

Press release – Hearing of Commissioner-designate Virginijus Sinkevičius



Political groups' coordinators and chairs from the two committees will meet later today to assess the performance of Lithuanian Commissioner-designate Sinkevičius.

Forests, biodiversity and oceans governance

During his [introductory speech](#), Mr. Sinkevičius listed three priorities for environmental matters: biodiversity, the circular economy and zero pollution. He spoke in favour of working at global level to achieve the equivalent of the Paris climate agreement for biodiversity. He also proposed extending circular economy policies to new sectors, such as textiles, food and the information and communications technology sector. To fight pollution, he announced he will focus on the challenges of hazardous chemicals, endocrine disruptors, as well as the runoff of nutrients, pharmaceuticals and microplastics in water.

Regarding fisheries, he committed to fully implementing the Common Fisheries Policy and its upcoming evaluation. He added that the EU must remain a global leader for sustainable fisheries and ocean governance. He also mentioned the importance of healthy oceans to ensure healthy fish stocks and thriving

fishing communities.

MEPs put forward several questions on how EU environmental policies can enhance the role of forests as carbon sinks and biodiversity reservoirs, tackling air pollution from agriculture and industry. Members also questioned the Commissioner-designate on plastic pollution, over-packaging and eco-design.

Fisheries-related questions touched upon the desired reciprocal agreement to access waters & resources in the event of Brexit, employment and youth matters for small fishing communities, multi-annual fishing plans, as well as the future of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund.

You can watch the video recording of the full hearing [here](#).

Press point

Following the hearing, the Commissioner-designate held a press point outside the meeting room: [watch it here](#).

Next steps

Based on the committees' recommendations, the Conference of Presidents will decide on 17 October if Parliament has received sufficient information to declare the hearing process closed. If so, the plenary will vote on whether or not to elect the Commission as a whole on 23 October, in Strasbourg.

Background

The hearing was co-chaired by Chris Davies (Renew Europe, UK; Fisheries Committee Chair) and Pascal Canfin (Renew Europe, FR; Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee Chair). The Committee for Agriculture was associated to this hearing.