

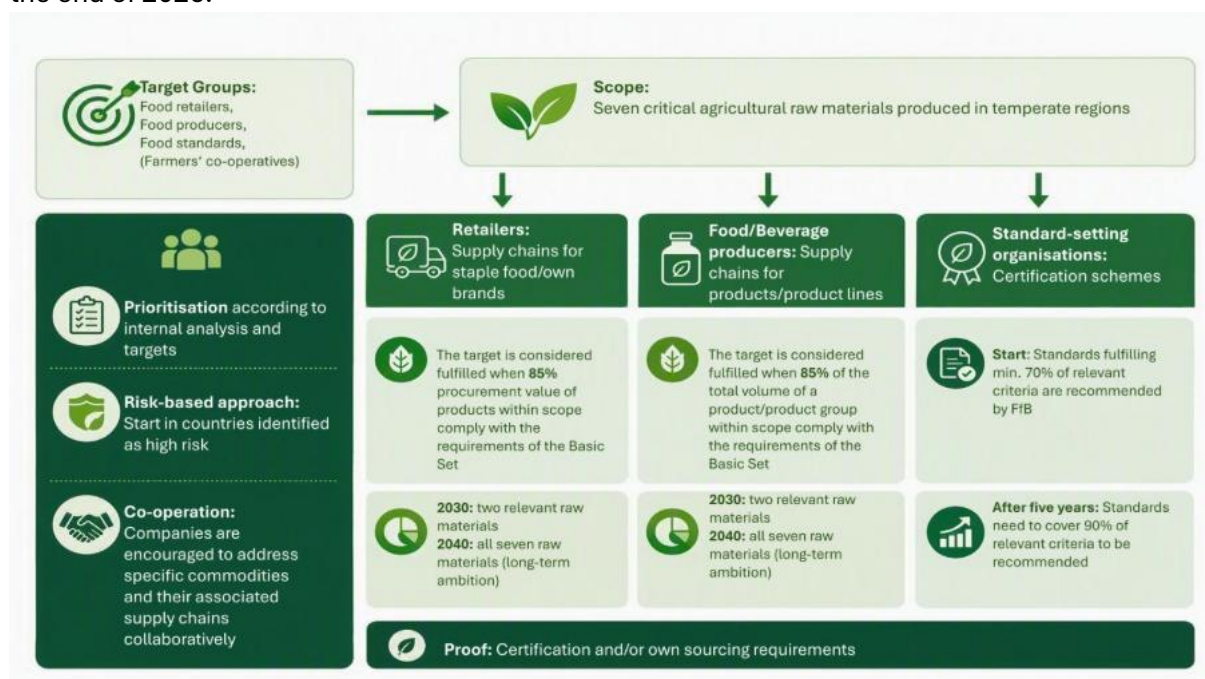
POLITICAL APPEAL: EMBEDDING BIODIVERSITY IN FOOD SUPPLY CHAINS

To political decision-makers at the German federal and state levels, and at the European level

Dear Madam or Sir,

The ongoing loss of biodiversity not only threatens ecosystems, but increasingly also the economic foundations of food production. Healthy soils, stable water systems and functioning pollination services are not ecological add-ons, but key production factors. Without them, yields, quality and security of supply cannot be guaranteed in the long term. Against this background, food manufacturers and retailers, standards organisations, environmental organisations and scientific institutions have joined forces as members of the Food for Biodiversity association. Together, we are pursuing a clear objective: to integrate biological diversity (biodiversity) systematically and comprehensively into food supply chains.

With the [Strategy for the Roll-out of the Basic Set Temperate Regions for the Promotion of Biodiversity in the Food and Beverage Sector](#), we are now taking the decisive step from pilot projects to broad-scale implementation. Our members are making voluntary commitments by integrating biodiversity criteria as binding requirements into procurement guidelines, supplier relationships and the selection and further development of standards for sustainable agriculture. The roll-out of the Basic Set for tropical and subtropical regions is to be adopted as a next step by the end of 2026.



Our Commitment to Biodiversity-Responsible Procurement

The Basic Set translates shared objectives into concrete requirements for practice and creates a common basis for the development of biodiversity protection along the supply chain. It focuses on key levers with demonstrable impact, such as creating habitats for biodiversity, protecting water bodies, providing alternatives to the use of chemical pesticides and promoting soil health.

By integrating these requirements into standards and procurement processes, biodiversity measures are transferred from pilot initiatives into regular commodity flows and scaled up. The

Basic Set therefore provides a practice-tested foundation for integrating biodiversity requirements into funding, reporting and procurement systems.

The food sector is ready to take responsibility and go beyond minimum legal requirements. Voluntary commitments are not a substitute for regulation, but a key implementation mechanism. Policymakers can help increase their effectiveness by creating incentives, defining minimum requirements, safeguarding impact and facilitating wide-scale implementation.

