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# WWF priority demands to the Italian Presidency

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# INTRODUCTION

Italy will head the Council of the European Union from July to December 2014, during a highly active political period at European and international level: both the European Parliament and European Commission will kick off a new five years term, and at the same time several delicate European and international political processes will require attention. The Italian Presidency will therefore lead the Council at a turning point for the European Union. WWF is convinced that the Presidency should seize this opportunity and bring Europe back on a more sustainable path, tackling the interlinked economic, financial, budgetary, employment, social, environmental and political challenges.

In the last years, the EU has put the emphasis essentially on macro-economic issues: financial crisis and banks bail outs, euro, budget deficits and austerity measures. This has come at a high political price: for European citizens such issues are very far from their main preoccupations related to jobs and inequalities, well-being and sustainability, in short social and environmental concerns – leading to citizens' trust in the European project being at an all-time low, with only 31% trusting the EU<sup>1</sup>.

The Italian Presidency must bring Europe to act quickly. It is high time to rebalance EU economic policies in favour of people themselves, better embedding social inequalities and environmental failures. Shifting towards low carbon and resource efficient economic systems is essential for a sustainable way out of the systemic crisis.

Besides the on-going sectoral policies, several European and international processes lend themselves in the second half of 2014 to take the first steps towards such a rebalancing:

- Mid-term review of the Europe 2020 strategy, expected to be finalised in March 2015;
- UN process towards the elaboration of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the UN General Assembly in September 2014;
- UNFCCC process towards the finalisation of a global climate agreement at COP 21 Paris, 2015, through the COP 20 Lima in December 2014 (and a UN Climate Summit on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September 2014 convened by the UN Secretary General);
- CBD process facilitating the concrete implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020, through the COP 12 Pyeongchang in October 2014, and steps to reach the internationally agreed Aichi targets.

With this paper, WWF wishes to give recommendations to the Italian Presidency on how to set the first steps towards a rebalancing of EU economic policies, and we indicate where sectoral policies must be improved.

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<sup>1</sup> European Commission (2013), Standard Eurobarometer 80 – Autumn 2013, consulted at [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/eb/eb80/eb80\\_anx\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb80/eb80_anx_en.pdf)

# GREENING THE EU SEMESTER AND THE EU2020 STRATEGY

Economic modelling by UNEP estimates that reallocating just 2% of global GDP from “brown investment” to make key sectors of the economy greener will enhance economic performance, increase global wealth, reduce environmental risks and social inequalities, and rebuild capacity to generate future prosperity. But the shift to green economies in Europe suffers from lack of clear vision and strategy, consistent political frameworks, investment shortage and harmful subsidies promoting business as usual practices.

WWF calls for a consistent framework to support a gradual shift from sunset sectors to energy and resource efficient technologies, eco-innovation and ecosystem based resource management. WWF underlines two key opportunities for the Italian presidency for that purpose:

- Greening the EU semester process;
- Modernising the EU 2020 strategy during its review.

## Greening the EU semester

National Reform Programmes (NRP) of Member States and Country Specific Recommendations (CSR) from the European Commission should be used to operate the necessary changes. There are in particular three key areas of interest:

### WWF priority demands to the Italian Presidency:

- Phase out national environmentally harmful subsidies in particular on transport, energy and agriculture;
- Shift taxation from labour to consumption (resource use) and pollution. Green taxation should reach at least 10% of overall taxation in Member States (from a 6% European average today);
- Ensure that economic policy reforms will fully deliver on European environmental targets by 2020, including energy efficiency, renewable energy, greenhouse gas emissions, water (notably proper water pricing schemes), biodiversity (notably Natura 2000 management plans) and green infrastructures (notably cost effective flood prevention).

## **Review the EU 2020 strategy in the light of the systemic crisis we face**

As of 2014, the EU 2020 strategy suffers of three main shortcomings that should be fixed in the review initiated by the European Commission and European Council:

- **Need for a resource efficiency target**

The resource consumption of Europeans is huge and generates enormous amounts of waste. Businesses are facing rising costs for essential raw materials, energy and minerals, and the absence of security of supply and price volatility has a damaging effect on the economy. Promoting a more efficient use of resources makes a lot of sense for businesses and should help boost employment. But the lack of a measurable target restricts a common European approach.

