



# The Nature Restoration Law

**Dani Lozano**

Policy Analyst, eco-union



**Natural  
heritage**

**Interreg  
Euro-MED**



Co-funded by  
the European Union



Union for the Mediterranean  
Union pour la Méditerranée  
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط

*A project labelled by the UfM*





# Brief political update on EU politics

© IUCN



**Natural  
heritage**

**Interreg  
Euro-MED**



Co-funded by  
the European Union



Union for the Mediterranean  
Union pour la Méditerranée  
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط

*A project labelled by the UfM*





# The NRL... is it a bird? Is it a plane?



**Go to [menti.com](https://www.menti.com)**

**and enter the code 1978 0788**

© IUCN



**Natural  
heritage**

**Interreg  
Euro-MED**



Co-funded by  
the European Union



Union for the Mediterranean  
Union pour la Méditerranée  
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط

*A project labelled by the UfM*





# The NRL is a Regulation

## ● Regulations

- Binding legal acts
- Apply directly and immediately in all Member States
- Don't need to be transposed into national law

## ● Directives

- Member States have to achieve a certain “result”
- Flexibility
- Must be transposed into national law

## ● Why call it “a law”?

- Informally, for the public discourse and the media
- Importance and the impact of the legislation
- To emphasize the binding nature across all Member States



**Natural  
heritage**

**Interreg  
Euro-MED**



Co-funded by  
the European Union



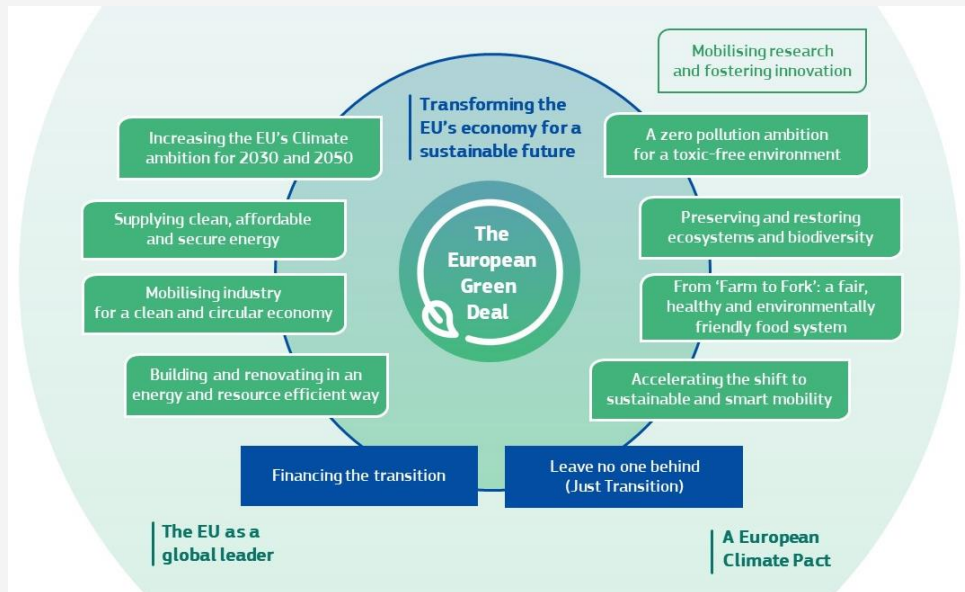
Union for the Mediterranean  
Union pour la Méditerranée  
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط

*A project labelled by the UfM*





# Where does the NRL come from?



- **European Green Deal**
  - EU's flagship initiative to put us on the path to reach climate neutrality by 2050.
- **EU's biodiversity strategy for 2030**
  - Functions as the **EU's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)** to the Global Biodiversity Framework, so it aligns with global biodiversity goals
- **One of the objectives of the NRL is to meet the EU's international commitments, such as the GBF**



Natural  
heritage

Interreg  
Euro-MED



Co-funded by  
the European Union



Union for the Mediterranean  
Union pour la Méditerranée  
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط

A project labelled by the UfM





## Differences with other legislation

- The **Birds Directive**, the **Habitats Directive**, the **Natura 2000** network, and now the **NRL**, are all part of the **EU's biodiversity policy**.
- **Nature Restoration Law:**
  - Restoration, not just protection
  - The **scope** is broader, and the **focus** is different
  - Specific, measurable **restoration targets** with **time-bound commitments** for Member States



**Natural  
heritage**

**Interreg  
Euro-MED**



Co-funded by  
the European Union



Union for the Mediterranean  
Union pour la Méditerranée  
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط

A project labelled by the UfM





# A rough and rowdy way into adoption

- June 2022 – **Commission's proposal**
- 2023 – **trilogues** (inter-institutional negotiations)
- November 2023 – **provisional agreement**
- February 2024 – **approved in Parliament**
- June 2024 – **approved in the Council of the EU (ENVI)**
- 29/07/24 – published in the Official Journal of the EU
- **18/08/24 – entry into force**



Natural  
heritage

Interreg  
Euro-MED



Co-funded by  
the European Union



Union for the Mediterranean  
Union pour la Méditerranée  
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط

A project labelled by the UfM





# Watered down during the legislative process

- Long campaign of political contestation
- Some aspects of the initial proposal have been **watered down** due to compromises **during the legislative process**:
  - “Access to justice” article
  - Agricultural ecosystems: less ambition
  - No specific enforcement measures in case of non-compliance



Natural  
heritage

Interreg  
Euro-MED



Co-funded by  
the European Union



Union for the Mediterranean  
Union pour la Méditerranée  
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط

A project labelled by the UfM







# Targets in the NRL

- EU-wide targets (Article 1):
  - Restoring **at least 20% of the EU's land and sea** by **2030**
  - **All ecosystems in need of restoration** by **2050**
- National targets (Articles 4 and 5):
  - Restoring **at least 30% of the total area of all habitats that are not in good condition** – *priority to Natura 2000 sites* – by **2030**
  - **60% by 2040**
  - **90% by 2050**



**Natural  
heritage**

**Interreg  
Euro-MED**



Co-funded by  
the European Union



Union for the Mediterranean  
Union pour la Méditerranée  
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط

A project labelled by the UfM





# Targets in the NRL

- Articles 6 and 7: Exemption from the ‘non-deterioration’ clause in areas located outside of Natura 2000 sites
  - Production of **renewable energy** as well as **grid connection**, and **national defense** are overriding public interest, which would exempt countries from the ‘non-deterioration’ clause in areas located outside of Natura 2000 sites.



Natural  
heritage

Interreg  
Euro-MED



Co-funded by  
the European Union



Union for the Mediterranean  
Union pour la Méditerranée  
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط

A project labelled by the UfM





# Targets in the NRL

- Article 8: No net loss of **urban green areas** and urban tree canopy by **2030** (compared to 2024). From 2031 onward, increase trend up to a satisfactory level
- Article 9: EU-wide restoration of at least **25.000 km of rivers** into free-flowing rivers by **2030**
- Article 10: Reverse the decline of the population of **pollinators** through habitat restoration by **2030**. From 2031 onward, increase trend up to a satisfactory level
- Article 11: Enhancement of biodiversity in **agricultural ecosystems** by achieving an increasing trend in at least 2 out of 3 indicators:
  - Grassland butterfly index
  - Stock of organic carbon in cropland mineral soils
  - Share of agricultural land with high diversity landscape features.
- Article 11: Also, **restoration of organic soils** in agricultural use (30% by 2030, 40% by 2040 and 50% by 2050)



Natural  
heritage

Interreg  
Euro-MED



Co-funded by  
the European Union



Union for the Mediterranean  
Union pour la Méditerranée  
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط

A project labelled by the UfM





## Targets in the NRL

- Article 12: Achieve an increasing trend at national level of the **common forest index** and in at least 6 out of 7 forest indicators, until satisfactory levels.
- Article 13: EU-wide target of planting **3 billion trees by 2030**
- Article 14: National Restoration Plans have to define, using scientific knowledge, the satisfactory levels for (i)**pollinators population**, (ii)**agricultural indicators**, (iii)**forest indicators**, (iv)**urban green space**, and (v) **urban tree canopy** by **2030**



Natural  
heritage

Interreg  
Euro-MED



Co-funded by  
the European Union



Union for the Mediterranean  
Union pour la Méditerranée  
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط

A project labelled by the UfM





# Targets in the NRL

- **Article 15: Content of the National Restoration Plans**
  - The quantification of areas to be restored with indicative maps
  - A description of measures planned, including specification which of those are planned within the Natura 2000 network
  - Indications of interventions planned to ensure that areas do not deteriorate
  - Indicators chosen for agricultural and forest ecosystems
  - Planned contribution to the tree planting of trees, outlined in Article 13
  - Timing for putting in place the restoration measures
  - A summary of the process, taking account of public participation, local communities, and stakeholders)
  - Climate change impact scenarios
  - Financing needs
  - The consideration of synergies with climate policies and other environmental instruments



**Natural  
heritage**

**Interreg  
Euro-MED**



Co-funded by  
the European Union



Union for the Mediterranean  
Union pour la Méditerranée  
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط

A project labelled by the UfM





# Targets in the NRL

- Articles 16 and 17: **Submission of National Restoration Plans**, in **2026** (drafts) and **2027** (final version)
- Article 19: **Review and revision of National Restoration Plans**
  - By June 2032, and subsequently 30 June 2042, and at least once every ten years thereafter.
  - If progress is deemed insufficient by the Commission, revised national restoration plan with supplementary measures
- Articles 20 and 21: **Monitoring and reporting**



**Natural  
heritage**

**Interreg  
Euro-MED**



Co-funded by  
the European Union



Union for the Mediterranean  
Union pour la Méditerranée  
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط

A project labelled by the UfM





# Timeline

- **December 2024** – Commission must establish a standard format for National Restoration Plans
- **August 2025** – Commission reports to the Parliament and Council on NRL implementation, finance, and funding needs; also, Member States have to develop a methodology for measuring indicators based on the Commission's guidelines
- **September 2026** – Member States submit their **DRAFT National Restoration Plans**
- **March 2027** – **Commission's assessment** of the Draft NRPs
- **September 2027** – Member States submit **final National Restoration Plans**



**Natural  
heritage**

**Interreg  
Euro-MED**



Co-funded by  
the European Union



Union for the Mediterranean  
Union pour la Méditerranée  
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط

*A project labelled by the UfM*





# Challenges in implementation

- **Governance**
- **Financing**
- **Capacity**
- **Multilevel challenges**
- **Policy coherence**
- **Stakeholder engagement**



**Natural  
heritage**

**Interreg  
Euro-MED**



Co-funded by  
the European Union



Union for the Mediterranean  
Union pour la Méditerranée  
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط

*A project labelled by the UfM*







## Now, a final quiz



**Go to [menti.com](https://www.menti.com)**

**and enter the code 1978 0788**

© IUCN



**Natural  
heritage**

**Interreg  
Euro-MED**



Co-funded by  
the European Union



Union for the Mediterranean  
Union pour la Méditerranée  
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط

*A project labelled by the UfM*

