

In the context of European Business Nature Summit 2021
30 November - 1 December

European Business Statement "Scaling up action for nature"



Background and objectives

Science warns us upon the risks attached to the rapid loss of biodiversity experienced everywhere on the planet, and on the urgency to reduce pressures and stay within the planetary boundaries.

Leading businesses are indeed already taking action to build the healthy, nature-positive⁽¹⁾, net-zero, circular, equitable and resilient economy of the future.

Much more needs to be done. More and more studies show that reaching the Sustainable Development Goals while remaining within planetary boundaries requires collective and parallel action by policy-makers, business and society, including changes in living patterns, innovation and investment, regulation and policies ensuring a fair ecological transition for all actors. In an unprecedented mobilisation, more than 1,000 businesses have signed the [Call to Action](#) "Nature is Everyone's Business" calling on governments to adopt policies now to reverse nature loss in this decade.

The [EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030](#) indeed sets out measures to ensure that Europe's biodiversity will be on path to recovery by 2030, and emphasizes that all parts of the economy and society, including businesses, will have to play their role in this process.

We take the opportunity of this Summit to call on all European businesses and European policy makers to scale and speed up action and raise ambition to accelerate the ecological transformation of the European economy, through business initiatives as well as ambitious public policies⁽²⁾.

Among business, frontrunners, across all sectors, including finance, are paving new paths towards innovative circular and low-impact business models. We encourage businesses of all sizes and all sectors to innovate for climate and nature and to make public their positive actions and commitments on the European Business & Biodiversity platform, including accountability mechanisms.

1 Nature-positive means not only reducing negative impacts of human activities on ecosystems and biodiversity as close as possible to zero, but even restore degraded ecosystems and contribute to the preservation of ecosystems.

2 See "Who is We?" page 4



We are calling on all businesses to speed and scale up action, ambition and innovative collaboration, and more precisely to:

- **Assess** their biodiversity impacts and dependencies at company and sector levels and progressively throughout their entire value chains, communicate transparently this information to key decision-makers, employees, board members, shareholders and clients by using relevant disclosure frameworks (e.g. CSRD³, SFDR⁴);
 - **Value natural assets and ecosystems and embed these in decision-making and disclosure** so that businesses and financial organisations short-term decisions are aligned with long-term interest of nature and humanity, including local communities;
 - **Act**, alone or in collaboration with other business actors, to reduce their impacts on nature and climate in line with the recommendations of the IPBES and IPCC. This means driving these impacts, direct and indirect, as close as possible to zero and even offer a positive contribution, using nature-based solutions when possible, pursuing opportunities to reduce raw materials, energy and water use as well as promoting circular economy;
 - **Invest in biodiversity protection and restoration**, in coordination with European authorities, as part of the objective to reach the €20 billion per year needed to implement the EU Biodiversity Strategy;
 - **Commit** to specific actions through national or European schemes requiring SMART commitments such as act4nature, the Finance for Biodiversity pledge or comparable schemes;
 - **Advocate** for the economic and financial systems to take planetary limits into account, as well as country specific economic and social contexts, signing for example the [‘Nature is Everyone’s Business’ Call to Action](#);
 - **Improve biodiversity knowledge, education and skills** by investing in research, innovation and knowledge exchange.
- To accelerate action, businesses need an appropriate and efficient regulatory framework to scale up their initiatives, based on clear, ambitious and actionable targets, as well as consistent policies adopted and enforced to foster local action.

