

Green Deal Newsletter #2

May 2021



What's new?

- Climate change was discussed at the [Special European Council on 24-25 May](#), including further emission reductions in the sectors concerned by the Effort Sharing Regulation (e.g. renewables and energy efficiency in buildings and transport and circular economy) and the Carbon Adjustment Border Mechanism.
- At the **Agriculture and Fisheries Council** held on 26-27 May 2021, the ministers approved the [Council conclusions on the EU's priorities for the United Nations Food Systems Summit](#). They emphasise the structural weaknesses and unsustainable trends of current food systems as well as inequalities in access to healthy diets and in terms of gender and indigenous peoples' rights. Key priorities recommended are: Strengthening sustainability and resilience¹; Promoting healthy diets through sustainable food systems; Strengthening food safety and public health, incl. by implementing the One Health approach; Contributing to the sustainability and resilience of food systems through trade; New finance solutions and business models; Improving scientific knowledge and ensuring a strong science-policy interface. Follow-up actions planned after the Summit include the development of EU initiatives and actions, including an EU legislative framework for sustainable food systems.

EU Policy Developments

NEW:

- On 12 May, the European Commission adopted the **EU Action Plan 'Towards a Zero Pollution for Air, Water and Soil'**. It calls for mainstreaming pollution across interventions and include key targets (e.g. toxic free environment by 2050). Pollution is 1 of the 5 main drivers of **biodiversity loss**. Every year over **400 000 premature deaths** are attributed to ambient air pollution. The external dimension includes mainstreaming in key sectors, full mobilisation of our tools, the EU footprint on third country (e.g. export of end of life vehicles).
- The **Communication on 'A new approach for a sustainable blue economy in the EU Transforming the EU's Blue Economy for a Sustainable Future'** was adopted on 17 May. It covers offshore renewable energy, pollution reduction including through circular economy, biodiversity conservation and protection, coastal resilience and sustainable food systems. It also provides for the creation of a

¹ incl. nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based approaches and sustainable and integrated water resources management, conserving and sustainably using fish stocks, addressing direct and indirect drivers of biodiversity loss in the context of food production and consumption, halting global deforestation and forest degradation incl. by halting illegal logging and ensuring transparent and sustainable supply chains, ensuring a fair transition to a circular economy.

Blue Forum for users of the sea to coordinate a dialogue between offshore operators, stakeholders and scientists, as well as setting up in 2022 an Ocean Observation Initiative to structure and harmonise the collection of data in the oceans. The Copernicus marine service will also be expanded.

- The Commission adopted on 21 April the **sustainable finance package**, including a [Commission Communication](#), the [Climate Delegated act](#), the [Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive](#). The EU taxonomy Climate Delegated Act details the first set of technical screening criteria to define which activities contribute substantially to 2 environmental objectives under the Taxonomy Regulation. It aims to support sustainable investment by making it clearer which economic activities most contribute to meeting the EU's environmental/climate objectives.
- The implementation of the [Strategy on off-shore renewable energy](#), adopted in November 2021, is currently being prepared, including actions to promote EU standards internationally (lead DG ENER) and market access in third countries (lead DG TRADE), and to facilitate the development of new markets for offshore renewables and strengthening existing ones (lead DG ENER).

TO COME:

- **The FIT for 55² package** of measures will be adopted by end June/ July; an important development being the Carbon Border Adjustment mechanism (CBAM) expected on 14 July, ISC end of May.
- **Upcoming policy developments include:** the renewed Sustainable Finance strategy (summer); the new EU forest strategy (Q2), the regulation on Minimising the risk of deforestation and forest degradation associated with products placed on the EU market (Q3).
- Following its endorsement by Coreper on 17 March, **Global Europe's** final compromise text will be adopted in June 2021. It will retroactively apply from 1 January 2021.

PAST: You may have missed!

