



SDG

WWF EUROPEAN POLICY OFFICE ANNUAL REVIEW





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FOREWORDS

In 2025, many of our worst predictions about the direction of EU policies and politics sadly proved to be right. A strong deregulation drive, framed around competitiveness and simplification, has put core elements of the European Green Deal under pressure. At the same time, attacks on civic space have intensified, including within EU institutions themselves, challenging long-standing assumptions about the role of civil society in European policy-making.

These developments reflect a wider global context marked by geopolitical instability, growing polarisation and a deliberate questioning of evidence-based policy-making. For environmental NGOs, it has been a year in which both our operating space and our sense of agency have been severely tested.

Nevertheless, I want to offer a few hopeful reflections on the questions many have grappled with: How to resist short-term rollbacks while keeping a long-term perspective? How to reactivate collective agency in increasingly hostile conditions? And: How to ensure that our work continues to deliver impact for people, nature and climate?

According to the World Economic Forum, environmental and climate-related risks rank among the top threats to prosperity and stability, and this evidence underlines why nature, climate and resilience must remain central to EU policy choices. Despite the dramatically altered European and global landscape, WWF's sense of urgency and long-term objectives therefore remain as relevant as ever.

The evolving context demands that we adapt how we work, as WWF EU and together with our European network, regarding our advocacy, tactics, narratives, and alliances.

We have strengthened our EU corporate advocacy for a more consistent and transparent engagement with businesses on EU policy.

We have also increasingly focused on policy implementation. As Member States begin drafting their National Restoration Plans, the key delivery tool for the EU Nature Restoration Law, we analysed progress across the EU. And even if this remains uneven, the overall message is hopeful: in most Member States, nature restoration planning is under way, keeping alive the promise of restoring ecosystems at scale.

Our collaboration with other green NGOs and civil society partners is another reason for hope. In 2025, we worked collectively to protect and promote civic space, pushing back against attacks originating from some political groups in the European Parliament and an unprecedented alignment between conservative and far-right politicians. Our collective action helped ensure that a dedicated climate



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ESTER ASIN, DIRECTOR,
WWF EUROPEAN POLICY OFFICE

and environmental spending target was retained in the Commission proposal for the next Multiannual Financial Framework. At the same time, we remain deeply concerned about proposals to discontinue the LIFE programme, a highly efficient, low-cost instrument with proven impact for biodiversity and ecosystems. In 2026, we will continue working to secure adequate funding for biodiversity and civil society in future EU instruments.

Public engagement remains a critical form of political action. Through the “Hands Off Nature” campaign, we mobilised nearly 200,000 citizens across the EU, who voiced their concerns about the ongoing weakening of environmental laws. Polling consistently shows that public concern for climate and nature remains high: People do care and value nature, but narratives, relevance and meaningful avenues for engagement matter more than ever.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the many colleagues across the WWF network who engage daily on EU policy, communications and campaigns, as well as our (old and new) partners in civil society and the business community. To our funders, thank you for your continued trust in our professionalism and high-quality delivery. And to the WWF EU team, your commitment and integrity remain a powerful reason for hope.

2026 will continue to challenge and disrupt us. In the face of deregulation packages, polarisation and shrinking civic space, we will be powered by collective courage and wisdom. We will speak up, raise, mobilise, rely on science, work with allies, and defeat fear. Together, we will keep building and implementing better EU policies for nature, for people and for our planet. Silence and inaction are not an option.

I have always cautioned against the overuse of the word ‘unprecedented’—but for us and many others working to hold the EU accountable in 2025, it is certainly an apt description of the year. Globally, the geopolitical tectonic plates began a grave shift. Here in Brussels, 2025 was marked by a drastic and distinct rightward shift in the political landscape, which was laid most bare within the European Parliament.

The year witnessed the demise of the (albeit informal) *cordon sanitaire*, spurred on by the European People's Party opportunistically forming majorities with the far right. In turn, the European Commission initiated a dubious deregulation push aimed at dismantling legislation that had only recently been adopted, beginning with its flagship European Green Deal, alongside corporate transparency and due diligence. And as the turbulent year progressed, the centre and far right began to identify and define a common enemy: civil society.

It would be easy to dismiss 2025 as a perfect storm of unrelated political developments, culminating in this distinctly hostile environment for European civil society. This would be a mistake: from a rapid descent into autocracy in some Western democracies or the European Parliament's newly created sham scrutiny working group on NGOs, the far right has become coordinated. They are pursuing a clear strategy with three distinct objectives: To **discredit** civil society, through smear campaigns and misinformation; to **distract** us from carrying out our respective missions; and, ultimately, to **defund** civil society from the next Union budget.

These unfounded attacks began with the targeting of organisations that tirelessly fought for the European Green Deal and legislation that would counter the climate crisis. The LIFE programme beneficiaries remained the focus throughout the year. In 2025, Transparency International EU stood alongside WWF EU, along with other members of the Green 10, in opposing this witch-hunt.

It has become apparent that this destructive campaign against civil society will not wane in 2026. Autocratic governments, far-right think tanks, and MAGA-affiliated organisations have gleefully entered the fray. Their scope of targets has widened to NGOs working with vulnerable communities and protecting fundamental rights.

From a dire year was borne a collective realisation that we face an existential threat. However, with that understanding came hopeful resolve that we must demonstrate unwavering solidarity and boldly fight back together. Civil society organisations began to come together from across their respective political fields in recognition of our joint goal. We pooled expertise and resources, to push back against and



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NICK AIOSSA, DIRECTOR,
TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL EU

challenge the misinformation and promote the importance of a vibrant civil society to European democracy. We were resultingly able to inspire vocal support from cross-party politicians and institutions.

So, in 2026, we will proudly continue to stand in solidarity with WWF EU and all other NGOs targeted by autocratic overreach. Civil society plays a crucial role in democratic politics, whether it is defending the planet, protecting migrants, upholding human rights, or fighting corruption.

At a time where opponents to democracy would rather divide and conquer, we will work tirelessly, and creatively, to expose the ways in which they are seeking to undo the EU from within.

That will only be possible when civil society stands united—as democracy requires of it.

As the turbulent year progressed, the centre and far right began to identify and define a common enemy: civil society.

GIVING NATURE A VOICE TO ENSURE ITS PROTECTION

As EU institutions pushed to weaken essential social and environmental protections under the accelerating deregulation agenda, WWF joined forces with other environmental NGOs to defend the laws that ensure clean air and water, and safeguard the nature that sustains us.

In 2025, this included:

- Launching the #HandsOffNature campaign with partner organisations, amplifying the voices of nature and people.
- Mobilising nearly 200,000 citizens to oppose the weakening of environmental laws.
- Bringing together NGO advocates, activists, farmers, and forest owners to deliver citizens' demands for strong nature laws to European Commissioner for Environment, Jessika Roswall.
- Organising our own "OmniBus tour", with a striking red, open-top double-decker bus rolling through Brussels' EU quarter, to protest against environmental deregulation.
- Publishing detailed responses to the most common questions on simplification, challenging the misleading narrative that "simplifying laws" automatically reduces costs and burdens.

"This unprecedented deregulation push is like watching a car crash in slow motion. Yet, these attacks have only made us more committed, united, and stronger. We will continue fighting to protect the laws that define Europe and sustain its nature - using our expertise, creativity and campaigning power!"

LIESBETH VAN DEN BOSSCHE, EU CAMPAIGN MANAGER

#HANDSOFFNATURE

DEFENDING EUROPE'S NATURE LAWS

The 2024 EU elections had marked a major shift in environmental policy, with key protections being rolled back under the guise of competitiveness. These changes threaten decades of progress and raise serious concerns about transparency, accountability, and the health of Europe's ecosystems and people. In response, WWF and other environmental NGOs have been ramping up efforts to give nature a voice and defend its protection.

NATURE LAWS IN THE EYE OF THE STORM

Following the shift to the right in the European Parliament, EU institutions have pivoted away from leading on climate and environmental action and the European Green Deal. Instead, in a dramatic U-turn, they have turned against key environmental protections, dismantling them one by one. This has also been driven by pressure from conservative governments, which have increasingly framed environmental regulation as an obstacle to growth rather than a cornerstone of economic resilience and industrial competitiveness.

In February, in a first of many so-called “omnibus packages”- bundles of measures presented as efforts to “simplify” regulation but which, in practice, dilute existing protections - the newly formed European Commission proposed a significant weakening of EU corporate sustainability laws (see page 34).

In the months that followed, the European Commission continued its agenda through several more such packages, which saw a weakening of key environmental provisions in EU agricultural and water legislation, thereby marking a

sharp departure from the ambitions set out in the European Green Deal. In a parallel development, the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) came under attack (see page 20).

With consultations bypassed and scientific evidence disregarded, the EU's deregulation efforts have sparked serious concerns about transparency and democratic accountability - even from the European Ombudswoman, who criticised the Commission for “maladministration” regarding the rapid, non-transparent weakening of environmental rules. Decision-makers, diplomats, officials,

and civil society organisations have voiced alarm over the abrupt dismantling of years of environmental progress in Europe.

Environmental groups have not taken these attacks against nature and the European Green Deal lying down. Instead, the deregulation craze has ramped up collaboration, bringing WWF and other green NGOs together to give nature a voice, launching the **#HandsOffNature campaign**.

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#HandsOffNature NGO coalition hands over nearly 200,000 signatures to Commissioner Roswall

EVERY
ATTACK ON
ENVIRONMENTAL
LAWS IS AN
ATTACK ON OUR
FUTURE

CIVIL SOCIETY IS
RISING TOGETHER
TO DEFEND THE
LAWS THAT
PROTECT US



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SIMPLIFICATION ROLLS ON, SO DO WE

In December, the **European Commission finally published its “Environmental Omnibus”**, confirming what civil society groups, scientists, and concerned citizens had warned for months: the growing influence of polluting industries and their political allies is driving the dismantling of hard-won nature protections, putting air quality, water resources, and public health at risk.

Through this package, the Commission proposed changes framed as minor or technical, but which in practice open the door to increased industrial and chemical pollution - increasing human exposure to toxic substances - and place additional stress on already fragile biodiversity.

Unfortunately, just days later, the Commission announced a review and revision of core EU water laws, a move that could further worsen pollution across European waters (see page 24).

