Basic information

2012/0337(COD) COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure) Decision	Procedure completed
General Union Environment Action Programme to 2020: 'Living well, within the limits of our planet'. 7th Environment Action Programme See also 2017/2030(INI) **Subject** 3.70 Environmental policy 3.70.18 International and regional environment protection measures and agreements 3.70.20 Sustainable development	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	FRANCO Gaston (PPE)	17/12/2012
	Shadow rapporteur LEINEN Jo (S&D) GERBRANDY Gerben-Jan (ALDE) AUKEN Margrete (Verts /ALE) ROSBACH Anna (ECR) FERREIRA João (GUE/NGL)	

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
EMPL Employment and Social Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
ITRE Industry, Research and Energy	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
REGI Regional Development	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
AGRI Agriculture and Rural Development	SÂRBU Daciana Octavia (S&D)	06/02/2013

	PECH Fisheries	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
Economic and Financial Affairs ECOFIN	3271	2013-11-15
Environment	3211	2012-12-17

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Environment	POTOČNIK Janez

European Economic and Social Committee

European Committee of the Regions

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
29/11/2012	Legislative proposal published	COM(2012)0710	Summary
10/12/2012	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 1st reading		
17/12/2012	Debate in Council		Summary
24/04/2013	Vote in committee, 1st reading		
06/05/2013	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading	A7-0166/2013	Summary
23/10/2013	Debate in Parliament		
24/10/2013	Decision by Parliament, 1st reading	T7-0451/2013	Summary
24/10/2013	Results of vote in Parliament		
15/11/2013	Act adopted by Council after Parliament's 1st reading		
20/11/2013	Final act signed		
20/11/2013	End of procedure in Parliament		
28/12/2013	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2012/0337(COD)
Procedure type	COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure)
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Decision
Amendments and repeals	See also 2017/2030(INI)

Legal basis	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union TFEU 192-p3
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Mandatory consultation of other institutions	European Economic and Social Committee European Committee of the Regions
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ENVI/7/11383

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE506.123	01/03/2013	
Committee opinion	AGRI	PE504.216	26/03/2013	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE508.007	27/03/2013	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE508.027	27/03/2013	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE508.028	27/03/2013	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE508.029	27/03/2013	
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A7-0166/2013	06/05/2013	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T7-0451/2013	24/10/2013	Summary

Council of the EU

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Draft final act	00064/2013/LEX	20/11/2013	

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Legislative proposal	COM(2012)0710	29/11/2012	Summary
Document attached to the procedure	SWD(2012)0397	29/11/2012	
Document attached to the procedure	SWD(2012)0398	29/11/2012	
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2013)872	27/11/2013	

National parliaments

Document type	Parliament /Chamber	Reference	Date	Summary
Contribution	PT_PARLIAMENT	COM(2012)0710	25/01/2013	

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
EESC	Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report	CES0296/2013	20/03/2013	
CofR	Committee of the Regions: opinion	CDR0593/2013	30/05/2013	

Additional information		
Source	**Document**	**Date**
National parliaments	IPEX	
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Final act	
Decision 2013/1386 OJ L 354 28.12.2013, p. 0171	Summary

General Union Environment Action Programme to 2020: 'Living well, within the limits of our planet'. 7th Environment Action Programme

2012/0337(COD) - 29/11/2012 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to establish the general Union's new environment action programme to 2020.

PROPOSED ACT: the context of this proposal is **fourfold**.

1. Despite progress in some areas, major environmental challenges remain, as well as opportunities to make the environment more resilient to systemic risks and change.

2. The EU has adopted the Europe 2020 Strategy for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth, which guides policy development for the period up to 2020.

3. While many Member States are struggling to cope with the economic crisis, the need for structural reforms offers new opportunities for the EU to move towards an inclusive green economy.

4. Rio+20 highlighted the importance of the global dimension.

Environment Action Programmes (EAP) have guided the development of EU environment policy since the early 1970s. The 6th EAP expired in July 2012.

The final assessment of 6th EAP concluded that the programme delivered benefits for the environment and provided an overarching strategic direction for environment policy. Despite those achievements, **unsustainable trends still persist** in all four priority areas identified in the 6th EAP: (i) climate change, (ii) biodiversity, (iii) environment and health, and (iv) sustainable use of natural resources and management of waste.

