



Convention on the Conservation of
European Wildlife and Natural Habitats

Standing Committee

Resolution No. 5 (1998) concerning the rules for the Network of Areas of Special Conservation Interest (Emerald Network)

(Adopted by the Standing Committee on 4 December 1998)

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

Having regard to its Resolution No. 1 (1989) on the provisions relating to the conservation of habitats;

Having regard to its Recommendation No. 14 (1989) on species habitat conservation and on the conservation of endangered natural habitats;

Having regard to its Recommendation No. 16 (1989) on Areas of Special Conservation Interest;

Having regard to its Resolution No. 3 (1996) on the setting-up of a pan-European Ecological Network;

Having regard to its Resolution No. 4 (1996) listing endangered natural habitats requiring specific habitat conservation measures;

Having regard to its Resolution No. 6 (1998) listing the species requiring specific habitat conservation measures;

Considering that for Contracting Parties which are Member States of the European Union Emerald Network sites are those of the Natura 2000 Network. Thus the procedures established by European Council Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC will be the only rules to apply;

Noting that, following points 3 and 4 of Resolution No 3 (1996), the use of the term "governments" in this resolution means the governments of the States Contracting Parties to the Convention, of other Council of Europe States and of other States which are observer States in the Standing Committee of the Convention,

Resolves to adopt hereby the Rules for the Emerald Network of Areas of Special Conservation Interest:

Article 1

Any area, whether land or sea, where that area fits one or several of the conditions established in Recommendation No. 16 (1989), point 1, may form part of the Emerald Network.

Article 2

2.1. Areas of Special Conservation Interest (ASCIs) to be included in the Emerald Network shall be designated by the governments.

2.2. The Standing Committee may advise the government concerned on the advisability of designating one or more ASCIs that are of a particular interest to the Emerald Network.

Article 3

3.1. Any government designating an ASCI shall deposit a standard Data Form with the Secretariat. A model for this Standard Data Form, derived from and compatible with the Natura 2000 Standard Data Form, is found as appendix to this resolution. Governments are encouraged to provide the information for the Standard Data Form on electronic support.

3.2. Where the designations conform with the provisions of Article 1 of this resolution, the Secretariat shall notify the government of the fact and shall register them.

3.3. If not, the Standing Committee shall advise the government concerned to withdraw the designation. If the government nevertheless maintains the designation, the Standing Committee may decide not to accept it.

3.4. The information on ASCIs shall be public and stored in a database, except for information communicated as confidential. Governments are requested not to send any confidential information in electronic form, but to do it separately, mentioning its confidentiality. Confidential information shall not be included in the database and shall not become public.

Article 4

4.1 The governments shall undertake surveillance of the conservation status of species and natural habitats in designated ASCIs

4.2. The governments shall inform the Secretariat of any important changes likely to affect negatively in a substantial way the ecological character of the designated ASCIs or the conditions having justified their designation.

4.3. Where any such changes come to light, the Standing Committee may advise the government concerned on steps to be taken to ensure conformity with the provisions of Recommendation No. 16 (1989).

4.4. Exceptions to the provisions of Articles 4, 5, 6 and 7 of the Convention in designated ASCIs shall be regulated by Article 9 of the Convention.

Article 5

5.1. The Group of Experts on the Setting-up of the Emerald Network shall follow the progress of the Emerald Network under the aegis of the Standing Committee. It will endeavour, under the aegis of the Standing Committee, to publish regularly lists of designated ASCIs and their character and to make that information available in electronic form.

5.2. The Standing Committee shall periodically review the contribution of the Emerald Network towards the achievement of the objectives of the Convention. In this context a designated ASCI may be considered for declassification where this is warranted by natural developments noted as a result of the surveillance provided for in Article 4.1.

Article 6

The Standing Committee shall encourage governments to implement Recommendation No. 16 (1989) on designated ASCIs and shall use its best endeavours to solve any difficulty that may arise in the implementation or interpretation of this resolution.

