



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL ENVIRONMENT
Directorate B - Natural Capital
ENV.B.2 - Biodiversity
ENV.B.3 - Nature

<p>CGBN</p> <p>Co-ordination Group for Biodiversity and Nature</p> <p>17th meeting – 25/09/14 (all day) & 26/09/14 (morning)</p>		
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**OPERATIONAL SUMMARY RECORD
OF THE 17TH MEETING OF THE CO-ORDINATION GROUP FOR BIODIVERSITY AND NATURE (CGBN)
HELD ON THURSDAY 25TH SEPTEMBER 2014 (ALL DAY) AND FRIDAY 26TH SEPTEMBER 2014
(MORNING)**

Place: European Commission's Conference Centre "Albert Borschette" - 36, rue Froissart - B-1040 Brussels (Schuman metro station)

This is an operational summary record of the discussions that took place. It is to be seen in parallel with the supporting documents prepared by the Commission and posted on the CGBN CIRCABC site prior to the meeting (<https://circabc.europa.eu/w/browse/6f30d1d2-d6f2-4c6e-a4dc-1feb66201929> - site requesting an ECAS authentication). All presentations made during the meeting can also be found on the CIRCABC site.

Chairs: François Wakenhut, Head of Unit ENV.B.2 Biodiversity and Stefan Leiner, Head of Unit ENV.B.3 Nature

1) Record of Previous Meetings

1.1 Approval of the summary record of the previous CGBN meeting (27-28/03/2014)

Doc.1.1

The summary record of the previous meeting was approved without any change.

1.2 Nature Directors meetings – Outcome of the last meeting under the Greek Presidency and information on the next meeting under the Italian Presidency (Rome, 25-26/11/14) -

Doc.1.2

GR reported from the meeting in Athens, where ND had worked effectively with conclusions on topics such as fisheries in Natura 2000 areas and the financing of biodiversity. The chair and the delegates thanked and congratulated GR for a very successful meeting.

The next NDM will take place in Rome on 25-26/11/2014. IT gave a short overview of the main agenda items which will focus on the Charter of Rome, restoration, Fitness Check as well as

financing. IT informed about the planned conference on The Natural and Cultural Capital: the future of Europe, which is to take place the day before the NDM, on the 24 November.

2) Implementation of target 1 of the EU Biodiversity Strategy

[Doc 2, 2.1.1, 2.2, 2.1.3 – POWERPOINT PRESENTATION](#)

SL presented the recent developments of Target 1. On site designation, he said that there will be an update of Sites of Community Importance (SCI) lists by the end of 2014. The biogeographical process is progressing well with a kick-off seminar for the Mediterranean region in Greece last May and a number of meetings planned, e.g. Continental/Pannonian/Blacksea/Steppic regions kick-off Seminar on 29/6-1/7 2015 in Luxembourg and a Marine Seminar planned on 5-7 May 2015 in Saint-Malo, France. ES and PT will organise a joint meeting for the Macaronesian region in Madeira.

On financing SL mentioned the recently published Guidance Handbook that can be downloaded from the website: <http://www.financing-natura2000.eu/the-guidance-handbook-for-financing-natura-2000-in-2014-2020/>. The aim is for the Guidance to be translated, but it may take some time.

On state aid, SL informed of the new General and Agricultural Block Exemptions Regulations (GBER and ABER).

Fotios Papoulias gave an update of the recent developments on marine areas and Natura 2000. On the issue of fisheries management in marine Natura 2000 sites, DE and EHF raised concerns that little had happened after the Nature Director conclusions in Athens and DE asked to have the topic discussed at the NDM in Rome on 25-26 November.

On recent ECJ court rulings, the case Cascina Tre Pini on declassification of a SCI was explained, since it seems to have been misrepresented in the media. The case Briels on distinguishing between mitigation and compensation measures was also discussed. CGBN members welcomed the note by the Commission clarifying these matters.

