

EU policy context



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



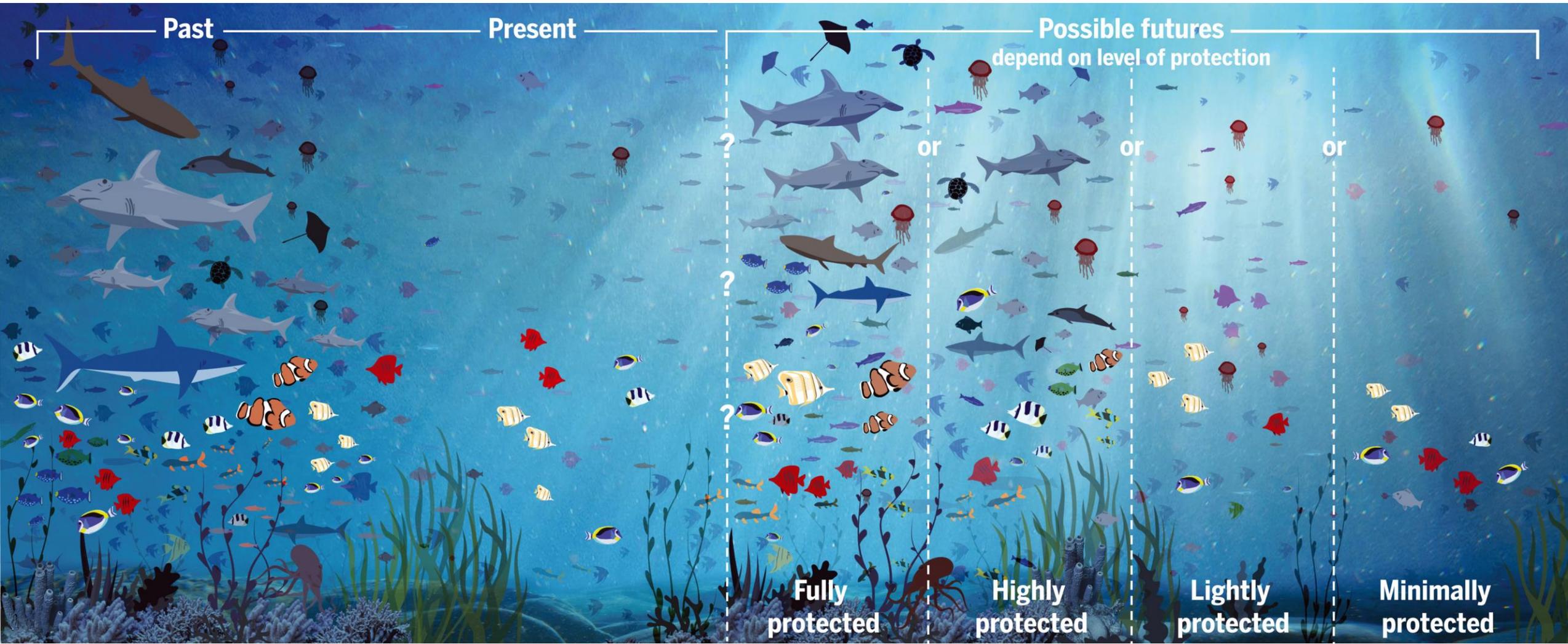
Biodiversity strategy for 2030: policy context for the biogeographical process

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

3rd Natura 2000 biogeographical seminar

for the Mediterranean and Black Sea marine regions

Marseille, France, 12-14 March 2024



Source: Grorud-Colvert et al., Science, 2021 (DOI: 10.1126/science.abf0861).

Biodiversity strategy for 2030 – marine targets

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**.

