



Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora

and

Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds

**FORMAT FOR
A PRIORITISED ACTION FRAMEWORK (PAF)
FOR NATURA 2000**

For the EU Multiannual Financing Period 2014-2020

(Final Version 11 May 2012)

A. Introductory overview of Natura 2000 network for territory

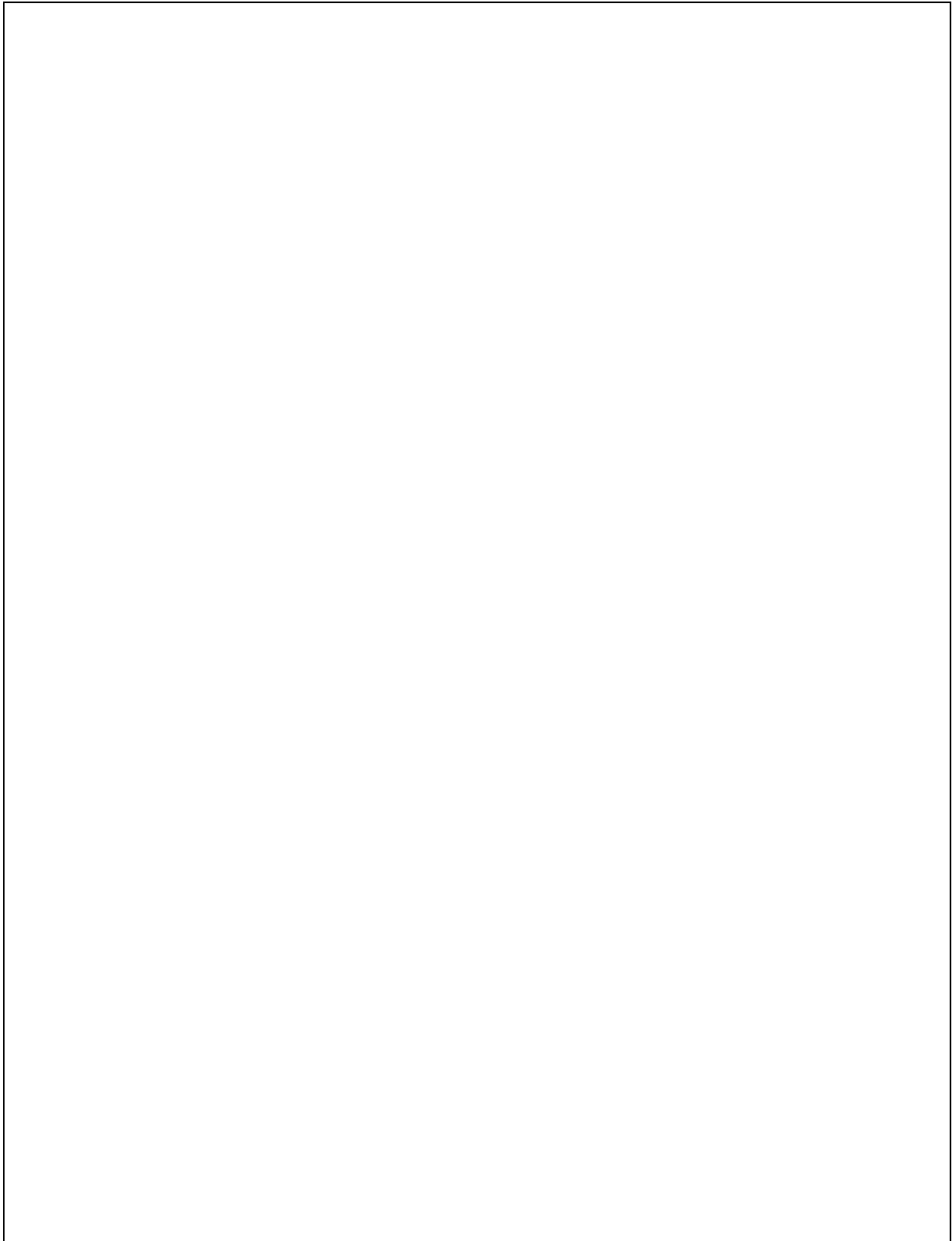
A.1 Short introduction to the habitat types of Annex I and species of Annex II of the Habitats Directive and Annex I and migratory bird species for which Natura 2000 sites are designated



A.2 Number and area of Natura 2000 sites

Sites of Community Importance (SCIs)	<i>Number and Area</i>
Reference to Commission Decisions on SCIs	<i>Link to Decisions at http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/sites_hab/biogeog_regions/index_en.htm</i>
Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)	<i>Number and Area</i>
Special Protection Areas (SPAs)	<i>Number and Area</i>
Total Natura 2000 terrestrial area	<i>To be compiled</i>
Total Natura 2000 marine area	<i>To be compiled</i>

A.3 Main land use cover and ecosystem categories for Natura 2000 sites



B. Status of the Habitats and Species

B.1 Most recent assessment of conservation status of species and habitat types for territory

B.1.a Habitat and species of Habitats Directive

	HABITATS					SPECIES				
	FV	U1	U2	XX	NA	FV	U1	U2	XX	NA
Biogeographic region A										
Biogeographic region B										
.....										
Member State or Region										

FV – Favourable; U1 – Unfavourable inadequate; U2 – Unfavourable bad; XX - Unknown; NA – Not reported

Region / Conclusion	HABITATS					SPECIES				
	FV	U1	U2	XX	NA	FV	U1	U2	XX	NA
Range										
Area / Population										
Structure / Habitat										
Future Prospects										

B.1.b Bird species of Birds Directive

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B.2 Overall assessment of conservation status by Habitat category / species group

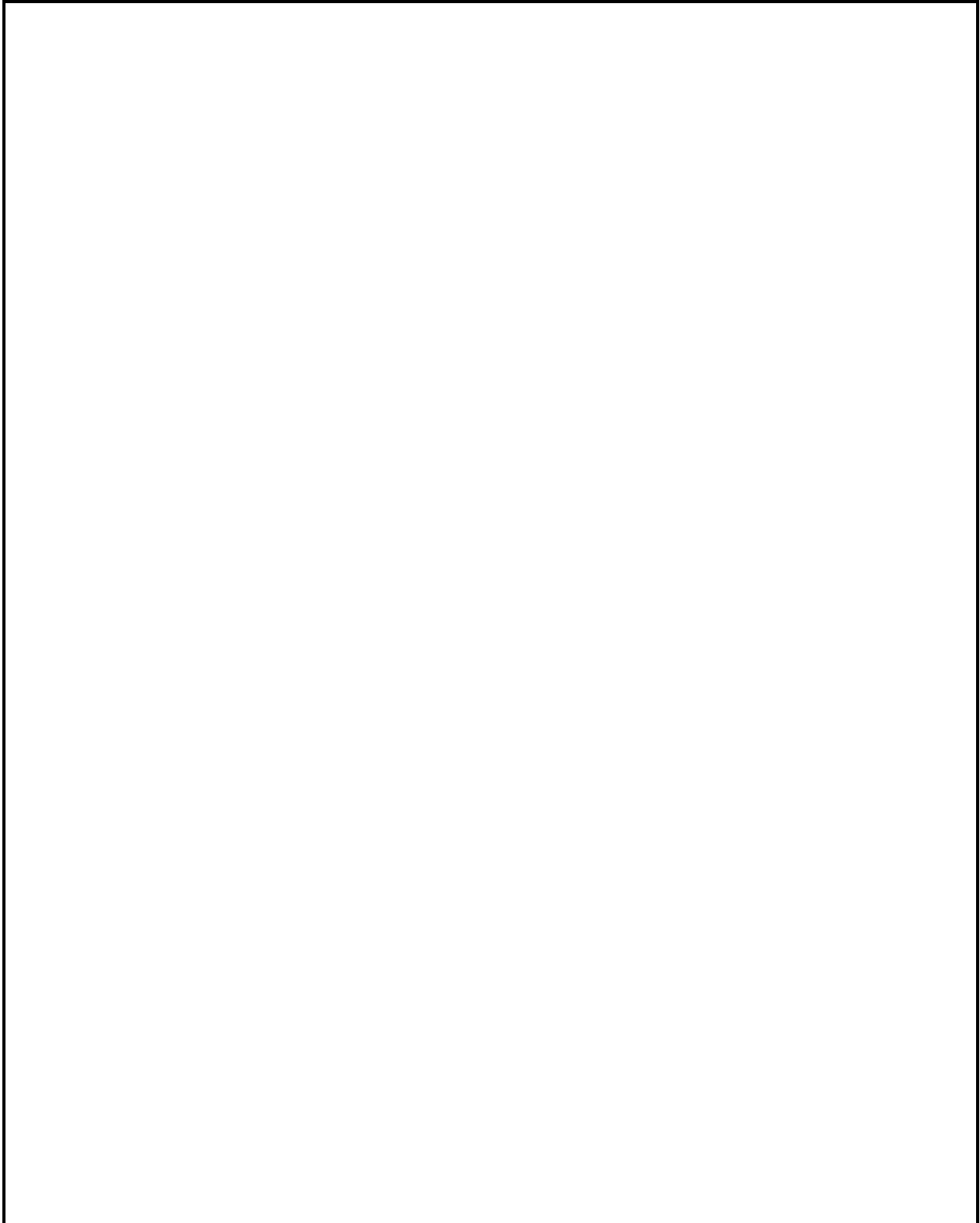
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B.3 Overview of pressures and threats to species and habitats

