

# Biodiversity policy implementation in Lithuania: challenges and achievements

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# The EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030

Biodiversity  
underpins  
sustainable  
development

Biodiversity loss: key  
threat for humanity



Almost half of global GDP (gross domestic payment) is linked to nature



Interdependence between biodiversity loss and climate change, link to pandemics



Restoring biodiversity as a core part of recovery

# Elements of the EU Biodiversity Strategy

Protect Nature

Enable  
Transformative  
Change

Restore Nature

EU For An  
Ambitious Global  
Agenda

# EU for an ambitious global agenda

- EU's position for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework
- Green diplomacy
- International ocean governance
- Trade policy
- Climate policy
- International cooperation

# EU Nature Restoration Regulation

The Commission has proposed a new law to restore ecosystems for people, the climate and the planet.

## Objectives:

The proposal aims to restore ecosystems, habitats and species across the EU's land and sea areas in order to

- enable the long-term and sustained recovery of biodiverse and resilient nature;
- contribute to achieving the EU's climate mitigation and climate adaptation objectives;
- set legally binding nature restoration targets for member states;
- meet international commitments.

# IN THE EU

**81% of habitats are in poor status**

**Every 1 euro invested into nature restoration adds €8 to €38 in benefits**

**One in three bee and butterfly species are in decline**

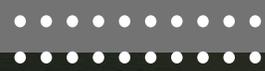
# Implementation of new agendas for the decade of 2021-2030 at different levels:

1. Global Biodiversity Agenda post 2020 (to be adopted at the end of 2022 at CBD COP 15)

2. EU Biodiversity strategy 2030 + Farm to Fork Strategy (adopted in May, 2020)

3. EU Forest strategy (adopted in July 2021)

4. National Government Programme (adopted at the end of 2020) and its implementation plan



# National level actions



# Government programme of the Republic of Lithuania 2020-2024: protected areas and biodiversity

2024

PROTECTED AREAS  
COVER 20%, A QUARTER FROM  
THEM ARE STRICTLY PROTECTED

FOREST COVER  
EXCEEDS 35% OF THE COUNTRY  
TERRITORY



Promotion of biomass in the heating sector, construction and the bioeconomy



Improved management of the protected areas



National forest agreement



Effective system for biodiversity monitoring

# Other actions at national level (1)

## Reform of protected areas governance

- **Objectives:** reinforced specific nature conservation competencies and increased capacities for implementation of global biodiversity agenda and EU Green Deal strategies in the entire territory of the country;
- **Action taken:** merging of 29 small and scattered across country directorates of protected areas into 4 larger administration units;
- **Ongoing actions:** revision of current responsibilities and work processes at national and regional level administrations of protected areas; drafting legislative proposals to enable protected areas administrations to act as nature conservation policy implementing bodies across the country.

## Other actions at national level (2)

### **Reform State forest governance:**

- **Action taken:** in 2018, 42 individual state forest enterprises were merged into a single State Forest Enterprise;
- **Continuous actions:** modernization of the enterprise, its working methods, with the aim to increase added value of state-owned forests and strengthen the ability to provide benefits to society in full spectrum of ecosystem services;
- **First results:** streamlined planning and implementation of nature conservation measures across all state-owned forests.

# Other actions at national level (3)

## **Mapping and evaluation of ecosystems and their services (MAES):**

- **Ongoing action:** Study on integration of MAES into decision making processes in different public and economic sectors
- **Planned actions:** Drafting of legislation for MAES integration, 2023-2024.

## **National Inventory of Habitats of Community interest**

- **Objectives:** Improved knowledge of conservation status of habitat types, solid basis for establishment of national conservation objectives for habitats, base-line data on habitats conservation status.
- **Results:** in 2009-2015, habitats of European interest were mapped on entire terrestrial part of the country; national reference database created; national conservation objectives for habitats set; surveillance schemes for habitats launched.

