



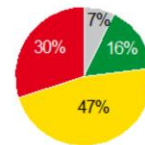
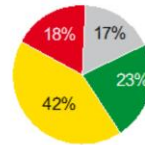
Introduction to the EU nature protection framework”

Dr. Micheal O'Briain
Deputy Head of Nature Unit
DG ENVIRONMENT

ERA conference 'Focus on species protection', Trier 23 April 2018

What's happening to biodiversity in Europe?

- ❖ *Europe has suffered more human-induced fragmentation than any other continent*
- ❖ *50% of wetlands and high-nature-value farmland gone*
- ❖ *> 40% of all bird species have unfavourable status*
- ❖ *Only 23% of species and 16% habitats of EU conservation concern have favourable status*



The presentation is intended to give a background on the broader context in which nature legislation is framed. It's more policy related than legal, but it gives the context insight into what really is happening with regard to nature protection in Europe.

Why does it matter?

- ❖ *A moral duty: to conserve the sheer variety of life on earth*
- ❖ *An environmental asset: healthy ecosystems play a vital role in regulating the environment – e.g. a major tool for climate change adaptation*
- ❖ *An economic imperative: ecosystem goods & services provide a whole range of direct and indirect economic benefits*

Our life support system



Why do people care about the species protection:

- Moral duty of society – our role on the planet
- Environmental asset - nature provides most important information in regulating the environment, most prominent example being climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Greater recognition of economic dimension of healthy nature

Health & Social benefits of nature & biodiversity

Health benefits	Social Benefits
Improved air quality, improved climatic conditions, Noise mitigation	Quality of green public spaces, promote social cohesion
Healthier lifestyles – nature experience	Opportunities for volunteering, employment
More pleasant & peaceful environment	
Outdoor recreation and physical activity	



Lastly the role of environment on human health is gaining lately a lot recognition and attention. The quality of the environment in which we live, including in relation to green spaces, has a huge impact on our health and stress levels.

EU Environmental policy context – the 7th EAP : Living well, within the limits of our planet

- 2020 timeframe, 2050 vision, 9 priority objectives
- Commitment by EU and its Member States

THEMATIC OBJECTIVES:

- Ecological resilience/natural capital
- Green & competitive growth – low-carbon, resource-efficient economy
- Health & environment, human well-being

ENABLING FRAMEWORK:

- Implementation
- Information, knowledge base
- Investment
- Integration, coherence

SPATIAL DIMENSION:

- Urban environment
- International



It identifies three key thematic objectives:

- Four so called "enablers" will help Europe deliver on these goals:

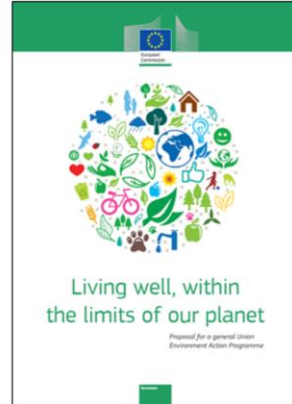
- 5

Two additional horizontal priority objectives complete the programme:

- to make the Union's cities more sustainable
- to help the Union address international environmental and climate challenges more effectively.

7th EAP - Protect, conserve and enhance EU's **natural capital**

The Union's economic prosperity and well-being is underpinned by its natural capital, i.e. its biodiversity, including ecosystems that provide essential goods and services, from fertile soil and multi-functional forests to productive land and seas, from good quality fresh water and clean air to pollination and climate regulation and protection against natural disasters



In the context of nature policy it is important to concentrate on the first priority of the EAP- to Protect, conserve and enhance EU's natural capital.

The concept of “Natural capital” is framed in the context of this plan looking at the economic prosperity and well-being of the EU and it includes its biodiversity, including ecosystems that provide essential goods and services, from fertile soil and multi-functional forests to productive land and seas, from good quality fresh water and clean air to pollination and climate regulation and protection against natural disasters.

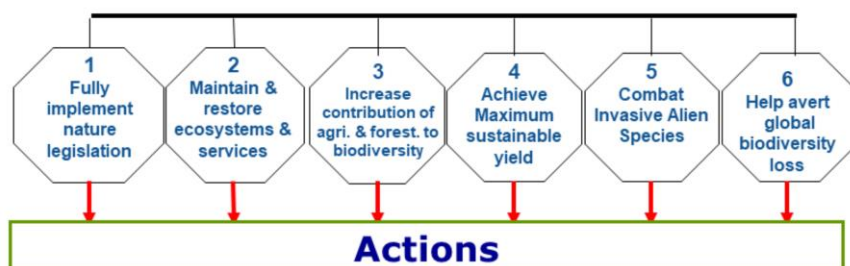
EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 « Our life insurance, our natural capital »

A 2050 VISION

*European Union biodiversity and the ecosystem services it provides – its **natural capital** – are protected, valued and appropriately restored...*

A 2020 HEADLINE TARGET

Halt the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the EU and restore them insofar as feasible, and step up the EU's contribution to averting global biodiversity loss



Building on this EAP in 2011 DG environment set out a EU biodiversity strategy covering up to 2020 and biodiversity is seen in this context as our life insurance.

