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# ENVIRONMENTAL FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME OF THE BASQUE COUNTRY 2020

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EUSKO JAURLARITZA



GOBIERNO VASCO

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## IÑIGO URKULLU RENTERIA

Basque Premier

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**The environment is a real source of development opportunities for people, of wealth creation for companies and entrepreneurs and of new opportunities to construct a fairer and more equitable society.**

In 1997, the Amsterdam Treaty, in its Articles 2 and 6, placed “environmentally friendly sustainable growth” and the integration of the environment in other policies at the heart of the goals of the European Union. In 2010, the European Commission approved the Europe Strategy 2020 that sets three priorities that are mutually reinforcing. They are smart growth that implies developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation; sustainable growth that proposes promoting an economy that is more resource efficient, and is greener and more competitive; and integrating growth that fosters an economy with high employment that is socially and territorially cohesive.

In this context, the Basque Government, taking the view that people are the lynchpin of all its policies and actions, has identified the environment in its programme for its parliamentary term as one of the key policies that will make up the cornerstone of our work during the coming years.

The “*Environmental Programme of the Basque Country 2020*” sets out this commitment of the Basque Government to the environment. This Programme is therefore among the 14 strategic plans that make up the core of the commitments acquired by the Basque Government to society reflected in the “*Euskadi 2020 for Human Development and Sustainable Growth*” report.

This environment thus becomes a cross-cutting aspect in the Euskadi 2020 strategy overall and it thus has assumed the mission to contribute to wellbeing, job creation and developing an embracing and low carbon economy.

The Basque Country has made great progress in the environmental area in recent years, thanks to the endeavours of the general public, companies, civil society and the authorities. The joint effort has positioned our country as a benchmark on the International Environmental Performance Index. This



environmental leadership position and the improvement in the performance of the main environmental indicators allow us to embark on this new stage of our environmental policy with optimism.

The environment is a real source of development opportunities for people, of wealth creation for companies and entrepreneurs and of new opportunities to construct a fairer and more equitable society.

There is a widespread perception among our society that the situation of the environment has improved in recent years and its degree of commitment to the environment is increasingly greater. Environmental problems continue to concern the immense majority of Basque citizens and they give great importance to its protection and indicate that they are greatly in favour of consolidating these policies. And as is only natural, we are talking about one of the basic pillars for the wellbeing of our society.

At this point of history, our priority is to modernise the environmental policy to address the new problems and challenges facing us in the 21st century. The environmental problems and the uncertainty regarding their impact must not be an excuse to delay the political measures to be adopted. Today's generation is responsible for the wellbeing of future generations and it is therefore essential to have a coherent vision of the future as the decisions that we take today in environmental policy will decide tomorrow's future.

In this framework, the Basque Country, being aware of our dependency on the resources and the priorities set by the European Union, has established six main environmental challenges noted for their high degree of complexity and uncertainty and their interdependent nature. The challenges of the future Basque environmental policy are: protecting our natural capital as a source of wellbeing and quality of life, combining climate change and energy model; public health and its interdependence with the environment; fostering a circular economy and a competitive territory; education that prioritises commitment to future generations; and governance based on co-responsibility.

We are convinced that the setting up of an advanced, modern and prosperous society is only possible by protecting and respecting our natural resources and by scrupulously preventing the environmental risks for the health and quality of life of everyone. We are thus sharing the reflection emanating from the VII EU Environment Action Programme to 2020 *"Living well, within the limits of our planet"*. The right to a decent life in a quality environment for everyone, today's and future generations, express an essential part of our sustainable development model and is the mainstay of our government slogan: *"Committed to people"*.

The Environmental Framework Programme of the Basque Country to 2020 which we are presenting in this document complies with the task entrusted of being the roadmap to a new stage setting the course and coordinating the actions in the environmental field for the coming years.



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## **ANA OREGI BASTARRIKA**

Minister for the Environment and Territorial Policy  
Basque Government

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**This document ends a cycle of strategic environmental planning between 2002 and 2020 and marks the start of a new stage of environmental policy aimed at using the social and economic opportunities provided by improving the environment to create wealth, employment and wellbeing.**

Environmental policy if it wishes to be effective must focus on long term achievements. Based on this premise, and after a far-reaching analysis and a reflection process, we are unveiling the IV Environmental Framework Programme of the Basque Country as the basis for an environmental policy that is modern, inclusive, providing guidance and is based on the shared responsibility of all the economic, social and political stakeholders.

In recent decades, the environment in the Basque Country has improved significantly. Our environment is cleaner and safer. We can be proud of the improvement to the quality of the air, the water and the soil. However, the main environmental problems that we are now facing are of a different type as they need a different approach in the new programme on which we are going to embark.

Climate change is an excellent example of this. The transition towards a low-carbon economy and by means of a change in our production and consumption processes requires a great deal of time. However, the environmental problems and the uncertainty regarding their impact must not be an excuse to delay the political measures to be adopted. The current generation is responsible for the wellbeing of future generations and, therefore, a coherent view of the future is essential.

This document ends a cycle of strategic environmental planning between 2002 and 2020 and marks the start of a new stage of environmental policy aimed at using the social and economic opportunities provided by improving the environment to create wealth, employment and wellbeing. The change that we propose in the new environmental policy is reflected in the process to prepare the Programme.

Special mention should be made of the role that the three Provincial Councils and the local councils have played in the process to prepare the IV Environmental Framework Programme 2020 of the Basque Country to coordinate the public action in the field of the environment and to facilitate an efficient deployment of the public policies in the territory as a whole.

Finally, but by no means less important, there is the role of numerous social stakeholders that in our territory work to improve the environment, and that of the companies and the general public that are increasingly more committed to protecting the environment.

In this new stage on which we are embarking, they will be the real centrepiece of the positive action to improve the state of our environment in a renewed public-private co-responsibility agreement that Basque society as a whole must construct.





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**INTRODUCTION.  
A COUNTRY  
COMMITTED  
TO THE  
ENVIRONMENT**

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## 1.1. ENVIRONMENTAL FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME

The General Environmental Protection Act of the Basque Country (Act 3/98) stipulated in its Article 6 that the environmental policy of the Basque Country would be set out in an Environmental Framework Programme (EFP) that would be drawn up by the environmental authority every four years. Three Environmental Framework Programmes, the I EFP, for the period 2002-2006, the II EFP, for the period 2007-2010, and the III EFP for 2011-2014, were produced in that context.

The Basque Environmental Strategy of Sustainable Development 2002-2020 was prepared and published simultaneously with the I EFP to:

- Equip the I EFP and successive ones with a long-term strategic vision
- In line with the underlying philosophy of Act 3/98, foster the setting up of a stable and lasting structure of the environmental policy to endorse and ensure that the public action and private initiative is safe and effective.
- Align the projects and approaches of the Basque environmental policy to the international context of the time it was drawn up, mainly to the environmental dimension of the 2001 European Union Strategy for Sustainable Development.

On 11 June 2013, the Basque Government adopted the Agreement which approved the timeline for strategic plans of the X Parliamentary Term 2013-2016. The IV Environmental Framework Programme (IV EFP 2020) is among the 14 strategic plans within the Agreement, as part of the “Employment and Sustainable Growth” block.

The IV EFP set the year 2020 as the time horizon to come into line with the main European benchmarks in the field of the environment and, in particular, the VII EU Environment Action Programme to 2020 “Living well, within the limits of our planet”.

In short, this Environmental Framework Programme 2020:

- describes the new environmental challenges facing the Basque Country;
- sets the targets and main measure for 2020;
- provide the authorities, general public and companies with the necessary clarity and predictability regarding environmental options.

## 1.2. AN SUSTAINED AND ONGOING POLICY

Basque environmental policy has a proven track record dating back over 30 years and during that time, there has been significant private and public endeavour and high stakes have been involved to drive the country towards sustainable environmental development. Thus, it should be noted there were very few urban water purification infrastructures four decades ago. We did not have networks to control the environmental quality of the air or water masses and, what is most important, there was no expertise and experience regarding environmental policy among the Public Administration, and among companies and the general public.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Annex II. Diagnostic Document 2: NONDIK Report: Balance Sheet of the State of the Environment of the Basque Country 1980-2012.

In this line, we can point out that the Basque Country has made significant progress in the field of environmental policy in recent years.

On the one hand, it is among the advanced European region in terms of environment-linked policies and instruments implemented. Significant examples are the gathering, analysis and publication of environmental information in its different thematic areas (climate change, biodiversity, air, water, soil, waste and material resources) or the stable set of statistical operations that provide current information on the main environmental vectors.

On the other hand, and taking into account the results obtained during recent years, the Basque Country is in fourth position in the Environmental Performance Index, behind countries such as Norway, France or Austria. These results, and the progressive improvement, are set out and considered in the document called “Environmental Profile” which documents the evolution of the headline indicators and the “Basque Environmental Performance Index”<sup>2</sup>.

The following table provides a brief summary of the main aspects of Basque environmental analysis from the 1980s-90s to the present.

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## ONGOING ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS IN TIME

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The Basque Government prepared 5 “State of the Environment in the Basque Country” reports (1986, 1998, 2001, 2004 and 2009) and established from 1998 onwards a panel of consolidated basic indicators, in line with the European Union, which have been successively updated and improved. In turn, the report on headline environmental indicators (Environmental Profile) with the performance of the main indicators for the Basque Country has been published annually since 2002. These reports provide a quick overview of the environmental performance, by reflecting the existing trends.

A synthetic overview of the environmental performance in the Basque Country in the last decade can be obtained by analysing, on the one hand, the balance sheet in 2001 and, on the other hand, the environmental results for 2013. The State of the Environment in the Basque Country 2001 showed a poor performance in environmental issues such as climate change (greenhouse gas emissions), contaminated soils or the marine and coastal environment, along with a large number of areas with insufficient progress (land use, water consumption, air quality and biodiversity). A positive trend could only begin to be seen in the area of energy consumption. Furthermore, after analysing the existing pressures and trends, the outlook for the future of the state of the environment likewise did not look good, with poor forecasts for the emission of chemical products, for climate change and for biodiversity.

It should be noted that all the tools, instruments and measures jointly implemented by companies, society and the public administration in the last decade have result in a more favourable state of the environment in 2014.

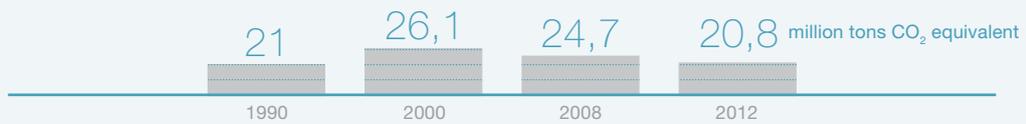
The current situation of the main environmental issues in the Basque Country is summarised below:

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<sup>2</sup> See Annex II. Diagnostic Document 3: Environmental Profile of the Basque Country 2013 and Diagnostic Document 4: Basque Country Environmental Performance Index 2013.

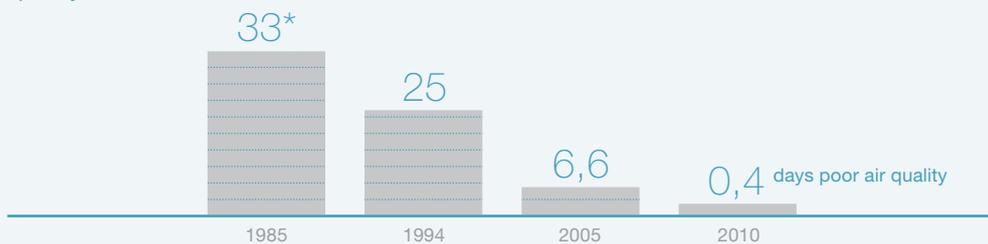
**CLIMATE CHANGE:** Between 1990 and 2011, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions dropped by 3%, with a steady downward trend since 2007. Specifically, the total CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from fuel fell by 18% in the Basque Country in the period 2000-2011. In that same period, the GDP rose by 25% and energy consumption by 4%. That implies greater efficiency of the Basque socio-economic sectors (lower energy intensity) and greater environmental efficiency of energy consumption (cleaner energy).

> GHG emissions evolution



**AIR QUALITY:** In recent decades, air quality in general has improved significantly and the poor air quality index has been reduced to less than one day a year. Between 1990 and 2010, sulphur oxide (SO<sub>x</sub>) emissions were reduced by 71%, nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) by 1%, and non-methane volatile organic compounds (NMVOCs) by 13%.

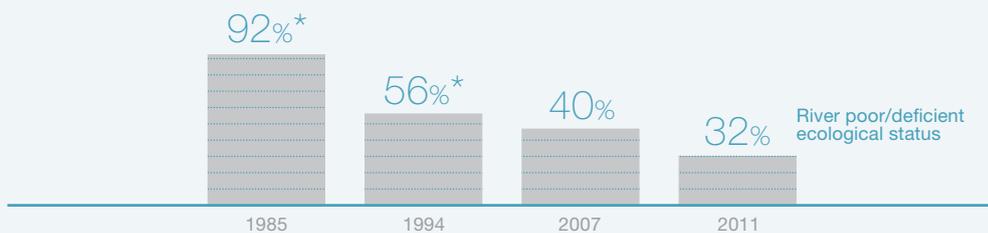
> Air quality



\*Approximation due to change in methodology.

**WATER QUALITY:** During recent years, the quality of the water bodies of our rivers has steadily improved. On the other hand, the water quality of our beaches has gone from 44% deficient/poor state in 1985 to 11% in 2012. During that same period, the population percentage with satisfactory quality water for consumption rose from 80% to 96%.

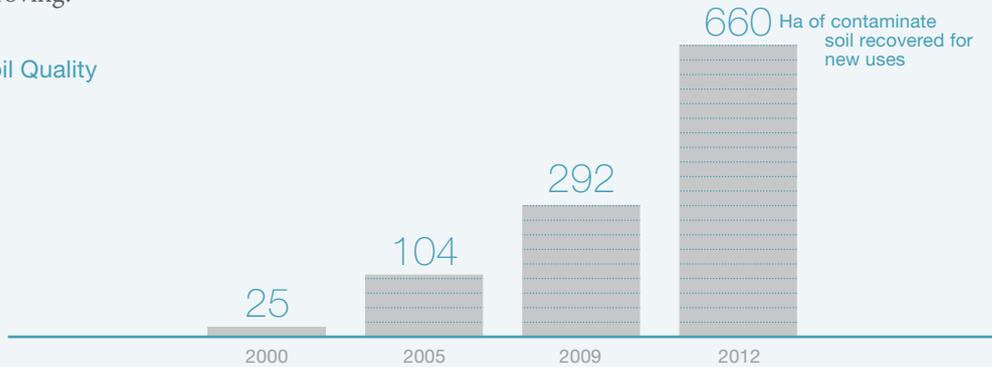
> River water quality



\*Approximation due to change in methodology.

**SOIL QUALITY:** The number of hectares of contaminated soil recovered for new uses has continued to increase and exceeded a total of 600 hectares. This has meant an average of nearly 100 hectares recovered each year during the last 10 years. Between 2000 and 2012, the number of sites tested came to 1312, 524 of which were recovered. We can conclude that with the prevention measures in place and the land recovery carried out, the quality of the soil resource is gradually improving.

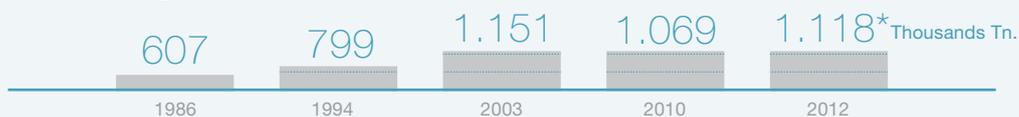
> Soil Quality



**BIODIVERSITY:** The protection of the terrestrial biome has doubled. In 2000, the Basque Country has nearly 12% of its territory protected. The initial steps for the Basque Country to join the Natura 2000 network were taken in 1997, 2000 and 2003, where 6 Special Protection Areas of Birds (SPA) and 52 areas were proposed to be designated as Sites of Community Importance (SCI). Those places were referred to the European Commission which approved them and designated those sites belonging to the Basque Country as Sites of Community Importance (SCIs) corresponding to the Mediterranean and Atlantic bio-geographic regions. Those decisions of the European Commission have been updated over the years and currently 20.3% of the surface area of the Basque Country is part of the Natura 2000 Network. Eighteen per cent of the different habitats identified have a clearly favourable status. As regards the rest, 35% have a general poor conservation state, while the general state of the habitat in 47% of the cases have diverse assessments of rank, surface area occupied, structure and specific functions and/or future prospect.

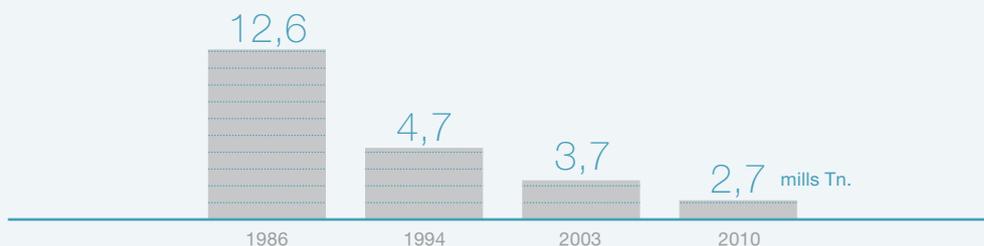
**WASTE GENERATION:** Between 1986 and 2010, municipal waste generation has increased by 76%. However, in that same period, the generation of industrial waste fell by 79% and hazardous waste by 97%.