The Commission sees it as essential that Union priority objectives for 2020 are established, in light of a long-term vision for 2050. The new programme should build on policy initiatives in the Europe 2020 strategy, including the EU climate and energy package, the Roadmap for moving to a low-carbon economy in 2050, the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020, the Roadmap to a resource-efficient Europe and the Innovation Union Flagship Initiative.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT: the impact assessment found that the proposal would add value in a number of ways: (i) by providing a strategic framework for environmental policy in the EU; (ii) by ensuring complementarity and coherence; (iii) by ensuring predictability and a level playing field; and (iv) by stimulating action at all levels of governance.

LEGAL BASIS: Article 192(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).

CONTENT: the new EAP aims to **step up the contribution of environment policy to the transition towards a resource-efficient, low-carbon economy** in which natural capital is protected and enhanced, and the health and well-being of citizens is safeguarded. The programme provides an overarching framework for environment policy to 2020, identifying **nine priority objectives** for the EU and its Member States to attain:

- to protect, conserve and enhance the Union's natural capital;
- to turn the Union into a resource-efficient, green and competitive low-carbon economy;
- to safeguard the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and wellbeing;
- to maximise the benefits of the Union's environment legislation;
- to improve the evidence base for environment policy;
- to secure investment for environment and climate policy and get the prices right;
- to improve environmental integration and policy coherence;
- to enhance the sustainability of the Union's cities;
- to increase the Union's effectiveness in confronting regional and global environmental challenges.

The programme shall be based on the polluter-pays principle, the precautionary principle and preventive action, and the principle of rectification of pollution at source.

BUDGETARY IMPLICATION: the programme in this proposal for a Decision has been developed in line with the Commission proposal for the EU Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020.

General Union Environment Action Programme to 2020: 'Living well, within the limits of our planet'. 7th Environment Action Programme

2012/0337(COD) - 17/12/2012

The Council held a **policy debate** on the proposal for a decision on a general Union Environment Action Programme to 2020 "Living well, within the limits of our planet".

Member States **welcomed the proposal in general**. Many of them were in favour of the nine priorities set out in the proposal, albeit in different degrees, but some of them recalled that the **diverse situation of Member States must be taken into account** and others called for more clarity on certain implementing measures.

Some Member States considered that the EU should learn lessons from the 6th Environment Action Programme and try to address certain shortcomings that were identified. Most Member States agreed with the need to **improve implementation of current legislation** and a number of them also considered crucial to keep working towards integrating environmental concerns in other policy sectors.

In addition, several Member States considered:

- that the medium-term goal of the programme should be ensuring a **non-toxic environment**, in particular through stricter measures to protect air and water quality, as well as establishing sustainable consumption patterns;
- the7th EAP to be a concrete contribution to the **implementation of the Rio+20 outcome**;
- some of the 2020 targets were quite ambitious, in particular as regards **land filling**. The proposals regarding **environmental inspections** also raised some concerns.

Some Member States were **not in favour of adding new legislation or new targets**, recalling the "smart regulation" principle. However, the Commission underlined that if it appeared necessary to do so, any legislative proposal or new targets should be based on solid evidence and rigorous impact assessments. The Commission also:

- called on Member States to stay focused and consistent;
- recalled that the proposal is based on three sets of conclusions from the Council and that all priorities are operational;
- underlined that preserving EU competitiveness and promoting green growth and employment are major goals and that the 7th EAP is designed to contribute to achieve them.

General Union Environment Action Programme to 2020: 'Living well, within the limits of our planet'. 7th Environment Action Programme

2012/0337(COD) - 06/05/2013 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety adopted the report by Gaston FRANCO (EPP, FR) on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on a General Union Environment Action Programme to 2020: "Living well, within the limits of our planet".

The parliamentary committee recommends that the position adopted by the European Parliament at first reading according to the ordinary legislative procedure should amend the Commission's proposal as follows:

Members consider that the programme should ensure a **high level of environmental protection, as well as quality of life** through equitable and sustainable wellbeing for citizens. Action shall be taken with due regard for the **principles of conferral, subsidiarity and proportionality** and all measures, actions and targets should be **based on reliable scientific research**.

