

Basque Green Deal

2024 RESULTS REPORT

EUSKO JAURLARITZA



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EKONOMIAREN GARAPEN,
JASANGARRITASUN
ETA INGURUMEN SAILA

DEPARTAMENTO DE DESARROLLO
ECONÓMICO, SOSTENIBILIDAD
Y MEDIO AMBIENTE



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction to the Basque Green Deal	4
2. Degree of progress of the Basque Green Deal	5
3. Conclusions, opportunities and forthcoming challenges	16



1. Introduction to the Basque Green Deal

In May 2021, the Basque Country signed up to the European Green Deal and unveiled its own roadmap for a more sustainable future, while ensuring nobody would be left behind on the way out of the crisis. Lehendakari Iñigo Urkullu, the Basque Premier, Arantxa Tapia, the Basque Government's Minister for Economic Development, Sustainability and the Environment; and Clara de la Torre, the Deputy Director-General of the European Commission's DG Climate, took part in the presentation.

The **Basque Green Deal** (hereinafter the BGD) sets the targets for reducing emissions and generating renewable energy in the Basque Country. However, it is not restricted to those areas, as it seeks to be an economic model with industry and technology as the main levers. Thus, science, technology, the circular economy, industry, energy transition and the food chain itself are aligned with a single **goal: just and sustainable development.**

The BDG's environmental undertaking has so far been brought to fruition by means of a comprehensive action package of [interrelated and strategic sectoral environmental planning](#) focused on the different environmental vectors and their specific targets. Accordingly, the [Basque Environmental Administration Act 10/2021 of 9 December](#) structures the protection, conservation and improvement of the environment, starting from a series of goals and fundamentals; its aim is to guarantee a high level of environmental protection, in accordance with the current social and economic reality. Different funding lines have been set up, such as the [Basque Recovery and Resilience Programme](#), in order to deploy all the premises of the Basque Green Deal. That programme sought to provide a local response for a global programme as COVID 19 was, based on addressing the challenges of the green energy transition, the digital transition and social cohesion.

This **future development model that combines competitiveness and sustainability** requires a new legislative context. Therefore, the Basque Government introduced the [Energy Transition and Climate Change Act 1/2024, of 8 February](#), in order to achieve climate neutrality in the Basque Country no later than 2050, by means of the decarbonisation of the social and production activity, the transition of a circular economy, and climate change adaptation by increasing the resilience of the territory. Those goals will be accomplished by means of a just and sustainable transition from an environmental, economic and social perspective, which guarantees equity and solidarity, and incorporates the gender perspective in the spaces for reflection and decision-making regarding the energy transition and climate change.



This new sustainable and inclusive development model, that the Basque Country has assumed in the framework of its Basque Green Deal strategy after signing up to the European Green Deal, incorporates five main areas of action:

- Energy transition with **renewable energies** in coexistence with the environment and natural resources.
- **Sustainable mobility**, addressing the needs of its electrification by using renewable energy and alternative solutions to fossil fuels.
- The implementation of **increasingly more sustainable industrial production** processes and with a responsible attitude to managing waste, with new circular economy and bioeconomy solutions where technological development plays a decisive role.
- A clear goal to preserve and **conserve Basque biodiversity** by means of its protection and adaptation by working in tandem **to reduce pollution**.
- Bolstering its commitment to quality and **locally sourced food**, with special care on avoiding food waste. A strategy in which the primary sector and the food processing industry will work together and show the utmost respect.

In short, the Basque Green Deal seeks to be a global strategy to make the production structure more competitive and to integrate the environmental criteria in all sectoral policies, not only as a constraint, but also as a competitive factor to create value, and to contribute to overcome the challenge of climate change in the Basque Country.

2. Degree of progress of the Basque Green Deal

The 5 main work areas of the Basque Green Deal are described in detail below. The current situation of each is analysed as regards strategic goals, legislative and planning instruments, and the related funding lines. All the information is summarised graphically and visually in computer graphic format to display and sum up the work by the Basque Government in the implementation of the actions and, insofar as they are quantifiable, the results obtained.

In short, the Basque Country can thus be said to be committed to carbon-neutral and sustainable social and economic development.