A larger and coherent EU network of protected areas

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

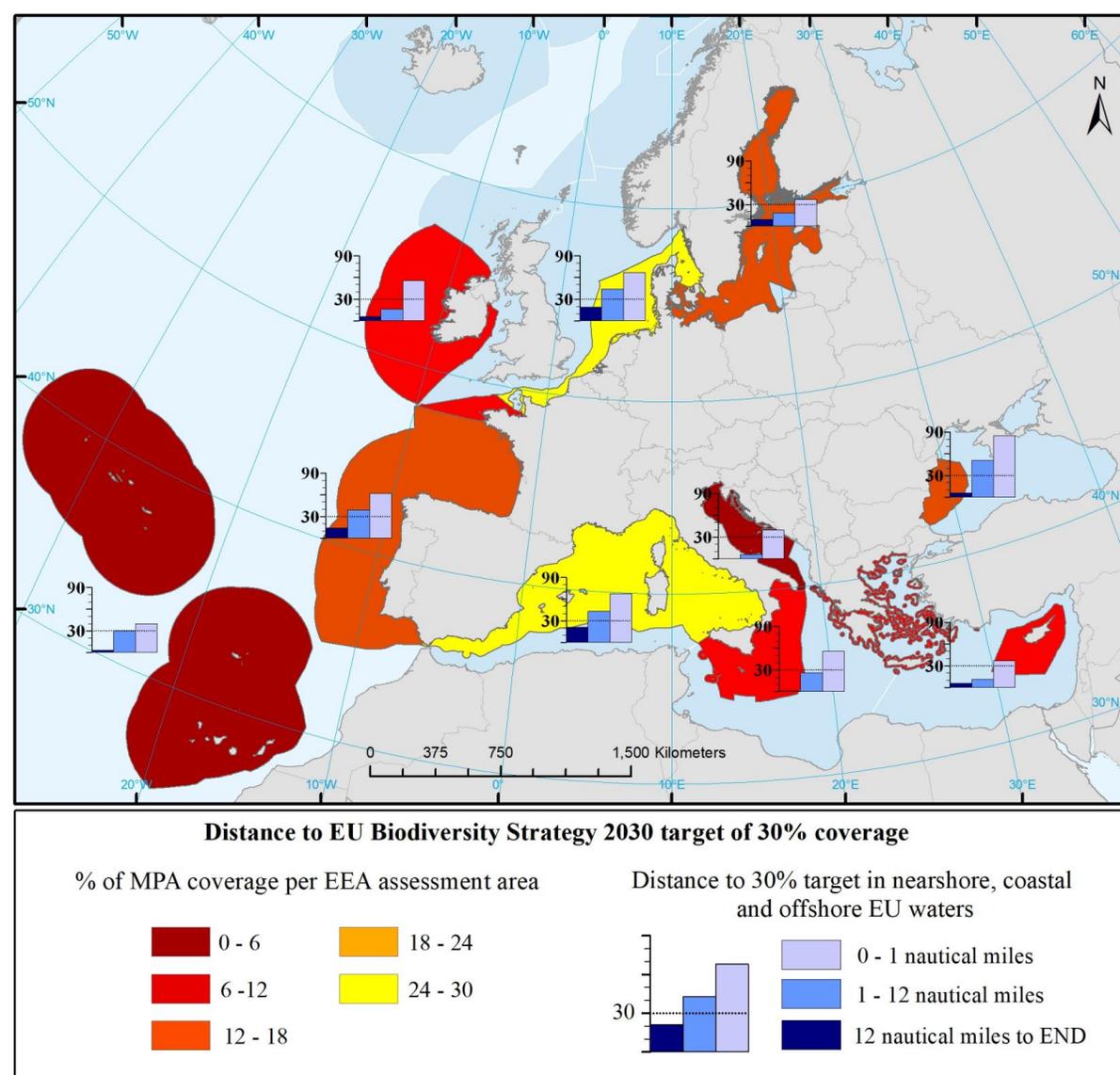
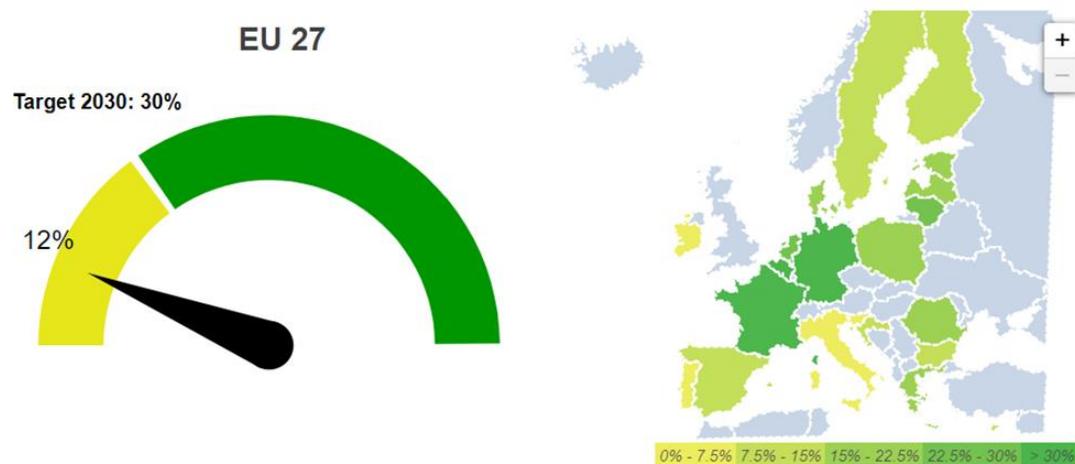
Targets for EU marine regions

