CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE AND NATURAL HABITATS

**Strategic Plan for the Bern Convention for the period to 2030**

**Draft Glossary of Terms**

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This Glossary is not a comprehensive dictionary of all the technical terms used in the Strategic Plan. It aims instead to provide accepted guiding interpretations of a selection of terms where there may be particular ambiguity, where usage is emerging, or where some interpretation may otherwise be helpful. Entries are presented in alphabetical order.

Where “GBF Glossary” is given as a source, this refers to the Updated Glossary for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework - [*https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/c3ab/388d/950ddc02586468a814120acf/wg2020-05-04-en.pdf*](https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/c3ab/388d/950ddc02586468a814120acf/wg2020-05-04-en.pdf) (provided for the Global Framework while it was being negotiated as a draft, but not further updated, and not formally adopted).

[Note for the draft, as at March 2023 (this note will be deleted from the final version): a number of comments in the latest consultation round propose deletion of entire sections of the 8th draft of the Strategic Plan. The Glossary will only include terms that appear in the Plan text, so any deletions that are agreed may result in deletion of some terms from the provisional list currently presented below].

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| **Terms used in the Strategic Plan** | **Interpretation** |
| **Alien species** | Alien species, also referred to as non-native, non-indigenous, introduced or “exotic” species, are animals and plants that are introduced accidentally or deliberately into a natural environment where they are not normally found. Conservation concern arises usually when such species are invasive (see separate “invasive species” interpretation below), but not all alien species are necessarily invasive. Whether or not a species is regarded as “alien” or “native” to a given area depends on subjectively decided benchmarks (see separate “native species” interpretation below). |
| **Case File** | The Case File is a monitoring tool specific to the Bern Convention. Individual Files may be initiated when there is a complaint about a possible breach of the Convention, which can be submitted by a government, an NGO or even private citizens. Complaints are processed by the Secretariat according to a standard system, and when the Standing Committee or its Bureau considers that further information is needed, they can arrange for on-the-spot visits by independent experts, who report to the Standing Committee. The Case File system was not created by provisions in the Convention text, but by decisions agreed by the Standing Committee, dating from 1984. It has since become a central and extensively used solution-finding mechanism for the Convention.[*https://www.coe.int/en/web/bern-convention/case-files*](https://www.coe.int/en/web/bern-convention/case-files) . |
| **Degraded ecosystems** | Environmental degradation is any change or disturbance to the environment that is perceived to be deleterious or undesirable (Johnson et al., 1997).Ecosystem degradation is any process or activity that removes or lessens the viability of ecosystem processes and hence biodiversity (Dunster and Dunster, 1996). It may also be manifest as a persistent reduction in the ecosystem’s capacity to provide ecosystem services (Plesnik, Hosek and Condé, 2011).The GBF Glossary provides the following for “degraded ecosystems”: “Land degradation can occur either through a loss of biodiversity, ecosystem functions or services. From an ecological perspective, land degradation may include complete transformation in the class or use of the ecosystem, such as the conversion of natural grassland to a crop field, delivering a different spectrum of benefits, but also degradation of the ‘natural’ or ‘transformed’ system. Natural ecosystems are often degraded prior to being transformed. The transformed ecosystem that results from this conversion can, in turn, be degraded and see a reduction in the delivery of its new functions (e.g. an agricultural field where soil degradation and reduced soil fertility leads to reduced crops). The same concepts are applicable to the degradation of marine and freshwater ecosystems. It may take the form of changed trophic structures in a marine community (through fishing pressure and selective removal of species, transformation of the soft and hard benthos (through repetitive sweeps of contacting gears, such as trawls) or artificial reef construction, to cite only a few examples. In the case of aquatic freshwater ecosystems, the construction of dams and reservoirs over river courses or the conversion of natural wetlands into rice paddies are examples of ecosystem transformation”. |