Revised appendix to Resolution No. 5(1998)

Emerald Network Standard Data Form

(Adopted by the Standing Committee on 12 December 2025)

Background colors represent the status of the data field between former and the proposed revised SDF:

	New additional field
	Data field of the Natura 2000 Standard Data Form which is not applicable for the Emerald Network
	Existing data field with modified definitions

Main sections of the Standard Data Form

1. Site identification	To be filled for each site
2. Site area and location	
3. Ecological information	
3.1 Habitat types	To be filled for each Resolution No. 4 (1996) habitat type present on the site
3.2 Species	To be filled for each Resolution No. 6 (1998) species present on the site
3.3 Other species	Optional
4. Site description	To be filled for each site
5. Site management	
6. Geospatial representation	

DATA FIELDS OF THE EMERALD STANDARD DATA FORM

1. Site Identification	
1.1 Site type	Pre-defined options: ☐ A: site only important for Birds ☐ B: site important for habitats and non-avian species ☐ C: site important for birds, non-avian species and/or habitats
1.2 Site code	Stable unique code
1.3 Site name	Name of the site in Latin alphabet
1.3.1 Site name non-Latin alphabet (optional)	Name of the site in non-Latin alphabet
1.4 Respondent	
1.4.1 Name of the organisation	Free text and language tag
1.4.2 Contact point in the organisation (optional)	Part of the organisation responsible for the compilation of data in the SDF
1.4.3 Postal address	Free text and language tag
1.4.4 Functional mailbox email address	Functional Email address of functional mailbox, not personal
1.4.5 Website with contact information	Website containing the official contact information of the organisation
1.5 Site classification/proposal/designation dates	
1.5.1 Date Site Proposed as ASCI (Emerald):	Date
1.5.2 Date Site Accepted as Candidate ASCI (Emerald):	Date
1.5.3 Date Site Accepted as ASCI (Emerald):	Date
1.5.4 Date Site Designated as Adopted ASCI (Emerald):	Date
1.5.5 National legal reference of ASCI designation:	Free text and language tag; explanations can be given, e.g. for classification or designation dates of sites
1.5.6 Explanations (optional)	Free text and language tag; explanations can be given
1.5.7 Emerald Site Status	Extra field not to be filled by the countries. It will be automatically included during the creation of a new Emerald Network Release ☐ Proposed ☐ Candidate ☐ Adopted

2. Site area and location

2.1 Site area	
2.1.1 Area	Area of the site in hectares
2.1.2 Reason for area difference with spatial dataset (if any) Optional	Pre-defined options: ☐ Cliff or steep area ☐ Cave ☐ Projection to ETRS89 ☐ Other - the spatial representation does not correspond to the area size in field 2.1.1 for other reasons. Give explanation in field 2.1.3
2.1.3 Reason for area difference – explanations Optional	Free text field and language tag. It must be filled if 'Other' is indicated in field 2.1.2.
2.2 Administrative region (optional)	
2.2.1 Administrative region code	Code from NUTS code-list (see Emerald Network reference portal)
2.2.2 Administrative region name	Name from NUTS code-list (see Emerald Network reference portal)
2.3 Biogeographical and marine regions	
2.3.1 Region code	Code-list for biogeographical and marine regions (see Emerald Network reference portal)
2.3.2 Percentage	For sites located across two or more regions, give the percentage coverage in each of these regions

3. Ecological information

3.1 Habitat types of the Annex to Resolution No. 4 (1996)

3.1.a Essential information (habitat type)	
3.1.1 Habitat type code	Fill in according to code-list for Resolution No. 4 (1996) habitat types (see Emerald Network reference portal)
3.1.2 Priority form Not applicable for the Emerald Network	Indicate if the habitat type is a priority form of 6210, 7130 or 9430