Further attacks on environmental protections are expected for 2026, with many sectors and vested interests jumping on the deregulation bandwagon and exerting their lobbying power. WWF, together with the #HandsOffNature coalition and other organisations, will continue to intensify efforts to defend our laws. Only then can we ensure that citizens have access to clean air and water, and that the nature which sustains and defines us is not sacrificed for the benefit of polluting industries and their political allies.

HANDS OFF NATURE!

In the middle of the summer, the European Commission quietly launched a “Call for Evidence” asking companies, organisations, and citizens whether EU environmental laws should be “simplified”.

In just 10 days, WWF and its #HandsOffNature campaign allies rallied many European NGOs and **nearly 200,000 citizens to oppose the**

weakening of environmental laws, making this call for evidence one of the most responded to on record.

Parodying the Commission’s deregulation drive, the #HandsOffNature campaign coalition also organised its own “OmniBus tour” in early October. A striking red, open-top double-decker bus - emblazoned with the slogans “Stop the OmniBus” and “Drive Action for Nature” - rolled through the iconic streets of Brussels’ EU quarter.

Following the tour, NGO advocates, activists, farmers, and forest owners **handed over the public submissions to European Commissioner for Environment, Jessika Roswall**.

In parallel, to counter ongoing disinformation around environmental laws and the Commission’s simplification efforts, WWF and other organisations published **detailed responses to the most common questions**, challenging the misleading narrative that “simpler” automatically means “better”.



ATTACKS ON NGOS AND NATURE FUNDING

Over the past year, WWF and other environmental NGOs faced politically motivated attacks on their integrity and legitimacy, calling into question civil society's critical role in evidence-based policy-making.

In parallel, the starting negotiations on the next EU budget and the future of the LIFE Programme revealed attempts to defund climate and nature action, despite broad institutional and societal support.

- Unfounded and politically driven accusations against environmental NGOs were repeatedly debunked by the European Commission, the European Court of Auditors, and media, yet have led to disproportionate parliamentary scrutiny over NGO funding.
- WWF's advocacy to maintain a dedicated spending target for climate and the environment in the next EU budget was successful.
- We have also advocated for a continuation for the successful LIFE Programme following its proposed dismantling by the European Commission.

“Europe’s green transition cannot succeed without the active participation of citizens and civil society, backed by dedicated funding for climate and nature. Restricting NGOs while scrapping the EU LIFE Programme undermines democracy and is a slap in the face of the countless people who work tirelessly to improve the implementation of EU environmental policy.”

TYCHO VANDERMAESEN, POLICY & STRATEGY DIRECTOR

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

SAFEGUARDING EU DEMOCRACY AND INVESTMENT IN NATURE

Recent political attacks on environmental NGOs have coincided with the start of critical negotiations on the EU’s next long-term budget. While allegations against civil society have been firmly rebutted by EU institutions, proposals to weaken climate and nature funding in the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), including the dismantling of LIFE, risk undermining not only Europe’s environmental objectives, but also the continued functioning of its participatory democracy.

A WITCH HUNT AGAINST ENVIRONMENTAL NGOS

Since the end of 2024, a small but very vocal group of MEPs from conservative and far-right groups launched politically motivated attacks on environmental NGOs, falsely accusing them of misusing EU funds—particularly those awarded as so-called “operating grants” under the EU’s LIFE Programme. Operating grants are designed to help NGOs cover their core running costs, enabling them to actively support and implement EU environmental and climate policies. They are critical for fostering civil society’s role in achieving the EU’s stated goals for nature, biodiversity and climate action.

Central to the debate is the nature and transparency of this financial support, with critics arguing that it constitutes inappropriate use of public money or even covert lobbying on behalf of the European Commission.

Allegations of ‘misuse’ of EU funding surfaced during the European Parliament’s 2023 budget discharge process and focused on claims that NGOs were engaging in ‘undue lobbying’ activities. Although it lacked any credible evidence, this fabricated “scandal” – fuelled by misleading and badly researched media reports – gained traction in some corners of the Parliament, with attempts to influence the discharge process to cast doubt on the integrity and legitimacy of NGO activities.

An assessment by the European Court of Auditors in April found no evidence of wrongdoing or mismanagement of EU funds by the NGOs involved. In addition, a legal review of the grant agreements in question conducted by the European Commission also confirmed that no contractual or ethical breaches were found. Importantly, EU Budget Commissioner Serafin also firmly rejected claims that the Commission had obliged NGOs to lobby MEPs.

It is important to note that NGOs operating at EU level (such as WWF) are independent actors with our own governance, mandates and constituencies. Funding provided under LIFE and similar instruments is intended to support civil society participation in policy-making, not to serve as a vehicle for institutional political direction.

In May 2025, the **European Parliament voted to adopt the 2023 budget discharge**, effectively closing the file. It rejected last-minute amendments from far-right groups seeking to reignite the allegations and instead acknowledged the essential role of NGOs in democratic debate. Parliament also supported increased funding for climate and biodiversity through the LIFE Programme as part of a separate vote on the next EU budget (MFF).

The conclusions on the budget discharge did not satisfy right-wing political groups, and they pressed ahead with their proposal to establish a formal parliamentary Inquiry Committee into EU funding for NGOs. The Conference of Presidents rejected the request, concluding that there was no evidence of maladministration and that existing audit and budgetary control mechanisms were sufficient. Following this rejection, a political compromise led to the creation of a more limited scrutiny working group within the Budgetary Control Committee, with a narrower mandate and without the far-reaching powers of an inquiry committee.

NGOs, including WWF, have warned that the focus of this working group on NGOs (rather than all beneficiaries of EU funding) is intrinsically biased and designed to undermine the legitimacy and viability of NGOs. A coalition of pro-European political groups, including the Socialists & Democrats, Renew Europe and the Greens, concurred with this assessment and chose to boycott participation

in the group, walking out of the inaugural meeting in November 2025.

We are particularly concerned about the political motives behind this intensified scrutiny, which reflects a broader effort to weaken environmental advocacy and constrain dissenting perspectives in policy debates. While we absolutely support efforts to improve transparency, accountability and reporting standards for EU funding, we maintain that NGOs’ independence and the public value of our work are critical for a participatory democracy and evidence-based environmental policy-making, and must be defended courageously.

SECURING CLIMATE AND NATURE FUNDING IN THE EU’S NEXT BUDGET

The year also marked the start of the long negotiations of the EU’s next long-term budget, the so-called Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), which will cover the period of 2028-2034. In a **position paper** published in early 2025, WWF emphasised the need for funding allocated to support the resilience of climate and nature, addressed key challenges, including climate change, biodiversity loss, industrial transformation, and energy security, and provided key recommendations for the next MFF.

Soon after, 30 organisations, including WWF, released a **statement** calling for stronger implementation of the ‘Do No Significant Harm’ (DNHS) principle, which would reduce administrative burdens for managing authorities and beneficiaries while ensuring EU funds do not undermine climate and environmental goals. WWF also co-signed a second paper, highlighting the next long-term budget as a critical opportunity to boost funding for biodiversity conservation and restoration, essential for achieving EU objectives and safeguarding ecosystem health and resilience.

The European Parliament **adopted its position** on the next MFF in May 2025. While it supported climate and nature, the position lacked ambition on concrete spending targets for these priorities.

Fearing a major setback for climate and environment in the European Commission’s budget proposal, WWF supported a **joint letter** signed by more than 60 business associations, think tanks and NGOs calling for the continuation of a climate and environment spending target.

When released in July 2025, the European Commission’s **MFF proposal** maintained an overall target but simultaneously introduced changes that effectively gutted funding for nature by eliminating the dedicated spending target for biodiversity and ending **the long-standing LIFE programme**, the only EU instrument fully devoted to nature, climate, and the environment.

As part of the MFF package, the Commission also proposed a new Performance Regulation aiming to track spending and outcomes across the MFF. WWF analysed this framework and put forward a list of recommendations to close any

loopholes. In particular, WWF welcomed the shift to a consistent application of the DNSH principle across the entire EU budget.

In addition to that, WWF **examined** the proposed restructuring of cohesion, social and agricultural funds into 27 National and Regional Partnership Plans. Without proper safeguards, this shift could reduce meaningful climate and nature spending by giving governments greater flexibility over budget allocations. WWF outlined these risks and proposed measures to ensure climate and nature remain central in the next MFF.

In October 2025, EU Environment Ministers discussed nature funding in the MFF, sending a **positive signal** that they acknowledge the need for dedicated resources for nature, even after the proposed dissolution of LIFE.

WWF continues to closely monitor relevant developments. While recent **discussions** among EU leaders largely focused on budget structure and governance, decisions on funding priorities are expected in 2026 in both the Council and Parliament. WWF will keep advocating for strong, dedicated investment in nature, climate, and the environment in the next long-term EU budget.

KEEP LIFE ALIVE!

The LIFE Programme, the EU’s only funding instrument dedicated exclusively to nature and climate, has co-financed over 6,000 environmental projects in more than 30 years, often reaching local communities. For many people and organisations, involvement in LIFE projects is their most direct interaction with the EU – otherwise an abstract or distant entity for some. WWF highlighted the multiple benefits and uniqueness of LIFE in a dedicated **position paper**.

It is then no surprise that the Commission’s proposal to scrap the LIFE programme and instead merge its actions with a wide array of other EU instruments, without a dedicated, ring-fenced budget in the next long-term EU budget met with widespread opposition. WWF immediately **denounced** the inexplicable move, urging EU decision-makers not to withdraw vital and, in the grand scheme of things, modest funding for projects that help Europe and its citizens adapt to rising temperatures, floods, droughts and water scarcity, to name a few.

In November, 820 signatories urged the European institutions to continue LIFE. The powerful non-partisan **letter**, initiated by regional governments in Italy, brought together regional and local authorities, municipalities, companies, trade associations, universities, research institutes, and other organisations across Europe, including WWF. It might be the best example of LIFE’s unique strength – connecting people from different countries, backgrounds, and experiences, to work on solutions to challenges posed by climate change and nature loss. If anything, Europe needs more crosscutting, innovative, and inclusive programmes as LIFE. WWF and its partners **keep advocating** to ensure its continuation.

PRESERVING NATURE'S VOICE IN EU POLICY

As the EU's deregulation drive escalated, undermining Europe's nature and the foundations of people's wellbeing, WWF ramped up its efforts to defend and strengthen environmental laws.

