

**Ref: 14/067**

## **Background policy brief for the Italian EU Presidency**

### **Climate and Energy Framework for 2030**

The European Union is currently planning the course it will take to secure Europe's energy supply and to set the 2030 climate targets. BirdLife Europe supports ambitious and binding targets for the EU of at least 55% of greenhouse gas reductions, 40 % of energy savings (compared to end use) and 45% of renewable energy by 2030 (of energy demand) and calls for the Italian Presidency to show ambition and push for the following commitments and policy measures :

- Binding targets for energy efficiency on member state level needs to be adopted as part of the Energy Efficiency Directive review, to ensure an effective contribution towards the 2030 climate and energy framework and as a part of the efforts to reduce EU's high energy dependency. A weak, non-binding target for 2030 would be a disaster for the EU economy and climate protection, as the huge cost-effective potential locked up in energy efficiency would be dismissed. An efficiency target of 25 % would cover only one fifth of the cost-effective energy efficiency potential for 2030 and raise the costs of the European energy system (generation, transmission and distribution) to consumers.
- The Italian Presidency should push for a clear and strong renewable energy policy framework as a part of the main elements of the 2030 climate and energy framework in the October conclusions of the European Council. Such policy framework should ensure as a minimum indicative targets for Member States as well as sustainability measures to limit the use of unsustainable kinds of bioenergy and to continue EUs commitment to cap land based, first generation biofuels.
- The Italian Presidency should to make sure that the EU takes global leadership to secure progress in the negotiations towards an international agreement in 2015 that will ensure that emission reduction pathways to the agreed 2050 goal (of at least 80-95%) are equitable and based upon the latest scientific information on keeping global temperature well below a 2°C rise.

### **Biofuels and Indirect Land Use Change**

During the Greek Presidency and agreement was finally found in the European Council on the proposal to limit the use of harmful, 1st generation biofuels until 2020 and to reduce the emissions related to indirect land use change following from their use. The substance of the agreement leaves nevertheless much to be improved in the subsequent negotiations with the European Parliament and the Commission. The cap on damaging, food based biofuels was increased from 5% to 7%, which is close to business as usual and factors to capture ILUC emissions were seriously weakened. BirdLife therefore calls on the Italian Presidency to ensure that a political agreement on ILUC and biofuels is reached during the second reading and that it leads to a significant improvement of the Council's first reading position, including ILUC factors for compliance purposes both in the Fuel Quality Directive and in the Renewable Energy Directive and supporting the cap on unsustainable land-based biofuels.

### **Environmental inspections**

Inspections are key to the successful implementation and enforcement of environmental law, for example in tackling illegal development in Natura 2000 sites or combatting the illegal killing of birds. The Commission is working on a legislative proposal on Environmental Inspections, as foreseen in the 7th Environmental Action plan, and published a Roadmap in 2013. However, to date the proposal has not been published. BirdLife welcomes new legislative action on environmental inspections, and encourages the Italian presidency to ensure that the Commission prepares an ambitious proposal in a timely manner.

### **REFIT, Access to Environmental Justice and Soil**

The REFIT programme aims to reduce unnecessary administrative burdens. However, the first round of REFIT had the environment firm in its sight, with the withdrawal of the proposals on an Access to Environmental Justice Regulation and a Soil Directive. These are much needed policies. EU legislation on Access to Environmental Justice will reduce administrative burdens rather than increasing them, and legislation on Soil is crucial to ensure the conservation of soils and biodiversity. BirdLife strongly believes that legislative action on access to environmental Justice on soil is needed, and invites the Italian presidency to find a way forward towards adoption of this legislation.

### **Convention on Biological Diversity**

The Italian government should facilitate ambitious EU positions in favour of 1) keeping the COP11 promise of doubling international financial flows to developing countries by 2015, 2) significantly increasing all Parties' domestic biodiversity financing and 3) putting a strong emphasis on the reform of environmentally harmful subsidies. Also it should ensure the missing report on Ecologically or Biologically Significant marine Areas of the North-East Atlantic is completed and submitted in time for COP12.

### **Convention on Migratory Species**

Poisoning is one of the major drivers of population declines in threatened species in Europe, especially birds of prey. The CMS Guidelines on preventing poisoning cover poisoning by lead shot, by veterinary drugs such as diclofenac and poison baits. Renewable energy can be very harmful to birds if it is constructed in the wrong place, such for example the construction of wind turbines on the migration route. BirdLife sees the adoption of these guidelines as a major step towards better protecting birds along their flyways. The CMS COP should also adopt the Saker Falcon Action Plan, the Terms of Reference of African-Eurasian Migratory Landbird Action Plan.

### **Implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy**

Fishing fleet overcapacity and consequent overfishing continue to be major problems for European marine ecosystems and biodiversity. A significant number of EU stocks in the Atlantic and adjacent waters are outside safe biological limits, and for many other stocks the status is unknown. Besides overexploitation of commercial fish stocks and loss of fishing jobs, current fishing practices also threaten other components of marine ecosystems, such as seabirds, marine mammals, reptiles and bottom habitats. In fact, BirdLife estimates that 200,000 seabirds die annually in the gears of European fisheries.

2013 saw the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), marking a turning point, especially in the obligation to rebuild fish stocks to Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) by 2015, new measures to reduce fleet capacity and to reduce discards. In addition, Member States are now required to use environmental and social criteria in allocating fishing opportunities, creating an incentive to fish responsibly. However, the new CFP will fall short unless the policy is implemented through further binding regulations and regional multiannual plans. The focus now shifts to the implementation phase of the CFP and challenges the Italian presidency to ensure that the Commission prepares an ambitious proposal in a timely manner, notably under the:

- Data Collection Framework (DCF) regulation – to ensure that data on ecosystems, including seabird bycatch will be collected alongside fish stocks.
- Technical Conservation Measures Framework (TCMF) regulation – to ensure that measures to minimise seabird bycatch are part of this framework.
- Multi-annual Plans (MAPs) – to ensure that regional implementation of fishing quotas are set at MSY level and that other technical measures are applied that align the CFP with environmental legislation.

---

## Contact Information

BirdLife Europe  
Ariel Brunner, Head of EU Policy  
e-mail: [ariel.brunner@birdlife.org](mailto:ariel.brunner@birdlife.org)  
<http://europe.birdlife.org>

LIPU  
Claudio Celada, Conservation Director  
e-mail : [claudio.celada@lipu.it](mailto:claudio.celada@lipu.it)  
<http://www.lipu.it/>