



Institute for European Environmental Policy

Annual Report

July 2024 – June 2025



The Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP) is the only Brussels-based think tank specialised in environmental policy and sustainability. Established in 1976, IEEP has advised generations of experts and policymakers since the very beginning of European environmental legislation.

As an independent, unbiased, impartial, and evidence-based institute, we are committed to supporting organisations to better navigate the European environmental policy landscape and advance impact-driven sustainability policy across the EU and beyond. Our multidisciplinary team works with EU institutions, foundations, industry, and civil society, providing integrated approaches and multiple perspectives across several research areas.

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Foreword by the Chair of the Board

Hans Wolters



Obviously, politicians can deceive themselves – and the public – that the climate and biodiversity crisis does not exist, is exaggerated or can be managed at a later stage. But the reality is that we are in the middle of a climate and biodiversity crisis and we don't have the luxury of denying the situation or of postponing action. The Institute for European Environmental Policy knows that sound science, facts and figures, identifying new solutions and best practices, and facilitating dialogue and discussion are necessary to achieve the urgent change that we need. Yet it may no longer be sufficient, and we will need to deepen our understanding of the root causes of why we are not making better progress towards creating a circular economy, restoring biodiversity, limiting climate change, and reducing overconsumption and resource waste. We will need to explain better how an unfair and unequal society leads to the disengagement of many and creates a fertile ground for populism; how a dysfunctional market economy overly favours shareholders and externalises social and environmental costs; and how a distorted information and communication infrastructure promotes disinformation, short-termism and overconcentration on the individual rather than on the community. At the same time, we must bring the positive message that public subsidies and investments, integrated social and environmental policies and legislation together can indeed realise a successful and fair ecological transition.

At IEEP, we have worked to do just that in the past year. This annual report demonstrates that as a think tank, science is the hard work of evidence, argumentation, accountability and dialogue. Europe and the EU need think tanks that bridge – or at the very least reduce – the gap between science, policy and politics. This is also why IEEP leads Think Sustainable Europe, the pan-European network of think tanks collaborating and conveying new insights and knowledge from the capitals to Brussels and from Brussels to the capitals of the EU member states.

All this work needs resources. We cannot serve society and support sound policy-making that works towards an urgently needed and fair ecological transition without funding. If there is value in more future thinking, deeper analysis and identifying better solutions beyond business-as-usual, then think tanks should get the resources to finance just that. If we want a thriving, future-proof democracy, we need think tanks that can question, challenge and speak truth to power.

I believe that IEEP has done, yet again, a fantastic job in delivering remarkable reports, organising excellent meetings and providing high-quality environmental intelligence to companies, institutions and colleagues in civil society. This annual report gives a rich overview of these activities. But I also flag up the growing challenge for think tanks such as IEEP to propose out-of-the-box thinking, alongside critical or questioning views.

With our new Executive Director, Antoine Oger, and our dedicated team, we have done a really good job in 2025. We have become more efficient with our resources, increased our outreach, become more visible in the media, and supported and developed our partnerships, including the unique European network of think tanks. And all this while a chilly conservative wind blows through the institutions and the capitals of the world.

I want to thank those who continued to support our work this year for their trust and understanding of the importance of think tanks. I want to thank the IEEP team for their excellent work, and the colleagues from IEEP UK and Think Sustainable Europe for fruitful cooperation. As I step down as chairperson, I want to thank my colleagues on the IEEP Board for their pleasant cooperation during all these years. My good colleague, EU expert and dedicated environmentalist Mercedes Sanchez Varela, will take over in 2026, with new energy and innovative ideas. I am grateful to have been able to serve IEEP. Let's continue our mission with enthusiasm, dedication, good communication and hopefully more resources.



Foreword by the Executive Director

Antoine Oger

The work covered in this report coincides with the first year of the new mandate of the EU institutions after the EU elections in June 2024. These elections profoundly altered the landscape for environmental policymaking even though the reality of the triple planetary crisis remains the same. Europe is the fastest-warming continent in the world, and climate risks are threatening our energy and food security, ecosystems, infrastructure, water resources, financial stability, and people's health. Extreme weather events like storms, heatwaves and flooding accounted for 85,000 to 145,000 human fatalities across Europe over the past 40 years. Economic losses from weather and climate-related extremes in Europe reached around half a trillion euros over the same period. Many of these risks have already reached critical levels and could become catastrophic without urgent and decisive actions. Severe climate events already experienced throughout Europe are expected to worsen even under optimistic global warming scenarios and to affect living conditions across the continent.

The first mandate of Ursula von der Leyen's European Commission from 2019-2024 proposed a paradigm shift in response to these realities with the deployment of the European Green Deal. This yielded substantial results as the EU is deemed on track to achieve its objective of reducing GHG net emissions by at least 55% by 2030, compared to 1990 levels. This is happening provided that Europe maintains the pace of its emission reductions and that Member States fully implement their climate-related policy frameworks. Meanwhile, preparations are ongoing to adopt a new ambitious target of 90% reduction by 2040 as recommended by the European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change (ESABCC), and which implies significant *additional* efforts. An assumption which now feels somewhat optimistic as the new political reality at the EU level tends to showcase not only a lack of interest in further climate and environmental measures but more worryingly a tendency to weaken previously agreed commitments.

In this context, we at IEEP continued providing high-quality policy analysis and recommendations on the most salient environmental issues of the day. Our work on agriculture focused on improving the design and implementation of national CAP Strategic Plans. It also provided a synthesis of existing knowledge on the costs and benefits of transitioning to sustainable agriculture in the EU in the new context set forth by the European Commission's Vision for Agriculture and Food, which focuses the debate on food security, competitiveness, and simplification. We also provided guidance on the key features of the flagship EU Nature Restoration Law, adopted into law in June 2024. We informed the crucial process of defining a 2040 climate target through dedicated work on market-based mechanisms, including the Carbon Removal Certification Framework (CRCF) and early exploration of nature and biodiversity credits. Meanwhile, we continued our long-standing commitment to consider environmental issues from a global perspective by researching the spillover effects of EU-trade-related sustainability policies, including the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), the Regulation on Deforestation-free products (EUDR), the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD), and the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR).

Despite a fraught political context, IEEP remains committed to inform the debate for ambitious *and* realistic environmental policies at the EU level. We believe that our role is now more important than ever in building bridges and common understanding throughout society.





