

NEWSLETTER – December 2013

THE ETC/BD 2014 - 2019

The current ETC/BD consortium ends on 31 December 2013 and a new ETC/BD comes into existence on January 1st 2014. Still led by the [Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle](#), the ETC/BD welcomes 4 new partners – [Alterra](#) (NL), [Ecologic](#) (DE), [Geoville](#) (LU) and the [Swiss Biodiversity Forum](#) and says goodbye to GDPNA (TR).

NEWS

• **NATURA 2000 & THE TWO NATURE DIRECTIVES**

As reported in the previous newsletter, 2013 is the year for the second report by EU Member States under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive on the conservation status species and habitats and for the first reporting on Birds status under Article 12 of the Birds Directive. While data were expected on 1 July under Article 17, the deadline for data under Article 12 is 31 December. All countries except Greece have delivered a first report under Article 17 which was quality checked by the ETC/BD and 21 have made their second and final delivery, see the ['scoreboard'](#) on the Article 17 website for further details. The ETC/BD is preparing national summaries on all information reported under Article 17 and will produce assessments of Conservation Status for biogeographical and marine regions with a public consultation during summer 2014.

So far only three countries have delivered their Article 12 (Birds Directive) reports – Finland, Luxembourg and Malta. The results from both Articles 12 and 17 will be summarised in an EEA Technical Report and a European Commission Composite Report to be published in 2015.

As part of the Natura 2000 biogeographical seminars focused on Natura 2000 management, the Alpine Seminar took place in Gratz (AT) on 25-26 November 2013 (see previous newsletters) and was organized by DG Environment and the Government of Styria. Preparatory work has started for the remaining biogeographical regions but no dates have been agreed for workshops and seminars. A [web-based platform](#) supports the process and includes a library with all the documents produced for the meetings and a forum. ETC/BD partner JNCC hosted a meeting on Nitrogen deposition and the nature directives as a contribution to work discussed at last year's Atlantic seminar – see below.

Further information about Natura 2000, including regularly updated statistics, are available on the [ETC/BD website](#).

• **THE EMERALD NETWORK**

The Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks under the Bern Convention met in Strasbourg on the 18 & 19 on September 2013. Otars Opermanis (ETC/BD core team) presented a paper on 'Criteria for assessing the National Lists of proposed Areas of Special Conservation Interest for bird species' and Doug Evans (ETC/BD core team) presented a proposed revision of Resolution 4 (the list of habitat types for which sites must be proposed) and gave an update on the 'Interpretation manual'. All presentations can be found on the [Emerald section of the Council of Europe's website](#).

At the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention held on 3-6 December 2013, 633 Norwegian sites were nominated as "candidate Emerald sites", as a direct follow up to the biogeographical seminar held in Trondheim on the 18 - 20 June.

The Committee also adopted a Revised Emerald Standard Data Form to ensure compatibility with the newly revised Natura 2000 Standard Form. Discussions are on-going between the EEA and the Council of Europe, with support from the ETC/BD, to adapt the Natura 2000 IT reporting tool to the Emerald reporting. Revised Criteria for the evaluation of the sufficiency of proposed ASCIs, including additional criteria for the evaluation of bird and migratory bird species were also adopted by the Standing Committee.

• **SECOND WEST BALKANS REGIONAL EEA/EIONET WORKSHOP ON BIODIVERSITY INDICATORS**

A second workshop was held on 5-6 November in Dubrovnik (Croatia) under the EEA West Balkans contract the Instrument for pre-accession (IPA) project 2011-2013. The ETC/BD was contracted to undertake this activity through MNHN and ECNC.



Delegates at the Dubrovnik workshop

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In June, the first workshop had selected some indicators to be worked out by the countries at home. Using the SEBI fact sheet model, countries representatives had to prepare two factsheets: one on SEBI07 Nationally designated protected areas and one to be chosen from SEBI01 Abundance & distribution of selected species, SEBI02 Red list index for national red list species or SEBI14 Fragmentation of river systems. These practical exercises mainly helped to assess the factsheet model, national data availability, national human and financial capacities. During the workshop, an exercise on how to aggregate these national indicators into a West Balkans indicator, with several difficulties including different periods of data collection, or in units, was highly appreciated by the participants.

These workshops contribute to better exchange experience between the countries, on both their difficulties and their success. It gives also a good opportunity to spend time discussing conceptual and methodological questions.

All documents and presentations are available [here](#).

• 2013 EIONET WORKSHOPS

The third annual EIONET workshop for the Agriculture and Forests National Reference Centres took place in Copenhagen on the 10 - 11 September. Topics discussed included work related to targets 2 and 3 of the 2020 biodiversity strategy and the State of the Environment Report 2015.