> Municipal waste generation



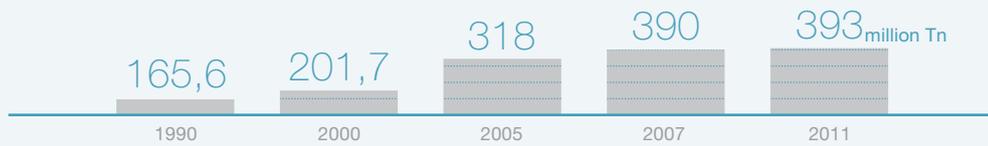
\* Preliminary data

> Industrial waste generation



**CONSUMPTION OF MATERIALS:** Consumption of materials has doubled since 1999, even though the material productivity (in other words, the GDP generated in relation to the amount of material used in the economy) has been multiplied by 4, rising from 0.5 to 2 €/kg.

> Consumption of materials



**SOCIETY AND THE ENVIRONMENT:** Basque grassroots perception of the main environmental problems has varied over time shifting from giving priority to water contamination and the destruction of the landscape in 2001, to highlighting air pollution and climate change as main concerns in 2013. Furthermore, industry has progressively lost ground in grassroots perception as the main cause of environmental pollution, dropping from 63% in 2001 to 53% in 2011, and it is the citizenry itself that recognises its greater role. Finally, it is noteworthy that 36% of the population in 2001 perceived that the environment had improved during recent years and that percentage had increased to 56% by 2011.

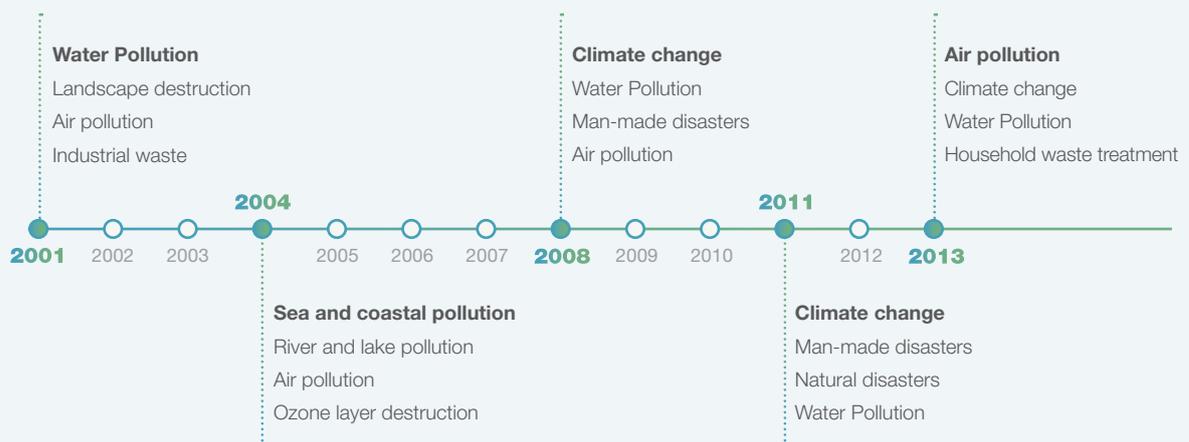


Diagram 1.1. Grassroots perception of environmental problems

The **stages in Basque environmental policy** could be summarised as follows:

— **From 1980 to 1998. The foundations were laid and the most serious problems tackled**

We are now a far cry from the decades of the 1980s and 1990s, when the environmental priorities consisted of managing the main environmental liabilities and urgently curbing the serious problems of environmental pollution and degradation of the marine and terrestrial ecosystems, the legacy of a development and predator model of all types of resources.

In 1980, the Environment Office of the Basque Government was set up and marked the formal start of Basque environmental policy. This period included very important milestones, such as the setting up of the network to monitor the quality of the water and rivers, establishing the network of protected natural areas and the implementation of voluntary agreement with specific industrial sector to decrease environmental pressures.

The approval by the Basque Parliament in 1998 of the General Environment Act marked a new landmark in coming into line with European Union sustainable development policies and legislation and other international benchmarks. Since then, there has been a considerable effect to keep closely in line with European environmental policy in its many areas: diagnostics, strategies, methodologies, indicators, reports, etc.

— **From 1998 to 2014. Planning and taking decisive action to transform the state of the environment**

Once the legislative and regulatory foundations were laid, and the environmental policy consolidated, work started on an important planning and transforming process.

The Basque Environmental Strategy for Sustainable Development 2002-2020 and the I Environmental Framework Programme 2002-2006 are the most important milestones of this period and led to the drawing up and implementation of the II and III Environmental Frameworks which became the core conductor of environmental policy, setting goals, targets and commitment, whose evolution was closely monitored. In tandem with developing the Framework Programmes, a broad series of different plans, programmes and measures were implemented and which reflect the proactive intention to prevent environmental impacts.

— **At present**

At present, after decades of consolidating the environmental policy, we are currently embarking on a new stage that includes the work carried out and the remarkable results achieved. With this in mind, this new stage of environmental policy is aimed at using the social and economic opportunities provided by improving the environment to create wealth, employment and wellbeing.

Diagram 1.2 shows the change undergone since the approval of the Environmental Strategy for Sustainable Development 2002-2020. Different planning tools have been implemented in the past but with weak links between them (mobility, land use, climate change, rural development, etc.). This IV EFP 2020 aspires not only to conclude the period established by that Strategy, but also for integration and coordination to become the cornerstones to progress towards a future Environmental Strategy that combines the different policies in pursuit of a strategy as a country.

## TOWARDS A BASQUE ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY

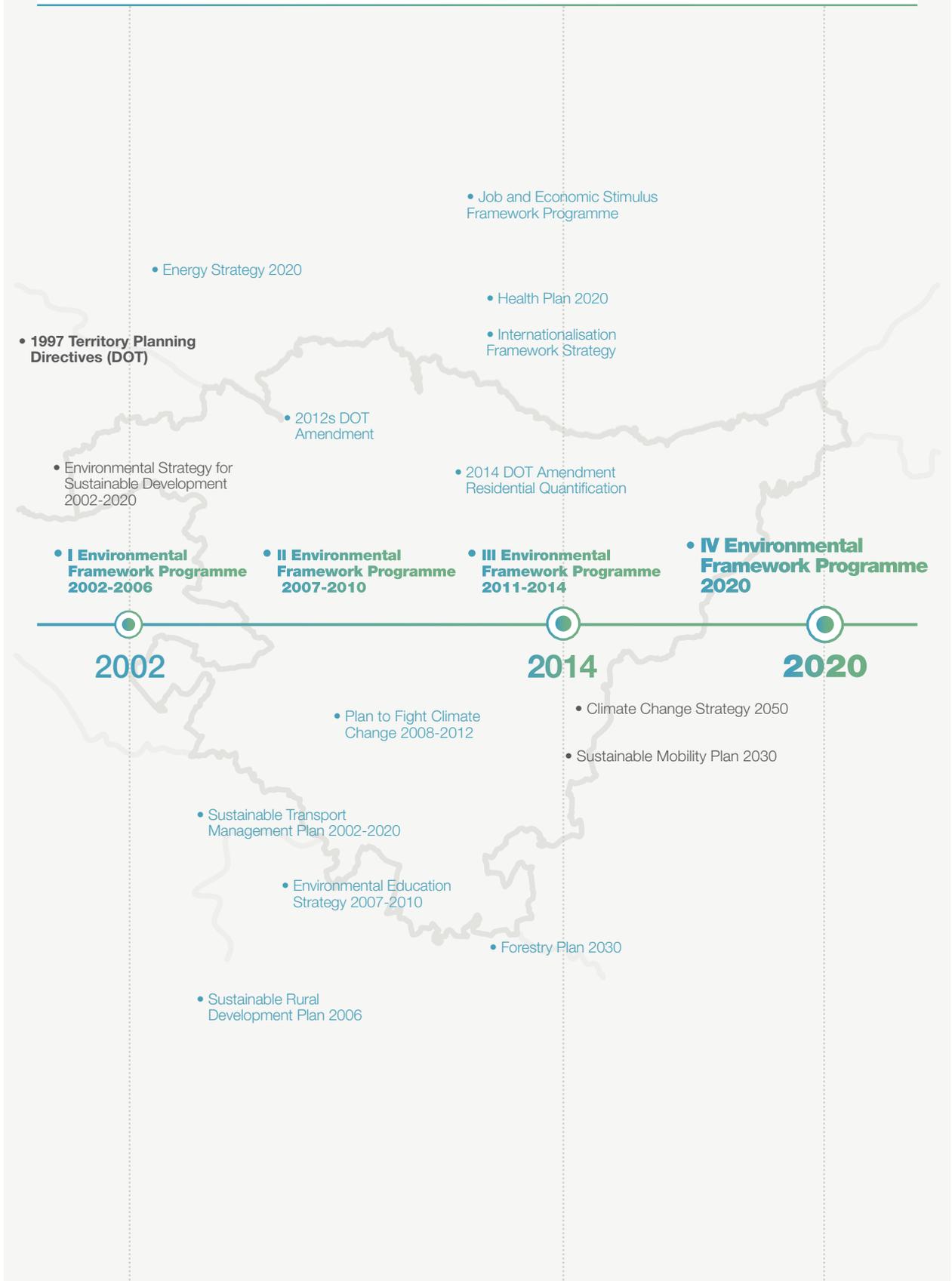


Diagram 1.2.

### 1.3. PEOPLE AT THE HEART OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

The IV Environmental Framework Programme for the period 2015-2020 is one of the 14 strategic plans underpinning the “Euskadi 2020 for human development and sustainable growth” scheme, and comes under the first of its three core areas: Sustainable Growth (See Diagram 1.3.).

Its “Responsible Environmental Policy” includes the initiative of *“Preparing the IV Environmental Framework Programme for the period 2015-2020 and developing the commitment envisaged in the Basque Environmental Strategy for Sustainable Development 2002-2020”*. It likewise points out that one of the main goals of the Basque Government is to leave for future generations a territory that is more pleasant, more sustainable and with greater development potential.

According to the Basque Government, the environment concept includes all the factors that condition human life, not merely the natural ones, but also the cultural, economic and social ones. Talking about the environment today is talking about our real life scenario, of the context in which we live our lives, of the services provided by our ecosystems and of showcasing the environmental knowledge that we have acquired as a country in recent years.

In short, we must drive the effective integration of the environment into all policies. The Basque Government has thus incorporated the environment as a cross-cutting element that decisively contributes to wellbeing, job creation and developing a future-looking and strong economy. The IV Environmental Framework Programme 2020 is one of the linchpins to construct the new economic driver of the Basque Country. As a Government plan, all the Ministries have actively participated in its preparation and will also do so decisively in its implementation.

There is a dual link between the IV EFP and the rest of the strategic planning of the Basque Government. On the one hand, it is a fundamental part of its commitment to sustainable growth (See Diagram 1.3.). The environment is decisively used as a real source of opportunities to kick start employment and economic activity, as well as being a key and emerging source of innovative companies, entrepreneurs and green jobs. The savings in resources and raw materials is a source of competitiveness in the medium and long term for companies. Furthermore, the environment is seen as a cross-cutting opportunity niche for the smart specialisation of the country. The environmental responsibility and commitment of the Basque Country to global environmental problems is a factor for international image and outreach. Therefore, environmental governance is a further aspect of the commitment to excellence and it commits the whole Administration to responsible and exemplary management of the environment in all its actions and measures.

On the other hand, the IV EFP is a crucial contribution to human development. The environment is a determining factor of human health. Protecting its environment conserves the services that the natural ecosystems provide (contribution of raw materials, hydric and energy resources, landscape, cultural heritage, etc.), is a factor for territorial competitiveness and cohesion, as well as for forward-looking integral training and responsibility of the general public.

### 1.4. PLANNING BASED ON OWN AND EXTERNAL TRENDS

#### **Perspective of environmental trends worldwide. United Nations and European Union**

From the global perspective, the most important institutions worldwide, such as the United Nations and the European Union, are clear that environmental degradation limits the social and economic development potential for countries and their message is clear: “being ambitious with the environment strengthens competitiveness and generates new sources of development and job creation”.

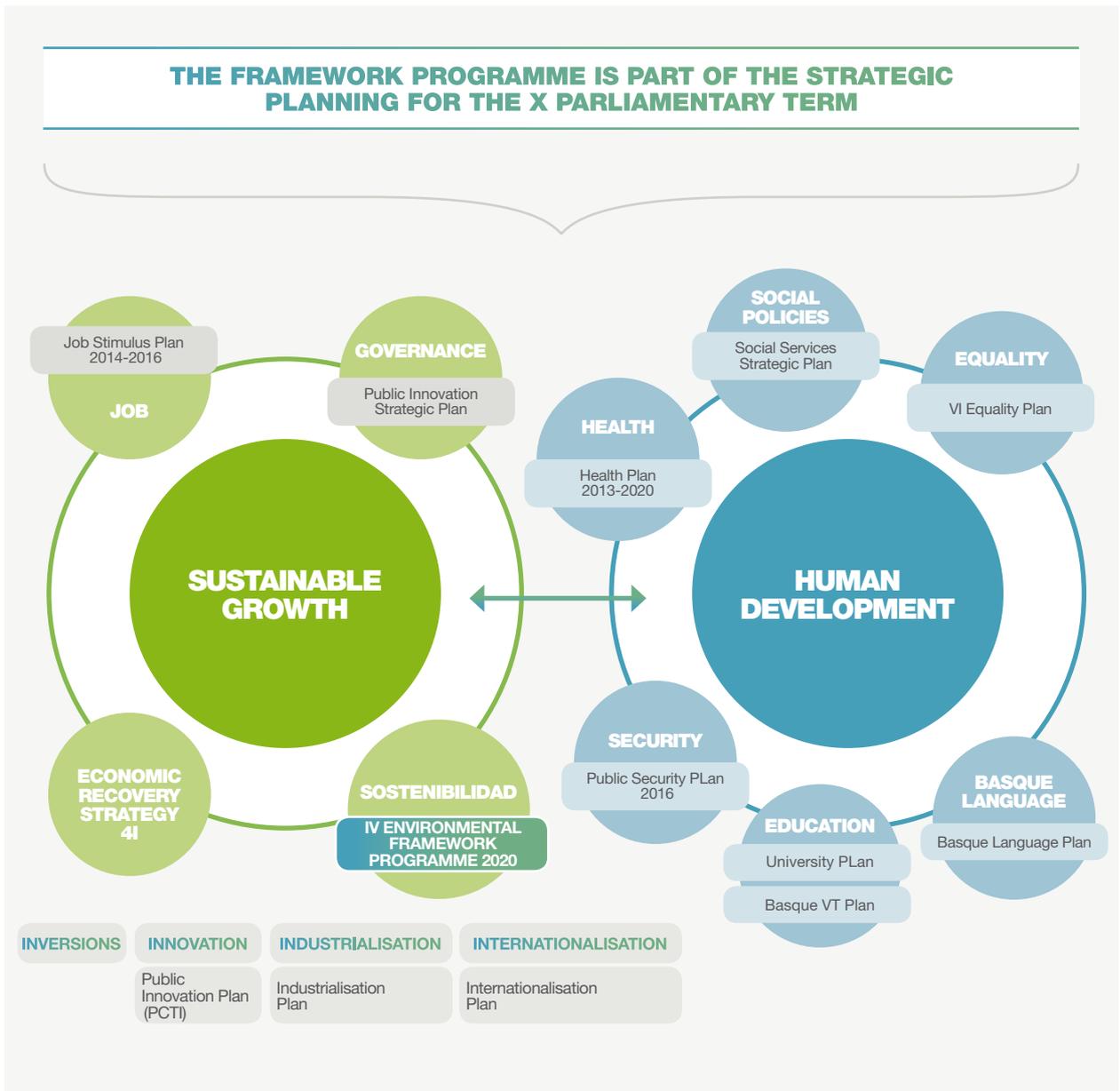


Diagram 1.3. **Map of Strategies, Plans and Programmes of the X Parliamentary Term of the Basque Government**

Environmental change in the EU is increasingly caused by developments taking place at global level, including demographics, consumption and trade patterns, and rapid technological progress. This evolution may offer significant opportunities for economic growth and social well-being, but poses challenges and uncertainties for the EU's economy and society and are causing environmental degradation worldwide.

Europe has taken a clear stance; there is significant scope for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and enhancing resource efficiency in the Union. This will ease pressures on the environment and bring competitiveness and new sources of growth and jobs through cost savings from improved efficiency, commercialisation of innovations and better management of resources through their whole lifecycle.

In turn, environmental problems and impacts continue to pose significant risks for human health and wellbeing; whereas measures to improve the state of the environment can be beneficial to increase the quality of life of people.