Highlights for 2025 included:

- After years of advocacy, EU institutions finally reached an agreement on updating the list of chemical substances that Member States must monitor and limit to stop the pollution of our rivers.
- Civil society and progressive businesses fought back fiercely against attempts to delay and derail the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR).
- The European Commission presented its proposal for the next Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), including some improvements to make the distribution of agricultural funds fairer, in favour of farmers who need it most.
- The Nature Restoration Law implementation is underway across the continent, with several frontrunners paving the way for nature's comeback.
- At CITES CoP20, parties agreed to strengthen the protection for Asian big cats, sharks, and rays, but fell short on stronger protection for eels.

“With political headwinds intensifying in 2025, it has never been more urgent to act and give nature a voice in EU policy-making — the very nature that shapes our landscapes, defines our identity, and underpins our future. We will continue to work relentlessly to protect it.”

ANDREAS BAUMÜLLER, PROGRAMME DIRECTOR & HEAD OF NATURAL RESOURCES

NATURAL RESOURCES

BIODIVERSITY & NATURE RESTORATION

Nature in Europe has faced another turbulent year, but there is a glimmer of hope – the Nature Restoration Law implementation is underway across the continent. Despite the challenging political context, WWF and our partners have gone the extra mile to bring nature back to Europe and defend crucial environmental protections.

From the heartbreaking decision to weaken wolf protection and recurring threats to the Habitats Directive, through the Commission's plan for nature credits, to tangible progress on implementing the long-awaited Nature Restoration Law, the EU nature and biodiversity policy work last year was as versatile as one could imagine.

EUROPE TURNS ITS BACK ON WOLVES AND ON SCIENCE

After decades of successful conservation efforts that brought wolves back from the brink of extinction, 2023 marked a dramatic change of heart. President von der Leyen proposed lowering the wolf's protection status, despite the lack of scientific evidence to justify such a move. From the very beginning, WWF warned that this set a dangerous political precedent.

In May 2025, the wolf was finally officially **downlisted** from a 'strictly protected' to a 'protected' species under the Council of Europe's Bern Convention, and subsequently under the EU Habitats Directive, granting Member States greater flexibility to 'manage' wolf populations – opening the door to increased culling and renewed threats to the species' recovery.



Despite this setback, WWF continues to advocate for Member States to keep the wolf strictly protected under their national law and to intensify efforts to implement effective measures to ensure peaceful coexistence between wolves and rural communities.

DO NOT THROW NATURE UNDER THE BUS

Unfortunately, the attacks on Europe's nature did not stop there – as WWF had warned, the downgrading of the wolf merely signaled the first step in rolling back vital environmental protections.

Indeed, in December 2025, the European Commission published its so-called **environmental omnibus**, a set of measures weakening environmental laws. This included the

announcement of a “stress test” for the Birds and Habitats Directives in 2026. Given the ongoing deregulation wave and ever-growing pressure from conservative and right-wing groups to further dismantle key nature laws in the name of “competitiveness”, WWF has cautioned that such a move was out of touch with the ongoing biodiversity crisis.

TOWARDS RESTORING NATURE IN EUROPE

Amid relentless attacks on EU environmental laws, the Nature Restoration Law has been steadily moving forward after enduring a fair share of political drama in previous years. WWF and our #RestoreNature coalition partners

have worked across European, national and regional levels to support implementation and encourage governments to prepare ambitious and timely National Restoration Plans (NRPs) – the backbone of the law.

With draft NRPs due by September 2026 and final plans in September 2027, last year we launched an **EU-wide progress assessment** of NRPs, which found that most Member States had begun implementing the law, with several frontrunners showing what good NRPs preparation can look like. This is a positive sign showing that the law's implementation is possible, even if the overall progress remains uneven and far from sufficient to meet its binding targets.

EUROPE HAS
BEGUN THE
JOURNEY
TO RESTORE
NATURE

Deforestation stood at the centre of an intense political debate in 2025, a year marked by political reversals that resulted in the weakening of regulations designed to protect forests. Despite these challenges, WWF pursued a proactive strategy to counter the impacts of an increasingly adverse political environment.

FIRST ATTEMPTS TO DERAIL EU DEFORESTATION LAW

The EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) – groundbreaking legislation to combat deforestation caused by EU consumption – was adopted in 2023, but before it could even be applied, the law came under sustained pressure. Throughout 2025, the European Commission alternately reaffirmed and then questioned its commitment to the law’s timeline and ambition.

In May, Austria and Luxembourg unexpectedly **proposed to “simplify” the EUDR to ease administrative burden.** In parallel, two MEPs (from EPP and Patriots for Europe respectively) **submitted a motion** to introduce further changes which would effectively lead to politically driven exemptions. These attempts to introduce “no-risk” or “negligible-risk” exemptions for selected countries were ultimately rejected, and the EUDR lived to fight another day.

THE DOG ATE MY HOMEWORK: BLAMING IT TO ASK FOR A DELAY

However, in late September, the EU Deforestation Regulation was again under pressure as the European Commission proposed a delay in its application citing issues with its IT system.

WWF condemned **the proposed delay** as a disguised attempt to derail the EUDR and **signed a joint statement** with 85 other civil society organisations, signalling the need to enforce the EU deforestation regulation as soon as possible. **WWF also published a report containing a fresh analysis of the environmental impacts** of a potential delay to the EU deforestation regulation. A one-year delay is estimated to result in an additional 16.8 million tonnes of CO₂ emissions and nearly 50 million trees lost.

Finally, what initially had been described as merely an IT issue was successfully used as a pathway

to deregulation of the EUDR. In December, EU institutions **approved** not only a one-year delay to the regulation’s application, but also a narrowing of its scope, and a so-called “simplification review” scheduled for April 2026.

STRONG BUSINESS OPPOSITION TO EUDR WEAKENING

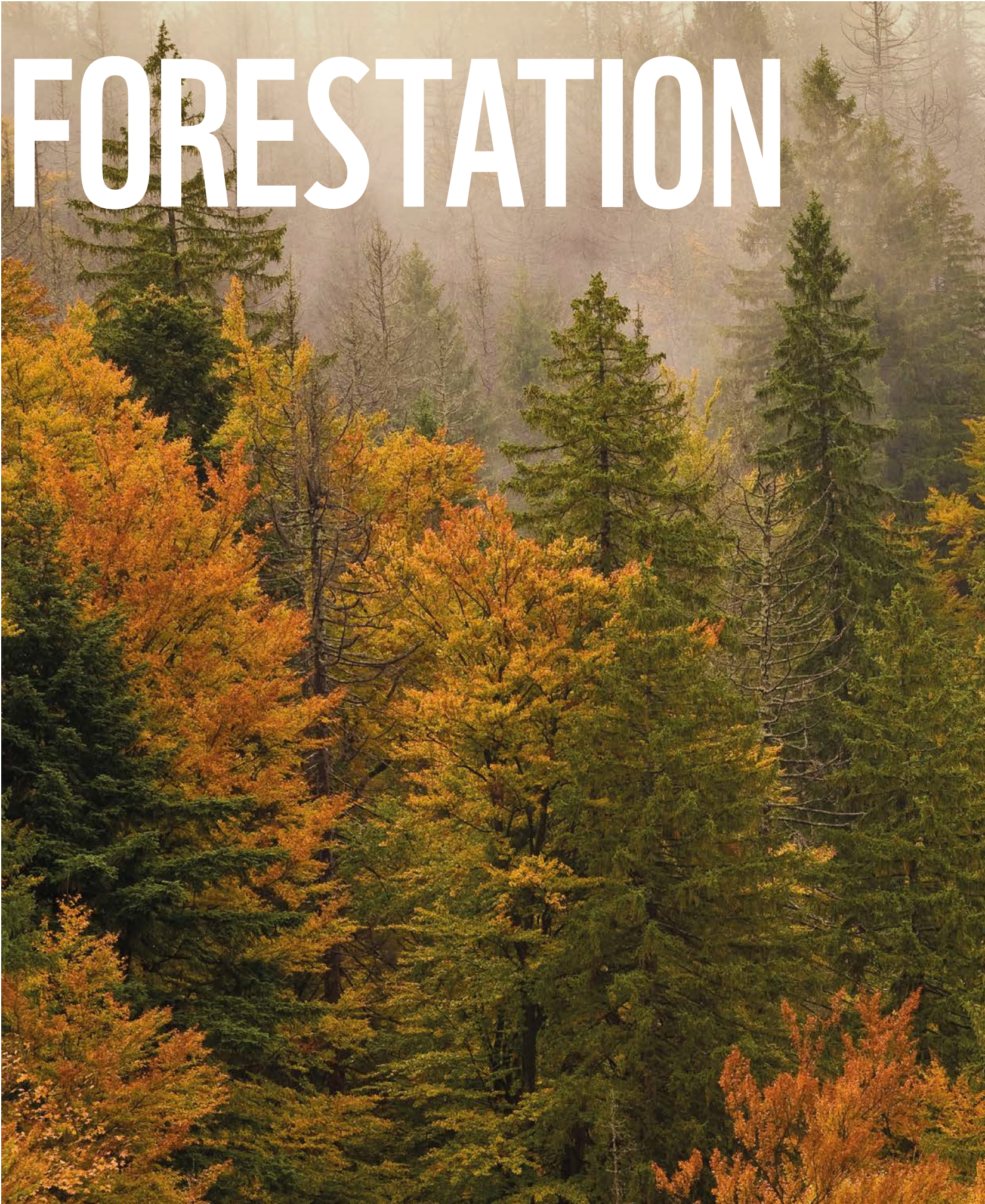
Forest protection has increasingly been sidelined under the premise of safeguarding companies’ growth and competitiveness. However, changes to the EUDR have created policy uncertainty and harm many companies, particularly those that had already made substantial investments to comply with the regulation and now face stranded costs on top of those incurred due to deforestation.

Against this backdrop, WWF EU launched **Business4Forests.eu**, a dedicated platform highlighting the investments virtuous businesses have already made based on the original EUDR implementation timeline. In November, we also hosted **a webinar discussion** on how businesses and local governments around the world are building EUDR-ready supply chains, based on **WWF International latest report** on the issue presented at COP30.

In parallel, WWF co-signed **a joint statement with more than 120 businesses**, investors, and civil society organisations, which was submitted to EU institutional representatives, reinforcing the call for timely and robust implementation.

Together with its network of partners, and in particular the #Together4Forests coalition, WWF will continue to advocate for a strong and effective law that delivers on its promise to protect forests and the rights of communities depending on them. The EUDR remains the EU’s flagship legislation **to halt forest degradation and deforestation**, and WWF stands ready to face the challenges ahead, united and guided by the lessons learned in 2025.

