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Debriefing of the July Plenary Session

10-13 July 2023

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Nature Restoration Law

On Wednesday, a majority of MEPs voted in favour of a Parliament position to restore nature. After the EPP, supported by the far-right, failed to secure a majority to reject the Nature Restoration Law (NRL) at committee-level, their motion for a complete rejection of the European Commission's proposal did not find a majority either. The negotiations of the European Parliament with the Council and the European Commission can start soon.

Philippe Lamberts MEP, President of the Greens/EFA Group in the European Parliament, comments: “We cannot stop the worst effects of climate change without restoring and supporting nature. Droughts, fires and floods are destroying our fields and soils and endangering our food security. That is why today’s vote marks the chance for Europe to restore our nature and support people and planet over the interests of big-agricultural lobbies."

Terry Reintke MEP, President of the Greens/EFA Group in the European Parliament, comments: “The disinformation campaign and attempts to derail the Nature Restoration Law from the EPP leadership

and their far-right friends has failed. Now is the time to roll up our sleeves and return to constructive and consensus based politics. There is no time to lose in saving nature"

- Greens/EFA Press Release
- Text adopted
- Social Media – Twitter: Greens/EFA
- Social media - Instagram: Greens/ EFA in the European Parliament
- Social media - LinkedIn: Greens/ EFA in the European Parliament

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Fit for 55 & Industrial Emissions Directive

On Tuesday, the European Parliament adopted three files included in the Fit for 55 package.

The Directive on the Deployment of Alternative Fuels Infrastructure focuses on boosting publicly accessible infrastructures for charging electric vehicles, the FuelEU Maritime Regulation will increase the demand for and consistent use of greener fuels for the shipping sector, and the Energy Efficiency Directive, thanks to Greens/EFA leadership, pushes for a binding EU energy efficiency target of 11,7% by 2030.

The European Parliament also adopted its plenary position on the Industrial Emissions Directive, the main EU instrument to regulate pollutant emissions from industrial plants.

Bas Eickhout, Greens/EFA MEP and Vice-Chair of the Environment committee, comments:

“For shipping, the phase-out of fossil fuels and the introduction of more climate-friendly fuels is finally on its way. With the reform of the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation, the EU is ensuring that motorists can drive their electric vehicles without worry and can also pay and compare charging prices conveniently. With the new Energy Efficiency Directive, the EU will save roughly as much energy by 2030 as Spain would consume in the same period."

- Greens/EFA Press Release
- Blogpost on FitFor55 Package
- Text adopted - Industrial Emissions Directive
- Text adopted - Deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure
- Text adopted - Sustainable maritime fuels (FuelEU Maritime Initiative)
- Text adopted - Energy efficiency (recast)
- Social media - Twitter: Greens/ EFA in the European Parliament

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Search & Rescue in the Mediterranean

On Thursday, MEPs voted on the need for an EU search and rescue mission in the Mediterranean. The Pylos shipwreck in Greece, which occurred on 14th June, leading to the death of over six hundred men, women and children, is a recent example of countless predictable and preventable deaths at sea.

The Greens/EFA Group has long called for an EU-led search and rescue mission in the Med and for an end to the criminalisation of those who provide assistance to people in need.

Erik Marquardt MEP, Greens/EFA negotiator on the file, comments:

“Instead of saving lives, EU governments have been focusing on deterrence and criminalising the very people who are substituting the humanitarian duties of Member States. We need an independent, transparent and international investigation into what happened with the Pylos shipwreck and the actions by the Hellenic Coast Guard.

The words in this important resolution must now be followed by actions. The cooperation with the criminal Libyan Coast Guard must end. Sea rescue NGOs should receive funds from the Commission to save lives. The EU needs to urgently establish, coordinate and fund a state-led EU Search and Rescue mission, ensuring that lives are no longer lost at sea.”

The Greens/EFA published a new study investigating Greece, with shocking findings that highlight Greece’s legal procedures are riddled with human rights violations. Trials of so-called “smugglers” last for only 37 minutes on average and lead to a sentence of 46 years and a fine of 332,209 euro.

- Greens/EFA Press Release
- Greens/EFA Study
- Social media - Twitter: Greens/ EFA in the European Parliament
- Social media - Instagram: Greens/ EFA in the European Parliament

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Ecodesign Regulation

On Wednesday, MEPs voted on the Ecodesign Regulation. This regulation will make our clothes, furniture and electrical appliances more repairable, reusable and recyclable, create numerous jobs and save billions in energy and raw materials. It not only extends the scope of products covered by ecodesign rules, but also foresees a ban on the destruction of unsold goods and the creation of a digital passport to provide information on the origin, composition and repair possibilities of products. The Greens/EFA have long been advocating for the inclusion of the textile industry, one of the most polluting in the world, in such a regulation.

The Greens/EFA published a factsheet that discusses the benefits of this new law.

- Text adopted
- Greens/EFA Factsheet
- Social media - Twitter: Greens/ EFA in the European Parliament
- Social media - Instagram: Greens/ EFA in the European Parliament

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Qatargate

On Thursday, Members of the European Parliament adopted the special report from the Committee on Foreign Interference (ING2). Following the Qatargate scandal, the ING2 committee made recommendations for the reform of Parliament's internal rules on integrity, transparency, accountability and anti-corruption. The report comes ahead of the vote in September on President Metsola's 14-point plan.

The recommendations made by the committee are a step in the right direction, but fall short. **Heidi Hautala** MEP, Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur on the Recommendations for reform of the European Parliament's rules on transparency, integrity, accountability and anti-corruption in the ING2 committee, comments:

"While we welcome the fact that the Parliament is taking steps towards being more transparent, the decision taken today falls far short of what is needed. The European Parliament needs to seize the opportunity created by the Qatargate scandal to radically improve its internal rules.

The Parliament needs to institute a cooling-off period for its members of up to 24 months after leaving office and at least as long as a member is entitled to receive the transitional allowance. In addition, upon the initiative of the Greens/EFA group, a ban on side-jobs that fall under the scope of the transparency register was adopted and should be implemented as soon as possible. On the initiative of our group, it was also clarified that requirements for NGOs to disclose all funding information needs to take into account the situation of NGOs in authoritarian and illiberal regimes, especially when it might put them at risk."

- Greens/EFA Press Release
- Text adopted

Ethics Body

On Wednesday, MEPs voted in favour of the resolution on the Commission's proposal for an EU Ethics Body. The Greens/EFA Group has called for a stronger ethics body with investigative powers and for existing ethics rules to be properly enforced.

Daniel Freund MEP, Greens/EFA Member of the AFCO Committee and European Parliament Rapporteur on the need for an independent EU Ethics Body, comments:

"We've seen Commissioners walk straight from the offices of the Berlaymont into roles at multinationals and we've seen MEPs trying to hide bags of cash under their beds. It's very clear we need a strong and independent ethics body to police these issues. Unfortunately, the Commission's proposal would not stop any of these recent scandals.

The list of existing scandals proves that the self-policing of the EU institutions does not work. We need a real ethics body that has the tools and the teeth to tackle ethics issues and rebuild trust in the EU institutions."

- Greens/EFA Press Release

- Text adopted

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- http://www.facebook.com/greensefa

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Next issue of Greens/EFA Plenary debriefing: 15 September 2023

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Responsible MEPs

Daniel Freund

Member

Heidi Hautala

EP Vice-President, Member

Philippe Lamberts

Member

Erik Marquardt

Member

Terry Reintke

Co-President

Contact person

Jeroen Steeman

Community manager

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