

NEWS

• NATURA 2000 & THE TWO NATURE DIRECTIVES

The delivery date for reports under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive covering the period 2007-2012 was June 30 and 9 countries submitted their reports on time, with the Czech Republic being first to deliver. Once delivered, reports are checked by the ETC/BD and if required, countries will be asked to resubmit corrected reports before a final deadline in December 2013. The ETC/BD has begun to analyse the data, the first publications will be the national summaries which should be available by the end of 2013. Biogeographical assessments at European level will be possible only once data from all MS have been received and quality checked for a given biogeographical region.

MS	Delivery date	
CZ	24/06/2013	
FI	26/06/2013	
IE	27/06/2013	
EE	28/06/2013	
ES	28/06/2013	
SE	28/06/2013	
LV	28/06/2013	
PT	28/06/2013	
BE	01/07/2013	
FR	03/07/2013	
LU	05/07/2013	
AT	12/07/2013	

This [table of deliveries](#) can be found on the Article 17 website and will be regularly updated.

The Alpine workshop for the new series of biogeographical seminars took place in Gratz (AT) on 12-14th June 2013 (see previous newsletters) and was organized by DG Environment and the Government of Styria. More than 90 delegates representing experts, practitioners and policymakers from the Member States in the Alpine biogeographical region attended the workshop. Marita Arvela (ETC/BD core team) presented the pre-scoping

document produced by the ETC/BD which led to the selection by Member States of habitats types, species and habitats groups for the Seminar. After site visits focused on four habitat groups (forests, lakes and rivers, wetlands, grasslands) where practical management issues and plans, including LIFE+ projects, were presented participants discussed conservation issues for each habitat group in parallel working groups. All groups tried to answer questions focusing on common issues in management of habitats over the Alpine region, potential solutions and concrete possibilities for cooperative actions, management measures to accommodate habitats and key associated species. Finally participants were invited to discuss several cross-cutting themes (global change, landscape fragmentation, stakeholder involvement and tourism).

The process continues and the Alpine seminar will take place in Gratz on 25-26 November. Preparatory work has started for the remaining biogeographical regions but no dates have been agreed for workshops and seminars.

A web platform, prepared by consultants to the European Commission to support the new seminar series is now operational, see www.natura2000communicationplatform.eu/. The platform includes a library with all the documents produced for the meetings and a forum.



The new communication platform

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

• THE EMERALD NETWORK

The first Emerald seminar for Norway was held in Trondheim on the 18-20 June and was hosted by the Norwegian [Directorate for Nature Management](#).

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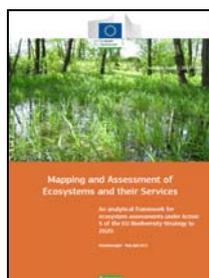


During the Emerald seminar for Norway

The meeting assessed the coverage of the habitats listed on Resolution 4 and the species listed on Resolution 6 of the Bern Convention by the 633 sites so far proposed by Norway. The meeting, chaired by Jan Plesnik, chair of the Bern Convention Standing Committee, included participants from Norwegian authorities and NGOs with observers from neighboring countries (Iceland & Sweden) and technical support from the ETC/BD.

Significant progress is being made in the implementation of the [Emerald network in seven Eastern European countries](#) with support of the Council of Europe, but so far without the ETC/BD's involvement due to the limited mandate of the EEA in this region.

• EUROPEAN ECOSYSTEM ASSESSMENTS



In support to [Target 2, action 5](#) of the European Strategy, the MAES (Mapping and Assessing European Ecosystems and their Services) Working Group met in January and in April. The [analytical framework for ecosystem assessment](#) was published in April in order to support the development of a coherent framework to be applied by the EU and its Member States and to ensure consistent approaches.

The other progress is the implementation of 6 thematic pilots: Pilot 1 focusing on Habitats and Birds Conservation Status (HBCS) data; Pilot 2 on agro-ecosystems; Pilot 3 on

forest ecosystems; Pilot 4 on freshwater ecosystems; Pilot 5 on marine ecosystems and Pilot 6 on natural capital accounting. The purpose of these Pilots is to provide methodological support including recommendations to assessments at European and national levels. Each pilot is co-lead by a MS and one EU institution. The main results will be presented during the next MAES WG meeting in September.

The ETC/BD is closely following these developments and is supporting the EEA and its ETC on Spatial Information and Assessments on methods to assess ecosystem extent and quality at European level.

In addition, a regular update of important reports and publications related to ecosystem assessments is made.

