Pledge and review process
under the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030

4th Mediterranean Biogeographical Seminar,
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Frank VASSEN, European Commission, DG ENV.D3, Nature Protection Unit

EU State of Nature report (2019) – key messages

EEA Report | No 10/2020

State of nature in the EU
Results from reporting under the nature directives 2013-2018

ISSN 1725-9177

European Environment Agency

- **Only 15 % of habitat assessments at EU level show a good conservation status**, while the majority continues to show poor (45 %) or bad (36 %) status

- **Grasslands, dunes, and bog, mire and fen habitats show strong deteriorating trends**, while forests have the most improving trends.

- Around one quarter of species have a good conservation status at EU level. However, **over 60 % of the species assessments report a poor or bad status.**

- Reptiles and vascular plants are the species with the highest proportion of good conservation status (more than 35 %), while **fish have the highest proportion of bad conservation status (38 %).**

- **Marine mammals (cetaceans)** are among the species with the highest proportion of **unknown assessments (over 78 %).**

- **The Atlantic and Continental regions contain highest share of poor and bad conservation statuses** among all biogeographical regions for both habitats and species.

- A **high percentage of unknown data** indicates a need to establish or reinforce appropriate and ideally coordinated and state-supported monitoring schemes in all Member States.

Key pressures on habitats and species (SoN)

Figure 4.1   Summary of pressures and responses

Pressures and responses

The analysis of pressures and responses looks jointly at the results from both nature directives' reporting. Member States have reported over 200 different pressures categorised into 15 overarching sectors, and over 100 conservation measures are listed in 13 main categories, corresponding to the pressure sectors identified.

Member States reported over

67 000 individual pressures

With **21 %**, **agriculture** is the most frequently reported pressure for habitats and species. Abandonment of grasslands and intensification is particularly impacting pollinator species, farmland birds and semi-natural habitats

Urbanisation and leisure activities account for **13 %** of all reported pressures, representing 48 % of all marine pressures.

Invasive alien species such as the False Indigo-bush, particularly affect dunes and sclerophyllous scrubs as well as species such as breeding seabirds.

The **modification on water regimes**, physical alterations of water bodies and removal of sediments predominantly affect freshwater habitats and fish.

Forestry activities represent **11 %** of all pressures, particularly affecting forest habitats, and woodland species.

13 % of all pressures for **birds** stem from the exploitation of species, mainly relating to **illegal killing and hunting**. In Europe, the annual hunting bag amounts to at least 52 million birds.

Climate change is reported as a rising threat, particularly due to ongoing changes in the temperature and the decrease of precipitation.

Almost **50 %** of all pressures related to **pollution** can be attributed to air, water and soil pollution caused by agriculture.

- Although drivers of habitat degradation and species decline are diverse, **changes in agricultural activities** such as abandoning extensive management and intensifying management practices are the most important pressures overall.

- **Urbanisation** is the second largest pressure, especially affecting habitats such as dunes and coastal and rocky habitats.

- **Pollution of air, water and soil** negatively affects a wide range of habitats and species.

- **Hunting, illegal killing and poisoning** remains a major pressure for many breeding, wintering and passage birds.

