

More than 90 of Europe's biggest businesses spanning consumer, finance, and energy, including Nestlé, Unilever, and IKEA are speaking out today to save the Nature Restoration Law on business grounds. The ENVI committee (European Parliament's Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety) will vote on this embattled legislation on 15 June. As the EPP is expected to vote down the legislation following the group's departure from the negotiations on the 30th of May, the law and the future of Europe's nature hangs in the balance.

Nestlé, Danone, Bel, Rémy Cointreau and SPAR are among 58 businesses which have co-signed a statement **"calling for the urgent adoption of an ambitious and legally-binding EU Nature Restoration Law to bring nature back to Europe"**, arguing that we are all shareholders in nature.

This comes as another coalition of 48 corporations including Unilever and IKEA have signed an open letter warning that "businesses and financial institutions depend on nature and have a vital role to play in conserving and restoring nature and transitioning to a nature-positive economy. Action at the scale and speed necessary can only take place if supported by ambitious environmental policies and regulations that transform our economic, fiscal, and legislative systems".

Bart Vandewaetere, VP ESG Engagement, Nestlé Europe said:

"When **nature** is under pressure, our food systems are under pressure. For example: rising temperatures will reduce the area suitable for growing coffee by up to 50% by 2050 if we don't intervene. Nature restoration and food security are interdependent - we rely on nature for producing our raw materials.

"Implementation of the EU nature restoration law could accelerate the transition to regenerative agriculture in Europe and generate benefits for farmers and their livelihoods and environment, improving soil health, restoring water cycles and increasing biodiversity. The adoption of this law must ensure that more funding is directed to farmers to help them restore nature through their day to day work."

The Nature Restoration Law proposes to have restoration measures in place on at least 20% of the EU's land and sea areas by 2030 and repair all ecosystems in need of restoration by 2050, to enable the long-term and sustained recovery and resilience of biodiversity and nature. Biodiversity is key to food security - making crops more resilient to pests and diseases, as well as climate change.

These businesses now join farmers, hunters, and scientists warning of the economic consequences if MEPs fail to pass the Nature Restoration Law, which would be the first European-wide legislation to set legally binding targets for national governments to restore

our degraded ecosystems.

Sabien Leemans, Senior Biodiversity Policy Officer, WWF European Policy Office:

“Progressive businesses join a long list of stakeholders calling for a strong Nature Restoration Law, including citizens, NGOs, the scientific community and other business networks. The Members of the European Parliament and EU Member States must listen to these calls and deliver legislation that Europe desperately needs, fit for tackling both nature and climate crises. Despite shameful attempts to present nature restoration as the enemy of farmers, fishers or renewable energy development, this statement is a reminder that we all need resilient ecosystems for our economic activities, human health and the planet.”

Ernest Mas, fruit farmer from Tarragona, Spain, said:

“There are many people who think that sustainability costs money. We should also think about whether being unsustainable costs us money. There are fewer and fewer players in the agricultural sector. There are players who are becoming very big but they are also very disconnected from the land and nature. We must produce, we must feed people, but we must do it in a way where we do not put nature in checkmate.”

MEP Maria Soraya Rodríguez Ramos (RENEW), Shadow rapporteur for the Nature Restoration Law, said:

“A number of MEPs are opposed to this law, claiming that it poses a risk to food security in our countries, but this is not true. Instead, the Nature Restoration Law is very very important for our food security and for our agricultural system. Nature and food systems are closely linked. Without our healthy environment, we cannot have the resilient food systems that can sustainably provide us with the nutrition we need. They are the basis for critical ecosystem services, such as pollination, on which our food system depends on. It’s only an example. More than a third of the world’s food production depends on this.

It is disheartening to see the position adopted by the EPP aligned with ECR and the extreme right, ID, opposing this law. They are breaking the von der Leyen majority that has been operating in Parliament over the years and whose programme has been the Green Deal. The Nature Restoration Law is a fundamental pillar of the Green Deal.”

Anders Tivell, forester from Closer-to-Nature Forestry, Tiveden National Park, Sweden said:

“Biodiversity is not a consideration because I have to be nice to nature, biodiversity is the tool and the insurance for me to have a healthy forest. I am scared of the politicians who are trying to convince us that we can continue living the way we did before. This is why the law is important. We must have it. Because we don’t get it from Sweden - we need support from Europe to push our government - it is important.”

Giles Dickson, CEO, WindEurope, said:

“WindEurope empathically supports the European Commission’s target of dedicating 20% of the EU’s land and sea areas to nature restoration. It’s wrong to think that nature restoration would stand in the way of the EU climate and energy targets. Quite the opposite is true: nature restoration and wind energy expansion go hand in hand. The wind industry is constantly striving to mitigate any potentially adverse impacts on nature and biodiversity. We support the EU’s 2030 Biodiversity Strategy. And we see the positive impacts of wind farms on biodiversity in many real-life projects already. Wind farm developers are actively helping to improve bird habitats, regenerate the seabed, recover fish stocks and develop aquaculture.”

As corporations, business networks, farmers and activists join forces to explain why the bottom line is a green one, those opposing the Nature Restoration law on the centre right stand accused of being bad for business as well as the environment. More than 90 of Europe’s biggest businesses spanning consumer, finance, and energy, including Nestlé, Unilever, and IKEA are speaking out today to save the Nature Restoration Law on business grounds. The ENVI committee (European Parliament’s Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety) will vote on this embattled legislation on 15 June. As the EPP is expected to vote down the legislation following the group’s departure from the negotiations on the 30th of May, the law and the future of Europe’s nature hangs in the balance. Nestlé, Danone, Bel, Rémy Cointreau and SPAR are among 58 businesses which have co-signed a statement “calling for the urgent adoption of an ambitious and legally-binding EU Nature Restoration Law to bring nature back to Europe”, arguing that we are all shareholders in nature.

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Source: WWF