
European Commission Biodiversity Knowledge Base

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Assessment of the EU Biodiversity Action Plan as a tool for
implementing biodiversity policy

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List of acronyms

BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
BEG	Biodiversity Expert Group
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CFP	Common Fisheries Policy
CHM	Clearing House Mechanism
CITES	International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CMS	Convention on Migratory Species
EC	European Commission/ European Community
EEA	European Environment Agency
EESC	European Economic and Social Committee
EFF	European Fisheries Fund
EPBRs	European Platform for Biodiversity Research Strategy
EU	European Union
GHG	Greenhouse gas(es)
IAS	Invasive alien species
ICZM	Integrated Coastal Zone Management
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IPPC	Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control
IT	Information technology
MEAs	Multilateral environmental agreements
MS	Member State(s)
MSFD	Marine Strategy Framework Directive
MSY	Maximum sustainable yield
MTI	Marine Trophic Index
MOP	Measure of Progress
NGOs	Non-governmental organisation(s)

SEBI	Streamlining European 2010 Biodiversity Indicators
SM	Supporting Measure
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time bound
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WFD	Water Framework Directive

Executive Summary

The aim of this report is to undertake an assessment of the existing European Union (EU) Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) as a tool for implementing biodiversity policy, and to establish its successes and failures, and strengths and weaknesses. The report has been compiled in particular to inform the development of an improved future BAP process for the EU or any equivalent instrument.

As chapter 2 describes, the European Commission, in response to obligations under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), has led EU efforts on biodiversity through three main initiatives: the 1998 Community Biodiversity Strategy and subsequent Biodiversity Action Plans in 2001, which were followed by the Communication on "Halting Biodiversity Loss by 2010 – and Beyond: Sustaining ecosystem services for human well-being" (COM/2006/0216 final) and the accompanying detailed Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP). The BAP specifies a comprehensive plan of ten priority actions, divided into four policy areas and outlines the responsibility of community institutions and Member States in relation to each. It further specifies four main supporting measures and also contains activities to monitor progress and a timetable for evaluations. The Action Plan is translated into 154 individual priority actions at both national and European level assembled under specific targets. The European Commission undertakes annual reporting on progress in delivery of the BAP.

The Communication and the BAP highlight two particular threats to EU biodiversity: fragmentation, degradation and destruction due to land use and development; and the increasing impact of climate change on biodiversity. Other key threats are not neglected, but it was felt that overexploitation, sustainable consumption and production were less extensively addressed despite the action plan's overall comprehensiveness. It was also argued that the comprehensiveness itself, the resulting failure to adequately prioritise and 'specify' actions most necessary to achieve the 2010 target were important problems that hindered the BAP's successfulness.

Although consisting of a mix of targets and actions addressing drivers, pressures of and responses to biodiversity loss, and the state of biodiversity, the BAP was not designed to fit into a driver-pressure-state-response-impact framework. Moreover, many targets put a stronger emphasis on the implementation of relevant responses than on the achievement of a certain biodiversity status or the reduction of certain impacts, not least in the area of ecosystem services. Due to the focus on existing instruments no proper horizon scanning was carried out to check whether the right responses were prioritised in light of potential future threats or changes in the importance of certain pressures.

In order to monitor change over time (i.e. whether the implementation of the plan has achieved the desired impact) it is necessary to establish both the indicators of change and the baseline at the start of the process. A major failure of the existing BAP is that it did not establish indicators, or milestones and baselines at any level. For reporting on the implementation of the BAP it was therefore necessary to retrofit indicators, which was not always possible.

A significant criticism of the BAP brought forward by a number of stakeholders and other EU institutions was the lack of an associated budget for its implementation. The BAP also suffered from a lack of support from the Council of the EU. In addition, although the delegation of the responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the BAP from the Commission to the Biodiversity Expert Group had many advantages, it led to a lack of support from sectoral agencies / departments outside the area of nature conservation and environment at the national level.

The 2006 Communication and the BAP identified a reporting process, which is introduced in chapter 3, with evaluations at the mid-term (to end of 2008), at the end of 2010, and at the end of 2013 (for post 2010 targets identified in the Action Plan). In 2008, recording the status of the implementation of the plan and its outcomes was achieved by looking at clusters of the actions within the BAP and developing country and community level profiles based on those clusters. In 2009/10, a detailed assessment of the biodiversity action plan was undertaken in order to review all actions, and identify indicators (Measures of Progress) and their data sources (official, unofficial). A Country Profile was developed that consisted of Measures of Progress that were prefilled from data sources and those involving a Member State question. However, the envisaged one-stop process of consultation with Member States was not achieved and additional rounds of feedback had to be introduced into the process.

The fact that it was not possible to identify appropriate indicators (Measures of Progress) for several of the actions, targets and objectives of the BAP thus draws into question whether it has been possible to evaluate all the desired outcomes of the current Biodiversity Action Plan.

Several Member States provided feedback on the technical aspects of the process of reporting on the implementation of the BAP. The level of detail of the Country Profiles was questioned and it was pointed out that the time-consuming process of consulting the relevant services and experts in the Member States was cumbersome and not sufficiently supported by a user-friendly format of the Country Profiles. However, it was stated that within Member States the BAP process and compilation of the Country Profiles had increased knowledge and awareness of the BAP. Also, it has proved useful having a profile of each Member State in one place rather than dispersed amongst a number of separate official data sources. The database of information gathered in 2008 and in 2010 is therefore valuable and has provided a baseline against which to assess future progress.

As there was no dedicated data harvesting tool or data repository, a Microsoft Office Word document with embedded schema was used in 2010 to assemble the information for the Country Profiles. For a number of reasons, this proved not to be an ideal method to collect the information.

Chapter 4 looks into the alignment of the EU BAP reporting process with other national, EU and global processes. The alignment of the BAP with monitoring processes at the national level has been particularly good where Member States are obliged to report on the implementation of EC Directives. This is demonstrated by a number of examples of monitoring by Member States for reporting on the implementation of EC regulations and directives in the areas of nature and biodiversity, water, fisheries, agriculture, rural development and climate change mitigation. In addition, the reporting process on the implementation of the BAP has drawn extensively on information from EC directives and

multilateral environmental agreements such as the CBD, but also the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Technical aspects of better aligning these different reporting processes in light of the BAP reporting process are discussed, focusing on the Biodiversity Information System for Europe, Reportnet and the EC Clearing-House Mechanism as maintained by the European Environment Agency. It is stated that the implementation of the integration of biodiversity into relevant sectors – a key aim of the EU BAP - is hampered by the fragmentation of departmental responsibilities at EC and national level.

Finally, chapter 5 assembles recommendations for a future EU BAP or equivalent instrument, resulting from the discussions in chapter 2, 3 and 4. The recommendations address the content and structure of, and support for such an instrument, the process of reporting on the implementation of the instrument, and an improved alignment with other biodiversity-related reporting processes.

A summary of the key recommendations for considering a future BAP or equivalent strategy is as follows:

- There should be a smaller and more clearly defined set of actions.
- Ownership and issues relating to financial resourcing of the future BAP or equivalent instrument should be established from the outset.
- A structured approach, such as a logical framework should be adopted with specific, measurable and time-limited targets and indicators identified at the outset, together with the baseline against which progress will be monitored.
- Data collection for monitoring progress should be harmonised with other processes to reduce the reporting burden, and the IT systems for achieving this should be developed and established from the outset.

1. Introduction

The aim of this report is to undertake an assessment of the existing European Union (EU) Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) as a tool for implementing biodiversity policy, including successes and failures of the BAP and analysing its strengths and weaknesses. The report has been compiled in particular to inform the development of an improved future BAP process for the EU or any equivalent instrument.

The report's focus is on the lessons learned throughout the BAP process, from development to its assessment, in particular by drawing on the experience that the European Commission Biodiversity Knowledge Base project team has gained during the duration of the project. The report provides a brief history of the BAP process, before taking a closer look at the content and structure of the BAP as well as the support it has received from the major stakeholders involved (chapter 2). The following section reviews the BAP reporting process, addressing indicators, data availability, reporting, and information technology (IT) issues (chapter 3). The report then turns to the question to what extent the BAP process has been aligned with national, EU and global biodiversity monitoring and reporting processes (chapter 4). Finally, the report provides recommendations to any future EU BAP process or its equivalent, including reporting, not least in the light of the global discussions under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and its post-2010 Strategic Plan, which is currently under negotiation (chapter 5).

2. Reviewing the EU Biodiversity Action Plan

In Europe, the Natura 2000 network and the related Birds ([Directive 2009/147/EC](#)) and Habitats Directives ([Directive 92/43/EEC](#)) constitute the backbone of the EU's internal policy on biodiversity protection. Over the last few years the European Union has developed its environmental policy through a large number of initiatives aimed at improving environmental conditions within the EU. The BAP process is one of the key tools to assess policies with regards to biodiversity achievements, both at EU and national levels, towards the objective of halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010.

The following chapter starts with a review of the processes that led to the development of the EU BAP and any lessons learned in this regard (section 2.1). It will particularly consider its political endorsement as well as the (financial) support (sections 2.1. and 2.5) it received. In addition, the chapter will take a look at the content of the action plan (section 2.3) and whether the structure fit the purpose (section 2.4).

2.1 History of the EU BAP process and the policy context

This section reviews the history of the EU biodiversity policy from 1998 onwards, focusing on the successive BAP processes. It briefly presents the various approaches and priorities, the implementation as well as the political support received.

The European Community and all its Member States are contracting parties to the [Convention on Biological Diversity](#) (CBD), which was adopted in 1992 and came into force in 1993. At the Gothenburg summit in 2001, the EU Heads of State and Government pledged to halt the loss of biodiversity in the EU by 2010 and to restore habitats and natural systems. The European Commission has led EU efforts to develop biodiversity strategies/action plans, as requested from parties to the CBD in its article 6, over the past decade. In response to the CBD, three main initiatives have been launched to date:

1998 Community Biodiversity Strategy

The [strategy](#), established in 1998, laid down a general framework for developing Community policies and instruments to fulfil the Community's obligations under the CBD. It aimed to anticipate, prevent and address the causes of significant reduction or loss of biodiversity at the source, and is built around four main themes:

- Conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity
- Sharing of benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources
- Research, identification, monitoring and exchange of information
- Education, training and awareness

The Strategy defined specific objectives to be attained in various fields of Community activity and proposed **sectoral and cross-sectoral action plans** to achieve these objectives together with indicators and mechanisms to evaluate the progress made. The action plans proposed referred to four sectors: **protection of natural resources, agriculture, fisheries, and development and economic cooperation**. Other sectors of activity (regional policies and spatial planning, forests, energy and transport, tourism) were not included in the action plans but were integrated into existing instruments or dealt with individually, e.g. within the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

The main aim of this first EC Strategy was to raise awareness on biodiversity issues but it lacked prioritisation and follow-up. Indeed, the strategy mostly contributed to raising awareness and making the case for biodiversity action.

2001 Biodiversity Action Plans

In 2001, the European Commission released [Biodiversity Action Plans](#) in the four identified areas of **conservation of natural resources, agriculture, fisheries, and development and economic cooperation** that each complemented existing and planned Community legislation. The sectoral Action Plans aimed at ensuring that instruments are used to their full potential to achieve the objectives of the 1998 Community Biodiversity Strategy by translating objectives into specific actions. A review of the Strategy was begun in 2003, and was completed at the stakeholder conference in Malahide, Ireland in 2004.