- 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.

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

EU MPAs today

- 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>

Key challenges

- **Where to put additional MPAs** to achieve a **coherent 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”. **How to significantly improve MPA management: governance, financing and stakeholder involvement?**
- How to reconcile the target with **renewable energy and fisheries**?

We need **smart and strategic planning!**

Supporting effective management of 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)
- Strong **legal obligations for designation and management of sites**
- **Nature dialogues** with authorities and stakeholders, **guidance**
- **EU co-financing**
- **Enforcement**



NATURA 2000 - EUROPEAN UNION
Orange: Birds Directive sites (SPA)
Blue: Habitats Directive sites (pSCI, SCI, SAC)
Green: 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: © EuroGeographics/Eurogeographics and DG ENV.
Validity of Natura 2000 data for: Europe, updated 04-2020.
Projection: Lambert Conformal Equal Area.

EU methodology to assess MPA management effectiveness

- Proposal developed in **2021-22**
- Uses effort-based and outcome-based criteria and indicators
- Tested on 75 Natura 2000 sites and other MPAs – development continues





Version 5.4

Instructions

Area Input

1. Conservation Objectives

2. Pressures

3. Conservation Measures

4. Management

5. Monitoring

6. Conservation Outcomes

Configuration

Progress Assessment

Save & Exit

PROGRESS ASSESSMENT Return Main Menu

Site Identification:

THEME		% of Total Score
1.	CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES	73
2.	PRESSURES	83
3.	CONSERVATION MEASURES	50
4.	MANAGEMENT	51
5.	MONITORING	73
6.	CONSERVATION OUTCOMES	33



Global Progress Overview

INDICATOR	QUESTION		YES	PARTIAL	NO
A	1	Have conservation objectives (COs) been set for the MPA?			
B	2	Have the pressures on species/ habitats protected in the site been identified and their impact assessed (indicate if pressures are inside/outside the MPA, and confidence level)?			
C	3	Have conservation measures been established to achieve the conservation objectives of the MPA (NB. Applies to relevant measures inside and outside the MPA)?			
D	7	Is there sufficient collaboration between authorities and bodies that are responsible or competent for managing activities that affect the protected species/habitats, including those outside of the MPA?			
E	9	Is there regular and systematic monitoring of the types and level of pressures acting on the MPA protected species/habitats?			
F	11a	Have conservation objectives been achieved or are they on track to be achieved in the timescale specified in the relevant conservation objective?			

