WWF’s Priorities for the Spanish EU Presidency

(January-June 2010)
Biodiversity when protection is simply not enough
Climate change and energy from promises to actions
Water the recovery of rivers, wetlands and aquifers
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EU external policies time for coherence
The current economic downturn reveals that our development model has failed. According to WWF’s Living Planet Report 2008, if humans’ demands on the planet continue at the current rate, by the mid-2030s we will need the equivalent of two planets to maintain our lifestyles. We are facing an unprecedented ecological crisis, in which the extinction of species, climate change and the depletion of natural resources are clear indicators of the need for change.

We have to move towards a new model with a de facto integration of environmental objectives, not only on paper, a new model in which the ecological footprint is one of the key indicators in determining if we are moving in the right direction. The European Union (EU), as a key player in the global arena, can and should lead this change without further delay. And the Spanish Presidency of the EU during the first half of 2010, must be the start of this change, by placing environmental issues at the forefront of the European agenda.

The Spanish Presidency will be organised together with those of Belgium and Hungary - constituting the so-called Trio or Troika. The programme shared by these three countries will address the new stages of the major policies of the EU: the Social Agenda, the Energy Plan 2010-2012, the Climate Change Execution Plan to be agreed in Copenhagen in December 2009, the post-Lisbon Economic Strategy, the Freedom, Security and Justice Area for the 2010-2014 phase, the ongoing reform of the Common Fisheries Policy and the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty after its entry into force.

In the following document, WWF presents its proposals to include environmental issues in the European agenda. The document is accompanied by a checklist, which will allow an assessment of whether the Spanish Government takes these priorities into account in setting and carrying out its agenda, or if all remains a dead letter.

Biodiversity when protection is simply not enough
The *Living Planet Index*, the indicator of wildlife on the planet obtained from a study of the evolution of 5,000 populations of 1,686 species of vertebrates, has dropped 30 percent since 1970. This dramatic loss of our natural wealth is mainly the product of deforestation and the transformation of land uses in tropical areas; the impact of pollution, habitat destruction, flow modification, and climate on freshwater species; and of pollution, overfishing and destructive fishing on marine and coastal ecosystems.

The United Nations has declared 2010 the **International Year of Biodiversity** (IYB). An important and emblematic date to emphasize both the importance of biological diversity and the rapid extinction of species, as well as the need to reach firm commitments to curb their disappearance. The assessment of the European Environment Agency for 2009 reflected the impossibility of achieving the objective of halting biodiversity loss by 2010.

During the Spanish Presidency, the EU must define the post-2010 goal on biodiversity and ecosystems conservation, which is scheduled to be submitted in October at the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

WWF considers that Spain, being one of the countries in the EU with greatest biological diversity, and with more surface territory included in the Natura 2000 Network, has a particular responsibility in ensuring the correct implementation of the European directives for nature protection, and commit to curbing species loss and habitat degradation to promoting their recovery.
**WWF proposals for the Spanish Presidency of the EU**

WWF requests the Government to include biodiversity and the health of ecosystems as a priority on the European agenda. To this end it shall:

– Ensure by June 2010 that a vision and ambitious objectives are established for 2020, that include appropriate measures for the recovery of land, marine and freshwater endangered species and ecosystems.

– Support for 2010 the implementation of Marine Natura 2000, completing the designation of sites during the Trio (during the Spanish Presidency the proposals from the Marine Natura 2000 network in the Mediterranean and Macaronesian bioregions will be assessed).

– Start the debate about the funding, ensuring a strong and specific fund for biodiversity and securing resources from other funds and strengthening Natura 2000’s financial perspectives for the future.

– Accelerate the implementation of the FLEGT regulation to stop illegal timber trade in the European market by the end of 2010, by:
  • Strengthening the international cooperation on socially and environmentally responsible forest management, and its certification through systems such as FSC (Forest Stewardship Council).
  • Implementing effective responsible public procurement policies.
  • Driving the development of legislation to effectively prevent the entry of timber from illegal origins into the EU through the first operators in the market.

