the Birds and Habitats Directives in protecting the EU's biodiversity, and recognised the importance of completing the Natura 2000 network on land and at sea. The promotion of selective fishing methods constituted a priority, since it would reduce by-catches, and Parliament drew attention to the need for ecological preservation of the oceans as a guarantee for the economic development of sectors such as fisheries and tourism. It also called for legislative measures to be taken for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity of the outermost regions.

Wider countryside and wide marine environment (Objectives 2 & 3): land use planning and exploitation of wild species are key factors affecting biodiversity and ecosystem services. Parliament recognised both the threats to high-nature-value farmland and forests posed by intensification and abandonment, and the threats posed to fish stocks and marine habitats caused by ecologically unsustainable fishing practices. It stressed the importance of implementing the reformed common fisheries policy (CFP). The Commission was asked to draw up a specific action programme to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU). Parliament was also concerned about the repercussions the introduction of exotic species and the likely escape of genetically modified fish into marine ecosystems might have on biodiversity, and called on the Commission to study the dangers.

It went on to point out that the CAP and the associated developmental dynamic leading, on the one hand, to specialisation and intensification and, on the other, to marginalisation and under-utilisation of land, had contributed to a significant biodiversity loss in recent decades. Biodiversity should be one of the main principles of the 'health check' on the CAP due to be carried out in 2008. Parliament called for the further integration of biodiversity and ecosystem service considerations into the CAP and CFP and the identification, in particular, of the opportunity provided in this regard by the 2008-09 budget review. It also regretted that large-scale agriculture had eroded the biodiversity and beauty of landscapes, and felt that restoring landscapes, such as hedgerows between meadows, would be widely applauded and would help to restore biodiversity.

In other recommendations under this heading, Parliament called on the Commission to consolidate the Natura 2000 network further by extending it to the ten Member States which acceded to the EU in 2004 and to Bulgaria and Romania since the Black Sea now forms part of Community waters. Recognising the immense damage being done to EU ecosystems by pollutants and certain pesticides, Members stressed the importance of reducing pollutant pressures and of effective implementation of REACH. **Regional and territorial development (Objective 4):** Parliament asserted that with careful

planning, damage to ecosystems could be greatly reduced and opportunities to benefit ecosystems identified. Member States were urged to ensure that projects funded by cohesion and structural funds did not harm biodiversity and ecosystem services and to prioritise recovery of biodiversity and ecosystem services in spatial planning at national, regional and local levels.

Invasive alien species and Alien Genotypes (Objective 5): Parliament urged the development of a comprehensive Community response to the problem of invasive alien species (IAS), the spread of which was exacerbated by the increasing movement of people and goods. Such a response should include an early warning system, and filling gaps in the legislative framework, including the development of an EU Strategy on IAS. Parliament also urged the Commission to allocate financing for European research into immunocontraception, which could play a decisive role in the control of mammalian IAS. It went on to emphasise the importance of fully implementing the EU legislative framework on Genetically Modified Organisms, highlighting the potential risks to biodiversity of industrial-scale production of GM crops.

International governance (Objective 6): strongly supporting the effective implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Parliament urged EU leadership in this respect. It stressed the need to conclude work on an international regime on access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing. Parliament proposed that third countries receiving EU subsidies should respect EU biodiversity policies. It advocated an agreement on the protection of biodiversity in the high seas under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, urging the EU to continue taking a lead role in this. Parliament advocated integration of the biodiversity dimension into international trade and into global efforts to change unsustainable production and consumption patterns. The Commission and Member States must give first priority to recognition of the Non-Trade Concerns in the ongoing WTO negotiations.

External assistance (Objective 7): Parliament shared the strong concern of the Court of Auditors' Report on environmental integration in development cooperation, and pointed out that there was very limited 'earmarked' funding for biodiversity in the Community's and Member States' external assistance programmes. It stressed the vital importance of committing limited earmarked funds to biodiversity priorities in third countries, and of effective 'mainstreaming' of biodiversity concerns in Community and Member State external assistance programmes (including budgetary support measures). Despite the policy aspirations, in reality there was a high risk that the new generation of Country and Regional Strategy Papers would continue to disregard biodiversity needs without a much more proactive engagement of the Commission with recipient countries in this regard.

Trade (Objective 8): the Commission and Member States were urged to identify major impacts of trade on biodiversity and ecosystem services, in particular through sustainability impact assessments. Parliament expressed deep concern at the EU imports of commodities, including wood, palm oil and soybean, which drive tropical deforestation. In addition, the emerging drive for biofuels might exacerbate pressure on tropical forests, and urgent action was needed from Commission and Member States, including bilateral agreements under the forest law enforcement, governance and trade (FLEGT) programme. Member States must reinforce efforts to combat illegal trade in CITES-listed species. Parliament was deeply concerned that fisheries partnership agreements had exacerbated pressures on fish stocks, non-target species and marine habitats in the waters of third countries.

