

Issue 49

Newsletter

Spring 2019



2019 European elections: Towards a more sustainable Europe?

#ThisTimeImVoting

In this issue

- P.3** Editorial
- P.7** European Elections - Insights
- P.9** Key European Elections' dates
- P.10** EU Parties Manifesto Analysis
- P.13** Think 2030 Publications and videos relevant to the EU elections
- P.14** 2019 European Policy Calendar
- P.17** 2017-2018 IEEP Annual Report
- P.18** IEEP Books and Publications
- P.19** Events and Conferences



THINK 2030

Science-policy
solutions for a more
sustainable Europe



Editorial

We are just a few days away from the European elections, which are to be held on the 23rd-26th of May 2019 in a polarized political context marked by the rise of Euroscepticism and unprecedented public concern for climate issues.

The stakes are high: the latest IPCC report concludes that we have 12 years to turn things around and reach the Paris Agreement objectives. As the European Commission did not yet provide a blueprint for the post-2020 agenda, the new European Parliament could play a key role in filling the void. In a context when the European Council is divided over the ambition of Europe's future climate and environmental policies, the European Parliament will also bear particular responsibility in scrutinizing the Member States' implementation of EU environmental law and in responding to the European citizens' growing concern on climate change.

To inform debates before the elections, IEEP and its partners convened the Think 2030 platform last October bringing together 100 policy experts to discuss pathways towards a more sustainable Europe, producing 30 key recommendations. According to *Votewatch Europe*, as much as 55 to 60% of the incoming MEPs will be newly elected, so we very much hope that these evidenced-based, non-partisan recommendations will provide a high-quality source of information to the new parliamentarians.

To bring messages to the Member State level and help inform the democratic debate, IEEP worked together with IDDRI (France), TMG (Germany) and IVL, Mistra and SEI (in Sweden).

On April 2nd, TMG, one of the German Think 2030 partners, presented the Think 2030 outcomes at a *Deutscher Naturschutzring (DNR)* event in Berlin.

Think 2030 conference, Brussels, Belgium



On May 2nd, IEEP, IVL, Mistra and SEI co-organised an event in Stockholm with MEP candidates from different parties. While climate change was seen as the top priority by the candidates, ecodesign, consumption-based emissions and just transition were also debated. [See here](#) to read more about this event.

In Paris on May 4th, IDDRI, Sciences-Po and IEEP welcomed over 200 people in a highly interactive [conference](#). Six parties were represented on the panel. The urgency to take the necessary actions to face climate change, the role of innovation, biodiversity loss, CAP, pesticides and many more issues were discussed.

Candidates also explored what the future Parliament would look like and whether it would be able to support an accelerated transition towards sustainability.

Stockholm, Sweden



Berlin, Germany



Paris, France



At the EU level, IEEP organised a session together with the European Environmental Agency, WWF and Energy Cities at Green Week on May 16th to discuss how the next European Parliament could help close the implementation gap, which prevents parts of European environmental acquis to achieve its objectives on the ground. Read more on IEEP's work on implementation [here](#).



EU Green Week conference Brussels, Belgium



Last but not least, IEEP carried out an analysis of the manifestos of European parties for the European parliamentary elections to analyse proposals relevant to the environment and sustainability.

Analysed manifestos indicated a significant increase in climate ambition with some parties citing either the 1.5 degree Paris target, climate neutrality by 2050 or a more ambitious 55% emissions reduction target for 2030.

However, most manifestos also have major blind spots on biodiversity, sustainable consumption or environmental governance, showing that the environmental community still has a way to go in conveying the complexity and interconnected nature of the environmental challenges we face today in Europe.



The debate on the future pathways towards a more sustainable Europe comes at time when the political establishment is under scrutiny from EU citizens. Since the European Parliament's inception in 1979, a broad alliance of major parties have held a comfortable majority. However, polls suggest this era could come to an end. It is expected that for the first time in their history, the EPP and S&D cannot reach a majority alone, opening a new chapter in the history of the European Parliament.