This second EC Strategy improved prioritisation in four comprehensive sectoral Action Plans and included a follow-up on implementation. Its main results were to increase biodiversity ownership in the four targeted sectors, particularly influencing sectoral reforms (Common Fisheries Policy CFP in 2002 and CAP in 2003).

2006 Communication and Action Plan

In May 2006, the European Commission adopted the Communication on "Halting Biodiversity Loss by 2010 – and Beyond: Sustaining ecosystem services for human well-

being" ([COM/2006/0216 final](#)). The Communication underlined the importance of biodiversity protection as a pre-requisite for sustainable development and set out a detailed [EU Biodiversity Action Plan](#) to achieve this. The EU Biodiversity Action Plan addresses the challenge of integrating biodiversity concerns into other policy sectors in a unified way. It specifies a comprehensive plan of **ten priority actions**, divided into **four policy areas** (biodiversity in the EU, the EU and global biodiversity, biodiversity and climate change, and the knowledge base) and outlines the responsibility of community institutions and Member States in relation to each. It further specifies four main supporting measures (financing, decision-making, building partnerships, and public education, awareness and participation), and also contains indicators to monitor progress and a timetable for evaluations. The Action Plan is translated into **154 individual priority actions** which are to be implemented against specific time-bound targets at both national and European level. Furthermore the European Commission is providing annual reporting on progress in delivery of the Biodiversity Action Plan (2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010 to come).

The third EC initiative stressed policy integration as essential to halt the loss of biodiversity. However, even if the approach was comprehensive with ten priority objectives addressing both EU and Member State levels, over 150 actions were defined with low prioritisation. The lack of political endorsement and the cumbersome reporting process weakened even more the process, which eventually failed to halt biodiversity loss. However, at the national level this strategy helped create a better overview of biodiversity policy and increased awareness of biodiversity, in particular through its rigorous follow-up and assessments of progress of the actions.

2.2 Policy endorsement

Throughout the years, Heads of State and Government have made various attempts to halt biodiversity loss in the EU and significantly reduce loss rates globally by 2010. The adoption of the 2010 target during the Gothenburg Summit in 2001, which predates the adoption of the global 2010 target under the CBD, has triggered some policy action for biodiversity at EU and global level. Unfortunately, biodiversity policy development, including BAP, often lacked strong political support from the Council of the European Union, preventing it from being a legally binding instrument and largely hindering its potential.

Numerous EU Presidencies have organized “thematic” Presidency events in an attempt at linking biodiversity to other agendas, including

- Message from Malahide 2004,
- Message from Paris on Mainstreaming Biodiversity into Development Cooperation, 2006
- Message from Berlin on Marine Conservation, 2007
- Message from Lisbon on Business and Biodiversity, 2007
- Message from Slovenia on Close to Nature Forest Management, 2008
- Message from Reunion on EU Overseas Territories, 2008
- Message from Prague on the last remaining Wild Areas in Europe, 2009
- Message from Athens and Soederstrom on the post 2010 target, 2009
- Outcomes from Madrid on Ecological Networks and the post 2010 target, 2010.

Besides these EU events, since 2006 the G8 has also delivered annual declarations on biodiversity – starting with the Potsdam Initiative, to the Kobe Declaration and most recently followed by the Syracuse Charter.

No doubt, over the years policy progress has been made. However, biodiversity assessments still point to a number of shortcomings, including insufficient political endorsement and ownership, which in hindsight, are necessary for the plans to be operational and effective.

2.3 Content

As already mentioned under 2.1, the EU Biodiversity Action Plan describes around 150 policy actions at the Community and Member States levels to be implemented within four key policy areas and according to ten objectives and four supporting measures. Under each of the ten objectives a number of headline targets and targets were defined to address the most important aspects relevant for the respective objective. These resulted in a comprehensive range of topics being addressed. The box below provides an overview of the most important issues under the different objectives.

Biodiversity in the EU – key issues under the BAP objectives

- 1 To safeguard the EU's most important habitats and species.
Natura 2000 implementation, coherence and resilience, protection of species
- 2 To conserve and restore biodiversity in the wider EU countryside.
Agricultural, rural development and forestry policy, soil biodiversity, freshwater status, principal pollutant pressures, flood risk
- 3 To conserve and restore biodiversity in the wider EU marine environment.
Environmental status of the marine environment, principal pollutant pressures, fisheries
- 4 To reinforce the compatibility of regional and territorial development with biodiversity in the EU.
Cohesion and structural funds, territorial plans, spatial planning, tourism, environmental impact assessment and strategic environmental assessment
- 5 To substantially reduce the impact on EU biodiversity of invasive alien species and alien genotypes.
Invasive alien species strategies and legislation, ballast water and genetically modified organisms

The EU and global biodiversity

- 6 To substantially strengthen effectiveness of international governance for biodiversity.
Convention on Biological Diversity, global processes, oceans governance
- 7 To substantially strengthen support for biodiversity in EU external assistance.
Development assistance, neighbourhood policy, overseas countries and territories
- 8 To substantially reduce the impact of international trade on EU and global biodiversity.
Impact of trade, globalisation, consumption of wood products, deforestation, trade in endangered species, fisheries

Biodiversity and climate change

9 To support biodiversity adaptation to climate change.

Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, climate change adaptation and mitigation measures, resilience

The knowledge base

10 To substantially strengthen the knowledge base for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, in the EU and globally

Research and advice

Measures supporting the delivery of the objectives:

- Ensuring adequate financing
- Strengthening EU decision-making
- Building partnerships
- Building public education, awareness and engagement

The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA 2005) identified five main direct drivers and pressures that lead to the loss of biodiversity, including

- land-use change/habitat loss and fragmentation,
- overexploitation/unsustainable use,
- pollution,
- invasive species, and
- climate change.

In this regard, the Communication on "Halting Biodiversity Loss by 2010 – and Beyond: Sustaining ecosystem services for human well-being", accompanied by the detailed BAP, highlights two particular **threats to EU biodiversity**. These refer to fragmentation, degradation and destruction due to land use and development as well as to the increasing impact of climate change on biodiversity. The importance given to these two challenges is partly reflected in the content and structure of the BAP. Climate change figures quite prominently as one of the four key policy areas. Measures referring to land use and development are covered comprehensively across different objectives (e.g. objective 2 on the conservation of biodiversity in the wider countryside and objective 4 on regional and territorial development), although not addressed by one specific objective or target. Also, other key pressures are included such as the spread of invasive alien species under objective 5 and pollution, which again is covered by more than one objective (e.g. environmental policy under objective 2 – wider countryside and 3 – marine environment).

However, it was pointed out that the BAP, particularly in terms of the objectives laid down by the 6th Environmental Action Programme, lacks focus on developing actions that enhance **sustainable consumption, production and investments** in relation to biodiversity, and avoid overexploitation, beyond the conservation of fish stocks (Withana et al 2010). Sustainable tourism for example is only marginally addressed by the action plan. The messages from Malahide (see section 2.1) recommended including an objective to make all tourism sustainable, but this was excluded when the Action Plan was finally adopted.

In its conclusions on the Communication of halting biodiversity loss, the Environment Council also emphasised the importance of **regional and local land-use planning**, in particular regarding related responsibilities of Member States. In addition, recommendations of the

Committee of the Regions included a call that biodiversity issues be given a prominent place in spatial planning decisions. However, only general requirements to promote best practices are included in the BAP, mostly due to the limited competence of the European Union in this regard.

Although consisting of a mix of targets and actions addressing drivers, pressures of and responses to biodiversity loss, and the state of biodiversity, the BAP was not designed to fit into a **driver-pressure-state-response-impact** framework. To achieve the 2010 target, the integration of biodiversity into other policy areas was seen as an essential task to guarantee success, which explains why the BAP was structured accordingly. Moreover, many targets put a stronger emphasis on the implementation of relevant responses than on the achievement of a certain status or the reduction of certain impacts. This particularly applied to the reducing the impact of biodiversity loss on human well-being, by providing actions on the conservation of **ecosystem services**. Likewise the Communication on halting biodiversity loss, the related non-legislative resolution brought forward by the European Parliament as well as the conclusions by the Environment Council recognised the importance of the emerging concept of ecosystem services (see figure 1). The European Parliament also suggested that the maintenance of ecosystem services becomes a fundamental goal of all EU horizontal and sectoral policies. However, the BAP does not provide explicit targets or measures addressing ecosystem services nor does it put emphasis on maintaining the overall health and integrity of ecosystems (Kettunen et al 2010), crucial for guaranteeing the provision of ecosystem services in the long-term. If related targets and actions are set, it is important that also innovative policy instruments are taken into consideration (eg, market based instruments).

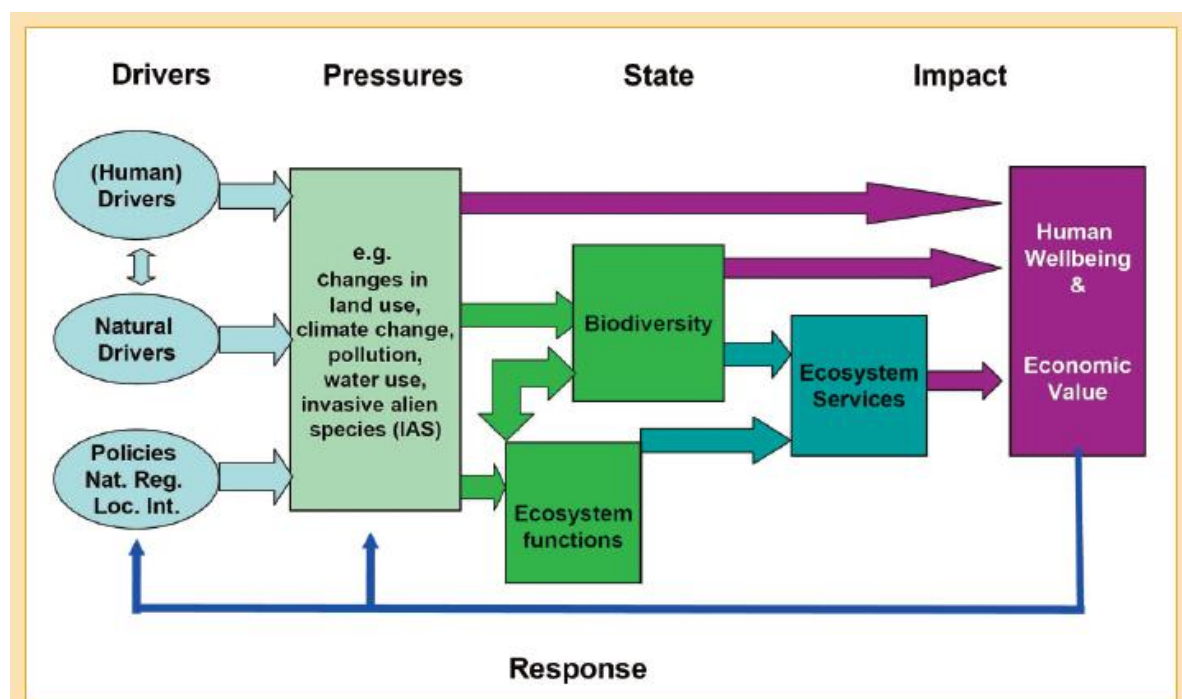


Figure 1: Drivers, Pressures, Status, Impact and Responses (DPSIR)

Source: TEEB 2009

Nevertheless, it has to be recognised that the BAP has set out a very detailed agenda, more or less comprehensively addressing key drivers and pressures related to biodiversity loss in

the EU and globally, across a wide range of different policy areas. One might argue that in some perspectives the actual problem was its **comprehensiveness** and the failure to adequately prioritise actions, which needed to be most urgently addressed for achieving the 2010 target. In its opinion of February 2007, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) specifically raised concerns as to whether all the proposed measures are equally important and whether they should all be addressed simultaneously. Although it did not doubt the rightfulness of the multitude of measures, the committee raised an interesting point. It noted that most of the measures outlined in the plan have been on the agenda for a number of years. The fact that the BAP strongly focuses on the implementation of existing instruments rather than on the development of new ones, particularly outside the biodiversity policy area, might have been one of the core problems regarding its successful implementation. It likely was the main reason for actions not being very **specific** and lacking **relevance** for the conservation of biodiversity under different policy areas and instruments. Many responses addressed general requirements in different policy areas without questioning their usefulness and appropriateness in achieving the 2010 target. The BAP asks, for example, to strengthen the implementation of Directives such as Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC) or National Emissions Ceilings without specifying how these two Directives could take biodiversity objectives into account (e.g. what emission ceilings would be needed to reduce impact on biodiversity). Other examples refer to the implementation of Rural Development measures and the first pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy, where actions fail to provide concrete guidance on relevant measures for biodiversity conservation.

