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## **CEEweb contribution to the public consultation about Green Paper: "EU development policy in support of inclusive growth and sustainable development - Increasing the impact of EU development policy"**

CEEweb for Biodiversity<sup>1</sup> welcomes the opportunity to give input to the public consultation about Green Paper: "EU development policy in support of inclusive growth and sustainable development - Increasing the impact of EU development policy". Please find below our responses for questions 22 and 24.

**22. Given the close interlinkage between climate change, biodiversity and development, and given the new opportunities offered by climate finance and the markets, how can the mainstreaming of climate adaptation as well as disaster risk reduction into the EU's development policy be strengthened in order to ensure more climate resilient and sustainable economies, as well as forest and biodiversity protection?**

A good tool for analyzing policy measures is the DPSIR model (Driving Forces-Pressures-State-Impact-Response) developed by European Environmental Agency (EEA). If we apply this holistic approach to the changing climate (being the State) and its adverse effects (being the Impacts), our Responses will be the mitigation and adaptation measures. These Responses can target the Impacts (e.g. building river dams as adaptation to extraordinary floods), the Pressures (e.g. regulating anthropogenic CO<sub>2</sub> emissions while keeping the current economic framework) or the Driving Forces (e.g. decreasing our total demand for energy and space).

There are many efforts in the EU to stop climate change, biodiversity loss and poverty at global level; yet most of these efforts are directed to addressing either the Impacts or the Pressures. However, our chances for combating the above crises are doubtful as long as their driving forces remain untouched – namely, our demand for energy, natural resources and anthropogenic space keeps increasing in the current trends, leading to unsustainable exploitation of resources and the consequent pressure on biodiversity in developed countries. We may even magnify the problems by eliminating one pressure while enhancing another at the same time. When designing the EU's development policy, the DPSIR model could help finding measures that support human wellbeing while addressing the common drivers behind climate change and biodiversity loss.

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<sup>1</sup> CEEweb for Biodiversity is a network of 64 non-governmental organizations in the Central and Eastern European region. Our mission is the conservation of biodiversity through the promotion of sustainable development.

CEEweb recommends the setting of overall targets of development policy as the first step. In line with the EU's Post-2010 Biodiversity Strategy, we recommend **setting the goal of reducing the EU's total environmental pressure on global biodiversity** also as a target of development policy. Furthermore, we recommend **setting limits and gradual decrease for the EU's demand for energy and natural resources**, until the carrying capacity of Europe is reached. Ecological footprint should be used as an indicator.

As for specific measures of climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction, we recommend to apply the **ecosystem approach**. Protecting the biodiversity in forests and other natural habitats, as well as the structure and organic carbon content of agricultural soils is crucial for combating climate change, implementing global biodiversity policies, and for feeding the growing world population as well. Therefore, we need to find **convergence of interests between soil conservation, climate change, water management, food production, disaster mitigation and biodiversity conservation**. To ensure the resilience of local communities, their land use needs to undergo an ecology-based transformation. Natural solutions supporting ecosystem services have been proven to bring multiple benefits and be extremely cost-effective at the same time. EU policies should bring stronger global focus on these synergies in upcoming international negotiations, most importantly the Rio+20.

As included in the CBD Nagoya Strategic Plan, global deforestation needs to be stopped by 2020. Designed for climate change mitigation, REDD+ is a tool soon available for protecting organic carbon in tropical forests. **We urge the REDD+ budget to be scaled up and start to operate at large scale as soon as possible**. However, the scope of REDD+ is restricted to tropical forests. It doesn't include belowground carbon stocks in other natural ecosystems, for example grasslands on peatlands and permafrost, which store 50% of soil carbon globally in spite of their relatively small cover of 16% of terrestrial land, and thus are the most significant terrestrial GHG emitters beside tropical deforestation. CEEweb calls for **exploring the possibility of including these as well as other natural ecosystems in the scheme**, so that we would have a much more comprehensive instrument covering huge amounts of terrestrial carbon. Besides, we support the inclusion of Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) sectors in carbon accounting.

#### **24. How can the EU's development policy best contribute to enhanced food security while safeguarding environmental qualities? Which policies and programmes are most conducive for small holder and private sector investment in agriculture and fisheries?**

**Agriculture is multifunctional:** yield is just one piece of the agricultural system's outputs. There are many others like fibres, timber and compost, but also services such as maintaining water supply, carbon sequestration and other ecosystem services as well as soil biodiversity are just as well parts of it, many of which are critically important for long-term sustainability. There are many possibilities in agriculture to make the above services more effective at marginal costs, provided that the right management techniques are recognized and implemented. Yet yield receives unbalanced big priority in today's agriculture while soil biodiversity is not considered to be a productive factor, allowing intensive techniques to dominate production.

Intensive agriculture is not only harmful for below- and aboveground biodiversity and the climate, but, through its huge externalities, makes farming vulnerable to future changes in supply of energy and natural resources. It involves huge externalities in terms of its demand for energy and external resources. Beside their huge costs, fertilization regimes negatively influence soil biodiversity and soil organic carbon (SOC) content, which is reflected in the soil's decreased productivity. A clear signal of soil depletion can be seen globally, yet this signal is often hidden by using even more fertilizers to balance against the loss in the soil's own organic fertility.

A **sustainable agricultural** system is diverse, providing food and many other goods and services at the same time. It applies techniques such as integrating crop residues into the soil, reduced tillage, cover crops and crop rotation. These techniques can enhance the soil's natural productive capacity through increasing its SOC. Enhanced SOC content increases carbon sequestration, water and nutrient retention and decreases the risk of erosion. Therefore, unlike monocultures vulnerable for any extreme events, integrated agricultural systems are more resilient to extremes, be it either weather event or pest outbreak.

Therefore, in order to contribute to food security and safeguard environmental qualities EU development policy should support **sustainable agriculture and local market creation, combining existing local frameworks with top-down initiatives**. Besides, **research and innovation in alternative agricultural methods needs to be scaled up**. The aim should be to find the way to satisfy human needs relying on local natural resources including enhanced soil capacity.

Agriculture is strongly interrelated with climate change, being on one hand extremely vulnerable to its adverse effects, but on the other hand, offering huge potentials to mitigation of, and adaptation to climate change. To support these potentials, **a scheme needs to be elaborated which will include Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) sectors in carbon accounting. Carbon sequestration as well as other soil services should be included in farmers' economy** by mainstreaming valuation of ecosystem services into land management. We need to look beyond today and estimate the huge cost of replacing lost services as well as benefits of society and reduction of costs achieved by maintaining healthy soil services. These costs need to be included in prices and a new scheme of **Payments for Ecosystem Services** needs to be elaborated.

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