Conservation Status Improvement Pledge Preparations in Finland

Outi Ala-Honkola, Senior Specialist, Ministry of the Environment, Finland





Finland's biodiversity pledge preparations

- Finland's pledge preparations started last year with a nomination of a broad-based high level steering group and a working group that both met several times in 2022.
- Steering group members were representatives of for example different ministries, nature conservation NGOs, forestry stakeholders and Sámi Parliament, from 28 different organisations in total.
- Working group consisted of public officials, experts and stakeholder representatives, 20 people in total. The working group met 14 times last year.
- Expert groups prepared extensive material for the working group about the current state of Finland's habitats and species and an estimate of for which species/habitats conservation status/trend could be improved by 2030 if all possible measures were taken.



Finland's biodiversity pledge preparations

- At the end of 2022 the steering group came into the conclusion that a political decision needs to made about the content of the pledges.
- Finland's pledge preparations were delayed due to our parliamentary elections in the beginning of 2023.
- Ministry of the Environment has continued the technical preparation of pledges (filling measures in excel sheets) with the help of SYKE (Finnish Environment Institute) and Metsähallitus. We have been regularly discussing the classification of species and habitats in the pledge with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.
- Stakeholders have been met twice this year.
- Political negotiations about the content of the pledges are ongoing in the new government.
- Government resolution about the content of the pledges will be made in early 2024.



Big Issues

- Conflicting interests over land use e.g. forestry, wind power / potential costs to industries
- Conflicting EU policies (e.g. agriculture; grazing)
- Difficult to change current practices in e.g. agriculture, forestry (for example improving the state of bird populations requires changes in wide areas)
- Fear of promising too much
- Lack of secured funding (can we promise something if we are not sure we will have funding for the implementation?)
 - Just halting the deterioration of certain habitats
 requires a lot of resources









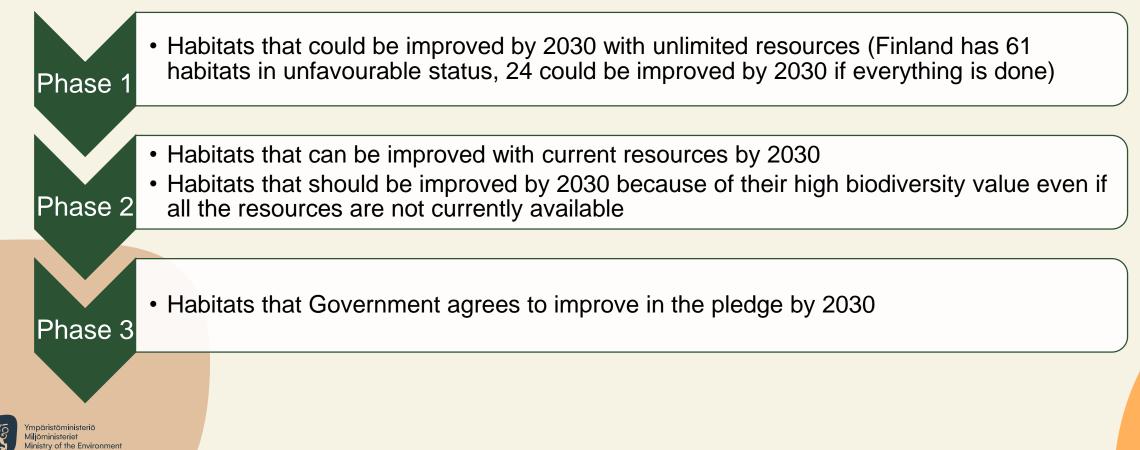
Small Issues

- Getting the needed information for commission's excel sheets requires a lot of expert work; expert work hours were in short supply
- Excel sheets ask very detailed information; the level of detail that excel sheets ask for often does not exist



of the Environment

Iteration of Finland's pledge for habitats



Criteria used in preparing the conservation improvement target for habitats

- Species-rich habitats preferred to have real biodiversity effects
- Realism and cost effectiveness (low hanging fruits and habitats with small area included) taken into account
- Including habitats that are protected via the conservation area pledge
- Including habitats in different ecosystems





Thank you!

Outi Ala-Honkola Outi.ala-honkola@gov.fi





Ympäristöministeriö Miljöministeriet Ministry of the Environment

Aleksanterinkatu 7, Helsinki | PL 35, FI-00023 Valtioneuvosto | ym.fi

