



# THE ROAD TO A SUSTAINABLE EUROPE STARTS HERE

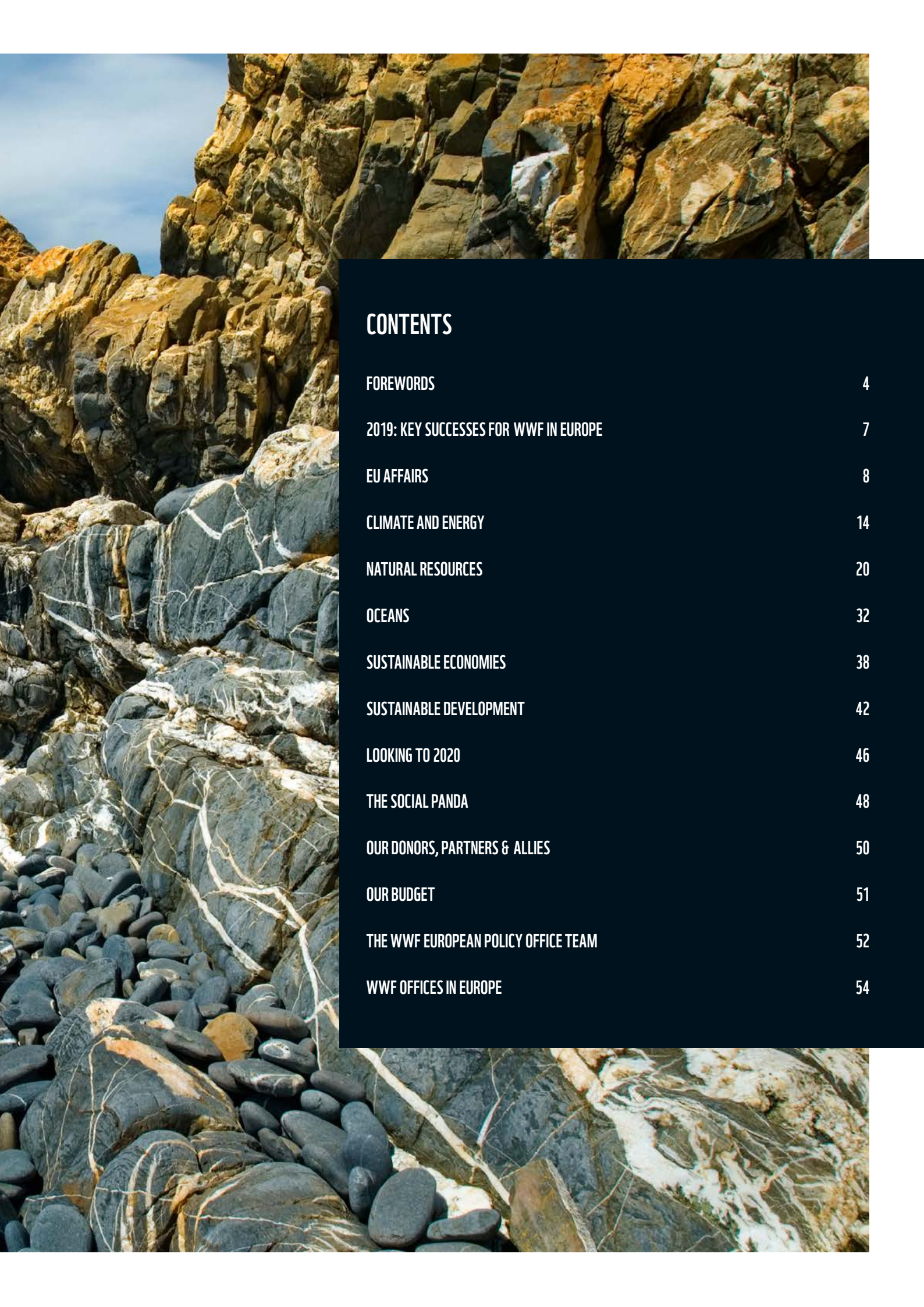
**WWF EUROPEAN POLICY OFFICE  
ANNUAL REVIEW 2019**





Coastline, Almogrove, Portugal





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# FOREWORDS



ESTER ASIN  
DIRECTOR  
WWF EUROPEAN  
POLICY OFFICE

**T**he year 2019 may well go down in history as the year when the world finally woke up to the climate and nature crisis. Dramatic forest fires devastated the green lungs of our planet, the Amazon, and also raged in Africa, and even in Siberia. Successive heat waves hit the world during the summer, giving us a glimpse of what 1°C of warming means in practice, let alone 1.5°C or even beyond. The UN's Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services report published in May delivered a stark warning on the ongoing sixth mass extinction. These warnings are not new. What was new in 2019 was the public and media attention they received.

The world's young generation reminded us that it is their future that is at risk by taking to the streets in force around the world. In September alone, more than four million people joined the climate marches, many of them under 18. I particularly retain the image of Fridays for Future in Afghanistan led by determined young girls, marching in Kabul.

The increased public awareness and calls for action have moved climate change and nature loss up the political agenda, and there is a growing understanding of the dire consequences of the inertia that has governed these past decades. Voter turnout in the European Parliament elections in May was the highest in 20 years, sending a strong signal to the newly elected European legislators that EU citizens want bold political decisions and actions to lead Europe towards a safer, prosperous and sustainable future.

2019 has also been a busy year for WWF's EU policy work, with a number of notable successes, such as the review of the EIB energy lending policy to exclude fossil fuel investments; the #ProtectWater campaign to save the EU's water law; the increased political momentum on deforestation in regions outside of Europe; and finally the publication of a comprehensive 'European Green Deal'. None of these successes would have been possible without the support and active engagement of the WWF network across Europe.

Throughout the year, WWF and its civil society partners worked to ensure that nature and climate change received the necessary attention during the European elections campaign and in the priorities of the new European Commission. We chaired the Green 10 coalition of environmental NGOs at this important moment of institutional change in the EU, presenting a strong and consistent voice of the NGO community to the renewed EU institutions.

Even before taking office, the new Commission President Ursula von der Leyen announced the European Green Deal as the first of her six political priorities. This provides an unprecedented opportunity for a shift away from 'business as usual' policies resulting in incremental change, towards a fundamental transformation of the EU's societies. However, only the concrete legislative proposals to be developed in 2020 and beyond will show whether the European Green Deal lives up to be this much needed game changer.

As the world enters this new decade, we have only ten years left to meet the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This must be a decade of action and delivery. 2020 must set in motion the process and the ambition to deliver a New Deal for Nature and People, with many key decisions on nature and climate change to be taken this year: a new global biodiversity agreement in at the CBD COP 15 in October, and revised and more ambitious climate commitments at the UNFCCC COP 26 in November.

The EU and its Member States must provide global leadership to drive real progress globally, and also lead by example back home. For the last 30 years of working in Brussels, WWF has advocated for the environment, and we will continue to hold our leaders and decision-makers to account during these decisive times.

Let me also take this opportunity to thank our donors, allies and partners for their ongoing support. I am convinced that together, we can turn the tide.



Climate and environment action is a top priority for Europe in 2020. Over the last year we saw a turning point in EU policy attention with the stronger than ever recognition that urgent action is needed now to address biodiversity loss, the increased impacts of climate change and the overconsumption of natural resources. Millions of Europeans and others around the world have demanded that policy makers take action in the wake of increased concerns over climate and pollution disasters.

Evidence-based scientific assessments, including our recent European Environment Agency's *State of Environment Report* (SOER 2020), stressed the magnitude of the challenges ahead and the urgent need to act. These calls are now turning into a policy roadmap for transformative change which will be crucial to achieving our long-term goals to live sustainably. The European Green Deal presented by the European Commission is a promising start for the critical decade ahead.

**“EUROPEAN  
COUNTRIES  
NEED TO FULLY  
IMPLEMENT  
ALREADY  
AGREED  
LEGISLATION”**

Thanks to the work done by the EU and organisations like the WWF, which have been calling for action for many years, we have already made good progress. SOER 2020 shows that European legislation and policy targets have succeeded on many fronts. Air pollutant emissions have gone down, greenhouse gas emissions decreased, a larger share of Europe's land and marine areas are now protected. Europe is recycling an increasing share of its municipal waste. However, while significant, the pace of these gains is insufficient in the face of the challenges that lie ahead.

European countries need to fully implement already agreed legislation. This can deliver further improvements. But still, incremental efficiency gains, such as more efficient cars or cleaner fuels, will not suffice in achieving systemic change. Such steps will not result in a clean mobility system. Sorting municipal waste will not result in a circular economy. Products and production processes need to be designed in ways to keep extracted resources within the economy. To achieve carbon neutrality, a circular economy, a zero pollution ambition and a fair society, we need to rethink, redesign and rebuild the key systems that underpin our economies and everyday lives, starting with the energy, food and mobility systems. These transformative changes require making the right investments to scale up and speed up truly sustainable solutions, while phasing out or altogether stopping unsustainable and polluting practices.

The European Green Deal presents an unprecedented opportunity: it sets out a common and coherent vision for an entire continent. But achieving this vision and the changes will not be an easy task. This year we will start to see the roll out of the Green Deal's specific policies. These proposals cannot succeed without the strong involvement of civil society. Your critical voice will help to ensure we stay on track and to make sure no one is left behind as we start this transition. At no other time have our priorities been so aligned. Now is the time to work together to bring about change and create a better future for our planet.



**DR HANS BRUYNINCKX**  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
**EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT**  
**AGENCY**







# 2019: KEY SUCCESSES FOR WWF IN EUROPE

## JANUARY

The European Commission announced that it would take Spain to court over the deterioration of **Doñana National Park**, which is protected by the EU nature laws.

The European Commission published its long-awaited reflection paper '**Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030**'.

## MARCH

375,386 citizens spoke out against an opening of the **EU water law** in the Commission's third-largest public consultation in the history of the EU.

The European Parliament called for a **45% spending target** for climate and environment in the EU's future external action financing instrument (NDICI).

## MAY

**EU Overshoot Day** fell on 10 May 2019, with not a single EU country operating within planetary boundaries.

The results of the **European elections** demonstrated the importance of environmental issues to Europe's voters. 16 WWF offices across Europe had engaged in the election campaign.

A WWF analysis demonstrated the clear alignment of the 'wish lists' of changes to the **EU water law** demanded by industry and EU Member States, sparking a media controversy.

## JULY

Within days of her nomination, Ursula von der Leyen announced a **European Green Deal** as the first of six priorities for her new Commission.

Commissioner Vella announced legal action against nine Member States on **14 infringement cases**, in a key step towards better enforcement of EU nature protection laws.

The European Commission published its long-awaited communication on **deforestation**, setting out measures to reduce the massive footprint of EU consumption abroad.

## SEPTEMBER

A WWF report revealed that only 1.8% of the EU marine area is currently covered by **Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)** with management plans, despite 12.4% being designated for protection.

Some of **Europe's largest asset owners** committed to decarbonising their investment portfolios.

WWF's first ever Europe-wide mapping showed that 28% of all **planned hydropower plants** in Europe are located in protected areas.

## NOVEMBER

In a world first, the **European Investment Bank (EIB)** committed to end coal, oil and gas lending by 2021.

## DECEMBER

The European Commission published its communication on a comprehensive and far-reaching **European Green Deal**.

EU Member States committed to reach **climate neutrality** by 2050, and the European Commission agreed to support the 'just transition' with €100 billion.

An EU agreement on the '**taxonomy**' was reached, setting a gold standard for sustainable investments.

In a major win for the WWF-led **#ProtectWater campaign**, the European Commission declared the EU water law to be 'fit for purpose'.

Over the year, WWF secured around €19 million in **EU development grants** for projects contributing to the sustainable food systems, good ocean governance and improving food waste solutions.

Climate march –  
Brussels, Belgium



# EU AFFAIRS

**“IN 2019, PARLIAMENT DECLARED A CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT EMERGENCY, AND THE NEW COMMISSION PRESENTED ITS EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL. NOW, STRONG ACTIONS MUST FOLLOW ON EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS AND NATURE RESTORATION.”**

**TYCHO VANDERMAESEN,  
HEAD, PUBLIC AFFAIRS,  
WWF EUROPEAN POLICY OFFICE**





## **THE EUROPEAN ELECTIONS AND THE START OF THE NEW COMMISSION PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY FOR A RENEWAL OF THE EU'S ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE AMBITIONS.**

WWF had called for strong and concrete plans to drive the ecological transition, and the promise of a comprehensive 'European Green Deal' by the new Commission is a big step in the right direction.

- Across Europe, WWF engaged in the European election campaign with strong advocacy and communications activities, including video interviews with all main candidates for the Commission presidency;
- The 'EU Overshoot Day report' launched in May showed that not a single EU country operates within planetary boundaries;
- WWF welcomed Commission President von der Leyen's announcement of a European Green Deal, and urged for this to include strong climate ambition, a just transition to a sustainable economy, and binding targets on biodiversity.



# HOPES FOR A SUSTAINABLE EUROPE AFTER THE ELECTIONS?

The European elections in May 2019 provided a key moment for addressing policy-makers both in Brussels and the Member States, and 16 WWF offices across Europe were actively engaged in our activities.