DEFORESTATION



FOOD & AGRICULTURE

Framed as a way to reduce burdens on farmers, the weakening of environmental measures instead deepened regression in EU agriculture, incentivising practices harmful to people's health and limiting support for food producers who strive to do better.

VISION FOR AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

In February, the European Commission launched its Vision for Agriculture and Food, marking the first hundred days of the new mandate. Replacing the previous Commission's Farm to Fork strategy, the Vision outlines a roadmap for the next Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and stresses the need for climate action, with some positive points such as better enforcement of green laws and financial rewards for farmers exceeding environmental requirements.

However, the text lacks clarity, failing to provide a concrete path for transforming the EU food system, **missing key points agreed on in the Strategic Dialogue** held in 2024 with industry, consumers, and green NGOs.

POST-2027 CAP: "NO-STRINGS-ATTACHED" FLEXIBILITY

After months of speculation, the European Commission presented its **proposal for the post-2027 Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) in July**. It included some improvements to make the distribution of CAP funds fairer, such as capping hectare-based financial support in favour of farmers who need it most. However, the proposal severely risks undermining efforts to foster sustainable food practices by granting Member States full flexibility to define the degree of environmental protection and by watering down requirements for agri-environmental and climate actions.



As floods and droughts continue to take a toll on farmers' harvests, WWF and other NGOs have urged decision-makers to move beyond short-term interests and political self-gain, **in a briefing outlining recommendations that put farmers' support and people's wellbeing first**.

AGRI SIMPLIFICATION - AT WHAT COST?

In 2024, the newly formed European Commission announced it would propose a number of measures to simplify agricultural and food policies. This was followed by several proposals that – without adequate consultation – resulted in wide-ranging weakening of environmental safeguards in the CAP, consolidating the strong wave of deregulation in the EU.

In May, the Commission **presented a package affecting the Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions (GAEC)**, which require farmers to meet basic environmental standards in order to receive CAP subsidies. In practical terms, the Commission proposed less protection of grasslands, peatlands, and wetlands in the EU, setting up a bad precedent for EU agriculture.

Unfortunately, in October the European Parliament doubled down by further weakening the Commission's proposal. Fortunately, thanks to pressure from **WWF and other environmental organisations**, the Parliament's position was ultimately discarded in the final negotiations, preventing further degradation and contamination of protected areas.

FREE PASS FOR PESTICIDES

The Commission managed to sneak in yet another simplification package in December, targeting feed and food safety policies, which go beyond the CAP's mandate. **Despite calls from WWF and other NGOs** to strengthen – rather than hinder – farmers' resilience to the triple environmental crisis, the proposed measures confirmed rumours of further regression.

The **Commission's proposal** introduced detrimental changes to EU pesticide regulation that pave the way for the continued use of substances contaminating European waters and threatening public health, in addition to disincentivising sustainable food production.

WWF will keep fighting to prevent setbacks in EU agriculture, so that the food on our plates is good for nature, farmers, and people.

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S SIMPLIFICATION MEASURES **HINDER, RATHER THAN STRENGTHEN, FARMERS' RESILIENCE**

SAFE WATER AND RESILIENCE

Water pollution continues to threaten the EU's rivers and lakes, and the health of its citizens. In 2025, WWF continued to fight this trend, while defending the EU water laws against hasty and unjustified deregulation.

STRENGTHENING EU WATER RESILIENCE

Europe is increasingly experiencing floods, droughts, and wildfires driven by extreme water events, while its freshwater ecosystems like rivers, lakes and wetlands remain in poor health, with fewer than half of them in good condition. Despite this, the EU and national governments **are not doing enough** to protect citizens from these threats or to reverse this trend.

In response, the Commission announced in 2024 that it would launch a strategy aiming to address water efficiency, scarcity, and pollution across sectors.

In June, the European Commission launched its Water Resilience Strategy, which includes a strong call to implement and enforce existing EU water laws and upscale Nature-based Solutions. However, the Strategy generally lacks dedicated funding and introduces only limited governance tools to support implementation.

WWF and the Living Rivers Europe Coalition **have called for targeted investments and robust accountability measures**. It now remains to be seen how the Strategy's positive elements will be put into action.

FIGHTING WATER POLLUTION

Hundreds of harmful substances pollute Europe's rivers, decreasing the availability of good quality water for its citizens. Over the last years, monitoring relied on outdated pollutant lists, missing many dangerous chemicals. For this reason, in 2022 the European Commission presented a proposal for an update to the lists of pollutants that EU Member States must monitor and control in surface and groundwater.

To ensure EU institutions would base their position on scientific advice, WWF and other environmental organisations coordinated a **statement signed by over 450 scientists** urging action on chemical threats like PFAS



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(known as “forever chemicals”). WWF also co-organised a stunt in front of the European Parliament featuring water samples from several countries, illustrating the detrimental state of our waters.

In September, the **EU institutions finally reached a provisional agreement**. While the deal requires Member States to monitor and limit pollution of new substances, deadlines to take action have been extended compared to the initial Commission proposal.

Unfortunately, building on the EU's current deregulation drive, the deal also weakens the Water Framework Directive (WFD) - the cornerstone of EU water laws - by introducing new exemptions allowing short-term deterioration of water and relocation of contaminated sediment or water.

ATTACKS ON CORE WATER LAWS

Stakeholders from the agriculture, chemical and mining sectors, as well as some Member States, were actively pushing to weaken the WFD throughout 2025.

Despite our efforts to protect the EU water laws and their effective implementation, the **European Commission unexpectedly committed to reviewing and revising the WFD** by the second quarter of 2026 under the RESourceEU Action Plan, in order to promote “access to critical raw materials in the EU”. This is an extremely worrying move, as such revision threatens to bring down European water standards – a concession to the metal and mining sectors.

As echoed in WWF's report “**Industry's role in water resilience: How some lead - and others wreck**”, mining activities are no light touch on the local populations and nature. Beyond the human rights implications, mining leads to severe contamination of water with heavy metals and chemicals from discharged mine effluent (liquid waste), which can severely harm wildlife and drinking water quality.

WWF and its allies will intensify their efforts to halt the revision of the WFD, safeguarding our freshwater - and, by extension, the wellbeing of citizens.

BETTER WATER
RESILIENCE IS
KEY
TO PREVENTING
FLOODS AND
DROUGHTS, AND
TO ENSURING
ACCESS TO
SAFE, CLEAN
WATER FOR EU
CITIZENS

Illegal wildlife trade is one of the most lucrative crimes worldwide, yet it often goes unnoticed. In 2025, WWF worked tirelessly to ensure the EU implements crucial legislation to tackle environmental crime: the EU Action Plan against Wildlife Trafficking, the new Environmental Crime Directive, and CITES.

WILDLIFE TRADE & CRIME

DEALING WITH ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME

A new Environmental Crime Directive was adopted in 2024, giving Member States two years (until May 2026) to transpose the legislation into their national laws. WWF’s goal for 2025 was to keep the attention on this important matter.

To this end, WWF published its **transposition briefing** in February 2025 and carried out legislative analyses in ten Member States to identify existing gaps in their national laws, offering tailored recommendations. A regional report summarising this work will be published in early 2026.

WWF, the Spanish Guardia Civil, TRAFFIC and UNODC organised an **event on environmental crime** in March 2025 in the European Parliament, bringing together more than 120 participants from a broad variety of sectors to discuss the main challenges encountered and actions needed.

An important victory was keeping environmental crime as a security priority for the EU as part of the new policy cycle for the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT) and in line with Europol’s Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment for 2025. WWF will support the implementation of this new EMPACT cycle, with a specific focus on counter-wildlife crime actions.

EU ACTION PLAN AGAINST WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING

The EU Action Plan against Wildlife Trafficking (EU-WAP) was adopted in November 2022 and runs until 2027. Although the first progress report on its implementation, published in June, shows that some progress has been made, investments by EU Member States remain insufficient, and they need to step up their efforts for the EU-WAP to achieve its goals.

Throughout the year, WWF participated in several roundtables and consultations on the exotic pet trade organised as part of the implementation of the Action Plan. Due to the transnational nature of illegal wildlife trade, the EU-WAP also includes actions aimed at supporting other regions in tackling this crime. The EU-funded GUARD Wildlife Program was developed with that goal in mind. As part of this program, WWF is involved in demand reduction activities in China and Hong-Kong SAR.

CITES: COP20 SECURES WINS FOR SHARKS, RAYS AND BIG CATS

2025 marked the 50th anniversary since the entry into force of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

In November, Uzbekistan hosted the 20th meeting of the CITES COP. **WWF seeks to ensure** that CITES decisions secure lasting benefits for people and nature, and improved protection of endangered species from illegal and unsustainable trade. While some **positive outcomes** were obtained especially for sharks and rays, as well as big cats, WWF was disappointed to see that the EU proposal to increase the protection of anguillid eels was rejected.



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MORE THAN
120
STAKEHOLDERS
JOINED WWF'S
FIRST-EVER
ENVIRONMENTAL
CRIME EVENT IN
THE EUROPEAN
PARLIAMENT

WANTED: EU CLIMATE LEADERSHIP

Despite scientific clarity on the scale and urgency of the climate crisis, 2025 exposed deep fractures in the EU's willingness to act at the pace and scale required. Key moments that should have strengthened Europe's climate leadership instead revealed hesitancy, political compromise and a troubling reliance on loopholes. The year was marked by failed leadership at home and abroad.

- European leaders decided on an inadequate 2040 climate target filled with loopholes.
- The European Commission launched the Clean Industrial Deal, but later decided to drop the word 'decarbonisation' from its upcoming Industrial Decarbonisation Accelerator Act.
- The EU submitted their National Determined Contribution (NDC) to the UN well after the deadline and was unable to achieve an agreement on the phase out of fossil fuels at COP30.

“2025 exposed a worrying retreat from climate ambition. Delays, loopholes and weak compromises dominated the year, but the story is not over: the policy framework developed in 2026 to implement the 2040 climate target could still make all the difference and will be decisive for Europe's climate credibility.”

ALEX MASON, HEAD OF CLIMATE & ENERGY

CLIMATE & ENERGY

EUROPE'S CLIMATE AMBITION UNDER PRESSURE AT HOME AND ABROAD

In 2025, the EU's climate agenda faced critical tests, from a weakened 2040 target to faltering international leadership. As policy debates unfolded on industry, renewables, carbon removals and social fairness, WWF worked to defend scientific integrity, close dangerous loopholes and promote a just transition that aligns climate action with nature protection and social equity.