If Europe is serious with resource efficiency it must set up an ambitious resource efficiency headline target by 2020 and for 2030. For the time being a minimum annual increase of resource efficiency of 3% is necessary: 2% has been business as usual in the last three decades, so the increase is not beyond reach. It should also include reduction targets for water, carbon and land footprints as well as biodiversity indicators.

It should be noted that resource productivity (relative to GDP) is not a meaningful indicator to measure what is at stake: European overuse of resources in absolute terms. A similar approach to energy efficiency, measured in absolute terms not compared to the GDP, must be followed: using Total Material Consumption would be much more relevant to measure resource efficiency.

- **Need to link the Strategy with post-2015 international development goals**

The EU is rightly supportive of a new set of international development goals as a follow up of the 2015 Millennium Development Goals (see below). The new development approach includes a universality principle – meaning that the goals will apply to all countries and not only developing ones. If Europe is serious with such a new approach, it must reflect it in all its relevant policies.

This should obviously include the EU 2020 strategy that nowadays includes education, poverty and environmental targets. Promoting alignment of the EU 2020 Strategy with this upcoming international framework will ensure better coherence of the European approach and make the EU more credible and effective with the international community.

- **Need a beyond GDP approach**

The limitations of GDP as a measure of key societal goals such as “well-being” and “sustainability” are widely recognised. Alternative measurement concepts are being tested but the crisis has completely side-lined such innovative approaches by refocusing essentially on growth – with in many cases backward looking policies that negated years of environmental and social efforts and promoted mere business as usual. The crisis has now however brought to the fore the long-standing issue of the effectiveness and fairness of the wealth produced and distributed through growth. While GDP and wealth have continued to increase overall, inequality has risen in Europe since the mid-1980s, and the crisis has constrained redistributive systems even more. Simultaneously, environmental concerns have not been properly addressed; energy efficiency is not on track with the EU target, resource efficiency is undefined, investments in renewable

energies have collapsed in the last two years, and air pollution is having huge negative health impacts.

Complementing GDP with environmental and social summary indicators is a must. We must stop calculating progress just in GDP-growth terms and start counting what really matters for people and the future. It should include quality of life and well-being indicators, social cohesion and human development, environmental indicators and integrated environmental economic accounting – making clear that biodiversity and ecosystems are our ultimate resource base, our natural capital, as is concluded in the TEEB study.

As a result, the “new” Europe 2020 strategy after the review should not be more of the same, but should instead set a new strategic direction: this should be the sustainable well-being of Europe’s citizens.

In Italy, WWF already actively engaged with ISTAT (the public statistics authority) and CNEL (National Council of Economy and Labour) for the definition of Equitable and Sustainable Wellbeing indicators (BES indicators). This resulted in the publication of a report in 2013 that urged the government to table a legislative proposal for National Committee for Nature Capital to publish annually for the Parliament a report on the impact of policies on environment and ecosystem services.

#### **WWF priority demands to the Italian Presidency:**

- Work together with the European Commission and European Council to introduce a resource efficiency headline target for 2020 and 2030. A minimum annual increase of resource efficiency of 3% is needed.
- Work together with the European Commission and European Council to align the post-2015 international development goals with the EU2020 strategy which already includes education, poverty and environmental targets.
- Invest in efforts to complement GDP with environmental and social summary indicators, to recognise societal goals such as “well-being” and “sustainability”.

# CLIMATE AND ENERGY POLICIES

The coming six months will see essential milestones in both EU and international climate and energy policy requiring careful handling by the Italian presidency. The 2030 framework presented by the Commission in January 2014 will be subject to further consideration by the Council as well as the Commission, but require a final decision to be taken by the European Council so that legislation can be tabled in 2015. Several significant international climate events will take place, including the special Heads of State meeting convened by the UN Secretary General Ban-Ki Moon in September 2014, and the UNFCCC COP in Lima in December 2014. The first should create momentum towards a deal and the second should already see the finalisation of a draft UN agreement for consideration in the subsequent six months. Considering the very preliminary status of the talks at this point, the EU will have to play an active and positive role to reach the ambitious timeline set out.

## Final political agreement of a 2030 climate and energy framework

WWF advocates a 2030 package that puts the EU on track to 95% decarbonisation. The role of renewable energy and energy efficiency to reaching this goal, as well as shutting out high carbon infrastructure, is too important to risk through inadequate policy. As called for by the European Parliament, this means **retaining three targets –for greenhouse gases, renewable energy, and energy efficiency**. These are not the only questions at hand, however. During the Italian presidency, there will be important discussions on the nature of the Commission's 'new governance procedure' and the implications of effort sharing of the greenhouse gas target, among other things.

