



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

**PRESS RELEASE**

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## **Halting biodiversity loss – the EU no net loss initiative**

The European Commission has published an on-line consultation to seek the public's views on a future EU initiative to halt biodiversity loss. [Biodiversity](#) – the natural world that surrounds us – is in decline around the world, often as a result of human activities. Even when efforts are made to minimize such damage, there is often a residual impact. If we are to stop the decline, losses resulting from human activities must be balanced by gains: when gains are at least equivalent to the losses, the principle of "No Net Loss" is respected.

Achieving No Net Loss would require that all planned developments which are expected to have an impact on biodiversity adhere to a strict "mitigation hierarchy", whereby priority is given, first, to avoiding or preventing negative impacts; second, where impacts cannot be avoided, to minimising damage and rehabilitating their effects; and lastly, to offsetting or compensating for residual adverse impacts.

The European Union and its Member States have a range of legal measures and policies dedicated to the protection of biodiversity, but we are continuing to lose large amounts of biodiversity every year. Currently almost 25 % of European animal species are at risk of extinction, and most of Europe's ecosystems are degraded. There are still many gaps in our legislation and policies, especially outside protected Natura 2000 areas. The No Net Loss initiative aims to fill some of these gaps.

Some Member States, including France and Germany, already have a No Net Loss objective enshrined in their legislation.

The [consultation](#) asks interested citizens, public authorities, business and NGOs for their views on a future No Net Loss Initiative at EU level. Ideas and comments are welcome on how to develop the policy, how to ensure that impacts are avoided, minimised and compensated for; the scope and the scale of the initiative; which drivers of biodiversity loss and which economic sectors to include; how to tackle the challenges related to offsetting and the choice of policy instruments to use.

The consultation will be online until 26 September.

### **For more information:**

This initiative is one of the actions foreseen in the EU [Biodiversity Strategy](#). The consultation, as well as background information and supporting documents can be found at DG Environment's website:

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/nnl/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/nnl/index_en.htm)

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