Commitment to Renewables & Climate Action

European Context



- Directive (EU) 2018/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources
- Regulation (EU) 2021/1119 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 June 2021 establishing the framework for achieving climate neutrality
- [2030 Energy Framework and Fit for 55](#)
- [Marine Renewable Energy Strategy](#)

Basque Country Context



- First Basque Plan to fight against Climate Change 2008-2012
- The Climate Change Strategy of the Basque Country - KLIMA 2050
- The Energy Sustainability of the Basque Autonomous Community Act 4/2019, of 21 February
- Decree 254/2020, of 10 November, regarding the Energy Sustainability of the Basque Autonomous Community
- Basque Science, Technology and Innovation Plan 2030
- 3E Energy Strategy 2010
- 3E Energy Strategy 2020
- 3E Energy Strategy 2030

KEY WORDS

Energy transition
Decarbonisation
Energy efficiency



FRAMEWORK GOAL

- Achieve a renewable energy share that accounts for 32% of the final energy consumption in 2030



INDICATORS

- 16.6 % renewables of final energy consumption, including imported renewable electricity. **2021**
- 729.18 MW renewable installed electric power. **2022**
- Annual budget earmarked for financing the increased production of renewables 307.3 M€. **2023**
- 45% degree of progress of the “Exemplary spatial management to develop renewables” initiative. **2022**
- 51% degree of progress of “The Basque Country, an international benchmark in marine power” initiative. **2022**
- 47% progress in the “Basque industry at the cutting edge of wind power” initiative. **2022**
- 48% progress in the “Hydrogen production, distribution and consumption ecosystem in the Basque Country” initiative. **2022**



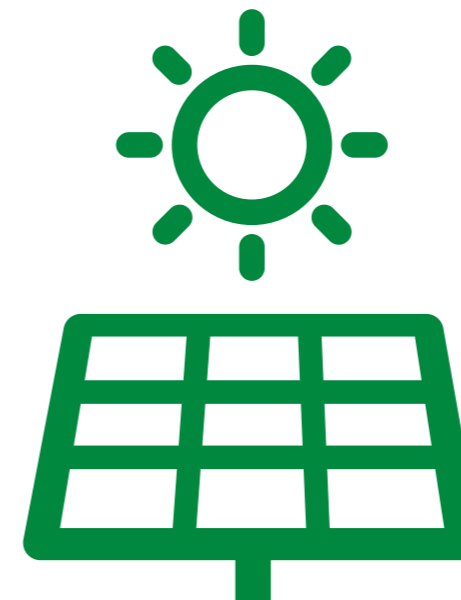
ALLOCATED RESOURCES

- Incentive programme linked to self-consumption and storage
- Grant programme for energy efficiency actions in SMEs and large companies of the industrial sector. **2019**
- Financial measures for protectable retrofitting actions in dwellings and buildings, accessibility and energy efficiency.
- Grants for innovation projects and studies, within the Eraikal Programme 2023
- €7.35 million increase in grants for retrofitting buildings and dwellings
- Grant programme for investments in energy efficiency, renewables, transport and efficient mobility. 2022-2024 call

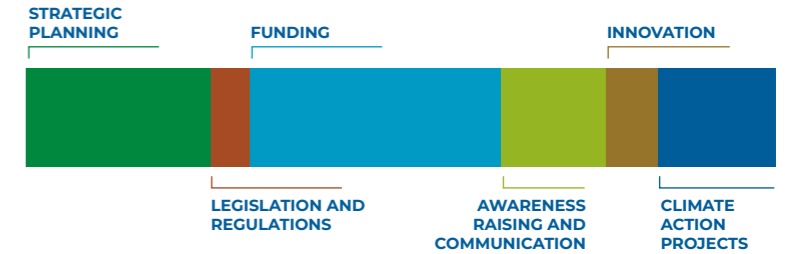


RESULTS

- Energy Transition and Climate Change Act 1/2024, of 8 February
- Climate Change and Energy Transition Plan 2021-2024
- LIFE URBAN KLIMA 2050
- Basque Energy Contingency Plan
- Basque Renewables Sectoral Territorial Plan approved
- Energy Action Plan 2030: Public Sector
- Basque Hydrogen Strategy
- Erreminta Guide
- Climate change adaptation and mitigation tools



Type of measures



Key actions

- Udalsarea 2030: Basque Network of Sustainable Municipalities
- LIFE IP URBAN KLIMA 2050 Project
- Kostaegoki Project: Tools and informatin on the effects of the rising average sea level due to climate change
- Klimatek Project - Okaklima: Pilot modelling of the effects of climate change on the Oka estuary
- Analysis of rainwater flooding associated to extreme precipitation events in climate change scenarios in the Basque Country
- Methodology developed to calculate the climate risk of Basque terrestrial habitats
- Ekiola: promoting the figure of the energy communities, by means of photovoltaic solar generation. Twelve had been created by 2022
- Participation in Europewave project: pre-commercial public procurement of 2 prototypes to harness wave energy
- Basque Hydrogen Corridor
- The Basque Country saved the equivalent energy consumption to 29,000 tonnes of oil in 2023