### WWF priority demands to the Italian Presidency:

- Work with the President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, to finalise the political debate on the 2030 framework at the earliest possible opportunity. Delay will undermine confidence that Europe will stay on track to delivering a legislative package.

## Fixing the EU Emissions trading system (EU ETS)

The EU ETS is failing to deliver on its goal of steadily transforming power and industry to more climate-friendly forms of production. Excess emission allowances and a low carbon price mean the measure has little effect on operations or construction. The effect could be a lock-in of emitting facilities that will make it far more difficult to achieve future, adequate greenhouse gas reduction requirements. The legislative proposal for a market stability reserve tabled by the Commission in January 2014 is only a small step forward as it doesn't tackle the need to remove excess tonnes from the ETS, including prior to 2020.

### **WWF priority demands to the Italian Presidency:**

- Ensure the proposal for an ETS market stability reserve, which is to be considered by the Council, helps to deliver a meaningful pollution price signal to decarbonise the EU's industrial sectors. The EU ETS must not be allowed to undermine emission reductions achieved by renewable energy and energy savings deployment during the current and next climate and energy package.

## **Putting energy efficiency back in sync with EU decarbonisation aims**

With a review of the Energy Efficiency Directive scheduled to start in June 2014, the Commission has delayed the consideration of possible further targets or measures to further efficiency goals. This has meant continuing the tendency for efficiency to be out of sync with consideration of other aspects of policy, undermining its central role. The June review should lead, under leadership by the Italian presidency, to a full consideration of improvements to the 2020 framework and a target and appropriate measures for 2030.

### **WWF priority demands to the Italian Presidency:**

- Ensure that any legislative proposal that relates to an energy efficiency framework for 2030 is considered at the same time as the proposals for GHG emissions and renewables to ensure coherence between these three pillars.

## **Introducing an EPS as a complementary measure that tackles the worst polluters within a 2030 climate and energy package**

A complete climate and energy package would ensure that the worst sources of pollution are curtailed as better alternatives are promoted. An Emission Performance Standard (EPS) would set a plant-level maximum of greenhouse gas emissions per unit of electrical output, leaving the ETS-driven carbon price to direct investments to decarbonisation technologies operating below that level. If it were set now at a level to rule out the worst offenders, it could be gradually tightened to ensure that only the least polluting technologies are investable. The European Investment Bank has established an EPS standard for its investments, and there is considerable interest in the European Parliament and in member states.

### **WWF priority demands to the Italian Presidency:**

- Convene a dedicated workshop for all stakeholders that puts the Emission Performance Standard (EPS) on the political map, examining it as a complementary measure that tackles the worst polluters within a 2030 climate and energy package.



## **Putting the UNFCCC on track to international agreement with EU leadership**

By December of 2014 the UNFCCC should have the draft of an agreement to be finalised in 2015. Confidence that this goal can be met will rest on Parties acting as leaders within the process, continuing to keep up the momentum both inside and outside the UNFCCC.

### **WWF priority demands to the Italian Presidency:**

#### **To put the UNFCCC on track to an international agreement, the Italian Presidency must ensure that:**

- The EU comes to the UN Secretary General's climate summit in September prepared to describe its commitment to a 2030 target and a framework to meet it.
- The EU puts forward concrete measures to contribute to closing the pre-2020 gigatonne gap that are additional to existing commitments.
- The EU announces funding pledges that keep the EU on track to meeting its portion of international finance commitments in 2020.
- The EU works positively within the UNFCCC process to ensure achievement of a draft agreement by the end of the COP in Lima.

# BIODIVERSITY POLICY

During the second half of 2014 the COP 12 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) will take place in South Korea. The role of the EU within the CBD is crucial to set high standards, as well as to lead the way towards implementation of the commitments, in particular the Aichi targets. Sustained efforts to ensure the full and effective implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy are crucial to secure the vital services and benefits biodiversity is providing to our societies. These include protection from floods and soil erosion, storing carbon, cooling and filtering the air, providing food, fibers, fuel, clean water, medicines and healthy soil.

