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CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

Standing Committee

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**Management of protected areas
from climate change perspective**

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BERN CONVENTION
CONTRACTING PARTIES AND PARTNERS**

*Document prepared by
Mr Otars Opermanis*

QUESTIONNAIRE ON MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS FROM CLIMATE CHANGE PERSPECTIVE

Addressed to Bern Convention Contracting Parties and Partners

Introduction

In the past decade the effects of Climate Change on biodiversity have been increasingly recognised by the Bern Convention. During this period, several recommendations¹ to Contracting Parties have been endorsed by the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention. Thousands of highly relevant scientific papers and many books have been published. Several of them cover the whole European territory (i.e. climatic atlases such as for birds and butterflies), thus this information is very informative for all European countries, including those outside the European Union. Based on this existing and constantly improving knowledge, many international and national guidelines have been prepared by various governmental and non-governmental institutions.

A special issue is the role of **protected areas** in adapting biodiversity and its conservation to Climate Change. In the European context, the most relevant and up-to-date guidance to policy makers and site managers is given in the 2013 “Guidelines on Climate Change and Natura 2000”². Although this guideline is primarily dedicated to European Union’s Natura 2000 network of protected areas, all principles are also applicable to the Emerald Network of sites in the non-EU countries .

Yet, it has been observed that Climate Change adaptation/mitigation measures linked to the management of protected areas have been implemented at different scales with various success in different Contracting Parties to the Bern Convention³. Thus the aim of this questionnaire is to reveal and take stock of particular needs of Contracting Parties for tackling Climate Change in the context of the **management of protected areas**, particularly Emerald Network sites. Based on the answers received from the Contracting Parties to this questionnaire, the Bern Convention Secretariat will assess the needs of Contracting Parties and identify appropriate responses which will provide orientations on how to help countries integrate Climate Change in protected areas management frameworks in a more systematic way.

The questionnaire is addressed to Focal Points to the Bern Convention in all its 51 Contracting Parties. As a minimum one response (i.e. filled questionnaire, representing the institution of the Focal Point) from each country should be returned, but Focal Points are free to distribute this questionnaire further to other institutions if they may have an active position with regards to the subject of Climate Change and protected areas.

This questionnaire does not cover issues related to the constitution of Natura 2000 or the Emerald Network, where the elements of mitigation and adaptation to climate change are embedded in the methodology⁴ of setting-up these networks, namely addressing site size and connectivity between sites (even across country borders) which is discussed in the Biogeographical evaluation seminars or bi-lateral meetings on network sufficiency for both EU and non-EU countries. But it is assumed that more sites, or adjustments to site boundaries (both under the Natura 2000 or the Emerald networks) in future would be necessary to face Climate change challenges.

¹ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/bern-convention/recommendations-on-climate-change>

² <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/climatechange/pdf/Guidance%20document.pdf>

³ An analysis of the implementation of recommendations made by the Group of experts on Biodiversity and Climate change (2006-2011) <https://rm.coe.int/1680746249>

⁴ <https://rm.coe.int/168074669d> (p 82)

CLIMATE CHANGE AND PROTECTED AREAS: QUESTIONNAIRE

Abbreviations: CC=Climate Change, PA=Protected Areas (i.e. Natura 2000 and Emerald Network)

GENERAL INFORMATION			
Country	Iceland	Compiler	Trausti Baldursson
Date of submission	12. 10. 2018	E-mail	trausti@ni.is
		Telephone	+354 5900 500
		Institution	Icelandic Institute of Natural History / Environment Agency of Iceland

Part I. General indicative self-assessment of progress in the implementation of CC adaptation / mitigation measures linked with protected areas

1. Please provide score from 0 (no CC related issues were addressed) to 5 (ideal situation both in quantity and quality) in the grey area corresponding to each question.

I-1_A	Is the awareness about CC and acceptance that it is unavoidable sufficient/appropriate in your institution?	4
I-1_B	Are conservation objectives for protected areas developed so as to take into account the species, habitat types and ecosystems which are most likely to be affected by CC?	2
I-1_C	Are there adequate pro-active conservation measures in place for PAs which take into account CC aspects?	1
I-1_D	Is the success of conservation measures monitored, and are monitoring results publicly available and taken into account in reviewing conservation objectives and management techniques?	1

Additional comments if appropriate: The knowledge and awareness of cc and its possible effects is well known in Iceland. But resources to take effects of cc into account in every item above is very limited.

Legislation and regulations are in place to carry out conservation measures if necessary.

Here is a new report on cc and its impact in Iceland (only available in Icelandic).

<https://www.vedur.is/media/loftslag/Skyrsla-loftslagsbreytingar-2018-Vefur-NY.pdf>

Additional questions

I-1_E	Please provide an indicative coverage of sites (in %) of PA network in your country which have operative management plans in place that are systematically reviewed based on monitoring data:	Data not available at this moment.
I-1_F	Are there species and/or habitats or protected areas for which CC effects have been already documented in your country? Please provide a list with comments as appropriate. This is a free text. Where appropriate, please add also links to any relevant publication or web-resource (preferably in English):	Please see report above and comments.

Additional comments if appropriate:

Please see the report above. CC effects on e.g. glaciers/rivers, changes in vegetation and bird populations (sea

birds) (arrival time) is relatively well documented. The changes are sometimes inside PA's but this has not been systematically documented for the sites.