Due to the focus on existing instruments no proper **horizon scanning** was carried out to check whether the right responses were prioritised in light of future up-coming threats or shifts regarding the importance of certain pressures. Pollution, for example, figures quite prominently in the BAP and has successfully decreased over the last couple of years (IEEP et al. 2009). On the other hand, challenges such as the impact of renewable energy production (particularly biofuels) on biodiversity have gained importance due to changes in the respective policy frameworks, but are only marginally included in the action plan. The comprehensiveness of the actions likely has further limited the **flexibility** of the current BAP in reacting to up-coming challenges.

Though some issues were perceived as not adequately covered by the BAP, it can be concluded that the main shortcoming of the content of the BAP is less the quantity of issues addressed but rather the quality, or more concretely how specific and relevant actions are as regards the achievement of biodiversity objectives in different policy areas.

2.4 Structure

This section examines the structure of the current Biodiversity Action Plan. The Biodiversity Action Plan expected to achieve certain **results** (namely to halt biodiversity loss) and it identified a number of **priority areas** (the BAP objectives) to be addressed. **Targets** were set for these objectives under which **actions** were identified at both the EU level and the Member State Level. The current biodiversity action plan has the following structure.

- A: Ten Priority objectives
 Policy Area 1: Biodiversity and the EU
 Objectives 1-5
 Headline target
 Targets (a differing number depending on the objective)
 Actions
 Actions at Community or Member State level
 Policy Area 2: the EU and global biodiversity
 Objectives 6-8 (with the same structure below, headline target, targets, actions)
 Policy area 3: Biodiversity and climate change
 Objective 9 (with the same structure below, headline target, targets, actions)
 Policy area 4: the knowledge base
 Objective 10 (with the same structure below, headline target, targets, actions)
- B. The four supporting measures
 SM1 Ensuring adequate financing
 Targets (a differing number depending on the Supporting measure)
 Actions
 Actions at Community or Member State level
 SM2: Strengthening decision making for biodiversity (with targets and actions below)
 SM3: Building partnerships for biodiversity (with targets and actions below)
 SM4: building Public Education, Awareness and participation for biodiversity (with targets and actions below)
- C. Monitoring evaluation and Review
 Annual reporting; Indicators, Monitoring, Evaluation and review (each with targets and actions below)

Besides exploring whether the structure is appropriate the section considers an alternative structure based on a logical framework approach, commonly used by a number of international organisations (see figure 2). For more detail on logical frameworks, see BOND (2003) and DFID (2009).

The results chain	Inputs	→ Process	→ Output	→ Outcome	→ Impact
Examples	Increase funding protection of biodiversity through the CFP	Introduce new measures under the CFP that will address biodiversity loss - restoration of species and habitats etc	More stock and habitat recovery plans in place	More marine and coastal habitats and more fish species restored	Marine Biodiversity loss halted (even, biodiversity increased)
The current BAP	Supporting measure 1	Activities at EU and Member State level	Target	Headline target	Objective
A logical framework structure	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Purpose	Goal

Figure 2: The results chain and a comparison of the Structure of the Biodiversity Action Plan with a logical framework structure

In order to establish whether the results that the BAP expected to achieve were delivered, it is necessary to monitor the **implementation** of the BAP and its outcomes. Thus this section is closely related to the section on the process for reporting progress of the implementation

of the action plan (chapter 4). In order to measure progress it is necessary to have identified suitable indicators of change, and to know the baseline situation.

The section therefore looks at the question of **indicators** and their definition: In order to monitor change over time (i.e. whether the implementation of the plan has achieved the desired impact) it is necessary to establish both the indicators of change and the baseline at the start of the process. Different types of indicator are required at different levels. Thus at goal (objective) and purpose (headline target) level the indicators are measures of impact and outcome. These typically indicate what will be measured but not necessarily a baseline or 'target' level to be achieved. The SEBI 2010 indicators are such higher level indicators of achievement. At the output (target) level however, indicators should be Measures of Progress. These must be clearly measurable and achievable. The baseline must be known and the desired end point must be defined (i.e. the target to be achieved). The target of any output will be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time bound) and there may also be milestones established within the indicator to show what should be achieved between the baseline date and key points along the way to the target date (e.g. 2006, the mid-term review in 2008, delivery in 2010). For activities typically the indicators can be related to whether that activity took place, how much money was spent undertaking that activity etc.

A major failure of the existing BAP is that it has not established indicators, or milestones at any level. Whilst it has established targets, these are not quite the same as the 'target' required to show achievements of outputs in a logical framework, and none of the targets in the BAP are truly SMART. The **lack of targets and baselines** means that no means of verification were defined at the outset and so in order to measure progress of the BAP it has been necessary to try to work backwards and to locate and fit indicators from existing data sources (means of verification) to the different levels of the BAP.

Is the BAP the right structure / logical frameworks?

As shown in figure 1 the structure of the BAP relates closely to that of a typical results chain and to that of the **logical framework**. However, there are some issues that could be examined.

Figure 2 2 shows that the current BAP identifies activities at a number of levels (EU and Member State). Furthermore, the BAP is set at a strategic level, one step higher than indicated in this figure. There are 10 priority objectives in the BAP (goals) and collectively they achieve a 'super-goal' of halting biodiversity loss across all habitat types / policy areas etc. To further explore logical frameworks, examples of the current BAP have been fitted to a logical framework structure.

Table 1 explores how the logical framework approach relates across the strategic level (i.e. the BAP is the strategy set by the Commission) and it is implemented by actions (policies instruments) at the EU level and the implementation of those instruments at the Member State level. This implies a nested logical framework approach with the strategy being the higher level framework (table 2). Implementation of each key policy area is then undertaken through the different EC services / Member States (table 3).

By fitting the existing BAP to the logical framework (although this is NOT the way to undertake the logical framework approach), it serves to illustrate the logical framework in context, and it also highlights a number of issues with the current structure of the BAP:

- The different parts of the BAP, A (the ten priority objectives), B (the four supporting measures) and C (Monitoring evaluation and review), mix outputs and inputs, which could be separated more logically.
- Within part A, it is questionable whether the 10 Objectives are the most appropriate. The purpose of the BAP is at a strategic level to make sure that all sectors are going in the same direction, that policies are complementary and where necessary integrated with each other across sectors and integrated biodiversity policy within sectoral aims (see section 2.3). Would it in fact be better to think in terms of the EC structure i.e. to define purpose and outputs for AGRI, MARE, DGENV, REGIO, RELEX, EEA etc, and under that to apply each of the three outcome oriented policy areas? For the three policy areas – to what extent do these cross-cut (i.e. AGRI, MARE, ENV etc; each have policies at the EU level, the global level, and for climate change). Whilst there are problems with the structure of the BAP the lack of indicators and a predefined process with means of verification for measuring progress of the BAP is a far more serious shortcoming.
- Objectives are generally the expected outcomes of a programme/ plan/ project but for the current BAP there are a mixture of outcomes/ outputs (i.e. changes to biodiversity status, Objectives 1-9) and inputs (i.e. factors needed to implement or monitor change, Objective 10, the Supporting Measures).
- Targets in the current BAP are approximately equivalent to Outputs in a logical framework and have been expressed as quasi indicators – but the indicators have not been fully defined – none of the targets can properly be described as SMART
- No indicators were identified at any level of the current BAP structure at the outset and so it has been necessary to retro-fit indicators. The latest logframe guidance suggests that a baseline must be known first before outputs and their indicators can be set (output – indicator – baseline+year, milestones (1-n), means of verification (data source)).
- Because there were no indicators defined, as a result the means of verification that show that change (in biodiversity status etc) has occurred were also not identified at the outset.
- Have the right actions been identified to achieve the targets (outputs) (see also section 2.3)? If output indicators had been defined these would suggest what actions were necessary. The actions in the current BAP may be appropriate but it is not clear that they all lead to delivery of the output, - as shown in section 4 many of the actions were never evaluated and have been redundant – a clearly defined set of actions that will deliver the desired outcomes is required.
- For many current BAP actions it was not possible to retro-fit indicators – had the logical framework approach been applied, and the assumptions tested, some of the present actions would have been dropped, other more relevant ones may have been defined.
- How do the EC level and Member State level actions relate? Can these be separated:
 - is it the case that the BAP action plan defines the strategy,

- the EC level outputs and actions define the policy instruments that will be put in place within each EC Service in order to achieve the desired strategic outcomes
 - some instruments may exist already, some may need to be developed in order to deliver the required outcome,
 - Member States implement the policy instruments in order to drive change.
- To what extent did the current BAP drive policy in the different EC services compared to accommodating what was already happening into an action plan (see section 2.3)? The next BAP should define the desired outcomes; some existing policy instruments may be relevant but new ones within each EC service may also be required. EC services must therefore buy into the process from the outset and take ownership of that element of the BAP to develop relevant new policies against the biodiversity strategy, and to implement a monitoring programme to report on implementation of the new and relevant existing policy instruments.

