



Natura 2000 Biogeographical Process Newsletter

Photo: Marbled white butterfly, *Melanargia galathea*. Source: NatureBureau

Welcome to the last edition of the Natura 2000 biogeographical process newsletter! In this newsletter we will update you on the latest information related to the process and draw some final conclusions on the previous three years – as the current project closes!

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

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- 3 years of the biogeographical process
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Thank you from the biogeographical process team!

The current cycle of the biogeographical process kicked-off in 2021, with the first newsletter published in September of that year. Since then, the process has published 18 further editions. When we started in May 2018 we had 209 subscribers, but the Newsletter now has a current reach of 1,700 people!

Over 3.5 years we have enjoyed sharing information on events and seminars organised by the process team, alongside additional events and news items related to conservation across all EU biogeographic regions. Much of the content was supported by the many hosts and organisations involved in the organising of events – so we would like to say a big thank you to everybody who has contributed to the content, and to all those who have supported the process by participating in our seminars and networking events!

Don't forget – you can keep updated with the latest biogeographical process news with just one click of a button. You can access our wiki [here](#).



Photo: Bronze furrow bee, *Halictus tumulorum*. Source: NatureBureau

Brief review of the past seminars and events

Since the start of the current cycle of biogeographical seminars and events, many seminars and networking events have been organised.

As part of the initiative to meet the objectives set out within the Biodiversity Strategy 2030, the EC has requested that Member States prepare pledges on the protected area and conservation status targets. Two large online 'introductory seminars', were held in December 2021 - one with a focus on marine and one on terrestrial Natura 2000 networks, introducing the Biodiversity Strategy and the pledge-and-review process. In total there were around 265 participants from all Member States attending.

Some 18 networking events were organised during the past three and half years, on topics ranging from protection of temporary Mediterranean ponds (H3170*) and protection of the Brown bear on the Iberian Peninsula, to protection of Europe's freshwater fish species in the framework of the Biodiversity Strategy targets. In total we have had close to 900 participants across all these events. In September 2023 we kicked-off with the last series of biogeographical seminars, with the main aim of discussing and reviewing the pledges that have been submitted so far, but also discussing other elements of the Biodiversity Strategy and habitat restoration. The seminars covered the Atlantic region (Hannover, Germany), Boreal region (Nuuksio, Finland), Macaronesian region (Terceira, Azores, Portugal), Mediterranean region (Larnaca, Cyprus), and Continental, Alpine, Pannonian, Black Sea and Steppic region (Prague, Czech Republic). In all, we had some 400 participants attending these seminars, representing all Member States and many NGOs and stakeholder organisations.

At the same time, the Biogeographical Process in the Marine Regions was also hosting events and seminars. The seminars covered the Atlantic and Macaronesia Region (Dublin, Ireland), the Baltic region (Riga, Latvia), and the Mediterranean region (Marseille, France). There were also networking events on topics such as Migratory seabird-friendly management of marine and/or coastal Protected Areas in the Baltic Sea region, Understanding OECMs to achieve the 30 by 30 target, an event on the effectiveness of Marine Protected Areas, and the (highly popular) Strictly Protected Marine Areas in the context of the EU Biodiversity Strategy, which was attended (online) by over 120 participants. The Marine Regions BGP closed in April 2024.

At this moment we are preparing for the last two terrestrial networking events – you can read more details below.

The European Commission has assured during last seminars that the process will continue in some form. In the end, all Member States and other organisations must step up, to ensure that we will stay on track and work towards the targets of the Biodiversity Strategy 2030 and the Nature Restoration Law!



Photo: Lesser Water-plantain, *Baldellia ranunculoides*. Source: NatureBureau

The Marine Mediterranean and Black Sea Seminar, 12-14 March 2024, Marseille, France

As reported in detail previously, the marine Mediterranean and Black Sea seminar was held in Marseille, France, on 12-14 March 2024. Around 55 participants gathered at the Palais du Pharo for this event, hosted jointly by the European Commission's DG Environment, the French Ministry of Ecological Transition and the French Biodiversity Agency (OFB).

Presentations from the event can be found [here](#), where the report is also now available.