Part II. Specific account of problems and obstacles encountered in the implementation of Climate Change adaptation/mitigation measures linked with the management of protected areas

1. Please indicate (by ticking X in the corresponding box) the problems/obstacles in reaching sufficient awareness of CC in your institution. Select one or more of offered options, or describe in your own words:

II-1_A	None	<input type="checkbox"/>
II-1_B	Lack of information supporting the importance of CC for your country, or lack of knowledge where such information can be found	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
II-1_C	Information exists but there are difficulties in interpreting the evidence in a meaningful way for your country	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
II-1_D	There are no documented observations of negative trends of wild species and habitats in your country which can be attributed to CC	<input type="checkbox"/>
II-1_E	Other, please specify:	<input type="checkbox"/>

Additional comments if appropriate: The impact of cc in Iceland can be considered negative and positive depending on species or/and habitats. Our institutes are in the phase of trying to establish monitoring related to cc, specially biodiversity, and management plans for PA's. Because of lack of manpower and other resources and with a relatively big country this is difficult and costly.

2. Please indicate (by ticking X in the corresponding box) any obstacles in setting appropriate conservation objectives for protected areas taking into account CC. Select one or more of offered options, or describe in your own words:

II-2_A	None	<input type="checkbox"/>
II-2_B	Lack of analytical skills and experience in searching for relevant information and data interpretation	<input type="checkbox"/>
II-2_C	Poor information on presence of species and habitats in protected areas Lack of up-to-date data	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
II-2_D	The procedure for setting conservation objectives for individual species and habitats for each protected area is not established	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
II-2_E	Other, please specify:	<input type="checkbox"/>

Additional comments if appropriate: The flora and fauna is relatively well known in Iceland but information for specific areas can be less systematic.

3. Please indicate (by ticking X in the corresponding box) why appropriate conservation measures for CC adaptation/mitigation are not either fully or partly implemented. Select one or more of offered options, or

describe in your own words:		
II-3_A	None	<input type="checkbox"/>
II-3_B	Lack of knowledge/experience about appropriate management techniques	<input type="checkbox"/>
II-3_C	Difficulties to act in private land and to involve landowners	<input type="checkbox"/>
II-3_D	Lack of cross-sectoral cooperation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
II-3_E	Lack of funding	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
II-3_F	Other, please specify:	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Additional comments if appropriate: Lack of manpower (funding).</p>		

4. Please indicate (by ticking X in the corresponding box) the obstacles/problems in monitoring management results and sharing such information at national and/or international level. Select one or more of offered options, or describe in your own words:		
II-4_A	None	<input type="checkbox"/>
II-4_B	Lack of general monitoring scheme for PAs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
II-4_C	Lack of sufficiently qualified staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
II-4_D	Information exists but the importance of sharing it is not recognised	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
II-4_E	Other, please specify:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Additional comments if appropriate: At the moment our institutes are working on a “complete” monitoring plan for key species and ecosystems and for protected areas. This is in its initial phase. If funding as needed was available lack of sufficiently qualified staff would probably not be a problem.		

Part III. Ideas and suggestions on how the Bern Convention Secretariat could assist Contracting Parties to improve the implementation of Climate Change adaptation/mitigation measures associated with management of protected areas		
1. Please indicate (by ticking X in the corresponding box) possible suggestions for improving awareness of CC in your institution. Select one or more of offered options, or describe in your own words:		
III-1_A	Demonstrate (through seminars and study visits) how the experience from Natura 2000 can be transferred to the Emerald Network	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
III-1_B	Provide positive examples to show that many adaptation/mitigation measures “work in real life” and in some cases do not even require a lot of resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
III-1_C	Showcase examples of working organisational structures at national level and strategic policy documents supporting the awareness of CC at institutional level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
III-1_D	Other, please specify:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Additional comments if appropriate: All the above can be useful but without the necessary resources all of this has to be in right order. Iceland has not established Emerald Network sites but is working on it. To explain this please find attached <i>Report on progress, achievements and challenges in the implementation of the Emerald Network Calendar since the 8th meeting of the Group of Experts in September 2017.</i>		

2. Please indicate (by ticking X in the corresponding box) suggestions which could support the setting up of conservation objectives for protected areas taking into account CC. Select one or more of offered options, or describe in your own words:		
III-2_A	Training seminars on practical setting of conservation objectives at site level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
III-2_B	Training on how to find, use and interpret data on the vulnerability of ecosystems / species / habitats to CC and how they relate to site- and country-specific contexts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
III-2_C	Other, please specify:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Additional comments if appropriate:		

3. Please indicate (by ticking X in the corresponding box) suggestions which could support the implementation of conservation measures for CC adaptation/mitigation. Select one or more of offered options, or describe in your own words:		
III-3_A	Study tours to sites which already implement conservation measures for CC adaptation/mitigation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
III-3_B	Launch of an international knowledge exchange on site management similar to the “new bio-geographical process” in the EU ⁵ [This also relates to all other points in this section]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
III-3_C	Provide guidance on where to find published materials on adequate management techniques	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
III-3_D	Other, please specify:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Additional comments if appropriate:		

4. Please indicate (by ticking X in the corresponding box) suggestions which could support the monitoring of management results and the sharing of this information at national and/or international level. Select one or more of offered options, or describe in your own words:		
III-4_A	Seminars aimed to foster the development of monitoring systems of species and habitats	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
III-4_B	Training on adaptive management planning: how to use monitoring results to review conservation objectives	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
III-4_C	Other, please specify:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Additional comments if appropriate:		
<p>Almost all of the above (2,3 and 4) can be useful but it has to be taking into account that Iceland has limited resources (including manpower) so every step has to come at a right time and with sufficient backup to implement the outcome of seminars, training etc.</p>		

⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/seminars_en.htm

