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Answer given by Mr Vella  
on behalf of the European Commission  
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Despite efforts and progress in many areas, evidence indicates that overall, the EU will not achieve the biodiversity targets by 2020<sup>1</sup>. Key drivers of biodiversity loss are still deeply rooted in our socio-economic system. Addressing them requires even stronger engagement and acceptance by public and private actors, as well as political determination to re-define priorities, re-direct incentives and implement a long-term sustainability agenda.

The Mid-Term Review of the EU Biodiversity Strategy<sup>2</sup> and the Fitness Check of Nature Legislation<sup>3</sup> have highlighted critical implementation gaps. In order to address them, the EU and its Member States have launched many actions to provide guidance, improve knowledge, strengthen coherence, increase financing, build ownership and engage stakeholders<sup>4</sup>. Their implementation will continue through 2020. The Commission's evaluation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy, due by the end of 2020, will also inform the ongoing debate.

The green architecture of the common agricultural policy (CAP) consists of several instruments which have an impact on biodiversity and landscapes. This includes linking receipt of CAP support by farmers to a set of basic rules related to the Nature Directives, for example. The restoration and enhancement of biodiversity is one of the priorities of the CAP's rural development pillar. Member States can put forward in their rural development programmes support for agri-environment-climate measures, Natura 2000 payments, biodiversity related investments, forestry measures, advisory services, knowledge transfer and cooperation. In this context, Member States have programmed to cover more than 17% of agricultural land with management contracts supporting biodiversity.

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<sup>1</sup> IPBES Assessment of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services for ECA (2018); 6th EU Report to the CBD (2019)

<sup>2</sup> COM/2015/0478 final

<sup>3</sup> SWD(2016) 472 final

<sup>4</sup> See COM(2017) 198 final, COM/2018/395 final