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T-PVS/PA(2024)09

CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE  
AND NATURAL HABITATS

**Standing Committee**  
44<sup>th</sup> meeting

## **14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks**

17-18 April 2024  
(Vaduz)

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### **- MEETING REPORT -**

*Document prepared by  
the Secretariat of the Bern Convention*

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The Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks met in Vaduz (Liechtenstein) on 17-18 April 2024. The Standing Committee/Bureau is invited to:

- Take note of the meeting report of the Group of Experts;
- Thank the authorities of Liechtenstein for hosting the meeting of the Group of Experts;
- Take note of the election of Ms Danielle Hofmann as Chair of the Group of Experts;
- Examine and, if appropriate, adopt the draft recommendation wrapping up Parties' binding and non-binding obligations towards the Emerald Network and in a second step mandate the development of detailed guidance on unclear requirements;
- Endorse the proposed targets for the post-2020 Strategic Workplan of the Emerald Network;
- Mandate the revision of the Emerald Network Standard Data Form to keep it harmonised with the Natura 2000 Standard Data Form and to enable the development of the appropriate processes needed to designate Emerald Network sites;
- Take note that in the next future, Parties will deliver their Emerald Network databases to EEA's new Reportnet 3 delivery platform instead of the Central Data Repository (CDR);
- Welcome the outcomes of the EU4Environment project in the Eastern Partnership region;
- Welcome the request of the authorities of Liechtenstein to adopt their 2 candidate Emerald Network sites;
- Thank the authorities of Montenegro for their invitation to host the 2025 meeting of the Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks.

## **Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks**

### **1. Opening of the meeting**

The Secretariat opened the meeting and welcomed the participants. It thanked the authorities of Liechtenstein for hosting the 14<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks within the frame of the presidency of Liechtenstein of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. It further informed participants that Environment had become very high in the agenda of the Council of Europe as an outcome of the 4<sup>th</sup> Summit of Heads of States and Governments in Reykjavik in May 2023. Within the frame of the follow up of the Reykjavik Summit, a Council of Europe Strategy on the Environment could be elaborated in the next future.

### **2. Election of the Chair**

The Secretariat reminded participants that Mr Tore Opdahl (Norway) who chaired the Group of Experts on Protected and Ecological Networks for several years had changed jobs and had resigned from this position.

The Secretariat had received the candidature of Ms Danielle Hofmann who was also the Delegate of Switzerland to the Bern Convention. As there were no other applications, the participants elected by acclamation Ms Danielle Hofmann as Chair of the Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks.

#### **Decision of the Group of Experts**

The participants in the Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks elected Ms Danielle Hofmann as Chair of the Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks as for a mandate of 4 years as from 2024.

### **3. Adoption of the agenda**

The Group of Experts adopted the draft agenda (see Appendix 1)

### **4. Mandate of the Group and decisions of the 42<sup>nd</sup> and 43<sup>rd</sup> meetings of the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention**

The Secretariat recalled that Standing Committee to the Bern Convention invited the Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks to give priority to the clarification and possible further development of the Legal framework of the Emerald Network and to the post-2020 Strategic Workplan of the Emerald Network.

### **5. Vision and Strategic Plan of the Bern Convention for the period to 2030**

The Secretariat informed that the 41<sup>st</sup> Standing Committee to the Bern Convention adopted in 2021 a Vision for the period to 2030 ([T-PVS\(2021\)14](#)) and in 2023 the 43<sup>rd</sup> Standing Committee complemented it by adopting a strategic plan ([T-PVS\(2023\)18](#)).

The motto of the Vision was 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.”*

The Strategic Plan provided a guiding framework for the programmes and activities that were needed to achieve the Vision. The core of the Plan was a set of 5 agreed goals and 11 targets to be achieved by 2030 out of which the targets 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 were directly related to protected areas.

The Secretariat recalled that the priority activities proposed within the frame of Programme of Activity for 2024 and 2025 should contribute to the achievement of the above targets.

