



Conference Report

Policy Forum
Shaping the Future of EU Environmental Policy
From the 7th to the 8th Environment Action Programme –
Status, Challenges, and Next Steps

Organised by *Umweltdachverband (UWD)* and *European Environmental Bureau (EEB)*
in cooperation with Haus der Europäischen Union.

Vienna, 13 June 2018
Haus der Europäischen Union

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Conference Report

Executive Summary

Policy Forum on "Shaping the Future of EU Environmental Policy: From the 7th to the 8th Environment Action Programme"

On 13th June, the Policy Forum "**Shaping the Future of EU Environmental Policy: From the 7th to the 8th Environment Action Programme**" was organised in Vienna as part of the project "AT 18 - From the Austrian EU Council Presidency to the 8th EU Environmental Action Program". The aim of the project is to build a strong case for an 8th EU Environmental Action Program (8EAP) and to use the upcoming Austrian Council presidency to present a basic proposal for its contents.

The Policy Forum convened a wide range of expert speakers on EU and national environmental policies including high-level representatives from the European Commission and Parliament, the European Environment Agency (EEA), the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), representatives from Austrian politics and administration, NGOs as well as policy experts from other EU member states to discuss the success of the 7EAP and explore priorities for a future 8EAP.

The conference report provides an overview of the various sessions as well as insights and discussions that transpired during the event.

The key messages that have emerged from the Policy Forum can be summarized as follows:

1. Value of Environment Action Programmes

The value of the 7EAP and the need for an 8EAP was clearly acknowledged. EAPs convey long-term predictability, strengthen the commitment of the European Commission, European Parliament and the Council and create a stable framework for environmental policy making irrespective of the Commission in charge.

2. Long-term vision

The long term vision to 2050 was generally considered to be helpful as a guiding framework. Questions were raised with regard to the embedded concept of "growth" and the ability to translate and communicate concepts such as "planetary boundaries" and "tipping points" and how to make them more operational.

3. Priority objectives and specific value of 7EAP

The priority objectives were each considered to be important and still valid, with some objectives coming out stronger than others (see below, points 4-6). Overall the perception seemed to be that the 7EAP had proven its value in terms of having the right title, policy priorities and narrative.

4. Thematic Priority Areas

There was a general recognition that the three thematic priority areas¹ have to be debated together and that one area cannot be resolved without the other. Many delegates expressed

¹ (1) Natural Capital (2) Resource-efficient, green and competitive low carbon economy (3) Risks to health and well-being

concern about the limited progress on **biodiversity protection** and that new approaches are necessary to become more effective. The **growth paradigm** was challenged several times, questioning GDP as an indicator and calling for a more sophisticated approach that moves beyond production targets and does justice to criteria such as “well-being” and “living well”. The importance of the **precautionary principle** was stressed by several delegates, especially with regards to biodiversity protection and health. **Policy contradictions** were addressed in all three priority areas and the role of policy coherence was emphasized as an important driver of change throughout the event.

5. Enabling Objectives

All four enabling objectives² were deemed important, with a clear emphasis on the objective of **policy coherence**. The inability of making the necessary progress on priority objectives, especially on biodiversity, was also strongly linked to a **lack of finance**. In this regard it was suggested that a new EAP should focus on financial instruments as a key enabling factor that can be developed much more. Also, the need to link the EU Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) to the EAP priorities was stressed several times.

6. Horizontal Objectives³

The discussions underlined the international dimension of environmental policy. Global collaboration was seen as essential to address the challenges that we face and the case for multilateralism was deemed to be more important than ever. The SDGs were considered as an important guiding framework also calling for a more holistic/systemic approach to EU policy making. EU leadership was seen as critical but also lacking in areas such as the Paris Agreement. It was also noted that there was lesser export of EU standards to the global level with competition coming from other standard setters, notably China, which was perceived as a threat.

Going beyond the priority objectives of the 7EAP, the following issues came out strongly and could play a role in a subsequent 8EAP:

7. Systemic approach

The interrelationship between environment, health, infrastructure, food security, climate, development, social cohesion and the global economy calls for a systemic approach that joins up and integrates the debate bringing people out of their silos.

A systemic approach could also affect the structure of a future EAP, but this would need further exploration.

8. Create spaces for solutions

To integrate the debate and develop solutions from a systemic perspective, spaces for interdisciplinary exchange have to be developed, reinforcing the idea of innovative ideas for the future. Foresight platforms to explore future risks could play as much a role as programmes

² (4) Better implementation, (5) Better information (3) More and wiser investment (4) Full integration into other policy areas

³ (8) Make Union’s cities more sustainable (9) Help Union address international environmental and climate challenges more effectively

where innovative projects and ideas can be developed at a much broader scale than it is currently the case. There should be an emphasis on rewarding holistic, multi-sector approaches.

9. Role of business

The potential role of business in advancing environmental agendas was acknowledged, specific reference was made to the success of the Circular Economy debate and the impact caused by the idea of “stranded assets” in the Climate Change debate. Building on the idea of creating spaces for innovative solutions, businesses should be brought together to look at key systems changes that need to take place in order to overcome current deadlocks.

10. Monitoring & Accountability

Accountability was stressed as a key factor for success. A future EAP should therefore be clear on who will deliver and who is responsible. This would need objectives, targets with lead indicators, concrete actions, timelines and regular monitoring to assess the progress made.

11. Timescale

The 2021-2030 timescale was considered important to fit in with the SDGs and the range of 2030 strategies and targets. In order to ensure ownership, it is important that the mid-term assessment and subsequent development of the next Environment Action Programmes is aligned with the Commission’s terms of office. Following from that, an 8EAP would need a mid-term evaluation by 2024-25 to ensure ownership of the incoming Commission for a subsequent EAP.

12. Role of current and future presidencies

Austria will discuss an 8EAP at the upcoming informal environmental Council in October this year. Based on the evaluation of the 7EAP, Finland will do the conclusions in the council (second half of 2019), Germany can then do the final decision with the European Parliament and the Commission.

What’s next?

In **October 2018, three expert meetings** will be held in Austria to build on the outcomes of the Policy Forum as well as **to develop practical ideas for an 8EAP**. More information on dates, location and content will be made available in due course.

