



Title The European Commission revealed its long awaited EU Biodiversity strategy, which sets out a blueprint for achieving the EU's renewed biodiversity target. BirdLife welcomed the strategy but at the same time stressed that if EU is serious about reversing the decline of biodiversity and restoring the ecosystems on which we all depend, much more than the outlined actions will be needed. The strategy includes six targets, each accompanied by a package of actions. These ranges, from properly managing the EU's Natura 2000 network of protected areas to combating the spread of invasive alien species, from habitat restoration to supporting biodiversity conservation in developing countries. It also rightly highlights the key role played by the two most problematic natural resource-based sectors under EU control: agriculture and fisheries. The make or break point for the biodiversity strategy, and for Europe's wildlife, will be the outcome of the reforms of the EU's budget and sectoral policies for the 2014-2020 period, looming in 2013. At the same time it will be vital that the strategy is fully implemented and financed by the EU and Member States. BirdLife Europe urges the European Parliament and European Council to lend their support to the biodiversity strategy, and to commit to showing leadership and ambition for protecting our biodiversity and ecosystems. BirdLife is also committed to closely following implementation of the strategy by the EU and its member states, and will sound the alarm bell if progress is hindered through unnecessary delays or political interference.