



**Public consultation
European Commission**

**Subject: Protecting biodiversity: nature restoration targets under EU
biodiversity strategy**

Terra Cypria's Comments

We welcome the proposal to set binding targets for the restoration of nature on land and sea. There is an important opportunity to reverse the loss of biodiversity, but also to create synergies that will simultaneously contribute to mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

We would like to highlight a few points that need special emphasis:

- The new Restoration Regulation (RR) should aim at and result in large-scale rehabilitation throughout the European Union (EU).
- It should be concise, easy to read, targeted, with specific restoration actions and immediately applicable in order to quickly lead to significant improvements on EU land and sea, leading to improvement of biodiversity.
- A prerequisite is that the new RR should be an addition to the relevant EU directives so that the restoration requirements contained in these directives are not undermined or repeated, but only reinforced by additional provisions.
- The new RR should build on existing commitments and strengthen what is already required by the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), the Birds Directive (2009/147/EC), the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) and the Marine Strategies Framework Directive (2008/56/EC). It should also introduce additional targeted and specific restoration requirements, both within protected areas such as the Natura 2000 network and throughout the Member States' territorial and maritime territories, while improving the implementation and enforcement of existing legislation. In addition, it should cover gaps in existing legislation such as the restoration of biodiversity-rich small water bodies which are currently not addressed by the Water Framework Directive.
- The objectives of the new RR should be binding but also have a specific formulation of wording, meaning it should be specific, quantitative, realistic, feasible and with deadlines and should aim at long-term results.
- To achieve these objectives, the new RR should include criteria for restoration measures to be taken by Member States and oblige them to draw-up national restoration plans based on scientific criteria.

- An important parameter is that the national restoration plans should include clear quantitative targets regarding location of the sites/areas, the types of ecosystems to be restored, the financial tools for restoration, clear deadlines, requirements for active stakeholder and public participation, etc. In addition to the national restoration plans, we propose the new RR to also oblige, for restoration measures, the owners of private land with clear measures and restoration objectives.
- We recommend that national restoration plans be evaluated and approved by the European Commission, be binding for the Member State and have a specific deadline. In order to formulate and implement all the restoration measures, we recommended to set explicit obligations for participation and consultation with stakeholders, the scientific community and the public, so that there is transparency of the approval process.
- Lastly, the new RR should include provisions of EU funding, thus strengthening national and private funding, and in synergy with other planning tools such as the Priority Action Framework (PAF), the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), etc. In addition, it should include clear provision for penalties in the event that Member States do not implement binding restoration measures within the prescribed deadlines.

There is an urgent need for the immediate adoption and effective implementation of the new Restoration Regulation to reduce the negative and worrying trends of biodiversity loss and climate change.