Climate change (Objective 9): a period of unavoidable climate change has begun. Parliament called on the EU to continue taking a strong lead internationally in working to decrease global greenhouse emissions. Mitigation measures, such as the development of renewable sources of energy, should be assessed for potential negative impacts on biodiversity and impacts should be prevented or minimised – notably in relation to windfarms, hydropower and biofuels. Parliament stressed the vital importance of a large, coherent protected areas network (especially Natura 2000 sites) and of the need to reduce 'conventional' pressures on ecosystems (fragmentation, overexploitation, pollution, invasive alien species).

Knowledge (Objective 10): the level of resources dedicated to research on biodiversity and ecosystems was far too low given the critical importance of the issue to our prosperity and wellbeing, and Parliament urged that higher priority be given to funding for biodiversity research in Community (FP7) and national research programmes. It was also concerned about the fact that the scientific reports of ICES (International Council for the Exploration of the Sea) were only partially adhered to, if at all, when setting the annual TACs (total allowable catches, and that there must be strong reasons and good arguments for not complying with the scientific recommendations.

Financing: Parliament expressed strong concern at financial constraints for support to Natura 2000 and other biodiversity actions in the EU Action Plan to 2010 and Beyond, resulting from Financial Framework decisions. Greater consideration must be given to financial needs in the 2008-09 budget review, during which there should be an assessment of the sufficiency and availability of EU financing for biodiversity, especially for Natura 2000. It regretted that the Commission proposal to provide EUR 20 billion more for rural development policy under the financial framework 2007-2013 had not been accepted by the Council, and deplored the fact that the available EAFRD funding falls woefully short of what would be necessary to produce the desired effect on management of the Natura 2000 network, as determined by farming and forestry, the support proposed for improving knowledge and monitoring being particularly meagre.

Halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010

2006/2233(INI) - 08/10/2010 - Follow-up document

The Commission presented a report on the 2010 assessment of the implementation of the EU Biodiversity Action Plan.

Context: the 2006 Communication Halting Biodiversity Loss by 2010 – and Beyond: Sustaining ecosystem services for human well-being underlined the importance of biodiversity protection as a pre-requisite for sustainable development, and set out a detailed Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) to achieve this. It also included a commitment from the Commission to periodically report to the Council and the Parliament on the progress achieved in implementation.

The 2008 mid-term assessment of the BAP outlined the most important activities undertaken by the Commission and the Member States since 2006. It revealed that the EU was highly unlikely to meet its 2010 target of halting biodiversity decline.

Since 2008, biodiversity has remained high on the political agenda, at EU and global level. **2010 is the International Year of Biodiversity**. Biodiversity will be debated for the first time ever at Head of State and Government level in the United Nations General Assembly in September, prior to the 10th Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UN CBD) in Nagoya, Japan, in October.

In January 2010, the European Commission adopted a Communication on Options for an EU vision and target for biodiversity beyond 2010. This provided an assessment of achievements and shortcomings of the current policy. In its March 2010 conclusions, the Environment Council agreed a new long-term vision and mid-term headline target for biodiversity in the EU for the period beyond 2010. The new target commits the EU to "Halting the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services in the EU by 2020, and restoring them in so far as feasible, while stepping up the EU contribution to averting global biodiversity loss". EU heads of state and government subsequently committed to the EU post-2010 vision and target for biodiversity at the 2010 Spring European Council.

Finally, the EU2020 Strategy endorsed by the European Council in June 2010 underscored the importance of achieving the biodiversity targets, in particular through the development of a resource efficiency initiative.

This 2010 BAP assessment highlights key actions taken since the mid-term assessment. The assessment summarises the current state of progress for each of the four main policy areas, the 10 objectives and the four supporting measures set out in the 2006 BAP.

Current situation: the EU 2010 Biodiversity Baseline published by the European Environment Agency (EEA) in June 2010 highlights that EU biodiversity is under serious pressure and faces grave risks. The focus of the Baseline is on the status of biodiversity as compared to measures undertaken, as inventoried in this Report. It is clear from the Baseline that **the target of halting the biodiversity loss in Europe by 2010 has been missed**. In addition, Europe's ecosystem services are judged to be of mixed status or degraded — i.e. no longer able to deliver the optimal quality and quantity of basic services such as crop pollination, clean air and water.

