

FIRST ANALYSIS OF THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL

12 December, 2019



The Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP) is a sustainability think tank. Working with stakeholders across EU institutions, international bodies, academia, civil society and industry, our team of policy professionals composed of economists, scientists and lawyers produce evidence-based research and policy insight.

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In its latest **State of the Environment Report**, the European Environment Agency (EEA) warns that the European Union is not on track to meet most of its 2020 and 2030 objectives and targets specified in the 7th Environmental Action Programme (EAP).

The **Communication on the European Green Deal**, published by the European Commission on 11 December 2019, outlines a strategy for Europe to become “the world’s first climate-neutral continent by 2050”.

The following analysis by the **Institute for European Environmental Policy** looks at the problem areas identified by EEA and assesses how well the Green Deal’s policy proposals address the environmental objectives deemed unlikely to be met by 2020.



At this stage, it is difficult to assess the level of ambition, but we have used a traffic light system to indicate which of the problem areas are adequately covered in the Communication on the Green Deal, with:

Green indicating reference or proposal that shows strong potential or adequately covers the problem area.

Orange indicating that a problem area has been identified but that the Green Deal lacks clear or adequate proposals at this stage, or the proposals are under-emphasised.

Red indicating inadequate proposals or a complete lack of recognition of the problem area.



European environmental objectives <u>unlikely to be met by 2020</u> (EEA, 2019)	Prospects of meeting policy objectives or targets according to EEA	Reference to the issue or relevant proposals in the European Green Deal (EC, 2019)	Assessment by IEEP
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Protecting, conserving and enhancing natural capital (7th EAP)

EU protected species and habitats	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Biodiversity Strategy (p. 13) • EU Forest Strategy (p. 13) • Proposal for an 8th Environmental Action Plan (annex p. 4) • Farm to Fork Strategy (p. 12) 	Lack of focus and action on adequate funding and enforcement of existing legislation.
Common species (birds and butterflies)	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Biodiversity Strategy (p. 13) 	Not enough action on common farm- and wetland species.
Ecosystem condition and services	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Biodiversity Strategy (p. 13) • EU Forest Strategy (p. 13) 	Not clear enough on targets and delivery.
Water ecosystems and wetlands	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a water quality action plan (p. 14) 	Dependent on the content of the plan, ownership by MS, integration with key policies/sectors and carrots/sticks to implement

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State of marine ecosystems and biodiversity	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Biodiversity Strategy (p. 13) • “Zero-tolerance approach to illegal, unreported, unregulated fishing” (p. 14) 	Need for more ambitious action to reduce harmful impacts of fisheries on biodiversity
Pressures and impacts on marine ecosystems	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The sector can contribute [...] by promoting the production and use of new sources of protein that can relieve pressure on agricultural land” (p. 14) 	See above under Water ecosystems and wetlands
Soil condition	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present the ‘Farm to Fork’ Strategy in spring 2020 (annex p. 3) • “The Commission will adopt in 2021 a zero pollution action plan for air, water and soil” (p.14) • Green Deal (Horizon) mission area on soil health and food 	Encouraging reference to the zero-pollution soil action plan but quantified targets (e.g. on pesticides use reduction and fertilisers) are needed and must be science-based.
Air pollution and impacts on ecosystems	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Biodiversity Strategy (p. 13) • Adopt an air pollution action plan (p. 14) 	Good to recognise the need to align air quality standards to WHO’s.

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Chemical pollution and impacts on ecosystems	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Present a ‘chemicals strategy for sustainability’” in June 2020, followed by a package of regulatory measures by [2021] (p. 15, annex p. 3-4) • ‘measures, including legislative, to reduce significantly the use and risk of chemical pesticides, as well as the use of fertilisers’ (p 12) 	Need for quantified reduction targets that go beyond existing legislation
Climate change and impacts on ecosystems	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU Biodiversity Strategy (p. 13) • Proposal for an 8th Environmental Action Plan (annex p. 4) 	Not concrete enough. This can only be solved structurally by reducing GHG emissions and restoration of ecosystems to make them more resilient.

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Resource-efficient, circular and low-carbon economy (7th EAP)			
Waste generation	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Strategic Action Plan on Batteries and Circular Economy” (p. 9, annex p. 3) • “Requires new legislation, including targets and measures for tackling over-packaging and waste generation” (p. 8) 	Does not address sufficiently the issue of sustainable consumption.
Waste management	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Adopt a new circular economy action plan by March 2020, including a sustainable products initiative” (p. 7-8, annex p. 2) • “Propose legislative reforms on tackling waste” (p. 8, annex p. 3) 	Focus on resource-intensive sectors is promising as it mentions the explicit support for circular design and sustainable product policy
Energy efficiency	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Propose to revise the Energy Taxation Directive” [by June 2021] (p. 5, annex p. 2) • “Propose to revise” the energy legislation to reflect the increased 2030 climate ambition by June 2021, including the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Directives (p. 6, annex p. 2) • Review the TEN-E regulation (p. 6) • New initiative on renovation in 2020, including innovative financing schemes (p. 9) 	Focus on building efficiency is welcome. Energy taxation remains a stumbling block; Member States should recognise the need to move to majority voting, enabling more effective collective action.