In October, the World Park Congress 2014 (WPC2014) will take place as well, offering an opportunity for the EU to highlight the Natura 2000 success, as well as to commit to an improved and enhanced implementation in future. In the EU the economic benefits that flow from the network of Natura 2000 sites, which come at a cost of no more than €6 billion, are estimated to be of the order of €200 to 300 billion/year. This includes estimates of carbon sequestration and storage, water provision and purification, national hazards prevention, tourism & recreation<sup>2</sup>.

Biodiversity protection is particularly relevant for Italy, hosting over 30% of fauna and 50% of flora of the total European biodiversity, in 1/30<sup>th</sup> of the whole European territory<sup>3</sup>. 12% of the Italian territory is furthermore protected and 21% is part of the Natura 2000 network<sup>4</sup>.

## Effective implementation of the 2020 EU Biodiversity Strategy

WWF calls on the Italian Presidency to contribute actively to the ongoing implementation of the 2020 EU Biodiversity Strategy. Several priority areas are discerned in the box below.

### WWF priority demands to the Italian Presidency:

- Ensure and facilitate the full and timely implementation of all environmental EU legislation focusing in particular on the implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives and the promotion of better protection for ecosystems, and increased use of green infrastructure.
- Substantially improve the Mediterranean Natura 2000 management, in particular through the biogeographical seminar process.
- Support the ongoing work on Mapping and Assessment of the Ecosystems and their Services (MAES), as a key element of the EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy.
- Give special attention to the Mediterranean Basin and the need for cross-border cooperation and marine spatial planning.
- Support the adoption of a legislative tool for soil.

<sup>2</sup> European Commission (2014), Financing Natura 2000, consulted at <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/financing/>

<sup>3</sup> Rossi G., Montagnani C., Gargano D., Peruzzi L., Abeli T., Ravera S., Cogoni A., Fenu G., Magrini S., Gennai M., Foggi B., Wagensommer R.P., Venturella G., Blasi C., Raimondo F.M., Orsenigo S. (Eds.) 2013. Lista Rossa della Flora Italiana. 1. Policy Species e altre specie minacciate. Comitato Italiano IUCN e Ministero dell'Ambiente e della Tutela del Territorio e del Mare

<sup>4</sup> [www.minambiente.it](http://www.minambiente.it)

## **WWF calls for *real* financing for biodiversity**

The European Fund for the Environment (LIFE) receives only 0.1 % of the EU budget. This does not even cover the basic costs resulting from the implementation of the EU Birds and Habitats Directives. As a result, the EU puts at risk its healthy natural capital which is necessary for a sustainable future. The commitment of Heads of State to the Natura 2000 network, under the EU Biodiversity strategy, must be appropriately reflected in the implementation of the EU budget 2014-2020.

### **WWF priority demands to the Italian Presidency:**

- Improve the existing integrated approach to co-finance the management of the Natura 2000 network. Funding for the Natura 2000 network from the different sectoral funds allows for financing of a diversity of measures required for the management and conservation of the sites in various contexts. To secure a higher up-take of the financing opportunities in the next years, WWF supports the use of “Natura 2000 Prioritized Action Framework” (PAF). These PAFs are necessary to improve transparency, coordination and focus to strategize the national uptake of funds from various EU sources to finance Natura 2000.
- Ensure the European Commission and Member States’ national and regional Operational Programmes are supportive and aligned with the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020, in particular in relation with agriculture and rural development, fisheries and regional development.

# WATER POLICY

Europe's freshwater ecosystems – a vital source for Europeans, the environment and economy - are under significant pressures. The EU's target to bring these ecosystems back to good ecological status by 2015 will be missed by a large margin.

The EU Water Blueprint proposed by the European Commission and fully endorsed by EU Member States in 2012 puts forward several important policy initiatives aimed to improve implementation of the existing legislation, improve coherence between water and other sectoral legislation as well as develop new legislation, where particular gaps have been identified.

The world is becoming increasingly aware of the water challenges, exacerbated by climate change, and the consequences of inaction which can lead to diminishing water supplies, more expensive treatment, increasing impacts on the economy and greater exposure to catastrophic events. Water policy in Europe is at the nexus of food and energy security, public health, biodiversity and climate change, and its importance should as such be recognised.

