

Green Deal Newsletter #4

July-August 2021



What's new?

- On 26-27 July, the [UN Food Systems Pre-Summit \(UNFSS\)](#) was held in Rome, with world leaders, civil society, the UN and private sector representatives meeting ahead of the main event in September. UN Secretary-General António Guterres stressed that our current food system generates one-third of all greenhouse gas emissions, while being responsible for up to 80% of biodiversity loss. One of the issue raised was how to use financing as a lever to reduce negative costs and enhance the benefits associated with farming and food. Hidden costs of the food systems, including malnutrition, deforestation and pollution, represent about \$12 trillion per year, which is more than the market value of food systems, estimated at \$10 trillion, according to the World Bank.
- A **counter-summit to the UNFSS**, the [Global People's Summit](#), was launched online during the summer with the aim to include marginalised groups in the agenda setting, denounce a “neoliberal agenda” and present pro-people and pro-planet alternatives, in order to radically transform food systems.
- Ahead of the **Convention on Biodiversity**, which will meet in October, the **UN released the [first draft of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework](#)**. It proposes 4 goals, 10 milestones and 21 targets, incl. on reducing threats to biodiversity, e.g. by cutting nutrient runoff in half, reducing pesticide use by two-thirds and eliminating plastic discharge; meeting people's needs *inter alia* via sustainable agriculture, aquaculture and forestry; implementing tools to create incentives, e.g. at business and financial levels.
- A [5 Point Plan](#) released on 15 July by more than 100 developing country governments sets out their expectations for **COP26 UN climate** talks in Glasgow this November. They demand that developed countries: 1) Cut emissions to halve GHG emissions by 2030; 2) Accelerate adaptation; 3) Face the reality of loss and damage due to climate change; 4) Pay up by scaling up finance every year from 2021 to 2025 (from min. \$100bn/year), while increasing the provision of grants rather than loans; 5) Put the Paris Agreement into action.
- On 24 July at the **G20 Summit in Naples**, the ministers responsible for climate, energy and environment failed to reach a consensus on committing to keeping global warming below 1.5 degree, instead they only pledged to aim for the less ambitious target in the Paris Climate Agreement of keeping the increase to well below 2 degrees.

EU Policy Developments

NEW

- The [FIT for 55](#) package of measures was launched on 14 July with the aim 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, emissions trading and a Carbon Border Mechanism. It consists of 12 legislative acts¹.

¹ More specifically: revision of the EU Emission Trading System, incl. revision of the EU ETS Directive concerning aviation, maritime and CORSIA; Revision of the Regulation on the inclusion of greenhouse gas emissions and removals from land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) - Effort Sharing Regulation - Amendment to the Renewable Energy Directive to implement the ambition of the new 2030 climate target; Amendment of the Energy Efficiency Directive to implement the ambition of the new 2030 climate target;

- The new [EU Forest Strategy for 2030](#) was adopted on 14 July. It helps the EU deliver on its commitment to enhance carbon removals by natural sinks as per the Climate Law. By addressing the social, economic and environmental aspects all together, the Forest Strategy aims at ensuring the multi-functionality of EU forests and highlights the pivotal role played by foresters.
- The [EU Directive on Single-use plastics](#) came into force on 2 July. It promotes circular approaches that give priority to sustainable and non-toxic re-usable products and re-use systems rather than to single-use products, aiming to reduce the quantity of waste generated including marine litter.
- The Commission adopted on 6 July a number of measures to set **international standards for sustainable finance**. These initiatives entail working closely with international partners, incl. through the International Platform on Sustainable Finance, to cooperate on building a robust international sustainable finance system. More specifically:
 - The new [Strategy for financing the transition to a sustainable economy](#) is a comprehensive package of measures to help improve the flow of money towards financing the transition to a sustainable economy, by enabling investors to re-orient investments towards more sustainable technologies and businesses.
 - The [European Green Bond Standard](#) proposed regulation will set a gold standard for how companies and public authorities can use green bonds to raise funds on capital markets to finance large-scale investments, while meeting tough sustainability requirements and protecting investors.
 - The [EU Taxonomy Climate Delegated Act](#) specifies the technical screening criteria under which certain economic activities qualify as contributing substantially to climate change mitigation and climate change adaptation and whether they cause significant harm to any of the other environmental objectives.
- On 29 July, the Commission published [new technical guidance on climate-proofing of infrastructure projects for the period 2021-2027](#). It will enable institutional and private investors to make informed decisions on projects deemed compatible with the Paris Agreement and EU climate objectives and 'do no significant harm' principles.
- The Commission presented on 20 July a [legislative package aiming to strengthen the EU's anti-money laundering and countering terrorism financing](#) (AML/CFT) rules, incl. the proposal for the creation of a new EU authority to fight money laundering.
- The first [Delegated Regulation](#) supplementing the new [Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument - Global Europe](#) instrument was adopted by the Commission on 12 July. It sets out specific objectives and priority areas of cooperation for the geographic programmes, indicative thematic targets and indicative financial allocations for sub-regions. The text is currently under scrutiny by the EP and Council.