This is all clearly established in the 7th EU Environment Action Programme to 2020 entitled “Living well, within the limits of our planet” that is based on the initiatives adopted as part of the Europe 2020 Strategy, particularly the EU climate and energy package, the roadmap for moving to a competitive low-carbon economy in 2050, the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020 and the roadmap to a resource-efficient Europe.

This 7th EU programme is guided by a 2050 Vision *“In 2050, we live well, within the planet’s ecological limits. Our prosperity and healthy environment stem from an innovative, circular economy, where nothing is wasted and where natural resources are managed sustainably, and biodiversity is protected, valued and restored in ways that enhance our society’s resilience. Our low-carbon growth has long been decoupled from resource use, setting the pace for a safe and sustainable global society”*.

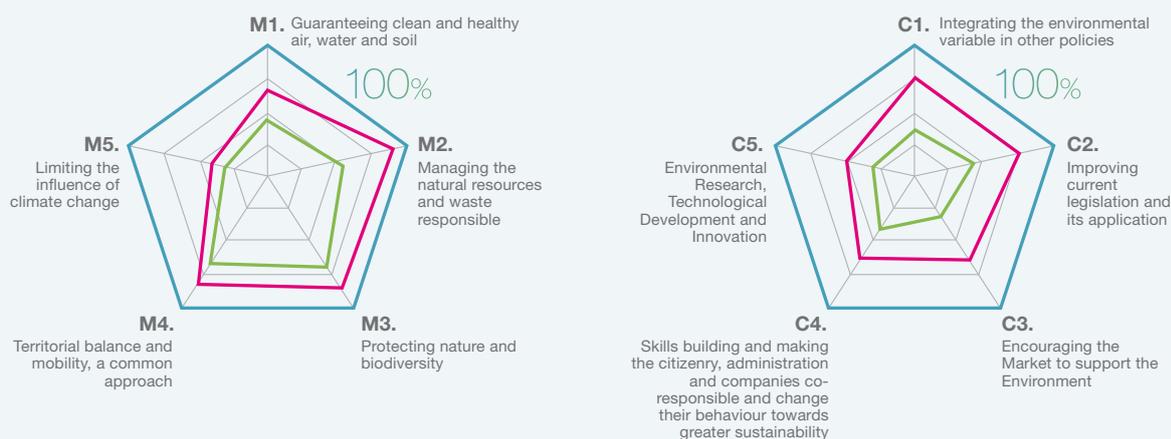
## 1.5. THE ASSESSMENT OF THE BASQUE ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT 2002-2020 AND THE III EFP 2011-2014

As part of the process to prepare the IV Environmental Framework Programme, independent and external assessments were carried out of the degree of implementation both of the Basque Environmental Strategy of Sustainable Development 2002-2020 and the 3rd Environmental Framework Programme 2014.<sup>3</sup>

An essential practical approach was applied in the assessment process in that its main objective was to extract conclusions in order to establish the future priorities for action.

The most important aspects of the Environmental Strategy assessment are set out below:

### DEGREE OF TOPICALITY AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TARGETS AND NECESSARY CONDITIONS OF THE BASQUE ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (EAVDS) 2002-2020



— Current international and European benchmarks (100%).

— Degree of topicality of the EAVDS (Extent to which the targets of the EAVDS comply with current international and European benchmarks).

— Degree of implementation of the EAVDS (Degree of advancement of the current situation with respect to the targets set in the EAVDS).

<sup>3</sup> See Annex II. Diagnostic Document 5: Assessment Report of the III EFP 2011-2014 and the Basque Environmental Strategy for Sustainable Development 2002-2020.

- The degree of topicality of the Strategy is very high in general and more so regarding the Targets than the Necessary Conditions. All the Targets have a high degree of topicality except for Target 5, regarding Climate Change. The degree of topicality of the Necessary Conditions is also reasonably high as regards Necessary Conditions 1 and 2 and less so in the case of Necessary Conditions 3, 4 and 5.
- These results confirm that it was in the areas of climate change (Target 5), economic instruments (NC3), co-responsibility and participation (NC4) and research (NC5), where international environmental policy has evolved and has further transformed since 2002.
- On the other hand, regarding the degree of current implementation of the objectives of the Strategy, it is also higher regarding the Targets than the Necessary Conditions. This shows, in the same way as the assessment of the degree of topicality, that progressing in the addressing of cross-cutting themes (where there is a greater number and type of managers and stakeholders intervening) intrinsically entails more difficulty than progressing in thematic priorities.

The main conclusions are included below as recommendations of the Assessment of the III Environmental Framework Programme 2011-2014:

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## SYNTHESIS OF THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE ASSESSMENT OF THE III EFP 2011-2014

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### Climate change

- Climate change is mainstreamed in the IV EFP. The proposed approach is similar to the one adopted in Europe where climate change is embedded in and is practically present throughout the 7th European Environmental Action Programme, but it does not include any specific climate change priority targets.
- Contributing to defining, development and implementing those aspects of the climate change adaptation strategy related to the priority areas of the environmental policy, including biodiversity, water and soil.
- Focusing efforts on mitigation in non-regulated, diffuse sectors and in voluntary agreements.
- Continuing improving, systematizing and disseminating the knowledge and information based on climate change in the BAC, on its impacts (social, environmental and economic) and on the vulnerability in those areas.

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### Biodiversity and land artificialisation

- Establishing more ambitious targets and measures than those laid down by legislation, for the sake of eco-efficiency in the use of resources.
- Greater determination when applying economic instruments that support the waste hierarchy, without which it would be difficult to meet the ambitious targets of the “Roadmap towards a Resource-efficient Europe”.
- Integrating a real sustainable private consumption policy within the environmental policy.
- Fostering ecodesign and eco-label as tools to improve the competitiveness of the territory.

### **Efficient use of resources and responsible consumption**

- Establishing more ambitious targets and measures than those laid down by legislation, for the sake of eco-efficiency in the use of resources.
- Greater determination when applying economic instruments that support the waste hierarchy, without which it would be difficult to meet the ambitious targets of the “Roadmap towards a Resource-efficient Europe”.
- Integrating a real sustainable private consumption policy within the environmental policy.
- Fostering ecodesign and eco-label as tools to improve the competitiveness of the territory.

### **Guaranteeing a healthy and clean environment**

- The air quality policy has to go beyond mere legal compliance so that it can effectively guarantee the protection of health and environment.
- Early management of risks and opportunities for the air quality arising from other sectoral, climatic and environmental policy. Many of the lines of action driven from the emerging environmental (mainly eco-efficiency), climate (mitigation) and sectoral (mainly transport, industry and agriculture) policies have significant impacts on the air quality, which can be positive or negative, and accumulative or synergic.
- Improving the risk management and assessment mechanisms to prevent the contamination of drinking water sources, mainly small-scale ones which are more vulnerable.
- Putting in place the measures to ensure access to drinking water and sanitation.

### **Institutional cooperation and coordination**

- Creating a governance structure of the EFP, that is really integrated and visibly led at the highest institutional level.
- Prioritising the integration efforts of the environmental variable in the most impacting environmental sectors.
- Intensifying the institutional cooperation and collaboration not only within the CAPV, but also worldwide.
- Cementing grassroots and social participation in improving environmental legislation.
- Searching for opportunities outside the Basque Country to capitalise on the expertise and experience acquired.

### **Promoting co-responsibility of social, scientific-technological and economic stakeholders**

- Creating an effective participation structure for the EFPs or adequately adapting a pre-existing one (Environment Advisory Board).
- Equip and insert the measures in education, training, awareness raising and environmental consciousness in a comprehensive and coherent planning and vision aimed at covering all the spheres that make up society.
- Encouraging the accountability of the companies, for example, by means of sustainability reports, specifically incorporating the responsibility of companies regarding Human Rights.
- Steering the incentive policy for EMAS membership by seeking to maximise the reduction of the environmental risk and impact.
- Using Education for Sustainable Development as an overarching umbrella, as an opportunity to consolidate and improve the work in education and awareness raising.
- Maintaining, bolstering and enhancing successful and consolidated lines of works and schemes that have already reached levels of excellence and for which the Basque Country is recognised externally, such as the integration of the environmental variable in the Basque company, the production and publication of environmental information or the work on School Agenda 21.

## 1.6. PROCESS TO PREPARE THE NEW ENVIRONMENTAL FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME 2020

The new EFP seeks to convey the guidelines and objectives of the Government in the field of the environment and sustainable development to all public policies. As a strategic document, the process has been coordinated by the Lehendakaritza [Basque Premier's Office] and promoted by the Basque Government's Ministry of the Environment and Territorial Policy.

Diagram 1.4. below summarises the process to prepare the IV EFP 2020.

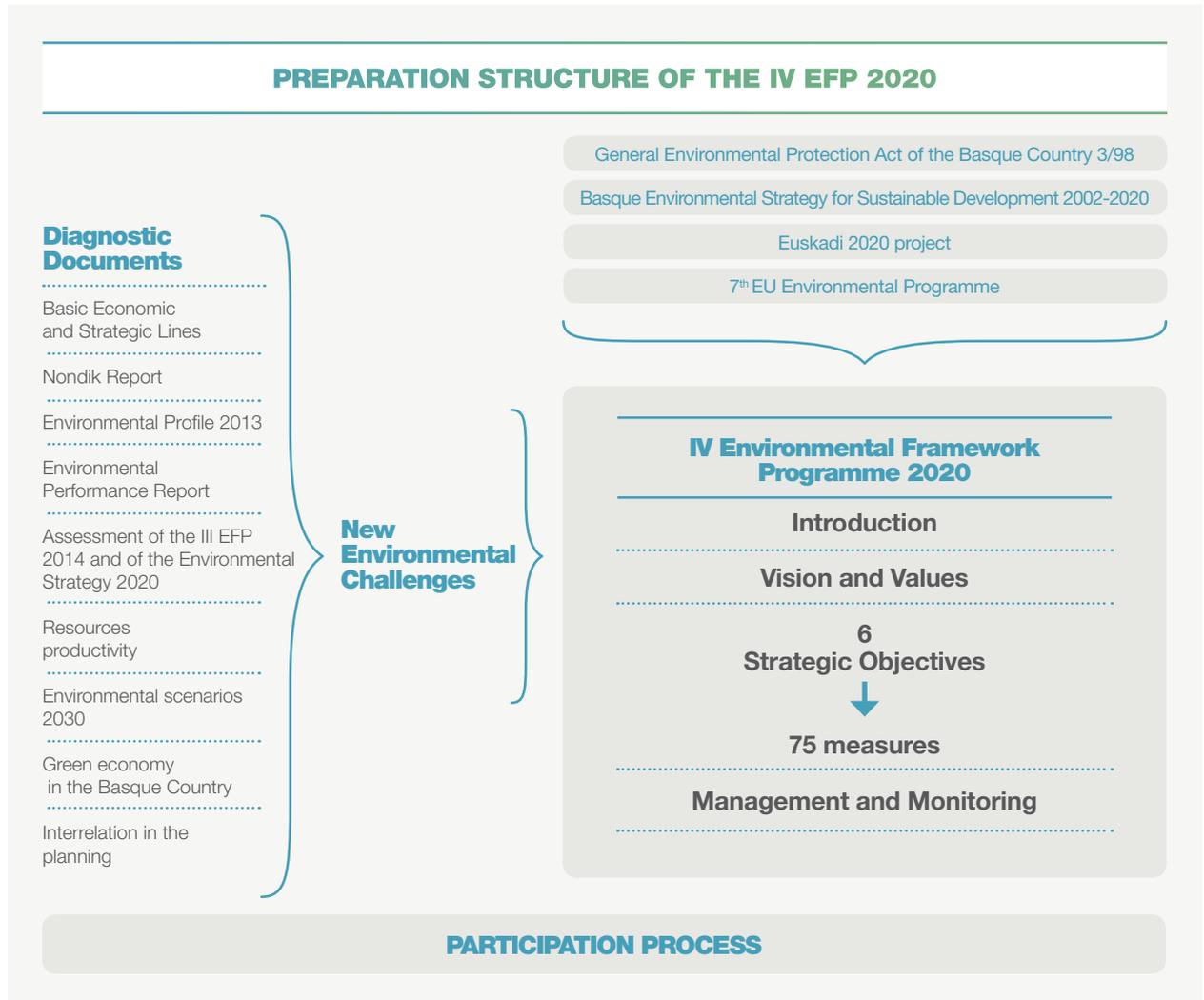


Diagram 1.4. **Preparation Structure of the Environmental Framework Programme 2020**

During the preparation process, special emphasis was placed on analysing and assessing the state of the environment of the Basque Country, along with the key variables and factors to understand how it operates. All this preliminary work is set out in 9 *diagnostic documents that complement the grounds and rationale of the IV EFP 2020*.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> See Anne II, Diagnostic Document.

DIAGNOSTIC DOCUMENTS	CONTENT
<b>Nondik Report: Balance Sheet of the situation of the Basque environment 1980-2012</b>	Historical overview of the situation of the environment and the environmental policy of the Basque Country from 1980 to 2012.
<b>Report on the Basic Economic and Strategic Lines of the EFP 2020</b>	Needs to be met by the Administration and their connection with the core areas, commitments and targets defined in the Government Programme. Status diagnosis and description of the current economic climate and future outlook affecting the Plan. Setting out the main areas and spheres of action and others with relevant involvements that correspond to the Basque Government. The need or opportunity for inter-institutional or interdepartmental coordination. Essential budgetary and economic aspects.
<b>Basque environmental profile 2013; headline environmental indicators</b>	It provides an overview of the evolution of the state of the environment through a series of significant indicators associated to the thematic areas of climate change, air, water, soil, biodiversity, flow of materials and waste.
<b>Basque environmental performance index</b>	The report sets out the calculation of the Environmental Performance Index (EPI) for the Basque Country. The EPI is an international benchmark to assess environmental sustainability.
<b>Assessment of III EFP 2002-2020 and the Basque Environmental Strategy for Sustainable Development 2011-2014</b>	Independent assessment report of the degree of implementation both of the Basque Environmental Strategy of Sustainable Development 2002-2020 and the 3rd Environmental Framework Programme 2011-2014.
<b>Basque Resource Productivity</b>	Report that analyses trends in consumption of material resources in the Basque Country. Raw materials, such as fuel, minerals and metals, are included, without overlooking food, earth, water, biomass and eco-systems.
<b>Basque Environmental Scenarios 2030</b>	It answers the main questions that environmental policy raises. How can the environment in the Basque Country evolve in the coming years? What are the factors that are going to be the most influential? and what are the challenges facing environmental policy in the medium- and long-term?
<b>Green economy in the Basque Country</b>	The green economy concept and the steps taken by the Basque economy in this direction are analysed and the guidelines are established to continue progressing in this area.
<b>Interrelation of the planning</b>	It sets out the links and coordination existing between the different strategic plans of the Basque Government.

*N.B.: All the reports are available on the website of the Basque Government [www.ingurumena.net](http://www.ingurumena.net)*

Based on those documents and taking into account the guidelines from the 7th EU Environment Action Programme to 2020 entitled “*Living well, within the limits of our planet*”, a dynamic and active participation process was carried out with the cooperation of the authorities, stakeholders and general public<sup>5</sup>. This collaborative process has been developed by integrating social innovation and techniques: use of multiple new methodologies and techniques, aimed at results, search for collective strategies and targets, governance and transparency and driving public-private partnership.

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## SUMMARY OF THE PARTICIPATIVE PROCESS TO PREPARE THE EFP 2020

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### Main objectives of the participative process:

- By the Government Management team: setting the boundaries of the strategic sphere and ensuring coherence with the strategic planning of the Government.
- By the authorities: directly taking part in the construction of the IV EFP 2020 and being committed to and assuming co-responsibility in its shared implementation.
- By stakeholders and citizenry: using this collaborative space to:
  1. report on the new Framework Programme;
  2. drive the response of society; and
  3. involve society in the awareness raising and dissemination of the value of a sustainable territory.

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### Highlights:

- Work has been carried out jointly together with 100 technical and political representatives of the different Basque authorities.
- Information has been directly given to over 8,000 people.
- Face-to-face meeting 110 representatives from the business world, knowledge sector and social movements, who provided their input to construct the IV EFP 2020.
- Input was gathered from over 900 people and/or entities.
- Over 1000 contributions in all were collected to prepare the IV EFP.

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### Measures taken in the participative process:

#### In the Basque Government:

- Introductory meeting to present the participative process at the Lehendakaritza with Directorates of different Ministries.
- Workshops with Directorates of the Ministry of the Environment and Territorial Policy.
- Participatory meetings with directors/publicly-owned companies of the Basque Country.
- Meeting with the Deputy Ministers involved in the process.

#### In the Provincial Councils:

- Joint meeting with the 3 provincial councils.
- Participatory meetings with the Provincial Councils.

#### By Local Councils:

- Extraordinary meeting of the Udalsarea 21 Task Force
- Interviews with local environment managers in the municipality.

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<sup>5</sup> See Annex III. Report on the Participation Process to Prepare the EFP 2020.

#### **With stakeholders and citizenry:**

- Driving the process on the Irekia online platform.
- Outreach to the education sector: on-line questionnaire for ingurugelas and summary report of the School Agenda 21 in 459 education centres.
- Organising an Environmental Encounter with the business community.
- Holding an open space with the general public and stakeholders.
- Information point campaign (University, interpretation centres and others).
- Mail shot to stakeholders.

