

World needs a change now to reverse biodiversity loss (secretary of state)

The year 2022 represents the major opportunity to reverse the loss of biodiversity, through specific, measurable and realistic objectives, Ionut Sorin Banciu, Secretary of State with the Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests (MMAF), said on Wednesday, on the first day of the informal meeting of EU environment ministers held in the Czech Republic, in Prague.

"The world urgently needs a change to reverse the loss of biodiversity and 2022 is the major opportunity to make that change. A solid framework should be established for the post-2020 period, with specific, measurable, ambitious, realistic goals to reverse the decline. We also believe that, during the COP negotiations, we should insist on the inclusion of a 30pct soil and ocean protection target, in line with our commitment. In this respect, we need to play an active role in the process of international negotiation to facilitate the adoption of this global biodiversity framework after 2020. Achieving its objectives will require closer cooperation with international partners, increased support, funding and the phasing out of harmful subsidies to biodiversity. Moreover, we believe there is need of an approach of the whole government and society, with a strong commitment from all players and sectors, in order to achieve the vision of 2050. Therefore, the integration of biodiversity should be included with this global framework on biodiversity. At the same time, the protection and restoration of biodiversity is the only way to preserve the quality and continuity of human life on Earth," said Banciu, as quoted in a press release of the relevant ministry, sent to AGERPRES.

Regarding the impact of the war in Ukraine on the environment, the Romanian official appreciated the ratification by Ukraine of the Aarhus Convention and the Espoo Convention, including the associated protocols.

Also, in his speech on climate change adaptation, Banciu underscored that nature restoration and nature-based solutions can help prevent the negative impact of climate change on the various sectors, while representing, at the same time, adequate, safe, sustainable and environmentally friendly adaptation measures.

At the same time, he mentioned the measures and strategies that Romania is considering in order to adapt to climate change: integration of climate change considerations in biodiversity conservation, making regional biodiversity management plans, developing and implementing national conservation monitoring systems of natural habitats, vegetation restoration, sustainable use of natural resources and research and development activities.

Regarding the international climate negotiations, the official underscored that, in order to reduce the emission gap to 1.5 degrees Celsius, it is necessary for all COP27 countries to take into account the IPCC report and align their long-term strategies, national adaptation plans with the latest scientific discoveries.

Secretary of State Ionut Sorin Banciu leads the Romanian delegation to the informal meeting of environment ministers from EU Member States, which takes place between July 13 and 14, 2022, in Prague. The event brings together environment ministers from the European Union and is organized under the auspices of the Czech Presidency of the EU Council.