

# An Action Plan promoting and supporting European pastoralism is needed to tackle sustainability challenges in the EU and beyond



*The EU must support the designation of the year 2026 as the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP)*

The European Committee of the Regions, the [Yolda Initiative](#), the [European association of mountain areas](#) (Euromontana) and the [Regional International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists Support Group for Europe](#) organised a joint online workshop on 14 June to underline the need to maintain pastoralists.

Pastoralism is a time-honoured practice of extensive livestock husbandry on rangelands such as mountains, dry plains, savannahs, steppes and tundra. This form of livestock husbandry makes economic use of areas that are not suitable for mechanised crop farming and/or are difficult to access.

More than half of the Earth's land surface is classified as rangeland. On an average, 21 % of the utilised agricultural area in the EU-27 is devoted to extensive grazing. The proportion is particularly high in Portugal (59 %), Latvia (58 %), Estonia (55 %) and Sweden (52 %). During the meeting, the European Committee of the Regions reiterated its call on the European Commission to develop an action plan to promote and better support European pastoralism.

[Ulrika Landergren](#) (SV/Renew), Chair of the Commission for Natural Resources (NAT), stated that "for the European Committee of the Regions, maintaining pastoralism is vital for keeping rural areas alive and for contributing to territorial cohesion, which is a fundamental value of the EU."

Juan Andr s Guti rrez, President of Euromontana, underlined that "maintaining pastoralism is crucial for achieving the EU's objectives on environment, climate and biodiversity protection within the EU Green Deal. Member States should put in place sufficient and appropriate support measures for pastoralism in their future CAP Strategic Plans. Furthermore, the EU should develop an Action Plan for Pastoralism to give pastoralists the adequate support they need to overcome the threats they face."

Herbert Dorfmann (IT/EPP), Member of the European Parliament and rapporteur on the Farm to Fork strategy, stated that "within the new CAP, plans regarding the role of cities and regions have been developed in order to enable pastoralism. One of the big challenges is definitely the return of the large carnivores. A balance between the protection of wolves and the protection of grazing livestock is essential. The fact that there are little

efforts to protect grazing livestock shows that there is a major imbalance within this debate.”

Rui Martinho, Secretary of State for Agriculture and Rural Development and Representative of the Portuguese presidency of the Council, stressed that “pastoralism is essential to preserve farming and livestock breeding in less favoured areas, contributing to a living rural fabric and thus to the objective of territorial cohesion enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty. Pastoralism is also fundamental to achieve the EU’s environmental, climate and biodiversity protection objectives, as expressed in the EU’s 2030 Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategies.”

At the global level, the United Nations (UN) are being encouraged to officially designate 2026 as the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP) to further support these ecosystems and livelihoods. Led by the Government of Mongolia, an international coalition of actors is supporting this initiative.

Maria Helena M.Q. Semedo, FAO Deputy Director-General, said that “the FAO Council endorsed the proposal of the Government of Mongolia to establish observance of the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists in 2026 as pastoralism contributes to several of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).”

Engin Yılmaz, Director of the Yolda Initiative stated that “the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists is aiming to provide the impetus and momentum necessary for a worldwide understanding of the importance of rangelands and pastoralism to healthy ecosystems, global food security, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and rural economies.”

“A modern world should not leave the Rangelands and Pastoralists issue behind,” stated Mendsaikhan Zagdjav, H.E Minister of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry, Mongolia.

The meeting discussed pastoralism in four round tables on: the contribution of pastoralism to biodiversity and to tackling climate change; food security and resilient rural communities; pastoralism’s role at the international level; and, lastly, ways to develop an EU action plan for pastoralism and to support the IYRP in concrete terms.

### [Meeting documents](#)

Webinar’s agenda: [English](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#)

Contact:

Wioletta Wojewodzka

Tel. +32 (0)2 282 2289

Mobile: +32 (0)473 843 986

[wioletta.wojewodzka@cor.europa.eu](mailto:wioletta.wojewodzka@cor.europa.eu)

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## [2021 G7 Leaders' communiqué: Our shared agenda for global action to build back better](#)



We, the leaders of the Group of Seven, met in Cornwall on 11-13 June 2021 determined to beat COVID-19 and build back better. We remembered everyone who has been lost to the pandemic and paid tribute to those still striving to overcome it. Inspired by their example of collaboration and determination, we gathered united by the principle that brought us together originally, that shared beliefs and shared responsibilities are the bedrock of leadership and prosperity. Guided by this, our enduring ideals as free open societies and democracies, and by our commitment to multilateralism, we have agreed a shared G7 agenda for global action to:

**End the pandemic and prepare for the future** by driving an intensified international effort, starting immediately, to vaccinate the world by getting as many safe vaccines to as many people as possible as fast as possible. Total G7 commitments since the start of the pandemic provide for a total of over two billion vaccine doses, with the commitments since we last met in February 2021, including here in Carbis Bay, providing for one billion doses over the next year. At the same time we will create the appropriate frameworks to strengthen our collective defences against threats to global health by: increasing and coordinating on global manufacturing capacity on all continents; improving early warning systems; and support science in a mission to shorten the cycle for the development of safe and effective vaccines, treatments and tests from 300 to 100 days.

**Reinvigorate our economies** by advancing recovery plans that build on the \$12 trillion of support we have put in place during the pandemic. We will continue to support our economies for as long as is necessary, shifting the focus of our support from crisis response to promoting growth into the future, with plans that create jobs, invest in infrastructure, drive innovation, support people, and level up so that no place or person, irrespective of age, ethnicity or gender is left behind. This has not been the case with past global crises, and we are determined that this time it will be different.

**Secure our future prosperity** by championing freer, fairer trade within a reformed trading system, a more resilient global economy, and a fairer global tax system that reverses the race to the bottom. We will collaborate to ensure future frontiers of the global economy and society, from cyber space to outer space, increase the prosperity and wellbeing of all people while upholding our values as open societies. We are convinced of the potential of technological transformation for the common good in accordance with our

shared values.

**Protect our planet** by supporting a green revolution that creates jobs, cuts emissions and seeks to limit the rise in global temperatures to 1.5 degrees. We commit to net zero no later than 2050, halving our collective emissions over the two decades to 2030, increasing and improving climate finance to 2025; and to conserve or protect at least 30 percent of our land and oceans by 2030. We acknowledge our duty to safeguard the planet for future generations.

**Strengthen our partnerships** with others around the world. We will develop a new partnership to build back better for the world, through a step change in our approach to investment for infrastructure, including through an initiative for clean and green growth. We are resolved to deepen our current partnership to a new deal with Africa, including by magnifying support from the International Monetary Fund for countries most in need to support our aim to reach a total global ambition of \$100 billion.

**Embrace our values** as an enduring foundation for success in an ever changing world. We will harness the power of democracy, freedom, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights to answer the biggest questions and overcome the greatest challenges. We will do this in a way that values the individual and promotes equality, especially gender equality, including by supporting a target to get 40 million more girls into education and with at least \$2<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> billion for the Global Partnership for Education.

We shall seek to advance this open agenda in collaboration with other countries and within the multilateral rules-based system. In particular, we look forward to working alongside our G20 partners and with all relevant International Organisations to secure a cleaner, greener, freer, fairer and safer future for our people and planet.

[Visit the meeting page](#)

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## [Remarks by President Charles Michel following the G7 summit in Carbis Bay, Cornwall](#)



The G7 ends today. We spent three days trying to align the positions of the world's biggest democracies.

The priority was to ensure we can meet the demand for vaccines and here the EU has taken the leadership. Partners have now joined us to accelerate production and delivery of vaccines worldwide.

We also see that liberal democracies and open societies face pressure from authoritarian regimes. This challenge has prompted us to join forces during the G7, not only to be able to respond under pressure or attack but also to spread our values of freedom, rule of law and respect for human rights.

Another point, of special significance to me, is our engagement with Africa. For some years already, with some leaders in Europe we are convinced that this engagement with Africa needs to be at the heart of our future international relations. Increasingly, we've been able to unify the positions of European countries on this issue and now we have convinced our partners to further mobilise funds to secure a win-win strategy for Africa and Europe.

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## **Forward look: 14 – 27 June 2021**



### **Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council, 14-15 June**

Ministers will aim for a general approach on rules to reinforce the role of the European Medicines Agency in crisis preparedness and management. They will also take stock of several ongoing legislative files, including on minimum wages and pay transparency. They will hold a number of public debates such as on the follow-up of the Porto Social Summit.

### **EU-Canada summit, 14 June**

The EU and Canada leaders are expected to discuss a wide range of issues, including COVID-19 response and recovery, fighting climate change and protecting the environment, trade, technology and innovation, and promoting democratic values, peace and security.