The global situation is even more alarming as pressures on biodiversity continue to intensify, as shown by the 3rd Global Biodiversity Outlook published in May 2010. The international community has failed to achieve the target under the UN CBD of significantly reducing biodiversity loss worldwide by 2010. Europe holds a share of responsibility for this failure. Over the last 40 years, Europe's Ecological Footprint, which compares human demand with the planet's ecological capacity, increased by 33%.

While still insufficient, significant progress has been made over the last two years on:

- the further selection and more effective protection of Natura 2000 sites;
- improving the knowledge base;
- establishing further linkages between biodiversity and climate change and emphasising co-benefits as a result of integrated approaches.

The findings of this report also confirm the failures identified in the Commission Communication on Options for a post 2010 policy. More progress needs to be made on:

- the integration of biodiversity considerations into other **sectoral policies**;
- making available the necessary **funding**;
- **filling existing policy gaps**.

The Commission is working on the future EU biodiversity policy framework. The findings of this 2010 BAP assessment will provide valuable input to this work. Action and implementation continue to be needed at multiple levels: international, EU, national and sub-national.

The approach taken in the EU BAP to share responsibility for implementation between all sectors and establish partnerships with Member States remains fully relevant. What is also clear is that the shortcomings of BAP implementation to date and its failure to achieve the 2010 biodiversity target will need to be reflected upon, to ensure successful delivery of the 2020 target at EU and global levels.

Halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010

2006/2233(INI) - 20/11/2006

The Council held an exchange of views on a Commission Communication "Halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010 - and beyond". The Commission Communication is a response both to the commitment made at the 2001 Göteborg European Council to halt the decline of biodiversity in the EU by 2010, and to the undertaking made at the World Summit for Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg in 2002 to significantly reduce the rate of biodiversity loss at global level.

The Presidency considered it important to have an exchange of views not only at the Environment Council, which is due to adopt conclusions relating to the Communication in December, but also at the Agriculture and Fisheries Council, which is directly concerned by parts of the Communication.

The exchange of views was based on two Presidency notes and was structured on the basis of the following question drawn up by the Presidency: *Do you agree that the targets and actions laid down in the Communication are going in the right direction and can be implemented effectively in order to safeguard the protection of biodiversity and sustainability in the fisheries sector and in the agricultural sector?*

All delegations could support the targets and the key actions proposed in the Communication and welcomed the Commission's initiative.

Delegations also stated that the recently reformed Community policies on agriculture, rural development and fisheries can substantially contribute to halting the decline of biodiversity and to preserving ecosystems.

Several delegations particularly stressed the importance of conserving and using genetic resources as a crucial component of biodiversity, underlining the role of international instruments.

Halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010

2006/2233(INI) - 18/12/2006

The Council adopted its conclusions on biodiversity. It welcomed the Commission Communication entitled “Halting the Loss of Biodiversity by 2010 – and Beyond: sustaining ecosystem services for human well-being,” which defined key policy areas and set out priority objectives for 2007-2013. It supported the ten priority objectives contained in the Communication and endorsed the general approach of strengthening integration of biodiversity and ecosystem services into relevant horizontal and sectoral policies. The Council emphasised the importance of strengthened cooperation and coordination between the Commission and the Member States in the further refinement and implementation of the EU Action Plan and called on the Commission further to develop appropriate processes and effective structures for this purpose, and to start a process, involving stakeholders, for the development of a long-term EU vision for biodiversity, as a frame for further policy development.

Regarding biodiversity in the EU, the Commission and the Member Startes are invited to:

- finalize the Natura 2000 network both on land and at sea, and to ensure effective management and adequate financing of the network;

- initiate a scientific review of species, and of habitats as a second step, listed in the annexes of the Habitats Directive, building, inter alia, on the analysis of the Member States' reports under the Habitats Directive and in the light of progress made by 2010;

- strengthen the integration of biodiversity and ecosystem services considerations and targets into policies and programmes in all relevant sectors;

- use the opportunities provided for in agricultural, rural development, forest and fisheries policies to support the biodiversity target, both within protected areas and in the wider countryside and marine environment;

- reduce pollution and nutrient load from agricultural and other diffuse sources as well as from urban, industrial and other point sources;

- pursue efforts to implement the EU Forest Action Plan;

- reinforce the compatibility of regional and territorial development with biodiversity objectives;

- ensure the adequate treatment of biodiversity concerns in Strategic Environmental Assessments and Environmental Impact Assessments;

- assess gaps in the current legal, policy and economic framework for the prevention of introduction and for the control and eradication of invasive alien species;

- prepare an EU strategy and an effective early warning system, taking into account biogeographic regions;

- fully implement the EU legislative framework on Genetically Modified Organisms, notably its provisions for environmental risk assessment, monitoring plans and identification systems.