Informed by the Policy Forum and the Expert Workshops, an **Action Plan on “EU Environmental and Austrian Environmental Policies after 2020”** will be developed and presented as an input to reflections on an 8EAP.

We thank all delegates and experts for their active participation in the Vienna Conference.

More information about the project and the Policy Forum can be found under:

<https://www.umweltdachverband.at/themen/europaeische-umweltpolitik/at18/> or contact: Julika Dittrich at julika.dittrich@umweltdachverband.at

Conference Report

Full version

EU Environment Action Programmes

Since the mid-1970s, EU environmental policy-making has been guided by Environment Action Programs (EAPs). The current 7th Environment Action Program (7EAP) entitled "Living well, within limits of our planet" was adopted by the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union in November 2013 and came into force in January 2014. Its stated aim is to

"to step up the contribution of environment policy to the transition towards a resource-efficient, low-carbon economy in which natural capital is protected and enhanced, and the health and well-being of citizens is safeguarded."

The programme provides an overarching framework for environment policy to 2020 and identifies nine priority objectives for the EU and its Member States to attain. Responsibility for achieving the goals and objectives is shared by the EU and its Member States and priority objectives need to be met by 2020.

Welcome Address

Wolfgang Bogensberger, Deputy Head of the European Commission Representation in Austria
Jouni Nissinen, Head of the Environmental Policy Unit, Finnish Association for Nature Conservation and President, European Environmental Bureau (EEB)

Wolfgang Bogensberger, Deputy Head of the European Commission Representation in Austria

- Shaping the future of EU environmental policy is one of the core tasks of the Commission. Since 1970s env policy defined by a series of action programmes;
- 7EAP EU agreed to step up actions on national capital, resource efficiency low carbon economy, and also health and citizens;
- Also readiness for a 2050 vision;
- Q: are we moving in this direction, in which areas well, in which ok and in which areas concern, which would require additional efforts?

Jouni Nissinen, Head of the Environmental Policy Unit, Finnish Association for Nature Conservation and President, European Environmental Bureau (EEB)

- It is often **implementation** that is needed in the EU, not necessarily more policies;
- Blueberries – important socially and culturally in Finland. This year the **threat of climate change** became very real for many Finns due to impact on blueberries;
- Eurostat reminds us of the harsh reality – after all these efforts 2017 carbon emissions by fossil fuels increased by 2%. They should be falling if we are serious about climate change. In only 7 of the MS are emissions falling;
- With 8EAP time to make it right – stop thinking of climate change as just a nuisance. It is a life and death issue;
- Let's make Europe right again with ambition of the environment/ambitious climate change protection.

Keynote (Video Message)

Elisabeth Köstinger, Austrian Minister of Sustainability and Tourism (BMNT)

- 8EAP will be discussed at the informal environmental council in Graz, October 29/30 2018.

Link to the video message:

<https://www.umweltdachverband.at/themen/europaeische-umweltpolitik/at18/policy-forum/>

Keynotes from the EU Institutions: The 7th Environment Action Programme – making a difference?!

Astrid Schomaker, Director for Global Sustainable Development, Directorate General for the Environment, European Commission

- The treaty says we have to have EAPs, so they must be adopted and that is already enough of a reason to have an EAP⁴;
- 7 EAP is a 7 year programme with a long term 2050 vision and 9 priority objectives that we have to attain by 2020 in order to follow this vision;
- Impact of action can't be felt immediately, therefore critically important to have **long-term framing/perspective to stay on course/** strategies that take a long-term view.(e.g. even if we stop littering plastic bottles now, they are here for many years);
- **Legal framework, predictability, and reliability** - policies have to be reliable and predictable: Citizens have a right to know what is happening in environmental policy. Also important for investment decisions – need long-term predictability.
- **Policy coherence** is important, as we tend to think in silos. Framing of environmental policy helps to overcome silos because people know where they are going;
- EAP creates **common understanding across the actors**: important that not only Brussels says where we should go but also the Member States should have a **long term vision of what our environmental policies want to achieve**;
- **Commitment** – having EAPs strengthens the commitment of the EP and Council for env.;
- **Evaluation**: The Commission is currently in the process of evaluating what is happening to the 60 actions foreseen in the EAP. (Commission initially proposed 45). EEA is also contributing to this process with high quality analysis.
 - Public consultation until end of July - opportunity to participate;
 - 21st June workshop in Brussels - asking for feedback from stakeholders;
 - **May 2019** publication of evaluation.
- Good step forward -> **Circular Economy**: managed to mainstream the idea;
- Despite 2017 **CO2 emissions**, broadly on target and developing a long term strategy;
- Everyone recognising 7EAP = **climate, biodiversity and resources debate together**. Cannot solve one without the other;
- **Biodiversity** (BD) remains a challenge, have come forward with new BD action plan to step up action and move forward with key regulations;

⁴ According to Article 192 (3) TFEU general action programmes setting out priority objectives to be attained shall be adopted by the European Parliament and the Council, acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure and after consulting the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.

- Invasive alien species regulation and recently a proposal on pollinators;
- **Health and environment:** taken action on air pollution – MS have agreed on ambitious new targets – revised NEC. Have collectively signed up to the Minamata Convention. The Refit on REACH has been done, next is the non REACH refit and once both of these are done then progress with the non-toxic env strategy;
- Overall the 7 EAP has proven its value in terms of having the right **title, policy focus, and narrative.**
- Of course **failings:** nitrogen too high, BD under threat, ecological footprint at home and abroad is still too high – there are areas where we haven't done enough and action fields remain for the future;
- **How to continue – 8EAP will be for the new Commission** to see if it wants to make a proposal. Independent on whether new commissions shares vision or not, **we need to talk about the future of env policy;**
- First of all we need to **strengthen the international dimension of environmental policy.** We will need some sort of **global collaboration to meet the challenges that we face.** More than ever it must be **Europe to push for multilateral solutions;**
- UN tells us that getting **urbanisation** right is critically important;
- But also we as Europeans have to realize that our lifestyles have an impact internationally – e.g. sending our electronic waste abroad. European sustainability also means **advocating for global sustainability.** No option but cooperative approach;
- **Biodiversity** moving to a critical date on targets. We must come up with new approaches to see how we can be more effective;
- Also **SDGs - guiding framework:** what is the contribution that EU environmental policy can do for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals/2030 Agenda?
- We are talking about systems – **food system, mobility system, buildings and life style.** It has to come together in a **systemic approach;**
- Env policy is not a luxury. Integration goes both ways;
- **Implementation, implementation, implementation** – have a gap between beautiful legislation on books, and reality in MS: sometimes lack of political will, sometimes lack of capacity etc. It means that it makes environmental policy less credible. This is also about **quality of legislation, peer to peer learning:** what is needed to improve implementation of environmental policy?
- “Umweltaktionsprogramme sind die Mutter aller Programme”.