- Further pressures include:
  - **invasive alien species**,
  - **Modifications to hydrological flow regimes and physical alterations to water bodies** (freshwater habitats and fish),
  - **Hydropower installations** (affecting river habitats, freshwater fish, etc.);
  - **Collisions** with electricity and communication transmissions (mostly affecting birds),
  - as well as **climate change related droughts and decreases in precipitation** (affecting bogs, mires, fens, amphibians, etc.).
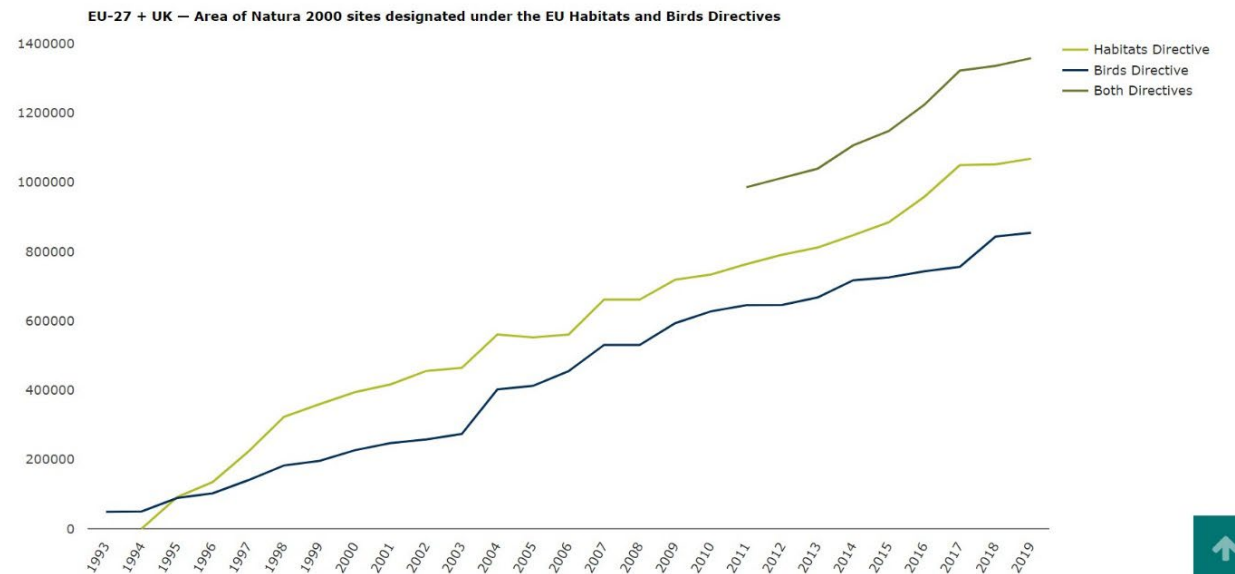
Natura 2000 network

Total number of sites (EU27): 27.027
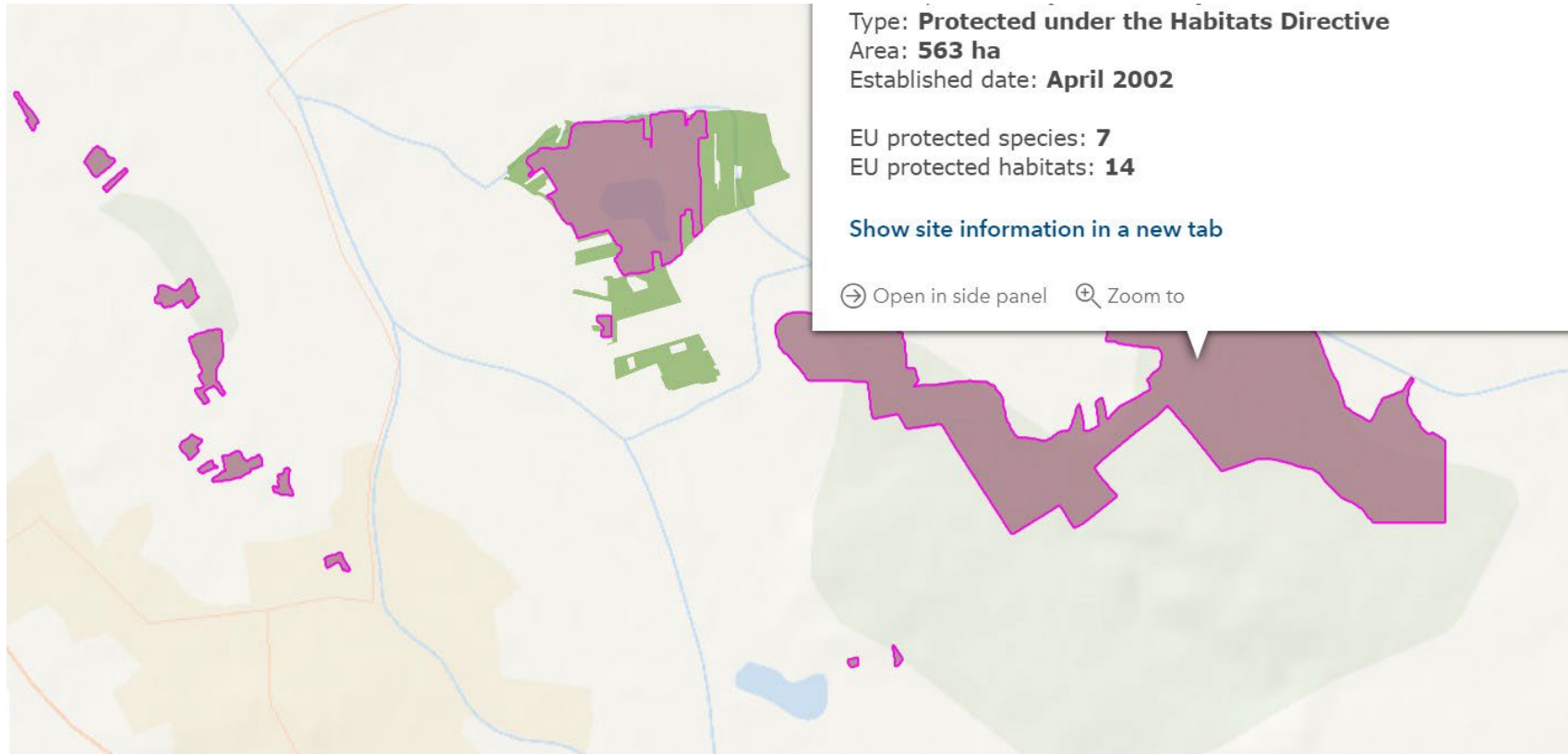
18,6 % of EU27 land area (767.000 km^2)

