MO1 MO Union of Young Democrats

Proposers:

Agenda item: 3. Chairing Member Organisation and Annual Agenda Applications

Why should biodiversity issues be considered a political challenge rather than solely an environmental one?

An opening topic to discuss how biodiversity is connected with the main pillars of CDNEE.

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Union of Young Democrats CoM Annual (2026/2027) Agenda Proposal

Biodiversity Priority: Restoration and Protection of Baltic and Freshwater Ecosystems

Lithuania is positioned between the Baltic Sea, the Curonian Lagoon, major river basins (Nemunas, Neris, Venta), extensive wetlands and forest ecosystems. Freshwater and coastal biodiversity are among the most threatened ecosystems in Eastern Europe due to pollution, habitat fragmentation, climate change, invasive species, and unsustainable land use.

Freshwater and coastal ecosystem restoration provides a clear link between environmental protection, democratic participation, economic resilience and social justice. It is also a shared challenge across Eastern Europe, making it highly relevant for CDNEE's regional mission.

Furthermore, healthy freshwater and coastal ecosystems contribute to food security, climate adaptation, public health, energy resilience and cross-border cooperation in the Baltic region. This allows Lithuania to present biodiversity not as a niche environmental issue, but as a foundation for sustainable and democratic societies.

Blue-Green Eastern Europe: Restoring Biodiversity for Democratic, Resilient and Just Societies

Vision

To strengthen biodiversity protection in Eastern Europe by promoting the restoration of freshwater, wetland and coastal ecosystems as a tool for environmental sustainability, democratic participation, social justice, economic resilience, and regional cooperation.

Objectives

1. Build knowledge among young progressive activists on biodiversity restoration and ecosystem governance.
2. Promote democratic participation in environmental decision-making.
3. Strengthen regional cooperation on shared ecological challenges.
4. Advocate for nature-positive economic development and just transition policies.
5. Ensure that biodiversity policies deliver tangible social benefits for local communities and vulnerable groups.

Political Priorities

From a perspective of democracy, biodiversity governance raises fundamental questions about participation, accountability and stewardship of common resources. The management of natural ecosystems requires transparent decision-making processes that balance different interests and ensure that communities have a meaningful voice in shaping their environment. Biodiversity protection therefore strengthens democratic culture by encouraging civic engagement, fostering trust in public institutions and promoting long-term thinking in policymaking. In this sense, healthy ecosystems and healthy democracies rely on similar principles: inclusion, responsibility and cooperation.

Within the pillar of foreign policy and security, biodiversity increasingly constitutes a matter of strategic importance. Environmental degradation does not respect national borders, and the condition of shared rivers, watersheds and marine ecosystems depends on cooperation among neighbouring countries. At the same time, climate change, resource scarcity and ecosystem decline can exacerbate social tensions and undermine regional stability. Protecting freshwater biodiversity contributes to resilience by reducing environmental vulnerabilities and strengthening the capacity of societies to respond to emerging challenges. It also creates opportunities for constructive international cooperation based on shared environmental interests and common responsibility for natural heritage.

The connection between climate, environment and biodiversity is particularly evident in freshwater, wetland and coastal ecosystems. Biodiversity loss and climate change are mutually reinforcing crises that cannot be effectively addressed separately. Diverse and healthy ecosystems enhance climate resilience, support adaptation to extreme weather events and provide natural mechanisms for carbon storage and regulation. At the same time, efforts to mitigate climate change are more successful when they preserve and restore ecological integrity. A focus on ecosystem restoration therefore reflects an integrated approach that recognises biodiversity as a prerequisite for long-term environmental sustainability.

From an economic perspective, biodiversity should be understood as a foundation of prosperity rather than a constraint on development. Ecosystems generate essential services that underpin economic activity, including clean water, fertile soils, flood protection and natural resources. The degradation of biodiversity imposes significant costs on societies, while investments in ecosystem health contribute to resilience, innovation and sustainable growth. A biodiversity-centred agenda promotes an economic model that values long-term sustainability, recognises environmental limits and seeks to align economic development with the preservation of natural capital for future generations.

Finally, biodiversity is closely connected to social rights and questions of equity. Access to a healthy environment, clean water and functioning ecosystems is increasingly recognised as an essential component of human well-being. Environmental degradation often disproportionately affects vulnerable communities, exacerbating existing inequalities and limiting opportunities for social development. Biodiversity protection therefore contributes to social justice by supporting healthier living conditions, strengthening community resilience and ensuring that the benefits provided by nature are accessible to all. Protecting ecosystems is not only an environmental responsibility but also a commitment to fairness and quality of life.

Union of Young Democrats proposes to place **freshwater, wetland and coastal ecosystem restoration** at the center of the 2026–2027 mandate because it represents a unique challenge that connects all pillars of CDNEE in one or another way. By protecting rivers, wetlands, lagoons and coastal habitats, we can strengthen democracy through participation, security through resilience, climate action through nature-based solutions, economies through sustainable development and social rights through environmental justice. Biodiversity is not only about protecting nature—it is about safeguarding the foundations of democratic and prosperous societies for future generations.