# [***Finland : Current legislation deficient from the perspective of halting biodiversity loss - Nature Act would strengthen the protection of biodiversity***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67V2-H011-F11P-X3XC-00000-00&context=1516831)

Mena Report

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**Body**

According to a recent preliminary study, there are several structural shortcomings in the legislation protecting nature that should be corrected in order to mitigate ***biodiversity*** ***loss***. Legislation can be developed by strengthening sector laws and enacting a completely new Nature Act.

Legislation that protects nature is point-by-point and dispersed under several sector laws. Furthermore, the legislation is not binding enough and there are gaps in the regulation. The fragmentation of the current steering instruments means that the mitigation of ***biodiversity*** ***loss*** as a whole is not governed by any legislation.

The researchers recommend a model for halting the ***loss*** of nature, in which, in addition to the Nature Act containing obligations, amendments would be made to legislation concerning different sectors, such as the Land Use and Construction Act, the Forest Act, the Water Act or the Environmental Protection Act. This can be done step by step. The starting point can be a nature law based on coordination, which would be binding on the authorities and which would lay down key provisions on planning systems and the objectives of safeguarding ***biodiversity***.

"The Climate Change Act has set a clear target for combating the climate crisis and a target year for Finland's carbon neutrality. We also need a similar will to halt ***biodiversity*** ***loss*** by 2030. After that, the state of nature should begin to recover. These would be guaranteed by the Nature Act," says Minister of the Environment and Climate Change Maria Ohisalo.

The Nature Act would establish a framework for a planning system concerning nature

***Biodiversity*** ***loss*** is a multifaceted phenomenon that requires legislation to be able to transcend policy sectors and borders between authorities. In Finland, there is no system by which actions affecting the state of nature are planned in a way that permeates the production sectors in a goal-oriented manner. In the first phase, the new Nature Act would set the objectives for safeguarding ***biodiversity*** for the authorities and create a planning and information production system to implement these objectives. For example, it would be possible to include in the Nature Act the objective of halting the ***loss*** of ***biodiversity***, to which Finland has committed itself through international agreements and at the EU level. A nature law like this would also provide citizens and businesses with the predictability and transparency they need to demonstrate responsibility and implement change.

"The revised Nature Conservation Act provides important tools for protecting already weakened and endangered nature. An example of this is the provisions on voluntary ecological compensation. However, outside of the endangered nature values under the Nature Conservation Act, there are few goals and means for curbing the ***loss*** of nature. The Nature Panel and various researchers have already proposed a new kind of Nature Act. The preliminary study provides a good basis for more detailed planning of the preparations during the next government term," says Johanna Korpi, Director of Legislative Affairs.

The study is based on a multidisciplinary research panel

The report was prepared by Professor of Environmental Law Niko Soininen and Senior Researcher Minna Pappila. The study is based on the synthesis of previous studies and research data, as well as on the results of the eDelphi scientific panel conducted by the Ministry of the Environment in January 2023 and an expert workshop held on its basis in February 2023. Key experts in law, ecology, social science and environmental economics were invited to the scientific panel.

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