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## TEXTS ADOPTED

*Provisional edition*

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### **P8\_TA-PROV(2017)0315**

#### **EU action for sustainability**

##### **European Parliament resolution of 6 July 2017 on EU action for sustainability (2017/2009(INI))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the United Nations resolution on ‘Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development’, adopted at the UN Sustainable Development Summit on 25 September 2015 in New York<sup>1</sup>,
- having regard to the Agreement adopted at the 21<sup>st</sup> Conference of Parties (COP21) in Paris on 12 December 2015 (the Paris Agreement),
- having regard to Article 3(3) and (5) of the Treaty on European Union (TEU),
- having regard to Article 7 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), which reaffirms that the EU ‘shall ensure consistency between its policies and activities, taking all of its objectives into account’, and to Article 11 of TFEU,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 22 November 2016, ‘Next steps for a sustainable European future – European action for sustainability’ (COM(2016)0739),
- having regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, ratified by the EU in January 2011,
- having regard to the General Union Environment Action Programme to 2020 entitled ‘Living well, within the limits of our planet’<sup>2</sup>,
- having regard to the European Environment Agency (EEA) Report No 30/2016: the Environmental indicator report 2016,
- having regard to its resolution of 12 May 2016 on the follow-up to and review of the 2030 Agenda<sup>3</sup>,

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<sup>1</sup> A/RES/70/1.

<sup>2</sup> Decision No 1386/2013/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 November 2013 (OJ L 354, 28.12.2013, p. 171).

<sup>3</sup> Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2016)0224.

- having regard to the Strategic Note of the Commission’s European Political Strategy Centre of 20 July 2016 entitled ‘Sustainability Now! A European Voice for Sustainability’<sup>1</sup>,
  - having regard to the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020<sup>2</sup>, to its mid-term review<sup>3</sup> and to the European Parliament resolution of 2 February 2016 on the mid-term review<sup>4</sup>,
  - having regard to the reports of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) International Resource Panel entitled: ‘Policy Coherence of the Sustainable Development Goals’ (2015), ‘Global Material Flows and Resource Productivity’ (2016) and ‘Resource Efficiency: Potential and Economic Implications’ (2017),
  - having regard to the Joint communication from the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 10 November 2016 on ‘International ocean governance: an agenda for the future of our oceans’ (JOIN(2016)0049),
  - having regard to the Habitat III New Urban Agenda Agreement adopted in Quito on 20 October 2016,
  - having regard to Rule 52 of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety and the opinions of the Committee on Development, the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development and the Committee on Culture and Education (A8-0239/2017),
- A. whereas the EU and its Member States have adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (hereinafter ‘the 2030 Agenda’), including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- B. whereas the UN’s 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represent a blueprint for a better society and world, deliverable through practical and measurable action and covering a number of issues including achieving better and more equal health outcomes, greater wellbeing and education of citizens, higher overall prosperity, action against climate change and the conservation of the environment for future generations, and as such must always be considered horizontally across all areas of the Union’s work;
- C. whereas future economic growth will only be possible by fully respecting the planetary boundaries in order to ensure a life of dignity for all;
- D. whereas the 2030 Agenda has a transformational potential and sets out universal, ambitious, comprehensive, indivisible and interlinked goals, aimed at eradicating poverty, fighting discrimination, and promoting prosperity, environmental responsibility, social inclusion and respect for human rights, and strengthening peace

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<sup>1</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/epsc/sites/epsc/files/strategic\\_note\\_issue\\_18.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/epsc/sites/epsc/files/strategic_note_issue_18.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Commission communication of 3 May 2011 entitled ‘Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020’ (COM(2011)0244).

<sup>3</sup> Commission report of 2 October 2015 on the mid-term review of the EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 (COM(2015)0478).

<sup>4</sup> Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2016)0034.

and security; whereas these goals require immediate action with a view to full and effective implementation;

- E. whereas the Commission has not yet established a comprehensive strategy to implement the 2030 Agenda encompassing internal and external policy areas with a detailed timeline up to 2030, as requested by the European Parliament in its resolution of 12 May 2016 on the follow-up to and review of the agenda, and has not fully taken up a general coordination role for the actions taken at national level; whereas an effective implementation strategy and a monitoring and review mechanism are essential in order to achieve the SDGs;
- F. whereas the 17 SDGs and 169 underlying targets touch on all aspects of the Union's policy;
- G. whereas many of the SDGs directly concern the powers of the EU in addition to the national, regional and local authorities and their implementation therefore requires a true multi-level governance approach with an active and broad-based civil society engagement;
- H. whereas climate change is not a stand-alone environmental issue but presents, according to the UN<sup>1</sup>, one of the greatest challenges of our time and poses a serious threat to sustainable development, and its widespread, unprecedented impacts place a disproportionate burden on the poorest and most vulnerable and increase inequality between and within countries; whereas urgent action to combat climate change is integral to the successful implementation of the SDGs;
- I. Whereas the Europe 2020 climate change and energy sustainability targets are: to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) by 20 %, to meet 20 % of EU energy demand with renewables, and to increase energy efficiency by 20 %; whereas the EU is committed to a reduction in domestic GHG emissions of at least 40 % by 2030 compared to 2005 levels, subject to a ratchet-up mechanism under the Paris Agreement; whereas Parliament has called for a binding 2030 energy efficiency target of 40 % and a binding renewable energy sources (RES) target of at least 30 %, and stresses that such targets should be implemented by means of individual national targets;
- J. Whereas the EU and its Member States are all signatories to the Paris Agreement, and as such are committed to working with other countries to limit the increase in global warming to well below 2 °C, and to pursue efforts to further limit it to 1,5 °C and therefore to attempt to limit the worst risks of climate change, which undermine the ability to achieve sustainable development;
- K. whereas healthy seas and oceans are essential to support abundant biodiversity, and provide food security and sustainable livelihoods;
- L. whereas the Commission is required, under the 7th Environment Action Programme (EAP), to assess the environmental impact, in a global context, of Union consumption of food and non-food commodities;
- M. whereas any appraisal of the current and future effectiveness of the SDG agenda in

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<sup>1</sup> <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2016/goal-13/>

Europe should not only speak to the current successes, but also look to future efforts and schemes, and should also be based on a thorough assessment of the gaps between the EU's policies and the SDGs, including areas where the EU does not meet the SDG targets, weak implementation of current policies and potential contradictions between policy areas;