SETTING THE BAR FOR 2040

THE EU'S
EFFECTIVE
2040
EMISSIONS
REDUCTION
TARGET OF
85%
IS FAR FROM
THE CLIMATE
NEUTRALITY
NEEDED

At the start of the year, the European Commission was expected to present its proposal for a 2040 EU climate target. Instead, weeks of uncertainty followed, and the February deadline passed, with the proposal finally postponed until July.

During this period, WWF published the '2040 Horizon' report that assessed what a fair and science-based 2040 target should look like. The report found that a 90% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2040, the widely anticipated target, would not be sufficient to keep the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C goal within reach. Given the EU's large share of historical emissions, the conclusion was that the EU should aim for climate neutrality by 2040, not later.

When the proposal finally arrived in early July, Climate Commissioner Wopke Hoekstra confirmed fears of weak ambition. The Commission put forward a 90% emissions reduction target and added a major loophole: international offsets. This would allow Member States to cover up to 5% of their efforts by paying for emission reductions outside the EU, instead of cutting pollution at home. This move went directly against the advice of the EU's own scientific body, the European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change, which warned that – based on past experience – such offsets were unlikely to result in real emissions cuts.

Throughout the remainder of the year, WWF worked closely with scientists, policymakers and civil society partners to oppose the use of international offsets and defend the integrity of the climate target. Despite these efforts, EU Member States weakened the proposal further, by accepting the offset loophole and adding new escape clauses, including an "emergency brake" that allows the target to be lowered if nature absorbs less CO₂ than expected. In practice, this would let countries miss their targets without facing consequences. One week later, the European Parliament endorsed the same approach.

After months of intense negotiations, the final outcome was deeply disappointing. Once all loopholes were taken into account, the EU's effective emissions reduction by 2040 dropped to below 85%, far from the climate neutrality needed to stay on an equitable pathway to 1.5°C. WWF strongly regrets this lack of ambition from the new European Commission at such a critical moment.

Looking ahead, 2026 will focus on developing the policies needed to deliver this weakened target. WWF will remain fully engaged, working to ensure these policies are as strong, credible and loophole-free as possible, and will continue to push for the level of climate action that science demands.

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CLIMATE POLICIES THAT WORK FOR EVERYONE

Climate action, however, is about much more than setting targets on paper. Moving the EU towards a carbon neutral economy requires deep and rapid change, guided by effective and fair policies. While this transformation is essential to secure a liveable future, it also affects people's daily lives and can create real challenges for communities and workers. Therefore, WWF EU supported its National Offices in to input into their national Social Climate Plans.

Throughout the year, WWF EU placed social fairness at the heart of its climate and energy work and in its coalition work, such as the European Alliance for Just Transition and the Beyond Fossil Fuel campaign, and the organisation of a session on the topic during the EU Sustainable Energy Week.

A just transition cannot be achieved in isolation. For this reason, WWF EU integrates social equity across all the areas listed below, linking climate action with employment, energy affordability and social protection.

MAKING EUROPE'S INDUSTRY CLEAN

Another major priority for the new European Commission in 2025 was the EU's industry. Towards the end of 2024, the Commission had announced plans for a new Clean Industrial Deal, designed to cut emissions from EU industry and boost green technologies, while ensuring it remains competitive on the global stage.

From the outset, WWF advocated for this deal to become a driver of a fast and socially fair industrial transformation, calling for strong support for clean technologies, fair

competition where polluters pay for their pollution, and the creation of sustainable, high-quality jobs. At the same time, WWF defended the importance of public participation and upholding robust protections for nature, which were under constant pressure from deregulation efforts throughout the year.

To contribute to the debate, WWF joined forces with Carbon Market Watch to publish the report 'A Clean Industrial Revolution in Europe', ahead of the Clean Industrial Deal proposal. The report gained wide media attention by exposing how heavy industries, such as steel and cement, still receive most of their pollution permits for free under the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS). In some cases, companies were given more permits than they needed, effectively subsidising the EU's most polluting industries and losing up to €40 billion in revenues, in 2023 alone.

The report also showed that almost 40% of Innovation Fund revenues under the ETS were being channelled into carbon capture and storage or utilisation technologies. This raised concerns that other essential climate solutions were being sidelined. WWF and Carbon Market Watch urged the EU to address these shortcomings as part of the Clean Industrial Deal.

When the Clean Industrial Deal was presented in February, it marked a modest step forward: While falling short of offering a clear, clean and fair vision for Europe's industrial future, it did include several positive measures to scale up clean technology sectors and products across the EU.

As part of this package the announcement of an Industrial Decarbonisation Accelerator Act was anticipated later in the year, intended to strengthen green lead markets, boost

circularity and reinforce EU value chains. However, during Commission President von der Leyen’s State of the Union address in September, it emerged that the word “decarbonisation” had been dropped from the Act’s title. This signalled a broadening of its scope to include areas such as AI and data centres, raising concerns that climate ambition could be diluted.

Originally expected in December, the Act has now been postponed until the end of January 2026. WWF continues to advocate for decarbonisation to remain at the core of the Industrial Accelerator Act.

UNLOCKING THE FULL POTENTIAL OF RENEWABLE ENERGY

In the area of renewable energy, WWF continued to push for a faster rollout of renewables, while ensuring that this expansion respects nature and includes public participation. We contributed to the discussion with own advocacy and research, but also through coalitions such as the Offshore Coalition for Energy & Nature (OCEaN).

In 2024, the Net Zero Industry Act introduced an important new requirement: EU countries must now include environmental, non-price criteria in their renewable energy auctions, such as wind energy. To support effective implementation, WWF **developed guidelines** to help governments make the best use of these ecological criteria. The guidance also shows how social considerations can be included.

In addition, WWF worked with five other think tanks and NGOs to assess how well ten EU Member States are progressing on spatial mapping and planning for renewable energy. **This work** also focused on the designation of Renewable Acceleration Areas, which are designed to help countries identify, in advance, where renewable energy can be built with the least impact on nature and communities. This could make permitting processes faster and more efficient, helping to speed up renewable deployment in a responsible and well-planned way.

NATURE AS CLIMATE’S ALLY

It is widely accepted that removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere will be necessary to meet climate goals, alongside deep and sustained cuts in emissions. How much carbon removals will be needed, which methods should be used, and where they should take place depends on many factors. What is already clear, however, is that the EU’s current policy framework is not fit for purpose. It lacks clear targets, strong safeguards and robust sustainability criteria, and looks set to label as carbon removal activities that actually increase net emissions.

Against this backdrop, WWF EU published concrete **recommendations** to help strengthen the EU’s approach to carbon dioxide removal. It also outlined a clear vision for **which types** of carbon removal should be prioritised – and avoided. At the centre of the right approach are nature-based solutions, such as restoring forests, wetlands and soils, which not only remove carbon from the atmosphere but also deliver multiple additional benefits, including protecting biodiversity, improving ecosystem resilience and supporting local livelihoods.

Through this work, WWF helped steer the debate towards a more sustainable and science-based approach to carbon dioxide removal, ensuring it complements emissions reductions.

THE EU ON THE INTERNATIONAL STAGE

2025 was a disappointing year for the EU on the international climate stage. The bloc submitted its Nationally Determined Contribution for 2035 late, and only as a wide range (66.25%–72.5%), after failing to reach internal agreement amid the heated debate over the 2040 climate target.

At COP30, the EU was also unable to break the deadlock. Its reluctance to commit additional funding to countries most threatened by climate impacts prevented progress on a global agreement to phase out fossil fuels. WWF, present at the summit, pushed for an agreement on both files, but instead the world ended up with neither.



EU MEMBER STATES MUST NOW INCLUDE ENVIRONMENTAL CRITERIA IN THEIR RENEWABLE ENERGY AUCTIONS

SUSTAINABLE FINANCE



PROGRESS AMID SETBACKS

Following the announcement of the first simplification omnibus package, aiming to ‘simplify’ (or deregulate) some core EU Green Deal legislation on corporate accountability, 2025 shaped up to be an especially challenging year for sustainable finance. Nevertheless, while progress in some fields visibly slowed down, other policy areas saw targeted advancements. WWF continued working for a sustainable economy that supports people, nature, and climate.

In 2025, this included:

- Advocating for strong corporate sustainability laws, specifically speaking out against the deregulation of the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD), the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), and the EU Taxonomy.
- Highlighting the importance of excluding fossil fuels from sustainable fund categories in the Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation (SFDR) revision.
- Examining how the European Central Bank can both protect price stability and support the energy transition with lower green interest rates.

“In 2025, as the EU shifted away from past ambitious action on sustainable finance, it became more important than ever to remain focused on Europe’s long-term prosperity and resilience, through accelerating the sustainable transition of EU companies for the benefit of people, nature and the climate, alongside companies themselves.”

SEBASTIEN GODINOT, SENIOR ECONOMIST

SUSTAINABLE FINANCE IN TURBULENT TIMES

As new priorities such as ‘simplification’ and ‘competitiveness’ dominated the EU’s 2025 agenda, climate, nature, and sustainability seemed to fall into the background of finance policy-making. Amid these shifts, WWF continued advocating for policies that support the development of a sustainable economy, prioritising long-term economic resilience by accelerating the green transition of EU companies.

CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY ON THE CHOPPING BLOCK

In early 2025, the European Commission signalled a shift in priorities for its new mandate. Corporate sustainability laws were the first to be targeted through an Omnibus package, a legislative proposal aiming to streamline key legislation, in this case, three laws: the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD), the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), and the EU Taxonomy.

In late February, under the pretext of ‘simplification’ and ‘easing administrative burden’, the European Commission presented a **proposal** that fell short of the promise to simplify without sacrificing sustainability ambition. Instead, it signalled a radically weakened EU corporate sustainability framework, reducing the number of companies in the scope by an astonishing 90%. The process was rushed and thin on evidence: both the required impact assessment and climate consistency assessment were omitted, the internal consultation time for Commission departments was limited to 24 hours over a weekend, and there was no public consultation, but instead a stakeholder outreach centred largely on conservative corporate lobbies or non-EU firms.

While the European Commission claimed an urgent timeline, it failed to provide adequate justification. Later in the year, the EU Ombudsman found “maladministration” and “procedural shortcomings” in the way the legislative proposal was prepared.

