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THE EEB'S

# TEN GREEN TESTS

## FOR THE BULGARIAN PRESIDENCY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION



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EUROPE'S LARGEST NETWORK  
OF ENVIRONMENTAL CITIZENS'  
ORGANISATIONS



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# TEN GREEN TESTS FOR THE BULGARIAN PRESIDENCY

**We call upon the Bulgarian Presidency of the European Union to promote a greener, more sustainable Europe, where our destructive impact on the climate, biodiversity and public health in Europe and beyond is rapidly decreased in line with citizens' expectations and scientific imperatives, through the following measures:**

## 1. Make sustainable development central to the future of Europe

- Take opportunities to promote a people-centred agenda of transformational change in the EU based on the global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- Seek to ensure that the Reflection Paper 'Towards a Sustainable Europe by 2030' on the follow-up to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which has been announced in the 2018 Commission Work Programme, will take up the demands voiced in the June 2017 Council conclusions on Agenda 2030 and that concrete steps are taken towards carrying out an in-depth gap analysis and putting in place a solid, transparent, participatory mechanism for implementing the SDGs;
- Use available opportunities to ensure that in the preparation of the post-2020 multi-annual financial framework (MFF), the allocation of budgetary resources is fully consistent with the Paris Agreement on climate change objectives and the need to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, e.g. in the informal discussions among European leaders' on the MFF scheduled to take place in February 2018;
- Press the Commission and encourage representatives of UN Environment and UNEA, including the Chair of UNEA-4, to actively participate in the next UN High Level Political Forum (HLPF) in July 2018 and urge the EC Commission to commit to present a first report on the EU's implementation of the SDGs in 2019 (in line with the June 2017 Council conclusions);

## 2. From better regulation to better governance

- Seek to re-build confidence in Europe's regulatory systems by ensuring that the outcome of the environmental implementation review is used as the basis for developing effective measures to improve implementation, e.g. new legislative and budgetary proposals aimed at strengthening inspection and enforcement capacities at EU and Member State level;
- Seek to avert deregulatory threats to EU environmental legislation and policy, and specifically seek to ensure that the current consensus among the EU-27 that the Brexit process should not be allowed to undermine the EU's environmental acquis and principles and that access to the EU market must be linked with UK's adherence to the principles and regulatory alignment with the environmental acquis as Phase 2 of the Brexit negotiations gets under way;





### 3. Fight climate change

- Ensure an improved implementation of the 2030 climate package in line with the environmental integrity of the EU climate objective for 2030, having in mind the need to bring the EU's contribution in line with the Paris commitment to pursue efforts to limit global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. This requires a push for strengthened targets of at least 60% greenhouse gas emission reductions, 40% energy savings and 45% renewable energy by 2030 at the latest;
- Upgrade the EU long-term objective by setting out a path to net zero emissions by 2040 as part of the EU's obligation to put forward a mid-century, long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategy;

### 4. Reform energy policy

- Put Energy Efficiency first in the revision of the Energy Union Governance regulation and the Electricity Market Design regulation and directive in order to reach our environmental objectives, create local jobs and growth and increase energy security;
- Be an honest and ambitious broker to achieve a deal between Council and Parliament for the revision of the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED), taking into consideration the full body of evidence on the multiple benefits of energy efficiency and the position of the European Parliament as co-legislator calling for a binding 40% energy efficiency target with individual national targets, and ensure consistency and strengthened energy savings measures in Article 7 of the EED;
- Pressure the highest level of the Commission to stop delaying Ecodesign and Energy labeling implementation measures and allocate the necessary resources to catch up with the backlog this past attitude has generated, so as to help grasp the internationally recognised potential they have for citizens, climate objectives and EU economy;
- Support measures that facilitate an energy transition to 100% renewable energy such as cutting all subsidies to fossil fuels, increasing the renewables target for 2030 to 45%, continuation of the current national binding targets also for 2030 with a linear trajectory and continuation of existing support provisions including priority dispatch and access to the grid for renewable energy, while ensuring that those renewable energy sources which are promoted are genuinely sustainable and are located and constructed in a way that minimises environmental impacts together with an interconnected and more flexible grid;
- Ensure during the trilogue on the Renewable Energy Directive that the EU does not return to misguided subsidies for environmentally and socially harmful crop-based biofuels and that provisions are put in place to minimize any negative impacts of bioenergy on forests and other sensitive ecosystems;