Table 1: An example of a logical framework approach showing the hierarchy of management responsibilities and how they relate to each other

BAP Strategy level	EC Level	Member State level
<u>Management responsibility</u> DGENV Biodiversity Unit	<u>Management responsibility</u> Relevant EC services	<u>Management responsibility</u> Member States
Goal Loss of biodiversity in all natural resource systems reduced		
Purpose Biodiversity loss and restoration of ecosystem services addressed within the EU, Globally through EU interventions, and through support to biodiversity adaptation to climate change	Goal Biodiversity loss and restoration of ecosystem services addressed within the EU, Globally through EU interventions, and through support to biodiversity adaptation to climate change	
Outputs Drivers of biodiversity loss removed	Purpose Drivers of biodiversity loss removed	Goal Drivers of biodiversity loss removed
Activities Drivers of biodiversity loss identified, mechanisms for addressing them identified, implemented and promoted	Outputs Drivers of biodiversity loss identified, mechanisms for addressing them identified, implemented and promoted	Purpose Drivers of biodiversity loss identified, mechanisms for addressing them identified, implemented and promoted
	Activities Mechanisms for addressing biodiversity loss created and	Outputs Mechanisms for addressing biodiversity loss created and

	adapted; promotion pathways established	adapted; promotion pathways established
		Activities Management actions, research studies, surveys, etc designed and implemented and promotion pathways identified

Table 2: Fitting the current BAP into a strategy level logical framework

Narrative Summary	Objectively verifiable indicators	Means of verification	Important assumptions
Goal Biodiversity loss reduced			
Purpose Biodiversity loss and restoration of ecosystem services addressed within the EU, globally through EU interventions, and through support to biodiversity adaptation to climate change			
Outputs Drivers of biodiversity loss removed, and ecosystem services restored in / through: Within EU i) The most important habitats and species (objective 1) ii) the wider EU countryside (objective 2 etc) iii) the wider EU marine environment iv) reinforce compatibility or regional and territorial development with biodiversity within the EU v) by reducing the impact of IAS and alien genotypes The EU globally vi) By strengthening the effectiveness of international governance vii) by strengthening biodiversity support in external assistance viii) By reducing the impact of international trade on biodiversity Climate change ix) by supporting biodiversity adaptation to climate change (The knowledge base objective 10 and supporting measures 1 are all activities that support actions to achieve above; SM 3-4 relate to uptake promotion and are activities at the next management level)			

<p>Activities</p> <p>BAP objectives identified and published</p> <p>BAP management system designed and implemented</p> <p>(obj10) Knowledge base for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in EU and globally established / strengthened</p> <p>(SM1) BAP budget established – ensure adequate financing for biodiversity</p> <p>(SM2) BAP policy framework developed to strengthen EU decision making</p>			
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Table 3: EC Services /Member State level logical framework, e.g. Objective 3 (highlight colours are those adopted in the BAP: – blue for objectives, pink for headline targets, grey for targets)

Narrative Summary	Objectively verifiable indicators	Means of verification	Important assumptions
<p>Goal</p> <p>Biodiversity loss halted within the wider EU marine environment and ecosystem services restored (objective 3)</p>			
<p>Purpose</p> <p>1. To conserve and restore biodiversity and ecosystem services in the wider EU marine environment. (objective 3)</p>	<p>Biodiversity loss:</p> <p>1. Marine Trophic Index shows that in the wider marine environment, outside the Natura 2000 network, biodiversity loss halted by 2010 and showing substantial recovery by 2013 (headline target) through an increase of the MTI of 15% between 2010 and 2013 (MTI=SEBI 2010 indicator)</p> <p>Restoration of ecosystem services:</p> <p>2. (None defined for current BAP)</p>	<p>Marine Trophic Index (weblink)</p>	
<p>Outputs</p> <p>1.1. Mechanisms to achieve good environmental status of the marine environment developed and promoted (i.e. incorporating SM 3 and 4)</p>	<p>(Target A3.1 Substantial progress achieved by 2010 and again by 2013 towards good environmental status)</p> <p>1.1.1 From the baseline recorded in 2006, a 50% increase in marine and coastal habitats and species that are recorded as favourable by 2010</p>	<p>Article 17 reports</p>	

<p>1.2. Principle pollutant pressures on marine biodiversity reduced</p> <p>1.3. Ecosystem approach to the protection of the seas adopted and implemented in all EU</p>	<p>and 75% by 2013</p> <p>1.1.2. The number of Member States with programmes of measures under the WFD for coastal areas increased from the 2006 baseline of X to Y by 2010 and to all 27 MS by 2013</p> <p>1.1.3. ICZM etc....</p> <p>(Target A3.2 Principle pollution pressures on marine biodiversity substantially reduced by 2010 and again by 2013)</p> <p>1.2.1. From the baseline in 2006, a 50% increase in the proportion of coastal bathing waters meeting minimum standards by 2010, and 75% by 2013</p> <p>1.2.2. From the baseline in 2006, a 50% decrease in the concentrations of oxidised nitrogen and orthophosphate concentrations in coastal and open waters by 2010, and 75% by 2013</p> <p>1.2.3. From the baseline in 2006, a 50% increase in the number of installations where IPCC permits have been updated to ensure local environmental conditions are taken into account by 2010, and 75% by 2013</p> <p>(Target A3.3.Ecosystem approach to the protection of the seas in place and implying fisheries management measures no later than 2016)</p> <p>1.3.1. None defined for current BAP)</p> <p>(Target A3.5. Stock levels</p>	<p>Reports to DGENV regarding implementation of the WFD</p> <p>Member State reports to DGENV (MSQ)</p> <p>Bathing water quality Reports</p> <p>Reports on trends in mean winter concentrations in ...</p> <p>IPCC reports</p>	
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<p>waters.</p> <p>1.4 (Target A3.4. substantially enhanced funding to EFF – this is an input, not an output and so should not be here)</p> <p>1.5. European fish stocks maintained at, or restored to levels that can support maximum sustainable yield</p>	<p>maintained or restored to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield, where possible no later than 2015)</p> <p>1.5.1 From the 2006 baseline of X% the proportion of stocks within safe biological limits increased to Y% by 2010 and to 100% by 2015.</p> <p>1.5.2. The number of Member States with plans of action under the CFP that implement stock recovery plans to attain MSY by 2015 is increased from the 2006 baseline of X to Y by 2010 and to all 27 MS by 2013.</p> <p>Etc...</p>		
<p>Activities</p> <p>1.1. Good environmental status</p> <p>1.1.1. (Action A3.1.1) Make initial assessments, determine good environmental status etc...</p> <p>1.1.2. (Action A3.1.4) Implement the WFD in a timely fashion</p> <p>1.1.3 (Action A3.1.5) Implement and review the EU ICZM recommendation</p> <p>1.2. Reduce principle pollutant pressures</p> <p>1.2.1 Implement programmes of measures to improve bathing water quality (this was not a BAP Action – it was included as a proxy in 2008 / 2010 that could be measured to show change)</p> <p>Etc...</p> <p>(I.e. Identify the actions that will deliver the desired output, and that relate to the indicators of change that have been identified)</p>	<p>Milestones and Inputs</p> <p>I.e. the budget and the dates by which actions will be implemented, evidence that actions have been implemented</p> <p>(EU actions at EU level setting policy, providing guidance etc – the MS level is implementing the actions policies etc 'on the ground')</p>		

2.5 Support

2.5.1 Has the lack of financing hampered the BAP's success?

A significant criticism of the BAP brought forward by a number of stakeholders and other EU institutions was the lack of an associated budget for its implementation. The European Parliament expressed strong concern at the **financial constraints** for support of the different biodiversity actions, particularly of Natura 2000. The Committee of the Regions criticised the insufficient allocation of EU funds for financing the 2010 biodiversity objectives in the 2007–2013 Financial Framework, and emphasised the difference between the ambitions of the Communication and the resources made available to achieve these objectives.

According to the Commission's impact assessment accompanying the BAP, many of the proposed actions referred to existing Community policies and/or legislation, with already existing budget lines. Therefore no additional resources were assigned for its implementation. However, some Member States have been struggling to commit resources to address challenges such as institutional and administrative requirements or implementing biodiversity strategies and action plans. In reality available resources were not sufficient to implement existing policies related to biodiversity (Withana et al 2010).

Although Member States increasingly have been using EU funding instruments to support biodiversity (particularly as regards rural development), the proportion of spending dedicated to biodiversity varies significantly across Member States (Kettunen et al 2009). Moreover, due to a lack of clear ring-fencing of the flow of funding allocated to biodiversity under EU funding instruments and Member States co-financing, the overall amount of funding directly benefiting biodiversity conservation still remains unclear.

2.5.2 To which extent was the BAP supported by Member States and stakeholders?

Prior to the publication of the Communication on halting biodiversity loss and associated Biodiversity Action Plan, the Commission initiated stakeholder consultations and launched a public consultation process to review the implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy and the 2001 Biodiversity Action Plans. This included consultations among Commission services in the framework of the Inter-Departmental Coordination Group on Biodiversity as well as the establishment of different working groups under the auspices of the Biodiversity Expert Group (BEG). The Group includes representatives from Member States and civil society and is chaired by DG Environment. The research community was involved through the European Platform for Biodiversity Research Strategy (EPBRS). The review process ended in 2004 with a stakeholder conference in Malahide under Irish Presidency (see section 2.1). After calls for accelerated action by the Environment Council, the Commission started developing the Communication on halting biodiversity loss and the associated BAP in June 2004, whereby the BEG was responsible for supervising the process. It consulted experts also during the drafting of the Communication.

This demonstrates that several occasions were offered to stakeholders to influence the shape of the BAP, and to gain ownership regarding its development, reflected in the strong support the BAP had immediately after its publication. However, most of the responsibility for **overseeing the implementation of the Action Plan** was delegated from the Commission

to the BEG. This transfer increased the pressure on officials from environment departments/agencies, particularly in Member States where they do not have a high level of political influence. This further reduced the already small chances of the Action Plan receiving adequate support from sectoral agencies / departments outside the area of nature conservation and environment (Withana et al 2010).

Another major drawback that hindered the BAP process is the **lack of formal political support**, in particular from the Council of the European Union that prevented it to gain appropriate legal impetus. In spite of several political declarations and conclusions that recognised the urgency of the biodiversity crisis (EU Spring Council 2001, World Summit for Sustainable Development 2002, European Council June 2004, European Parliament resolution 2007, European Council Spring 2008), the Council never formally endorsed the BAP (noticeably in the 2006 Environment Council Conclusions that only adopted the 2006 Communication, but not the 'EU Action Plan to 2010 and Beyond' annexed to it). Combined with the Commission's decision of discharging any regulatory approach for the BAP in order to meet the Council's call for accelerated action, the Biodiversity Action Plan turned into a mostly voluntary process (besides the legal instruments it addresses), whose structure and content were not sufficiently tailored to gain the support outside the environment area.

In addition, reporting and evaluation processes did not involve other Council formations (Agriculture and Fisheries, Competitiveness etc.) or other Parliamentary Committees (AGRI, TREN). As a consequence, the process never received enough recognition, and there was no binding obligation for Member States or European Institutions (particularly other EC DGs) that could have resulted in a sense of increased ownership.

3. Reviewing the BAP reporting process

3.1 Summary of the reporting process

The EU Communication on *Halting the Loss of Biodiversity to 2010 and Beyond* and the associated *EU Action Plan to 2010 and Beyond* were published in 2006. They identified a reporting process with evaluations at the mid-term (to end of 2008), at the end of 2010, and at the end of 2013 (for post 2010 targets identified in the Action Plan). As noted in section 2.4, indicators necessary to demonstrate progress over time and their means of verification were not defined at the outset, although a process for establishing and measuring high level outcome indicators was initiated (SEBI 2010). Actions within the plan related to the Commission (Community level) and to Member States (country level). Thus a mechanism for recording the status of the implementation of the plan and its outcomes was necessary. In 2008 this was achieved by looking at clusters of the actions within the BAP and developing country and community level profiles based on those clusters. These, with the high level SEBI indicators fed into a Consolidated Profile that informed the Communication (figure 3).

