



Biodiversity strategy for 2030: policy context for the biogeographical process

Vedran Nikolić, European Commission, DG Environment, Nature Conservation Unit

3rd Natura 2000 biogeographical seminar
for the Atlantic and Macaronesian marine regions

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EU policy context



- the Birds and Habitats Directives, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive
- **EU Biodiversity strategy for 2030**
- Global biodiversity framework
- **Marine action plan**
- Climate policy and climate law
- **Nature restoration law *proposal***

Biodiversity strategy for 2030

Bringing nature back into our lives

Protect and restore nature

PROTECT NATURE

- Legally protect at **least 30% of the European Union's sea area** – coherent trans-European nature network
- **Strictly protect at least a third** of the EU's marine protected areas (**10%** of sea area)
- **Effectively manage all protected areas**, defining clear conservation objectives and measures, and monitoring them appropriately.
- **Fisheries management measures must be established in all MPAs** according to clearly defined conservation objectives and on the basis of the best available scientific advice.

RESTORE NATURE

- **Nature Restoration Law** with **legally binding restoration targets**, including for the marine environment.
- Achieving good environmental status of marine ecosystems, including through strictly protected areas, must involve the **restoration of carbon-rich ecosystems** as well as important **fish spawning and nursery areas**.
- **Reduce bycatch** of sensitive species and the impact of bottom fishing **on the seabed**.

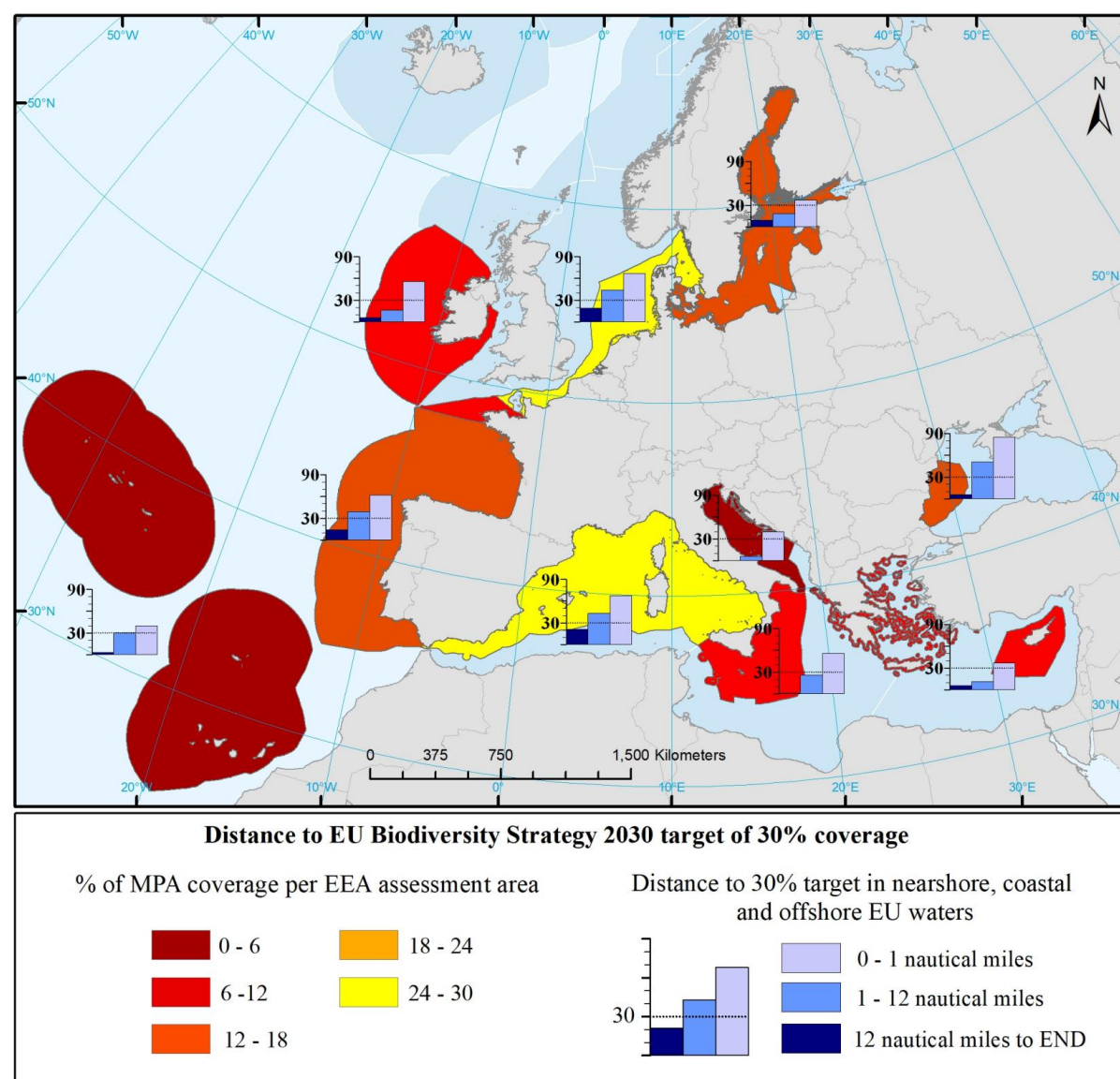
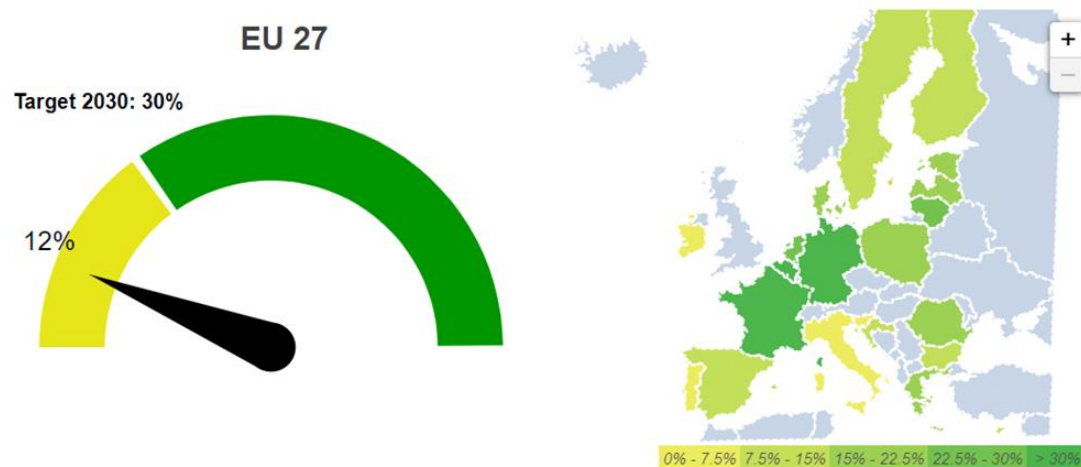
Protected area targets