TO COME

- The regulation on [Minimising the risk of deforestation and forest degradation associated with products placed on the EU market](#) is planned to be proposed for adoption in Q4. It aims to promote the consumption of products from deforestation-free supply chains in the EU and to reduce deforestation and forest degradation at global level, thus reducing GHG emissions and loss of biodiversity. It includes citizens' awareness raising, promoting deforestation-free products, as well as financial incentives.
- The new [EU soil strategy](#), incl. soil biodiversity and desertification, is planned to be adopted in Q3. Its goals are to protect soil fertility, reduce erosion and sealing, increase organic matter, identify contaminated sites, restore degraded soils, define what constitutes 'good ecological status' for soils.
- The [Sustainable Products Initiative](#) under the Circular economy action plan is planned to be adopted in Q4, incl. a revision of the Ecodesign Directive. It aims to make products placed on the EU market durable, reusable, repairable, recyclable and energy-efficient. The initiative will also address the presence of harmful chemicals.
- The [Waste Shipment Regulation](#) under the Circular Economy Action Plan, was submitted to ISC in July only. This initiative has a strong international dimension, incl. to "guarantee that waste exported outside the EU is managed in an environmentally sound manner", while addressing illegal shipments of waste within and outside the EU and "restricting the export of 'green-listed' waste to non-OECD countries [...]to that explicitly notify their willingness to receive waste from the EU and demonstrate their ability to treat it in an environmentally sustainable manner".

- The Commission plans to present a **legislative proposal to empower consumers for the green transition** with better information on products' sustainability and better protection against practices such as greenwashing, as well as a legislative proposal on the substantiation of green claims based on the [Environmental Footprint methods](#).

Reports and events



New reports

- The latest [report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#) (IPCC) shows that climate change is widespread, rapid, and intensifying, with some trends being irreversible. On the other hand, based on their more accurate findings, scientists know that net zero can really deliver. Among the main findings:
 - Emissions of methane have made a huge contribution to current warming: 30 to 50% of the current rise in temperatures is due to this powerful, but short-lived gas. Major sources of methane include agriculture (esp. cattle), landfills and leaks from oil and gas production.
 - Every tonne of CO₂ emissions adds to global warming: there is a near-linear relationship between cumulative CO₂ emissions and the increase in global surface temperature.
 - Extreme heat and heatwaves are likely to increase in frequency and intensity.
 - Extreme rainfalls are also likely to occur: they are projected to become 1.5 to 2.7 more frequent and 10.5% to 30.2% more intense. At 1.5°C global warming, heavy precipitation and associated flooding are projected to intensify and be more frequent in most regions.
 - Under all scenarios, the 1.5°C threshold will be reached by 2040 and if emissions are not reined in, it could be exceeded in around a decade.
 - Many changes due to past and future GHG emissions are irreversible for centuries to millennia, especially changes in the ocean, ice sheets and global sea level, mountain and polar glaciers melting, loss of permafrost carbon following permafrost thaw. Upper ocean stratification, acidification and deoxygenation will continue to increase in the 21st century. The sea level will continue to rise even with a 1.5°C scenario and could go up to 2 to 3 metres by the end of this century and up to 5 metres by 2150 under other warmer scenarios.
 - Data on the range of possible outcomes, including low-likelihood and high impact outcomes, can provide decision makers with information to assess climate-related risks and plan for adaptation measures.
- The World Bank Group (WBG) announced end of June the **adoption of its [Climate Change Action Plan 2021-2025](#)**, which includes: an increase in climate finance (35% of total WBG financing for climate and at least 50% percent of climate finance from the World Bank – IBRD and IDA – supporting adaptation); a new core diagnostic tool, the Country Climate and Development Report, which will help countries align climate action and development efforts and absorb new climate-related technologies as they emerge; boosting support to countries for implementing and updating their NDCs; catalysing private capital for climate action and stepping up efforts to develop carbon credit markets, green bonds and loan markets in countries.
- In an [article published in BioScience](#) on 28 July, nearly 14,000 scientists warned that **Earth's 'vital signs'** are rapidly worsening and reiterated calls for transformative change, listing 3 main emergency responses: phasing out and eliminating fossil fuels, implementing "a significant carbon price", restoring ecosystems such as carbon sinks and biodiversity hotspots. Researchers also urged slashing pollutants, stabilizing the human population and switching to plant-based diets.
- UNICEF stresses in a report published in August that "[The Climate Crisis Is a Child Rights Crisis](#)". The report shows that nearly half of the world's 2.2 billion children living in 33 countries are "extremely high-risk", especially in the Central African Republic, Chad, Nigeria, Guinea, as well as in India and the Philippines. Children face a deadly combination of exposure to multiple climate and environmental shocks with a high vulnerability due to inadequate essential services, such as water and sanitation, healthcare and education.
- In a report on "[Indigenous Peoples' food systems - Insights on sustainability and resilience from the front line of climate change](#)", the FAO highlights the common and unique sustainability elements of Indigenous Peoples' food systems. With their sustainable approach to natural resource management, access to market, diet diversity and governance systems, they contribute to the Zero Hunger Goal and are in line with the call made