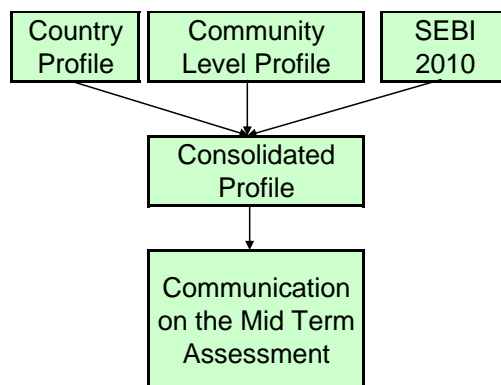


Figure 3: A summary of the mid-term evaluation process used in 2008

The Community level ‘BAP Table’ and report was based on actions undertaken by the various EC Services. The Country Profile was based on data obtained from a Member State questionnaire and data from other sources including ‘official’ data sources (i.e. those where Member States formally report to another EU body and those reports are publically available) and ‘unofficial data sources’ (e.g. from NGOs such as BirdLife International). The various data were compiled into a Profile. A narrative Country Summary was then produced, and a synthesis of the 27 Country Profiles/Summaries was generated to feed into the Consolidated Profile (figure 3). In 2010, broadly the same process has been adopted with the same overall reporting structure.

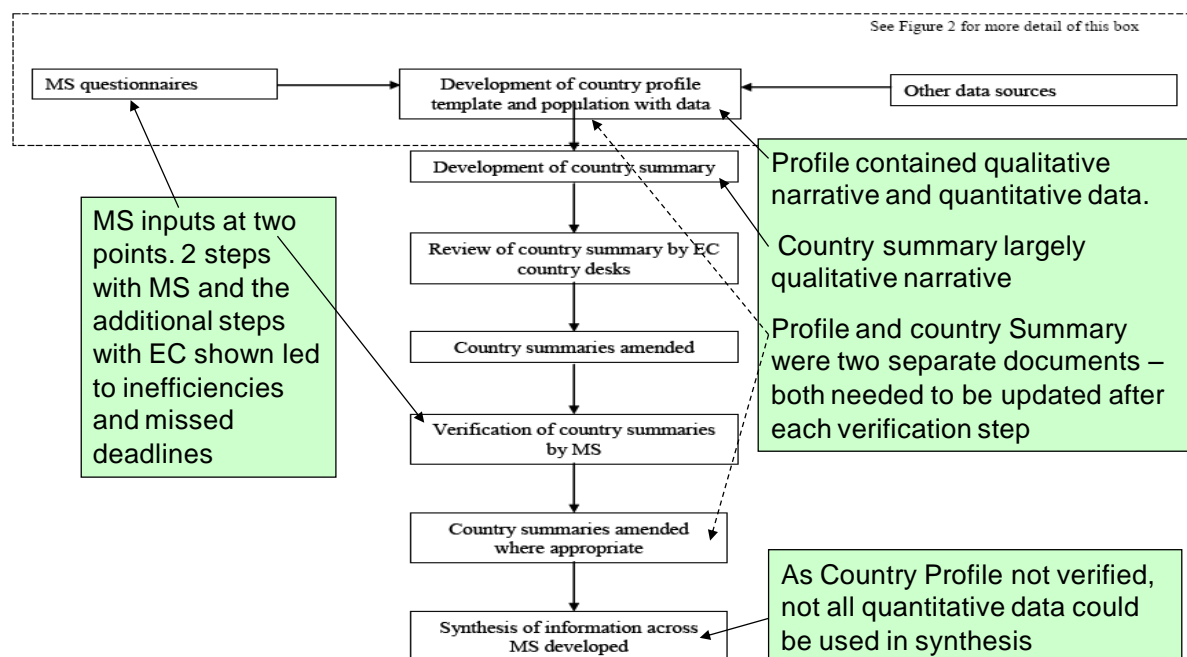


Figure 4: The 2008 process for the Country Profile and Synthesis

The process based on clusters of actions adopted in 2008 did not consider all actions in the plan, and for the Member State reporting it involved a number of steps that led to inefficiencies and delays (see figure 4). Thus during 2009 a detailed **assessment of the biodiversity action plan** was undertaken in order to review all actions, identify indicators (Measures of Progress) and their data sources (official, unofficial) (see figure 4). This process involved looking at all actions in the plan, and drawing up a longlist of those for which a SMART indicator could feasibly be developed (23% of all actions were dropped at

this point because a suitable indicator could not be devised). A shortlist was then developed. The aim in 2010 was to collate as much existing data as possible to reduce the burden on Member States. Where no data source existed, a decision was made whether to evaluate that action in 2010 through a question posed to the Member State. The decision was based on whether the same action had been described in the 2008 Consolidated Profile, whether the action lent itself to having a SMART indicator defined, and more subjectively on its considered importance (by DGENV). A Country Profile was then developed that consisted of Measures of Progress that could be prefilled from data sources and those involving a Member State question. For each measure of progress a narrative summary was included. The aim of the revised process in 2010 was:

- To enable reporting on a greater number of actions in the plan than in 2008, whilst still reporting on those important in 2008 (i.e. by retaining 'key' actions).
- To identify and employ relevant official data sources (means of verification) to the Measures of Progress (indicators) that it was possible to apply retrospectively to the actions, and thereby reduce the need for verification (i.e. the data has already come from Member States and so is effectively already verified).
- To have a one-stop process with Member States thus increasing the efficiency of the process avoiding the potential for delays.
- To avoid the need for a separate Country Summary that needed to be updated and verified at the same time as the Country Profile.

Country Profile		Criteria for assessment / [Information]	Achieved by
Year 2			
Review <u>ALL</u> MS BAP Actions		Key in 2008?; SMART?; Feasibly monitored?	
	Recommendations		31-Mar-09
<u>Longlist</u> : Define indicators (often >1 per BAP action); Explore data sources		Key in 2008?; Data source exists (standard / non standard)?; Data >2006<2010;	
	Recommendations	Data constraints; quantitative	01-Jun-09
<u>Shortlist</u> :		Feasibility of MS completing questionnaire elements; Potential for harmonisation of data collection	
	Agree with DGENV/MS		07-Jul-09
<u>Consolidated shortlist</u>		<i>Combine common and duplicated actions across BAP objectives, so they are not repeated; Consider if targets/objectives adequately covered.</i>	
	Agree with DGENV		15-Jul-09
<u>Country Profile</u> : Develop template		[Per BAP action, > 1 indicator; Data sources, MS questions, mix data source / questions] Preliminary thoughts on suitable analyses of data for Consolidated Profile	
	Agree with DGENV		14-Aug-09
<u>Online tool</u> : Develop		[Based on ReportNet]	
	Agree with COM, EEA		30-Sep-09
Year 3			
<u>Populate with data</u> : contractor first, MS to verify and fill the gaps		[MS: Questionnaire elements entered; data source information verified]	19-Mar-09
	Agree with DGENV		02-Apr-09
<u>Country synthesis</u>			
<u>Synthesis</u> of MS data in the Country Profiles		Link MS synthesis to the scoreboard approach	31-May-09

Figure 5: The process to develop and populate the country profile and generate the consolidated profiles.

In practice, whilst the 2010 process did incorporate more actions than in 2008, avoided the need for a separate Country Summary, and undertook a process to verify all information entered so that it could be employed in the 2010 evaluation (synthesis and consolidated profile), it proved impossible to have a **one-stop process with Member States**, even for already verified prefilled data. A revised process with additional steps was adopted (figures 5 and 6). The reasons for this were varied. For prefilled data sources clearly not all Member States agreed with either the interpretation of the data or the values given, despite the fact that they derived from 'official sources'. For questionnaire data Measures of Progress were often incompletely answered or it was necessary to seek clarification over the meaning of text provided. With respect to verification, there was a feeling that despite having signed off on individual Measures of Progress, Member States required sight of the final document before agreeing to agree to its public release.

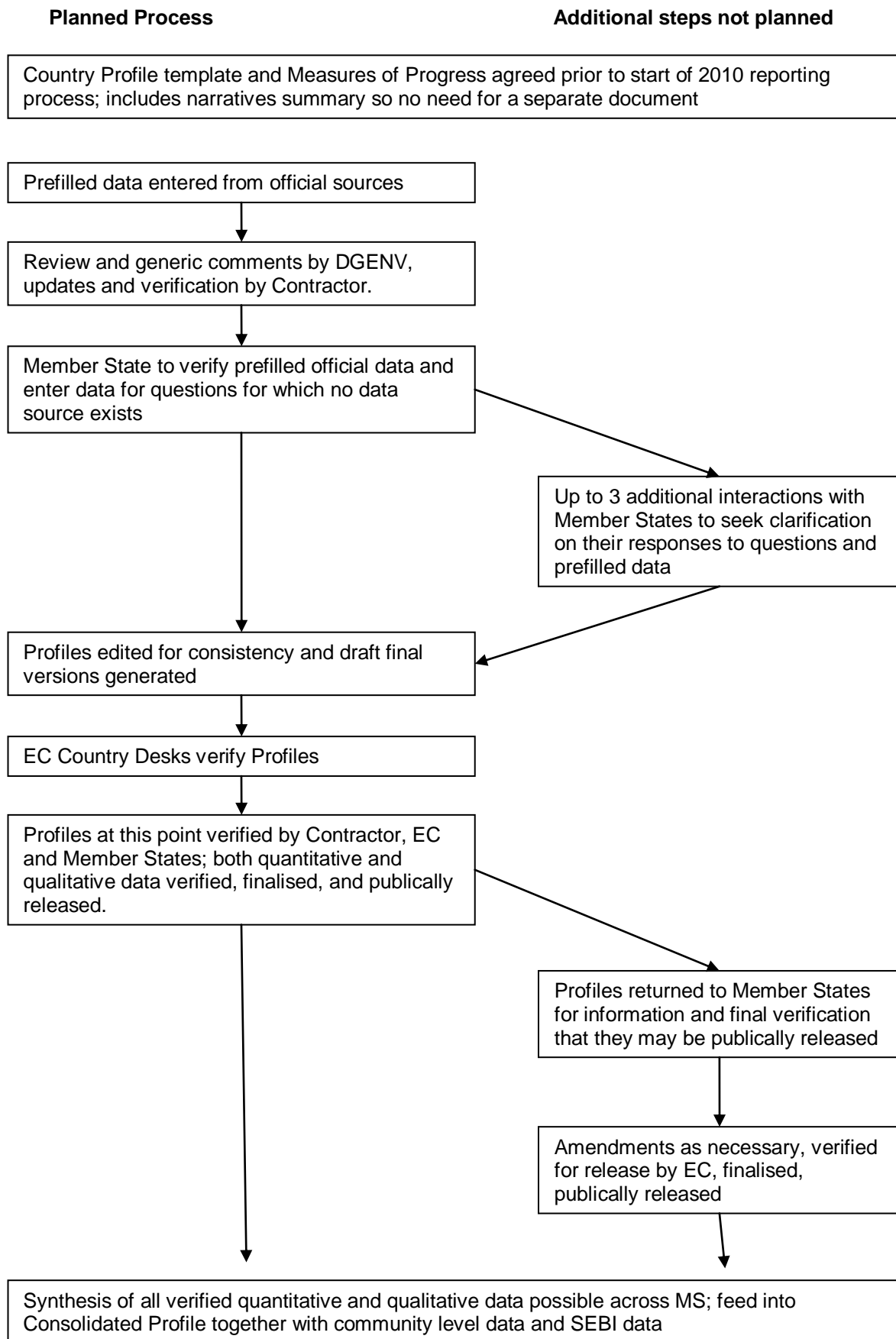


Figure 6: The 2010 process for the Country Profile and Synthesis

3.2 Did the process to develop a Country Profile for the 2010 evaluation address all the desired outcomes of the Biodiversity Action Plan (i.e. do the agreed Measures of Progress satisfactorily cover the objectives and targets)?