## **Assessment of Status of Endangered Species:**

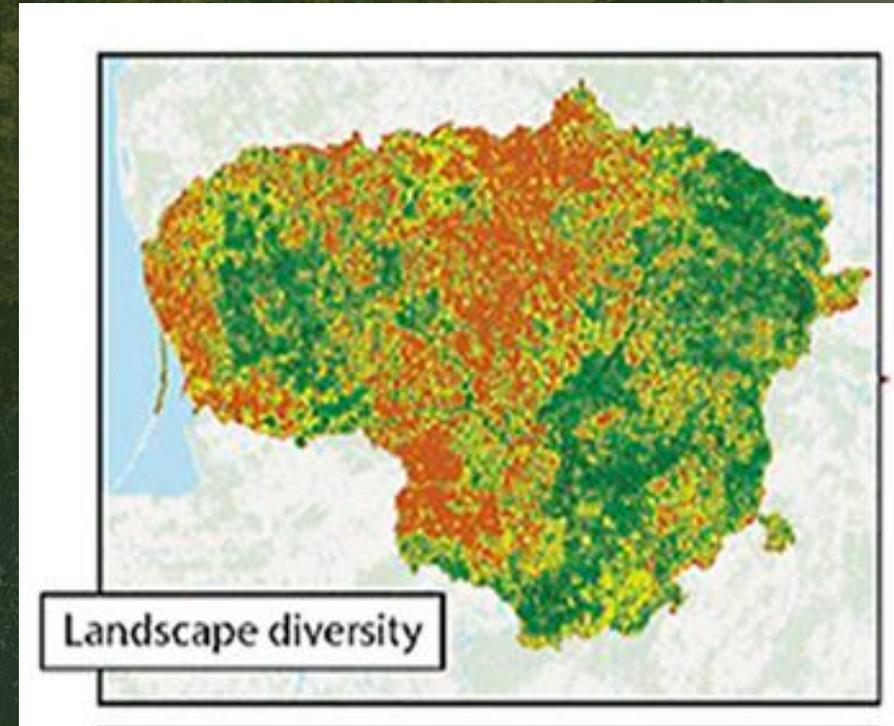
- **Objectives:** using IUCN Red List methodology to evaluate the status of all nationally protected species

**Results:** for the first time in the country, in 2018 assessments for 875 species finalized using IUCN methodology; Improved knowledge of habitat types and species; some species “fallen out” off the protected species list 😊, series of new were added 😞.

# Lithuanian national landscape management plan

Approved in 2015. Integrated into Comprehensive Plan of the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania in 2021.

National scale planning document laying down the principles of landscape protection and use and its key maintenance trends in the country.



Marius Kalinauskas, Katažyna Mikša, Miguel Inácio, Eduardo Gomes, Paulo Pereira, Mapping and assessment of landscape aesthetic quality in Lithuania, *Journal of Environmental Management*, Volume 286, 2021.

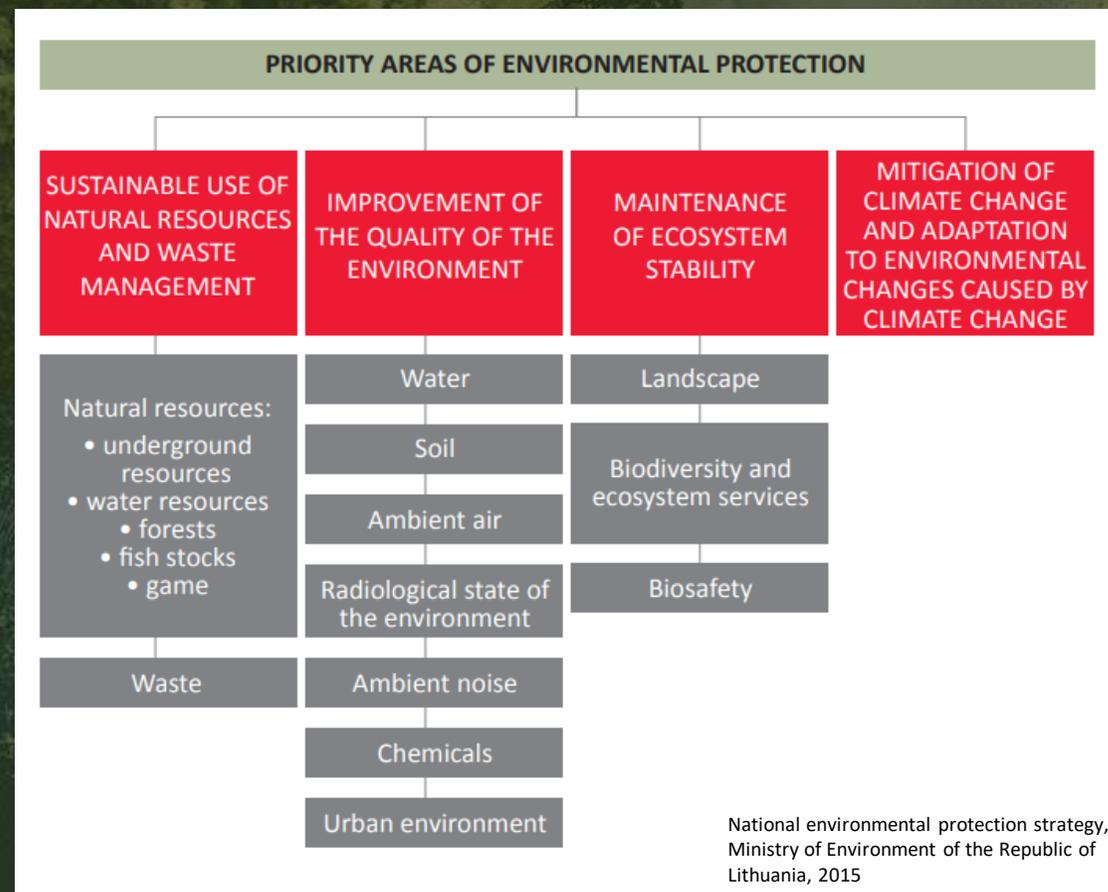
# National environmental protection strategy, 2015

