



**Clarification of Natura 2000 terminology**  
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## **Annexes of the Habitats Directive**

The Habitats Directive includes six annexes, which refer to the various articles of the Directive. Annex I lists around 230 habitat types of Community interest that require site protection through Natura 2000. Annex II lists over 1000 plant and animal species of Community interest that require site protection. Annex III lists the criteria for the selection Sites of NATURA 2000 sites. In Annexes IV to VI specific species protection regulations are defined (strict protection, management measures, modes of transport).

## **Appropriate assessment**

According to Art. 6 (3) of Habitat Directive, any plan or project likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site shall be subject to an appropriate assessment, which refers to the specific conservation objectives of that site. With the help of an appropriate assessment the implications of a plan or project on specific, selected protected areas with their biotopes and species are verified.

## **Article 6 (Habitats Directive) -Consolidated version 1. 1. 2007**

1. For special areas of conservation, Member States shall establish the necessary conservation measures involving, if need be, appropriate management plans specifically designed for the sites or integrated into other development plans, and appropriate statutory, administrative or contractual measures which correspond to the ecological requirements of the natural habitat types in Annex I and the species in Annex II present on the sites.
2. Member States shall take appropriate steps to avoid, in the special areas of conservation, the deterioration of natural habitats and the habitats of species as well as disturbance of the species for which the areas have been designated, in so far as such disturbance could be significant in relation to the objectives of this Directive.
3. Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In the light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.
4. If, in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature, the Member State shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that the overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted. Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or a priority species, the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, to beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest.”



## **Birds Directive**

The Birds Directive (79/409/EEC) was adopted in 1979 and aims to protect all wild birds and their most important habitats across their entire natural range within the EU. The Directive puts an end to certain practices, such as the keeping or sale of native wild birds, and introduces a legal mechanism for regulating other activities, such as hunting, to ensure that they are sustainable.

It also requires all EU Member States to protect the most important sites as Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for over 190 threatened species and all migratory birds, paying particular attention to wetlands of international importance.

## **Biodiversity**

The variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems.

## **Convention on Biological Diversity**

This is an International Treaty that was adopted at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The Convention has three main goals:

1. Conservation of biological diversity (or biodiversity);
2. Sustainable use of its components; and
3. Fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from genetic resources

## **Biogeographical region**

The EU has nine biogeographical regions, each with its own characteristic blend of vegetation, climate, topography and geology. The boundaries between each region are not hard and fast but they make it much easier to check how trends in species and habitat conservation vary under similar natural conditions across Europe, irrespective of national borders. The nine regions include: Alpine, Boreal, Atlantic, Continental, Pannonian, Mediterranean, Steppic, Black Sea and Macaronesian.

## **Biogeographical seminars**

Seminars are held for each biogeographical region to discuss the scientific assessments of the site-proposals by Member State. The DG Environment of European Commission chairs the discussions during the seminar while the European Topic Centre (ETC) provides a scientific evaluation of the proposals.

Participation to the biogeographical seminar:

- European Commission
- Member States
- ETC and independent experts
- Representative of the European Habitat Forum, (Nature conservation NGOs)
- Representative of the Forum Natura 2000 , (land owner & users organisations)
- Representative of accession countries or other Member States (as observers).



### **Biotope**

The physical habitat with its associated, distinctive biological communities. The smallest unit of a habitat that can be delineated conveniently and it is characterised by the community of plants and animals living there (Anon, 2001).

### **Buffer Zone**

An area of land on which development is regulated in order to maintain an adequate distance between sensitive areas and potentially harmful development.

### **Conservation**

A series of measures required to maintain or restore the natural habitats and the populations of species of wild fauna and flora at a favourable status.

### **Habitats Directive**

The Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) was adopted in 1992. This introduces similar measures to the Birds Directive but extends its coverage to a further 1000 species (plants, mammals, invertebrates etc.) and for the first time also protects certain types of natural and semi-natural habitats in their own right (more than 230). The Habitats Directive is more precise concerning the necessity and the conditions for plans or projects which affects to habitats and species have to be assessed.

### **Duty to report**

Every 6 years according to Art. 17 (1) HD the Member States have to compile a comprehensive report about the implementation of the measures defined within the framework of the HD as well as perform an evaluation on the effects these measures have on the conservation status of the habitats of Annex I and the species of Annex II. In addition, every 2 years Member State have to report about species conservation in connection with granted exceptions have to be provided.