In 2008 the broad brush cluster approach was not considered to adequately reflect the full scope of the Biodiversity Action Plan. Thus in 2009 the evaluation of all Member State actions under the BAP as described above was undertaken and **Measures of Progress** (MOP) were proposed that could be used to evaluate if a particular action has been achieved. The BAP does not identify any MS actions at the objective and target level. Nevertheless, MOPs were proposed at these levels.

Table 4 provides a summary of the final shortlist in order to determine whether each of the **BAP objectives and targets** are satisfactorily **addressed** – i.e. is it possible in 2010 to evaluate if all the desired outcomes of the Biodiversity Action Plan have been achieved? It shows that at the objective level, MOPs have only been directly identified for objectives 2, 3 and 5. Thus, including the Supporting Measures, MOPS have NOT been identified for 12 ‘objectives’.

At the target level, MOPS have only been identified for 2.3; 3.1; 3.2; 3.4; 3.5; 4.1; 4.3; 5.1; 7.1; 8.1; 9.4; 10.1; SM2.4; SM4.1; and, C1.2. Thus at the target level MOPS have NOT been identified for 32 targets.

The analysis has not looked to see if MOPs have been identified for every action under a target, but the table 4 shows the total number of MOPs at action level that correspond to a particular target within the BAP itself. There are 14 targets for which no MOPs have been identified at action level.

There are no objectives that will not be represented in the Country Profile as they all have MOPs at least at the activity level. There are some targets that will not be represented in the Country Profile having no MOPs at either the target or action level (1.4; 1.5; 2.5; 3.3; 4.2; 4.6; 9.2; 9.3; SM 2.1; SM 2.3; SM2.5; SM2.6; C1.1 and C1.4).

One would anticipate that achievement (progress) at the MS action level would contribute towards achievement of **progress at the target level**. Similarly, delivery of the targets would contribute towards **achievement at the objective level**. However, as discussed in section 2.4, the current BAP was not set out using a logical framework that had clearly identified ‘objectively verifiable indicators’ and ‘means of verification’ that would have described how this progress would be measured. The objective and target levels often require high level indicators (Measures of Progress) and so it is not a surprise that relatively few have been identified and agreed when trying to ‘retro-fit’ them. What the analysis in table 4 does not show is whether, when considered cumulatively, the MOPs at action level will inform progress at the target level in any way, or at the objective level. This is something that will need to be considered when developing the 2010 analysis and Communication.

The fact that it was not possible to identify appropriate indicators (Measures of Progress) for so many actions, targets and objectives thus draws into question whether it has been possible to evaluate all the desired outcomes of the current Biodiversity Action Plan. The analysis does not indicate whether those actions, that indicators have been identified for,

satisfactorily informs target level progress and whether better actions could have been identified; similarly for the indicators at target level that inform objective level progress within the BAP.

Table 4: A summary indicating the number of MOPs agreed in the shortlist at the objective, target and action levels – as noted previously – the objectives/ targets are the purpose/ output level in a logical framework and indicate the desired outcomes of having implemented the BAP (where decision or objective/ target is blank the item was rejected during step 1. Pink in the decision column indicates rejected by DGENV, yellow shading Indicates no objective level MOP agreed, or Target not covered at either the Target or Action level).

Objective (blue) and Target (grey)	MOPs at Objective level	MOPs at target level	MOPS at action level	# actions per target in the BAP	DGENV decision at level of Objective or target MOP	Objective	Target
1	0	0	12	13	NOTE#-	1: To safeguard	
1.1.		0	5	5		1: To safeguard	A.1.1: Natura 2000 network
1.2.		0	1	3	REJECT	1: To safeguard	A.1.2: Sufficiency, coherence
1.3.		0	6	3		1: To safeguard	A.1.3: No priority species in
1.4.		0	0	1		NOTE #-	
1.5.		0	0	1	REJECT	1: To safeguard	A.1.5: For those EU Outerm
2	2	3	26	24	KEEP	2: to conserve a	
2.1.		0	16	15			
2.2.		0	1	2	REJECT	2: to conserve a	A.2.2 Risks to soil biodivers
2.3.		3	2	1	KEEP	2: to conserve a	A.2.3 Substantial progress i
2.4.		0	7	4			
2.5.		0	0	2			
3	1	9	15	21	KEEP?	3 - To Conserve	
3.1		3	4	5	KEEP	3 - To Conserve	A.3.1 - Substantial progress
3.2		4	2	4	KEEP	3 - To Conserve	A.3.2 - Principle pollution pr
3.3		0	0	1	REJECT	3 - To Conserve	A.3.3 - Ecosystem approach
3.4		1	0	1	?	3 - To Conserve	A.3.4 - Substantially enhanc
3.5		1	4	5	KEEP	3 - To Conserve	A.3.5 - Stock levels maintai
3.6		0	4	4			
3.7		0	1	1	REJECT	3 - To Conserve	A.3.7 - Substantially improv
4	0	2	3	15			
4.1		1	1	6	KEEP	4:To reinforce c	A.4.1 Cohesion and structur
4.2		0	0	2	REJECT	4:To reinforce c	A.4.2 Negative impacts of te
4.3		1	0	1	KEEP	4:To reinforce c	A.4.3 Ecological coherence
4.4		0	1	1	REJECT	4:To reinforce c	A.4.4 Significant increase in
4.5		0	1	1	REJECT	4:To reinforce c	A.4.5 All above outcomes a
4.6		0	0	4	REJECT	4:To reinforce c	A.4.6 All Strategic Environm
5	1	3	12	6	KEEP	5: To substantia	
5.1		3	10	4	KEEP	5: To substantia	A.5.1 Impact of IAS on biodi
5.2		0	2	2	REJECT	5: To substantia	A.5.2 Impact of alien genoty
6	0	0	4	3			
6.1		0	4	3	REJECT	6: To substantia	A.6.1: International governa
7	0	2	9	11			
7.1		2	7	6	KEEP	7: To substantia	A.7.1 Financial Resources f
7.2		0	2	5	REJECT	7: To substantia	A.7.2 EU mainstream extem
8	0	1	11	9			
8.1		1	11	9	?	8: To substantia	A.8.1: Impact on biodiversity
9	0	1	9	7	REJECT	9:To support bid	
9.1		0	2	1			
9.2		0	0	1			
9.3		0	0	2	REJECT	9:To support bid	A.9.3 Climate change adap
9.4		1	7	3	KEEP	9:To support bid	A.9.4 Resilience of EU biod
10	0	2	5	9			
10.1		2	5	9	KEEP	10: To sustaina	A.10.1 Research findings of
SM1	0	0	5	9			
SM1.1		0	5	9	REJECT	SUPPORTING	B.1.1 Adequate funding pro
SM2	0	1	2	11			
SM2.1		0	0	2			
SM2.2		0	2	2	REJECT	Supporting Mea	B.2.2 New policies benefit b
SM2.3		0	0	1			
SM2.4		1	0	3	KEEP	Supporting Mea	B.2.4 Target: Complimentar
SM2.5		0	0	2	REJECT	Supporting Mea	B.2.5 Target: Effective integ
SM2.6.		0	0	1			
SM3	0	0	5	8			
SM3.1		0	5	8	REJECT	Supporting Mea	B.3.1 Target: Key stakehold
SM4	0	1	4	3			
SM4.1		1	4	3	KEEP	Supporting Mea	B.4.1: 10 million Europeans
C. M&E	0	1	2	8			
C1.1		0	0	1	REJECT	MONITORING	C.1.1: Annual, Mid-term and
C1.2		1	1	1	KEEP	MONITORING	C.1.2: Indicators in place an
C1.3		0	1	3	REJECT	MONITORING	C.1.3: Monitoring providing
C1.4.		0	0	3	xxxxxxx	MONITORING	C.1.4: Action Plan adjusted

3.3 Has the technical approach through the development of Country Profiles been efficient?

Difficulties of the process

It is valid to question if the technical approach adopted for reporting progress on the current Biodiversity Action Plan, with a country profile, community level profile and SEBI 2010 reporting was efficient. As already noted in section 2 no indicators were defined at the time of establishing the plan and neither were baseline data defined against which to monitor progress. Thus the process adopted involved backward fitting data sources to actions in the plan. In neither 2008 nor 2010 were all actions evaluated which questions the relevance of including them in the original plan. Furthermore there were a **large number of actions**, and Sweden, for example, commented that the structure of the BAP itself - as the BAP spans over several (all) areas of policy - led to the questions in the BAP evaluation form being very heterogeneous. However, they question the level of detail and consider it unnecessary in most cases.

Actions at a Community level feed into actions at the Member State level, but the linkages between them were not clearly drawn out in the reporting process. One would expect official **data sources** to exist for all actions where Member States are required to implement a plan/ programme/ Directive coming from the Commission, but frequently this information was not available in an official data source, and needed to be compiled through a questionnaire based process. Again Sweden provides valuable insight into the resources needed to address this: 'Due to the level of detail and very broad scope, many experts at many different authorities needed to be consulted. Around 50 people in 12 different authorities contributed, to a varying degree. I estimate that altogether Swedish officials have spent in the order of 200 working hours on the BAP evaluation'. This was echoed by other Member States. For example Estonia pointed out that they consulted 35 experts in order to fill in the Country Profile and for federal states such as Belgium and Germany involving the different levels of government proved complex. Member States felt that the format of the Country Profiles was not sufficiently user-friendly to allow for such consultation (e.g. the lack of search, copy and paste, and filtering functions). The UK pointed out that they did not always recognise the standard data source used for pre-filling information. The external resources commissioned by the Commission to compile the prefilled data elements of the profile were also substantial.

Several Member States felt that the time available for working on the pre-filled and non-pre-filled sections of the Country Profiles and for verifying information was not sufficient, given that there was a need to consult several other services in-country, although it is noted that the Member States were provided with details of the questions contained in the Country Profile as early as six months prior to the original deadline which should have been sufficient for elements to be completed by them.

Thus, given the resources needed to generate them, it is also valid to ask 'How **useful** is the **Country Profile**' i.e. having all the data on one country collated in one place? Would it be possible to do away with the Country Profile for data that already exists elsewhere in official data sources and only have a questionnaire based approach where no data source exists (in future will there be any actions that are not reported already through official data sources?).

Can a country synthesis be developed based on a review of existing data sources? A harmonised approach to data collection and reporting will be important here (see section 4.4 for a discussion of this aspect).

Benefits of the process

Within Member States it was reported that the BAP process and compilation of the Country Profiles has increased knowledge and awareness of the BAP from near zero (e.g. Sweden). A general appreciation amongst Member States was expressed regarding the professional way the BAP was managed, raising its profile.

Member States generally appreciated the fact that much of the information in the Country Profiles was pre-filled and needed validation instead of compilation (although the pre-filled information was questioned in many cases).

Amongst the different EC Services a multidisciplinary way of working has been fostered and awareness raised of related biodiversity issues amongst them.

