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WTO 296
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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations
Subject: Implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030
- Information from the Commission

Delegations will find in the Annex an information note from the Commission on the above subject, to be dealt with under "Any other business" at the Council (Environment) meeting on 20 December 2021.

**EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 – State of implementation and new governance framework
- Information from the Commission -**

The EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 contains over 100 actions, commitments and targets. Monitoring progress in their implementation is crucial for achieving the overarching goal of this Strategy – to halt and reverse the alarming loss of biodiversity in the EU. Monitoring implementation includes checking how all the actors (the Commission, the Member States and stakeholders) carry out the necessary actions, but also, crucially, how nature responds to those actions.

Since the adoption of the Strategy, the Commission has engaged in a cross-cutting effort that has led to significant first results in implementation. By 6 December 2021, 17 of the 100+ actions listed in the Strategy have been reported as completed, with additional actions expected to be delivered by the end of 2021. The completed actions include notably the publication of the EU Forest and Soil Strategies, the Deforestation Law proposal and the launch of the new biodiversity governance framework. EU initiatives across the policy spectrum, from education and research, through to agriculture, energy, trade and climate action have contributed to the effort through the setting of strengthened objectives, support measures and safeguards to protect nature, restore it and use it more sustainably. Guidance documents have been produced to help Member States achieve the EU biodiversity targets on the ground. The Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021-2027 is set to invest 7.5% of EU budget in biodiversity in 2024, and 10% in 2026 and 2027. It is important that Member States fully use the EU funding opportunities to finance biodiversity actions on the ground.

There is still substantial work ahead, with close to 90 actions in progress. A significant number of these are due in 2022, in particular those that contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, including the Commission proposal for an EU Nature Restoration Law to restore degraded ecosystems, initially planned for adoption this year, and for which work is still ongoing due its complexity.

Effective governance is key to implementation success. In the evaluation work on the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020, the Commission has looked into the effectiveness of biodiversity governance. Experts and stakeholders have suggested improvements, for example in access to information, coordination and cooperation among nature and biodiversity actors. The main challenges identified are the need to break silos, engage other sectors at the EU and national levels, establish a “whole of government approach”, and ensure accountability, adequate capacity and funding for implementation. Stepping up biodiversity governance is therefore among the key areas for improvement identified in the evaluation of the 2020 Biodiversity Strategy. Improved governance is also among the key recommendations of the 2019 global assessment report of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, and is part of the discussions on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

As a result, the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 calls for the Commission to put in place a **new EU biodiversity governance framework** to help map obligations and commitments, and set out a roadmap to guide their implementation. This new framework is to include a clear set of agreed indicators and enable regular progress assessment and corrective action when necessary. It should ensure co-responsibility and co-ownership by all relevant actors, support capacity building, transparency, stakeholder dialogue, and participation at various levels. The Commission will assess the progress and suitability of this approach in 2023, and consider whether a legally binding approach to governance is needed.

A Commission proposal for a new EU biodiversity governance framework has been discussed intensively with Member State experts and stakeholders over the last months. This new framework will build on what has worked well and will set up stronger mechanisms to address the challenges identified. It includes two main elements:

- (1) a biodiversity **monitoring, reporting and review mechanism** based on publicly available online tools to track progress in implementing the strategy’s actions (an “[actions tracker](#)”) and in reaching the strategy’s targets (a “[targets dashboard](#)” to be gradually complemented with further indicators in the course of 2022);

(2) a strengthened **coordination structure**, based on a coherent structure of Expert Groups and other bodies as well as improved mechanisms to engage and cooperate with groups in other policy areas beyond biodiversity. The two main coordinating bodies will be:

- **EU Nature Directors meetings** – bi-annual meetings of Member State representatives at director level, co-chaired by the Council Presidency and the Commission, and providing a high-level political overview and steer.
- **An EU Biodiversity Platform** – gathering Member State and key stakeholder representatives at technical level, and preparing the work of EU Nature Directors, with sub-groups dedicated to specific topics such as pollinators, forests or ecosystem monitoring.

The new Knowledge Centre for Biodiversity set up in 2020 will contribute to the governance framework by providing the scientific underpinning necessary for robust, evidence-based policy-making.

In 2022, the Commission will complement the governance framework with measures to facilitate capacity building and to encourage citizen engagement.

The Commission is fully committed to taking forward the implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030. The Commission also recalls the importance of Member States fully implementing the actions and commitments stemming from the Strategy, and invites them to actively engage in tracking implementation progress. Delivering our biodiversity commitments under a strong governance approach will enable the EU to lead by example in the negotiations on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.
