

## ESDNewsletter July 2017

This ESDNewsletter informs about the following topics and activities on sustainable development in Europe:

- **New ESDN Quarterly Report on “The Role of European Parliaments in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs”**
- **15<sup>th</sup> ESDN Workshop, “Implementation of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs at the sub-national level: Practical experiences and governance needs”, Berlin, Germany, 16-17 October 2017 – save the date!**
- **ESDN Conference 2017 on “Strategic Governance for SD: New developments and approaches in the context of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs” in Prague, Czech Republic, 22-23 June 2017 – first part of the documentation online!**
- **ESDN organized a Side Event at the HLPF 2017 on 12 July 2017**
- **2<sup>nd</sup> ESDN Peer Learning Platform and Visit in Helsinki, Finland, 20-21 April 2017 – full documentation online!**
- **European Sustainable Development Week (ESDW) 2017 – a great success with more than 4,000 activities in 30 European countries**
- **ESDN and ESDW mentioned in the General Affairs Council Conclusions of 20 June 2017**
- **News on the governance of sustainable development from European countries and the EU:**
  - **Finland:** Case Study on the science-policy interface for sustainable development policies
  - **Germany:** Political declaration on Sustainable Development by the German Government
  - **Germany:** The 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the German Council for Sustainable Development Council took place on 29 May 2017
  - **Germany:** German Council for Sustainable Development has published its 2017 Sustainability Almanac
  - **Germany:** Two peer-reviewed articles about the Sustainability Strategy of North Rhine-Westphalia published in the Journal “Sustainability”
  - **Germany:** Sustainable Development in Germany – Indicator Report 2016
  - **Greece:** Current and planned activities for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for SD and the SDGs
  - **Italy:** Sustainable Development Festival with about 160 events took place from 22 May – 7 June 2017
  - **Netherlands:** People and the Earth – International cooperation for the Sustainable Development Goals in 23 infographics

- **Poland:** Activities for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for SD
  - **Spain:** Catalan Plan for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for SD
  - **Voluntary National Reviews from HLPF 2017 already available**
  
  - **European Commission/Eurostat:** New EU SDG indicator set
  - **European Commission:** European Consensus on Development signed
  
  - **Other news:**
    - **United Nations:** High Level Political Forum (HLPF) 2017 in New York takes place 10-19 July 2017
    - **EEAC Conference 2017:** “Towards the 2030 Agenda and beyond: European cooperation within a new citizens–science–policy–interface”, 12-13 October 2017, in Maastricht, the Netherlands
    - **EEB Annual Conference 2017:** Changing Landscapes – Protecting the environment in a new Europe, 6 November 2017, Edinburgh, UK
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## **New ESDN Quarterly Report on “The Role of European Parliaments in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs”**

This Quarterly Report primarily focuses on the role of European national parliaments in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), but will also briefly include the European Parliament and the European Commission, as they also play a role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in Europe. This Report will seek to determine what actions parliaments and parliamentarians are taking in order to deal with this ambitious agenda and the highly integrated and interrelated nature of the SDGs.

### **15<sup>th</sup> ESDN Workshop, “Implementation of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs at the sub-national level: Practical experiences and governance needs”, Berlin, Germany, 16-17 October 2017 – save the date!**

The 15<sup>th</sup> ESDN Workshop, “Implementation of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs at the sub-national level: Practical experiences and governance needs”, will be held in Berlin, Germany on 16-17 October 2017. The workshop will be organized in cooperation with the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety.