| **(Ecological) connectivity** | Ecological connectivity is the unimpeded movement of species and the flow of natural processes that sustain life on Earth (Convention on Migratory Species, Resolution 12.26, Rev.COP13 – see [*https://www.cms.int/en/topics/ecological-connectivity*](https://www.cms.int/en/topics/ecological-connectivity) ).The GBF Glossary further notes that it may also refer to continuous ecosystems often connected through ecological corridors; and that there are two types of connectivity: structural (in which the continuity between ecosystems is identified) and functional (in which the movement of species or processes is verified). |
| **(Ecological) integrity** | There are numerous different definitions of ecological (or more commonly “ecosystem”) integrity in the literature, variously emphasising (e.g.) completeness, intactness, natural functioning and resilience.The GBF Glossary describes “ecosystem integrity” in the following terms: “An ecosystem is generally understood to have integrity when its dominant ecological characteristics (e.g. elements of composition, structure, function, and ecological processes) occur within their natural ranges of variation and can withstand and recover from most perturbations”; adding reference also to “species diversity and abundance, and communities of interacting species” (based on CBD/SBSTTA/24/3/Add.2/Rev.1 – see [*https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/e823/b80c/8b0e8a08470a476865e9b203/sbstta-24-03-add2-rev1-en.pdf*](https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/e823/b80c/8b0e8a08470a476865e9b203/sbstta-24-03-add2-rev1-en.pdf) ). The GBF Glossary also notes that “Indicators of ecosystem integrity may include the structure, function and composition of an ecosystem relative to the pre-industrial range of variation of these characteristics”.The glossary for the IPBES Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (2019), defines “ecosystem integrity” as “the ability of an ecosystem to support and maintain ecological processes and a diverse community of organisms. It is measured as the degree to which a diverse community of native organisms is maintained, and [it] is used as a proxy for ecological resilience”. |
| **(Ecological) resilience** | There are numerous different definitions of ecological resilience (or resilience in ecological systems) in the literature. A foundation for many of these is attributed to Holling (1973), who described the concept in terms of the persistence of natural systems in the face of changes in ecosystem variables due to natural or anthropogenic causes; the capacity of systems to absorb disturbances and to continue functioning; and the capacity of systems to adapt to disturbances by reorganising into new states that persist thereafter, while still maintaining essentially the same structures and functions as before.Other approaches invite a gauging of the degree of resilience in terms of the amount of disturbance that a system can withstand before its self-organised processes and structures alter, or the time taken for a system to return to its equilibrium state following a perturbation.The GBF Glossary, quoting the glossary for the IPBES Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (2019), defines “resilience” as: “the capacity of a system to absorb disturbance and reorganise while undergoing change so as to still retain essentially the same function, structure, identity, and feedbacks” (citing Walker *et al*., 2004). |
| **Ecosystem-based approaches** | The glossary for the IPBES Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (2019) defines “ecosystem-based approach” as “a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way. An ecosystem approach is based on the application of appropriate scientific methods, focused on levels of biological organisation that encompass the essential structure, processes, functions and interactions among and between organisms and their environment. It recognises that humans, with their cultural diversity, are an integral component of many ecosystems”.The GBF Glossary defines “ecosystem-based approaches” in a context of climate change adaptation, as “the use of biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services as part of an overall adaptation strategy to help people adapt to the adverse effects of climate change. This term may refer to a wide range of ecosystem management activities to increase the resilience and reduce the vulnerability of people and the environment, including to climate change and disasters”. It refers also to CBD COP Decision X/33 (2010) which invited implementation of “ecosystem-based approaches for adaptation that may include sustainable management, conservation and restoration of ecosystems, as part of an overall adaptation strategy that takes into account the multiple social, economic and cultural co-benefits for local communities”. |
| **Emerald Network** | The Emerald Network is one of the main tools for Bern Convention Parties to comply with their obligations under the Convention. It is an ecological network made up of Areas of Special Conservation Interest, and was initiated by Recommendation No. 16 (1989) of the Convention’s Standing Committee. Parties designate areas for the Network based on criteria of conservation interest, and are then expected to ensure that necessary and appropriate conservation measures are taken for each area.All sites proposed for inclusion in the Network are assessed at biogeographical level for their sufficiency to achieve the ultimate objective of securing the long term survival of species and habitats that have been identified (by Resolution No. 4 (1996) and Resolution No. 6 (1998)) as needing specific protection measures.In Member States of the European Union, the Emerald Network consists of sites designated for the Natura 2000 network under the EU’s nature Directives (see separate Natura 2000 interpretation below).[*https://www.coe.int/en/web/bern-convention/emerald-network*](https://www.coe.int/en/web/bern-convention/emerald-network) . |