by the UN to enhance sustainable food systems and diversify diets with nutritious foods, while broadening the existing food base and preserving biodiversity.

- In the latest FAO/WHO/IFAD/WFP/UNICEF report on [‘The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021. Transforming food systems for food security, improved nutrition and affordable healthy diets for all’](#), estimates show that between 720 and 811 million people faced hunger in 2020 –161m more than in 2019, with Asia and Africa being the most affected. The report highlights the “circular feedback loop” impacting drivers that affect the food system, for example in the way diets affect GHG emissions. Shifting to healthy diets that include sustainability considerations can therefore contribute to reducing health and climate change costs by 2030, compared with the high hidden costs of current consumption patterns.
- The report [‘Food systems at risk. Transformative Adaptation for Long Term Food Security’](#), issued by the World Resource Institute, synthesized dozens of research studies on how climate change is affecting food systems. It highlights how climate change will negatively impact food systems. It finds that incremental adaptation, while important, will be insufficient to avert dramatic increases in hunger, poverty, and displacement over the next 30 years. Instead, greater commitments to plan, fund, and implement transformative adaptation² measures will be essential to ensure food security.
- The report [“Connecting the Dots: Policy Innovations for Food Systems Transformation in Africa”](#) published by the Malabo Montpellier Panel presents progress made in four leading countries (Ghana, Malawi, Morocco, and Rwanda) towards food system sustainability.
- A [survey released by the Global Commons Alliance](#) in August on the attitudes to transformation and planetary stewardship showed that 83% are willing to do more to protect and regenerate the global commons. People in developing economies expressed greater willingness to do more to protect nature and climate than those in advanced economies. 73% agree their country’s economy should move beyond a singular focus on profit and economic growth (GDP) and focus more on human wellbeing and ecological protection and regeneration. 69% of people believe the benefits of action to protect the global commons outweigh the costs.
- The article [“Post COVID-19: a solution scan of options for preventing future zoonotic epidemics”](#) published on 7 July in *Biological Reviews* shows that the risk of pathogens spilling over from wildlife trade and farmed animals into humans should be key considerations in efforts to prevent the next pandemic.
- The IEA issued in July a new report presenting its [Sustainable Recovery Tracker](#), which monitors governments’ fiscal responses to the Covid-19 crisis and estimates their impact on clean energy investments and global CO2 emissions. Its key findings are that with less than 2% of recovery spending going to clean energy transitions, emissions are set to surge to an all-time high.
- The UNEP report [“Governing Coastal Resources - Implications for a Sustainable Blue Economy”](#) highlights that coastal resources such as fish, minerals, and energy are critical for the Sustainable Blue Economy but are threatened by a wide range of land-based human activities (80% of marine and coastal pollution originating on land). Yet there is nearly no effective governance mechanism taking into account land-ocean interactions.
- The EU report on [‘Accounting for ecosystems and their services in the European Union \(INCA\)’](#), provides an introduction to ecosystem accounting principles, and shows current ecosystem extent accounts.
- *Climate Change and Biodiversity Governance in the Amazon: At the Edge of Ecological Collapse?* is an ebook available via [Find-eR](#), the common catalogue of the libraries of the EC.

