



WWF

BRIEFING

NOV

2013

Scotland

2014 EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

About 80% of environmental law is decided at EU level. At WWF Scotland, we recognise the importance of these elections for the fight against climate change and the protection of our natural environment.

MEPs can make a difference for their constituents

A 2011 Eurobarometer survey shows that 95% of EU citizens feel that protecting the environment is important; and 81% of them believe European environmental legislation is necessary to protect the environment.¹ In the UK in 2013, 85% of citizens see climate change as a serious problem.²

The next term of the European Parliament will coincide with the implementation of a series of crucial European policy reforms that should lead us on a more sustainable path towards 2020. Key environmental legislation will be reviewed and implemented, new and ambitious European climate and energy targets will have to be set for 2030, and international climate and environmental targets will have to be negotiated.

Scotland's opportunity in Europe

Scotland's MEPs have played a huge role in the championing, strengthening and delivery of environmental policies. With our 6 MEPs in the European Parliament, Scotland has an important contribution to make. On marine, fisheries, climate and energy, we have a good story to tell, and experiences to share, with our colleagues in Europe.

WWF Scotland calls on all political parties and future MEPs to:

- ✓ Ensure all climate and energy targets for 2020 are met and increase efforts to reduce energy consumption;
- ✓ Push for ambitious and binding targets on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions, increasing renewable energy and energy efficiency for 2030;
- ✓ Secure an end to overfishing and delivery of sustainable fish stocks;
- ✓ Champion the protection and restoration of marine ecosystems.

Climate and Energy

Problem: As demonstrated by the latest summary of climate science by the IPCC, there is still a considerable gap between the science of climate change and the ambition of policies to reduce emissions. Climate change is already being felt globally, including in Europe: heat waves, forest fires, prolonged droughts and extreme rainfall seriously affect our lives and economies.

As the third-largest emitter of greenhouse gasses, Europe is a major contributor to climatic change, and must lead the way in terms of mitigation. UK citizens consider climate change a serious problem; it is up to their EU representatives to act.

Solution: As Europe's economies struggle to recover, renewable energy and energy savings become increasingly attractive for investors, governments and citizens. Meeting the 2020 climate and energy targets would alone already generate up to 5 million new jobs. Meeting Europe's energy efficiency target for 2020 would lead to annual net savings of €200bn.³ This process needs to accelerate and vital 2030 goals need to be set and reached.

Scotland's opportunity: Scotland has a lot to gain from increased European ambition on climate and energy. Scotland has already legislated for ambitious levels of emissions reduction under the 2009 Climate Change Act. However, about a third of the effort needed to meet Scotland's emissions reduction plan derive from European policies – for instance, on vehicle emissions, energy efficiency of buildings, or emissions trading. Scotland also has a higher rate of energy inefficient buildings than many other EU countries, with higher rates of fuel poverty. Setting stronger EU energy saving targets will help to ensure people in Scotland can live in warm homes, insulated against rising fuel prices.

Scotland has also demonstrated that a long history of setting ambitious renewables targets drives policy certainty and investment into key new and cleaner industries – such as offshore wind and wave and tidal. A failure to support strong targets would undermine credibility and investor confidence in Scotland just when we need it most. Scotland can be the green powerhouse of Europe, but it needs European ambition to match its own.

✓ The next Parliament must:

Ensure all climate and energy targets for 2020 are met and increase efforts to reduce energy consumption

The European Parliament needs to remain committed to achieve all of the 20-20-20 targets on GHG emissions, renewable energy and energy efficiency.

The 20% GHG emissions target should be raised to at least 30%. On energy efficiency, more effort is needed to reduce the EU energy consumption by 20% by 2020.

✓ The next Parliament must:

Push for ambitious and binding targets on greenhouse gas emissions reductions, increasing renewable energy and energy efficiency for 2030

These targets should be legally binding, set at EU level and effort shared among Member States:

- ✓ 55% emissions reductions
- ✓ 40% energy saving
- ✓ 45% renewable energy

✓ The next Parliament must:

Secure an end to overfishing and delivery of sustainable fish stocks

The European Parliament needs to ensure the reformed Common Fisheries Policy is implemented to ensure that Member States are on course to end overfishing and achieve sustainable fish stocks by 2020.

The European Parliament also needs to ensure that the existing IUU regulation (illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing) is effective and properly enforced at national level.

✓ The next Parliament must:

Champion the protection and restoration of marine ecosystems

The European Parliament needs to ensure through progress reporting by Member States that the Marine Strategy Framework Directive is fully and properly implemented and that marine ecosystems achieve Good Environmental Status by 2020.

Marine and Fisheries

Problem: Many fish stocks in the EU are still overfished, with a significant level of wasted fish discarded into the ocean. If we still want to have fish on our plates in the future, guarantee fish stocks and ensure a viable fishing industry, we must end overfishing and stop illegal fishing practices. While the EU has legislation to combat illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing, enforcement and implementation are still lagging behind. The EU's global footprint, both as consumer and producer, is enormous, and illegal fishing can be environmentally, social and economically destructive, particularly in developing countries.

Solution: Effective implementation of the Common Fishing Policy, including adequate long-term management plans and enforcement need to be implemented in Europe and abroad. This will allow fish stocks to recover and to be maintained at healthy levels far into the future. It must also promote sustainable fishing practices, prevent fish from being wasted, maintain fishing fleets at levels fish stocks can support, and end harmful subsidies while encouraging better fishing practices. The existing IUU regulation must also be properly implemented and enforced.

The implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) must also lead to Good Environmental Status (GES) by 2020 at the latest. Proper implementation should enable the establishment of networks Marine Protected Areas, effective marine planning systems and the implementation of ecosystem based approaches to marine governance.

Scotland's Opportunity: Scotland has an extensive coastline, with a rich marine environment and heritage that needs safeguarding. It also has a significant fishing industry and fishing communities that are making significant strides towards ecological sustainability. Over the years, Scotland's fishing industry has seen how a model of regionalised, participative and adaptive management can result in the gains for both fisheries and conservation.

Scotland fought hard for the Common Fisheries Policy Reform to be guided by science, long-term planning and regionalised decision-making. The European Parliament must now ensure that political decisions at EU level are consistent with scientific advice, to ensure stocks are rebuilt and maintained at sustainable levels, with discards kept to a minimum.

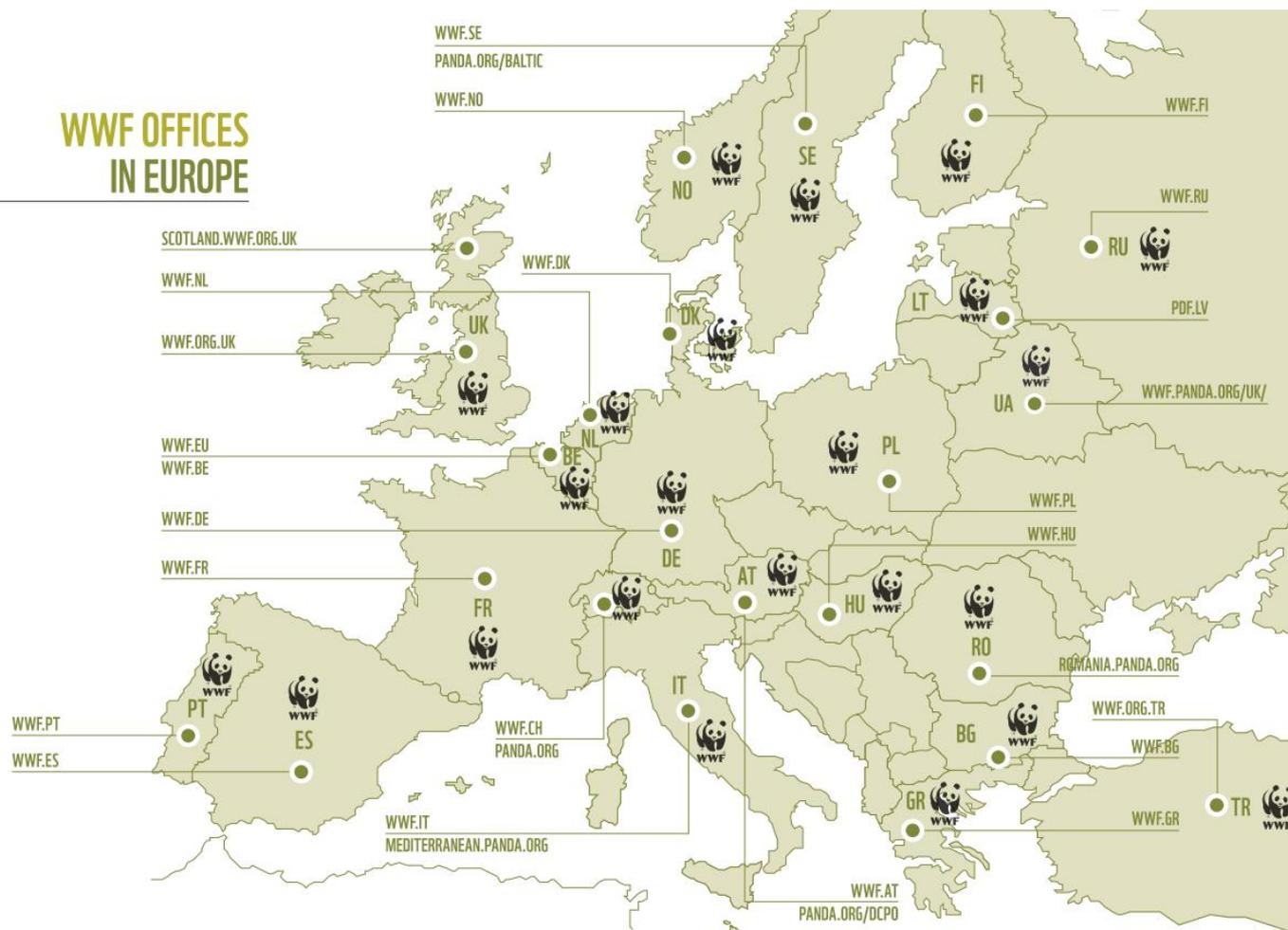
A more detailed WWF EU manifesto is available on request.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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WWF OFFICES IN EUROPE



1. Eurobarometer 365, June 2011, http://ec.europa.eu/environment/pdf/EB_summary_EB752.pdf
2. Flash Barometer 379, Nov 2013, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_379_en.pdf
3. European Commission (2012), http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/hedegaard/headlines/news/2012-06-14_01_en.htm

	<p>Why we are here To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature. wwf.org.uk</p>
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