

## Biodiversity conservation, EU biodiversity strategy

Biodiversity conservation is one of today's priorities. But what does the expression biodiversity mean?

**Biodiversity** refers to the diversity of life on Earth, including species diversity, genetic diversity within species and diversity of ecosystems. An **ecosystem** is a complex unit of a habitat (physical environment) and the living organisms (associations) populate the habitat. Living and non-living environmental factors interact and change dynamically in an ecosystem.

**Crop production**, and in particular modern crop production practices (e.g. monoculture, inappropriate tillage, use of fertilizers instead of harmonious nutrient cycles in organic farming, use of other chemicals, etc.), result in a **significant loss of biodiversity**.

More than 50 % of Hungary's land is agricultural land. As the amount of land under cultivation increases, the area of **natural habitats** is being reduced. Natural ecosystems are characterized by a **network of species and individuals**, which ensures the **stability** of the system. A loss of biodiversity increases the **vulnerability** of an ecosystem.

Biodiversity loss also makes agricultural production impossible. To give just the most obvious examples, a reduction in the species and number of pollinating insects threatens crop fixation, while changes in the species richness and species composition of soil macro- and micro-organisms directly reduce soil productivity.

The **EU's biodiversity strategy** has set the goal of restoring Europe's biodiversity by 2030.

The strategy sets targets and commitments in four areas:

### 1. Coherent network of protected areas:

- ✓ Achieve 30% of protected areas in Europe
- ✓ One third of these should be strictly protected areas
- ✓ Effective management of protected areas

### 2. EU recovery plan:

- ✓ Restoration and sustainable management of nature, with legally binding targets
- ✓ following an impact assessment, propose legally binding EU nature restoration targets in 2021
- ✓ restoring degraded carbon-rich ecosystems
- ✓ to ensure that there is no deterioration in habitat and species trends and conservation status and that at least 30 % of species and habitats with a conservation status other than currently favourable reach favourable conservation status or at least show an improving trend
- ✓ increase pollinator population sizes
- ✓ reduce the use and risk of chemical pesticides by 50% and the use of the most harmful pesticides by 50%
- ✓ at least 25% of agricultural land should be under organic management
- ✓ agroecological practices should become more widespread
- ✓ progress in the restoration of contaminated land

- ✓ planting 3 billion new trees
- ✓ restoring at least 25 000 km of unregulated river water
- ✓ Red List species threatened by invasive species reduced by 50%
- ✓ fertilizer-use reduced by at least 20 %
- ✓ European cities with 20,000 or more inhabitants should have a large-scale urban greening plan by the end of 2021
- ✓ negative impacts of fishing and extraction activities on sensitive species and habitats should be significantly reduced

### 3. Promotion of transformative changes:

- ✓ Ensuring compliance with biodiversity commitments
- ✓ Strengthening biodiversity knowledge, research, financing and investments

### 4. Supporting the restoration of global biodiversity:

- ✓ Taking the lead in establishing a global biodiversity framework
- ✓ Using foreign policy instruments to protect biodiversity
- ✓ Implementing international cooperations

**Biodiversity conservation is in our common interest!**

Sources:

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legalcontent/HU/TXT/?uri=celex%3A52020DC0380>



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