## **6. Development of the Emerald Network guidance and tools**

### **6.a Legal framework of the Emerald Network**

The Secretariat reminded participants that, in 2021, the Standing Committee had decided on a on a roadmap for either consolidating, clarifying, adjusting or complementing the legal framework of the Emerald Network. This roadmap defined 3 consultation phases of Contracting Parties:

1. A survey inviting Parties and Observers to respond to the question “Please identify what problems or challenges you face with implementing relevant elements of the Convention and other measures in place for Emerald Network sites, including in the frame of case-files”. Based on Parties responses, a paper with a description and analysis of the problems and challenges they face with Emerald Network implementation including issues associated with case-files, would be prepared and discussed at the Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks.
2. A dedicated session within the frame of the meeting of the Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks. The purpose of this session would be for Parties to identify any problems or challenges they face with implementing the relevant elements of the Convention and other measures in place for Emerald Network sites and to discuss possible solutions to address the problems/challenges identified.
3. For the Standing Committee to examine options to address the problems prepared in the light of the solutions identified by the Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks.

Mr Arie Trouwborst, consultant, recalled the developments since 2020 for either consolidating, clarifying, adjusting or complementing the legal framework of the Emerald Network. He then presented the outcomes of the survey carried out among Contracting Parties and Observers on the problems or challenges faced with the implementation of the Emerald Network to which 5 Contracting Parties had participated in. (see document [T-PVS/PA\(2024\)03](#)).

Almost all respondents were concerned that information regarding the Emerald Network was scattered across too many documents which was an obstacle for Parties to understand what binding requirements were. A single, concise document plainly indicating requirements regarding Emerald Network sites, distinguishing clearly between binding and non-binding ones could address this general concern.

Mr Trouwborst concluded that based on most recent survey of Parties but also considering the outcomes of a survey carried out in 2021, there was:

- Significant support for adopting clear statement, in a single brief document, of what can presently be stated with confidence, based on the Convention and current Resolutions and Recommendations, about the obligations of parties regarding Emerald Network sites, distinguishing clearly between binding and non-binding commitments.
- Significant support for further clarification of currently unclear aspects of legal framework as such, but no agreement on what aspects to prioritise.
- No consensus yet regarding further alignment with Natura 2000 regime.

In the subsequent discussion, participants in the Group of Experts discussed the opportunity of comparing the obligations of both the Natura 2000 the Emerald networks. This could be of particular interest of Parties candidate to the EU accession. The Secretariat reminded that the aim of the reflection on legal framework of the Emerald Network was to reduce or avoid further complaints related to Emerald Network sites.

Participants in the Group of Experts also expressed wishes for further guidance, namely on environment impact assessment and on management of Emerald Network sites.

In the end participants in the Group of Experts supported a two-step approach:

- To prepare a document bringing together in an accessible language binding and non-binding obligations and outlining unclear aspects of requirement of the legal framework. In the light of Mr Troubworst's advice, this document could take the form of a recommendation of the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention.
- To prepare detailed guidance documents on currently unclear requirements (results to be achieved under Article 4 of the Convention, monitoring and reporting, site protection status, site management measures, assessment and authorisation of projects, scope for exceptions under Article 9 of the Convention) and to give priority to areas which directly stem from the provisions of the convention.

### **Decision of the Group of Experts**

The participants in the Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks welcomed the conclusions of the survey carried out and mandated the Secretariat to prepare a draft recommendation wrapping up in an accessible language binding and non-binding obligations of Contracting Parties towards the Emerald Network and outlining unclear requirements for the consideration of the 44<sup>th</sup> Standing Committee to the Bern Convention.

The draft recommendation would be circulated to participants in the Group of Experts for comments before the meeting of the Standing Committee.

### **6.b Post-2020 Emerald Network strategic workplan**

Mr Otars Opermanis, consultant, reminded participants that in 2020, the Standing Committee welcomed the principles of the proposed post-2020 Strategic Workplan for the Emerald Network (as presented in document [T-PVS/PA\(2020\)04rev](#)). It mandated the Secretariat to further develop the workplan in light of Convention on Biological Diversity's global targets, the EU interpretative guidance related to the targets set in the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and the vision for the Bern Convention to 2030.

He presented revisited minimum targets for the Emerald Network for the period to 2030 ([T-PVS/PA\(2024\)05](#)) considering the capacity of Contracting Parties and the state of implementation of the Emerald Network in Contracting Parties.

He emphasized that the main objective of the Emerald Network was to ensure the long-term conservation of species and habitats protected by the Bern Convention and that were subject to site designation. The progress in achieving this goal was measured by the Sufficiency Index. The target proposed was an increase of the Sufficiency Index based on whether Parties benefited from 1, 2 or 3 biogeographical evaluations.