- N. whereas, according to the EEA, it is highly likely that 11 of the 30 priority objectives of the EAP will not be achieved by the 2020 deadline;
  - O. whereas the financing of the SDGs poses an enormous challenge which demands a strong and global partnership and the use of all forms of financing (from domestic, international, public, private and innovative sources), as well as non-financial means; whereas private financing can complement, but not substitute public funding;
  - P. whereas effective mobilisation of domestic resources is an indispensable factor in achieving the objectives of the 2030 Agenda; whereas developing countries are particularly affected by corporate tax evasion and tax avoidance;
  - Q. whereas promoting sustainable development requires resilience, which should be fostered by means of a multifaceted approach to the EU's external action and by upholding the principle of policy coherence for development; whereas the Member States' and EU's policies have both intended and unintended effects on developing countries, and the SDGs constitute a unique opportunity to achieve more coherence and fairer policies towards developing countries;
  - R. whereas international trade can be a powerful driver of development and economic growth and a large share of EU imports comes from developing countries; whereas the 2030 Agenda acknowledges trade as a means of achieving the SDGs;
  - S. whereas addressing the challenge of migration and the demands of an increasing global population is essential for achieving sustainable development; whereas the 2030 Agenda emphasises the role of migration as a potential driver of development; whereas Article 208 of TFEU establishes the eradication of poverty as the primary objective of EU development policies;
1. Takes note of the Commission communication on European action for sustainability, which maps existing policy initiatives and instruments at European level and serves as a reaction to the 2030 Agenda; stresses, however, the necessity of a comprehensive assessment, including policy gaps and trends, inconsistencies and implementation deficiencies as well as the potential co-benefits and synergies, of all existing EU policies and legislation in all sectors; underlines the need for coordinated action for this assessment at both European and Member State levels; calls, therefore, on the Commission, on the Council, in all its formations, and on the EU agencies and bodies, to pursue this work without delay;
  2. Highlights that the aim of the 2030 Agenda is to achieve greater well-being for all and that the three equal pillars of sustainable development, namely social, environmental and economic development, are essential for achieving the SDGs; underlines the fact that sustainable development is a fundamental objective of the Union as laid down in Article 3(3) of TEU and should play a central role in the debate on the future of Europe;

3. Welcomes the Commission's commitment to mainstreaming SDGs into all EU policies and initiatives, based on the principles of universality and integration; calls on the Commission to develop, without delay, a comprehensive short-, medium-, and long-term coherent, coordinated and overarching framework strategy on the implementation of the 17 SDGs and their 169 targets in the EU, recognising the inter-linkages and parity of the different SDGs by taking a multi-level governance and cross-sectoral approach; underlines, furthermore, the necessity of integrating all aspects of the 2030 Agenda into the European Semester and of ensuring Parliament's complete involvement in the process; calls on the First Vice-President, who has cross-cutting responsibility for sustainable development, to take a lead on this; stresses the fact that the EU and its Member States have made a commitment to fully implementing all SDGs and targets, both in practice and in spirit;
4. Recalls the importance of the underlying principle of the 2030 Agenda of 'leaving no one behind'; asks the Commission and the Member States to take strong action in addressing inequalities within and between countries, as these magnify the impact of other global challenges and hinder progress on sustainable development; asks the Commission and the Member States to promote research and data disaggregation in their policies in order to ensure that the most vulnerable and marginalised are included and prioritised;
5. Welcomes the Commission's commitment to mainstreaming the SDGs into its Better Regulation agenda and underlines the potential of using the Better Regulation tools strategically in order to evaluate EU policy coherence with regard to the 2030 Agenda; calls on the Commission to establish an SDG check of all new policies and legislation and to ensure full policy coherence in the implementation of the SDGs, while promoting synergies, gaining co-benefits and avoiding trade-offs, both at European and Member State levels; underlines the need to include sustainable development as an integrated part of the overarching framework of impact assessments, not as a separate impact assessment as is currently the case according to the Commission's Better Regulation toolbox; calls for the tools designed to measure and quantify medium- and long-term environmental outcomes in impact assessments to be improved; calls on the Commission, furthermore, to ensure that evaluations and fitness checks carried out within the framework of the Regulatory Fitness and Performance (REFIT) programme assess whether certain policies or legislation contribute to the ambitious implementation of the SDGs or actually hinder it; calls for the clear identification and differentiation of the governance level at which the targets should be implemented, while stressing that the principle of subsidiarity should be respected; calls for the establishment of clear and coherent sustainable development pathways at national and, if necessary, subnational or local levels for those Member States which have not done so already; stresses that the Commission should provide guidance for this process in order to ensure a harmonised format;
6. Underlines that the 7th EAP is, in itself, a key instrument for the implementation of the SDGs, although action taken in some sectors is still not enough to ensure that the SDGs will be met; calls on the Commission and the Member States to take all the necessary steps to fully implement the 7th EAP, to incorporate in the evaluation of the 7th EAP an assessment of the extent to which its goals correspond to the SDGs and, by taking these outcomes into account, to come up with a recommendation for the successor programme; calls on the Commission to propose in a timely manner a Union Environmental Action Programme for the period after 2020, as required by Article

192(3) of TFEU, as such a programme will contribute to achieving the SDGs in Europe;

7. Strongly urges the Commission to adhere to the governance agenda agreed upon in the Rio Declaration and in the 2030 Agenda, as well as in the 2002 Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) and Rio+20 Outcome Document of the 2012 UN Conference on Sustainable Development;
8. Considers that the Commission should encourage the Member States to promote the establishment or enhancement of sustainable development councils at national level, including at local level; and to enhance the participation and effective engagement of civil society and other relevant stakeholders in the relevant international forums and, in this regard, promote transparency and broad public participation and partnerships to implement sustainable development;
9. Recognises that in order to meet the SDGs, multi-stakeholder engagement will be required from the EU, Member States' local and regional authorities, civil society, citizens, business and third partners; calls on the Commission to ensure that the multi-stakeholder platform announced in its communication becomes a model of best practice for facilitating the planning, implementation, monitoring and review of the 2030 Agenda; stresses that the platform should mobilise the expertise of different key sectors, promote innovation and contribute to ensuring effective links with stakeholders, encouraging the bottom-up promotion of sustainable development; stresses, moreover, that the platform should be much broader in scope than a peer-learning platform and allow for a real engagement of stakeholders in the planning and monitoring of the implementation of the SDGs; calls on the Commission to promote synergies with other related platforms such as the REFIT platform, the Circular Economy Platform, the High Level Working Group on Competitiveness and Growth and the High Level Expert Group on Sustainable Finance, and to report to Parliament and the Council on how the recommendations of the platform will be followed up;
10. **Calls on the Commission** to step up efforts to facilitate the governance of the SDGs to **ensure** the following:
  - (i) **Multi-sector**: by setting up a national co-ordination structure responsible for the **follow-up of Agenda 21** which would benefit from the expertise of NGOs;
  - (ii) **Multi-level**: by establishing an effective institutional framework for sustainable development at all levels;
  - (iii) **Multi-actor**: by facilitating and encouraging public awareness and participation by making information widely available;
  - (iv) A focus on improving the science-policy interface;
  - (v) Establishing a clear timetable that combines short-term and long-term thinking.