• WEST BALKANS REGIONAL EEA/EIONET WORKSHOP ON BIODIVERSITY INDICATORS

The EEA is cooperating with the seven West Balkan countries under the Instrument for pre-accession (IPA) project 2011-2013. For 2013, there was an agreement with the West Balkans National Focal Points to focus on indicators and biodiversity among other topics. The ETC/BD was contracted to undertake this activity through MNHN and ECNC.



Participants at the Tirana workshop

An initial two-day workshop was organised in Tirana (Albania) on 4-5 June with the aim to: reach a common understanding of biodiversity indicator development at the level of the EEA region, get an overview of activities regarding biodiversity indicators in the Western Balkan region, identify gaps and issues faced by the region in developing and producing biodiversity indicators and develop an action plan for developing national biodiversity indicators. Presentations, exchanges and discussions were very constructive and helpful to get an initial overview of the situation of biodiversity indicators in the region.



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Preliminary lessons learnt are that major gaps in the indicator development process are due to weakness in cooperation/communication between institutions /sectors/ stakeholder and problems of expertise within some institutions even if legislation. Funding and public awareness are also important issues. Therefore data exist but have a low availability due to problems of dissemination and ownership. Monitoring systems are not efficient enough and suffer of lack of human capacity for data collection. Datasets are not well balanced between the countries and are not equally distributed through a whole country (protected areas are well covered but the wider countryside is not). The importance of exchange of experience with other countries in the region was highly stressed and the organisation of such a workshop appreciated. A second workshop is expected in early November to exchange feedback from countries on the feasibility of the action plans defined in Tirana.

• EIONET NFPs SEMINAR AND MEETINGS

Following a decision made at the first annual meeting of the National Focal Points, in March in Dublin, the second annual NFP meeting, held in Copenhagen on 4-6 June, had a threefold approach. The first half day was dedicated to a training session for new NFP representatives to get familiar with the EIONET network and better understand their role at the interface between the EEA and their respective countries. The second day, in which several ETC managers participated, was organised as a brainstorming seminar to allow exchanges among NFPs and between NFPs and EEA on issues such as: "What are we trying to achieve together?", "How can we work together better?", "What do we expect from each other considering recent policy developments and the EEA Multi Annual Work Programme 2014-2018?".

The third day was organised as a genuine NFP meeting, with the first part chaired by the newly appointed EEA Executive Director, [Hans Bruyninckx](#) who emphasised the importance of EIONET as a unique collaborative network of knowledge. He stated that the EEA Multi-Annual Work Programme, currently under preparation, would duly recognise the role of EIONET and suggested that EIONET would evolve in two directions: within its internal dynamic, i.e development of a learning network (exchange of good practices, training activities) and in links with EEA dynamics, with important focus on support to policy implementation

• MARINE-RELATED ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENTS

In close collaboration with ETC/ Inland, Coastal and Marine (ETC/ICM), the ETC/BD is involved in a number of EEA projects related to the marine environment. This includes the preparation of a Marine Baseline Assessment, to be published in 2014, based on the analysis of data/information reported by EU member states as part of their 'Initial assessment' under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD). As an ETC/BD partner, ISPRA is involved in the assessment of data reported on habitats, functional groups, species and ecosystems particularly for Mediterranean countries. ISPRA is also involved in the preparation, for EEA, of an analytical overview of marine protected areas in Europe, making use of the Natura 2000 database as well as of the Common Database on Designated Areas.

At the request of the EEA, the ETC/BD core team has prepared crosswalks between different marine habitat classifications, i.e EUNIS/MSFD, EUSeaMap/MSFD, Habitat Directive Annex I/MSFD and Habitat Directive Annex I/ EUSeaMap. Links with the MAES ecosystem typology was also ensured.

• ALTERNET & EPBRS

[ALTER-Net](#) is a network of 26 research institutes from 18 European countries. Its 2013 Conference on 'Science underpinning the EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy' was held in Ghent (BE) on 15-18 April 2013 and focused on the objectives and targets of the EU's 2020 Biodiversity Strategy and the science required to achieve them. The presentations, including one from Doug Evans (ETC/BD core team) on 'The need for science in implementing Natura 2000', and recommendations from the meeting are available at <http://www.alter-net.info/outputs/conf-2013>.

