

Scientists concerned about the future of the EU Green Deal

Urgent Call to Action: EU Scientists Demand Bold Steps to Save the Green Deal

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, December 4, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In light of unprecedented environmental challenges and a growing planetary crisis, scientists from across Europe have issued an urgent appeal to EU policymakers to halt the rollback of the European Green Deal and reinstate its transformative ambition.



We call on the EU to remember that our economies and wellbeing depend on a healthy planet. Rolling back environmental standards endangers not only nature but the foundation of our society and economy”

Kris Decler

Over 1900 European scientists, and over 30 scientific organisations, express deep concerns for the future of the Green Deal sparked by recent decisions on key environmental regulations that have been delayed, weakened, or removed altogether. Among these are the withdrawal of the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Regulation (SUR), amendments to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) removing environmental safeguards, and the delayed European Deforestation Regulation (EUDR). These

actions are detrimental to the EU's capacity to meet its commitments to carbon neutrality, biodiversity conservation, and pollution reduction, with critical risk to public health, wellbeing, and food security.

Critical Concerns and Implications

Deforestation and Biodiversity Loss: The implementation of the EUDR was delayed, undermining the regulation's ability to tackle deforestation linked to European supply chains. This delay threatens biodiversity and penalises businesses that have invested in compliance.

Pesticide Regulation: The rejection of the SUR has ignored strong scientific evidence and public support for EU-wide pesticide reduction targets. This setback jeopardises efforts to address the growing prevalence of agrochemicals harmful to human health and ecosystems.

Agricultural Policy: CAP reforms have weakened environmental standards, prioritising short-term productivity over long-term sustainability, potentially exacerbating soil degradation, biodiversity loss, and greenhouse gas emissions.

Renewable Energy Expansion: While renewable energy is critical, unregulated expansion risks habitat destruction and soil degradation, contradicting EU biodiversity goals and the "no-net land take" strategy by 2050.

Shift in Priorities

The scientists expressed deep concern over a shift in the EU's policy priorities to competitiveness and economic growth at the expense of sustainability. This reorientation, reflected in the Commission's 100-day strategy, disregards planetary boundaries and the interconnectedness of environmental health, human well-being, and economic resilience.

Call to Action

The letter outlines several urgent steps to realign the EU with its Green Deal objectives:

- 1) Revoking Recent Amendments: Reconsider recent contested decisions such as on the CAP, the delayed implementation of the EUDR and the protection status of the wolves, and resist further attempts to water down or weaken existing environmental regulations
- 2) Work for the full implementation of existing legislation and regulation, with a commitment to evidence-based decision-making and stakeholder consultation.
- 3) Set an ambitious Environmental Agenda: Developing a post-election strategy aligned with planetary boundaries and the EU's global commitments to climate and biodiversity goals, especially for the CAP reform.
- 4) Reinstating the SUR: Reintroducing the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Regulation to uphold science-based pesticide reduction targets.
- 5) Science-Policy Collaboration: Strengthening the science-policy interface, and using those interfaces enacted by the European Commission exactly for the purpose of ensuring timely, informed decisions and evidence-based governance.

A Call for Broader Support

The authors urge EU citizens, civil society organisations, and political actors to advocate for policies that prioritise sustainability, environmental health, and resilience. Only through collective action can Europe maintain its position as a global leader in addressing the climate and biodiversity crisis.

"With over 1900 colleagues and 30 scientific organizations across Europe, we urge EU policymakers to move beyond short-sighted, economy-driven decisions and prioritise long-term,

sustainable solutions that balance societal well-being with the health of the environment we all depend on." said Laura Bosco, President-Elect of the Society for Conservation Biology Europe Region.

"The rules of nature are not a matter for political games: nature is the foundation for our survival. The Green Deal has been a beacon of hope for transformative change, and an essential means to secure our health, economy and wellbeing. Diluting it would undermine Europe's environmental commitments, pose risks to European citizens, and send a worrying signal globally", said Guy Pe'er, a senior scientist at UFZ - Helmholtz centre for Environmental Research and the German Centre for integrative Biodiversity Research in Germany, and a member of the Society for Conservation Biology (Europe Region) and Scientists for Future.

Quote by Kris Decler, Senior Researcher at the Research Institute of Nature and Forests (INBO), Flanders, Belgium and Policy-Lead of the Society for Ecological Restoration Europe.

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