WWF's call to action *A Safer, more Competitive and Responsible EU* advocated for a European Sustainability Pact, urging candidates and future EU leaders to put people's wellbeing in a thriving environment at the centre of their thinking as they shape the future of the EU and its population. The document emphasised that continued economic and political stability, job creation and global relevance of the EU will largely depend on boosting investment in the sustainable blue and green economy sectors, which will be at the heart of tomorrow's economy. It also called on political representatives to combat climate change and halt environmental degradation through ambitious EU standards and laws.

On an institutional level, WWF called for a European Commission Vice-President for Climate Action and Natural Resources to oversee the transition to a truly sustainable Europe and ensure policy coherence, as well as for improvements to the European Parliament's working methods to better integrate environmental considerations in key EU policies.



The WWF network came together around big moments leading up the elections, including on high-level advocacy work around the EU Leaders summit in Romania on 9 May, the launch of the EU Earth Overshoot Day report on the same day, and video interviews with prominent EU elections candidates (the 'Spitzenkandidaten').

Following the elections, the Members of the the new European Parliament now have the decisive responsibility to turn the tide and lead Europe towards a safer, prosperous and responsible future.





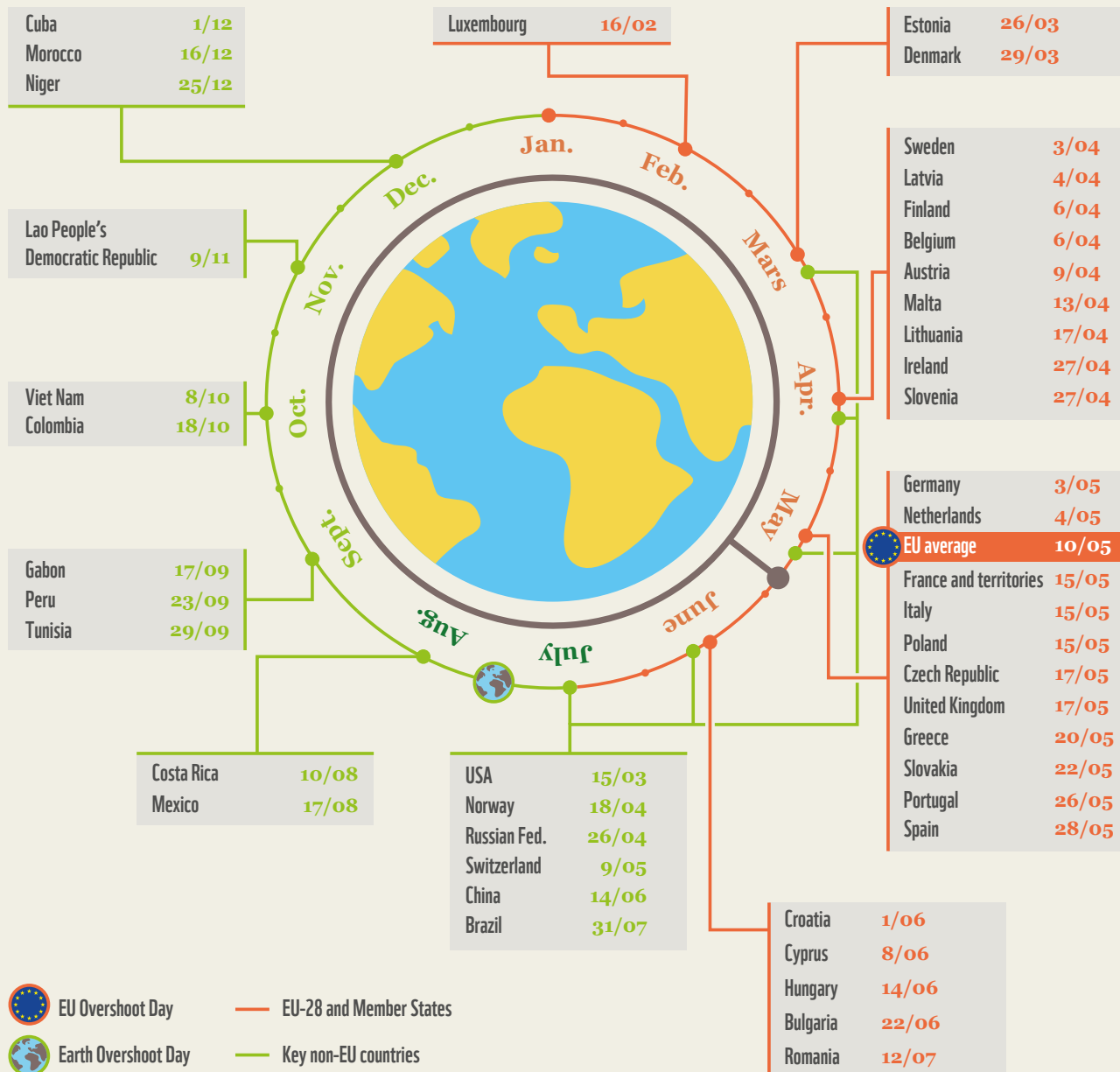
**Green 10**

As chair of the Green 10 coalition of environmental NGOs in Brussels during the second half of 2019, WWF organised a welcome reception for MEPs. Participants were asked to 'add their piece to the puzzle' for a sustainable Europe.





## OVERSHOOT DAYS ACROSS THE EU AND THE WORLD



### 10 MAY 2019: EU OVERSHOOT DAY

**2.8**  
**EARTHS**  
**WOULD BE**  
**NEEDED TO**  
**SUSTAIN**  
**THE EU**  
**LIFESTYLE**

Together with the Global Footprint Network, WWF published a report on the EU Overshoot Day, which fell on 10 May 2019 - the date by which humanity would have exhausted nature's annual budget if everybody in the world lived like EU residents. This means that 2.8 Earths would be needed to sustain the demand of natural resources required by such a lifestyle.

EU Overshoot Day is a stark reminder that EU consumption is contributing to the Earth's looming ecological and climate collapse. The consequences include global deforestation, biodiversity loss, collapse of fish stocks, water

scarcity, soil erosion, air pollution, and climate change, leading to more frequent extreme weather events such as droughts, floods, and wildfires.

The report showed that despite large variations among EU countries, not a single one of them is performing at a sustainable level. The report was launched at a high-level event in Brussels, and widely covered in EU and national media.

In response to the report, WWF interviewed all lead candidates from the European political groups. In these interviews, candidates have expressed their individual commitments to help 'move the date' of EU Overshoot Day by bringing the EU footprint back within planetary boundaries.



## EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL: A TURNING POINT FOR NATURE & CLIMATE?

During the election campaign, many lead candidates at EU and national level committed to stepping up action on climate and environment, and the election results also demonstrated the importance of environmental issues to Europe's voters. Following the elections, WWF continued its engagement with the elected representatives from across the political spectrum, calling on MEPs to make their approval of the new Commission President conditional on the presentation of a strong and concrete plan to fight climate change and nature loss.

Within days of her nomination by national governments in July, Commission President-designate Ursula von der Leyen announced a 'European Green Deal' as the first of six priorities for her new Commission, and committed to presenting proposals within the first 100 days of her presidency. This proposed deal focusses not only on the much needed increase in climate ambition and a just transition to a climate neutral Europe, but also promises to curtail biodiversity loss within the next five years and present an EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030. On the basis of this promise, WWF

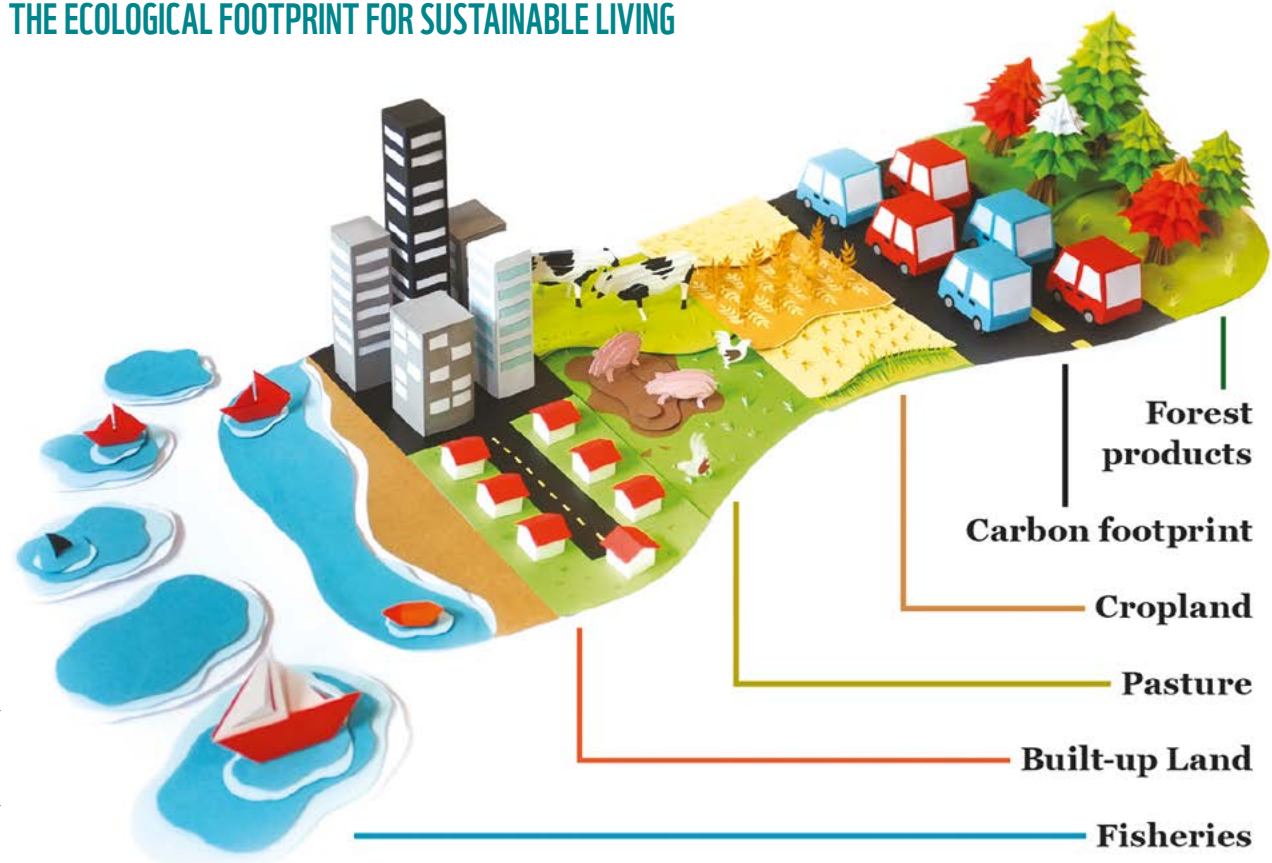
supported von der Leyen's appointment by the European Parliament later that month. We also closely followed the parliamentary hearings of key commissioners, encouraging MEPs to drill down on the environmental commitments of the candidates.

On 11 December, the European Commission published its European Green Deal Communication, which clearly recognises the environmental challenges the world is facing, and provides new impetus for action. The proposed package is comprehensive, identifies the right areas for action - from biodiversity and nature restoration to climate change and stopping deforestation - and it presents us with a number of new and potentially transformational initiatives.

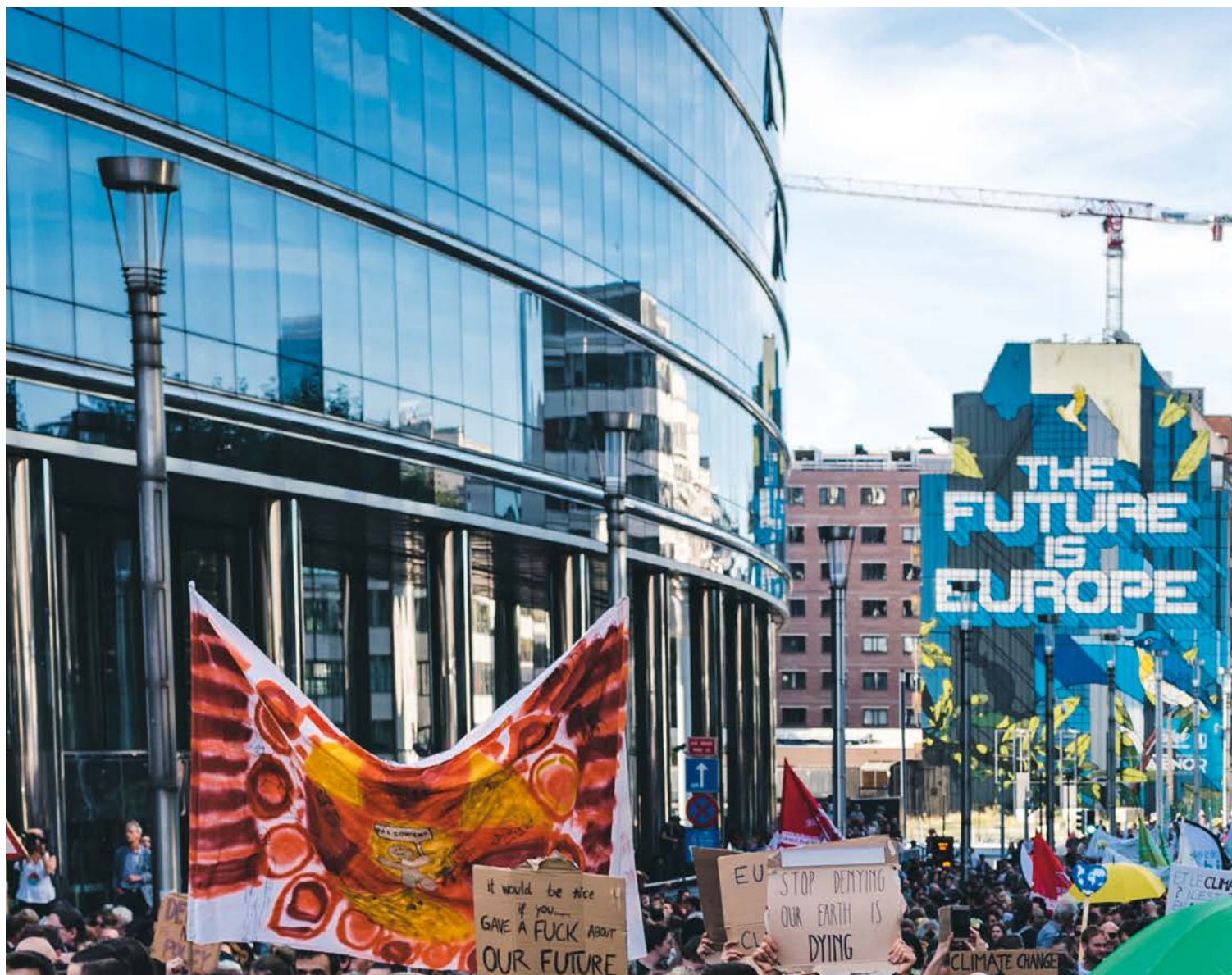
However, only the concrete legislative and policy proposals expected in the coming months will show the extent to which the Commission is actually committed to heeding scientific recommendations for urgent and far-reaching transformational change.

