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CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

**Ad-Hoc Restricted Group of Experts on
Reporting on the Emerald Network of Areas of Special Conservation Interest**

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Council of Europe, Strasbourg,
Agora building, Room G5

**Selecting a subset of species and habitats
listed in Resolutions No. 6 (1998) and No. 4 (1996)
for the first reporting exercise on the Emerald Network (2013-2018)**

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1. Criteria for the selection of species and habitats for the reporting exercise

At their meeting in September 2015, the Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks agreed to reduce the number of species and habitats listed in the Bern Convention Resolutions No. 4 (1996) and No. 6 (1998) on which Contracting Parties will report during the first Emerald Network reporting exercise covering the period 2013-2018.

The Group agreed on the following criteria for the common selection of species and habitats:

- 1) the presence of the species and habitats in as many countries concerned as possible;
- 2) priority to be given to Red Listed species;
- 3) species/habitats with declared unfavourable conservation status in the EU Natura 2000 Network.

However, the Group agreed that all species groups and main habitat types should be represented in the selection and that data availability should not be used as an argument for the selection of the species and habitats, as the reporting process should also trigger initiatives for the collection of new data. In addition, a few species and habitats with limited distribution could be added to the final selection, equally distributed over the countries concerned.

2. Methodology used for identifying and proposing a subset of species and habitats

In order to identify the species and habitats present in all or in the majority of the countries concerned, it was necessary to have a closer look into the “Reference Lists of species and habitats”, agreed for each country during the Emerald biogeographical seminars.

In order to allow the analysis of all the information available from the seminars (see Table 1), the reference list resulting from the evaluation were merged to a consolidated version. The tables resulting from the countries’ Reference lists data merging are available in the **Excel files annexed to this document.**

Table 1: Overview of the Emerald Network Evaluation Seminars organised by September 2016

| Year | Venue | Countries concerned | Biogeographical regions concerned | Species and habitats covered |
|------|---------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 2011 | Bar (Montenegro) | Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, “the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia | MED, ALP, CON, PAN | All |
| 2012 | Basel (Switzerland) | Switzerland | ALP, CON | All |
| 2013 | Trondheim (Norway) | Norway | ARC, ALP, ATL, BOR | All |
| 2015 | Tbilisi (Georgia) | Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia | STE, ALP-Caucasus, ANA | All (except birds) |
| 2015 | Petrozavodsk (the Russian Federation) | Belarus, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Ukraine | ARC, BOR, ALP-Ural | All (except birds) |
| 2015 | Minsk (Belarus) | Belarus, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Ukraine | n/a | Birds |
| 2016 | Chisinau (Republic of Moldova) | Belarus, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Ukraine | CON, ALP-Car, PAN | All (except birds) |

| | | | | |
|------|--------------------|--|------------------------|--------------------|
| 2016 | Trondheim (Norway) | Norway | ARC, ALP, ATL, BOR | All |
| 2016 | Kiev (Ukraine) | Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Ukraine | STE, ALP-Caucasus, BLS | All (except birds) |
| 2016 | Tbilisi (Georgia) | Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia | n/a | Birds |

3. Main aspects of the data merging and analysis

- The “Reference Lists” of the evaluation seminars identify all species and habitats present in the countries and in the respective biogeographical regions, as agreed during the seminars ;
- Emerald data are available from 14 countries. The data for Morocco are too preliminary to be taken into account, while Iceland hasn’t submitted any Emerald database yet ;
- The data of the 8 first evaluation seminars are complete and fully agreed ;
- The data for the 9th seminar in Kiev (September 2016) are still under review. However, the draft final version was used for the current analysis ;
- The 10th seminar will be organised at the end of November 2016 for the three Caucasus countries, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. Nevertheless, a draft conclusions database already exists and those draft data are transformed to a draft Reference List (but noted with the code “ND”- Not Discussed) ;
- Together, the 10 seminars cover the full area for all 14 countries and all biogeographical regions concerned ;
- As a consequence, all species groups and habitats could be analysed for all countries and all biogeographical regions ;
- The number of Biogeographical regions per country is presented in Table 2 below ;

Table 2: Number of biogeographical regions in each Emerald Network country

| Country code | Number of biogeographical regions |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|
| AL | 2 |
| AM | 2 |
| AZ | 3 |
| BA | 3 |
| BY | 2 |
| CH | 2 |
| GE | 3 |
| MD | 2 |
| ME | 2 |
| MK | 2 |
| NO | 5 |
| RS | 3 |
| RU | 7 |
| UA | 4 |

- The draft reporting format presented in document [T-PVS/PA(2016)6] also refers to Marine biogeographical regions, however, until now no such regions are defined under Emerald ;

