

# Citizens' summary

## EU biodiversity strategy up to 2020

### WHAT'S THE ISSUE?

- **Biodiversity** – the variety of ecosystems, species and genes that surround us – **is under threat** globally and in the EU:
  - species extinction rates are extremely high – between 100 and 1,000 times the natural rate.
  - only 17% of species and habitats and 11% of EU-protected ecosystems are doing well.
- The loss of biodiversity and the benefits humans derive from it ([ecosystem services](#)) **affects the environment, the economy and society** at large. Alongside climate change, it is the biggest environmental challenge the world faces.
- Last year, the EU set itself the goal of **halting biodiversity loss and the degradation of ecosystem services** in the EU by 2020, restoring them as far as possible, and stepping up its contribution to averting global biodiversity loss.
- The EU has also signed up to a number of important **international commitments** under the [UN convention on biological diversity](#), including a set of global targets for 2020.

### WHAT IS THE EU PROPOSING?

A new **biodiversity strategy running until 2020** – to conserve and enhance natural assets and manage them sustainably, ensuring nature delivers what we need.

This should **protect species and their habitats**, help us combat climate change and adapt to its impacts and contribute to meeting the goals of the EU's resource-efficient Europe initiative.

Unlike the previous approach – too wide-ranging and not effective enough – the new strategy focuses more tightly on **6 priority targets** (and corresponding measures) that aim to:

- enhance efforts to **protect species and habitats**
- **maintain and restore** ecosystems and their services
- anchor biodiversity goals in the **most relevant EU policy areas**: farming, forests and fisheries
- combat **invasive alien species**
- step up the EU contribution to **averting global biodiversity loss**.

### WHO WILL BENEFIT AND HOW?

- Europeans working in **sectors that depend on biodiversity** and ecosystem services.
- **All European citizens** – because we all benefit directly and indirectly from the goods and services that nature provides.

- People **outside the EU** – as the EU helps avert global biodiversity loss.

#### **WHY IS EU ACTION NEEDED?**

- No country can tackle the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services alone.
- By working together at EU level, governments are better able to coordinate action to address this shared problem.

#### **WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT?**

- The strategy will be sent to the European Parliament and EU Council for discussion and endorsement.