Category of pressure / threat	HABITATS		SPECIES	
	Actual pressures	Future threats	Actual pressures	Future threats
Agriculture, Forestry				
Fishing, hunting and collecting				
Mining and extraction of materials				
Urbanisation, industrialisation and similar activities				
Transportation and communication				
Leisure and tourism (other than above)				
Pollution and other human impacts/activities				
Human induced changes in wetlands and marine environments				
Natural processes (biotic and abiotic)				

C. LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS FOR THE PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE NATURA 2000 SITES

C.1 Relevant legal provisions



C.2 Progress and perspectives for management planning for the sites

Progress in establishing conservation objectives	
% of sites with plans completed	
% of sites with plans in preparation	
% of sites with no plans	
Link to web sites with plans & any guidelines	
More background information on plans and comment on other instruments/approaches for management planning, information on and plans for particular sectors (e.g. forestry etc.)	

C.3 Relevant government and non-governmental plans

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D CURRENT EXPERIENCE WITH USE OF EU FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

D1 European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)

Provide a summary of allocations under relevant provisions of rural development fund for Natura 2000 management, (as well as other relevant national/regional financing)

Fund	Provision	Level of Use*
EAFRD	213 Natura 2000 payments	
	224 Forest Natura 2000 payments	
	214 agri-environment	
	225 forest-environment measures	
Other relevant (national/regional) payment schemes for Territory		
Summary of key Natura 2000 related measures being undertaken under fund:		
Key lessons learnt and obstacles encountered:		

* Where estimates are available they should be provided. Otherwise indicate as VS Very significant; MU Moderate Use; MI Minor use; NU No use

D.2 European Fisheries Fund (EFF)

Provide a summary of allocations under Axis 1-4 of EFF used for Natura 2000 management, (as well as other relevant national/regional funding)

Fund	Provision	Level of Use*
EFF	Axis 1	
	Axis 2	
	Axis 3	
	Axis 4	
Other (national/regional) payment schemes for Territory		
Summary of key Natura 2000 related measures being undertaken under fund:		
Key lessons learnt and obstacles encountered:		

Where estimates are available they should be provided. Otherwise indicate as VS Very significant; MU Moderate Use; MI Minor use; NU No use

D.3 Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund

Provide a summary of allocations under relevant provisions of structural funds used for Natura 2000 management, (as well as other relevant national/regional funding)

Fund	Provision	Level of Use*
ERDF	Category 51	
	Category 55	
	Category 56	
	INTERREG	
European Social Fund (ESF)		
Summary of key Natura 2000 related measures being undertaken under fund:		
Key lessons learnt and obstacles encountered:		

Where estimates are available they should be provided. Otherwise indicate as VS Very significant; MU Moderate Use; MI Minor use; NU No use

D.4 LIFE+

Provide a summary of allocations under LIFE+ for Natura 2000 management,

Fund	Provision	Level of Use*
LIFE+	Nature and Biodiversity	
Summary of key Natura 2000 related measures being undertaken under fund:		
Key lessons learnt and obstacles encountered:		

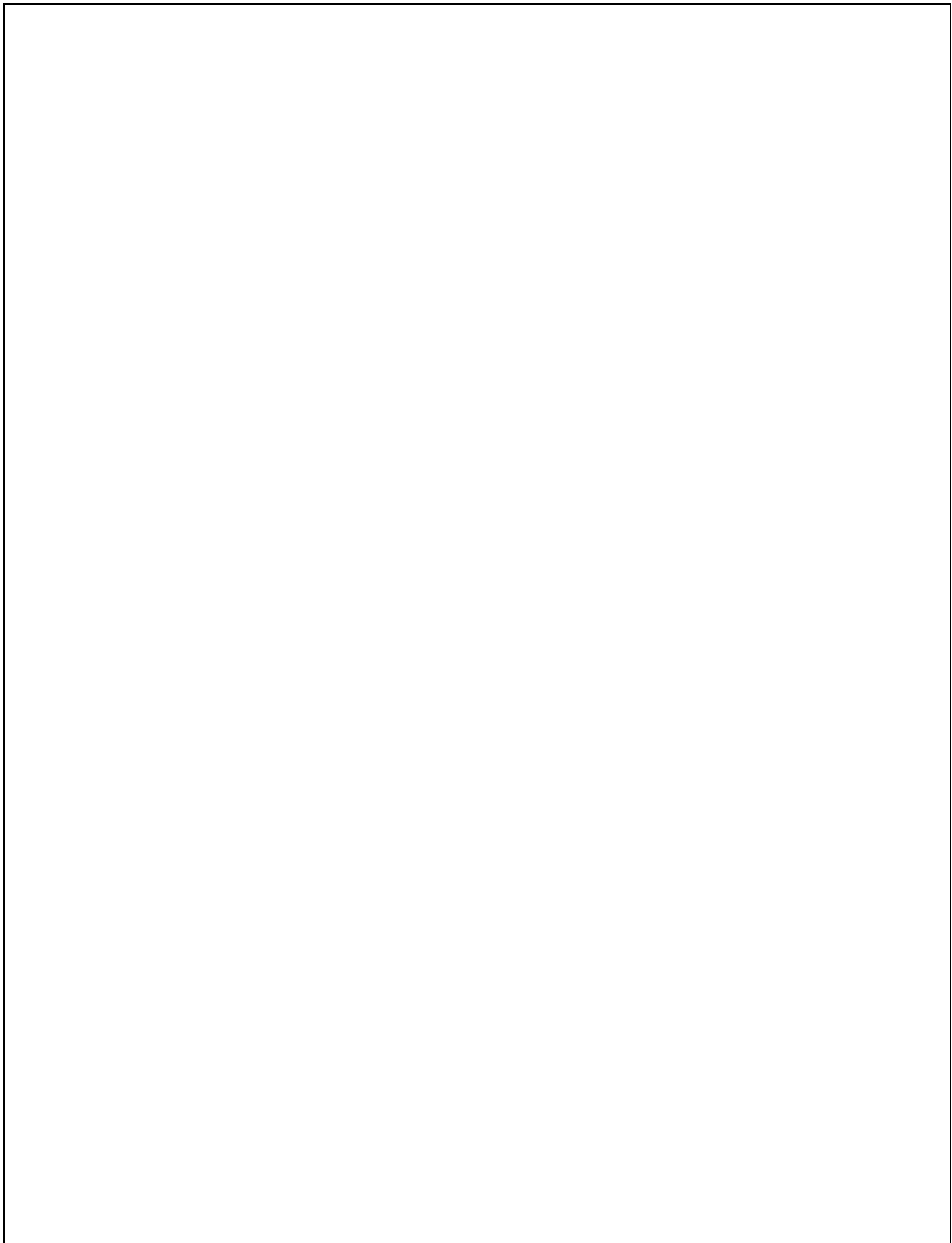
Where estimates are available they should be provided. Otherwise indicate as VS Very significant; MU Moderate Use; MI Minor use; NU No use