Approved by Parliament.

The Strategy up to 2030 shapes four long-term priority policy areas:

- sustainable use of natural resources and waste management,
- improvement of the quality of the environment,
- maintenance of ecosystem stability,
- climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Achieving the objectives for 2030 in these areas requires our joint efforts in responsible and sustainable production and consumption, waste management, protection of our nature, fostering and preservation of environment.



National environmental protection strategy, Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania, 2015

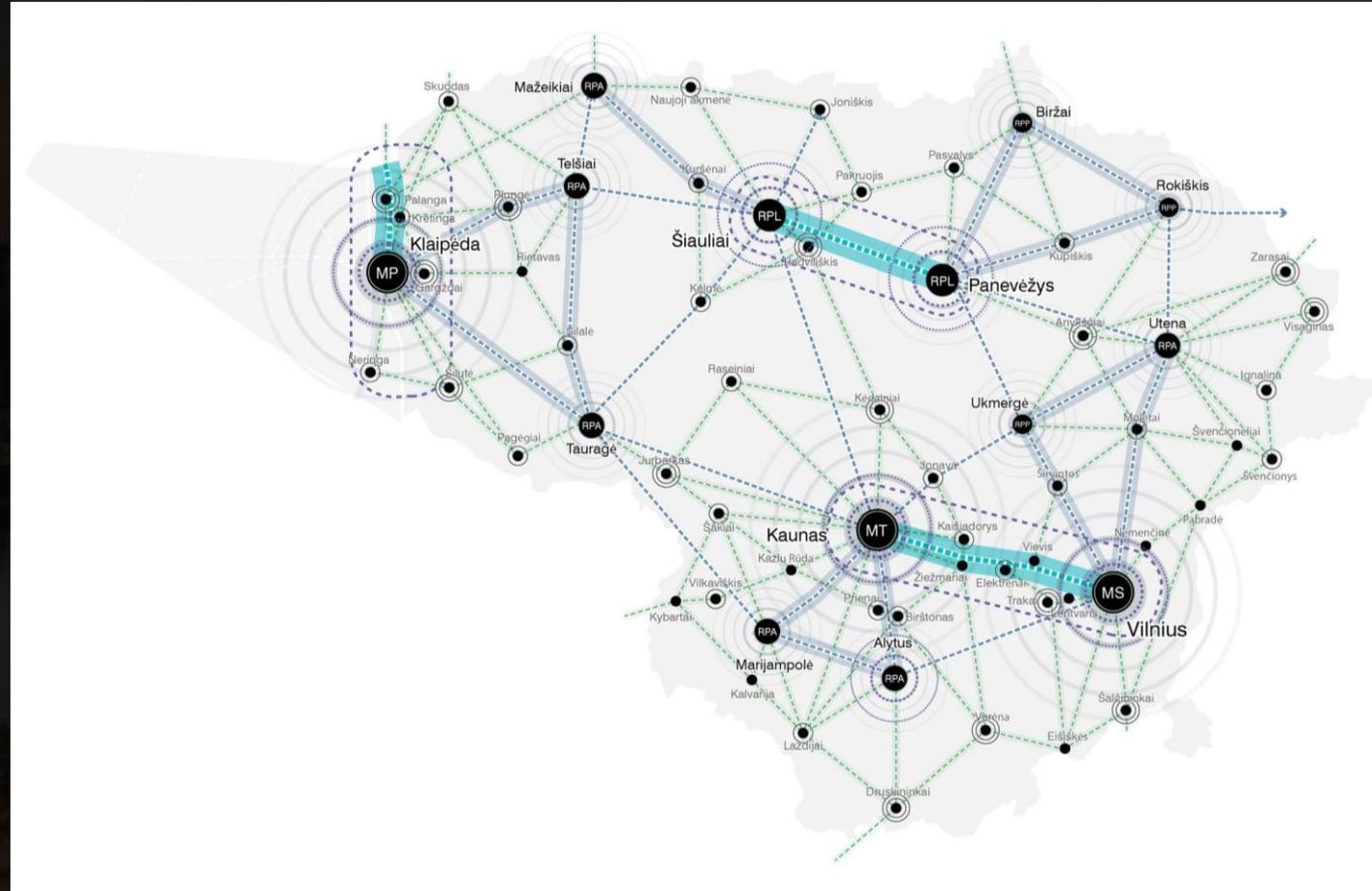
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# Comprehensive Plan of the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania

An integrated planning document of the long term strategy for the country to 2050.

The specified solution stage encompasses principles, rules and tools for urbanized areas and priority development strategies and plans until 2030 in Lithuania.

Provides insights on the development of protected areas networks.





# Prioritised action framework (PAF) for Natura 2000 in Lithuania (2021-2027)

## Concept of PAF:

a strategic multiannual planning tool;  
comprehensive overview of the species/habitats conservation measures for Natura 2000 network and its associated green infrastructure;

Summary of financing needs and links to the EU funding programmes.

## Lithuanian PAF:

Total evaluated financial needs for biodiversity conservation 7 years – MEUR 852.

Annual needs – MEUR 121.

## Main areas of investment:

closure of knowledge gaps,  
Natura 2000 sites management planning,  
maintenance of habitats, incl. agri-environment measures,  
control of invasive species,  
raising of public awareness on biodiversity.



# National Forest Agreement

- More than 1/3 country's land is reserved for forests
- Societal contract on new visions for national forest policy

## Biodiversity conservation related challenges:

- recognition of importance of ecosystem services other than timber provisioning;
- finding the territorial balance between distinct management objectives: timber provision, biodiversity conservation and social needs;
- fair compensation for restrictions in private forests;
- confronting needs: carbon capture/storage and biodiversity conservation;
- limited acceptance of new biodiversity management methods by forestry professionals – increase of deadwood, non-clear cuttings, prescribed burning, etc.



# Agriculture & biodiversity

- Change of farming traditions, intensification, consolidation of fields, depopulation of rural areas;
- Grassland abandonment in biodiversity rich areas, eg. wetlands, hilly landscapes, etc.
- Common Birds Index of rural bird species: continuously decline in 2014-2020, by 31 % in the period.
- Deteriorating status of grassland habitats of Community importance. 2014-2018 evaluation: 9 % of all mapped natural grasslands converted into other land-use areas; no grassland habitat type with Favourable conservation status; 22 % - Unfavourable-Inadequate; 78 % -Unfavorable-Bad.
- Decrease of total area of permanent grasslands (by 11 % since 2015), loss of non-productive landscape elements and associated species, incl. pollinators.
- Spread and establishment of invasive alien species (mostly in abandoned lands).



# Strategic plan 2023– 2027 for Agriculture and Rural Development of Lithuania

The ambition of the new strategic plan:  
to move towards healthier and more  
sustainable food systems,  
to maintain food security and production p  
otential,  
to increase viability, competitiveness and  
resilience of farms.

