

Convention on the Conservation
of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats

Standing Committee

Recommendation No. 220 (2023) of the Standing Committee, adopted on 1st December 2023, on the implementation of the Strategic Plan for the Bern Convention for the period to 2030:

The Standing Committee to the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, acting under the terms of Article 14 of the Convention,

Having regard to the overall objective of the Convention to conserve wild flora and fauna and their natural habitats as stipulated in the Articles of the Treaty;

Recalling the success and longevity of the Bern Convention as a Treaty of the Council of Europe, having been ratified by 51 Contracting Parties and endured since 1979;

Recalling that in the decades since its establishment, the existence of multiple actors in the field of biodiversity has increased dramatically, and thus there is a greater need to form strategic partnerships and ensure more targeted activities;

Acknowledging the excellent cooperation already established over the decades with other biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements, the European Commission, and other organisations, both governmental and non-governmental;

Recalling [Resolution No. 7 \(2000\)](#) “on the medium-term strategic development of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats”;

Welcoming the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) which has been adopted in December 2022 by the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and recalling CBD COP.15 decision 15/13 paragraph 4 inviting the governing bodies of biodiversity-related conventions to, inter alia, coordinate their own strategies with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;

Welcoming the European Union (EU) Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 which has been adopted in May 2020;

Recognising the synergies with other global and regional biodiversity strategies as well as related strategies and plans in the field of climate change, sustainability, nature restoration, not least the UN Sustainable Development Goals to 2030;

Recalling the Vision for the Bern Convention for the period to 2030 adopted by the Standing Committee in 2021, which affirms that the Contracting Parties expect to see that “By 2030, declines in biodiversity are halted, leading to recovery of wildlife and habitats, improving the lives of people and contributing to the health of the planet.”;

Considering the commitment of the Heads of State and Government expressed in the Reykjavík Declaration to strengthen the work at the Council of Europe on the human rights aspects of the environment, including the political recognition of the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment in line with the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 76/300 "*The human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment*" and its prioritisation in the Programme and Budget for 2024-2027;

Taking into consideration that, following the adoption of the Strategic Plan for the Bern Convention for the period to 2030, the context, challenges and actions needed for the delivery of the plan may differ between individual Contracting Parties, but that overall success of the plan shall be based on the collective progress of the Parties;

Taking into consideration the important role that the Observers of the Convention (such as NGOs, international organisations, experts, scientists, academia) shall have in assisting the Contracting Parties in fulfilment of the goals and achievement of the related targets;

Recommends that Contracting Parties:

1. reflect and support relevant elements of the Vision¹ and Strategic Plan² to 2030 in and through national policies and related measures, including the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), in relation to the conservation of wild flora, fauna and their habitats;
2. prior to each Standing Committee meeting, send an update to the Secretariat on any major national achievements regarding progress with the Strategic Plan such as in relation to point 1 of this Recommendation, the compilation of which will be made available to the Standing Committee for information;

Instructs the Secretariat to support the Working Group on overseeing implementation of the Bern Convention Strategic Plan to 2030 in undertaking its tasks to:

3. further advance technical work on the Monitoring & Evaluation Guide for the Strategic Plan, in particular indicators relating to the Emerald Network, including management planning and management effectiveness (taking into account, for example, the methodology for assessing management effectiveness of Natura 2000 sites developed by the European Commission), as support for the implementation of relevant targets in the Strategic Plan;
4. consider how the Strategic Plan is implemented through other instruments of the Bern Convention, including action plans and submit the Strategic Plan to all Bern Convention Groups of Experts / Working Groups for consideration on how they could contribute to its implementation;
5. undertake a midterm review of the Strategic Plan's progress in 2027 and, dependent on the outcomes of such a review, make proposals for consideration by the Standing Committee for any adjustments to the Plan and any intensification of efforts that may be needed;
6. in advance of the Plan's end-date in 2030, conduct a review of the Plan's implementation and progress, assessing its strengths, weaknesses, successes, and areas of required improvement, as a basis for potentially elaborating a new Strategic Plan for the succeeding decade, for consideration by the Standing Committee.

¹ Vision for the Bern Convention for the period to 2030 - [T-PVS\(2021\)14](#)

² Strategic Plan for the Bern Convention for the period to 2030 - [T-PVS\(2023\)18](#)