| **Invasive species** | The glossary for the IPBES Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (2019), defines “invasive” (for a species) as “tending to expand into and modify ecosystems to which it has been introduced”. The expansion often involves organisms that can grow and reproduce quickly, spreading aggressively. The modification is usually assumed to be negative, and there are ever-increasing examples of invasive species causing major environmental, social and economic damage, including biodiversity loss.Conservation concern often focuses on species that are both invasive and non-native (see separate “alien species” interpretation above). The risk is high when a species is introduced into an area that does not have the predators or competitors that would otherwise (in its native area) keep its expansion in check.Many definitions in the literature on this basis relate to “alien invasive species”, or define “invasive” in ways that address only species that have been introduced. However not all invasive species are aliens, since native species in certain circumstances can also increase and become invasive – for example when populations of their natural predators or competitors are depleted, or when nutrient pollution or changing climatic factors give them a new proliferation advantage. |
| **Major hazards** | In the Council of Europe context, and in this Strategic Plan, this term references the existence of a specific Council of Europe Open Partial Agreement known as the EUR-OPA Major Hazards Agreement, established in 1987 and now providing a platform for cooperation between the countries of Europe and those of the southern Mediterranean. The Agreement does not provide a definition, but refers simply to “major natural and technological disasters” and their prevention, protection against them, and organisation of relief when they occur. The term “hazard” has subsequently been used more commonly in this context, and has been interpreted as “any set of dangerous circumstances that could lead to harm/ damage to living and non-living resources”. Examples include catastrophic floods, wildfires, earthquakes and avalanches. “Technological” disasters may either be triggered by these, or may occur independently (for example major industrial accidents).[*https://www.coe.int/en/web/europarisks*](https://www.coe.int/en/web/europarisks) . |
| **Nationally Determined Contribution** | Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) are the national plans for climate change mitigation and adaptation actions that are developed by each Party to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Under the Convention’s Paris Agreement (2015), Parties are required to submit their NDCs to the UNFCCC Secretariat and to update them every five years. The next updates are due in 2025 and 2030, with each one expected to represent a progression of ambition compared to the previous one. Enhancements can also be made between these formal updates, and the Convention’s COP26 in 2021 called on countries to strengthen the targets in their NDCs in 2022.[*https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/nationally-determined-contributions-ndcs*](https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/nationally-determined-contributions-ndcs) . |
| **Native species** | A species is native to a given area if its occurrence is a result of only natural processes. Such species may also be referred to as “indigenous” or “autochthonous”. The concept is only meaningful in relation to the area concerned being specified in each case. It is the opposite of the concept of “alien species” (see separate interpretation entry above for “alien species”).Species occurrences can vary over time as a result of purely natural processes, such as natural tectonic or climatic changes over geological time. Whether or not a species is regarded as “native” or “alien” to a given area therefore depends on subjectively decided benchmarks concerning how far back in history to look for evidence of the species’ presence. In the UK, for example, “native” plant species are considered to be those that became established after the most recent glacial period, around 11,000 years ago (or continued to be present from an earlier time). Others that have colonised subsequently and have become self-sustaining may also be regarded as “native” if their arrival occurred without human assistance. Species that have been self-sustaining for hundreds or even thousands of years, but whose original presence was human-assisted, may be regarded as “naturalised”, but not “native”. |