National priorities until 2030:

15 percent less use of mineral fertilizers  
(compared to 2020)

15 percent all farms are organic

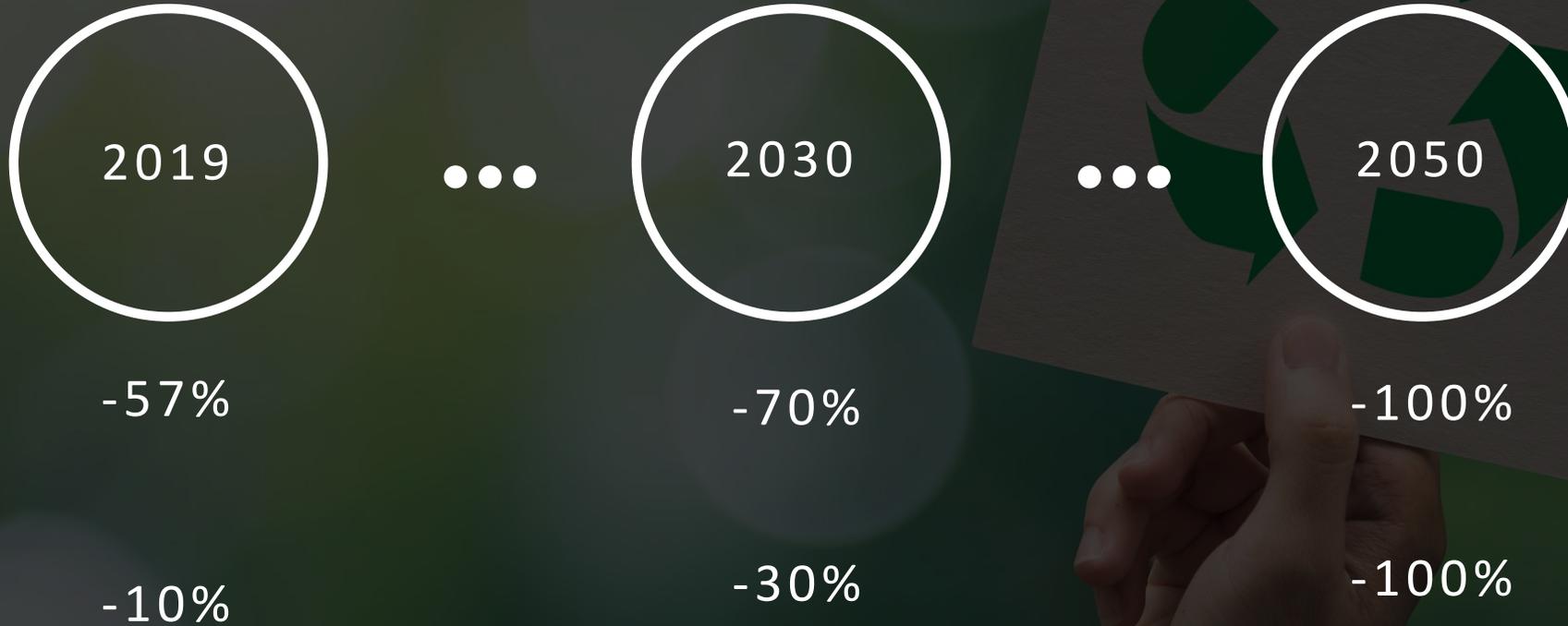
11 percent lower agricultural GHG emissions  
(compared to 2005)

Main challenges:

- fair allocation of at least 25 % of direct payments budget to eco-schemes, and at least 35 % rural development budget for environmental and climate measures;
- Identification of most effective environmental measures and engaging farmers into them, by avoiding “green washing” at the same time

