The European Green Deal & Sustainability transitions

Libraries and the future of Europe, 9 November 2022

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3 major interrelated ecological crises

We are encountering three major interrelated ecological crises...

- Climate change
- Biodiversity loss
- Pollution

... and our **unsustainable use of resources** is a key driver for all of them.

... and the EU is responding with interrelated solutions!

- Biodiversity Strategy
- Zero Pollution Ambition
- Circular Economy
- Climate Action
The European Green Deal

Transforming the EU’s economy for a sustainable future

- Increasing the EU’s Climate ambition for 2030 and 2050
- Supplying clean, affordable and secure energy
- Mobilising industry for a clean and circular economy
- Building and renovating in an energy and resource efficient way

A zero pollution ambition for a toxic-free environment

- Preserving and restoring ecosystems and biodiversity
- From ‘Farm to Fork’: a fair, healthy and environmentally friendly food system
- Accelerating the shift to sustainable and smart mobility

Designing a set of deeply transformative policies, under the Do No Harm principle

The EU as a global leader

A European Climate Pact

And leaving no one behind
Climate neutrality by 2050

The response

- European ‘Climate Law’ enshrining the 2050 climate neutrality objective in law
- **2030 Climate Target Plan**: EU agreement to cut greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030 sets Europe on a responsible path to becoming climate neutral by 2050.
- ‘Fit for 55’ package: legislative proposals to meet 2030 reduction target
- **EU Strategy on Adaption to Climate Change** for a smarter, swifter and more systemic adaption
Climate neutrality by 2050

Progress on tackling climate change

The EU is a global leader in the fight against climate change:

Between 1990 and 2018, greenhouse gas emissions decreased by 23%, while the economy grew by 61%.
Climate neutrality by 2050

What climate neutrality means:

![Graph showing emissions reduction](image)
Preserving and restoring ecosystems and biodiversity

The challenge

**WHY DO WE NEED TO ACT?**

- EU nature is in alarming decline, with more than 80% of habitats in bad or poor conservation status. Peatlands, grasslands and dunes are worst affected. Wetlands have shrunk by 50% in Western, Central and Eastern Europe since 1970.

- In the past decade, 71% of fish and 60% of amphibian populations have suffered a decline.

- Up to 70% of EU soils are in an unhealthy condition. Severely eroded croplands are estimated to contribute to a loss in agricultural productivity of **EUR 1.25 billion** per year in the EU.

- One in three bee and butterfly species in the EU are in decline, and one in ten such species are on the verge of extinction.
The EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030

The response – Protect Nature

Establishing protected areas for at least:

- 30% of land in Europe
- 30% of sea in Europe
The EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030

The response – Restore Nature

Restoring degraded ecosystems at land and sea across the whole of Europe by:

- Increasing organic farming and biodiversity-rich landscape features on agricultural land
- Halting and reversing the decline of pollinators
- Restoring at least 25,000 km of EU rivers to a free flowing state
- Reducing the use and risk of chemical pesticides by 50% by 2030
- Planting 3 billion trees by 2030

Proposal for legally binding nature restoration targets
2030 targets for sustainable food production

- Reduce by 50% the overall use and risk of chemical pesticides and reduce use by 50% of more hazardous pesticides
- Reduce nutrient losses by at least 50% while ensuring that no deterioration in soil fertility; this will reduce use of fertilisers by at least 20%
- Reduce sales of antimicrobials for farmed animals and in aquaculture by 50%
- Achieve at least 25% of the EU’s agricultural land under organic farming and bring back at least 10% of agricultural area under high-diversity landscape features
A Zero Pollution ambition for a toxic-free environment

The challenge

- **Air pollution** is the biggest environmental health risk in Europe. 400,000 deaths per year result of air pollution (EEA, 2019).

- Only **40%** of the **surface water bodies** in Europe have a **good ecological status**.
A Zero Pollution ambition for a toxic-free environment

The response

The Zero Pollution Action Plan

The zero pollution vision for 2050: Air, water and soil pollution is reduced to levels no longer harmful to health and natural ecosystems thus creating a toxic-free environment.