Let's hope that the new MEPs, irrespective of the party they come from, will be able to work together to address the daunting challenge set by scientists of the IPCC. We have less than 5000 days before the window of opportunity for change closes so let's not waste any minute!

Happy reading and voting!

2019 European elections - insights

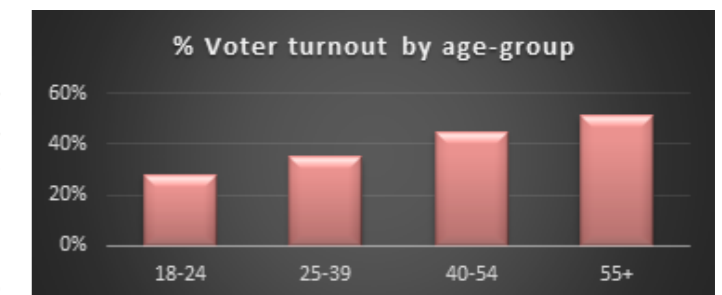
POLICY PRIORITIES AND PUBLIC PERSPECTIVE

European public opinion has fundamentally shifted in the last few years. Decades of relative consensus, whereby the European Parliament and national governments jointly governed an expanding area of policy, have been threatened by the increase in polarisation of opinions, interests and values all along the political spectrum. This is a result of ongoing economic, social and environmental challenges which are testing the internal cohesion of the European Union. The latest Eurobarometer survey indicates that opinion sees immigration, terrorism and economic issues, feeling of disenfranchisement, lack of interest and lack of knowledge of EU institutions, fear of loss of national identity, poor voter mobilisation or simply that the political system is essentially incomprehensible to voters. Worrying voter turnout trends are also apparent across various demographics, notably age groups, where younger age groups are significantly more likely to abstain from voting. Whether we will see a shift in this trend remains to be seen, especially in a context where support to Europe is on average increasing among voters (see here). This is one of many uncertainties in the lead up to this critical election.

issues, feeling of disenfranchisement, lack of interest and lack of knowledge of EU institutions, fear of loss of national identity, poor voter mobilisation or simply that the political system is essentially incomprehensible to voters. Worrying voter turnout trends are also apparent across various demographics, notably age groups, where younger age groups are significantly more likely to abstain from voting. Whether we will see a shift in this trend remains to be seen, especially in a context where support to Europe is on average increasing among voters (see here). This is one of many uncertainties in the lead up to this critical election.

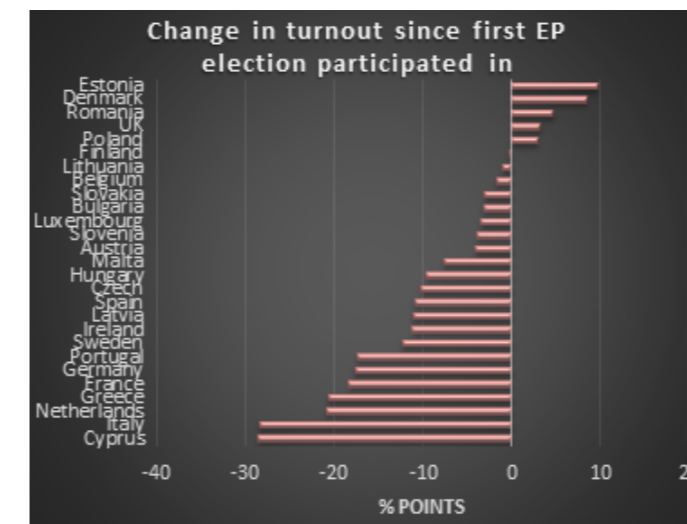
VOTER-TURNOUT - A TROUBLESOME TREND

The increasing urgency voiced by climate scientists worldwide has led to a spike in demonstrations demanding global leaders to take action on climate change. There is hope this will put to an end the historically low voter turnouts in European Parliamentary election. Every year since the establishment of the European Parliament in 1979, voter turnout has consistently decreased with each passing election with the last election reaching an all-time low of 42.54%.

