

EuropeAid

Press Pack: EU actions on Environment and Climate Change in the world

**Background material in view of COP15
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**EUROPEAN
COMMISSION**

1) Info Sheet: EU's actions on Environment in the world



The world is today facing a major environmental crisis. Annual deforestation rate amounts to 15 millions ha per year – about the size of Greece. Biodiversity loss rate is estimated to be 100 to 1000 times the natural one. 75% of marine fisheries are now threatened by overfishing. Pollution – notably by chemicals or heavy metals – is widespread and reaches even territories that could appear untouched. Greenhouse gases emissions continue to increase, exceeding the foreseen rates of the worst scenario of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Since the poorest segment of society relies heavily on the environment for its livelihood and further development, every poverty alleviation strategy and each development policy needs to integrate environmental aspects and concerns. Just as low carbon and greener development in developed countries is as crucial in order to maintain and preserve global public goods such as forests, biodiversity, water, soil and climate, green development paths in developing countries are necessary conditions to ensure long-term improvements of living conditions of developing countries' citizens. This is why the environmental actions have a central role in the European Union's (EU) external cooperation.

Key issues on environment and development:

- The [Millennium Development Goal \(MDG\) # 7](#) directly relates to environment with specific targets of integrating sustainable development principles, reducing biodiversity loss, halving the proportion of people without access to drinking water and sanitation, and improving lives of the slum dwellers. Most of the other MDGs are indirectly related to environmental situation through the maintenance of ecosystems services.
- The **loss of biodiversity** is increasing at an alarming rate, due to human activities such as deforestation and land use change, while climate change is increasing the pressure on ecosystems and species. The biodiversity crisis affects the functioning of ecosystems and thus reducing the services they provide to humanity and undermining development. The European Commission is currently financing a study – on the model of the Stern review on Climate Change – on *the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity* to raise the awareness of political and economic spheres on the issue.

- An estimated 1.6 billion people rely heavily on forests for their subsistence needs, including food security, health, shelter, energy etc. Furthermore, approximately 4.6 billion people rely on forest systems for all or some of their water supplies. Forests play an important role in regulating local, regional and global climate patterns. The **protection and sustainable use of forests** is thus of paramount importance for poverty alleviation as well as for preservation of the global environment. The EU has been an important actor in the fight against deforestation for a long time – and has endorsed the objective of halting deforestation by 2030.
- Around 200 million people rely on fisheries for their livelihoods. Small-scale fishers are the most affected by the decrease of fishery resources which is due to unsustainable fishing practices and marine pollution. The EU plays an important role in strengthening the governance of the fishery sector through the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and the World Summit on Sustainable Development action plans.
- All environmental issues are interlinked with Climate Change. In many countries, development is at risk due to changes in climate patterns: more severe drought, increase of extreme weather events such as cyclones, sea level rise, and glacier melting are turning former development strategies upside down. **Adaptation to climate change** is today a key issue for development – on top of mitigation efforts at the global scale to limit the temperature rise. The EU, as a global leader in the fight against Climate Change, has taken several steps to internally reduce its Greenhouse Gases emissions, as well as supporting developing countries in adapting to climate change. Climate change is also on the top of the EU diplomatic agenda – and is currently receiving a special attention in the context of the review of cooperation strategies with partner countries.

The European Union's development aid and environment:

- The European Commission spends almost half a billion Euro per year on environment related actions in its external cooperation globally.
- The geographical instruments (bilateral cooperation) are the preferred instruments for implementing environmental activities. These activities vary a lot from one country to the other, following the country situation and needs. For example, forestry is an important sector in Latin America or Central Africa, whereas energy efficiency and pollution reduction are more prominent in economies in transition. Similarly, activities related to adaptation to climate change depend on the foreseen consequences of climate change in the country and could encompass water, agriculture or coastal management sectors.
- The *Environment & Natural Resources Thematic Programme (ENRTP)* supports environmental actions all over the world, frequently implemented in cooperation with civil society organisations. The ENRTP has been allocated €850 million for years 2007-2013 and covers activities on most of the main environmental issues such as biodiversity loss, deforestation and forest governance, climate change adaptation and mitigation, energy efficiency and renewable energies, water, chemicals and heavy metal pollution etc.
- The EU is also committed to mainstream environment within its development cooperation. Today, Environmental Impact Assessments are undertaken on every project with potential negative effect on environment and mitigation measures are implemented if necessary. Environment is more and more integrated in all relevant aid cooperation programmes and in our support to sector policies through Strategic Environmental Assessments.