WWF continues its work to ensure that the good intentions are translated into meaningful action with clear timelines and concrete measures, and that the policy and legislative proposals in the coming months reflect our calls for transformational change.

## THE ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVING







# CLIMATE AND ENERGY

**"THE CLIMATE-NEUTRALITY GOAL  
MUST NOW BE RAPIDLY PUT INTO LAW,  
AND THE EU'S 2030 CLIMATE TARGET  
UPDATED TO AT LEAST  
65% EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS."**

IMKE LÜBBEKE,  
HEAD, CLIMATE & ENERGY,  
WWF EUROPEAN POLICY OFFICE







## CITIZENS ARE ON THE STREETS FOR CLIMATE ACTION. EU LEADERS HEARD THE MESSAGE, AND ENDORSED A NET ZERO EMISSIONS TARGET FOR 2050.

Some key successes in 2019 included:

- The commitment by EU Member States to reach climate neutrality by 2050;
- The European Commission's agreement to support a 'just transition' with €100 billion;
- The EU's strong role pushing for climate ambition at COP25 in Madrid in December.

The next ten years are make or break for the climate. The EU needs to start 2020 by increasing its 2030 climate target drastically if we are to keep global heating to 1.5°C and avoid catastrophic climate impacts.

This will allow the EU to strengthen its climate plan ahead of the COP26 summit. It must also bring all its policies in line with its climate goals.

Climate march – Brussels, Belgium



# THE FUTURE IS CLIMATE-NEUTRAL

In 2019, millions of people marched for the climate worldwide, and scientific warnings about impending planetary catastrophe grew starker. The message to decision-makers was stronger than ever: we need to cut emissions drastically and fast, and restore nature to help absorb the emissions we cannot cut.



In a sign that the EU is willing to go for higher climate ambition, leaders finally agreed a climate neutrality target for 2050 right at the end of 2019, after months of disagreements between Member States.

While climate neutrality by 2050 is ten years too late in WWF's view, getting the agreement was a real milestone, after countries had repeatedly postponed or disagreed on such a target during previous attempts. WWF had been relentlessly advocating for the need for climate neutrality throughout 2019, using meetings, letters, media work, press briefings, and lots of coordination with WWF offices in EU Member States.





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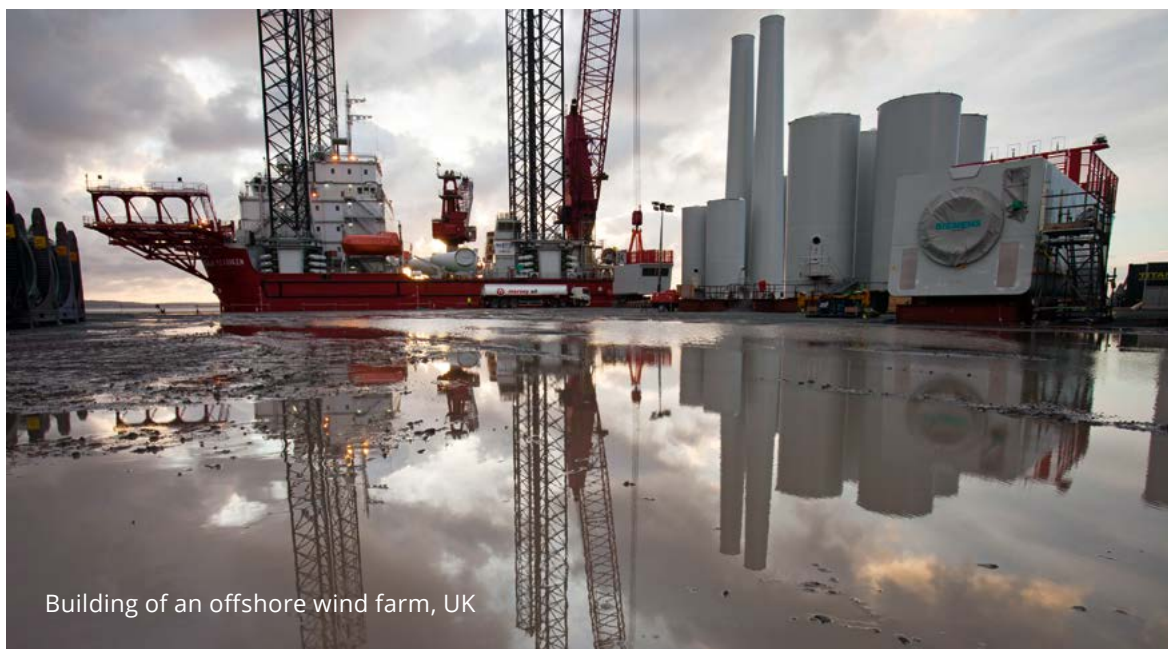


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Wind farm, UK

© Global Warming Images / WWF



Building of an offshore wind farm, UK

© Global Warming Images / WWF

Ahead of crucial summits, we published new reports to push our messages; for example in October, together with WWF Poland, we *crunched the numbers*, finding that Poland can reach climate neutrality in a socially fair way without lots of new EU money, by shifting its spending. Ahead of the December summit, we published an analysis of how Emissions Trading System revenues are spent, which shows that several Member States, including Poland and Hungary, do not always use the money wisely.

In 2020, as part of the 'European Green Deal', the agreed target is set to be enshrined in legislation as part of a new EU Climate Law, which WWF has been championing in the EU institutions. The Climate Law should unlock greater action on all EU policies to move to a climate neutral Europe - and we will be pushing for this cross-policy transformation, with a particular focus on industrial decarbonisation.



Bełchatów coal plant, Poland



© Client Earth

## A HIGHER 2030 TARGET IS KEY

First up must be increasing the EU's 2030 climate target to 65% emissions reductions in good time before the crucial COP26 summit in November, ahead of which countries must all submit updated climate pledges. This will ensure the EU starts to make the drastic emissions reductions that science requires today.

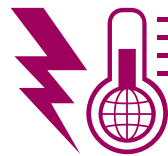
A 65% target would be in line with scientific recommendations: the UN says that to keep temperature rise to 1.5°C and avoid the worst impacts of the climate crisis, global emissions must drop by 7.6% per year. In the EU this takes us to 65% emissions reductions by 2030 - and that's even without considering our responsibility for historical emissions. This is far higher than the current target level of 40%, the EU Commission's aim of 50% then 55%, and the EU Parliament's position of 55%.

Increasing its 2030 target by summer 2020 will also help the EU to lead on the world stage and consolidate at COP26 the positive role it played pushing countries for more action at the otherwise disappointing COP25 summit in Madrid in December 2019.

## LEAVING NO-ONE BEHIND

One of the reasons for Hungary and the Czech Republic finally supporting the climate neutrality target in December, which they had resisted along with Poland until then, was the promise of more EU money to help their economies get sustainable. In its Green Deal communication, which came just a day before EU leaders agreed on the 2050 climate goal, the European Commission promised €100 billion to ensure all regions and parts of society are supported on the road to climate





## INCREASING THE EU'S 2030 CLIMATE TARGET TO **65%** EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS WILL ENSURE THE EU STARTS TO MAKE THE DRASTIC REDUCTIONS THAT SCIENCE REQUIRES TODAY

neutrality, under a 'just transition mechanism'. The official proposal for this mechanism was published in January 2020.

Promoting a 'just transition' was a major part of our activities in 2019. WWF led this work as part of the Europe Beyond Coal campaign of NGOs and was also active with several national offices in a just transition project financed by the German government's 'EUKI' fund. WWF continued to support mayors from coal regions, and in October, more than 40 mayors signed a statement on a sustainable, coal-free future, which was then presented to the EU Commission.

WWF also built up much stronger relationships with the EU's Platform on coal regions in transition and dived into the link between just transition and the EU budget with a briefing and a well-attended event with NGO, MEP and scientist (IPCC) speakers in June.

WWF and partners also had a huge success in March when the European Parliament voted to cut fossil fuels out of EU funding which goes to least well-off regions - known as 'cohesion funding'. The vote followed a sustained campaign by WWF, including postcards delivered to all MEPs. WWF is now working with other NGOs to influence the discussions between the EU Council, Parliament and Commission, which will determine the final outcome.

## GETTING IT RIGHT NATIONALLY

In 2019, countries had to submit draft national energy and climate plans (NECPs) to the European Commission. The first drafts were not up to scratch, and WWF offices provided reactions on their plans. Based on the European Commission's recommendations, countries had to finalise these NECPs by the end of the year. WWF will work with national offices to try to support their work on strengthening those plans.

In addition, EU Member States had to submit their long-term climate strategies a day later, by 1 January 2020. We will work with WWF national offices across the EU to analyse these plans and compare them to the level of ambition needed, and to what is in the 2030 NECPs.




Wildflower meadow, Lithuania

# NATURAL RESOURCES

**“THE EU HAS POWERFUL LAWS TO PROTECT NATURE, BUT IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT ARE WEAK. THESE LAWS MUST WORK NOT JUST ON PAPER BUT IN PRACTICE.”**

**ANDREAS BAUMÜLLER,  
HEAD, NATURAL RESOURCES,  
WWF EUROPEAN POLICY OFFICE**





## **IN 2019, THE URGENT NEED TO HALT NATURE LOSS SKYROCKETED UP THE POLITICAL AGENDA. NOW, IT'S TIME FOR BOLD AND COMMITTED ACTION**

This new awareness was driven by a better understanding of the linkages between climate change and nature loss, as well as of the role that healthy ecosystems and their biodiversity play in sustaining people, nature and economies.

Highlights of WWF's work in 2019 include:

- The European Commission declaring the EU water law to be 'fit for purpose', following 18 months of campaigning by WWF and other environmental groups;
- Commissioner Vella bringing forward legal action in nine Member States in one sweeping round of infringements, giving a clear signal to the incoming European Commission to ramp up enforcement of the EU's nature protection laws;
- The European Commission recognising the role of EU consumption in driving deforestation around the world;
- Ensuring that nature had a seat at the table in the debates surrounding the reform of the EU's farming policy.





Whiskered tern, Croatia





# FRESH WATER

Huge #ProtectWater victory! After 18 months of campaigning, a vital milestone was achieved in saving the EU water law.

Christmas came early in 2019 with a massive campaign win for Europe's rivers and freshwater biodiversity: On 12 December, the European Commission signed-off the EU water law as 'fit for purpose'!

The news concluded the two-year evaluation of the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD), setting the EU back on course to bring life back to its rivers through full implementation and enforcement of the law.

WWF, together with other environmental groups, has been campaigning tirelessly for this outcome, mobilising a supporter base of hundreds of thousands of European citizens, scientists and civil society groups along the way. The campaign was underpinned by strong policy, advocacy and communications work to ensure that sustainable water management and the WFD skyrocketed up the political agenda and were well-covered in EU, national and international media.

In Europe, 60% of freshwater ecosystems are still not healthy due to poor implementation and enforcement of the WFD. Rather than putting all efforts into protecting and restoring these ecosystems by the law's 2027 deadline, Member States and the European Commission have allowed them to be further polluted and destroyed.

In 2018, the Commission launched its 'fitness-check' of the WFD, a process each piece of EU legislation undergoes to evaluate whether it is still relevant and 'fit for purpose'. Faced with an alarming push from a number of Member States to weaken the WFD's strong elements, urgent action was needed. Together with its partners in the Living Rivers Europe coalition (the European Environmental Bureau, European Rivers Network, European Anglers Alliance and Wetlands International), WWF launched the #ProtectWater campaign to save the WFD.