D.5 Other key funding sources

Fund	Level of Use*
7th Framework Programme for Research (FP7)	
Public/Private Partnership financing schemes	
Use of innovative financing	
Other (specify)	
Summary of key Natura 2000 related measures being undertaken under fund:	
Key lessons learnt and obstacles encountered:	

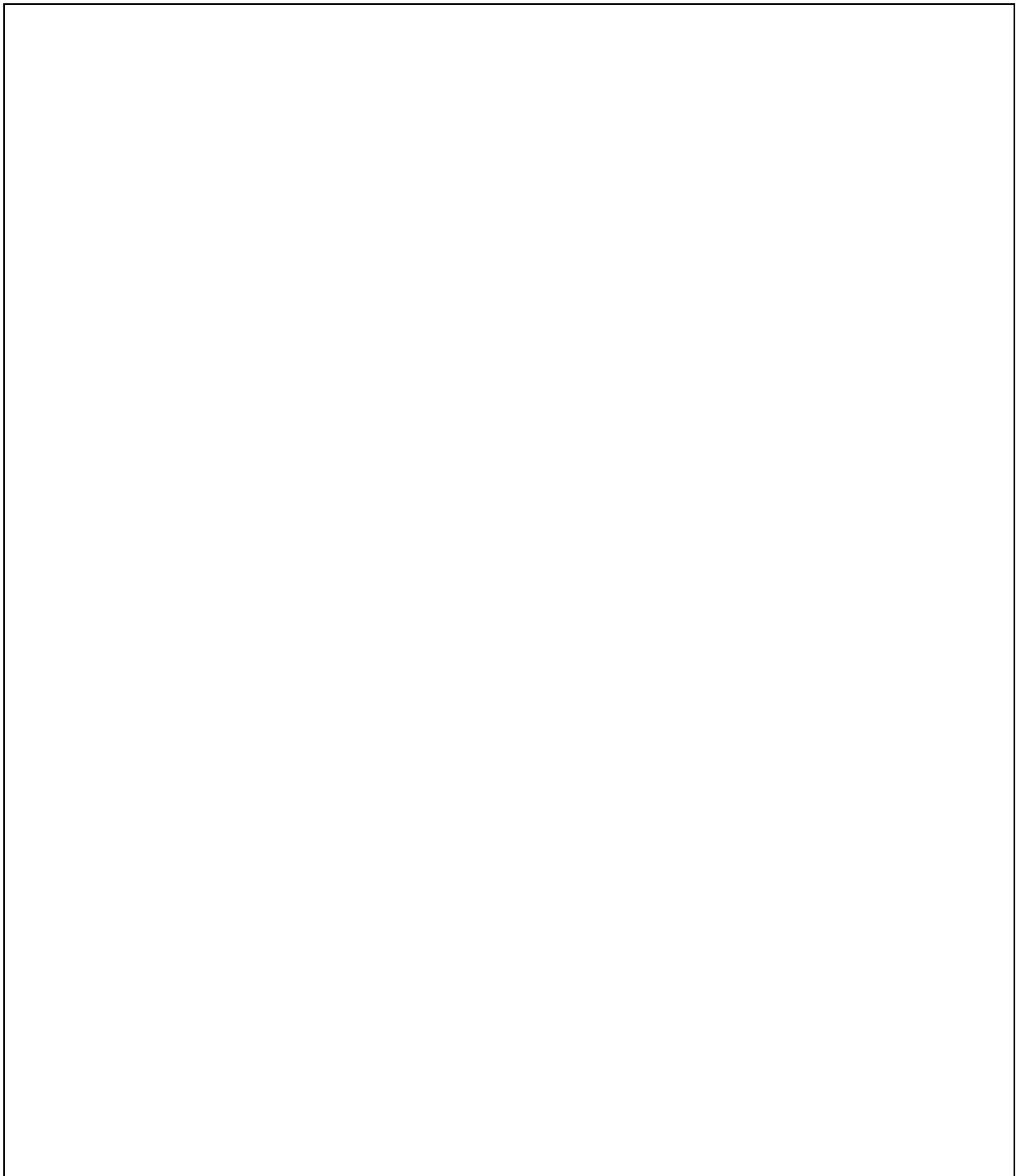
Where estimates are available they should be provided. Otherwise indicate as VS Very significant; MU Moderate Use; MI Minor use; NU No use

E Current estimate of financial needs for management of Natura 2000 for the territory



F STRATEGIC CONSERVATION PRIORITIES FOR NATURA 2000 FOR THE TERRITORY FOR PERIOD 2014-2020

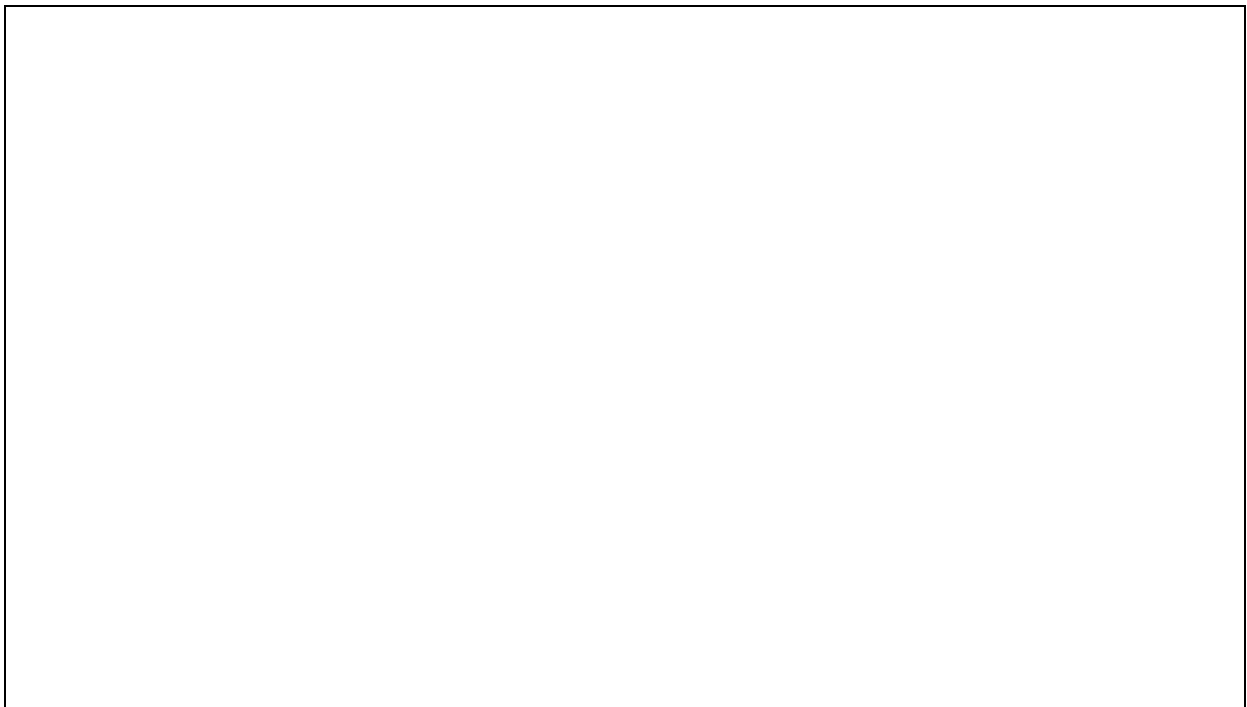
F.1 Summary of priorities for period (and expected outcomes), for priority habitat types and species having regard to the to the need for to measurable progress on the nature sub-target under EU 2020 biodiversity strategy and for ensuring good functioning of Natura 2000 network (SACs + SPAs)



F.2 Summary of priorities for other habitats and species covered by nature Directives having regard to the need for to measurable progress on nature sub-target under EU 2020 biodiversity strategy (Habitats and Birds Directives) and for ensuring good functioning of Natura 2000 network (SACs + SPAs)



F.3 Strategic priorities in relation to investments in Natura 2000 linked to green tourism and jobs, to support climate change mitigation and adaptation or other ecosystem benefits, for research, education, training, awareness and promotion of co-operation (including cross-border) linked to Natura 2000 management