#### **Areas of special interest:**

- **Public-private co-responsibility:** the different participant stakeholders agreed on the importance of finding co-responsibility formula so that all the private and public agents adopt more sustainable conducts (fostering exemplary administration, encouraging responsible consumption among the general public and in companies...).
- **Energy efficiency:** Basque society prioritises all the measures aimed at reducing and optimising energy consumption at all levels (home, company, leisure centres, private and public institutions).
- **Biodiversity-services of the eco-systems:** protecting the plant and animals species of the Basque Country appears as one of the priorities of Basque society. The citizenry proposes fighting against biodiversity loss and the deterioration of ecosystems with renewed instruments that facilitate the enhancing of the natural capital (services of the ecosystems).
- **Healthy territory:** greater control of the risks to human health arising from environmental problems is perceived as necessary, particularly the air quality, quality of drinking water, noise pollution and other new aspects of environmental pollution including electromagnetic radiation and chemical products.
- **Education:** Including environmental sustainable development in all strages of education / training considered to be fundamental.
- **Resource efficiency:** The need to interrelate the economy and the environment by means of full circles and as a competitiveness factor has ben stressed.

## **1.7. ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES 2020**

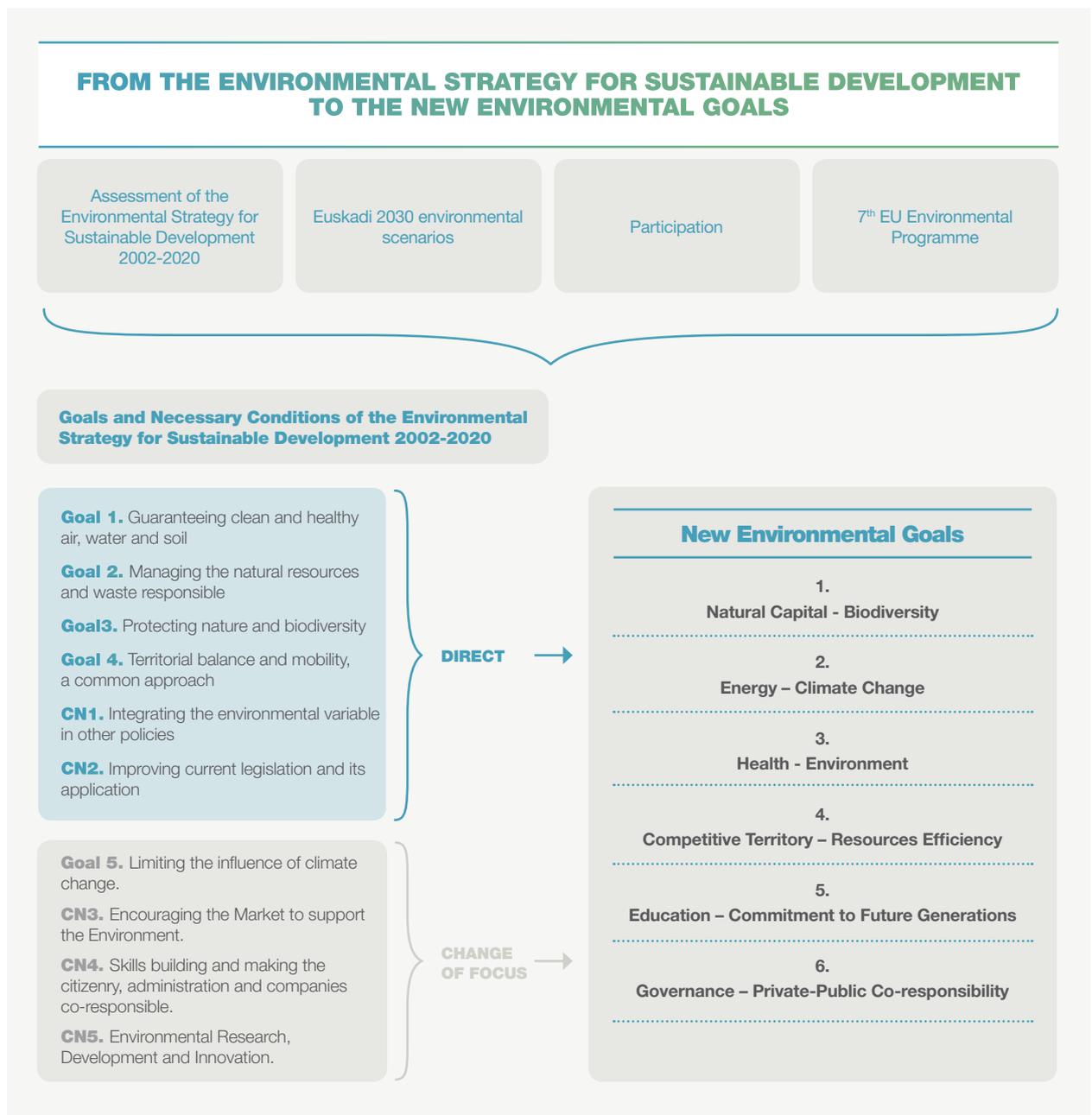
The evolution of the Basque environmental policy in the coming years must be based on analysing different factors. On the one hand, it is necessary to try to determine what is going to be the evolution of the environment in the Basque Country in the coming years. On the other hand, the exogenous factors that are going to be most influential in it have to be identified. Finally, it is fundamental to define the medium-long term challenges that environmental policy is going to have to face to outline the action programme to 2020.

The predicted evolution for the environment in coming years does not differ from the provisions by the international bodies for the geographical context in which our territory is located. Albeit that the baseline is an objectifiable standard of high environmental quality, environmental areas where there is clearly room for improvement continue to be detected, along with a citizenry that is increasingly more demanding as far as environmental quality is concerned.

In addition to the baseline environmental quality, there is the identification of the factors that will impact the environment and which will condition the course of the environmental policy. Thus, issues such as the governance, the economic climate or the managing of land use are identified as key factors. In addition, and considering each environmental theme, the transformation of the energy model, the circular economy or managing mobility are prioritised. In short, the transition of traditional environmental policy to a new one is summarized in the need to evolve from a search for

gains in efficiency to a change in the system itself that defines a new consumption model based on environmental education.

The analysis of Basque environmental perspectives, of the participation processes developed that combines expert knowledge with the interest and commitment of the general public, of the legal framework underpinning the General Environment Act, and of the degree of implementation of the Basque Environmental Strategy for Sustainable Development 2002 leads to the natural transition from the Environmental Goals and Necessary Conditions underpinning this Strategy to the new environmental challenges.



Graph 1.5. Transition from the Goals of the Basque Environmental Strategy for Sustainable Development towards the new Environmental Challenges.

It can be concluded from the degree of topicality and implementation of the 5 Goals and Necessary Conditions of the Basque Environmental Strategy for Sustainable Development that some of them continue to be directly included in the Environmental Challenges. Despite the advances recorded, their importance forces us to continue working on these Goals, even though the new knowledge generated about them results in new ways of tackling them. This group includes:

- Goal 1. Guaranteeing clean and healthy air, water and soil that is included in the Environmental Goal defined as Health and Environment.
- Goal 2. Responsible management of the resources and waste reflected in the Competitive Territory - Resource Efficiency Environmental Challenge.
- Goal 3. Protecting nature and biodiversity reflected in the Natural Capital - Biodiversity Challenge.
- Goal 4. Territorial balance and mobility reflected in the Energy-Climate Change and Competitive Territory-Resource Efficiency environmental challenges.
- Necessary Condition 1. Integrating the environmental variable in other policies, and NC2, Improving current legislation and its application, are included in the Governance-Private Public Co-responsibility environmental Challenge.

On the other hand, the change in the socio-economic context, of new knowledge, of new approaches in the international and European environmental policy, along with the very degree of implementation of the Basque Environmental Strategy for Sustainable Development requires the other Goals and Necessary Conditions to be reformulated, with a significant change in the approach, which in any case, continue to be present in the essence of the Environmental Challenges.

- Goal 5. Limiting the influence of climate change becomes the Environmental Challenges that addresses the transformation of the energy model by means of jointly considering energy and climate change, which, on the other hand, must be present in all the areas of the plan of action up to 2020.
- Necessary Conditions 3. Encouraging the market to act in favour of the environment and NC 5 Environmental Research, Development and Innovation change their approach to working on enhancing the environment as a factor of competitiveness to serve the market, and it is included in the Competitive Territory-Resource Efficiency Environmental challenge.
- Necessary Condition 4. Enabling and making the General Public, Administration and Companies Co-responsible is focused in the Education-Commitment to Future Generations Environmental challenge, in response to the relevance detected for the change in the consumption model.

In short, the **6 new environmental challenges** that are going to mark the course of Basque environmental policy in the coming years are, as biomes.

Some of these challenges are noted for being persistent problems, with a high degree of complexity and uncertainty, and being interdependent (for example, biodiversity and climate change). Furthermore, renovated instruments are required that will have to be based on the development and use of the knowledge, on new funding sources (green taxation and market instruments) and excellent public governance that streamlines the procedures as far as possible and minimises the transaction costs, which favour private-public co-responsibility and is commitment to greater and increasing grassroots awareness, with an emphasis on educating Basque society as a whole.

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## ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES 2020

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- 1. Natural Capital-Biodiversity.** Nature as an integral part of the capital that we need to develop and grow sustainably, with special emphasis on the services that the ecosystems provide. Given that its management is complex and interdependent, the global change concept needs to be included. Progressing in this challenge helps us to adapt to the effects of climate change and better efficiency in the use of the resources.
- 2. Energy-Climate Change.** The transformation of the energy model and its relationship with progressing towards a low-carbon economy is one of the established challenges. This is all in line with the global challenge of climate change that will require a new way of understanding and using energy, implementing the measures to reduce its impact with a special emphasis on mobility and urban regeneration. Natural gas, along with renewable energies, is predicted to be a key factor in the demand, economy and environmental and energy sustainable development.
- 3. Health-Environment.** The general environmental and socio-economic conditions influence working and living conditions, which depend on access to basic resources and services; those factors in turn influence community and social support, lifestyles and, finally, family and personal factors. In this context, the environment is a determining factor of public health and, therefore, becomes a key factor in preventing diseases that impact society and the economy.
- 4. Competitive Territory-Resource Efficiency.** Progressing in the interrelation between the competitiveness of a territory with its environmental policy based on a preventive scheme benchmarking the environment is one of the common challenges set by Europe. In this context, the integral use of tangible resources and the circularity of the economy are a source of innovation, efficiency and competitiveness, both of the territories and of companies on the global markets. Innovation in advanced manufacturing and energy is intrinsically linked to environmental considerations.
- 5. Education-Commitment to Future Generations.** First-rate and inclusive education is one of the most powerful tools to drive the transformational changes needed for the environment, in order to lay the foundations for an ethical undertaking of today's generation to future generations. This challenge involves progressing in the effective incorporation in the taking of environmental decisions by our young people in order to enable a high degree of inter-generational co-responsibility and participation.
- 6. Governance and Public-private Co-responsibility.** This challenge is defined as the need for effective and real coordination between the different authorities at all levels. The approach of coordinated and joint public policies can increase their benefits. Achieving a more efficient and streamlines administration that helps companies to be more competitive and the general public to be more responsible.

As part of those challenges, the environmental policy has to close the gap between the perception of the state of the environment in the Basque Country which is notably more negative, and the reality reflected by the environmental indicators. In this dynamics, it is necessary to incorporate and prioritise a new consumption model (responsible consumption) with the same intensity as the production model (sustainable model) is being addressed, as both are key elements of the state of the environment in the medium or long term; the focus of the environmental policy has to shift from controlling emissions to managing the impacts generated.



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**LIVING BETTER,  
CREATING MORE  
EMPLOYMENT AND  
HAVE A GREATER  
PRESENCE IN  
THE WORLD, BY  
RESPECTING THE  
ENVIRONMENT**

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## 2.1. A STRATEGIC VIEW

The Basque Country, in keeping with the main global trends and in line with the European Union, seeks to deploy an environmental policy, from the conviction that a healthy environment is closely and inextricably linked to the very identity and to the development of a sustainable, advanced, modern and prosperous society. (See Diagram 2.1).

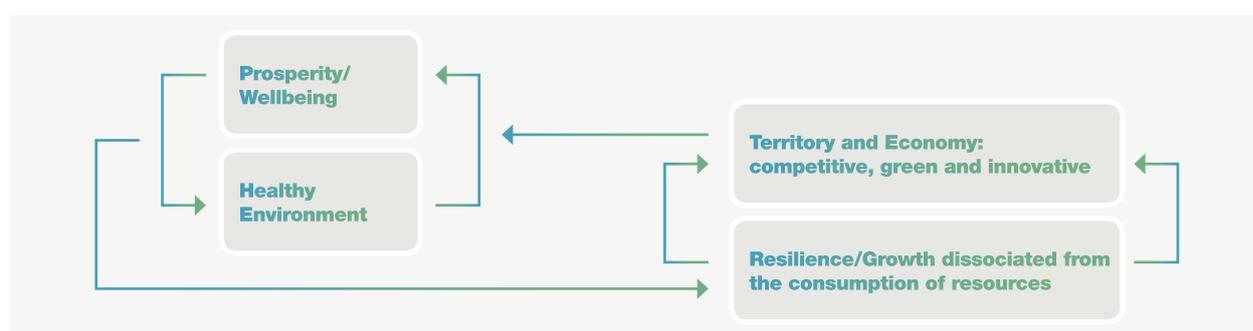


Diagram 2.1. **Strategic motivation of the EFP 2020**

The IV EFP 2020 establishes a change in direction in Basque environmental policy (See Diagram 2.2.). The Basque Country has completed a large stage of environmental transformation where the institutional, social and human foundations have been laid to be on a par with the most developed countries of Europe in the main environmental parameters and indicators.<sup>6</sup>

The Basque Country is now in a position to consider a qualitative leap in its environmental policy, to evolve towards a territorial model where the healthy environment and social and economic prosperity are inextricably associated to the results of an innovative, green and competitive economy that does not waste resources, that creates employment and which contributes to the main sustainable development and environmental challenges facing the world. In other words, progressing towards a sustainable territory.

There is a long road ahead in this regard and the approach is ambitious and requires the action of a convinced citizenry that acts responsibly based on knowledge of the impact of their decisions. The Basque Country is ready to set off decisively along the new path.



Diagram 2.2. **Basque Environmental Policy. The stages of a major transformation**

<sup>6</sup>See Annex II. Diagnostic Document 4: Basque Environmental Performance Index 2013.

In short and to drive this new environmental policy stage, the Basque Government has established a **Vision** that aims to inspire all the public policies affecting the territory, and therefore the environment, to steer the instruments for a decisive action and committed to people, companies and private and public institutions in a renewed endeavour of co-responsibility.

## VISION

**The Basque Country has a citizenry that enjoys a healthy environment and territory, with which it is committed and of which it feels proud to have recovered to leave it in all its splendour to future generations.**

This is all the result of the setting up of a **green economy and territory**, with an industrial base, that is competitive and innovative that has been fundamental for creating broad **job opportunities**, in a global low-carbon context and where the **natural capital is** optimised as far as possible”.

## 2.2. VALUES

This vision is founded on the values of ethics, responsibility and solidarity established as a benchmark in the Euskadi 2020 project for Human Development and Sustainable Growth of the Basque Government. These basic pillars of the development model of the Basque Country have a strategic reading from the environmental perspective (See Diagram 2.3).