Site Name: _____

Site Code: _____

Site Location: _____

Site Designation (Category and Type): _____

Date of designation: _____

Overlapping site Designations: _____

Management body (if established): _____

Respondent / Institution: _____

Date: _____

TEST

2022



Support through Horizon Europe and LIFE

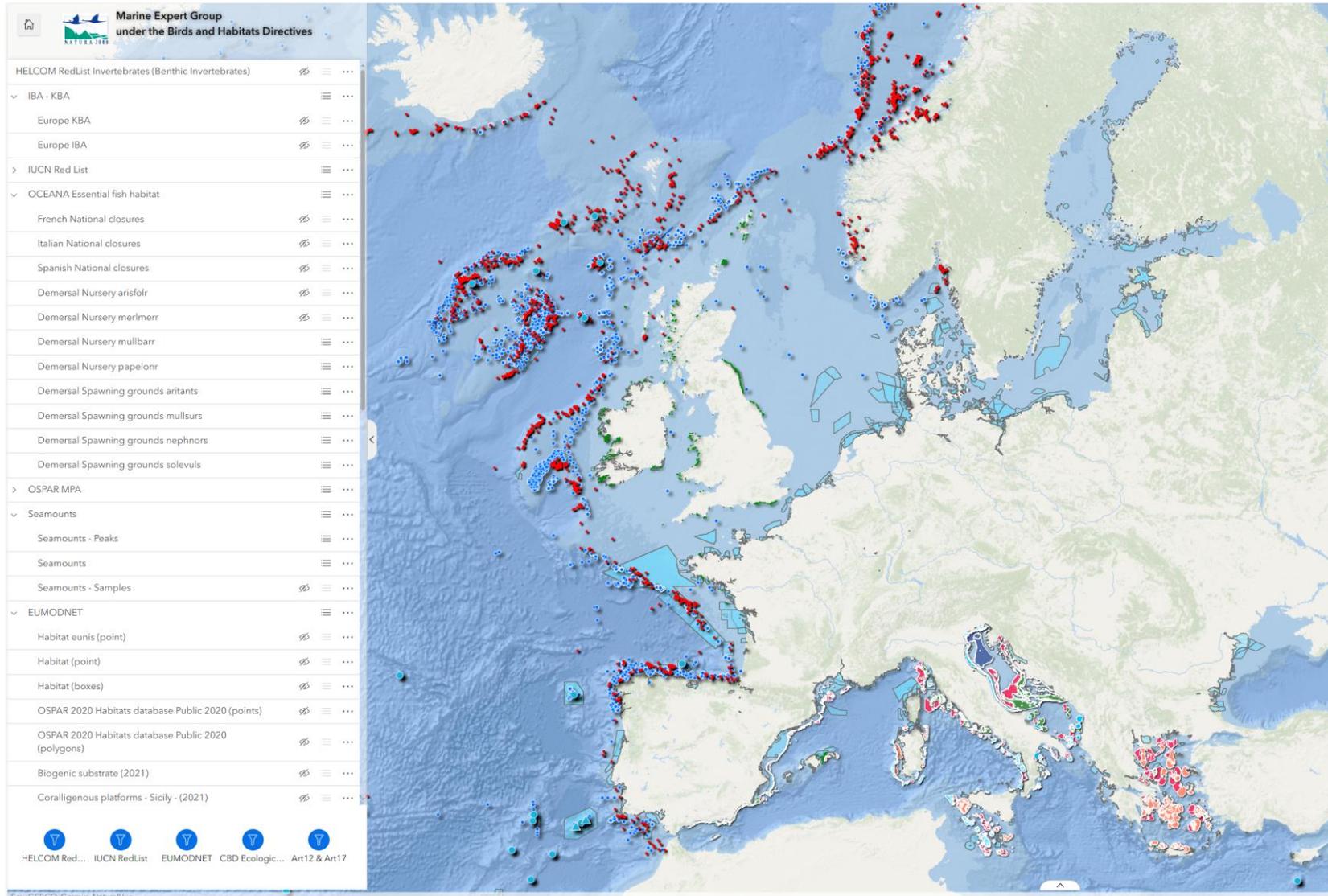
EU MISSIONS
RESTORE OUR OCEAN & WATERS



- Currently, about **225 million eur** is being invested by **Horizon Europe, LIFE and EMFAF** into projects which **support the targets of the Biodiversity strategy**.
- Projects support the development and management of EU MPA network, maritime spatial planning, marine conservation and restoration, reduction of bycatch, observing and mapping marine biodiversity/ecosystems and their services...