G Description of key measures to achieve priorities

G.1.a General Priority Measures for Natura 2000

Type of activity	Description of measure	Target species/habitats/sites	Potential Financing sources*

**Funding sources: EAFRD; ERDF, EFF; ESF, LIFE, National public, Private sources*

G.1.b Priority Measures for Natura 2000 agricultural and forest habitats and species

Type of activity	Description of measure	Target species/habitats/sites	Potential Financing sources*

**Funding sources: EAFRD; ERDF, EFF; ESF, LIFE, National public, Private sources*

G.1.c Priority Measures for Natura 2000 marine and coastal habitats and species

Type of activity	Description of measure	Target species/habitats/sites	Potential Financing sources*

**Funding sources: EAFRD; ERDF, EFF; ESF, LIFE, National public, Private sources*

G.1.d Priority Measures for Natura 2000 wetlands habitats and species (including peatlands)

Type of activity	Description of measure	Target species/habitats/sites	Potential Financing sources*

**Funding sources: EAFRD; ERDF, EFF; ESF, LIFE, National public, Private sources*

G.2 Other priority measures

G.2.a Priority Measures for securing ecosystem benefits of Natura 2000, especially in relation to climate change mitigation and adaptation

Type of activity	Description of measure	Target species/habitats/sites	Potential Financing sources*

**Funding sources: EAFRD; ERDF, EFF; ESF, LIFE, National public, Private sources*

G.2.B Priority Measures for promoting sustainable tourism and employment in relation to Natura 2000

Type of activity	Description of measure	Target species/habitats/sites	Potential Financing sources*

**Funding sources: EAFRD; ERDF, EFF; ESF, LIFE, National public, Private sources*

G.2.c Priority Measures to promote innovative approaches in relation to Natura 2000

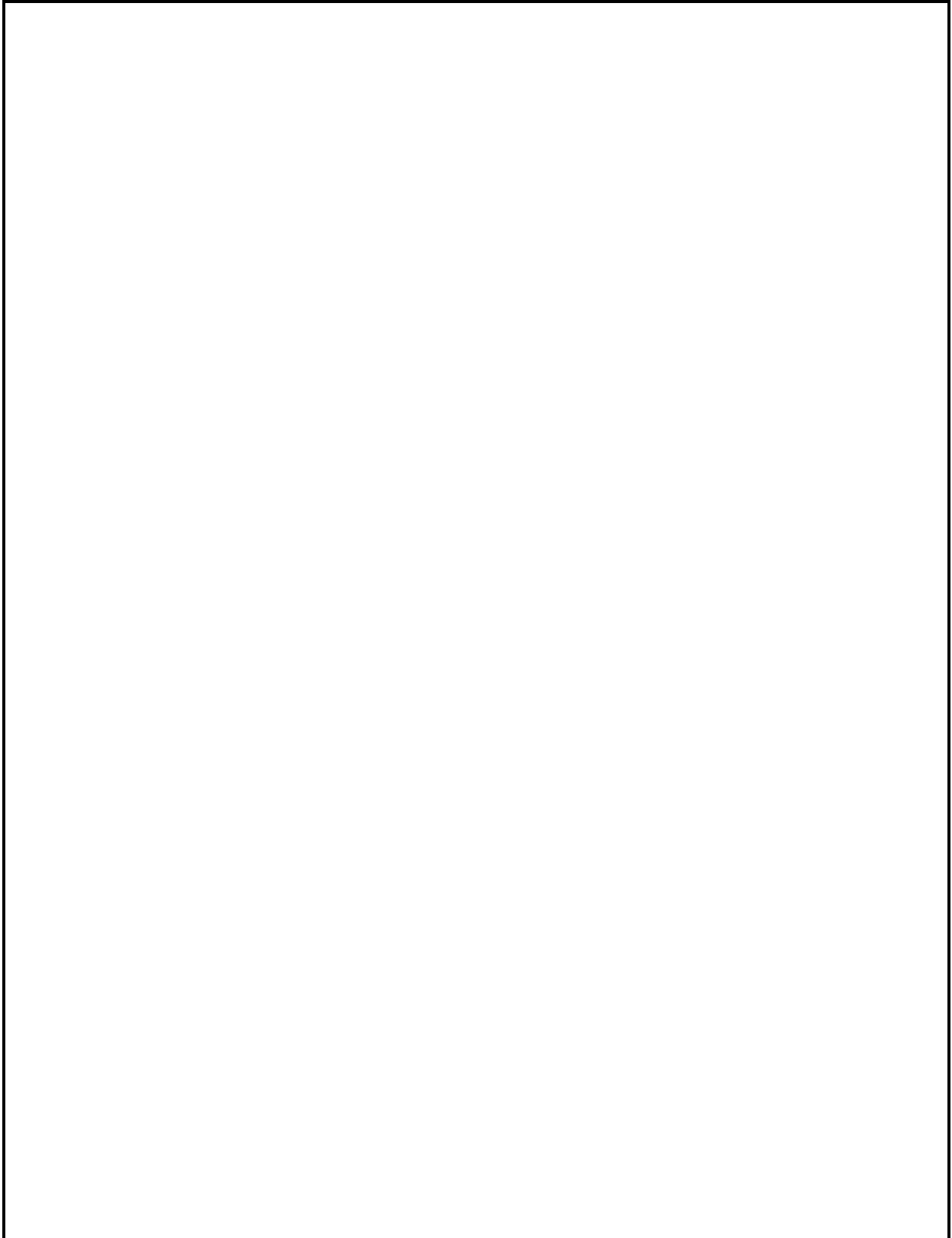
Type of activity	Description of measure	Target species/habitats/sites	Potential Financing sources*

**Funding sources: EAFRD; ERDF, EFF; ESF, LIFE, National public, Private sources*

G.3 Summary table of priority measures per habitat type and species

Feature (habitat type or species)	Conservation status (code from HD Article 17 report or BD Article 12 report)	Pressures and threats (codes from HD Article 17 report or BD Article 12 report)	Priority measure (from section G of PAF, possibly by coding)

Section H: Monitoring, evaluation and updating of PAFs



DRAFT FORMAT FOR A PRIORITISED ACTION FRAMEWORK (PAF) FOR NATURA 2000

EXPLANATORY NOTES

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Introduction

The establishment of Natura 2000 is now at an advanced stage and the upcoming period will be critical to making the network fully operational through the effective management and restoration of the sites. While the main responsibility for financing Natura 2000 lies with the Member States Article 8 of the Habitats Directive explicitly recognises the need for EU support for management of the sites, through co-financing by Community financial instruments. Article 8 does not specify the types of EU funding which could be used for co-financing. The current approach, set out in a 2004 Commission Communication on financing Natura 2000 for the 2007-2013 financing period¹, is to integrate the financing of Natura 2000 into the funding streams of different EU policy sectors. The opportunity to finance Natura 2000 has been specified in the financial regulations of the main policy sectors. The Commission has provided guidance, an IT-tool, and training for each Member State to support the use of this integration approach². Despite important progress it appears that the EU co-financing opportunities for Natura 2000 are not been fully utilised³.

The Commission's Communication on 'A budget for Europe 2020'⁴ has set out the framework for future EU financing under the new financial multiannual financial framework, firmly focusing on the delivery of the EU 2020 strategy. In the environment policy fiche attached to the budget communication⁵ it is recognised that the effective management and restoration of Natura 2000 sites is central to attainment of the EU 2020 biodiversity target and that a strengthened integrated approach using the various EU sectoral funds, ensuring their consistency with the priorities of Natura 2000 action frameworks, together with an enhanced LIFE Biodiversity strand, will provide a strong basis for the new Natura 2000 financing strategy.

The Commission staff working paper of 12 December 2012 provides an overview of relevant provisions for EU co-financing of Natura 2000 in the Commission proposals for the next multi-annual financial framework, underlines the benefits to be gained from effective management of these areas and explains how prioritised action frameworks (PAFs) can serve as strategic planning tools to strengthen the integration of Natura 2000 financing into the use of relevant EU financial instruments for the next programming period⁶.

Article 8 of the Habitats Directive already foresees the need to develop "a prioritized action framework", to be taken when sites are designated as SACs. This would only be possible on the basis of Member States establishing National and/or regional Natura 2000 prioritised action frameworks (PAFs) for the next financing period. Such an approach will provide a

¹ COM(2004) 431 final.