The analysis of the Article 12 and 17 Reports are almost ready. It shows a continuous decline in biodiversity, but a slight slowing down. In some cases there are also improvements taking place. Some changes measured are not real genuine changes, but are a result of improved methodologies or sources of information. There will be less percentage "unknown" from these reports.

Micheal O'Briain gave a brief overview of the Fitness Check, explaining the mandate and setting out the timetable.

Issues raised in the debate were: the updating of the PAFs and the feasibility of doing this; the change in the comitology regulation and how this affects the Ornithology Committee; Fisheries and Natura 2000 and how to better integrate environment ministries in decisions; the new Commission and how the mission letter should not be seen as pre-empting the Fitness Check, and the importance of looking at how MS measure and report to the Art 12 and 17 Reports (will be looked at by the Reporting Group).

François Kremer informed about the Guidance Document on Natura 2000 and Forests, which is being developed. [POWERPOINT PRESENTATION](#)

3. Raising the policy profile of nature and biodiversity issues in the context of the new Commission mandate and EP legislature

3.1 Discussion point with draft ND conclusions: (Doc 3.1) POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

- A future-oriented discussion on how to improve the uptake of biodiversity and natural capital in the new Commission's work programme and priorities.

Laure Ledoux presented how biodiversity and natural capital have been promoted in for example the 7th EAP, Roadmap for Resource Efficiency and the EU Biodiversity Strategy. However, the concept of natural capital and ecosystem services needs to be further mainstreamed in key EU policies such as agriculture, maritime and fisheries, cohesion, and climate policy, and should be prominent in the forthcoming mid-term review of EU sectoral policies, as well as in the preparations for the 2021-2027 EU budget and sectoral reforms.

In the ensuing debate, the terminology "natural capital" was questioned. It was also strongly urged to integrate nature and biodiversity into the European Semester process; to put more emphasis on Natura 2000 as the core business of natural capital; engage in discussions with finance ministries to integrate natural capital into economic decisions and the "Scottish Natural Capital Forum" was mentioned as a positive example.

François Wakenhut (FW) concluded that this topic was not yet mature for ND conclusions, but a revised version without conclusions would be prepared for the NDM. Written comments were welcomed.

4. Implementation of Target 2 of the EU Biodiversity Strategy (Doc 4)

Presentation by the Commission on recent developments in the field of MAES, Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity proofing and No Net Loss.

FW referred to the background document (Doc 4) for an up-date on MAES, Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity proofing and No Net Loss, and moved directly to the discussion point on restoration.

4.1 Discussion points with draft ND conclusions:

- Restoration Prioritisation Framework (Doc 4.1) POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

Pat Murphy presented the developments on the Restoration Prioritisation Frameworks (RPFs) related to Target 2 of the Biodiversity Strategy. The presentation was based on the letter sent by Director Pia Bucella to Nature Directors in May 2014. The restoration target (15% of degraded ecosystems to be restored by 2020) and the development of national and sub-national RPFs was part of the biodiversity strategy and had been broadly endorsed by Council and Parliament. The recommendations and guidelines provided by the Commission were to assist the Member States in carrying out the work foreseen under the strategy. The approach being suggested was pragmatic and gave maximum flexibility to the Member States.

The majority of Member States that contributed to the discussion indicated that they had not developed Restoration Prioritization Frameworks (RPFs) as foreseen under Action 6a of the Biodiversity Strategy; restoration work was being carried out at individual sites including Natura 2000 sites but in general there was no national strategy. FIN, UK and Austria did have national restoration strategies linked to the Aichi targets and the EU biodiversity strategy. France was

protecting and enhancing “les trames verts et bleus” which provided a framework for restoration efforts. Several Member States indicated that in this period of financial constraints it was extremely difficult to secure financing for restoration activities. The NL representative asked to what extent ongoing national restoration actions could be considered as Restoration Prioritization Frameworks within the context of the LIFE+ integrated programmes.