To measure progress in the implementation of the Phase II of the constitution process of the Emerald Network focusing on the legal protection of the Emerald Network sites, the target proposed was that by 2030, all Emerald Network sites which have undergone bio-geographical evaluations until 2028 would be adopted by the Standing Committee.

In relation to the Phase III of the constitution process of the Emerald Network, sites required management plans including conservation objectives and adequate conservation measures planned and implemented along with the monitoring of species and habitats. The target proposed was that by 2030, 40% of the Emerald Network sites would have management plans.

He concluded his presentation underlining that the prerequisite for achieving the targets proposed was that Parties update of their Emerald Network databases on a regular basis. Therefore, Parties would be required to submit two updated Emerald Network databases by 2030.

The table below wrapped up the proposed minimum targets to be achieved by 2030:

Number of indicator	Indicator description	Proposed 2030 minimum target value
1	Number of new or updated Emerald Network databases followed by biogeographical evaluations	2
2	Sufficiency Index A proportion of “sufficient” conclusions versus all conclusions	Group 0 (no biogeographical evaluation): 25% Group 1 (1 biogeographical evaluation): 35% Group 2 (2 biogeographical evaluations): 50% Group 3 (3 biogeographical evaluations): 60%
3	All Emerald Network sites which went through the biogeographical evaluation process until 2028 should be adopted by the Standing Committee by 2030.	Qualitative: yes
4	A proportion of Emerald Network sites with site management plans	40%

### Decision of the Group of Experts

The participants in the Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks welcomed the targets and invited the Standing Committee to endorse them and to consider their possible revision in the light of the mid-term review of the post-2020 Strategic workplan of the Emerald Network.

### 6.c Amended Natura 2000 Standard Data Form

Ms Laura Patricia Gavilán presented to participants the revised Natura 2000 Standard Data Form (SDF) on behalf of the European Environment Agency (EEA). The SDF had been revised to improve the availability and quality of data, to provide information on conservation objectives, measures and management effectiveness and to ensure more coherence with the reporting under the Nature Directives and inform the EU 2030 Biodiversity Strategy. Furthermore, the revised SDF was compatible with EEA’s new Reportnet 3 delivery platform. Ms Gavilán further informed participants that the revised Natura 2000 SDF would enter into force on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2025 and that the introduced new fields would remain optional until the end of 2027.

Mr Marc Roekaerts, consultant, informed participants on the opportunity to reflect the changes of the Natura 2000 SDF into the Emerald Network SDF. He recalled that the Emerald Network and Natura 2000 dataflows were harmonised and that the Emerald Network tools were hosted onto EEA’s IT infrastructure. He emphasized that the current Emerald Network SDF would not be maintained beyond 2026.

He also underlined that the new fields on conservation objectives, measures and management effectiveness introduced in the Natura 2000 SDF could help develop additional indicators on

management effectiveness for measuring progress on target 1.3 of the Strategic Plan of the Bern Convention for the period to 2030 which reads and of the third phase of the constitution process of the Emerald Network.

#### **Decision of the Group of Experts**

The participants in the Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks took note of the revised Natura 2000 Standard Data Form and agreed an information document should be provided/presented at the next the Standing Committee so Parties can consider the implications of and options for revising the Emerald Network Standard Data Form along the changes introduced in the Natura 2000 SDF, for example, by keeping changes optional for non-EU Contracting Parties. Participants also agreed to consider any feedback from Parties at the next meeting of the Group of Experts. They further invited the Standing Committee to mandate the Secretariat to propose, in liaison with the European Environment Agency, options for the transition from the current Emerald Network SDF to a revised version together with a timeline.

#### **6.d Reportnet 3 delivery platform**

Mr Jonathan Maidens, European Environment Agency, updated participants on the new Reportnet 3 delivery platform. Reportnet 3 had been developed because of increasing number of reporting obligations to be processed and an aging technology of the former delivery platform.

Reportnet 3 was more user friendly and enabled collaborative work.

He reassured that the overall reporting process would not change. Reporters would need to collect data, deliver them and get them validated. He emphasized that Reportnet 3 would store data and not files anymore.

Mr Marc Roekaerts, consultant, informed participants of the extent to which Reportnet 3 would impact the Emerald Network dataflow. As from 2025, EU member States would use the new Natura 2000 SDF and Reportnet 3. The current SDF Manager would not be maintained, and it would even not be possible to install the SDF Manager on recent computers.