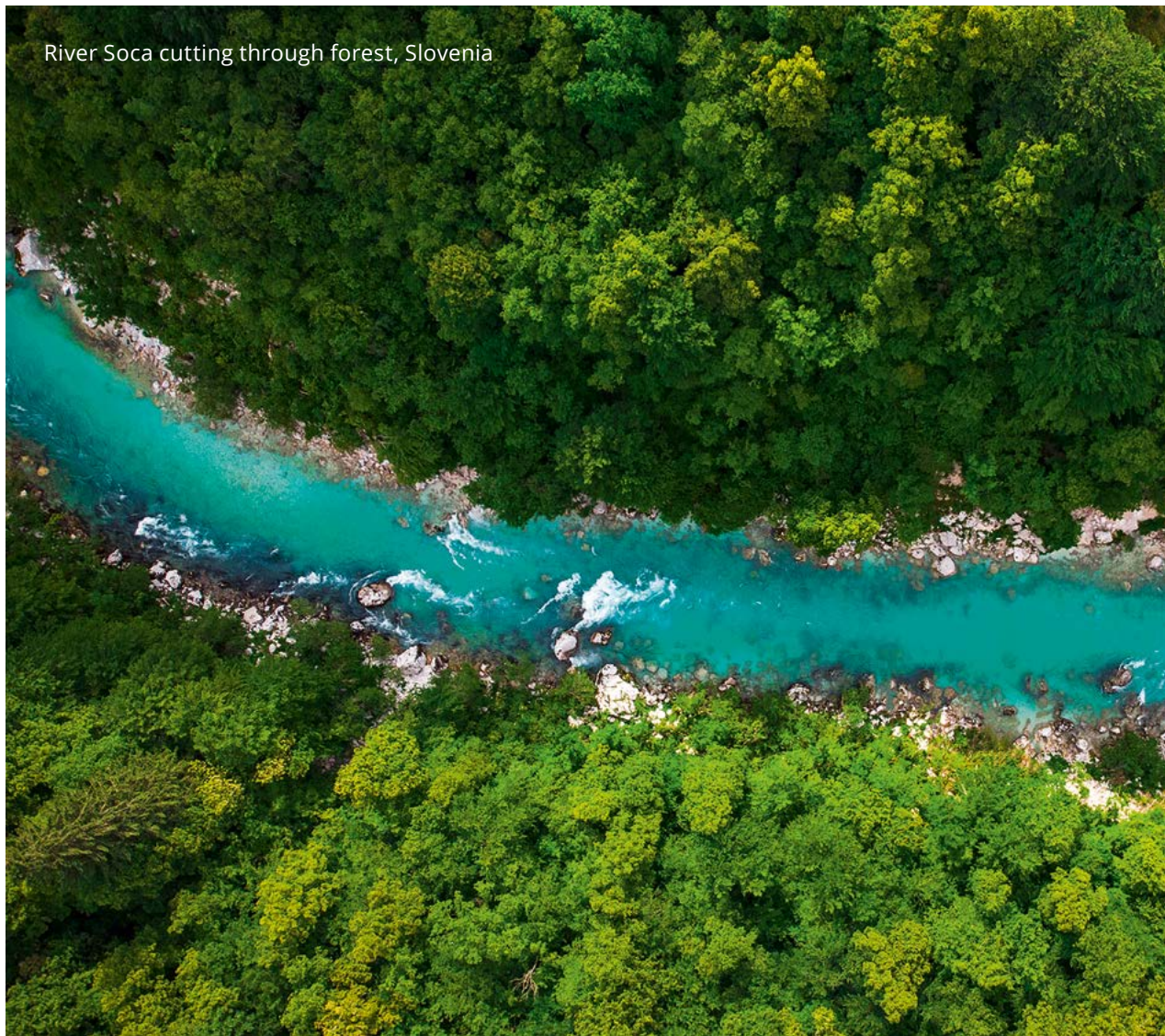
The campaign, supported by 130 civil society organisations, inspired 375,386 citizens to take part in the Commission's public consultation on the WFD (which ran from October 2018 to March 2019 and was the only opportunity for the public to have its say during the evaluation) to express their opposition to changing the law. This made the public consultation on the WFD the third largest in the history of the EU. The call went on to be supported by 5,500+ scientists, who sent an open letter to the new Commission calling on them to 'save the Water Framework Directive' in order to halt and reverse the decline in freshwater biodiversity, and renew impetus towards the implementation of the law.



River Soca cutting through forest, Slovenia



**33%**  
OF AQUATIC  
INSECT  
SPECIES ARE  
THREATENED  
WITH  
EXTINCTION



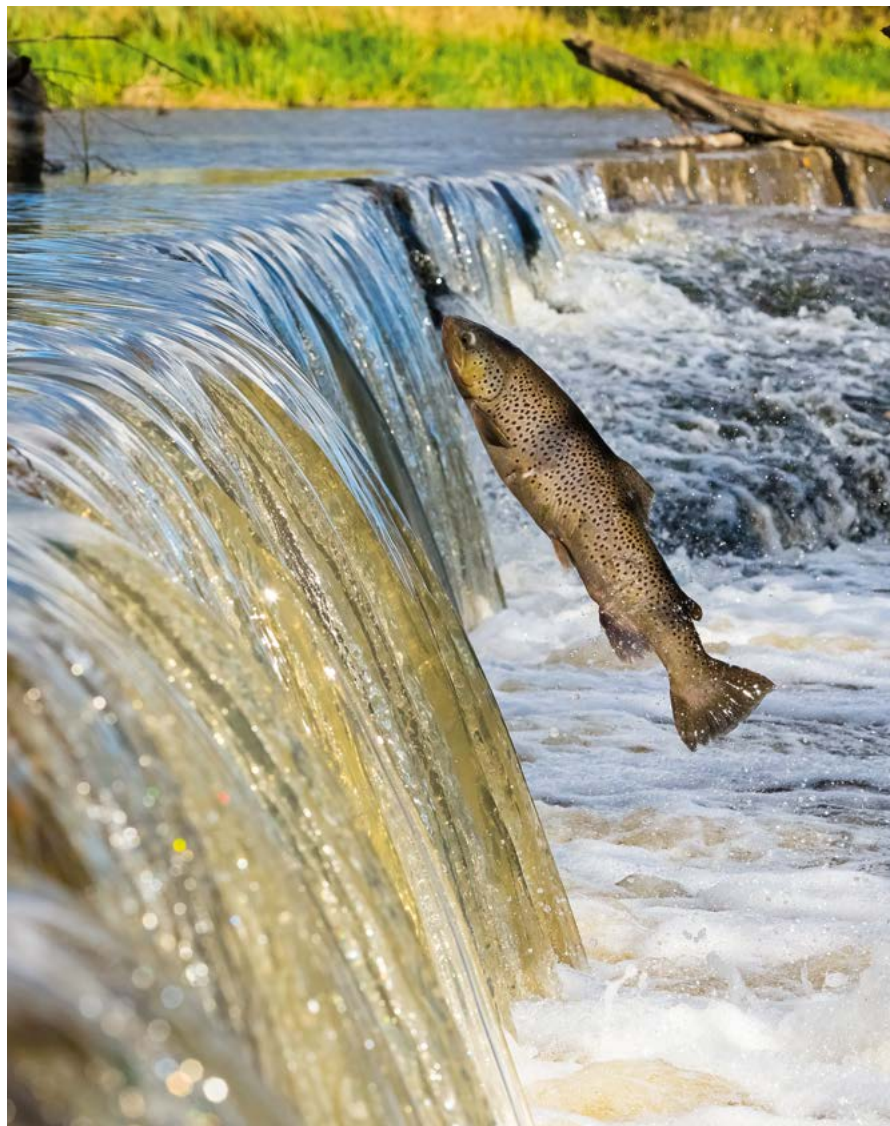
In May 2019, WWF launched a paper compiling the positions on the WFD of different associations representing the interests of industry, and those of Member States. It showcased the clear alignment between the two 'wish lists' of changes and provided compelling analysis as to why these would be a terrible blow for nature and EU citizens if ever put into effect. The paper was well-covered by the media, including The Guardian, sparking political debate in Member States and at the Informal Meeting of the Environment Council the following week - ultimately resulting in Germany publicly stating that the WFD should not be changed.

Another big success of 2019 was WWF's launch of the first ever Europe-wide mapping of hydropower plants. Hydropower dams are one of the biggest pressures on rivers and reasons for the WFD being breached. Amongst other shocking findings, the study showed that 28% of all planned hydropower plants in Europe are in protected areas. The study was well-covered by the media, including Reuters, POLITICO, the New York Times and The Guardian.

Whilst the fitness-check conclusions ended 2019 on a high, WWF will continue to ensure that Member States and the Commission follow through and that the possibility of revising the WFD is definitely discarded. With the new year comes a new Commission - the European Green Deal, biodiversity, zero pollution and stronger enforcement are high on the agenda, providing an opportunity to give new impetus to our work on the WFD.

With 2020 marking the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the WFD and the mad rush from Member States to polish off their final plans to meet the law's 2027 deadline, WWF will continue to put all its energy into ensuring this strong law works on the ground. We will also be stepping up our work to raise awareness of the negative impacts of hydropower dams on European rivers, with a special focus on halting developments in the Balkans.





## MEMBER STATES: STOP BOWING TO PRESSURE FROM DESTRUCTIVE INDUSTRY!





# FORESTS

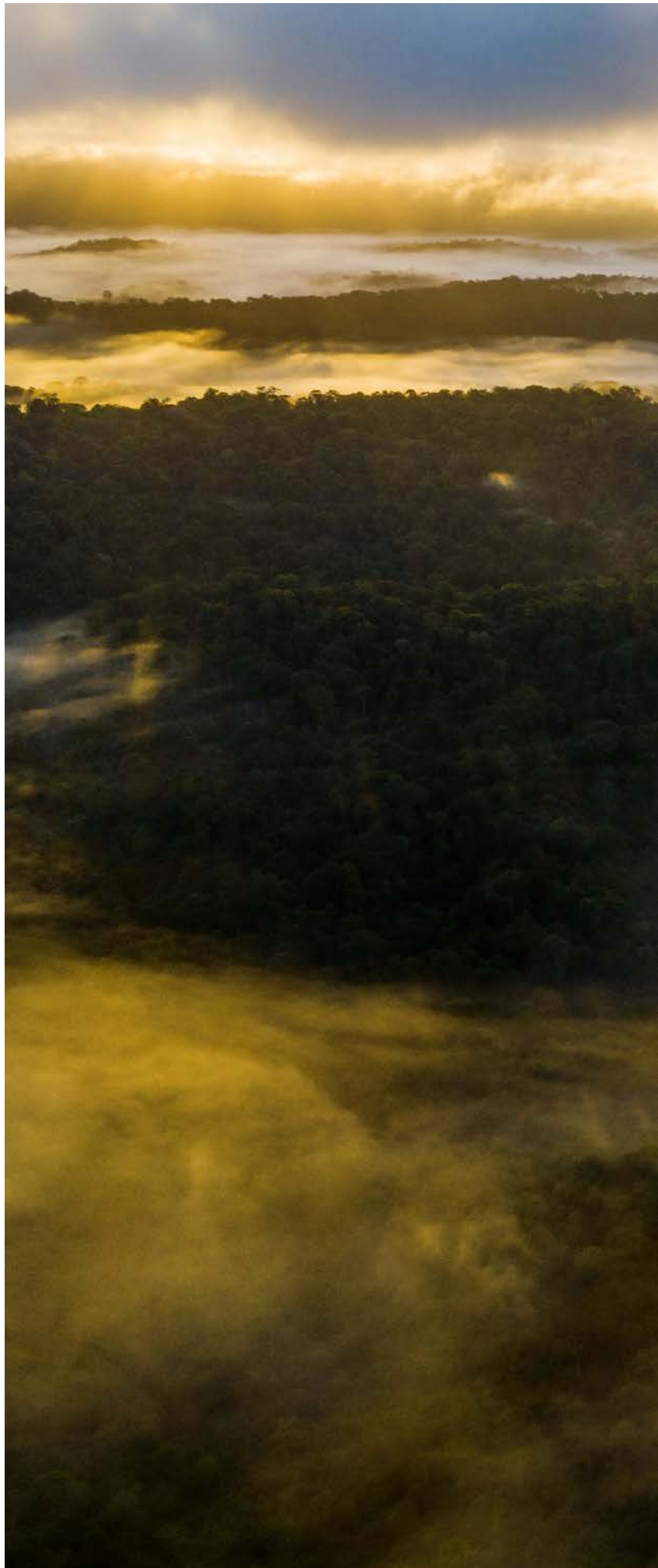
The fires in the Amazon in the summer of 2019 sparked a public outcry, yet our own consumption contributes significantly to global deforestation.

Wouldn't it be great if EU consumers could be sure that the products they buy did not contribute to the destruction of rainforests and other precious ecosystems?

WWF has long called for an EU law to ensure that products placed on the European market are sustainable and not linked to the destruction or degradation of forests and other ecosystems. For the first time ever, the European Commission is now considering to introduce concrete measures to address the EU's role in 'consuming the world'.

The Commission's long-awaited Communication in July 2019 recognised that EU consumption drives deforestation around the world, through commodities such as palm oil, beef, soy, cocoa, maize, timber and rubber, and set out a number of measures to reduce this massive footprint. In line with WWF's long-standing ask, new legislation to prevent further deforestation and forest degradation was mentioned as one option - a great first step! As we continue to advocate for a deforestation law, support for this is also growing among Member States, so we are expecting further progress in 2020.

