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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	AOB for the meeting of the Council (Environment) on 12 October 2026 Investing in nature across EU policies and financial instruments - Information from France

This "Any Other Business" item aims to draw the attention of Member States and the European Commission to the strategic importance of nature within the European agenda, and the necessity to invest in nature through the Union's policies and financial instruments.

Nature, a strategic asset for the Union

Healthy ecosystems are a strategic asset for the European Union, just as energy, raw materials or critical infrastructure are. They deliver on several of the Union's current priorities at once: food security and strategic autonomy, safety of populations and adaptation, carbon sequestration, jobs and competitiveness.

In a context of geopolitical tension, disrupted supply chains and increased climate risks, protecting and restoring nature is a matter of European security, resilience and competitiveness. Investing in nature is an investment in Europe's capacity to withstand shocks.

Yet more than 80% of habitats protected under EU law are in poor condition, and every year of further degradation raises the cost of recovery. Ahead of the first global review of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework at CBD COP17 in Yerevan (19-30 October 2026), it is necessary for nature to be treated as a core pillar of Europe's strategic agenda.

A collective roadmap for nature

Over recent years, the Union has built a robust environmental acquis, notably with the Birds and Habitats Directives, the Natura 2000 network and the Nature Restoration Regulation.

The Nature Restoration Regulation – adopted in 2024 – represents the last contribution to this common framework. Member States are currently submitting their draft national restoration plans, as provided for in the regulation. These plans turn shared commitments into concrete measures on the ground.

Implementation will only succeed with predictable, adequate and well-targeted funding, public and private alike. National restoration plans reveal substantial needs, on top of a biodiversity funding gap that the Commission puts at around €19-€37 billion a year to 2030. The Nature Restoration Regulation itself recognized this issue by tasking the Commission with assessing funding needs and gaps (Article 21(7)).

A need to invest into nature through the Union's policies and financial instruments

Nature should therefore be visible and secured across the Union's policies and instruments. In particular, the next European multiannual framework should contribute to financing nature restoration policies, through its different pillars and programs, in particular the NRPPs and the ECF.