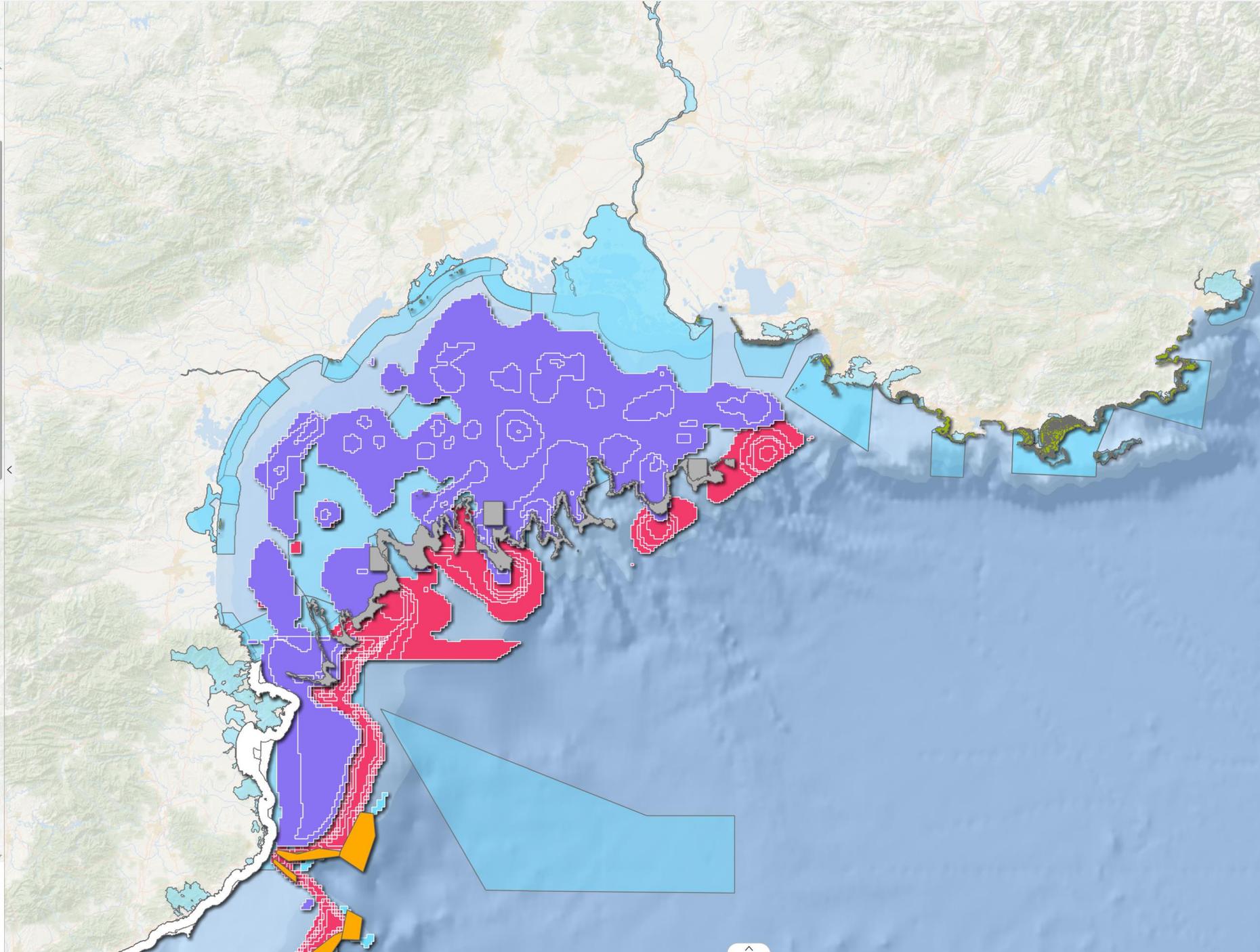


Viewer of spatial data to assist the pledging process (DG ENV) – to be published soon



