



Natura 2000 Biogeographical Process Newsletter

Photo: Lyell's Bristle-moss, *Orthotrichum lyellii*. Source: NatureBureau

Welcome to the first 2023 edition of the Natura 2000 biogeographical process newsletter!

If you have any questions, comments or remarks about the content of this newsletter, please do contact us at natura2000platform@wur.nl

In this edition:

- Events Calendar
- Forthcoming events
- Meeting reports
- Other news

Share your Natura 2000 news here!

As of January 2023, the biogeographical process newsletter has over 1,300 subscribers. As readers will know, these newsletters are used to promote upcoming events, report on relevant meetings, and to share updates on news and achievements related to Natura 2000 across Europe. This year, further newsletters will be circulated in April, June, August, October and December.

If you have any updates or news that you would like to see promoted in upcoming editions, you can send the information to natura2000platform@wur.nl

We look forward to sharing your news and working together to exchange knowledge and celebrate accomplishments as we move towards a better future for our environment.



Photo: Shelduck, *Tadorna tadorna*. Source: NatureBureau

Biogeographical Seminars

We are delighted to inform you that we are preparing for biogeographic seminars to be held later this year! Three seminars have already been agreed upon with the hosts organisations. As a reminder, this year's seminars will focus on reviewing and exchanging on the pledges that countries submit for the targets on protected areas and status improvement of species and habitats in the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030.

Firstly, we are happy to announce that Sweden has agreed to host the **Boreal seminar** (also covering part of the Northern Alpine region), during the second half of September. Secondly, we are pleased that the Azores, an autonomous region of Portugal, are willing to host the **Macaronesian seminar**. This seminar is also planned for late September or early October, probably on the island of Terceira. More details will be communicated as soon as they are known. Lastly, the **Atlantic seminar** will be hosted by Germany, by the federal state of Lower-Saxony with support from the LIFE IP project "Atlantic Sandlandscapes". Soon we will provide more detail on the timing and location of the event.

We are still discussing possible venues for the Mediterranean and Continental seminars. If your country or region is volunteering to host a seminar, please do not hesitate to contact us.



Photo: Attendees of the Boreal Seminar, 2019, Estonia. Source: Kalev Sepp

As announced in our December Newsletter there will be no specific call for terrestrial networking events in the coming months. However, if you would like to propose an event which is related to the pledge process or the Nature Restoration Law, please do not hesitate to contact us by mail natura2000platform@wur.nl

A call for networking events related to marine regions has now been launched. You can find out more about this [here](#).

Natural river processes as a base for river-related protected areas and river restoration, 20-22 April 2023, Drawa National Park, Poland

This event, organised by Coalition Clean Baltic, is aimed at the protection of rivers and freshwater ecosystems, the strict protection target, and Nature Restoration Law requirements.

Discussion will focus on the Odra River basin, Drawa National Park, and the wider river conservation issues in the Boreal and Continental biogeographical regions.

More information will soon be available on our [platform](#).

Restoring degraded landscapes through Green Infrastructure; University of Lisbon & Leaf, spring 2023, Portugal

This event will focus on restoration of habitats and improvement of green infrastructure of a mountainous rural landscape in-between Natura 2000 areas, degraded by forest fires with soil, water, and resulting biodiversity loss. The event will pay particular attention to the EU Nature Restoration Law. No date has been decided on yet.

More information will soon be available on our [events calendar](#).



Photo: Natura2000 Logo. Source: European Commission

Further updates can be found on our [website](#), or by following our [terrestrial Twitter](#) account and [marine Twitter](#) account.



Photo: Snow bunting, *Plectrophenax nivalis*. Source: NatureBureau

Back to the past: Is the brown bear returning? 28-29 October 2021, Braganca, Portugal

In December 2021, an event was held to bring together Spanish and Portuguese specialists, nature conservation authorities and relevant stakeholders – with the aim to increase cross-border cooperation and knowledge exchange on co-existence with bears on the Iberian Peninsula. The purpose of this networking event was to anticipate what will become an important conservation challenge to be addressed over the coming years: the potential return of the European brown bear to the North of Portugal, and their coexistence with local populations.

During the meeting several presentations reviewed the current knowledge of the northern Iberia population of brown bear, to provide a framework for the following discussions on what should be contained within a future Brown Bear Action Plan for Portugal.

A report from this event can now be found on our [platform](#).



Photo: Overview of the auditorium during the brown bear event. Source: Palombar

Assessment of current and future Invasive Alien plant Species (IAS) in European coastal dune ecosystems, 19-21 May 2022, De Panne, Belgium

This event was a follow-up event to the [international workshop on the management of coastal dunes and sandy beaches](#) held in Dunkirk in June 2018.

This workshop aimed to foster knowledge exchange on invasive alien plants in Atlantic coastal dunes, perform a horizon scan of alien species that could become invasive in protected dune habitats in the next decade, focus the horizon scan on protected ecosystems (dune scrub & woodland, embryonic dunes, mobile sand dunes, dune grassland & tidal salt marsh), prioritise systematic management for established invasive plants and explore and discuss management case studies.

The report has now been made available [here](#).

[The effects of observer variation on field monitoring data and integrating new technologies for monitoring in Natura 2000 site management, part 2, 23-25 May 2022, Croatia](#)

Split into two workshops which took place in November 2021 (part 1) and May 2022 (part 2), the main theme of these events was to illustrate which aspects of our traditional methods of data collection provide the most reliable data and which can be improved by integrating new technologies.

The workshops demonstrated how we can complement traditional field data with data from new technologies and Earth observation and provide timely feedback into the management of Natura 2000 sites. Specifically, the workshops explored the potential for incorporating a) satellite data, e.g., from Sentinels 1 and 2 and from higher resolution platforms such as RapidEye, and b) drone data, including LiDAR, hyperspectral and multispectral data. Participants also looked at the potential advantages of using phone apps to augment field data collection and aid the interpretation of remote images.