Large variation of coverage: 8,3 % (DK) - 37,9 % (SI)

> 8 % of EU marine area (452.000 km^2)

Source: Natura 2000 barometer

EU-27 + UK — Area of Natura 2000 sites designated under the EU Habitats and Birds Directives

Legend:
- Habitats Directive
- Birds Directive
- Both Directives

Natura 2000 network

Type: **Protected under the Habitats Directive**
Area: **563 ha**
Established date: **April 2002**

EU protected species: **7**
EU protected habitats: **14**

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European Commission

EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030

- adopted by European Commission on 20th May 2020
  https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1590574123338&uri=CELEX:52020DC0380

- **to put biodiversity on the path to recovery** by 2030, by protecting and restoring nature and ecosystems in the EU

- **headline targets:**
  1. *Establish larger **coherent EU-wide network of protected areas***
  2. *Develop **EU Nature Restoration Plan***

- **endorsed by Member States** through Council Conclusions in October 2020, and by **European Parliament** in an own-initiative report adopted in June 2021

European Commission

EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030

Protected area target: key commitments by 2030

1. **Legally protect** a minimum of 30% of the EU's land area and 30% of EU's sea area as part of a truly coherent Trans-European Nature Network, and integrate ecological corridors.

2. **Strictly protect** at least a third of the EU's protected areas (10% of land and 10% of sea area), including all remaining EU primary and old-growth forests.

3. **Effectively manage** all protected areas, with clear conservation objectives and conservation measures, and monitor these areas appropriately.

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EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030

EU Nature Restoration Plan: key commitments by 2030

1. Ensure there is no deterioration in conservation status of habitats and species; at least 30 % of those not already in favourable conservation status reach that category or show a positive trend.

2. Restore significant areas of degraded and carbon-rich ecosystems.

3. Reverse the decline in pollinators.

4. Reduce the risk and use of chemical pesticides and reduce the use of more hazardous pesticides is reduced by 50%.

5. At least 10% of agricultural area is under high-diversity landscape features.

6. At least 25% of the EU's agricultural land is under organic farming management, and the uptake of agroforestry is increased.

7. At least 3 billion new trees are planted in the EU.

8. Significant progress is made in the remediation of contaminated soil sites.

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EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030

EU Nature Restoration Plan: key commitments by 2030
9. At least 25,000 km of free-flowing rivers are restored.
10. 50% reduction in the number of Red List species threatened by IAS.
11. The losses of nutrients from fertilisers are reduced by 50%, resulting in the reduction of the use of fertilisers by at least 20%.
12. Cities with a least 20,000 inhabitants have an ambitious Urban Green Plan.
13. No chemical pesticides are used in sensitive areas such as EU urban Green areas.
14. Negative impacts on sensitive species and habitats, including on the seabed through fishing and extraction activities, are substantially reduced to achieve good environment status.
15. Eliminate or reduce the by-catch of species to a level that allows species recovery and conservation.

European Commission

Commission Guidance on the "30% status improvement target"

➢ The target is closely aligned with the reporting under Article 17 Habitats Directive and Article 12 Birds Directive, covering all species and habitats on which Member States report !

➢ The target is a national-level target, that **needs to be achieved by each Member State** individually. There is no further breakdown of the target below the national level.