The Council also strongly supported the strengthening of international governance for biodiversity and reiterated the need for mutual supportiveness between Multilateral Environmental Agreements and enhanced cooperation among biodiversity-related conventions and processes as well as the need for strengthening synergies and, as appropriate, consistency between them at all levels. The Commission and Member States were encouraged to:

- implement fully the CBD Bonn Guidelines and other ABS-related agreements, and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the MOP 3 decision on documentation requirements for transboundary movements of GMOs;

- support the partner countries and regions to integrate biodiversity in their development strategies, and enhance funding for biodiversity considerations in external assistance programmes;

- identify the major impacts of trade on biodiversity and to adopt appropriate measures to prevent or mitigate negative impacts, as well as to encourage positive trade practices;

- promote integration of biodiversity in the WTO Doha negotiations, and to enhance mutual supportiveness between multilateral trade agreements and biodiversity-related Multilateral Environmental Agreements, as well as bilateral and regional agreements;

- explore options for further ensuring that imports of wild fauna and flora, including wild birds, to the EU are fully supportive of biodiversity objectives and do not pose a risk for their survival in the wild.

The Council stressed the importance of strengthening the resilience of EU biodiversity to climate change and invited the Commission to develop with the Member States a comprehensive programme of priority actions, taking into account long-term cost effectiveness, to support biodiversity adaptation to climate change in the EU.

The Commission was invited to submit to the Council and the Parliament mid-term and final reports on progress towards the targets of the Communication and the Action Plan.

Halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010

2006/2233(INI) - 22/05/2006 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE : to put forward key policy areas for action for halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010 and putting biodiversity on course for recovery.

CONTENT : this paper discusses measures to halt the decline in both the variety and extent of natural systems — of biodiversity.This loss of biodiversity, at the levels of ecosystems, species and genes, is of concern not just because of the important intrinsic value of nature, but also because it results in a decline in 'ecosystem services' which natural systems provide. These services include production of food, fuel, fibre and medicines, regulation of water, air and climate, maintenance of soil fertility, cycling of nutrients.

At Community level, the policy framework to halt biodiversity loss in the EU is now largely in place. Biodiversity objectives are, for example, integrated in the Sustainable Development Strategy and the Lisbon partnership as well as in a wide range of environmental and sector policies. An EC Biodiversity Strategywas adopted in 1998 and related Action Plansin 2001. Most Member States have also developed such strategies. While important progress has been made and there are first signs of slowing rates of loss, the pace and extent of implementation has been insufficient. Achievement of the 2010 target is still possible but will require accelerated implementation at both Community and Member State levels.

Two particular threats to EU biodiversity are highlighted:

- ill-considered land use and development. Member States have particular responsibility, through improved planning, to reconcile land use and development needs with the conservation of biodiversity and maintenance of ecosystem services;

- the increasing impact of climate change on biodiversity. This reinforces the imperative for effective action on greenhouse gas emissions beyond the Kyoto Protocol targets.

This Communication outlines the extent of the problem and reviews the adequacy of the EU response so far. It then identifies key policy areas for action, and related objectives and supporting measures to deliver the 2010 targets and put biodiversity on course for recovery. These are translated into specific targets and actions in the annexed "EU Action Plan to 2010 and Beyond." This is addressed to both Community institutions and Member States and specifies the responsibilities of each in order to pull together action. The Plan is based on, and strongly supported by, wide–ranging expert and public consultation.

The paper introduces the four key policy areas and ten priority objectives, explains their scope, and highlights some of the key actions identified in the Action Plan.

Policy Area 1: Biodiversity in the EU

Objectives:

1) to safeguard the EU's most important habitats and species;

2) to conserve and restore biodiversity and ecosystem services in the wider EU countryside;

3) to conserve and restore biodiversity and ecosystem services in the wider EU marine environment. Key actions include: optimising the use of available measures under the reformed CAP, notably to prevent intensification or abandonment of high–nature–value farmland, woodland and forest and supporting their restoration; implementing forthcoming Forest Action Plan; optimising the use of available measures under the reformed CFP, notably to restore fish stocks, reduce impacts on non–target species and reduce damages to marine habitats; and advancing implementation of key environmental framework directives and thematic strategies which reduce pressures on biodiversity.

4) to reinforce compatibility of regional and territorial development with biodiversity in the EU.

Key actions include: ensuring that community funds for regional development benefit, and do not damage, biodiversity; and building partnerships between planners, developers and biodiversity interests.