The report emphasises the following points, in particular:

- Union priority objectives for 2020 should be established, in light of a **clear long-term vision for 2050**, in order to provide a stable environment for sustainable investment and growth. The programme should identify policy areas where there is a need to set additional targets;
- **the European Union's pledges** should continue to apply on the basis of the existing climate and energy policy framework, which sets binding targets for 2030, in order to ensure that long-term climate policy objectives can be achieved in a cost-effective manner;
- by 2050, **the Union's biodiversity and the ecosystem services** it provides should be protected, valued and appropriately restored in a manner that reflects their intrinsic value and their essential contribution to human wellbeing and economic prosperity; biodiversity threats also represent a challenge for the Union in terms of its responsibility towards the **outermost regions and the overseas countries and territories**, which are 'biodiversity hotspots';
- the programme should take into account that the Union has set itself the target of **halting global forest cover loss by 2030** and reducing gross tropical deforestation by at least 50% by 2020 compared to 2008 levels;
- **transparency-based engagement** with non-government actors is important in ensuring the success of the programme and the achievement of its priority objectives;
- it is important to recognise the considerable threat posed to the Union's **marine environment**, of the degradation of the marine environment, including from ocean acidification, marine litter, and ocean noise;
- measures to improve the state of the environment should be encouraged **in all aspects of Union policy**;
- Union policy on climate change should pursue a **comprehensive approach**, recognising that all sectors of the economy have to contribute to tackling climate change on the path to achieving 2050 objectives; **additional action** is needed to unlock cost effective reductions of emissions covered by the Effort Sharing Decision, in ways that can stimulate green investment and encourage behaviour change in consumers and other actors;
- the use of **Public Private Partnerships** should be encouraged, in particular in the waste management sector, through the targeting of Union Structural Fund support in accordance with the Waste Framework Directive;
- the new general Union environment action programme should support the implementation of the commitments undertaken at the **2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20 Summit)**, at Union and at international level, aiming to transform the global economy into an inclusive green economy.

Lastly, in keeping with the European Parliament's resolution of 12 March 2013 on improving the delivery of benefits from EU environment measures: building confidence through better knowledge and responsiveness, Members call for greater attention to be paid to the implementation of Union environmental law.

General Union Environment Action Programme to 2020: 'Living well, within the limits of our planet'. 7th Environment Action Programme

2012/0337(COD) - 24/10/2013 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 472 votes to 81, with 21 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on a General Union Environment Action Programme to 2020: "Living well, within the limits of our planet".

Parliament adopted its position at first reading following the ordinary legislative procedure. The amendments adopted in plenary are the result of a compromise negotiated between the European Parliament and the Council.

The 7th Environment Action Programme proposed in November 2012 identified **nine priority objectives to be reached by 2020**. The amendments adopted in plenary focused in particular on the following points:

- to agree and implement an **EU Strategy on adaptation to climate change**, including the integration of climate change adaptation and disaster risk management considerations into key Union policy initiatives and sectors;
- to adopt the agreement of a **climate and energy framework** for 2030;
- to halt the loss of **biodiversity** and the degradation of ecosystem services and to restore at least 15 % of degraded ecosystems;
- to ensure that **water quality objectives** are adequately supported by source-based policy measures;
- to urgently increase efforts, inter alia, to ensure that **healthy fish stocks** are achieved, reduce the headline target for marine litter, complete the Natura 2000 network of marine protected areas, and ensure that coastal zones are managed sustainably;
- to develop a renewed **EU strategy for forests**, including sustainable forest management;
- to further develop the approach set out in the **Eco-innovation Action Plan**;
- to develop training programmes geared towards **green jobs**;
- to increase efforts to reach existing targets and reviewing approaches to green public procurement;
- to raise awareness and understanding of **waste** policy and to stimulate a change in behaviour;
- to improve **outdoor air pollution**, moving closer to WHO recommended levels;
- to **continue implementing REACH** in order to ensure a high level of protection for human health and the environment;
- to monitor the implementation of EU legislation on the sustainable use of **biocides and pesticides**;
- to improve the way knowledge about implementation is collected and disseminated to help the general public and environment professionals fully understand the purpose and benefit of Union environment legislation;

- to improve the **knowledge base** and ensure that the evidence underpinning policy-making, including cases where the precautionary principle has been invoked, can be better understood at all levels;
- to ensure that the **public and private sector funding** for environment and climate-related expenditure is increased in order to secure investment;
- to **improve environmental integration** and policy coherence implementing the Directive on the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive and Environmental Impact Assessment Directive;
- to enhance the sustainability of the Union's **cities**.