### **EU-US summit, 15 June**

The EU and US leaders are expected to address a wide range of issues of common concern, including COVID-19, climate, trade and investment, foreign affairs, and common values. The EU will be represented by the President of the European Council, Charles Michel, and the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen. The US will be represented by President Joe Biden.

### **Economic and Financial Affairs Council, 18 June**

Ministers will exchange views on issues related to Recovery and Resilience

Facility. They will also focus on the state of play of the Banking Union and aim to adopt Recommendation on the implementation of the Stability and Growth Pact.

## **Foreign Affairs Council, 21 June**

EU foreign affairs ministers will be informed about current affairs and exchange views on Belarus, Iraq and Latin America.

## **General Affairs Council, 22 June**

The Council will prepare for the European Council meeting on 24-25 June 2021. Enlargement, the Conference on the Future of Europe and hearings with Poland and Hungary will be as well on the agenda. Under AOB, ministers will be informed about the EU-Switzerland relations.

## **European Council, 24-25 June**

EU leaders will meet in Brussels to discuss COVID-19, economic recovery, migration and external relations, including relations with Turkey and Russia.

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## **Council agrees on new rules for cross-border energy infrastructure**

The Council today reached a general approach on the revision of the Trans-European Networks for Energy (TEN-E) Regulation. The objective of the revised TEN-E regulation is to modernise, decarbonise and interconnect the EU's cross-border energy infrastructure in order to help the EU achieve its 2050 climate neutrality objectives. The revised Regulation also aims to continue ensuring market integration, competitiveness and security of supply.



To become climate-neutral by 2050, we need modern, interconnected energy infrastructures that are fit for clean energy technologies. We need to see more smart grids and more renewables in our grids. The agreement reached today invests in a green and climate-neutral future that guarantees efficiency, competitiveness and security of supply, while leaving no one behind.

*João Pedro Matos Fernandes, Portuguese Minister for the Environment and Climate Action*

The revision of the TEN-E Regulation identifies 11 priority corridors and 3 priority thematic areas to develop and interconnect. This will be done mostly through projects of common interest (PCIs), financed by the Connecting Europe Facility for 2021-2027. The revised Regulation updates the infrastructure categories eligible for support with an emphasis on decarbonisation and adds a new focus on offshore electricity grids, hydrogen infrastructure and smart grids.

The Council, in its position, decided to end support for new natural gas and oil projects and to introduce mandatory sustainability criteria for all projects. During a transitional period until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2029, dedicated hydrogen assets converted from natural gas can be used to transport or store a pre-defined blend of hydrogen with natural gas or biomethane. Selected projects shall demonstrate how, by the end of this transitional period, these assets will cease to be natural gas assets and become dedicated hydrogen assets. The assessment of candidate projects will also ensure that the assets are designed in view of creating dedicated hydrogen assets by the end of the transitional period and do not lead to the prolongation of the lifetime of natural gas. The purpose is to gradually decarbonise this sector and increase the share of renewable gases in the pipelines.

In its position, the Council put a particular emphasis on energy from renewable sources regarding all assets, including smart gas grids.

In the case of Cyprus and Malta, that are still not interconnected to the trans-European gas network, projects under development or planning that have been granted the Project of Common Interest status under the previous Regulation will maintain their status until the interconnection is complete. The purpose of this exception is to end the isolation of these two member states and to give them access to future energy markets, including hydrogen.

The Council decided to include certain types of electrolyzers that contribute to sustainability in the scope of the Regulation. Those electrolyzers shall account for at least 100 MW capacity in a project. The production of hydrogen, particularly of renewable sources, from these electrolyzers, shall comply with a life cycle greenhouse gas emissions savings requirement of 70 % relative to a fossil fuel comparator of 94g CO<sub>2</sub>e/MJ.

Member States also agreed to simplify and accelerate permitting and authorisation procedures.

According to the Council's position, the revised Regulation will continue to ensure that new projects respond to market integration, competitiveness and security of supply objectives. It will also continue to support projects that connect regions currently isolated from European energy markets, that strengthen existing cross-border interconnections and that promote cooperation with countries outside of the EU.

The text of the general approach will be available soon.

## **Background and next steps**

The European Commission presented its proposal on a revised TEN-E on 15 December 2020. The general approach reached today will serve as a basis for the Council's position in the negotiations with the European Parliament to find a final agreement on the future legislation. Once a provisional political agreement is found between the two institutions, a formal adoption procedure will seal the agreement into legislation.

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