Section 4.54.5 however, notes that a lack of integration in the EC and Member State institutional structures has hampered implementation of the BAP. Thus, whilst it will be important for the future BAP process to capitalise on the raised awareness and way of working both amongst Member States and amongst the relevant EC Services, it will also be important to examine institutional structures and to build on the successes of the BAP to further develop horizontal integration at the Member State and EC level..

As a knowledge base, it was considered that there is a wealth of information within the Country Profiles and the BAP is the only coherent source of response indicators. Despite the significant resources required to gather this information it has been useful having a profile of each Member State in one place rather than dispersed amongst a number of separate official data sources. Additionally the elements completed by Member States themselves are not available elsewhere and so the Country Profiles provide the only data source. The question is whether in future to allocate resources to exactly this kind of profile, whether to differentiate between the data already available from official sources and only reflect that in a Country Synthesis across all Member States rather than on an individual basis, and that that can only be generated from Member States and develop a Country Profile focussed only on the latter.

The database of information gathered in 2008 and in 2010 is valuable and must be available for future use and analysis. Only superficial analyses have been possible for the Country Synthesis/ Consolidated Profile and it is recommended that more in-depth analyses are undertaken and that the database is made available for research.

The assessments in 2008 and 2010 have provided a baseline against which to assess future progress and in establishing the future BAP strategy it is worth exploring which of the particularly key indicators would remain relevant for future monitoring and would align to the future strategy.

3.4 IT and data storage

For the current BAP reporting process there was no dedicated data **harvesting tool** or data repository. There was also no online tool for Member States to provide data in response to

questions (on Measures of Progress). Establishing such a tool is a substantial task, and although it was explored by the Commission no tool was established.

A Microsoft Office **Word document with embedded schema** was thus used in 2010 to collect data as it was considered that most users were familiar with Word and could easily enter information into that format. The schema enable the data to subsequently be extracted to a database. However this proved not to be an ideal method to collect the information. Word is not used in every country, and even where it is used, different versions are used (this can cause the schema to be removed or corrupted and in the end generated a significant additional burden in replacing them after the data had been entered). Navigation around the document is cumbersome. Also to avoid the schema being corrupted (where countries did have access to Word 2003 or more recent versions) it was necessary to lock the files which caused problems for some Member States who needed to copy sections of the report to different organisations, and suppressed the search facility. In addition, IT problems also arose due to difficulty of storing a large quantity of data in MS Office Word documents. These could be solved by applying MS Office Excel, which would also allow to automatically create country profiles in different formats. Indeed, it was the format of the Word Country Profile that generated the most feedback from Member States in response to lessons learned and highlighted the need for a dedicated IT tool for this purpose. Additional thoughts on the IT tool are included in section 4.4.

4. Linkages with national, other EU and global processes

This chapter addresses the linkages of the EU BAP process with other processes, from the national to the regional (EU and European) and global level (see also UNEP-WCMC et al 2009). It is structured along the lines of these levels. It also includes a section on the technical arrangements potentially supporting a better alignment of reporting processes and a section on the integration – or not – of governance structures in support of reporting processes.

The analysis below demonstrates a great deal of alignment of the BAP reporting process with reporting to EC Directives and global biodiversity-related conventions. Information from the latter has been used to a good extent in reporting on the implementation of the BAP.

4.1 Are the targets and Measures of Progress well aligned with the existing monitoring processes at the national level of the Member States?

The alignment of the BAP with monitoring processes at the national level has been particularly good where Member States are obliged to report on the implementation of EC Directives. There are several examples (see below) where national monitoring in compliance with EC Directives provides substantial information on the implementation of the BAP, as shown by use of such data in the Country Profiles published at the midterm and full assessments made in 2008 and 2010.

A good example is the **Article 17 Habitats Directive reporting** on habitats and species status (under targets A1.1 and A1.3 in the Country Profiles). Article 11 of the [Habitats](#)

[Directive](#) (92/43/EEC) requires Member States to monitor the habitats and species listed in the annexes, and Article 17 requires a report to be sent to the European Commission every six years following an agreed format. A major part of the report is an assessment of the conservation status of all the habitats and species listed on annexes I & II of the Directive (those for which the Member States must propose & designate sites forming part of the Natura 2000 network and known as 'Special Areas of Conservation'), annex IV (species strictly protected) and annex V (species whose exploitation may be subject to management). The Article 17 reporting covers the habitat types and species in the whole territory of the Member State concerned, not only those within Natura 2000 sites.

Another example is the monitoring of and reporting on the ecological status of **fresh water** as reflected in target A.2.3 of the Country Profiles. According to Article 18 of the [Water Framework Directive](#) (WFD) (2000/60/EC) the Commission has to assess the progress in the implementation of the WFD in certain intervals and to inform the European Parliament, the Council and the public about the results of its assessments. In April 2009, the second implementation report was published, which addresses the establishment of monitoring programmes for surface waters and groundwater. Implementation reports are released every 2 years, whereas reporting obligations on programmes of measures are due every six years.

There are a number of EU Directives aimed at reducing the loads and impacts of **nutrients**, including the [Nitrates Directive](#) (91/676/EEC) aimed at reducing nitrate pollution from agricultural land, the [Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive](#) (91/271/EEC) aimed at reducing pollution from sewage treatment works and from certain industries; and the [Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Directive](#) (96/61/EEC and 2008/1/EC) aimed at controlling and preventing pollution of water from industry. The issue of nutrients is reflected in a number of Measures of Progress in objectives 2 (2.4.2, 2.4.3) and 3 (3.2) in the Country Profiles.

Data on the concentration of oxidised nitrogen and orthophosphate in transitional, coastal and marine waters are held in the [EEA Waterbase](#) and are collected through the Eionet Water (Eurowaternet) process and from the marine conventions; these are therefore sub-samples of national data assembled for the purpose of providing comparable indicators of state and impact of transitional, coastal and marine waters (TCM-data) on a Europe-wide scale.

With a view to increasing the level of transparency on how Member States comply with their obligations to enforce Community rules, the [Council Regulation establishing a list of types of behaviour which seriously infringe the rules of the Common Fisheries Policy](#) (1447/1999) introduced the obligation for the Member States to report yearly to the Commission on how many "serious" **infringements of the rules of the Common Fisheries Policy** have been detected and on the sanctions imposed. The data from the 2006 MS reports used for the Measures of Progress in A3.5.1 and A3.6.1 were presented in the *Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament - Reports from Member States on behaviours which seriously infringed the rules of the Common Fisheries Policy in 2006* COM(2008) 0670 final.

All Member States must maintain a **register of fishing vessels** under the [Council Regulation on the conservation and sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources under the Common Fisheries Policy](#) (2371/2002). The obligations of Member States regarding the

collection, validation and transmission of the data from their national register to the Commission are found in [Commission Regulation on the Community fishing fleet register](#) (26/2004) of 30 December 2003. The Community fishing fleet register was used in the Measure of Progress A3.5.3 to show changes in fishing capacity in individual Member States over time.

A3.1.1 and A3.1.2 are Measures of Progress not included in the 2008 or 2010 BAP evaluation. These two Measures of Progress pertain to the [Marine Strategy Framework Directive](#) (2008/56/EC), but measuring progress on Member State implementation was not possible in 2008 or 2010 because of the timing of obligations under the MSFD. Member States do not need to complete an initial assessment of environmental status of waters concerned until July 2012, establish a monitoring programme until 2014, or develop a programme of measures until 2015. The first report Member States need to make on the methodology for the assessment of environmental status is for July 2010, so even this is outside the timeframe for this BAP.

Based on the three core objectives and the strategic guidelines provided by the [Rural Development Regulation](#) (EC 1698/2005) Member States draw up national **Rural Development Programmes** that translate national strategies into action. This currently applies for the period 2007-2013. Data included in national Rural Development programmes have been used in assessing progress for objective 2 of the BAP. In addition, in accordance with the procedure referred to in Article 90(2) of the Rural Development Regulation, a common monitoring and evaluation framework in cooperation between the Commission and the Member States shall be developed. It aims to specify a limited number of common indicators applicable to each programme.

In reporting against objective 4 and supporting measure 1 of the BAP, data was used from annual strategic reports under **Cohesion and Structural Funds** that must be submitted by Member States, throughout the 2007-2013 programming period. The aim of these documents is to assess progress Member States and their regions made in delivering agreed objectives and addressing priorities - both at EU (Cohesion Policy objectives of the Treaty) and national level (National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) and Operational Programmes (OP)). This reporting obligation is established by article 29 of the [Council Regulation laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund and repealing Regulation \(EC\) No 1260/1999](#) (1083/2006). Each Member State should designate a management authority responsible for the efficient, effective and correct management and implementation of each operational programme. It should then deliver an annual performance report to the Commission each year by 30 June at the latest, in which Member States should provide information on the contribution of the programmes co-financed by the Funds towards achieving their national strategies.

Given the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto Protocol requirements, thorough monitoring and regular assessment of Community **greenhouse gas** (GHG) **emissions** and the measures taken by the Community and its Member States in the field of climate change policy is required. There are several decisions regulating Member States GHG reporting processes to the European Commission, among which is a mechanism for monitoring and reporting greenhouse gas emissions so as to be able to evaluate more accurately and more regularly the progress made in reducing

emissions with a view to complying with the Community's commitments under the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol ([Decision No 280/2004/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning a mechanism for monitoring Community greenhouse gas emissions and for implementing the Kyoto Protocol](#)). The [Directive establishing a scheme for GHG emission allowance trading within the Community](#) (2003/87/EC) also stresses the need for accurate and transparent GHG monitoring and reporting process for Member States (see also [Commission Decision 2007/589/EC establishing guidelines for the monitoring and reporting of greenhouse gas emissions](#)). In addition to the information in national reports, Member States must communicate other information on GHG inventories to the Commission (assisted by the European Environment Agency) for the assessment of actual progress and the preparation of annual reports as required under the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol. Information on GHG emissions is required for reporting against objective 9 of the BAP.

It should be noted in this context that Member States often encountered problems in assembling the data and information necessary for filling in the non-prefilled parts of the Country Profiles, i.e. information that is not available from other reporting processes (see also section 3.3). Information on specific Measures of Progress was hard to obtain for many Member States. It can only be guessed whether this is due to a genuine lack of data or to problems in accessing the data; it will likely vary from case to case.

Finally, it should be noted that there is good alignment of national activities with the BAP process in terms of monitoring of most vertebrate groups, in particular for birds. Common bird monitoring resulting in, among other farmland bird indices, are applied in the vast majority of Member States and the results are well reflected in the BAP (see action A1.3.1 and headline target of objective 2).

4.2 Are the targets and Measures of Progress well aligned with the existing EU and European processes (EU Directives, SEBI indicators)?

For information on the implementation of the actions in the BAP, where possible information from existing standard data sources was used to report on Measures of Progress. For Measures of Progress where no standard data source exists, Member States were provided with information from national sources. Table 5 shows two categories of standard data sources (EU Directives, multilateral environmental agreements) that were used per objective or supporting measure (see also the previous chapter). One such category refers to reports on the implementation of **EU Directives**, mostly Member State reports. This includes the [Habitats Directive](#), [Water Framework Directive](#), [Bathing Water Directive](#), [National Emissions Ceiling Directive](#) and the [Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Directive](#). The [Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive](#), [Marine Strategy Framework Directive](#), and the [Nitrates Directive](#) were not used (see above section 4.1 for a discussion on those). Reports on the implementation of EU Directives are particularly relevant for reporting against objective 1 (To safeguard the EU's most important habitats and species), objective 2 (To conserve and restore biodiversity and ecosystem services in the wider EU countryside), and objective 3 (To conserve and restore biodiversity and ecosystem services in the wider EU marine environment).