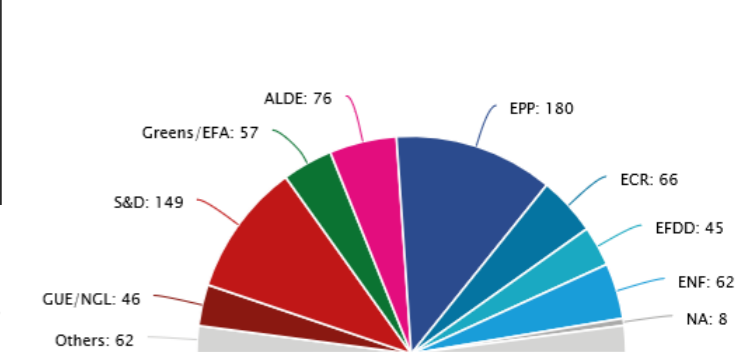


WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

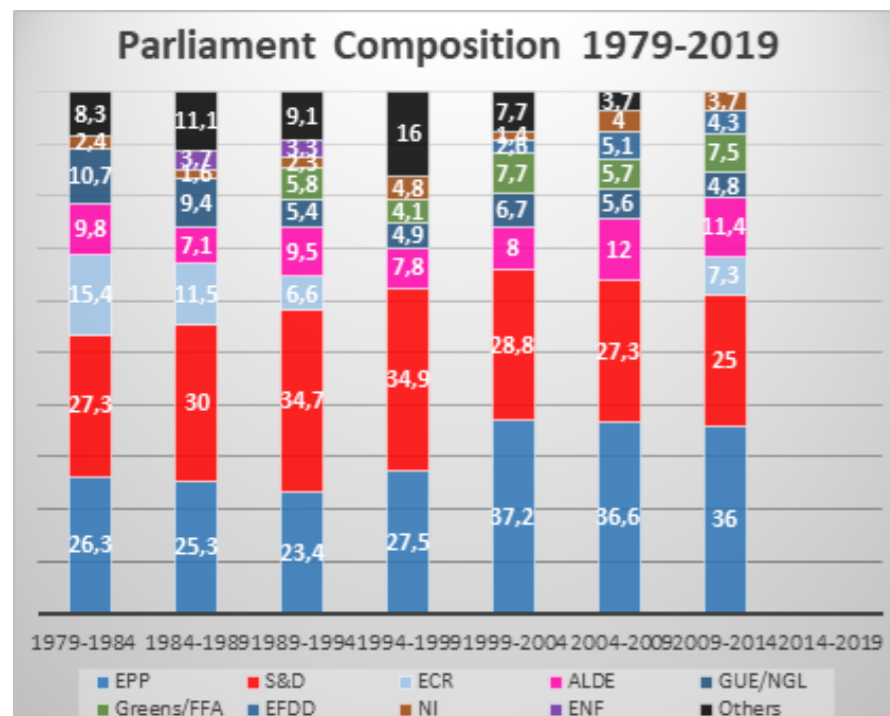
That the EPP and S&D may not reach a majority alone (see seats projection below) is an interesting development as various players now have the power to negotiate as parties all across the political spectrum tussle to form a majority. If the EPP wants to see its Spitzenkandidat at the head of the Commission, negotiations might include red lines from other parties, from ALDE to S&D.



Projections by seats at EU level
18/04/2019



The low-voter turnout is a legitimacy crisis. These trends can be explained by a number of reasons including national issues overshadowing European



EPP – European People’s Party
 S&D – Socialists and democrats
 ALDE – Alliance of Liberals and Democrats
 PES – Party of European Socialists
 Greens – European Green Party
 ECR – European Conservatives and Reformists
 EFDD – Europe of Freedom and Democracy
 GUE/NGL – The European United Left/ Nordic Green Left

What is likely is that the PES (whose manifesto seems to put a greater emphasis on environmental issues), the Greens and ALDE will press for greater climate ambition than what the EPP currently offers, while parties on the right side of the spectrum (some of which do support climate action) are unlikely to make climate change their key bargaining chip in terms of a potential alliance with EPP.