A larger and coherent EU-wide network of protected areas

- **Legal protection** for at least $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 30\% \text{ of EU land area} \\ 30\% \text{ of EU sea area} \end{array} \right.$
 - ↳ **Strict protection** for at least $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 10\% \text{ of EU land area} \\ 10\% \text{ of EU sea area} \end{array} \right.$
- Integrate **ecological corridors**.
- All protected areas have clearly defined **conservation objectives and measures** and are **effectively managed** and appropriately **monitored**.

Protected areas

- EU MPA network currently covers **12%** of EU seas (Natura 2000 >9%)
- **Less than 1%** strictly protected
- Most MPAs **not effectively managed**



Source: [Spatial Analysis of Marine Protected Area Networks in Europe's Seas III](#)

More information: <https://biodiversity.europa.eu/protected-areas> and <https://biodiversity.europa.eu/countries>

Marine Natura 2000

- **Natura 2000** - the **largest** coordinated network of protected areas in the world
- Covers **9% of EU seas**: main driver of MPA designation (**75%** of all EU MPAs)
- Network is still **not complete**, in particular offshore and in some sea basins
- Strong **legal obligations** for the **designation and management** of sites



NATURA 2000 - EUROPEAN UNION

- Birds Directive sites (SPA)
- Habitats Directive sites (pSCI, SCI, SAC)
- Sites - or parts of sites - belonging to both Directives

European Environment Agency



Source:
-NATURA 2000 - DG ENV, compiled from databases from the Member States;
-Source: background map: © EuroGlobe/Map/Eurogeographics and DG ESTAT;
-Validity of NATURA 2000 data for : Europe, updated End 2020;
-Projection: Lambert cylindrical equal area.

Targets for EU marine regions

- The **protected area targets** are for the EU territory of the 27 Member States (incl. EU outermost regions and sea areas surrounding them)
- The targets should be achieved **in each EU (marine) biogeographical region**.
 - ➔ *“All Member States expected to contribute towards reaching the targets, to an extent proportionate to the natural values they host and the potential they have for restoration.”*
- Member States are currently submitting their **initial pledges** for the targets. Pledges will be discussed in 2023/24 at the level of marine biogeographical regions with involvement of stakeholders.

