



SERE-EFIB-CIREF-REVER-REAET-SPECO feedback on the “Protecting biodiversity: nature restoration targets under EU biodiversity strategy” Roadmap

2nd December 2020

Our organizations **welcome the BS2030**. EUBS2030 can be a powerful framework to halt the decline in biodiversity, adapt to climate change and mitigate its effects, improve human health and contribute to the wellbeing of European citizens. So far, **BS2030 has shown political ambition** to avoid repeating the errors that slowed down the progress of Biodiversity Strategy 2020. We consider that any **success of this agenda heavily depends on increasing the extent and quality of ecological restoration (ER)**, supported by adequate enforcement and financing mechanisms, fostering the political ambitions at Member States (MS) level.

Effective ER aims at enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services by assisting and hastening natural recovery towards resilient ecosystems; a process that is based on prior assessment, monitoring and adaptive management.

The success of an EU Restoration Plan must be based on a comprehensive approach based on sound and integrative knowledge of all socio-ecological components and dynamics and framed by the iterative loops that characterize adaptive management.

We advocate for:

1. High quality ER

- by fostering sustainable collaboration networks between scientists, practitioners and policy makers at both Member State and EU level to help with the development of prioritization plans, training and knowledge-sharing to enable the determination of local restoration targets and achieve cost-effective restoration.
- by adopting standards of good practices based on SER standards for different sectors and ecosystem types.
- by using native species and local genotypes.
- by implementing both active and passive restoration measures as appropriate.
- by improving the environmental quality in nature areas (air, water, soil, ground water etc.) and reducing fragmentation.
- by ensuring the long-term sustainability of restoration investments and their socio-ecological impact.
- by increasing efforts for the monitoring of restoration outcomes, enabling adaptive management or restoration measures if necessary.

2. Sufficiently ambitious targets in terms of the extent and quantity of ER

- per MS at least 30% of land and sea effectively protected and managed for nature and at least 15% restored or in the process of restoration.
- at least 25.000 km of free-flowing rivers, scaled-up to achieve 15% of rivers restored to a free-flowing state in 2030 through inter alia barrier removal and floodplain restoration.



- by adopting quantitative targets for CO2 sinks through expansion and restoration of natural ecosystems such as forests, peatlands, permanent grasslands and coastal marshes and littoral zones, in addition to the 2030 emissions reduction target.
- by increasing green infrastructure and restoring farmland biodiversity on at least 10% of each farm

3. Increased political, societal and sectorial support for ER

- by raising awareness on the risks of ecosystem degradation and the benefits of ecological restoration, including job creation and health, particularly in those regions and sectors where the concept has been adopted later and/or is not fully understood and developed.
- by raising awareness on the need for transformative change in the agricultural, energy and transport and tourism policies
- by emphasizing that a sustainable economy and biodiversity cannot be uncoupled

4. Drastically increased funding for ER

- by drastically increasing the available budget for LIFE projects, as a step-up to a full-fledged financial instrument for investments in high quality nature restoration and management in the EU.
- by making EU sectoral subsidies dependent on efforts for better protection and restoration of biodiversity and environmental quality.
- by allowing COVID19 recovery funds and climate funds to be used to support the BS2030 Strategy, recognizing that bank loans for investment in nature restoration cannot be paid back in hard euros.
- by unlocking funds from DG RTD to foster the establishment of collaboration networks between scientists, practitioners and policy makers to unlock and share state-of-the-art knowledge and improve monitoring, reporting and training opportunities.

5. Stronger enforcement of ER

- by increasing the number of infringement procedures for non-compliance of MS with the Nature Directives, Water Framework Directive, Marine Strategy Framework Directive and EU pollution legislation.
- by developing a dedicated EU Restoration Law, with ambitious and enforceable objectives, including the development of national restoration plans with targets in terms of e.g., locations, areas, types of ecosystems to be restored, financial tools to be used, requirements for active public participation and deadlines and tackling fragmentation and environmental quality issues.
- by aligning the objectives and actions of the EU Climate law, the Farm to Fork strategy for sustainable agriculture, the EU Green Deal strategies to reduce pollution and decarbonize the energy sector, and the EC Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction with the challenges and actions of the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030

6. Global EU leadership by example

- by globally promoting ER as a solution for tackling the climate and biodiversity crisis and their connection to prosperity and sustainability of human welfare.



- by collaborating with developing countries in their efforts to protect and restore ecosystems.

Our organizations are convinced that these measures would contribute to protect European biodiversity and respond to climate change while fostering the growth of an emerging economic sector and contributing to the European Business for Biodiversity Movement.

Our networks are available to assist in further developments at EU and MS level to plan ecological restoration, to integrate it into land-use planning, to prioritize actions, to implement evaluation programs, to find cost-effective solutions and to engage with stakeholders.

Proposed and revised by the Boards of:

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