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IEEP steps up work on the multiple benefits of biodiversity

Investing in and protecting nature and biodiversity brings multiple benefits to people, society and the economy, complementing the intrinsic value of nature itself. IEEP is developing several work streams on this topic, analysing and developing policy options to tap into these benefits and integrate them into EU and national policy-making. For example, we are looking at the links between nature, human health and social inclusion, the multiple benefits of marine protected areas, the contribution of nature to wider socio-economic objectives in Europe, and how the EU's Natura 2000 network can help create and sustain jobs both on-site and in the wider economy.

Health and social benefits of nature

Building on the findings of a yearlong study and the outcomes of a [stakeholder workshop held in Brussels in January](#), our final report on the Health and Social Benefits of Nature and Biodiversity Protection is now available on the [website of the European Commission](#). The research team, led by IEEP, identified more than 100 cases across the EU where initiatives are making use of nature for health and social benefits. Examples included reducing exposure to pollutants, mitigating noise and heat stress, improving everyday well-being, providing therapeutic spaces for rehabilitation and treatment, promoting recreation and sustainable mobility, and facilitating volunteering and local engagement. The report develops a road map for how European cities, regions and countries can realise these benefits and how the EU can support this process.

Multiple benefits of marine areas

The multiple benefits of nature are not limited to land ecosystems – marine areas make an important contribution too. Another recently completed [IEEP report](#) highlights how marine protected areas can capture and store carbon, support fisheries and food production, provide resilience against coastal hazards, and bring benefits through nature-based tourism in and around marine protected areas.

Supporting socio-economic priorities

A third recently launched study focuses on the role that nature and biodiversity can play in supporting socio-economic priorities across the EU Member States. The work will look at the various objectives of countries, such as promoting regional development, urban regeneration or social cohesion. The team is exploring promising areas where nature and biodiversity have an important potential to address national

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agriculture and forestry, climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as research and education. We

will also explore what methods can be used to estimate how protecting and investing in nature can support jobs throughout Europe. Our findings will inform future assessments on employment-environment synergies.

Through our continued engagement on this topic, IEEP is helping to develop a strong evidence base demonstrating the wide range of benefits of nature and biodiversity, and how protecting these values can contribute to addressing a variety of challenges currently facing Europe.

For more information on IEEP’s work in this area, contact [Konar Mutafoğlu](mailto:kmutafoglu@ieep.eu) (kmutafoglu@ieep.eu), [Jean-Pierre Schweitzer](mailto:jpschweitzer@ieep.eu) (jpschweitzer@ieep.eu), or [Patrick ten Brink](mailto:ptenbrink@ieep.eu) (ptenbrink@ieep.eu).

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