- Some examples of important programmes and initiatives on Environment:
 - Launched in 2007, the **Global Climate Change Alliance** (GCCA) aims at strengthening the political dialogue with developing countries and to support their effort to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change. Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States are the focal countries. The GCCA has been allocated €100 million; €60 million from the European budget and €40 million from the European Development Fund.
 - In 2003 the EU adopted an Action Plan for **Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade** (FLEGT) to address the problem of illegal logging. The Action Plan blends measures in producer and consumer countries to facilitate trade in legal timber, and eliminate illegal timber from trade with the EU. This initiative is supported by a range of cooperation activities for a total amount of over €80 million.
 - The **Global Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Fund** (GEEREF) is an innovative financing instrument, set up as a global public-private partnership, proposed by the European Commission under the ENRTP to maximise the leverage of public funds. The risk capital is managed by the European Investment Fund (EIF) in support of Small and Medium size Enterprises (SME) wanting to develop renewable energies and energy efficiency. A budget of €80 million has been reserved by the European Commission for the first 4 years – amount topped-up by contributions from several Member States. The First 2 regional funds have been set up in 2008 for an amount of €22 million.
 - The **Forests and Protected Areas** programmes in Central Africa – including the flagship programme ECOFAC on Forest Ecosystems – are implemented since the beginning of the 1990's. More than €100 million have been allocated to various complementary projects in the region, leading to a network of better managed protected areas of more than 3.5 million ha of tropical forest and more than 80 million ha of savannah area, and improving the living conditions and ecosystems services in the region.
 - A switch is needed from unsustainable to sustainable patterns of development. The **SWITCH ASIA** programme was born out of this need. The programme – granted €90 million - focuses on sustainable consumption and production and directly contributes to sustainable growth and the fight against poverty.

More information:

- European Commission's policies and strategies on environment and development
http://ec.europa.eu/development/policies/9interventionareas/environment_fr.cfm
- European Commission activities on environment in developing countries:
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/what/natural-resources/index_en.htm
- The Environment and Natural Resources Thematic programme, including Energy
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/worldwide/environment/details_en.htm
- Summaries of EU legislations regarding Environment and Cooperation with third countries
<http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/s15011.htm>

2) Case studies on EU Environment projects in the world:

See all EU project on climate actions in the world at the interactive map [Climate Actions for a Better Development](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/climate-change-actions/) <http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/climate-change-actions/>



"Thanks to the great importance of forest ecosystem in the Congo Basin, Central Africa concentrates an exceptional richness in terms of animal and plant biodiversity. Its preservation and management are a major challenge for the planet in the fight against climate change."

Jean-Michel Sionneau
Project coordinator, ECOFAC IV

Read more about concrete EU actions on environment all over the world in the case studies below:

- **ECOFAC IV: Conservation and rational use of forest ecosystem in Central Africa**
The project aim is to guarantee the long-term conservation and sustainable management of natural resources in seven Central African countries: Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and São Tomé and Príncipe.
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/case-studies/central-africa_natural-resources_ecofac_en.pdf
- **Climate change mitigation and adaptation through payments for environmental services, conservation and improved forest management , Bolivia**
Conservation of Ambor National Park, the Cruce Valleys and the El Chore Forest Reserve through the development of pro-poor payments for environmental services that make sustainable forest management economically and institutionally attractive.
http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/case-studies/bolivia_forest-management_santa-cruz_en.pdf

- **ACCCA – Advancing Capacity to Support Climate Change Adaptation**

The ACCCA project sought to bring together stakeholders and scientific communities in several developing countries from Asia and Africa to enable and support effective adaptation decisions that would reduce vulnerability to climate and environment.

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/case-studies/thematic_environment_accca_en.pdf

- **Across the River – A Transboundary Peace Park for Sierra Leone and Liberia project**

The programme aims at ensuring the land tenure and rights of local communities in sustainable forest management. The project focuses also on forest conservation financing as well as on carbon finance and ecotourism.

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/case-studies/sierra-leone-liberia_biodiversity_en.pdf

- **Afforestation clean development mechanism project in Northern India – Haryana Community Forestry project**

This Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) pilot project, which is a part of the larger Haryana Community Forestry Project, is the first small scale afforestation project in the world to get certified by the Clean Development Mechanism.