As the process progressed, it became clear that policymakers were not taking scientific evidence into account. WWF EU’s **analysis** of the European Commission’s proposal revealed that the changes suggested in the simplification omnibus would exempt large oil and gas companies from

disclosing their alignment with the EU Taxonomy. By June, the first draft report by lead negotiator MEP Jörgen Warborn introduced further weakening measures. Days later, **Member States agreed** to proceed with diluting the corporate sustainability laws, confirming that the Omnibus package prioritised administrative convenience over climate and nature.

Meanwhile, the European Financial Reporting Advisory Group (EFRAG – of which WWF is a member), tasked by the European Commission with preparing a draft revision of the European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS) as part of the omnibus process, released its proposal. Given the very tight timeline set for this work, the evidence-based approach underpinning the ESRS was constrained, **raising concerns** about the standards’ ability to effectively track progress and provide transparency on impacts to people and nature.

In the following months, **political shifts and new alliances** in the European Parliament increasingly favoured business interests over credible corporate sustainability laws. By the final stage, the JURI Committee faced two options, both more or less detrimental to the EU’s sustainable finance framework. Despite **initial efforts** by progressive members to support the less harmful choice, conservative and far-right groups ultimately prevailed, delivering a significantly **damaging outcome** – notably abandoning mandatory climate transition plans for large companies.

The inter-institutional negotiations wrapped up just before the winter holidays, confirming a year-long trend: conservative priorities increasingly overshadow climate and nature. The **final Omnibus package** reversed years of progress, departing from evidence-based policy while ignoring the many voices of progressive businesses, economists, and sustainability experts.

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SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENTS: SMALL STEPS IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

Throughout 2025, WWF EU worked to ensure that sustainable investments live up to their name, closing loopholes that allow fossil fuels to be included in green fund categories.

Ahead of the Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation (SFDR) review, WWF EU partnered with **Urgewald** to publish a **briefing paper** advocating for the exclusion of fossil fuels from forthcoming SFDR sustainable fund categories. The briefing highlighted the review of the law as a critical opportunity to address shortcomings, prevent greenwashing practices, and create a clear, level playing field for investors.

WWF EU also published its **third paper** with recommendations for the review of the SFDR – completing a series that started in 2024. The **three briefing papers**, published in October 2024, November 2024, and July 2025, explore different key aspects of strengthening sustainability in the SFDR. This evidence-based collection reinforced WWF’s advocacy work for a more robust and clearer framework.

As the SFDR review neared, WWF joined seven other organisations in urging the European Commission to **integrate stewardship** as a core element of the law, making it stronger and more consistent. **Another letter** followed shortly after, with 29 organisations sending a

clear message: all future SFDR fund categories need to exclude companies developing new fossil fuel projects.

When the European Commission ultimately presented its **proposal** for the SFDR review, it included several positive steps but fell short of WWF’s expectations. While it excluded new fossil fuel activities from the ‘sustainable’ and ‘transition’ fund categories, oil and gas remain in the ‘ESG basics’ category. The proposal also omitted clear disclaimers for non-sustainable products, depriving retail investors of clarity regarding potentially harmful funds. Despite these shortcomings, the proposal offers a foundation for greater ambition. WWF EU authored a **new briefing paper** in December 2025, containing targeted recommendations based on the Commission’s proposal. As the process unfolds in 2026, it will be up to the Member States and the European Parliament to prioritise science, clarity and transparency.

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AS CATALYSTS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE

Financial systems play a critical role – positive or negative – in environmental stability and, by extension, economic resilience. In 2025, WWF continued advocating for policies that align financial systems with EU and global climate and nature objectives. Several positive developments took place throughout the year in

CORPORATE
SUSTAINABILITY
LAWS WERE
THE FIRST TO
BE TARGETED
BY AN
OMNIBUS
‘SIMPLIFICATION’
PACKAGE

the field of monetary policy and prudential rules. The year began with the European Banking Authority’s **new guidelines** on prudential transition plans, a positive milestone for banking supervision.

Later in January, WWF joined 60 other organisations in urging the Governing Council of the European Central Bank (ECB) to update its **Climate Roadmap**, reflecting new challenges and opportunities since its last iteration four years prior.

In the summer, the ECB took two notable steps forward: it put in place its first-ever nature indicator in financial disclosures and, shortly after, announced the introduction of a **climate factor** in its collateral framework, set to take effect in late 2026. This mechanism will adjust collateral values based on climate transition risk, signalling the ECB’s recognition of climate change as a financial stability concern.

In **July 2025**, WWF EU contributed to a study led by WWF’s Greening Financial Regulations Initiative (GFRI) in collaboration with University College London’s Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose (UCL IIPP). The report found that EU-based financial institutions significantly support companies implicated in global ecosystem degradation, and underscored the need for central banks and financial regulators to tighten prudential and supervisory responses to nature-related risks.

Later in the year, attention turned to insurance risks. In November, WWF EU was involved in another publication led by the GFRI. This **new paper** highlighted how worsening extreme weather, combined with the growing loss of natural defences such as forests and wetlands, renders insurance inaccessible across Europe. This trend widens the ‘insurance protection gap,’ leaving households and companies exposed to uninsured losses. While there is some progress being made among financial institutions and regulators, such as the ECB’s new climate factor, WWF’s landmark **SUSREG 2025 report**, an assessment of sustainable finance supervision and central bank activities in 50 countries, published in December 2025, found that nature-related risks remain largely overlooked in financial regulation and supervision.

Closing the year, WWF EU **published a study** examining the impact of green refinancing operations, the practice of the ECB offering preferential rates to commercial banks for financing projects in sustainable sectors such as renewable power, upgraded energy grids, energy-efficient buildings, and sustainable transport. The study, commissioned by WWF and authored by Stanislas Jourdan, associate fellow at the New Economics Foundation and Sustainable Finance Lab, found that by implementing such mechanisms, the ECB can both strengthen price stability by reducing energy bills and inflation risks, and accelerate the energy transition: a win-win.



Elman Husaynov / Pexels

WE WORKED
TO ENSURE
THAT
**SUSTAINABLE
INVESTMENTS**
LIVE UP TO
THEIR NAME,
CLOSING
LOOPHOLES
THAT ALLOW
FOSSIL
FUELS TO BE
INCLUDED

SAFEGUARDING AND REBUILDING MARINE LIFE

In 2025, the European Commission unveiled its Ocean Pact, setting the stage for binding action to protect marine ecosystems through an EU Ocean Act. WWF delivered a two-pronged approach to build on this momentum: Advocate for legally binding protection of 30% of EU seas and ensure efforts to rebuild marine life are coherently integrated across EU policies.

Our actions included:

- Advocating for effective protection of at least 30% of EU marine areas by 2030, of which 10% must be under strict protection.
- Demonstrating what “good” marine and coastal restoration under the EU Nature Restoration Law looks like, including through a field trip with the EU Commissioner for Fisheries and Oceans.
- Spotlighting the role of sustainable fisheries in ocean protection and restoration efforts, and the EU's role in stopping the illegal seafood trade.

“2025 raised serious questions as to the credibility of the EU’s green leadership. In its forthcoming Ocean Act, the EU has the chance to claw back its credentials by locking in effective, legally binding marine protection”

JACOB ARMSTRONG, OCEAN POLICY MANAGER

OCEANS

SAFEGUARDING AND REBUILDING MARINE LIFE

In 2025, our planet reached a major tipping point linked to greenhouse gas emissions, with warm water coral reefs now facing a long-term decline. Despite this, there were signs that the tide could be turning for European marine ecosystems.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATURE RESTORATION LAW UNDERWAY

Most EU Member States have started putting the Nature Restoration Law to work, marking a crucial first step towards repairing Europe's ecosystems, including marine and coastal ecosystems.

In 2025, WWF advocated for Member States to make full use of this legislation by showing what “good” restoration efforts look like. **This took the shape of a report** outlining ten science-based principles for effective marine and coastal restoration, based on peer-reviewed EU research and case studies from WWF restoration projects across Europe. In doing so, it offered a catalogue of best practices, as well as a practical checklist for policymakers and project managers preparing Member States's National Restoration Plans – the crucial next step in the law's implementation.

The report was launched during a well-attended webinar for NGOs, ministries, EU institutions, and academia, and a **complementary website** to deliver the case studies and tools to a wider audience.

Building on this momentum, we joined forces with our office in Spain and the WWF Mediterranean Marine Initiative to show the Commission how marine life can bounce back



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BETWEEN
2020 AND
2023, ONLY
2%
OF EU SEAS
WERE COVERED
BY MARINE
PROTECTED
AREAS WITH
MANAGEMENT
PLANS

thanks to science-based restoration efforts. We hosted a field visit with the EU Commissioner for Fisheries and Oceans, Costas Kadis, to LIFE Ecorest in Catalonia, a project which aims to restore 30,000 hectares of deep-sea habitats. The Commissioner discovered the project through discussions with fishers and scientists, before embarking on WWF's Blue Panda sailing boat to participate in restoration hands-on by releasing coral into the sea.

Through these various outputs and activities, we showed that the Nature Restoration Law can be a mechanism for meaningful ocean restoration. With Member States set to submit their draft National Restoration Plans as early as this September, it is critical that they get them right. In 2026, we will continue to showcase positive examples of marine restoration and deliver multi-stakeholder initiatives to convince Europe's politicians and civil servants to put measures to reduce human pressures at sea – for instance, overfishing and destructive fishing – into their restoration plans.

THE EU OCEAN ACT ON ITS WAY

Another positive sign in 2025 was President Von der Leyen's announcement that the Commission would put forward a European Ocean Act by 2027, in a bid to provide “a single framework to facilitate delivery on Europe's ocean commitments [...] turning ambition into reality”.

WWF and other civil society groups see the Act as the next step to deliver on the **Blue Manifesto** and, in particular, to make protection of at least 30% of EU seas by 2030 (through the establishment of Marine Protected Areas) legally binding. While this commitment exists under the EU Biodiversity Strategy, it has yet to be enshrined into EU law.

Marine Protected Areas are a key tool for safeguarding marine biodiversity by providing spatial protection for specific species, habitats, and ecological processes. However, merely designating an area as an MPA does not guarantee effective protection. Rather, this hangs on the implementation of comprehensive management and restoration plans, backed by rigorous monitoring and strong enforcement measures.

In June, we **released new analysis** showing that a mere 2% of EU seas are currently covered by MPAs with management plans. Without the clear objectives, conservation measures and restoration actions that are provided by management plans in designated MPAs, these sites remain protected in name only, and harmful activities often continue unchecked.



