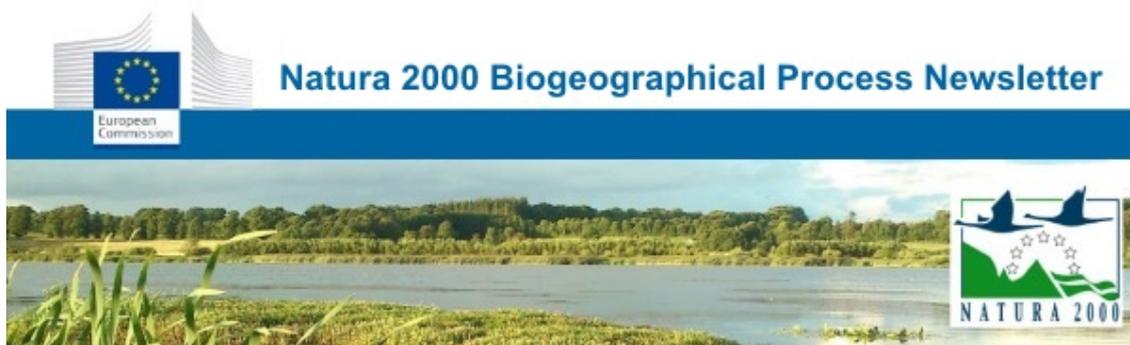


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August 2017

WORKING TOGETHER IN NATURA 2000

This newsletter provides an overview of progress in the Natura 2000 Biogeographical Process. It contains relevant Natura 2000 developments within each of the biogeographical regions, funding information, the latest news, forthcoming networking events and links to other useful resources.

On behalf of the EC, ECNC leads the consortium of partners appointed to support the development and implementation of the Natura 2000 Biogeographical Process. (See last page for contact details.)

ABOUT THE NATURA 2000 BIOGEOGRAPHICAL PROCESS

The Natura 2000 Biogeographical Process assists Member States and key stakeholders to manage Natura 2000 as a [coherent ecological network](#).

[Read more about it »](#)

BIOGEOGRAPHICAL REGION UPDATES

Items marked with an asterisk (*) are part of the Natura 2000 Biogeographical Process. All other items are included for information, but they are coordinated by external parties.

ALPINE

***Second Alpine Natura 2000 Seminar**

21-23 June 2017, Padova, Italy

[The Seminar](#) provided an opportunity for Natura 2000 experts across the Alpine region to discuss the forms of joint actions and concrete areas of cooperation which can be developed to optimise the contribution of Natura 2000 to achieving the favourable conservation status of Alpine habitats and species of Community importance.

This seminar was organised around four large thematic clusters. The four 'Habitat Working Groups' of the previous Alpine Seminar were replaced by four 'Thematic Working Groups' corresponding to the following thematic clusters:

- Setting conservation status, objectives and priorities (setting restoration priorities,

reference values, etc.)

- Conservation measures and their effectiveness (approaches to integrated planning, effective Natura 2000 governance structures, participatory approaches, etc.)
- Monitoring and evaluation (ways to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of conservation measures, etc.)
- Addressing pressures & threats to Alpine habitats and species (ways to assess and mitigate negative impacts, dealing with ecological connectivity, etc.).

The background documents and presentations can be found on the [event web page](#).

***Living together**

12-14 October 2017, Municipality of Venzone (UD) - Giulian Alps, Italy

The European Union is home to five species of large carnivores. These include the brown bear, the wolf, the wolverine and two species of lynx, the Eurasian lynx and the Iberian lynx. Historically these species have all suffered dramatic declines in numbers and distribution as a consequence of human activity.

This [Networking Event](#) will provide a good opportunity to further discuss the relation between human and large carnivores and to share good practices for a better management of species and for the prevention and resolution of conflicts across the EU. The event will facilitate the sharing of expertise across multiple regions, providing a platform to follow up on large carnivores discussions that started in the course of the recent Boreal review Seminar in Lithuania. The focus of the event will mainly be on the Alpine Region, but, as a cross-cutting topic, open to other regions.

ATLANTIC

***Second Atlantic Natura 2000 Seminar**

The second Atlantic Biogeographic Seminar was held in Ireland from 25 to 27 October 2016. The seminar report can now be downloaded [here](#).

Presentations from the seminar can be found on the [event web page](#).

