



Assessing management effectiveness



*4th Natura 2000 Biogeographical Seminar for the Mediterranean Region
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Policy context

EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2030

1. Legally protect 30% of the European Union's sea area.
2. Strictly protect at least a third of the EU's marine protected areas.
- 3. Effectively manage all protected areas, defining clear conservation objectives and measures, and monitoring them appropriately.**

Initiatives of the Commission on management effectiveness assessment

1. 2021-2022 - Development of a methodology to assess management effectiveness of marine Natura 2000 sites and other EU marine protected areas
2. In 2022-2023 - A study assessing the management effectiveness of SPAs in the EU

EU methodology to assess MPA management effectiveness

The request was to design a methodology which:

- builds on **experience** from methodologies developed and implemented to date
- is **applicable to large number and diversity of Natura 2000 sites** and other MPAs
- is **cost-effective**, easy to use and **uses existing/reported information**
- **reflects Natura 2000 management regime** but flexible to other PA systems
- uses **effort-based** (e.g. management body, management planning, definition of conservation objectives and measures in relation to the pressures and threats, stakeholder involvement, regulatory regime, financial and staff resources, ...) and **outcome-based** (e.g. improvement of status and trends of protected species/habitats) **criteria and indicators**
- enables assessment at different scales (individual site to EU level) and provides valuable insights to authorities and stakeholders on how to **improve the management of sites**
- **integrates** the indicators for presentation and reporting of results

The methodology


- **Self-assessment/questionnaire** with a set of predetermined statements/answers/standardised lists covering the main PAME elements
- Corresponds to the WCPA **PAME evaluation framework**
- **Benefits:** a systematic structure, clear framework for the answers, easier comparisons between sites, focuses on key elements, relatively rapid to complete, can be completed for PAs at different stages of their development
- **Supporting guidance and glossary**



The methodology

- 6 sections – 11 main questions:
 - *Conservation objectives*
 - *Pressures*
 - *Conservation measures*
 - *Management*
 - *Monitoring*
 - *Conservation outcomes*
- **Scoring system** - visualisation of results
- **Guidance notes** and video tutorial

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

Site Name: TEST

Site Code: 2022

Site Location:

Site Designation (Category and Type):

Date of designation:

Overlapping site Designations:

Management body (if established):

Respondent / Institution:

Date:

Conservation objectives

CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES

1. Have conservation objectives (Cos) been set for the MPA?	YES (provide link to source material)
1.a. Are the COs site-specific (SSCOs) for the species/habitats for which the MPA has been designated?	PARTIALLY - for some of the relevant species/habitats and reflecting some of the importance of the site

1.b. Do the COs specify the condition of the habitats and species to be achieved and/or maintained within the MPA, the relevant attributes (e.g. quality and quantity of the habitat of the species/population of the species and area/condition of habitat types) and their target values (measurable targets) in accordance with their ecological requirements and the envisaged timescales to achieve them?

Select relevant Species and/or Habitats

Species/habitat:	COs define the condition e.g. maintenance/recovery (YES/Partially/No)	Attributes. The objective covers some aspects regarding the population, its distribution or the habitat area/quality (Yes/Partially/No)	Targets. The objective includes quantitative targets e.g. population number/habitat area (Yes/Partially/No)	Envisaged timescales to achieve targets (S,M,L,NS)
1170 Reefs	Partially	Partially	No	NS (Not Specified)

FREE TEXT BOX: Successes and challenges on this theme e.g. relating to baseline data/knowledge of the relevant species/habitats, time period since designation, management structures, types and number of species/habitats to be covered, if conservation objectives are set only for some species (or covering several species).

Conservation objectives

- Site-specific for each habitat/species?
- Specify condition of hab.spec to be achieved and/or maintained?
- Specify relevant attributes (quality and quantity of habitat)?
- Specify measurable targets for those attributes with timeline?

Conservation measures

Conservation measures:

- Developed with a view of achieving COs?
- Detailed and quantifiable?
- Address known pressures?
- Actually implemented?
- Sufficient to reach COs?
- Inside and outside MPA?

