

Agenda

1. The Maltese EU Presidency: General overview
2. Environmental Priorities during January and June 2017 (and thereafter)
3. Discuss rough structure of the EU Presidency: meetings, upcoming decisions on the EU presidency agenda
4. Input from each eNGOs: preparation, planned actions and communication
5. Identify national and international engagement opportunities with other working groups
6. Communication during Maltese EU Presidency
7. Discuss way forward

The Maltese EU Presidency: General overview

- The presidency of the Council rotates among the EU member states every **6 months**
- Tasks include: to **chair meetings at every level in the Council, mediate compromises between the 28 EU member states between EU institutions**
- Trio Presidency: sets long-term goals and prepares a common agenda, current trio is Netherlands (January to June 2016) and Slovakia (July to December 2016), **Malta (January to June 2017) – first EU Presidency**
- Malta will manages the daily EU policy debates, and to a certain extent has the possibility to **shape EU agenda priorities**
- <http://www.eu2017.mt/en/Pages/home.aspx>

The current EU Presidency: Key Areas and Main Goals

- Stronger economies with more jobs
- Societies enabled to empower and protect
- **A secure energy and climate future**
- A trusted area of fundamental freedoms
- Effective joint action in the world

- **Environment:** improved resource management in the areas of **waste, water, air and biodiversity**, creating **new green jobs** and developing a more competitive **resource-efficient economy** (including circular economy)

Engagement of NGO's during EU Presidencies

- The role of national NGOs is to **advocate** in close cooperation with international platforms for a few chosen priorities on EU and national level
 - Engagement on both **advocacy** and **project level**
 - Make use of the opportunity to **strengthen the platform, relationships and individual NGOs**
 - Highlight own work and combine forces to **achieve mutual goals**
 - Make use of the moment to **promote environmental awareness among civil society**

Environmental Priorities during January and June 2017

- Sustainable development, SDG's and Agenda 2030
- Avoiding harmful **international trade and investment agreements** (e.g. TTIP)
- Fighting **climate change** and improving **energy security**
- Creating a **circular economy** through product design and **better management of waste**
- Improving **environmental governance**
- Protecting **biodiversity** and **ecosystems**
- New steps to **chemical safety**, including nanotechnology and mercury
- Towards a **sustainable food and farming policy** as part of a new EU Budget of results
- An ecosystem based approach to **fisheries management** and **aquaculture production**

BirdLife Priorities during January and June 2017

- Nature Directives post Fitness Check
- New policy for Climate and Energy, including sustainability criteria for Biomass
- Fisheries and marine environment
- Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)
- Multiannual Financial Perspective
- Preparations for Our Ocean 2017

Dates: Important Meetings regarding Environment

- Slovakian EU Presidency:
 - Environmental Crime Conference on the European Union Action Plan for the Fight Against Environmental Crime **24 - 25 November 2016**
 - Informal meeting of Water and Marine Directors of the European Union, Candidate and EFTA Countries **27 November 2016**
 - Environment Council (ENV) **19 December 2016**
- Maltese EU Presidency
 - High-level meeting on future of EU (EU Brexit) **3 February 2017**
 - Council Meeting of Ministers of Environment **25 April 2017**
 - International Meeting on Med-Fish Forever **29 – 30 May 2017**
 - Meeting on Habitat Directive **End of May**
 - Meeting on Water and Marine **End of June**

Communication Strategy and way forward

- Draft policy briefs and position papers and distribute among national stakeholders to raise awareness
- Sending official (“lobby”) letters to the national administration
- Organize events for general public
- Participating in ministerial and working groups
- organizing roundtables and conferences in order to bring together multiple stakeholders to discuss relevant environmental issues in coordination with the EU calendar of meetings
- Meeting with all eNGO's once per month to catch up
 - Mailing list
 - Cooperation with other NGO's with overlapping agenda
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