Our services
& outreach

Our services

IEEP is the only Brussels-based think tank dedicated to EU environmental policy research and, for 50 years, has stood as a beacon for generations of experts and policymakers. IEEP provides strategic intelligence on how Europe can turn environmental policy into a driver of competitiveness, resilience, and innovation. We connect zero-pollution, nature, and climate goals with jobs, investment, and social well-being, helping governments and businesses make sustainability work in practice. Our work equips decision-makers with clear evidence and actionable insights to navigate Europe’s transition with confidence.

Independent expertise	Policy impact	Collaborative network
We are renowned for our unbiased and high-quality research.	We work to shape environmental policies through science-based recommendations.	We connect diverse organisations to reflect on our recommendations and ensure their viability for policymaking and implementation.

Our multidisciplinary team works with EU institutions, international organisations, academia, and civil society, providing integrated approaches and multiple perspectives across several research areas, including agri-food, biodiversity, land use, trade, climate, and the circular economy.

IEEP also offers a variety of opportunities for cooperation with partners, including establishing long-term collaborations between different organisations. Through our partnerships, we create a trustworthy and interactive space for civil society organisations, academic entities, public institutions, industries, and foundations that share our vision for sustainable development and place rigorous, impactful research at the core of their missions. We build connections among diverse actors, fostering mutual understanding and collaboration towards a more sustainable future, even – and perhaps especially – on contentious issues.

Partners gain privileged access to IEEP’s interdisciplinary team of policy analysts and environmental scientists through bilateral exchanges and participation in tailored policy dialogues.

Partners are invited to participate in the [Think Sustainable Europe](#) network Working Groups, gatherings of experts from the different think tanks that are members of IEEP. These groups connect national and European experts to provide policymakers with science-based, impact-driven policy insights and recommendations throughout the EU legislative process. The network focuses mainly on upstream legislative processes and agenda-setting.

Partners are also integrated into [Think2030](#), IEEP’s flagship events, organised in conjunction with the rotating Presidencies of the Council of the EU. Think2030 brings together decision-makers, policy experts, business leaders, and civil society to advance science-based solutions for a sustainable future.



Our outreach

Despite strong pushback on environmental actions, we continued to engage with our large and varied audience of policymakers, civil society representatives, private partners, and academia through our unbiased, independent, and science-based work.

Our communications, events, policy insights, and activities strengthened IEEP’s visibility and solid reputation as a trusted interlocutor, while also reaching out to new stakeholders, building on existing activities such as the Think2030 events and developing new initiatives, including the Science4Policy briefings at the European Parliament.

Policy briefings, reports and blogs

During the financial year, IEEP maintained a strong output of publications and events, producing **46 thematic briefings and reports and 19 blogs**, covering all areas of our work. Key publications included the working paper titled “Leveraging private finance for the transition to sustainable agriculture”, in which the CAP and Food team explored how private finance can be mobilised to close the funding gap and support farmers in the transition to sustainable agriculture. This was followed by a stakeholder workshop that brought together the European Commission, farming and food sectors, business networks, academia, and civil society to discuss the paper’s findings and implications.



In an ongoing effort to monitor and assess the progress of the European Green Deal, we released the fifth edition of the European Green Deal Barometer. This annual survey captured insights from 165 sustainability experts, offering a comprehensive view of the Green Deal’s implementation.

In connection with the Think2030 Hungary webinar, IEEP produced a policy briefing titled “Clean Industrial Deal, COP29 and beyond: integrating competitiveness and climate commitments” in collaboration with our Think

Sustainable Europe Hungarian member EnergiaKlub. Later in the year, in conjunction with the Polish presidency, a series of recommendations focusing on energy transition, ETS, the external dimension of the Green Deal and resilient agriculture was produced following the Think2030 Dialogue in Warsaw in collaboration with the Reform Institute and the Green Economy Institute.

Events

IEEP organised and hosted **15 roundtable discussions, workshops, and events**. In parallel, IEEP experts participated in and spoke at more than 80 external events, meetings and gatherings, including as members of the European Commission’s expert group on circular economy – the Ecodesign Forum. A cornerstone of this year’s work was the continued development of Think2030, which remains a vital space for cross-sectoral dialogue on environmental



policy. We organised two major events under this initiative: Think2030 Hungary, hosted online in November 2024, and Think2030 Poland, held in March 2025, in association with the Polish Presidency of the Council of the EU—marking a significant milestone for the platform. These events brought together hundreds of voices from academia, civil society, business, and government and helped shape policy discussions through targeted recommendations.

In February 2025, IEEP convened public and private stakeholders on the theme of the European Climate Risk Assessment for businesses for a workshop exploring how companies could prepare for a resilient, competitive future amid climate risks. In June, IEEP organised a discussion on the Circular Economy Act, featuring Karl Falkenberg, former Director-General for Environment at the European Commission, as well as a public conference on Global Green Leadership, which brought together EU and Global South stakeholders to address the external spillovers of the Green Deal.

We also strengthened our dialogue with European Parliament Members by becoming a core contributor to the Advisory Group of the MEP Group on Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development. In coordination with this group, we co-organised four Science4Policy briefings at the European Parliament on topics ranging from affordable energy and the Clean Industrial Deal to the social dimension of the energy transition and the EU’s 2040 climate targets for agriculture, forestry, and land use. These briefings were supported by targeted publications, including analyses of the distributional effects of energy policies and strategies to ensure affordable energy and industrial competitiveness.



Media

Over the course of the year, our visibility across traditional and digital media has grown significantly. We were referenced in **25 scientific articles** and featured in **87 articles** spanning a wide range of outlets, including major EU-focused media such as Carbon Pulse, ENDS Europe, Euractiv, POLITICO, Carbon Brief, Contexte Borderlex, as well as national media such as DeMorgen, Bloomberg, Focus Germany, Financial Times, and Le Parisien, among many others.

The articles were a mix of interviews and quotes of our work and our experts and covered topics across all our work, from sustainable finance and environmental governance to nature restoration and agriculture. Highlights include Euractiv’s reporting on our Think2030 event in Poland and POLITICO’s coverage of our Animal Welfare Report. Our Green Deal Barometer report received extensive attention, notably in POLITICO’s Morning Pro Newsletter, the Financial Times’ Sustainable Views, and ENDS Europe, which published a dedicated article outlining the Barometer’s key findings. With a readership spanning EU institutions, governments, businesses and civil society, these publications significantly enhanced our visibility among key decision-makers and expert audiences at the core of EU policymaking.