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/case-studies/india_forestry_haryana_en.pdf

- **Renewable Energy Policy in the Russian Federation – Rehabilitation of Small Scale Hydro Power Stations**

The project aims to support the Russian Federal Government and regional administrations in the development of legal and regulatory framework to facilitate and encourage the use of renewable energy in the Russian Federation.

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/case-studies/russia_renewable-energy-policy_en.pdf

- **EU-China CDM Facilitation Project**

The project will through a number of activities, including policy research, capacity building, policy study tours, regional workshops and business facilitation conferences, strengthen and improve the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) in China.

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/case-studies/china_environment_cdm-facilitation-project_en.pdf

- **Sustainable management of sites of global importance for biodiversity in the Pacific**

Sites of global biodiversity importance (important bird areas) were identified through field research. The sustainable management of the sites was promoted by local NGO partners in Fiji, New Caledonia, French Polynesia and Palau.

http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/documents/case-studies/pacific_biodiversity_important-sites_en.pdf

3) Audiovisual material on EU Environment actions in the world:



- **EuropeAid - Environmental protection in developing countries**

A news report profiling three different communities around the world where EU funding is helping to promote sustainable development and conservation in challenging conditions where poverty and the environment are closely linked. These initiatives – to combat desertification (Mali), to exploit natural resources without damaging the environment (Brazil) and to adapt to climate change (Sri Lanka) are all part of the EU's commitment to the Rio Conventions of 1992 for international action on Biodiversity, Climate Change and Desertification.

http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/video/video_prod_en.cfm?type=detail&prodid=950&src=1

- **Working with developing countries to tackle climate change**

Released on the occasion of the United Nations ministerial conference on climate change, taking place in December 2007 in Bali, Indonesia, this video clip shows through a number of key messages how the European Union is working with developing countries to tackle climate change.

http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/download/video_download_en.cfm?prodid=4455&name=I055811EN1.rm&type=3&src=1

In order to access the videos on the Commission's audiovisual website you need to register on the site. The process only takes a few minutes, please see following link on how to proceed with the registration: http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/support/support_faq_en.cfm#68

The two following and other videos on development and environment are available on following website (search on "environment"):

http://ec.europa.eu/development/video_app/app_public/search_en.cfm?CFID=14384142&CFTOKEN=db0862110ea146f6-30432618-F765-A011-81558DF98B03E623&jsessionid=0806f395d3a6285a2513#

- **South Africa, the Ecological Economy**

On the lands of the "Wild Coast", against which the Indian Ocean gently laps, the local communities have taken an original tourist initiative based on respect for their environment.

- **Waters from the hills - Mauritius**

Neglect of anti-erosion structures and destructive fishing practices threaten the environment of Rodrigues. The island is gradually recovering ground for cultivation and preventing further soil erosion.

Videos to view online:

- **Fighting Climate Change: Mekong**

Climate change affects all countries but not with the same intensity. Poorer areas of the world are among the most vulnerable. In most countries of the developing world, climate change threatens to destroy development efforts and make living conditions impossible. On the Asia peninsula, the Mekong River and Delta provides the breadbasket of the region but is also one of the most vulnerable regions in terms of climate change. This video shows how together with local authorities, NGOs and other international institutions, the EU provides assistance and funding for territorial adaptations and disaster preparedness.

<http://www.youtube.com/user/EUintheWorld#p/u/4/wm2snER02Rk>

- **Climate Action**

Global warming is one of the biggest challenges facing the world today. Unless we act quickly to change the way we use and produce energy, the damage could be irreversible. The EU has set three key targets which it hopes will put Europe on the right track - towards a sustainable future.

<http://www.youtube.com/user/EUintheWorld#p/u/9/iPZ4pTGrK>

- **Tajikistan: On the brink of climate chaos**

Tajikistan, one of the 20 poorest countries in the world, is facing climate change chaos. Temperatures are rising, glaciers are melting and the weather is becoming more extreme, causing floods, pollution, disease and landslides. The video illustrates the problem, with aerial footage of the countrys fastest retreating glacier in the Zerafashan valley in northern Tajikistan one of the remotest places on earth.

<http://www.youtube.com/user/EUintheWorld#p/u/3/5WObYxTNvBk>

- **Energy production without negative environmental impact**

In Madagascar, people use a large amount of charcoal as a source of energy which leads to massive deforestation and as a result has a significant environmental impact. Thanks to EU support, the installation of hydraulic systems allows electricity production without creating negative environmental impacts. More about energy and development:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tuVxNyVQKZU>

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