The [European Platform for Biodiversity Research Strategy](#) (EPBRS) is a forum where natural and social scientists, policy-makers and other stakeholders can discuss and identify research requirements. The EPBRS held a meeting in Dublin on May 15-17, under the Irish Presidency of the EU, aimed to discuss and prioritise the research needs required to implement the EU Biodiversity Research Strategy in the context of Horizon 2020 and other supporting mechanisms. This meeting shared many participants with the Alter-Net meeting and used the recommendations of the earlier meeting as an important input. The recommendations of research required to help implement the EU 2020 Biodiversity strategy are available on the [EPBRS website](#).

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● **OTHER MEETINGS**

The 22nd workshop of the [European Vegetation Survey](#) was held on the 9-11 April in Rome and featured a session on red listing of habitats which included presentations from Doug Evans (ETC/BD core team) and Aurélien Carré. (MNHN). Programme and abstracts are available on the meeting's [website](#).

Brian MacSharry (ETC/BD core team) attended the European Breeding Bird Atlas 2 (EBBA2) workshop held in Barcelona on the 22nd March. This was to support the data collection process for the non EU countries for the "European Red List of Birds" project. Brian gave a presentation on the use of the Reporting Tool for this project.

Doug Evans attended a meeting organised by the EEA and held in Copenhagen on the June 12th to discuss a draft report on 'European Forests Assessments: further development of the High Natural Value Forest Indicator', with the aim of helping the EEA frame future work on this issue.

Luboš Halada (ILE-SAS) participated on behalf of the ETC/BD in the [23rd Workshop of the Coordination Centre on Effects \(CCE\)](#) & the 29th Task Force meeting of the International Cooperative Programme on Modelling and Mapping under the Convention on Transboundary Air Pollution, held in Copenhagen on 8-11 April. Progress in the development of indicators and models on effects of air pollution on biodiversity as well as their relevance to policy were discussed.

NEWS FROM THE PARTNERS

● **MUSEUM NATIONAL D'HISTOIRE NATURELLE**

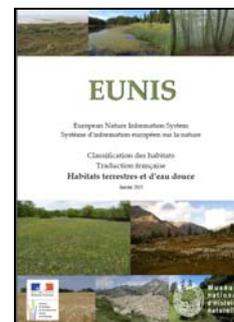
The Director of the MNHN, Thomas Grenon, was informed by a letter dated 8 July 2013 from the Executive Director of the EEA, that the proposal submitted by the MNHN on behalf of a consortium of 12 institutions for the renewal of the ETC/BD beyond 2013 (i.e for the period 2014-2018) had been accepted by the Management Board of the EEA, further details in the next newsletter.

Brian MacSharry who has been part of the ETC/BD core team since 2007 where he has been responsible for GIS and related work will be leaving at the end of July to take up a post at [UNEP-WCMC](#) in Cambridge (UK). We wish Brian all the best for this new post where instead of dealing with spatial data on protected areas in Europe, he will be dealing with the entire planet.



Brian with a memento of Paris

Mikael Baudet joined the ETC/BD core team in June and will be helping with processing the data associated with Article 17 reports. Mikael has a background in database management and has previously worked with companies such as Orange and SFR.



The MNHN has published 'EUNIS, European Nature Information System, *Système d'information européen sur la nature. Classification des habitats. Traduction française. Habitats terrestres et d'eau douce*', a translation in to French of the terrestrial and freshwater sections of the EUNIS habitat classification. It can be downloaded from the website of the museum's [Service du Patrimoine Naturel](#).

● **EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR NATURE CONSERVATION**

Lawrence Jones-Walters who was Deputy Executive Director and Senior Programme Manager - Business and Biodiversity / Green Infrastructure left [ECNC](#) in June 2013 to take up a post

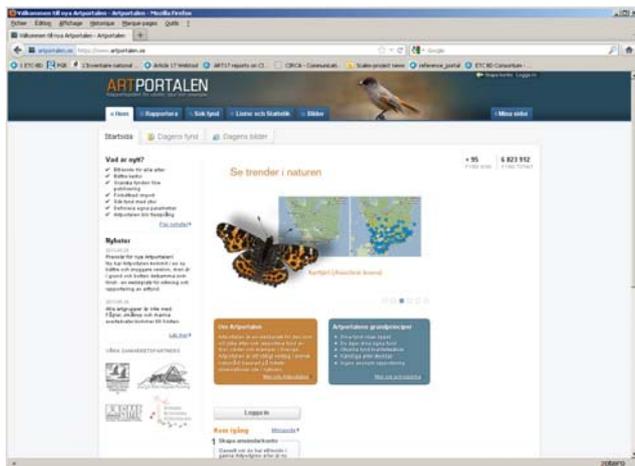
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at [Alterra](#). Neil McIntosh who was previously with [Eurosites](#) will become Deputy Executive Director.