- For the purposes of the Emerald Biogeographical evaluation process, it was decided to handle the different sub-zones for the Alpine as separate biogeographical regions. For the purpose of reporting it can be decided to handle the subzones as one region (Carpathians, Urals and Caucasus) ;
- During the first evaluation seminar in Bar, a number of species and habitats were not discussed. Nevertheless, the species and habitats marked with “ND” are taken into account for the analysis ;
- Species and Habitats indicated with the “SR REF” evaluation are taken into account in the statistics ;
- In spite of using high data QA/QC standards, the merging of data from different seminars may still contain small problems, hampering a smooth analysis. For instance, Resolution No. 6 (1998) lists a few genus as “spp.” and during the first evaluation Seminars it was listed at the level of the genus. Today, all evaluations and the reporting exercises are at the level of individual species. In most cases, those “spp.” listed species could be changed to the individual species concerned. The few remaining cases were left out of the analysis at species level.

4. Proposals for the number of species and habitats

The Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks did not discuss or specify the number of species and habitats to report on. The Restricted Group of Experts is invited to make the decision on both the number and the selection on the species and habitats.

The information below should be taken into account during the discussion on the Annexed Excel tables:

- Bird species are evaluated at country level and therefore the biogeographical regions aspect was not taken into account ;
- For all other species and habitats, the draft reporting format [T-PVS/PA(2016)6] request countries to report per biogeographical region. As a consequence, the reporting workload also depends on the number of biogeographical regions occurring in a given country and the number of regions in which the species and habitats occur ;
- In total, Resolution No.6 (1998) lists 207 birds and 908 other species and Resolution No. 4 (1996) lists 212 habitats. For plants the total is 684, but the 121 endemic macaronesian species are not taken into account.
- The total number of species and habitats being indicated as present in all 14 countries concerned is indicated in Table 3, together with the total number of biogeographical evaluations, and thus the potential total number of reporting units.

Table 3: Total number of listed species and habitats present in all 14 countries concerned:

| Taxonomic group | N° of species listed in Resolution No. 6 (1998) | Number of species from Resolution No. 6 (1998) present in all 14 countries | N° in biogeo regions |
|------------------------|--|---|-----------------------------|
| Amphibians | 29 | 9 | 89 |
| Fish | 84 | 51 | 396 |
| Invertebrates | 136 | 75 | 738 |
| Mammals | 65 | 45 | 546 |
| Reptiles | 31 | 13 | 126 |

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------|------------|-------------|
| Plants (excl. 121 species for MAC) | 563 | 140 | 581 |
| Subtotal: | 908 | 333 | 2476 |
| Birds | 207 | 173 | 173 |
| Habitats | 212 | 169 | 1755 |
| Total: | 1327 | 675 | 4404 |

- All the records in the consolidated version of the Reference List were sorted by the number of countries where the species is present. In this way, the species belonging to the highest number of countries can be easily extracted. The Excel table annexed to this document list the species/habitats per taxonomic group with the highest occurrences
- Table 4 below is an example for Plant species, the green background represent the selection made, totalling 20 plant species in the selection list (see annexed Excel file):

Table 4: Example of selection of plant species for the reporting exercise

| Number of species | Number of countries in which the species is present |
|-------------------|---|
| 1 | 12 |
| 1 | 11 |
| 3 | 9 |
| 2 | 8 |
| 2 | 7 |
| 3 | 6 |
| 8 | 5 |
| 3 | 4 |
| 16 | 3 |
| 38 | 2 |
| 63 | 1 |

Table 5 below indicates a possible number of species and habitats on which countries should report, with 3 scenarios: low, medium and high “workload” for the countries, which should be discussed by the Restricted Group of Experts:

Table 5: Quantifying the discussion on number of species/habitats to be reported on

| Workload | Total | Animals | Birds | Plants | Habitats |
|---------------|------------|---------|-------|--------|----------|
| Low | 50 | 20 | 20 | 5 | 5 |
| Medium | 75 | 26 | 35 | 7 | 7 |
| High | 100 | 30 | 50 | 10 | 10 |

- It should be stressed that the number of reporting units still varies considerably amongst countries according to the number of biogeographical regions involved ;
- If this selection procedure is accepted, the preliminary selection can serve as a pick-list to produce the final list of species and habitats depending on the decision on the numbers of species and habitats ;

- The Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks also indicated the possibility to add a few species with a rather limited distribution. Countries could be asked to add a fixed number of such “single country” species to the agreed common list (e.g. <5).

Annex 1 : Proposal for species and habitats to be selected for the first reporting exercise

<http://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016806a499a>