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Business and Biodiversity

Last updated in October 2013

Latest Developments

Overall assessment of Business and Biodiversity developments and impact on golf in Q3 2013:

In Q3, the European Parliament adopted the draft European regulation which transposes the Nagoya Protocol into EU law and the EU Joint Research Centre released a study that looks into potential threats to soil biodiversity.

The European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) has co-authored an article which looks into areas where soil biodiversity is most under pressure. According to the article, 56% of the EU territory faces a varying degree of potential threats, with intense land exploitation estimated as the main pressure on soil biodiversity. The potential threat calculations are based on the soil biodiversity pressure index, using data from the European Soil Data Centre (ESDAC) and other European databases. Agricultural intensity (based on nitrogen load) seems to be the most significant threat, followed by organic carbon losses, invasive species, compaction, erosion and contamination. The potential pressures were found to be particularly high in the UK and central Europe.

[JRC Press Release](#)

[Article](#)

On 12 September 2013, the European Parliament approved the draft European regulation which transposes into EU law the Nagoya Protocol on access to genetic resources and the fair sharing-out of the benefits from their use (ABS). The European Parliament also gave its rapporteur, Sandrine Bélier (Greens/EFA, France) a mandate to start negotiations with the Council in the hope of reaching a first-reading agreement before the deadline of July 2014. The Nagoya Protocol on ABS is a supplementary agreement to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and provides a legal framework for the effective implementation of one of the three objectives of the CBD: the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.

[Legislative Observatory Procedure File](#)

Janez Potočnik, the EU Commissioner for Environment held a meeting with Zhou Shengxian, Minister of Environment Protection of the People's Republic of China in Beijing on 19 July 2013, as part of the EU-China Environmental Policy Dialogue. The two parties agreed to strengthen the policy dialogue, improve existing cooperation projects, such as the EU-China Environmental Governance Programme, and to work together to start new projects including the EU-China Sustainability Programme. They also agreed to strengthen co-operation on biodiversity and ecosystems conservation, in particular on the valuation of ecosystem services, natural capital accounting and innovative financing mechanisms.

[Press Release](#)

The UK Department for Environmental Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) published on 5 September 2013 a Green Paper on Biodiversity Offsetting which favours a voluntary national scheme across



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England. DEFRA launched a public consultation to gather views on how such a scheme would work, which will last until 7 November 2013. Detailed proposals will be developed before the end of 2013. DEFRA hopes that offsetting will be a boost for both business and biodiversity; however this would also depend on the details of how the scheme works.

[DEFRA Public Consultation](#)

Impact on golf

- Potentially, in the long run, growing number of protected areas and increased level of protection of biodiversity

Background

Last updated in July 2013:

Overall assessment of Business and Biodiversity developments and impact on golf in Q2 2013:

In Q2, the Irish Presidency managed to reach an agreement between the Council and the European Parliament on a number of key dossiers, including the LIFE programme for 2014-2020 and the 7th Environment Action Programme for 2020. Moreover, the European Commission adopted a Green Infrastructure Strategy and the European Parliament called for the creation of an EU biodiversity fund.

In July, the European Parliament's Environment Committee supported the creation of an EU biodiversity fund, until a global support programme is set up under the Nagoya Protocol. The call was made as an amendment to the Commission proposal for a draft regulation intended to transpose the Protocol into European legislation. The details of the functioning of the fund would be proposed by the European Commission within six months of the regulation's entry into force.

[European Parliament Compromise Amendments](#); [Commission proposal](#); [Article by ENDS Europe](#)

On 26 June 2013 the European Commission and the Council reached an agreement on the LIFE programme for 2014-2020, replacing the current programme which expires on 30 December 2013. The new LIFE programme will have a budget of €3 billion split between actions for the protection of the environment and biodiversity, and climate change mitigation and adaptation measures. The budget is conditional on overall agreement on the EU's multiannual financial framework (MFF) and still has to be adopted by Member States and the Parliament in October 2013.

[Press Release by Irish Presidency](#); [LIFE webpage](#)

In June, the the Council and the European Parliament reached an agreement on the EU's 7th Environment Action Programme to 2020 (7th EAP) in the context of trilogues (informal inter-institutional negotiations). The 7th EAP is a strategic document, which outlines priority objectives to be attained in environment policy in the context of the Europe 2020 Strategy. It draws on a number of European initiatives, including the Resource Efficiency Roadmap and the 2020 Biodiversity Strategy and aims to secure the commitment of EU institutions, Member States and other stakeholders to a common agenda for environmental policy action up to 2020. To this end, it sets out priority objectives for EU environment policy in a range of areas including biodiversity, soil and resource efficiency.