The EU Biodiversity Strategy aims to halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the EU and help stop global biodiversity loss by 2020. It reflects the commitments taken by the EU in 2010, within the international Convention on Biological Diversity. The Strategy contains 6 targets and 20 actions to halt the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the EU by 2020.

Mid-term review 2015: not mid-way to the 2020 targets



- **Local success stories...**
- ... but overall **continued loss of biodiversity** and ecosystem services
- **Challenges** related to:
 - **implementation**
 - **policy integration**
 - **financing**
 - **knowledge & awareness** of human dependencies on nature...
- **More effort needed** to reach the targets

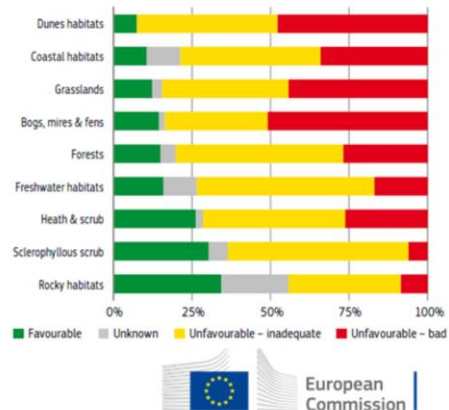


There was a mid term review of the EU Biodiversity Strategy in 2015. It assessed whether the EU was on track to achieve the objective of halting biodiversity loss by 2020. The results show progress in many areas, but highlight the need for much greater effort to deliver commitments on implementation by Member States. Nature's capacity to clean the air and water, to pollinate crops and to limit the impacts of catastrophes such as flooding is being compromised, with potentially significant unforeseen costs to society and our economy

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/comm2006/pdf/mid_term_review_summary.pdf

Target 1: EU Nature Legislation: Habitats & Birds Directives

- *Natura 2000 almost complete on land and expanded at sea*
- *More species and habitats in secure/favourable or improved status but many others remain in unfavourable status; and some are deteriorating further (State of Nature Report 2015)*
- *Challenges until 2020: completion of marine Natura 2000, effective management and finance to support Natura 2000*
- *Nature Action Plan follow up to Fitness Check evaluation of Birds and Habitats Directives*



European Commission

Target 1 of the Biodiversity Strategy primarily concerns implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directive, including establishment of Natura 2000. There has been important progress on establishment of Natura 2000 but the many of the sites need to be effectively managed and protected.

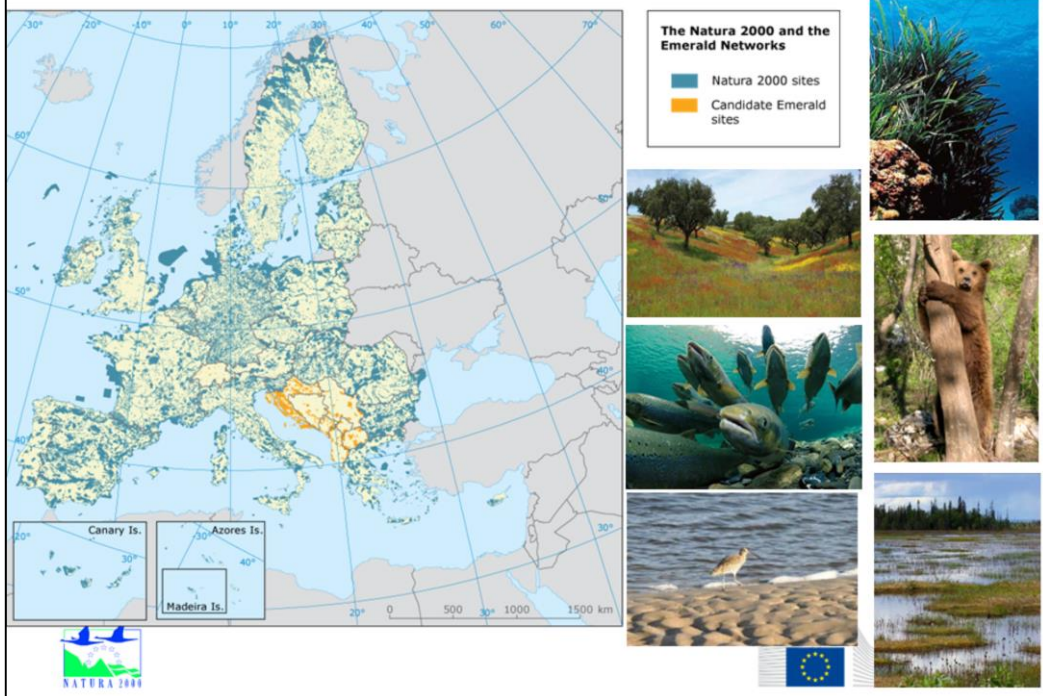
The Commission Environmental Implementation Review (EIR) <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1493972666323&uri=CELEX:52017DC0063> identifies biodiversity and water quality and management (surface and marine water) as the policy fields where the main challenges and most pressing implementation gaps across Member States are found with relevance to Objective 1. Some of the problems spotted in connection with biodiversity are:

- as regards the state of the environment, 75 % of habitat assessments point to an unfavourable conservation status and a significant proportion continues deteriorating: 60 % of EU assessments indicate an unfavourable status for non-bird species, while the status of 15 % of all bird species is near threatened, declining or depleted and another 17 % are threatened. Thus, the EIR concludes that the overall status of protected species and habitats has not significantly improved over the last six years. The EIR acknowledges that there has been progress in many areas, but also indicates that there are significant gaps in implementation, financing and policy integration. 'At the current rate of efforts, biodiversity loss would continue in the EU with potentially serious consequences for the capacity of natural ecosystems to provide for human needs in the future'. This finding is

largely confirmed by the trend spotted in the EEA indicator report (see below) and the stakeholder consultation (see above);

- although the Commission's fitness check on the Birds and Habitats Directives concluded that they are fit for purpose, it also found that substantial improvement in their implementation is needed, if their objectives are to be fulfilled. In particular, the 'designation of (land/sea) sites' process under the Habitats Directive has not yet been completed across the EU. Management plans for Natura 2000 sites under both nature directives are often missing or their execution is problematic, which is assessed by the Commission as a 'systemic issue causing poor implementation of those pieces of EU law';
- pressure on land biodiversity, in particular unsustainable agricultural practices, the modification of natural conditions, and pollution;
- pressure on marine biodiversity, in particular unsustainable fishing and harvesting of aquatic resources, modification of natural conditions, climate change and ocean acidification, and also pollution by chemicals, plastics and noise.

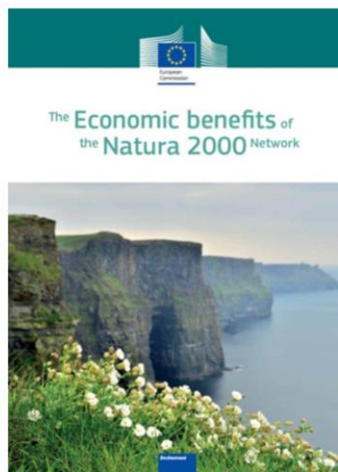
NATURA 2000: areas of high biodiversity value in EU



This slide shows the Natura 2000 network. Stretching over 18 % of the EU's land area and now covering 9% of its marine territory, it is the largest coordinated network of protected areas in the world. It offers a haven to Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats.

Costs & Benefits of investing in Natura 2000

- *costs: €5.8 billion/year*
- *Ecosystem services: €200 to 300 billion/yr;*
- *Network stores approx. 9.6 billion tonnes of carbon (equiv. 35 billion tonnes of CO₂) valued at between €607 billion and €1,130 billion;*
- *Estimated between 1.2 to 2.2 billion visitor days/yr to Natura 2000 - recreational benefits € 5 - € 9 billion/yr.*



Effective management and restoration of sites in the Natura 2000 network requires significant investments. In 2004 the Commission provided a first cost estimate of 6.1 billion EUR per year for EU-25 Natura 2000 financing needs. However, the most recent estimates indicate that this is a significant underestimate, particularly if the costs of restoration are included and the figure is probably closer to 10 billion EUR.

However, these costs are greatly outweighed by the benefits provided by the network. In addition to playing a crucial role in protecting Europe's biodiversity, Natura 2000 sites provide a wide range of other ecosystem benefits and services to society. The economic value of these multiple benefits has been considered to be very significant, but until recently few studies have been undertaken to evaluate this in detail. DG Environment has commissioned three contracts to help identify, evaluate and subsequently demonstrate the economic benefits provided by Natura 2000.

According to this study, the benefits that flow from Natura 2000 are of the order of €200 to 300 billion/year. It is estimated that there are between 1.2 to 2.2 billion visitor days to Natura 2000 sites each year, generating recreational benefits worth between €5 and €9 billion per annum. Therefore, investing in Natura 2000 makes sense and is directly relevant to Europe 2020 objectives of growth and employment as it can be a motor for the local and regional economy.

Natura 2000's fundamental role in climate mitigation – The Carbon storage and sequestration benefits of Natura 2000 Introduction In general carbon

stock density appears to be relatively high across Europe (Campbell et al., 2008). Many Natura 2000 sites harbour several ecosystems that are important current stores of carbon and offer significant opportunities for further carbon sequestration, including sites located on forested lands, wetlands, agricultural lands, and marine and coastal ecosystems. In particular Northern European countries, where boreal forests are predominant, show much higher carbon storage potential in terms of high carbon density in the soil and biomass. Therefore, a careful assessment of carbon potential and economic consequences associated with Natura 2000 habitats may provide important insights on the cost-effective land-use policy and management practices on Natura 2000 sites, which in turn can influence ecosystem progress that affect greenhouse gas (GHG) fluxes over a period of several years to a few decades, and contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies in Europe.

All in all, our valuation estimates indicate that the total carbon value of all Natura 2000 habitats as a whole⁹ lay between € 607 and 1,130 billion in 2010, depending on the choice of carbon prices. These are values of the stock of carbon and not the annual sequestration rate. Among all others, the forest habitats contain the highest carbon value in the network, ranging between € 318.3 and 610.1 billion in 2010. The second highest carbon value is contained in the dryland (grassland) system, ranging between € 105.6 and 196.5 billion in 2010, followed by marine and inland water ecosystem, which account for € 92 to 171 billion and € 84.2 to 156.7 billion, respectively.

