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CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

Standing Committee

43rd meeting
Strasbourg, 27 November - 1 December 2023

**TERMS OF REFERENCE OF A WORKING GROUP
ON OVERSEEING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BERN
CONVENTION STRATEGIC PLAN TO 2030**

*Document prepared by
the Secretariat of the Bern Convention*

I. BACKGROUND

At its 41st meeting in 2021, the Standing Committee adopted a [Vision for the Bern Convention for the period to 2030](#), and, at its 43rd meeting, it adopted a Strategic Plan for the Bern Convention for the period to 2030¹. At the same meeting the Committee adopted Recommendation no. 220 (2023)² on the implementation of the Strategic Plan for the Bern Convention for the period to 2030, which notably recommended to “convene as needed a Working Group on Strategic Plan matters in order to support implementation of the above tasks.” This was seen as particularly important for a number of reasons:

- A) some aspects of the Plan such as monitoring indicators require further elaboration;
- B) some linkages between the Plan and other instruments of the Bern Convention require further consideration;
- C) the need to conduct reviews of the Plan as well as to ensure its ongoing complementarity with other relevant international instruments and strategies.

Overall, the Strategic Plan is to be considered as a living process, and its implementation is a high priority of the Standing Committee, thus an overseeing body is deemed necessary to ensure its follow-up.

II. SCOPE

The objective of this Working Group will be to assist the Standing Committee in overseeing progress in implementation of the Strategic Plan to 2030, notably through the following tasks:

- further advancing technical work on the Monitoring Framework and indicators for the Strategic Plan, in particular indicators relating to the Emerald Network, including management planning and management effectiveness (taking into account for example the methodology for assessing management effectiveness of Natura 2000 sites developed by the European Commission), as support for the implementation of relevant targets in the Strategic Plan;
- considering linkages between the Strategic Plan and other instruments of the Bern Convention for implementation, including action plans;
- ensuring ongoing complementarity of the Strategic Plan with other relevant international instruments and strategies;
- providing proposals on how to translate priority goals of the Strategic Plan into the annual programme of activities of the Convention;
- increasing the visibility of the Strategic Plan;
- undertaking a midterm review of the Strategic Plan in 2027 and, if necessary, making proposals for the intensification of efforts where progress towards particular targets is considered insufficient, and for adjustments to elements of the Plan that may be needed in light of the findings of the review;
- in advance of the Plan’s end-date in 2030, conducting an analysis of the Plan’s implementation, assessing its strengths, weaknesses, successes, and areas of required improvement, as a basis for potentially elaborating a new Strategic Plan for the succeeding decade;
- providing any other necessary support and advice to the Secretariat and possible independent experts.

III. COMPOSITION

The Working Group will comprise experts of Contracting Parties to the Bern Convention, including Chairs of Groups of Experts established under the Bern Convention, as well as Observers, including other Conventions as appropriate.

The Working Group may call on additional expertise on an *ad hoc* basis.

¹ Strategic Plan for the Bern Convention for the period to 2030 - [T-PVS\(2023\)18](#)

² [Recommendation no. 220 \(2023\)](#) on the implementation of the Strategic Plan

The Working Group will select one Chair.

Membership of the Working Group will be reviewed by the Group as required.

Should the need arise, the Working Group may establish task teams to work on particular aspects of the strategy.

The Working Group shall continue to exist until the finalisation of the implementation of the Strategic Plan and of its review, in 2030, unless decided otherwise by the Standing Committee.

IV. WORKING METHODS

The Working Group members will provide input through meetings, conference calls, contribution to draft papers, and reports, participation in smaller task forces and other means as appropriate.

The working language will be English.

The Working Group will determine its own meeting frequency; however, it is expected to meet on a regular basis from 2024. The Working Group shall operate virtually unless otherwise agreed by the Working Group members.

The Bureau of the Standing Committee will review and evaluate the work of the Working Group at the Bureau's meetings.

The Working Group will report to the Standing Committee at its annual meeting.

In co-operation with the Chair of the Working Group, the Secretariat will coordinate and assist with the organisation and preparation of the agenda for the meetings of the Working Group and any other support activities and documents deemed necessary.