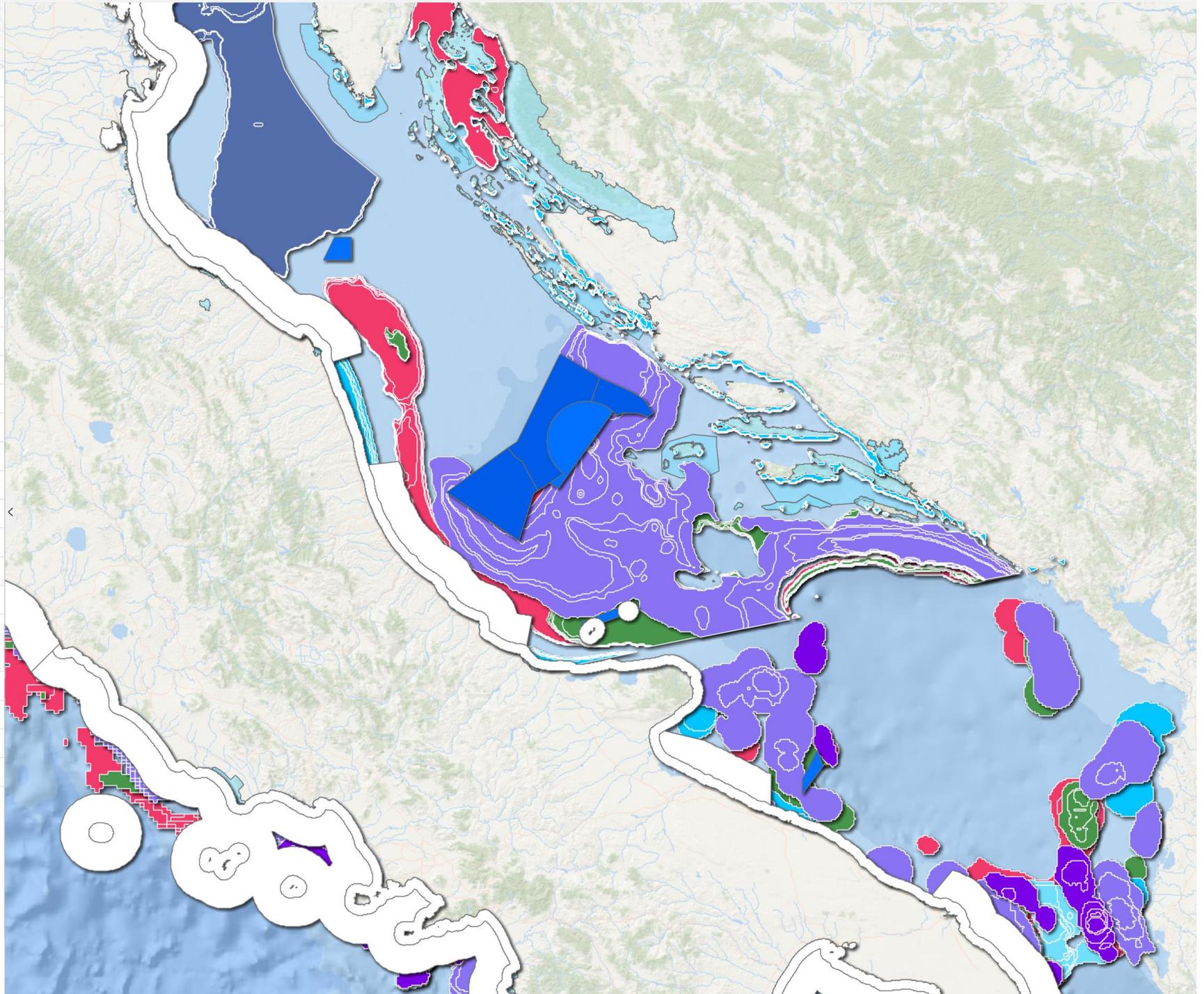


- Conus 🔗 ≡ ⋮
- Lobsters 🔗 ≡ ⋮
- Mangroves 🔗 ≡ ⋮
- > Marine Fish ≡ ⋮
- Marine Mammals 🔗 ≡ ⋮
- > Reef forming coral ≡ ⋮
- Reptiles 🔗 ≡ ⋮
- ▼ OCEANA Essential fish habitat ≡ ⋮
- French National closures 🔗 ≡ ⋮
- Italian National closures ≡ ⋮
- Spanish National closures ≡ ⋮
- Demersal Nursery arisfolr ≡ ⋮
- Demersal Nursery merlmer ≡ ⋮
- Demersal Nursery mullbarr ≡ ⋮
- Demersal Nursery papelonr ≡ ⋮
- Demersal Spawning grounds aritants ≡ ⋮
- Demersal Spawning grounds mullsurs ≡ ⋮
- Demersal Spawning grounds nephnors ≡ ⋮
- Demersal Spawning grounds solevuls ≡ ⋮
- > OSPAR MPA ≡ ⋮
- ▼ Seamounts ≡ ⋮
- Seamounts - Peaks 🔗 ≡ ⋮
- Seamounts 🔗 ≡ ⋮
- Seamounts - Samples 🔗 ≡ ⋮
- ▼ EUMODNET ≡ ⋮
- Habitat eunis (point) 🔗 ≡ ⋮
- Habitat (point) 🔗 ≡ ⋮
- Habitat (boxes) 🔗 ≡ ⋮
- OSPAR 2020 Habitats database Public 2020 (points) 🔗 ≡ ⋮
- OSPAR 2020 Habitats database Public 2020 (polygons) 🔗 ≡ ⋮