Evaluation of Birds & Habitats Directives

The Fitness Check will evaluate how the EU nature legislation performs according to these 5 key criteria:

Effectiveness



Have the objectives of the legislation been met?

Efficiency



Were the costs involved reasonable?

Coherence



Is the EU nature legislation complementing or contradicting other policy and legislation?

Relevance



Does EU legislation address the main problems that species and habitats are facing today?

EU added value



Could similar changes have been achieved at national or regional level, or did EU action provide clear added value?



This REFIT Fitness Check provides a comprehensive policy evaluation of the Birds¹ and Habitats² Directives.

It has examined their performance against five criteria: effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and EU added value. The Fitness Check, supported by a study, has involved extensive evidence gathering and consultation with many stakeholders at Member State and EU levels, including a 12 week public internet consultation that attracted unprecedented interest, with more than 552,000 responses, strongly influenced by different campaigns. The resulting analysis brings together a substantial body of evidence and seeks to identify changes that can be logically attributed to the intervention of the Directives. However, despite evidence of large scale declines in European nature during the 20th century, the work has been limited by the fact that there was no clear baseline against which to estimate how the status of flora and fauna might develop in the absence of EU action. The evaluation on effectiveness focused on assessing the extent to which the objectives of the two Directives have been achieved and any significant factors that may have contributed to or inhibited progress towards meeting those objectives.

Key findings of Nature Fitness Check

- *Too many species & habitats show negative trends*
- *Only 50% of Natura 2000 sites properly managed*
- *Marine Natura 2000 network incomplete*
- *Funding shortage and weak policy integration*
- *Cases of inflexible application & permitting delays by national & local authorities*
- *Insufficient knowledge, awareness, engagement & cooperation*



European
Commission

The evaluation on effectiveness focused on assessing the extent to which the objectives of the two Directives have been achieved and any significant factors that may have contributed to or inhibited progress towards meeting those objectives. The evaluation showed that the general objectives of the Directives have not yet been met and it is not possible to predict when they will be fully achieved. However, it is clear that the status and trends of bird species as well as other species and habitats protected by the Directives would be significantly worse in their absence and improvements in the status of species and habitats are taking place where there are targeted actions at a sufficient scale. Although there are still gaps for the marine environment, the terrestrial part of the Natura 2000 protected areas network is now largely established. National systems of species protection and sustainable use are in place. Progress on habitat conservation and delivery of ecosystem services beyond Natura 2000 is more limited.

Although management plans are not a legal obligation of the Directive they are a good indicator of progress in establishing conservation measures and some Member States require them to be written. Member States have been asked to provide information on the numbers of sites with management plans within the framework of their reporting under the Directives. By the end of 2012 only 50% of sites were reported to have comprehensive management plans. There are large differences between Member States in the extent to which they have developed such plans ranging from Slovenia reporting that 100% of its Natura 2000 sites have comprehensive management plans to

Bulgaria and Ireland all reporting that they have no plans finalised.

The effectiveness of the Directives has also been hindered by delays in the establishment of Natura 2000 and in putting in place the necessary conservation measures for management and restoration of the sites and consequently the network has still not delivered its full conservation and socio-economic potential. Availability and targeting of funding, knowledge gaps, full stakeholder engagement, effective management of the Natura 2000 sites, policy integration and human resource constraints remain the most significant challenges.

Enforcement action has been central to progress in implementing the Directives. The relatively high number of infringements and complaints dealt with by the Commission has reflected the high level of interest of citizens and civil society groups in the Directives as well as weaknesses of governance and systemic failures within Member States in applying the Directives. Historically, some uncertainty regarding the implications of certain legislative provisions has also contributed to some delays in transposition, leading, in turn, to infringement procedures, legal cases and further delays. Problems have arisen as a result of limited expertise, insufficient staff resources and inconsistent standards with impact assessments and permitting procedure

EU Nature Action Plan

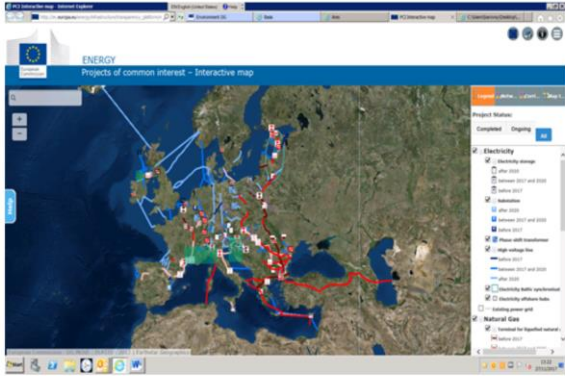
- **4 priority areas of Action:**
 - ❖ Improving guidance and knowledge and ensuring better coherence with broader socio-economic objectives
 - ❖ Building political ownership and strengthening compliance – especially to ensure a functional Natura 2000 network
 - ❖ Strengthening investment in Natura 2000 and improving synergies with EU funding instruments
 - ❖ Better communication and outreach, engaging citizens, stakeholders and communities
- **15 Actions & over 100 measures**
- **Timeframe 2017-2019 Key Actors:** Member States, European Commission, Committee of the Regions, European Investment Bank, European Environment Agency, Stakeholders