Likewise, WWF requests:

– To incorporate the recommendations of the TEEB (*The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity*) report to condition decision making of all Councils, particularly those related to agriculture, fisheries, development cooperation and the economy, and to influence the expected reforms of these policies and instruments.

– Approve the Framework Soil Directive (FSD), which, along with other policies, will ensure the sustainable management of natural resources within the EU. The new FSD shall incorporate the harmonised evaluation of the soil resource status, analysing pressures and impacts, by defining common objectives for good health and the appropriate measures and timetables to approve them.

– Progress in ensuring the timely and correct transposition period of the Marine Framework Directive into Member States’ legislation.

– Urge the Commission to publish a proposal to reduce the emissions from deforestation and forests degradation (Green Paper on Forest Protection) during the first semester of 2010.

**WWF also request the Spanish government to give example and:**

– Make progress in designating marine protected areas in the whole of the EU, according to a participatory model involving the exchange of good practices.

– Promote the development of management tools for Natura 2000, both land and marine, which can serve as an example for the work programme of CBD protected areas.


– Lead the work within the UN on marine biodiversity conservation in areas outside the jurisdiction of the United States.

– Be consistent with European policies and eliminate freeways that endanger the Iberian lynx in Sierra Morena (Spain).
Climate change and energy from promises to actions
Climate change is the greatest environmental, social and economic challenge faced by mankind. The Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change (IPCC) has been alerting us for years about the importance of ensuring that the average temperature increases are less than 2°C, a limit in which impacts on ecosystems can be very severe.

The Spanish Presidency starts just after the Copenhagen Climate talks (COP15), and the agenda of the Presidency will be based on the agreements adopted. But regardless of the results, the fight against climate change must be one of its priorities for this and any European Presidency for the coming decades.

WWF considers it a priority amongst the basic mechanisms to curb climate change, the commitment of the EU to strengthen the resilience of ecosystems, to stop deforestation within and outside its borders, and to improve energy efficiency as the main axis of climate and energy policies. In addition, WWF consider the EU must articulate public funding mechanisms to contribute with sufficient funds to the mitigation and adaptation of developing countries by 2020.

Spain, a country with enormous potential in the field of renewable energy, shall lead the European energy conversion to solar and wind power and should make sure that only sustainably produced biomass could be used for the production of energy in Europe.
WWF’s Priorities for the Spanish EU Presidency (January–June 2010)

Under the EU Presidency, the Spanish Government should lead the proposal to fight against climate change, ensuring:

- Science-based emission reduction targets of 40% by 2020.
- EU financial commitment by 2020 of 35 billion € per year for developing countries.
- Financial commitment before 2013 of 7 billion € per year for adaptation in developing countries.

Inside the EU climate and energy package and the energy efficiency package, the Spanish Government shall:

- Strengthen the Emissions Trading System by reducing the cap and by requiring the ear-marking of auction revenue for climate protection measures;
- Include CO$_2$ performance standards for new large fossil power plants in the new Industrial Emissions Directive.
- Approve the new Energy Efficiency Action Plan in March 2010, which sets a binding objective of a minimum primary energy savings of 20% in absolute terms by 2020 at Community level.
- Propose to the Commission the drafting of a Directive to develop the energy saving objective mentioned above.
- Ensure a rapid transposition and implementation of the revision of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive.
- Approve ambitious eco-design requisites for boilers and air conditioning units (Eco-design Directive) so as to ensure that only “green” and more efficient machines access the market.
- Maximize the contribution of energies saving and renewable energies in the EU Energy Action Plan (2010-2014) and minimize the role of nuclear energy and carbon capture and storage.
- Propose and promote the meaningful and effective application of the sustainability criteria for biofuels and bioliquids as provided for in the Renewable Energy Directive (EC 28/2009).
- Support the development application of legally binding sustainability criteria for biomass used for the production of heat and electricity.
- Promote effective solutions on the issue of indirect land use change as asked for in the Renewable Directive (EC 28/2009).
- Ensure European funds to create a Super Network of Renewable Energies and Measures to achieve maximum energy efficiency with two initial basic pillars: the mass development of wind marine energy in the North Sea and the development of solar technologies for export in Africa (Solar Mediterranean and Desertec Plan), and measures for energy efficiency.