THE EU IS
THE WORLD'S
LARGEST
SEAFOOD
IMPORTER,
SOURCING
69%
OF ITS SEAFOOD
FROM OUTSIDE
THE REGION

In 2026, WWF will advocate for the forthcoming Ocean Act to be a clear vehicle to enshrine “30 by 30” into law. Built on the foundations of the Maritime Spatial Planning Directive, the Act has the potential turn political promises into actual protection by ensuring Member States comply with their commitments and finally deliver on the pledge to protect at least 30% of Europe’s seas.

BANGING THE DRUM FOR SUSTAINABLE FISHING

With an evaluation of the EU Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) expected in 2026, WWF worked closely with other NGOs to highlight the improvements brought about by the legislation since it came into force in 2013, and the importance of maintaining regulatory certainty in the years to come. We released **a joint position paper** supported by

various environmental groups, calling on the Commission to fulfil the CFP’s potential, maintain regulatory stability and fully enforce the law in its current form.

Within the framework of EU Ocean Week, our team in Brussels joined forces with WWF Sweden to deliver a high-level event on the future of fishery technology, bringing about strategic dialogue on the integration of new technologies – such as autonomous surface vessels – for ecosystem monitoring and data collection, and their role in supporting the implementation of the CFP and Fisheries Control Regulation.

As a member of the EU IUU Fishing Coalition, WWF also continued to advocate for EU leadership in improving global fisheries transparency and governance to end illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. The EU is the

world’s largest seafood importer, sourcing 69% of its seafood from outside the region. It is estimated that one in five seafood products globally is linked to IUU fishing, which is often associated with environmental destruction and forced labour.

Together with EU IUU Fishing Coalition members, WWF **launched several reports assessing** Member States’ patchy implementation of the EU’s landmark Regulation to end IUU fishing – for instance, analysis released by the coalition in October showed that between 2020 and 2023, only 0.29% of the nearly 800,000 catch certificates received from non-EU countries were verified with flag states, and just 0.01% were refused. 2020 and 2023, only 0.29% of the nearly 800,000 catch certificates received

from non-EU countries were verified with flag states, and just 0.01% were refused.

Lastly, WWF supported the EU-funded **Fish-X research project**, aimed at fostering the digital transition of small-scale fisheries. In collaboration with WWF Portugal, the Mediterranean Marine Initiative, and WWF Adria, WWF installed 90 Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS) across fishing vessels, helping fishers safeguard their grounds in increasingly crowded maritime spaces. The project completed in May, culminating with a final conference at the European Parliament hosted by two MEPs, and attended by around 50 participants from EU and national institutions, civil society, fisheries industry and research.

INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

PUTTING NATURE AT THE HEART OF DEVELOPMENT

Throughout 2025, WWF continued to advocate for nature, climate action and environmental integrity at the heart of EU international partnerships. As the EU intensified its focus on competitiveness and large-scale investments, WWF raised concerns that biodiversity protection, climate resilience and poverty eradication risk being sidelined at a time when global crises demand stronger, not weaker, international cooperation.

Highlights included:

- Joint civil society calls to reinforce EU external action and reject the merger of external financing instruments in the next Multi-Annual Financial Framework
- WWF contributions to MFF consultations and joint NGO positions advocating for increased climate and biodiversity ambition in EU external spending
- Analysis and advocacy on the proposed Global Europe Instrument, calling for a minimum 50% climate and environment spending target, 15% biodiversity earmarking, and the robust application of the Do No Significant Harm principle across all EU external investments.

“Global Gateway must deliver tangible benefits for people and nature, not narrow economic or geopolitical interests. Biodiversity, climate and environmental integrity must remain central, and civil society continue to play a meaningful role in shaping and delivering EU external action.”

KATARINA MACEJAKOVA, HEAD OF INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS



KEEPING NATURE AT THE HEART OF EU EXTERNAL ACTION

2025 saw intensified debates on how EU external action should evolve. The year was marked by preparations for the next MFF, the launch of the proposal for a new Global Europe Instrument, and an increasingly explicit alignment of EU external policies with strategic, economic and security interests. For WWF, these developments raised fundamental questions about the future direction of EU external action.

While the EU continues to reaffirm its commitments to the Paris Agreement, the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and the 2030 Agenda, the growing emphasis on competitiveness, migration management and large-scale investment initiatives risks sidelining nature, climate resilience and poverty eradication. Throughout the year, WWF worked to ensure that biodiversity protection, climate action and environmental integrity remain central to EU international partnerships, and that civil society continues to play a meaningful role in shaping and delivering EU external action.

EU EXTERNAL ACTION IN TRANSITION

The EU's approach to international partnerships reflected a broader shift in EU external policy. Global Gateway, the EU's flagship external investment strategy, became increasingly dominant in political messaging and programming. Framed

as a tool to enhance Europe's economic security, diversify supply chains and strengthen geopolitical influence, Global Gateway prioritises large-scale infrastructure, energy and connectivity projects, often implemented through blended finance, guarantees and partnerships with the private sector.

While infrastructure and investment can contribute to sustainable development if designed and governed responsibly, WWF remains concerned that the growing focus on economic interests risks weakening the EU's commitment to poverty eradication and sustainable development. Environmental and social objectives are too often treated as secondary considerations rather than as foundational principles guiding EU engagement with partner countries.

At the same time, the space for civil society in EU external action continued to shrink, with CSOs increasingly framed as consultation partners rather than independent actors with a right of initiative and a key role in implementation. This trend undermines the effectiveness, accountability and legitimacy of EU external action, particularly in contexts where local civil society plays a critical role in protecting human rights, defending environmental defenders and ensuring that development benefits reach communities most in need.

These shifts formed the backdrop to WWF's advocacy throughout the year, particularly in relation to the future architecture and priorities of EU external financing.

DEFENDING A STRONG, SUSTAINABLE EU EXTERNAL ACTION BUDGET

As discussions on the next MFF gathered momentum, WWF joined broad civil society coalitions to defend a strong, coherent and values-based EU external action budget. In February, **WWF co-signed a joint call with 47 other organisations** urging the European Commission to reject proposals to merge existing external financing instruments into a single undifferentiated fund, which would risk undermining the effectiveness and predictability of EU funding for climate, biodiversity, development, humanitarian aid and pre-accession support.



Members of the Lungani Women Group in Kenya with goats they received to support women-led nature-based enterprises

© WWF-US / Jerry Mshale

HARMONY IN HABITAT: EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES FOR NATURE'S RESILIENCE

Stretching across the Mau and Tsavo sub-landscapes, two of Kenya's most important water towers and biodiversity hotspots, *Harmony in Habitat* works at the heart of the transboundary Southern Kenya–Northern Tanzania landscape. These ecosystems underpin wildlife movement, climate regulation, and local livelihoods, yet they are under growing pressure from land degradation, climate impacts, and socio-economic change.

Harmony in Habitat is a five-year, EU-funded initiative implemented by WWF-Kenya in partnership with the Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association, the Taita Taveta Wildlife Conservancies Association, Rhino Ark, and CIFOR-ICRAF. The project responds to these interconnected challenges through an integrated, landscape-scale approach that places people and nature at the centre of sustainable development.

By strengthening local governance, restoring degraded ecosystems, and supporting viable green livelihoods, the project enables communities to lead conservation efforts while

building resilience to climate and economic shocks. Concrete benefits include improved food security, enhanced climate resilience, and expanded socio-economic opportunities, with a strong focus on women, youth, and Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities as key agents of change.

Reflecting NaturAfrica's people-centred approach, *Harmony in Habitat* simultaneously delivers biodiversity outcomes, inclusive green economic development, and more effective landscape governance. Support for nature-based livelihoods across agriculture, forestry, rangelands, and tourism, combined with stronger market linkages for local enterprises, is expected to catalyse up to €10 million in green investment.

Through EU support, the project contributes to the Southern Kenya Corridor initiative, strengthening ecological connectivity while unlocking sustainable economic opportunities across one of Kenya's most biodiverse and strategically important regions.

Flooded forest during rainy season, Amazonas, Brazil

FINANCING NATURE-POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT AT SCALE

Delivering on global climate and biodiversity goals requires more than public funding alone. WWF works at the intersection of conservation, development and finance to help mobilise capital at scale — while ensuring investments deliver real benefits for nature and communities. Through its work on **financing green**, WWF brings decades of on-the-ground experience and technical expertise to design and pilot innovative financial solutions that align environmental integrity with long-term economic resilience.

WWF's financial solutions demonstrate how EU external action investment initiatives such as Global Gateway can support inclusive, nature-positive investment models that reduce risk, strengthen local livelihoods and protect ecosystems. These approaches provide a practical testing ground for blended finance, guarantees and smaller-scale instruments that complement large infrastructure investments.

Three examples illustrate this potential. WWF's **Landscape Finance Approach** mobilises public and private capital at landscape scale, aligning conservation priorities with value chains and community needs. The **Dutch Fund for Climate and Development (DFCD)** — backed by an EU guarantee — shows how blended finance can unlock private investment for climate adaptation and nature-based solutions in vulnerable contexts. Meanwhile, the **Southwest Indian Ocean (SWIO) Venture Builder** complements these models by supporting small and medium-sized, community-led blue enterprises in Africa, providing business incubation, technical assistance and bridge financing, and aggregating projects into investable portfolios.

WWF stressed that dedicated, well-resourced instruments are essential to delivering long-term impact for nature, climate and people. Blurring the lines between development cooperation, humanitarian assistance and geopolitical objectives risks creating damaging trade-offs and weakening the EU's credibility as a reliable global partner.

In parallel, **WWF joined 30 NGOs in calling for a significant reinforcement of EU external action** and international cooperation in the next MFF. The coalition highlighted that global challenges — from climate change and biodiversity loss to poverty, inequality and conflict — demand increased, not reduced, investment in Official Development Assistance (ODA), and emphasised the effectiveness of the current NDICI–Global Europe instrument.

Key demands included a substantial increase in the external action budget, strong ODA commitments with a focus on Least Developed Countries and fragile contexts, and predictable, long-term financing that balances flexibility with strategic investments in climate resilience, biodiversity protection and human development.

WWF'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE MFF DEBATE

In April, WWF contributed to the **Commission's public consultation on MFF and EU external action**, calling for a well-resourced external action budget underpinned by a dedicated instrument for international cooperation.

