

To: Ursula von der Leyen
President of the European Commission

CC: Frans Timmermans
Executive Vice-President of the European Commission
European Green Deal

Virginijus Sinkevičius
Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries

Brussels, May 31, 2022

Subject: European non-energy extractive industry associations call to stop further delay and keep ambition of proposal for legally binding nature restoration targets

Dear President Von der Leyen,

We, the undersigned, UEPG - the European Aggregates Association, Eurogypsum and CEMBUREAU in working with BirdLife Europe and Central Asia, welcome the upcoming adoption of a legal proposal for nature restoration that the European Commission is planning for the month of June 2022. We ask not to further delay the publication of this proposal, and to keep up the ambition level needed to tackle the climate and biodiversity crises. Our nature and society need a restoration law that is ambitious, timely and enforceable with a clear sense of urgency.

Nature restoration targets are key to meet the broader objectives of the European Green Deal, its Strategy to reverse biodiversity decline by 2050 and the ambitions of the Paris Agreement and the upcoming post-2020 global biodiversity framework. Nature contributes to our overall health and wellbeing. It provides significant socio-economic benefits, including sustainable jobs. Protecting and restoring well-functioning ecosystems is fundamental to tackle the dual crises of biodiversity loss and climate change and its impact on our daily lives.

We understand the difficult context in which the legal proposal for the nature restoration law is being finalized. But in parallel, it remains important to protect and restore the health of the ecosystems we all depend on for our livelihoods.

Large-scale nature restoration will not only enhance biodiversity conservation but will also improve societies' resilience against climate change impacts like droughts, flooding and forest fires and will contribute to mitigating climate change.

To conclude, nature restoration is unarguably part of the extraction business. While activities do not directly depend on functioning ecosystems or sufficient biodiversity, they suffer from the externalisation of environmental damage by other economic sectors and to other regions of the world. Moreover, extreme weather events have a global effect on our societies, also impacting our economies and business models. The companies of the undersigned European non-energy extractive industry associations, which supply the EU with primary and secondary raw materials and products essential to the achievement of the European Green Deal, play a major role in protecting, maintaining and restoring ecosystems, and have been at the forefront of developing nature restoration techniques, metrics and collaborations. The extraction of raw materials and restoration after the end of quarrying are actually used in a targeted manner to (re)create landscapes and habitats, often in previously degraded areas, therefore actively contributing to nature and climate protection. The sector remains committed to play an active and positive role in the restoration agenda and looks forward to positively engaging with the implementation of the new law.

Europe made strong commitments for a sustainable future in its Green Deal, we need to make it work now and adopt legally binding nature restoration targets. We look forward to supporting in developing it.

Yours sincerely, the undersigned,



.....
Dirk Fincke
Secretary General
UEPG



.....
Tristan Suffys
Secretary General
Eurogypsum



.....
Koen Coppenholle
CEO
CEMBUREAU



.....
Ariel Brunner
Deputy Director
BirdLife Europe
and Central Asia