The FOE representative indicated that there were issues related to the possible contribution of restoration to offsetting and the suggestion that reducing atmospheric deposition could be seen as a contribution to restoration.

The Commission indicated that it would reflect on the positions expressed in the meeting and take this into account in the development of the future work programme. With regard to the way that national restoration actions were considered in the context of the LIFE+ integrated programmes, this issue would be discussed with the colleagues responsible for LIFE+ in DG ENV.

FW drew the attention to the low attendance by MS in the Green Infrastructure and Restoration Working Group. It was suggested that the group might be closed down if no additional expression of interest was made. Some MS intervened to indicate that the WG GIIR is of interest and has a high stakeholder attendance, though lack of resources is preventing further involvement by MS.

4.2 Preparation for Scientific Conference in Rome, back to back with Nature Directors Meeting, and Italian Presidency draft "Carta di Roma" (Doc 4.2) [POWERPOINT PRESENTATION](#)

IT presented its proposal for a "Charter of Rome", to lift and promote natural and cultural capital in the political process. The Charter will address the following points:

- Improving the scientific knowledge of Natural Capital as the primary asset providing vital resources and benefits, that are essential for human survival and economic activities;
- Investing in Natural Capital to support a smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in Europe;
- Securing the functionality of natural and healthy ecosystems as components of the Natural Capital, providing society with a full range of key valuable economic goods and services;
- Linking Natural and Cultural Capitals, considering that human influence on European ecosystems has been constant and widespread throughout History and these two capitals are in dynamic and often positive synergies;
- Creating synergies among green infrastructure, urban and rural areas

GR announced that a high-level event in Greece on 10-11 October would also look at the important connection between cultural and natural resources.

In the debate, it was highlighted that the Charter of Rome and the previous discussion on how to promote natural capital in EU policy making could have great synergies. There should be a focus on lifting the positive contributions natural and cultural capital could have for resilience and sustainable development. Green infrastructure, cultural heritage and knowledge could form interesting clusters and potential for green growth. It was suggested to include a reference to the strengthened implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives and Natura 2000 into the Charter.

5. Implementation of Target 3 and 4 of the EU Biodiversity Strategy (Doc 5)

Vujadin Kovacevic updated the group on the recent developments in regards to Target 3. The mandate of Agriculture & Biodiversity Group is finishing and the group's deliverables are being finalized.

The assessment of the rural development programs is ongoing with majority of them already processed by DG ENV through the first consultation (107/118). This topic was covered in more depth under point 9.1 of the agenda.

The group was also informed about the Pilot Project on "Result-based agri-environment payment schemes". The study that examines and inventorizes existing schemes will be finalized by the end of the year while the call for proposals for pilot on-farm projects has just been closed – the evaluation of received proposals will start shortly.

Preparations for a workshop on nature, biodiversity, marine and water policy (Brussels, 2-3 December 2014): At the joint Nature, Marine and Water Directors meeting in Vilnius in December 2013, it was proposed to organise a dedicated workshop on issues of common interest. The workshop is scheduled to be held in Brussels on 2-3 December 2014. At a first preparatory meeting hosted by DG ENV on 21 May, it was agreed that the workshop would focus on the following issues: (a) objectives and assessments, (b) monitoring and reporting, and (c) programmes of measures, under the Water Framework Directive (WFD), the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), nature legislation and the Biodiversity Strategy. France asked for a follow up of this workshop by each coordination group (CGBN, SCG and MSCG) and for this item to figure on the next CGBN agenda.