| **Natura 2000** | Natura 2000 is a network of sites of conservation importance designated by Member States of the European Union. It comprises Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the 1979 Wild Birds Directive and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the 1992 Habitats Directive. Subject to meeting defined criteria, SPAs are designated directly by the Member States, whereas SACs are proposed by the Member States and approved by the European Commission. Protection obligations defined in the Directives then apply, and these must be reflected in national legislation.Natura 2000 sites form the European Union component of the Bern Convention’s Emerald Network (see separate Emerald Network interpretation above). |
| **Natural habitats/ ecosystems** | As with the listing of this term here, the definition in the GBF Glossary is for “natural ecosystems (habitats)”, in order to embrace both habitats and ecosystems, since it is the concept of naturalness that is being defined, rather than the concept of habitat or ecosystem (distinctions between the latter terms are given in the definitions contained in the text of the Convention on Biological Diversity).Both the GBF Glossary and the glossary for the IPBES Global Assessment Report cite the same definition of “natural habitats” provided by UNEP-WCMC, which in turn is derived from a World Bank standard, and defines such habitats as “areas composed of viable assemblages of plant and/ or animal species of largely native origin and/ or where human activity had not essentially modified an area’s primary ecological functions and species composition”.[*www.biodiversitya-z.org/content/natural-habitats*](http://www.biodiversitya-z.org/content/natural-habitats) .The idea, in this definition, of origins being “largely” native, and ecology being “essentially” unmodified, acknowledges the reality that few environments can be completely devoid of any human influence. This is reflected also in the European Union’s Habitats Directive which defines “natural habitats” as “terrestrial or aquatic areas distinguished by geographic, abiotic and biotic features, whether entirely natural or semi-natural”. (See also separate interpretation of “semi-natural habitats” below). |
| **Nature-based solutions** | Drawing on earlier work by IUCN ([*https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/46191*](https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/46191) ), the UN Environment Assembly at its 5th session in 2022 adopted a Resolution (5/5) which defines nature-based solutions (NbS) as “actions to protect, conserve, restore, sustainably use and manage natural or modified terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine ecosystems which address social, economic and environmental challenges effectively and adaptively, while simultaneously providing human well-being, ecosystem services, resilience and biodiversity benefits”. The GBF Glossary uses this same definition.In the context of the Bern Convention Strategic Plan, it is emphasised (a) that this definition requires that nature-based solutions must always be “nature-positive” (i.e. “simultaneously providing biodiversity benefits”), and (b) such solutions should not in any way be treated as an alternative for the measures defined in other fora (notably the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change) to make urgent reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and to implement other climate change mitigation measures.[*https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/39864/NATURE-BASED%20SOLUTIONS%20FOR%20SUPPORTING%20SUSTAINABLE%20DEVELOPMENT.%20English.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y*](https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/39864/NATURE-BASED%20SOLUTIONS%20FOR%20SUPPORTING%20SUSTAINABLE%20DEVELOPMENT.%20English.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y). |
| **Other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs)** | Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at their 14th COP (2018) in Decision 14/8 adopted a definition of "other effective area-based conservation measure" as follows: “a geographically defined area other than a Protected Area, which is governed and managed in ways that achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for the *in situ* conservation of biodiversity, with associated ecosystem functions and services and where applicable, cultural, spiritual, socio–economic, and other locally relevant values”. Guiding principles, common characteristics and criteria for identification of OECMs were agreed in the same Decision.In slightly adapted forms, this definition has also been used in the glossaries of the GBF and the IPBES Global Assessment Report.OECMs may be managed for many different objectives but they must deliver effective conservation. They may be managed with conservation as a primary or secondary objective, or long-term conservation may be the ancillary result of management activities.OECMs are generally regarded as different from and complementary to formally/ legally designated “protected areas”; although there is some conceptual overlap with the type of protected area characterised in IUCN’s protected area management categories as “Category V”, in which ecological, biological, cultural and scenic values are linked to human activities such as traditional agricultural or forestry systems. A clearer distinction in this respect may emerge as experience and thinking evolve in future. In the marine environment also the concept remains to be fully explored and elaborated.[*https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-14/cop-14-dec-08-en.pdf*](https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-14/cop-14-dec-08-en.pdf) .[*https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/48773*](https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/48773) . |