The Natura 2000 tools (Viewer and Web App) would be moved to an upgraded system integrating all the scientific and administrative aspects of the management of the network. The Emerald Network tools should migrate as well in order to maintain the automated update of the Emerald Network Viewer and Barometer.

#### **Decision of the Group of Experts**

The participants in the Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks took note of the delivery process to Reportnet 3 and mandated the Secretariat to develop a guidance document for the attention of reporters.

### **7. State of play of the Emerald Network and future perspectives**

#### **7.a European Union for Environment Programme in the Eastern Partnership region**

Mr Otars Opermanis, consultant, informed participants of the 5 objectives of the EU4Environment project implemented in the Eastern Partnership region, namely:

- Greener decision-making;

- Circular economy and new growth opportunities;
- An environmental level playing field;
- Ecosystem services and livelihoods;
- Knowledge sharing and coordination.

The fourth objective on “Ecosystem services and livelihoods” was implemented by the World Bank. The objective included:

- The development of the Emerald Network;
- The promotion of sustainable natural resources management;
- The support to the promotion of legal trade and prevention of illegal trade in wood products;
- The enhancement of strategic financing to the forest and natural resource management sectors.

The project produced the following outputs:

Armenia: a review of the Emerald Network, the development of a roadmap for the period to 2030, the elaboration of guidelines for the development of management plans, the draft of one management plan for an Emerald Network site and capacity building events.

Azerbaijan: the development of a roadmap for the period to 2030, the elaboration of guidelines for the development of management plans, the draft of one management plan for an Emerald Network site.

Georgia: an analysis of the Emerald Network and the elaboration of guidelines for the management of forest habitats.

Republic of Moldova: the development of a roadmap for the period to 2030, the elaboration of guidelines for the development of management plans, the draft of one management plan for an Emerald Network site and capacity building events.

### **Decision of the Group of Experts**

The participants in the Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks took note of the outcomes of EU4Environment project.

## **7.b National roadmaps developed by Eastern Partnership countries**

Ms Veronica Josu, Delegate to the Bern Convention of the Republic of Moldova, presented to participants the draft roadmap for the development of the Emerald Network in the Republic of Moldova for the period to 2030.

The roadmap was foreseen for a term of 10 years and included activities and actions that would assure an increase of the Emerald Network area up to 10% towards 2030, reaching a sufficiency index of approximately 80% by 2030 and developing management plans for 90% of the sites.

The roadmap included:

- The collection of information on the current ecological status and distribution of species and habitats of European interest and supporting the identification of new Emerald Network sites.
- The development and publication of the Register of Emerald Network sites on the website of the Environment Agency.
- The development of a national dataflow resulting *inter alia* in a regular reporting to the Bern Convention on conservation progress and updates on species and habitats.



- The identification of additional sites to be included in the Emerald Network.
- The development of monitoring guidelines and reporting tools within the frame of the provisions of the Bern Convention.
- The development of management plans for Emerald Network sites.

### **7.c Emerald Network in Liechtenstein**

Mr Oliver Mueller, Delegate to Bern Convention of Liechtenstein, informed participants of the development of the Emerald Network in his country.

Liechtenstein counted 10 Nature Reserves out of which the 2 largest were already Emerald Network candidate sites. The 2 candidate sites represented 0.9% of the territory and reached a sufficiency index of 9.6%.

The priority of the authorities was the finalisation of a Biodiversity Action Plan in order to raise political attention and provide a frame of action for the achieving the targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Diversity Framework and of the Strategic Plan of the Bern Convention for the period to 2030.

Mr Oliver Mueller also concluded his presentation by informing participants that Liechtenstein would nominate the 2 Emerald Network candidate sites as adopted sites at the forthcoming meeting of the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention.

#### **Decision of the Group of Experts**

The participants in the Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks welcomed the decision of the authorities of Liechtenstein to nominate their 2 Emerald Network candidate sites for adoption by 44<sup>th</sup> Standing Committee to the Bern Convention.

### **7.d Development of the network in Contracting Parties and nomination of Emerald Network sites**

The Chair invited Contracting Parties to present highlights in the development of the Emerald Network in 2023.

The representative of Armenia informed that management plans were developed for 2 Emerald Network sites within the frame of the EU4Environment project and that a public consultation was currently carried out on the delineation of the revised list of Emerald Network sites.