OTHER RELEVANT SOURCES ON EUROPEAN ELECTIONS AND SUSTAINABILITY

Adelphi: “Convenient truths - Mapping climate agendas of right-wing populist parties in Europe”.

CAN Europe: “Defenders, Delayers, Dinosaurs - Ranking of EU political groups & national parties on climate change”.

E3G: “Update EU elections: manifestos, key people and moments”.

The Green 10: “2019 European Parliament election manifesto”

IEEP conducted a country-by-country analysis of Member States systems, opinion polls and the percentage of MEPs to be re-elected.



Key European elections’ dates

22nd of May	The final day which British MPs could pass a Brexit withdrawal deal and avoid holding parliament elections
23rd-26th of May	European Elections
June	Elected candidates negotiate to form political groups for the upcoming Parliament’s 9th term. The President of the European Council proposes a candidate to the European Council with EU leaders deciding by qualified majority.
20th-21st of June	European Council Summit: “EU budget 2021-2027”, “the agenda 2019-2024”, and high-level appointments.
24th of June	Political groups notify their composition
1st of July	Start of Parliament’s 9th term
2nd of July	Inaugural plenary session of the newly-elected Parliament
September and October	Hearings of Commissioners-designate in Parliamentary committees
October (unconfirmed day)	Plenary session – New Commission is elected, new Commission President gives inaugural speech
31st of October	Six-month Brexit Negotiations extension expires
1st of November	New European Commission to take up office

European parties' manifesto analysis

IEEP carried out an analysis of the manifestos of European parties for the European parliamentary elections in May 2019. After analysing each party's programme, an overall analysis was made. The objective is to assess commitments on sustainability issues by comparing them with:

- 2014 manifestos,
- [Think 2030 recommendations](#),
- International commitments of the EU,
- The [7th Environmental Action Plan](#) and the [European Environmental Agency environmental indicator report 2018](#) published in November.

Key messages

The manifestos demonstrate that all parties are attempting to respond to the increased concern by citizens on climate change. However, the proposals they contain are unlikely to get Europe on a safe course to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. Most proposed actions still focus primarily on energy and transport. The other top priority issues that emerge from party manifestos are the circular economy, research and innovation for sustainability, environmental health and the need to link the social and environmental agendas together.

There are clear dividing lines between the main parties on the need for greening Europe's economic growth model, the usefulness of using the SDGs as a framework, the scale and financing of low-carbon investments, strategies for emissions reductions within transport, the potential transformation of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), Better Regulation 2.0, environmental fiscal reform and trade.

While the manifestos of the Party of European Socialists and Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe are "greener" than in 2014, the EPP manifesto mostly restates existing policies and commitments. In fact, the marked difference between the EPP's proposals and that of other parties (Greens, PES, ALDE and EL) on several key files could lead to difficult post-election negotiations around the Presidency of the European Commission and its programme.

If, as projected, the EPP has fewer seats, other parties could ask for greater climate and environmental ambition to be included within the programme of the new European Commission in return for their support to the president nominee. The impact of the potential surge of right-wing, Eurosceptic parties on environmental issues, is unclear at the moment.

Compared with evidence to date from the European Environment Agency (EEA) and recommendations from Think 2030 experts, the main parties' manifestos have a few major blind spots including biodiversity (except for the Greens), sustainable consumption policies, the bioeconomy, environmental governance and environmental security. This suggests that parties are either underestimating the importance of these issues or are unwilling to make them electoral issues.



