



# HALTING BIODIVERSITY LOSS BY 2010

10 steps to 2010



Heads of State have committed to halting biodiversity loss by 2010. The clock is ticking. This is BirdLife International's vision for achieving this target in 10 steps.





Tomaz Mihelc (DOPPS)

## 1 Save our finest sites and species

World class EU nature legislation gives us a powerful tool to protect key species and sites. Efforts must now be increased to implement and fully enforce the Birds and Habitats Directives in practice.

- The NATURA 2000 network of protected sites must be completed and properly managed. This network should include all Important Bird Areas (IBAs) as identified by BirdLife.
- Action needs to be taken to secure favourable conservation status of species and habitats included in the directives.
- The EU needs to do more to recognise and communicate the benefits we all receive from biodiversity – and the moral responsibility we have to safeguard wildlife

## 2 Improving agriculture

Agricultural and rural areas are home to a large part of the EU's biodiversity.

### The EU should:

- Undertake a radical reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) in 2008, to make farming subsidies pay for environmental goods and services in rural areas, through agri environmental schemes targeted at the conservation of farmland biodiversity and farmland birds.
- Ensure Member States dedicate sufficient rural development funds to the management of the NATURA 2000 network, including all Important Bird Areas (IBAs).

Providing targeted support for rural areas and wildlife gems, while agreeing to far-reaching CAP reform by 2008, would meet public demands for a fairer European Union.

## 3 A healthy marine environment

Marine wildlife has experienced dramatic declines under EU policies.

### The EU should:

- Fully implement its Marine Protected Area (MPA) commitments:
  - Marine NATURA 2000 sites should be designated by 2008 and be under effective management by 2010;
  - an ecologically coherent network of MPAs to be established by 2010, as agreed under OSPAR and HELCOM Conventions.
- Agree and swiftly implement a robust EU Marine Strategy Directive.
- Adopt a Fisheries Ecosystem Plan for the North Sea by 2008 and begin to implement it immediately thereafter.
- Adopt Community Action Plans on by-catch of seabirds and sharks in 2006 and ensure their immediate implementation.

## 4 A vision for forestry

Biodiversity conservation should be a key objective of the EU's forestry policy both inside and outside the EU.

- The EU Forest Action Plan should include a long term vision for increasing the amount of strictly protected forests for all natural old-growth forests in Europe.
- Forest management should be revised to better support ecological and social objectives. Socio-economic values of sustainable forest products should be promoted e.g. nature tourism and food products.
- The EU's forest policies should protect biodiversity outside the Union. Imports of tropical timber must be banned where the origin cannot be reliably verified.



Michael Gore (rspb-images.com)

## 5 Regional development and transport

### Transport

- The extension of the EU-funded trans-European transport networks has to be fully consistent with EC environmental legislation, particularly the Birds and Habitats Directives.
- National programmes for the trans-European transport networks should be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

### Cohesion policy

- EU Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund should be cut if projects breach EC environmental legislation e.g. the Birds and Habitats Directives.
- As the EU's principal infrastructure and employment training budget, the Funds should play a major role in supporting the NATURA 2000 network.
- It is important that environmental partners, including NGOs, are involved in the preparation of plans, project implementation and monitoring of the Funds.



Niall Benwie (rspb-images.com)



Mike Read (rspb-images.com)

## 6 Trade and development

Globally, EU policies for economic and development co-operation, trade, fisheries and agriculture must work for, and not inadvertently destroy, the biodiversity of other countries.

- Substantial funding, commensurate with the challenge, should be allocated to halting biodiversity loss through the EU Thematic Programme on Environment, Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (including energy).
- The environment, including biodiversity, must be systematically mainstreamed into EU development policy (including budgets, sectoral aid and geographical assistance), using all available tools, such as Country and Regional Environment Profiles and Environmental Impact Assessment.
- The EU should reform its trade policy to contribute to sustainable development: trade negotiations should be preceded by and based on sustainability impact assessments.