Think2030 Conference in Denmark 2025



87
articles

25
scientific
articles

Social media

At the beginning of the year, we made the strategic decision to pause activity on X (formerly Twitter) and shift our focus to Bluesky, where we are continuing to build our audience.

LinkedIn remained a key channel for professional engagement. We gained over 4,900 new followers, bringing our total to **38,720**. The platform saw 85 posts, generating **368,980 impressions** and 3,909 reactions, and gained **11,000 monthly newsletter subscribers** since its launch in February.

We also expanded our digital presence, especially to younger audiences, by launching an Instagram account in January. Meanwhile, our website remained a central hub for information, attracting **101,000 users** and generating 18,000 downloads.

Our YouTube channel saw strong engagement, with **23,557 views** and 1,700 hours of watch time. This year, we posted conference videos, webinars, and podcasts, and continued our tradition of covering the COPs with experts. We produced a podcast on the pre-COP16 Convention on Biological Diversity and discussed the sought-after outcomes. Together with Think Sustainable Europe members Concito and TMG, we discussed the outcomes of COP29 and delved deeper into the challenges of financing the transition towards sustainable agri-food systems.

More information on our impactful work is included in the thematic areas reporting.

368,980
impressions

23,557
YouTube views

1,500
newsletter
subscribers



in 38,720
LinkedIn followers

101,000
website users





Our policy
areas

Climate and Circular Economy



Over the past year, the Climate and Circular Economy team has consolidated IEEP's expertise on incorporating social justice within Europe's transition to a low-carbon and circular economy. Our work has spanned fiscal and market-based instruments, circularity and resource efficiency, and socially inclusive local implementation, with strong visibility and engagement across EU, international and private-sector arenas.

Building on previous analyses of the polluter pays principle, we continued to influence policy debates on how economic instruments can drive a fair energy transition. Our research-informed discussions on the stalled revision of the Energy Taxation Directive, the implementation of the Social Climate Fund, and the emerging Clean Industrial Deal ensured that social equity remains central to IEEP. It presented its findings on just energy transition at the Green European Foundation's "Future of Europe" conference in Siena.

The team engaged with the European Commission, including with the Directorate-General for Budget (DG BUDG), providing a first assessment to improve the understanding of the contribution of EU Programmes to climate change adaptation and mitigation policy. The work with the Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM) continued, with a project to support an environmental fiscal reform in Greece.

IEEP expanded its focus on circular economy governance and material use through early contributions to the forthcoming EU Circular Economy Act, highlighting how secondary materials can help reduce Europe's material footprint. We participated in a Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership event at the European Parliament and a CINEA networking meeting on plastics sustainability, reinforcing our presence among key EU stakeholders. The team actively engaged with the European Commission's Directorate-General Research and Innovation (DG RTD), developing new indicators and methods to measure the transition to climate-neutral circularity, including its benefits, challenges, and trade-offs.



Science4Policy session: Social policies in the energy transition 2025



AdJUST meeting 2025

The team also deepened engagement with the private sector, producing a forward-looking assessment of the EU's circular economy policy agenda. This work supported industry actors in anticipating the next Commission's priorities and fostered dialogue with sustainability leaders, including the Corporate Leaders Group Europe, ECOPRENEUR, and the European Waste Management Association (FEAD).

Our attention to the local dimension of just transition led to the work around Low and Zero Emission Zones with case studies on Warsaw and Sofia, informing policy conversations on equitable implementation of low-emission mobility measures across European cities. The research gained wide traction, with media coverage in POLITICO and CGTN Europe and was presented to the POLIS Network conference.

In parallel, the CCE team also contributed significantly to advancing a people-centred vision for environmental governance through its work on a European Wellbeing Economy. In collaboration with the Green European Foundation, IEEP co-led the creation of Knowledge Communities on Wellbeing Economics, gathering over 60 experts from academia, EU institutions, and civil society to discuss justice, indicators beyond GDP, finance, and planetary boundaries. IEEP represented the initiative at the OECD 7th World Forum on Wellbeing in Rome and at the Global Doughnut Days, helping align the wellbeing economy narrative with broader EU policy frameworks and international dialogues.

Through these activities, the team enhanced IEEP's reputation as a think tank linking social justice, industrial competitiveness, and environmental effectiveness, ensuring that Europe's circular and low-carbon transition is both fair and feasible.

Key Reports

A European Wellbeing Economy – avenues for political action

This briefing provides policy-makers and other stakeholders with ambitious and actionable policy tools and recommendations to foster sustainable inclusive wellbeing in the EU.

Addressing food waste in the retail sector

The retail sector alone generates 13% of global food waste, making it a key area for reducing waste throughout the entire food supply chain.

Low and Zero Emission Zones: Navigating the Social Challenges of Clean Air Policies in EU Cities

During this webinar, we presented our findings on key considerations for policymakers in relation to stakeholder engagement and social acceptability for Low Emission Zones.

THEMATIC AREAS

Land Use and Climate



Over the past year, the European Commission was focused on defining a 2040 climate target, initially emphasising the contribution of land use and carbon removals, before shifting its focus to competitiveness and strategic security. Policy attention was centred on market-based mechanisms, including the Carbon Removal Certification Framework (CRCF), a potential EU-level procurement mechanism for certified removals, and early exploration of nature and biodiversity credits.

To inform this debate, IEEP published two briefs in its “2040 climate target and the land use sectors” series. Two publications, warning of a declining EU LULUCF carbon sink and one assessing tensions in the bioeconomy, helped shape policy narratives around risk, precaution and land-use trade-offs, with coverage in [Carbon Pulse](#) and [Ends Europe](#).

The team continued to engage directly with decision-makers across EU Institutions. We briefed newly elected MEPs on carbon pricing and farmer-focused financial incentives, moderated a Forest Policy roundtable hosted by the French Permanent Representation, spoke alongside the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Climate Action (DG CLIMA) and Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI) at the ClieNFarms Horizon event, and engaged bilaterally in a high-level meeting with the Director of Innovation for a Low Carbon, Resilient Economy in DG CLIMA. We also engaged internationally, most notably through exchanges with Chinese climate policy institutes on EU deforestation regulation



AgriFood Forum 2025

and land-sector mitigation. IEEP is a core partner in the DG CLIMA-commissioned study on climate-mitigation incentives across the agri-food value chain and co-led stakeholder sessions with farmer unions (COPA-COGECA), agri-food industry (Arla Foods, Yara, FoodDrinkEurope), NGOs (WWF, BirdLife, EEB), national ministries and financial actors. Our framing work influenced DG CLIMA’s internal thinking, particularly on Monitoring, Reporting and Verification design points of obligation, de-minimis thresholds and governance of potential agri-climate policy options.