² http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/financing/index_en.htm

³ A summary of the current integration approach is given in the Commission brochure on 'Investing in Natura 2000 for nature and people'
<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/info/pubs/docs/brochures/investing%20in%20N2000%20brochure.pdf>

⁴ COM (2011) 867 final

⁵ COM(2011) 500 final, page 40

⁶ SEC(2011) 1573 final

clearer framework to set out objectives and priorities, describe the Natura 2000 measures to be financed, identify the potential contribution of each EU fund to the national/regional Natura 2000 network for the next Financial Perspective and set out the prioritised actions to be taken, as well as monitoring and evaluation of the measures supported.

PAFs are intended as planning tools aimed at identifying key priorities and providing an integrated overview of how to achieve them having regard to different financing instruments. Member States will still need to specify their financing needs for Natura 2000 under the relevant plans or programmes. To maximise their influence and the prospect of the uptake under the integration approach such action frameworks will need to be established in advance of the finalisation of the agreement of key programmes for agriculture, fisheries and regional development for the next funding period. The objective is to ensure strategic focus on the most important priorities, as well as complementarity and consistency between the information contained in the prioritised action frameworks and the relevant programmes?

Article 8 of the Directive indicates that PAFs should be prepared at national level. However, Member State may decide to provide a more refined framework at regional level⁷. As regards the marine environment the PAFs also relate to the offshore marine environment where Member States are exercising sovereign rights.

A. INTRODUCTORY OVERVIEW OF NATURA 2000 NETWORK FOR THE TERRITORY

The aim is to set the context in relation to the species and habitats that are the focus of action, the number and area of Natura 2000 sites for the territory and details of main ecosystem types involved.

A.1 Short introduction to the habitat types of Annex I and species of Annex II of the Habitats Directive and Annex I and migratory bird species for which Natura 2000 sites are designated

The aim is to provide a summary overview of the species and habitat types, indicating in particular the situation regarding priority habitat types and species, and if possible providing an assessment of the importance of the territory for particular species and habitat types.

Potential Sources of information: Article 17 HD summary reports; 2010 BAP national summary reports; National web sites; Important Bird Areas 2000 publication or national IBAs

A.2 Number and area of Natura 2000 sites

The aim is to provide summary statistics for the Natura 2000 network for both the terrestrial and marine environments⁸. This should be complemented in an Annex to the document (or a

⁷ In deciding on an appropriate territorial level Member States should have regard to available biological and financial data that is necessary for the evaluation.

⁸ In accordance with the guidelines for reporting under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive marine sites are defined as any of those which include an area of sea. The Marine area of sites is the area being below the coastline. The definition of the coastline used to define the marine boundary should follow international or national legislation. This approach is the same as adopted for the revised Standard Data Forms (SDFs) for

link to a web site) with the most up to date list of SCIs (indicating sites hosting priority habitat types/species), those SCIs already designated SACs, as well as an up to date list of SPAs.

One or more overview maps should also be provided. These can be extracted from the Natura 2000 map viewer (<http://natura2000.eea.europa.eu/#>), which also provides a link to the standard data form for each Natura 2000 site. Other national GIS data systems may be used as well. Other relevant information, such as the range in the surface areas of the sites, may be provided where this is considered relevant.

Potential Sources of information: Statistics on the number and area of SCIs and SPAs are available from the Natura barometer. Member States will need to indicate to what extent the SCIs have formally been designated as SACs. The overall area for Natura 2000 terrestrial and marine sites can be derived from spatial data in the Natura 2000 database.

A.3 Main land use cover and ecosystem categories for Natura 2000 sites

The aim is to provide an overview for the territory concerned of the main CORINE land cover categories for the Natura 2000 sites (based on spatial boundaries of the sites). This will give an indication of the relative importance of major ecosystem types (e.g. forests, grasslands, marine, wetlands etc) within the Natura 2000 network.

Potential Sources of information: Biodiversity Data Centre of the EEA

B STATUS OF THE HABITATS AND SPECIES

The aim is to summarise the most up to date information on the conservation status of species and habitat types covered by Natura 2000 under both the Habitats and Birds Directive and to present summary information on the main pressures and threats they are facing

B.1 Latest assessment of conservation status of species and habitat types for territory

B.1.a Habitat types and species of Habitats Directive

The objective is to provide the most up to date knowledge on the conservation status of the Annex I habitats and Annex II species. This should be presented for each biogeographical region covered by the Region concerned. This should also be complemented by the summary assessment of the parameters for favourable conservation status

Sources of information: This will largely be based on data extracted from the Habitats Directive Article 17 assessment⁹.

individual Natura 2000 sites. Thus, a site located at the coastline and stretching out into the sea should be counted as a 'marine site', although it might include a terrestrial component.

⁹ The Article 17 Habitats Directive conservation status assessment has been carried out for EU 25 and does not cover Bulgaria and Romania, for which other relevant sources of information will need to be used. The summary data is also provided at national level and for regional PAFs there will be a need for further analysis

B.1.b Annex I and migratory Bird Species

For bird species there is as yet no published EU assessment on the status and trends of Annex I and migratory bird species (for which SPAs are classified)¹⁰. Notwithstanding, it is necessary to have data for birds as a basis for priority setting in relation to management and restoration of Natura 2000 sites.

Potential sources of information: the summary of the 2004 Birds in Europe assessment for the country; national red lists results or other national assessments; the 2010 BAP country profile

B.2 Overall assessment of conservation status by Habitat category / species group

The situation in relation to ecosystem types (eg forests, peatlands, grasslands etc.) should be presented and interpreted.

Potential sources of information: The main source of information will be the summary results of the Article 17 assessment. This is also summarised in the 2010 BAP country profile (sections A1.1 & A1.3). More detailed summaries are available for agriculture and forest related habitats (2010 BAP profiles Objective 2) and for marine related habitats (2010 BAP profiles Section 3.1). Any relevant information and studies by Member States for habitats of birds should also be summarised

B.3 Overview of pressures and threats to species and habitats

Available information on key pressures and threats to be addressed should be presented, especially relevant to the management and restoration of the Natura 2000 sites.

Potential source of information: Article 17 summary reports for species and habitats of Habitats Directive. Information on bird habitats should also be presented where relevant

C. Legal and administrative provisions for the protection and management of the Natura 2000 sites

C.1 Relevant legal provisions

Present a short summary of the regulatory, administrative and contractual approach for the management of the Natura 2000 sites. Indicate the competent authorities for the management of the sites and indicate any procedural provisions and co-operation between the public authorities as well as between them and private bodies, technical and scientific institutions, and if applicable with other regions and trans-border co-operation for implementation of management measures (max. 1-2 page).

Potential source of information: National/regional web sites and relevant policy documents

C.2 Progress and perspectives for management planning for the sites

The aim is to provide an update on progress and perspectives in relation to the establishment of conservation objectives and measures for species and habitats and especially in putting in

¹⁰ An assessment on population status and trends for bird species covered by the Birds Directive is under preparation in the context of reporting under Article 12 of this Directive.

place management plans and/or equivalent instruments for Natura 2000¹¹. Where information is available on the management systems applying to different categories of sites, this should be given.

While it is acknowledged that management plans are not a requirement under the Directive, this information is of special interest in order to understand the instruments the Member States use to manage their network and also to find more specific information if required.

In the context of Article 17 reporting under the Habitats Directive information is requested on the overall number of comprehensive management plans and the percentage of the network area covered by the comprehensive management plans plus the number of comprehensive management plans in preparation. Although the SDF will include information on management plans (with “yes/no/in preparation” information), it is important to inform the general public on the overall number of comprehensive management plans. In order to put this number into context, a new field “% of the network area covered by plans” is included.

In this context management plans are considered as operational instruments that set practical measures to achieve the conservation objectives for the sites in the network. For reporting purposes under Article 17, only comprehensive management plans covering an entire Natura 2000 site (or sites) and fulfilling the following minimum requirements should be reported:

A comprehensive management plan should:

- indicate the habitat types and/or species and their localities for which conservation measures are planned;
- identify the actual status of the habitat types and species and the desired status which should be reached through the conservation measures;
- define clear and achievable conservation objectives and
- identify the necessary measures together with the means and a time schedule which can contribute to meeting those objectives.