Best communication practices

- [Urban Klima 2050 reports on the progress of its climate actions to the European Commission](#)
- [The Basque Country at COP28 to showcase nature-based solutions as an essential climate action tool](#)
- [Report on climate change in the Basque Country from the gender perspective](#)
- [2022 Monitoring Report and Assessment of the Energy Transition and Climate Change Plan 2021-2024](#)
- [WindEurope 2024](#)
- [Conference on “Energy Procurement on the Way to Decarbonisation”](#)
- [Youth employment and climate change and energy transition in the local administration](#)
- [ICOE 2022 Forum participation](#)
- [The Basque Government showcases its tools and instruments to spearhead climate action in the Basque Country](#)
- [The Basque Government at Uhinak to unveil the project to adapt the territory to the impacts of climate change](#)
- [Fourteen municipalities and districts spearhead the first climate and energy local action strategy together with Ihobe and EVE](#)

Sustainable Industry

European Context



- Directive 2018/851 on waste
- Directive 2018/852 on packaging and packaging waste
- Directive 2018/850 on the landfill of waste
- Directive 2018/849 on end-of-life vehicles
- Directive 2017/849 on batteries and accumulators and waste batteries and accumulators
- Directive 2018/849 on waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive
- Eco-Innovation Action Plan
- The EU Action Plan for the Circular Economy

Basque Country Context



- Circular Economy Strategy of the Basque Country 2030
- Basque Ecodesign Center
- Basque Clean Technology List
- Basque Bioeconomy Alliance
- Construction and Demolition Waste Decree 112/2012
- Order of 12 January 2015, of the Basque Minister for the Environment and Spatial Planning establishing the requirements to use recycled aggregates from recovering and reusing construction and demolition waste
- Decree 64/2019, of 9 April, establishing the legal system applicable to the recovery and reuse of black slag from steel-making in electric arc furnace
- Decree 46/2001 of 13 March, regulating the management of scrap tyres in the BAC

KEY WORDS

Circular economy
Innovation
Life Cycle



FRAMEWORK GOAL

- Increase material productivity and the circular material use rate by 30%



INDICATORS

- Turnover of Basque companies in more circular products: €2,852 million. **2016**
- No. of Circular Economy and Bioeconomy technologies included in the Basque Clean Technology List: 92. **2021**
- No. of companies incorporating the Circular Economy and Bioeconomy principles: over 150. **2018**
- % waste used out of the total generated in the Basque industrial sector: 57%. **2018**
- Total non-hazardous waste generate per EWL categories in the BAC (Tn): 2,664,338. **2022**
- Total hazardous waste generate per EWL categories in the BAC (Tn): 186,594. **2020**
- Construction and demolition waste recycling rate: 76%. **2018**
- Circular material use rate (CMU): 7.9%. **2018**

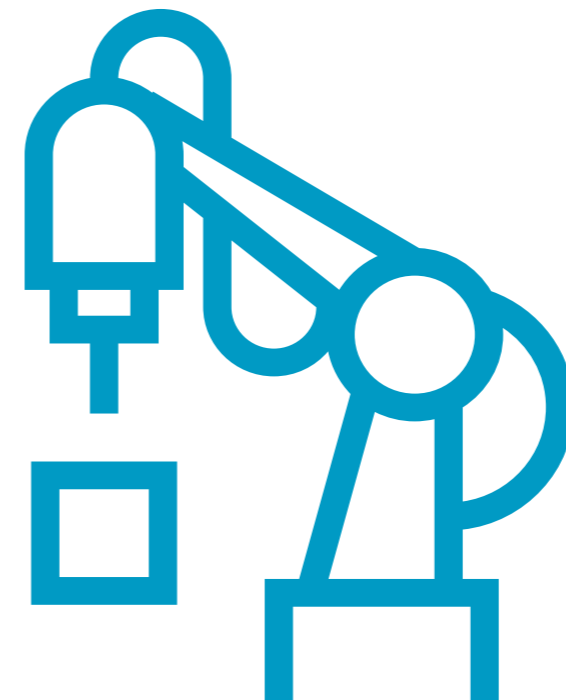


ALLOCATED RESOURCES

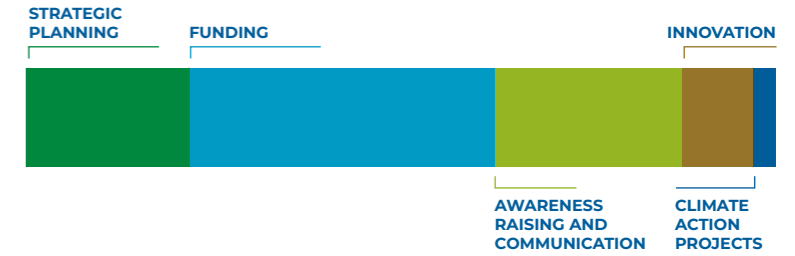
- Azpitek Programme 2023
- Berrindartzea Circular Programme 2022
- IKERTALENT Programme 2022
- EVE Programme
- Industrial Decarbonisation grant programme
- Renove Industry 4.0 scrappage scheme
- Subsidies for circular economy innovation
- Hazinnova Programme
- Circular SME Programme