CONSERVATION MEASURES

3. Have conservation measures been established to achieve the conservation objectives of the MPA (NB. Applies to relevant measures inside and outside the MPA)?

PARTIALLY - For some relevant species and habitats

3.a. Have conservation measures been developed with a view to achieving the COs of species/habitats for which the MPA has been designated? Are the conservation measures detailed and/or quantifiable? Do they address known pressures to the protected species/habitats in the MPA? What is the status of the conservation measures?

Answer this in table below

Species / Habitat	Pressure (H&M only)	CO	Other	Yes	No
Harbour porpoise	Litter - F07, F09		OTHER - Ot		
SEALS	Climate change - N01, N04, N05, N06, N07, N08				
1110 Sandbanks slightly covered with seawater	Modification/disturbance of the seabed - F08		*		No
Harbour porpoise	Noise - C09		*		Yes
1110 Sandbanks slightly covered with seawater	Modification/disturbance of the seabed - C01,C03, C02		CC01, CC02		Yes
1110 Sandbanks slightly covered with seawater	Modification/ disturbance of the seabed - G03		CG01 - Mar		Yes
	0		0 *	2	Yes
	0		0 *		Yes

3.b. If any conservation measures are needed outside the MPA to address pressures on the MPA to help achieve the COs, please report on their status and the level of implementation.

Conservation measure (code)	Status of Measure
**	2

Add New Conservation Measure

4. How sufficient are conservation measures both within and outside the MPA to address the pressures and achieve the conservation objectives?

Conservation measures (inside and outside the MPA) (Code)	How sufficient are they to address the (H & M) pressures?	To what extent do they achieve the COs within the stated timescale?	Bases for assessment
*			
**			
CC01, CC02 - Adapt/manage extraction of non-energy and energy resources	4	2	1
CG01 - Management of professional/commercial fishing (including shellfish and seaweed harvesting)	4 n/a		n/a
OTHER - Other (please specify)	3	3	2

Conservation outcomes

Conservation outcomes

- Condition of species and habitats improved/stable/deteriorated?
- Conservation objectives achieved or on track to be achieved in specified timescale?
- The link with conservation measures?
- Reasons for not achieving COs or delay compared to specified timescale?

CONSERVATION OUTCOMES

11. Has the condition of the species/habitats (at site level) for which the MPA been designated improved/remained stable/deteriorated since the establishment of the MPA?

11a. Have conservation objectives been achieved or are they on track to be achieved in the timescale specified in the relevant MPA plan?

Species/habitat	Change of condition since MPA establishment	Confidence level	If im		
Benthic fish	deteriorated	▾ (High)			
Coastal Bottlenose dolphin	stable	M (Medium)			
Demersal fish	deteriorated	H (High)			
Shags & cormorants	stable	L (Low)		Yes	Yes
1120 Posidonia beds	stable	H (High)		Yes	Yes
1160 Large shallow inlets and bays	deteriorated	L (Low)		Unknown	Unknown
1170 Reefs	stable	H (High)		Yes	Yes

11.b. For species/habitats PARTIALLY or NOT on target for achievement of Conservation Objectives, please indicate the reasons.

Species/Habitat	Reasons for limited progress in achieving conservation objectives
Benthic fish	persistence of pressures
Demersal fish	persistence of pressures
*	

