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13121/26

LIMITE

ENV 1067

'I/A' ITEM NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Permanent Representatives Committee/Council
Subject: "Friends of Credits for Nature and Biodiversity" Statement
- Authorisation to negotiate a non-binding instrument (NBI)

1. At the 2026 UN Biodiversity Conference, to take place in Yerevan, Armenia on 19-30 October 2026, the Commission plans to announce, at a side-event on nature credits, its intention to work with interested partners through a "Friends of Credits of Nature and Biodiversity". Interested governments, both in Member States of the EU and in third countries, will be asked to sign a short political Statement.
2. The "Friends of Credits for Nature and Biodiversity" Statement is considered to be a non-binding instrument that contain political commitments in accordance with the 'Arrangements for Non- Binding Instruments' agreed by the Council, the Commission and the EEAS in December 2017.¹

¹ ST 15367/17.

3. On 15 September 2026, the Commission informed the Council preparatory bodies about its intention to enter into negotiations on the “Friends of Credits of Nature and Biodiversity” initiative and Statement on behalf of the EU.² The Commission’s note initiates the first step of the NBI procedure as foreseen in the Arrangements. The Working Party on International Environment Issues and the Working Party on the Environment examined the Commission’s note and request to enter into negotiations through written consultation, which ended on 23 September 2026.³
4. Discussions will continue at working party level on the Statement. Once the negotiations are finalised, it is recalled that the Commission will revert to the Council to seek authorisation for launching the “Friends of Credits of Nature and Biodiversity” on behalf of the EU (second step of the Non-binding Instruments procedure).
5. Against this background, the Permanent Representatives Committee is invited to recommend that the Council, as an A item at one of its forthcoming meetings, authorises the Commission to open negotiations on the “Friends of Credits of Nature and Biodiversity” initiative and Statement, on behalf of the EU.

² ST 13120/26.

³ WK 14112/2026 + ADD 2.