RESULTS

- Circular Economy and Bioeconomy Plan 2024
- Net-Zero Basque Industrial Super Cluster
- Basque Circular HUB
- Basque Ecodesign Center
- Basque Circular Summit 2022



Type of measures



Key actions

- Aixear has made progress in the formalities for 3 new wind farms
- SAITEC completed the work to construction a floating platform for a wind turbine
- In 2022, 16 companies joined the Basque Ecodesign Center and over 50 projects rolled out a year
- Over 500 professionals in the field and over 300 young people trained through the Circular Hub
- 70 projects were implemented in companies
- An integrated tool has been produced to calculate metrics for a life cycle approach such as the environmental footprint and the carbon footprint
- Equipment included in the Basque Clean Technology List updated
- As regards waste, two end-of-waste decrees regarding construction and demolition waste and household waste incineration slag have been drafted and are currently in the pipeline
- Basquevolt: initiative to produce solid state batteries
- Ecoinnovation in the Basque Country. 74 new circular solutions
- ESG Reporting: Guide on environmental, social and governance activities for companies

Best communication practices

- The Basque Country signs up to the World Economic Forum Declaration with the commitment of Basque industry achieving net zero emissions by 2050
- Catalogue of circular products manufactured in the Basque Country
- Arcelor Mittal Sestao, first zero emissions steelworks in the world
- 2022 Monitoring report of the Bioeconomy and Circular Economy Plan 2024

Sustainable Mobility

European Context



- 2030 Energy and Climate Framework, and Fit for 55 goal
- Smart and sustainable mobility strategy: getting European transport on track for the future
- Guidelines to prepare and apply a sustainable urban mobility plan – *European Platform on Sustainable Urban Mobility Plans*
- Connecting Europe Facility

Basque Country Context



- The Energy Sustainability of the Basque Autonomous Community Act 4/2019, of 21 February
- Basque Sustainable Transport Master Plan 2030
- Comprehensive Electricity Mobility Plan



KEY WORDS

Electrification
Efficiency
Innovation



FRAMEWORK GOAL

- Increase material productivity and the circular material use rate by 30%



INDICATORS

- Transport energy consumption by type of energy: renewable 104.75 ktep. **2022**
- Electrified vehicle penetration indicator: 18.1 (index base 100, second quarter 2023)
- Ratio of public charging points by number of electric vehicles: 6.30%. **2017**
- CO₂ emissions associated to transport: 35%. **2021**
- Means of transport broken down: 96% of the sector's emissions are from road transport (54% generated by cars, 33% by freight transport and the rest by buses, motorbikes, etc). **2021**