5) to reduce the impact on EU biodiversity of invasive alien species and alien genotypes. Various measures for the prevention and control of invasive alien species are in place but some policy gaps may remain; a comprehensive EU strategy should be developed for this purpose as well as specific actions including an early warning system.

Policy area 2: the EU and global biodiversity.

Objectives:

6) to strengthen effectiveness of international governance for biodiversity and ecosystem services;

7) to strengthen support for biodiversity and ecosystem services in EU external assistance;

8) to substantially reduce the impact of international trade on global biodiversity and ecosystem services.

A more coherent EU approach is required, which ensures synergy between actions for governance, trade (including bilateral agreements) and development cooperation. Regarding governance, the EU should focus on more effective implementation of the CBD and related agreements. Regarding external assistance, the EU should enhance 'earmarked' funds for biodiversity and strengthen mainstreaming of biodiversity into sector and geographical programmes. Regarding trade, measures to address tropical deforestation, including trade in commodities which drive deforestation, are particularly urgent.

Policy Area 3 : Biodiversity and climate change

Objective:

9) to support biodiversity adaptation to climate change. Substantial cuts in global greenhouse gas emissions are required to mitigate the longer–term threat to biodiversity.

Policy Area 4: the knowledge base

Objective:

10) to strengthen substantially the knowledge base for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, in the EU and globally. This requires strengthening (under FP7 and national research programmes) the European Research Area, its international dimension, research infrastructures, the science–policy interface and data interoperability for biodiversity.

The four key supporting measures:

1) ensuring adequate financing: this is essential, both for Natura 2000 and for biodiversity outside Natura 2000. The new Financial Perspectives for 2007–13 open opportunities for cofinancing of biodiversity and Natura 2000 under the Fund for Rural Development, the Cohesion and Structural Funds, Life+and FP7. However, the budget reduction foreseen by the December European Council would certainly influence funding options for biodiversity under these instruments. Consequently, national implementation choices will be crucial. The Community and Member States will need to ensure, through Community co-financing and Member States' own resources, adequate financing of the Action Plan, notably in relation to Natura 2000, high–nature–value farmland and forests, marine biodiversity, global biodiversity, biodiversity research, monitoring and inventory. In any case the allocation of Community financial resources should take into account the budgetary constraints and be within the limits of the new Financial Perspectives.

2) strengthening EU decision–making. This includes: improving coordination between Community and Member States, notably through the BEG; and ensuring existing and new policies and budgets (including those developed under Lisbon Strategy National Reform Programmes) take due account of biodiversity needs.

3) building partnerships between government, academia, conservation practitioners, landowners and users, private sector, finance sector, educational sector and the media to frame solutions.

4) building public education, awareness and participation.

Halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010

2006/2233(INI) - 16/12/2008 - Follow-up document

In May 2006, the Commission adopted a communication on "Halting Biodiversity Loss by 2010 and Beyond: Sustaining ecosystem services for human well-being". The Communication underlined the importance of biodiversity protection as a pre-requisite for sustainable development, as well as setting out a detailed Action Plan to achieve this.

Biodiversity is now higher on the EU political agenda than ever before. The Spring 2008 European Council restated its commitment to strengthening efforts aimed at halting biodiversity loss by 2010 and beyond, and highlighted the essential role of Natura 2000 in achieving this objective.

This **mid-term assessment** shows the progress made since June 2006 and outlines the most important activities which have been undertaken by the EC and its Member States to implement the Biodiversity Action Plan.

Despite the fact that the 2006 Biodiversity Communication was well received and that there is some progress in delivery of the EC Biodiversity Action Plan, it is highly unlikely - on the basis of current efforts - that the overall goal of halting biodiversity loss in the EU by 2010 will be achieved. This will require significant additional commitment by the European Community and the EU Member States over the next two years, if the EU is even to come close to its objective.

At the global level, biodiversity loss is disastrous, with ecosystems frequently being degraded to the point where natural processes are disrupted, resulting in severe economic and social impacts. New issues, such as expansion of the agricultural sector to meet increasing demand for food, and the emergence of alternative market outlets such as biofuels, have emerged as major challenges.

The **EU biodiversity policy framework will need to be further strengthened**, as there are still important gaps, such as addressing invasive species. There is also a need to put in place an effective legal framework for the conservation of soil structure and functions. Integration of biodiversity considerations into other sectoral policies remains a key challenge. There is also a need to develop valuation systems for ecosystem services, relevant to different policy sectors.

The Commission will continue to closely monitor the implementation of the Biodiversity Action Plan with a view to providing a comprehensive assessment at both Community and Member State levels in 2010.