## 7 Climate change

Climate change is the greatest long-term threat to wildlife.

- EU biodiversity policies should change to ensure a twin-track approach:
  - help increase the resilience of wildlife to the effects of climate change, such as increasing the populations of bird species that are vulnerable to change;
  - adapt existing EU conservation strategies to accommodate the inevitable changes e.g. develop larger protected areas where needed to help species whose ranges will change.
- Protected areas, such as NATURA 2000 sites, should be both properly interconnected and integrated into other major EU land use policies, delivering conservation at a landscape scale.
- Ensure that the National Allocation Plans under the EU Emissions trading scheme (EU ETS) are set at a level consistent with attaining the EU's Kyoto target and opt aviation emissions into the EU ETS.



David Broadbent (rspb-images.com)

## 8 Our overseas regions and territories

The 21 Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) of the EU harbour highly threatened plants and animals that do not occur anywhere else.

Forgotten, they are left unprotected by EU environmental legislation, benefiting from limited funding and few safeguards.

- In the next funding cycle, environmental priorities should feature strongly in EU's funding for the OCTs. These should include projects for protecting the biological heritage of these territories as well as safeguards against projects with a negative impact on biodiversity.
- Civil society, including environmental NGOs, should be invited to participate in drawing up new programmes for EU funding with a focus on the natural environment.

## 9 Joining up policy making

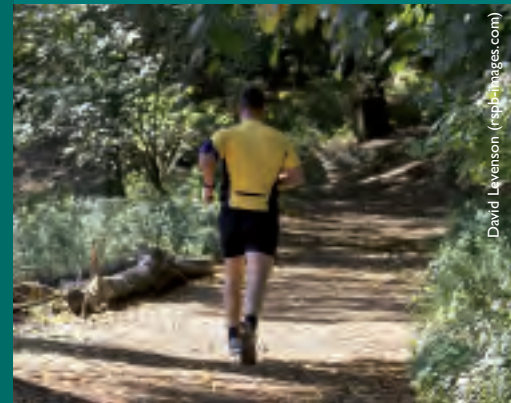
The EU's major land use and marine policies must integrate wildlife and environment policies to achieve a sustainable Europe.

- The EU and its Governments should reinvigorate the 'Cardiff integration process', using impact assessments to determine the environmental sustainability of EU proposals and policies.
- The Commission should review the effectiveness and success of its method of integrating financing for NATURA 2000 in time for the 2008/9 review of the EU budget.

## 10 Revealing the value of biodiversity

Nature conservation improves the quality of peoples' lives, contributing to economic activity and social welfare.

- The environment supports substantial economic activity. Wildlife can generate significant benefits for local economies e.g. it is estimated that in the EU-15 125,000 jobs are supported by nature protection related activities.
- Preserving ecosystems can often be a cost-effective solution for providing essential services such as flood protection and water purification.
- The use of natural green spaces can improve our physical (and mental) health significantly, yet cheaply. This helps deal with public health problems such as obesity.



# 1

Fully implement the world class Birds and Habitats Directives, including NATURA 2000.

# 2

Reform the Common Agricultural Policy to provide better support for conserving farmland biodiversity.

# 3

Secure an EU network of Marine Protected Areas and adopt Actions Plans to reduce by-catch of seabirds and sharks.

# 4

Protect remaining EU old growth forests, while banning illegal timber imports into the EU.

# 5

Ensure transport networks and regional development comply with EU environment laws.



Andy Hay (rspb-images.com)



Andy Hay (rspb-images.com)



Richard Revels (rspb-images.com)

# 6

Better integrate biodiversity into EU trade policy.

# 7

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions while adapting nature conservation policy to climate change.

# 8

Protect the forgotten biological treasures of the EU's 21 Overseas Countries and Territories.

# 9

Review the effectiveness of NATURA 2000 financing for 2008-9 review of the Financial Perspectives.

# 10

Recognise the economic and social values of EU biodiversity.



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