

EIB to support for high-impact investment in 11 Sahel countries under Great Green Wall initiative



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- **President Hoyer reaffirms EIB commitment to Sahel and climate vulnerable regions in Africa as part of Team Europe**
- **EIB to strengthen financial and technical support for sustainable agriculture, clean energy, water, infrastructure and microfinance to create jobs and resilience**
- **Biodiversity investment in Africa to benefit from pioneering EIB Sustainable Awareness Bonds**

The European Investment Bank today announced that it aims to provide new financial and technical support to back sustainable agriculture, clean energy, water, infrastructure and private sector financing in 11 Sahel countries most vulnerable to a changing climate by 2025.

The EIB financing and technical support will enhance the impact of the Great Green Wall initiative to improve biodiversity in the Sahel and better tackle climate and environmental challenges facing the region. Targeted high-impact investment will enable more inclusive economic growth and strengthen resilience in the region to foster peace and stability.

EIB President Werner Hoyer outlined the expected strengthened engagement to back high-impact investment essential to create jobs, improve economic opportunities and increase access to clean energy and water during the One Planet Summit for Biodiversity hosted by French President Emmanuel Macron in Paris earlier today.

“Communities across the Sahel are threatened by climate change, increasingly frequent droughts and floods, and unreliable and limited access to energy, water and food. The European Investment Bank, as part of Team Europe and member of the Sahel Alliance, recognises the need to scale up investment that tackles these challenges, delivers sustainable development and improves stability in the region. The EU Bank is pleased to join African and international partners in ensuring that the Great Green Wall biodiversity initiative improves lives and opportunities across the Sahel. Looking ahead, the EIB expects to back transformational public and private sector investment in 11 Sahel states most vulnerable to climate change as part of our commitment to accelerate high-impact investment across Africa. This will complement our broader strategic engagement across Africa and 58 year track record of backing transformational investment on the continent.” said Werner Hoyer, European Investment Bank President.

President Hoyer addressed the One Planet Summit for Biodiversity alongside the Prince of Wales, President of the African Union Commission and heads of the French Development Agency, African Development Bank, UN Food and Agriculture Organisation and United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

Working with African partners to unlock high-impact investment across the Sahel

During his address to the One Planet Summit for Biodiversity President Hoyer highlighted the impact of recent EIB support for water investment in Mali and Niger, clean energy across West Africa and private sector support with local microfinance and banking partners.

The EIB is currently supporting projects to address land degradation and enhance access to finance by rural communities and small holders in Mali and Ethiopia, and to redress and prevent soil erosion in Nigeria, all initiatives that provide a model for successful biodiversity investment elsewhere in Africa.

EIB harnessing global capital markets to support biodiversity investment

Future EIB investment for sustainable agriculture and environmental projects across Africa will benefit from the EIB being the first international financial institution to issue bonds to support biodiversity investment.

This week the EIB, the world’s largest supranational bond issuer and pioneering of green bonds, will include biodiversity in the eligibility of the established EIB Sustainable Awareness Bonds.

Supporting the Great Green Wall initiative to improve lives and opportunities

in the Sahel

The Great Green Wall initiative aims to restore Africa's degraded landscapes and transform the lives of people living in the Sahel. The 11 countries selected as intervention zoned for the Great Green Wall are Burkina Faso, Chad, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Sudan

The European Investment Bank is the world's largest international public bank and owned directly by the 27 European Union member states.

The EIB Group has recently adopted its Climate Bank Roadmap to deliver on its ambitious agenda to support €1 trillion of climate action and environmental sustainability investments in the decade to 2030 and to deliver more than 50% of EIB finance for climate action and environmental sustainability by 2025. As part of the Roadmap, all new EIB Group operations will also be aligned with the goals and principles of the Paris Agreement from the start of 2021.

Sustainability: What are the alternatives to economic growth?

The EEA briefing '[Growth without economic growth](#)' presents an overview of the various ideas about progress beyond economic growth.

Economic growth is closely linked to increasing production, consumption and resource use, which has negative effects on nature, climate and human health. Moreover, current research suggests that it is unlikely that economic growth can be completely detached from its environmental impacts, the EEA briefing notes.

Various ideas and theories have been presented to rethink economic growth and societal progress. Green growth, doughnut economics, post-growth and degrowth agendas all share similar aims but diverge in their means to achieve sustainability goals. The EEA briefing reminds that economic growth is highly correlated with indicators for human well-being, such as life expectancy and education. At the same time, Europe's fundamental values, such as human dignity, freedom, democracy, are not materialistic and maintaining high social, health and environmental standards does not have to depend on economic growth.

Political initiatives for a sustainable future require not only technological change, but also changes in consumption and social practices. The challenge is to innovate lifestyles that consume less but are attractive to individuals without an environmental, spiritual or ideological interest. Could the European Green Deal, for example, become a catalyst for a society that consumes less and grows in other than material dimensions, the EEA briefing

asks.

[EUCAP Sahel Mali: mission extended until 31 January 2023 and mandate adjusted](#)



The Council has decided to extend the mandate of EU civilian mission EUCAP Sahel Mali until **31 January 2023** and has allocated it a **budget of over €89 million** for the period from 15 January 2021 to 31 January 2023.

The Council has also decided to adjust the mission's mandate to enhance its ability to assist and advise the Malian internal security forces by **supporting a gradual redeployment of Mali's civilian administrative authorities to the centre of Mali**. In addition, the objectives of the Regional Advisory and Coordination Cell have been adapted to improve the cooperation and **coordination between G5 Sahel structures and G5 Sahel countries**, and the **regionalisation** of CSDP action.