European Green Party (Greens)
[Party Manifesto](#)
[IEEP Manifesto Analysis](#)



European People's Party (EPP)
[Party Manifesto](#)
[IEEP Manifesto Analysis](#)



Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE)
[Party Manifesto](#)
[IEEP Manifesto Analysis](#)



European Left (EL)
[Party Manifesto](#)
[IEEP Manifesto Analysis](#)



[Overall Manifesto Analysis](#)



Party of European Socialists (PES)
[Party Manifesto](#)
[IEEP Manifesto Analysis](#)

Think 2030 Publications



30x30 Actions for a Sustainable Europe #Think2030 Action Plan

[ACCESS HERE](#)

30x30 Actions for a Sustainable Europe #Think2030 Action Plan Executive summary

[ACCESS HERE](#)

Advancing sustainable development goals within Europe and globally: the role of the EU

[ACCESS HERE](#)

Sustainable consumption – policy approaches for systems change

[ACCESS HERE](#)

Mobilising EU trade policy for raising environmental standards: the example of climate action

[ACCESS HERE](#)

Sustainable bio-resource pathways towards a fossil-free world: the European bioeconomy in a global development context

[ACCESS HERE](#)

Valuing biodiversity and reversing its decline by 2030

[ACCESS HERE](#)

Securing and financing clean growth for the EU

[ACCESS HERE](#)

A long-term strategy for a European circular economy – setting the course for success

[ACCESS HERE](#)

Reinforcing the Environmental Dimensions of the European Foreign and Security Policy

[ACCESS HERE](#)

Moving towards a circular economy for plastics in the EU by 2030

[ACCESS HERE](#)

Think 2050, Act 2020: Bringing European ambition and policies in line with the Paris Agreement

[ACCESS HERE](#)

Feeding Europe: Agriculture and sustainable food systems

[ACCESS HERE](#)

Aligning EU resources and expenditure with 2030 objectives

[ACCESS HERE](#)

Ocean protection: why citizens' values matter

[ACCESS HERE](#)

How to ensure a just and fast transition to a competitive low-carbon economy for the EU?

[ACCESS HERE](#)

Think 2030 Videos

[Vice-President Jyrki Katainen](#)



[Minister Teresa Ribera](#)



[MEP José Inácio Faria](#)



[MEP Sirpa Piñtikainen](#)



[MEP Theresa Griffin](#)



[MEP Ricardo Serrão Santos](#)



[MEP Linnéa Engström](#)



[MEP Benedek Jávor](#)



[Kate Raworth](#)



[Céline Charveriat](#)



[Susanna Gionfra](#)



2019 European Policy Calendar



May

- Basel Convention COP14, Rotterdam Convention COP9 and Stockholm Convention COP9 - 29 April-9 May, Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm
- IPBES Plenary Session #7- 29 April-4 May - Paris
- World Tuna Day - 2 May
- 1st EU-US Energy Council B2B energy forum - 2 May Brussels
- 22nd European Forum on Eco-innovation: Closing the loop 7-8 May
- 49th Session of the IPCC - 8-12 May, Kyoto, Japan
- Sibiu Heads of State summit on the future of Europe - 9 May - Sibiu, Romania
- World Migratory Bird Day - 11-12 May
- Foreign Affairs Council - 13 May - Brussels
- EU Green Week - 13-17 May
- AGRIFISH Council - 14 May - Brussels
- Foreign Affairs Council (Defence) - 14 May - Brussels
- European cluster conference 'Connecting ecosystems: Bridge. Inspire. Change.'- 14-16 May - Bucharest, Romania
- Workshop on the problem formulation for the environmental risk assessment of gene drive modified insects - 15 May Brussels
- Live TV Debate - Presidential candidates for the European Commission - 15 May - Brussels
- Foreign Affairs Council (Development) - 16 May - Brussels
- European Maritime Day Conference - 16-17 May - Lisbon
- ECOFIN Council - 17 May - Brussels
- Annual convention for inclusive growth - 20 May - Brussels
- 4th World Congress on Agroforestry - 20-25 May Montpellier, France
- General Affairs Council - 21 May - Brussels
- European Chemicals Agency Conference -21 May-22 May
- World Biodiversity Day - 22 May
- European Forum on Urban Forestry - 22 May-25 May
- Education, Youth, Culture and Sports Council - 22-23 May Brussels
- Energy Infrastructure Forum 2019 - 23-24 May - Copenhagen
- European Parliament election - 23-26 May
- Tenth Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM 10) - 27 May Vancouver, Canada
- 27th EU Biomass Conference and exhibition - 27 May Lisbon
- Competitiveness Council - 27-28 May - Brussels
- Foreign Affairs Council (Trade) - 28 May - Brussels
- European Climate Change Adaptation Conference 28-31 May
- 172nd European Association of Agriculture Economists seminar - 28-29 May - Brussels
- Workshop on strategy to support substitution of chemicals on concern - 29 May - Helsinki