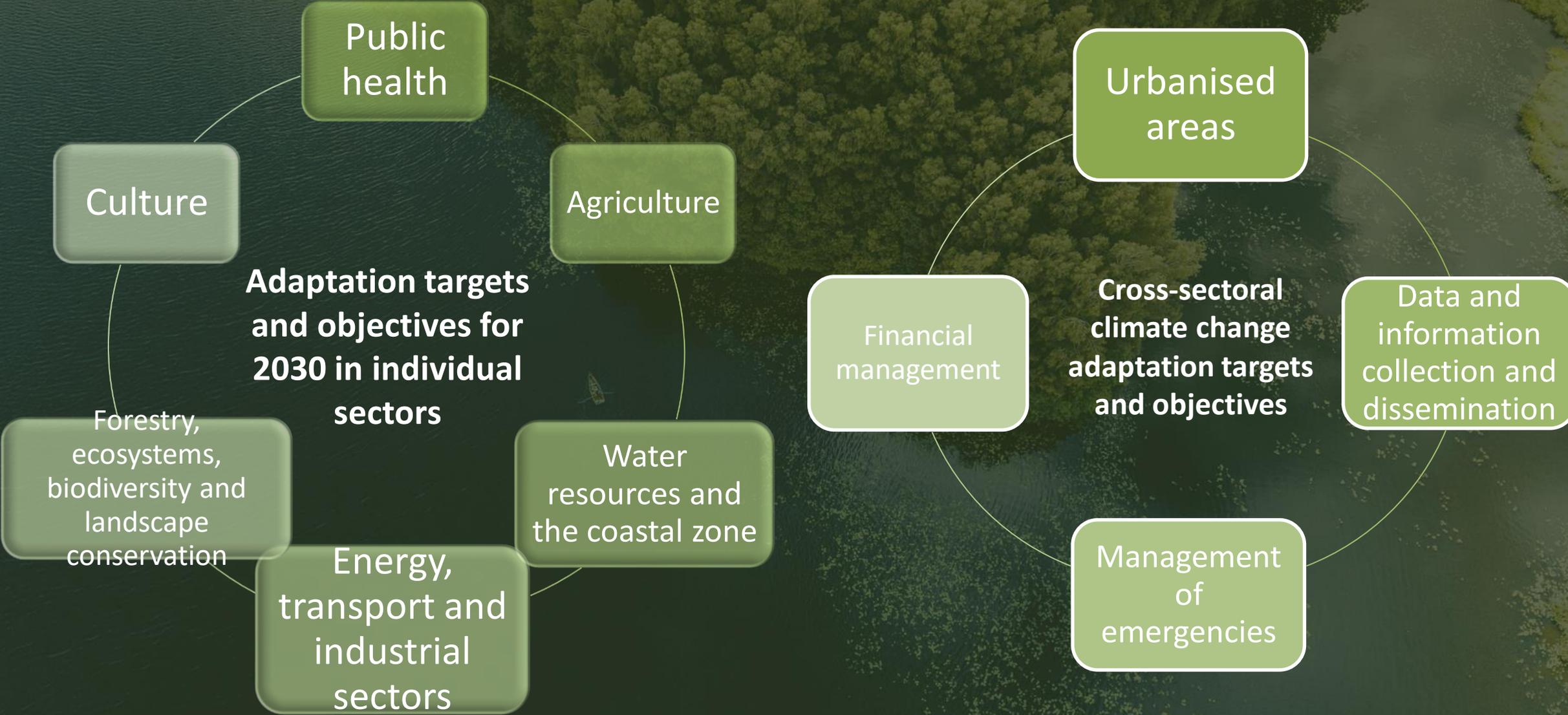
# NATIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE MANAGEMENT AGENDA

- National climate change management agenda (strategy) – updated in 2021, with the goals and targets for mitigation and adaptation to climate change



