# [***Down the priority list; Biodiversity loss***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:660V-8911-JC8Y-80TV-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

'***Biodiversity*** is being lost, and nature's contributions to people are being degraded, faster now than at any other point in human history," an expert UN report said earlier this month. This comes just as a global wave of extreme weather events makes it daily more evident that the climate emergency is a real, present and rapidly deepening danger.

***Biodiversity*** ***loss***, which includes the collapse of ecosystems vital for carbon sequestration, is intrinsically linked to global heating, though often treated as its poor relation. Both crises must be addressed together, informed by science and supported by necessarily radical policies. To succeed, such policies must be based on a new public understanding that a thriving natural world is no luxury, but the sole source of the natural capital and ecosystem services that support all our economic and cultural life. Industrial and hi-tech systems have made this linkage almost invisible, but we ignore it at our peril.

It is distressing, then, to find that Fingal County Council has bluntly stated that it won't meet two thirds of the targets set by its own very well-researched and impressive ***biodiversity*** plan, which aims to achieve the EU goal of halting ***biodiversity*** ***loss*** by 2030. The council says that "competing priorities" like housing, roads, recreation and sports centres do not permit it to commit the EUR 4 million and six extra staff the plan requires.

Crucial wetland corridors linking such prime natural features as the Royal Canal, the Liffey and the Tolka are among the projects dropped.

At least the council has been frank about refusing to make ***biodiversity*** a priority. This reflects the real attitude of the State, which repeatedly fails to meet minimal EU environmental requirements, with a National Parks and Wildlife Service that remains, despite welcome new resources and promised but inadequate reforms, still unfit to protect and restore our degraded landscapes.

The prospect of ***biodiversity*** and climate collapse will only be averted if we all recognise that environmental health is not the icing on the national cake, it is its essential ingredient.

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