Potential sources of information: National/regional web sites; 2010 BAP country profiles (see section A.1.1.1); "Fact Sheet on Member State Natura 2000 Management Plans" in framework of Management Group on Natura 2000; Information being compiled on management plans in context of reporting under Article 17 Habitats Directive.

C.3 Relevant government and non-governmental plans

Any particular initiatives for the conservation and recovery of individual habitat types or species or groups of them or for strengthening the coherence of the Natura 2000 network should be noted (e.g. a national plan for recovery of peatlands or forests). This may also relate to relevant measures under other plans in fulfilment of other EU legislation (e.g. Nitrates Directive, Water Framework Directive, Marine Strategy Directive etc.)

Potential sources of information: National/regional web sites of competent authorities

¹¹ Whereas management plans are not a legal obligation under the Habitats Directive they are widely recognised to be a valuable tool in helping define and achieve the necessary conservation measures

D CURRENT EXPERIENCE WITH USE OF EU FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The aim is to get an overview of the significance / relative importance of different EU financial instruments for investments in Natura 2000 over the current EU financing period (2007-2013), the kind of uses being made of them as well as any problems encountered in using these funds. Background information on each of the relevant sectoral funds and the opportunities they provide for EU co-financing of Natura 2000 is available in the 'Financing Natura 2000 guidance handbook'.¹² Presentations on the relevance of each of the key sectoral funds were also made at the conference on financing Natura 2000, held in Brussels in July 2010¹³.

D1 European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)

Provide a summary of allocations under Axis 2 of Rural Development Programmes, as well as other national/regional financing. The aim is to provide an indication of the current approach to use of the funds for the territory, including the main categories being applied (e.g. whether category 213 Natura 2000 type payments or category 214 agri-environment payments etc apply). There is an opportunity to indicate other relevant categories. Where estimates are available they should be provided. Otherwise, indicate as VS (Very significant); MU (Moderate Use); MI (Minor use); NU (No use).

Please also provide an additional narrative summary of relevant details, including an indication of the key Natura 2000 conservation measures being pursued. Also indicate important lessons learnt in relation to the use of these funds, obstacles encountered that may need to be overcome to improve uptake of funding of future.

Potential source of information: Section A.2.1 of 2010 BAP country profile provides details on the allocation of funds to main categories of RDP. Information has also been compiled as part of the Commission study on Financing of Natura 2000. Member States may also have access to national/regional databases. In relation to the conservation measures being used the key source should be the rural development plans for the territory concerned.

D.2 European Fisheries Fund (EFF)

Provide a summary of allocations under Axis 1-4 of EFF used for Natura 2000 management. Due to fact that coding system for EFF funds does not provide breakdown for Natura 2000 the information is likely to be limited. In this context please indicate in narrative text any projects where EFF funds have been allocated/used please. If EFF funds are available and not utilised, where possible, please indicated an obstacles encountered.

Potential source of information: Section 3.2.1 of 2010 BAP country profile. Information compiled as part of the Commission study on Financing of Natura 2000.

¹² Available in 22 languages at http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/financing/index_en.htm

¹³ <http://www.ecologic-events.de/natura2000/downloads.htm>

D.3 Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund

Provide a summary of allocations under the relevant categories of structural funding (51, 55 and 56) as well as the use of INTERREG for Natura 2000 management. Also indicate to what extent the European Social Fund may have been applied.

Potential source of information: Section B.1.1.4 of 2010 BAP country profile. *Information has also been compiled as part of the Commission study on Financing of Natura 2000. Member States may also have access to national/regional databases. In relation to the conservation measures being used the key source should be the regional development plans for the territory concerned.*

D.4 LIFE+

Provide a summary of allocations under LIFE+ for Natura 2000 management and indicate the main type of conservation measures being undertaken by the fund as well as key lessons learnt

Potential source of information: Section B.1.1 of 2010 BAP country profile. LIFE+ database.¹⁴ *Information has also been compiled as part of the Commission study on Financing of Natura 2000*

D.5 Other funding sources

Indicate any other important sources of funding relevant to the management of Natura 2000, particularly EU related funding, such as the 7th Framework Programme for Research. Also indicate any significant public/private partnership financing schemes or innovative financing initiatives. Summarise the key conservation measures being undertaken and lessons learnt.

Also indicate in this section whether there has been any 'programmatic' approach towards the national/regional funding of Natura 2000.

Potential source of information: National reports and web sites. Examples of innovative financing relevant to Natura 2000 are available in the Commission contracts¹⁵.

¹⁴ The Life project database summarises all relevant projects <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/index.cfm> Reviews of LIFE funded projects for several key ecosystems are available at <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/themes/nature.htm>

¹⁵ For examples see study on "Innovative use of EU funds to finance management measures and activities in Natura 2000 sites" at http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/financing/docs/innovative_use_eu_funds.pdf

E CURRENT ESTIMATE OF FINANCIAL NEEDS FOR MANAGEMENT OF NATURA 2000 FOR THE TERRITORY

The aim is to summarise the results of the 2008 questionnaire, which was designed to obtain an estimate of the financial resources required to complete and effectively manage Natura 2000 at land and sea. The aim was to have estimates consistent with managing all sites so as to ensure they make their contribution to the overall favourable conservation status of the network as defined in Articles 1e and 1i of the Habitats Directive¹⁶. This related to the implementation of the management measures foreseen in the Directives, in particular in relation to Article 6 of the Habitats and Article 4 of the Birds Directive.

Individual Member States' cost estimates should relate to all sites¹⁷ for which they have responsibility. Estimates should relate to what is still required and not to what is currently spent, or what has already been spent. The aim was to present an estimate of future costs. However, the Commission did also encourage those countries who have annual estimates of actual expenditure to provide them as additional information.

Financing needs are based on activities relating to the management requirements at Natura 2000 sites or to network costs. To establish consistency and compatibility across Natura 2000 sites, some form of uniform system of reporting on costs was clearly required. The key reference used in this questionnaire was Annex III of the Commission Communication on Financing Natura 2000 (2004), which established a preliminary list of necessary measures and activities for the establishment and management of the Natura 2000 network. The Communication classification has subsequently been articulated in the Financing Natura 2000 Guidance Handbook¹⁸. As noted, this is generally consistent with the earlier classifications. It was not based on the nature of the costs incurred, like labour, fuel or utility charges but on the type of the activities to be financed. The main categories of costs for the 2008 questionnaire were

EC 2008	Type of cost
Finalisation of sites	One-off
Investment costs	One-off
Management planning	One-off
Management planning	Recurrent
Habitat management and monitoring	Recurrent

Where Member States have more updated and reliable estimates of costs these can be provided for the territory.

Potential sources of information: National responses to 2008 questionnaire or more updated estimates of costs that have been prepared for the territory

¹⁶ Favourable conservation status does not appear in the Birds Directive but it can be seen as a tool for determining the ecological requirements of the various bird species under Article 2 and the EC has argued that the obligation extends to the Birds Directive in its own guidance on hunting under the Birds Directive.

¹⁷ Note that site specific cost estimates are not needed; only the national aggregates across sites should be reported – see further below and the questionnaire.

¹⁸ http://circa.europa.eu/Public/irc/env/financing_natura/library?!=contract_management/handbook_update&vm=detailed&sb=Title (table 3 page 10).

F STRATEGIC CONSERVATION PRIORITIES FOR NATURA 2000 FOR THE TERRITORY FOR PERIOD 2014-2020

Outline the strategic priorities for the next period and how this is expected to improve conservation status of Natura 2000 habitat types and species over the next financing period (2014 to 2020). Particular attention needs to be paid to strategy for improving the conservation status for priority habitat types and species. However, the strategy should not be limited to this and should also consider more widely how to secure improvements in conservation of other Natura 2000 habitats and species under both Birds and Habitats Directive (linked to nature sub-target). It can also take an ecosystem perspective (e.g. agricultural, forest, wetland, marine, etc). Whereas the primary focus should be on the sites there may also be justification for measures aimed at the overall coherence of the network, including those directly linked to implementation of Article 10 of the Directive.