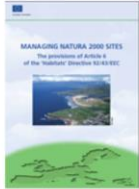
Following a thorough evaluation of the Birds and Habitats Directives, the European Commission, in April 2017, adopted the Action Plan for nature, people and the economy to improve their implementation and boost their contribution towards reaching the EU's biodiversity targets for 2020. The Action Plan focuses on four priority areas and comprises 15 actions to be carried out between now and 2019



Improve guidance & knowledge and ensure better coherence with broader socio-economic objectives



Improve EU guidance on site permitting, species protection, sectoral & ecosystem services




Fill knowledge gaps and improve quality & access to data

The European Commission, together with Member States and stakeholders, is improving guidance and knowledge and ensuring better coherence with broader socioeconomic objectives. Key priorities are:

Update, develop and actively promote, in all EU languages, guidance on

- (a) site permitting procedures, species protection and management as well as sector-specific guidance
- (b) integrating ecosystem services into decision-making

Building political ownership and strengthening compliance

Completing Natura 2000 network & establishing conservation objectives & measures



Stakeholders Engagement in site management & co-operation at Biogeographical level



Species & habitat Action Plans

The main priorities are that the Network Natura 2000 is fully in place, that there is conservation objectives for each of the sites, and that the necessary conservation measures are established.

This requires cooperation at different governance levels. The Commission is supporting strengthening co-operation between the member states through the Biogeographical Seminars and

It is also supporting the development of further species and habitat action plans.



Strengthening investment in Natura 2000 & improve synergies with EU funding instruments

Update funding strategies (PAFs) for Natura 2000

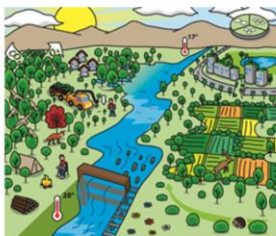


10% increase in nature & biodiversity within LIFE budget



Promote synergies with CAP & other EU funds & private sector funding





Provide EU guidance to support deployment of green infrastructure

With regard to financing the Commission is working on strategic planning for investment and improve integration of nature conservation needs and opportunities in different EU funding instruments. The action plan proposes an increase in dedicated funding for nature and biodiversity under the LIFE programme, which would allow higher investment in Natura 2000. It also provides for the development of more guidance and planning for the development of Prioritised Action Frameworks (PAFs) by Member States, which set out funding needs and priorities for Natura 2000 in a multiannual context. These PAFs will provide a key reference for assessing future programmes under different EU funds from the Member States, including under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Finally, it proposes ways to stimulate private investment and to better support connectivity between Natura 2000 areas, including through green infrastructure and nature-based solutions



Better communication & outreach, engaging citizens, stakeholders & communities



European Natura 2000 Award
Get the recognition you deserve!

recognition of good management of Natura 2000



knowledge exchange & engagement of local & regional authorities

Involve young people

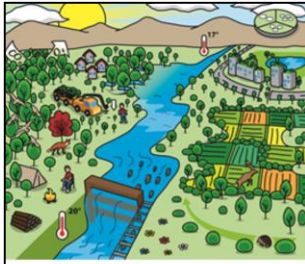




strengthen links between natural and cultural heritage

Expenditure supported by visitors to Natura 2000 sites
≈ €50-85 billion/year (in 2006)

The action plan seeks to strengthen the involvement of the public, stakeholders, local authorities and communities. Protecting nature and its benefits concerns us all because it is our common heritage. The Commission together with the Committee of Regions will use all available platforms to raise awareness and promote local involvement and exchanges of knowledge. It will give more recognition to good management practices in Natura 2000 areas. Through the European Solidarity Corps the Commission will help young people to get directly involved in conserving nature and gain valuable expertise for their professional life.



Target 2: Ecosystem restoration & Green Infrastructure

- Progress on **policy** (EU Green Infrastructure Strategy) and **knowledge improvement** (MAES)
- Some **restoration** activities in Member States
- However, degradation of ecosystems and services continues