WWF also requests the Spanish Government to lead by example and:

- Adopt, within the Renewable Energies Directive, the ambitious goal for Spain beyond the current 20% (25-30%), especially in the field of electric power, to move at least from 40% to 50%.
- Submit a National Action Plan of Renewable Energies in June 2010 describing how the renewable national objectives for 2020 will be met.
- Adopt the objective of reducing emissions in diffuse sectors in Spain by 30% by 2020, with respect of 2005, instead of the present 10% assumed.
Water the recovery of rivers, wetlands and aquifers
Access to good quality water in sufficient quantity is fundamental to the daily lives of every human being, environment and to most economic activities. But our water environment is in crisis and Spain is no exception - its rivers, wetlands and aquifers are under growing pressure from pollution, over-abstraction, excessive development and climate change.

According to the Living Planet Report 2008, *The Water Footprint of Spain* measuring the total volume of water used globally to produce goods and services consumed by its citizens, is among the top five highest globally. Many rivers, lakes and coastal waters have been degraded to the point where they cannot sustain functioning ecosystems, or their services to humans. In addition, water scarcity is expected to be further intensified by climate change.

During the Spanish Presidency the river basin management plans to achieve “good water” status are to be approved, as required by the Water Framework Directive (WFD), although with some delay. WWF considers that the year 2010 is key to making significant progress in the conservation of aquifers, rivers and wetlands, according to the objectives set by the WFD; and that Spain must play an important role to serve as an example to the Mediterranean countries.
WWF proposals for the Spanish Presidency of the EU

WWF is calling on the Spanish Presidency to step up to the water challenges and put water at the central place in political decision making and:

– Promote and show example of the ambitious implementation of the Water Framework Directive and related water legislation
– Lead the implementation of the EU strategy to address water scarcity and droughts established by the European Commission Communication and step up the efforts with a particular focus on training, awareness, demand management, efficiency and integrated management of resources, with no impact on ecosystems
– Put water cycle and resilience of freshwater ecosystems at the heart of the EU strategy to adapt to climate change impacts.
– Promote the ratification of the International Convention on the non-navigational uses of international watercourses by Member States and the EU as a block.

Likewise, WWF urges the Government to ensure an ambitious implementation of the WFD and adequate river basin management planning and:

– Promote public participation in the development and implementation of the River Basin Management Plans, especially in the process of establishment of the ecological flows.
– Ensure a correct implementation of ecological flows in the main water bodies of river basin districts, starting with places with the highest conflict.
– Establish a proper programme of measures directed towards the achievement of the ecological health of water bodies and to ensure clean up of urban and industrial water.
– Ensure the water needed for ecological processes through programmes of demand management by setting ambitious water-saving objectives for the different uses (mainly for irrigation), and effective measures to control and reduce water consumption (cost recovery, water pricing, extraction control, the “polluter pays” principle, efficiency, new technologies applied to irrigation, losses correction in networks, consumer training and awareness).
– Protect the rivers of high ecological value and prevent infrastructure projects having a significant adverse impact on them, such as dams and basin transfers, creating a network of hydrological reserves and natural water reserves.