Every 3 years according to Art. 12 BD the Member States deliver a conclusive report on the application of the national law of the Member States issued on the basis of this directive.

### **Directive**

A directive is a legislative act of the European Union which requires Member States to achieve a particular result without dictating the means of achieving that result. It can be distinguished from European Union regulations which are self-executing and do not require any implementing measures.

### **Ecosystem**

This refers to all biotic and abiotic components, their interactions with each other; in some defined area, with no conceptual restrictions on how large or small that area can be.



### **Emerald Network**

It is an ecological network made up of Areas of Special Conservation Interest (ASCI) with all parties to the Bern Convention obliged to set up such a network. The network includes areas of particular ecological significance for threatened species and for habitat types protected pursuant to the Bern Convention.

In EU Member States, the Emerald Network is equivalent to the NATURA 2000 ecological network. In EU candidate states, the Emerald Network represents the preparations for and direct contribution to the implementation of the NATURA 2000 programme.

### **Endangered Species**

A population of an organism (usually a species) which because it is either few in number or threatened by changing environmental or predation parameters, is at risk of becoming extinct.

### **Endemic**

Species, which only occur in a strictly limited geographical area, i.e. on an island or exclusively on mountain range. In the Directive it is mainly used for species which are limited to one Member State and also do not occur outside of the EC.

### **Environmental impact assessment, EIA**

EIA recognise, describe and assess in the most appropriate way, influence on the environment, identifying possible direct and indirect impact on: soil, water, sea, air, forest, climate, humans, flora and fauna, landscape, physical assets, cultural heritage, taking into account their interconnectivity.

### **EU**

The European Union is established in accordance with the Treaty on European Union and there are currently 27 Member States of the Union (Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Sweden, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Cyprus, Bulgaria and Romania). It is based on the European Communities and the Member States co-operation in the fields of Common Foreign and Security Policy and Justice and Home Affairs.

### **European Commission (EC)**

Executive body of the European Union based in Brussels, in addition solely appointed with the power of initiative for EU legislation. Main tasks of the commission: monitoring of the Member States, administration, imposition of sanctions, preparation of proposals to the Council, legislature to implement Council acts, opinions, negotiation of agreements and the representation of the EU in court.

### **European Court of Justice**

European Court of Justice based in Luxemburg. Main tasks: assertion of legal protection for legal actions of the commission against Member States, actions of one Member States against another



Member State, actions for annulment against the council or the commission and actions for failure to act.

### **Favourable conservation status**

The Directive establishes a coherent network of NATURA 2000 sites, to enable the habitats and species to be maintained or restored at favourable conservation status in their natural range. The conservation status means the sum of the influences acting on habitats and the species concerned that may affect the long-term distribution and abundance of its populations within the territory of species. The conservation status means is considered favourable when

- population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats, and
- the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and
- there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.

### **Habitat**

Habitat means terrestrial or aquatic areas distinguished by geographic, abiotic and biotic features, whether entirely natural or semi-natural.

### **Habitats Committee**

Committee appointed to facilitate the implementation of the Habitats Directive (Article 20, 21) and to support the European Commission.

**Habitat of a species** An environment defined by specific abiotic and biotic factors, in which the species lives at any stage of its biological cycle – eg hibernation place, breeding place, feeding place, resting place.

### **IUCN categories**

IUCN has defined a series of six protected area management categories, based on primary management objective. In summary, these are:

**CATEGORY Ia: Strict Nature Reserve:** protected area managed mainly for science

Area of land and/or sea possessing some outstanding or representative ecosystems, geological or physiological features and/or species, available primarily for scientific research and/or environmental monitoring.

**CATEGORY Ib Wilderness Area:** protected area managed mainly for wilderness protection

Large area of unmodified or slightly modified land, and/or sea, retaining its natural character and influence, without permanent or significant habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural condition.

**CATEGORY II National Park:** protected area managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation

Natural area of land and/or sea, designated to (a) protect the ecological integrity of one or more ecosystems for present and future generations, (b) exclude exploitation or occupation inimical to



the purposes of designation of the area and (c) provide a foundation for spiritual, scientific, educational, recreational and visitor opportunities, all of which must be environmentally and culturally compatible.