Prevent and reduce pollution to waters and oceans and facilitate remediation

Prevent and reduce air and noise pollution

Prevent and reduce soil pollution and facilitate remediation
A new industrial policy based on Circular Economy

The challenge

From 1970 to 2017, the annual global extraction of materials **tripled** and it continues to grow.

Source: The International Resource Panel, Global Resources Outlook, 2019

More than **90%** of biodiversity loss and water stress come from resource extraction and processing.

Source: The International Resource Panel, Global Resources Outlook, 2019

EU’s industry accounts for **20%** of the EU’s emissions.

Source: European Commission, EU Climate Action Progress Report 2019

Only **12%** of the materials used by EU industry come from recycling.

Source: Eurostat, 2016 figures
Making sustainable products the norm in Europe

Our current ‘take-make-replace’ economic model depletes our resources, pollutes our environment, damages biodiversity and drives climate change. It also makes Europe dependent on resources from elsewhere. This is why the EU is moving to a circular economy model, based on more sustainable products.

Key actions for circular and sustainable products:

- Make products greener, circular and energy efficient through **ecodesign requirements**
- Improve products **environmental sustainability information** for consumers and supply chain actors by introducing **Digital Product Passports**
- Prevent destruction of unsold consumer products
- Promote sustainable business models
- Set mandatory requirements for green public procurement
For the European Union to meet its 2050 Climate targets and get rid of the dependency from Russian oil, gas and coal, we have to:

- **diversify the supply** away from Russia and towards reliable suppliers
- **boost energy efficiency and energy savings**: renovation of buildings, smart industrial processes, artificial intelligence, behavioural changes
- **massively invest in renewables** (solar, wind and hydrogen)

**How to get there?**

- Energy System Integration Strategy
- Hydrogen Strategy
- Offshore Renewable Energy Strategy
- Renovation Wave
- Methane Strategy
- Trans-European Networks for Energy
- New: REPower Europe
Mobilising private investments

- Renewed **Sustainable Finance Strategy** in July 2021
- **EU Sustainable Finance Taxonomy**
- Proposal for a **Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive**
- Support **natural capital accounting**
- Labels for retail financial investment products
- **Developing EU green bond standard**; integration of environmental risks in EU prudential framework
Environmental fairness and Just transition

Inequalities

Intergenerational justice
Correlation human development – environmental footprint

Source: EEA
SOER 2020
Climate neutrality by 2050

Total net GHG emissions per capita in 2018 (‘Kyoto basket’) (kt CO2 equivalent):

- EU-27 average: 6.55
- World: 4.72
- United States: 16.06
- China: 7.10
- India: 1.91
- African continent: 1.11

Total net emissions (UNFCCC), source: EEA greenhouse gases - data viewer — European Environment Agency (europa.eu)
Just transition in the Green Deal

• **EU Just Transition Mechanism** including the **Just Transition Fund**
  
  A key tool to ensure that the transition towards a climate-neutral economy happens in a fair way, leaving no one behind, **mobilising up to €150 billion** over the period 2021-2027

• Council Recommendation on ensuring a **fair transition** towards climate neutrality

• **Skills Agenda**

• **Social Climate Fund**
Global Action

- The EU is actively working with other countries and regions to **achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement**.
- It promotes ambitious climate action in **multilateral fora** and in its **bilateral cooperation** with countries outside the EU. E.g. negotiations on a legally binding Global Agreement on Plastics.
- The EU is also a top provider of **international climate finance** to support developing countries in their efforts to tackle climate change.

Two important international events in 2022:
- **COP Biodiversity** Montreal
- **COP 26 Climate** Sharm El-Sheikh
The European Climate Pact

Discover the Pact
Make a pledge
Get together
Become an Ambassador

The Pact in numbers

3,093,937
pledges made by EU citizens
All across Europe, individuals have pledged to take action and help shape a climate-friendly society.

10,029,858 kg
delivered in CO2e reduction
These practical actions in everyday life, both big and small, add up to make a real difference.

874
committed Ambassadors
As passionate climate activists, Pact Ambassadors are driving change in their communities.
The Conference on the Future of Europe

- Multilingual digital platform
- Citizens’ Panels
- Final Report on citizens’ proposals for future
- COM report on follow up
- COM Work Programme
- Better Regulation
- Event 2/12/2022

Conference on the Future of Europe (europa.eu)