

## **NEWS**

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

A draft of 'State of nature in the European Union - Results from the Reporting under the Nature Directives 2007-2012', a report based on reporting under Article 12 of the Birds Directive and Article 17 of the Habitats Directive, was sent to National Reference Centres and members of the Expert Group on Reporting for comments on 11 December and the consultation will run until 26 January 2015. The report will be published by the EEA in April 2015, there will also be a Composite Report from the European Commission.

Preliminary results have been presented at several meetings including the Habitats and Birds Directive Expert Group and the Coordination group for Biodiversity and nature. Further information, including National Summaries, scoreboards on timeliness and completeness of deliveries and access to assessments of conservation status can be found on the [Article 12](#) and [Article 17](#) websites.

Discussions have begun on how to improve reporting under the two directives for the next reporting round and two *ad hoc* working groups will be established in 2015 to help develop revised guidelines. One group will work on Favourable Reference Values while the second will address Structure and Functions, Future prospects and Trends. It is planned that revised guidelines and reporting formats will be available for the end of 2016.

A biogeographical seminar was held in Zagreb, Croatia on the 29 and 30 September to assess the Croatian contribution to the network. The Croatian proposals, which cover some 36% of its land surface were assessed as sufficient for most habitats and species although some further work is required.

For the latest news on Natura 2000 see [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/platform/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/platform/index_en.htm)

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### **• MARINE AND FRESHWATER RELATED ISSUES**

The ETC/BD participated in the second annual meeting of the Marine expert group which was held in Brussels on 30-31 October. Laura Patricia Gavilan reported on the [state of play of marine Natura 2000 sites](#) at the end of 2013, showing the latest contributions to the network, mainly from Croatia, United Kingdom and Ireland, and mentioning the marine proposals received in 2014 from Spain, Ireland and Bulgaria which will be added to the network next year. Mora Aronsson (ETC/BD partner SLU) made a presentation on a proposed ranking of marine habitats and species across the four EU marine regions based on

results from the 2007-2012 Article 17 reporting. This presentation was further completed with information on main pressures on marine habitats and species reported under Article 17 when drafting the first 'Pre-scoping document for the marine regions', in support to the marine seminar focused on Natura 2000 sites management to be held in Saint Malo (France) on 5-7 May 2015.

On behalf of ETC/BD, Zelmira Gaudillat-Sipkova participated in a workshop on coordinated implementation of nature, biodiversity, marine and water policies organized under the Italian Presidency in Brussels on 2-3 December to discuss streamlining of the related directives in terms of 1) Objectives and assessments, 2) Monitoring and reporting and 3) Programme of measures and public participation. The workshop outlined a need to continue to develop common understanding and to build crosslinks between the directives at all levels of implementation and in multiple domains, including for example setting objectives, assessing status and pressures, reporting and communicating and demonstrating progress towards objectives.

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### **• EUNIS**

Following a workshop last December (see previous newsletter) a proposal for revising the marine section of the EUNIS habitat classification has been produced. There will soon be a consultation via EIONET, other interested groups, such as the regional marine conventions, will also be consulted.

There has also been work to revise the forest and heath sections of the classification and it is expected that there will be a consultation via EIONET in 2015. At the same a contract with the [European Vegetation Survey](#) has been using information from vegetation databases to improve habitat descriptions and to produce distribution maps.

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### **• EMERALD & THE BERN CONVENTION**

The ETC/BD has continued to support the development of the Emerald network, in particular by helping to ensure similar approaches between Natura 2000 and Emerald.

Following discussions at previous meetings, Doug Evans (ETC/BD core team) presented a revision of Resolution 4 of the Bern Convention (list of habitats for Emerald sites) at a meeting of the Group of experts on protected areas and ecological networks held in Strasbourg on 11 & 12 September. This revision aims to harmonise Resolution 4 and Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive as far as possible and follows a similar revision of Resolution 6 for species. These changes mean that implementing Emerald is more

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than ever good preparation for Natura 2000. The ETC/BD also presented proposals for new habitats from Switzerland and Ukraine. It was agreed to forward a revised Resolution 4 to the Standing Committee and this was adopted on 2-5 December 2014. A report from the Standing Committee, including the revised Resolution 4, can be found on the [Council of Europe's website](#).

During the Expert group meeting, Doug Evans also made a presentation of changes to the EUNIS website to better show information relevant to Emerald and Sabine Roscher reported on a collaborative work between the ETC/BD and the 'Species 2000' Secretariat to clarify taxonomic issues linked to new species proposed by Contracting Parties to the Convention for addition to Resolution 6 of the Convention.

The ETC/BD provided support to the EEA to adapt the Natura 2000 software for the Emerald Network, this software was further tested and released early October and is now being used by teams from the seven Eastern European countries working on the identification of Emerald sites as part of the [ENPI programme](#).

The Standing Committee of the Bern Convention expressed its 'deepest gratitude for this work'.

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### • OTHER MEETINGS

Doug Evans attended a meeting to celebrate the tenth anniversary of [Butterfly Conservation Europe](#), held in Laufen, Germany, on 1<sup>st</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> December and presented some results from Article 17 for butterflies and moths.

## NEWS FROM THE PARTNERS

### • MUSEUM NATIONAL D'HISTOIRE NATURELLE

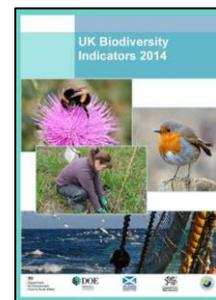
The decree which establishes the new [statutory framework of the MNHN](#) was published in 1<sup>st</sup> October 2014, which will lead to a new governance of the institution. A new Management Board and a new Scientific Council will be set up early in 2015 and a President who will act as the Director of the MNHN will be nominated by the two Ministers in charge of the MNHN upon recommendation by a specifically appointed commission. In the meantime, Gilles Boeuf, current President of the MNHN, has been appointed as chair of the scientific committee of a 'task force' to [create the future French Agency for Biodiversity](#) which is one of the cornerstones of the Framework Law on

Biodiversity currently in preparation. The agency is scheduled to start work by the end of 2015.