BOREAL

***9th Meeting of the Boreal Steering Committee**

4 May 2017, Brussels, Belgium

The [Boreal Steering Committee](#) met to discuss planned activities for the Boreal road map following the [Second Boreal Seminar](#) in 2016, as well as a planned workshop on restoration priorities and the 'low-hanging fruit' approach. The Boreal has a well-coordinated approach of national experts that is potentially an interesting model and effective way of working useful for other regions.

This Steering Committee meeting followed the 6th meeting of the Expert Group on the Birds and Habitats Directives (NADEG) on 3 & 4 May 2017. This was the first NADEG meeting open to stakeholder participation. In a busy agenda, several items were discussed and specific attention given to the EC's [Nature Action Plan](#) developed to support stronger implementation of the Nature Directives.

International and interregional connectivity of protected areas in the European North

13–17 November 2017, Petrozavodsk, Russian Federation

For many years work to establish the system of protected areas (PA) in the European North has been carried out in a systematic manner relying on existing interregional and

intergovernmental agreements and arrangements. The backbone of this system is green belts (meridians) linking countries and regions of the European North.

A [conference](#) will be organised within the framework of the National Year of Protected Areas at the Karelian Research Centre RAS (Petrozavodsk) in November 2017. For more information visit the [conference website](#).

[CONTINENTAL, PANNONIAN, BLACK SEA & STEPPIC](#)

***Impact of the CAP on grassland habitats in Continental, Pannonian and Steppic regions**

3-4 October 2017, Eger, Hungary

[CEEweb for Biodiversity](#) and [Bükk National Park Directorate](#) are organizing a thematic networking event of the Natura 2000 Biogeographical Process taking place on October 3-4 2017 in Eger, Hungary.

The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) affects Natura 2000 habitats and species, including those related to grasslands. In many countries in continental, pannonian and steppic biogeographical regions, the lack of good agriculture practices resulting in undergrazing and overgrazing has significant effects for the local biodiversity. The event brings together experts working on habitats impacted by agriculture, providing a platform for a discussion about the impact of the current CAP on Natura 2000 habitats. Participants will also be provided with possibilities to discuss national Rule Development Programmes and their relevant measures for Natura 2000; they will be able to exchange experiences on relevant habitats management and get the opportunity to visit the local best practice sites. This seminar will advocate for a better management of agriculture related habitats and for creating a more sustainable agriculture policy.

More information and the draft agenda can be found [here](#).

Natura 2000 Forest habitat types on secondary sites – conservation and management strategies

19-21 September 2017, Bad Bergzabern, situated in Rhineland-Palatinate near to the large forest area of the Bienwald in south-western Germany, close to the French border

Many Member states are facing the challenge of conserving Annex I forest habitat types promoted by (former) human management activities, growing on sites with differing potential natural vegetation. The [workshop](#) will address forest management issues on secondary sites in Natura 2000 areas based on input and experience of experts from various countries and disciplines. As underlined through the Natura 2000 Biogeographical Process of the European Commission, knowledge exchange among European experts of the forestry and nature conservation sectors is essential to find adequate solutions for the problems across different member states. One focus will be on the management of oak- and oak-hornbeam forest habitat types in Germany and France with excursions to respective stands in the Bienwald (Germany) and the Forêt de Haguenau (France).

More details and information on registration [here](#).

***Mountain Forest management in Natura 2000 sites**

7-9 November 2017, Horska Kvilda, Czech Republic

EUROPARC, in cooperation with the Sumava National Park (CZ), and with the support of the EUROPARC Central Eastern Europe Section, will organise a [Networking Seminar](#) to address issues related with the management of Mountain Forest Habitats in the Continental Region. The two-day seminar, addressed to managers, experts and authorities

with responsibilities for site management, will give the opportunity to exchange practical experience in management of mountain forests as part of Natura 2000 sites. New scientific findings will be presented, contributing to improve the understanding of natural processes in mountain forests in the Continental region.

Please note: Due to logistical restrictions the Seminar will be open for a maximum of 40 participants.

MEDITERRANEAN

***Second Mediterranean Natura 2000 Seminar**

14-16 November 2017, Cyprus

More information will follow [here](#), but save the date!

MARINE

Our Ocean, An Ocean for Life

5-6 October 2017, Malta

Over 3 billion people depend directly on our seas for their livelihoods. But in reality, all of us depend on the ocean: for our water, our food, our climate, and our air. Seas and oceans enrich our identity, ensure our wellbeing and sustain a large part of the economy.