### 5. Restore ecosystems and biodiversity

- Use the EU Action Plan for Nature, People and the Economy as an opportunity for scaling up efforts towards full and effective implementation of the nature directives, and take all measures needed to keep up momentum throughout and beyond its Presidency;
- Support any additional fast-track measures proposed by the Commission to meet the Biodiversity Strategy's headline target, in particular the development of the EU Pollinators Initiative over the coming months;
- Push for securing predictable, adequate, regular and targeted EU financing for biodiversity and Natura 2000 in the next multiannual financial framework (MFF) including through a ten-fold increase in the LIFE Fund;







## 6. Transform agriculture policy

- Bring the debate on the CAP post 2020 forward by discussing the necessary improvements (notably on accountability and biodiversity and Natura 2000 financing) to the Commission's proposals and help ensure that the MFF proposals contain those improvements and that the future CAP legislative proposals are evidence-based;
- Seek input from environmental NGOs and representatives from the Living Land initiative (80% of the actual respondents to the 2016 CAP consultation) into discussions on the future CAP at the informal Agriculture Ministers' meeting;



## 7. Support the circular economy and waste minimisation

- Following the publication of the EU Plastics Strategy, the Bulgarian EU Presidency should work towards Council Conclusions supporting legislative measures limiting both macro- and micro-plastic items leaking into the environment, and reinforcing tracking and controlling the use of substances of concern in a circular economy;
- Ensure the Commission does not create further delays and delivers on resources savings through Ecodesign and Energy Labelling, and take the advantage of new energy labeling schemes consultation process and testing to propose wide communication at national levels on the merits of the policy for transforming the market towards more durable and repairable products;
- Building on the annual report of the European Commission on the implementation of the EU Circular Economy Action Plan, the Informal Environmental Council should reflect on the need for future actions on promoting the transition towards a more circular economy through a more coherent EU Product Policy Framework, Digitization and International Collaboration;



## 8. Protect the public from hazardous chemicals and pollution

- Bring high-level political attention to the urgent need to improve air quality in the EU and to reach the long-term objectives of achieving levels of air pollution that do not lead to unacceptable harm to human health and the environment;
- Remind the Commission of its obligation under the Seventh Environmental Action Programme to develop by 2018 a new strategy for a non-toxic environment and urge that this builds on a strengthened implementation of REACH, fills regulatory gaps such as on nanomaterials and mixture effects, and sets out a way forward following the fitness checks of REACH and all other EU Chemical safety legislation;
- Ensure that the Commission develops scientific and horizontal criteria for the identification of endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs) that are consistent with the EU identification system for CMRs (carcinogenic, mutagenic, or toxic for reproduction) and are protective enough to catch all EDCs to which the public and the environment are exposed;
- Within the context of REACH REFIT, call on the Commission, the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) and Member States to address the obstacles in the implementation of the REACH regulation, and in particular to develop effective measures to ensure the compliance, quality and reliability of the registration information; ensure proper application, implementation and enforcement of REACH article 33 (the right to know on substances of very high concern (SVHCs)); and ensure effective restriction and phase out of substances of most concern through restriction and authorisation processes and creating a comprehensive Candidate List;
- Maintain EU leadership in relation to the Minamata Convention on Mercury by working towards establishing an effective international operational framework to achieve significant mercury reductions, seeking to ensure swift ratification of the Convention by the remaining EU Member States and enforcement of the EU Mercury regulation and promoting further actions to address mercury pollution in the EU;



## 9. Safeguard sustainable fisheries

- Ensure that the North Sea Multi Annual Plan supports the objectives of the reformed Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and, in particular, that fishing rates are set below the maximum rate of fishing mortality FMSY in order to provide at least a chance to restore and maintain fish stocks above levels capable of producing the maximum sustainable yield;
- Ensure that the final agreed Technical Measures Regulation is based on a European framework of principles and requirements; supports the objectives of the Natura 2000 network and other Marine Protected Areas; does not provide permission to conduct previously prohibited, destructive fisheries; leads to the avoidance or at least the minimisation of unwanted catches including through tactical selectivity measures; and minimises the ecosystem impact of fishing in general, including on seabirds;



## 10. Strengthen democratic governance

- Coordinate an effective follow-up by the EU Member States to the sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention (Montenegro, September 2017), notably by preparing and presiding over the adoption of a Council Decision calling on the European Commission to initiate the preparation of a legislative proposal for revision of the Aarhus Regulation so as to improve access to justice and bring the EU back into compliance with the Convention;
- Push for measures to apply and monitor the application of the interpretative guidance on access to justice in environmental matters adopted in April 2017 with a view to eventual preparation of a new legislative proposal on access to justice.



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