[More information: SWD_guidance_protected_areas.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

Key challenges

- **Where the additional area needs to be protected** to achieve a coherent (representative, connected, adequate) network that will deliver maximum **benefits for biodiversity and society?**
- What is the role of **other effective area-based conservation measures** (OECMs)?
- We are not interested in “paper parks”. **Establish and implement appropriate conservation objectives and measures** and ensure effective management: **governance, financing and stakeholder involvement.**
- How to reconcile the target with **renewable energy and fisheries?**

Main solution → **smart and strategic planning!**

Conservation status improvement target

National target for Member States

- **To ensure no deterioration in conservation trends and status of all protected habitats and species by 2030 (+closing knowledge gaps).**
- **To ensure that at least 30% of species and habitats not currently in favourable status are in that category or show a strong positive trend.**
- **Covers all species/habitats reported under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive and bird species reported under Article 12 of the Birds Directive.**

Guidance to Member States on how to select and prioritise species/habitats for the 30% conservation improvement target under the strategy:

<https://circabc.europa.eu/ui/group/6f30d1d2-d6f2-4c6e-a4dc-1feb66201929/library/bd8a2cd4-f774-4574-bd88-0b1fa012b725/details>

Selecting species and habitats

Priority: species and habitats **with the highest risk of disappearance**, national responsibility, **umbrella effect**,...

EU-level coordination or transnational coordinated approaches:

- **for transboundary populations**
- **for migratory species** to ensure that efforts taken in one Member State are not imperilled by the lack of measures in another Member State
- in cases where the conservation status or trend of a species or habitat is influenced by **pressures or threats acting at transboundary levels**

Nature restoration law

Pioneering new legislation

Proposal for a nature restoration law



A key initiative of the European Green Deal and the Biodiversity Strategy for 2030:

- **Protection** needs to be strengthened but is not enough
- Need for **large scale restoration effort**
- Complement and **build on existing policy framework** (BHD, MSFD, WFD)
- Focus on the **synergies between climate and nature policy**
- Key global target of the GBF

Regulation on nature restoration: structure

Overarching objective

Restoration targets

Implementation framework

**National
Restoration Plans**

**Monitoring and
Reporting**

**By 2030 restoration measures
cover 20% of EU's land and sea**

**By 2050 – all ecosystems in need of
restoration**

Specific restoration targets

Protected
Habitat Types
(Annex I HD)



Habitats of
protected
species (BHD)



Marine
Habitats
(beyond HD)



Urban
ecosystems



River
connectivity



Pollinators



Agro-
ecosystems



Forest
ecosystems



Marine restoration targets

- Put in place the restoration measures necessary **to improve** to good condition areas of habitats in not-good condition
 - ✓ ...for **groups of habitat types**: on at least **30%** by 2030, **60%** by 2040, **90%** by 2050;
- Put in place the restoration measures necessary **to re-establish** the habitat to reach the favourable reference area
 - ✓ ...for **groups of habitat types**: on at least **30%** by 2030, **60%** by 2040, **100%** by 2050;
- Put in place the restoration measures necessary to **improve the quality and quantity** of habitats of species listed in Art. II, IV, V HD and wild birds + Annex III of regulation (including re-establishing them) and **enhance connectivity** until sufficient quality and quantity is achieved

Marine habitat types (Annex II)

1. Seagrass beds
2. Macroalgal forests
3. Shellfish beds
4. Maerl beds
5. Sponge, coral and coralligenous beds
6. Vents and seeps
7. Soft sediments (above 1000 meters of depth)

