



EU nature directives & Natura 2000

recent developments & near future

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1979: EU Birds Directive

- legal protection for all wild bird species in the EU
- Species protection pillar & site protection pillar (SPAs)
- Strict protection regime for all Special Protection areas / SPAs (ECJ)

1992: EU Habitats Directive (based on Bern Convention !)

- Same approach (species and site protection) for certain species (other than birds) and (new !) for "habitat types"
- establishes the term "Natura 2000" for all sites designated according to both directives, softening of the strict protection region for SPAs
- aim: "favourable conservation status" for all species and habitats

1992: LIFE programme

- financial instrument for the implementation of Natura 2000



Since that time ...

- Significant progress in terms of designation and legal protection of Natura 2000 sites, setting of site-level conservation objectives and measures
- no significant changes, except in terms of adding species & habitat types to the annexes following EU enlargements (1995, 2004, 2007, 2013)
- significant improvements in data quality of national reporting (6-yearly reporting under Birds and Habitats Directives & Natura 2000 reporting)
- Interpretation resp. clarification of many aspects of the directives in the frame of ECJ judgements
- production of Guidance documents on many aspects of the directives



Natura 2000: a coherent EU-wide network of protected sites

27.500 sites; 1,2 10⁶ km²; 18% EU land area ; ca. 6% EU marine area

Natura 2000 network is now mostly completed on land

Sites shall make a significant contribution to the maintenance or restoration of species and habitats to a "favourable conservation status"

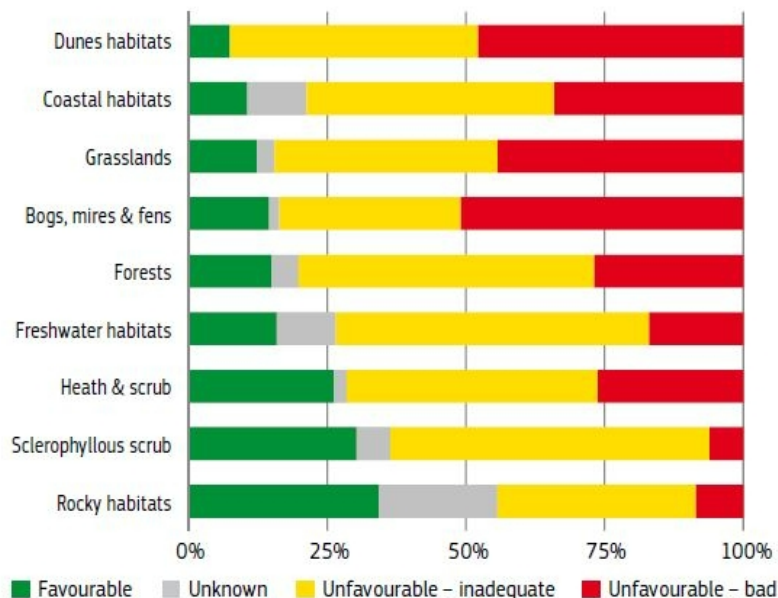
Ongoing progress in terms of ...

- national protection as "Special Areas of Conservation"
- Definition of site-specific conservation objectives
- maintenance and restoration measures