Human action has left our oceans heavily affected by pollution, overexploitation, coastal degradation, and global warming. This has severe consequences for all. A new vision is needed, along with strong and action-oriented commitments.

Since 2014, 'Our ocean' conferences invite world leaders to look forward and respond, delivering high-level commitments and transforming the challenges ahead into an opportunity for cooperation, innovation and entrepreneurship. The [2017 edition, 'An ocean for life'](#), will be hosted by the European Union in Malta, at the heart of the Mediterranean.

CROSS-CUTTING

***Eurosite Annual Meeting: Improving natural sites – join forces and prioritise your conservation actions**

25-27 September 2017, Finland

Metsähallitus Parks & Wildlife Finland is hosting a combined event consisting of the [Eurosite Annual Meeting and a Natura 2000 Biogeographical Process \(Boreal region\) Thematic Networking Event](#) to enhance the ecological effectiveness of collaboration approaches and to investigate alternative funding mechanisms to support these approaches.

The meeting is structured around three main themes:

- Funding and possibilities: Voluntary work, private sector, compensations and habitat banking, etc. as mechanisms for conservation and management of biodiversity
- Collaboration: Twinning and systematic biogeographic planning in the management of N2000 areas
- Cost-effectiveness: Restoration prioritisation, Ecologically justifiable Low Hanging Fruits (LHF).

More information, including the draft programme and practical information, can be found on the [Eurosite Annual Meeting 2017 web page](#). The deadline for registration is 10 September

* **Monitoring in Natura 2000 sites**

4–6 April 2017, Litoměřice, Czech Republic

This Eurosite [workshop on monitoring](#) was about deciding what we want to achieve and how to recognise when we have achieved it. It was focused on how to translate conservation management objectives into performance indicators in order to measure progress towards reaching these objectives.

A key purpose of the workshop was to exchange experiences of objective setting for habitats and species on Natura 2000 sites. This enabled a profitable transfer of knowledge, hopefully leading to further networking of the subject between member states of the European Union. The workshop aimed to contribute to an increase in the production of clear, concise and measurable objectives for conservation management. These management objectives will contribute to the development of efficient and reliable monitoring projects.

For more information and to download the presentations visit the workshop page on the [Eurosite website](#).

NETWORKING EVENTS

News of all networking events can be found on the Natura 2000 Platform's [Events Calendar](#) - check regularly for details.

NATURA 2000 FUNDING NEWS

A page on [funding opportunities for the Natura 2000 Biogeographical Process](#) has been included on the Natura 2000 Platform.

INTERREG

The Platform provides a [gateway](#) to all the following INTERREG funding websites.

- Baltic Sea Region
- North Sea Region
- North West Europe
- Central Europe
- South West Europe
- Mediterranean
- Balkan-Mediterranean

LIFE

The LIFE programme has launched its 2017 call for proposals, underlining its commitment to supporting projects that protect the environment and tackle the impact of climate change.

The total budget for project action grants in this year's call is over €373 million. Of this, over €290 million is foreseen for the sub-programme for Environment and over €82 million for the sub-programme for Climate Action. At least 55% of the budgetary resources allocated to projects under the sub-programme for Environment shall be dedicated to

projects supporting the conservation of nature and biodiversity.

For further information about all the features of the 2017 call for action grants, including guidance, links to application packages and links to National Contacts Points, go to the [2017 call page on the LIFE website](#).

OTHER NATURA 2000 NEWS

Natura 2000 branding campaign website launched

Natura 2000 not only protects nature but also offers socio-economic opportunities to its local communities. The [Natura 2000 branding campaign](#) stresses the benefits this network can provide. It promotes nature-friendly products and services from Natura 2000 areas and showcases inspiring stories about their benefits for nature as well as the local community.

By sharing these successful and positive stories this campaign aims to trigger new partnerships between site managers, farmers and local businesses to develop more Natura 2000 products. In time, this will hopefully lead to an improved perception of the Natura 2000 network and increased support for the further implementation of the Nature Directives.

Do you know about a Natura 2000 product or a story worth telling? Share it through the campaign. The campaign has been developed by [Eurositer](#), with funding from the EU.