The representative of Georgia reported that management plans were developed for 9 Emerald Network sites, that it was planned to revise the Standard Data Forms of the 66 Emerald Network sites to mainly address the conclusions of the last biogeographical evaluation. She further informed that guidance on the Emerald Network was in preparation and that Georgia was working towards integrating the objectives of the Strategic Plan of the Bern Convention for the period to 2030 into their National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan to 2030.

The representative of Montenegro informed that research was carried out for 27 Emerald Network sites and that 60% of the territory had been mapped.

The representative of North Macedonia explained that 35 areas of conservation interest representing 29% of the territory had been identified and that the Standard Data Forms of 21 areas would be revised within the frame of an on-going IPA project.

The representative of Serbia informed that their focus was on the targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Diversity Framework and of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2030 and that an updated Emerald Network database could be submitted in 2025.

The representative of Switzerland reported that they engaged in a review of their national protected areas and that further development of the Emerald Network was envisaged in particular within the frame of the work of the Cantons on the ecological infrastructure.

The representative of Türkiye acknowledged that there was a lack of awareness and legal basis for the development of the Emerald Network in her country.

The representative of the UK recalled that they revised the Standard Data Form of 3 Emerald Network sites in 2023 and informed that they would consider providing relevant data so as to integrate the Emerald Network Barometer and assessing the sufficiency of bird species.

The Secretariat recalled that Group of Experts was mandated to examine any proposals of nomination of Emerald Network candidate or adopted sites.

The Secretariat reminded participants of the information already provided by the representative of Liechtenstein under agenda item 7c namely the nomination of their 2 candidate Emerald Network sites for adoption at the 44<sup>th</sup> Standing Committee.

The Secretariat recalled that Contracting Parties should provide the Secretariat with the required information and data regarding the sites nominated as candidates or proposed for adoption by 1st November at the very latest.

### **Decision of the Group of Experts**

Participants in the Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks took note of the recent developments of the Emerald Network in Contracting Parties.

## **8. Future work of the Group of Experts**

### **8.a Programme of activities 2024 - 2025**

The Secretariat reminded participants activities should support in priority the implementation of the post-2020 Strategic Workplan of the Emerald Network.

Parties were encouraged to submit at least two new Emerald Network databases which should result in biogeographical evaluation seminars.

Further work should be engaged to develop guidance documents to support Parties in the implementation of the Emerald Network and to ensure the Emerald Network IT tools continue to function with the progressive entry into force of Reportnet 3 and remain streamlined with Natura 2000.

### **8.b Date and place of the next meeting of the Group of Experts**

The 2025 meeting of the Group of Experts will be scheduled end of September – beginning of October 2025 and could take place in Montenegro.

**9. Any other business**

The representative of Europarc suggested that an Emerald Network Award reflecting the criteria of the Natura 2000 award is created. The Secretariat took note of the suggestion and informed participants that it would look into the functioning of the Natura 2000 award and report back to the Group of Experts on the feasibility of launching a similar award for the Emerald Network.

**10. Conclusions of the meeting**

The Chair thanked the participants, the experts, and the authorities of Liechtenstein and declared the meeting closed.



### Appendix I – Agenda

		Documents	Expected results
<i>Wednesday 17 April</i>			
9.00	<b>11. Opening of the meeting</b>	<b>Opening address by the Secretariat of the Bern Convention</b>	
	<b>12. Election of the Chair</b>		
	<b>13. Adoption of the agenda</b>	Meeting agenda T-PVS/Agenda(2024)01  For adoption	<b>Members of and observers to the Group of Experts are informed of the aims of the meeting and adopt the agenda.</b>
	<b>14. Mandate of the Group and decisions of the 42<sup>nd</sup> and 43<sup>rd</sup> meetings of the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention</b>	<b>Report of the 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks</b>  <a href="#">T-PVS/PA(2022)07</a>	<b>The salient points of the 42<sup>nd</sup> and 43<sup>rd</sup> meetings of the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention are recalled.</b>