- HELCOM RedList Invertebrates (Benthic Invertebrates) ☞ ☰ ⋮
- > IBA - KBA ☰ ⋮
- > IUCN Red List ☰ ⋮
- ▼ OCEANA Essential fish habitat ☰ ⋮
 - French National closures ☰ ⋮
 - Italian National closures ☰ ⋮
 - Spanish National closures ☰ ⋮
 - Demersal Nursery arisfolr ☰ ⋮
 - Demersal Nursery merlmerr ☰ ⋮
 - Demersal Nursery mullbarr ☰ ⋮
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 - Demersal Spawning grounds aritants ☰ ⋮
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 - Demersal Spawning grounds nephnors ☰ ⋮
 - Demersal Spawning grounds solevuls ☰ ⋮
- > OSPAR MPA ☰ ⋮
- > Seamounts ☰ ⋮
- > EUMODNET ☰ ⋮
- CBD Ecologically Biologically Marine Areas ☞ ☰ ⋮
- ▼ CDDA ☰ ⋮
 - Protected Site (Multipoint) ☞ ☰ ⋮
 - Protected Site (Polygon) ☞ ☰ ⋮
- IMMA Marine Mammal Protected Area (IUCN IMMA) ☞ ☰ ⋮
- > ICES ☰ ⋮
- Natura2000 Maritime Sites - MarineAreaSea Natura2000 ☰ ⋮
- > Natura2000Sites ☞ ☰ ⋮



Conservation status improvement target

- 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**.
- Target to be reached **by each MS**

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 put at risk 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



Nature Restoration Law For people, climate, and planet

22 June 2022
#EUGreenDeal



Restoring wetlands, rivers, forests, grasslands, marine ecosystems, and the species they host will help:



Increase biodiversity and secure the things nature does for free, like cleaning our water and air, pollinating crops, and protecting us from floods



Limit global warming to 1.5°C



Build up Europe's resilience and strategic autonomy, preventing natural disasters and reducing risks to food security

New binding targets suggested by the law:

- restore habitats and species protected by the EU nature legislation
- reverse the decline of pollinators by 2030
- no net loss of green urban spaces by 2030 and a minimum of 10% tree canopy cover in European cities
- improved biodiversity on farmland e.g. for grassland butterflies, farmland birds, high-diversity landscape features
- restore drained peatlands
- healthier forests with improved biodiversity
- at least 25.000 km free-flowing rivers by 2030
- restore seagrasses and sea bottoms

Environment

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

Overarching objective

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

Restoration targets

By 2050 – all ecosystems in need of restoration

Implementation framework

**National
Restoration Plans**

**Monitoring and
Reporting**

Co-legislators reached provisional agreement on NRL

European Parliament adopted the text in February

Specific restoration targets

Protected
Habitat Types
(Annex I HD)



Habitats of
protected
species (BHD)



Marine
Habitats
(beyond HD)



Urban
ecosystems



River
connectivity



Pollinators



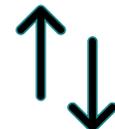
Agro-
ecosystems



Forest
ecosystems



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 

Governance and process

Measures

→ Measures for **priority species**
→ Transition to **better protection of the seabed**: Natura 2000 sites protecting the habitats and marine species (Habitats Directive)

→ Transition to better protection of the seabed in all MPAs
→ Protect remaining sensitive species

2023

2024

2030

Governance

New special group established

-
First meeting held on 6 October

Member States' **roadmaps** prepared & delivered

Implementation of Member States' roadmaps

Biodiversity strategy progress assessment > action plan progress

Working together to achieve the targets

- 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
- Review, finalisation and implementation of pledges



Third Natura 2000 biogeographical seminar for the Mediterranean and Black Sea marine regions

Background Document



12-14 March 2024, Marseille
Palais du Pharo, Marseille, France

Seminars and networking events



- **Regional marine biogeographical seminars** with the participation of national authorities, relevant stakeholders and experts:
 - **Atlantic and Macaronesia:** 11-13 October 2023, Ireland
 - **Baltic Sea:** 8-10 November 2023, Latvia
 - **Mediterranean and Black Sea:** 12-14 March 2024, France
- **Networking events** and workshops
- An opportunity to look into successes and challenges [Study about the factors influencing the submission of the pledges](#) by Dr. Veronica Relañó:



Thank you



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