Photo: Venue of the Mediterranean and Black Sea marine seminar. Source: NatureBureau

Fourth Mediterranean Biogeographical Seminar, 17 - 19 April 2024, Larnaca, Cyprus,

The fourth Mediterranean Biogeographical seminar was hosted by the Department of the Environment of Cyprus in Larnaca, Cyprus, from 17 to 19 April 2024. In total, 93 participants attended the seminar, originating from all the Mediterranean Member States except Portugal, plus people from five additional Member States who participated as experts, representatives of the European Commission, and members of the supporting team.

The seminar report has now been uploaded [here](#), along with all presentations from the event.

The Continental, Pannonian, Steppic, Black Sea and Alpine Biogeographical seminar, 25-27 June 2024, Prague, Czech Republic

The fourth Continental, Pannonian, Steppic, Black Sea and Alpine Biogeographical seminar, the biggest seminar covering 16 Member States in one-third of the European Union land territory. The seminar was held at the Czech University of Life Sciences (CULS), in Prague/Czech Republic on 25-27 June 2024.

Co-hosted by the Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic, the Faculty of Environmental Sciences of the Czech University of Life Sciences, and the European Commission - a total of 93 participants attended the seminar, from fifteen Member States and Ukraine. Topics covered all the Continental Member States and included experts from five additional Member States, representatives of the European Commission, or members of the BGP supporting team.

Prior to the seminar, three seminar themes were selected:

Theme 1: Protected area targets

Theme 2: Restoration of grasslands

Theme 3: Using OECM's to safeguard biodiversity



Photo: Excursion participants of the Continental+ seminar, at Český kras. Source: Alexandra Tamchynoa

Reports on the outcomes of sessions were presented in plenary during the last day and summarised in the seminar report. The report, along with all presentations and background information from the seminar can be found on our website [here](#).



Events Calendar

Photo: Five-spot Burnets, *Zygaena trifolii*. Source: NatureBureau

Prescribed burning in forest management: containing risks while maintaining biodiversity, 10-11 September 2024, online, and 2025 in Sweden

A networking event on Prescribed burning is being prepared by the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency SEPA, together with the LIFE in Taiga project. The event will be in September 2024, 2 half-days online, to be followed by a live event and excursion in Sweden in the second half of 2025. The event covers all biogeographical regions, countries from South and Northern Europe that are facing increased fire risks, due to climate change.

This event will focus on the role of fire in the management of forest ecosystems. The LIFE in Taiga project is demonstrating how fire regimes are best reinstated as part of the forest management. The network event is planned for 10-11 September 2024. It will be an online event, with two half days of presentations and discussions. The first half day to introduce the role of fire and its' importance for forest management, and how it has been incorporated in forest management policies. The second day will focus on aspects of forest biodiversity and Natura 2000.

In 2025, a follow-up networking event is planned near Stockholm in Sweden (in person), for two days, followed by a 1-day field excursion. If you are interested to join the online event on 10-11 September, more information can be found on the [LIFE website](#) and you can register for the event [here](#).



Photo: Forest burning. Source: Anders Heurlin

Strictly Protected Areas, Brussels, 12-13 November 2024

The networking event on “**Strictly Protected Areas in the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030**”, is scheduled for 12 - 13 November 2024. It will take place in the building of the Committee of the Regions, in Brussels. The event will focus on all biogeographical regions and discuss aspects of strict protection in various regions in Europe.

The main purpose of the event will be to further discuss and provide additional clarifications on the definition of **Strictly Protected Areas on land**, on the basis of the [guidelines published by the Commission in 2022](#). Over the last 12 months, several questions have still been raised on this subject by Member States and stakeholders, in particular during the Biogeographical seminars.

The event will last 1.5 days, starting on the 12 November at 13:00 hrs. That afternoon the meeting will be web-streamed, and people can attend the general presentations. The second day of the event (13 November, all day) will be in-person only and will include further presentations, break-out sessions and a concluding plenary. As the second day of the event will be for in-person participation only, it will be restricted to a maximum of 60 participants. Formal registration is required beforehand. The registration for the event will open in the coming weeks.

Please follow updates which will be shared on our website [here](#).



Photo: Biogradska Gora NP (Montenegro), old growth forest. Source: Theo van der Sluis

Keep updated with event information by following the [Terrestrial Twitter](#) account.

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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