The report for part 2 is now available [here](#).

LIFE IN COMMON LAND: Final Congress, 8-9 November 2022, Lugo, Spain

[LIFE IN COMMON LAND](#) is a demonstration project funded by LIFE Nature and Biodiversity, aiming to improve the Conservation Status of the priority habitats of bogs (7110* and 7130*) and Atlantic wet heaths (4020*), in the Serra do Xistral Special Area of Conservation (SAC) in Galicia, Spain. Since its inception in 2017, project organisers have worked closely with owners of communal areas implementing a [Results-Based Management Model for Conservation](#) and developing Habitat Restoration Actions, as well as an ambitious Results Based Payment Scheme.

On 8-9 November 2022 the team celebrated their Final Congress, where the main results of the project were presented. We previously shared with you the event conclusions, but we can now share the project report in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#).



Photo: The New Forest, UK. Source: NatureBureau

OECMs in Europe: The way forward, 20-24 February 2023, International Academy for Nature, Vilm Island, Germany

The German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation and the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas together with the IUCN Regional Office for Europe are hosting a workshop on identifying Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs).

Both the recently adopted Global Biodiversity Framework and the EU Biodiversity Strategy call for an increase in the protection of terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems by 2030. While there will be opportunities for establishing new protected areas, recognising and maintaining areas that are already effective in protecting important biodiversity (OECMs) may also be critical to achieving the 30% target.

The workshop will bring together a group of approximately 30 participants from diverse geographical and institutional backgrounds across Europe to apply assessment criteria to selected case studies that are relevant to land, water and ocean management in Europe. Participants will consider progress and requirements for identifying OECMs in Europe. Discussions will cover existing methodologies and test assessment tools in the context of different land and sea management prevalent across Europe, with the aim of supporting national authorities and other relevant organisations to make progress in identifying, reporting and supporting OECMs. You can still register for this event [here](#).

NaturaConnect Stakeholder event, 28th February

NaturaConnect is an EU Horizon project that aims to design and develop a blueprint for a truly coherent Trans-European Nature Network (TEN-N) of areas that protect at least 30% of land in the European Union, with at least one third of it under strict protection.

NaturaConnect is organising a (live) stakeholder event in Brussels on the 28th of February. The event intends to catalyse a connected network of stakeholders who will support Member States in realising an ecologically representative, resilient and well-connected network of conserved areas. During the event, the aim is to introduce the NaturaConnect project and kick-off a dialogue around the current context, future scenarios and the overarching challenges that are foreseen so far. For more information check out their [website](#).



Photo: NaturaConnect logo. Source: NaturaConnect

Eurosite Grazing Study Tour, 9-11 May 2022, The Netherlands

We previously announced the [Eurosite Grazing Study Tour](#), hosted by the State Forestry, Natuurmonumenten and Eurosite. The Tour is part of a series of events related to grazing in 2023, with the first event having taken place in the Netherlands from [3-5 October 2022](#). The second event recently took place as an online webinar on natural grazing on 26 January 2023.

The next Tour will take place in the Netherlands from 9-11 May 2023, with registration opening this spring. A further event is planned for the last week of September 2023.

If you have any questions about this tour, please contact grazingtour@natuurmonumenten.nl or info@eurosite.org

"Mediterranean Temporary Ponds" (habitat 3170*) follow-up events, 23 May, and 18-23 June 2023

During March 2022, a platform of experts was established at the [Natura 2000 Networking Event in Rome](#). Organisers of the event informed us of two follow-up events this year, providing an opportunity to reconvene experts and broaden the topic to other colleagues.

The events are as follows:

- Side Workshop "**Gathering of Natura 2000 Practitioners for the Restoration, Conservation and Management of Standing Freshwater Habitats**" that will be held Tuesday, 23 May, at the Botanical Garden of Rome, during the [EVS 2023 - European Vegetation Survey Meeting](#), 21-25 May 2023, Rome, Italy.
- Special Session "**SS18. Driving forward the network on the interpretation, conservation and management of temporary ponds**" that will be held in the framework of the [SEFS13 – Symposium for European Freshwater Sciences](#) of Newcastle, 18-23 June 2023, United Kingdom.

The call for abstracts is open for both events. If you need any more information, please do not hesitate to contact Vito Emanuele Cambria at vitoemanuele.cambria@uniroma1.it

Power to the Peatlands: 19-21 September 2023, Antwerp, Belgium

Attitudes to peatlands are changing. They are no longer seen as valueless wastelands but are now appreciated as precious habitats that deliver significant ecosystem services. Peatlands have become **key components in national and international strategies on biodiversity, climate change mitigation and water retention**.

This 2023 conference will celebrate the end of an era with a last gathering of the Interreg North-West Europe project Care-Peat, but also the continuation and beginning of new cooperative peatland projects throughout Europe.

Keep informed about the conference and register your interest by following this [link](#).



Photo: Foggy peatland Source: [Varèche](#) via Flickr.com

EUROPARC Conference, 3-6 October 2023, Leeuwarden, the Netherlands

This year's (50 year anniversary) EUROPARC Conference is taking place in **Leeuwarden, the Netherlands**. This EUROPARC Conference aims to help participants discover **how** we can connect people and nature, to find long-term harmony. Registration will open in April – keep an eye on the [EUROPARC calendar](#) for more information.

Follow us on Twitter

Visit our [Biogeographical Process Twitter](#) account for the latest updates on seminars and networking events, as well as live postings from ongoing meetings. We also cover news from related projects such as LIFE+ projects or the work of organisations working towards Natura 2000 objectives.

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