EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL RISK RADAR | UPDATE

What to watch out for in the EU's new legislative term 2024-2029



NATURE RESTORATION REGULATION

Regulation (EU) 2024/1991 on nature restoration

The Regulation sets binding targets to restore degraded ecosystems, in particular those with the most potential to capture and store carbon and to prevent and reduce the impact of natural disasters. These measures should cover at least 20% of the EU's land and sea areas by 2030, and ultimately all ecosystems in need of restoration by 2050.

WHAT'S IN IT? GOOD PROSPECTS A STEP BACKWARDS, IN VIFW OF MIXFD UNDERMINING **OBJECTIVE** THE OBJECTIVE **PROSPECTS** THE OBJECTIVE **Climate ambition** In view of respecting the limit of 1.5°C global warming under the Paris Agreement **Biodiversity** Preserving biodiversity in the EU and beyond Zero pollution

WHAT'S NEXT? MILESTONES STATUS Pending By September 2033 By September 2026 By 2030 2025 By 2050 European Commission to evaluate EU Member States to submit On 20% of EU's All ecosystems of Annex 1 the application of the Regulation draft national restoration plans Habitats Directive should land and sea area, restoration have favourable status measures should be

taking place

WHAT TO WATCH OUT FOR?

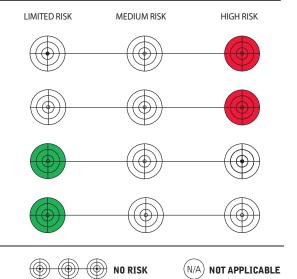
Speed. Slowing down the EU law's progress or implementation.

Achieving zero pollution and a circular economy in the EU and beyond

Money. Conflict on distributional effects or lack of finance for making this EU law impactful.

Licence for polluters. Undermining the polluter-pays principle, increasing global pollution.

Inequalities. Allowing for practices that deepen global inequality.





Nature Restoration Regulation

WHAT'S IN IT?

Climate ambition

The Regulation sets binding targets to restore degraded ecosystems, in particular those with the most potential to capture and store carbon, with subtargets for rewetting drained peatlands. It is an ambitious core element of the EU's contributions to achieve the Paris Climate Agreement.

Biodiversity

Restoring degraded ecosystems as required under the Regulation will lead to more action in favour of the EU's biodiversity. Progress has to be measured using descriptive indicators. It is a core element of the EU's contributions to achieve the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.



Zero pollution

The Regulation does not directly influence the achievement of the zero-pollution objective.

WHAT TO WATCH OUT FOR? RISKS











The Nature Restoration Regulation was the subject of huge political divergences in both the Parliament and the Council, and was adopted with the thinnest possible majorities. The regulation is not being targeted by conservative forces at the moment, but given EU Member States delays with submitting their National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs), there are serious doubts whether Member States will perform better in producing timely, ambitious and implementable national nature restoration plans.

`We all share responsibility for ensuring cost-effective and balanced implementation [of the Nature Restoration Regulation]. We trust the European Commission will work towards achieving this.' Kai Mykkänen, Finnish Environment Minister, 17 June 2024 after agreement on Council position

WHAT'S NEXT?



STATUS

Entered into force on 18 August 2024

Transposition by EU Member States

Member States must prepare substantive national restoration plans (NRPs) and carry out the preparatory monitoring and research needed to identify the restoration measures that are necessary to meet the collective EU restoration targets. Member States shall submit a draft of their national restoration plans to the European Commission (EC) by 1 September 2026. The EC has published a draft template for the NRPs in January 2025.

Revision clauses and reporting duties

The Commission shall evaluate the application of this Regulation by 31 December 2033.

Delegated acts and other related legislative action

The Commission has received the mandate to revise, if need be and through Delegated Acts, the seven annexes to the Regulation (which include lists of habitat types, marine species, farmland birds, biodiversity indicators for agricultural and forest ecosystems, and restoration measures).

HOW TO IMPROVE IT? OPPORTUNITIES

As with the NECPs, the development of the national restoration plans should be seen as an opportunity for improving EU Member States' plans and policies to improve biodiversity and the ability of ecosystems to capture and store carbon.

FURTHER READING

WWF fact sheets on health benefits, economic benefits and climate benefits of nature restoration

IEEP: Benefits of nature restoration: A new series of policy briefs, January 2023