

Proposal for a Regulation on Nature Restoration - NRL



An tSeirbhís Páirceanna Náisiúnta
agus Fiadhúlra
National Parks and Wildlife Service

Overarching objective



“...to contribute to the continuous, long-term and sustained recovery of biodiverse and resilient nature across the EU’s land and sea areas through the restoration of ecosystems.”

Ecosystems to be Restored

- ▶ Article 4 Terrestrial - coastal and freshwater ecosystems throughout the State
- ▶ Article 5 Marine ecosystems - listed marine habitats and species throughout territorial waters
- ▶ Article 6 Urban ecosystems – Cities, towns (green space and tree cover)
- ▶ Article 7 Natural connectivity of rivers and functions of floodplains
- ▶ Article 8 Pollinator populations
- ▶ Article 9 Agricultural ecosystems (including drained peatlands)
- ▶ Article 10 Forest ecosystems
- ▶ New article with ambition to plant 3 Billion trees

Restoration Ambition



- **Article 4 - Terrestrial, Coastal and Freshwater ecosystems**

Wetlands, forests, grasslands, river and lakes, heath & scrub, rocky habitats & dunes

- Establish where these habitats are and establish the condition
- Put measures in place to bring at least 30% of habitats that are not in good condition up to good condition by 2030

bring back species populations by improving and enlarging their habitats.

Restoration Ambition



- **Article 5 - marine ecosystems**

Seagrass beds, Macroalgal forests, Shellfish beds, Maerl beds, Sponge, coral & coralligenous beds, Vents and seeps. Soft sediments

- Establish where these habitats are and establish the condition
- Put measures in place to bring at least 30% of habitats that are not in good condition up to good condition by 2030

restore the habitats of iconic marine species such as dolphins and porpoises, sharks and seabirds.

Restoration Ambition

- **Article 6 Urban Ecosystems**
- **Cities, towns and suburbs, peri-urban areas**
 - Establish the quantity of green urban space and urban tree canopy at a national level.
 - Put measures in place to ensure no net loss by 2030 and,
 - increase in the total area covered by green urban space by 2040 and 2050



Restoration Ambition

- **Article 7 Restoration of natural connectivity of rivers & natural functions of related floodplains**
 - Remove artificial barriers that prevent the connectivity of surface waters
 - Put measures in place to improve the natural function of related floodplains
 - Contribute towards a Union ambition of at least 25 000 km of rivers are restored to a free-flowing state by 2030



Restoration Ambition

- **Article 8 Pollinator Populations**

- Put measures in place to reverse the decline of pollinator populations by 2030
- Achieve an increasing trend thereafter.
- define actions across other ecosystems



Restoration Ambition

- **Article 9 Agricultural ecosystems**

Put measures in place to achieve an increasing trend in

- grassland butterflies, and farmland birds,
- stock of organic carbon in cropland mineral soils,
- share of agricultural land with high-diversity landscape features;



Restoration Ambition



- **Article 9 Agricultural ecosystems**

- Put measures in place to restore drained peatlands under agricultural use
 - 30% by 2030, of which at least a quarter shall be rewetted;
 - 40% by 2040, of which at least a third shall rewetted;
 - 50% by 2050, of which at least a third shall be rewetted.

Restoration of commercial peat extraction sites can count towards the targets

Other land uses can contribute to up to 40% of the targets

Where duly justified, the extent of the rewetting of peatland under agricultural use may be reduced

Restoration Ambition



- **Article 10 forest ecosystems**

- Put measures in place to achieve an increasing trend for standing and lying deadwood, uneven aged forests, forest connectivity, abundance of common forest birds and stock of organic carbon
- Put measures in place to increase the common forest bird index

- **Article 10a Planting of 3 Billion additional trees.**

- member states shall contribute to the commitment to plant 3 Billion trees
- Prioritisation of native trees.

National Restoration Plan (NRP)



A draft NRP will be required within 24 months of regulation coming into force.

The plan needs to:

- Quantify and map areas to be restored
- Set the baseline from which progress can be measured
- Identify and develop measures and actions for inclusion in the plan;
- Develop schemes and programmes to enhance the delivery
- Outline timescales, monitoring requirements, financing needs
- Capture and represent the requirements of Strategic Partners and Stakeholders

Some Practical Challenges



- Extremely tight timeframes for quantification of targets and measures and for the preparation of national restoration plan, **and for delivery of targets.**
- a considerable amount of scientific data collection, collation and analysis required.
- A significant resource is needed to develop the plan
- Long term resource implications of implementing and monitoring the plan..
- The requirements for consultation and engagement are considerable.
- Financing delivery - A dedicated EU funding instrument is not currently foreseen.

Some Practical Challenges



- €3.15 Bn Fund for Nature announced in Budget 2024
- There is a lot to be learned from the recently launched 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan
- Biodiversity loss is finally getting media attention



▶ Questions and suggestions

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