Asks the Commission, therefore, to ensure that the multi-stakeholder platform results not only in pooling, but also in the dissemination of working knowledge on SDGs, and to ensure that the platform influences the policy agenda. As such, requests that the Commission, with input from Parliament and the Council, create a multi-stakeholder platform that engages actors from across a range of sectors. Business and industry, consumer groups, trade unions, social NGOs, environment and climate NGOs,

development cooperation NGOs and local government and city representatives should all be represented in a forum of no less than 30 stakeholders. The meetings should be open to as many actors as possible and designed to be expanded if interest increases over time. The platform should, in its quarterly meetings, identify issues which present impediments to delivering on the SDGs. Parliament should consider the establishment of a working group on the SDGs so as to ensure horizontal working within Parliament on the topic. This forum should consist of MEPs representing as many of the Committees as possible. The Commission and Parliament should both be active in the meetings of the multi-stakeholder platform meetings. The Commission should produce an update to the platform each year on its future plans to help with SDG implementation, as well as a document that would be accessible at all levels in all Member States about best practice in implementing SDGs ahead of the UN SDG high level meetings in June/July. The Committee of Regions should act as a bridge between local actors and national actors;

11. Welcomes the increasing amount of institutional and private capital allocated to financing the SDGs and invites the Commission and the Member States to develop sustainable development criteria for EU institutional spending, to identify potential regulatory barriers and incentives to SDG investment and to explore opportunities for convergence and cooperation between public and private investments;
12. Welcomes the potential contribution of the Environmental Implementation Review to the achievement of the SDGs through the improved implementation of the *acquis* in the Member States; warns, however, that this review should not be considered a replacement for other tools such as infringement procedures;
13. Urges the Commission to develop effective monitoring, tracking and review mechanisms for implementing and mainstreaming the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda and calls on the Commission, in cooperation with Eurostat, to establish a set of specific progress indicators for the internal application of the SDGs in the EU; calls for the Commission to carry out annual reporting on the EU's progress in SDG implementation; stresses that the Member States should be supported by the Commission in their coherent reporting; calls for Parliament to become a partner in the process, particularly in the second work stream post-2020, and calls for annual dialogue and reporting between Parliament, the Council and the Commission, culminating in the production of a report; urges that the results should be both transparent and easily understandable and communicable for a wide range of audiences; highlights the importance of transparency and democratic accountability when monitoring the 2030 Agenda and therefore underlines the role of the co-legislators in this process; considers that the conclusion of a binding interinstitutional agreement under Article 295 of TFEU would provide an appropriate arrangement for cooperation in this regard;
14. Recalls that Member States are required to report to the UN on their performance with respect to the SDGs; emphasises that these Member State reports should be developed in cooperation with competent local and regional authorities; underlines that in Member States with federal or devolved levels of government it is necessary to detail the specific challenges and obligations of these delegated levels of government in achieving the SDGs;
15. Calls on the Commission to promote sustainable global value chains with the introduction of due diligence systems for companies, with a focus on their entire supply

chain, which would encourage businesses to invest more responsibly and stimulate a more effective implementation of sustainability chapters in free trade agreements, including in the areas of anticorruption, transparency, anti-tax avoidance and responsible business conduct;

16. Considers that any future vision of Europe must embrace the SDGs as a key principle, and that in doing so Member States should be moving towards sustainable economic models, and the role of the EU in achieving sustainable development should therefore be at the heart of the reflections launched by the Commission's White Paper of 1 March 2017 on the Future of Europe (COM(2017)2025), where a stronger dimension of sustainability in the context of economic growth is needed; considers that achieving the SDGs and 2030 Agenda is crucial for the EU and that achieving the SDGs should be Europe's legacy to future generations; recognises that the 2030 Agenda is in line with the principles and values of the Union and that achieving the SDGs therefore naturally follows the European Union's plans to create a better, healthier and more sustainable future for Europe;
17. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to build capacities for integrated assessment, technological and institutional innovation and financial mobilisation for the achievement of the SDGs;
18. Recognises that most European countries, both EU and non-EU, are signatories to the SDG agreement; considers that, in the context of the debate on the future of Europe, consideration should be given to the development of a pan-European framework for the achievement of the SDGs among Member States of the EU and EEA, signatories to EU association agreements, EU candidate countries and, following its withdrawal, the United Kingdom;
19. Stresses the role of the High-Level Political Forum in the follow-up and review of the SDGs, and calls on the Commission and Council to honour the EU's leading role in designing and implementing the 2030 Agenda by agreeing joint EU positions and joined-up EU reporting, based on coordinated reporting from the Member States and the EU institutions, ahead of the High-Level Political Forum under the auspices of the General Assembly; invites the Commission to take stock of existing actions during the upcoming High-Level Political Forum and the specific SDGs that will be under review;
20. Considers that the EU should be the global frontrunner of the transition to a low-carbon economy and a sustainable production-consumption system; invites the Commission to orient its science, technology and innovation (STI) policies towards the SDGs and calls on it to devise a communication on STI for sustainable development ('STI4SD'), as recommended by the Commission Expert Group on the 'Follow-up to Rio+20, notably the SDGs', in order to formulate and support long-term policy coordination and cohesion;
21. Stresses that science, technology and innovation are particularly important tools for implementing the SDGs; emphasises the need for Horizon 2020 and future framework programmes for research to integrate better the concept of sustainable development and societal challenges;
22. Recalls that, as set out in its 12 May 2016 resolution, Parliament should have a clear role in the EU's implementation of the 2030 Agenda;

23. Welcomes recent initiatives to promote resource efficiency, *inter alia* through the promotion of waste prevention, reuse and recycling, limiting energy recovery to non-recyclable materials and phasing out landfilling of recyclable or recoverable waste, as put forward in the Circular Economy Action Plan and the proposal for new, ambitious EU waste targets, which will, *inter alia*, contribute to SDG 12 and the reduction of marine litter; recognises that achieving the SDGs and meeting the climate change targets in a cost-effective manner will require increases in resource efficiency and will, by 2050, reduce annual global GHG emissions by 19 % and the GHG emissions of the G7 nations by up to 25 % alone; points to the fact that 12 out of the 17 SDGs are dependent on the sustainable use of natural resources; highlights the importance of sustainable consumption and production by increasing efficiency and by reducing pollution, resource demand and waste; stresses the need to decouple growth, resource use and environmental impacts; calls on the Commission to draft a regular report on the state of the Circular economy that details its state and trends and enables existing policies to be modified on the basis of objective, reliable and comparable information; calls on the Commission, furthermore, to ensure that the circular economy delivers a significant drop in the use of virgin materials, a reduction in materials waste, longer lasting products, and the use of manufacturing by-products and excess materials previously considered waste streams; calls on the Commission to come up with an ambitious and comprehensive strategy on plastics while also adhering to the 2020 target for the environmentally sound management of chemicals, taking into account the objective on non-toxic materials cycles as laid down in the 7th EAP; considers that coordinated action at European level against food waste is crucial to SDG 2; underlines the EU target of reducing food waste by 50 % by 2030;
24. Stresses that Decision No 1386/2013/EU indicates that the current systems of production and consumption in the global economy generate a large amount of waste which, combined with a growing demand for goods and services to the point of resource exhaustion, are contributing to the rise in price of essential raw materials, minerals and energy, while generating even more pollution and waste, increasing global greenhouse gas emissions, and accelerating soil degradation and deforestation; consequently, efforts need to be made on the part of the EU and its Member States to ensure the life-cycle assessment (LCA) of products and services so as to evaluate their real impact with regard to sustainability;
25. Recalls that decoupling economic growth from resource consumption is essential for limiting environmental impacts and for improving Europe's competitiveness and reducing its resource dependency;
26. Stresses that in order for the EU to meet the goals of the 2030 Agenda it is essential that these are comprehensively reflected in the European Semester, including by addressing green jobs, resource efficiency, and sustainable investments and innovation; notes that a resource-efficient economy has great potential for job creation and economic growth, as by 2050 it would add an extra USD 2 trillion to the global economy and generate an extra USD 600 billion in the GDP of G7 countries;
27. Calls on the Commission to emphasise to all stakeholders, including investors, trade unions and citizens, the benefits of transforming unsustainable productions into activities that make it possible to implement the sustainable development goals and the benefits of permanent retraining of the workforce with a view to green, clean, high-quality employment;