Forests are also under pressure from illegal logging, and the EU's main tool for fighting against illegal timber trade is the EU Timber Regulation (EUTR). However, a WWF report published in December concludes that six years after the law came into force, its implementation is lagging significantly, thus failing to put a stop to the trade in illegal timber products on the EU market. WWF is urging the European Commission to hold Member States accountable on fighting illegal logging.







Nouragues Natural Reserve, French Guiana







# BIODIVERSITY

2019 saw the biodiversity crisis jump up the political agenda, thanks to better understanding of the links between climate change and nature loss.

WWF has continued to fight for Europe's diverse range of habitats and species by advocating for the full enforcement and implementation of the EU Nature Directives (Birds and Habitats Directives), and for an ambitious and legally binding 2030 EU Biodiversity Strategy.

## EU NATURE DIRECTIVES - MAKE THEM WORK!

The year started with a bang, with the European Commission announcing in January that it would take Spain to the European Court of Justice (ECJ) over the serious deterioration of the Doñana National Park, which is protected by the EU Water Framework Directive and EU Nature Directives. This decision followed years of inaction and repeated breaches of EU law, with Spanish authorities at all levels failing to prevent the illegal agricultural irrigation that is bleeding Doñana's wetlands dry.

Sadly, there are countless cases like Doñana all across the EU, despite the strong laws which should protect these precious natural areas. Enforcement of the laws

was still missing: cases that needed decisive action were being delayed, getting stuck and even closed while the problems on the ground were not solved. This is why over the course of 2019, WWF and its partners called on Environment Commissioner Vella to leave a lasting legacy for nature by holding Member States accountable, and we stepped up the pressure with a strong social media campaign during the summer.

Our campaign was highly successful! In one sweeping round of infringement decisions on 25 July, Commissioner Vella brought legal action forward on 14 cases in nine different Member States. These decisions gave a clear signal to the incoming Commission to dramatically ramp up enforcement of the Nature Directives.

## A NEW DEAL FOR NATURE & PEOPLE

In 2019, WWF has also been strongly advocating for the need of a New Deal for Nature and People at the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) COP 15 summit in 2020 - where a new global framework to protect and restore biodiversity will be agreed - and worked closely with the EU institutions to ensure EU leadership. Before the year was up, this culminated in calls from the European Parliament's Environment Committee and the EU Environment Ministers in favour of the EU taking a strong leadership position at the CBD COP 15 summit in October 2020.

Of course, domestic action is the basis for global leadership. The European Commission is currently drafting its 2030 EU Biodiversity Strategy, with a Communication expected in early 2020. WWF is calling for a new EU law to restore nature for biodiversity and climate and for well managed and connected Protected Areas to cover at least 30% of Europe's land and sea. These asks were supported by the Parliament's Environment Committee in December, which voted for at least 30% of natural areas to be protected and 30% of degraded ecosystems to be restored at both EU and global level.

Commissioner Sinkevičius signed our pledge to push for a legally binding restoration initiative











# FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

## Debates around the reform of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) continued in 2019 without a conclusion.

The current unsustainable food consumption and production constitutes a primary cause of biodiversity loss, land use change, depletion of natural resources and climate change.

Major shifts are needed to reduce the impact of food consumption and waste in Europe, as well as of our production systems, including their external footprint. With almost half of Europe's land area used as farmland, the CAP is one of the most critical tools to accelerate the transition towards resilient, equitable and sustainable agri-food systems. WWF has been deeply involved in several rounds of reform of the CAP, and the current one - which began in 2017 - is no exception.

WWF is campaigning to achieve a CAP that benefits farmers and rural communities, and produces a variety of healthy and nutritious food for people, while protecting our finite natural resources in Europe and globally.

To achieve this, WWF works with key stakeholders and farmers organisations who agree that the current CAP policy is neither fair nor sustainable, and are willing to engage in a deep reform. We also campaigning to increase political and public awareness and engagement for a change in our diets and food production.

In 2019, the debate was not concluded, largely due to the continued uncertainty regarding the next EU budget, 30% of which is devoted to the CAP, and to the elections to the European Parliament, which interrupted the parliamentary debates for several months.

Before the elections, WWF engaged closely with the relevant parliamentary committees to ensure environmental ambition. While the Environment Committee took a remarkable stand in favour of a more nature-friendly EU farming policy, this was weakened considerably by the much more conservative stance of the Agriculture Committee a couple of months later. The work ground to a halt with the elections before a plenary vote could take place, and only started up again in December, so the battle is far from over!

In Council, agriculture ministers continued to strive for greater national flexibility on CAP and to reduce some of the reform's environmental provisions, thereby undermining some of the basic environmental standards within the EU farming policy. Despite NGO pressure, ministers have failed to commit to an ambitious CAP reform, citing the lack of a final agreement of the budget allocation to this policy area.

The EU farming sector is also responsible for 15% of greenhouse gases, when it could instead be capturing and storing much more CO<sub>2</sub>. In May, the EU's Agriculture Ministers were set to discuss the long-term climate strategy, but they were missing a crucial assessment of EU Common Agricultural Policy's impact on the climate, which existed but had not been published. Following an 'Access to Documents' request submitted by WWF and the international media coverage it generated, the Commission finally published the report. This showed clearly that agriculture policy must do much more to help Europe achieve its net-zero emissions target, which would benefit both the climate and the farming sector's sustainability.



# OCEANS

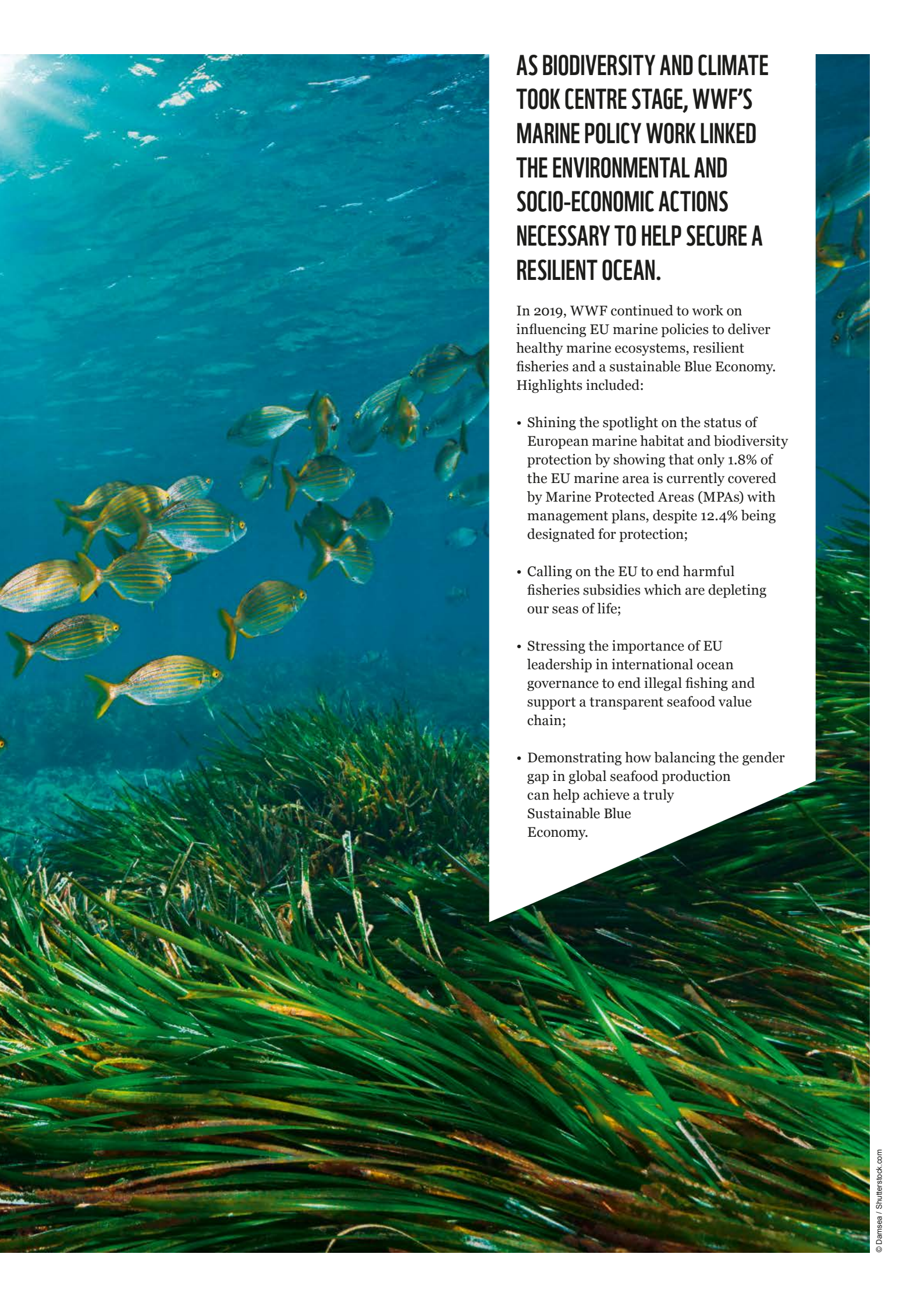
A vibrant underwater photograph showing a large school of silver fish with yellow stripes swimming over a dense bed of green seagrass. Sunlight filters down from the surface, creating a bright, clear blue environment.

**"THE EU IS NOT ON TRACK TO DELIVERING SUSTAINABLY  
MANAGED FISHERIES AND GOOD ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS  
IN EUROPEAN SEAS. WE MUST ACT URGENTLY TO ENSURE  
A RESILIENT AND HEALTHY OCEAN, WHICH IS THE FOUNDATION  
FOR A SUSTAINABLE BLUE ECONOMY."**

**DR SAMANTHA BURGESS\*,  
SENIOR ADVISOR EUROPEAN MARINE POLICY,  
\*OCEAN TERRA CONSULTING**

Mediterranean sea school of fish with  
seagrass and sunlight underwater,  
Cabo de Gata Nijar, Almería, Andalusia, Spain



An underwater photograph showing a large school of fish, possibly sea bream, swimming in clear blue water above a dense bed of green seagrass. The fish are silvery with yellowish-brown stripes. The seagrass is long and blade-like, growing in a thick patch at the bottom of the frame.

## AS BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE TOOK CENTRE STAGE, WWF'S MARINE POLICY WORK LINKED THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC ACTIONS NECESSARY TO HELP SECURE A RESILIENT OCEAN.

In 2019, WWF continued to work on influencing EU marine policies to deliver healthy marine ecosystems, resilient fisheries and a sustainable Blue Economy. Highlights included:

- Shining the spotlight on the status of European marine habitat and biodiversity protection by showing that only 1.8% of the EU marine area is currently covered by Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) with management plans, despite 12.4% being designated for protection;
- Calling on the EU to end harmful fisheries subsidies which are depleting our seas of life;
- Stressing the importance of EU leadership in international ocean governance to end illegal fishing and support a transparent seafood value chain;
- Demonstrating how balancing the gender gap in global seafood production can help achieve a truly Sustainable Blue Economy.



# BROKEN PROMISES FOR MARINE PROTECTION

The WWF & Sky Ocean Rescue report, *Protecting Our Ocean* assesses the EU's progress to effectively protect at least 10% of its marine and coastal areas by 2020, in accordance with commitments under the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and UN Sustainable Development Goal 14.

19  
OF 23  
MEMBER  
STATES LACK  
ADEQUATE  
MANAGEMENT  
PLANS FOR  
MARINE  
PROTECTED  
AREAS

The analysis reveals that European seas remain in a poor state, with just 1.8% of the EU marine area covered by MPAs with management plans, despite 12.4% being designated for protection. Eleven EU Member States have not reported any management plans for their MPAs and eight have management plans for less than 10% of their marine area.

The report launch event held on 10 September featured openings from Commissioner Vella and the Chair of the EP Fisheries Committee Chris Davies, with MEP Davies pledging for the Committee to address its impact on marine protection.

In 2020, WWF will build on the report's findings and the wider issues of marine biodiversity loss and threats to healthy European seas to advocate for 30% marine protection by 2030, with robust and ambitious measures to address the shortcomings identified in the report.

## DELIVERING PARTNERSHIPS FOR A SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

UN Environment's new *Sustainable Blue Economy Finance Initiative* was launched at their Roundtable event in November. This finance platform will adopt the *Sustainable Blue Economy Finance Principles* as a guiding framework to the key role financial institutions play in ensuring economies tied to our seas hold preservation of marine ecosystems at their core. As a co-creator of the Principles, WWF will become a Steering Group member for the Initiative, supporting and, where possible, driving the development of guidance, tools, metrics and ocean literacy materials. In 2020, WWF will emphasise the importance of greater coherence between finance and policy. Robust implementation of legislation and preventing harmful investments in the ocean are key to delivering a Sustainable Blue Economy to benefit society and future generations.