## **WWF priority demands to the Italian Presidency:**

- Take an active role in developing the Common Implementation Strategy for the Water Framework Directive as a co-chair and deliver guidance on setting and implementing environmental flows, and resource documents on Natural Water Retention Measures and affordability.
- Give a boost to the EU Water Initiative to support integrated sustainable water management globally and EU's water diplomacy efforts.
- Strengthen EU's global leadership on trans-boundary cooperation by promoting ratification and implementation of the 1997 UN Convention on the Law of Non-Navigational Uses of International Water courses. The Convention counts 34 contracting states, only one short of the number required for entry into force. Entry into force of the convention will enable countries across the globe to strengthen policy and institutional capacity and will level the playing field among the states globally and, where necessary, strengthening the ability of weaker countries and vulnerable stakeholders within the basin to voice their interests and concerns.

# MARINE POLICIES

## **Effectively implementing the Common Fisheries Policy within the EU**

The new EU Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) implemented from 1<sup>st</sup> January this year will allow for the recovery and production of healthy fish stocks, healthy marine environment and a viable fishing sector. This can certainly be achieved provided that effective actions take place aiming at the conservation goals set by the legislation, namely achieving Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) wherever possible already in 2015 and developing actions towards the achievement of Good Environmental Status by 2020.

Given Italy's rocky track record in the implementation of CFP policies, such as the Mediterranean Regulation 1967/2006, it is vital that Italy leads by example European fisheries towards sustainability, through the unwavering implementation of all relevant legislation.

### **WWF priority demands to the Italian Presidency:**

- As Chair of the Council of Ministers, contribute actively to the effective implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy, guided by science based recommendations, and including the implementation of national operational plans of the European Maritime and Fisheries Funds (EMFF).
- Lead the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) and Quota negotiations at the end of 2014, to reach the first Maximum Sustainably Yield deadline of 2015.

## **Effectively implementing the Common Fisheries Policy outside the EU**

Consistency between fishing management applied within the EU and the EU's foreign fishing policy must be ensured, both in international waters through Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) and in third countries through bilateral agreements.

The EU fisheries policy worldwide should comply with the rules and objectives of the CFP and relevant international agreements, in particular the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, the UN Fish Stocks Agreement and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

### **WWF priority demands to the Italian Presidency:**

- Ensure that the EU strengthens its international leadership role promoting the adoption of policies for the protection and sustainable use of high seas resources, notably via the Regional Fisheries Management Organisations or bilateral agreements.

## **Fighting against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fisheries**

The EU has strengthened its anti-IUU (Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing) policy commitment since 2010 with the coming into force of the IUU regulation and the signing of joint positions with USA and Japan to strengthen the cooperation with these two countries in the combat against IUU. However, the implementation of the IUU Regulation is still in early phases. In WWF's opinion, significant loopholes in ascertaining the legal origin of seafood imports into the EU, as well as issues of Member State compliance with required record-keeping and verification procedures, remain to be resolved before the Regulation can have desired impacts. Additionally, the EU-US Joint Statement needs urgent and significant follow-up, with a solid work plan of distinct, effective actions.

### **WWF priority demands to the Italian Presidency:**

- Guide the EU institutions towards a leading position fighting Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing, and especially towards strong implementation of the EU IUU Regulation

## **Restoring, maintaining and preserving EU marine environment at healthy levels**

In order to swiftly implement the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), with particular emphasis on the development of programmes and measures by 2015, WWF calls on the Member States, under the Italian leadership, to use the opportunity to develop fora for exchange of best practice and expertise amongst Member States while involving all relevant sectors.

### **WWF priority demands to the Italian Presidency:**

- Develop fora for the exchange of best practice and expertise amongst Member States while involving all relevant sectors
- Secure the commitment of Adriatic Governments to make significant advancements towards the CBD Aichi target 11 (10% protection target of the Mediterranean Sea) through the establishment of new coastal marine protected areas and guide the remaining EU MSs to effectively deliver on the commitment made under the CBD Aichi targets. Given Italy's experience on MPA management, Italy should champion a ministerial agreement among Adriatic Heads of State to commit to an effective and representative regional MPA network.
- Support the establishment of fisheries protected areas through the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean and particularly to protect a trans-boundary feeding area of utmost importance for the survival of the blue fin tuna, one of the most economically valuable species worldwide. It is also key that in its leadership role, the Italian Presidency asks for other EU Member States to take similar actions at their regional sea level.
- Promote all actions needed to implement rules and regulations to obtain an effective and efficient management of the Pelagos Sanctuary.