WWF's recommendations focused on strengthening biodiversity protection and climate action across EU external spending, applying the Do No Significant Harm (DNSH) principle consistently, reinforcing thematic programmes, enhancing support for civil society, and ensuring that the overall architecture of EU external action remains coherent, transparent and accountable.

WWF also contributed to a **joint position paper led by CONCORD**, calling for binding targets within the next MFF, including at least 35% of international cooperation funding for climate action and at least 15% exclusively for biodiversity. These targets are essential to align EU spending with its international commitments and to ensure that nature-based solutions, ecosystem restoration and biodiversity conservation are not crowded out by more commercially attractive investments.

THE GLOBAL EUROPE INSTRUMENT: OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS

In December, WWF contributed to **CONCORD's analysis of the Commission's proposal for the Global Europe Instrument** (GEI) and

endorsed the **joint MFF Hub assessment of the GEI**. The proposed GEI would consolidate existing external instruments into a single framework worth €200.3 billion, presented as a “simplification” aimed at increasing flexibility and responsiveness. While the scale of the proposed budget is welcome, WWF is concerned that the consolidation reflects a deeper shift in the philosophy of EU external action.

The removal of binding spending targets represents one of the most significant setbacks. Under the current framework, clear benchmarks exist for climate action, biodiversity, human development and regional allocations. The GEI proposal eliminates most of these, retaining only a reduced ODA requirement and a general climate and environment target referenced outside the regulation itself.

The absence of a dedicated biodiversity target is particularly concerning, as it risks sidelining nature finance at a time when global biodiversity loss is accelerating. Worryingly, the proposal also significantly expands the role of financial instruments, private sector actors and large-scale investments which risks marginalising grant-based support for biodiversity conservation, ecosystem restoration and community-based natural resource management.

WWF will continue to advocate for an EU external action instrument that delivers tangible benefits for people, nature and the climate, and recommends raising the climate and environmental spending target for Global Europe to at least 50%, with a legally binding 15% dedicated to biodiversity; embedding these targets directly in the GEI regulation; and establishing robust tracking methodologies that prevent greenwashing and ensure real impact. WWF also calls for the Do No Significant Harm principle to be applied as a binding safeguard across all financing modalities.

Protecting predictable funding for civil society, prioritising grant-based financing in low-income and fragile contexts and safeguarding an ambitious overall budget will be essential to ensure that EU external action remains credible, effective and aligned with the EU's global commitments.

Civil society organisations play a critical role in translating EU external action into tangible and lasting impact on the ground. With long-term presence, trusted relationships with local and Indigenous communities, CSOs are uniquely placed to link biodiversity conservation with inclusive development, good governance and rights-based approaches.

EU support to the Dzanga-Sangha Protected Areas in the Central African Republic under the NaturAfrica programme illustrates this added value in practice. Through close cooperation between the EU, national authorities and civil society partners, conservation efforts are linked with sustainable livelihoods, eco-tourism and renewable energy. The partnership also enabled the **inauguration of a new Indigenous Peoples' Centre**, providing a dedicated space for dialogue, cultural promotion, training and economic empowerment for Indigenous communities.

OUR DONORS, PARTNERS & ALLIES

The success of WWF’s policy work at EU level depends on external funding for our priority work, a coordinated and supportive network and strong alliances with key stakeholders and partners.

WWF NETWORK

Throughout the year, many WWF offices provided WWF EU with their expertise and advocacy support. We are particularly grateful to the 17 network offices which contributed financially to our policy and communications activities and campaigns. This support makes it possible for WWF EU to engage in a broad range of policy and legislative processes and represent the voices and concerns of millions of WWF supporters around Europe and the world.

FOUNDATIONS

WWF EU is supported both financially and in terms of policy development by major foundations. We are grateful for the continued support from the European Climate Foundation, the KR Foundation, the Walton Family Foundation, Oceans 5, the Laudes Foundation, the Flotilla Foundation, the Minor Foundation, the Ecological Restoration Fund and the Gieske Strijbis Fund.

CIVIL SOCIETY

WWF EU works with other organisations in various alliances: as a member of the ten biggest EU environmental NGOs in Brussels (Green 10 coalition), the European NGO confederation for relief and development (CONCORD), the Climate Action Network (CAN Europe), the Living Rivers Europe coalition, the European Habitats Forum (EHF), and the Offshore Coalition for Energy and Nature (OCEaN). WWF is also a member of the EU IUU Fishing Coalition.

We also contribute to the following organisations: Fédération des Associations Européennes (FAIB), Market Advisory Council, the Coalition for Energy Savings, Renewables Grid Initiative, the Long Distance Advisory Council (LDAC), and the European Environmental Citizens Organisation for Standardisation (ECOS).

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

We receive an operating grant from the EU Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA) through the LIFE Programme. In 2025, we also received project funding via the Research Executive Agency (REA) and the European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA).



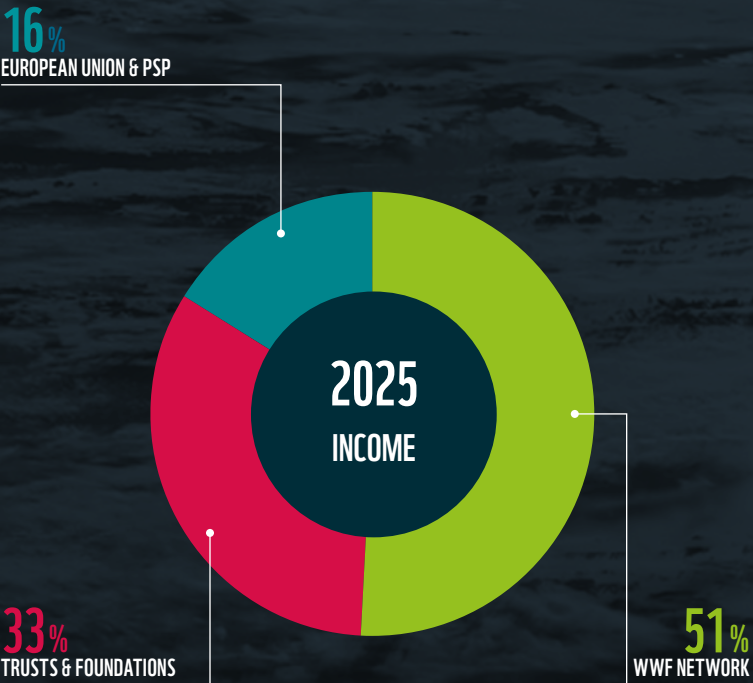
During the financial year 2025, the WWF European Policy Office has received EU funding via the following grants:

- European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA) .Project 101156578 – LIFE23 NGO/BE/WWF EPO
- Research Executive Agency (REA). Project 101060707 – MSP4BIO
- Research Executive Agency (REA). Project 101060879 – FISH-X
- Research Executive Agency (REA). Project 862480 – SHOWCASE
- European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA). Project 101206245 – SEAMPHONI

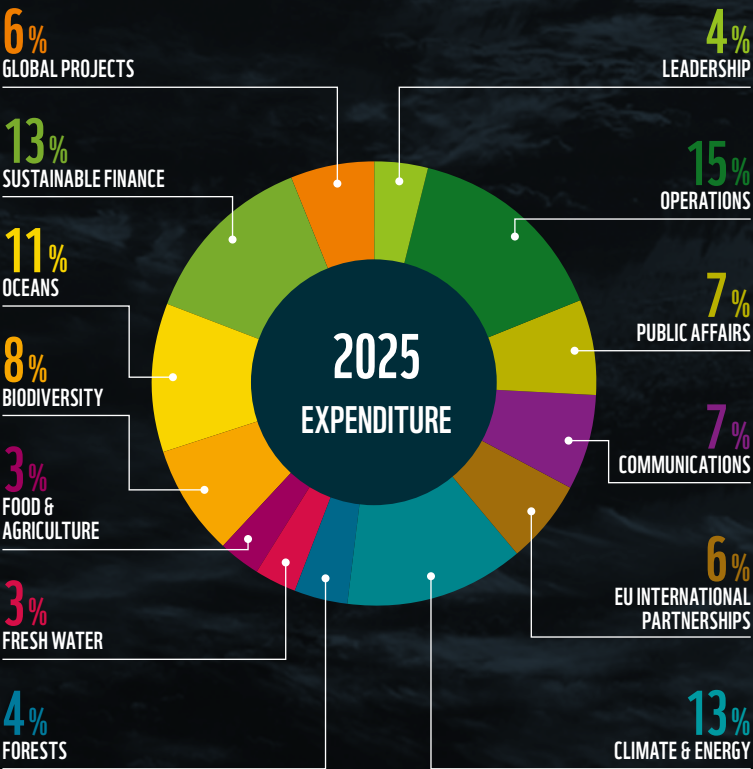
OUR BUDGET

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2025

TOTAL INCOME	€ 5,329,854	
WWF Network	€ 2,693,866	51%
Trusts & Foundations	€ 1,778,372	33%
European Union & Public Sector Partnership (PSP)	€ 834,103	16%
Other Income	€ 23,513	0%



TOTAL EXPENDITURE	€ 5,184,929	
Leadership	€ 199,976	4%
Operations	€ 780,807	15%
Public Affairs	€ 381,267	7%
Communications	€ 354,449	7%
EU International Partnerships	€ 317,889	6%
Climate & Energy	€ 650,405	13%
Forests	€ 226,214	4%
Fresh Water	€ 143,418	3%
Food & Agriculture	€ 163,206	3%
Biodiversity	€ 401,239	8%
Oceans	€ 593,033	11%
Sustainable Finance	€ 649,079	13%
Global Projects	€ 323,949	6%



THE WWF EUROPEAN POLICY OFFICE TEAM*

* as of February 2026

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The WWF European Policy Office is made up of a truly international team representing 17 nationalities, with expertise ranging from biology to finance, from forestry to communications, from political sciences to accounting.

We are united in our passion and dedication to help take Europe firmly on a path to environmental sustainability.

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WWF is an independent conservation organisation, with a global network active through local leadership in over 100 countries.

Our mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which people live in harmony with nature, by conserving the world's biological diversity, ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable, and promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption.

The European Policy Office contributes to the achievement of WWF's global mission by leading the WWF network to shape EU policies impacting on the European and global environment.

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**OUR MISSION IS
TO STOP THE DEGRADATION
OF THE PLANET'S NATURAL
ENVIRONMENT AND TO BUILD
A FUTURE IN WHICH
PEOPLE LIVE IN HARMONY
WITH NATURE.**



Working to sustain the natural
world for the benefit of people
and wildlife.

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