As a result, we were proactively invited into further closed-door consultations by the European Policy Centre, ESABCC, COPA-COGECA, FoodDrinkEurope, BASF, WWF, CAN Europe and the New Zealand Mission to the EU. This confirmed IEEP’s role as a trusted intermediary able to bridge administrative feasibility and technical robustness.

We also shaped the Commission’s evolving work on nature credits through a study commissioned by the Directorate-General for Environment (DG-ENV) on [voluntary certification of closer-to-nature forestry](#). The analysis prompted DG ENV to request a follow-up study from IEEP on quantifying CNF practices for certification. We were also invited to contribute to CRCF methodology development led by Wageningen University, ensuring biodiversity co-benefits are embedded from the outset in EU carbon certification.

Beyond individual outputs, we invested in coalition-building. We initiated a technical workshop series to align leading European think tanks and academic partners (Agora Agrar, Concito, Ecologic and others), which laid the foundation for a new Climate Task Force to build national-level capacity on agricultural climate policy and support implementation of future EU instruments such as the Carbon Removals and Carbon Farming.



Animal AgTech Europe

Key Reports

EU LULUCF sink development until 2040: Trends, projections and uncertainties

This brief discusses the decline of the EU LULUCF sink due to increased harvests, ageing forests, and climate-driven disturbances, along with current projections revealing a gap between existing and planned policies and the 2030 LULUCF target.

Promoting Closer-to-Nature Forestry in the EU through voluntary forest certification schemes

This report serves as a starting point for dialogue with key stakeholders and will help shape the Commission’s next steps in advancing closer-to-nature forestry in the EU.

EU bioeconomy in the context of the 2040 climate target

This briefing examines the current policy framework governing biomass use and explores bioenergy pathways outlined in the Commission’s Impact Assessment accompanying the 2040 climate target communication

CAP and Food



The past year marked a significant shift in the EU's agricultural policy narrative and priorities. The [Strategic Dialogue on the Future of EU Agriculture](#), concluded in September 2024, had set out a balanced roadmap for a fairer and more sustainable farming system, highlighting the need for better farmer incomes, payments for ecosystem services, and a dedicated transition fund. However, this trajectory changed sharply in early 2025. The European Commission's [Vision for Agriculture and Food](#), published in February 2025, reframed the debate around food security, competitiveness, and simplification.

This change in narrative quickly translated into policy. The [CAP Simplification Package](#), adopted in May 2025, introduced substantial changes to reduce administrative burdens and increase farmers' flexibility. While some measures were welcomed, others significantly weakened environmental safeguards and signalled a clear political prioritisation of short-term competitiveness over long-term sustainability, reinforcing trends already visible in the [Spring 2024 simplification measures](#).

Against this backdrop, our work over the past year focused on strengthening the implementation of the current Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), shaping the debate on its post-2027 reform, and advancing the transition to sustainable food systems in Europe.

We published two key analyses to inform discussions on improving the design and implementation of national CAP Strategic Plans (CSPs): a report [reflecting on the CAP implementation and the use of crisis responses](#) and [a synthesis of existing knowledge on the costs and benefits of transitioning to sustainable agriculture in the EU](#). We also released [the first EU-wide review of how the CSPs for 2023 – 2027 incentivise actions to enhance the welfare of farm animals](#). The study attracted significant media attention and was presented to the Commissioner for Agriculture and Food at the European Board on Agriculture and Food meeting in June 2025. To inform the preparation of the European Commission's proposals for the post-2027 CAP, we published a report [detailing how selected CAP payment schemes could be realigned towards](#)



Empowering farmers to drive and benefit from European protein diversification 2025



Science4Policy session: The EU's 2040 climate targets 2024

[sustainable agriculture](#). This was complemented by [a short brief making the case for a dedicated just transition funding mechanism for agriculture](#).

Key events where we presented our work on the current and future CAP included [the OECD Global Forum on Agriculture 2024](#) in October 2024, [a Science4Policy briefing event](#) at the European Parliament on Advancing towards sustainable and resilient food systems in January 2025 and the [launch event of the MEP Group on 'Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development'](#), focusing on competitiveness and the future of the Green Deal in April 2025.

In the absence of the promised Sustainable Food Systems Law, we have focused on protein diversification as a key lever for change over the past year. Our work, co-funded by Breakthrough Energy, examined opportunities and barriers for farmers to diversify into sustainable protein crops and the [launch event](#) featured panellists from the Commission, farmer organisations, the private sector and academia. Following publication, we received multiple requests for follow-up discussions, including with the European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change (ESABCC), and were invited to present the report at a European Parliament breakfast event on "The Future of Protein", and at the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI) workshop preparing the next EU Agricultural Outlook.

Key Reports

[European protein diversification: Growing opportunities for farmers](#)

This report explores how European farmers, along with the wider food industry, scientists, and policymakers, can turn these challenges into new opportunities by diversifying protein sources within the European food system.

[Realigning selected CAP payment schemes](#)

As environmental, climate and biodiversity crises grow, this report explores how key CAP payments can better align with EU sustainability goals and support more resilient, sustainable farming.

[Improving animal welfare through the Common Agricultural Policy](#)

This brief provides recommendations outlining how both the EU and its Member States can ensure that CAP funding delivers on public expectations, aligns with scientific evidence, and supports the transition to more humane and sustainable farming systems.

Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services



The EU Nature Restoration Law (NRL) was adopted into law in June 2024, so the focus turned to supporting an ambitious implementation. IEEP produced for WWF Europe, BirdLife, Client Earth and the European Environmental Bureau a guidance on the key features of the NRL and its implementation, explaining the law in simple terms to national NGOs and other stakeholders. We also contributed two articles to a special edition of the Nature of Cities, an online magazine for architects, planners, educators, and managers interested in urban sustainable development. The articles focus on '[Better management and restoration of Natura 2000 in cities for nature and people](#)' and '[Addressing the issue of pollinator loss in urban areas](#)'.

The Biodiversity team also contributed actively to events and debates with policymakers and experts around the nature restoration regulation throughout the year, including a series of events organised by or with the cluster of EU-funded projects on nature restoration (SUPERB, MERLIN, REST-COAST and WaterLANDS).