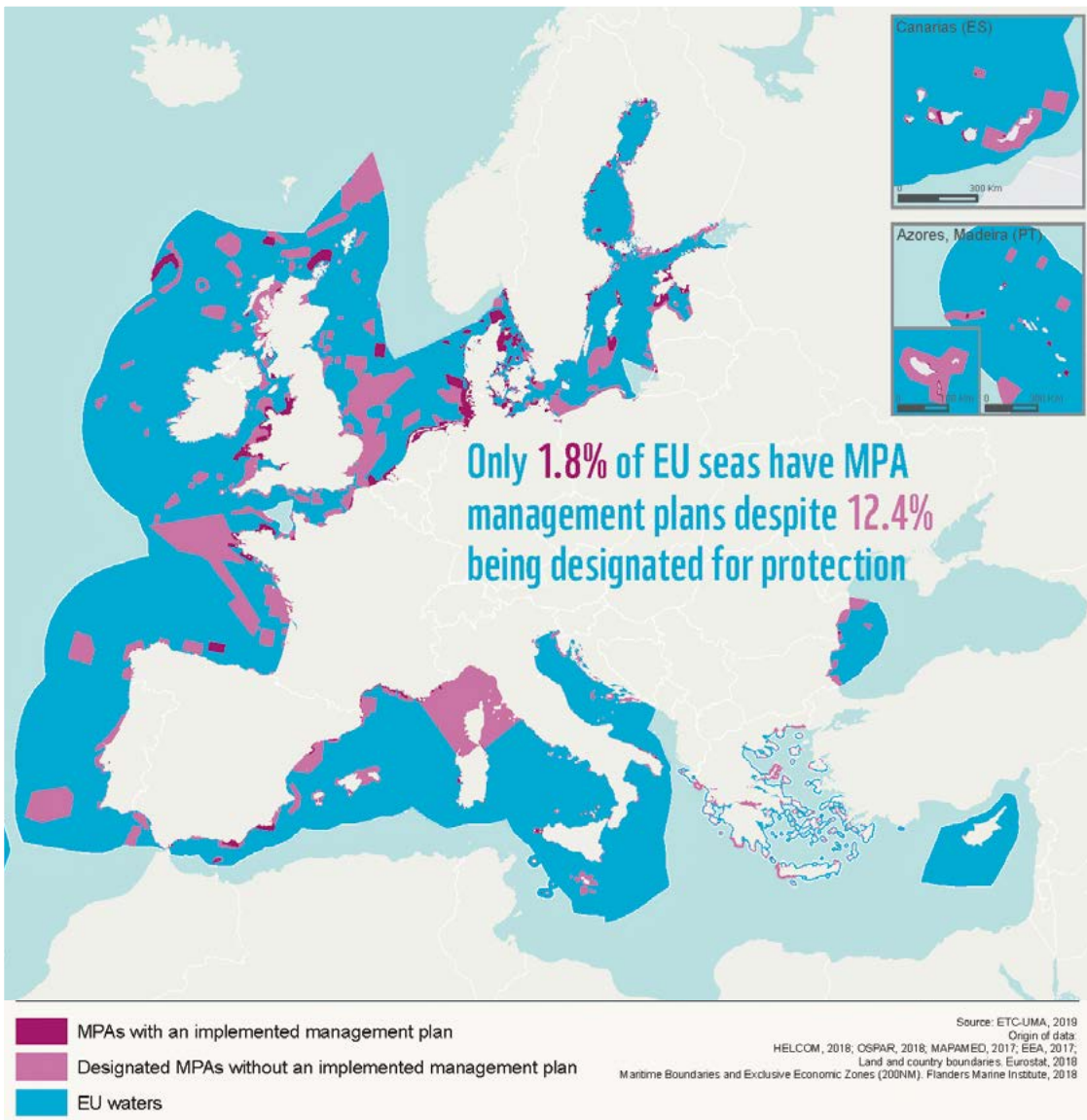
## OCEAN ACTION IS CLIMATE AND GENDER EQUALITY ACTION

70% of the EU's seafood is imported from abroad, including from nations whose fisheries face potential reductions in annual catches of up to 50% by 2050 due to overfishing and climate change. Meanwhile, 80-90% of the workforce in the global seafood processing industry and nearly one quarter of the European aquaculture workforce is female. Despite occupying mainly low-skilled, low-paid and low-valued jobs in these sectors, female representation is forecast to grow, meaning these voices can no longer be left out of policy dialogues to achieve sustainable seafood production and meet growing demand.

Two WWF publications have laid out how the EU's seafood policies, socio-cultural actions and economic strategies can mitigate climate change, secure healthy ecosystems and encourage better business, all whilst supporting the EU to meet its commitments to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Citing WWF's briefing *Empowering women in marine communities* at his confirmation hearing in the European Parliament, the new Environment, Ocean and Fisheries Commissioner Virginijus Sinkevičius has pledged to step up efforts to improve gender equality in the fisheries and seafood sector.

Better implementation of legal frameworks and integrating adaptive measures into action plans and national policies can improve governance and resilience in the face of accelerating climate change. These are crucial steps for the EU to take in order to meet its international commitments to the SDGs, of which four targets focusing on ocean health and sustainability are due in 2020.

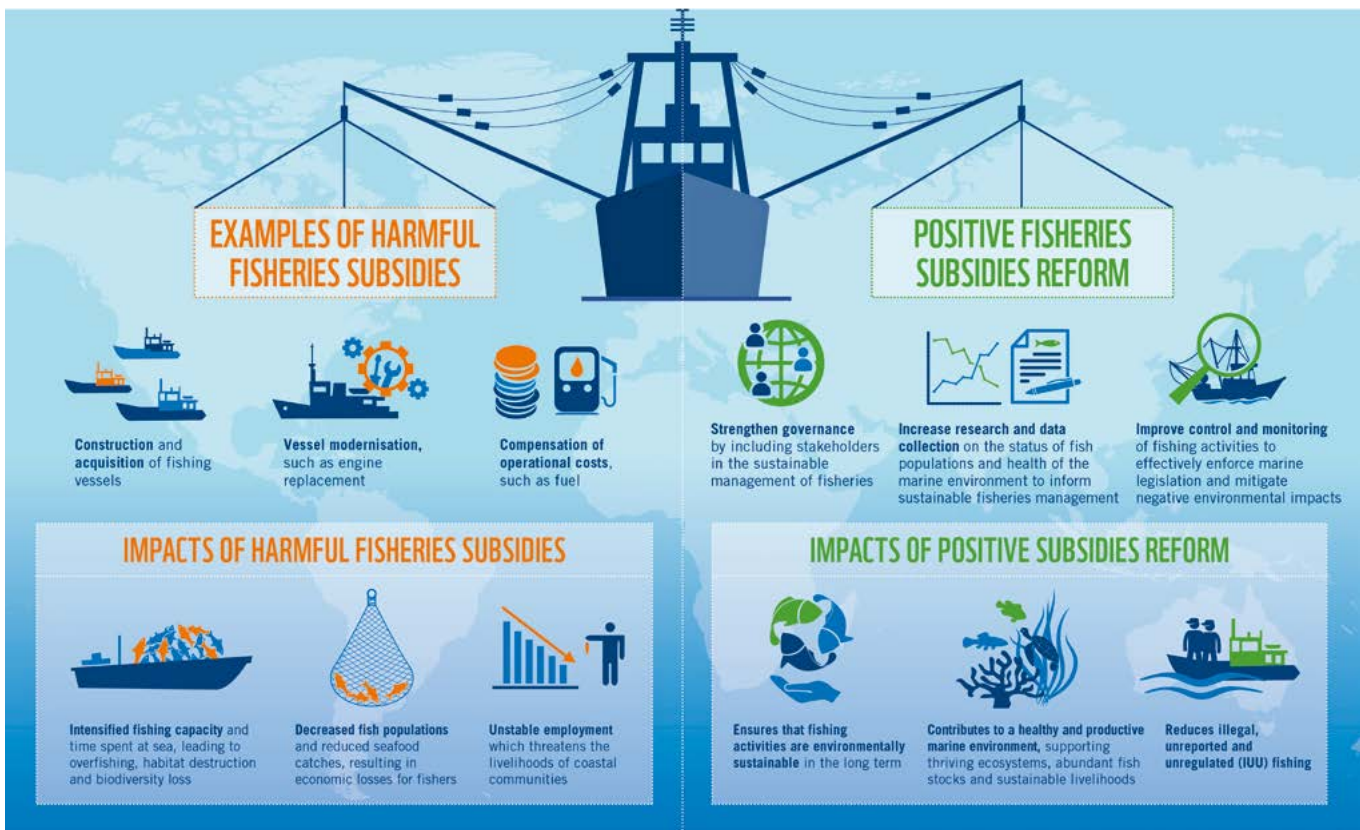




**80-90%**  
OF THE  
WORKFORCE  
IN THE  
SEAFOOD  
PROCESSING  
INDUSTRY  
IS FEMALE



# THE NEED FOR FISHERIES SUBSIDIES REFORM - ENDING OVERFISHING, FLEET OVERCAPACITY AND ILLEGAL FISHING



## A FINAL CRY TO END HARMFUL FISHERIES SUBSIDIES

**70%**  
OF SEAFOOD  
CONSUMED  
IN THE EU  
IS IMPORTED

In the year since the European Commission first published its post-2020 funding strategy for the maritime and fisheries sector (EMFF), the contentious development of the fund came to a head in 2019. Votes by the Fisheries Committee in March, the European Parliament plenary in April, the EU fisheries ministers at Council level in June and the newly elected European Parliament Fisheries Committee in November were all in favour of reintroducing harmful subsidies. WWF and our NGO partners have been fighting against such subsidies for many years through concerted advocacy, communications and campaigning efforts, as they risk increasing the EU fleet's activities in already heavily overfished waters with negative impacts on the marine environment and the long-term viability of the fisheries sector.

The move directly undermines EU objectives to create sustainable business models for fishers and to end overfishing, as laid out in the Common Fisheries Policy and in the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Additionally, it compromises the EU's position in ongoing World Trade Organization negotiations, where it has been actively advocating to end harmful fisheries subsidies proven to contribute to global overfishing.

Trilogue negotiations on the EMFF began in November and the final outcome is anticipated for early 2020. WWF is continuing its efforts at national and EU levels to ensure that the agreed final text does not endorse harmful fisheries subsidies.

## TRANSPARENCY AND TRACEABILITY OF SEAFOOD IN EUROPE

The environmental and economic viability of global fisheries are facing continued challenges. Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing remains one of the biggest threats to the sustainable management of marine resources. In a report launched in June, the EU IUU Coalition - the Environmental Justice Foundation, Oceana, The Nature Conservancy, The Pew Charitable Trusts and WWF - outlined the minimum transparency and anti-IUU fishing measures considered vital for the Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) who manage fish stocks in more than 90% of the world's marine areas. The EU is a major global fishing player and the world's largest seafood trader. In light of the significant commitments it has made to improve international ocean governance, including the EU IUU Regulation and the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the EU is called upon to drive policy changes and prompt actions by other markets to fight IUU fishing.



In November, two RFMOs, the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) and the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), hosted Commission meetings to reflect upon, refine and adopt conservation and management measures. A WWF delegation was present and bore witness to the results of both meetings.

The GFCM agreed to make information on all fishing activities by foreign vessels in the Mediterranean Sea available and made it obligatory for vessels to report the contents and location of all catches of red coral and turbot, keeping anything caught above limits or outside legal areas off the EU market.

The ICCAT Convention proposal was formally adopted, including the management of sharks and rays, as well as modernisation and improvement of transparency in decision-making processes, while a working group will identify and address the important loopholes in traceability for bluefin tuna products to help curb illegal fishing and trade. WWF will work to ensure that the same measures are considered by ICCAT in 2020 for the shortfin Mako shark, now listed as endangered due to overfishing and bycatch.

Closing 2019, WWF launched two reports analysing Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements (SFPAs), the EU's fishing agreements with non-EU countries.

WWF research shows that SFPAs do not always contribute to sustainable fishing, as lack of accountability and transparency around EU fishing activities outside EU waters is contributing to overfishing and endangering local food supply; this, in turn, clouds the sustainability of seafood sold and consumed in the EU. In Central and West Africa alone, around 400 million people rely on marine fisheries for their food security and livelihoods, while West Africa is the area on Earth most vulnerable to illegal fishing activities with an estimated one in four fish caught illegally in its waters.

The EU's extensive fishing activities in these regions mean that how it operates and manages its practices has an immense impact on ocean health. To move towards sustainability, resilience and institutional growth, the EU must work to promote transparency in these regions, which face severe impacts from climate change and continued overfishing.



EU FISHING  
ACTIVITIES  
OUTSIDE OF  
EU WATERS  
MAKE UP  
**19%**  
OF THE TOTAL  
ANNUAL VALUE  
OF CATCHES  
AT €1.4 BN

Purse-sein trawlers lying in harbour



# SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIES

**“EUROPE’S FINANCES ARE GETTING CLEANER. FOSSIL FUELS WILL NO LONGER BE FUNDED BY THE EU’S PUBLIC BANK: THIS WILL FREE UP MONEY FOR CLEAN SECTORS AND SET A PRECEDENT FOR OTHER BANKS.”**

**SEBASTIEN GODINOT,  
ECONOMIST, WWF EUROPEAN POLICY OFFICE**





## **ENSURING A RAPID TRANSITION TO SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIES IN EUROPE IS A CHALLENGE THAT REQUIRES BOLD LEADERSHIP AND STRONG COMMITMENT TO ACTION.**

WWF has long played a leading role in driving this transition, by focusing on both public and private finance as a critical cog of our economic system.