	<p><i>Presentation by the Secretariat</i></p>	<p>Extract from the list of decisions and adopted texts on the protection of habitats of the 42<sup>nd</sup> and 43<sup>rd</sup> meetings of the Standing Committee</p> <p><a href="#">T-PVS/PA(2024)01</a> and <a href="#">T-PVS/PA(2024)02</a></p> <p>For information</p>	
	<p><b>15. Vision and Strategic Plan of the Bern Convention for the period to 2030</b></p> <p><i>Presentation by the Secretariat</i></p> <p><i>Members of and observers to the Group of Experts are informed of the Vision and Strategic Plan of the Bern Convention for the period to 2030 and invited to reflect on the contribution of the work of the Group of Experts to the achievement of the Strategic Plan.</i></p>	<p><b>Strategic Plan for the Bern Convention for the period to 2030</b></p> <p><a href="#">T-PVS(2023)18</a></p> <p><b>Vision for the Bern Convention for the period to 2030</b></p> <p><a href="#">T-PVS(2021)14</a></p> <p>For information</p>	<p><b>Members of and observers to the Group of Experts take note of the Vision and Strategic Plan of the Bern Convention for the period to 2030.</b></p>

	<p><b>16. Development of the Emerald Network guidance and tools</b></p>		
	<p><b>6.a Legal framework of the Emerald Network</b></p> <p><i>Presentation by Mr Arie Trouwborst, consultant</i></p> <p><i>Members of and observers to the Group of Experts are informed of the challenges and problems faced by Parties with the implementation of the Emerald Network and are invited to identify possible solutions.</i></p>	<p><b>Challenges and problems faced by Contracting Parties with the implementation of the Emerald Network – Possible solutions</b></p> <p><a href="#">T-PVS/PA(2024)03</a></p> <p><b>Future work on the legal framework of the Emerald Network – possible next steps</b></p> <p><a href="#">T-PVS/PA(2021)01</a></p> <p><b>Outcomes of the consultation of Contracting Parties on how to follow up on the conclusions of the 2020 legal analysis</b></p> <p><a href="#">T-PVS/PA(2021)02</a></p> <p><b>Obligations of Bern Convention parties regarding the conservation of candidate and adopted Emerald Network sites: a legal analysis</b></p> <p><a href="#">T-PVS/PA(2020)07</a></p>	<p><b>Members of and observers to the Group of Experts agree on the solutions to the challenges and problems reported by Contracted Parties and provide the Secretariat with guidance for developing concrete options for addressing these challenges and problems.</b></p>

		<p><b>For discussion and decision</b></p>	
	<p><b>6.b Post-2020 Emerald Network strategic workplan</b></p> <p><i>Presentation by Mr Otars Opermanis, consultant</i></p> <p><i>Members of and observers to the Group of Experts are reminded of the post-2020 Emerald Network strategic workplan and are invited to exchange views on the targets to be achieved in the light of the Vision of the Bern Convention for the period to 2030 and its related Strategic Plan as well as the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.</i></p>	<p><b>Revisited targets for the Emerald Network for the period to 2030</b></p> <p><a href="#"><u>T-PVS/PA(2024)05</u></a></p> <p><b>Post-2020 Emerald Network strategic workplan</b></p> <p><a href="#"><u>T-PVS/PA(2020)04rev</u></a></p> <p><b>Monitoring framework for the implementation of the Emerald Network</b></p> <p><a href="#"><u>T-PVS/PA(2020)02</u></a></p> <p><b>Strategic Plan for the Bern Convention for the period to 2030</b></p> <p>T-PVS(2023)18</p> <p><b>For discussion and decision</b></p>	<p><b>Members of and observers to the Group of Experts agree on relevant targets to be achieved within the frame of the Post-2020 Emerald Network strategic workplan.</b></p>

	<p><b>6.c Amended Natura 2000 Standard Data Form</b></p> <p><i>Presentation by Ms Laura Patricia Gavilán on behalf of the European Environment Agency</i></p> <p><i>Presentation by Mr Marc Roekaerts, consultant</i></p> <p><i>Members of and observers to the Group of Experts are informed of the changes in the Natura 2000 Standard Data Form (SDF) and are invited to exchange views on the interest of these changes for the Emerald Network SDF and the indicators of the Emerald Network Barometer.</i></p>	<p><b>Document underlining the changes in the revised Natura 2000 Standard Data Form</b></p> <p><a href="#">T-PVS/PA(2024)04</a></p> <p><b>For discussion and decision</b></p>	<p><b>Members of and observers to the Group of Experts take note of the amendments in the Natura 2000 SDF and provide the Secretariat with guidance on the extent to which the amendments should be reflected in the Emerald Network SDF.</b></p>
	<p><b>6.d Reportnet 3 delivery platform</b></p> <p><i>Presentation by Mr Jonathan Maidens – European Environment Agency</i></p> <p><i>Members of and observers to the Group of Experts are informed of the new delivery process to Reportnet 3 and are invited to exchange views on the implications for the delivery of Emerald Network databases.</i></p>	<p><b>For discussion and decision</b></p>	<p><b>Members of and observers to the Group of Experts take note of the delivery process to Reportnet 3 and provide the Secretariat with guidance on follow up work.</b></p>