Presentation by the Natura 2000 Users' Forum- "*Ensuring a good uptake of biodiversity measures on the ground*" POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

Tania Runge, Copa-Cogeca and Clemens von Doderer, CEPPF, gave the presentation on behalf of the Natura 2000 Users' Forum. The main messages delivered were:

- Importance of cooperating with Europe's land owners, managers and users
- The users need long term commitments with sufficient flexibility
- Need for specific environment schemes for targeted permanent landscape elements and management actions
- Stronger focus on collaboration and cooperation
- Coordination of land use related authorities
 - Horizontally – territorial approach
 - Vertically – integration of local authorities and stakeholders and resource holders
 - Cross-sectorial engagement
- Innovative approaches – EIP operational groups

In the discussion the importance of having these kind of cross-sectoral exchanges to better understand each other was highlighted; a request to not only focus on provisioning ecosystem services was raised; -projects vs. grants funding and the need for long-term security for users were discussed.

6. Targets 5 of the EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 (Doc 6.1)

Presentation by the Commission on recent developments.

6.1. Information point without draft ND conclusions:

- Adoption of the IAS Regulation and the next steps forward

FW presented the latest developments on the IAS Regulation. The Council will adopt the Regulation text the first week of October. The EP has already adopted it. The final signing of the regulation will take place in Strasbourg in the second half of October. The entry into force is foreseen for 1 January 2015. The implementation phase is now being prepared, with the setting up of the comitology process and the work on the list of banned species to be presented 1 year after the entry into force.

It was discussed how stakeholders best would be involved; how LIFE could be used for eradication and how to ensure that economic interest would not prevail over environmental concern.

09.30 until 13.00

7. Targets 6 of the EU biodiversity strategy to 2020

Presentation by the Commission on recent developments.

- Presentation of the B4Life Programme, DG DEVCO [POWERPOINT PRESENTATION](#)

Arnold Jacques de Dixmude (AJD) from DG DEVCO presented the flagship initiative B4Life. This development programme will promote an ecosystem-based approach for economic growth, climate change mitigation and adaptation, food security and good governance. There are new strong pressures on biodiversity: poaching, land-use change, demographic growth, globalisation etc. that will need a more consolidated approach. The main budget comes from the Global Public Goods and Challenges, for which 5 priority areas have been set: environment and climate change, sustainable energy, food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture, human development, migration and asylum. B4Life will focus on three priority areas, in line with the Agenda for Change:

Good governance - support sustainable management of natural capital by strengthening of institutions, empowerment of environmental civil society, law enforcement etc.

Food security - Promotion of high biodiversity value agro-products, protection of a genetically diverse pool of seeds, promote ecosystem restoration of degraded areas and integrated coastal management.

Green economy - Develop nature-based market models involving local communities and private sector, develop public-private partnership for long-term investments in natural capital and develop Payment-for-Ecosystem-Services schemes

In addition a special Wildlife Crisis Window (WCW) in response to the current crisis of wildlife, particularly in Africa (poaching, climate change etc).

The programming period is 2014-2020 and the focus is on least developed countries and countries with biodiversity hotspots.

In the discussion, CGBN members raised issues such as trade and biodiversity; CBD financial commitment and the links between B4Life and multilateral environmental agreements.

8. Preparation for EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy mid-term review ([Doc 8.1](#))

Presentation by the Commission concerning the preparation of the mid-term review.

8.1 Discussion point with draft ND conclusions:

- Data available and data needed from the Member States, the sequence of proposals in 2015 and the next steps forward. [POWERPOINT PRESENTATION](#)

The Commission presented the main outcomes so far of the mid-term review process with special emphasis on the contributions from Member States. The current exercise based on 5NR has shown its limits, as was highlighted in an early draft report (Doc 8.1 annex 2). The report has its flaws that need to be corrected, but it still clearly demonstrates the lack of existing quantitative data. An important input would be the mapping of national targets to EU ones so that information on progress could be properly attributed to targets. Also, more quantified (indicators) information would allow for tracking progress effectively.

There was an interesting exchange with MS on how to find the right balance between limiting reporting burden MS and compile useful information from Member States for the Mid-Term Review. The Commission proposed to send the country contributions extracted from their 5NR to CGBN members for amendment and validation.