28. Stresses the importance of meeting SDG 2 on sustainable agriculture and the SDGs on preventing pollution and the overuse of water (6.3 & 6.4), on improving soil quality (2.4 & 15.3), and on halting biodiversity loss (15) at EU level;
29. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to address the significant delays in achieving good water status under the Water Framework Directive, and to ensure the attainment of SDG 6; notes the EEA's assessment that more than half of the river and lake water bodies in Europe have an ecological status that is classified as less than good and that water ecosystems are still experiencing the most significant deterioration and biodiversity decline; calls on the Commission to support innovative approaches to sustainable water management, including by unlocking the full potential of waste water, and applying the principles of circular economy in water management, by implementing measures to promote the safe reuse of waste water in agriculture and in the industrial and municipal sectors; emphasises that around 70 million Europeans experience water stress during the summer months; recalls, moreover, that approximately 2 % of the total population of the EU does not have full access to drinking water, which disproportionately affects vulnerable, marginalised groups; recalls, furthermore, that there are 10 deaths a day in Europe as a result of unsafe water and poor sanitation and hygiene;
30. Welcomes the Commission's joint communication for the future of our oceans, which proposes 50 actions for safe, secure, clean and sustainably managed oceans in Europe and around the world in order to meet SDG 14 – an urgent goal given the need for rapid recovery of European seas and global oceans;
31. Stresses the environmental significance and socio-economic benefits of biodiversity and notes that according to the latest 'Planetary boundaries' report, current values of biodiversity loss have crossed the planetary boundary, while biosphere integrity is considered a core boundary which when significantly altered brings the earth system into a new state; notes with concern that the targets of the EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy and of the Convention on Biological Diversity will not be met without substantial additional efforts; recalls that around 60 % of animal species and 77 % of protected habitats are in less than optimal conditions<sup>1</sup>; calls on the Commission and the Member States to step up their efforts in order to achieve these targets, by, *inter alia*, fully implementing the Nature Directives and recognising the added value of the ecosystems and biodiversity of the European environment by allocating sufficient resources, including in future budgets for biodiversity conservation, in particular to the Natura 2000 network and the LIFE programme; reiterates the necessity for a common tracking methodology that takes into account all direct and indirect spending on biodiversity and the efficiency of that spending, while stressing that overall EU spending must have no negative impact on biodiversity and should support the achievement of Europe's biodiversity targets;
32. Stresses that the full implementation, enforcement and adequate financing of the Nature Directives is a vital prerequisite for ensuring the success of the biodiversity strategy as a whole and meeting its headline target; welcomes the Commission's decision not to

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<sup>1</sup> EEA Report No 30/2016, Environmental indicator report 2016 — In support to the monitoring of the 7th Environment Action Programme:  
<https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/environmental-indicator-report-2016>.

revise the Nature Directives;

33. Urges the Commission and the Member States to quickly complete and bolster the Natura 2000 ecological network, while stepping up efforts to ensure that a sufficient number of special areas of conservation (SACs) are designated as such in accordance with the Habitats Directive and that a designation of that kind is combined with effective measures to protect biodiversity in Europe;
34. Notes that research shows that unsustainable agriculture is a key driver of loss of soil organic carbon and soil biodiversity; calls on the EU to promote methods that build soil quality, such as rotations including legumes and livestock, thereby enabling the EU to meet SDGs 2.4 and 15.3;
35. Considers that the EU must do much more to achieve SDG 15; urges the Commission, in particular, to prioritise the topic of environmental decontamination by proposing harmonised standards against the use and degradation of soil and by presenting as soon as possible the action plan against deforestation and forest degradation that has been announced several times and the time schedule for its implementation;
36. Recognises that changes in soil biodiversity and soil organic carbon are mostly driven by land management practices and land use change as well as climate change, which has a severe, negative impact on entire ecosystems and society; calls on the Commission, therefore, to devote particular attention to soil-related issues in the forthcoming 8th EAP;
37. Stresses that EU imports of soybean meal for animal nutrition contribute to deforestation in South America, thereby undermining the SDGs on deforestation, climate change and biodiversity;
38. Calls on the Commission to step up efforts as a global player in protecting the important ecology and environment of the Arctic; strongly urges the Commission not to allow any policies which incentivise the exploitation of the Arctic for fossil fuels;
39. Welcomes the focus on biodiversity, natural resources and ecosystems, and the acknowledged link between these elements and human health and well-being; stresses the need for a 'One Health' approach encompassing human, animal and environmental health, and recalls that investment in research and innovation aimed at developing new health technologies is an essential precondition for achieving the SDGs; urges the Commission to undertake an analysis very swiftly in order to respond to the OECD EU Health at a Glance publication, which shows that life expectancy has not risen in many EU Member States; notes that equitable access to high-quality healthcare is the key to sustainable health systems as it has the potential to reduce inequalities; stresses that more efforts are needed in order to address the multi-dimensional barriers to access at individual, provider and health system levels – and to continue to invest in innovation and medical research and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) with a view to developing health solutions that are accessible, sustainable and geared towards combating the global scourge of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis meningitis, Hepatitis C and other neglected infectious diseases, which are often tied to poverty; points out that investing in global medical research and development is crucial for addressing emerging health challenges such as epidemics and resistance to antibiotics;