The decision, adopted by written procedure, was taken as part of the **strategic review of CSDP engagement in the region**.

Background

EUCAP Sahel Mali is a European Union civilian mission based in Bamako. It was launched on 15 January 2015 following an official invitation by the Malian government to assist the internal security forces with reasserting the government's authority over the whole of the country in the wake of the 'Northern Mali Crisis', which left large parts of the country under the control of various factions.

EUCAP Sahel Mali provides assistance and advice to the national police, the national gendarmerie and the national guard in the implementation of security reform in close coordination with other international partners, including the Delegation of the European Union and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).

Mr **Hervé Flahaut**, a French police General with more than 30 years of professional experience, is the **Head of Mission** of EUCAP Sahel Mali as of 1 January 2021.

Two other CSDP missions are present in the region as part of the **EU's integrated approach to security and development in the Sahel: EUTM Mali**, which contributes to strengthening the capabilities of the Malian Armed Forces through the provision of military advice, training, education and

mentoring, and **EUCAP Sahel Niger**, which supports the fight against organised crime and terrorism in Niger.

[Euro-DEN Plus network prepares to expand beyond the EU](#)

Data from hospital emergency departments show that every year in Europe thousands of individuals experience drug-related toxicity and other harms, resulting in emergency presentations to hospital ^(¹). Supported by the EMCDDA, the European Drug Emergencies Network (Euro-DEN Plus) monitors [drug-related emergency](#) presentations across Europe to provide unique insight into acute health harms related to drug use ^(²).

A Euro-DEN Plus technical [kick-off meeting](#) is taking place today to discuss the expansion of the network in 2021 to new hospital 'sentinel' centres in European cities outside the EU (see below).

New centres will be located in countries participating in the EU-funded [EU4Monitoring Drugs](#) (EU4MD) project, developed and managed by the EMCDDA as part of its ongoing commitment to strengthening cooperation and sharing expertise with partners in the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) area. The project supports national and regional readiness to identify and respond to drug-related security and health threats ([see map of EU4MD countries](#)).

Also expected is the enrolment of new centres in candidate countries and potential candidates to the EU, in the framework of technical cooperation projects financed by the European Commission's Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA). The ultimate goal of these projects is to familiarise the beneficiaries with EU policies and working methods and to support them for participating in the work of the EMCDDA (see [IPA 7 project](#) and [map of IPA 7 beneficiaries](#)).

The Euro-DEN Plus network already includes a total of 28 sentinel centres in 18 EU Member States, Norway, the UK and Switzerland. New centres in candidate countries and potential candidates, and in neighbouring countries, will not only expand geographical coverage of data monitoring, but will also reinforce the network, and strengthen the policy-oriented monitoring of acute drug-related harms in new regions.

Euro-DEN Plus technical kick-off meeting

The EMCDDA and Euro-DEN Plus are holding the first network meeting today with selected experts from the EU4MD and the IPA7 partners. The meeting, involving 25 experts from 12 countries, aims to provide representatives of the forthcoming centres with an overview of the Euro-DEN Plus project and its data-collection model.

During the meeting (conducted in English, French and Russian), the participants will take part in a roundtable on Euro-DEN Plus data collection and discuss the timeline and work plan for the contribution of the new centres. This first technical meeting with the interested centres and practitioners will support the deployment of the network and formalise the recruitment of the new centres into the project in 2021.

The participants will include: members of the Euro-DEN Plus Steering Group; representatives of the EMCDDA; clinicians in hospital emergency rooms, poison centres and other emergency settings who receive patients presenting with acute drug-toxicity. This broad participation is designed to facilitate discussions on how the Euro-DEN Plus data collection can serve as a novel data source, feeding into more established monitoring of drug use and drug-related harms in the respective countries.

The EMCDDA adopts a multi-indicator approach to drug monitoring on the principle that no single measure can provide a full picture of the drug situation and of the quickly changing drug-related health threats ⁽³⁾. This was discussed with experts from the EU4MD countries, in the margin of the last annual expert meeting on drug-related deaths ⁽⁴⁾, where the benefit and value of the Euro-DEN Plus projects were presented. The EMCDDA views hospital emergency data-collection as a useful addition to its monitoring toolkit. The agency is confident that enriched by six years of contributing to drug monitoring and responses in Europe ⁽⁵⁾, the Euro-DEN Plus project can support local experts in developing the network in their respective cities.

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As of 11 January small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) based in the EU can apply for financing under the new [Ideas Powered for Business SME Fund](#).

The application window is open from 11 to 31 January. This is the first of **five application windows** that will run throughout 2021.

Open to all enterprises in the EU that fit the [official definition of a SME](#), the new scheme offers **financial support in the form of reimbursements** for trade mark and design application and for IP pre-diagnostic services (IP Scan)*, **up to a maximum amount of EUR 1 500 per business**.

The new scheme is run through the [Ideas Powered for Business programme](#) at the EUIPO, and forms part of the European Commission's [IP Action Plan](#). It is carried out in cooperation with the national and regional intellectual property offices of the EU.

Commissioner for Internal market Thierry **Breton** said: *"The coronavirus pandemic has hugely impacted SMEs. We want to help SMEs capitalise on their innovations and creativity to support their recovery."*

The requirements, timing and other information relevant to the scheme can already be consulted through the **Ideas Powered for Business [hub](#)**.

* IP pre-diagnostic services under this scheme are only available through participating national and regional IP offices of the EU. Before applying, you should check the list to ensure that the IP office in your Member State offers this service.