CALENDAR



Trainings, webinars, e-learning

- The Booklet [‘Water and Beyond: Elements for a strategic approach on global and EU external action in the water sector’](#) lays out a roadmap for the integration of interventions related to water and sanitation in multi-

² The authors define transformative adaptation in agriculture as promoting long-term resilience by continually shifting the geographical locations where specific types of crops and livestock are produced, aligning agricultural production with changing landscapes and ecosystems, and/or introducing significantly new resilience-building production methods and technologies at broad scale across value chains.

sectoral strategies and programmes designed for partner countries and regions. It also presents examples of operational strategies to strengthen transboundary cooperation and trigger investments in this sector.

- The **technical guidelines “[Building with Nature](#)”** produced by Wetlands International integrates nature-based solutions into water and marine engineering practice.
- DG INTPA has published presentations from, and recording of, the webinar on “[The effects of agroecology. Why are metrics needed?](#)” held in July. It shows how the benefits of agroecology can be measured.
- Session recordings of the [pre-summit to the UN Food Systems Summit](#) are available, with many different topics. Also included, a webinar on “Nature-based Solutions from Africa to the Pacific”.
- [Climate Bond Initiative channel on Youtube](#), featuring presentations on climate bonds, EU taxonomy briefings, an EU Platform presentation on proposed "Significantly Harmful" & "No Significant Impact" Taxonomies.
- Documents of the webinar on “[Plastics pollution: Are biodegradable plastics a solution?](#)”, hosted by the EP Intergroup on ‘Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development’ are now available.
- DG INTPA (F1, F2 and F4) will organise the following webinars between in Q4: (a) **Disaster Risk Reduction**, (b) **Green Cities** and (c) **Green Deal Policy Developments Updates** as part of a series of Webinars promoting the greening of EU development cooperation. Dates will be announced soon in EU Learn.



Upcoming Events, conferences, meetings

- **30 August:** [Biodiversity PreCOP](#) - a virtual event hosted by the Government of Colombia gathering States, international organizations, multilateral banks, women, youth, indigenous peoples and local communities to discuss priorities and expectations for an ambitious and effective global biodiversity framework, with a focus on sustainable consumption and production patterns, mainstreaming and means of implementation.
- **1 September:** launch of the UNEP campaign ‘[100 Days to #BeatPlasticPollution](#)’, aiming to mobilise digitally-connected youth to adopt habits that will help turn the tide on the plastic pandemic.
- **2 September:** Online event “[Food. Nature. People](#)” on nature-positive solutions for food production.
- **3-11 September:** [IUCN World Conservation Congress](#) to be held in a hybrid format in Marseille
- **6 September:** High-level event on biodiversity on the sidelines of the IUCN Congress, with the launch of the NaturAfrica booklet by our DG
- **7 September:** [International Day of Clean Air for blue skies](#) on the theme of #HealthyAirHealthyPlanet
- **7 September:** EMG Nexus Dialogue on “[Sustainable Recovery through Sustainable Fashion: A Focus on the Environmental Dimensions](#)”
- **13 September:** [UN Food System Summit](#)
- **13-15 September:** [UN High-level dialogue on energy](#)
- **13-15 September:** [World Circular Economy Forum](#) which will be held virtually in Canada
- **15 September:** [Accelerating sustainability in the textile value chain, inspiring action and behaviour change](#) - online side event that will be held by UNEP at the upcoming World Circular Economy Forum
- **14 September:** first [High Level Meeting of the Global Alliance on Circular Economy and Resource Efficiency](#) (GACERE), which will be held online
- **16 September:** [Energy Action Day](#) – a UNEP online event
- **16 September:** [World Ozone Day](#)
- **21 September:** [Launch of UrbanShift: Transforming Cities for People and Planet through Integrated Urban Development](#), organised online as part of New York City Climate Week 2021
- **21-23 September:** [76th annual United Nations General Assembly](#), incl. on the agenda topics related to investments and financing for sustainable development, implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including through sustainable consumption and production, as well as the implementation status of SDGs related to DRR, climate change, desertification, biological diversity, etc.
- **22-23 September:** [GLF Amazonia: The Tipping Point - Solutions from the Inside Out](#), the largest-ever global conference on the Amazon Biome organised by the Global Landscapes Forum (GLF)
- **28 September – 12 October:** ‘[Take action for people and planet](#)’, an online event organised by the UNEP, as part of the [#AnatomyofAction media challenge](#). The aim is to raise awareness and encourage more sustainable