Ecosystem services seminar presentations available online

For many managers of nature sites around Europe, the concept of ecosystem services is relatively new and barely put into practice, or at least not consciously. During a full day [seminar on 'ecosystems at your service'](#) as part of Eurositer's annual members' meeting in November 2016, the participants learned about ecosystem services and how this can help in increasing support for their management and protection activities. For many it was an eye-opener, making them realise that their sites and well-managed ecosystems have more to offer to society than they think. The PowerPoint presentations and brief summaries of the keynotes during the seminar at day 1 of the Annual Meeting are now available.

Conference on the EU Action Plan for Nature

On 6 June 2017 the European Commission, in cooperation with the Committee of the Regions, held a [conference](#) to officially present the Action Plan for nature, people and economy to relevant authorities and stakeholders.

In April this year the European Commission published its [Communication on the Action Plan for nature, people and economy](#), which comes as a follow-up to the comprehensive evaluation of the Nature Directives launched by the Commission in the form of a 'Fitness Check' in 2014. The Fitness Check found that, as part of broader EU biodiversity policy, the Nature Directives are fit for purpose, but that achieving their objectives and realising their full potential will depend upon substantially improving their implementation. The Action Plan should improve the practical implementation of the Nature Directives and help us move closer to stopping the loss of biodiversity and achieving the targets of the [EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020](#).

The conference followed up on one of the actions (13) from the Action Plan. It was well attended by representatives of all sectors identified as important partners in implementing the different actions, and the Action Plan was positively received by everyone.

The Natura 2000 Biogeographical Process is integral to the Action Plan. In particular, Action 6 of the Action Plan reflects this with the explicit aim being to bring together public authorities and stakeholders from different Member States at the biogeographical region level to address common challenges, including on cross-border issues.

More information about the conference, including a video recording, can be found [here](#).

New French Agency for Biodiversity

The [French Agency for Biodiversity](#) (AFB) became operational on 1 January 2017. The Agency was created under France's new law on biodiversity, nature and landscapes, and comes under the Ministry of the Environment. It brings together four existing organizations.

EU guide to the environmental directives

The EU has produced a [starter's guide to the main provisions of the five EU environmental directives](#) that target the protection and management of Europe's freshwater and marine environments. These concern the Habitats Directive, the Birds Directive, the Water Framework Directive, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, and the Floods Directive.

PISCO/UNS publication on the science of marine protected areas

The oceans and seas are of great value. They provide important benefits to people, including food, oxygen, economic opportunities, recreation, and cultural value. However, heavy uses of the ocean are eroding these benefits, sometimes at alarming rates. Marine protected areas (MPAs) can be a powerful tool to protect, and possibly restore, the ability of ecosystems to provide these benefits. Globally, there are thousands of MPAs, though their collective area is small. What have we learned from these protected places?

The Partnership for Interdisciplinary Studies of Coastal Oceans (PISCO, USA) and the University of Nice Sophia Antipolis (UNS, France) have produced [a booklet](#) summarizing the latest science about MPAs, with an emphasis on the Mediterranean Sea.

RESOURCES

Relevant publications and links to tools in support of habitat management continue to be added to the [Natura 2000 Platform](#), including:

Management concepts for selected species and habitats of the Habitats Directive / Maßnahmenkonzepte zur Verbesserung des Erhaltungszustands von Natura 2000-Schutzgütern

This publication and poster are available from the [Knowledge Library](#).

The Integrated Approach to Nitrogen in the Netherlands: A preliminary review from a societal, scientific, juridical and practical perspective

This article was published in the *Journal for Nature Conservation*, and is available from the [Knowledge Library](#).

Restoration priorities and strategies: Restoration to protect biodiversity and enhance green infrastructure: Nordic examples of priorities and needs for strategic solutions

This publication is available from the [Knowledge Library](#).

Fact sheet: socio-economic benefits of Natura 2000 in central and eastern Europe
CEEweb (2016)

This publication is available from the [Knowledge Library](#).



Get involved!

We really value your news, feedback and inputs! Please share news with us about your Natura 2000 activities, past, present and future. For example, you can tell us about your LIFE, INTERREG or other funded projects, recent Natura 2000 publications and other news by emailing natura2000platform@ecnc.org. Do not hesitate to distribute this newsletter among your colleagues and networks.

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ECNC leads the consortium of partners that support the EC in the development and implementation of the Natura 2000 Biogeographical Process. We work together with CEEweb for Biodiversity, Eurosite, the EUROPARC Federation, the European Landowners' Organization, ILE-SAS, and Arcadis.



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