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Resource-efficient, circular and low-carbon economy (7th EAP)			
Pollutant emissions from industry	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Propose a carbon border adjustment mechanism, for selected sectors,” by 2021 (p. 5, annex p. 2) • “Review” EU measures to address industrial pollution from large industrial installations (p. 14-15) 	<p>Where Best Available Techniques are not effectively applied, stronger action is needed to address industrial emissions.</p> <p>Good that the carbon border adjustment is now presented in terms of the effectiveness of mitigation at a global level rather than as a “level playing field” commitment.</p>
Clean industrial technologies and processes	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present a “strategy for smart sector integration” by mid-2020 (p. 6, annex p. 2) • Adopt an EU Industrial Strategy by March 2020 (p. 7, annex p. 2) • “Stimulate lead markets for climate neutral and circular products in energy intensive industrial sectors” (p. 7) • Roll out the EU Emissions Trading System innovation Fund to support large-scale innovative industrial projects (p. 9, 11, 15-16, annex p. 2) 	<p>Vital that the industrial strategy is focused on delivery of decarbonisation and other European Green Deal objectives</p>

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Emissions of chemicals	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present a chemicals strategy for sustainability in June 2020, (p. 15, annex p. 4) followed by a package of regulatory measures by [2021] (annex p. 3) 	<p>Focus needs to be on effective enforcement of the precautionary principle. Rapidity of risk assessment is not as important as its thoroughness.</p>
Water abstraction and its pressures on surface and groundwater	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The natural functions of ground and surface water must be restored” (p.14) 	<p>Little mention is made of this – highlighting the need for the natural functions of water to “be restored” and for the preservation and restoration of biodiversity.</p>
Sustainable use of the seas	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “more sustainable use” of maritime space (p. 14) • “zero-tolerance approach” to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (p. 14) • Green Deal (Horizon) mission area: Healthy oceans, seas, coastal and inland waters (p. 18) 	<p>Insufficient. Other measures need to be proposed following analysis of the IPCC special report on oceans.</p>

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Safeguarding from environmental risks to health and well-being (7th EAP)

Concentrations of air pollutants	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “More stringent air pollutant emission standards for combustion-engine vehicles” (p. 11) • “Tackling the emissions of pollutants by aeroplanes and airport operations” (p. 11) • “Action in relation to maritime transport, including to regulate access of the most polluting ships to EU ports and to oblige docked ships to use shore-side electricity” (p. 11) • “Zero pollution action plan for air, water and soil” (p 14) 	Helpful commitment to enhanced implementation and enforcement of standards
Population exposure to environmental noise and impacts on human health	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Air to be part of the new “zero pollution action plan” (p. 14) 	Not explicitly mentioned. Could be included in zero pollution action plan or transport modal shift.
Preservation of quiet areas	X		Not mentioned

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Safeguarding from environmental risks to health and well-being (7th EAP)

Pollution pressures on water and links to human health	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water to be covered as part of the new “zero pollution action plan” (p. 14) Green Deal (Horizon) mission area: Healthy oceans, seas, coastal and inland waters (p. 18) 	Not ambitious enough: challenges for EU waters are significant and the water framework directive needs to be fully implemented
Chemical pollution and risks to human health and well-being	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present a chemicals strategy for innovation in June 2020, (p. 15, annex p. 4) followed by a package of regulatory measures by [2021] (annex p. 3) 	Integration of an agenda on chemical pollution is welcome to strengthen the legislative framework and reduce use of hazardous chemicals.
Climate change risks to society	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Just Transition Mechanism, including a Just Transition Fund to focus on the regions and sectors that are most affected by the transition because they depend on fossil fuels or carbon-intensive processes.” (p. 16) Produce guidance for Member States to address energy poverty (p. 6) 	Helpful expansion of just transition concept to “regions and sectors that are most affected by the transition because they depend on fossil fuels or carbon-intensive processes”
Climate change adaptation strategies and plans	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt a new EU Strategy on Adaptation to climate Change in 2020/21 (p. 5, annex p. 2) Green Deal (Horizon) mission “Adaptation to climate change including societal transformation” (p. 18) 	Mitigation proofing of adaptation strategies to enable synergies to be realised in the transition.

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