Daciana Octavia Sârbu, Member of the European Parliament, Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D) (Video Message)

Link to the video message:

<https://www.umweltdachverband.at/themen/europaeische-umweltpolitik/at18/policy-forum/>

Jock Martin, Head of Programme of Integrated Assessments, European Environment Agency (EEA)

- EEA is more and more looking at the **global and systemic perspective** of things.
- **Global megatrends** - we really need to think about the **urgency of action.** Great acceleration – **across many indicators** we see the **typical “hockey-stick” form, flat for many years and then exponential in the last decades:** we have **unsustainable systems.**
- The **urgency of action is a key message:** Climate, Biodiversity and environmental health impacts.

Earth system trends – also negative: loss of forests, overuse of phosphorous and nitrogen et al.;

- **Aging population in Europe** another challenge;
- **Global env outlook report** - will be published at the end of this year/early next year;
- **Challenges: fiscal and finance systems.** One interesting thing: the sustainable finance initiative. Problems vs. Solutions (lets more focus on the latter): bring in more ideas about solutions and not so much about problems and create those solutions from a systems perspective.

High level panel discussion, followed by Q&A: State of Environment and challenges for the next decade: 7EAP progress and policy needs for 2021-2030

Moderator: Mia Forbes Pirie

Panelists:

Astrid Schomaker, Director for Global Sustainable Development, Directorate General for the Environment, European Commission

Jock Martin, Head of Programme of Integrated Assessments, European Environment Agency (EEA)

Karl Vella, Climate Policy Lead, World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)

Rob Williams, Senior Consultant, Trinomics

Moderator summarizes three issues that came up in previous statements: **teeth, implementation** and **silos**.

Rob Williams, Trinomics:

- EP work on mid-term assessment resulted in mixed picture: good on climate, some water, problems with BD, chemicals, CAP.

Karl Vella, WBCSD:

- The **vision for 2050** is good, but it needs to be made more specific. Needs more teeth. Business solutions to accelerate shift;
- Bring businesses together to **look at key systems changes** that need to take place **to move forward on environmental policy agendas**;
- Systems interact with each other. You can't have a discussion about transport without having a discussion about energy. We **bring together a variety of sectors to develop solutions**.

Jock Martin, EEA:

- Focus on **urgency perspective**.

Moderator:

We talked about the implementation gap and we have to move people along at various speed. Are we too ambitious, are we not ambitious enough?

Jock Martin, EEA:

- Priority objectives are clear, explicit;
- What we find most useful is **how we can relate our knowledge to the priority objectives**;
- One objective – implies a lot of policies, very complex;
- How to maintain these **priorities** but **enable them to be more ambitious?**

- We need to **join up things, integrate, systems perspective**;
- Opportunity for better teeth? Yes;
- We need to think about **resetting the narrative about today's context**;
- How to **bring people out of their silos**? Even the research panels are in silos – e.g. panels on climate, on BD, on resources – but they haven't come together: becomes difficult and complicated.

Astrid Schomaker, EC:

- 7EAP says a lot of nice things, says on how to implement, but what hasn't been done is **promote on the 7EAP itself**. Take as an example what EEA did with State of Environment Report (SOER)– EEA set up a whole road show and engaged every single member. Commission could have said “what does the 7EAP mean for Austria” etc.;
- 7th EAP was adopted by the predecessor of the current commissions. So DGENV had to explain how 7EAP priorities fitted in with the current Juncker 10 priorities. **New commission** will make it owns programme – so **more ownership**;
- Priority objectives are each important;
- **Circular Economy** first promoted by DGENV, then withdrew...then worked with other DGs – got broader support. **Sustainable finance** – worked with amazing speed. So what really needs to be done? SDGs tell us have to move in a holistic way.

Karl Vella, WBCS:

- To get through silos – focus on the economic challenges and then see how to address –...e.g. circular economy and Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP). At WBCSD see how to address SCP and integrating into the practice/policies. E.g. sustainable food patterns that need to shift;
- Finance:
 - **Innovative carbon forum** in Frankfurt – in the past about international climate challenges. This year about funders, getting them on board, block chain investment. There is an appetite – **when business sees the appetite, it grasps the opportunity**. How to truly engage the private sector;
 - **Climate finance** well articulated in Paris, but there is just as a big a funding gap in BD and other areas. Need to **drive funding towards other priority areas**. Now looking at things - e.g. **taxonomy**. Need to work more on Natural capital accountings and also rank/benchmarking on SDG performance.
 - **Sustainable finance initiative**: finance understood it to be **only about climate change**. So bringing in BD and other areas opened eyes.
- **System transition** – we find an area where all parts of business interested – the broader and the more complex, the greater interest;
- **Foresight: business is often better at looking forward than policy**. Astrid and Jock developing a foresight exercise. Also asked to join a foresight group with DGENV on SDGs. Foresight regaining grounds, was strong in 1990s, but weaker since;
- **Chemicals**: have invited a number of scientists from US to talk of endocrine disrupting substance et al.
- Have a **knowledge domain** as a space **to break down silos**;
- In the past 20% of the budget had climate relevance. Business can make money out of it, but more difficult for nature. So **more subsidies are needed for nature** – yet the **MFF budget**

doesn't have it.

Rob Williams, Trinomics:

- Reason **businesses are not engaging with biodiversity targets** is that there is not so much scope to make money out of it;
- A good driver in climate change has been the idea of “**stranded assets**”. Take as an example plastic – if you have invested in only plastic cotton buds you now have stranded assets. Need to be more aware of stranded assets.

Moderator: Is there a hierarchy- sort of climate change above all?

Astrid Schomaker, EC:

- **Hierarchy in public awareness** - more on climate, and less on BD. What we need to bring more to the attention of the public is **how all things hang together**. We cannot deal with one without the other.