The Biodiversity team turned attention to advances in **biodiversity monitoring** techniques and methods, and their potential to inform and better deliver policy. This work resulted in an invitation to contribute to a European Commission conference on the future of EU biodiversity monitoring programmes and their integration into EU policy frameworks. We presented some key findings in the policy panel at the final EMBAL and LUCAS conference with the European Commission, European Environment Agency, Joint Research Centre, national nature and

agricultural research institutes, the EU remote sensing programme Grassland Watch, agricultural organisations and NGOs present.

The focus remained on how to improve Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) support for biodiversity and nature restoration. We supported and accompanied the European Network of Conservation Agencies (ENCA) in a series of dialogues with Commission officials in the Directorates-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI) and for Environment (DG-ENV). The series of meetings included the Deputy Director General of DG AGRI, the Commissioner for the Environment Jessica Roswall, and around 10 desk officers. These dialogues clarified their evidence and information needs for making the CAP more effective for biodiversity conservation and restoration.

The Biodiversity team also began a workstream on mainstreaming biodiversity and nature restoration funding and overcoming barriers to this in EU funding, with a view to the next EU

Multiannual Financial Framework and associated regulations (to be in place from 2027 to 2036). We responded to an expert consultation to inform a report to the European Commission (DG ENV and DG CLIMA) on future nature and biodiversity-related funding priorities in the post-2027 period. We also participated in a roundtable discussion on improving EU funding delivery for biodiversity, organised by the Guidehouse consultancy on behalf of the German environment ministry (BMUV), with EU and national policymakers from the Commission, national permanent representations, the European Parliament, and the German ministry.

Key Reports

Future EU targets for climate, nature and water: implications for agricultural land use

This study scopes the range of possible additional EU level targets for the EU's climate mitigation, nature, and water objectives that may be adopted in legislation and affect land use on agricultural land to 2050.

Advancing biodiversity monitoring in agricultural landscapes

This briefing gives an overview of innovations in biodiversity monitoring in agricultural landscapes and discusses some advantages and limitations of how new techniques can inform policy.

Guidance and recommendations for ambitious nature restoration plans

The newly adopted Nature Restoration Law is the most significant piece of nature legislation in the EU since the adoption of the Habitats Directive in 1992. It holds huge potential to bring some of Europe's lost nature back, increase our resilience to extreme weather events, and tackle the intertwined biodiversity and climate crises.



Farming for pollinators: unlocking economic and ecological gains 2025



Safeguard project Annual General Meeting

Global Challenges and SDGs



Since the announcement of the [Clean Industrial Deal \(CID\) on 26 February 2025](#), the EU's industrial decarbonisation and trade policy has become increasingly interlinked. The CID aims to accelerate climate action and improve the EU's industrial competitiveness through a handful of initiatives to promote industrial decarbonisation, finance the clean transition and ensure affordable energy while meeting its climate targets. Two key aspects of the CID include its proposals for a Circular Economy Act (CEA) to improve the EU's circular use of resources and critical raw materials (CRMs) for the clean transition, thereby promoting resource efficiency and security. It also includes a new Clean Trade and Investment Partnerships (CTIPs) to diversify and strengthen supply chains relevant to the clean transition.

Yet, despite the initial novelty surrounding the new partnership agreement and the first concluded CTIP with South Africa, the development of subsequent CTIPs appears to have fizzled, while the classic EU free trade agreements (FTAs) have seen an uptake in negotiations and the conclusions of several agreements, such as Mercosur and Indonesia. Yet, as always with the EU's FTAs, its EU Green Deal autonomous measures, including the CBAM and the EUDR, will cause additional frictions in trade negotiations.

As a result, the Global Challenges and SDGs team focused on the spillover effects of EU-trade-related sustainability policies, including the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), the Regulation on Deforestation-free products (EUDR), the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD), and the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR). Last year saw a drastic backtrack of ambition through the Omnibus Simplification Packages targeting these Regulations.



Green Trade Day 2025

The team therefore continued to produce evidence on the negative spillovers of EU consumption and the role of trade policy and partnerships in mitigating them. We are also highlighting the urgency for the global community to advance on its commitments towards the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), since merely 17% of SDG targets are on track for 2030, while the rest show limited or reversed progress.

Along these lines, our publications "[Shaping global green leadership](#)" and "[External impacts of new EU sustainable product standards](#)" informed ongoing policy discussion. In addition, we continue to assess the sustainability challenges of EU trade partners and provide recommendations to improve the sustainability credentials of EU FTAs. We are also a core partner in the support provided to the European Commission on the [implementation of the EUDR, together with UNEP-WCMC](#), assisting in ensuring that communications to stakeholders are updated and assessing the impact of the regulation.



Shaping global green leadership: Addressing the external spillovers of the Green Deal 2025

Key Reports

[The UN High Level Political Forum 2025 – Taking stock of global SDG progress](#)

This briefing, commissioned by the ENVI committee of the European Parliament, provides an overview of the challenges and opportunities for a joint approach towards the SDGs, in a time of multiple global crises.

[Shaping global green leadership](#)

This report aims to foster a European-level reflection on the coherence between the European Union's internal and external policies, with a particular focus on the spillover effects of EU trade-related sustainability policies.

[External impacts of new eu sustainable product standards](#)

This policy paper reviews the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR) with a primary focus on new performance and information requirements for products sold in the EU. This paper explains which products will be covered in the first Working Plan, what obligations economic actors will face, and features potential trade implications for major exporters and supply chains.



Our membership network & initiatives

Our membership network – Think Sustainable Europe

As the first and only established European network of think tanks working on sustainability, [Think Sustainable Europe](#) informs debates and supports science-informed decision-making to increase the ambition of European and national policymakers on European environmental policies.