| **Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework** | The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) is an intergovernmentally adopted successor to the Global Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. Delays occasioned by the Covid pandemic caused the negotiation of the GBF to be concluded only in December 2022, when it was adopted at the 15th meeting of the COP of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Framework contains four goals to be achieved by 2050 and 23 targets to be achieved by 2030, and it is accompanied by other frameworks for monitoring, resource mobilisation and capacity building.There is a strong motivation among all biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements, including the Bern Convention, to undertake their own planning and implementation work in ways that reinforce, and are reinforced by, the GBF.[*https://www.cbd.int/gbf/*](https://www.cbd.int/gbf/) . |
| **Protected area** | Two broadly similar definitions of “protected area” are commonly recognised, and both are included in the Glossary for the Global Biodiversity Framework.Article 2 of the Convention on Biological Diversity defines it as “a geographically defined area which is designated or regulated and managed to achieve specific conservation objectives” ([*https://www.cbd.int/convention/articles/?a=cbd-02*](https://www.cbd.int/convention/articles/?a=cbd-02) ).IUCN defines it as “A clearly defined geographical space, recognised, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values”.At international level IUCN has also developed a widely-used typology defining six management categories and four governance types that characterise different types of protected area. – see [*https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/30018*](https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/30018) .At national level, whether an area is regarded as a protected area or not may be determined by provisions in national policy or legislation. |
| **Recovery** | The three terms included in this Glossary - “recovery”, “rehabilitation” and “restoration” express similar ideas. Nuanced differences between them can be debated, but there is little technical basis for consistent hard distinctions, and normal usage tends to treat these three terms as largely interchangeable.“Recovery” tends more often to be used in relation to species or populations (with “restoration” being more often used for ecosystems). The GBF Glossary interprets “recovery” as follows: “The restoration of natural processes and genetic, demographic, or ecological parameters of a population or species, with regard to its state at the initiation of the recovery activities. It also refers to its past local abundance, structure and dynamics, to resume its ecological and evolutionary role, and the consequent improvement regarding habitat quality”. The Glossary further cites IUCN’s “Green Status” standard for measuring species recovery (*https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/49511* ) which advises that “a species is fully recovered if it is present in all parts of its range, even those that are no longer occupied but were occupied prior to major human impacts/ disruption; is viable (i.e. not threatened with extinction) in all parts of the range; and is performing its ecological functions in all parts of the range”. |
| **Rehabilitation** | The three terms included in this Glossary - “recovery”, “rehabilitation” and “restoration” express similar ideas. Nuanced differences between them can be debated, but there is little technical basis for consistent hard distinctions, and normal usage tends to treat these three terms as largely interchangeable.“Rehabilitation” is sometimes used for the treatment and re-release of injured or contaminated individual animals; but it can also be applied to habitats. The glossary for the IPBES Global Assessment Report includes a definition of “remediation” as “any action taken to rehabilitate ecosystems after their degradation”.The Society for Ecological Restoration refers to rehabilitation as “reparation of ecosystem processes, productivity and services”. |