lifestyles, esp. considering that households are responsible for approximately 70% of GHG emissions and have important impacts on nature and biodiversity, especially around what we eat.

- **28 September:** EP online event on "[How cutting methane emissions quickly can slow global warming](#)"
- **29 September:** [International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste](#)
- **11-15 October:** high-level opening of [UN Biodiversity Conference](#) (COP 15) and online conference. The second part of the conference will be held in in-person in April-May 2022.
- **12 October:** [World Migratory Bird Day](#)
- **16 October:** [World Food Day](#)
- **1-12 November:** Climate [COP26](#), Glasgow
- **5 November:** '[Forests, Food, Finance - Solutions for a Healthy Planet](#)' discussions convened by the Global Landscape Forum with the UK Government on the sidelines of COP26
- **6 November:** [International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict](#)
- **5 December:** [World Soil Day](#)

Past events, conferences, meetings

- **30 June:** EP Intergroup event on "[EU Green Deal ambitions: What do we want and need from EU forests?](#)"
- **30 June:** [Sustainable Cocoa Dialogue - High-level conference](#), co-organised by the EUDEL and the government of Ghana.
- **30 June:** [High-Level Event on Nature-based Solutions for Cities](#). Among key messages: cities drive but also are vulnerable to the triple planetary crisis (climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution), meaning that they play a key role in that respect.
- **1 July:** CGIAR webinar on "[Training resources and capacity building needs for landscape restoration in Kenya](#)"
- **6-15 July:** [High Level Political Forum](#) for SDG follow-up and review
- **9 July:** Water and health meeting held by the Presidency of Slovenia, with Commissioner Urpilainen – Launch of the Water booklet prepared by INTPA F2
- **12-13 July:** [The EU Platform on Sustainable Finance presents](#): proposed "Social Taxonomy" (12 July) and proposed "Significantly Harmful" & "No Significant Impact" Taxonomies (13 July)
- **15 July:** World Youth Skills Day Social, with media promotion of the Youth Sounding Board by Commissioner
- **6-28 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](#)'
- **23-27 August:** [World Water Week](#) on the theme of 'building resilience faster', with more than 400 sessions focusing on concrete solutions to the world's greatest water-related challenges –the climate crisis, water scarcity, food security, health, biodiversity, and impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Where to find more info?

- INTPA and the JRC have launched the [Global Development Data Tool](#), featuring a wide variety of economic and social indicators, figures and trends related to countries, regions and regional organisations. Topics include environment (incl. agriculture), climate change, energy, human development (incl. food security).
- The [Science Advice for Policy by European Academies \(SAPEA\) platform](#) is part of the European Commission's Scientific Advice Mechanism. You can find on their website many academic reports and studies on environmental topics, e.g. the energy transition, biodegradable plastics, sustainable food systems, etc.
- The [Climate Nature Nexus programme](#) set by the Finance for Biodiversity (F4B) Initiative takes a practical look at which elements of nature are picked up or not by current financial sector approaches to climate, at the corresponding investment potential and how they map within risk management and investment strategies.
- The [EU GCCA+ community on Capacity4Dev](#) offers articles and tools, incl. recently a [Factsheet on Smart Agriculture for Climate](#) and an analysis of "[Why are NDCs so important?](#)" in its Review of Climate Issues no.7.

Green (Deal) tip #4 – Back-to-work green tips

- 😊 To get to work, you can easily find alternatives to your car (see in last issue, Green Deal tip #3), incl. by using the [Carpool](#) website.
- 😊 Bring your own reusable water bottle that you can fill at a water fountain or a tap, as well as your own cutlery if you eat in your office.
- 😊 Get outside at lunchtime when the weather allows, to practice some brisk walking in the park, or just a gentle walk to connect with nature! You can also join a group session to practice some sport or yoga at a nearby club or studio.

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