40. Underlines the fact that the oceans economy, or ‘blue economy’, offers important opportunities for the sustainable use and conservation of marine resources, and that suitable capacity-building support for developing and implementing planning tools and management systems can enable developing countries to seize these opportunities; underlines the major role that the European Union must play in this regard;
41. Recognises the nexus between the extraction of fisheries resources and conservation and trade; recognises, furthermore, that the opportunity cost of not acting to address harmful fishing subsidies is extremely high, as without action resources will be depleted, food insecurity will result and those sources of employment that were sought to be preserved will be destroyed;
42. Recalls that the EU and its Member States are all signatories to the Paris Agreement, and are therefore committed to its objectives, which require global action; underlines the need to integrate the long-term decarbonisation objective to limit global warming to well below 2 °C, and to pursue efforts to further limit this increase to 1,5 °C;
43. Recalls that the Commission proposal for the 2030 climate and energy framework sets three key targets for 2030: a reduction in GHG emissions of at least 40 %, at least 27 % of EU energy demand to be met with renewables and an improvement in energy efficiency of at least 30 %; recalls the positions taken by Parliament on these targets; underlines the need to keep these targets under review and to prepare a mid-century zero emissions strategy for the EU, providing a cost-efficient pathway, by taking into account the regional and national specificities within the EU, towards reaching the net zero emissions goals of the Paris Agreement;
44. Calls for the EU and the Member States to effectively mainstream climate change mitigation and adaptation in development policies; highlights the need to encourage technology transfers for energy efficiency and clean technologies, and to support investments in small-scale, off-grid and decentralised renewable energy projects; calls for the EU to scale up its assistance to sustainable agriculture in order to cope with climate change, by means of targeted support for small-scale farmers, crop diversification, agro-forestry and agro-ecological practices;
45. Notes that environmental degradation and climate change pose significant risks to establishing and maintaining peace and justice; recognises the need for a higher profile of the part that climate change and environmental degradation are playing in driving global migration, as well as poverty and hunger; calls for the EU and the Member States to maintain climate change as a strategic priority in diplomatic dialogues at global level, including in high-level bilateral and bi-regional dialogues with the G7, the G20, at the UN and with partner countries such as China in order to continue a positive and active dialogue that speeds up the global clean energy transition and avoids dangerous climate change;
46. Recognises the work of the US-based Center for Climate and Security in identifying flashpoints between climate change and international security, which refers to climate change as a ‘threat multiplier’ which could demand greater humanitarian or military intervention and lead to more severe storms that threaten cities and military bases;
47. Underlines the fact that energy poverty, which is often defined as a situation whereby individuals or households are not able to adequately heat or provide other required

energy services in their homes at an affordable cost, is a problem across many Member States; stresses that energy poverty is due to rising energy prices, the recessionary impact on national and regional economies and poor energy efficient homes; recalls that according to the EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC), it is estimated that 54 million European citizens (10,8 % of the EU's population) were unable to keep their home adequately warm in 2012, with similar numbers being reported with regard to the late payment of utility bills or presence of poor housing conditions; calls on the Member States to recognise and address this problem, as guaranteeing basic energy services is critical for ensuring that communities do not suffer negative health impacts, do not become further entrenched in poverty and can maintain a good quality of life, as well as for ensuring the financial outlay to assist households that require support does not become too burdensome; stresses that modern energy services are crucial to human well-being and to a country's economic development; and yet globally 1,2 billion people are without access to electricity and more than 2,7 billion people are without clean cooking facilities; recalls, furthermore, that more than 95 % of these people live either in sub-Saharan African or developing Asia, and around 80 % live in rural areas; stresses that energy is central to nearly every major challenge and opportunity the world faces today; stresses that, be it for jobs, security, climate change, food production or increasing incomes, access to energy for all is essential, and that sustainable energy represents opportunity – it transforms lives, economies and the planet;

48. Recommends a full integration of climate action across the EU budget (climate action mainstreaming), ensuring that measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions are integrated into all investment decisions in Europe;
49. Calls on the Commission to produce a report every five years, starting within six months of the 2018 facilitative dialogue under the UNFCCC, on the EU's climate legislation, including the Effort Sharing Regulation and the ETS Directive, in order to ascertain that this legislation is effective in making the expected contribution to EU GHG reduction efforts and to establish whether the current trajectory for reductions will be enough to meet the SDGs and the goals of the Paris Agreement; further requests that the Commission revise and scale up the 2030 climate and energy framework and the EU's nationally determined contribution by 2020 at the latest, so that they are sufficiently aligned with the long-term objectives of the Paris Agreement and the SDGs; calls for the Commission to incentivise the potential for GHG absorption by encouraging the development of policies that support afforestation with proper forest management practices, in view of the fact that the EU has, under the 2030 Agenda, committed to promoting the implementation of sustainable forest management, to halting deforestation, restoring degraded forests and increasing afforestation and reforestation globally by 2020;
50. Underlines the fact that efforts to mitigate global warming are not an obstacle to economic growth and employment and that, on the contrary, the decarbonisation of the economy should be seen as a key source for new and sustainable economic growth and employment; acknowledges, nevertheless, that in moving towards any new economic and social model, communities centred around traditional industries are likely to face challenges; underlines the importance of support in this transition and calls on the Commission and Member States to stream funding from sources such as the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) in order to finance modernisation and a just transition to help such communities and to promote the adoption of the best technology and

production practices to ensure the best environmental standards and safe, stable and sustainable work;

51. Notes that continuous biodiversity loss, the negative effects of deforestation and climate change can lead to growing competition for resources such as food and energy, to increased poverty, global political instability, and population displacements and new global migration patterns; insists that the Commission, the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Member States should consider these in all aspects of external relations and international diplomacy while ensuring a substantial increase in Official Development Assistance (ODA) financing; asks that the Commission, the EEAS and the Member States pursue, in all actions and interactions with third countries, efforts to reduce emissions by promoting renewable energy sources, resource efficiency biodiversity and forest protection, and by promoting climate change mitigation and adaptation;
52. Calls on the Commission to ensure that EU external policies are compatible with the SDGs, and to identify areas where further action or implementation is needed to ensure that EU external policies support effective implementation of the SDGs and do not conflict with SDGs and their implementation in other regions, especially developing countries; calls on the Commission, to this end, to set in motion a reliable process starting with a foresight/early warning method for new initiatives and proposals, including the revision of existing legislation, and to come forward with a proposal for an overarching external Sustainable Development Strategy; emphasises the available tools and forums such as the European Fund for Sustainable Development (EFSD), the UNECE Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (RFSD) the High-Level Political Forum, and the UN central platform; calls for a voluntary review at the High-Level Political Forum in line with the 2030 Agenda, which encourages Member States to 'conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress'; emphasises the role of regular and adequate ex-ante impact assessments in this regard; recalls the Treaty obligation to take into account the objectives of development cooperation in all policies which are likely to affect developing countries;
53. Underlines the importance of ODA as a key instrument for achieving the 2030 Agenda, for eradicating poverty in all its forms and fighting inequalities, while reiterating that development aid alone is not sufficient to lift developing countries out of poverty; stresses the need to promote instruments which encourage greater accountability, such as budget support; calls for the EU and its Member States to reconfirm their commitment without delay to the 0,7 % of the gross national income target and to submit detailed timeline proposals for gradually increasing ODA in order to achieve it; recalls the EU's commitment to allocate at least 20 % of its ODA to human development and social inclusion and asks for a renewed commitment to this end; calls on the Commission to achieve the OECD Development Assistance Committee's (DAC) recommendation of reaching an annual average grant element of total ODA commitments of 86 %; calls for ODA to be protected from diversion and for the internationally agreed development effectiveness principles to be respected, by retaining the fundamental ODA objective of poverty eradication, with a particular focus on least developed countries (LDCs) and fragile contexts; recalls the need to go beyond the donor/beneficiary relationship in a broader development agenda;
54. Stresses that ensuring tax justice and transparency, fighting tax dodging, eradicating illicit financial flows and tax havens, together with improved public finance