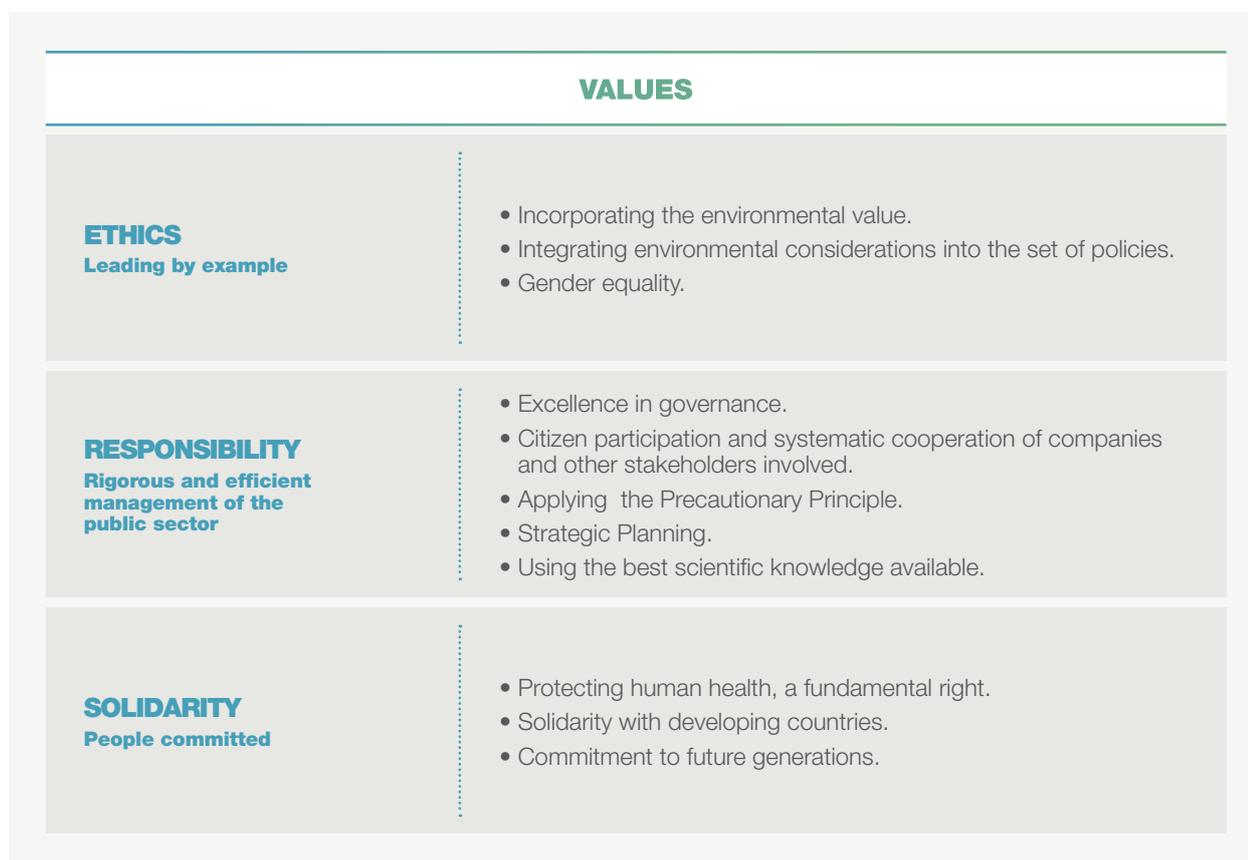


Diagram 2.3. Values underpinning the environmental policy

**ETHICS.** It requires “leading by example” and from the environmental perspective this means:

- Incorporating the environmental value. Society is entitled to demand that whoever damages the common property by polluting its soil, air or water should be liable for the damage occurred. Environmental costs do not have to be borne by society. To the contrary, whoever pollutes has to assume the relevant cost. Accordingly, market instruments<sup>7</sup> are a fundamental tool to progress towards incorporating the environmental value.
- Integrating environmental considerations in the set of the policies. The environment is cross-cutting to all sectors and human activities. Therefore, environmental considerations must be perfectly integrated in the set of policies, plans and programmes at all levels and areas of the Basque public sector.
- Gender equality. Sustainable development is a firm commitment to equality between everyone. It requires specific initiatives to guarantee the real and effective equality of women and men in any area of private and public life and, in particular, with respect to the environment, its management and its impacts.

**RESPONSIBILITY.** It implies rigorous and efficient management of the public sector and grassroots commitment. From the environmental point of view, this means:

- Excellence in governance: Politics in general and the environmental aspect in particular are designed as a commitment to society, based on transparency, participation, results oriented, accountability, simplification and coherence between the range of policies. Progressing towards excellence with require a political leadership that drive change, along with an exemplary attitude by the Authorities. Progressing towards this principle of excellence in the environment government of our territory therefore engages the Authorities and society as a whole.
- Citizen participation and systematic cooperation of companies and other stakeholders involved. The active participation of organised civil society in the decision-taking processes is the best way of guaranteeing the transparency of the public action and incentivises the efficiency and effectiveness of the action instruments implemented. Civil society as a whole, and in particular, the economic fabric are key players of our economy and we have to manage to harness their active involvement.
- Applying the Precautionary Principle. If reasonable scientific doubts exist regarding a certain decision, the precautionary criterion will prevail in order to avoid harm to the health of the people and to the environment. However, lack of certainty will not be sufficient grounds to delay or prevent any action aimed at protecting the health of people or the environment.
- Strategic planning and sustained action over time. The transition towards the environmental sustainable development of the Basque Country will be the result of a sustained effort over time, of an integration of diverse wills, of a multiplicity of measures and actions on different scales. It would require significant changes to the energy policy, to the transport system, to the agricultural model, to the urban configuration dynamics of our territory, to the way in which our industries produce, to the care taken by households to managing the waste or their energy and water consumption, to people’s daily decisions when purchasing goods and services.
- Using the best scientific knowledge available. Basque environmental policy is fully in line with that of the European Union and with that of the United Nations. As the environmental policies of both entities is based on the best scientific knowledge available worldwide, the Basque Country has the assurance that its environmental policy is underpinned by a solid scientific base that it must continue developing as it progresses towards new achievements.

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<sup>7</sup> Those that give economic value to pollution such as environmental taxes.

**SOLIDARITY.** It involves involving everyone in common goals and rights and from the environmental perspective this means:

- Protecting the health of people, a human right. There is sufficient scientific knowledge to assert that human health is directly influenced by different environment factors in our surroundings. The environment is a determining factor of public health. Basque environmental policy considers that protecting the health of people, taking into account the more vulnerable aspects such as childhood and the elderly, is a fundamental right. As such, it has to prevail with regard to other demands and interests of society.
- Solidarity with developing countries. Today's major environmental problems know no borders. There is an onus on economically developed countries, which include the Basque Country, to cooperate actively with the so-called countries in the South to help them in their own transition towards a sustainable economy and society, and in particular, regarding preventing and reducing the consequences of climate change.
- Commitment to future generations. Sustainable development implies the commitment of the present generation to future generations. It arose from understanding and assuming the responsibility that today's children will be handed over a Basque Country where the natural capital, the biological diversity, landscapes, territory and the environment have been respected, protected and preserved and they are, consequently, brimming with life, beauty and wealth.

## 2.3. A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

**6 Strategic Objectives** have emerged from the Environmental challenges (the first 4 obtained from thematic aspects to foster sustainable environmental development and the last 2 related to the governance system). This is all in a framework of efficiency and effectiveness that can only be governed by maximum coherence of the set of public policies that have a cross-cutting impact on the environment (See Diagram 2.4).

The specific objectives define the place that the Basque Country wishes to occupy in 2020. Each objective represents that environmental ambition in its area and it will require a wide range of measures that set the course, coherence and coordination in the planning of the environmental policy.

The 6 strategic objectives have been deployed in **75 measures** considered as priority for 2020 by the stakeholders involved in the participation process. Considering the mid-term assessment period scheduled for 2017, those actions that must start or be developed in this first period are indicated<sup>8</sup> in the measure. Once the IV EFP 2020 has been passed, each one of these measures will be detailed and specified in order to drive its implementation and facilitate its monitoring.

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<sup>8</sup>Priority to 2017.

## STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK OF THE IV EFP 2020

### NEW ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS

1.  
Natural Capital  
Biodiversity

2.  
Energy  
Climate Change

3.  
Health  
Environment

4.  
Competitive Territory  
Resources Efficiency

5.  
Education  
Commitment to Future Generations

6.  
Governance  
Private-Public Co-responsibility

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Strategic Objective 1.  
**Protecting, conserving and restoring our natural capital, by preserving the services that the eco-systems provide us.**

Strategic Objective 2.  
**Progressing towards a resource-efficient, low carbon, innovative and competitive economy.**

Strategic Objective 3.  
**Fostering and protecting the health and wellbeing of our citizenry.**

Strategic Objective 4.  
**Increasing the sustainability of the territory.**

Strategic Objective 5.  
**Guaranteeing the coherence of the policies by intensifying environmental integration.**

Strategic Objective 6.  
**Contributing to the international outreach and responsibility of the Basque Country.**

Diagram 2.4. Strategic Framework of the IV Environmental Framework Programme 2020



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# **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL FRAMEWORK PLAN**

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## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1. **PROTECTING, CONSERVING AND RESTORING OUR NATURAL CAPITAL, BY PRESERVING THE SERVICES THAT THE ECO-SYSTEMS PROVIDE US**

**The IV EFP sets the strategic objective that the deterioration of the ecosystems of the Basque Country will have been curbed by 2020. That the state of the main marine and terrestrial habitats will have improved their state and that the main impacts such as the isolation of zones and invasive species will be managed in a systematic and integral way, with all the competent authorities working closely together.**

Our wellbeing and quality of life is based on the natural capital, in other words, on biodiversity, including ecosystems, that provide essential goods and services, with fertile soils and multifunctional forests, productive land and sea, good quality fresh water and clean air, along with pollination, climate regulation and protection against extreme events.

Furthermore, this objective is in line with the European Union Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 that establishes a series of goals and measures to curb the loss of biodiversity and the deterioration of the eco-systemic services and re-establish them as far as possible.

The Basque Country has embarked on a long and ongoing effort for the protection and active management of their natural capital, highlighting the work carried out by the competent authorities in the natural spaces that are part of the Natura 2000 network and the management of the species included in the Basque Catalogue of Threatened Species. However, there is still a long way to go for the marine and terrestrial ecosystems of the Basque Country to have a favourable status and substantially improve the biodiversity as called for by the directives of the European Union that seeks to curb the loss of its biodiversity for 2020.

Despite the progress, many of the ecosystems are degraded or are being used unsustainably. The Basque Environmental Profile 2013 indicates that biodiversity continues to be lost and that part of the ecosystems is degraded (35% of the habitats of European interest in the Basque Country have a general state of poor conservation). This is all due to different types of pressures. On the one hand, there is the strong pressure from the social and economic model of a small country that is heavily populated and highly industrialised where biodiversity has not achieved the degree of priority it deserves. The invasive exotic species along with climate change, for example, can accentuate the impact of the pressures that we exercise on our natural capital.

The territory does not consider its natural capital in its full extent (we focus on the natural capital mainly of the protected areas). Two-way reflection is required: the first, focused on the impact that we generate on our natural capital and the second on the changes that we must make to correctly assess the services that the eco-systems offer us. The artificialization and fragmentation of the land, together with the uses that are not compatible with conserving the natural capital are some aspects to be tackled to ensure sound management. Our degree of artificialisation of the soil is high, even though a slowdown to the rate has been noted in recent years. Accordingly, significant steps have been taken in the field of land use arising from the Spatial Development Guidelines and the different ensuing plans. This planning has resulted in a balanced and attractive territorial model for the general public.

Very significant progress has been made in terms of guaranteeing soil protection, advancing in the recovery of contaminated soils, awareness-raising action, research and development of control mechanisms. A following step will consist of regenerating and enhancing those land and the rehabilitation of anthropic areas to avoid even further land use.

There is no doubt that society is progressively becoming aware of the importance of the ecosystems and services they provide and that their deterioration needs to be curbed, but the degree of co-responsibility and conviction required to use and enhance the natural value has still not been achieved.

The lack of information still existing on the state of the biodiversity and ecosystems in the Basque Country is a barrier in this regard: there is no standardised monitoring system and based on scientific

techniques and data to measure the objective state of the biodiversity, much more if it takes into account the ecosystems are not something static.

Furthermore, a great limitation is that the market does not assign economic value to the important public benefits from conserving the ecosystems and biodiversity. However, if economic value is assigned to the private goods and services, whose production can damage the ecosystems. The valuation of the ecosystemic services is a fundamental starting point to identify priority actions that avoid or minimise the human impacts on the ecosystems and the services they provide. It is necessary to know which services they provide, quantify the state of those services and work to apply both public and private measures that foster progress towards maintaining or improving them.

To protect, conserve and restore our natural capital, the strategic action of EFP 2020 will be focused on the following measures:

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### Lines of Action 1.1: **Effectively integrating the conservation of the natural environment in sectoral policies**

#### **Main measures:**

1. Reviewing and aligning the different sectoral regulations and schemes to include environmental variables in order to conserve the ecosystems, their flows and services (particularly in agriculture, forestry and fishery policy and on the organisation of spatial planning). A case of particular importance is the integration of the Natura 2000 Network and the ecosystemic services.
2. Reinforcing the operational coordination between the competent authorities in conservation policy and management of biodiversity. [Priority to 2017].
3. Fostering coordinated inspection among all the competent agents.
4. Integrating the quantifying the environmental costs and benefits of the intervention of the Administration. [Priority to 2017].

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### Lines of Action 1.2: **Limiting the loss of the ecosystems and their services**

#### **Main measures:**

5. Involving all the competent authorities in the Basque Biodiversity Strategy 2030, which considers climate change. [Priority to 2017].
6. Implementing environment adaptive management systems: use of the best available knowledge in the application of measures, review and assessment of results.
7. Implementing an information system on the state of the natural capital in the Basque Country. The system must allow the state of conservation of the habitats to facilitate their monitoring and consequently set up intervention plans in accordance with the real needs. [Priority to 2017].
8. Improving and consolidating the analysis and monitoring mechanisms of the state of conservation of the threatened species and giving impetus to the approval of their Management Plans. [Priority to 2017].

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Lines of Action 1.3: **Slowing down land occupancy, encouraging the mix of uses and the regeneration and reuse of degraded spaces**

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**Main measures:**

9. Fostering the implementation of a smart territorial planning that prioritises greater population densities, foster the combination of uses (work, leisure, housing) and optimising consumption of land, with the use on its reuse and regeneration.
10. Fostering the ecosystemic services in restoring degraded zones. [Priority to 2017].
11. Incorporating the green infrastructures concepts in our territorial planning guidelines. [Priority to 2017].

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Lines of Action 1.4: **Including economic instruments in the management of the natural capital of the Basque Country**

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**Main measures:**

12. Fostering and incorporating the valuation and assessment systems of the ecosystemic services. [Priority to 2017].
13. Identifying the impacts on the ecosystemic services of the main funding system in the primary sector, by intensifying the work to apply positive incentive for the sustainable conservation and use of biological diversity and gradually eliminating the possible harmful incentives.

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Lines of Action 1.5: **Engaging and awareness raising of the stakeholders that operate in the territory of the importance of the services of the ecosystems**

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**Main measures:**

14. Driving the implementation of routine management practices in the territory (fundamentally in the primary sector and in the territorial planning), that are friendly from the biodiversity approach.
15. Intensifying the information, awareness-raising and education of the general public regarding the natural environment, bringing nature to our households and to our citizenry. [Priority to 2017].
16. Preparing best practices manuals for recovering habitats.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2. **PROGRESSING TOWARDS A RESOURCE-EFFICIENT, LOW CARBON, INNOVATIVE AND COMPETITIVE ECONOMY**

**The IV EFP sets the strategic objective that by 2020, the Basque Country will have become more competitive by means of more sustainable growth that develops a low-carbon economy and which leads to a more efficient and sustainable use of the resources, by using the market opportunities that the environment generates based on innovation and smart specialisation.**

In recent years, protecting and conserving the environment has become one of the key factors to be considered in the economic activities of our productive model. In keeping with the environmental regulations, legislation and policies, companies have had to adapt to the new game plan which, to a certain extent, has become a further lure to develop new products and services that minimise the environmental impact. Accordingly, Basque companies have successfully grasped that the environment is a factor for competitiveness and differentiation.

The Basque Country needs to innovate, on the one hand, to increase efficiency in the use of the resources, to enhance competitiveness in a context set by the increase of their prices, the scarcity and supply limitations of raw materials and the dependency of its imports. On the other hand, innovation that generates new market applications with high value added and drive the creation of goods and services that provide considerable environmental improvement. Undoubtedly, the environmental variable will become a real catalyst for innovation.

The integrated industrial policy of the European Union is committed to sustainability as a decisive factor in the specialisation and differentiation of the European industrial sector. The factories of the future will apply highly efficient processes regarding the use of energy and materials; they will use recycled and renewable materials and will adopt increasingly more sustainable business models, such as industrial symbiosis, to recover dissipated materials, heat and energy.

Improving the environment is currently one of the most important aspects to create new companies in new market niches that are emerging to leverage private and public investments to construct a Europe is more competitive, green, low carbon and that uses resources efficiently. The infrastructures and services linked to the integral cycle of water, reusing products, recycling materials, developing and enhancing ecosystemic services are just some examples (“A Resource Efficient Europe” and “An Innovative Europe”).

Furthermore, the opportunities are not only for the entrepreneurs, but also for the business fabric overall that have in the environment a powerful driver for eco-innovation. The business innovation that improves the environment in fields such as sustainable mobility, energy and climate change, recycling and, in a cross-cutting way, all the companies that by saving in the consumption of raw materials and materials, have a direct tool to improve their productivity and competitiveness. The drivers for eco-innovation in the Basque company are compliance of public policies (41%) and the environmental constraints of the customers (39%).

The data reflect a clear improvement of the energy and material productivity of the BAC during recent years. For example, nearly half the materials that were needed in 2005 are required to produce a GDP unit and the improvement in the productivity is substantially greater than that of the EU.

This is all the result of the productivity constraints of the market and hike in the price of raw materials that requires a significant emphasis on operational efficiency. In addition, society and companies are environmentally more motivated and demanding regarding their environmental legislation, which is clearly leading to the desired results.

Furthermore, along with innovation in material-saving manufacturing technologies and which are more efficient in the use of energy, there is the growing interest and application of the ecodesign methodologies. 80% of all the environmental impacts of a product in its lifecycle are determined by its design. Ecodesign applies environmental criteria taking into account the full lifecycle of the product both regarding its design and conceptualisation and in its manufacturing, distribution, use and end-of-life of the product. This leads to savings in material resources, less environmental impacts and significant functional improvements to the products.