The Commission will also further explore with EEA and some volunteered MS how MS input to MTR could be improved with regard to the political importance of the mid-term review and its associated activities for the new Commission and in relation to the ongoing fitness check of nature legislation.

9. Financing the delivery of the EU Biodiversity Strategy

Presentation by the Commission concerning the recent developments in relation to biodiversity funding.

9.1 Information point without ND conclusions:

- Taking stock of the integration progress in the financial instruments (including OPs, RDPs) ([Doc 9.1](#))

Vujadin Kovacevic presented the overview of the biodiversity integration into current ESIF programming process. The majority of the programs (around 500 in total) have been received by DG ENV for consultation. The major problems from the nature and biodiversity perspective are:

- Nature and biodiversity not prioritized sufficiently (or at all) – particularly in more developed regions
- Lack of sound intervention logic – at the level of SWOT, strategy or measures
- Lack of completeness – in terms of programs and supporting documentation (e.g. SEA)
- Low level of ambition – in terms of the scope and type of actions or funding
- Lack of biodiversity proofing – planning investments in actions which can negatively affect nature and biodiversity without providing safeguard mechanisms

In the exchange with MS it has emerged that after the adoption of the operational programmes it will be important to follow up on their implementation, to the extent feasible, through the monitoring committees in order to ensure good uptake of opportunities for biodiversity. Concerns were raised on the methodology and the high figures published for biodiversity tracking (8 % of whole EU budget 2015); with regards to the 'integrated approach' such figures should be measured and communicated/interpreted carefully.

9.2 Discussion point without draft ND conclusions:

- Natural Capital Funding Facility (NCF), latest developments ([Doc 9.2](#)) [POWERPOINT PRESENTATION](#)

Laure Ledoux and Eva Mayerhofer, EIB, presented the latest developments in setting up the NCF. The objectives of the NCF are: To encourage investments in revenue-generating or cost saving projects promoting the conservation of natural capital to meet biodiversity/adaptation objectives and support green growth; and to demonstrate to private investors the attractiveness of natural capital projects and build a project pipeline. The funding consists of M€ 30 from LIFE Environment plus M€ 30 from LIFE Climate Action; plus matching funds from EIB of € 50M (up to € 75M).

There are still ongoing negotiations between the EIB and COM on delegation agreement. The aim is to already start some projects in 2014. Eligible projects must fall into one of the following project categories:

- Projects using Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES)
- Green Infrastructure (GI) projects

- Biodiversity offsets - No support for compensation to comply with article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive
- Innovative pro-biodiversity and adaptation businesses

A few examples of eligible projects were shown (see PowerPoint presentation).

In the discussion criticism was voiced to include any offsetting projects; calls for more promotional activities for the NCFE was made and there were questions on the role of the national focal points.

10. Recent and Upcoming Meetings

The planning document is kept regularly up to date on circabc. Participants will be invited to take note of future events and to suggest amendments (preferably in writing before the meeting)

FR and ENV gave a brief update on the International Conference on Biodiversity and Climate Change in Guadeloupe 21-24 October. The event is co-organised by the Region of Guadeloupe, French Ministry of Environment, French Overseas Ministry, BVI, OCTA, CBD, IUCN and the European Commission. The European Commission makes a significant financial contribution through INTERREG, EDF and a BEST project. The objective of the Conference is to develop a concise 'Roadmap from Guadeloupe' following up on the Message from Reunion. The event constitutes of 2 technical days (22-23 October), running 5 parallel workshops (the topics of the parallel workshops are the following: Increasing resilience, tackling biodiversity loss, developing the blue and green economy, advancing research capitalising on innovative natural solutions and mobilising and easing access to resources) and featuring a number of side events and a 1 day high-level segment (24 October). Confirmed high-level participants as of 29/10 include French ENV minister, FR overseas minister, CBD Executive Secretary, IUCN Director General, President of the Region of Guadeloupe (current OR President); Prime Minister of BVI (current chair of the OCT-EU Forum) and several high level participants of OR and OCTs. The mobilisation is on-going. The involvement of Member States would be welcome. For more info see <http://guadeloupe2014.com>