**CATEGORY III Natural Monument:** protected area managed mainly for conservation of specific natural features

Area containing one, or more, specific natural or natural/cultural feature which is of outstanding or unique value because of its inherent rarity, representative or aesthetic qualities or cultural significance.

**CATEGORY IV Habitat/Species Management Area:** protected area managed mainly for conservation through management intervention

Area of land and/or sea subject to active intervention for management purposes so as to ensure the maintenance of habitats and/or to meet the requirements of specific species.

**CATEGORY V Protected Landscape/Seascape:** protected area managed mainly for landscape/seascape conservation and recreation

Area of land, with coast and sea as appropriate, where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant aesthetic, ecological and/or cultural value, and often with high biological diversity. Safeguarding the integrity of this traditional interaction is vital to the protection, maintenance and evolution of such an area.

**CATEGORY VI Managed Resource Protected Area:** protected area managed mainly for the sustainable use of natural ecosystems

Area containing predominantly unmodified natural systems, managed to ensure long term protection and maintenance of biological diversity, while providing at the same time a sustainable flow of natural products and services to meet community needs.

### **IBA – Important Bird Area**

An Important Bird Area (IBA) is an area designated as being globally important habitat for the conservation of bird populations. The program was developed by BirdLife International; IBAs in a given country are designated by a national conservation organization. IBAs are an important base for the designation of SPAs.

### **Invasive Species**

An invasive species is one that is introduced to an area where it does not naturally occur and is able to establish a population without human, or other, intervention.

### **Life+**

The LIFE+ is focused funding instrument providing specific support for the development and implementation of Community environmental policy and legislation, supporting environmental and nature conservation projects throughout the EU, some candidate, acceding and neighbouring

countries. Since 1992, LIFE has co-financed some 3104 projects, contributing approximately €2.2 billion to the protection of the environment, and a budget of €2.143 billion is provided for the period 2007-2013.



It comprises three components:

- LIFE+ Nature & Biodiversity
- LIFE+ Environment Policy & Governance
- LIFE+ Information & Communication

### **Management plan**

Detailed plan for a specific Natura 2000 site which according to Article 6 of the Habitats Directive defines the necessary conservation measures for the site (only conservation measures are mandatory). The plan has to take the ecologic requirements of the habitats and species into consideration.

### **Monitoring**

Regular checks to see if the plants and animals are going well or not. For NATURA 2000 it means obligation to monitor the conservation status of habitats of Annex I and species of Annex II, IV and V with special consideration for the priority habitats and species.

### **NATURA 2000**

A network of marine and terrestrial areas of international importance designed to conserve natural habitats and species of plants and animals that are rare, endangered or vulnerable protected under EU law. NATURA 2000 sites consist of SACs (protected sites based on the Habitats Directive) and SPAs (protected sites based on the Birds Directive)

### **Habitat types of Community interest**

Those natural habitat types which are:

- a) in danger of disappearance in their natural range (Priority natural habitat type) , or
- b) have a small natural range following their regression or by reason of their intrinsically restricted area,
- c) present outstanding examples of typical characteristics of one or more of the following biogeographical regions: Alpine, Boreal, Atlantic, Continental, Pannonian, Mediterranean, Steppic, Black Sea and Macaronesian

### **PADOR**

The PADOR database, managed by EuropeAid, contains the organisations and their partners who apply for grants of the European commission in the field of external assistance. PADOR is the acronym of "Potential Applicant Dated Online Registration".

### **Priority habitat type**

Natural habitat types in danger of disappearance for which the Community has particular responsibility - these priority natural habitat types are indicated by an asterisk (\*) in Annex I of the Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.





### **Priority species**

Species for the conservation of which the Community has particular responsibility in view of the proportion of their natural range - these priority species are indicated by an asterisk (\*) in Annex II of the Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.

### **pSCI (proposed Site of Community Importance)**

Proposed sites of community interest on the national evaluation list.

### **Ramsar site**

A wetland area of international importance for birds protected through the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (1979).