# TIMBER TRADE AND DEFORESTATION

Between 1990 and 2008 the EU imported and consumed about 9 million hectares of newly deforested land (roughly 3 times the size of Belgium), according to a study from the European Commission<sup>5</sup>. This makes the EU the biggest importer of deforestation worldwide, being well ahead of other industrialized regions: Eastern Asia, including Japan and China imported 4.5 million ha and North America 1.9 million ha during the same period. This shows that despite the EU's commitments to reducing gross tropical deforestation by 50% by 2020, the EU imports far more goods that are associated with tropical deforestation (crops and livestock) than expected.

It is time that the EU addresses its impact beyond the EU borders. It needs to be ensured, that the EU is not fuelling deforestation elsewhere by exporting its footprint abroad.

## Reduction of the EU's footprint related to deforestation

According to the European Commission study, almost 36% of crop and livestock products traded internationally go to the EU. Increases in consumption of oil crops such as soy, palm oil and related products as well as meat consumption are all major drivers of deforestation in tropical areas. Together with the European demand for timber products, it shows the impact the EU has on third countries. EU Policy therefore has an important role to play in reducing deforestation.

### WWF priority demands to the Italian Presidency:

- **Ensure proper implementation of the EU Timber Regulation in all 28 EU Member States:** Though the EU Timber Regulation, which aims to stop illegal timber from entering the EU, has been in force since March 2013, a proper enforcement of the legislation across the EU is still lacking. However, without proper implementation, the legislation will not achieve its objective.
- **Develop measures to reduce the EU's impact on deforestation:** The EU needs to reduce the negative impacts of its impact in third countries. This includes the reduction of harmful subsidies as well as the enforcement of standards necessary to ensure that crop and livestock, consumed in the EU are produced efficiently and sustainably and do not fuel deforestation.

<sup>5</sup> European Commission (2014), Study "The impact of EU consumption on deforestation", consulted at [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/impact\\_deforestation.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/impact_deforestation.htm)

# REDUCING EUROPE'S FOOD FOOTPRINT

Something is seriously wrong with our food system: While politicians discuss feeding a growing world population in which 1 in 8 go to bed hungry, in Europe 90 million tonnes of food are wasted every year. On top, the average European eats too much and in an unbalanced way, contributing to a wide range of health and environmental challenges.

Food waste and current overconsumption of food represent an enormous and unnecessary economic, human and natural loss both at home and abroad. Globally, the carbon footprint of food produced and not eaten is estimated to be 3.3 Gtonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent. As such, food waste ranks as the third top emitter after the USA and China<sup>6</sup>. It also wastes large quantities of other scarce natural resources such as freshwater and land, and contributes to Europe's leading global position in importing deforestation through products<sup>7</sup>.

The potential social, environmental and economic benefits of food waste prevention and better diets are enormous. If private households and the retail sector (including wholesale, hotels and restaurants) in the EU would reduce food waste by 40% in 2020, it would save € 123 per person per year. The total savings for the EU would amount to € 75.5 billion with only a negligible reduction in GDP. Moreover, agricultural land use in Europe would be reduced by the size of Belgium – and three times if people would adopt a healthy diet simultaneously<sup>8</sup>.

European policy influences the way we produce and consume food in many ways, and there is an urgent need to re-balance the EU's policy framework to encourage food consumption that benefit both people and the planet. One major barrier is current policy incoherence, and a growing number of EU food stakeholders are demanding a more ambitious and integrated EU strategy.

Italy has one of the richest food cultures in Europe and on 1 May 2015, the Milan World Expo will open under the title '*Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life*'. During its EU presidency, Italy has the opportunity to lead the EU closer towards a European food system which delivers on this vision.

## EU Sustainable Food Strategy

In June 2014 the European Commission will present its long-awaited Communication on Sustainable Food, marking the start of a broader debate on the future of EU's food policy. Food waste and unsustainable diets are identified as priorities. To be sustainable, a food system must achieve two fundamental goals: (1) Produce sufficient nutritious, affordable and accessible food for all and (2) minimise the environmental harm caused by food production, distribution, consumption and waste, e.g. through greenhouse gas emissions, excessive freshwater usage, soil erosion, and biodiversity loss.

WWF's LiveWell for LIFE project over the last 2 years worked with a wide range of stakeholders to demonstrate healthy and sustainable diets and how best to encourage these through national and EU policy. The project's final recommendations will be presented in fall 2014 and offer an opportunity for informed policy-making to encourage better diets across Europe.