There will be a need to incorporate into strategy and priorities a clear link to benefits from financial investments in Natura 2000 and ecosystem services, especially in relation to climate change and mitigation, and also to socio-economic benefits. The information may be organised under three main headings, the first two focusing in particular on the conservation priorities to be achieved for priority habitat types and species as well as other habitat types and species, the third on links to wider policy objectives and the benefits of investments in Natura 2000. It is for the Member States indicate their priorities in light of the above considerations, and having full regard to their state of development in establishing and implementing Natura 2000.

F.1 Summary of priorities for period (and expected outcomes) for priority habitat types and species having regard to need for measurable progress on nature sub-target under EU 2020 biodiversity strategy (Habitats and Birds Directives) and for ensuring good functioning of Natura 2000 network (SACs + SPAs)

F.2 Summary of priorities for period (and expected outcomes) for other habitat types and species having regard to need for measurable progress on nature sub-target under EU 2020 biodiversity strategy (Habitats and Birds Directives) and for ensuring good functioning of the Natura 2000 network (SACs + SPAs)

In line with Article 8 of the Habitats Directive the PAF should recognise the particular importance of priority habitats and species' listed under this Directive. However, full consideration needs to be given to other species and habitats, especially those for which the Member States/Regions has a particular responsibility for their conservation within the EU. It is for the Member State to identify the habitat types and species most in need and for which Natura 2000 investments are required.

In establishing priorities the results of the Article 17 assessments under the Habitats Directive need to be fully considered. Together with information on the status of birds this forms the baseline for assessing progress towards attainment of the nature target of the EU 2020 biodiversity strategy. The priorities should reflect the objective of achieving a significant and measurable improvement in the status of species and habitats by 2020

Target 1 of EU Biodiversity Strategy¹⁹

To halt the deterioration in the status of all species and habitats covered by EU nature legislation and achieve a significant and measurable improvement in their status so that, by 2020, compared to current assessments: (i) 100% more habitat assessments and 50% more species assessments under the Habitats Directive show an improved conservation status; and (ii) 50% more species assessments under the Birds Directive show a secure or improved status.

Priority setting should also have regard to the functioning and coherence of the network, including ecological connectivity of Natura 2000 or wider measures supporting the sites as part of green infrastructure.

F.3 Strategic priorities in relation to investments in Natura 2000 linked to green tourism and jobs, to support climate change mitigation and adaptation or other ecosystem benefits, for research, education, training, awareness and promotion of co-operation (including cross-border) linked to Natura 2000 management

In order to secure adequate financing for Natura 2000 there needs to be increased focus on its contribution to the attainment of Europe 2020 objectives²⁰. Optimising the benefits provided by investing in Natura 2000 needs to be more clearly reflected in the priority setting.

In addition to protecting nature's intrinsic value investing in Natura 2000 provides multiple benefits to society and the economy, at the local, regional, national and EU level. The most relevant socio-economic benefits include the role of Natura 2000 in regulating climate²¹ (e.g. mitigating climate change - including services directly relevant to climate change mitigation and adaptation such as flood conveyance of wetlands, natural coastal protection of dune systems, carbon sequestration of peatlands and the ability of forested mountain areas to prevent erosion and landslides), maintaining water flow and quality, safeguarding natural pollinators, preserving landscape and amenity values, and supporting tourism and recreation.

Several studies have already been undertaken for the Commission to evaluate the benefits of Natura 2000²². Three further studies evaluating overall benefits of Natura 2000, the benefits linked directly to delivery of conservation measures at the sites and the tourism, recreational and employment benefits of investing in Natura 2000, will be finalised before the end of 2011.

¹⁹ COM (2011) 540 final

²⁰ Europe 2020 is the EU's growth strategy for the coming decade aimed at a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy. These three mutually reinforcing priorities should help the EU and the Member States deliver high levels of employment, productivity and social cohesion. The EU has set five ambitious objectives - on employment, innovation, education, social inclusion and climate/energy - to be reached by 2020. Each Member State has adopted its own national targets in each of these areas. Concrete actions at EU and national levels underpin the strategy (see http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm)

²¹ The Commission has developed guidelines on Climate change and Natura 2000 which are available at http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/guidance_en.htm

²² The results of Commission funded studies on the benefits of Natura 2000 are available on the web site of DG ENV at http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/financing/index_en.htm.

Therefore in establishing priorities for financial investments in Natura 2000 full consideration needs to be given to

- Multiple ecosystem benefits that can be derived from such investments
- the potential link between financial investments in Natura 2000 and climate change²³ It is for Member States to identify particular Natura 2000 habitat types (e.g. peatlands, river floodplains, forests, coastal habitats) for which investments can also provide climate change benefits.
- the link between Natura 2000 investments, tourism and jobs and opportunities for research, education, training, awareness and promotion of co-operation (including cross-border) linked to Natura 2000 management

²³ Commission guidelines on Natura 2000 and climate change are in preparation

G DESCRIPTION OF KEY MEASURES TO ACHIEVE PRIORITIES

The essential measures to give effect to priorities need to be identified by the Member State. A typology of 25 Natura 2000 management activities that may be eligible for EU co-financing has been developed (see Annex). This may be broadly defined as one-off investment costs and recurring management costs. Eligibility of different activities will vary under different EU funds.

It is proposed that this is best approached on an ecosystem perspective. Where possible, measures should be linked to each habitat type and species prioritised in the strategy. This can be further strengthened if linked to different Natura 2000 sites. The measures should also have full regard to ongoing work on setting conservation objectives and on the development of management plans or equivalent instruments for the sites (section C.2). They should also have full regard to the obstacles and lessons learnt from use of EU funds under the current financing period (section D).

The Natura 2000 Financing Natura 2000 guidance handbook and IT-tool already provide an indication of the type of conservation measures that may be applicable under current different sectoral funds, including potential examples and it is recommended that these are availed of, while noting that the future regulations may not contain each of the same provisions.

For each major heading and using the attached Annex provide for each major category the following breakdown

- An outline of the type of activity
- Description of the measures to be undertaken
- An indication of the target species/habitats/sites
- An indication of potential financing sources

Where estimated costs exist for different priority measures (in accordance with information provided under section E) they can be indicated, although this may not be possible in relation to certain measures.

The following sections are indicative and can be adapted in relation to the priorities identified and indicated in Section F for the territory concerned. There may also be an overlap between measures indicated for one section and another (e.g. measures for restoration of peatlands can be indicated under wetlands and climate change mitigation/adaptation).

In relation to level of detail to be provided the aim should be to provide a level of specification in relation to conservation measures that can be readily translated into national and/or regional programmes.

G.1 General Priority Measures for Natura 2000

Indicate the general priority measures that are not linked to particular ecosystem or land category types. This can also include measures linked to good functioning of the network. This should relate to one off investments as well as recurring costs.

G.1.a Priority Measures for Natura 2000 agricultural and forest habitats and species

Indicate the main agriculture and forestry related measures to give effect to priorities. This should relate to one off investments as well as recurring costs. Of particular interest here are measures linked to Rural Development Policy under the CAP. However, other financial instruments may also be relevant.

G.1.b Priority Measures for Natura 2000 marine and coastal habitats and species

This should include consideration of marine management measures that are linked to fisheries. This should relate to one off investments as well as recurring costs. If possible also have regard to the potential for complementarity with measures taken under the Marine Strategy Directive

G.1.c Priority Measures for Natura 2000 wetlands habitats and species, including peatlands.

This may include measures linked to aquaculture in freshwaters. This should relate to one off investments as well as recurring costs. Also have regard to actions being taken under EU water legislation, especially the Water Framework Directive

G.2 Other priority measures

As some EU co-financing opportunities for Natura 2000 may be linked to the attainment of other EU objectives (e.g. in relation to socio-economic development, climate change adaptation and mitigation, employment) it will be necessary to identify measures that provide such multiple benefits. The following sections are indicative and can be adapted in relation to the situation pertaining to the territory concerned.

G.2.a Priority Measures for securing ecosystem benefits of Natura 2000, especially in relation to climate change mitigation and adaptation

G.2.b Priority Measures for promoting sustainable tourism and employment in relation to Natura 2000

G.2.c Priority Measures to promote innovative approaches in relation to Natura 2000

Indicate priority measures that provide multiple ecosystem benefits²⁴ and that contribute to 'Green Infrastructure'. These may be one off investments or recurring management.

