



EU environmental and climate acquis

# The EU Nature Restoration Law and Its Implementation Pathways in Ukraine

## Executive Summary

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**The European Union** is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.

Ukraine was granted the status of a candidate country for EU membership, and now both the EU and Ukraine are actively preparing to open negotiations, including under the Chapter 27 «Environment and Climate Change». The issue of nature protection is an important component of this chapter. Ukraine must implement the entire EU acquis in the field of environment and climate, including those acts that have recently been adopted in the EU, in particular to achieve the goals of the European Green Deal. One such act is the Nature Restoration Law.

**Regulation (EU) 2024/1991 on nature restoration (hereinafter referred to as the Regulation), adopted on 24 June 2024 as part of the European Green Deal and the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2030, introduces a comprehensive mechanism that sets legally binding nature restoration targets for both the EU and its Member States.** These goals aim to achieve long-term and sustained recovery of degraded ecosystems; climate change mitigation, adaptation to climate change and land degradation neutrality; enhancing food security; and meeting the EU's international commitments.

At the EU level, the Regulation envisages the restoration of at least 20% of land areas, and at least 20% of marine areas by 2030 and the restoration of all ecosystems in need of restoration by 2050. The Regulation also contains certain commitments to implement the EU initiative to plant an additional 3 billion trees in the EU by 2030.

**A key tool for implementing the Regulation is the development of a national restoration plan (NRP) by each EU Member State.** According to the Regulation, each EU Member State must adopt its own NRP, which will cover the period up to 2050, with intermediate implementation stages. At the same time, it is envisaged that EU member states may first develop a detailed plan for the period until 2032, and after July 1, 2032, present a strategic vision of the state for the restoration of nature until 2050.

Member States must submit their NRPs to the European Commission within two years of the entry into force of the Regulation. Therefore, by 1 September 2026, Member States must submit their draft NRPs for assessment by the European Commission, which will assess their compliance with the objectives and commitments. The plan will then be regularly reviewed and updated in the light of monitoring results and new scientific evidence.

**The implementation of the Regulation is an important element of Ukraine's European integration process. The practical implementation of its ambitious goals is not only a prerequisite for the implementation of the EU acquis but will also contribute to the restoration of ecosystems and the protection of biodiversity in Ukraine, and the post-war reconstruction of Ukraine.**

Ukraine has developed a significant legislative framework in the environmental sector, but the regulation of nature restoration and individual ecosystems remains fragmented and unclear. Currently, Ukraine's strategic environmental documents contain general provisions on the restoration of natural resources. However, they lack specific targets and detailed criteria that would meet the requirements of the Regulation. This creates a need to develop new strategic documents and/or revise existing ones.

At the same time, certain initiatives envisaged by the Regulation are already being implemented in Ukraine. For example, the initiative to plant 1 billion trees is being implemented, but there are no clear environmental criteria for afforestation and tree species.

Given the requirements of the EU Regulation, Ukraine will need to harmonize its legal system regarding ecosystem restoration goals and obligations, as well as introduce a comprehensive mechanism for planning and implementing nature restoration measures through NRP.

**Potential ways to ensure Ukraine's readiness to comply with the requirements of the Regulation are the following:**

1. *Changes to the national legislation.* This includes, in particular, the development and formal approval of the NRP as a new planning document; considering the specifics of ecosystems damaged by war and mechanisms for their restoration; and improving the national monitoring system, including the introduction of uniform standards for assessing the state of ecosystems and identifying priority areas for restoration.
2. *Strengthening institutional capacity, coordination and stakeholder engagement.* Important measures in this direction include the clear assignment and distribution of functions and responsibilities among state bodies that will be involved in the development and implementation of the NRP; the formation of an Interdepartmental Coordination Group and the creation of working and thematic groups; the involvement of the public and other stakeholders in the NRP development process.
3. *Strengthening organizational and financial instruments.* In the process of implementing the Regulation, Ukraine should pay attention to the following two issues: (1) the absence or partial availability of primary data, mapping and assessment of the state of ecosystems; (2) financial needs for restoration measures.

*The executive summary is based on the policy brief "The EU Nature Restoration Law and Its Implementation Pathways in Ukraine", which offers a detailed analysis of the provisions of Regulation (EC) 2024/1991 and comprehensive recommendations for its implementation in Ukraine. The full text of the policy brief is available in Ukrainian. The material was prepared with the support of the European Union and the International Renaissance Foundation within the framework of the project «Environment and Climate: Preparation for the Negotiation Process».*