The sub-national and local level is referred to as a key level for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs. It was pointed out in the 2030 Agenda document that “governments and public institutions will also work closely on implementation with regional and local authorities” (para. 45). In addition, SDG 11 (‘Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable’) is specifically oriented towards the local level. It has various targets that show how important the local level is in the efforts to realize the 2030 Agenda. However, the strong role given to the local level also brings with it certain challenges that need to be addressed in order to guarantee an effective implementation. Based on this background, the workshop will have the following objectives:

- Providing an overview and reflection upon the importance and specific role of the sub-national and local level for the 2030 Agenda and SDGs implementation;
- Showcasing examples of various activities in cities and municipalities to implement the SDGs, also relating to SDG 11;
- Reflecting on multi-level governance issues and challenges in the cooperation between the different political levels (international, national, sub-national);
- Addressing the efforts undertaken at the local level in balancing various sectoral policy objectives with SD and SDG objectives;
- Debating the experiences made with different local SD approaches (e.g. Local Agendas 21, smart cities) and how they relate to the implementation of SDGs; and
- Looking into the cooperation of the local level with various stakeholder groups for their implementation efforts.

More information about the workshop and an invitation email will be distributed soon!

## **ESDN Conference 2017 on “Strategic Governance for SD: New developments and approaches in the context of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs” in Prague, Czech Republic, 22-23 June 2017 – first part of the documentation online!**

The ESDN Conference 2017, entitled “Strategic Governance for SD: New developments and approaches in the context of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs” took place in Prague, Czech Republic on 22-23 June 2017, in cooperation with the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic (Department of Sustainable Development). The conference was a 1.5 days event and brought together policy-makers and experts from different stakeholder groups from all over Europe. A total of 75 participants from 24 countries took part in the conference.

The first part of the conference documentation is now online, including the final program, participant list, discussion paper, and the slides of the keynote presentations and break-out group presentations. Please go to the [conference section](#) of the ESDN website to download these documents. The second part of the documentation, including the conference proceedings and photo documentation, will follow during the summer. So please check the ESDN website regularly.

## **ESDN organized a Side Event at the HLPF 2017 on 12 July 2017**

The ESDN organized a Side Event at the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) 2017, which took place at the UN Headquarters in New York. This Side Event, entitled “The Role of Peer Learning in Achieving the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs”, was organized by Austria, in cooperation with member countries of the ESDN Steering Group and the European Commission.

The ESDN Side Event introduced the Peer Learning Mechanism that the ESDN has recently developed, inviting for a broader reflection on peer learning as a general approach to support learning and experience sharing in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Important questions that were addressed in this Side Event: How has peer learning been addressed in different regions? What issues in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs will particularly benefit from peer learning? How to put peer learning into effective practice?

A documentation of the Side Event will follow soon at the ESDN website!

## **2<sup>nd</sup> ESDN Peer Learning Platform and Visit in Helsinki, Finland, 20-21 April 2017 – full documentation online!**

The Peer Learning Platform brought together policymakers who have already completed their Voluntary Nation Reviews (VNRs) for the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) 2016 to share, in greater depth, their experiences, in order to facilitate a sharing of experiences and learning with policymakers from those countries currently preparing their own VNRs for the HLPF 2017 and all future HLPFs. The Peer Learning Visit allowed policymakers to experience how horizontal integration, with respect to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, works in Finland. The Visit focused on inter-ministerial cooperation, as well as stakeholder engagement in Finland.

Please find the documentation for both events on the [ESDN website](#), including the agendas of both events, the background paper, and the Peer Learning Platform and Visit report.

### **European Sustainable Development Week (ESDW) 2017 – a great success with more than 4,000 activities in 30 European countries**

The third European Sustainable Development Week (ESDW) took place from 30 May – 5 June 2017. The ESDW 2017 was a great success with 4,031 activities taking place in 30 European countries. The ESDW 2017 also reached more than 360,000 people, who are estimated to have attended these diverse events! On Twitter, the hashtag #ESDW was seen over 400,000 times and the hashtag #ESDW2017 received over 25,000 impressions!

For the second year in a row, the ESDW activities were linked to the global UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The activities that took place during the ESDW 2017 could be linked to each of the 17 SDGs, but were most frequently linked to SDG 12 “Responsible Consumption and Production”; SDG 11 “Sustainable Cities and Communities”; SDG 3 “Good Health and Well-Being”; SDG 13 “Climate Action”; and SDG 15 “Life on Land”. The most common types of activities registered during the ESDW 2017 were educational events, followed by conferences/workshops and community events. The most common types of organizers participating in the ESDW 2017 with their activities were local governments, associations, business, civil society organisations/NGOs, and educational institutions. The main target groups were the general public, youth/students, professionals/experts, and local communities.