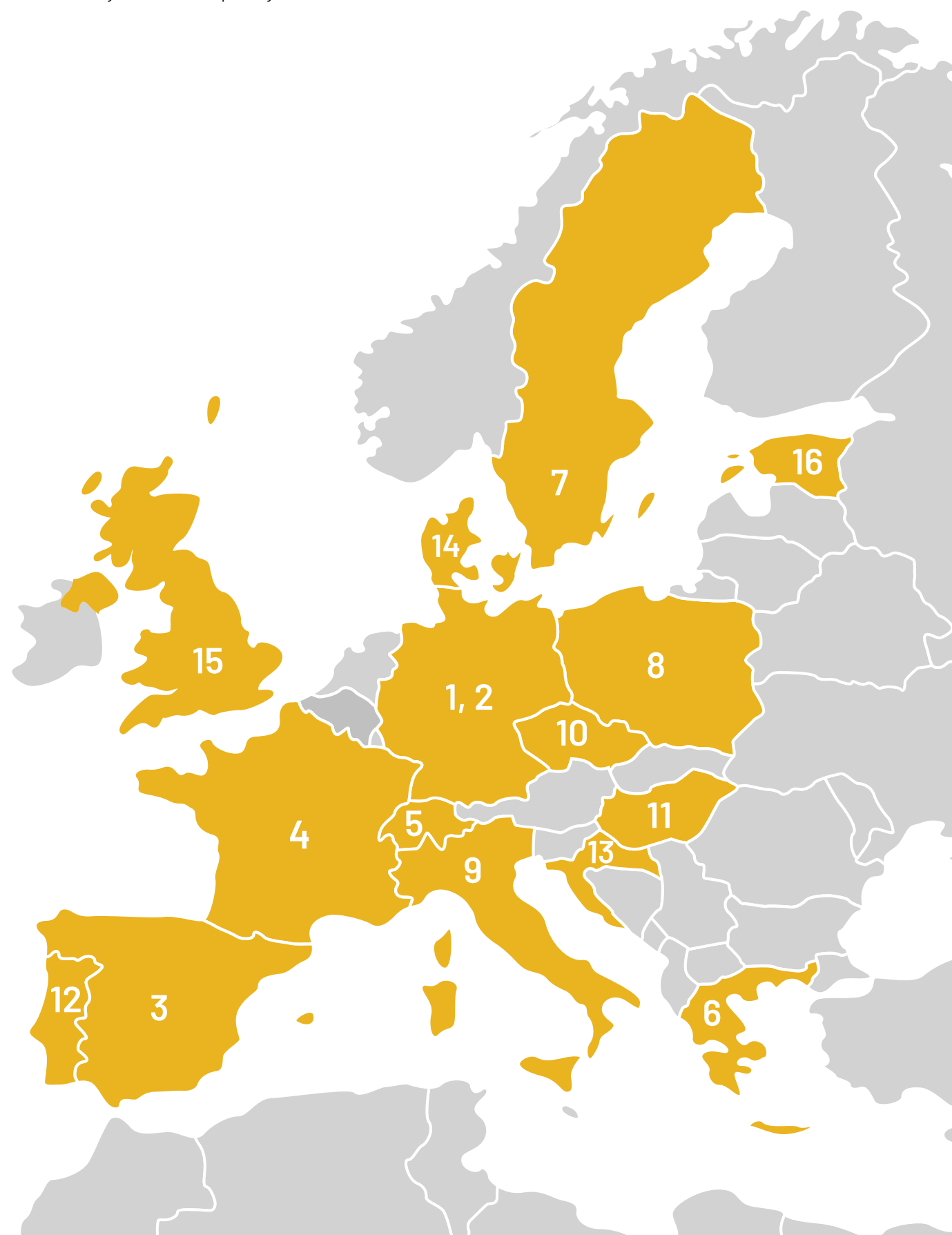
Thanks to the presence of its members in Brussels, in EU member states and beyond, since 2019, TSE has:

- maintained a strong capacity to engage and inform policymakers in all the network countries thanks to the complementarity among different members' work areas, capacities and outreach experience
- focused its activities on European institutions and governments, with a particular emphasis on the Council of the EU as the most powerful player to increase ambition and accelerate the EU Green policies implementation

As of today, Think Sustainable Europe boasts 17 members, including The Institute for European Environmental Policy - IEEP as its coordinator. The network covers 16 EU Member states plus the UK and addresses global-scale issues thanks to the international outreach of some of its members:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Ecologic Institute (Germany) | 8. WiseEuropa (Poland) |
| 2. TMG Research GmbH (Germany), Asoc | 9. Fondazione per lo Sviluppo Sostenibile (Italy) |
| 3. BC3 Basque Centre for Climate Change - BC3 (Spain) | 10. AMO – Association for international Affairs (Czech Republic) |
| 4. Fondation Institut du Développement Durable et des Relations Internationales - IDDRI (France) | 11. EnergiaKlub (Hungary) |
| 5. The International Institute for Sustainable Development - IISD (Switzerland) | 12. CENSE (Portugal) |
| 6. The Green Tank (Greece) | 13. DOOR (Croatia) |
| 7. The Stockholm Environment Institute - SEI (Sweden) | 14. CONCITO (Denmark) |
| | 15. IEEP UK (UK, affiliated) |
| | 16. The Stockholm Environment Institute - SEI TALLINN (Estonia, affiliated). |

The **Think Sustainable Europe** exemplifies successful cooperation among its members through joint research, policy advising, and high-level engagement with EU policymakers. Its initiatives have made significant contributions across the sustainability and social policy fields.



Policy advising

Social Consequences of Climate Policy Options: TSE has analysed the distributional and social impacts of EU climate and energy policies, leveraging its members' strengths in data access, modelling, and policy expertise. Focus areas include the Energy Taxation Directive, CBAM, ETS, and **aviation**, as well as measures addressing the **2022/23 energy price crisis**.

The Need for Nature Conservation and Restoration: Since mid-2022, TSE's **Biodiversity and Natural Capital working group** has focused on the **Nature Restoration Law**, a cornerstone of the **EU Biodiversity Strategy**. The group has promoted awareness of the NRL's ecological and socio-economic benefits through a series of policy briefs and events.

Outreach and capacity of engagement

As part of its work on the [social dimension of the Fit for 55 package](#), TSE presented findings on the social implications of climate and energy policies, which informed internal Commission discussions and policy debates. In parallel, the network contributed actively to the development of the **Nature Restoration Law** by sharing its research and recommendations, including the publication [Nature Restoration – what it means for farmers and other land managers](#), a series of 11 policy briefs on the [Benefits of nature restoration](#). To further promote dialogue, TSE organised European Parliament events (such as the [“Nature Restoration Law: Mitigation of impacts and benefits for stakeholders”](#) event in June 2023), highlighting the socio-economic benefits of ecosystem restoration across Europe.

Connecting, convening, engaging

TSE serves as the **idea engine** behind **Think2030**, hosting **events** aligned with EU Council Presidencies. Through this platform, TSE members produce **joint policy recommendations** on critical topics such as food security, land use, the **circular economy**, **energy**, **taxation**, and **biodiversity**. Explore [key publications and outputs here](#).