ECNC organised a workshop on 29-30 May on how to reach the restoration target under Action 6 of the EU's 2020 biodiversity strategy. The results of the workshop will be used in the EU funded project 'Priorities for the restoration of ecosystems and their services' to further develop the guidance and a proposal for a support mechanism for Member States to better implement the restoration agenda.

• **SVERIGES LANTBRUKSUNIVERSITET (SLU)**

Johan Bodegård, who was the primary contact person for [SLU](#) to the ETC/BD and who acted as the chair of the ETC Management Committee between 2011 and 2012 was appointed on 15 April as the Deputy-Director of the [Swedish Museum of Natural History](#). We wish him well in his new position!



The Artportalen home page

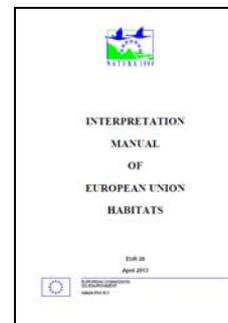
At the end of May the next generation of the joint Swedish - Norwegian Species Observation System project ([Artportalen.se](#)) was launched. This observation reporting system went public in 2000 and was initially a collaboration between Bird Life Sweden and the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency. From 2004, responsibility for the system moved to the [Swedish Species Information Centre](#) (part of SLU) who develop and manage the system together with the four main NGOs working with species information and conservation. Work to upgrade the system began in 2008 and four and a half year later the first part covering plants, fungi and vertebrates (except birds) is on line.

• **AGENTURA OCHRANY PŘÍRODY A KRAJINY ČESKÉ REPUBLIKY**

Michael Hosek, former Deputy Director of the [Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic](#), and primary contact point to the ETC/BD for this partner organisation, was appointed as the Director-General for Nature Conservation in the Ministry of the Environment at the beginning of April. We wish Michael full success in his new position.

PUBLICATIONS

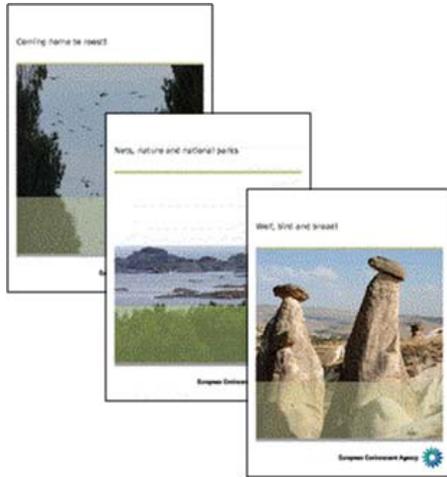
• **INTERPRETATION MANUAL OF EUROPEAN UNION HABITATS – EUR28**



A new edition of the Interpretation Manual for the EU28 has just been published following its approval by the Habitats Committee in April. The major changes are the addition of 2 new habitats ('32A0 Tufa cascades of karstic rivers of the Dinaric Alps' and '6540 Sub-Mediterranean grasslands of the *Molinio-Hordeion secalini*') and a revision of habitat '8140 Eastern Mediterranean screes' to cover variation in the west Balkans as a result of Croatia joining the EU. The opportunity has been taken to correct EUNIS habitat codes for marine habitat types and to make some other minor corrections. The revised manual can be downloaded from [DG Environment's website](#).

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• **OUR NATURAL EUROPE**



There are three new publications in the EEA's 'Our Natural Europe' series including 'Wolf, bird and bread!' from Turkey featuring Eyüp Yüksel from ETC/BD partner GDNPA-TR.

The other new titles are 'Coming home to roost!' (Romania) and 'Nets, nature and national parks' (Sweden). All three can be found at on the [EEA's website](#).

• **ADAPTING LEGISLATION FOR AN ENLARGED EUROPEAN UNION - EXPERIENCE FROM THE HABITATS DIRECTIVE**

Doug Evans, Peter Gajdos and Luboš Halada from the ETC/BD together with Andras Demeter from the European Commission have contributed a paper describing how the Habitats Directive was amended for the accession of 12 new Member States in 2004 and 2007 to a special issue of the journal *Environmental Conservation* on biodiversity governance in Central Europe (Evans, Demeter, Gajdos & Halada (2013) Adapting legislation for an enlarged European Union - experience from the Habitats Directive. [Environmental Conservation. 40 \(2\): 97–107](#)).

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](mailto:evans@mnhn.fr)).

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