In 2019 we worked to ensure that investment flows become aligned with the EU's climate, environmental and social objectives, and take into account climate change risks and opportunities.

Highlights of our work in 2019 include:

- The commitment of the European Investment Bank (EIB) to end coal, oil and gas lending;
- An EU agreement on the 'taxonomy', setting a gold standard for sustainable investments;
- Decisions by some of Europe's largest asset owners to decarbonise their investments.

Currency and money on a financial chart  
representing finance and economic investment



# EU BANK ENDS FOSSIL FUEL FUNDING IN WORLD-FIRST

2019 was a momentous year for sustainable finance. Not only did EU Member States take a landmark decision that the European Investment Bank should stop financing oil, coal and gas, but other EU laws were agreed that will help clean up finance in Europe



Disruptive action at the European Investment Bank to end fossil fuels investments

In a huge victory for WWF and other campaigners, and setting a global precedent, the EU's bank - the European Investment Bank - will stop lending to fossil fuel projects by 2021. The vote by Member States (the Bank's shareholders) on 14 November, followed months of advocacy and communications work by WWF and other NGOs, with EU countries clashing until the very end on issues like whether or not gas power should be included.

WWF's reaction was widely covered in international media. The decision sends a signal far and wide: other public and private banks must now follow suit. It is also a major boost, just ahead of COP25, to climate action and the EU's green credentials.

WWF also campaigned on the EU sustainable investment guide - the 'taxonomy', which aims to show which economic activities are sustainable, potentially helping shift billions of Euros from dirty to clean investments – and we supported a petition signed by over 120,000 citizens supporting an end to greenwashing in the finance sector.

A deal on the taxonomy was finally agreed by the EU Council and European Parliament in mid-December, after months of wrangling between EU institutions and Member States. WWF commended the final text as a balanced agreement that will ensure the taxonomy will be based on climate and environmental science. The agreement now needs to be rubber stamped by the European Parliament plenary in 2020.





## SEVEN CLIMATE COMMANDMENTS FOR INVESTORS

-  **1** MEASURE ALIGNMENT WITH PARIS CLIMATE GOALS
-  **2** INTEGRATE CLIMATE INTO INVESTMENT POLICY
-  **3** DEVELOP BEYOND FOSSIL FUEL POLICIES
-  **4** SET TARGETS BASED ON CLIMATE SCIENCE
-  **5** MONITOR INVESTMENT MANAGERS
-  **6** ENGAGE WITH COMPANIES
-  **7** ENGAGE WITH POLICY-MAKERS

## WORKING WITH INVESTORS

WWF also continued its work with asset owners - like pension funds - to encourage greater climate action. We supported the launch of the UN's 'Net-Zero Asset Owner Alliance' in September, which included several major EU investors committing to decarbonise their portfolios. We liaised with those EU investors who signed up to see how they could begin to implement their commitment, and worked with others to encourage them to join the alliance.

WWF also published a final report in our series of 'climate guides for asset owners', this time on the oil and gas sector.

## FINANCE GETS MORE SUSTAINABLE WITH HELP OF MEPS

Earlier in 2019, the EU reached agreement on a number of sustainable finance files, with generally very positive outcomes. WWF has been highly involved in all of them, inputting to

the Commission, Parliament and Council and communicating on what is needed and why. The Parliament has been instrumental in raising the bar in each case.

In February, a deal was reached amending the EU Benchmark Regulation, which stipulates that index providers must disclose the sustainability impacts of their mainstream financial indices, including how they align with the Paris Agreement. Two categories of 'Paris-aligned benchmarks' and 'Climate transition benchmarks' have also been created in the regulation.

An agreement was reached in March on the Disclosure Regulation. This requires EU investors to assess and disclose by 2021 their sustainability risks (on their own assets) and their sustainability impacts (on the planet and societies), including how their portfolio aligns with the Paris Agreement. This is a major step forward!

Also in March, EU institutions agreed on a requirement for European Supervisory Authorities to develop common tools for climate and environmental stress-testing of financial institutions, setting a global precedent.



**NEW EU RULES MEAN PEOPLE WILL NO LONGER BE SOLD FAKE GREEN FINANCIAL PRODUCTS; THEY WILL HAVE THE FACTS.**



# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



**“THE EU SHOULD ALLOCATE 50% OF ITS  
DEVELOPMENT SPENDING TO ACTION  
ON CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT, AND ALSO  
BOOST ITS ‘GREEN DIPLOMACY’ EFFORTS  
TOWARDS PARTNER COUNTRIES.”**

**KATARINA MACEJAKOVA,  
HEAD, EU DEVELOPMENT FUNDING & POLICY,  
WWF EUROPEAN POLICY OFFICE**





## **WWF BELIEVES THAT SUSTAINABILITY SHOULD BE AT THE HEART OF ALL EU POLICIES, AND HAS LONG CALLED FOR A STRATEGY TO IMPLEMENT THE SDGS.**

Four years after the adoption of the 2030 Sustainability Agenda in 2015, the EU has still no overarching plan on how to implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) domestically. In this year of institutional changes, WWF has argued that sustainable development should be the guiding principle of all policies, as well as its budget and in its development actions.

Some key highlights for 2019 included:

- The European Commission published its long-awaited reflection paper 'Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030'
- Member States repeatedly echoed NGOs' call for an overarching SDG strategy, and the European Court of Auditors (ECA) also highlighted an alarming lack of EU action on sustainable development;
- The European Parliament called for a 45% spending target for climate and environment in the EU's new external action instrument, in line with WWF's position;
- The European Green Deal provides a great opportunity for the EU to boost its 'green diplomacy' efforts.

Woman dehusking and separating various grains, Mozambique



# A SUSTAINABLE EUROPE BY 2030?

The year got off to a good start: in January, the European Commission finally published its long-awaited reflection paper ‘Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030’, which outlines its strategy for delivering on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including on the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.



**MEPS CALLED FOR AN AMBITIOUS AND COMPREHENSIVE**

**45% SPENDING TARGET FOR CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT OBJECTIVES**

For WWF, this paper was a welcome recognition that EU needs to considerably step up its efforts to meet its international commitments and that doing so will bring a wealth of benefits for Europe and its citizens. It also clearly acknowledges that Europe’s disproportionate consumption of the world’s resources pushes the planet’s boundaries to its limits and that this cannot continue if we want to ensure wellbeing for all within the limits of the planet. The Reflection Paper was largely informed by the inputs of the Multi-stakeholder Platform on the implementation of the SDGs, a cross-sectoral body set up to support and advise the European Commission on the implementation of the SDGs. WWF was an active member of this platform and contributed positions which were adopted in the Reflection Paper.

Ever since the adoption of the SDGs in September 2015, WWF has urged the Commission to present an overarching EU strategy to implement them domestically and ensure continued mainstreaming of climate and biodiversity through all EU policy areas to improve policy coherence. The European Court of Auditors (ECA) in June 2019 highlighted an alarming lack of action on sustainable development, showing that the Commission does not report on or monitor how the EU budget and policies contribute to sustainable development and achieving the SDGs.

During 2019, the call for increased action and an overarching strategy was again echoed by Member States in Council meetings in April and December. Despite this, Juncker Commission failed to leave a meaningful legacy on SDGs implementation, and instead kicked the can down the road to its successor.

WWF has warned that while the European Green Deal can be a first step to help the EU on the path towards sustainability, this cannot replace a fully integrated SDG strategy, which must guide all of the EU’s actions in the coming legislative term, and ensure that initiatives in other areas do not undermine the environmental objectives of the Green Deal.

## EXTERNAL ACTION IN THE NEXT EU BUDGET

Throughout 2019 WWF has been closely following the negotiations of the post-2020 EU Budget, and the future External Financing Instruments. In March, the European Parliament approved its position on the Neighbourhood Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI). WWF welcomed this position as it strengthens the Commission proposal in its alignment to Agenda 2030 and the Paris Agreement and in its ambition to address poverty eradication, sustainable development, climate action and environment protection. In particular, MEPs called for an ambitious and comprehensive 45% spending target for climate and environment objectives and for excluding fossil fuel related investments and action that would cause environmental harm - this is very much aligned with WWF’s position as it contributes to much needed investments in the protection, restoration and sustainable management of natural resources as well as climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts that will deliver significant sustainable development benefits in developing countries. The NDICI triologue negotiations officially started in October 2019, facilitated by the Finnish presidency, and WWF will continue to push for a stronger outcome and greater investments for climate, nature and people.

## THE EXTERNAL DIMENSION OF THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL

The European Green Deal provides a great opportunity for the EU to champion even higher environmental ambition through its relations with partner countries. EU can play a leading role by boosting its ‘green diplomacy’ efforts and supporting partner countries in meeting their climate and biodiversity objectives and delivering





an inclusive and just transition of their economies and societies. The programming of the EU's international development cooperation funding (NDICI), which will start in 2020, is a key process to achieve these objectives, and should be carried out through effective dialogue and involvement of all relevant stakeholders, in particular civil society and local communities. In the discussions around the external dimension of the European Green Deal, WWF will continue to push for increasing the EU's targeted expenditure for climate and environment across future external financing instruments with the aim of reaching 50%. In addition, we advocate for future trade agreements to include a binding, enforceable and ambitious dedicated chapter on sustainable development, especially for environmental and social provisions.

## BETTER SAFEGUARDS ACROSS ALL WWF PROJECTS

WWF works in challenging contexts around the world, and recent allegations about our work with local communities have shown how difficult this can be. A while ago, WWF embarked on a significant exercise designed to enhance our environmental and social safeguards and strengthen their implementation across our network of offices and all of our projects, and in June 2019, we adopted an enhanced Environment

and Social Standards Framework (ESSF) to ensure consistent, comprehensive application of safeguards. The ESSF provides an institutional mechanism to manage a broad range of environmental and social risks of WWF's work, and help to deliver better conservation outcomes and enhances well-being of local communities in the places where WWF operates. It systemises good governance practices to uphold human rights, transparency, nondiscrimination, public participation and accountability.

## EU GRANTS FOR CONSERVATION

In 2019, WWF secured around €19 million in EU development grants for projects contributing to sustainable food systems, good ocean governance and improving food waste solutions.

One example includes a €10 million grant for a project aimed at creating a shift towards sustainable diets and improved food production practices by raising public awareness on the environmental impact of people's food choices. Young people will be engaged to take steps towards sustainable lifestyle patterns by making positive changes to their diets, to motivate their peers and act as multipliers.

The project will take place in Finland, Sweden, Austria, UK, France, Belgium, Greece, Estonia, Portugal, Argentina and Brazil, and kick off in 2020.



# LOOKING TO 2020

## THE ROAD TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STARTS HERE

At EU level, during the course of 2020, the von der Leyen Commission must prove that it is actually committed to heeding scientific recommendations for urgent and far-reaching transformational change, following the announcement of a European Green Deal at the end of 2019.

The devil, as ever, will be in the detail, and WWF will closely follow the concrete legislative and policy proposals on climate, biodiversity, deforestation, sustainable investment and food and agriculture, and oceans.

At international level, 2020 will bring crucial opportunities to shape the global agenda, including the UN Convention for Biological Diversity COP15 in October and the UN climate negotiations COP26 in November. Here, world leaders will take key decisions on a new global biodiversity framework; on national contributions to the Paris climate agreement; on a new treaty for the oceans; and on a renewed commitment to the environment under the UN Sustainable Development Goals. This is a momentous opportunity to commit to a New Deal for Nature and People.

### BIODIVERSITY

With one million species facing extinction, 2020 is the year for biodiversity with a string of crucial decisions throughout the year. In the first quarter, the EU 2030 Biodiversity Strategy will be announced by the European Commission.

The strategy must be ambitious and move away from mere voluntary commitments to enforce existing environmental law and to introduce new legally binding rules to restore Europe's nature for biodiversity and climate. High ambition will also raise the level of commitment at the global level when parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity will meet in China later this year.

### CLIMATE AND ENERGY

From bushfires to flooding, climate change is wreaking havoc across the world. To stand a chance of curbing the devastation, greenhouse gas emissions must be slashed now. Europe must therefore begin 2020 by increasing its short term climate target drastically. Science shows the EU must reduce emissions by 65% by 2030 - or even more, if the bloc's past as a major global emitter is factored in - to help keep temperature rise to 1.5°C globally, as the Paris Agreement says. Increasing the 2030 goal well before summer 2020 will allow the EU to have its finalised, updated climate plan at the crucial COP26 climate summit next November, giving it credibility and leadership on the global stage.



## SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIES

EU Commission President Von der Leyen wants the EU to be a sustainable finance frontrunner. In 2020, the EU's flagship plan for cleaning up finance will be reviewed: this is a chance to make it far more ambitious. WWF is preparing its own proposals for a re-worked plan that could drive EU's global leadership in the sector, inspiring action from other countries.

## FORESTS

In 2020, WWF will continue the fight against deforestation and forest degradation and to advocate for a new EU law to ensure that no products linked to deforestation or ecosystem destruction can be placed on the EU market. Together with the EU Timber Regulation which deals with illegality, this would open the door for a paradigm shift in the EU, reducing the EU's footprint and protecting forests and ecosystems worldwide.