Table 5: Number of contractor-prefilled (green) Measures of Progress using information from EC Directives or multilateral environmental agreements as data sources.

MEA or Directive/ objective or supporting measure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	SM1	SM2	SM3	SM4	Monitoring, evaluation & review
Habitats Directive	4	3	1	1				1			2				
Water Framework Directive		2	1												
Bathing Water Directive		1													
National Emissions Ceiling Directive		1													
IPCC Directive		1													
CBD			1			2		1	1		1				
CITES								2							
CMS						1									
UNFCCC									2						
International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Conventions					1										
Ramsar Convention						1									

The SEBI process has also been relevant for reporting on the implementation of the BAP. Measures of Progress for Monitoring, evaluation and review reflect on the extent to which Member States apply the **SEBI indicators** (see EEA 2009).

Due to the non-synchronisation between certain policy process periods and the BAP reporting coverage, there have been some difficulties to find sufficient data for some Measures of Progress. This is the case for objective 4 on EU regional and territorial developments. For instance Cohesion and Structural Funds are synchronized with EU budget 7-years programming periods. Those budget periods have often specific financial instruments/programmes that might change from one period to another. Therefore it was hardly possible to get consistent data/indicators for analysis on period covering two financial

programming periods (e.g. Cohesion and Structural Funds are defined for 2000-2006/2007-2013, and BAP reporting 2006/2008).

4.3 Are the targets and Measures of Progress well aligned with the existing global processes?

The BAP reporting process not only builds on information reported to EU Directives but also information reported to global environmental conventions, in particular biodiversity-related conventions. National reports on implementation and non-national reporting sources (mostly the agreements' websites) of the following **multilateral environmental agreements** have been used as standard data source: in particular the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), but also the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Conventions.

As table 5 shows reports to, and other information from, MEAs inform in particular the reporting against objective 6 (To substantially strengthen effectiveness of international governance for biodiversity and ecosystem services), objective 8 (To substantially reduce the impact of international trade on global biodiversity and ecosystem services) and objective 9 (To support biodiversity adaptation to climate change).

4.4 How can technical arrangements support reducing the reporting burden to EU and global mechanisms?

Chapter 4 demonstrates that much information from reporting to other processes has been used in the reporting on the implementation of the BAP. The advanced technology that is available could become an important tool in the collection of data and information on the implementation of any future EU Biodiversity Action Plan or equivalent instruments. **Technology** could help in particular to harmonize the collection of data and information across different processes with related content. Given the overlap of information relevant for reporting on the EU BAP with reporting on EC Directives and MEAs, Reportnet and the EC Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM) maintained by the European Environment Agency (EEA) might be used to harvest (Reportnet) and store and present (CHM) data and information from those reporting processes. Information from forest-related reporting by Parties to MEAs is available through the forest reporting portal of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF; see <http://www.fao.org/forestry/cpf/mar/en/>). Another information portal is Tematea (www.tematea.org), which provides access to commitments and obligations for Parties to MEAs on specific themes.

Particularly relevant in this context is the **Biodiversity Information System for Europe** that the European Commission has launched. Such systems should allow easy access to relevant information at any time for Member States, the European Commission, Council and Parliament, and interested organisations and institutions. In any case, it would be important to develop clear concepts for such systems, in particular regarding their collaboration with, as well as distinction from, other related systems at the global (for example the Global

Biodiversity Information Facility, GBIF), EC or national level. The discussions on the development of any such systems could be supported by a biodiversity inter-services group at the Commission level, in order to mobilize the participation of the different DGs as required.

Given the current negotiations of a post-2010 Strategic Plan under the CBD, with a system of goals, targets and indicators expected, it seems particularly relevant and timely to consider the future alignment of an EU BAP reporting process, or an equivalent process, with these global efforts. As mentioned above, all EU Member States and the European Community are parties to the CBD and are expected to be requested to report against the CBD Strategic Plan. Aligning the contents and technical systems for these two reporting systems would reduce the Member States and the EC's reporting burden considerably.

4.5 Lack of an integrated governance structure at all levels: Fragmentation of departmental responsibilities are not adequate for dealing with a horizontal issue such as the BAP

The Biodiversity Action Plan has put a strong focus on integration of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into other sectors that impact on species, ecosystems and ecosystem services. The implementation of this integration is hampered by the **fragmentation of departmental responsibilities** at EC and national level. This has been recognised by global reports on the state of biological diversity (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment 2005, Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity 2010). It is also reflected by the wide range of issues addressed by the BAP Measures of Progress, incorporating aspects such as nature conservation, fisheries, forestry, overseas development aid, and others. It has accordingly been challenging for the EC and Member States to collect the information required for reporting on the implementation of the BAP from the many departments involved (see chapter 3.3 above).

A horizontal issue such as the Biodiversity Action Plan requires **horizontal integration**, as required by article 6b of the CBD. Thus, an integrated governance structure remains one of the key challenges for the implementation of any future EU Biodiversity Action Plan or an equivalent instrument.

5. Recommendations for the future BAP

This final chapter assembles recommendations arising from the discussion in the previous chapters, aimed at informing the consideration of future Biodiversity Action Plans and the accompanied reporting processes or any equivalent instruments.

5.1 Recommendations from chapter 2: Reviewing the EU Biodiversity Action Plan

Content:

- A future BAP or equivalent instruments should address overexploitation and unsustainable consumption and production more largely.
- Concrete actions on spatial planning need to be identified.
- Explicit targets or measures addressing ecosystem services and the maintenance of the overall health and integrity of ecosystems should be provided.
- A clear framework (e.g., targets focused on status, pressures and impacts, actions representing responses) should be followed.
- A reduced amount of actions, specific and highlighting the relevance of responses across different policy areas in achieving biodiversity objectives, is recommended.
- A forward-looking approach and the use of new instruments should be considered.

Structure:

- In establishing the post-2010 BAP strategy or any equivalent instruments it is recommended that alternative approaches, such as that of the logical framework, are explored. Such an approach can accommodate inputs at different levels that feed into an overarching strategy – i.e. strategic plan – EC level policy instruments – implementation by Member States. It could also be aligned with the post-2010 Strategic Plan of the CBD, which is currently under negotiation.
- It is recommended that the output (BAP objective) level is considered: specifically, whether by adopting a structure based on the existing EC service structure would increase ownership over implementation of the BAP or any equivalent instruments and also lead to improved reporting.
- It is recommended that the next BAP or any equivalent instruments should define the desired outcomes/impact; some existing policy instruments may be relevant but new ones within each EC service may also be required. The strategy should not aim to micro-manage and define the actions to achieve those outcomes – that should be left to the different EC Services who must set new policy instruments in order to achieve the outcome at the strategy level (EC services, and thus Member States who will implement those policies; they must therefore buy-in to the process from the outset).
- Indicators and measures of change must be set, as well as their means of verification. The strategy level indicators can be defined within the new BAP, but the measures of performance will be defined at the next level by the EC services / Member States.

Support:

- Any future biodiversity strategy needs to assess potential financial constraints linked to its implementation.
- Ownership would need to be created by delegating the monitoring of the implementation of the BAP to a larger range of stakeholders.

5.2 Recommendations from chapter 3: Reviewing the BAP reporting process

- Adopt a structured approach for the post 2010 plan, such as a logical framework approach, and identify at the outset indicators that will be used to measure progress, and the baseline against which change will be monitored. Indicators at the action level can include process oriented indicators – i.e. has a Member State started down the road to addressing biodiversity, for example by implementing a plan or

programme. At the output level outcome oriented indicators will be relevant that show whether the actions have achieved a change in biodiversity indicators and whether the change is in the right direction.

- A smaller more clearly defined set of actions must be defined.
- Member States would need to be given sufficient time for providing information on the implementation of the BAP or any equivalent instrument (or to check pre-filled information) as well as for verifying any draft reports or profiles.
- In addition to the difficulties faced in collating information to report on the current BAP, there have been a number of positive outcomes to the current reporting process and these must be capitalised upon, specifically:
 - At both Member state level and amongst the different EC Services awareness of biodiversity issues has been raised and an interdisciplinary way of working has been encouraged although a lack of integration in the EC and Member State institutional structures has hampered implementation of the BAP. It is recommended that in developing the post-2010 BAP strategy, institutional structures are examined with a view to build on the successes of the BAP to further develop horizontal integration at the Member state and EC level.
 - The Country Profiles and associated database represent a significant knowledge base either not available elsewhere (Member State questionnaire data) or not collated in one place (data from official sources). However, significant resources were required to gather the data. For the post-2010 strategy it is recommended that the question of whether to allocate resources to exactly this kind of profile is considered (noting however, that it is likely to be for a smaller set of indicators). Should there be more of a differentiation between data already available from official sources, which can be compiled in a Country Synthesis, and data that can only be generated from Member States. I.e. how important it is to have separate Country Profile data: – what is the important factor – a collation of all the material against one country in one place as it relates to the BAP reporting process, or comparison of all Member States against relevant indicators, for which the data already exists elsewhere.
 - It is recommended that the database of information gathered in 2008 and in 2010 is made available for future use and in-depth analysis that goes beyond the analyses presented in the Country Synthesis / Consolidated Profile.
 - The assessments in 2008 and 2010 have provided a baseline against which to assess future progress. In developing the post 2010 BAP strategy it is recommended exploring which of the particularly key indicators would remain relevant for future monitoring and would align to the future strategy in order to build on the existing data set.

Exactly what kind of IT data collection/repository tool is required in future will depend on what information is desirable – is it appropriate only to gather metadata – i.e. links to reports that already have data comparing Member States, or is it important to have

a unique data set compiled for each individual Member State. Particularly if the latter, we recommend the development of some kind browser-based tool, as everyone has access to a browser. Some requirements of the tool include: that it is accessible and usable to all users, easy to navigate, can authenticate users, can accept large amounts of data, can accept charts/graphics, integrates as much as possible with other systems, and stores the data in a usable way.

5.3 Recommendations from chapter 4: Linkages with national, other EU and global processes

- It should be considered to which extent the collection of data and information on the implementation of the EU Biodiversity Action Plan can be harmonized/ synchronized with the collection of information for other processes, in particular EC Directives and processes (e.g. EU Budget Review) and multilateral environmental agreements. Technical facilities such as Reportnet and the EC Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM) should be used wherever possible and appropriate. The Biodiversity Information System for Europe would play a particular role in this regard. The discussions on the development of any such systems could be supported by a biodiversity inter-services group at the Commission level, in order to mobilize the participation of the different DGs as required.
- Such streamlining of collection and submission of information relevant to the EU BAP could feed back into the national level by providing a strong stimulus for harmonization of national reporting to EC-wide and international conventions and mechanisms. The ways to achieve further harmonization could work as follows. The information modules created through the EU BAP-related system (or any equivalent system in the future) could be used by Member States to satisfy the reporting requirements for relevant EC, regional and global directives, treaties and mechanisms. Once the system has been established and proved working, steps to align the reporting systems with those for relevant EC directives, such as the Birds and Habitats Directives, could be explored. In the future, it might be feasible to merge at least part of the reporting systems. The same could potentially apply to harmonization with reporting to the Bern Convention.

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