Other networks and initiatives

As an integral part of our work, we collaborate with European institutions and are the creators and drivers of numerous platforms and initiatives. From green trade to well-being economy, from sustainable agriculture to more cross-sector action such as examining the European Green Deal, we convene gatherings and coordinate cross-sector exchanges with like-minded actors who want to advance environmental action.

Think2030 conferences



Created in 2018, Think2030 is a multi-stakeholder forum that brings together decision-makers, policy experts, industry leaders, and civil society to advance science-based solutions on European environmental policies. The conferences usually take place in the country of the rotating Presidency of the Council of the EU, and are organised with the support of the Think Sustainable Europe members and other partners. In this financial year, we organised a webinar discussing the Hungarian Presidency and an in-person high-level event in Warsaw in collaboration with the Reform Institute and in association with the Polish Presidency of the Council.

European Green Deal Barometer

The European Green Deal Barometer is a survey of sustainability experts that assesses their views on the design and implementation of European Green Deal policies. The Barometer analyses progress and identifies gaps and opportunities, serving as a “confidence barometer” for developments in EU environmental policies. In June 2025, the **fifth and latest edition of the Barometer** gathered views from experts within and outside the EU as it focused on the external dimension of the Green Deal policies including their impact and spillovers at the international level.

Green Trade Network



In early 2022, IEEP created the Green Trade Network, a group of experts from European research organisations, ranging from think tanks to NGOs and academia, conducting evidence-based research and outreach activities on the trade and environment nexus. The Green Trade Network’s membership and audience have grown since its inception, with over 50 researchers participating and representing over 20 research organisations.

European Sustainable Agriculture Dialogue (ESAD)



In 2019, IEEP created the European Sustainable Agriculture Dialogue (ESAD) multi-stakeholder platform, bringing together industry, civil society, universities, and research centres to exchange views and standpoints, and ultimately shape decisions towards sustainable agriculture. ESAD’s work has been supported by experts who have provided science-based input and research briefings, which members have used to inform their debates.

EU Wellbeing Economy Coalition

In June 2021, together with the ZOE Institute for Future-fit Economies, we founded the EU Wellbeing Economy Coalition, a civil society coalition working to move policy beyond economic growth towards a wellbeing economy. Members of the informal coalition support each other in advising and influencing EU policymakers to design coherent policies that improve people’s wellbeing.

Science4Policy briefings

This financial year, IEEP has organised a series of Science4Policy briefings on the key European environmental policies. Through these events, IEEP offers a space for MEPs, assistants, and advisors to learn about the latest environmental topics relevant to the European Parliament’s work, and to gather input from other key stakeholders participating in the discussion. The last topics we covered included the social dimension of the energy transition, the Clean Industrial Deal, sustainable farming practices and food systems, the EU’s 2040 climate targets and the Nature Restoration Law. We are grateful to the MEPs who hosted our briefings so far:

- MEP Christophe Grudler (Renew)
- MEP Ludek Niedermayer (EPP)
- MEP Nicolás González Casares (S&D)
- MEP Marko Vešligaj (S&D)
- MEP Pär Holmgren (Greens/EFA)
- MEP Anna Strolenberg (Greens/EFA)
- MEP Elsi Katainen (Renew)
- MEP Sirpa Pietikäinen (EPP)
- MEP Jutta Paulus (Greens/EFA)
- MEP César Luena (S&D).

Science4Policy briefings: Sustainable and resilient food systems (January 2025)





About IEEP

About IEEP

Board of Directors

The governance of the Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP AISBL) is overseen by two bodies: the General Assembly, comprising eight members, and the Board of Directors. The General Assembly mandates the Board of Directors to set priorities, ensure that IEEP fulfils its mission effectively, and maintain financial sustainability. The Board oversees the organisation’s strategic and financial matters.

Board Members 2024–2025 were:

	Herman Johan (Hans) Wolters Chair		Mercedes Sanchez Varela Chapter Zero Brussels
	Edmond Lefebvre Chartered Professional Accountant (Canada)		Marianne Kettunen Ellen MacArthur Foundation
	Thomas Nowak Quantum International		Dorthe Nielsen I4CE - Institut de l'économie pour le climat
	Malini Mehra GLOBE International		

The members of the IEEP’s membership network, [Think Sustainable Europe](#), are also observing members of the IEEP General Assembly.

Strategic Advisory Council

The Strategic Advisory Council provides independent, diverse, and expert advice on European environmental policy, strategic priorities, transparency, and independence. It also evaluates IEEP’s impact in line with its mission. Members, appointed for four-year terms by IEEP’s management and Board, come from fields such as science, law, academia, and governance, offering feedback on the political and societal relevance of IEEP’s work. SAC Members 2024–2025 were:

- Luc Bas – Director, Belgium Climate and Environment Risk Assessment Center (Chair)
- Sirpa Pietikäinen – Member of the European Parliament
- Sandrine Dixon-Declève – Independent Consultant, Co-President of The Club of Rome
- Chiara Martinelli – Director, Climate Action Network (CAN) Europe
- Petros Fassoulas – Secretary General, European Movement International
- Andrea Kohl – Former Acting Director and EPO Programme Director, WWF European Policy Office
- Christian Hey – Director for Climate, Sustainable Urban Development and Biodiversity, Hessian Ministry for the Environment
- Derek Osborn – Former IEEP Board Member
- David Stanners – Former Programme Head, European Environment Agency; IEEP UK Board Member
- Nick Molho – Consultant; Head of Climate Policy, Aviva Investors
- Ralph Hallo – Founder and Director, Brussels Strategics
- Claudia La Donna – CEO Brussels; Chair of Tech Media Telecom (TMT) at Edelman



Teams (as of December 2025)



Executive Management

	Antoine Oger Executive Director
	Tijana Tufek Director of Operations and People
	Melanie Muro Director for Nature and Food systems
	Julia Bognar Director for Climate



Research and Policy

	Chiara Antonelli Lead – Economic and social dimensions of climate policy		Evelyn Underwood Lead – Biodiversity and ecosystem services
	Elisabet Nadeu Senior Policy Analyst		Krystyna Springer Senior Policy Analyst
	Louis Durrant Senior Policy Analyst		David Baldock Senior Fellow
	Eline Blot Senior Policy Analyst		Nora Hiller Senior Policy Analyst
	Irene Chiocchetti Policy Analyst		Hermann Kam Policy Analyst
	Laure-Lou Tremblay Policy Analyst		Olga Szewczyk Visiting Fellow
	Axel Godfroy Junior Policy Analyst		Auriane Flottes de Pouzols Junior policy analyst
	Alizée Kuhn Policy Assistant		Alice Albertini IEEP-EGU mentorship scheme