3.1.3 Non-presence	Pre-defined options: ☐ the habitat is no longer present in the site ☐ the habitat type is not present and was not present at the time of designation but its re-establishment is planned. Only the fields 3.1.1 (Habitat code), 3.1.6 (Method used), 3.1.7 (Period of last data collection), 3.1.13 (Conservation objectives), 3.1.16 (Update date) need to be filled. The field 3.1.4 (Cover) must be 0 (zero). The other fields of section 3.1 should be left blank.
3.1.4 Cover	Cover of the habitat type in hectares
3.1.5 Caves	Number of caves (included in habitat type codes H1 and A1.44, A3 and A4.)
3.1.6 Method used for cover	Pre-defined options: ☐ complete survey or a statistically robust estimate; ☐ based mainly on extrapolation from a limited amount of data; ☐ based mainly on expert opinion with very limited data.
3.1.7 Period of last data collection Optional	Start date and end date of the period (month and year); if such information is unknown indicate 'survey older than 2022'.
3.1.b Site assessment (habitat type)	
3.1.8 Significance	Indicate if habitat type occurrence is non-significant; For significant occurrences all fields of section 3.1.b must be filled whereas for non-significant occurrences only the fields 3.1.8 (Significance) and 3.1.16 (Update date) of section 3.1.b have to be filled.
3.1.9 Representativity	Pre-defined options: ☐ A: excellent representativity ☐ B: good representativity ☐ C: significant representativity
3.1.10 Relative surface	Pre-defined options: ☐ A1: $100\% \geq p > 75\%$ ☐ A2: $75\% \geq p > 50\%$ ☐ A3: $50\% \geq p > 25\%$ ☐ A4: $25\% \geq p > 15\%$ ☐ B: $15\% \geq p > 2\%$ ☐ C: $2\% \geq p > 0\%$
3.1.11 Relative surface explanations (optional)	Free text and language tag
3.1.12 Degree of conservation	

3.1.12.1 Degree of conservation – categorised	Pre-defined options: ☐ A: excellent degree of conservation (nearly all of the habitat area in good condition) ☐ B: good degree of conservation (most of the habitat area in good condition) ☐ C: reduced degree of conservation (most of the habitat area in not in good condition) ☐ X: unknown degree of conservation (most or all of the habitat area in unknown condition)
3.1.12.2 Degree of conservation – area Optional	Give the area in hectares for each of the categories: ☐ Good condition: ...[ha] ☐ Not-good condition: ...[ha] ☐ Unknown condition: ...[ha]
3.1.12.3 Degree of conservation – method used Optional	☐ Complete survey or statistically robust estimate in hectares (for example taken from mapping in management plans) ☐ Based mainly on extrapolation from a limited amount of data (expert judgement) ☐ Based mainly on expert opinion with very limited data (based on partial mapping data) ☐ Insufficient or no data available
3.1.13 Conservation objectives Optional	Pre-defined options: ☐ Prevent deterioration ☐ Maintain the habitat type's surface area and its good condition ☐ Enlarge the area of the habitat type ☐ Improve the habitat type condition ☐ Re-establish the habitat type ☐ Other
3.1.14 Conservation objectives – explanations Optional	Free text and language tag

3.1.15 Global	Pre-defined options: ☐ A: excellent value ☐ B: good value ☐ C: significant value
3.1.16 Update date Optional	Year and month

3.2 Species referred to in Resolution No. 6 (1998)

3.2a Essential information (species)	
3.2.1 Species group	Code-list (see Emerald Network reference portal)
3.2.2 Species code	Code-list (see Emerald Network reference portal)
3.2.3 Scientific name	Species name from the relevant code-list on the reference portal that corresponds to the code used in 3.2.2
3.2.4 Sensitivity of species data	Indicate in case of sensitive species data
3.2.5 Non-presence	Pre-defined options: ☐ the species is no longer present in the site ☐ the species is not present and was not present at the time of designation but it's re-establishment is planned. Following fields need to be filled: 3.2.1 to 3.2.5, 3.2.9 (method used), 3.2.10 (period of last data collection) and 3.2.16 (conservation objectives). The field 3.2.7.1 population size minimum and maximum need both to be 0 (zero). The other fields of the section 3.2 should be left blank.
3.2.6 Population type	Pre-defined options: ☐ Permanent ☐ Reproducing ☐ Concentration ☐ Wintering
3.2.7 Population size and unit	
3.2.7.1 Population size	Give minimum and maximum population size
3.2.7.2 Population unit	Code-list (see Emerald Network reference portal)
3.2.8 Abundance category	Pre-defined options: ☐ Common ☐ Rare ☐ Very rare ☐ Present
3.2.9 Method used for population size	Pre-defined options: ☐ Complete survey or a statistically robust estimate ☐ Based mainly on expert opinion with very limited data ☐ Based mainly on extrapolation from a limited amount of data ☐ Insufficient or no data available