Marita Arvela, who had been leading the ETC/BD work on reporting under the Nature Directives within the core team, was appointed as Policy Officer at the European Commission in the Nature unit of DG Environment on 1<sup>st</sup> September. Zelmira Gaudillat-Sipkova, who has been part of the core team working on the Habitats Directive since 2007, has been appointed as Marita's successor. We wish both of them success in their new roles, with our thanks for their active work in the ETC/BD.

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### • JOINT NATURE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE



The 2014 update for the UK Biodiversity Indicators was published on [JNCC's website](#) on 4 December, and was immediately communicated and used during the EEA's BISE-CHM expert meeting to demonstrate a national approach at linking indicators at different scales, in this case to the Aichi targets.

Further information on development of the UK biodiversity indicators is available from James Williams at JNCC ([james.williams@jncc.gov.uk](mailto:james.williams@jncc.gov.uk)).

JNCC is one of the partners undertaking work within the Seabed Habitats data portal of the 2nd phase of development in the European Marine Observation and Data Network (EMODnet). The other six data portals cover bathymetry, geology, physics, chemistry, biology and human activities. EMODnet is a consortium of organisations assembling European marine data, data products and metadata. It is a long term marine data initiative from the European Commission's DG MARE underpinning its Marine Knowledge 2020 strategy.

The Seabed Habitats component is also known as the EUSeaMap 2 project and aims to create a homogeneous seabed habitat map covering all European seas, and to extend the EUNIS broadscale seabed habitat map (developed under the first phase of the EUSeaMap project) for EMODnet to cover all European basins. The enhanced calibration of the EUNIS thresholds with biological data is



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the most innovative EUSeaMap 2 strand of phase 2 work. JNCC's main role is to lead on the development of the web portal and the overall modelling for the Atlantic region.

See <http://www.emodnet-seabedhabitats.eu/> for further information.

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### • EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR NATURE CONSERVATION

The [EcoFINDERS research project](#) on 'Ecological Function and Biodiversity Indicators in European Soils' held its final meeting in December at INRA Dijon, France, just before its official end in January 2015.

ECNC was part of the project's stakeholder forum to represent the European Learning Network on Functional AgroBiodiversity ([ELN-FAB](#)) and to provide a link to projects such as [OpenNESS](#). In the final feedback round from stakeholders, ECNC's Ben Delbaere suggested follow-up actions in terms of outreach and linking to the EU policy implementation such as on mapping and assessment of ecosystem services (MAES), the biogeographical process, ecosystem restoration, and biodiversity indicators.

Although the project is coming to a close now, its knowledge will continue to be important for soil biodiversity and land management activities in years to come. For example, the project's database will most likely be hosted by the EC Joint Research Centre. And ECNC will integrate some of the findings in the ELN-FAB implementation.

ECNC is also involved in the European Nature Outlook process which is led by PBL, the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency. The Nature Outlook will serve as input for an informal Ministers Conference on the future of nature and biodiversity policies to be held in April 2016 under the Dutch presidency of the Council of the EU. The study is complementary to the mid-term review of the EU Biodiversity Strategy and the fitness check of the Birds and Habitats Directives, which are carried out by the EC. For further information see the [Nature Outlook website](#).

## PUBLICATIONS

### • DEVELOPING A FOREST NATURALNESS INDICATOR FOR EUROPE

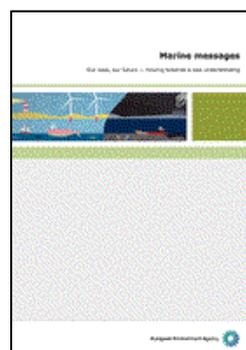


This report, to which both ETC/SIA and ETC/BD contributed, extends the High Nature Value concept to forests and documents the first steps towards the development of a forest naturalness indicator for Europe. An enhanced European HNV forest indicator and its corresponding map will enable us to gain better insights into the current status and extent of forest naturalness, and will allow for further analyses on spatial and time trends.

<http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/developing-a-forest-naturalness-indicator>

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### • MARINE MESSAGES



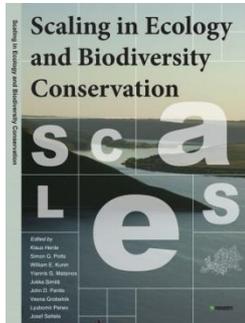
'Marine messages', is a briefing from the European Environment Agency (EEA), providing an overview of the current state-of-affairs of European seas and our use of them. It argues that economic activities including transport, fishing, offshore energy and tourism should be better managed so that they ensure sustainable health of marine ecosystems. ETC/BD partner ISPRA contributed to the report as part of ETC/ICM.

<http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/marine-messages>

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- **SCALING IN ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION**



present it in a way that is usable not only for scientists but also for people making decisions in administration, management, policy or even business and NGOs; to people who are more interested in the "practical" side of this issue. Doug Evans (ETC/BD core team) was a member of the projects Advisory Board and co-authored one of the chapters. The book is available from <http://ab.pensoft.net/articles.php?id=1169>

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This book aims to bring together the main results of the [SCALES FP7 project](#) in a comprehensive manner and

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 2014-2018.

*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)).*

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