Presentation of results

PROGRESS ASSESSMENT

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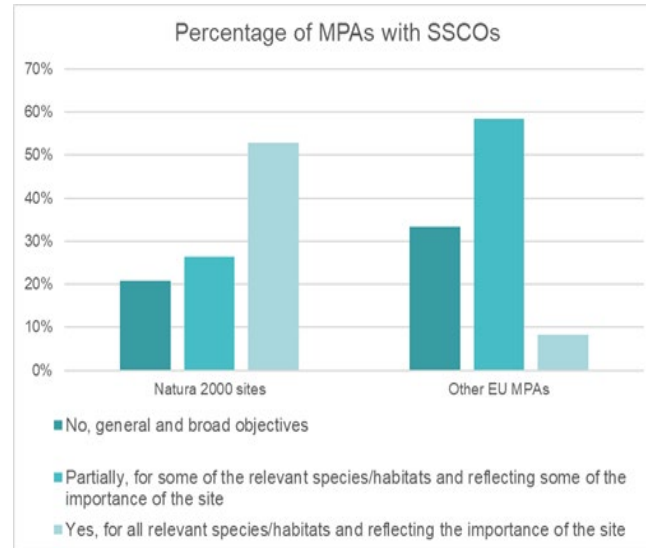
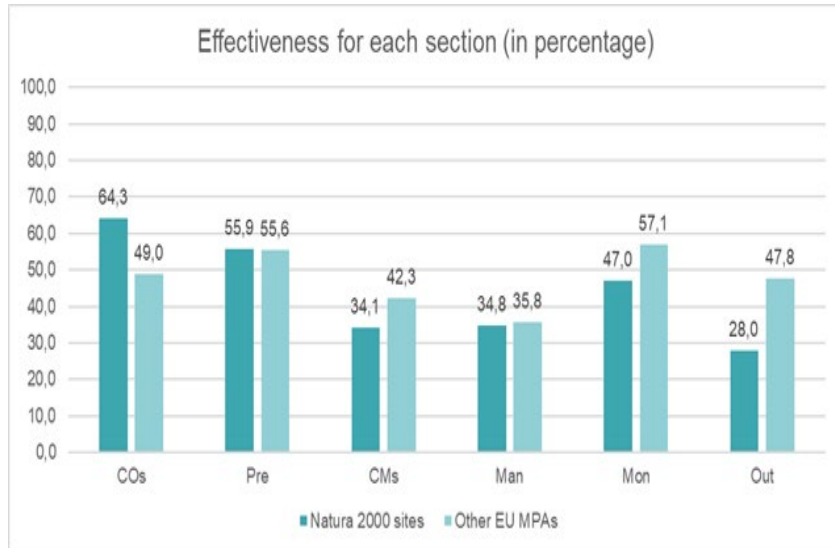
Site Identification:

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



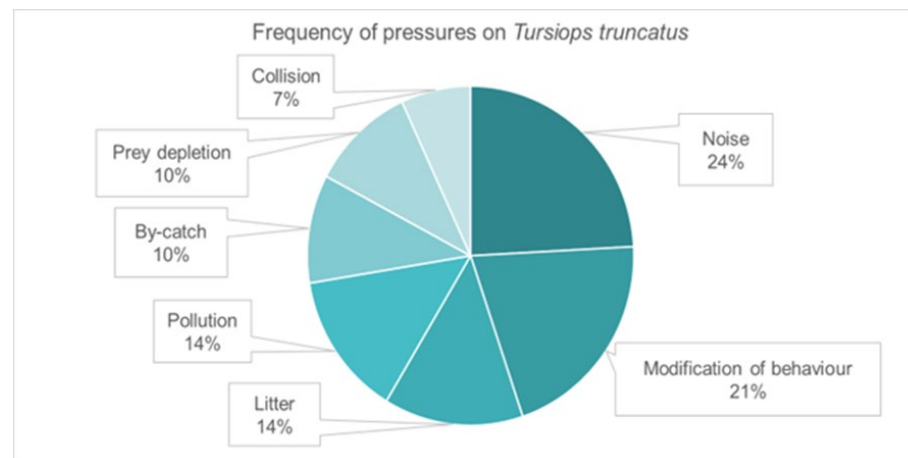
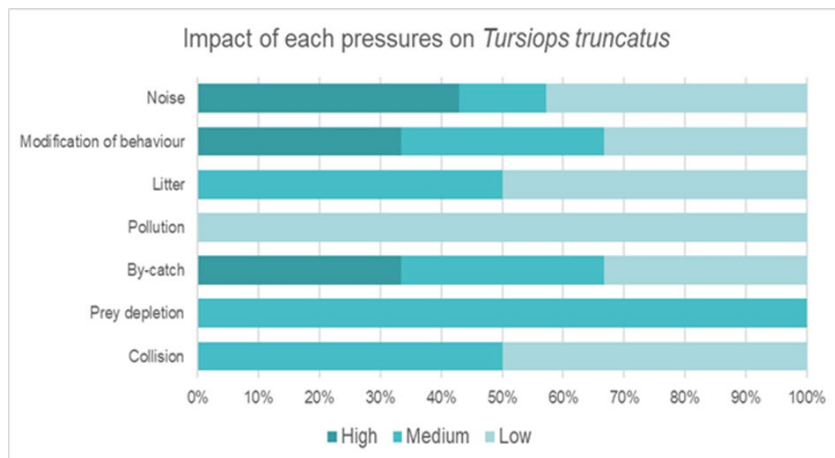
INDICATOR	QUESTION	YES	PARTIAL	NO
A	1	Have conservation objectives (COs) been set for de MPA?		
B	2	Have the pressures on species/ habitats protected in the site been identified and their impact assessed (indicate if pressures are inside/outside the MPA, and confidence level)?		
C	3	Have conservation 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?		