Jock Martin, EEA:

- I hope we will never have a market for biodiversity (BD);
- We are **caught in a knowledge trap** – we have a system on what is happening in the economy, and a system for climate. We are trying to apply similar demands to BD, but BD is more complex. We should rather understand that the BD issue is so complex and so huge that the precautionary principle is much better suited for BD. So **we may not always have sufficient knowledge**, but we need to break out of the knowledge gap. And recognize that knowledge has different aspects to it. – So the **precautionary principle needs strengthening**;
- We spend far too much time looking backwards, and not enough time looking forwards.

Karl Vella, WBCS:

- Maybe reason we are so focussed on climate debate also related to **international profile of climate debate**;
- Survey of **private sector: Two highest talked about SDGs – climate and SCP**. Two lowest – life below water and life on land. Here lies the challenge of engaging with the private sector;
- Public awareness: maybe climate on the top, but now plastics has risen right to the top, issue of **circular economy right to the top**.

Moderator: Public perception and how we draw people into these issues: How do we make them important?

Jock Martin, EEA:

- **Lifecycle analysis:** Transparency is important in term of footprint and **enabling the consumers to make choices**;
- Regulation, behavioral science and not shifting responsibility away from the consumers;
- Looking at companies of the future: what does value mean? We are now looking at a very capitalist based business environment;
- Biz – profit is everything – so how does one look at the **value of the company** when looking into the future. How do we move away from an unsustainable future but create a future where businesses are also valued by what they contribute to society. So company success **not just profits**. So how does a company contribute to jobs etc?

- **Transparency** is important for citizens and business. Use phones/apps to help people make choices.

Astrid Schomaker, EC:

- Not right to shift responsibility to the consumer. Responsibility to regulate. Don't just assume that if we give more info to citizens they will improve behavior. Busy people don't have the half hour at the end of the day.

Moderator: International landscape is shifting – what is it we have to do? Are there any opportunities?

Karl Vella, WBCS:

- EU leading role on climate. 3 years since Paris, but we don't know what the EU position is...need more ambition at EU level to lead. Little look at the supply chains. What are supply chain emissions? Not only look at EU, but also look at **supply chain and emissions outside of the EU**.
- Need responsible business practice, CSR – when they invest abroad not to exploit weaknesses, but abide by their own standards. Responsible corporate citizens.

Astrid Schomaker, EC:

- 7EAP talks about deforestation and what can be done. To a large extent it concerns the products we import into Europe. One could look at sustainability standards, but this is difficult in 3rd countries. But one can work with development assistance to address deforestation;
- The need/case for multilateralism is more important than ever. With REACH – this led to global standards. Other countries immediately follow. But there is lesser export of EU standards to the global level now, as there is competition from other standard setters (notably China).

Moderator: What are key priorities for 8EAP?

Jock Martin, EEA:

Go up stream in systems perspective...and then solve downstream problems.

Rob Williams, Trinomics:

- **Broaden climate spending target** for wider environment – should help put things up the agenda.

Astrid Schomaker, EC:

- Systems perspective: and policy mixes to bring about the transition.

Karl Vella, WBCSD:

- Systems perspective from an **economic perspective** as well.

Questions & Answers - Audience & Panelists:

- We see problems growing...but the politician's solutions are more growth...therefore are we trapped?
- **Citizens' assembly**... works in Ireland; can we export that to Europe?
- On **responsibility of business** – it is not responsibility of business to accept lower profit, but to have rules and pricing to change the context for "**profit decisions**" for business;

- Redefine what **value means**, not profit... Strong proponents of **carbon pricing** – as a v cost effective way of reducing emissions;
- **How do you include all the parameters from the start** when you take a decision? (how do you enable a **system’s perspective?**);
- **Health** – we can see policy contradictions – e.g. plant protection & health; energy policies & health, indoor air and impact on health. So how does one take factors into account?
- For example, as regards schools or other buildings with better-insulated windows– they get hot and stuff very quickly. There is a need to improve the architect’s design to **avoid trade-offs**;
- What does “**living well**” mean? Can we continue to have upwards growth charts?
- 7EAP – **emissions from transport** – really one of the key challenges the EU is facing. The level of ambition of **current ambition is insufficient**. So this is one of the key sectors/systems that need to be addressed in a concrete manner on the way forward;
- **Citizens’ health** – green health back to the fore - super high priorities;
- Are we in a growth trap – **beyond GDP** – look at quality of life as part of this definition? Austria will take a very ambitious narrative on transitions – in its annual debate on the subject. This is also about decoupling – looking at how to produce goods with lesser environmental impacts;
- **Global happiness index** – what we need to measure is important;
- **Zero chemical economy**: brings this more into economic transformation;
- We have to **start thinking outside the box, revolutionize the way we produce and consume**;
- We need to look at research and academia and reinforce the idea of innovative ideas for the future.

Moderator: How ambitious do we need to be and how to get out of the box on systems lock-in?

Unattributed:

- **Food (processing, delivering)**– we are playing with evolution– e.g. endocrine disrupting substances, health, soil, etc.;
- The **SDGs** means that we have to change everything we do...start by ambition and **consumption patterns**;
- Ambition and innovation – to **change systems** – research, academia, innovative solutions;
- **Lifestyle** - food, transport;
- **Consumption (patterns)** is not just an issue at the end, but throughout the chains.
- Defining an EAP but not as Sustainable Development. We need to go **back to env policy tools**.

Parallel Break-Out Session: Natural Capital

Moderator: Bjela Vossen, Director EU-Koordinationsbüro, Deutscher Naturschutzring (DNR)

Rapporteur:

Jouni Nissinen, Head of the Environmental Policy Unit, Finnish Association for Nature Conservation and President, European Environmental Bureau (EEB)

Speakers:

Laure Ledoux, Deputy Head of the Biodiversity Unit, Directorate-General for the Environment, European Commission

Andreas Beckmann, Managing Director, WWF International Danube-Carpathian Programme

Sergiy Moroz, Senior Policy Officer for Water and Biodiversity, European Environmental Bureau (EEB)

Marina von Weissenberg, Senior Ministerial Adviser, Department of the Natural Environment/Biodiversity, Finnish Ministry of the Environment

Andreas Beckman, WWF:

- The EAP is and should be guiding DGENV actions;
- Needed is:
 - an overarching strategy including the SDG's & the Paris agreement;
 - a clear vision;
 - close the funding and implementation gap;
 - take care of (policy) coherence;
 - monitoring and enforcement;
 - go beyond everyday level of ambition;
- The existence of the 7th EAP is a good thing, a lot has been achieved in the other two realms only not in the realm of Natural Capital;
- in the realm of Natural Capital the **integration** is bad, for example the CAP and also **financing**. This is because of a lack of commitment of especially the member states;
- Maybe this is the case because **public awareness** is too low. How can we turn this around to become the first priority? It is strange because the Eurobarometer shows concerns and commitment of citizens for the environment. Also the youth < 18 shows that environment is top priority directly after education. We haven't found the right vision and narrative.

