

Latest developments in EU Nature Policy



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EU Environmental policy context – the 7th EAP : Living well, within the limits of our planet

- **2020** timeframe, **2050** vision, **9** priority objectives
- Commitment by EU and its **Member States**

THEMATIC OBJECTIVES:

- **Ecological resilience/natural capital**
- **Green & competitive growth – low-carbon, resource-efficient economy**
- **Health & environment, human well-being**

ENABLING FRAMEWORK:

- **Implementation**
- **Information, knowledge base**
- **Investment**
- **Integration, coherence**

SPATIAL DIMENSION:

- **Urban environment**
- **International**



EU biodiversity strategy to 2020

« Our life insurance, our natural capital »

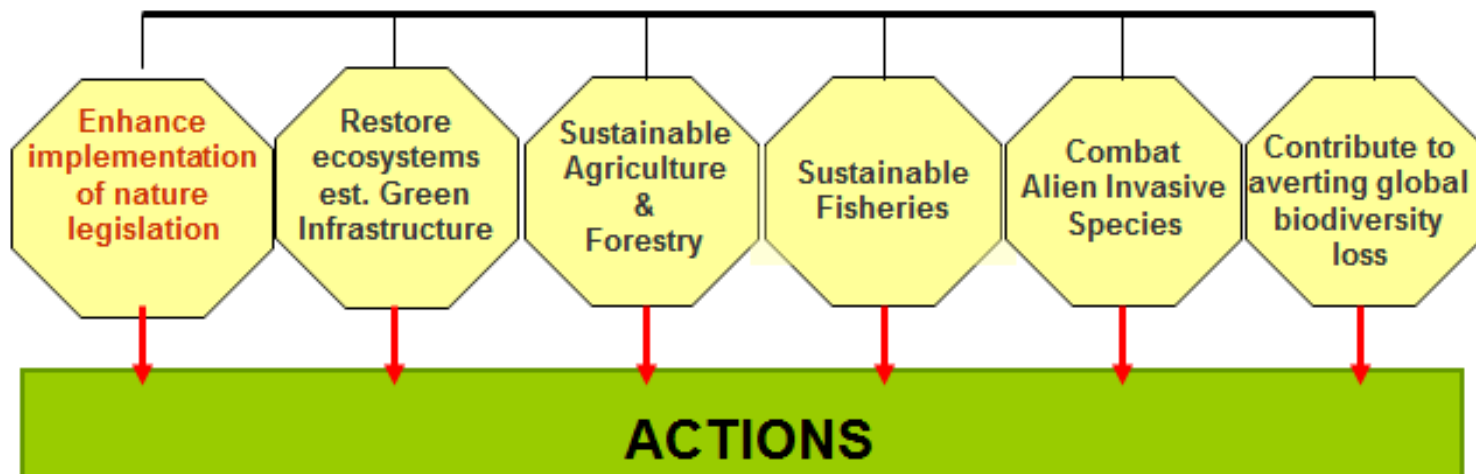
A 2050 VISION

European Union biodiversity and the ecosystem services it provides – its natural capital – are protected, valued and appropriately restored...

A 2020 HEADLINE TARGET

Halt the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the EU and restore them insofar as feasible, and step up the EU's contribution to averting global biodiversity loss