3.2.10 Period of last data collection Optional	Start date and end date of the period (year and month) or if such information is unknown indicate 'survey older than 2022'
3.2b Site assessment (species)	
3.2.11 Significance	Indicate if occurrence of the species is non-significant. For significant occurrences of species all fields of the section 3.2.b must be filled in whereas for non-significant occurrences of species only the fields 3.2.11 (Significance) and 3.2.20 (Update date) of section 3.2.b have to be filled.
3.2.12 Species meeting ornithological criteria for SPA classification Not applicable for the Emerald Network	Indicate if the bird species met the ornithological criteria used to justify SPA classification.
3.2.13 Population	Pre-defined options: ☐ A1: $100\% \geq p > 75\%$ ☐ A2: $75\% \geq p > 50\%$ ☐ A3: $50\% \geq p > 25\%$ ☐ A4: $25\% \geq p > 15\%$ ☐ B: $15\% \geq p > 2\%$ ☐ C: $2\% \geq p > 0\%$
3.2.14 Population – explanations (optional)	Free text and language tag
3.2.15 Degree of conservation	
3.2.15.1 Degree of conservation - categorised	Pre-defined options: ☐ A: excellent degree of conservation (nearly all of the habitat occupied by the species has sufficient quality) ☐ B: good degree of conservation (most of the habitat occupied by the species has sufficient quality) ☐ C: reduced degree of conservation (most of the habitat occupied by the species has non-sufficient quality) ☐ X: unknown degree of conservation (most or all of the habitat occupied by the species has unknown quality)
3.2.15.2 Degree of conservation – occupied area (optional)	Give the area of the habitat occupied by the species in percentages for each of the categories: ☐ Sufficient quality: ...% ☐ Non-sufficient quality: ...% ☐ Unknown habitat quality: ...%

3.2.15.3 Degree of conservation – occupied percentage classes Optional	Estimated area of the habitat occupied by the species with sufficient quality ☐ 0-25 % ☐ 26-50% ☐ 51-75% ☐ 76-100% Estimated area of the habitat occupied by the species with non-sufficient quality ☐ 0-25 % ☐ 26-50% ☐ 51-75% ☐ 76-100% Estimated area of the habitat occupied by the species for which the quality is unknown ☐ 0-25 % ☐ 26-50% ☐ 51-75% ☐ 76-100%
3.2.16 Conservation objectives Optional	Pre-defined options: ☐ Prevent deterioration ☐ Maintain the extent and good quality of the habitat of the species and the population size ☐ Enlarge area of the habitat of the species ☐ Re-establish habitat for the species ☐ Improve the quality of the habitat of the species (considering also disturbance and mortality factors) ☐ Increase the population size ☐ Reduce pressure on the population (e.g. reduce mortality or disturbance) ☐ Re-establish the population at the site ☐ Other
3.2.17 Conservation objectives – explanations Optional	Free text and language tag
3.2.18 Isolation	Pre-defined options: ☐ A: population (almost) isolated, ☐ B: population not isolated, but on margins of area of distribution, ☐ C: population not isolated within extended distribution range
3.2.19 Global	Pre-defined options: ☐ A: excellent value ☐ B: good value ☐ C: significant value
3.2.20 Update date	Year and month
3.3 Other important species of flora and fauna (optional)	
3.3.1 Species group	If the species belongs to one of the species groups on the code-list available on the Emerald Network reference portal use the respective code from this list; otherwise leave the field empty (blank).