Laure Ledoux, European Commission:

- The evaluation process is ongoing;
- Especially **regulation services are going down** because nature is being used up;
- Relates to the **bomb shell German insect-biomass research with the 70% decline**;
- Progress is made for instance with the **pollinator initiative**;
- **More money for LIFE in MFF proposals**;
- Progress on **Finance & Biodiversity** – community of practice but expect no overnight results;
- Systemic change has to come from new CAP.

Further steps to be taken:

- Capitalise on ongoing developments;
- International steps, Beijing should be the Paris moment for Nat. Cap.;
- Develop narrative in relation to well-being and economy;
- Address the (systemic) drivers.

Marina von Weissenberg, Finnish Ministry of the Environment:

- The wording 'Natural Capital' doesn't work well, it causes confusion;
- 7th/8th EAP should be clear on who is in the lead, who will deliver and who is responsible. So **accountability is key**;
- **Natural Capital accounting** hasn't really flown. That's because there is ambivalence, still there is the **issue of intrinsic value**;
- We need to **put a price on nature and phase out harmful subsidies**;
- We need to simplify, biodiversity is too complex, we need a **new deal for nature**;
- **Implement Natura 2000 & the Birds and Habitats Directives (BHD) & Action Plan**. The national missions of the EU to the MS are very effective;
- Protected area's are delivering if effective management including restoration is assured;

- The **vision is a challenge**, we have the **planetary boundaries** and the **tipping points** but they **don't work (yet)**;
- Call to DG ENVI, **link into CAP reform regarding biodiversity**, because it isn't going to work on the MS level. Maybe for climate it will work but not for biodiversity;
- The **LIFE budget should go up**.

Input from a mix of persons joining the breakout session - journalism, science, administration, agriculture, fisheries, nature conservation and mountain farming:

The new narrative:

- **Answer the question of the added value of Nat. Cap.** The **narrative should be broader**; it is worth investing in nature. Eurostat is giving grants for ecosystem accounts, maybe this could be the beginning of systemic change;
- SDG's will be here until 2030, link up with them;
- **We need a clear simple focal point like the 1.5-2 degree in the climate debate**;
- Maybe that simple focal point could be: Let no species go!;
- Could the 'Half earth' plea be an idea? The Austrian foresters will translate this to: "They are going to take away half of our forest";
- Circular economy within planetary boundaries.

Question: 'What specific aspect is most important to focus on in the next 5-10 years'

- Basically the 7th EAP is not bad at all, it is about **Implementation, implementation, implementation**;
- **Soil & pesticides**, soil because farmers can relate to the degradation of (their) soil;
- Focus on youth as the new voters and employed in the field of environment – **digitalisation & citizens science as instruments**;
- **Regionalized nature-inclusive farming**: In the Netherlands buzzing concept because society & farmers see it can't go on like this (soil, pesticides, insect loss etc.);
- Do not shy away from **legislation**, for instance the **15% restoration target could be made concrete and accountable through legislation**;
- **Make the 8th EAP a interdisciplinary project**;
- **Take it to a higher level**: It is all about a **green circular economy, biodiversity is part of that**;
- Make clear **who is in charge & who is responsible for financing**;
- Use **taxes to guide consumer behavior**;
- The 7th EAP seems to consist of **3 silo's** but they **should make a circle**;
- Think about the half earth model;
- Only public opinion can drive biodiversity higher on the political agenda, so the focus must also be on the **message to the public**;
- Focused on the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), WWF is building on a campaign.

Parallel Break-Out Session: Resource-efficient, green, and competitive low-carbon economy

Moderator: Patrick ten Brink, EU Policy Director, European Environmental Bureau (EEB)

Rapporteur:

Patrick ten Brink, EU Policy Director, European Environmental Bureau (EEB)

Speakers:

Constanze Adolf, Project Coordinator, Lumenion GmbH

Stefan Sengelin, Advisor, Austrian Federal Ministry of Sustainability and Tourism (BMNT)

Sigrid Stagl, Head of the Institute for Ecological Economics, Vienna University of Economics and Business

André Weidenhaupt, Premier Conseiller de Gouvernement, Luxembourg

Matthias Neitsch, Managing Director, Reuse and Repair Network (RepaNet)

Constanze Adolf, Lumenion GmbH:

- Is the GDP still the right **indicator to measure well-being**?
- Have a system where prices represent the **cost of our consumption patterns**;
- If we buy organic fair trade products, in the end it will be cheaper for us;
- Difficult for the European Union to move forward on **environmental taxes**, because different systems in all EU MS;
- **Harmful subsidies** – will Europe meet its commitment to end harmful subsidies by 2020?

Stefan Sengelin, BMNT:

- **Taxonomy** – classify activities which are sustainable and which are not;
- Austrian klimaaktiv-Initiative to introduce and promote climate friendly technologies and services;
- We need **spaces** to allow for **innovation and development**.

Sigrid Stagl, Vienna University of Economics and Business:

- There is no such thing as a **free market**. There are rules and regulations that determine the market. Every market is regulated, it is just a question of how the market is regulated;
- Another point about **externalities**: when we see that fair trade / organic products are priced higher, it is because they are paying a higher share of the overall costs;
- **GDP is not a well-being indicator**; it has never been designed as a well-being indicator. No economist would call GDP a welfare indicator of economic production. It's a **measure of production**. We need a far more sophisticated approach than just aiming for GDP. But then we also have to talk about distribution;
- What we are trying as ecological economists is to try to reframe this, normal economics only work within GDP.

Two very specific proposals:

- **Get environmental indicators into the EAP**, I would just argue against resource efficiency.

