

by CEEweb for Biodiversity

International Day of Biodiversity: can we learn from past lessons for the benefit of people and nature?

Budapest, Hungary – on the 22nd of May we celebrate the UN international day for Biological Diversity. CEEweb for Biodiversity raises the question, whether current policies at EU and national level are really sufficient to stop the loss of biodiversity and thus, to protect our future?

Global biodiversity crisis, along with climate change, are the main environmental problems today. The extinction rate of species is 100-1000 times higher than what would be natural. This also has tangible negative effects on the society: biodiversity underpins ecosystem services, which contribute to human wellbeing through the provision of food, water, timber, stable climate, prevention from disasters, recreational opportunities, spiritual values and many more.

In order to respond to this huge challenge and meet global and EU commitments, the European Commission as well as its Member States try their best to adopt and implement their biodiversity-related strategies and action plans, and protect their natural landscapes. It's twenty years ago when the EU Habitats Directive was adopted and the EU-wide network of protected areas called Natura 2000 established. The Commission is committed to halt the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services in the EU by 2020, and restore them in so far as feasible, while stepping up the EU contribution to averting global biodiversity loss.

While acknowledging the positive results of the above efforts, unfortunately all of them lack the political ambition to recognize and respond to the most important drivers of biodiversity loss and thus fail to achieve really significant improvements in the state of species and ecosystems. Biodiversity policies barely touch upon the main drivers behind biodiversity loss, namely, the overuse of natural resources and natural space caused by the current growth-based socio-economic framework, and the excessive pollution as their consequence. CEEweb calls on the European Parliament and EU Member States to openly debate the underlying causes of biodiversity loss and support a strong reform of policies which can address the problem: agriculture, fisheries and resource efficiency, as well as the new EU budget (2014-2021).

“If we really want to protect biodiversity as our life insurance, we have to avoid the pitfalls of the previous policies. We need to tackle the root causes: reduce our resource and land use and put ecosystem services at the heart of development planning,” says Mátyás Prommer, CEEweb Secretary General.

Further information

CEEweb for Biodiversity <http://ceeweb.org/>

About CEEweb for Biodiversity

CEEweb for Biodiversity is an umbrella organization of NGOs in the Central and Eastern European region. Our mission is the conservation of biodiversity through the promotion of sustainable development.

If you have any questions please contact:

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