Ecodesign, along with the application of new business models that enhance market differentiation aspects based on the durability of the products and the service-product combination during the lifecycle are areas where Basque companies and entrepreneurs have a proven track record.

Along with the productivity of the use of the materials, waste is another important area of business opportunity and job creation in the Basque Country.. Less waste means less risks to the health of people and eco-systems, but also greater productivity in the medium and long term for companies that generate them and they emerge as opportunity niches that by means of new technologies, new processes or new ideas are capable of recovering the waste again for the market.

There are two keys aspects in the medium and long term to minimise the generation and for the main waste segments to come full circle. First of all, co-responsibility and awareness raising of the general public and companies and all the private and public stakeholders working together and in a coordinated way to guarantee that the conditions are met for a circular economy that does not waste resources.

Secondly, technological improvement and innovation both to incorporate more efficient cross-cutting production techniques and for more radical innovations that allow important waste segments to come full circle and release them again on the market with the ensuing environmental and economic advantages.

In order to convert the Basque Country into a resource-efficient, low carbon, innovative and competitive economy, the strategic action of the EFP 2020 will focus on the following measures:

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#### Lines of Action 2.1: **To give momentum to a low-carbon competitive economy.**

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##### **Main measures:**

17. Preparing the Basque Climate Change Strategy 2050, which sets the action to be taken during the coming years. [Priority to 2017].
18. Foster energy savings and efficient at all levels (residential and buildings, mobility, industry, services, primary sector, Public Administration and product consumption) and giving momentum to generating renewable energies. [Priority to 2017].
19. Strengthening the co-responsibility of the general public and companies to climate change (encouraging the use of shared and public transport, fostering the use of more energy efficient products, eco-labelling of products and services, encouraging voluntary commitment and emissions offset systems): [Priority to 2017].

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Lines of Action 2.2: **Optimising the consumption of materials as a way to improve the competitiveness by means of more efficient and competitive products and processes**

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**Main measures:**

20. Contributing to the development and implementation of the smart specialisation Strategy in its priority to progress towards Advanced Manufacturing by means of programmes that drive eco-innovation and eco-efficiency in the Basque Country. [Priority to 2017].
21. Fostering eco-design as an instrument to reduce the consumption of resources and prevention in waste generation, by increasing the functionality (servitization), durability and recyclability of the products. [Priority to 2017].
22. Driving process and product business eco-innovation to leverage the market opportunities that the environment generates in the global market. [Priority to 2017].
23. Giving impetus to the incorporation of clean technologies and the available technological improvements established by the Industrial Emissions Directive. [Priority to 2017].

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Lines of Action 2.3: **Fostering a circular economy where nothing is wasted**

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**Main measures:**

24. Establishing economic instruments that penalise dumping and the use of natural raw materials and incentivise re-use, recycling and recovery, by facilitating, for example, the setting up of secondary product markets.
25. Giving momentum to building and construction that is more efficient in the use of resources throughout their lifecycle and, in particular, in the leverage of the waste at the end of it. [Priority to 2017].
26. Driving entrepreneurship through new business models that encourage full circles and industrial ecosystems. [Priority to 2017].

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Lines of Action 2.4: **Fostering entrepreneurship and green jobs**

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**Main measures:**

27. Driving entrepreneurship, informing and training entrepreneurs on the business opportunities of the environment. [Priority to 2017].
28. Optimising the company location infrastructures in the territory. [Priority to 2017].
29. Increasing support initiatives for innovation and best practices in municipalities. [Priority to 2017].
30. Consolidating collaborative networks in the framework of sustainable territorial development. [Priority to 2017].

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3. **FOSTERING AND PROTECTING THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF OUR CITIZENRY**

**The IV EFP sets the strategic objective that by 2020, the Basque citizenry will have a healthy environment, reducing the incidence of diseases related to environmental determinants and progressing in the expertise and management of environmental risks for the well-being of people. That the quality standards of air, water and soil do not pose health risks. That the impacts of the environmental vectors of growing concern (chemical substances, electromagnetic, light, noise pollution, etc.) are better known and managed.**

The World Health Organisation (WHO) considers that environmental stress factors are responsible for between 15% and 20% of all deaths recorded in European countries and according to the OECD, atmospheric pollution in cities will be the main environmental cause of mortality around the world by 2050.

In the last decade, the Basque Country has made very significant progress in improving environmental quality. The combination of the environmental policy, together with the energy and industrial policy applied in recent years and, to a good extent, determined by European policies, has proven to be highly effective in terms of improving the quality of the air, water and soil. Furthermore, the health care policy has endeavoured to monitor and prevent the health risks of the environmental<sup>9</sup> determinants and has made significant progress in control the risks for public health of the chemical products, waste, emissions of pollutants and water quality.

Air quality in the Basque Country is currently on a par with the developed countries of Europe. The improvements achieved are due, first of all, to the far-reaching transformation of the energy and industrial system that has resulted in the structuring of a more efficient economic system in terms of using energy and therefore less polluting (in 2008, 80% less energy was needed to produce the same amount of GDP as in 1980) and of energy diversification marked by the gasification of the Country; gas has become the main source of energy and its specific emissions of polluting gases are clearly less than the coal and oil derivatives that it replaces (SO<sub>2</sub> emissions to the atmosphere down by over 50%).

Secondly, the upgrading of the public and private fleet of vehicles has meant more efficient and less polluting engines. This transformation has partly offset the effects of the progressive increase in the number of vehicles and motorised mobility, which continues to be an important pollution vector.

The ecological status or potential of the bodies of water has improved greatly in the Basque Country. However, there is still much to be accomplished to comply with the guidelines established in the Water Framework Directive that seeks the good environmental status of all bodies of water.

To a great extent, the contaminated soil is the result of our industrial past that left a great liability. The integral and specific legislation on contaminated soils marked a clear turning point towards greater emphasis on the research work and recovery of the soil. The Basque contaminated soil policy has managed to manage the risk adequately and minimise the potential impact that it has on health and ecosystems.

The health challenge is a constantly-adapting issue as science advances and there is greater knowledge of the relations between pollutants and the health of people and the eco-systems. Accordingly, the intervention must be more focused on the impact on the health of people than on assessing the emissions and the quality of the environment.

Pollution must be tackled and controlled at its source, perform an early opportunities and risk management for the quality of the environment and be able to embark on more ambitious regulations that those from the European Union (new limits on air pollutants, greater control requirements for chemical products, classification standards, labelling and packaging, legislation on biocides and pesticides).

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<sup>9</sup>Health Plan 2013-2020 of the Basque Government.

There is growing concern about the environmental factors with a potential impact on the health, such as light and electromagnetic pollution, the quality of inside air, marine litter, bioproducts, biocides, smells and, in particular, noise, a concern that is felt among the population and, also, among the authorities.

This all requires a decisive social response that brings all the stakeholders onboard, integrates the set of policies (health, industry, energy, land use, transport, environment) and all the competent authorities to protect public health and, in particular, those population segments such as childhood and the elderly where the impact can be greater.

The strategic action of the EFP 2020 to protect the general public from the environmental risks for health and wellbeing will focus on the following measures:

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### Lines of Action 3.1: **Continuing to strive to improve the quality of the environment**

#### **Main measures:**

31. Achieving a good state of the surface (rivers, estuaries, coastal, lakes and wetland) and underground bodies of water and of the protected zones (bathing areas, water intakes, zones vulnerable to nitrates, etc.). [Priority to 2017].
32. Meeting the demand for quality water based on criteria of sustainability, savings and efficiency in a way that is compatible with the ecological flow schemes, by fostering instruments to manage water demand. [Priority to 2017].
33. Ensuring air quality (outdoor and indoor) in line with the recommendation of the World Health Organisation. [Priority to 2017].
34. Improving the management of contaminated soil, consolidating the legal guarantee and the actions of stakeholders and potential users of the soil. [Priority to 2017].

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### Lines of Action 3.2: **Addressing the environmental vectors and challenges of growing concern (climate change, electromagnetic, light and noise pollution, new substances, etc.)**

#### **Main measures:**

35. Curbing the effects of extreme climatic phenomenon (droughts, floods, heat waves, etc.)
36. Reinforcing the monitoring, prevention and managing of the environmental risks for health, by improving the environmental information systems. [Priority to 2017]
37. Assessing the social and economic cost/benefit of the environmental quality in terms of the increases/savings of health costs.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4. INCREASING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE TERRITORY

**The IV EFP sets the strategic objective that by 2020, the Basque Country will have incorporate environmental sustainable development as a core area of its municipal policies aimed at improving the quality of life of its inhabitants. A territorial balance that drives local sustainability. Protecting its natural capital, enhancing job creation and business opportunities, working on regenerating urban life, by means of a territorial policy that fosters the regeneration of the industrial and urban fabrics and sustainable mobility, and protecting the citizenry of the environmental risks to health.**

A sustainable territory is synonymous with quality of life. The majority of our territory is facing a set of common ecological problems. It is fundamental to tackle these problems, to apply sustainable design and planning policies of the urban space, that integrate aspects such as the efficient use of material and energy resources, a low-carbon economy, the adaptation to climate change, the sustainable use of land, contaminated soil and waste management, the resilience of the ecosystems, water management, human health, grassroots involvement in decision-taking, along with education and awareness raising regarding the environment.

Given the number of people concentrated there, urban centres are the places where the environment-health-wellbeing relation occurs more directly and obviously. The quality of air that we breathe in our towns and cities is greatly conditioned by the urban model and more particularly by the use of energy, the mobility model and the consumption model. On the other hand, global environmental problems such as climate change look for local solutions based on the conviction that without the proactive contribution of the municipalities, it will be less than impossible to be successful in those major endeavours. Giving momentum to measures locally to achieve global goals.

Responsibility for the deployment of the Europe 2020 Strategy basically falls on European institutions and on its Member States overall. However, it is important to note that regional or local authorities hold the power in important areas for Europe 2020 in its social, economic and environmental dimension.

There are increasingly more European municipalities that position environmental sustainable development at the centre of their development strategies. Increasing urbanisation has increased awareness about the importance of green spaces in urban zones. The municipality sets the guidelines in urban sustainability and is frequently groundbreaking in the application of innovative solutions to environmental problems. Local authorities play a key role in carrying out actions that help to address the aforementioned challenges.

Basque municipalities have been very aware of this reality and driven by the environmental policy, they have implemented local action policies (Local Agendas 21) to drive their development on the path towards sustainable development. With a proven track record since it was set up in 2002, Udalsarea 21- the Basque Network of Municipalities towards Sustainable Development is the main example of the work carried out in this sphere.

Udalsarea is made up of 198 municipalities, the main drivers of the network, the Ministry of the Environment and Territorial Policy and the Ministry of Health of the Basque Government. This institutional cooperation is the key aspect that drives the network and unites all the efforts in a single direction, progressing towards effective sustainable development in the Basque territory.

Accordingly, the transformation of the environmental policy underpinning the IV EFP 2020 has to be deployed in the territorial reality to reach the people and their daily lives. The municipality is the nearest cooperation space between the Administration and the general public.

Biodiversity is not only in the natural parks, but it also has to permeate and come together with urban life in new developments of green infrastructures that connect protecting and recouping the natural environment and the numerous benefits that human society obtains from nature, and integrating them consciously in urban planning.

This is all combined with the new business opportunities that the environment offers and which lead to new urban revitalisation channels by means of new sources of entrepreneurship and creating companies that offer new sources of decent jobs.

The population centres are striving for the real transformation of people's consumption to responsible consumption habits that take into account the implications for the environment and our health. Our own mobility decisions, the choice of products and services to meet our needs and the use of energy condition the quality of the air we breathe, the water needs, the volume of waste and, in short, the environmental quality of our territory.

The awareness-raising and co-responsibility of the citizenry that is involved with responsible consumption and the structuring of a scenario that progresses in the construction of a green and ecologically responsible city that is commitment to rational and efficient use of energy, sustainable mobility models and a resolute fight against climate change is the only and definitive guarantee for the sustainable development of the Territory as a whole.

The strategic action of the EPF 2020 to foster the sustainable development of the territory will be focused on the following measures:

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#### Lines of Action 4.1: **Driving responsible consumption of people**

##### **Main measures:**

- 38. Development consumer information systems. [Priority to 2017].
- 39. Fostering the eco-labelling of products.
- 40. Encouraging responsible consumption behaviour.
- 41. Driving local consumption, locally source and coming full circle in the food. [Priority to 2017].

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#### Lines of Action 4.2: **Developing and implementing green infrastructures to foster mitigation and adapting to climate change and contribute social, economic and ecological benefits by means of solutions that integrate nature in the territory**

##### **Main measures:**

- 42. Globally planning green infrastructures in keeping with the territorial planning directive and sectoral and territorial plans. [Priority to 2017].
- 43. Fostering coordination between municipalities to develop shared green infrastructures.
- 44. Facilitating information on natural capital and its efficient use to the municipalities. [Priority to 2017].

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Lines of Action 4.3: **Fostering urban models of sustainable mobility of people and goods**

**Contribution to the strategic objective:** Sustainable mobility and urban quality of life.

**Results indicator:** Travelling by public transport, by bike and on foot.

**Main measures:**

45. Fostering non-motorised mobility, by encouraging people to travel on foot and by bike. [Priority to 2017].
46. Maximising shared and public transport, by driving smart multimodal transport that use the ICTs to optimise the mobility of people and goods and with an emphasis on those means of transport using clean energies. [Priority to 2017].
47. Progressing in the implementation of systems to manage transport demand. [Priority to 2017].

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Lines of Action 4.4: **Encouraging responsible use of energy, water, waste and land in the territory**

**Contribution to the strategic objective:** Territorial balance that drives local sustainability.

**Results indicator:** Incentives to regenerate urban fabrics.

**Main measures:**

48. Driving the regeneration of urban fabrics by fostering the necessary transition towards a more sustainable business model, a more efficient building stock and a first-rate public space as a citizen relations centre. [Priority to 2017].
49. Fostering efficiency and saving habits in the home and in urban companies. [Priority to 2017].

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Lines of Action 4.5: **Driving citizen participation and awareness in the territory**

**Main measures:**

50. Fostering training and conducting awareness raising and information campaigns to reduce the citizen carbon footprint.
51. Increasing coordination between School Agenda 21 and Local Agenda 21. [Priority to 2017].
52. Encouraging local governments to be examples in sustainable development. [Priority to 2017].
53. Reinforcing the citizen participation processes at municipal level. [Priority to 2017].

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5. **GUARANTEING THE COHERENCE OF THE POLICIES BY INTENSIFYING ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRATION**

**The IV EFP sets the strategic objective that environmental integration will be consolidated by 2020. The set of public policies regarding the environment will be coherent and the measures aimed at achieved environmental improvements will be beneficial for other policies. In this framework, the authorities will work in coordination, share the necessary information and search for the maximum consonance for the effective implementation of their policies. Furthermore, by 2020, the citizenry and companies will be at centre stage of the positive action to improve the state of our environment.**

Achieving all the objectives of this Environmental Framework Programme requires the environmental considerations to be effectively integrated in the other policies. Embarking on joint and coordinated approaches allow the benefits of these policies to be increased exponentially. This coherence of the set of public policies on the environment is recognised as a key vector for sustainable growth.

The state of the environment is the result of the confluence of many private actions and of the confluence of many different public policies: in the field of the natural environment, of the cultural, territorial, social and economic development model.

The IV EFP, as a Strategic Government Plan, lies the bases to consolidate the coherence of all the policies with respect to the environment, guaranteeing that all the parties implied assumed their responsibility and work to achieve common goals. The pathway to coherence occurs when channels are created that strengthen the constructive dialogue between all the parties involved so that the nation-building commitment to the environment is seen, of course in the EFP and in the environmental policies, but all in the set of public policies that are carried out and which decisively affect the state of the environment and how that affects the health and wellbeing of the people.

In turn, the Local Authorities play a key role in the result of the Basque environmental policy. Giving impetus to inter-administrative coordination and the integration of the environment into its policies is considered to be an essential factor to achieve an effective coherence of all environmental policies.

The coherence of environmental policies also extends to the commitment of the Public Administration to the general public and companies. A co-responsibility effort is asked of them that will be well received if they perceive that there is the coordinated action of the Public Administration in return.

However, little progress can be achieved in environmental policies, without the contribution of a governance model that puts society in centre stage. Driving grassroots and public-private co-responsibility is the way for better coordinated and participative management of the environment.

Particularly important is the education for sustainable development is a fundamental impetus process, where people and communities become aware of their surroundings and embrace the know-how, values, skills, experience and determination that enable them to act to solve present and future socio-environmental problems. The University must pay a fundamental role for future professionals to include the sustainability dimension in their career development.

The IV EFP changes the focus of the environmental policy and looks towards the citizenry and companies as active subjects and responsible for the environment, in order to consolidate their role by assuming a transformational leadership. The citizenry and companies are co-responsible for their own conduct and are the ones that will make the great difference to the future of the environment. We have key examples in the field of recycling materials by the citizenry or of responsibility in the consumption of materials by companies that show the huge potential of both to act in favour of the environment.