| **Restoration** | The three terms included in this Glossary - “recovery”, “rehabilitation” and “restoration” express similar ideas. Nuanced differences between them can be debated, but there is little technical basis for consistent hard distinctions, and normal usage tends to treat these three terms as largely interchangeable.The GBF Glossary cites the glossary for the IPBES Global Assessment Report which defines (ecological) restoration as “any intentional activity that initiates or accelerates the recovery of an ecosystem from a degraded state”, noting that “this definition covers all forms and intensities of the degradation state and, in this sense, is inclusive of the definition adopted by the Society for Ecological Restoration” (the latter being “an intentional activity that initiates or accelerates the recovery of an ecosystem's health, integrity and sustainability” and “the process of assisting the recovery of an ecosystem that has been degraded, damaged, or destroyed”).[*www.ser.org/*](http://www.ser.org/) .The GBF Glossary also refers to the Short-term Action Plan on Ecosystem Restoration adopted by CBD Parties at COP13 (2016) as the Annex to Decision XIII/5, which notes that “ecological restoration refers to the process of managing or assisting the recovery of an ecosystem that has been degraded, damaged or destroyed, as a means of sustaining ecosystem resilience and conserving biodiversity”.The GBF Glossary further refers to the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration ([*www.decadeonrestoration.org/what-ecosystem-restoration*](http://www.decadeonrestoration.org/what-ecosystem-restoration) ) which interprets ecosystem restoration as “assisting in the recovery of ecosystems that have been degraded or destroyed, as well as conserving the ecosystems that are still intact”, noting also that “restoration can happen in many ways – for example, through actively planting or by removing pressures so that nature can recover on its own”; and “it is not always possible – or desirable – to return an ecosystem to its original state”.The Ramsar Convention’s “Principles and guidelines for wetland restoration” (COP8 Resolution VIII.16, 2002 - [*www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/res/key\_res\_viii\_16\_e.pdf*](http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/res/key_res_viii_16_e.pdf) ) noted that although the Convention’s Strategic Plan at the time referred to both “restoration” and “rehabilitation”, the difference between these two terms is not clear. The Ramsar Convention has not attempted to provide precise definitions of these terms. While it might be said that “restoration” implies a return to pre-disturbance conditions and that “rehabilitation” implies an improvement of wetland functions without necessarily returning to pre-disturbance conditions, these words are often used interchangeably both within Ramsar documentation and within the conservation literature. The principles and guidelines therefore used the term “restoration” in its broadest sense, to include both projects that promote a return to original conditions and projects that improve wetland functions without necessarily promoting a return to pre-disturbance conditions.This Ramsar approach helps to acknowledge the point noted in the UN Decade quotation above, namely that pure restoration to pre-existing conditions is either rarely ever really possible, or is only possible in respect of specified variables within specified limits of precision and specified limits of confidence. |
| **Satisfactory conservation status** | In the Bern Convention context, the term “satisfactory conservation status” appears in Resolution No. 8 (2012), in relation to species and habitats conserved through the Emerald Network. Paragraph 2.1 of the Resolution states: “The national designation of the adopted Emerald sites will ensure that they are protected from external threats and subject to an appropriate regime for achieving a satisfactory conservation status of the species and natural habitats listed in Resolutions No. 4 (1996) and No. 6 (1998) present on the site, involving, if and where appropriate, management plans, administrative measures and contractual measures”.The term has not been defined further in the Bern Convention context. It may be seen however as linked to the obligation defined in Article 2 of the Convention, for Parties to “take requisite measures to maintain the population of wild flora and fauna at, or adapt it to, a level which corresponds in particular to ecological, scientific and cultural requirements, while taking account of economic and recreational requirements [...]”. The element of this obligation that concerns “adaptation to requirements” suggests that achieving “satisfactory” status may in appropriate cases involve activities for restoration of habitats and species populations, and not only their maintenance.The concept of “satisfactory conservation status” has resonance with the related concept of "favourable conservation status" in the European Union context, where the latter is defined in the EU Habitats Directive (1992, Article 1) as follows:The conservative status of a natural habitat will be taken as "favourable" when: - its natural range and areas it covers within that range are stable or increasing, and - the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and - the conservation status of its typical species is favourable as defined [below].The conservation status of a species will be taken as "favourable" when: - population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats, and - the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and - there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis.This reflects the earlier definition in the Convention on Migratory Species (1979, Art 1(c)) of favourable conservation status for migratory species, which includes the additional element of the distribution and abundance of the species approaching historic coverage and levels (to the extent that potentially suitable ecosystems exist).The greater detail in these EU and CMS definitions, albeit for the different term “favourable”, may be helpful for interpreting “satisfactory” in the Bern Convention context, in particular to ensure that the latter accords with the level of ambition in Article 2 of the Convention. |