management, sustainable economic growth and increasing Domestic Resources Mobilisation, is crucial for financing the 2030 Agenda; calls for the EU to create a funding programme (DEVETAX2030) to specifically assist the establishment of tax structures in emerging market economies and to help developing countries to create new regional tax authority offices; reiterates its calls for a global financial transaction tax in order to tackle the global challenges of poverty, for an investigation into the spill-over impact on developing countries of all national and EU tax policies, and for the principle of PCD to be upheld when legislating in this field;

55. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to re-adjust their approach to migration with a view to developing a migration policy in line with SDG 10 and a fact-based perception of migrants and asylum-seekers and with countering xenophobia and discrimination against migrants, as well as with a view to investing in key drivers for human development; reiterates its concerns that the new policies and financial instruments to address the root causes of irregular and forced migration may be implemented to the detriment of development objectives, and asks for the European Parliament to be given a stronger scrutinising role in this regard so as to ensure that the new funding tools are compatible with the legal basis, principles and commitments of the EU, especially the 2030 Agenda; recalls that the primary objective of development cooperation is the eradication of poverty and economic and social long-term development;
56. Welcomes the emphasis placed on investing in young people as the main implementers of the SDGs; stresses the need to harness the demographic dividend of developing countries by means of appropriate public policies and investment in youth education and health, including sexual and reproductive health and education; stresses the opportunity to finally advance gender equality and women's empowerment as an essential element of PCD and urges the EU to mainstream these across all external action areas; recognises that these key enablers for human development and human capital need to be prioritised in order to guarantee sustainable development;
57. Calls for the EU and its Member States to commit the necessary resources and political focus to ensure that the principle of gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment is at the core of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda;
58. Presses the Commission and the Member States to ensure that public budgets do not conflict with the SDGs; considers that significant acceleration of green investment, innovation and growth in the EU is needed for the timely and successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda and recognises that new financing tools and different approaches to current investment policy, such as the phasing out of environmentally harmful subsidies and high-emission projects, are necessary; calls for a strategy for the integration of environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors by multinationals and businesses in their corporate business models and by institutional investors in their investment strategies in order to shift funds to sustainable finance and divest from fossil fuels;
59. Calls for the post-2020 MFF to reorient the Union's budget towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, ensuring that sufficient funding is allocated to effectively achieving the SDGs; calls for enhanced mainstreaming of sustainable development in all funding mechanisms and budgetary lines, reiterating that long-term policy coherence plays an important role in cost minimisation; highlights the significance of cohesion policy as the main investment policy of the EU, and recalls that

a horizontal application of sustainability criteria and performance-based objectives for all EU structural and investment funds, including the European Fund for Strategic Investments, is needed in order to achieve a comprehensive transition to sustainable and inclusive economic growth;

60. Calls on the European Investment Bank (EIB) to ensure that it lives up to the values of Europe in implementing strong sustainability criteria in its lending, and in particular that lending to the energy and transport sectors is targeted at low-carbon and sustainable projects;
61. Calls on the EIB to commit 40 % of its lending portfolio to low-carbon and climate-resilient growth by 2030;
62. Asks the EIB to allocate more funds to the ELENA initiative to provide grants for technical assistance focused on the implementation of energy efficiency, distributed renewable energy and urban transport projects and programmes;
63. Recognises that resilient and sustainable infrastructure is a key principle of achieving a low-carbon sustainable future and brings a number of co-benefits such as durability and improved protection from fire and flooding; considers that a transition to a sustainable society can be achieved by adhering to the principle of ‘energy efficiency first’ and continuing to improve the efficiency of appliances, power grids and buildings while developing storage systems; recognises that the greatest potential for energy efficiency lies in buildings and asks the EU to commit to a 2050 goal of an entirely sustainable, decarbonised, energy-efficient building stock that has nearly zero energy demand and where any residual demand is supplied from a wide range of renewable sources; calls for an accelerated increase in the share of renewable energy in the EU energy mix; warns against the lock-in of unsustainable infrastructure and calls on the Commission to propose measures for an orderly transition to a sustainable low-carbon economy and a fundamental reorientation of infrastructure development in order to mitigate the systemic economic risks associated with high-carbon financial assets;
64. Calls on the Commission and its Member States to prioritise sustainable mobility by improving local public transport systems in line with the specific characteristics of every country and on the basis of the real needs of its citizens; considers that EU financial support for the development of the transport sector and infrastructures should pursue objectives that bring real added value to the Member States;
65. Underlines that corruption has a serious impact on the environment, and that trafficking in endangered species of wildlife, minerals and precious stones, as well as forest products such as timber, are also inextricably linked to corruption; underlines further that trafficking in wildlife can further threaten endangered species, while illegal logging can lead to a loss of biodiversity and increase carbon emissions, which contribute to climate change; stresses that for organised criminal groups the profits are good and come with little risk, as forest crimes are rarely prosecuted and the sanctions often do not match the gravity of the crime; recalls that the United Nations Convention against Corruption, with its comprehensive focus on corruption prevention, effective law enforcement, international cooperation and asset recovery, can be an effective tool for combating corruption in the environmental sector; calls on the Member States to integrate anti-corruption strategies such as transparency and accountability into environmental legislation and policies and to enhance democracy and good governance;

stresses that tackling corruption in the environmental sector will help create equitable access to essential resources such as water and a clean environment and is essential for protecting our environment and ensuring sustainable development;