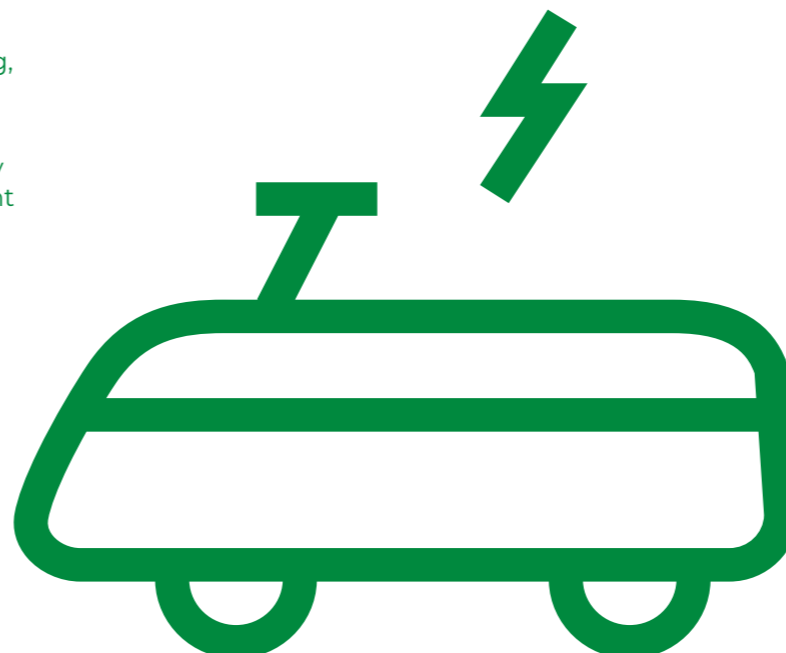


ALLOCATED RESOURCES

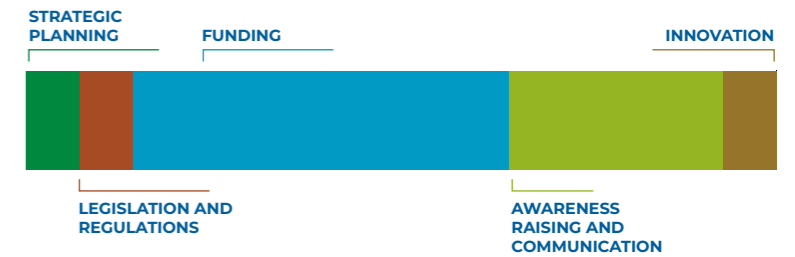
- Renove scrappage scheme for lorries 2022
- Renove scrappage scheme for vehicles 2021
- 50% discount on train, tramway, funicular services, applied by Euskotren, the publicly-owned company of the Basque Government's Ministry of Territorial Planning, Housing and Transport
- MOVES III Programme
- Grant programme for investments in energy efficiency, renewables, transport and efficient mobility. 2022-2024 call

RESULTS

- Basque Electricity Mobility Strategy
- MUBIL Hub
- Study of the mobility of the Basque Autonomous Community 2021
- Basque Transport Snapshot 2021
- Basquevolt
- Basque Sustainable Mobility Act 11/2023, of 9 November



Type of measures

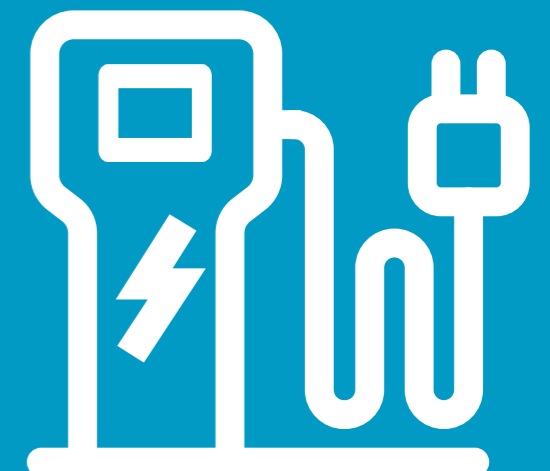


Key actions

- III Basque Greenways Symposiums: discussing tourism resources and sustainable mobility
- Three Basque technological leaders set up the Basque Autonomous and Connected Mobility Centre with business and institutional support
- MUBIL Mobility Awards: recognition of international technology startup projects with great potential to positively impact mobility
- MUBIL Mobility Expo: professional for the sustainable mobility industry in southern Europe
- Inbound trade missions for MUBIL Hub companies
- MUBIL Hub Professional Groups dynamics
- Agreement for Mubil and the Basque Energy Board to purchase R&D and testing equipment

Best communication practices

- GoMobility Fair
- BATZ Automotive Innovation Summit 2021



Protecting Biodiversity & Reducing Pollution

European Context



- Directive 2009/147/EC: Bird Directive
- Directive 1992/43/EEC: Habitats Directive
- Directive 2008/56/EC: Marine Strategy Framework Directive
- EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030

Basque Country Context



- Basque Natural Heritage Conservation Act 9/2021, of 25 November
- Waste prevention and management plan 2030
- Biodiversity Strategy of the Basque Country 2030
- Basque Country Action Plan - Bid Rex
- Basque Air Quality Plan 2030
- Information System of the Nature of the Basque Country
- Basque Country Environmental Profile 2022. Biodiversity
- Environmental Inspection and Control Plan 2019-2026
- Decree 211/2012, of 16 October, regulating the procedure for the strategic environmental assessment of plans and programmes
- Decree 202/2015, of 27 October, regulating the subsidies for companies to make investments to protect the environment

KEY WORDS

Conservation
Reduction
Protection



FRAMEWORK GOALS

- Cut the waste generation rate per unit of GDP by 30%
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 30%



INDICATORS

- Natural protected surface area with respect to the total surface area of the Basque Country: 24.2 %. 2021
- List of threatened flora and fauna species in the BAC
- Categories of threatened flora and fauna species in the BAC
- Evolution of the native forest surface area: 192,892 Ha. 2022
- Index of urban population exposed to air pollution by type of PM10 particulate matter: 15.3 µgr/m³. 2021
- Index of evolution of total Greenhouse Gas emissions - Baseline 1990=100%: 78.5 CO₂-eq(kt). 2020
- Urban waste per capita generated: 493 kg/inhabitant. 2020



