



# Sustainable Europe

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Posted by: WWF European Policy Office



## 2014 Manifesto Create a new Europe for the Planet

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If everyone in the world consumed natural resources and generated greenhouse gas emissions at the rate of the average European, we would need 2,6 planets to maintain our way of life. Climate change, deforestation, water shortages and the loss of numerous species are already starting to affect us all across the world and need a firm response.

95% of EU citizens feel that protecting the environment is important; and 81% of them believe European environmental legislation is necessary to protect the environment. That's why WWF called on Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) in its 2014 elections manifesto to **Create a new Europe for the Planet** and to make a **pledge for our Planet**:

**"If elected as a member of the European Parliament in 2014, I commit to supporting EU policies which ensure that Europe's use of natural resources stays within the limits of One Planet."**

## natural resources stays within the limits of One Planet.”

In total, 640 candidates across all 28 EU Member States and political groups signed the above pledge. 132 of them secured a seat in the European Parliament. 34% of the pledging MEPs are from S&D, 27% from the Greens/EFA, 12% from EPP, 11% GUE-NGL, 8% from ALDE, 7% from EFDD and 1% from ECR.

A truly sustainable Europe can bring a brighter future for people and planet. But to get there, every EU policy area from fisheries to agriculture and finance must be aligned with sustainability objectives. In 2015, the EU took up that commitment by signing up to the UN’s **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The 2030 Agenda and its goals are based on the understanding that the challenges we face, from poverty and environmental destruction to inequality are universal and inter-connected and that all countries have a responsibility to achieve the goals at home and to support others.

WWF believes that the EU must now develop an implementation strategy to ensure that the EU meets the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. This will be crucial to successfully tackle climate change, shift to a resource-efficient economy, halt the loss of nature, encourage more sustainable and healthy consumption, secure clean and healthy water, protect the environment for human well-being globally, stop illegal timber and wildlife trades, ensure sustainable agriculture and recover fish stocks, among other things.

## EU action for sustainability

### Vote Breakdown

 446

For

 57

Against

 84

Abstain

 164

Absent

**252** votes required to pass.

The European Parliament’s report on “**EU action for sustainability**” was

prepared in response to the European Commission's [communication](#), which served as a first reaction to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The report was led by MEP Seb Dance (S&D) and other key involved MEPs were José Inácio Faria (EPP), Jadwiga Wiśniewska (ECR), Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy (ALDE), Stefan Eck (GUE-NGL), Benedek Jávor (Greens/EFA) and Evi Eleonora (EFDD).

### **What did the report say?**

In their report, MEPs called on the Commission to urgently step up its ambition and produce an EU implementation strategy for the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), analysing and addressing the existing policy gaps. The Parliament plenary's overwhelming support for the report followed shortly after Member States adopted Council conclusions making a similar call. WWF strongly welcomes both Parliament and Member States positions.

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88% of the MEPs who have signed WWF's 2014 elections pledge decided to support the report in the plenary vote. The remaining representatives abstained from the vote and only one MEP decided to vote against the report. For a full overview of MEP voting behaviour, please consult [VoteWatch](#).

The Parliament report also contained many of WWF's 2014 elections manifesto recommendations:

- **Tackle climate change:** the Parliament repeated their calls for more ambitious climate and energy targets towards 2030, in line with the Paris Agreement (§43);

- **Shift to a resource-efficient economy:** MEPs asked to phase out environmentally harmful subsidies and high-emission projects, as well as the

need to accelerate green investments (§58);

● **Halt the loss of nature:** MEPs pressed for the full implementation of EU nature legislation as well as increased financing for nature protection (§31);

● **Encourage more sustainable and healthy consumption :**

Representatives have urged the European Commission to, without delay, present plans for a Sustainable European Food System (§87);

● **Secure clean and healthy waters:** the report criticises the significant delays by Commission and Member States in achieving good water status under the EU Water Framework Directive (§29);

● **Protect the environment for human well-being globally :** the report acknowledges the link between human health and well-being, and biodiversity, natural resources and ecosystems (§32);

● **Stop illegal timber and wildlife trades :** MEPs stressed the links between corruption and wildlife trafficking and illegal timber trade and called on Member States to step up actions (§65);

● **Ensure sustainable agriculture:** representatives called on the Commission to examine how the EU's agricultural policy can best contribute to the SDGs and asked to improve the efficiency of greening measures already present in the policy (§93);

● **Recover fish stocks:** MEPs recognised that without further action fish stocks will be depleted and an important source of employment will disappear (§41).

## **Towards 2019**

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We now expect the European Commission to pay heed and get to work. It must produce an implementation plan for the SDGs and address the inconsistencies in current EU policies, as requested by both the European Parliament and Member States. All opportunities should also be taken to ensure that forthcoming policies and revisions of existing policies are aligned with the 2030 Agenda.

In the next two years, Members of the European Parliament are also provided with a number of crucial political and legislative opportunities to prove they are committed to what they've voted on in their report on "*EU action for sustainability*". MEPs will get to decide and vote on a reform of Europe's unsustainable agricultural policy and legislation that helps achieve the 2030 climate and energy targets. MEPs will also review the implementation of EU water legislation and will have the chance to provide input on the reform of the EU's multiannual budget.

MEPs often tend to vote more conservatively on legislation than on aspirational texts such as the report analysed above, as in-depth analysis of legislative dossiers available on *On Our Watch* shows. WWF will continue to share its recommendations with representatives along the way and will hold them accountable to the commitments taken as part of our 2014 elections pledge and their recent report on "*EU action for sustainability*".

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