	<b>17. State of play of the Emerald Network and future perspectives</b>		
	<p><b>7.a European Union for Environment Programme in the Eastern Partnership region</b></p> <p><i>Presentation by Mr Otars Opermanis on behalf of the World Bank</i></p> <p><i>Members of and observers to the Group of Experts are informed the results of the European Union for Environment Programme implemented by the World Bank in the Eastern Partnership region.</i></p>	<p>Website <a href="#">EU4Environment</a></p> <p><b>For information</b></p>	<p><b>Members of and observers to the Group of Experts take note of the progress in the implementation of the European Union for Environment Programme.</b></p>
	<b>7.b National roadmaps developed by Eastern Partnership countries</b>	<a href="#">Link to the Roadmap of the Republic of Moldova</a>	<p><b>Members of and observers to the Group of Experts take note of the roadmaps developed by Eastern Partnership countries.</b></p>

	<p><i>Presentation by Ms Veronica Josu – representative of the Republic of Moldova</i></p> <p><i>Members of and observers to the Group of Experts are informed of the roadmaps developed by Eastern Partnership countries for implementing the Post-2020 Emerald Network strategic workplan and are invited to exchange views on the extent the roadmaps could be a source of inspiration for other Parties to the Convention.</i></p>	<p><b>For information</b></p>	
	<p><b>7.c Emerald Network in Liechtenstein</b></p> <p><i>Presentation by Mr Oliver Mueller, Office of Environment of Liechtenstein</i></p> <p><i>Members of and observers to the Group of Experts are informed of the highlights of the Emerald Network in Liechtenstein.</i></p>	<p><b>For information</b></p>	<p><b>Members of and observers to the Group of Experts take note of the highlights of the Emerald Network in Liechtenstein.</b></p>

<p><b>7.d Development of the network in Contracting Parties and nomination of Emerald Network sites</b></p> <p><i>Tour de table</i></p> <p><i>Reminder by the Secretariat</i></p> <p><i>Representatives of the Contracting Parties are invited to update the Group of Experts of the latest developments regarding the Emerald Network in their countries.</i></p> <p><i>Representatives of the Contracting Parties and Observer states are invited to confirm that all newly proposed sites from their latest national databases are to be sent for official nomination as candidate sites to the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention.</i></p> <p><i>Representatives of the Contracting Parties and Observer states are invited to inform the Secretariat whether their country is submitting its candidate Emerald Network sites for official adoption as Emerald Network sites by the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention.</i></p>		<p><b>Members of and observers to the Group of Experts take note of the recent developments of the Emerald Network in Contracting Parties.</b></p> <p><b>Countries may request the official nomination of their newly proposed Emerald Network sites as candidate Emerald Network sites by the Standing Committee.</b></p> <p><b>Countries may request the official adoption as Emerald Network sites (ASCI) of their candidate sites by the Standing Committee.</b></p>
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		<b>For discussion and decision</b>	
	<b>18. Future work of the Group of Experts</b>		
	<p><b>8.a Programme of activities 2024 - 2025</b></p> <p><i>Presentation by the Secretariat</i></p> <p><i>Members of and observers to the Group of Experts are invited to propose and discuss priority activities in 2024 and 2025.</i></p>	<b>For discussion and decision</b>	<b>Priority activities are identified and will feed into the 2024 programme of work and/or be included in the 2025 draft Programme of Activity of the Bern Convention (subject to the availability of financial and human resources)</b>
	<p><b>8.b Date and place of the next meeting of the Group of Experts</b></p> <p><i>Presentation by the Secretariat</i></p> <p><i>Members of and observers to the Group of Experts wishing to host the next meeting of the Group of Experts are invited to inform the Secretariat.</i></p>	<b>For decision</b>	<b>The provisional venue and dates of the next meeting are agreed on.</b>
	<b>19. Any other business</b>		