3.3.2 Species code	If the species is on the code-lists on the Emerald Network reference portal that are used in field 3.2.2, please use that code, otherwise leave this field empty.
3.3.3 Scientific name	If relevant, insert the scientific name as used in the code lists on the Emerald Network reference portal that are used in field 3.2.2.
3.3.4 Sensitivity of species data	Indicate in case of sensitive species data
3.3.5 Non-presence	Indicate if the species is no-longer present in the site
3.3.6 Population size and unit	
3.3.6.1 Population size	Minimum and maximum population size
3.3.6.2 Population unit	Code-list (see Emerald Network reference portal)
3.3.7 Abundance category	Pre-defined options: ☐ Common ☐ Rare ☐ Very rare ☐ Present

3.3.8 Motivation	Pre-defined options: ☐ Appendix I species ☐ Appendix II species ☐ Appendix III species ☐ Species listed in National Red Lists ☐ Species listed in Global Red Lists ☐ Endemic species ☐ Species listed/protected under international Conventions such as Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals or the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) ☐ Typical species of Resolution No. 4 (1996) habitat types ☐ Crop Wild Relatives (CWR) / Forest Genetic Resources (FGR) ☐ Invasive alien species of Bern Convention concern ☐ Other reasons
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4. Site description

4.1 Site characteristics	Free text and language tag
4.2 Quality and importance of the site	Free text and language tag
4.3 Pressures on the site	
4.3.1 Pressure code	Code-list (see Emerald Network reference portal)
4.3.2 Rank (same field but new list of pressures)	Pre-defined options: ☐ High importance ☐ Medium importance ☐ Low importance
4.3.3 Location inside/outside (same field but new list of pressures)	Pre-defined options: ☐ Inside Emerald Network site ☐ Outside Emerald Network site ☐ Inside and outside Emerald Network site
4.3.4 Pressure further detailed Optional	Free text and language tag
4.3.5 Update date Optional	Year and month

4.4 Documentation	Free text and language tag
4.4.1 Link(s)	URI (URL or DOI)
4.4.2 Update date <i>Optional</i>	Year and month

5. Site management

5.1 Body responsible for the site management	
5.1.1 Name of the organisation	Free text and language tag
5.1.2 Contact point in the organisation (optional)	Part of the organisation responsible for the management of the site
5.1.3 Postal address	Free text and language tag
5.1.4 Functional mailbox email address	Functional mailbox email address, not personal
5.1.5 Website with contact information	Website containing the official contact information of the organisation
5.2 Management plans	
5.2.1 Existence of management plans(s)	Pre-defined options: ☐ Yes (if yes fill in 5.2.2) ☐ No, site only partially covered (fill in 5.2.2) ☐ No, but in preparation ☐ No, because a management plan is not necessary (fill in 5.2.3) ☐ No, other reason (fill in 5.2.3)
5.2.2 Reference and validity of the management plan(s)	☐ Name of the plan and ☐ Link to the plan (URI) and ☐ Validity: start date (year and month) and duration: number of months / or not defined
5.2.3 Further explanations <i>Optional</i>	Free text and language tag; To be filled if management plan does not exist and is also not in preparation
5.3 Conservation measures	
5.3.1 Detailed information on measures	Pre-defined options: ☐ Conservation measures are included in the management plan(s) to which the link is provided in section 5.2.2 (yes/no) ☐ Conservation measures are described in the following document(s): — Title and link (URI) and/or — Further explanations on detailed conservation measures (free text and language tag) <i>(optional)</i>

5.3.2 Status of conservation measures	Two questions with pre-defined options: 1. Are the measures established? ☐ fully established ☐ partly established ☐ not established/ not assessed For fully or partly established measures only: 2. Are the established measures implemented? ☐ all implemented and/or all on-going ☐ only partly implemented and/or partly on-going ☐ one-off measures not implemented and/or no re- current measures on-going
5.4 Management effectiveness	Two questions with pre-defined options: — Is the effectiveness of the conservation measures periodically assessed? [yes/no] — Are the conservation measures delivering the set conservation objectives? [yes/no/not yet/ unknown because not assessed]

6. Geospatial representation of the site (**optional**)

6.1 INSPIRE identifier	INSPIRE identifier of the spatial object (see Natura 2000 reference portal)
6.1.1 Namespace	The namespace as defined by the national INSPIRE implementation
6.1.2 Local identifier	The local identifier must be unique within the namespace
6.1.3 Version identifier (optional)	The identifier of the particular version of the spatial object