➢ By the end of 2022, Member States were expected to submit to the Commission a list of pledges that includes the following:

    (1)   a list of habitats and species that should at least show a strong positive trend by 2030;

    (2)   an explanation on the criteria used for selecting these habitats and species

    (3)   an additional list of habitats and species for which further measures should be taken to achieve non-deterioration by 2030

    (4)   an explanation on the **measures** need to achieve the desired positive/ stable trends by 2030

    (5)   If relevant, an explanation on why certain habitats and species are not expected to achieve the target, despite all possible measures taken; and a list of these habitats and species

    (6)   If relevant, an explanation on measures that will be taken to improve the quality of monitoring

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Examples of Mediterranean region-level priorities for non-deterioration or recovery of threatened bird species

Taxa "Threatened" and still further declining in most or all Member States where they reproduce:

- *Circus pygargus*
- *Chersophilus duponti* (ES only)
- *Clamator glandarius*
- *Emberiza cineracea* (EL only)
- *Falco biamicus*
- *Lanius meridionalis*
- *Larus audouinii*
- *Neophron percnopterus*
- *Pterocles orientalis*
- *Sitta witeheadi* (FR only)
- *Tetrax tetrax*

Clamator glandarius
(Frank Vassen)

Emberiza cineracea
(Frank Vassen)

Examples Mediterranean region-level priorities for non-deterioration or recovery of species (U2-)

- ➢ **Margaritifera auricularia**
- ➢ **Unio tumidiformis**
- ➢ Coenonympha oedippus
- ➢ Limoniscus violaceus
- ➢ Osmoderma eremita
- ➢ Podarcis raffonea
- ➢ Rana latastei (HR only)
- ➢ **Galemys pyrenaicus**
- ➢ Microtus cabrerae
- ➢ Myotis cappacini
- ➢ Roussettus aegypiacus (CY only)
- ➢ **60 (!) freshwater fish sp. in U2 status, mostly further declining**

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Exemples of Mediterranean region-level priorities for non-deterioration or recovery of habitats (U2-)

- *2110 Embryonic shifting dunes* *(+ 10 other dune habitats)*

- *3170 Mediterranean temporary ponds* *(+ 8 other freshwater habitats)*

- *6210 Semi-natural dry grasslands (Festuco-Brometalia)*

- *6310 Dehesas with evergreen Quercus spp.*

- *5220 Arborescent matorral with Zyziphus*

- *7140 Transition mires and quaking bogs*

- *7210 Calcareous fens with Cladium mariscus*

- *7230 Alkaline fens*

- *9330 Quercus suber forests*

- *91E0 Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior*

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Commission Guidance on the protected areas target

➢ Member States are responsible for identifying and designating additional Natura 2000 sites or additional sites under national protection.

➢ All protected areas should have clearly defined conservation objectives and measures.

➢ The target is an EU-level target, to be achieved for each EU biogeographical region ➔ this requires cooperation between Member States to ensure effort sharing and trans-boundary coherence and connectivity of the network

➢ By the end of 2022, all Member State were expected to submit to the Commission a list of existing protected areas which fulfil the criteria <u>as well as an initial pledge for new areas</u> to be designated explaining:

> (1) which criteria were used for their identification;
>
> (2) the scientific evidence that leads to their selection for designation;
>
> (3) the mechanism that will be put in place to ensure adequate site management and monitoring

Key challenges for the protected area target!

o **clarifying the baseline:** which and how much area already qualifies for the 30% target for protection and 10% target for strict protection?

o **how much additional area is needed** in different parts of the EU, where is it and for what reason should it become better protected (bigger, more robust sites, representativeness, connectivity, etc.)?

o What is the role *Other Effective Area-based Conservation measures* (OECMs) can play for achieving the targets?

o **Biogeographical region breakdown / national "burden sharing"**

o **How to achieve all this in practise?**

➔ These points will keep us busy for the next years!

European Commission

Review of the pledges in the frame of the Natura 2000 Biogeographical seminars

- Member States report their pledges to Reportnet3

  (pledges received so far from CY, DE, DK, FR, ES, LUX, SE)

- Presentation/discussion of pledges in the frame of Biogeographical seminars and collection of feedback to finalise the review

- Feedback (« review ») to Member States on their pledges

Thank you for your attention !

Área Protegida Privada da Faia Brava, Vale do Côa, Portugal (Frank Vassen)