2. GROUP 2: MACROALGAL FORESTS

EUNIS code	EUNIS habitat type name	Related Annex I (Habitats Directive) codes
Atlantic		
MA123	Seaweed communities on full salinity Atlantic littoral rock	1160; 1170; 1130
MA125	Fucoids on variable salinity Atlantic littoral rock	1170; 1130
MB121	Kelp and seaweed communities on Atlantic infralittoral rock	1170; 1160
MB123	Kelp and seaweed communities on sediment-affected or disturbed Atlantic infralittoral rock	1170; 1160
MB124	Kelp communities on variable salinity Atlantic infralittoral rock	1170; 1130; 1160
MB321	Kelp and seaweed communities on Atlantic infralittoral coarse sediment	1160
MB521	Kelp and seaweed communities on Atlantic infralittoral sand	1160
MB621	Vegetated communities on Atlantic infralittoral mud	1160
Baltic Sea		
MA131	Baltic hydrolittoral rock and boulders characterised by perennial algae	1160; 1170; 1130; 1610; 1620
MB131	Perennial algae on Baltic infralittoral rock and boulders	1170; 1160
MB232	Baltic infralittoral bottoms characterised by shell gravel	1160; 1110
MB333	Baltic infralittoral coarse sediment characterised by perennial algae	1110; 1160
MB433	Baltic infralittoral mixed sediment characterised by perennial algae	1110; 1130; 1160; 1170
Black Sea		
MB144	Mytilid-dominated Black Sea exposed upper infralittoral rock with fucales	1170; 1160

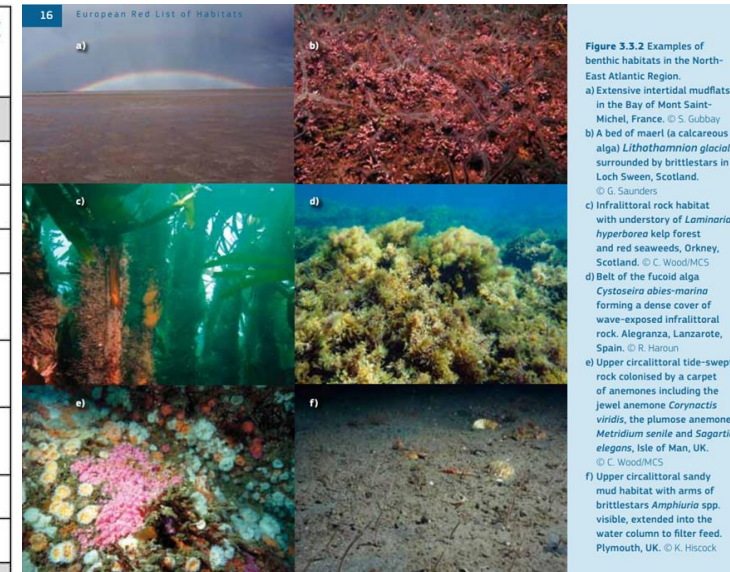






Figure 3.3.2 Examples of benthic habitats in the North-East Atlantic Region.
a) Extensive intertidal mudflats in the Bay of Mont Saint-Michel, France. © S. Gubbay
b) A bed of maerl (a calcareous alga) *Lithothamnion glaciale* surrounded by brittlestars in Loch Sween, Scotland. © G. Saunders
c) Infralittoral rock habitat with understory of *Laminaria hyperborea* kelp forest and red seaweeds, Orkney, Scotland. © C. Wood/MCS
d) Belt of the fucoid alga *Cystoseira abies-marina* forming a dense cover of wave-exposed infralittoral rock. Alegranza, Lanzarote, Spain. © R. Haroun
e) Upper circalittoral tide-swept rock colonised by a carpet of anemones including the jewel anemone *Corynactis viridis*, the plumose anemone *Metridium senile* and *Sagartia elegans*, Isle of Man, UK. © C. Wood/MCS
f) Upper circalittoral sandy mud habitat with arms of brittlestars *Amphiprion* spp. visible, extended into the water column to filter feed. Plymouth, UK. © K. Hiscock

Source: https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/knowledge/pdf/Marine_EU_red_list_report.pdf