| **Semi-natural habitats/ ecosystems** | The listing of this term as “habitats/ ecosystems” embraces both habitats and ecosystems, since it is the concept of semi-naturalness that is being defined, rather than the concept of habitat or ecosystem (distinctions between the latter terms are given in the definitions contained in the text of the Convention on Biological Diversity).The glossary for the IPBES Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (2019) defines “semi-natural habitat” as “an ecosystem with most of its processes and biodiversity intact, though altered by human activity in strength or abundance relative to the natural state”.UNEP-WCMC gives a definition used by the European Investment Bank, as follows: “Semi-natural habitats have ecological assemblages that have been substantially modified in their composition, balance or function by human activities. They may have evolved through traditional agricultural, pastoral or other human activities and depend on their continuation to retain their characteristic composition, structure and function. Despite not being natural, these habitats and ecosystems often have high value in terms of biodiversity and the services they provide”.[*https://www.biodiversitya-z.org/content/semi-natural-habitats*](https://www.biodiversitya-z.org/content/semi-natural-habitats) .Other descriptions give examples rather than defining the concept, or address particular ecosystem types - for example the European Environment Agency refers to semi-natural forest as “a stand which is composed predominantly of native trees and shrub species which have not been planted”.The EU Habitats Directive acknowledges the reality that few environments can be regarded as totally “natural” in the sense of being completely devoid of any human influence, and its definition of “natural habitats” includes those that are semi-natural.(See also separate interpretation of “natural habitats/ ecosystems” above). |
| **Sustainable Development Goals** | Seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) form the heart of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (“Transforming our world”), adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015. The Goals, with 169 associated targets, are the successor to the previous Millennium Development Goals. They cover interlinked issues including poverty, health, education, equality and justice. Goals 14 (“Life below water”) and 15 (“Life on land”) particularly address nature conservation; but others (for example those relating to clean water, climate action and responsible consumption) are also relevant.[*https://sdgs.un.org/goals*](https://sdgs.un.org/goals) .In 2017, a global framework of 231 indicators for the SDGs was also agreed.[*https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/indicators-list/*](https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/indicators-list/) . |
| **Sustainable use** | The term “sustainable use” does not appear in the Bern Convention, but the concept is partly implied in the provisions for permitting “judicious exploitation of certain wild animals and plants in small numbers” in certain circumstances, subject to this “not be[ing] detrimental to the survival of the population concerned”. Subsequently the Convention’s role has become more broadly and explicitly described in terms of “conservation and sustainable use”, including for example in the “Declaration on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in Europe” adopted by the Standing Committee in 2009.The most widely used definition of "sustainable use" in the nature conservation context is that contained in Article 2 of the Convention on Biological Diversity, where it is defined as “the use of components of biological diversity in a way and at a rate that does not lead to the long-term decline of biological diversity, thereby maintaining its potential to meet the needs and aspirations of present and future generations”. |
| **Threatened species** | Threatened species are identified by the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species ([*https://www.iucnredlist.org/*](https://www.iucnredlist.org/) ). The List is organised according to nine categories of assessed extinction risk, but although the overall title for the list is “threatened species”, this term is usually used only to refer to those species in the three highest risk categories, of “Critically Endangered”, “Endangered” and “Vulnerable”. This approach is also reflected in the definition given in the glossary for the IPBES Global Assessment Report. |

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