Supportive Political Framework Conditions

We call on political decision-makers at national and European level to specifically strengthen and incentivise voluntary commitments by food companies, and to adequately and reliably reward the contributions made by farms to the development of protecting biodiversity:

1. Recognise Biodiversity as an Investment

Measures to protect biodiversity contribute to the long-term safeguarding of production foundations, as well as to risk reduction and the stabilisation of supply chains. Biodiversity protection measures must therefore be more strongly recognised and treated as investments in resilience and security of supply. This perspective must be firmly embedded in funding logics, assessment frameworks and political objectives. Investments in biodiversity should be recognised for tax purposes and placed on an equal footing with other precautionary and future-oriented investments. Special investments in biodiversity should receive tax benefits. Improved financing conditions are also needed, for example through targeted credit offers that take biodiversity services into account.

2. Targeted Support for Ambitious Voluntary Measures

Particularly ambitious and effective biodiversity measures are not sufficiently addressed under the current funding framework. Funding programmes are often designed on the basis of area or individual measures rather than being consistently geared towards demonstrable impact. As a result, there are too few incentives to go beyond minimum legal requirements.

Public funds — particularly under the CAP — must be consistently aligned with demonstrably effective biodiversity services. Higher levels of performance must be rewarded much more clearly. Reliable, long-term funding conditions, a clear focus on particularly effective measures and significantly simplified access conditions for farms are required.

At the same time, the legal framework must be designed in such a way that public funding and private premiums along the supply chain can be combined in a targeted manner. Such public-private co-financing opens up additional sources of funding and makes ambitious biodiversity measures economically viable and more attractive for farms.

Moreover, the economic burden must not rest solely on agriculture. A fair distribution of costs and targeted incentive systems along the entire value chain are required, for example through premium models, stronger involvement of the food sector and improved financing conditions. There is a particular need for support for concrete area-based measures in agricultural production, such as a minimum share of 10% semi-natural or natural habitats and 10-metre buffer strips along permanent watercourses.

3. Recognise and Reward Voluntary Engagement in Regulatory Frameworks

Food companies that implement ambitious biodiversity requirements currently benefit only to a limited extent, for example due to insufficient consideration in sustainability reporting, due diligence reporting or the EU taxonomy. Voluntary action works best in the long term when it pays

off. We are therefore not calling for regulation for its own sake, but for targeted framework conditions that reward frontrunners and do not give free riders an advantage.

Against this background, voluntary standards — such as those used in organic agriculture or those with ambitious biodiversity criteria — should be taken into account in regulatory frameworks, for example through the recognition of existing certifications in control and verification procedures or by linking standards to tax incentives.

Certifications could also be recognised as proof of compliance with certain requirements in funding or support systems, for example under the CAP. This would create effective incentives for measures that protect and promote biodiversity without the need to establish additional control systems.

4. Ensure Policy Coherence and Planning Certainty

Different requirements arising from agricultural policy, environmental law, sustainability reporting and supply chain regulation lead to high transaction costs and planning uncertainty, particularly for farms. These hurdles not only slow down the willingness of stakeholders to act, but also limit the impact of voluntary solutions.

To address this, political requirements from environmental, agricultural and economic policy must be consistently aligned. Binding and coherent framework conditions are needed, along with clear long-term development pathways that enable food companies and farms to make reliable investment decisions. We offer Food for Biodiversity's expertise to work in partnership with political decision-makers on comprehensive solutions.

5. Embed Ambitious Standards in Public Procurement

Public procurement currently provides very few incentives for biodiversity-responsible farming practices. Biodiversity criteria are either not embedded in procurement guidelines or play only a minor role, meaning that ambitious standards do not receive a systematic market advantage. As a result, important demand signals that would be necessary to trigger investment in biodiversity along the value chain are missing.

Public procurement must be used strategically as a lever for biodiversity. Procurement guidelines should require a binding minimum share of the standards recommended by Food for Biodiversity in procurement. One option would also be to involve the interministerial working group on sustainable public procurement. This would send clear market signals and create investment certainty.

Conclusion: Making Voluntary Action Effective

As an industry association, we are committed to protecting biodiversity along our supply chains. With the roll-out of the Basic Set, we have set ourselves an ambitious, measurable and scalable voluntary commitment, including concrete time-bound targets for biodiversity-responsible procurement of high-risk raw materials. As part of this, ten member standards of Food for Biodiversity are already recommended for biodiversity-responsible procurement. The substantive solutions are available, and there is willingness to implement them in business and civil society. What is now needed is a political framework that does not disadvantage frontrunners and that rewards impact. We ask the committee to take the measures set out here into account in the ongoing discussions on CAP implementation and sustainability reporting.

Disclaimer: This political appeal was developed within the framework of Food for Biodiversity e.V. and reflects the consensus reached by the member organisations involved in its development. While it represents the shared position of the network, individual member organisations may hold different views on specific aspects or details.