

We need an EU budget that benefits people and the planet

CEEweb for Biodiversity's position on the ongoing review of the EU budget
and the starting negotiations about the next financial cycle

What?

We call for a reformed EU budget which serves sustainability while increasing well-being. Such an EU budget does not only deliver results for today, but also thinks of tomorrow.

Why?

We need to reform the EU budget because **unsustainable, incoherent policies lead to waste of money, waste of time and loss of lives**. Economic growth that implies the increasing use of resources and land within or beyond borders can never be a goal in a sustainable society. Protecting the environment and maintaining the ecosystem services is not a luxury, but essential preconditions for a thriving society and economy. Economy has to be rather perceived as the means to achieve societal objectives.

In our view sustainability is
the continuous **adaptation** to
the changing natural and socio-economic environment, where
the **goal is increasing human wellbeing**, the economy is
a **tool**, and the natural environment is a **precondition**

How?

By using **public money for public good**. The EU budget shall finance programmes and cover only those costs in the investments that can be directly linked to the public good. For instance the EU budget shall finance those extra costs that are needed to realise investments with reduced negative or increased positive externalities as compared to the mainstream technological options.

By increasing the **European added value** of the EU budget through enhancing synergistic effects and decreasing trade-offs among different sectors. The EU shall stop squandering money on promoting contradictory objectives.

By using the EU budget for **decreasing the total environmental pressure**. This includes absolutely reducing resource use, the intensity of land use and pollution. This is one effective way of reducing trade-offs among several policies, if we want to achieve targets on increased wellbeing, such as the Sustainable Development Goals.

By **stopping wasting money on outdated infrastructures**. Today grey infrastructures, linear business models and fossil energy systems often have more efficient, as well as environmentally and socially better alternatives.

By **providing systemic responses to support systemic transitions**. The EU budget shall be able to strategically support the interlinked economic and social transitions with funds for innovation, infrastructure development, training and education at the same time on multiple levels.

By **supporting long term goals**, which can secure the long term future of the EU and spans beyond the short electoral cycles of national politics.

By focusing on **prevention and adaptation**. The EU budget shall help people and the society preventing future problems, as the most efficient way of dealing with them. This often requires a change of mind and a change in institutions.

By taking a **life cycle approach**, where the whole life cycle of investments is duly taken into account with the help of a reformed cost-benefit analysis, from environmental, economic and social points of view.

By incorporating more **flexibility** so that the EU can respond quickly and effectively to the current and future challenges.

Sustainability proofing

We call for the sustainability proofing of the next EU budget, which provides the right principles and tools to make the EU budget work for the people and the planet.

