

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002365/26
to the Commission
Markus Buchheit (ESN)
(9 June 2026)**

Subject: Restoring nature in outdoor areas and greening of Commission buildings

Until the 1990s, the Berlaymont building was surrounded by thriving Japanese cherry trees. During the process to remove asbestos from the building, the trees were felled and replaced by uninterrupted bare paving.

The Commission itself has advanced the Nature Restoration Law (the Nature Restoration Regulation).

1. When does the Commission intend to break up the paving in front of the Berlaymont building and replace it with new trees, in line with its nature restoration regulation?
2. Which patios and roofs of its other buildings in Brussels and Luxembourg and those of its agencies and delegations does it intend to green? By when and what are the estimated costs?

Submitted: 9.6.2026

**Answer given by Mr Serafin on behalf of the European Commission
(22 September 2026)**

The Commission is committed to integrating greenery and restoring nature ⁽¹⁾ where feasible. The redevelopment in front of Charlemagne strengthens the esplanade's green character by introducing more vegetation and landscaping to improve the microclimate, reduce heat, and enhance overall environmental quality.

A native garden was developed in 2022 near the Berlaymont visitors' entrance and nearly 1 000 m² were then transformed into a distinctive biodiverse garden.

Tree planting in front of the Berlaymont building is however currently not foreseen due to security, technical and spatial constraints including insufficient soil depth, risk of water leakage, and the need to maintain safe access for firefighters.

The Commission has developed biodiversity plans for its sites that aim to develop green areas in urban sites (Brussels, Luxembourg and Seville) and to manage its green areas in non-urban sites ⁽²⁾.

In Brussels, the latest biodiversity initiatives were implemented at the Berlaymont, Loi 41, Belliard 28, Charlemagne (including a green roof), Tervueren 211, Cour Saint Michel and Mérode buildings.

The playground design for the Grand Clovis building also promotes urban biodiversity. Since 2023, around EUR 360 000 have been allocated to these projects ⁽³⁾.

In Luxembourg, biodiversity actions are in place or under implementation at the Euroforum, CPE3, CPE5, Mercier-Post, Foyer and T2 buildings.

Since 2023, around EUR 40 000 have been allocated to these projects. The JMO2 design achieved the highest rating for long-term impact on biodiversity under the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) with, for example, around 9 000 m² of planted surfaces.

The JMO2 biodiversity related costs are currently estimated at EUR 620 000 and are included in the overall construction costs.

⁽¹⁾ Under the Commission's Communication on Greening, 2022: https://commission.europa.eu/about/service-standards-and-principles/modernising-european-commission/greening-european-commission_en.

⁽²⁾ These include the Joint Research Centres and the Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety at Grange, Ireland as reported in the EMAS Environmental Statement: <https://op.europa.eu/webpub/hr/ec-environmental-statement-2025/index.html>.

⁽³⁾ Feasibility studies for further projects are ongoing. The Commission plans green spaces to promote biodiversity in all its new buildings in Brussels.