Accordingly, a private sector and a citizenry committed to the environment are the ones who can really demand integral initiatives to the political leaders where the environment receives growing priority in the development model. This all involves emphasising dialogue and participation spaces of civil society

as a whole and of it with the public administrations. The processes have to be more dynamic, flexible and transparent to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of public policies. It is the time to leverage the potential to the maximum that the new information and communication technologies offer, and the development and progress of social networks.

The environment in all its aspects and its relations with the socio-economic activity and human health are very complex realities. Its study is subject to rigorous research processes whose progress provides environmental policy makers with a rigorous and coherent application framework that is technically better justified. The Basque Country has a developed innovation, technology and science system with significant capacities in the sphere of the environment that needs to be driven and its whole potential used.

The strategic action of the EFP 2020 to foster environmental integration and coherence of the policies will focus on the following measures:

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### Lines of Action 5.1: **Fostering the environmental integration of public policies**

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#### **Main measures:**

54. **Impetus to the Key Projects<sup>10</sup> as an interdepartmental integration instrument of the environmental variable.. [Priority to 2017]. 6 projects will get underway in this period:**
  1. Environmentally exemplary administration.
  2. Healthy territory.
  3. Environmental taxation.
  4. Green manufacturing.
  5. Circular food.
  6. Green infrastructures.
55. **Showcasing the underlying environmental narrative in public policies overall and in particular, in the public budgets.**
56. **Making progress in incorporating new simple and innovative instruments where the emphasis is on networking between the people tasked with driving the EFP.**
57. **Setting up technical coordination mechanisms to monitor the environmental policy between the Departments of the Environment of the Provincial Councils and the Basque Government's Ministry of the Environment. [Priority to 2017].**
58. **Progressing in the incorporation of the interaction between environmental and socio-economic factors in the ex ante and ex post assessments of the policies.**

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<sup>10</sup> See Annex I. Details of Key Projects.

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## Lines of Action 5.2: **Progressing in the configuration of an environmentally exemplary public administration**

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### **Main measures:**

59. Progressing in the qualification and minimisation of the environmental footprint of public action at all levels. [Priority to 2017].
60. Giving impetus to green public procurement in those areas likely to incorporate environmental criteria, particularly, when planning and developing infrastructures, building and facilities, vehicles and mobility and the use of energy and supplies. [Priority to 2017].
61. Scaling down, simplifying and streamlining the formalities and procedure of environmental management. [Priority to 2017].

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## Lines of Action 5.3: **Fostering the spaces for participation and dialogue with civil society and private-public co-responsibility**

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### **Main measures:**

62. Incorporating new flexible and dynamic participation systems that leverage the ICTs and social networks for an efficient information flow underpinning decision taking.
63. Improving the knowledge base on the environment and on its influence on the wellbeing of the general public. [Priority to 2017].
64. Coordinating, sharing and fostering the research work of the Basque Science and Technology Network in the sphere of the environment and transferring its advances to environmental public policies. In this regard, special emphasis must be placed on assessing the biodiversity, the health impacts of the environmental conditions and the assessment and management of new environmental areas of increasing concern (sound, light and electromagnetic pollution and from new substances, etc.), [Priority to 2017].
65. Driving a shared environmental information system that simplifies, rationalises and modernises the collection, management and sharing data, allow new themes to be incorporated. [Priority to 2017].

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## Lines of Action 5.4: **Fostering education and awareness raising about sustainable development in Basque society overall**

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### **Main measures:**

66. Preparing the environmental education for sustainable development strategy.
67. Giving impetus to the Agenda 21 in vocational training centres and its coordination with the School Agenda 21. [Priority to 2017].
68. Progressing in preparing a diagnosis of the degree of environmental training of Basque society and, in particular, driving the incorporation of sustainable development perspective in all university education. [Priority to 2017].
69. Maximising the use of ICTs and network to give impetus to innovative environmental training systems.
70. Progressing in environmental training by segments of people and groups with similar interests and needs, taking into account the lifelong learning of people.
71. Developing training capacities in environmental areas.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 6.

### **CONTRIBUTING TO THE INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE BASQUE COUNTRY**

**The IV EFP sets the strategic objective that by 2020, the environment will be consolidated as a key aspect of the international outreach of the Basque Country, by means of high levels of excellence when applying environmental policies and the active participation at the highest level in world environmental networks and forums.**

The main environmental challenges facing humanity are global in scope and the individual contributions of the countries and region come together to address them. The paradigmatic case is climate change caused by the local greenhouse gas emissions, but others such as protecting biodiversity, environmental pollution or soil degradation are some of the most important ones.

The Basque Country is a small country that wishes to face up to its responsibility and sign up to Europe's commitment to the environment and be included among the countries in the world that contribute in an active and committed way to the managing of the great environmental issues facing humanity. First of all, by applying environmental policies that are coherent with the recommendations from Europe, as it has been steadily doing since the approval of the Basque Environmental Strategy for Sustainable Development and in the successive Environmental Framework Programmes. Thus, this IV EFP applies the guidelines from the VII EU Environment Action Programme to 2020 "Living well, within the limits of our planet". Secondly, by working closely with the other regions and countries to progress in the sustainable development in the world as it has been doing with its involvement in the Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development (nrg4SD), and in the Environmental Conference of the Regions of Europe (ENCORE) and the Network of Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI), and Climate Group among others.

As set out in the "Basque Internationalisation Framework Strategy: Euskadi Basque Country", the future of the Basque Country is being played out on the global stage and, to a great extent, the future wellbeing of Basque society will depend on the capacity of its institutions, persons, companies and socio-economic stakeholders to address this challenge. A challenge that the IV EFP embraces with the conviction that our environment and the specific way of approaching it and enjoying it helps to the positive image that we wish to give as a country to the rest of the world. A positive image can only be reliably transmitted to the world, if the environmental committed is firmly rooted in people. In people who understand the environment and who have it incorporated in their scheme of a values and a society that provides them with effective means to interrelated with the environment in a responsible and systemic way. In order to contribute to the international outreach and accountability of the Basque Country, the strategic actions of the EFP 2020 will be focused on.

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#### Lines of Action: **Contributing from the environment to the internationalisation strategy of the Basque Country**

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##### **Main measures:**

72. Integrating the environment in the Basque international outreach policy and working with the leading Institutions and Departments in the driving of the internationalisation. [Priority to 2017].
73. Supporting and disseminating the work carried out by all the public and private stakeholders internationally. [Priority to 2017].
74. Facilitating the participation in the global forums on the environment as a means to showcase the Basque Country in the world, defend the interests of Basque companies and citizens and contribute to the constructions of a fairer and more balanced world (through networks such as the ICLEI, Network of Local Governments for Sustainability the Climate Group or the Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development. [Priority to 2017].
75. Encouraging our young people to take part in programmes to drive and educate in sustainability. [Priority to 2017].



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**EFP 2020  
MONITORING  
AND MANAGEMENT  
MODEL**

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## 4.1. GOVERNANCE

The governance and management model of the environmental policy of the Basque Country is the result of the mandate established in the General Environmental Protection Act of the Basque Country 3/1998, of 27 February. It likewise establishes a participative and cross-cutting governance system which brings in the main public and private institutions related to the environment in the Basque Country.

The Lehendakaritza coordinates the overall evolution of this IV EFP 2020 and the Basque Government Ministry of the Environment and Territorial Policy, through its Natural Environment and Environmental Planning Directorate is tasked with driving the assessment and monitoring of the environmental policy that is set out in the Environmental Framework Programme.

The EFP 2020 is an umbrella and benchmark for the other sectoral plans and policies that have an impact on the environment. The technical secretariat of the EFP is the Natural Environment and Environmental Planning Directorate, which will be assisted by Ihobe, the publicly-owned company. This Directorate is tasked with support the Lehendakaritza and the Ministry of the Environment and Territorial Policy in all the technical work to analyse, diagnose, plan and assess the environmental policy designed in this EFP 2020.

The **key projects** that are a specific aspect of the EFP 2020 will have their own management and monitoring system. They will also be coordinated by the Lehendakaritza with will have a technical reference group made up of representatives of the Ministries of the Government responsible for each of them. Those technical groups, with the technical assistance of the Natural Environment and Environmental Planning Directorate will be in charge of developing and implementing the selected projects.

## 4.2. ECONOMIC RESOURCES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME

The “IV Environmental Framework Programme” sets a 6-year time line, up to 2020, with an initial implementation period 2015-2017. At the end of that period, a comprehensive assessment will be carried out of the degree of advancement considered and topicality of the envisaged objectives, along with the implementation of the inter-institutional and inter-departmental task forces and the development of the key projects associated to them. The pending actions for the second implementation period will most likely be redefined at that time.

Given the time line envisaged and the economic climate conditioned by a prolonged economic crisis where the loss of GDP<sup>11</sup> and the drop in employment have meant that a growing number of needs have to be addressed with fewer public resources, the associated degree of uncertainty, both regarding the budgetary needs of the Programme and the availability of economic resources, is relatively higher, and increasing in the last few years of the Programme being in force.

In this context, as a Strategic Plan of Government Action, the IV EFP 2020 must be aligned with the budgetary-economic forecast of the Government and, accordingly, to support its objectives and

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<sup>11</sup> The Basque Country has lost around 5% of its GDP between 2008 and 2012. Ministry of the Treasury and Finances of the Basque Government.

include the measures to be undertaken in its powers of action. On the other hand, the complexity in preparing macroeconomic scenarios is focused on cycle turning points and times of great uncertainty such as the present one.

The benchmark framework must, therefore, be the budgetary situation included in the 2015 Budget Bill<sup>12</sup>, along with the environmental quality required as part of the general objectives of the Basque Government and the specific ones of the Environment Office.. Therefore, the efficient leverage of the procedural and technological advances that maximise the leverage of the potential synergies is essential.

The new Environmental Framework Programme faces different challenges, but two stand out from among the others. On the one hand, the need to effectively implement and for once and for all a preventive environmental policy that replaces the reactive policy that traditionally has marked government action in this regard. On the other hand, and in keeping with the Basque Government's requirement to maximise the efficient use of resources and the leverage of synergies, driving the economic return of the investment in the environment over the last 30 years, so that the environmental variable starts to be considered as a factor for competitiveness. Consequently, the budgetary needs must be defined in such a way to respond to those challenges set out in the general objectives of the EFP 2020.

Furthermore, the work of the Framework Programme must be in line with the global objectives of the Basque Government and of the Ministry of the Environment and Territorial Policy. Thus, and taking the economic guidelines of the 2015 Budgetary Bill of the Basque Government as the benchmark, the percentage of the overall budget of the Ministry of the Environment and Territorial Policy managed by the Environment Office is approximately 8.5% of the total<sup>13</sup>, even though the overall one for the Ministry accounts for 6.3% of the Basque Government budget.

From the perspective that the Framework Programme is the planning instrument of the environmental policy of the Environment Office that covers the other sectoral operating strategies and plans, we can put the budget of this Office on an equal footing with the budgetary requirements for the implementation of the EFP; even more so when the measures envisaged in it are not operational<sup>14</sup> but rather outlines the roadmap with an integral approach that must be followed and implemented at an operational level by the rest of the sectoral environmental policies.

Based on the 2015 budget bill, where the operating budgetary allocation is slightly over 53.5 million euros, the budgetary resources required in 2015 to achieve the targets, would be:

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<sup>12</sup> Basque Government forecasts for 2015 predict growth for the Basque economy around 1.7%, together with an increase in the employment rate of 0.7%. However, this does not mean that expansive budgets are going to be available, as can be seen from the 2015 Budget Bill.

<sup>13</sup> This percentage does not include staff costs and those not associated to any specific implementation project, that is, that are purely structure costs.

<sup>14</sup> Except for the key projects.

EFP STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	BUDGETARY NEEDS	PERCENTAGE	OVERHEADS AND STAFF COSTS
<b>SO 1.</b> Protecting, conserving and restoring our natural capital, by preserving the services that the eco-systems provide us.	€4.445.166	8,3 %	€738.440
<b>SO 2.</b> Progressing towards a resource-efficient, low carbon, innovative and competitive economy.	€2.186.660€	4,08 %	€363.252
<b>SO 3.</b> Fostering and protecting the health and wellbeing of our citizenry.	€37.390.399	69,79 %	€6.211.369
<b>SO 4.</b> Increasing the sustainability of the territory.	€6.893.364	12,86 %	€1.145.140
<b>SO 5.</b> Guaranteeing the coherence of the policies by intensifying environmental integration.	€2.657.145	4,96 %	€441.410
<b>SO 6.</b> Contributing to the international outreach and responsibility of Basque Country.			

However, it should be noted that this budget is the aggregation of the budgetary requirements of the set of sectoral environmental policy measures and are not directly implemented by the Environmental Framework Programme where the emphasis is on those sectoral plans, strategies and measures are coherent between them and with the other measures of the Basque Government. Therefore, it is not a matter of specific budgetary resources to implement the EFP 2020. The spending that the Framework Programme itself directly carries out is what is necessary to produce support reports and monitoring assessments, for which an annual budgetary allocation of €140,000 is estimated and contained in the budget associated to Strategic Objective 5 (To guarantee the coherence of the polices, by intensifying environmental integration and private-public co-responsibility).

In addition to the budgetary resources envisaged by the Environment Office, it needs to be taken into account that a key element for the success of this Framework Programme is the involvement of different Ministries of the Basque Government, along with other institutions through the development of key projects, which also need additional budgets from those other Ministries associated to their development. For these initiatives, it is envisaged that during 2015 the work will be on setting up the teams in charge of their implementation and providing them with content and the teams will set out the plan of action for achieve the proposed goals by 2017, and, where applicable, they will redirect the work to be carried out after the mid-term assessment of the Environmental Framework Programme as of that date. Therefore, it is not envisaged that the budgetary requirements, which must be contributed from other Ministries will be significant during this budgetary period.

Given the aforementioned question marks over preparing the budgets beyond 2015 and, in the expectation that the upturn in employment and the economy will become more established, an average annual increase in public spending of around 2% could be considered from 2016, which, unless there were a very significant change in the objectives as a result of the assessments of the Framework Programme, would lead to the following spending levels:

<b>EFP STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>SO 1.</b> Protecting, conserving and restoring our natural capital, by preserving the services that the eco-systems provide us.	4.445	4.534	4.625	4.717	4.812	4.908
<b>SO 2.</b> Progressing towards a resource-efficient, low carbon, innovative and competitive economy.	2.187	2.230	2.275	2.321	2.367	2.414
<b>SO 3.</b> Fostering and protecting the health and wellbeing of our citizenry <sup>15</sup> .	37.390	38.138	38.901	39.679	40.472	41.282
<b>SO 4.</b> Increasing the sustainability of the territory.	6.893	7.031	7.172	7.315	7.462	7.611
<b>SO 5.</b> Guaranteeing the coherence of the policies by intensifying environmental integration.	2.657	2.710	2.764	2.820	2.876	2.934
<b>SO 6.</b> Contributing to the international outreach and responsibility of Basque Country.						
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>53.573</b>	<b>54.644</b>	<b>55.737</b>	<b>56.852</b>	<b>57.989</b>	<b>59.149</b>

With all those conditioning factors, the estimated operating budget for the correct implementation of the Programme stands at 337.943.3 thousands of €<sup>16</sup>, distributed over the six years of the programme in force. Regardless of the budgetary forecasts, the level of action in each of the financial years of the Framework Budget will be subordinated to the amounts, limits and mandates that the Basque Parliament sets at the time of passing the budgets of the Basque Autonomous Community, along with the formal processing of those instruments aimed at achieving the implementation of those measures.

<sup>15</sup> Special mention should be made to the budgetary percentage attributed to Strategy Objective 3 as it includes the amount corresponding to the Basque Water Board, which has traditionally required high budgetary allocations compared to other environmental projects and measures, and which was not included in the previous Environmental Framework Programme, as measures regarding water were not included.

<sup>16</sup> In addition to the operating budget, the structure and staff cost are estimated to be €8,889,611 a year.

### 4.3. MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT OF THE EFP 2020

The environmental policy in the Basque Country has numerous tools to measure the advances of the quality of the environment in our territory. Some of the most important are the environmental profile, the industrial and social ecobarometers, the states of the environment, environmental statistics, etc., will continue to be valid tools in order to establish and improve our baseline.

However, with the approval of the new Environmental Framework Programme 2020, the monitoring and assessment of the 75 measures envisaged, one of which is the setting up the task forces of the 6 Key Projects, will be implemented.

For the sake of simplicity and effectiveness, there will be two monitoring and assessment mechanisms of the Programme:

- **Biannual Monitoring Reports:** They set out the degree of advancement of the measures and key projects envisaged in the EFP 2020. Those reports will be used as support documents for the mid-term and final assessments of the Programme. Each of the measures will have its detailed datasheet to facilitate its permanent monitoring and implementation. These datasheets will be embodied in specific projects, with an associated budget, in the management plans of the departments involved in its implementation.
- **Assessment Reports of the Environmental Framework Programme 2020:** This report will be produced in 2017 and 2020, the latter as a step prior to preparing the following EFP will be carried out by an independent and external entity in accordance with the criteria of transparency, participation and cooperation. The report will assess the impact of the measures and initiatives included in the EFP 2020, along with how the scorecard indicators have performed. In addition and according to the needs, specific sectoral analysis and reports will be produced to complement the earlier ones.