ALLOCATED RESOURCES

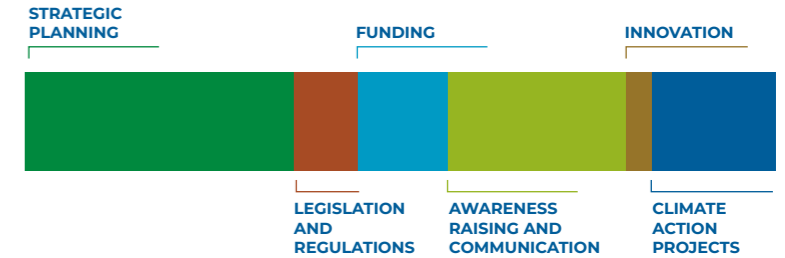
- Priority Action Framework 2021-2027 in the Basque Country and financing of the Natura 2000 Network
- Grant programme for local entities that implement actions to foster sustainable development. Local eco-innovation line
- Support for partnership projects between Basque stakeholders and of the regions of Wales, Flanders and Corsica
- Grants for proper environmental management, by means of stewardship agreements in the Urdaibai Biosphere Reserve, in the framework of the Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan, funded by the European Union - Next Generation EU
- Support for projects in Urdaibai and Txingudi natural areas



RESULTS

- Decree 153/2022, of 13 December, approving the II Management Plan of the Natural Resources of the Protected Space of Izki Natural Heritage, Natural Park, Special Area of Conservation, and Special Protection Area, and modifying the boundaries of Izki Natural Park and its peripheral protection area
- Ruling 43/2023, of 3 April, of the Director of the Government Secretariat and of Relations with Parliament, ordering the publication of the partnership agreement between the Basque Water Agency and the Basque Government's Ministry of Health regarding the protection the quality of public consumption water and the quality of the water in bathing areas
- Basque soil protection strategy 2030
- Action Programme for the vulnerable areas of the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country
- Basque Waste Prevention and Management Plan 2030
- Roadmap to minimise waste to landfill and guarantee the self-sufficiency of facilities in 2024
- Tourism Sustainability Territorial Plan
- LIFE IP URBAN KLIMA 2050 Project
- Approval of the Basque Air Quality Plan 2030
- SOILUZIOAK 2023

Type of measures



Key actions

- Criteria developed to prepare the carbon footprint, reductions and offset register
- Absorption calculator and its instruction manual updated
- Studies and analytics conducted to update the Basque Country's soil organic carbon map
- Forestation activities, mainly in degraded areas, such as the Atlantic slopes of Bermeo
- Recovery and rewilding in different areas of Donostia/San Sebastián, and riverside woodland of the Natura 2000 Network in Álava
- Projects have been rolled out for the forestation of public uplands, woodland restoration, recovery of wetlands, etc.
- Instruments have been developed that comprehensively include the climate perspective in the Management Plans of the Natura 2000 Network and which facilitate the climate risk assessment and putting measures in place in different species groups
- Pilot projects incorporating the climate risk perspective in the Aizkorri-Aratz and Aralar Management Plans
- Urdaibai Biosphere accredited as the first sustainable tourist destination of the Basque Country
- Enlarging the San Lorenzo lagoon and improve the connectivity and restoration of the Txingudi natural areas
- Economic assessment of the Natura 2000 Network in the Basque Country - Methodology and Results for 2010-2021

Best communication practices

- [EKOADRILA](#), the campaign to give waste a "second life"
- [Annual Air Quality Report](#)
- [Environmental Profile of the Basque Country 2022 - Biodiversity](#)
- [Manifesto to protect the Basque forestry sector and calling for the "active and sustainable management" of its forests](#)
- [Advances in the sustainability of the forests of the Basque Country](#)

Farm to Fork

European Context



- Farm to Fork Strategy
- Strategic Guidelines for a More Sustainable and Competitive Aquaculture. 2021-2030
- European Union Common Agriculture Policy. 2023-2027
- White Paper on Food Safety. 2020-present

Basque Country Context



- Strategic development framework for the smart digitalisation of the Basque food and hospitality food chain
- Plan to fight food waste
- Guide for donating food surpluses
- Food Waste in the Basque Agri-food Chain Analysis
- Elika, Basque Foundation for Agri-food Safety



FRAMEWORK GOAL

- Halve the generation of food waste



INDICATORS

- Evolution of the surface area used for organic farming: 7,905 ha. 2021
- Total food waste (edible and non-edible parts) of primary production: 4,670 tn/year. 2019
- Number of organic production operators: 740. 2023



ALLOCATED RESOURCES

- Berriker Programme
- Grants for organic production in different sectors.
- Leader Programme
- Onekin Programme
- Handitu Programme