WWF also request the Spanish government to lead by example and:

– Ensure the proper transposition of the WFD into the Spanish legislation.
– Drive the National River Restoration Strategy and incorporate it into State law.
– Discard any project having serious environmental and social impacts such as the planned basin transfer projects from the Tagus middle basin, and the construction of the Alcolea, Montequudo, Castrovido, Yesa and Biscarrués dams.
– Lead, with appropriate legislative tools, the fight against the illegal use of water that has severely endangered mythical locations such as Las Tablas de Daimiel and Doñana National Parks.
– Ensure that the future National Irrigation Strategy does not include the expansion of the irrigated areas, focusing their efforts on saving water through the modernisation of the irrigation systems to release saved flows and ensure the good conditions of rivers, aquifers and wetlands.
Public money for public goods I fisheries
With 88% of fisheries in European waters being fished beyond Maximum Sustainable Yield and 30% of these stocks now outside safe biological limits (meaning they may not be able to recover), the European Union has a difficult challenge in the new Common Fisheries Policy but also a unique opportunity to reverse the current trend. Meanwhile, Spain as a major player in the European fishing industry both in EU waters and throughout the world’s ocean, is uniquely well-positioned to lead the adoption of a new fishing model that can ensure sustainable management of fish resources, the conservation of marine ecosystems and a profitable Community fishing industry.

During the Spanish Presidency, the European Commission shall present the conclusions of the Green Paper on Fisheries, after the debates carried out in 2009, as well as their regulation proposal for the new Fisheries Policy 2013-2020, the negotiations of which will begin under the Spanish Presidency.
WWF proposals for the Spanish Presidency of the EU

WWF urge the Spanish Government to ensure, under the EU Presidency, that the current Common Fisheries Policy:
− Follows the scientific recommendations, the precautionary principles and the protection of the marine ecosystem as a whole in the decision-making process on TACs and quotas set to ensure the recovery of stocks.
− Applies the EU rules on penalties in cases of overfishing by national fleets, particularly in more severe cases, such as blue fin tuna.
− Ensures that Member States implement and comply with all the measures contained in the regulation against Illegal Fishing in community and international waters.

More importantly, WWF urges the Spanish Government to promote, under the negotiation of the new Common Fisheries Policy:
− The establishment of long-term binding management plans for all European commercial fisheries that follow scientific recommendations.
− The elimination of the excess capacity of the European fleet by completely eliminating harmful subsidies and establishing a new framework of incentives for sustainable fishing and good practices.
− The promotion of a new policy that will minimize discards that will prevent the discarding of lower value animals and that considers the total catches, not just landings, for management purposes.
− The progress towards a model of more decentralised governance that promotes the participation of stakeholders, co-management and responsibility of the fish sector.
− The insurance of consistency between fishing management in the EU and its foreign fishing policy, both in international waters and in third countries. The EU should strengthen its international leadership role to facilitate the adoption of policies for the protection and sustainable use of high seas resources.
− The strengthening of fishing management in the Mediterranean and the quality of the scientific advice available in the region.

Likewise, WWF also requests the Spanish government to set a strong example and:
− Lead the improvement of fishing management in the Mediterranean.
− Ensure concrete measures to prevent the extinction of blue fin tuna in the Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean Oceans.
− Promote a joint meeting of Ministers of the Environment and Fisheries, to ensure a genuine integration of environmental aspects in the new CFP.
Public money for public goods II agriculture
During 2010, progress will continue to be made in the definition of a new Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) beyond 2013. To defend the position of the Spanish Government in maintaining and even strengthening the current CAP, focused solely on the productive aspects, support to agro-industry and infrastructures, a change of direction must be promoted. The challenge will be to transform the current CAP into a common environmental and rural policy focused on payments for goods and services to society, and under the umbrella of the fight against climate change, the sustainable use of natural resources and the protection of biodiversity.
WWF proposals for the Spanish Presidency of the EU

WWF urge the Spanish Government to ensure, under the EU Presidency, the defence of a new CAP:

– Based on the principle of “public money for public goods and services”,
  which incorporates the principles of “the polluter pays” and “transparency”
  (where public money is invested and the results of this).
– Ensuring that existing measures address the challenges identified by the EU: the fight against climate change, the sustainable management of water and the protection of biodiversity.
– Ensuring a participative debate on the future CAP, involving all stakeholders, including environmental and development NGO, consumer organizations, etc.

