



European Union

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Environment

The EU has some of the world's highest environmental standards. Environment policy helps **green the EU economy, protect nature, and safeguard the health and quality of life** of people living in the EU.

Green growth

Protecting the environment and maintaining a competitive EU presence on the global market can go hand in hand, and environment policy can play a key role in creating jobs and stimulating investment. 'Green growth' entails developing integrated policies that promote a **sustainable environmental framework**. Environmental innovations can be implemented and exported, making Europe more competitive and improving people's quality of life. Fairness is paramount in all this.

Protecting nature

Nature is our **life support system**, so we need to look after it. We share resources like water, air, natural habitats and the species they support, and we also share environmental standards to protect them.

Europe is working to safeguard these natural resources and halt the decline of endangered species and habitats. **Natura 2000** is a network of 26,000 protected natural areas, covering almost 20% of the EU's land mass, where sustainable human activities can coexist with rare and vulnerable species and habitats.

Safeguarding the health and wellbeing of people living in the EU

Water, air pollution and chemicals are among people's top environmental concerns. To safeguard people from environment-related pressures and risks to health and wellbeing, EU policy aims to:

guarantee **safe drinking and bathing water**

improve **air quality** and reduce noise

reduce or eliminate the effects of **harmful chemicals**.

Global challenges

As the world population continues to expand, with ever-greater numbers of city-dwellers, global environmental challenges become more pressing. More action is needed to ensure that

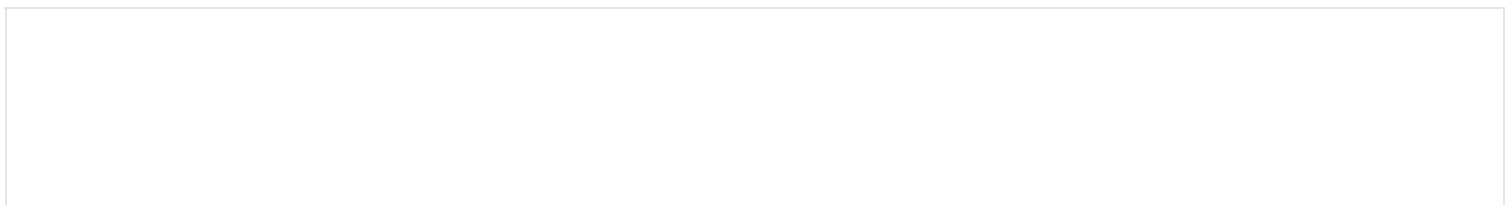
air, oceans and other water resources are kept clean

land and ecosystems are used sustainably

climate change is kept to manageable levels.

As a **global actor**, the EU plays a key role in international efforts to promote sustainable development globally.

Current EU policy up to 2020 is based on the 7th Environment Action Programme - the dual responsibility of the EU institutions and national governments.





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See also 

EU institutions and bodies

- **European Parliament**
- Committee on environment, public health and food safety
- **Council of the European Union**
- Environment
- **European Commission**
- Environment
- Climate action
- **European Economic and Social Committee**
- Agriculture, rural development and environment section
- **Committee of the Regions**
- Commission for environment, climate change and energy (ENVE)
- **European Investment Bank**
- European Investment Bank and environment
- **EU agencies**
- European Environment Agency

Funding opportunities

- Grants
- Call for tender (public procurement)

Publications, newsletters and statistics

- Publications
- Newsletters
- Statistics

Legislation

- Summaries of EU legislation on environment
- Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union - Articles 191-193 (environment) 

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