June

- 3rd World Circular Economy Forum - 3-5 June - Helsinki
- World Environment Day - 5 June
- Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Transport) - 6 June - Luxembourg
- Justice and Home Affairs Council - 6-7 June - Luxembourg
- World Oceans Day - 8 June
- Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council - 13-14 June - Luxembourg
- ECOFIN Council - 14 June - Luxembourg
- Global wind day - 15 June
- Foreign Affairs Council - 17 June - Luxembourg
- World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought - 17 June
- Meeting of the European electricity regulatory forum 17 June - 18 June - Florence, Italy
- EU Sustainable Energy Week - 17 June - 21 June - Brussels
- Bonn Climate Change Conference - 17-27 June - Bonn, Germany
- AGRIFISH Council - 18 June - Luxembourg
- European Council - 20-21 June - Brussels
- Adoption of the Strategic Agenda for 2019-2024 and high-level appointments - 20-21 June
- Symposium of the International Agricultural Trade Research Consortium - 23-25 June - Sevilla, Spain
- General Affairs Council (Cohesion) - 25 June - Luxembourg
- Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council (Energy) 25 June - Luxembourg
- Environment Council - 26 June - Luxembourg
- Resilient Cities 2019 - 26-28 June - Bonn, Germany
- G20 Summit - 28-29 June - Osaka, Japan

July

- End of Parliament's 8th term - 1 July
- Inaugural European Parliament Plenary Session for newly-elected Parliament - 2-4 July - Brussels
- Ninth Trondheim Conference on Biodiversity - 2-5 May Trondheim
- High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (ECOSO auspices) - 8-19 July - UNHQ, New York
- World Population Day - 11 July
- European Parliament Plenary Session - 15-18 July - Strasbourg

August

- IPCC Special Report on Climate Change and Land - Day TBD
- 50th Session of the IPCC - 2-6 August - Geneva
- G7 Summit - 24-26 August - Biarritz, France
- World Water Week - 25-30 August - Stockholm

September

- IPCC Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate - Day TBD
- European Parliament Committee Meetings - 2nd-5th September
- International Mountain Conference - 8-12 September Innsbruck
- International Conference on Mercury as a Global Pollutant 8-13 September - Krakow
- European Parliament Committee Meetings - 9 September
- 36th European photovoltaic solar energy conference and exhibition - 9-13 September -Marseille, France
- International day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer 16 September
- European Parliament plenary session - 16-19 September Strasbourg, France
- 74th Session of the UNGA - 17-30 September - New York, USA
- 51st Session of the IPCC - 20-23 September - Monaco
- UN Climate Summit - 23 September - NY, USA
- SDG Summit - 24-25 September - NY, USA
- World Maritime Day - 26 September

October

- Energy Efficiency Day - 5 October
- European Parliament plenary session - 9-10 October Brussels
- Arctic Circle Assembly - 11-13 October - Reykjavik
- International Day for Disaster Reduction - 13 October
- World Environmental Day -14 October
- World Food Day - 16 October
- European Council - 17-18 October - Brussels
- European Parliament plenary session - 21-24 October Strasbourg, France
- World Cities Day - 31 October
- 2nd European conference on Xylella fastidiosa 29-31 October – Ajaccio, France

2019 Annual Report 2017-2018

November

- Eight Session of the Governing Body to the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture 11-16 November - Rome
- European Parliament plenary session 13-14 November - Brussels
- Global Science, Technology and Innovation Conference 20-22 November - Brussels
- World Fisheries Day – 21 November
- European Parliament plenary session 25-28 November – Strasbourg, France
- European Clean Air Forum 28th-29th November - Bratislava



December

- COP 25 2-13 December - Santiago, Chile
- World Soil Day - 5 December
- International Mountain Day 11 December
- NATO Summit - December (unconfirmed date) - London

IEEP is delighted to release its Annual Report for 2017-18. In this edition, Executive Director, Celine Charveriat, presents the institute's highlights and strategy and introduces IEEP's widened scope from environment to sustainability more broadly.