Resource efficiency and all has gone up, but we are still using more resources. I would suggest that we put an absolute indicator, rather than an efficiency indicator;

- **Eco-taxes**-of course, we need to do this. Better to do it at EU level and not at national level;
- There is a lot of inertia and resistance, because of those who own fossil fuel reserves. We need to talk about how we convince them to leave their reserves aside, leave them in the soil.

André Weidenhaupt, Luxembourg

- There was once an initiative by Italy during the Italian EU presidency when they tried to come up with a **resource efficiency indicator**, but they failed. They could not get this adopted;
- Reaction to **eco-taxes**: European Commission's plan to tax non-recycled plastic packaging waste will be opposed by Luxembourg, because we don't like EU taxes;
- Luxembourg's Climate & Energy plan builds very much on local actors;
- **Climate Act** between the municipalities and the government: a volunteer joining in from all municipalities;
- In terms of **circular economy** we linked it in with local businesses, circular economy model ideal for a country like Luxembourg that doesn't have a lot of resources;
- **Circular Economy**: Three Benelux states are keen on moving towards a Circular Economy;
- **Financial sector: Luxembourg** has a very strong financial sector, **largest host for green bonds**. Global market for green bonds totals more than \$ 160 billion, more than half of all green bonds listed are listed in Luxembourg's stock exchange. One of the reasons is that European Investment Bank is next door;
- Luxembourg set up a **labeling agency for sustainable funds**, for microfinance funds. We need a green sector, we need integrity;
- We **need to attract private money** and for that develop innovation;
- **For the next EAP we also need financial instruments**. One of the enabling factors that can be developed much more.

Matthias Neitsch, RepaNet

- The value of **reuse** and how it contributes to prevention of resource extraction is not yet taken into consideration;
- Reuse doesn't create economic growth and if our system is based on growth we can't create a circular economy.

Additional input from panelists and audience joining the breakout session (unattributed):

- What is lacking is a **programme where innovative projects or ideas can be developed**;
- If we are talking about projects of the future, what the EU should be doing is to **reward holistic, multi-sectorial projects**;
- We need to have **programmes and platforms that are supported** and only an organization like the EU can do it;
- We have no problem to agree on the final objectives, but the **speed is the problem**. The speed of decarbonisation. If we want to keep temperatures below a certain threshold, we will have to decarbonize the atmosphere;
- Establish **foresight platforms to explore futures risks**, future proofing;
- Show the **disconnect between the different visions**;

- To implement a **CO2 Tax at the EU level**. Problem: if we cannot change labor taxes at the EU level, then we should not introduce environmental taxes at the EU level;
- Until now majority of Austrians support CO2 taxes;
- We often hear that we need new financing mechanism. But we have very low interest rates, **there is enough capital**.

Private financing:

- We need to **put public money together with private money**. Putting together private and public money, you have to **create the instruments that investors can understand**;
- We need more than even trillions to achieve this;
- Regarding **how to evaluate the financial streams** and **the way we shift the money**: those who own fossil fuels don't want to end up with stranded assets. But the question is **who would invest?** So there **public money** begins to play a role. More and more **pension funds** shift away from fossil fuels and move into other assets;
- So we **need criteria to help them shift**, pension funds are very important in this regard.

Question: 'What specific aspect is most important to focus on in the next 5-10 years' - What should go into an 8EAP?

Unattributed:

- I think we need **awareness of consumers and of companies**. But I fully agree that we need **rules for the market** and we need **commitment from the politicians** and we need **legislation and rules**;
- **Environmental tax**, harmonizing CO2 prices, 100€ per tonne of carbon through carbon tax;
- Let's get **reduced consumption, get out of the economic growth paradigm**. This has to be stated very, very clearly along with the urgency of the question. We have to be much more ambitious;
- Besides **technological innovation**, especially **social innovation** is something that we need to think more about;
- Footprint, deforestation issues. We **can't leave it to the consumers**;
- The **internalization of social and environmental costs**, addressing those directly;
- **Education** - raising awareness starting with children at the kindergarten, pupils in elementary schools;
- We will not solve this issue in the short term. We need a **strategic approach that gives politicians some flexibility**;
- Step away **from waste management and shift to resource policy**. Help the willing companies with low level funding and education for sustainability for companies;
- We don't need more, we have all that we need. We have the politicians that say they want to take action but they don't. The people are far more advanced than the politicians at the moment. Let's make the people do. **How can we allow the people to move ahead?**
- I don't think that education is the answer. People are already there, we have a clear majority for stronger climate protection. The problem is that in politics we have the **influence of fossil fuel lobbyists**. **More participation**, like again in the Irish model. And even let the people decide about the instruments. People need to be integrated into policy making;
- **Non-market instruments**-there is a lot of power in non-market instruments. We often

emphasize the role of institutions. Example “smoking ban”: enabled me to participate in social interactions that I was excluded from before. So there is a lot of **power in non-market instruments**;

- I would like to have a **future environmental framework** and understanding that the **growing material flows** are actually the **source of the sickness**, whereas climate change is the sickness. Instead of curing the symptoms, we should cure the sources. Growing material flows are caused by **growing financial flows**. Economic growth no longer the solution. Growth is not the model of our future;
- **Policy coherence**- if we address and create policy coherence, then we are better able to move ahead with our agendas;
- Paris Agreement, especially **realigning all financial flows to achieve Paris targets**. We should do policies with people, building up a knowledge base on transition. What do we need, what do we need for the transition?
- **Youth perspective** - Climate change communication. We are failing on every level when it comes to this topic. Education is an important point, not thinking in silos, but holistic thinking. Kids are quite capable to talk about climate change. Participation, wider issue of governance

Parallel Break-Out Session: Environment -related pressures and risks to health and wellbeing

Moderator: Sandor Fülöp, President, EMLA

Rapporteur: Attracta Ui Bhroin, Council Member, An Taice, Vice President, European Environmental Bureau (EEB)

Speakers:

Marco Martuzzi, Programme Manager Environment and Health Impact Assessment , WHO European Centre for Environment and Health

Sophie Perroud, Policy Coordinator, Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL), Brussels

Brigit Staatsen, Senior Researcher Healthy Living Environment, National Institute of Public Health and Environment (RIVM), The Netherlands

