

# Towards restoring nature in Europe

## Tracking EU Member States' progress in implementing Nature Restoration Law

The #RestoreNature coalition is starting **an evaluation of EU Member States' progress in preparing National Restoration Plans**, a critical first step in the implementation of the Nature Restoration Law (NRL) that entered into force in August 2024.

The law sets various legally binding targets for Member States to recover lost and damaged nature in the EU. It also requires them to develop National Restoration Plans, outlining how they will achieve these targets. National Restoration Plans are the roadmap that will guide concerted action to recover the EU's valuable but degraded ecosystems.

The #RestoreNature coalition has identified **five key criteria** to determine whether National Restoration Plans (NRPs) will provide a solid basis to guide the necessary restoration action on the ground and meet the NRL's goals:

- 1 Science-based:** Plans must be rooted in the best available science, using existing data while actively addressing knowledge gaps, such as in marine ecosystems, which are still poorly understood.
- 2 Inclusive:** Stakeholder participation following a whole-of-society and bottom-up approach is crucial. Plans must be developed transparently, with early and effective opportunities for public and stakeholder input, and must demonstrate how these inputs have been taken into account.
- 3 Ambitious:** While Member States welcomed a binding legal framework for nature restoration, many elements of the initial proposal were weakened to increase flexibility. Member States should not exploit this flexibility to weaken their commitments. They must ensure their planned actions align with the law's 2030 targets.
- 4 Empowered:** Besides defining national targets and restoration measures, NRPs must include realistic implementation and enforcement plans, focusing on: 1) Buy-in from relevant authorities (e.g. agriculture, fisheries, forestry, etc.); 2) Estimates of financial needs and plans on meeting them and 3) Plans on how to monitor, coordinate, and govern national implementation progress.
- 5 Effective:** For Member States to meet the NRL's targets and obligations, the plans must include relevant, precise, coherent, and actionable restoration measures with clear responsibilities and timelines.

Based on these criteria, the coalition developed a common checklist to evaluate plans of all 27 EU Member States. The checklist will inform **two assessments**:

- **Mid-term assessment in autumn 2025** of progress made in the preparation of Member States' National Restoration Plans;
- **Final assessment of the draft plans by September 2026**

**It's time to #RestoreNature in Europe!**