- On 20 April, [MEPs reached a deal with the Council](#) on the obligation for the EU to **become climate neutral by 2050**. This crucial decision was made just before the US [Leaders' Summit on Climate](#), at which President Biden announced emissions reduction by 50-52% by 2030 compared to 2005 levels.
- **ACP:** negotiations between the EU and the ACP States (OACPS) on the renewed and modernised [post-Cotonou partnership](#) were formally concluded on 15 April, opening a new chapter in relations between the EU and 79 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries. Commissioner Jutta Urpilainen and Togo's Minister of Foreign Affairs Robert Dussey initialled the Partnership Agreement.
- The [Escazu agreement](#), the **1st environment treaty in Latin America**, entered into force on 22 April. Adopted by 24 states and ratified by 12, it is the first treaty addressing access to information, public participation and justice in environmental matters in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- The United Nations' Committee on **World Food Security** endorsed the [Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition](#) (VGFSyN), a new policy document aimed at guiding the transformation of global food systems to address malnutrition and achieve related Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. It was developed to support the implementation of the "UN Decade of Action on Nutrition".

INTPA Green Deal policy team

The **Green Deal policy team met on 27 May** to discuss policy developments and programming process. The focus of this session was on the impact of the Green Deal policy developments on partner countries as well as on the zero pollution action plan. Minutes are available on the Green Deal drive.

² The Commission will table a **Fit for 55 package** to reduce emissions by at least 55% by 2030 covering various policy areas – from renewables to energy efficiency, energy performance of buildings, land use, energy taxation, effort sharing and emissions trading.

Reports and events



New reports

- The UN [2021 Global Forest Goals Report](#) launched on 26 April is the first evaluation of where the world stands in implementing the **United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2030**. It addresses the impacts of climate change and of the biodiversity crisis, also showing how forests and forest-dependent people are both a casualty and an important part of the solution to these issues.
- The **International Energy Agency** just release a flagship report: '[Net Zero by 2050 - A Roadmap for the Global Energy Sector](#)'. This special report is the world's first comprehensive study of how to transition to a net zero energy system by 2050 while ensuring stable and affordable energy supplies, providing universal energy access, and enabling robust economic growth. It also examines key uncertainties, such as the roles of bioenergy, carbon capture and behavioural changes.
- The **World Food Programme** [2021 Global report on food crises](#) launched on 5 May highlights the remarkably high severity and numbers of people in crisis in 55 countries/territories, driven by persistent conflict, pre-existing and COVID-19-related economic shocks, and weather extremes.
- The International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) published in April a report on '[The "Crown Jewels" of Environmental Diplomacy: Assessing the UNEP Regional Seas Programme](#)'. It shows that: a **regional approach to the oceans** can accelerate cooperation; regional seas Conventions and action plans have achieved significant accomplishments, including pollution prevention and coastal zone management; implementation varies from region to region due to lack of political will, political instability in some states, lack of funding, and/or weak enforcement mechanisms.
- The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) announced that the African forest **elephant is now listed as Critically Endangered** and the African savanna elephant as Endangered on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, following population declines over several decades due to poaching for ivory and loss of habitat. Before this update, African elephants were treated as a single species, listed as Vulnerable.
- Jointly published by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization and the Fund for the Development of Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean, a report on '[Forest governance by indigenous and tribal peoples](#)' shows that Deforestation rates are significantly lower in indigenous and tribal territories where governments have formally recognized collective land rights. It also shows that improving the tenure security is an efficient way to reduce carbon emissions.
- A study recently published in *Nature*, '[A trade-off between plant and soil carbon storage under elevated CO2](#)', shows that the storage potential of one of the **Earth's biggest carbon sinks – soils** – may have been overestimated. This could mean ecosystems on land soaking up less of humanity's emissions than expected, and more rapid global heating.
- In case you missed it, UNDP [Human Development Report 2020 'The Next Frontier: Human Development and the Anthropocene'](#), proposes a new planetary pressure-adjusted Human Development Index.