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<sup>6</sup> FAO (2013), Food waste harms climate, water, land and biodiversity, consulted at <http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/196220/icode/>

<sup>7</sup> European Commission (2014), Study "The impact of EU consumption on deforestation", consulted at [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/impact\\_deforestation.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/impact_deforestation.htm)

<sup>8</sup> LEI Wageningen UR (2014), Less food waste results in land use savings, higher consumer welfare and a smaller agro-food sector, consulted at <http://www.wageningenur.nl/en/newsarticle/Less-food-waste-results-in-land-use-savings-higher-consumer-welfare-and-a-smaller-agrofood-sector.htm>



## WWF priority demands to the Italian Presidency:

- Secure an ambitious Council position on the EC Communication on Sustainable Food, in particular on:
  - o Concrete next steps to encourage healthier and more sustainable food production and consumption patterns;
  - o An ambitious EU policy package to reduce food waste in line with the ambition shown by the European Commission and Parliament;
  - o Proposals to increase the coherence of European food policy, particularly to exploit the synergies between healthy and sustainable food production and consumption.
- Motivate the European Commission to quickly follow-up on food consumption policy measures it can take today, such as the agreement on common principles for a healthy and sustainable diet and the strengthening of green public procurement.
- Make use of the LiveWell for LIFE project's recommendation to inform its agenda-setting and broad the scope of the strategy to a wider food footprint approach (Carbon, Water, Nitrogen).

# GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT

## Maintain and deliver commitments on environment and climate expenditures

As the largest provider of Official Development Assistance (ODA), the EU is a major actor in supporting developing countries in transitioning towards sustainable development. Under the EU budget 2014-2020 and its external expenditure plans, the EU made important commitments to the global environment including the mainstreaming of environment and climate change, a 20% benchmark for climate action and targeted expenditures on global environment and climate priorities. Those commitments now need to be translated into reality through the adoption of annual budgets and annual action programmes.

### WWF priority demands to the Italian Presidency:

- Ensure at least a doubling of the EU's current targeted investment in environment and climate actions through its development cooperation programmes. It should also substantiate the EU's global commitments in Hyderabad COP 11 to double international biodiversity-related international financial flows and commitments in the EU's own Biodiversity Strategy to step up contributions to avert global biodiversity loss by 2020.
- Mainstream environment and climate as critical cross-cutting issues in the EU's development programme through the preparation and adoption of a measurable and action plan with monitoring framework.
- Provide space for Civil Society Organisations in the programme formulation and implementation.

## The Post-2015 Sustainable Development Framework

In the lead up to the September 2014 UN General Assembly, governments will be discussing a new development framework to succeed the current Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This is a once in a generation opportunity to tackle the drivers of poverty and environmental degradation in one single and coherent sustainable development framework. The EU has already demonstrated its ambition for a transformative agenda that recognises the multi-dimensions of poverty and the opportunities to promote equitable human well-being within the ecological carrying capacity of our planet<sup>9</sup>, but it will now need to defend its ambition in the global arena.

The Italian Presidency will be able to play a major role together with UN General Secretary Ban Ki-moon by representing the EU and promoting a sustainable development agenda at the General Assembly in September.

<sup>9</sup> "A Decent Life for All: ending poverty and giving the world a sustainable future" COM(2013) 92 final. Council Conclusions, General Affairs, Luxembourg, 25 June 2013.

The EU and its Member States should continue to promote a transformative and ambitious sustainable development framework for 2015 within the UN and amongst its partners.

### **WWF priority demands to the Italian Presidency:**

#### **Contribute to a post 2015 development framework which:**

- Includes goals and targets that integrate environmental sustainability across the framework as the basis for human well-being – not just for today but also for future generations.
- Includes goals and targets which recognise the many and complex interlinkages between food, water, health and energy and the ecosystems and natural resources on which we all rely.
- Recognises and addresses the causes of climate change as well as the diverse and grave impacts, particularly on the poorest and most vulnerable populations.
- Reduces inequality and ensures the fulfilment of human rights for everyone, everywhere.
- Questions the prevailing consumption and production models on which our global economy is founded and promotes low carbon development.
- Has universal goals that are relevant for all countries and to the achievement of which, all countries contribute. Every country must commit to make improvements in all goal areas in the way that is most relevant to their national context.
- Recognises the important role of policy coherence for development in delivering a successful implementation of the framework – a principle that is enshrined within the EU Treaty.
- Has relevant and strong accountability mechanisms for all actors contributing to the implementation of the framework.

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**Why we are here**

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and  
to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

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