Examples of possible analyses



Disclaimer:

- Small number of questionnaires – not a fully representative sample (for EU MPAs).
- Incomplete questionnaires: many respondents focused of a few species/pressures.
- Managers usually chose the best managed site for the test.
- Scoring system still in a trial phase, current scores may not reflect actual results.



Next steps

- Finalise the methodology (full use of existing data infrastructure and reporting streams), develop IT tool, make it operational and promote its use: LIFE PLP project
- To apply the EU PAME in synergy with other PAME systems (national and global)
- Assessment of management effectiveness – not an additional burden
- Effectiveness assessments provide valuable insights for authorities and stakeholders on how to improve the delivery of benefits from PAs for biodiversity and society
- Effectively managed PAs will make major contribution to reaching EU 2030 nature protection and restoration targets

How effective are conservation measures implemented in SPAs ? – a study

- Study implemented in 2021-2022: HR, FI, FR, IT, IE, LV, PL, RO, SK, ES
- 5 tasks to: Select 10 sites in each target MS and assess their classification acts, assess their SSCOs, assess their conservation measures, assess the level of implementation of conservation measures, assess the effectiveness of the measures
- Methodology: extensive questionnaire to site managers and relevant stakeholders
- EU OP: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/b81bea2f-8fd0-11ed-b508-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>