Stepping up action to 2020

Review of Green Infrastructure

Guidance on EU level Green Infrastructure

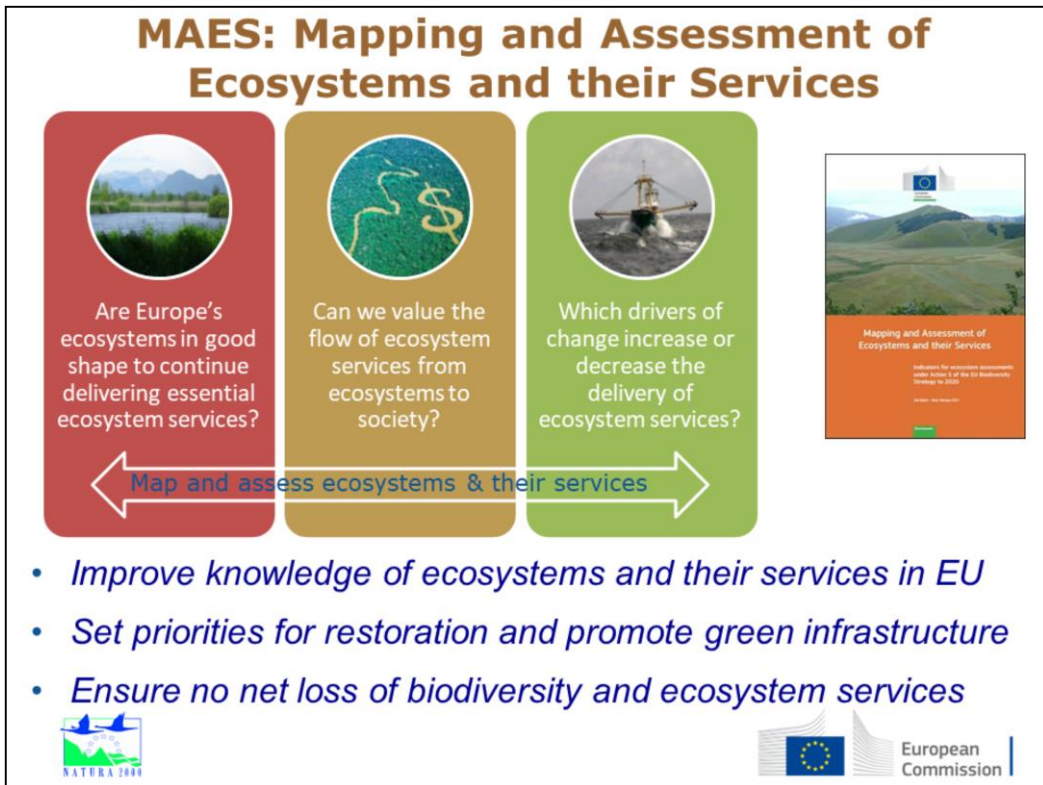


The European Commission, DG Environment, has put forward new plans for encouraging the use of green infrastructure – the network of natural land and water that lies within and between cities, towns and villages. In a 2013 Communication entitled 'Green Infrastructure (GI) – Enhancing Europe's Natural Capital', the Commission sets out plans for a new enabling framework to help create good quality, healthy and sustainable places in which people and wildlife can live.

GI is an approach to spatial planning of land use that plays a critical role in ensuring human environments are resilient to environmental, social and economic challenges. For example, GI would allow a natural wetland to absorb excess water from heavy rain instead of needing to build flood protection. It would enable the development of transport networks that encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport, which would help to reduce carbon emissions. The Communication draws on the Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe and the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020. Both identify investing in GI as an important step towards protecting Europe's natural capital.

The new strategy focuses on promoting GI in main policy areas such as agriculture, forestry, water, climate change mitigation and adaptation, transport and energy. It calls for improved research and data to strengthen the

knowledge base and stimulate innovation, and improved support and access to finance for GI projects by the end of 2015. The Commission is reviewing progress on developing GI and will publish a report by the end of 2018 on the lessons learned together with recommendations for future action.



30% of EU territory is moderately-highly to very highly fragmented due to urban sprawl and transport and energy infrastructure development.

70% of species are threatened by the loss of their habitats

- restoring at least 15% of degraded ecosystems by 2020 – **restoration prioritization framework (RPF) by 2014** to set priorities for ecosystem restoration at sub-national, national and EU level
- establishing ‘**Green Infrastructure**’ throughout the EU (GI)
- mapping and assessing of state of ecosystems and their services – **(MAES) by 2014**
- seeking to achieve "no net loss" of biodiversity and ecosystem services (**NNL**)

Target 3: 'Green' agriculture and forestry in the EU



- **Continuing decline** in the status of species and habitats associated with agriculture
- **CAP 2014-2020** provides a range of instruments to support biodiversity – but they need to be taken-up by Member States **on a sufficient scale**
- Examples of **sustainable agricultural practices**, if implemented broadly, could put the EU back on track to achieve the target by 2020.
- EU **forest area** increased - but no signs of improvement in the **conservation status** of habitats and species of EU importance
- **EU-level data** on the biodiversity status of forest habitats outside Natura 2000 limited
- The potential of Forest Management Plans for achieving target **largely unused**.



72% of land in the EU is used for farming (43%) and forestry (29%)

Currently only 7% of agro-ecosystems and 5% of grasslands in the EU are in good conservation status.

Agriculture and forestry go hand in hand with the biodiversity on which they depend, and both have a great impact on its health. These two activity sectors can and must, as a priority, help maintain and improve biodiversity. The strategy identified a number of actions to ensure we reach target 3 rapidly.

The EU has already made efforts to integrate biodiversity into the development and implementation of other policies. However, given the benefits that biodiversity and ecosystem services bring to sectors such as agriculture and forestry, these efforts are still not sufficient. By 2020, there must be a measurable improvement, compared to the EU2010 baseline, in the conservation of species and habitats depending on or affected by agriculture and forestry, and in the provision of their ecosystem services.

The Strategy identified 5 actions to ensure that agriculture and forestry help maintain biodiversity.

Action 8: Enhance CAP direct payments to reward environmental public

goods such as crop rotation and permanent pastures; improve cross-compliance standards for GAEC (Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions) and consider including the Water Framework in these standards

Action 9: Better target Rural Development to biodiversity needs and develop tools to help farmers and foresters work together towards biodiversity conservation

Action 10: Conserve and support genetic diversity in Europe's agriculture

Action 11: Encourage forest holders to protect and enhance forest biodiversity

Action 12: Integrate biodiversity measures such as fire prevention and the preservation of wilderness areas in forest management plans

Some of the progress so far...