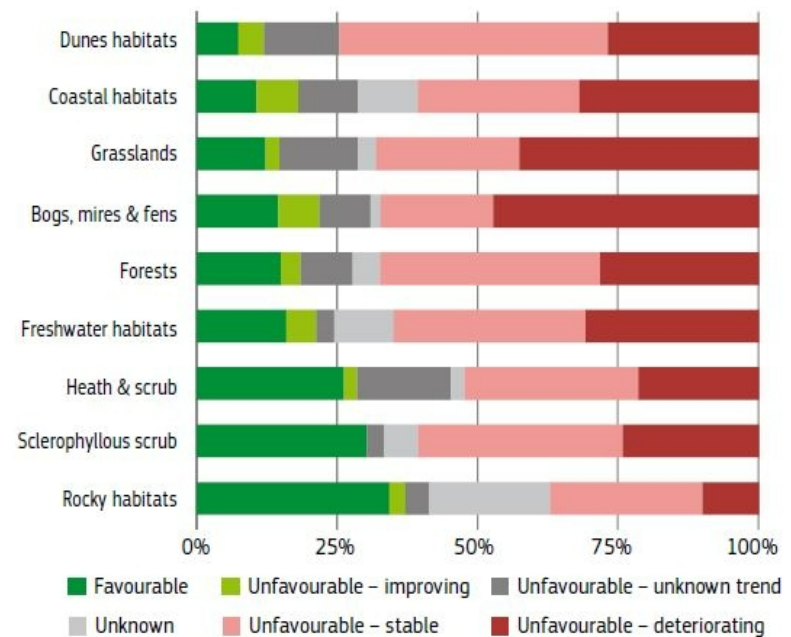


Conservation status: can the objective of FCS be achieved ?

- "State of Nature Report" 2015: negative trends are dominant
- positive trends at regional level are not visible in the EU-level reporting
- need to better document and communicate positive trends!