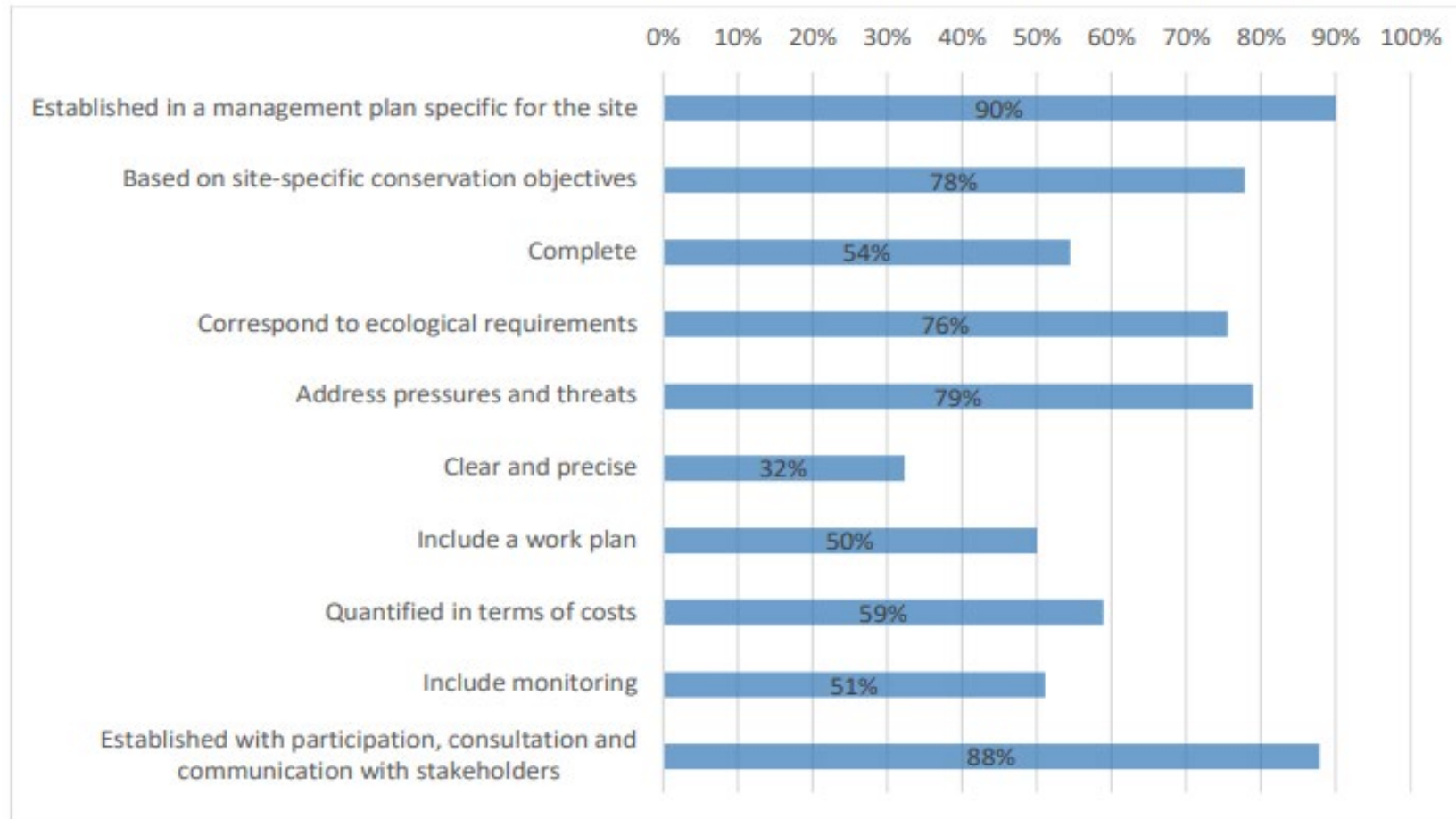


Key findings – setting SSCOs

87 of the 100 SPAs have site-specific conservation objectives, however:

- only 50% can they be considered comprehensive
 - often only broad generic conservation objectives have been set
 - defined only for groups of species that have similar ecological requirements or share similar habitats
- only 43% have conservation objectives that clearly identify the desired condition to be achieved
- only 20% included quantitative and measurable targets
- only in 25% conservation objectives reflect the importance of the site for the species at national or EU level

Key findings – establishing conservation measures



Key findings – level of implementation of measures

Other important findings:

- in all sites, at least some bird species suffer from no, insufficient or inappropriate implementation of conservation measures
- in almost half of the sites (48%) the respondents consider that the measures implemented are insufficient for the majority (51-100%) of the species
- regular financial resources are considered sufficient in only 2% of the studied SPAs
- monitoring populations of all bird species that motivates the designation of the SPA is carried out on a regular basis in 40% of the sites

Assessing the effectiveness of the measures

Aim - to assess the effectiveness of the implemented conservation measures (CM) in terms of maintaining or improving the populations of the bird species and structure and functions of their habitats

Three main questions:

1. Have the conservation measures implemented benefited the bird species for which the SPA has been classified?
2. Have the populations of the bird species increased (or at least not declined) over time, since the site's classification?
3. Has the effectiveness of the measures been affected by changes in the land uses and human activities in the site?

Key findings - effectiveness of the measures

- in only 34% of the sites the conservation measures implemented could benefit all or most of the species for which the SPA was classified
- only in 16% of the SPAs reported an increase in the populations of some species and no further decline in others. 32% of the sites reported no change, 17% a decrease in the populations of some of the bird species.
- In 76% of the sites - already existing conflicts of interest with other land uses and human activities appear as still on-going

General conclusions

- Important gaps in establishing conservation objectives and conservation measures
- Insufficient implementation of the necessary measures to improve the status of the bird species
- Lack of effectiveness detected in terms of achieving an improvement or at least preventing decline
- Insufficient resources for the implementation of conservation measures and for the monitoring of bird species at the sites

[EU OP: https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/b81bea2f-8fd0-11ed-b508-01aa75ed71a1/language-en](https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/b81bea2f-8fd0-11ed-b508-01aa75ed71a1/language-en)