The annual EIONET Biodiversity workshop took place on the 28 and 29 October in Copenhagen. The first session of this workshop presented the new EEA multi-annual programme 2014-2018 and the Annual Management Plan 2014 to the biodiversity NRCs representatives. This was followed by presentations on progress on reporting under Articles 17 and 12 of the EU Habitats and Birds Directives in 2013 by MS (Doug Evans, ETC/BD) and progress on the [MAES process](#), restoration issues, review of EEA set of indicators and state of BISE and Data Centre on biodiversity. The final session was dedicated to a presentation by the EEA of next SOER2015 followed by break-out discussions on three topics which are expected to be addressed by the report: Restoring ecosystems and their services, Linking the European Union directives (Nature, Water and Marine), and European biodiversity challenges in a global perspective.

All [presentations](#) and [discussions](#) are available on the EIONET website.

• EUNIS HABITATS CLASSIFICATION

A workshop was held at the EEA on 28 & 29 November 2013 to agree guidelines for a revision of the marine component of the EUNIS habitats classification involving invited experts from a variety of European, regional and national projects (e.g. MESH, EUSeaMap). The ETC/BD will now produce a revised classification which will then be subject to a consultation via EIONET next year. Other interested parties will also be consulted.



Corymorpha, Gerssemia, Zoantharia and Heliometra glacialis on coarse sediment – treatment of deep sea benthic habitats was one of the major issues at the EUNIS marine workshop (Crown Copyright 2006, all rights reserved.)

A report from members of the [European Vegetation Survey](#), led by Alterra, has made proposals for revising the forest section of the classification and used vegetation databases to produce species lists of plants for the EUNIS level 3 forest habitats. There will be consultation with EIONET and users before any changes are made.

It is planned to examine the grassland and heathland sections of the classification during 2014.

• EUROPEAN HABITATS REDLIST

Following a feasibility study, the European Commission are funding a 3 year project to produce a European Red List of habitats. The work will be done by a consortium led by Alterra and IUCN in collaboration with the ETC/BD. The project starts in December 2013 and will be based on EUNIS level 3 (terrestrial) & 4 (marine).

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• **NITROGEN DEPOSITION AND THE NATURE DIRECTIVES**

This meeting, held near Peterborough (UK) and organised by JNCC, brought together researchers, staff from conservation agencies, NGOs and landuser organisations to discuss the impact of Nitrogen deposition on the habitats protected by the Habitats Directive. The meeting was both a follow up to an earlier meeting held in Brussels in 2009 and a contribution the Atlantic biogeographical seminar as Nitrogen deposition had been recognised as a major pressure for many habitats at last year's seminar held in the Netherlands.



Jean-Paul Hettelingh from the Co-ordination Centre for Effects (NL) and Doug Evans (ETC/BD) at the Nitrogen deposition and Nature Directives meeting (photo from JNCC)

The significant impact of Nitrogen deposition on many habitats was clearly shown by many presentations while others presented possible solutions. A report will be published in spring 2014, see the [JNCC website](#) for further information.

NEWS FROM THE PARTNERS

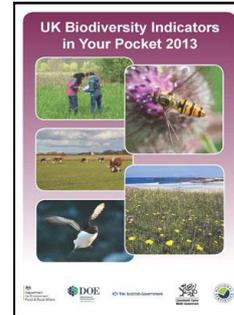
• **EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR NATURE CONSERVATION**

The ECNC recently took part in a workshop held at Loch Leven (Scotland) organised by the OpenNESS project where some 90 participants discussed ways to apply theory, concepts and models on ecosystem services and natural capital in real situations.

[OpenNESS](#) (from Operationalisation of natural capital and ecosystem services) is a FP7 project led by the Finnish Environment Institute SYKE which aims at turning the

concepts and theories about ecosystem services and natural capital into reality.

• **JNCC**



UK Biodiversity Indicators in your pocket which contains 25 indicators has been updated and is available from the [JNCC website](#).

• **ISPRA & JNCC**

Both JNCC and ISPRA are participating in the EUSeaMap 2 project which is led by Ifremer and funded by DG Mare. The project aims to extend the EUNIS broadscale modelled seabed habitat map developed by the previous EUSeaMap project so as to cover all European regional seas. The modelling approach involves elaboration of abiotic variable spatial datasets (i.e. bathymetry, substrate, salinity, modelled energy and light etc.) capable of determining the likely occurrence of broadscale habitats. The project also foresees enhanced validation of the modelled output using existing surveyed habitat maps, as well as collation of any survey habitat maps available from Member States, translated into EUNIS, and storage of this spatial information in a specific web portal.