Likewise, WWF also request the Spanish government to lead by example and:

– Leverage the mid-term review of the rural development programmes to shift investments basing measures on measures for the conservation of the environment in the agricultural and forestry sectors.
– Promote the principle of “public money for public goods” in the implementation of the new Law 45/2007 on the sustainable development of rural areas, giving priority to the actions on the environmental axis, giving example of how to reorient CAP in a near future, promoting the implementation of exploitation contracts and the bet for sustainable management systems, such as FSC or ecological production.
EU External policies

Time for coherence
Both the Mediterranean and Latin America are two of the major priorities for the Spanish Presidency in terms of external relations.

The Union for the Mediterranean, launched by France under their presidency, is particularly relevant and, under the role of Spain, it is generating many expectations. In fact, a key institution of this initiative, the Secretariat, shall be very soon headquartered in Barcelona.

The Union for the Mediterranean has a number of major programmes or “flagship initiatives” from which three are of particular relevance for WWF: the Mediterranean Solar Plan, the review of the Water Strategy for the Mediterranean and the Horizon 2020 initiative for the de-pollution of the Mediterranean Sea. Under the Spanish Presidency, the Barcelona Summit will take place in June 2010, where a new action programme will be approved and co-Presidencies will be changed.

During the Spanish Presidency the revision process of the instrument for Development Cooperation and the European Fund for Development (2010-2011) will begin; processes of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Cotonou Convention.

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1 For a two-year period. Current Co-Presidents are France and Egypt.
2 It includes developing countries in Africa (Southern Sahara), Caribbean, Pacific, Latin America and Asia.
**WWF proposals for the Spanish Presidency of the EU**

WWF urge the Spanish Government that under the EU Presidency, environmental concerns and especially the fight against climate change become integrated in all external policies of the EU; and stress that the continued loss of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems is undermining the resilience of people and nature to the impacts of climate change and the opportunities to adapt.

**In the context of the Union for the Mediterranean, WWF urges the Spanish Government to:**

- Adopt an ambitious work plan at the Barcelona Summit in June 2010 that includes sustainable development as a strategic objective and has a strong environmental component in climate change mitigation and adaptation as key priorities.
- Finalise and adopt the Mediterranean Water Strategy in April 2010. This should be based on the ecosystem approach and promote a new water culture in the Mediterranean, based on the principles of the Water Framework Directive, sustainable use and demand management, and provides political and financial measures to address the degradation of resources and the impacts of climate change.
- Develop a sustainable framework for the Mediterranean Solar Plan by 2010. Ensure it is a participatory process to enable dialogue with local stakeholders on renewable energy, energy efficiency and convergence with EU legislation.
- Promote a strong cooperation between the EU Member States of the EU (27) and the other Mediterranean Partner countries (16) to achieve a well governed and integrated maritime policy within the Horizon 2020 initiative in the Mediterranean.

**On the Eastern Partnership, WWF urge the Spanish Government to:**

- Adopt two key “flagship initiatives”: one on renewable energies and energy efficiency; and another one on the environment and cooperation in the fight against climate change in the Black Sea region.
- Consolidate the participation of civil society in the political development of the Eastern Partnership by way of the Civil Forum.

**Development Cooperation Policy**

The revision of the financial instruments for development cooperation should promote environmental sustainability and ecosystem services, and provide access to funding and support to capacity building for local civil society organisations.

Spanish Presidency should ensure that financial support for developing countries to cope with the consequences of climate change is additional to European commitments for ODA (0.57% by 2010), and does not divert funding from essential progress on health and education.

- The EU position for the MDG Review in 2010 should accelerate progress on the most off-track MDGs, including MDG7 on environmental sustainability.
- In order to improve the EU’s policy coherence for development, set up a mechanism whereby instances of negative impacts on development as a result of EU policies or actions can be raised by affected governments and communities and independently examined.