66. Recognises the importance of culture and cultural participation to delivering on the SDG agenda, as well as the role played by culture in external relations and development policy; calls for proper support for cultural institutions and organisations in delivering on the SDG agenda as well as further deepening links between research, science, innovation and the arts;
67. Recalls that cultural participation improves physical and mental health and well-being, positively impacts school and professional performance, helps people most at risk of social exclusion to enter the labour market, and thus contributes greatly to the achievement of many SDGs;
68. Is deeply concerned at the differences in the performance of education systems in Member States, as shown by the latest PISA reports; stresses that properly resourced public education and training systems, accessible to all, are essential for equality and social inclusion and for meeting the targets set by SDG 4, and that quality education has the ability to empower vulnerable people, minorities, people with special needs and women and girls; regrets the persistent problem of high youth unemployment; notes that education is key to developing self-sustaining societies; calls for the EU to link quality education, technical and vocational training and cooperation with industry as an essential precondition for youth employability and access to qualified jobs;
69. Calls for the EU and its Member States to protect regional, minority and lesser-used languages and linguistic diversity and to ensure that linguistic discrimination is not tolerated when integrating the SDGs into the European policy framework and current and future Commission priorities;
70. Believes that cultural diversity and the protection of natural heritage should be promoted across the European policy framework, including through education;
71. Calls on the Member States to prioritise the environmental and economic reconversion of industrial sites that in many areas of Europe cause high levels of pollution in environmental media and expose locals to serious health risks;
72. Underlines the role that the EU Urban Agenda will play in implementing the global 'New Urban Agenda', and welcomes policy developments that empower cities and regions to make synergistic green investments; welcomes also initiatives such as the Green Leaf Award and the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, and further emphasises the indispensable importance that cities and regions have in delivering on the SDGs, as sustainability requires collaborative and long-term approaches from all levels of governance and all sectors;
73. Recalls that the 2030 Agenda recognises that we can no longer look at food, livelihoods and the management of natural resources separately; underlines that a focus on rural development and investment in agriculture – crops, livestock, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture – are powerful tools for ending poverty and hunger, and bringing about sustainable development; notes that agriculture has a major role to play in combating climate change; stresses that the great ambition of the SDGs can only be achieved

through cooperation – North-South, South-South and triangular – and global partnerships between multiple actors and across a broad range of areas;

74. Welcomes the intention to mainstream trade and investment policy which integrates sustainable development, and calls for the impacts of sourcing commodities and natural resources within and outside the EU to be better addressed in EU policy-making, within and beyond the EU's borders; calls for a rethink of the investment policy and for the broad use of innovative financing tools for the achievement of the SDGs; calls on the Commission to ensure that sustainable development checks on future trade agreements are transparent;
75. Calls on the Commission to design, with the involvement of relevant stakeholders, and provide, specific, tailored support for marginalised, low-income households and groups such as Roma people to ensure healthy lives and access to basic services and safe, clean natural resources such as air, water, affordable and modern energy and healthy nutrition, which would also contribute to attaining SDGs 1, 10 and 15 on ending poverty, reducing inequality and promoting peaceful and inclusive societies;
76. Acknowledges, as in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, that persons with disabilities are at very high risk of living in poverty, with inadequate access to basic rights such as education, health and employment;
77. Considers that EU initiatives geared towards creating a sustainable future cannot disregard the wider debate on the role of animals as sentient beings and their well-being, which is often neglected in the prevailing production and consumption systems; stresses that the EU needs to overcome the current political and legislative shortcomings with regard to animal welfare, as demanded by an increasing number of European citizens;
78. Calls on the Commission to scale up efforts and funding for awareness raising, targeted education campaigns and enhancing citizens' commitments and action for sustainable development;
79. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to end by 2020 incentives for palm-oil- and soy-based biofuels that lead to deforestation and peatland damage; calls furthermore for the introduction of a single certification scheme for palm oil entering the EU market that certifies the socially responsible origin of the product;
80. Strongly urges the Commission to continue stepping up action on effective measures to tackle poor air quality, which is responsible for over 430 000 premature deaths in the EU every year; urges the Commission to ensure that new and existing legislation is enforced to speed up legal actions against Member States failing to comply with air pollution laws, and to propose new, effective legislation, including sector-specific legislation, to tackle poor ambient air quality and the various sources of pollution while also addressing methane emissions; underlines the fact that the EU is still far from achieving the air quality levels set for the EU, which are much less stringent than those recommended by the WHO;
81. Notes that the Commission has addressed the problem of poor air quality by launching a number of infringement procedures, in particular against those continuously exceeding the NO<sub>2</sub> limit values laid down in Directive 2008/50/EC;

82. Points out that a reduction in noise pollution is one of the quality parameters that will not be achieved by 2020; stresses that, in the EU, exposure to noise contributes to at least 10 000 premature deaths per year related to coronary heart disease and stroke, and that in 2012 approximately a quarter of the EU population was exposed to noise louder than the limit values; calls on the Member States to prioritise monitoring noise levels and to ensure that the limit values for external and internal environments are respected; calls furthermore for measures to address noise pollution;
83. Stresses that Commission data shows that over 50 % of EU cereals are used to feed animals; notes that the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation has warned that further use of cereals as animal feed could threaten food security by reducing the grain available for human consumption;
84. Stresses the contribution that the livestock sector makes to the EU economy and to sustainable agriculture, particularly when integrated into arable production systems; draws attention to the potential of active nutrient cycle management in the livestock sector to reduce the environmental impact of CO<sub>2</sub>, ammonia and nitrate emissions; draws attention, furthermore, to the potential of integrated farming to contribute to a better functioning agricultural ecosystem and a climate-friendly farming sector;
85. Notes that women working in farming in developing countries could increase farm yields by 20-30 % if they had the same access to resources as men; stresses that this level of yield could reduce the number of people who go hungry around the world by 12-17 %;
86. Stresses, in particular, the fundamental role of women as members of family farms, which constitute the main socioeconomic cell of rural areas, in caring for food production, preservation of traditional knowledge and skills, cultural identity and protection of the environment, bearing in mind that women in rural areas are also affected by wage and pension gaps;
87. Recalls that, under the 7th Environment Action Programme, the Commission is required to assess the environmental impact, in a global context, of Union consumption; stresses the positive impact that sustainable lifestyles can have on human health and reducing greenhouse gas emissions; reminds the Commission that SDG 12.8 requires that the public have information and awareness regarding sustainable development and lifestyles; accordingly, urges the Commission and the Member States to develop programmes to increase public awareness of the implications of different types of consumption for human health, the environment, food security and climate change; calls on the Commission to publish the communication on a sustainable European food system without delay;
88. Notes that SDG 12.8 requires governments to ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness as regards sustainable development and lifestyle in harmony with nature; urges the Commission and the Member States, accordingly, to develop programmes to increase public awareness of the implications of consumption levels for human health, the environment, food security and climate change;
89. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to develop a comprehensive EU Policy Framework addressing global health challenges such as HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, Hepatitis C and antimicrobial resistance, bearing in mind the different situations and

specific challenges of EU Member States and their neighbouring countries where the burden of HIV and MDR-TB is highest; calls on the Commission and the Council to play a strong political role in the dialogue with high-disease burden countries, including neighbouring countries in Africa, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, ensuring that plans for sustainable transition to domestic funding are in place, so that HIV and TB programmes will be effective, continued and scaled up after the withdrawal of international donors' support and to continue to work closely with those countries in ensuring they take the responsibility and ownership of HIV and TB responses;

