

BACKGROUND NOTE

for the session on the EU Nature Restoration Law

16th Meeting of the Carpathian Convention Working Group on Biodiversity

13 May 2025, Veselí nad Moravou, Czech Republic

INTRODUCTION TO THE EU REGULATION ON NATURE RESTORATION

The Nature Restoration Regulation (Nature Restoration Law), adopted in June 2024, is a groundbreaking law under the EU Biodiversity Strategy, aiming to restore degraded ecosystems across Europe. With over 80% of habitats in poor condition, the regulation sets binding targets to rejuvenate wetlands, rivers, forests, grasslands, marine ecosystems, and urban areas. Such restoration is crucial for increasing biodiversity, securing ecosystem services like water purification and crop pollination, limiting global warming to 1.5°C, and enhancing Europe's resilience against natural disasters and food security risks.

The overall target is to cover at least 20% of the EU's land areas and 20% of its sea areas with restoration efforts by 2030. By 2050, these measures should be expanded to all ecosystems that need restoration. Specific targets include (*inter alia*) reversing the decline of pollinators by 2030, increasing forest connectivity and organic carbon stocks, and restoring marine habitats and river connectivity.

EU countries must submit National Restoration Plans by 1 September 2026, detailing how they will achieve these targets. Regular monitoring and reporting will ensure progress, with the European Environment Agency providing technical reports and the Commission updating the European Parliament and Council on implementation.

OBJECTIVE OF THE SESSION

The moderated discussion on the Nature Restoration Law at the Working Group on Biodiversity, scheduled for the afternoon of 13 May 2025, aims to provide space for an open exchange on plans, lessons and initiatives for preparing National Restoration Plans (for EU Member States) or other national plans related to nature restoration (for Serbia and Ukraine), allowing for the sharing of experiences and lessons learned.

Understanding the countries' priorities and plans for the National Restoration Plans will also help identify potential synergies and opportunities for streamlining other related processes, including revised National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) under the Convention of Biological Diversity and the development of the Carpathian LIFE SNaP proposal (see the Background Note for this workshop).

FORMAT OF THE SESSION

After a brief introduction to the session by the Chair of the Working Group, official delegates/representatives from each Carpathian country will share a short update on their National Restoration Plan preparations or related national plans.

One representative from each EU Member State is invited to provide a short update (5-7 mins) on the preparation of their National Restoration Plans, with a focus on sharing relevant experiences and examples of best practices on concrete issues such as:

- transboundary cooperation
- approach to restoration under specific articles of the Regulation (habitats, urban areas, pollinators, agriculture, forests)
- public participation, engaging landowners/managers, private sector, other ministries, etc.
- communication strategy
- level of ambition expected
- obstacles encountered

Serbia and Ukraine are invited to share any updates related to nature restoration or national biodiversity-related plans.