

Press Release

Brussels, 25th November 2022

SoGreen alliance: 'let's make the move to greener cities together'

Professionals in urban greenery welcome EC-proposal for the Nature Restoration Law

The SoGreen alliance, in which the European associations of tree nurserers, landscape architects, gardeners and landscapers, interior greeners, builders of green roofs and facades and natural bathing water pools welcome the proposal of the European Commission for the Nature Restoration Law with great enthusiasm. The proposed law states concrete aims for, amongst others, renaturing cities in the fight against climate change and the loss of biodiversity. The SoGreen alliance appreciates the EU-recognition of the benefits of greenery as part of the solution in these challenges. By working together with all relevant stakeholders on European, national, regional and local level, the SoGreen alliance aims to maximize common efforts in establishing sustainable and inclusive green cities. These green initiatives can also be integrated in the EU Renovation Wave, which is also part of the European Green Deal. In a special position paper the SoGreen alliance summarizes its ideas and what is needed to make the green move. This paper has been sent to the rapporteur on the Nature Restoration Law in the European Parliament.

The SoGreen alliance is a European movement of professionals in urban greenery. They take care for the design, creation and maintenance of green projects in the private area, public space and inside, on top of and at facades of buildings. For them, greenery can no longer be considered as decoration only. Supported by scientific research and dedicated vocational training these professionals have developed themselves into specialists of greenery with clear benefits for climate, biodiversity and health of people. There is where the close connection with the goals of European Green Deal and its underlying initiatives can be made. Although green projects are situated on local level, their benefits can be enlarged to a much greater scale. That is why the SoGreen alliance puts strong emphasis on a good interlinkage between policy making and cooperation on European, national, regional and local level. In the position paper there are several suggestions in order to support the realization of the bigger movement behind the Nature Restoration Law. Besides a good interlinkage, the SoGreen alliance draws the attention on the importance of scientific research and innovation, vocational training linked to the EU Skills Agenda and initiatives to create more awareness and participation of citizens. Green professionals from Canada have already expressed their great interest in the EU Nature Restoration Law and hope that we can create a global approach for nature restoration in cities together.

Goals European Green Deal

With its Green Deal, the European Commission proposes measures to make Europe climate neutral by 2050. In 2030 the emission of Co2 must be reduced with 55% already. Besides reduction, it is also relevant to look at possibilities to absorb Co2. That is where the benefits of natural greenery come in. The European Commission underlines that greenery is part of the solution and has set out goals for, amongst others, green development in urban areas within the Nature Restoration Law: ***“By 2030 there must be a no net loss of green spaces in urban areas. By 2050 the surface of green spaces in urban areas has grown with 5% and also a growth of at least 10% of tree canopy in urban agglomerations. Besides that there must be a net profit of green spaces that are realized in buildings and infrastructure.”*** It highlights the importance to combine climate and biodiversity issues together. The Nature Restoration Law is a key element of the EU Biodiversity Strategy, which calls for binding targets to restore degraded ecosystems, in particular those with the most potential to capture and store carbon and to prevent and reduce the impact of natural disasters.

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Information for the press, not to be published:

The following European associations are working together within the SoGreen alliance:

- European Landscape Contractors Association (ELCA)
- European Federations of Green Roof and Living Walls Associations (EFB)
- European Interior Landscaping Association (EILO)
- European Nurserystock Association (ENA)
- International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA)
- International Organization of Natural Bathing Waters (IOB)
- World Urban Parks Europe (WUP)

Look for more information about SoGreen on: <https://www.onthegreenmove.com/info.php>

Attachment: position paper of the SOGreen alliance

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