- On 16 December 2013, the new CAP reform for 2014-2020 was adopted. It focuses on delivering more effective policy instruments, designed to improve not just the competitiveness but also the sustainability of the agricultural sector over the long term
- On 19 May 2014, the Council welcomed the Communication of the European Commission on a new EU Forest Strategy. This strategy aims to stem the decrease in forest areas and ensure sustainable forest management.



Target 4: Make fishing sustainable and reach good environmental status

- Progress in the policy framework for sustainable fisheries (**reformed CFP**) and Good Environmental Status (**MSFD**)
- Work on **Oceans Governance**
- Uneven **policy implementation** and major challenges: just over 50% of MSY-assessed stocks were fished sustainably in 2013
- **Multiple pressures** and continued decline of marine species and ecosystems across Europe's seas



Currently 88% of fish stocks in the EU are fished beyond maximum sustainable yield

Steady decline in average fish size over past 20 yrs

Like agriculture and forestry, the fishing sector depends on healthy marine biodiversity, but current fishing practices are not always sustainable. While the pressure on fished species is obvious, these activities also damage the marine ecosystem as a whole. The strategy identified a number of actions to ensure we reach target 4 rapidly. The strategy mid-term review provides a detailed assessment of progress towards target 4.

What the strategy says

The EU strives to integrate biodiversity into the development and implementation of other policies. However, given the benefits that biodiversity and ecosystem services bring to many sectors, these efforts are still not sufficient. Target 4 requires that, by 2015, fishing is sustainable and that, by 2020, fish stocks are healthy. Fishing must have no significant adverse impacts on species and ecosystems so that all European oceans and seas can be ecologically diverse and dynamic, as well as clean, healthy and productive by 2020.

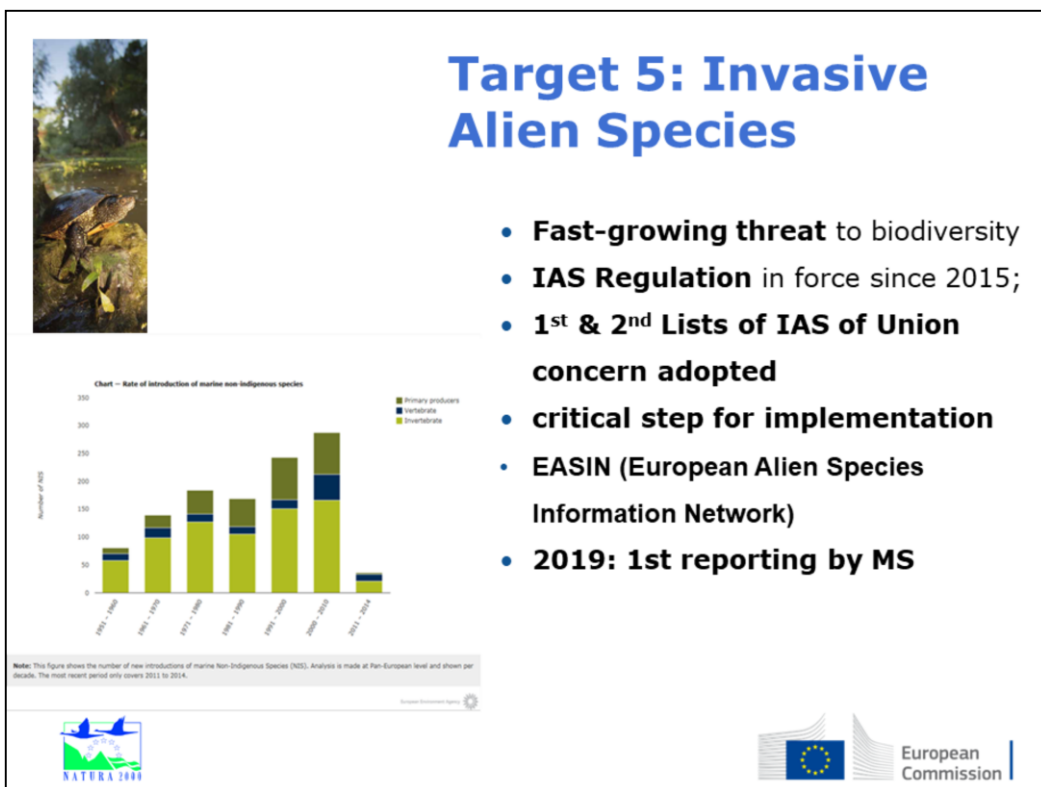
We've identified 2 specific actions to deliver healthier fish stocks and seas.

Action 13: Ensure that the management plans of the Common Fisheries Policy are based on scientific advice and sustainability principles to restore and maintain fish stocks to sustainable levels.

Action 14: Reduce the impact of fisheries by gradually getting rid of discards and avoiding by-catch; make sure the Marine Strategy Framework Directive is consistently carried out with further marine protected areas; adapt fishing activities and get the fishing sector involved in alternative activities such as eco-tourism, the monitoring of marine biodiversity, and the fight against marine litter.