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[Commission Proposal](#); [Press Release by the Irish Presidency](#); Reactions by [HEAL](#) and [European Environmental Bureau](#)

On 6 May 2013 the European Commission adopted a Green Infrastructure Strategy which draws from the [EU Resource Efficiency Roadmap](#) and will focus on the following issues:

1. By the end of 2013, the Commission will develop guidance on how green infrastructure can be integrated into the main policy areas from 2014 to 2020 (e.g. agriculture, forestry, nature, water, land use policies).
2. Improving research and data and promoting innovative technologies.
3. By 2014 the Commission will set up an EU financing facility together with the European Investment Bank to support green infrastructure projects.
4. By the end of 2015, the Commission will carry out a study to assess the opportunities for developing an EU-wide network of green infrastructure.

By the end of 2017, the the Commission will review progress on developing Green Infrastructure and publish a report on the lessons learnt together with recommendations for future action.

[European Commission Green Infrastructure webpage](#); [European Commission Press Release](#)

On 19 June 2013, the Scottish government launched an updated 2020 Biodiversity Strategy, which supplements, but does not replace the 2004 Biodiversity Strategy. The strategy aligns Scottish efforts to the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2020 and UK commitments made under the UN Convention on Biological Diversity in 2010. The report notes the growing demands on land in Scotland from livestock grazing, forestry, field sports, renewable energy, recreation and peatlands.

[Scottish 2020 Biodiversity Strategy](#)

In a recent study, researchers calculated the relative risk of pressures caused by human activity on soil biodiversity in the EU, showing that intensive land use has the greatest impact, followed by decline in the organic material found in soil, and habitat disruption. The authors used a mathematical model to quantify the relative severity of 12 potential threats to soil biodiversity, based on an analysis of 20 experts from the Soil Biodiversity Expert Group. The analysis also showed that soil biodiversity is under threat in 56% of EU territory.

[Article on Science for Environmental Policy](#)

Last updated in April 2013:

Overall assessment of Business and Biodiversity developments and impact on golf in Q1 2013:

There were no major legislative changes on biodiversity this quarter. Activities are now focusing on the implementation of the biodiversity strategy and reporting on the maintenance and restoration of ecosystems and their services.

In April 2013, the European Commission published a report on 'Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystems and their Services'. The technical report provides an analytical framework for ecosystem assessments under Action 5 of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020. Action 5 calls Member States to map and assess the state of ecosystems and their services in their national territory with the assistance of the European Commission. The results of this mapping and assessment should support the maintenance and restoration of ecosystems and their services.

[Report](#)



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In March 2013, the European Commission published a study on 'The Economic Benefits of the Natura 2000 Network', a synthesis report of three studies on: a) a methodological framework for assessing the overall economic value of the Natura 2000 benefits; b) the economic value of benefits provided by tourism, recreation and employment and; c) a proposed tool for estimating the total economic value of the changes to ecosystem services as a result of taking conservation measures in Natura 2000 sites.

[Report](#)

On 2 February 2013, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP), the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and partners launched the report "The Economics of Ecosystem and Biodiversity (TEEB) for Water and Wetlands". The report, which was published for the World Wetlands Day, suggests that a major shift in attitude towards wetlands is needed to recognise their value in delivering water, raw materials and food. The aim of the report is to encourage political momentum, commitment by the private sector and investment in conservation, restoration and wide use of wetlands.

[Full Report](#)

[Executive Summary](#)

On 29 January 2013, the European Commission published a study on "Exploring potential demand for and supply of habitat banking in the EU and appropriate design elements for a habitat scheme". According to the study, offsetting damage to biodiversity in Europe could cost between €30,000 and €100,000 per hectare. The report suggests that establishing an offsetting mechanism, known as habitat banking, would allow developers to buy credits from projects established to improve or maintain biodiversity elsewhere. The report shows that potential demand for offsets may be greatest for the construction and property development sector, but that sports and leisure developments could also have significant requirement for offsets.

[Full Report](#)

[Executive Summary](#)

On 11 January 2013, the Scottish Government published an analysis of the responses to the consultation on the draft Strategy '[2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity](#)'. The consultation, which took place between 6 July and 26 September 2012, will inform the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy.

[Report](#)