### **Rare Species**

An organism that is very uncommon or scarce or that occurs in a very restricted geographical area or that has a wide distribution range but never occurs in large numbers

### **Red List and Red Data Book**

The world union for nature conservation (The World Conservation Union, IUCN) has laid down the criteria for identification of threatened plant and animal species and preparation of the so-called red list of species. They represent one of the essential expert documents of nature protection, because indicating species or subspecies (taxa) of plants, fungi and animals threatened with extinction and the level and imminence of the threat. The main objective of red lists is to draw the attention of government and scientific institutions, non-governmental organizations and the general public to the need to take concrete steps for the protection of these species, specifying priorities and urgency of actions.

### **SAC, Special Area of Conservation**

Special Area of Conservation means a site of Community importance designated by the Member States through a statutory, administrative and/or contractual act where the necessary conservation measures are applied for the maintenance or restoration, at a favourable conservation status, of the natural habitats and/or the populations of the species for which the site is designated;

Member States are required to identify sites for designation and establish measures necessary for conservation. (Together with SPAs, SACs form a network of European sites known as Natura 2000.)

### **SCI, Site of Community importance**

A Site which, in the biogeographical region(s) to which it belongs, contributes significantly to the maintenance or restoration at a favourable conservation status of a natural habitat type in Annex I or of a species in Annex II of the Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, and may also contribute significantly to the coherence of



Natura 2000, and/or contributes significantly to the maintenance of a biological diversity within the biogeographic region or regions concerned.

### **SPA, Special Protection Area**

Designated wild bird areas to comply with the EC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds - (79/409/EEC).

### **Specimen**

Any animal or plant, whether alive or dead, of the species listed in Annex IV and Annex V, any part or derivative thereof, as well as any other goods which appear, from an accompanying document, the packaging or a mark or label, or from any other circumstances, to be parts or derivatives of animals or plants of those species.

### **Species**

This term refers to all the individual organisms of a natural population which are able to interbreed, generally sharing similar appearance, characteristics and genetics due to having relatively recent common ancestors.

### **Species of Community interest**

Species which, within the territory are:

- endangered, except those species whose natural range is marginal in that territory and which are not endangered or vulnerable in the western palearctic region; or
- vulnerable, i.e. believed likely to move into the endangered category in the near future if the causal factors continue operating; or
- rare, i.e. with small populations that are not at present endangered or vulnerable, but are at risk. The species are located within restricted geographical areas or are thinly scattered over a more extensive range; or
- endemic and requiring particular attention by reason of the specific nature of their habitat and/or the potential impact of their exploitation on their habitat and/or the potential impact of their exploitation on their conservation status.

### **Standard Data Form**

Nature 2000 designation sheet, for the designation of sites according to the Habitats and Birds Directives standardised form which is ratified by the Habitat Committee

### **Threatened Species**

Plants and animals that are vulnerable to extinction.



### Some useful links

European Union: [http://europa.eu/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/index_en.htm)

European Commission, DG Environment: [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/index_en.htm)

EIONET- European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity: technical and scientific support  
[http://biodiversity.eionet.europa.eu/activities/Natura\\_2000/](http://biodiversity.eionet.europa.eu/activities/Natura_2000/)

Habitat Directive: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CONSLEG:1992L0043:20070101:EN:PDF>

Bird Directive: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CONSLEG:1979L0409:20070101:EN:PDF>

Natura 2000: [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/index_en.htm)

European Communities (2000) Managing Natura 2000 Sites:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/guidance\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/guidance_en.htm)

Biogeographic Regions: <http://dataservice.eea.europa.eu/atlas/viewdata/viewpub.asp?id=2250>

European Commission (2001) Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 sites:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/guidance\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/guidance_en.htm)

Cases at European court: <http://curia.europa.eu/> > language > search > number of case  
Nature and Biodiversity cases ruling of the European Court of Justice 2006:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/caselaw/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/caselaw/index_en.htm)

Regional Policy- European Funds: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/index_en.htm)

LIFE+: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/>

<http://> Natura 2000 - networking site: [www.natura.org](http://www.natura.org)

Natura 2000 from an NGO point of view - Lessons learnt in EU 10 (brochure)  
[http://www.ceeweb.org/publications/english/Natura\\_lessons\\_learnt.pdf](http://www.ceeweb.org/publications/english/Natura_lessons_learnt.pdf)

Prepared by:  
Andrea Ștefan, Policy Officer  
WWF Med PO