Building on the continued success of the past 3 years, and keeping with the ESDW tradition, the ESDW 2018 will take place on the same dates (May 30<sup>th</sup> – June 5<sup>th</sup>).

### **ESDN and ESDW mentioned in the General Affairs Council Conclusions of 20 June 2017**

The ESDN and ESDW have both been mentioned at the recent General Affairs Council Conclusions of 20 June 2017. In the Outcome of Proceedings document, the ESDW is mentioned in the context of ambitious communication and awareness raising for the 2030 Agenda and SDGs (para 26); the ESDN with regard to SD networks and peer learning mechanisms. Please find the two paragraphs in full length below:

“26. UNDERLINES the need to raise awareness of EU citizens, especially its youth, and the private sector on the transformative potential of the 2030 Agenda and to raise levels of public engagement and responsibility and political leadership in addressing the SDGs at all levels, thus contributing to global citizenship and to raise awareness of the SDGs’ positive transformative potential; CALLS UPON the Commission to carry out ambitious communication and awareness raising activities in this regard, building inter alia on the **European Sustainable Development Week;**”

“28. WELCOMES the establishment by the Commission of an inclusive multi-stakeholder platform underpinned by a balanced composition including the involvement of Member States; ENCOURAGES the Commission to build on existing processes and networks for this

purpose; STRESSES that the platform should enable all stakeholders to contribute with their best practices, policy recommendations, ideas and innovative potential to the EU's SDG implementation approach and builds inter alia on the expertise of existing sustainable development networks and peer learning mechanisms, such as the **European Sustainable Development Network (ESDN)**, to foster and disseminate the exchange of views and best practices and to contribute to the vertical coherence of implementation efforts at EU and Member States level;"

### **News on the governance of sustainable development from various European countries and the EU:**

#### **Finland: Case Study on the science-policy interface for sustainable development policies**

The Finnish Innovation Fund, Sitra, has recently published a study entitled "Scientific support for sustainable development policies: A typology of science policy interfaces with case studies". This benchmark study analyses different models of scientific support for sustainable development policies, with case examples from various countries. The study was commissioned by the Finnish Expert Panel on Sustainable Development, hosted by Sitra. The panel inspires action on sustainable development by giving science a voice on the Finnish political scene, and supports the Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development. Please find more information about the study and a download link [here](#).

#### **Germany: Political declaration on Sustainable Development by the German Government**

On 24 April 2017, the German Government passed an official political declaration on Sustainable Development. In this declaration, titled "Sharing responsibility – shaping the future together", the German Government advocates for a stronger international cooperation for Sustainable Development. The German Government underlines in its Declaration that "[t]he agreement on the 2030 Agenda showed that global solidarity on the key challenges of our time is possible. Shaping our world in a sustainable way is currently the most ambitious project that involves all countries and enables them to build on a unique formal consensus. The 2030 Agenda thus creates invaluable opportunities for cooperation and prospects for the future."

#### **Germany: The 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the German Council for Sustainable Development Council took place on 29 May 2017**

The 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the German Council for Sustainable Development took place on 29 May 2017. The discussions during the conference centered on: "How we can live sustainable development, what we have to change, what is realistic for Germany, or what must still be realized for Germany in this regard?" A great number of high-level speakers attended the conference, including the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel. The documentation of the conference can be [found here](#).

## **Germany: German Council for Sustainable Development has published its 2017 Sustainability Almanac**

The German Council for Sustainable Development has published its 2017 Sustainability Almanac online. The almanac highlights specific projects and initiatives implemented by local authorities, government bodies and the private sector to demonstrate where the transformation towards a more ecological and caring society is already in full swing. The Almanac is distributed via the Foreign Office. You can download the Almanac in [German](#) and [English](#) from the website of the German Council for SD.