BY 2050 LITHUANIA BECOMES  
CLIMATE NEUTRAL COUNTRY

# ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE GOALS AND TARGETS



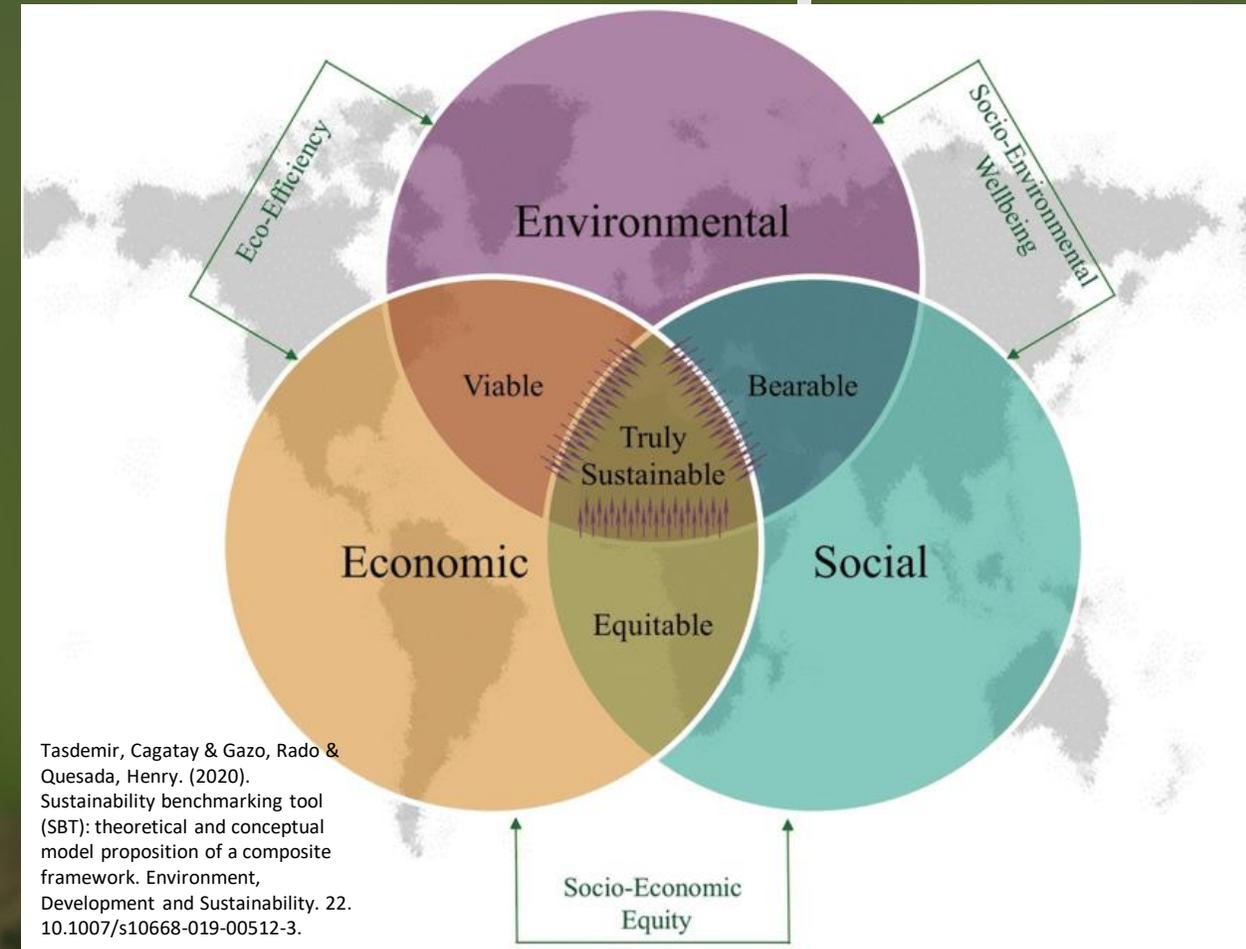
# Take-away message

More philosophy on sustainability

Scientists say:

“Lithuania has successfully implemented the international obligations in environmental conservation. However, all efforts have mostly been made only to correspond to the international obligations; any activities that exceed these requirements are very rare. Many species already receive some conservation attention, but others do not. Species protection requires a combination of research and coordinated efforts. To meet the target of halting biodiversity loss, there is need of a better monitoring capacity, results analysis, and high-quality specialists. The strength and capacity of responsible institutions should also be addressed to cope with arising challenges and potential and existing impingements in nature and biodiversity protection. Public involvement in management and planning as well as volunteering in biodiversity monitoring should be considered very important aspects of the whole protection system.”

*Zaltauskaite, Jurate & Dagiliūtė, Renata & Sujetoviene, Gintare. (2019). Biodiversity in Lithuania: achievements, challenges and policy. International Journal of Environment and Sustainable Development. 18. 45. 10.1504/IJESD.2019.10019988.*





THANK YOU