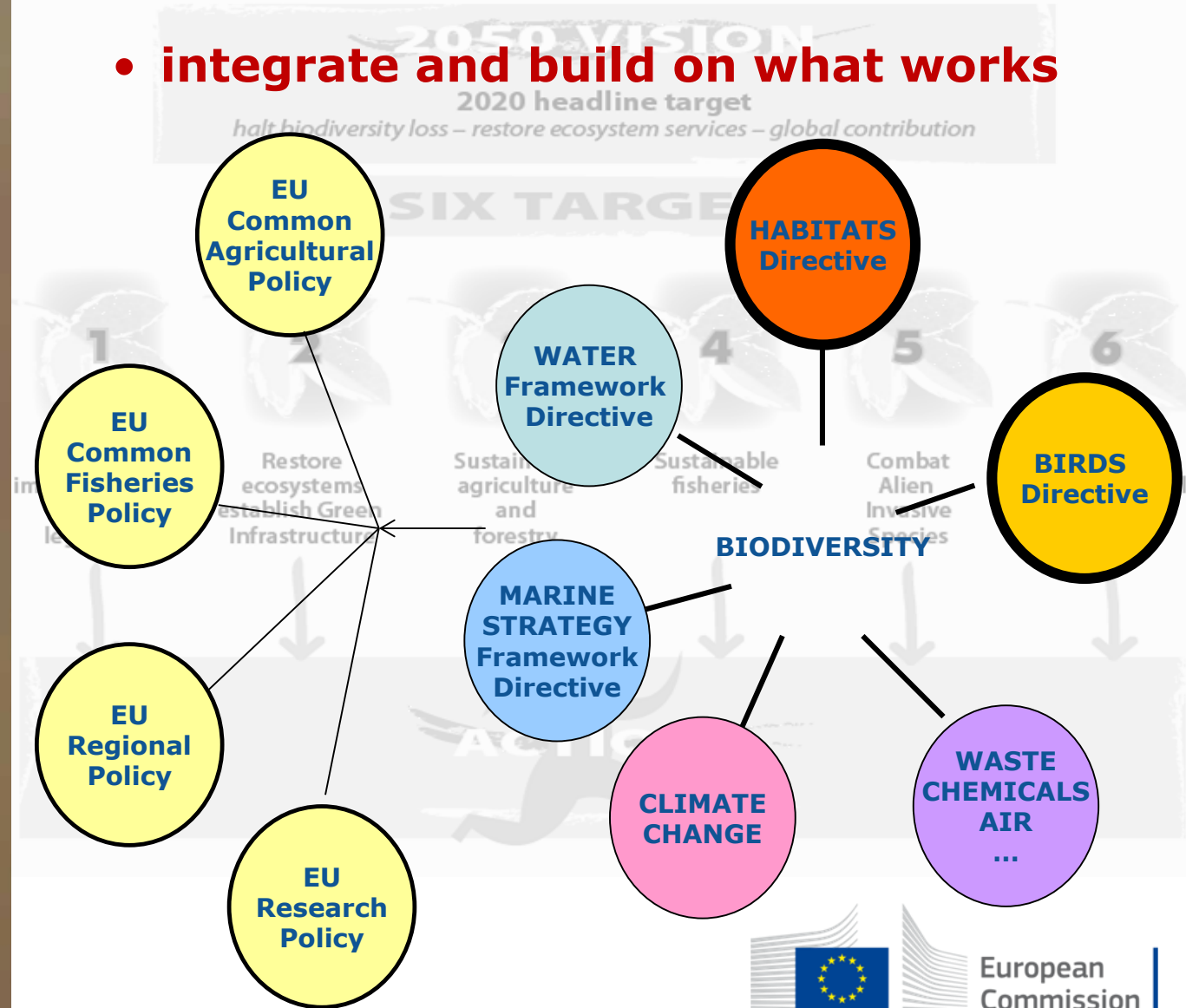
6 TARGETS



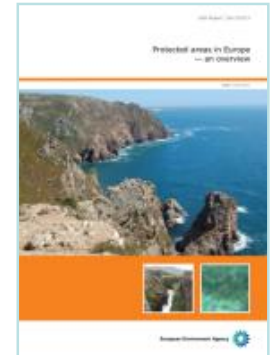


Structure of the EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy

- **integrate and build on what works**



Establishment of Natura 2000



- >27 000 sites
- > 1 000 000 km²
- 18 % EU land
- ~4 % EU seas
- Largest co-ordinated PA network
- Almost complete on land
- Some additional work for marine

Evaluation of Birds & Habitats Directives

The Fitness Check will evaluate how the EU nature legislation performs according to these 5 key criteria:

Effectiveness



Have the objectives of the legislation been met?

Efficiency



Were the costs involved reasonable?

Coherence



Is the EU nature legislation complementing or contradicting other policy and legislation?

Relevance



Does EU legislation address the main problems that species and habitats are facing today?

EU added value



Could similar changes have been achieved at national or regional level, or did EU action provide clear added value?