RESULTS

- Rural Development Act 7/2022, of 30 June
- Gastronomy and Food Strategic Plan 2024
- Gastronomy Open Ecosystem
- Basque Farm to Fork Research Plan 2022-2026
- Ekolurra
- Strategic Plan of the Common Agricultural Policy in the Basque Country
- Ontzi EKILA Project: Basque Food Packaging Innovation Hub

Type of measures



Key actions

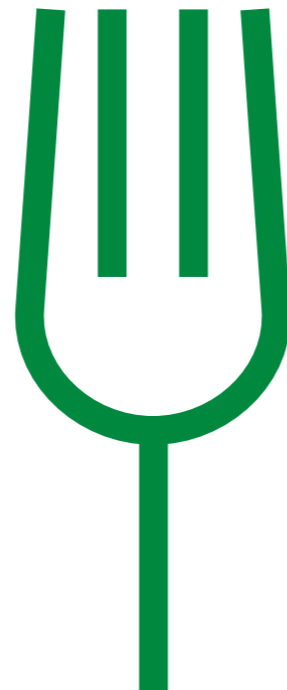
- Pilot project to reduce waste in retail and hospitality
- BasQusite: Equisite Food and Beverages Trade Show

Best communication practices

- "Transfer of Food Innovation in the Basque Country" event
- Euskaber livestock rearing farm
- Food 4 Future Congress
- "Don't throw away food"

KEY WORDS

Sustainable agriculture
Food waste
Rural development



3. Conclusions, opportunities and forthcoming challenges

In September 2023, the President of the **European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen**, took stock of the European Green Deal. She stressed that it was born out of this necessity to protect our planet, but it was also designed as an opportunity to preserve our future prosperity. The Commission shifted the climate agenda to be an economic one. That has given a clear sense of direction for investment and innovation. The European Green Deal as a growth strategy is already delivering results. Europe's industry is showing every day that it is ready to power this transition, proving that modernisation and decarbonisation can go hand in hand. With the European Green Deal, Europe is setting out a clear vision to become the first climate neutral continent by 2050; this vision is being included in the Climate Act.

To quote the President, *"the European Green Deal is delivering the change we need to reduce CO₂ emissions. It does so while keeping the interests of our citizens in mind, and providing opportunities for our European industry. The legislation to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030 is now in place, and I am very happy that we are even on track to overshoot this ambition. This is an important sign to Europe and to our global partners that the green transition is possible, that Europe is delivering on its promises."*

In 2021, the Basque Country signed up to the European Green Deal and has set out its own roadmap to achieve a more sustainable future, underpinned by the need for this development model to adhere to the principle of justice so nobody is left behind. An essential instrument of the **Basque Green Deal** is the **Energy Transition and Climate Change Act** for the Basque Country to be climate neutral before 2050 and to achieve the resilience of the territory. It is the first piece of legislation to jointly address climate change and the energy transition in the Basque Country, and to reach the whole of society; it establishes a stable legal framework to accelerate decarbonisation by means of shared responsibility.

With the Basque Green Deal as its standard and with the whole series of plans, strategies and programmes approved since 2021, the Basque Country has forged a robust ecosystem that sets the playing field and draws the line to be followed for the energy and climate transition to the end of the decade. Special mention should be made of the **Basque Environmental Framework Programme 2030**, approved by the Basque Government in March 2023, which is a turning point in the mainstreaming of environmental policies to resolutely advance towards the just and sustainable development model spearheaded by the Basque Green Deal.



OPPORTUNITIES of the Green Deal for Europe and the Basque Country

The European Green Deal does not only address energy and climate challenges, but it also creates a favourable scenario for sustainable economic growth and job creation in key sectors of the economy. It offers a series of significant opportunities.

First, the **transition towards renewable energy sources** and better energy efficiency are driving innovation in clean technologies. This opens up new investment and job creation opportunities in sectors such as solar energy, wind power, green hydrogen and energy storage. There are now more clean energy workers in the world than fossil fuel ones; solar energy, for example, is today ten times cheaper than ten years ago. Since 2019, in all the regions where there has been a fall in fossil fuel jobs, employment in clean energies has far exceeded those losses. Therefore, the transformation of our energy system is not only good for the planet, but it is also good for our economy.

Furthermore, the European Green Deal is striving to **promote a circular economy**, which means there will be an increase in the demand for sustainable products and services. Companies that adopt ecoefficient practices, ecodesign, recycling and reduce waste become more competitive. The existing ecodesign requirement is estimated to have saved Europeans more than €120 billion in their energy bills in 2021. As another example of the opportunities linked to the circular economy, the European Critical Raw Materials Act seeks to bolster EU capabilities with regard to those products throughout the phases of the value chain. Its goal is also to increase our resilience by reducing dependency, increasing the preparation, and fostering the sustainability and circularity of the supply chain.