The EU should also further intensify its contribution to initiatives that facilitate the transition towards an inclusive and green economy at international level.

General Union Environment Action Programme to 2020: 'Living well, within the limits of our planet'. 7th Environment Action Programme

2012/0337(COD) - 20/11/2013 - Final act

PURPOSE: to establish a new Union action programme on the environment until 2020.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Decision No 1386/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on a General Union Environment Action Programme to 2020 ‘Living well, within the limits of our planet’.

CONTENT: the seventh Environment Action Programme replaces the sixth programme, which expired in July 2012. The new programme reflects the EU's commitment to transforming itself into an inclusive green economy that secures growth and development, safeguards human health and well-being and provides decent jobs. It sets out **nine priority objectives for EU environment policy in the period up to 2020:**

- **To protect, conserve and enhance the Union's natural capital**: e.g.: (i) ensure the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services are halted, and at least 15 % of degraded ecosystems have been restored; (ii) reduce the impact of pressures on transitional, coastal and fresh waters (including surface and ground waters) and sea waters; (iii) reduce air pollution and its impacts on ecosystems and biodiversity; (iv) sustainable management of forests and land.

- **To turn the Union into a resource-efficient, green and competitive low-carbon economy:** e.g. (i) meet the Union’s 2020 climate and energy targets; (ii) reduce by 2050 GHG emissions by 80–95 % compared to 1990 levels; (iii) agreement of a climate and energy framework for 2030; (iv) ensure consumption patterns have reduced the overall environmental impact of production and consumption, in particular in the food, housing and mobility sectors; (v) safe waste management; (vi) reduce water stress.

- **To safeguard the Union's citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and wellbeing**: e.g. (i) improve outdoor air quality in the Union; (ii) significantly decrease noise pollution; (iii) high standards for safe drinking and bathing water; (iv) actions to reach a non-toxic environment without harmful pesticides; (v) effectively address safety concerns on nanomaterials.

- **To maximise the benefits of the Union's environment legislation by improving implementation:** e.g. (i) public has access to clear information showing how Union environment law is being implemented; (ii) increase compliance with specific environment legislation.

- **To improve the knowledge and evidence base for environment policy**: e.g. (i) ensure policy-makers have a more informed basis for developing and implementing environment and climate policies; (ii) improve the understanding of emerging environmental and climate risks.

- **To secure investment for environment and climate policy and address environmental externalities:** e.g. achieve environment and climate policy objectives in a cost-effective way and are supported by adequate finance; (ii) increase public and private sector funding for environment and climate-related expenditure.

- **To improve environmental integration and policy coherence**: develop and implement sectoral policies at Union and Member State level in a way that supports relevant environment and climate-related targets and objectives.

- **To enhance the sustainability of the Union's cities**: e.g. (i) agree on a set of criteria to assess the environmental performance of cities, taking into account economic, social and territorial impacts; (ii) ensuring that cities have better access to, financing for measures to improve urban sustainability; (iii) sharing best practice between cities at Union and international level in relation to innovative and sustainable urban development.

- **To increase the Union's effectiveness in addressing international environmental and climate challenges**: e.g. (i) ensure the outcomes of Rio + 20 are fully integrated into the Union’s internal and external policies; (ii) see that the Union is providing effective support to national, regional and international efforts to address environmental and climate-related challenges; (iii) reduce the impact of consumption in the Union on the environment beyond the Union’s borders.

The Commission shall ensure that the implementation of the relevant elements of the 7th EAP is **monitored** in the context of the regular monitoring process of the Europe 2020 Strategy. It shall also carry out an evaluation of the 7th EAP and submit a **report** based on this evaluation in due course before the end of the 7th EAP.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 17/01/2014.