Robert Thaler, Head, Division Mobility, Transport & Noise, Austrian Federal Ministry of Sustainability and Tourism

Introduction by the moderator:

- Midterm Review of Objective 3 of the 7EAP
 - Air quality – not sufficiently implemented;
 - Noise (indoor and outdoor) – not suff. Impl.;
 - Water (drinking and bathing) – implemented ;
 - Hazardous chemicals – not suff. Impl.;
 - Pesticides – not suff. Impl.;
 - Nanomaterials – not suff. Impl.;
 - Climate change adaptation – acceptable;
 - EAP7 found moderately influence EU policies;
 - Lack of administrative/human resources;
 - Lack of knowledge and data;
 - Funding is not adequately matched to needs;

- Insufficient compliance assurance;
 - Citizens' trust in enforcement is declining;
 - Precautionary, integration and polluter pays principle are not consequentially used.
- Priorities of 8EAP:
 - More effective enforcement of existing laws in place;
 - Follow new scientific results, eg WHO recommendations;
 - Different levels of governance work together;
 - Long term strategies to cut down emissions, identification of new substances, phase out, non-toxic material cycles;
 - Data available to the public, in real time;
 - Implementation of strategic decisions in the European legal culture (framework, guide);
 - Sustainable development, SDGs, ecosystem services;
 - Equity issues, incl inter-generational ones;
 - Big Data, citizens' enforcement, the system of public participation;
 - Science-based policy, the EIA family.

Discussion (unattributed):

- Need to move **from “lip service” – to delivering** and putting health at the centre of decision making – health expertise too often is on the margins of policy and decision making;
- Need for a **re-framing**, recognise there are many environments (indoor, outdoor, noise, air etc – in addition to the natural environment needs integration and response across sectors);
- Nature and Environment & Health – special subjects;
- **Inequality** issue;
- Lack of **admin/human resources** to implement;
- Lack of **knowledge and data**, funding is not adequately matched to needs;
- Insufficient **compliance** assurance;
- Citizens' **trust in enforcement** is declining;
- **Precautionary principle** is key!

Marco Martuzzi/WHO:

- Focus of EAPs should be on Air Pollution, WatSan, Climate Change, Cities, Waste, Chemicals.

Sophie Perroud/HEAL

- **Translation/Interpretation of knowledge** is important to do good lobby work;
- Focus on health/social policies;
- Need a way **from non-toxic to post-toxic environment**;
- **Buildings** are our daily environment, as humans are 20h(!) daily inside;
- How to nudge **implementation**?
- **MFF** need to be linked to 7/8EAP priorities;
- European Semester.

Brigit Staatsen/RIVM

- We need to change lifestyles!
- Systemic change;
- Environmental planning but also spatial planning;
- Raising awareness;
- Focus on cities.

Robert Thaler/BMNT

- Mobility is raising, 46% only in transport;
- We need a sectoral approach (Building, Housing, Transport):
Ministry of Transport agreed to sectoral commitments for CO2 reduction within the Austrian Climate and Energy Strategy (<https://mission2030.info/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Klima-Energiestrategie.pdf>)
 - „Verkehr ist mit einem Anteil von 46 % der Gesamtemissionen derzeit der emissionsstärkste Sektor. Zur Erreichung des Gesamtziels bis 2030 ist eine Reduktion der Emissionen um rund 7,2 mio. t co2 eq auf rund 15,7 mio. t co2 eq (aktuell: 22,9 mio. t co2eq) vorgesehen.“
- Focus on **SDGs** which are totally missing in 7EAP;
- **E-cars** and **digitalisation** will not solve everything. 50% demand management, 50% technology;
- How will we construct cities and use land;
- However, city approach to narrow- broaden it up to regions;
- Young people not interested in driving licences any more;
- No cycling strategy in place;
- De-carbonisation: transformation needed!
- EU citizens need support in this transformation period, otherwise they feel left alone;
- Tax system: behaviour change and lifestyle change!

What content in 8EAP:

- **Food/System vs nutrition & safety** – essential for a sustainable approach, broader environmental responsibility – planetary boundaries;
- **Mobility** – cross-sectoral;
- Flow of Materials;
- Implementation;
- Sub-national/regional/communities and cities;
- Envi justice;
- Inter-generational focus (3 generations ahead, like American natives);
- Lost pollution focus back (air, noise, chemicals, etc);
- Prevention;
- Precautionary principle/no data-no market;
- Grouping chemicals;
- Decarbonisation/zero emission mobility;
- ICT/Biotech;
Post-toxic / non-toxic – chemicals the EU Treaties TFEU 191;
- Maintain Basic elements trying to re-invent too much – implementation and delivery instead;
- Integrate and synergies with the WHO;
- Make it easy;
- Systems approach;

- Driving effects of interests and powers – control of info and research, fake news issues, conflict of interests;
- EU Frameworks – extending to regional approach;
- Citizens are not alone – EU regulation is supporting you;
- Innovation;
- Carrot and stick;
- Networking;
- Inequality issue.

What should AT do?

- Bring it on Agenda of Environmental Council;
- Be bold and ambitious;
- AT has the power- given the MFF falls within AT presidency – it will determine what can be delivered in an 8EAP; unique opportunity;
- Austria was a frontrunner in environmental policies in the 1990s - be like in the 90s again!
- New Draft Life programme – health not mentioned – remedy this!
- Awareness raising – the EC EEA “roadshow” but also the lead in to the 2019 elections – set the scene

Concluding plenary session

Conclusions: Priorities for an 8th EAP and the way forward, followed by Q&A

The concluding plenary session heard reports back from the break-out sessions and a closing panel discussion.

Moderator: Mia Forbes Pirie

Panelists:

Elisabeth Freytag-Rigler, Director, EU Environmental Affairs, Federal Ministry of Sustainability and Tourism, Austria

Julia Werner, Head of Unit, European Union: Strategic and Legal Aspects, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany

Marina von Weissenberg, Senior Ministerial Adviser, Department of the Natural Environment/Biodiversity, Finnish Ministry of the Environment, Finland

Anne Saudmont, EU Policy Officer, Brussels Environment Administration – IBGE, Belgium

Elisabeth Freytag-Rigler, BMNT, Austria

- Let's implement 7EAP as well as design an 8EAP;
- Infringements + EIR;
- Yes, Austria in favour of 8EAP, will discuss 8 EAP at informal environmental council;
- What if EU reflection on 2030 so good that all SDGs covers everything?- unlikely;
- Finns will do conclusions in the council on the basis of the evaluation;
- German presidency can then do the final decision with the EP;

- It is on the basis of the treaty –decided by Council and EP – legally binding. Very good for the commission. In a time when commission has 10 priorities where SD not there, that env can come forward;
- EU 2020 ultimate aim is economic ground. But clearly growth is not a goal.