Communications and Events

	Carla Coppola Head of Communications
	Ha Doan Communications Officer
	Aditi Desai Events Assistant



Strategic Partnerships

	Mattia Bonfanti Head of Strategic Partnerships
	Carla de Cristofaro Junior Membership Officer



Operations

	Sandra Mootoosamy HR and Office Manager
	Thérèse Geortay Finance Manager
	Fruzsina Csepi Senior Project Finance Officer
	Mike Majevelle IT Officer



IEEP team celebrating World Environment Day at Forêt de Soignes

As part of our educational mandate, we are pleased to host bachelor's and master's students and PhD candidates in partnership with their universities for their studies or ongoing research. We collaborate with several educational institutions, such as Stanford University and, most recently, the School for Moral Ambition, as well as other organisations, such as the European Geosciences Union, to welcome researchers for a limited period to collaborate with our team. We want to thank our students and fellows for their support and enthusiasm brought to the office! Here is our class of 2024-2025: Tijn van Vugt (Research fellow through the School for Moral Ambition), Mistral Van Oudenhove (PhD Research fellow through CEBAS-CSIC), Nora Förell (PhD Research fellow from the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences), Peyton Daley (Earth Systems Bachelor student from Stanford University), Paloma Biessy (European Public Affairs Master's student from Sciences Po), Amalia Tuchmann (Environmental Studies Bachelor's student from Yale University), and Ewa Jarosz (Public Policy Master's student from Sciences Po).



Remembering Harriet Bradley

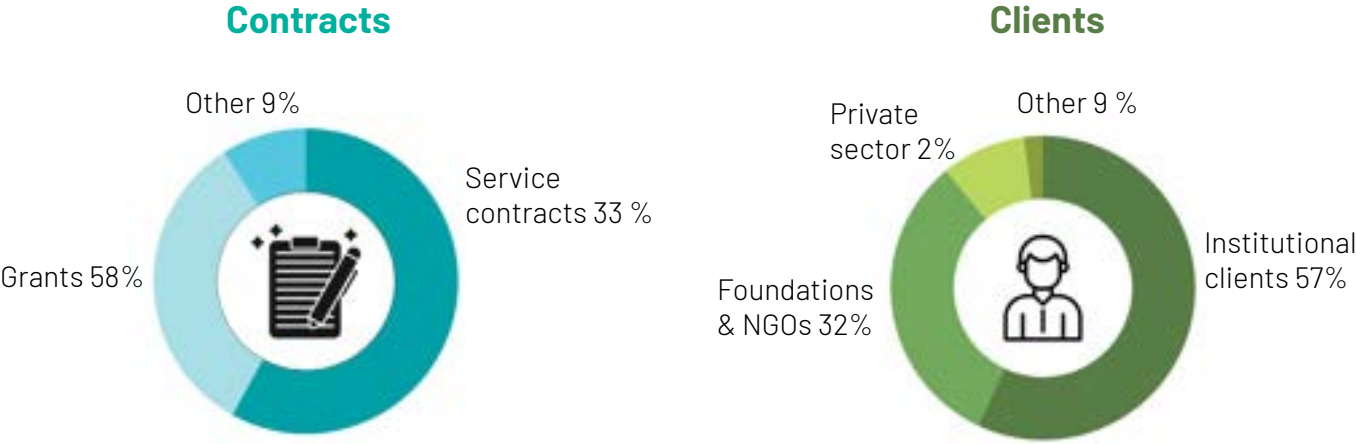
Our colleague Harriet Bradley, who was heading the IEEP's CAP and Food programme, sadly passed away in February 2025. Harriet was an inspiring environmentalist with a profound dedication to her work and a well-known and respected voice in Brussels for her expertise in biodiversity, environmental protection, and sustainable agriculture. Harriet contributed greatly to our work on financing the agrifood sector, environmental standards, just transition, and nature restoration.



**Our finance
& carbon
footprint**

Finance

In the period covered by this annual report, we have engaged in 74 projects, concluding the financial year with a total income of 2,837,569.46 Euro. Our funding was mainly project-related, with 33% of the funding acquired through open public procurement and the remaining 67% through grants and other types of funding coming from a variety of public and private sources.



Private funders

- Apple
 - Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
 - Breakthrough Energy Foundation
 - China Global Television Network Europe Ltd
 - Clean Air Fund
 - CocaCola
 - Concito
 - European Climate Foundation (ECF)
 - European Environmental Bureau (EEB)
 - Environmental Defense Fund (EDF)
- Eurogroup for Animals
 - FAIRR
 - Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS)
 - Giving Green
 - GOPA
 - Green European Foundation
 - Heinrich Böll Foundation
 - IBMA
 - Institut du développement durable et des relations internationales (IDDRI)
 - Stockholm Environmental Institute

Institutional clients:

- European Commission
 - European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA)
 - European Investment Bank (EIB)
 - Greens/EFA Group in the European Parliament
- Bundesamt für Naturschutz (German Ministry of Environment)
 - PBL (Netherlands Environmental Agency)

Carbon footprint

IEEP believes it is crucial to remain mindful of the environmental impact of our daily operations. All our team members in Brussels work from home two to three days a week and use public transport or active modes such as walking and cycling to get to the office. We pay attention to the organisation of our internal and external events. For example, for conferences and events, we opt for vegetarian catering and caterers that meet specific sustainability standards.

While we acknowledge the efforts made so far, we see an ongoing opportunity to further reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. By fostering greater commitment to sustainable practices and elevating environmental awareness across all levels, we can better align our actions with our shared responsibility.

While train travel is strongly encouraged, we believe there is further potential to prioritise it. Air travel, although sometimes necessary, will continue to be minimised wherever possible. From July 2024 to June 2025, we took flights that resulted in 21.29 metric tons of CO₂e. This is an increase of 2.83 metric tons from the previous financial year.

IEEP recognises the need to further reduce its footprint. Our focus for the next financial year will be on:

- Moving to new, modern offices, with higher energy efficiency standards.
- Actively encouraging staff and management to fully utilise new technologies that enable hybrid work and meetings and reduce the need for travel.
- Strongly prioritising train travel whenever possible, as part of our broader effort to shift away from air travel, especially for short distances.
- Continuing to privilege venues and catering companies that meet high sustainability standards for our external events. Strongly prioritising train travel whenever possible, as part of our broader effort to shift away from air travel.





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