## FRESH WATER

2020 marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) and will be a critical year for boosting implementation and enforcement of the law to meet the final objective of having 100% healthy waters by 2027 (at the latest!). WWF will also work to show the integral role this law plays in a meaningful EU post-2020 biodiversity strategy and European Green Deal, and work to influence the European Commission's upcoming Water Action Plan. Last but not least, WWF will be stepping up its work to raise awareness of the negative environmental and social consequences of hydropower dams on European rivers, with a special focus on halting developments in the Balkans.

## FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Political agreement on the future Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) will likely be reached in 2020, followed by the submission and review of strategic plans in 2021-2022.

In 2020, WWF will continue its engagement with the European Parliament, which aims to rediscuss in committee some parts of the CAP regulation. WWF will also keep a close eye on the final deliberations of the Council, calling them out and aiming to reverse some of the most questionable amendments they have introduced in the regulations.

The European Commission's new Farm to Fork Strategy, to be published as part of the European Green Deal, is a new avenue for advocacy work on sustainable food and farming systems in Europe. Together with other civil society groups, WWF will engage with policymakers and stakeholders to demand more integrated and coherent food-related policies.

## OCEANS

2020 is a critical year for the ocean. With the EU targets of good environmental status and sustainably managed fisheries as well as four global SDG targets due, we are not on track to achieve a healthy and resilient ocean. WWF will continue to focus on fisheries governance to ensure that the revised Control Regulation enforces policies to monitor seafood catches, fight illegal fishing, support data collection for effective fisheries management and bring traceability to the seafood supply chain.

Our marine protection work will focus on the European Green Deal and the 2030 Biodiversity Strategy to ensure at least 30% of the ocean is protected to restore biodiversity to European Seas. To incentivise better implementation from the EU, WWF and NGO partners developed a Blue Manifesto - an action plan for the EU to deliver healthy, resilient and biologically diverse marine ecosystems by 2030.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

In 2020, WWF will continue its work on urging the European Commission to present an overarching strategy on implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. It is expected that the Commissioner in charge with the economy portfolio, Paolo Gentiloni, will organise a conference on the SDGs in the spring.

Tripartite negotiations on the EU's new external action instrument (NDICI), started in October 2019 and will likely continue throughout the year - if not beyond -, pending decisions on the overall MFF, notably in terms of its overall structure, amounts, as well as on the climate ambition of the new EU Budget. WWF will continue to call for a 50% spending target for climate and environment delivering co-benefits for sustainable development.

**IN 2020,  
WORLD  
LEADERS  
MUST  
COMMIT  
TO A  
NEW DEAL  
FOR NATURE  
AND  
PEOPLE**



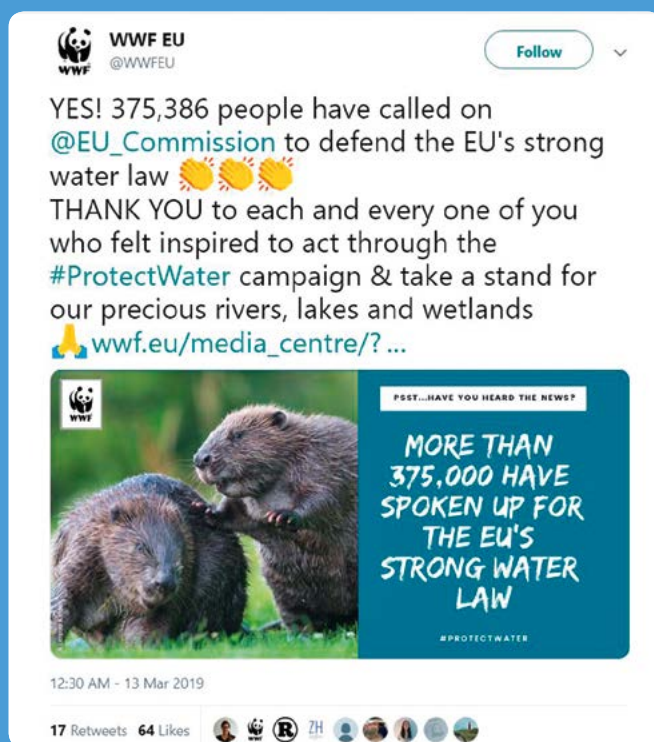
# THE SOCIAL PANDA

@WWFEU



## The Guardian EU CLEAN WATER LAWS UNDER ATTACK FROM INDUSTRY LOBBYISTS

“ Rivers, lakes and wetlands are our life support systems but they are being annihilated under our very eyes. We have the legal tool to stop this – the EU water law – but Member States must actively stand up to the sectors that pollute and destroy the most. ” *Andreas Baumüller, Head, Natural Resources, WWF European Policy Office*



## POLITICOPRO MEPS CALL FOR BINDING TARGETS TO PROTECT BIODIVERSITY

“ Politicians are finally waking up to the nature crisis. Biodiversity needs a legally-binding lifeline to bring Europe's nature back. ” *Sabien Leemans, Senior Biodiversity Policy Officer, WWF European Policy Office*



## BBC EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK DROPS FOSSIL FUEL FUNDING

“ Hats off to the European Investment Bank and those countries who fought hard to help it set a global benchmark today ” *Sebastien Godinot, Economist, WWF European Policy Office*





## euobserver EU AGENCY: 'EUROPE WILL NOT MEET 2030 CLIMATE GOALS'

“ EU governments must provide strong support on delivering the European Green Deal [and] demonstrate through concrete actions that they have heard the citizen protests which have dominated much of this past year ” *Ester Asin, Director, WWF European Policy Office*



euronews.

## EURONEWS: EUROPE'S OCEAN CONSERVATION EFFORT NOT ENOUGH DESPITE GOOD INTENTIONS

“ The aim of protected areas is to conserve biodiversity so that we can ensure that the oceans are conserved for future generations. Not only that, it's also important for a stable blue economy; this means greater use of marine sectors and is something the EU is currently developing. ” *Janica Borg, Marine Protection and Spatial Planning Policy Coordinator, WWF European Policy Office*



## ENDS Europe ILLEGAL TIMBER RULES STILL HAVE 'NO TEETH'

“ Without meaningful criminal sanctions, thorough checks and controls, and adequate resources to carry them out the EUTR has no teeth. The problem of illegal logging is serious, and we urge Member States to start taking it seriously ” *Anke Schulmeister-Oldenhove, Senior Forest Policy Officer, WWF European Policy Office*



## FINANCIAL TIMES POLES CAN SAVE BILLIONS BY SWITCHING FROM COAL TO RENEWABLES

“ The scientific consensus is clear: coal power has no future if we are to tackle the climate crisis. The EU needs to continue to support Poland and other coal countries as they make that change. But by sticking its head in the sand on coal power, Poland is shooting itself in the foot. ” *Imke Lübbecke, Head, Climate & Energy, WWF European Policy Office*





# OUR DONORS, PARTNERS & ALLIES

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The success of WWF's policy work at EU level depends on funding for our critical programmes, a coordinated and supportive network and key stakeholder alliances.

## WWF NETWORK

Throughout the year, many WWF offices provided WWF EPO with their expertise and advocacy support. Eighteen offices contributed financially to our office. This support makes it possible to operate, make a real impact in Brussels and to help address issues raised by millions of WWF supporters around Europe and the world.

## FOUNDATIONS

WWF EPO is supported both financially and in terms of policy development by major foundations. We are grateful for the continued support from the European Climate Foundation, the KR Foundation, the MAVA Foundation, Oceans 5 and the Paul M. Angell Family Foundation.

## BUSINESS ALLIANCES

Our effectiveness is enhanced by our cooperation with leading business groups willing to join us in building common advocacy positions. We thank Sky Ocean Rescue for their support over the last two years.

## EUROPEAN COMMISSION AND DEVELOPMENT AID AGENCIES

We receive an operational grant from the European Commission through the LIFE Programme. We also received project funding via LIFE, Horizon 2020, and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD).

## CIVIL SOCIETY

WWF EPO works with other organisations in various alliances:

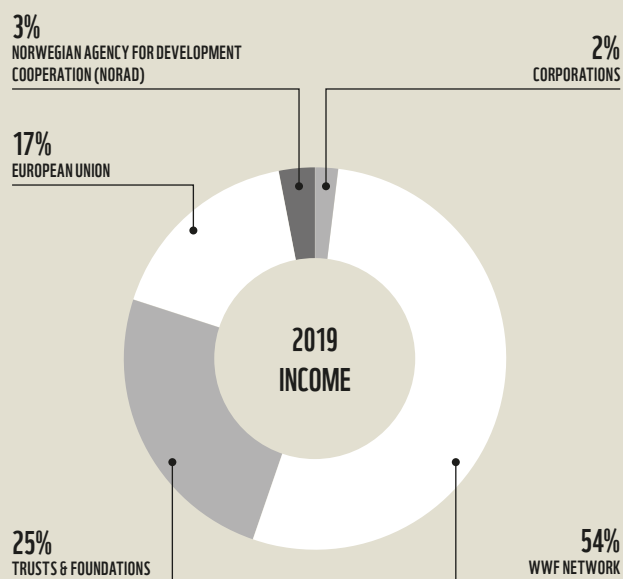
In the Green10 coalition of the ten biggest EU environmental NGOs in Brussels; as the only environmental NGO of CONCORD, the European confederation of development NGOs; as a member of the Climate Action Network (CAN) Europe, working on climate and energy issues; as part of the sustainable Europe coalition, the Living Rivers Europe coalition, and as a member of the European Habitats Forum (EHF).

We also contribute to the following organisations: ECOS, Fédération des Associations Européennes (FAIB), Market Advisory Council, North Sea Advisory Council, the Coalition for Energy Savings, and the European Policy Centre.

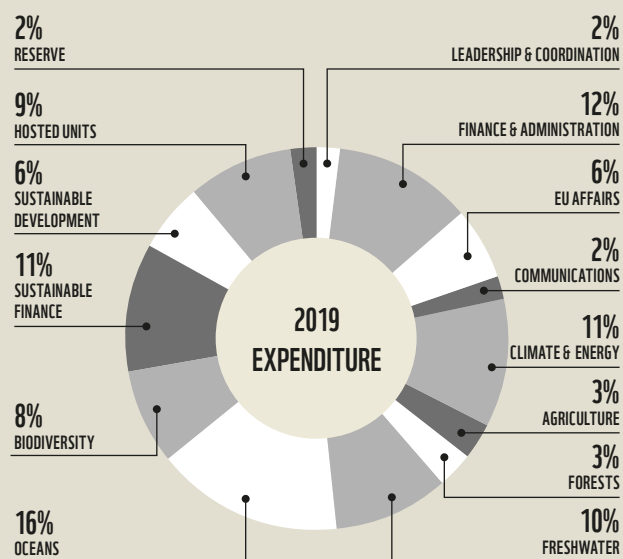


# OUR BUDGET

## INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2019



TOTAL INCOME	€ 5,034,988	100%
Corporations	€ 96,991	2%
WWF Network	€ 2,699,735	54%
Trusts & Foundations	€ 1,253,902	25%
European Union	€ 849,007	17%
Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD)	€ 135,353	3%



TOTAL EXPENDITURE	€ 5,034,988	100%
Leadership & coordination	€ 124,028	2%
Finance & administration	€ 600,287	12%
EU Affairs	€ 298,089	6%
Communications	€ 77,974	2%
Climate & Energy	€ 565,049	11%
Agriculture	€ 133,152	3%
Forests	€ 130,468	3%
Freshwater	€ 510,305	10%
Oceans	€ 795,689	16%
Biodiversity	€ 393,543	8%
Sustainable Finance	€ 561,119	11%
Sustainable Development	€ 312,496	6%
Hosted Units	€ 438,307	9%
Reserve	€ 94,483	2%



# THE WWF EUROPEAN POLICY OFFICE TEAM \*

The WWF European Policy Office is made up of a truly diverse team representing more than 15 nationalities from Europe, the Americas and Australia, with expertise ranging from biology to finance, from forestry to communications, from political sciences to accounting.

We united in our passion and dedication to help take Europe firmly on a path to environmental sustainability, and are also constantly striving to 'walk the talk' by improving the sustainability of our own operations. We do this by reducing emissions from air travel, producing our own power from photovoltaic panels, choosing sustainable office furniture, printing on certified paper, and actively reducing our energy usage and waste. In 2019, these efforts were recognised by the Belgian 'Label Entreprise Ecodynamique', which EPO was granted with the highest possible score.

WWF EPO is a great place to work, and we have been evaluated as the best working place for young professionals in Brussels by InternsGoPro!

## LEADERSHIP



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Director

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\* as of 1 February 2020



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**TESSA JANSOONE**  
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**ANNE-CÉCILE DRAGON**  
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WWF is one of the world's largest and most experienced independent conservation organisations, with over five million supporters and a global network active in more than 100 countries.

WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, by conserving the world's biological diversity, ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable and promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption.

The European Policy Office contributes to the achievement of WWF's global mission by leading the WWF network to shape EU policies impacting on the European and global environment.

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**WWF'S MISSION IS  
TO STOP THE DEGRADATION  
OF THE PLANET'S NATURAL  
ENVIRONMENT AND TO BUILD  
A FUTURE IN WHICH  
HUMANS LIVE IN HARMONY  
WITH NATURE**



Working to sustain the natural  
world for the benefit of people  
and wildlife.

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