

#EUGREENWEEK

BEST Life 2030



MEP Group on Climate Change, Biodiversity & Sustainable Development

From nature conservation to EU policy

Translating leadership into EU policy and strategic investment in Europe's overseas regions

1st July 2026, 13h00-15h00, European Parliament

Co-organised by the European Bureau for Conservation and Development (EBCD) and hosted by MEP Paulo do Nascimento Cabral



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1. Event overview

EU outermost regions and Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) steward some of the world's most valuable biodiversity and marine ecosystems, yet they face acute environmental pressures and structural constraints that require sustained and tailored support. These territories are not peripheral beneficiaries of EU environmental policy, but strategic partners delivering tangible contributions to Europe's biodiversity and climate commitments.

As the European Union prepares the next Multiannual Financial Framework (2028-2034), the moment is critical to ensure that the political recognition of these regions' role as biodiversity stewards translates into concrete policy support and sustained financial investment.

This event will serve as a catalyst to bridge leadership with EU decision-making. Bringing together representatives from the European Parliament, EU Member States, the European Commission, and key institutional donors, the event will highlight the strategic value of investing in overseas biodiversity, as a cost-effective pathway to deliver conservation outcomes, climate adaptation and global environmental commitments.

Central to this discussion will be BESTLIFE2030, presented as a proven, credible and scalable delivery model, which enables locally led biodiversity action in complex overseas contexts, while generating measurable environmental and community benefits.

More broadly, the event aims to translate recognition into action by mobilising policy alignment, funding traction and strategic partnerships. Discussions will therefore focus on recognising bottom-up funding mechanisms, such as BESTLIFE2030 as effective instruments for biodiversity delivery, exploring the establishment of a dedicated EU biodiversity funding window for overseas regions, and encouraging donors and foundations to view region-led biodiversity initiatives as investment-ready and scalable solutions.

The event ultimately seeks to strengthen alliances and catalyse long-term investment in overseas biodiversity, ensuring that the EU's global environmental ambitions are matched with sustained support where they matter most.

2. Agenda

Event moderator: Tommaso Demozzi, Biodiversity Policy Officer, IUCN EU Representative Office

13:00 - 13:15: Welcome participants

13:15 - 13:30: From Aruba to Brussels: Positioning overseas biodiversity within the EU agenda

Focus: Build on the political momentum generated during the OCTA Ministerial Conference and OCTs–EU Forum held in Aruba in April 2026 by positioning EU outermost regions and Overseas Countries and Territories as strategic environmental partners contributing to Europe’s biodiversity. Set the political context ahead of the next Multiannual Financial Framework (2028–2034) and frame the need to translate growing recognition into sustained policy support and long-term investment.

- MEP Paulo do Nascimento Cabral (EPP group)
- MEP Younous Omarjee, Vice-President, European Parliament

13:30 - 13:50: Voices from the territories: Locally led biodiversity action in practice

Focus: Highlight locally led biodiversity action emerging across overseas territories and provide grounded perspectives from the field on the realities, challenges and opportunities of implementing conservation initiatives in geographically remote and institutionally diverse contexts.

- Laëtitia Faivre, OCEA Consult, Indian Ocean
- Sabine Brismeur, Nature Foundation Sint Maarten, Dutch Caribbean
- Joao Miguel Gouveia Nunes, Ecological Park of Funchal, Macaronesia

13:50 - 14:35: From recognition to investment: Strengthening long-term support for overseas biodiversity

Focus: Explore how EU institutions, Member States and funding partners can strengthen long-term support for biodiversity delivery in outermost regions and Overseas Countries and Territories. Discussions will examine the strategic value of implementation-ready mechanisms such as BESTLIFE2030, opportunities for stronger policy and financing alignment, and pathways to scale investment in locally led biodiversity action.

Panel discussion with the participation of:

- Aurelie Godefroy, Deputy Head of Unit (B3) on All Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs), DG INTPA, European Commission
- Alexandra Varkou, Head of Unit for the Green Knowledge & Research Hub (LIFE Unit) **or** Lucilla di Virgilio, Responsible for LIFE, Unité ENV.A.3 Green Knowledge and Research Hub, DG ENVIRONMENT, European Commission

- Guus Schutjes, Policy Coordinator, Caribbean Team. Directorate-General for Nature and Fisheries (DG Nature and Fisheries). Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Quality and Nature, The Netherlands
- Representative from France
- Kate Brown, Executive Director of the Global Island Partnership (GLISPA) and the Island Biodiversity Coalition
- Harry Durimel, Mayor of Pointe-à-Pitre and Premier Vice-Président de Cap Excellence Guadeloupe

14:35 - 14:50: Interaction with the audience, including reactions by BESTLIFE2030 partners and more Members of the European Parliament (MEPs)

Focus: Highlight the partnerships, regional cooperation and implementation support structures that enable biodiversity delivery across overseas territories in practice. Reflect on lessons emerging from BESTLIFE2030 implementation and discuss the conditions required to strengthen territorial ownership, continuity and long-term biodiversity delivery.

- French Biodiversity Agency (OFB)
- Chloé Desmots, French Committee of IUCN
- Mark van der Wal, Dutch Committee of IUCN

14:50 - 15:00: From recognition to sustained action: Closing reflections and next steps

Focus: Consolidate the event's strategic messages by reinforcing the importance of sustained and tailored investment in overseas biodiversity. Emphasise the need to strengthen alliances between policy actors, funding institutions and territorial partners to ensure that Europe's environmental ambitions are matched by long-term implementation support where it matters most.

- MEP Paulo do Nascimento Cabral (EPP Group)
- Trevor Sandwith, Director for Centre for Conservation Action, IUCN

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