All the information generated in the monitoring and assessment of the new Environmental Framework Programme will be available, for their consultation and participation, through the website of the Basque Government’s Ministry of the Environment. [www.ingurumena.net](http://www.ingurumena.net)

The objective measuring system of the degree of compliance of the EFP 2020 and of its results (Integral Scorecard) is set out below:

INTEGRAL SCORECARD	2017 TARGET	2020 TARGET
Level of implementation of the EFP 2020 measures envisaged	>50%	100%
Level of implementation of the Key Projects	>70%	100%
Assessment Reports produced	Mid-term assessment 2017	Final assessment 2020
Monitoring Reports (biannual) produced	2016, 2018 and 2020	

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# ANNEXES

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## ANNEX I. DETAILS OF THE KEY PROJECTS

The Basque Government has taken a further step and proposes 6 Key Projects within the 75 measures that are the drivers of the change of the environmental policy, which is committed to a healthy environment as a means to support the quality of life of people and the development of a sustainable, advanced, modern and prosperous society. They are the essence of Strategic Objective 5 for the coherence and integration of policies. They tackle the future environmental challenges from the collaborative and joint vision of the Basque Government, and are coordinated by the Lehendakaitza and co-headed by different Ministries. Their fundamental objective consists of driving and/or consolidating one or several of the strategic objectives set in the IV EFP. They are always from the perspective of a new excellent environmental governance which prioritises public-private co-responsibility.

They are projects on a 2020 horizon timeline and, in all events, are aimed at action and obtaining tangible and practical results in the short term (2-3 years). The implementation of the projects will act to create platforms (formal or informal) that combine capacities, generate trust and engagement spaces and are a means to share resources and joint technical work between the Ministries of the Basque Government that develop them. The synergies and snowball effect are thus used and learning and knowledge transfer is thus facilitated between the different stakeholders, in a framework of public innovation and cooperation. Depending on their goals, the projects are open to the participation of the Provincial Councils, local councils and other institutions, along with public-private partnership. In turn, and in line with the UNESCO Mab (Man and Biosphere) Programme, the Urdaibai Biosphere Reserve is showcased as a territory that is an ideal to be a laboratory to test out those projects.

## KEY PROJECTS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME 2020

KEY PROJECT **1. ENVIRONMENTALLY EXEMPLARY ADMINISTRATION**

KEY PROJECTS **2. HEALTHY TERRITORY**

KEY PROJECT **3. ENVIRONMENTAL TAXATION**

KEY PROJECT **4. GREEN MANUFACTURING**

KEY PROJECT **5. CIRCULAR FOOD**

KEY PROJECT **6. GREEN INFRASTRUCTURES**

## KEY PROJECT 1. ENVIRONMENTALLY EXEMPLARY ADMINISTRATION

Alongside its important regulating role, the Basque Public Administration must play an exemplary role for all the citizenry, companies and institutions of any type where it demands co-responsibility for responsible action with the environment.

This aim of this key project consists of implementing measures to minimise the environmental impact of the Basque Government, including its autonomous institutions and bodies, entities and publicly-owned companies, foundations and public consortiums, achieving a driver effect in the private sector and at grassroots levels by means of setting an example.

### The Basque Government will work on:

- Identifying and analysing the environmental impact caused by its activity. Buildings, transport and mobility, purchasing goods and services and generating waste.
- Identifying cost-effective projects to reduce the environmental impact and establish financial-technical plans for their practical implementation.
- Implementing pilot schemes to reduce the environmental impact in general. In the sphere of energy in public buildings and in transport in the sustainability mobility of people.
- Implementation of green public procurement procedures for the purchase of products and services by the Basque Government. Supporting and advising other public institutions, particularly Local Councils to develop and implement green public procurements processes.
- Driving the skills buildings and awareness-raising of the staff of the Public Administrations.

### Work team:

- Ministry of Economic Development and Competitiveness.
- Ministry of The Treasury and Finances.
- Ministry of the Environment and Territorial Policy.

**By 2020**, the project will have the result of reducing energy consumption and increasing the proportion from renewable, reducing the use of materials, waste and greenhouse gases and increasing the percentage of green procurement in the sphere of the Basque Government.

The envisaged results of the project **by 2017** will be:

- The approval of a Energy Sustainability in the Buildings of the Basque Government Programme that contemplates renewables and energy efficiency measures.
- The approval of the Green Public Procurements Programme 2020 by the Basque Government and achieving the green procurement targets recommended by the European Union.
- The implementation of measures aimed at ensuring that the services offered by the Government are provided in the most environmentally sustainable way possible.

## KEY PROJECT 2. HEALTHY TERRITORY

The place where people live impacts on their health and on their possibilities of having a healthy life. The territory is where people interact with the environment. The relationship existing between health, wellbeing, quality of life and the physical environment are clearly perceived of those spaces.

The objective of this key project is to develop actions to advance in the integration of the environment and health variable in the territorial policy and in the setting up of an urban life where the way of life is compatible with the full health and wellbeing of people. By 2020, Basque municipalities will have notably progressed in the implementation of healthy territory models and the putting into practices of daring and ambitious measures to regenerate urban life to foster health and protect the general public from environmental risks to health.

### **The Basque Government will work on:**

- Sustainable urban development. Developing and implementing tools to analyse and assess the health impact of the different sectoral initiatives in the urban environment.
- The health focus in all policies. Integrating the environment and health variable in the territorial policy, by applying the tool of the health perspective to significant initiatives and intervention in the Environment, Land Planning and Housing.
- Environmental risk information system. Unified information gathering. Georeferencing of emission points, dumps, etc.
- Environment and Health Indicators. Preparing and performing the monitoring of a panel of environment and health structural indicators.

### **Work team:**

- Health Ministry.
- Ministry of Employment and Social Policies.
- Ministry of the Environment and Territorial Policy. Land Planning and Environment.

**By 2020**, the project seeks to achieve a more sustainable territory that optimises its ecological footprint and improves the quality and health for people.

The results of the project **by 2017** will be:

- Implementing a tool to analyse and assess the health impact on the different public policies.
- Establishing a panel of environment and health indicators.
- Defining and studying “population health profiles” by territorial areas.
- Defining communication and action protocols with the population related to the environmental risk information systems.

## KEY PROJECT 3. ENVIRONMENTAL TAXATION

Apart from the main taxes, such as income tax (IRPF), VAT and Corporation Tax, others need to be taken into account such as municipal taxes, rates and public prices with an impact on the conduct of the social stakeholders.

This key project seeks to take the necessary steps for a progressive implementation in the Basque Country of a taxation system that systematically takes into account the promotion of responsible behaviour by the general public, companies and institutions regarding the environment.

### The Basque Government will work on:

- Studying and analysing the public price and tax system of the Basque Country and its potential for green taxation.
- Conducting “benchmarking” studies with the green tax systems of regions and countries that are comparable to the Basque Country, to extract lessons to implement them.
- Proposing to the competent authorities, changes to the public price and tax system, where the environmental, social and economic impacts of those changes are envisaged.
- Progressively introducing green taxation in the Basque Country.
- Monitoring the impacts of green tax changes on the environment.

### Work team:

- Ministry for the Treasury and Public Finances.
- Ministry of the Environment and Territorial Policy.
- Provincial Councils.

**By 2020**, the project will result in progress in the transformation of certain taxes and public prices to encourage responsible attitudes towards the environment.

The results of the project **by 2017** will be:

- The setting up of a work team between the Ministry for the Treasury and Public Finances and the Ministry for the Environment and Territorial Policy.
- Analysis of the setting up of a green taxation system.

## KEY PROJECT 4. GREEN MANUFACTURING

The Basque Industry is the sector that has made greatest progress in its environmental endeavours in recent years. It managed to slash its greenhouse gas emissions by 43% between 1990 and 2012, while its impact on air quality fell notably and it cut the generation of hazardous waste by 10% between 2003 and 2010. However, the Basque economy, with 94% SMEs, consumes 23 M Ton of materials and does not recover 47% of the waste, while it has an SME focused business fabric in the manufacturing sector.

The fundamental objective of the project is to foster eco-innovation that refers to any type of innovation – technological and non-technological, new products and services and new commercial practices – that creates business opportunities and benefits the environment by preventing or reducing its impact or optimising the use of resources (including energy). The schemes of this project will be aimed at companies saving more energy and material resources with the subsequent cutting of costs, driving maximum leverage of the waste and obtaining all the competitive advantages offered by the environment.

### **The Basque Government will work on:**

- Directing the eco-innovation of Basque companies towards the opportunities offered by the market by supporting the deployment of the smart specialisation strategy - RIS3 in the priority goal of advanced manufacturing and support new business models.
- Driving the programmed managed of joint support that exploit the capacities of the different Ministries, to develop more efficient products and processes through the supply chain.
- Developing joint instruments (technical-tax) to facilitate the market of secondary products, developing new raw materials based on recovery products and full circle processes and assessing the main material flows.
- Giving impetus to searching for competitive opportunities for the sector.

### **Work team:**

- Ministry for Economic Development and Competitiveness.
- Ministry of the Environment and Territorial policy.

**By 2020**, the project will have managed to improve the competitive position of the companies of the Basque Country, consequently leading to slashing consumption of resources and environmental impacts, along with the economically advantageous leverage of the waste.

The results of the project **by 2017** will be:

- Developing and implementing a new list of cleaner materials and technologies.
- Managing an advanced support system for technically viable full circle ideas and processes where there are barriers to their industrial introduction on the market.
- The integrated driving, through different support programmes by the Ministries, of product ecodesign and process efficiency projects in accordance with the smart specialisation strategy of the Basque Country.

## KEY PROJECT 5. CIRCULAR FOOD

The project seeks to enhance the environmental function of the Basque primary sector by means of the leverage of the full cycle of the food value chain in the Basque Country (production, transformation, sale, reuse and recovery of by-products and waste) to consolidate the natural capital, activate the eco-system services, improve human health and foster job creation based on sustainable rural development. The final aim of the project is to optimise the impact of the primary sector on the environment, by minimising its ecological impact and consolidating the natural capital stock through its activity.

### **The Basque Government will work in the following areas:**

#### **Transformation of the agricultural model:**

- Raising awareness among people in the rural setting of the possibilities and opportunities that the environment offers, by fostering the development of demonstration projects at all levels.
- Analysing payment practices for ecosystemic services to the stakeholders that implement sustainable agricultural practices.

#### **New ways to transform and distribute agricultural products:**

- Driving eco-innovation of the local agrifood industry.
- Fostering short circuits and product and service distribution channels that increase the added value of producers (minimising middlemen) and minimising the environmental impact.

#### **Activating the sustainable product market:**

- Encouraging the presence of sustainable local products at the most used points of sale and mainly in the urban retail sector.
- Raising awareness among consumers of the importance of responsible consumption.
- Activating the demand for sustainable products by means of green public procurement in school canteens.

#### **Leverage of by-products and minimising waste:**

- Impetus to the circular economy in the food chain with sustainable local products, by means of optimising the processes and the reuse and leverage of all secondary materials. reuse, new food production, compost production, energy recovery, etc. in the processes.
- Encouraging zero waste patterns in the major food product consumption centres.

#### **Research and monitoring:**

- Driving research projects to better know the relationship between the agricultural sector, health of people and the environment.
- Encouraging impact studies of the agricultural sector and the environment.

**Work team:**

- Ministry for Economic Development and Competitiveness.
- Health Ministry.
- Ministry of the Environment and Territorial Policy.

**By 2020**, the project seeks to consolidate in the Basque Country a new environmentally-friendly agricultural model that fosters and facilitate responsible food patterns.

The results of the project **by 2017** will be:

- Analysis of the driving of food full cycle and short circuits.
- Impetus to differentiating the local product by means of calculating hydric and carbon footprints.
- Conducting awareness raising schemes on the opportunities of the new fisheries and agricultural models.
- Establishing agricultural production pilot products including payment for providing ecosystemic services.
- Conducting a responsible foot pilot scheme with schools.
- Defining future lines on research on food and the environment.

## KEY PROJECT 6. GREEN INFRASTRUCTURES

The key project particularly seeks to link the development of green infrastructures to a strategic approach that emerges from the planning and organisation of the territory and combines the set of authorities and the private initiative in an integrating approach that seeks for innovative funding channels that take into account the environmental, social and economic return of the projects in the long term: setting up leisure spaces outside protected zones and bringing nature to the population centres, revitalising urban economy and life, improving the natural capital of the existing linear infrastructures by reducing the fragmentation of the habitat and its impact on the landscape, exploiting ecosystemic services, creating green jobs, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, flood defences, etc:

The project seeks to foster the implementation and development of green infrastructures in the Basque Country. The green infrastructures are schemes that allow the natural capital and the services of the ecosystems to be optimised in the territory in which they are set up. They can be protected natural zones, but also other semi-natural or natural zones and they can even be developed using highly artificialised urban and degraded zones, thus encouraging people to directly interact with the natural environment. This is the case, for example of the so-called green walls or roofs and the green rings and parks that connect and integrate the urban space with nature.

### The Basque Government will work on:

- Incorporating the green infrastructure in the land use instruments, related to climate change or water management.
- Analysing/reviewing the linear infrastructures existing the BAC to improve/drive, as far as possible, their function as green infrastructures.
- Analysing the potential of economic instruments and payment for ecosystemic services as a way to fund green infrastructures.
- Analysing the potential of regulating and the legislation to foster the setting up of green infrastructures, by fostering the measures included in the EIA, among others.
- Fostering the presence of the private initiative in the implementation of green infrastructures in relation to the ecosystemic services.
- Working with local authorities to driving the setting up of pilot schemes integrated in the sustainability framework.

### Work team:

- Ministry of Employment and Social Policies.
- Ministry of the Environment and Territorial policy.

**By 2020**, the project will have managed to progress in the setting up of green infrastructures in the Basque Country.

The results of the project **by 2017** will be:

- Preparing green infrastructure policy criteria in the framework of the ecosystemic services.
- Analysing of funding instruments to implement green infrastructures.
- Analysis of the linear infrastructures present in the BAC and their potential to become green infrastructures.
- Skills training of private and public stakeholders in green infrastructures and ecosystemic services.
- Running green infrastructure pilot schemes with private and public stakeholders.

## ANNEX II. DIAGNOSTIC DOCUMENTS

**1. Basic Economic and Strategic Lines.**

[http://www.irekia.euskadi.net/uploads/attachments/4744/Lineas\\_Estrategicas\\_PMA.pdf?1402398133](http://www.irekia.euskadi.net/uploads/attachments/4744/Lineas_Estrategicas_PMA.pdf?1402398133)

**2. Nondik Report: Balance Sheet of the Situation of the Basque Environment 1980-2012.**

[http://www.irekia.euskadi.net/uploads/attachments/4745/Nondik\\_Evolucion\\_Ambiental\\_es.pdf?1402398202](http://www.irekia.euskadi.net/uploads/attachments/4745/Nondik_Evolucion_Ambiental_es.pdf?1402398202)

**3. Basque environmental profile 2013; headline environmental indicators**

[http://www.irekia.euskadi.net/uploads/attachments/4725/Perfil2013\\_Indicadores\\_Ambientales\\_es.pdf?1402398063](http://www.irekia.euskadi.net/uploads/attachments/4725/Perfil2013_Indicadores_Ambientales_es.pdf?1402398063)

**4. Basque environmental performance index 2013.**

[http://www.irekia.euskadi.net/uploads/attachments/4742/Indice\\_Rendimiento\\_Ambiental\\_es.pdf?1402398106](http://www.irekia.euskadi.net/uploads/attachments/4742/Indice_Rendimiento_Ambiental_es.pdf?1402398106)

**5. Assessment of III EFP 2002-2020 and the Basque Environmental Strategy for Sustainable Development 2002-2020.**

<http://www.irekia.euskadi.net/uploads/attachments/4795/Evaluacion.pdf?1402398320>

**6. Basque Resource Productivity.**

[http://www.irekia.euskadi.net/uploads/attachments/4747/Productividad\\_Recursos\\_Euskadi\\_es.pdf?1402398240](http://www.irekia.euskadi.net/uploads/attachments/4747/Productividad_Recursos_Euskadi_es.pdf?1402398240)

**7. Basque Environmental Scenarios 2030.**

[http://www.irekia.euskadi.net/uploads/attachments/4793/Escenarios\\_Ambientales.pdf?1402398282](http://www.irekia.euskadi.net/uploads/attachments/4793/Escenarios_Ambientales.pdf?1402398282)

**8. Green economy in the Basque Country.**

[http://www.irekia.euskadi.net/uploads/attachments/4741/Economia\\_verde\\_Euskadi.pdf?1402398083](http://www.irekia.euskadi.net/uploads/attachments/4741/Economia_verde_Euskadi.pdf?1402398083)

**9. Interrelation in the planning of the Basque Government.**

## ANNEX III. PARTICIPATION PROCESS TO PREPARE THE IV EFP 2020

[http://www.irekia.euskadi.net/uploads/attachments/5075/anexo\\_1\\_metodologia\\_y\\_resultados\\_pma\\_2020.pdf?1406707139](http://www.irekia.euskadi.net/uploads/attachments/5075/anexo_1_metodologia_y_resultados_pma_2020.pdf?1406707139)