The project is a component of the European Marine Observation and Data Network ([EMODnet](#)).

• **MNHN**

The Museum and the wider French biodiversity community have lost one of their most devoted and respected members. Robert Barbault, a father of ecology as a science in France, professor emeritus in ecology and former director of the Department of Ecology and Biodiversity Management at the MNHN, passed away on December 12th, 2013. A real humanist, Robert Barbault was president of the French committee of the Man and Biosphere (MAB) programme and an initiator of the international Diversitas programme. The president of the

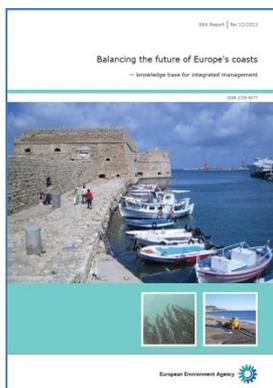
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MNHN, Gilles Boeuf, gave him a vibrant tribute in his speech at UNESCO on 13 December which is available on [YouTube](#). His recent books include *Un éléphant dans un jeu de quilles* and *La vie, quelle entreprise!*

includes an introduction to habitat mapping and information from many counties.

PUBLICATIONS

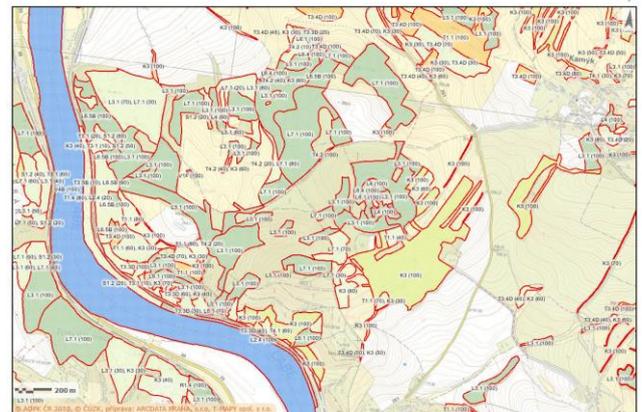
- **BALANCING THE FUTURE OF EUROPE'S COASTS — KNOWLEDGE BASE FOR INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT**



The aim of this report, which is largely based on work by four European Topic Centres: ETC/ICM (Inland, Coastal and Marine Waters); ETC/SIA (Spatial Information and Analysis); ETC/BD and ETC/CCA (Climate Change and Adaptation). is to frame an analytical approach for coastal areas in Europe, and to place this in the context of the new socio-economic drivers of sustainable growth, and the formation of a new integrated policy framework. This framework builds on an ecosystem-based management approach and integrated spatial planning and management. The report presents some key sustainability challenges for European coastal areas and waters, and highlights the need for a consolidated knowledge base and widespread information-sharing to support informed policy development and management actions. It can be found on the [EEA's website](#).

- **HABITAT MAPPING IN EUROPE**

This report produced jointly by the EEA and the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle and involving more than 40 contributors is based on a survey of habitat and vegetation mapping projects which have mapped large areas (sometimes whole countries) at large scales across Europe. As well as the results of the survey, the report



An extract from the habitat map of the Czech Republic (AOPK)

The report will be available from the [publications section of the EEA website](#) early in 2014.

- **THE ROLE OF PUBLISHED INFORMATION IN REVIEWING CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES FOR NATURA 2000 PROTECTED AREAS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION**

This paper, published in *Environmental Management*, by Otars Opermanis and colleagues in the ETC/BD core team examines how published data on new discoveries of protected animal species were taken into account by the nature conservation authorities in updating species lists of Natura 2000 sites in the European Union, which are the basis for conservation planning at the site-level. Over the period studied (2000-2011) only 40 % of published new protected species records were recognized by the authorities. The two main reasons for this seem to be a reliance on other sources of information by authorities and the difficulty in finding relevant information in scientific papers. The latter is because published faunistic information is very fragmented among many journals, and often with insufficient detail. The paper is available on line at [DOI 10.1007/s00267-013-0212-8](https://doi.org/10.1007/s00267-013-0212-8)

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This newsletter produced twice a year is from the European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity. It aims at providing information on activities led by the Consortium in the framework of the multi-annual European Environment Agency's Strategy 2009-2013.

If you have any contributions for the next issue of this newsletter please forward them to Doug Evans (evans@mnhn.fr).

Visit our website at <http://bd.eionet.europa.eu/>



(photo – Otars Opermanis)