Marina von Weissenberg, Finnish Ministry of the Environment, Finland

- Finland has not yet discussed this at all, and we don't have an official position;
- At the moment implementing the 7th. We need to see clearly added value of the 7th and 8th, because of SDGs. And Finland has even more ambitious strategies. Health –have challenges – definitely synergies with WHO. But sometimes they don't understand our thinking at all. Because the pharmaceutical industry is very hard. Also food issue (and soil – pesticides: quite dramatic). Reporting requirements can be irritating.

Julia Werner, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany

- On board for 8EAP: Env Ministry is on board and the German government as whole is on board;
- When it comes to the level of ambitions, we need further internal discussions. Should be an ambitious 8EAP and really need it. And even need it in the unlikely event that the EU reflection paper should be ambitious;
- Need some more concrete env guidance for the next years. Ambitious but simpler. 7EAP was quite good, but it wasn't simple. If it could be concentrated when negotiating 8th would help all of us;
- Internal discussions could concentrate on **objectives, targets with lead indicators, concrete actions, and concrete timelines**. This could give it a simple structure ...so business/industry would like to know what they are facing.

Anne Saudmont, Brussels Environment Administration – IBGE, Belgium

- **Most important issue is systems issue; need more integration;**
- Sometimes contradictions between biodiversity and energy – need these to be solved;
- Need more coherence – agriculture, soil, biodiversity;
- Link between EAP and higher level strategies should be enhanced – strategy 2020.
- More regular state of play during 7EAP would have helped – to identify priorities and areas where further efforts need to be strengthened.

Unattributed...in order of discussion

- Monitoring – evaluation and monitoring now quite late;
- Agree to not have too many indicators.
- Stakeholder participation when writing the paper and also when monitoring the programme
- Urgency of BD loss is very alarming. Urgency is here now. So we don't have time to think of system changes. We need actions. But without financial means we can't do it.
- This morning no discussion on biodiversity – if we don't get BD into agriculture now we've lost the opportunity. Still now we need to work together on different issues.
- EEA: loss of BD – has to do with land-use with infrastructure (EU supporting Interreg) – push from EU in Montenegro to have highways and roads all over the country and at the the same

time talk about environmental policies. We have trade-offs all the time...How do we stop contradicting ourselves across different policies.

- Problem is that env ministries and authorities are very weak. We are small players. We should sit with finance ministries. We should have the finance ministries on the panel.
- The failure of the 7EAP is that there was no financing linked to it; If with the MFF we don't get money for that now, it is a lost opportunity.
- Agree that finance is important – important financial decisions were made before 7EAP – so these strategies are not well coordinated. Maybe 8EAP can affect next MFF more effectively.
- Environmental justice and addressing inequalities, not only in the health area – is really important to show what is the benefit of environmental policy. Hopefully a benefit of overcoming inequality.

Anne Saudmont, BE:

Objectives of 7EAP remain relevant: but synergies between priorities need to be enhanced. We need to break them if we wish to progress.

Julia Werner (DE):

The issues are more or less the old ones, but may be should reframe in a systematic way. But don't know how.

Marina von Weissenberg (FI):

Most effective is to have regulations and directives and legal obligations. Strategies are fine, but quite weak. Simplification can lose things, so 7EAP good. But systematic –we need to put leverage on circular economy, to drive also biodiversity agenda. CE could be one of the issues where we could integrate nature much more.

Good boost and critical attention on plastics and pollinators.

- Planetary boundaries don't fly outside of EU borders.
- Mainstreaming and integration – in US: nothing happens

Elisabeth Freytag-Rigler (AT):

EP pushed commission for proposals. So we need an EAP so that the EP can ask. We need a bit more systemic approach – also people talking about food supply chains....also energy revolutions. We would like to change EURATOM treaty. Also would like to reiterate education is important.

Moderator: timescale for 8EAP?

- to 2030 or to 2030 with midterm evaluation in 2025?
- 2030 with a strong 2050 vision
- Agree + obligatory assessment and back casting, with 3 years' time check, who is in charge etc...We need to involve broader society and have a time frame. – Who is in charge, what is done, what financing, and EEA reporting on it.
- 2030 and need 2050 vision (already have it).
- Sync it with SDGs

Moderator: How do we make sure that the EAPs are well implemented and have teeth? What can we learn from cities?

- We need obligatory assessments in three years cycles. Responsibilities included, not only for the

Commission, but also MS and all the SH. And we need to have a timeframe when this action x,y,z is done. Then we need to link the financing with it.

- What was missing was a midterm evaluation. Evaluation s too late. Key element of a next EAP. Maybe align EAP with EIR. Why not take opportunity for transparent state of play. EIR a good tool to monitor progress of MS, but needs to be strengthened. EIR should not measure progress on the general objectives, but on the actions. At the moment too vague.
- What is monitored should be drafted and written in a way that is very specific. If we have concrete targets and concrete timelines, it should be easy to monitor.
- Presidencies will communicate. But general public doesn't know about 7EAP communication and awareness raising part very important part. Need to get the people who are elected to be aware.
- Facts are really important. We need Jock and fantastic NGOs and landowners also going around. Twitting, TV programmes, big bangs. People need to feel it.
- a big PR campaign that energizes Europe.

Moderator: Three most important things we need to do to enable an 8EAP?

Marina von Weissenberg (FI):

Consumption and production patters and key; then soil (microbial, health, food security, landowners etc) , and organisational land-use

Julia Werner (DE):

Climate, BD and air pollution

Anne Saudmont, BE:

Food, sustainable consumption and production, urban dimension (mobility, air quality, noise etc) – need to keep cities involved in the process

- Soil and land use have subsidiarity dimension. Make sure EEB/UWD background report gets to commission, following work of commission, - need to push others in the government. Not just env council, but all councils!