

The European Commission's [proposal for a Regulation on Nature Restoration](#) presents a huge opportunity to address the biodiversity and climate crises in a synergistic manner. Restoring ecosystems to bring back nature is crucial for human health and wellbeing, food security and increases our resilience against floods, droughts and other extreme weather events. In addition, restoring ecosystems such as peatlands, seagrass meadows, semi-natural grasslands and forests can help to sequester millions of tons of carbon each year.

The members of the [European Habitats Forum](#) call upon the European Parliament and the Council of the EU to adopt the Nature Restoration Law (NRL) in a timely manner, to strengthen key aspects of the proposal to meet the urgency of the twin climate and biodiversity crises, and to ensure implementable and enforceable targets.

Building upon the expertise of the EHF members and complementing the papers of other coalitions (see e.g. [this overarching NGO analysis](#)), we highlight below the improvement needs for key aspects of the NRL proposal in a specific fact sheet.



Peatland restoration

1 The need for restoration

Peatlands occur in [almost all EU Member States](#)

peatlands (230 Mt CO₂eq/year = 15% of total global peatland emissions), which equates to approximately [7% of EU-27 total GHG emissions](#) (3,601 Mt CO₂eq/year in 2019). To reduce these emissions significantly and protect the remaining peat carbon stocks, restoring drained peatlands must entail rewetting (raising water levels to near the surface, e.g. by drain blocking or stopping pumping in polders).

Besides reducing GHG emissions, **rewetting peatlands will prevent soil subsidence, eventual flooding, and saltwater intrusion in coastal areas** it will _____



The Commission proposal

Article 9(4)



Improvement needs

The target to restore drained peatlands under agricultural use beyond peatlands listed in Annex I of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC (Article 9 NRL proposal) is highly appreciated. Peatlands which have been drained and are currently used for agriculture, can become just as vital for water storage and climate change mitigation and adaptation as peatland habitats that are protected under the Habitats Directive. We welcome the recognition of the importance of peatlands for biodiversity and climate protection and the mention of alternative



As it stands, Article 9(4) thus creates an imbalance in the NRL's ambitions in light of the need for peatland restoration. Therefore, its scope should be extended to other types of land use.

The proposed Article 9(4) differs from 1

This fact sheet was jointly produced in October 2022 by