11. Any Other Business

Tentatively planned dates for the next CGBN meeting: 12/13 March 2015

17TH MEETING OF THE CO-ORDINATION GROUP FOR BIODIVERSITY AND NATURE

HELD ON 25TH AND 26TH SEPTEMBER 2014 IN BRUSSELS

List of attendees

Member States:

- Austria: Edda-Maria BERTEL, Arno ASCHAUER
- Belgium: Els MARTENS, Catherine DEBRUYNE
- Croatia: Ana KOBASLIC
- Cyprus: Eleni STYLIANOPOULOU
- Czech Republic: Helena KOSTOHRYZOVÁ, Dagmar ZÍKOVÁ
- Denmark: Lars RUDFELD, Annette SAMUELSEN
- Estonia: Kadri MÖLLER, Hanno ZINGEL
- Finland: Kristiina NIIKKONEN
- France: Fanny LENDI-RAMIREZ, Nicolas ROUYER
- Germany: Christa RATTE, Detlef SZYMANSKI
- Greece: Eleni TRYFON
- Hungary: Rozalia ERDINE SZEKERES
- Ireland: Ciaran O'KEEFFE
- Italy: Eugenio DUPRÉ, Pier Carlo ZINGARI
- Latvia: Ilona MENDZINA
- Luxembourg: Claude ORIGER
- Malta: Marie-Thérèse GAMBIN
- The Netherlands: Hans VAN DEN HEUVEL
- Poland: Piotr OTAWSKI, Anna KLISOWSKA, Jan REKLEWSKI
- Portugal: Mario SILVA
- Slovak Republic: Jana DURKOSOVA
- Slovenia: Branka TAVZES
- Spain: Miguel AYMERICH
- Sweden: Anna LINDHAGEN
- United Kingdom: Chris DE GROUCHY, Dai HARRIS

Not represented: Bulgaria, Lithuania, Romania

European Environment Agency / European Topic Centre: Ivone PEREIRA MARTINS (EEA), Ronan UHEL (EEA), Dominique RICHARD (ETC), Sophie CONDÉ (ETC)

NGOs and other stakeholders:

- BirdLife: Wouter LANGHOUT
- BUSINESS EUROPE: Catrin SCHIFFER
- CEPF (Confédération européenne des propriétaires forestiers): Clemens von DODERER
- CLIENT EARTH: Flamina TACCONI
- COE (Council of Europe): Ivana D'ALESSANDRO
- COPA-COGECA (Committee of Professional Agriculture Organizations - General Committee for Agricultural Cooperation in the EU): Tania RUNGE
- EAA (European Anglers' Alliance): Jan KAPPEL
- ECNC (European Centre for Nature Conservation): Neil MCINTOSH

- EHF (European Habitats Forum): Alberto ARROYO SCHNELL, Sue COLLINS, Vera COELHO, Kris DECLEER
- EIB (European Investment Bank): Eva MAYERHOFER
- FACE (Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation of the EU): Cy GRIFFIN, Charlotte SIMON
- FOE (Friends of the Earth): Friedrich WULF
- IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature): Ana NIETO
- UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme): Maria MORGADO, Claire BROWN (UNEP-WCMC)
- WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature): Martina MLINARIC

Not represented: BRS (Biodiversity Research Strategy), EBRD (European Bank for Reconstruction and Development), EEB (European Environment Bureau), ELO (European Landowners' Organization), EPBRS (European Platform for Biodiversity Research Strategy)

European Commission (*attended all or part of the meeting*): various colleagues mainly from units ENV.B.2 "Biodiversity" and ENV.B.3 "Nature" but also a few from other DG Environment units and from other Commission Directorates General.