2018
ANNUAL REPORT



IEEP Books and Publications



CAP 2021-27: proposals for increasing its environmental and climate ambition

[ACCESS HERE](#)

Emerging agricultural policy frameworks in the UK

[ACCESS HERE](#)

Sustainable Development Goals & the EU: uncovering the nexus between external and internal policies

December 11, 2018

[ACCESS HERE](#)

CAP 2021-27: Using the eco-scheme to maximise environmental and climate benefits

January 30, 2019

[ACCESS BOOK](#)

IEEP report on risks and opportunities of Brexit outcomes: “no deal” outcome poses the worst threats

February 18, 2019

[ACCESS PUBLICATION](#)

Reinforcing Environmental Dimensions of European Foreign and Security Policy

February 19, 2019

[ACCESS HERE](#)

Net-zero agriculture in 2050: how to get there?

February 28, 2019

[ACCESS HERE](#)

Drivers of conservation success in the EU

April 3, 2019

[ACCESS HERE](#)

IEEP Conferences and Events

Upcoming Events

Natural Capital Conference 2019: (How) can marine protected areas deliver both conservation and socio-economic benefits? Successful governance strategies and key factors. Special session at the Natural Capital Initiative’s 10th anniversary summit “Valuing our Life Support Systems” Parliament and Commission.

London, 22nd of May 2019

IEEP will lead a special session that aims at gathering insights on whether, and if so how, Marine protected areas (MPAs) can provide socio-economic benefits to local stakeholders, while protecting and enhancing the state of ecosystems and habitats. Stakeholders with experience on the ground will recount success stories in the UK and abroad, reflecting on key elements that can explain the positive results achieved by individual MPAs or MPA networks.

CONTACT

Daniela Russi
drussi@ieep.eu

Mia Pantzar
mpantzar@ieep.eu

European Commission and Committee of the Regions meeting Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services: a common agenda to 2020 and beyond.

Brussels, 23rd-24th of May 2019

IEEP will help organise this conference that will provide the starting point for the public consultation of the final evaluation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020. With the objective to look back at what has been achieved by the EU, to draw on lessons learned and reflect on main challenges for the future. This high-level session will bring together EU policy-makers and stakeholders in order to take stock of achievements in the field of nature and biodiversity during this Commission.

CONTACT

Hans Van Gossum
hvangossum@ieep.eu

EU Sustainable Energy Week: Supporting sustainable bioenergy and renewable gas use.

Brussels, 20th of June 2019

IEEP will be organising and presenting recent research at a conference for the Sustainable Energy Week; a European Commission initiative. Presentations will outline good practices and policy lessons supporting bioenergy and renewable biogas across EU Member States.

CONTACT

Silvia Nanni
snanni@ieep.eu

Thorfinn Stainforth
tstainforth@ieep.eu

IUCN Regional Conservation Forum for Europe, North and Central Asia 2019

Rotterdam, 1st-3rd of July 2019

IEEP will be attending the IUCN Regional Conservation Forum. This event is a key opportunity for attendees to explore synergies amongst a range of stakeholders and partners as the IUCN Constituency prepare for the next IUCN Congress and to ensure that regional matters are adequately taken into account.

CONTACT

Hans Van Gossum
hvangossum@ieep.eu



Editors: Remi Highton and
Clementine Richer

To subscribe to this newsletter
please visit our [website](#).
To no longer receive this
newsletter, please email
newsletter@ieep.eu, quoting
'Newsletter unsubscribe'
in the subject field.

This newsletter is published
and distributed by the [Institute
for European Environmental
Policy \(IEEP\)](#). IEEP is a
sustainability think tank. For
further information about IEEP,
see [our website](#) or contact any
staff member.

© Copyright IEEP 2019