3 CSRD: Corporate Sustainable Reporting Disclosure

4 SFDR: Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation



We therefore call on the European Union to:

- Integrate biodiversity as strongly as climate into the Green Deal and recovery plans, and to actively work towards the adoption of a transformative Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework at CBD COP15, China (see [BfN contribution on draft 1](#));
- Implement the European Biodiversity Strategy, and build on Farm to Fork strategy, the new European Soil Strategy for 2030 and the proposal for a regulation on deforestation-free products, as an integral part of the EU Green Deal by:
 - Ensuring the **protection of 30%** of the EU land and 30% of European sea area by 2030, and strict protection of at least a third of the EU protected areas as noted by [Kunming Declaration](#); the protection must lead to the development of an **ecological connected infrastructure** to increase resilience, and be established in consideration of current and future social and economic requirements, including the need for a sustainable development of renewable energies;
 - **Contributing to reaching the commitments of the EU Nature Restoration Plan for 2030** included in the [EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030](#): bringing nature back to agricultural land, addressing land take and restoring soil ecosystems, increasing the quantity of forests, promoting energy from renewable sources, restoring the environmental status of marine ecosystems, restoring freshwater ecosystems, greening urban and peri-urban areas, reducing pollution and addressing invasive alien species;

- Adopting ambitious, measurable, verifiable **European and national strategies**, in collaboration with all primary sectors using natural resources, to tackle **unsustainable imports** known to be key drivers of deforestation;
 - Adopting strong **awareness policies**, increasing the value attributed to ecosystems by the people and fostering the transformation of European economy towards sustainable lifestyles;
 - Supporting the creation of **public funds** to leverage private sector finance and de-risk investment towards nature-positive assets and connected green infra-structure;
 - Ensuring that **post-pandemic recovery policies** contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity;
- **Mainstream biodiversity in all European and national policies and decision-making by:**
- Supporting businesses to **value and embed natural assets in decision-making and disclosure** so that businesses and financial organizations decisions are favourable to nature and to the diversity of and in eco-systems;
 - **Eliminating promptly harmful subsidies** or economic incentives damaging biodiversity and repurposing these incentives to redirect consumption and production to nature-positive options, as listed in the Nature Restoration Plan for 2030;
- Adopting and effectively implementing European **international trade policies** that positively reinforce environmental action with no harm to biodiversity and maintain a level playing field in global competition;
 - Integrating biodiversity protection in the Fit for 55 package, in particular as regards the **development of renewable energies**, with adequate governance mechanisms that will protect biodiversity and natural assets despite rapidly increasing land and biomass new uses;
 - Deploying concrete plans to strongly reduce impacts of **supply chains** on nature at European and international levels;
- **Develop robust governance and predictable economic pathways through:**
- **Pricing negative impacts**, based on "polluter pays" principle (land-use change, pollution, over-exploitation of natural resources and contribution to invasive species) and **pricing positively** the services delivered by natural ecosystems such as connectivity, water regulation and carbon storage in forests and soils;
 - **Anticipating and supporting the transition** of the sectors that will be negatively affected in the short term by the ecological and low carbon transitions;
 - Asking for precise and pragmatic **reporting of all businesses impacts and dependencies**, recognising the diversity of parameters to be considered in measuring what "nature-positive" means.

To support the above, we are prepared to sustain a transparent and constant dialogue through diversified channels with our stakeholders as well as with European and national policy-makers. This exchange should be maintained in regards to effective ecological transition, biodiversity and climate policy, at national and international level as well as on the integration of business commitments and sectoral plans for nature in national and local commitments.

*These messages have been drafted by the EBNS 2021 editorial committee, composed of the **EBNS partners and Business Networks of the EBNS 2021** (see list of organisations below).*

They have been reviewed, discussed and generally endorsed by the CEOs present at the closed session held during the EBNS 2021; final messages to be published therefore represent a consensus among the business community present at the EBNS.

As such, they do NOT represent the views of the European Commission, that does not assume any responsibility for the content.

They are intended to provide participants of the Summit and policy makers with consensual messages from the business community present or represented at the Summit, expressed as «we» in the statement hereabove; however, it does not mean that every business participant agrees with every message of the statement; therefore they will not be individually signed by individual companies.

Points of view at a more detailed level may vary between partners; all members of the editorial committee agree on the importance of supporting these top-level messages, whilst acknowledging different interpretations from businesses and organisations at a more detailed level.

https://ec.europa.eu/environment/biodiversity/business/ebns/index_en.htm



European Business Statement in partnership with