## **Germany: Two peer-reviewed articles about the Sustainability Strategy of North Rhine-Westphalia published in the Journal “Sustainability”**

Two peer-reviewed articles about the Sustainability Strategy of the Federal State of North Rhine-Westphalia in Germany have been published in the open access journal “Sustainability” for free download. The article "The Future of North Rhine-Westphalia - Participation of the Youth as Part of a Social Transformation towards Sustainable Development" from Mona Treude, Dorothea Schostok, Oscar Reutter and Manfred Fishedick deals with participation concepts for children and young people applied as part of a scientific research project that accompanied the development of the Sustainability Strategy North Rhine-Westphalia. The article is available open access under <http://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/9/6/1055/htm>. The article "Vision Development towards a Sustainable North Rhine-Westphalia 2030 in a Science-Practice-Dialogue" from Miriam Müller and Oscar Reutter presents the results and the methodological approach of a participatory vision development process in the Federal State of North Rhine-Westphalia. The article is available open access under <http://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/9/7/1111>.

## **Germany: Sustainable Development in Germany – Indicator Report 2016**

Compared to the indicator report 2014 the [report 2016](#) has been thoroughly revised: It is now based on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations. Many of the indicators of the preceding four issues – published since 2006 – can still be found in the new publication. However, nearly thirty new indicators have been added to the list. In addition to that, the report provides a detailed description and analysis for each of the indicators of the German Sustainable Development Strategy and presents their status as to the political targets. Several environmental indicators of the strategy are embedded in the Environmental Economic Accounting.

## **Greece: Current and planned activities for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for SD and the SDGs**

Greece, after a preparatory phase for setting up the required governance structure that will undertake the responsibility of coordinating efforts at national level, for the implementation of the SDGs, is currently in the process of “adapting” the SDGs to national priorities and circumstances. Given that all SDGs are equal, interlinked and need to be addressed holistically, Greece’s general objective is to benefit from the opportunity that the SDGs

provide, in order to revisit the country's overall development perspectives from a sustainable and more balanced point of view, through an "SDGs lens", while improving policy coherence for sustainable development and promoting new win-win-win opportunities for the country.

**Governance:** Regarding the governance scheme for coordinating national efforts to implement the SDGs, since December 2016 following a decision by the Greek Prime Minister, the task has been allocated by law to the General Secretariat of the Government (GSG), with emphasis on enhancing inter-ministerial coordination, given the fact that the GSG is a permanent structure well positioned standing close to the political leadership of the country, indicating commitment at the highest level, as well as close to the public administration and all line Ministries for law making issues, ensuring the continuity of efforts. Under the coordination of the General Secretariat of the Government (GSG), an "Inter-ministerial Coordination Committee" with representatives from all line Ministries, was officially re-established in December 20016 to oversee and steer national efforts for the implementation of the SDGs at national level and in particular, as a first urgent initial step, to undertake the completion of a mapping / gap analysis exercise by all Ministries.

**Preparation for HLPF 2018:** Greece will be going through the VNR process for the HLPF 2018. The "Inter-ministerial Coordination Committee", led by the General Secretariat of the Government, has already started the national preparations for the drafting of the outline of the National VNR Report. Since the 5 SDGs selected for the in-depth thematic review during the 2018 HLPF are of an "environmental nature" (i.e. SDGs 6, 7, 11, 12, 15), an important part of the work to be done regarding the thematic analysis falls under the responsibilities of the Hellenic Ministry of Environment and Energy. Greece plans to elaborate a National Implementation Action Plan after the VNR process is completed, which is due to be finalized in later 2018.

### **Italy: Sustainable Development Festival with about 160 events took place from 22 May – 7 June 2017**

The Italian Alliance for Sustainable Development (ASviS), which comprises over 160 organizations in the economic and social field, launched its first Sustainable Development Festival, a large-scale awareness raising campaign to foster cultural-political reflections on the 2030 Agenda. The Festival took place over 17 days, from May 22 to June 7, 2017 during which around 160 events were organized throughout Italy. More information can be on the [ESDW homepage](#) (as the event was organized during ESDW 2017) and on the [ASviS website](#).

