

# WHY WE NEED A NATURE RESTORATION LAW

## A fact-check.



The Nature Restoration Law is the first EU legal biodiversity framework. It is the environmental equivalent of the Climate Act and serves as the first comprehensive restoration law at EU level.

However, conservative and right-wing representatives are now seeking to kill the law, spreading disinformation and fear mongering, boycotting negotiations.

Here, you can find the 10 biggest lies being spread by right wing forces and a summary of the (true) facts regarding the Nature Restoration Law.



### 10 lies used to derail the Nature Restoration Law

#### 1: "This regulation harms farmers, fishing communities, and consumers."

The viability and future of farming and fishing depend entirely on restoring the ecosystems that underpin them. The impacts of this regulation will be overwhelmingly positive for fishing communities, farmers and consumers, as detailed in the impact assessment. It will help fish stocks recover, stop soil erosion and depleting fertility, stop the decline in pollinators, help both sectors adapt to climate change impacts and lessen impacts of floods and droughts.

#### 2: "This regulation will lead to loss of food production and to higher food prices."

This is a particularly nasty manipulation, given the soaring inflation across the EU and the rising costs of food. This proposal will actually enhance food security if implemented. The impact assessment is clear that this regulation will not reduce food production.

#### 3: "This regulation will increase our dependence on food imports."

Nothing could be further than the truth, this regulation will help and boost the agriculture sector contributing to food security. This lie is again premised on the false idea that this regulation will lead to loss of farming land and food production, the opposite of which is true. .

#### 4: "This regulation will lead to 10% of agricultural land taken out of production."

There has never been, at any stage, a binding or legal target for 10% of agricultural land to be taken out of production. Check the actual text!

#### 5: "This regulation will put farmers out of business."

On the contrary, this law is an opportunity for farmers to have new and predictable financing, within a legal framework. The Nature Restoration Law foresees a dedicated permanent nature restoration fund in the next revision of the Multi Financial Framework (MFF). This is of course on top of the money from the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

Farmers will not be forced to comply with targets and obligations, because there are none! . The contribution from farmers will be done voluntarily, with incentives designed in Member States national restoration plans. The only targets and obligations contained in the regulation are for Member States.

#### 6: "This regulation will lead to grabbing land from farming."

There is nothing in this regulation that could lead to land grabbing, the financialisation of land, or land speculation. In fact there is nothing about payments or financial rewards for action in this proposal. All the restoration actions will be planned and overseen by the Member States, in an open and participatory process in the designing of their nature restoration plans. This Regulation is not about creating more protected areas. There is no obligation to widen the network of protected areas nor limit any economic activity. The NRL is about improving biodiversity in existing protected areas and beyond.

#### 7: "This regulation will be an additional regulatory burden"

There are no obligations which apply directly to industries, farmers, fisheries, etc, so there is no regulatory burden! If the NRL is approved, the only additional administrative workload is for EU Member States' civil service, who will be responsible for the preparation of their National Restoration Plans. Restoration obligations for EU Member States already exist in current legislation, but their application is done on an ad hoc basis and in small-scale projects. The NRL creates more legal certainty by establishing a legal framework with clear definitions, rights, obligations, monitoring, reporting, targets and deadlines.

#### 8: "The European Commission has not been listening to farmers."

The Commission has met with farmers regularly, including Copa-Cogeca, the union of the two big agricultural umbrella organisations and the strongest interest group for European farmers. Commissioner Timmermans has also been to the European Parliament's Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI) committee to discuss the NRL with MEPs.

#### 9: "This regulation blocks infrastructure projects crucial to our climate transition."

There is no such conflict with this regulation and the roll out of renewable energy infrastructure or with the extraction of critical raw materials. Member States can decide on what constitutes an overriding public interest for the obligation on non-deterioration.

#### 10: "We want the EU Commission to come up with a new proposal."

The Commission has repeatedly made it clear that it will not come up with a new proposal if this one is rejected. Moreover, there would not be time with less than a year in the mandate.

## A few (objective) facts

On June 15th, the members of the Environmental Committee (ENVI) will vote on the Nature Restoration Law. If the legislation makes it through the committee stage, all Members of the European Parliament will have to vote on it. If this regulation is rejected in either the ENVI committee or plenary, then there will be no EU legal framework for biodiversity at all.

The overall objective of the Nature Restoration Law is to implement restoration measures on 20% of the Union's land and sea areas by 2030. More specific targets are defined for certain ecosystems. Each Member State will have to determine, in a national plan, how to achieve these objectives. It is crucial to address the decline in biodiversity and improve the condition of ecosystems.

Currently, the European Environment Agency (EEA) reports that **81% of protected habitats in the EU and 63% of protected species are in poor condition**, meaning they have an unfavorable conservation status. Only 15% of habitats and approximately 27% of species have a good conservation status

This Regulation sets EU targets and obligations and does not predetermine how Member States will contribute to them. The whole decision-making around what restoration happens where, how and when is left to the Member States.

The parties that are blocking the Nature Restoration Law complain that there has been no impact assessment specific to EU food security or rural life or other specific areas. Yet there are 600+ pages of impact assessment for the regulation, exploring four different policy options and picking the best one for socio-economic and environmental impact.