	<b>20. Conclusions of the meeting</b>		
<b>12.00</b>	<i>Thursday 18 April</i> <b>End of the formal meeting</b>		
<b>12.30</b>	<b>Lunch in Ruggell hosted by Ms Sabine MONAUNI, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Home Affairs, Economy and Environment of Liechtenstein</b>		
<b>13.30 - 17.00</b>	<i>Excursion to the Ruggeller Riet Nature Reserve led by Dr. Jürgen Kühnis and Rainer Kühnis,</i> <b>Opening Remarks by Ms Sabine MONAUNI, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Home Affairs, Economy and Environment of Liechtenstein and Mr Christian Öhri, Mayor of Ruggell</b>		



## Appendix 2 – List of Participants

### CONTRACTING PARTIES

Contracting Party	Name
<b>Armenia</b>	<b>Mr Hakob MATEVOSYAN</b> Chief Specialist of the department of Specially Protected Areas and Biodiversity Policy Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Armenia, 0010, Government Building 3, Republic Square, Yerevan
<b>Czech Republic</b>	<b>Mr Jan PLESNÍK</b> Adviser for foreign affairs, Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic
<b>Georgia</b>	<b>Ms Salome NOZADZE</b> Biodiversity Specialist Biodiversity and Forestry Department Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia
<b>Hungary</b>	<b>Dr. Andrea RISKÓ</b> Head of Ecology Unit Department for Nature Conservation, Ministry of Agriculture
<b>Liechtenstein</b>	<b>Mr Oliver MUELLER</b> Office of Environment Department Forest and Landscape
<b>Republic of Moldova</b>	<b>Ms Veronica JOSU</b> Policy on Nature Conservation and Biosafety Department Ministry of Environment
<b>Montenegro</b>	<b>Ms Anela SIJARIĆ</b> Head of the Department for Freshwater and Terrestrial Ecosystems Directorate for Climate Change and Nature Protection Ministry of Tourism, Ecology, Sustainable Development and Northern Development IV Proleterske brigade 19, 81000 Podgorica
<b>North Macedonia</b>	<b>Ms Marija DIRLEVSKA–CHALOSKA</b> National Focal Point for Bern Convention Head of biodiversity and GMO Unit Department of Nature Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning Square “Presveta Bogorodica” no. 3 Skopje
<b>Serbia</b>	<b>Ms Snezana PROKIC</b> Ministry of Environmental Protection of the Republic of Serbia
<b>Switzerland</b>	<b>Ms Danielle HOFMANN</b> Office fédéral de l'environnement OFEV Division Biodiversité et paysage Section Faune sauvage et conservation des espèces  <b>Ms Gabriella SILVESTRI</b> Office fédéral de l'environnement OFEV

<b>Türkiye</b>	<b>Ms Zerrin KARAARSLAN ÜNVER</b> Landscape Architect (MSc.) General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks
<b>United Kingdom</b>	<b>Mr Simon MACKOWN</b> Head of Species Recovery and Reintroductions Policy National Biodiversity and Ivory Team Wildlife Division, Defra  <b>Ms Maria CHADWICK</b>  <b>Ms Sarah SCOTT</b> Technical advisor for the Bern Convention Senior International Biodiversity Adviser

#### OBSERVERS

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Representative</b>
<b>EUROPARC</b>	<b>Mr Stefano SANTI</b>
<b>European Environment Agency</b>	<b>Mr Jonathan MAIDENS</b> (online)
<b>Pro Natura</b>	<b>Mr. Friedrich WULF</b> Head, International Biodiversity Policy Pro Natura – Friends of the Earth Switzerland Dornacherstr. 192, 4053 Basel

#### EXPERTS

<b>Mr Arie TROUWBORST</b>	Professor of Nature Conservation Law Tilburg Law School The Netherlands
<b>Mr Marc ROEKAERTS</b>	Consultant Belgium
<b>Mr Otars OPERMANIS</b>	Consultant Latvia
<b>Ms Laura Patricia GAVILÁN</b> (online)	Consultant Spain

#### SECRETARIAT OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

<b>Mr Gianluca SILVESTRINI</b>	Head of the Biodiversity and Landscape Division
<b>Mr Marc HORY</b>	Project Manager Secretariat of the Bern Convention