### **Netherlands: People and the Earth – International cooperation for the Sustainable Development Goals in 23 infographics**

The Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (PBL) has very recently published the book "People and the Earth - International cooperation for the Sustainable Development Goals in 23 infographics". This book uses visual representations to communicate challenges and options for making progress towards the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It visualizes human development and dependencies on the Earth, challenges for the nexus between food, water, energy and land, and new concepts for partnerships and coalitions. The book is not intended to be comprehensive – its ambition is to enlighten and



inspire discussions on ways forward. You can find more information and a download link of the book [here](#).

## **Poland: Activities for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for SD**

The Polish Ministry of Economic Development is the national coordinator for the Agenda 2030 and its SDGs implementation in Poland. The Polish perspective of actions for the sustainable and economic development has been formulated in Strategy for Responsible Development (SRD). The concept of the sustainable and responsible development, on which the Strategy was built, is consistent with the vision of the 2030 Agenda. The convergence of the Strategy and Agenda is noticeable at the level of the goals, areas and priority actions. Recently, the Ministry of Economic Development has published a booklet, which explains what the 2030 Agenda is and how the national Strategy for Responsible Development intends to fulfill the SDGs.

The Ministry of Economic Development is intensifying its efforts on the promotion the 2030 Agenda and building a broad partnership around SDGs in Poland. On 5 June 2017, the conference, titled “The Agenda 2030 for SD – the goals for the world, the challenge for the country, the responsibility for all”, was held. During the conference, 47 institutions, representing mainly businesses, expressed intentions to work together in the partnership for the effective of the SDGs. The representatives signed the jointly agreed declaration, recognizing that achieving ambitious goals and targets will be possible through effective joint action, mobilization of forces, synergies, a vibrant and enhanced partnership that is open to all stakeholders. The Ministry of Economic Development committed to appoint Multi-Stakeholder Forum - platform for knowledge, experience and best practices sharing. Forum will bring together representatives of the government and local administration, NGOs, social and economic organizations, science, business.

Moreover, Poland will prepare its Voluntary National Review for the HLPF 2018 and preparations of the national report will start soon.

## **Spain: Catalan Plan for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for SD**

The elaboration of the Catalan Plan for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda has already started following a Government decision of 14 February 2017. The main features of Catalonia’s Plan for 2030 Agenda implementation are the following:

- The plan has been conceived with two phases. In the first one (March-June 2017), concrete and localized milestones (or commitments) need to be set by the Government. In September a consultation process will be launched and the plan should be approved at the end of 2017.
- An inter-ministerial commission has been established to coordinate the elaboration of the National Plan, ensure consistency between the different commitments included in the plan, and monitor compliance with the 17 SDGs. The inter-ministerial commission is composed by the secretaries-general of all ministries within the Government of Catalonia and is attached to the Ministry of Transparency and Foreign and Institutional Relations and Affairs. It will approve the final Plan proposal to be sent to the Government.

- The inter-ministerial commission also includes a Technical Committee, whose main function is to develop the National Plan for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. This technical commission consists of representatives of all ministries in the Government. Each ministry, according to its main functions, will coordinate the work of different ministries on a specific SDG.
- The Advisory Council for Sustainable Development of Catalonia (CADS) assumes the technical and material assistance to Interdepartmental Commission and the Technical Committee. In this role, the council will facilitate the work of the different ministries and will ensure consistency between the various SDGs. The CADS report on the main challenges for meeting SDGs in Catalonia, which is already [available in English](#).

## **Voluntary National Reviews from HLPF 2017 already available**

Most Voluntary National Reviews that have been prepared by the various countries for the HLPF 2017 are already available to download or will be available very soon. Please go to the [HLPF 2017 website](#) and check their availabilities.

