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THE EUROPEAN GOLF ASSOCIATION GOLF COURSE COMMITTEE

EU BIODIVERSITY FACT SHEET

The key issues

In an assessment of the EU Biodiversity Action Plan, a recent report noted that the EU is unlikely to meet its targets for halting biodiversity loss by 2010, however the Natura 2000 network of protected areas is being expanded.

In March 2009, the Environment Council of the European Commission underlined the need to establish, by 2010 at the latest, a vision and targets beyond 2010 for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity within the European Union. This builds on and contributes to deliberations at a global level, through the United Nations. To this end the European Commission organized a major Conference on Biodiversity in April 2009 which stressed the need for urgent actions and for a better understanding and communication of why healthy ecosystems deliver tangible economic, social and cultural benefits. Climate change is the main focus of the EU's 2009 Green Week and biodiversity will be one of the key issues addressed given its essential link with climate change.

Impact on golf

Golf will be expected to demonstrate its contribution to the conservation of biodiversity.

The EGA GCC position

This is an opportunity for golf to clearly demonstrate its value in terms of the diverse habitats and wildlife that can be supported on and around golf courses. Only approximately half the area of most golf facilities is specifically maintained and set aside for play, i.e. tees, fairways, greens and semi-rough. The remaining land should be sensitively managed to develop habitat diversity and the flora and fauna that this supports.

Golf facilities should work and cooperate with government agencies and appropriate non-government organisations to enhance biodiversity, conserve designated habitat (of national and European protected status) and protect species that are on local, national and international rare or endangered lists. New golf developments should respect existing biodiversity and designated habitat and avoid any action that might have a negative impact.

More information on how golf courses can conserve biodiversity is available at www.bestcourseforgolf.org

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Recommended action

The European Golf Association Golf Course Committee (EGA GCC) will keep you informed of developments at the EU.

The EGA GCC recommends that you engage with the authorities in charge of biodiversity within your national government, ideally on a collective basis as demonstrated by the members of the EGA GCC.