European
Commission

Fitness Check Conclusions (December 2016)

- Directives are fit for purpose but fulfilling their objectives and realising their full potential depends upon greatly improving implementation.
 - Too many species/habitats continue to show negative trends
 - Marine Natura 2000 network incomplete
 - Only 50% of sites managed
 - Funding shortage
 - Cases of inflexible application & permitting delays
 - Insufficient knowledge, awareness, engagement, cooperation
 - Nature Directives require action also outside Natura 2000
 - Only 11% citizens know about Natura 2000

Objectives of the Nature Action Plan

- to realise the full potential of the **Directives** to achieve **healthy ecosystems**, whose services benefit of **people, nature and the economy**
- to **boost their contribution** towards reaching the **EU's biodiversity targets** for 2020
- to **improve** the Directives' **coherence with** broader **socio-economic objectives**

Approach of Action Plan

- **4 priority areas of Action**

- Improving guidance and knowledge and ensuring better coherence with broader socio-economic objectives
- Building political ownership and strengthening compliance
- Strengthening investment in Natura 2000 and improving synergies with EU funding instruments
- Better communication and outreach, engaging citizens, stakeholders and communities

- **15 Actions** (detailed factsheets in SWD)

- **Timeframe 2017-2019** (cannot pre-empt next MFF and on-going debate on the future of CAP)

- **Key Actors: MS, COM, CoR, EIB, EEA, Stakeholders**

Improve guidance & knowledge and ensure better coherence with broader socio-economic objectives

1. Update, develop and actively promote , in all EU languages, guidance on (a) site permitting procedures, species protection and management as well as sector-specific guidance (b) integrating ecosystem services into decision-making	COM/CoR/MS / stakeholders
2. Establish a support mechanism to help Member State authorities address key challenges in applying the permitting requirements of the Birds and Habitats Directives for Natura 2000 and species protection rules	COM / MS / stakeholders
3. Improve knowledge , including through enhanced and more efficient monitoring , and ensure public online access to data necessary for implementing the Directives (e.g. satellite imagery from the Copernicus programme)	COM / EEA / MS

Building political ownership and strengthening compliance

4. Complete Natura 2000 network, especially gaps for marine & put in place necessary conservation measures for sites	MS/ stakeholders / COM
5. Use Environmental Implementation Review for dedicated bilaterals with national & regional authorities to develop agreed roadmaps to improve implementation & consult with landowners & other stakeholders on challenges	COM/MS/ stakeholders
6. Bring together public authorities & stakeholders from different MS at biogeographical region level to address common challenges , including on cross-border issues	COM/CoR /MS/ stakeholders
7. Further develop Species & Habitats Action Plans for most threatened species/natural habitats & stakeholder platforms on coexistence with conflict species (e.g. large carnivores)	COM/MS / stakeholders

Strengthening investment in Natura 2000 and improving synergies with EU funding instruments

8. Strengthen investments in nature (a) Update PAFs - improve Natura 2000 multiannual financial planning (b) Propose 10% nature/biodiversity increase within LIFE budget (c) Stimulate private sector investment in nature projects	COM/EIB/MS /stakeholders
9. Promote synergies with CAP , incl. Natura 2000 payments & agri-environment-climate measures, development of result-based schemes, Farming Advisory Services , innovation and knowledge transfer.	COM / MS / stakeholders
10. Increase awareness of cohesion policy funding opportunities and improve synergies	COM / MS / stakeholders
11. Improve synergies with the common fisheries policy & integrated maritime policy, including more effective use of financing opportunities	COM / MS / stakeholders
12. Provide guidance to support deployment of green infrastructure for better connectivity of Natura 2000 areas; support nature-based solutions projects through EU research and innovation policy and Horizon 2020 funds	COM / MS / stakeholders

Better communication & outreach, engaging citizens, stakeholders & communities

13. Support knowledge exchange & engagement of local & regional authorities through a joint platform with Committee of the Regions	CoR / COM
14. Support recognition of good management of Natura 2000 & awareness-raising of Nature Directives, availing of new technologies and outreach activities , and strengthen links between natural and cultural heritage (2018 European year of cultural heritage)	COM / CoR / MS stakeholders
15. Involve young people by giving them the opportunity to get involved in nature protection in Natura 2000 sites (European Solidarity Corps)	COM / MS / stakeholders

Next steps

- **Ambitious work programme for the next two and a half years**
- **Natura 2000 Day to be proclaimed on 15 May**
- **Dedicated Conference on 6th June, hosted jointly with CoR and Maltese Presidency**
- **Council Conclusions under Maltese Presidency**