Marine action plan

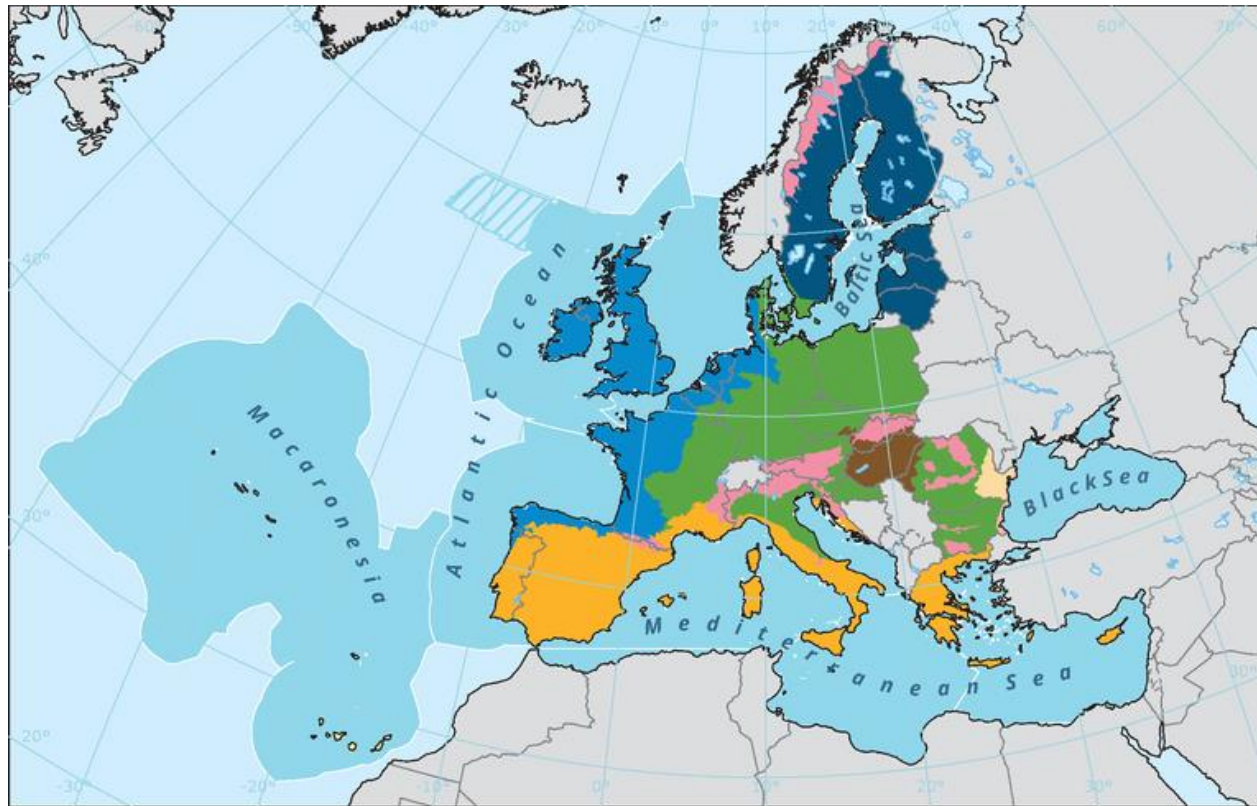
Bringing environment and fisheries worlds together

EU Action plan: Protecting and restoring marine ecosystems for sustainable and resilient fisheries

- State of seas and sustainability of fisheries
- Bring “nature back into our lives”
- Bridge fisheries and environment worlds
- Builds on existing framework
- Improve gear selectivity & address bycatch of sensitive species 
- Protect the seabed 
- Transition & knowledge 
- Governance 

Natura 2000 biogeographical process

Working together to achieve the targets





Reference data: ©ESRI

Biogeographical and marine regions in the EU

Biogeographical regions

	Alpine		Macaronesia
	Atlantic		Mediterranean
	Black Sea		Pannonian
	Boreal		Steppic
	Continental		

Marine regions

	Marine region names are given in the map
	Overlapping submissions to UNCLOS

0 500 1000 1500 km

 Outside coverage

- The **Natura 2000** biogeographical process expanded to include the **pledge and review process for Biodiversity strategy targets**
- **Marine Expert Group** is steering the marine biogeographical process
- **Face-to-face biogeographical region-level seminars** to discuss the pledges and Natura 2000 management issues
- Review, finalisation and implementation of pledges

Seminars and networking events



- **Regional marine biogeographical seminars** with the participation of national authorities, relevant stakeholders and experts:
 - **Atlantic and Macaronesia:** 11-13 October, Ireland
 - **Baltic Sea:** 8-10 November, Latvia
 - **Mediterranean and the Black Sea:** beginning 2024 (tbc)
- **Networking events** and workshops
- The Commission will **evaluate the progress by 2024** and decide whether stronger action, including EU legislation, is needed. [[BDS Progress report in spring 2024](#)]

Natura 2000 Award 2024



The Natura 2000 Award celebrates excellence in the management of Natura 2000 sites



All types of public and private organisations managing Natura 2000 sites are eligible to apply



Five categories: Conservation on land; **Marine conservation**; Working together for nature; Cross-border cooperation; Communication + the *Citizens' Award*, voted by the public



Why apply? Recognition of work in protecting Natura 2000 Network; EU-wide media attention and visibility; networking opportunities; benefits for ongoing activities



Application phase:

22 May 2023 – **12 October** 2023

For more information:

https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/nature-and-biodiversity/natura-2000-award_en



Thank you



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