Some of the progress so far...

- The latest reform of the Common Fisheries Policy took effect on 1 January 2014. It stipulates that between 2015 and 2020 catch limits should be set that are sustainable and maintain fish stocks in the long term. It also seeks to phase out the practice of discarding unwanted fish. Find out more about the integration of our EU Coastal and Marine Policy in other sectors.
- The main goal of the Marine Framework Directive, adopted in 2010, is to achieve ecologically diverse and dynamic oceans and seas which are clean, healthy and productive by 2020. To help Member States interpret what this means in practice, the directive sets out 11 criteria, or qualitative descriptors. The first is that marine biodiversity is maintained. One important measure taken by Member States is the establishment of a network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).



22% of species in the EU are threatened by invasive alien species; one of the fastest growing threats

IAS cause some €10 billion damage/year in the EU

Alien species are animals and plants introduced accidentally or deliberately into a natural environment where they are not normally found. Such species can become invasive in their new environment if they start spreading and causing serious damage to native species and ecosystems.

Invasive alien species represent a major threat to Europe's native biodiversity and cause economic damage worth billions of euros every year. This threat and damage is likely to increase in the future unless decisive and coordinated action is taken to control the pathways of their introduction, prevent their establishment and spread, and manage already established populations. Prevention is priority because established populations can be expensive to manage and difficult or impossible to eradicate.

What the EU Biodiversity Strategy says

Target 5 requires that by 2020, invasive alien species are identified, priority species controlled or eradicated, and pathways managed to prevent new

invasive species from disrupting European biodiversity. (Read the Strategy). It is accompanied by two specific actions to tackle the threat of invasive alien species.

Action 15: Make sure that the EU Plant and Animal Health legislation includes a greater concern for biodiversity.

Action 16: Provide a legal framework to fight invasive alien species

Some of the progress so far...

- The IAS Regulation (Regulation (EU) 1143/2014 on invasive alien species) entered into force on 1 January 2015.
- A list of invasive alien species of Union concern has been adopted, currently including 49 species that are subject to common action at Union level as set out in the IAS Regulation.
- An information exchange mechanism supporting the implementation of Regulation (EU) 1143/2014 has been established. EASIN (European Alien Species Information Network) is a platform developed by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre which enables easy access to data on alien species reported in Europe.
- The new Regulation (EU) 2016/429 on transmissible animal diseases "Animal Health Law" was adopted in March 2016 and the new Regulation (EU) 2016/2031 on protective measures against pests of plants "Plant health law " in October 2016.

Target 6: Global biodiversity



- EU and EU MS: by far the **largest donor** for biodiversity.
- Policy frameworks: **CITES, ABS**
- Some steps to reduce **indirect drivers** of global biodiversity loss but insufficient progress in reducing the impact of **EU consumption patterns** on global biodiversity.
- On the current trajectory, **efforts may not be sufficient** to meet the targets.



Between 12-55% of known animals and plants threatened with extinction
13 million ha of tropical forests lost each year
60% of tropical reefs are at risk of disappearing by 2030, 1/5 of coral reefs world wide is located in EU overseas
Less than 1% of world's oceans are protected

i.a. by:

reducing indirect drivers of biodiversity loss
mobilising resources for biodiversity protection and 'biodiversity-proofing' EU development cooperation
implementing the Nagoya Protocol on ABS
stepping up efforts in the EU Outermost Regions and Overseas Countries and Territories (BEST)

The EU derives great benefits from global biodiversity but some of our consumption patterns can be blamed for part of the loss and degradation that occur beyond our borders. The EU is committed to step up its contribution in the fight to protect global biodiversity. Our biodiversity strategy to 2020 is also in line with international commitments made in October 2010, when the UN Convention on Biological Diversity adopted a strategic plan to address global

biodiversity loss over the coming decade. The EU biodiversity strategy identified a number of actions to ensure we reach target 6 rapidly. The strategy mid-term review provides a detailed assessment of progress towards target 6.

What the strategy says

The EU has pledged to meet the international 2020 biodiversity goals and objectives agreed to under the CBD. Target 6 requires that, by 2020, the EU steps up its contribution to avert global biodiversity loss by greening its economy and endeavouring to reduce its pressure on global biodiversity.

We've identified 4 specific actions to step up our contribution in the fight against global biodiversity loss:

Action 17: Reduce the impacts of EU consumption patterns on biodiversity and make sure that the EU initiative on resource efficiency, our trade negotiations and market signals all reflect this objective.

Action 18: Target more EU funding towards global biodiversity and make this funding more effective.

Action 19: Systematically screen EU action for development cooperation to reduce any negative impacts on biodiversity.

Action 20: Make sure that the benefits of nature's genetic resources are shared fairly and equitably.

Some of the progress so far:

On 12 October 2014, the new regulation on access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from their use became applicable. This Access and Benefit-Sharing regulation establishes how researchers and companies can obtain access to genetic resources and the traditional knowledge linked to these resources. It also explains how benefits arising from the use of genetic resources and the associated traditional knowledge must be shared with the countries providing these resources.



For more information, please consult:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/index_en.htm

<http://ec.europa.eu/environment>