CALENDAR



Trainings, webinars, e-learning

- Podcast on the [Copernicus Climate Change Service](#), by DG Defence Industry and Space

- INTPA Academy document on '[Climate Ambitions: An analysis of nationally determined contributions \(NDCs\) in the ACP Group of States](#)', identifies processes, patterns, weaknesses, and opportunities in the NDCs of ACP countries.
- INTPA Academy e-learning course on [Green economy](#) on tools and skills to effectively promote green economy.
- INTPA Academy document on the '[Water Sector Development and Governance](#)', highlighting common principles and synergies between sector-wide approach (SWAP) and Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM)
- DeSIRA webinar on '[Accelerating the Impact of CGIAR Climate Research for Africa \(AICCRA\)](#)'
- [The Gender Action Plan III and the Green Deal](#), online course on INTPA Academy
- The initiative 'Beacons of Hope: Accelerating Transformations to Sustainable Food Systems' developed an [interactive Toolkit](#) from existing literature and practice, including a Food Systems Transformation Framework and Discussion Guide, as well as [27 case studies](#) from around the world.

Upcoming Events, conferences, meetings

- **31 May-4 June:** [EU Green Week](#) and high-level conference, focusing on "Zero pollution for healthier people and planet, including 2 sessions organised by INTPA on 2 June: sound management of chemicals and waste; plastics
- **1 June:** '[The urgency to step up climate adaptation action](#)', event co-organised by the European Commission (DG CLIMA and RTD) and the EP Intergroup to discuss enablers for the new EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change and the Horizon Europe Mission on Adaptation to Climate Change.
- **3 June:** online event '[Water, Wetlands and Fires: Innovative solutions for Green Recovery in South America](#)' organised by Wetlands International
- **5 June:** [UN Decade on Restoration](#) will be launched officially on Earth Day
- **8 June:** [World Oceans Day](#) - UN online event '[The ocean: life and livelihoods](#)', including sessions on 'A Changing Ocean', 'Creating Sustainable Livelihoods', 'Blue Economy and Private Sector Impact'
- **8 June:** 3 online events organized by the Ocean Climate Platform and the Conservatoire du littoral: '[Adaptation to climate change in coastal areas](#)'; '[The time for solutions](#)'; '[European Mapping](#)'
- **10 June:** online event organised by Devex: '[Cities Can: accelerating progress towards the SDGs](#)'
- **15-16 June:** EDDs
- **16 June:** EP online event '[Plastics pollution: Are biodegradable plastics a solution?](#)'
- **6-15 July:** [High Level Political Forum](#) for SDG follow-up and review
- **26-28 July:** UN Food Systems pre-Summit (Italy)
- **26-30 July:** IPCC 54th Session and approval of Working Group I contribution to the 6th Assessment Report '[AR6 Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis](#)'
- **3-4 September:** [IUCN World Conservation Congress](#)
- **13 September:** [UN Food System Summit](#)
- **13-15 September:** [UN High-level dialogue on energy](#)
- **11 - 24 October :** [UN Biodiversity Conference](#) (COP 15), Kunming, China
- **1-12 November:** Climate [COP26](#), Glasgow

Past events, conferences, meetings

- **17 April:** [Conference 'Protecting planet and people: Voices of Environmental Women Human Rights Defenders'](#), co-organised by the EU Delegation to the UN, the Permanent Mission of the United States and human rights NGOs.

