

TO: European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen

Rue de la Loi 200, 1000 Brussels

CC: Frans Timmermans

June 8, 2022

**Subject: European business urges no further delay in proposal for legally binding nature restoration targets**

Dear President Von der Leyen,

Business warmly welcomes the Commission's ambitions to propose legally binding targets for nature restoration and urges the publication of these in June 2022 with no further delay.

Nature restoration targets are key to achieving the broader objectives set out in the EU Green Deal and its Strategy to reverse biodiversity loss by 2050, fully in line with the ambitions of the Paris Agreement and the upcoming post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

Europe finds itself in a challenging moment. We applaud the primary concern of the Commission to ensure food security in response to the war in Ukraine. **However, we believe that the debate on risks to food security should not occur at the expense of progress in tackling the climate and biodiversity crises.**

In reality, it is the climate and biodiversity crises that are drastically affecting food production<sup>1</sup>. Our food production fundamentally depends upon healthy ecosystems and the services they provide, such as healthy soils, abundant fish stocks and pollination. Land use change and intensification are the main drivers of biodiversity loss worldwide<sup>2</sup>. At EU level, a JRC study found that the absence of insect pollination alone would mean a 25% to 32% reduction of the total production of crops<sup>3</sup>. Impacts to yield depend on the crop type and climate of a region. In a 2°C warming scenario, a reduction in wheat yield by 12% is estimated for Southern regions, reaching losses of up to 50% in the worst affected areas<sup>4</sup>. The IPCC warns with high confidence that the climate crisis and extreme weather events will push current food-growing areas 'beyond the safe climate space for production'<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> [https://ieep.eu/uploads/articles/attachments/548d9fc9-3f2e-4fa6-9dbe-a51176b5128c/Policy%20brief\\_Environmental%20degradation.%20Impacts%20on%20agricultural%20production\\_IEEP%20\(2022\).pdf?v=63816541685](https://ieep.eu/uploads/articles/attachments/548d9fc9-3f2e-4fa6-9dbe-a51176b5128c/Policy%20brief_Environmental%20degradation.%20Impacts%20on%20agricultural%20production_IEEP%20(2022).pdf?v=63816541685)

<sup>2</sup> <https://ipbes.net/global-assessment>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.mdpi.com/2073-445X/2/3/472>

<sup>4</sup> [https://ieep.eu/uploads/articles/attachments/548d9fc9-3f2e-4fa6-9dbe-a51176b5128c/Policy%20brief\\_Environmental%20degradation.%20Impacts%20on%20agricultural%20production\\_IEEP%20\(2022\).pdf?v=63816541685](https://ieep.eu/uploads/articles/attachments/548d9fc9-3f2e-4fa6-9dbe-a51176b5128c/Policy%20brief_Environmental%20degradation.%20Impacts%20on%20agricultural%20production_IEEP%20(2022).pdf?v=63816541685)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.carbonbrief.org/in-depth-qa-the-ipccs-sixth-assessment-on-how-climate-change-impacts-the-world>

The climate and biodiversity crises are also severely undermining the resilience of European forests to deliver their rich diversity of societal benefits and services. Therefore, business strongly believes that a fundamental realignment of our current agricultural and forestry models towards practices that support nature restoration is needed to restore biodiversity, guarantee the world's growing population can be fed, and secure socio-economic prosperity. The transition to more sustainable agricultural and forestry systems is needed to achieve the goals set out in the European Green Deal, and must be supported by strong political ambitions at the EU level. The Commission's forthcoming proposal to adopt legally binding EU level nature restoration targets can give a much needed push for this transition to happen.

**Lastly, nature restoration is unarguably good for business.** Nature provides the raw material inputs and the ecosystem services that many of our businesses rely on. Continued degradation of nature only serves to threaten our business models by creating unforeseen and often unmanageable disruption in our supply chains, whilst extreme weather events continue to impact our productivity and increase our operational costs.

We look forward to reviewing the Commission's unifying framework and approach to nature restoration via the delivery of legally binding targets.

Yours, the undersigned business organisations,

**CDP Europe**

**Corporate Leaders Group Europe**

**One Planet Business for Biodiversity**

**Responsible Business Forum in Poland**

**The B Team**

**We Mean Business Coalition**