They may be climate change mitigation and adaptation measures, including in relation to carbon sequestration and water quality and quantity management measures.

Measures that contribute to the sustainable development of the territory and for which Natura 2000 sites provide benefits to the local population should be considered. This includes measures for tourism and promotion of local businesses. Measures may include investments

²⁴ information from the 3 Commission studies on benefits of Natura 2000 will be made available in 2011.

in visitor infrastructure and nature interpretation, measures that promote Natura 2000 related entrepreneurial opportunities.²⁵

There will also be a need to consider and trial innovative financing measures for Natura 2000, especially in relation to private financing. This may include tourism and entrepreneurial activities directly linked to and benefitting from the Natura 2000 areas but also in relation to the multiple benefits provided by investments in management and restoration of Natura 2000 sites (e.g. in relation to water quality management objectives).

Section G.3. Summary Table for of measures per species and habitat type

This summary table allows crosschecking from the point of view of species and habitats, to see how pressures and threats to each species/habitat are addressed in the given region/Member State. This summary table should list for each feature (species or habitat) the planned priority measures to be financed from EU funding (e.g. agri-environmental payment for late mowing, forest-environmental payment for retaining dead wood in the forest). This could serve for crosschecking which features are planned to be covered with one or more planned measures from EU financing/co-financing. This will allow for an overview of the priority measures planned for each feature having regard to the conservation status of the given feature and whether they represent a proper response to the main pressures and threats. Also, this allows a comparison between different regions/Member States to see, feature by feature, how pressures and threats are addressed within the range of the feature.

Section H: Monitoring, evaluation and updating of PAFs

Different elements for evaluation of the priorities and measures to be undertaken in accordance with the prioritised action framework already exist.

As regards the main expected outcome of improved conservation status of species and habitats the Article 17 evaluation and reporting system of the Habitats Directive is the key mechanism, and reporting will be foreseen for 2013/2014 and 2020/2021. A system for reporting on the population status and trends of birds under the Birds Directive is under development with the aim of being in place by 2014. These reporting systems will also provide the principal basis for evaluating progress in meeting the 2020 nature target of the EU biodiversity strategy.

Member States should also be in a position to evaluate progress through review of the implementation of management plans and equivalent instruments. Progress in the establishment of these management tools will also be an important indicator.

Each of the EU sectoral funds (EARDF, ERDF etc) has their own monitoring and evaluation systems and it is not proposed to duplicate these. However, in designing projects under these funds and under any future LIFE instrument the indicators of success should be defined in

²⁵ An example of the types of investment considered for the Slovenian Natura 2000 programme for the period 2007-2013 is given in Annex 4.6 to the 'Natura 2000 site management programme: 2007-2013 operational programme'

relation to the objectives of these projects. There should also be full regard to determining the allocation and uptake of funds for Natura 2000 under the different sectoral funds.

There should be a provision for updating of the PAFs in light of improved knowledge on the measures to be taken (e.g. as result of LIFE projects including work on the development of 'integrated projects', or the outcome of biogeographical seminars on management of Natura 2000) and also having regard to developments in programming under key EU policy sectors (e.g. CAP, CFP). Progress in implementation of the PAFs shall also be considered in the context of future reviews of implementation of the EU Biodiversity strategy.

ANNEX

Natura 2000 management Activities which may be eligible for EU co-financing²⁶

Categorisation	No.	Types of Activities	Further description
Establishment of Natura 2000 sites	1	Administration of the site selection process	Funding for authorities carrying out the selection process.
	2	Scientific studies/inventories for the identification of sites – surveys, inventories, mapping, condition assessment	Scientific studies, research personnel, workshops and meetings, creation of databases etc.
	3	Preparation of initial information and publicity material	Including handbooks, seminars, workshops, communication materials for training and capacity building.
	4	Pilot projects	Initial 'trial' projects at sites.
Management planning	5	Preparation of management plans, strategies and schemes (including scientific studies and investigations needed for planning and implementation based on solid knowledge)	Elaboration and/or update of management and action plans, land use plans etc.
	6	Establishment of management bodies	Start-up funding, feasibility studies, management plans etc.
	7	Consultation – public meetings, liaison with landowners	Including costs incurred for the organization of meetings and workshops, publication of consultation outcomes, financial support of stakeholders, etc. Can include networking activities (travel, meetings and workshops).
	8	Review of management plans, strategies and schemes	Review and updating of management plans and strategies.
	9	Running costs of management bodies (maintenance of buildings and equipment)	Including: running costs incurred to meet depreciation of infrastructure, consumables, travel expenses, rents and leases etc.
	10	Maintenance of facilities for public access and use of the sites, interpretation, observatories and kiosks etc.	Including costs related to guides, maps, related personnel.
	11	Staff (conservation/project officers, wardens/rangers, workers)	Ongoing staff costs.
Ongoing habitat management and monitoring	12	Conservation management measures – maintenance and improvement of habitats' favourable conservation status	Including restoration work, provision of wildlife passages, management of specific habitats, and preparation of management plans.
	13	Conservation management measures – maintenance and improvement of species' favourable conservation status	Including restoration work, provision of wildlife passages, management of specific species (flora and fauna) and plans.
	14	Conservation management measures in relation to invasive alien species (IAS)	Including restoration work, infrastructure, management of specific species, and preparation of management plans.

²⁶ P 33, Financing Natura 2000, Guidance Handbook, revised version May 2007, http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/financing/index_en.htm

Categorisation	No.	Types of Activities	Further description
Ongoing habitat management and monitoring	15	Implementation of management schemes and agreements with owners and managers of land or water to follow particular prescriptions.	Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Agri-environmental measures</i>, e.g. wildlife-friendly production methods, habitat restoration on agricultural land, extensive livestock breeding, conservation of meadows, etc • <i>Forest-environmental measures</i>, e.g. creation of exploitation-free zones, retention of dead wood, control or eradication of invasive alien species, afforestation or reforestation activities, management of specific vegetation, etc. • <i>Aqua-environmental measures</i>, e.g. habitat maintenance in aquaculture zones etc. (relates to aquaculture rather than fishing).
	16	Provision of services: compensation for rights foregone and loss of income and developing acceptability 'liaison' with neighbors	Costs of compensation, e.g. to farmers, foresters or other land owners or users for income forgone as a result of management prescriptions needed for Natura 2000.
	17	Monitoring and surveying	Refers mainly to one-off costs related to monitoring and surveying activities, e.g. development of monitoring plans, methods and equipment and training of personnel.
	18	Risk management (fire prevention and control, flooding etc)	Includes the preparation of wardening and fire-control plans, development of relevant infrastructure, and equipment purchase.
	19	Site surveillance	Includes on-going surveillance, wardening and patrolling activities. Can include personnel costs, consumables, travel, etc in order to implement surveillance and guarding activities, including surveillance to control harmful recreational or economic activities and protect against wildfires.
	20	Provision of information and publicity material	Includes establishing communication networks, producing newsletters and awareness-raising and information materials, setting-up and maintaining internet pages, etc.
	21	Training and education	Including production of handbooks, seminars, workshops and communication materials.
	22	Facilities to encourage visitor use and appreciation of Natura 2000 sites	
Investment costs	23	Land purchase, including compensation for development rights	Land purchase to achieve environmental protection and management schemes.

Categorisation	No.	Types of Activities	Further description
Investment costs	24	Infrastructure needed for habitat or species restoration	Includes an array of measures for the creation of specific infrastructure for the management of the environment, e.g. for water management in peat bogs and mines. Can include equipment acquisition (for equipment relevant to the running of protection and management institutions such as office and IT equipment, monitoring materials, boats, diving equipment, cameras, etc.)
	25	Infrastructure for public access, interpretation, observatories and kiosks, etc	Infrastructure for public use that is conducive to environmental protection and management (e.g. infrastructure to increase the amenity value of sites such as signage, trails, observation platforms and visitor centres). Can include equipment acquisition (for equipment relevant to the running of protection and management institutions such as office and IT equipment, monitoring materials, boats, diving equipment, cameras, etc.)