Third, the Green Deal also spearheads **sustainable mobility**, which drives innovation in electric vehicles, charging infrastructures and public transport solutions. In the same vein, the Energy Transition and Climate Change Act 1/2024, of 8 February, champions non-motorised mobility (pedestrian and cycling), public transport, and more efficient and less polluting means of transport. Reducing the environmental footprint of the transport sector – particularly of heavy vehicles – is another of the key challenges linked to opportunity and competitive advantage. The companies that spearhead these areas could benefit significantly. Promoting sustainable mobility can also have a positive impact on the Basque Country. The region can capitalise on their advances in manufacturing vehicles and components to be trailblazers in adopting electric vehicle technologies and expanding charging infrastructures.



Furthermore, **sustainable agriculture and responsible forestry management** are key areas that offer opportunities for agricultural producers and forestry companies. There can be no food security without our farmers. The Green Deal champions the adoption of sustainable farming practices, such as agro-ecology, and farmers that implement these practices will benefit from financial support programmes and preferential access to markets that value sustainable production. Accordingly, the growing demand for locally sourced produce can be a driving force for short food miles, such as local markets or community farming programmes; thus, reducing the environmental footprint and increasing productivity.

In order to bolster all these lines, European institutions are coming up with **new effective financial tools** that make clean alternatives more feasible. The race to be at the centre of laying down the rules of green financing is underway. We therefore need a Green Deal in key sectors such as critical raw materials, batteries and wind turbines.

In turn, the Deal focuses on the green technologies being more affordable for consumers. The Basque Country's commitment to innovation, research and technological development can lead to opportunities to set up new companies and strengthen the Basque Country's position as a benchmark region in sustainable innovation.

In short, the European Green Deal provides Europe and the Basque Country with the opportunity to convert their traditional business strengths into sustainable competitive advantages of the future; thus, driving economic growth and job creation while contributing to the energy, climate and environmental goals.



CHALLENGES

of the Green Deal for Europe and the Basque Country

In addition to understanding the benefits of advancing towards the ecological transition, the Commission has highlighted some of the **remaining challenges in Europe** in order to meet the goals set in the Deal; those challenges include:

- Balancing the economic, social and environmental goals, and guaranteeing the integration and coherence of the policies.
- Avoiding overlaps and bureaucracy in the deployment of the Green Deal and the SDGs, while guaranteeing the coherence of the policies.
- Ensuring that the regional and local authorities have the necessary capacity and resources to reach the ambitious goals established in the different policies.
- Overcoming resistance to change and guaranteeing that all the stakeholders take part in the transition towards a fairer and more sustainable future.

With the passing of the revised Renewable Energy Directive in 2023, **the EU already has legally binding climate targets that cover all the key sectors of the economy**. The general package includes emissions reduction targets in a wide range of sectors; a target to prioritise natural carbon sinks; and an updated emissions trading system to limit emissions, putting a price on pollution and driving investments in the green transition, along with social support for the public and small companies. Its effective implementation will be a real challenge for the coming years.

In the specific context of **the Basque Country**, the implementation of the European Green Deal and its transposition in the Basque Green Deal is also facing specific challenges:

- **Business challenges:** The Basque Country has a very important industrial base, including sectors such as steelmaking and petrochemical. The transition towards a circular and low-carbon economy can raise specific challenges for those companies. Cutting emissions in energy intensive sectors requires significant investments in clean technologies and more sustainable production processes.
- **Energy Transition:** Even though the Basque Country has made great strides in the diversification of its energy matrix, the transition towards renewable energy sources can imply infrastructure and logistic challenges. Promoting wind power, for example, can come up against obstacles related to the NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) syndrome.



- **Agriculture:** Adapting farming practices to comply with stricter sustainability standards would require educational, financial and technical support for local farmers.
- **Sustainable Mobility:** Promoting sustainable mobility in the Basque Country, including active cycling and pedestrian mobility, and public transport, implies improving the infrastructure for electric vehicles; promoting more efficient and less polluting means of transport, in line with energy efficiency and savings criteria, and the use of alternative energies that contribute to the decarbonisation of transport. That may require significant investments in the expansion of charging networks and to improve public transport connectivity.
- **Citizen Participation:** Encouraging citizen participation and guaranteeing the backing of Basque society for the Green Deal measures will be crucial. That implies effectively communicating the short- and long-term benefits of the actions implemented and including citizens in policy design.

It is important to fully exploit the opportunities provided by the green transition to ensure our future prosperity. Therefore, both the European Green Deal and the Basque Green Deal are programmes for growth, that show that competitiveness and decarbonisation can and must go hand in hand



Basque Green Deal

2024 RESULTS REPORT

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