## **European Commission/Eurostat: New EU SDG indicator set**

On 22 November 2016, the European Commission adopted the Communication “[Next steps for a sustainable European future](#)” (COM(2016)739). This Communication presents the EU's answer to the 2030 Agenda and includes two work streams. The first work stream is to fully integrate the SDGs in the European policy framework and current Commission priorities, assessing where we stand and identifying the most relevant sustainability concerns. A second track is related to reflection work on further developing our longer term vision and the focus of sectoral policies after 2020, preparing for the long term implementation of the SDGs. The Communication also announces a detailed regular monitoring of the SDGs in an EU context from 2017 onwards, and the development of a reference indicator framework for this purpose.

By end of April 2017, Eurostat has finalised the EU SDG indicator set, which will be used for regular monitoring of the SDGs in an EU context. The new EU SDG indicator set is the result of a broad, inclusive process, which involved other Commission Services, the EU Member States, the European Statistical Advisory Committee, non-governmental organisations, academia, etc. The indicator set received the favourable opinion of the European Statistical System Committee on 18 May 2017 and the list of indicators is now available on Eurostat's website, at: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/sdi/overview>. The full online implementation of the indicator set, including the figures, is foreseen in November 2017 together with the publication of Eurostat's first EU SDG monitoring report.

## **European Commission: European Consensus on Development signed**

At the European Development Days on 7 June 2017, the EU and its Member States signed the European Consensus on Development - a new, collective vision which outlines how they will work better together to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development. The document was signed by President Jean-Claude Juncker, HR/VP Federica Mogherini, President of the European Parliament Antonio Tajani, and Prime Minister of Malta Joseph

Muscat, on behalf of the Council and Member States. The European Consensus on Development constitutes not just a shared vision, but also a framework for action on development cooperation by the EU and its Member States, aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Further information is available here:

- Joint public statement
- New European Consensus on Development - 'Our world, our dignity, our future'
- European Commission - Press release

## **Other News:**

### **United Nations: High Level Political Forum (HLPF) 2017 in New York took place 10-19 July 2017**

The [High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development](#) (HLPF) is the UN's central platform for the follow-up and review of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals](#), adopted at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit on 25 September 2015. The Forum, which adopts a Ministerial Declaration, is expected to provide political leadership, guidance and recommendations on the 2030 Agenda's implementation and follow-up; keep track of progress of the SDGs; spur coherent policies informed by evidence, science and country experiences; as well as address new and emerging issues.

The HLPF in 2017 took place in New York from 10-19 July 2017. The theme was "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world". The set of goals reviewed in depth included Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development that will be considered each year:

- Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
- Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
- Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
- Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

### **EEAC Conference 2017: "Towards the 2030 Agenda and beyond: European cooperation within a new citizens–science–policy–interface", 12-13 October 2017, in Maastricht, the Netherlands**

The European Network of Advisory Councils on Environment and Sustainable Development (EEAC) is celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on 12-13 October 2017 in Maastricht, the Netherlands, with an extraordinary event. The conference will provide a stimulating environment for knowledge-sharing through keynote speeches by internationally recognized

experts and politicians, as well as round-table interactions. These round tables will be led by prominent EEAC members, and each will address a specific policy domain related to sustainable development and/or the environment. More information about the conference can be found on the [EEAC website](#).

**EEB Annual Conference 2017: Changing Landscapes – Protecting the environment in a new Europe, 6 November 2017, Edinburgh, UK**

Organized together with EEB member Scottish Environment, the EEB's 2017 Annual Conference will debate how policies can and should be delivered to tackle this changing landscape. The conference will bring together members of the environmental movement from across the EU, the UK and Scotland, together with policy makers, civil society, thought leaders as well as entrepreneurs. Participants will debate issues such as tackling climate change, preventing biodiversity loss, undertaking a deep reform of agriculture policies and safeguarding our marine environment, with the overarching aim of fully implementing the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). More information will be available shortly at <http://www.eebconference.eu/>.