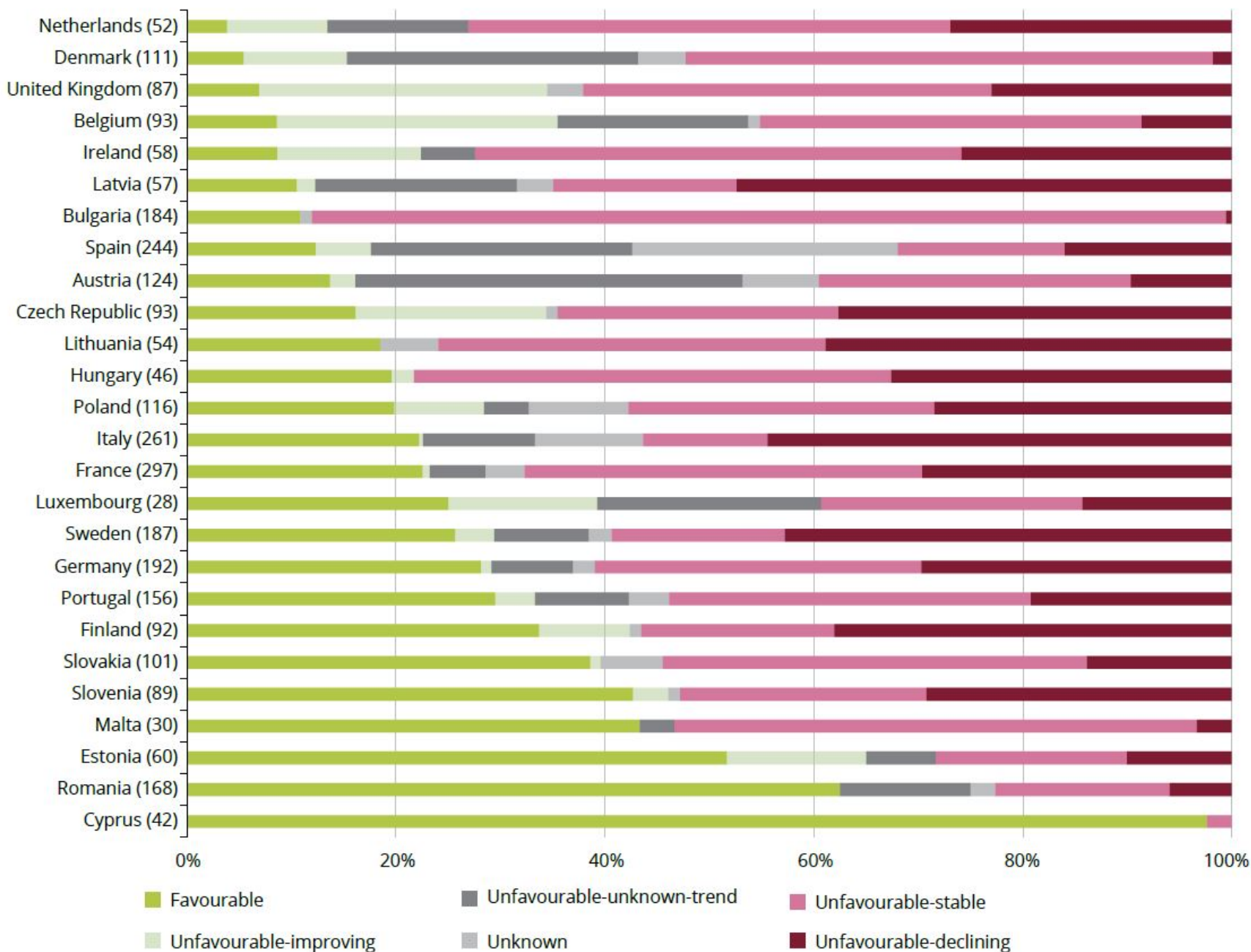


Conservation status of habitat types by main habitat group



Conservation status trends of habitat types by main habitat group

Figure 3.2 Conservation status and trends of habitats assessed as unfavourable at Member State level





Action Plan for Nature, People and the Economy

Objectives

- to realise the full potential of the Directives to achieve healthy ecosystems, whose services benefit of people, nature and the economy
- to boost their contribution towards reaching the EU's biodiversity targets for 2020
- to improve the Directives' coherence with broader socio-economic objectives



Approach of the Action Plan (2017 – 2019)

1. improving guidance and knowledge and ensuring better coherence with broader socio-economic objectives
2. building political ownership and strengthening compliance;
3. strengthening investment in Natura 2000 and improving synergies with EU funding instruments;
4. better communication and outreach, engaging citizens, stakeholders and communities



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

<p>1. Update, develop & 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</p>	COM/CoR/MS / stakeholders
<p>2. Establish a support mechanism to help Member State authorities address key challenges in applying the permitting requirements of the Birds and Habitats Directives for Natura 2000 and species protection rules</p>	COM / MS / stakeholders
<p>3. Improve knowledge, including through enhanced and more efficient monitoring, and ensure public online access to data necessary for implementing the Directives (e.g. satellite imagery from the Copernicus programme)</p>	COM / EEA / MS



Building political ownership & strengthening compliance

4. Complete Natura 2000 network, especially gaps for marine & put in place necessary conservation measures for sites	MS/ stakeholders/ COM
5. Use Environmental Implementation Review for dedicated bilaterals with national & regional authorities to develop agreed roadmaps to improve implementation & consult with landowners & other stakeholders on challenges	COM/MS/ stakeholders
6. Bring together public authorities & stakeholders from different MS at biogeographical region level to address common challenges, including on cross-border issues	COM/CoR /MS/ stakeholders
7. Further develop Species & Habitats Action Plans for most threatened species/natural habitats & stakeholder platforms on coexistence with conflict species (e.g. large carnivores)	COM/MS / stakeholders



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

<p>8. Strengthen investments in nature</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) Update PAFs - improve Natura 2000 multiannual financial planning(b) Propose 10% nature/biodiversity increase within LIFE budget(c) Stimulate private sector investment in nature projects	COM/EIB/MS/stakeholders
<p>9. Promote synergies with CAP, incl. Natura 2000 payments & agri-environment-climate measures, development of result-based schemes, Farming Advisory Services, innovation and knowledge transfer.</p>	COM / MS / stakeholders
<p>10. Increase awareness of cohesion policy funding opportunities and improve synergies</p>	COM / MS / stakeholders
<p>11. Improve synergies with the common fisheries policy & integrated maritime policy, including more effective use of financing opportunities</p>	COM / MS / stakeholders
<p>12. Provide guidance to support deployment of green infrastructure for better connectivity of Natura 2000 areas; support nature-based solutions projects through EU research and innovation policy and Horizon 2020 funds</p>	COM / MS / stakeholders



Better communication & outreach, engaging citizens, stakeholders & communities

13. Support knowledge exchange & engagement of local & regional authorities through a joint platform with Committee of the Regions	CoR / COM
14. Support recognition of good management of Natura 2000 & awareness-raising of Nature Directives, availing of new technologies and outreach activities, and strengthen links between natural and cultural heritage (2018 European year of cultural heritage)	COM / CoR / MS stakeholders
15. Involve young people by giving them the opportunity to get involved in nature protection in Natura 2000 sites (European Solidarity Corps)	COM / MS / stakeholders