90. Recognises the effectiveness in making available 'PREP' medication for preventing HIV/AIDS; further calls on the Commission and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) to recognise that for HIV/AIDS treatment is also preventative;
91. Recognises that sexual reproductive health and rights (SRHR) are a key driver with transformative potential for multi-dimensional poverty eradication, and should be always recognised as a pre-condition for both healthy lives and gender equality; stresses, in this context, that greater attention must be paid to SRHR, which are unfortunately still treated as a niche issue, despite being of utmost importance for gender equality, youth empowerment and human development, and ultimately poverty eradication; underlines that this represents little progress from previous EU approaches, and that the recognition of SRHR as key drivers for sustainable development is still missing; notes that the EU position has been incoherent on this front, as shown in this package: the Commission recognises EU action in this domain only under 'health' in its communication on the 2030 Agenda, but only under 'gender equality' in the communication on the Consensus; calls on the Commission and the Member States therefore to continue to request that the United States rethink its stance on the so-called 'global gag rule';
92. Stresses the need to continue promoting health research to develop new and improved accessible, affordable and suitable medical solutions to HIV/AIDS, TB and other poverty-related and neglected diseases, emerging epidemics and antimicrobial resistance;
93. Points out that the EU farming sector is already making a contribution to sustainability; notes, however, that the common agricultural policy (CAP) must be enabled to better respond to current and future challenges; calls on the Commission to examine how the CAP and sustainable farming systems can best contribute to the SDGs in order to guarantee stable, safe and nutritious food as well as protecting and enhancing natural resources while tackling climate change; asks the Commission, in the framework of the upcoming communication on the post-2020 CAP, to come forward with proposals to further improve the efficiency of greening measures and to ensure the attainment of SDGs 2, 3, 6, 12, 13, 14 & 15; calls on the Commission also to promote locally and ecologically produced food with a low carbon, land and water footprint; highlights the importance of agro-ecosystems and sustainable forest management and of providing incentives for the sustainable restoration of disused agricultural areas; underlines the need to ensure that all EU policies effectively achieve the set objectives through strict compliance and through greater coherence across policy areas; stresses that this is of particular relevance with regard to the sustainable management of natural resources and the instruments dedicated to this under the CAP;

94. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to promote this agro-ecological transition, while minimising the use of pesticides that are detrimental to health and the environment and developing measures to protect and support organic and biodynamic agriculture within the scope of the CAP;
95. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to reform the EU rules on the approval of pesticides as soon as possible, and to establish binding objectives to reduce their use;
96. Points out that the EU farming sector provides jobs for millions of people in rural areas in agriculture and in other sectors, guaranteeing food supplies and food security and attracting people to rural areas as a place in which to live, work and relax; points out, furthermore, that landscapes with a high biodiversity and high nature value attract people to the countryside, bringing added value to rural areas; notes the great value of rural development policy in building viable, robust and vibrant rural communities and economies; points out that better access for farmers to resources is essential in order to achieve this;
97. Calls for farming to be developed by focusing on family holdings, with the aid of a better use of European funds such as the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), and by paying special attention to small- and medium-sized holdings, by sharing and transferring expertise and by exploiting the advantages of local and regional value and production chains and regional employment, with greater emphasis on peri-urban links and direct sales, which have been a successful model in many parts of the EU; takes the view that the ability of farmers to generate fair remuneration from their labour is a prerequisite for the sustainability of European agriculture and a guarantee of farmers' welfare;
98. Recalls that it is important to guarantee proper public services, notably care for children and the elderly, given that such services are particularly important for women, since they have traditionally played a major role in looking after young and elderly family members;
99. Points out the important role of traditional knowledge and foodstuffs, especially in outermost regions, mountain areas and disadvantaged areas of the EU, as well as the economic contribution that European quality schemes such as Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) bring to local areas; recalls Parliament's unanimous support for extending such protection to a wider range of regionally produced goods; stresses, in this connection moreover, the role of EU quality schemes (PDO/PGI/TSG) in offering and maintaining livelihoods in those areas; recognises that these schemes are more widely known only in some Member States and calls for awareness to be raised across the Union on their advantages;
100. Stresses the contribution of the Mediterranean forest and the dehesa agroforestry system – which seamlessly combines sustained, extensive livestock farming with farming and forestry activities – to the objectives of conserving and ensuring the sustainability of biodiversity, for the purposes of recognition and support under the CAP;
101. Stresses the importance of bioenergy to farms and the bioeconomy, and of installations, for the generation, storage, distribution and on-farm use of renewable energy, as they help to secure farmers' incomes by offering them an additional product to sell, and both create and preserve high-quality jobs in rural areas; stresses that the development of

bioenergy must be pursued sustainably and must not hamper the production of food and feed; stresses that energy needs should instead be met by encouraging the use of waste and by-products that are not useful in any other process;

102. Notes that growing leguminous crops in arable rotation can deliver a win-win situation for farmers, animals, biodiversity and climate needs; calls on the Commission to come forward with a protein plan that includes leguminous crops in rotation;
103. Regards further progress in precision farming, digitalisation, the rational use of energy, plant and animal breeding and the mainstreaming of integrated pest management as necessary, because increased efficiency based on SDGs and biodiversity will help to reduce both the land requirement and the environmental impact of farming; considers that getting biodiversity to work for farmers could help to improve income, soil health and performance, and help with pest control and improving pollination; highlights, therefore, the importance of an improved regulatory framework so as to ensure timely, efficient and effective decision-making procedures; highlights that these ‘smart’ solutions should incentivise and support initiatives tailored to the needs of smallholdings without economies of scale to benefit from new technologies;
104. Considers it essential to maintain and develop the performance of traditional and local breeds, given their ability to adapt to the characteristics of their native environment, and for the right of farmers to breed plants autonomously and to store and exchange seeds of different species and varieties to be respected, in order to ensure the genetic diversity of agriculture; rejects attempts of any kind to patent life, plants and animals, genetic material, or essential biological processes, especially where native strains, varieties and characteristics are concerned;
105. Calls on the Commission to come forward with an action plan and to set up an expert group in order to work towards a more sustainable integrated plant protection management system; highlights the need for a pest management system that improves the interaction between plant breeding efforts, natural combat systems and pesticide use;
106. Believes it necessary to promote broadband availability and improve transport services in rural areas, so as to contribute not only to the achievement of environmental sustainability objectives but also to the promotion of growth in rural areas that is fully sustainable in environmental, economic and social terms;
107. Stresses that it is necessary to make culture an integral part of the Commission’s action for sustainability, clearly highlighting the role it plays in economic development, job creation, promoting democracy, social justice and solidarity, fostering cohesion, fighting social exclusion, poverty and generational and demographic disparities; calls on the Commission to mainstream culture in the objectives, definitions, tools and evaluation criteria of its strategy for the SDGs;
108. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.