

Follow-up opinion: ACTION FOR BIODIVERSITY

As part of its 2011 opinion on diversity, the ESEC seeks to place its actions within the process initiated by the government, as it is drawing up a draft framework law on biodiversity.

The ESEC has seen some progress, particularly in the approach and objectives of the National Biodiversity Strategy (SNB), but also in the understanding of the issues by key stakeholders. It notes the desire expressed by the President of the Republic to make France an exemplary country in terms of restoring bio-diversity. It nevertheless notes a persistent discrepancy between the declared ambition and the resources assigned to it. With the aim of strengthening a concerted eco-systemic approach, the ESEC is currently reflecting on the following three areas

KEEPING OUR INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS

👉 Coordinating the IPBES

The ESEC reiterates the need to ensure the inter-disciplinary nature of the work of IPBES, which is not the case with the current composition of the multi-disciplinary group of experts, where the social sciences are almost absent.

As well as the need to establish interaction with the IPCC, the IPBES must organise a consultation process with bio-diversity stakeholders such as local authorities, NGOs, economic and social players, as well as communities which are the custodians of knowledge.

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👉 Implementing the Nagoya Protocol (APA)

For the implementation of the Protocol in 2015, the ESEC considers that in terms of access to genetic resources, France should set out a national collection declaratory system, which could be supplemented by a specific administrative measure in the case of economic exploitation of these resources. The ESEC deems it necessary to take into account the specificities of each professional sector in the sharing of monetary or non-monetary benefits. It recommends that the funds deriving from the sharing of generic resources be concentrated at national level before redistribution.

Concerning overseas territories, bilateral negotiation with local authorities and

stakeholders is vital in respect of conditions of access and sharing.

AMPLIFYING THE MOBILISATION OF STAKEHOLDERS

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The implementation of the future “biodiversity” framework law and the specific form of the SNB should amplify the mobilisation of stakeholders.

The ESEC recommends that State resources be allocated within the context of a proper inter-ministerial system to integrate the challenges of bio-diversity within policies.

👉 Making education and support a priority

The ESEC recommends that places of learning emphasize the potential of actions favouring biodiversity and sustainable development, and that the regulatory and budgetary conditions be met to encourage nature walks and discovery classes.

The ESEC considers that upcoming negotiations concerning ongoing vocational training must integrate the issues of sustainable development and biodiversity in the different professional sectors, as well as sectoral developments driven by a “new development model”.

👉 Strengthening the mobilisation of economic and social stakeholders

Biodiversity is a growing concern for social and economic stakeholders, 



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but without them fully and comprehensively taking responsibility for it. This is why, by analogy with carbon footprints, the ESEC invites all stakeholders to enter into consultation to develop the contents of a biodiversity footprint and its application within companies. It also re-affirms the need to expand social dialogue to bio-diversity, both in business and regionally.

The improvement of the environmental performance of agriculture requires the concrete development of specific tools, involving all stakeholders. The ESEC wants all key stakeholders in the agricultural world to sign up to the SNB.

👉 Making planning policy a major tool

Urbanisation weakens and threatens biodiversity. This is why, in line with its previous opinions, the ESEC supports the idea of an automatic transfer of planning and development powers to agglomerations and groupings of municipalities. This measure, aimed at putting a brake on the excessive consumption of natural and agricultural spaces, must be implemented in consultation with local stakeholders.

The principle of “Avoid, Reduce, Offset” must be supplemented by a principle of “Reconquest.”

In the event that the spaces consumed cannot be offset by other land, monetary compensation methods must be drawn up in consultation with stakeholders to result in a progressive system, guaranteeing equitable conditions of redistribution.

👉 Promoting natural heritage as the equal of cultural heritage

“The ESEC wishes to boost the positive and celebratory idea of biodiversity by integrating natural heritage in the framework of “European Heritage Days”

As has been done for historic monuments, the ESEC wants to encourage the positive and celebratory idea of biodiversity by integrating natural heritage into the framework of “European heritage days”. The ESEC reiterates its recommendation to establish a national inventory of natural heritage of France and to submit

a regular assessment of environmental management of this heritage.

IMPROVING GOVERNANCE

👉 Reinforcing the planned or ongoing evolutions

“The future regional committees of biodiversity should be able to assume their prerogatives, particularly in the construction and implementation of regional strategies for biodiversity.”

The planned approach involving making the National Biodiversity Council (CNB) a body for dialogue and consultation, and the National Council for the Protection of Nature (CNPN) a body of exclusively scientific and technical expertise, meets the approval of the ESEC. It considers it desirable that this system should be supplemented by provisions allowing the coordination of the ESEC and CNB, in the same way that the ESEC and the National Council for Energy Transition (CNTE) should be coordinated.

Bearing in mind the importance of the regional footing of policies aimed at conservation and the restoration of bio-diversity, the ESEC believes the regions should drive the consistency of this action. This will make it necessary to rationalise powers between the authorities of the same region, to effectively coordinate national and regional bodies, but also regional bodies of different levels.

The future regional biodiversity committees must be able to assume their prerogatives, in particular in the construction and implementation of regional bio-diversity strategies.

👉 Strengthening the SNB as a governance tool

The ESEC believes the State should do everything possible to ensure that the regions as a whole adhere to the SNB and prepare an SRB. It remains convinced that only joint State-Region coordination will enable the mobilisation and involvement of all regional stakeholders. Improved valorisation of membership, underlining the merits and unique nature of new

members to the SNB would be of a nature to strengthen this dynamic.

👉 Providing actions for biodiversity with a solid and unquestionable tool

The ESEC considers that the five tasks of the future French Biodiversity Agency proposed by its devisers will give it the authority and powers necessary to develop, together, policies in favour of biodiversity in all territories.

The ESEC considers, however, that the content of these missions must be specified. It considers that the actions of the AFB must be enacted at a regional level, and underlines the fact that the initial ambition can only be achieved with suitable means. It believes that considerations concerning the financing of the agency should be the occasion to refocus subsidies that are damaging to diversity.👉