

EU parliamentarians agree on law to restore natural environments

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The European Parliament on Thursday agreed on a controversial law to restore degraded environments to their natural state.

More forests are to be reforested, moors re-wetted and rivers returned to their natural free-flowing states.

Negotiators from the European Parliament and EU member states reached an agreement late on Thursday on the fiercely debated nature

conservation project.

The EU Nature Restoration Law aims sets a target for the European Union to restore at least 20% of the bloc's land and sea areas by 2030 and all ecosystems in need of restoration by 2050.

According to EU figures, around 80% of habitats in the European Union are in a poor state. In addition, 10% of bee and [butterfly species](#) are threatened with extinction and 70% of soils are in an unhealthy condition.

The law was preceded by a fierce dispute, partly because there were fears of heavy restrictions on farmers. The conservative European People's Party, or EPP, in particular were strongly opposed to the plan and tried to put it on ice completely.

However, a [motion](#) to reject the law failed to gain a majority in parliament in the summer. Under pressure from the EPP, many of the requirements were watered down.

With the compromise that has now been negotiated, farmers will not be obliged to make a certain percentage of their land available for environmentally friendly measures in future, which [farmers](#) had feared would happen.

The law still has to be formally approved by the EU member states and the European Parliament. Normally this is a formality.

In this case, however, it is not entirely certain that enough EPP members of the European Parliament will vote in favor of the compromise to obtain the necessary majority.

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