



**European Committee  
of the Regions**



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### *Green Deal Going Local - call to plant trees in Europe*

Dear Members, Dear Friends,

Today's plenary debate reiterated our shared commitment to tackling the climate emergency, preserving our precious natural environment and delivering sustainable growth. Under the European Green Deal, the EU's biodiversity strategy proposed [planting 3 billion](#) additional trees by 2030, double the current estimated planting rate.

To achieve this goal, we need your commitment – Europe's local and regional leaders. Therefore, **we call on you and citizens in your villages, cities or regions to kick off your reforestation plan by planting the 'First tree for Life' by June 2022.**

This ambition will enhance the resilience of our forests, reverse biodiversity loss whilst mitigating and helping us adapt to climate change, following the dedicated roadmap outlined in the [new EU forest strategy for 2030](#). **In fact it is estimated<sup>1</sup> that one tree can absorb up to 150kg of CO2 per year helping tackle climate change.** Trees cool down our cities, contribute to the preservation of biodiversity and the well-being of the population. In our rural areas, they support food production and improve water quality and soil health through agroforestry, whilst helping prevent fires in sustainably managed forests

Local and regional authorities hold competencies both in urban planning and forestry management. Your involvement is fundamental to make this pledge a reality. By participating you can help show the importance of local and regional leadership in delivering the EU's Green Deal and secure a sustainable future. Planting this **'First Tree for Life'** will symbolically raise awareness of the fundamental changes we need to take to protect our planet and **spread a new culture of how, where and which species to plant.**

<sup>1</sup> [Benefits of Urban Trees \(fao.org\)](#) FAO from 2016.

This is one of the ten proposed actions set out in the European Committee of the Regions' own [Green Deal: Going Local campaign](#), and specifically aims to ensure local and regional leader's plant one million trees representing the EU's one million local politicians.

On the International Day of Disaster Risk Reduction, we are therefore pleased to announce that the European Committee of the Regions and the European Commission will work together towards delivering this shared objective. We invite you to participate and commit. Our Services ([greendeal@cor.europa.eu](mailto:greendeal@cor.europa.eu)) will support you and be in contact in due course on the practical steps on how to contribute.

This is a small but important step towards a giant leap for our planet. Together we must continue to build a greener, fairer more sustainable future for our children and our planet.



**Apostolos Tzitzikostas**  
*President*  
*European Committee of the*  
*Regions*



**Virginijus Sinkevičius**  
*Commissioner*  
*Environment, Oceans and*  
*Fisheries*

Enclosed: *Green Deal Going Local Campaign Concept – Background information*