Title

The EU Overseas entities are home to an extraordinarily rich biodiversity hosting even more endemic species than the European continent. Their total marine area ranks first in the world and contains more than 10% of the world's coral reefs. However, their biodiversity faces several increasing threats.

Being fully part of the EU, the nine ORs of the EU receive considerable European support through regional programmes. However, many of the projects co-funded by the Commission have had a negative impact on the environment, while specific financing for biodiversity remains severely insufficient. Furthermore, due to having an association to the EU Member States, OCTs are not eligible for international financial instruments for environment such as GEF and REDD+. The funds dedicated to the EU Overseas entities need to reflect the EU's priorities, responsibilities and objectives for tackling climate change, biodiversity loss and resource efficiency.

European overseas entities have long been overlooked in EU environmental policy, in spite of their crucial importance. A great deal is at stake in this "last frontier" of the EU scattered in some very important regions of the globe, when it concerns biodiversity, climate adaptation, and ocean health.

Recently, the EU has started acknowledging the vast potential of ORs and OCTs for its green agenda. DG Environment has begun a preparatory action for these entities, BEST [1]. There is already tremendous enthusiasm within the ORs and OCTs to see the establishment of this scheme. The proposals have seen projects of high quality and very much in line with EU priorities and whole new dynamics have started to emerge locally. This successful experiment is only a first step, and we believe it is time for the EU to develop a bold political vision to ensure sustainable development

of ORs and OCTs.

[1] "Voluntary scheme for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in Territories of the EU Outermost Regions and Overseas Countries and Territories"

Related topics

- Why EU Policy matters

- Financing Natura 2000
- LIFE
- Cohesion Policy
- Overseas entities
- Development aid and International commitments
- Back to EU Budget - Time for change

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