

UNDERSTANDING THE FITNESS CHECK NATURE LEGISLATION IN THE EU

WHAT IS A FITNESS CHECK?

A **Fitness Check** is part of the regular EU policy cycle. It is a comprehensive, evidence-based policy evaluation **assessing** whether EU legislation is **“fit for purpose”**. It provides a basis for **future policy considerations**.

A common EU legislative framework that sets the standards for **nature protection** across European Member States is provided by two main pieces of legislation, which are currently undergoing a Fitness Check.

Birds Directive



1979

Directive on the conservation of wild birds

Habitats Directive



1992

Directive on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora

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

Effectiveness



Have the objectives of the legislation been met?

Efficiency



Were the costs involved reasonable?

Coherence



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

Relevance



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

EU added value



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

The Fitness Check is an evidence-based approach covering **environmental**, **economic** and **social** aspects in relation to the two nature Directives.

MAIN INPUTS INTO THE PROCESS:

- Stakeholder consultation
- Public consultation
- A review of scientific literature and published reports, including:
 - The State of Nature in the EU
 - The mid-term review of EU biodiversity strategy to 2020

KEY ASPECTS OF EUROPE'S NATURE LEGISLATION THAT WILL BE EVALUATED:

- Successes and challenges
- Costs and benefits
- Opportunities for improving implementation and reducing administrative burden without compromising the integrity of the purpose of the Directives
- Experience of implementation in EU Member States
- Views of key stakeholder groups

The **report from the European Commission** (Staff Working Document) on the results of the Fitness Check analysing all information gathered during the process will provide the basis for any future policy considerations in relation to EU nature legislation and policy.

[#NatureFit4All](#)

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE FITNESS CHECK