- **20 April:** [UN virtual high-level event on ‘Raising Ambition for Nature’](#), at which participants discussed innovative solutions for protecting, restoring and sustainably managing biodiversity that can sustain livelihoods, ensure our health, help us to address the climate crisis and recover better from the pandemic. Governments also shared concrete actions towards fulfilling the #LeadersPledge4Nature.
- **20 April:** European Policy Centre policy dialogue [‘Why the UN Sustainable Development Goals matter more than ever’](#), with Commissioner Urpilainen and Queen Mathilde of Belgium.
- **21 April:** [‘The role of the EU in Ocean Diplomacy’](#), organised by the EP Intergroup on Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development, emphasised the importance of ocean science diplomacy for ocean governance and the need for accountability.
- **22 April – Earth day** - see global coalition for biodiversity, [“#UnitedforBiodiversity”](#), to raise awareness on this crucial topic, ahead of the CoP 15 meeting of the Convention on Biological Diversity in October this year.
- **26 April:** [‘Just transition going global’ session](#) organised by DG REGIO as part of the Just Transition Platform, starting an international discussion on how to make the climate transition fair.
- **26-29 April :** [16th UN Forum on Forests](#): participants agreed on the critical need to integrate sustainable forest management and actions to halt deforestation in post-pandemic recovery strategies, as well as on the role of forests and agroforestry in addressing hunger and food insecurity. The implementation of the [UN Strategic Plan for Forests](#) and the new [2021 Global Forest Goals Report](#) were also discussed.
- **27 April:** [‘Planet Unplugged’ dialogue](#) held among experts on the 1st UNEP synthesis report [‘Making peace with nature: a scientific blueprint to tackle the climate, biodiversity and pollution emergencies’](#).
- **29 April:** GAP III and the Green Deal – Training session for GFPs and Gender Expert Group
- **4 May:** EP online event [‘Further improving farming sustainability via Integrated Pest Management: challenges & opportunities ahead’](#)
- **5 May:** · EU Expert Group on Climate Change and Development
- **6-7 May:** [Petersberg Climate Dialogue](#)
- **12 May:** [Tackling malnutrition: Improving both food and health systems](#), + Devex series on how food systems can work better, making food fair and healthy for all.
- **17 May:** [#GenerationRestoration : YOUTH reconnecting with Nature](#) was jointly organized by UNEP, FAO and Youth & Environment Europe to mark the launch of the [UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration](#) for youth in Europe.
- **18 May:** IEA: [World roadmap to net zero](#)
- **20 May:** [UN High Level Dialogue on Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought](#), back to back with the UN Forum on Forests
- **21 May:** [Global Health Summit](#) in Rome
- **22 May:** [International day for biological diversity](#)
- **25 May:** Special EUCO on Climate in Russia
- **25 May:** EP event [‘Market-based measures for methane emissions’ reduction: Challenges and opportunities ahead’](#)
- **26 May:** online event [‘EU agenda for global forests - Getting the balance right’](#) organised by Euractiv to discuss the balance between EU legislations on forest-risk commodities and efforts underway in

third countries; how to build bridges with producers; whether the EU-Mercosur agreement is a challenge or an opportunity for deforestation-free supply chains

- **26 May:** UN policy dialogue on '[Strengthening Sustainable Forest and Ocean Management to Mitigate Climate Change](#)' - Session 3 of the UN DESA Global Policy Dialogues for Climate Action
- **26 May:** Webinar '[Une transition juste pour aligner le système alimentaire européen et le Pacte vert](#)' organised by the IDDRI.
- **26 May:** online debate on the '[European Climate Situation Room](#)' organised by Friends of Europe in partnership with the European Space Agency (ESA)
- **27 May:** online discussion event on the latest flagship report by WBGU (German Advisory Council on Global Change) '[Rethinking Land in the Anthropocene: Strategies for Securing the Future and the Role of New Plant Breeding Methods](#)'

Where to find more info?

- [Series of webinars N°3: European Green Deal - Greening EU Cooperation](#) (Environment and Climate Change)
- **INTPA Academy** e-learning courses, webinars, factsheets and other resources on [climate change and desertification](#), [environment, biodiversity and green economy](#), [agriculture and fisheries](#), [food security](#), etc.
- [EU Climate-ADAPT platform](#) providing data for adaptation knowledge.
- **Sustainable Wildlife Management (SWM)** Programme: 5 diagnostic tools (T) and relevant methodologies (M) founded on a Community Rights-Based Approach, incl. [legal hubs on biodiversity](#)
- The [Global Forest Watch dashboard](#) provides data on forest loss, land cover, forest change
- As a reminder, you can also find a lot of GD documents here **P:\Green Deal** or [online](#). Find [here](#) the Infographics of Green Deal TA facilities

Green (Deal) tip #2 - Green your food!

- 😊 For some inspiration and practical tips, check out the [EU Staff for Climate Cookbook](#) published by EMAS (the EU Eco Management and Audit System), in which you will find lots of yummy recipes from colleagues!
- 😊 As spring is here at last, why not make our food more sustainable and healthier? See study published in *Science* last year and presented in a [Guardian article](#), on effective individual change we can bring in our daily lives to help the environment.

The European Commission is committed to personal data protection. Any personal data is processed in line with Regulation(EU)2018/1725. All personal information processed by the Directorate-General for International Partnerships is treated accordingly.