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Mr Seb Dance, MEP
Ms Molly Scott Cato, MEP
Ms Sirpa Pietikäinen, MEP
Mr Bart Staes, MEP
Ms Julie Ward, MEP
Mr Paul Brannen, MEP
Ms Jean Lambert, MEP
Mr Keith Taylor, MEP
Mr Benedek Jávor, MEP
Ms Catherine Bearder, MEP
Mr Bas Eickhout, MEP
Ms Jude Kirton-Darling, MEP
Mr Jo Leinen, MEP

Dear Members of the European Parliament,

Thank you for your letter of 17 October 2014 concerning the Commission's public consultation on a future EU initiative on No Net Loss.

Action 7b of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020, foresees that the Commission will carry out further work with a view to proposing by 2015 an initiative to ensure there is no net loss of ecosystems and their services (e.g. through compensation or offsetting schemes).

The recent public consultation on a future EU initiative on No Net Loss highlighted a number of policy options and potential instruments that could be used to achieve no net loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services, in line with the EU Biodiversity Strategy and with the orientations provided by the Parliament and the Council. The Parliament's Resolution on the EU Biodiversity Strategy includes the following text in relation to the No Net Loss initiative: *"Urges the Commission to develop an effective regulatory framework based on the 'No Net Loss' Initiative, taking into account the past experience of the Member States while also utilising the standards applied by the Business and Biodiversity Offsets Programme; notes, in this connection, the importance of applying such an approach to all EU habitats and species not covered by EU legislation."* The Resolution also *'Emphasises the importance ... of developing innovative financial mechanisms – in particular habitat banking in conjunction with offsetting...'*

The Council Conclusions (11978/11) requested the Commission to operationalize the no net loss objective for areas and species not covered by existing EU nature legislation, for which the Council gave a preliminary definition: *"conservation losses in one geographically or otherwise defined area are balanced by a gain elsewhere provided that this principle does not entail any impairment of existing biodiversity as protected by EU nature legislation"*. The Council also recognised that a common approach is needed for the implementation in the EU of the "no net loss" principle (18862/11).

The Commission received over 700 responses to the on-line consultation. We are pleased to see that so many used this opportunity to express their opinions. We are now in the process of analysing this information. The replies, together with a statistical analysis and a short summary will be published on our website in the coming weeks.

The Commission will take this information into account when deciding on the further actions to be taken at EU level to achieve no net loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services. I look forward to continuing working closely with the European Parliament.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David V. Re", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.