



# **An Action Plan for nature, people and the economy**

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## **Nature Directives' Fitness Check - Diagnosis:** **The directives are fit for purpose, but implementation should be improved**

- *Too many species/habitats still show negative trends*
- *Only 50% of sites properly managed*
- *The marine Natura 2000 network incomplete*
- *Funding shortage*
- *Cases of inflexible application and permitting delays by national & local authorities*
- *Insufficient knowledge, awareness, engagement & cooperation*
- *Need to increase coherence between nature protection and socio-economic activities*

## **An Action Plan for nature, people and the economy**

- The Action Plan was adopted on 27 April 2017
- Measures will be taken at EU level, but Member States and stakeholders concerned will also need to act, with increased support and assistance from the European Commission.
- The Action Plan was presented at a conference on the 6th June 2017 in Brussels.
- See:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/fitness\\_check/action\\_plan/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/fitness_check/action_plan/index_en.htm)

# Objectives of the Nature Action Plan

- to realise the full potential of the **Directives** to achieve **healthy ecosystems**, whose services benefit of **people, nature and the economy**
- to **boost their contribution** towards reaching the **EU's biodiversity targets** for 2020
- to **improve** the Directives' **coherence with** broader **socio-economic objectives**

# Approach of Action Plan

- **4 priority areas of Action**

- Improving guidance and knowledge and ensuring better coherence with broader socio-economic objectives
- Building political ownership and strengthening compliance
- Strengthening investment in Natura 2000 and improving synergies with EU funding instruments
- Better communication and outreach, engaging citizens, stakeholders and communities

- **15 Actions** (detailed factsheets in SWD, see:

- [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/fitness\\_check/action\\_plan/factsheets\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/fitness_check/action_plan/factsheets_en.pdf))

- **Timeframe 2017-2019** (cannot pre-empt next MFF and on-going debate on the future of CAP)

- **Key Actors:** MS, COM, CoR, EIB, EEA, Stakeholders

# Improve guidance & knowledge and ensure better coherence with broader socio-economic objectives

|   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. <b>Update, develop and actively promote</b> , in all EU languages, <b>guidance</b> on<br>(a) <b>site permitting</b> procedures, <b>species protection</b> and management as well as <b>sector-specific guidance</b><br>(b) integrating ecosystem services into decision-making | COM/CoR/MS / stakeholders |
| 2. Establish <b>a support mechanism</b> to help Member State authorities address key challenges in applying the <b>permitting</b> requirements of the Birds and Habitats Directives for Natura 2000 and species protection rules  | COM / MS / stakeholders   |
| 3. <b>Improve knowledge</b> , including through enhanced and more efficient <b>monitoring</b> , and ensure public online <b>access to data</b> necessary for implementing the Directives (e.g. satellite imagery from the Copernicus programme)                                   | COM / EEA / MS            |

# Building political ownership and strengthening compliance

|   |  |
|---|--|
| 4. <b>Complete Natura 2000</b> network, especially <b>gaps for marine</b> & <b>put in place necessary conservation measures</b> for sites   | <b>MS/<br/>stakeholders<br/>/ COM</b>    |
| 5. Use <b>Environmental Implementation Review</b> for dedicated <b>bilaterals</b> with national & regional authorities to develop agreed <b>roadmaps</b> to improve implementation & consult with landowners & other stakeholders on challenges | <b>COM/MS/<br/>stakeholders</b>          |
| 6. Bring together public authorities & stakeholders from different MS at <b>biogeographical region</b> level to address <b>common challenges</b> , including on <b>cross-border issues</b>  | <b>COM/CoR<br/>/MS/<br/>stakeholders</b> |
| 7. Further develop <b>Species &amp; Habitats Action Plans</b> for most threatened species/natural habitats & <b>stakeholder platforms</b> on coexistence with conflict species (e.g. large carnivores)  | <b>COM/MS /<br/>stakeholders</b>         |

# Strengthening investment in Natura 2000 and improving synergies with EU funding instruments

|  |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 8. Strengthen investments in nature<br>(a) <b>Update PAFs</b> - improve Natura 2000 multiannual financial planning<br>(b) <b>Propose 10% nature/biodiversity increase</b> within <b>LIFE</b> budget<br>(c) Stimulate <b>private sector investment</b> in nature projects | <b>COM/EIB/MS /stakeholders</b> |
| 9. <b>Promote synergies with CAP</b> , incl. Natura 2000 payments & agri-environment-climate measures, development of <b>result-based schemes</b> , <b>Farming Advisory Services</b> , innovation and knowledge transfer.  | <b>COM / MS / stakeholders</b>  |
| 10. <b>Increase awareness of cohesion policy funding opportunities</b> and improve synergies   | <b>COM / MS / stakeholders</b>  |
| 11. <b>Improve synergies with the common fisheries policy</b> & integrated maritime policy, including more effective use of financing opportunities  | <b>COM / MS / stakeholders</b>  |
| 12. Provide <b>guidance to support deployment of green infrastructure</b> for better connectivity of Natura 2000 areas; support nature-based solutions projects through EU research and innovation policy and Horizon 2020 funds   | <b>COM / MS / stakeholders</b>  |



# Better communication & outreach, engaging citizens, stakeholders & communities

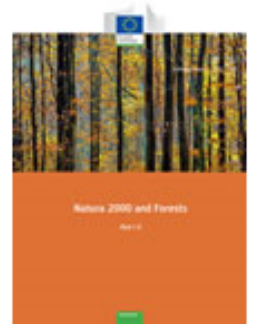
|   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 13. Support <b>knowledge exchange &amp; engagement</b> of <b>local &amp; regional authorities</b> through a joint platform with <b>Committee of the Regions</b>   | <b>CoR / COM</b>                   |
| 14. <b>Support recognition of good management</b> of Natura 2000 & awareness-raising of Nature Directives, <b>availing of new technologies</b> and <b>outreach activities</b> , and strengthen links between <b>natural and cultural heritage</b> (2018 European year of cultural heritage) | <b>COM / CoR / MS stakeholders</b> |
| 15. <b>Involve young people</b> by giving them the opportunity to get involved in nature protection in Natura 2000 sites ( <b>European Solidarity Corps</b> )   | <b>COM / MS / stakeholders</b>     |

**Some examples of (sub-)actions that may more particularly interest the forestry sector**

## **Under Action 1 – guidance and coherence with socio-economic objectives**

Aim = clarifying the flexibility provided by the Nature Directives and applying cost-effective approaches

- Update existing guidance
- New guidance and practical tools on incorporating ecosystem services into planning and decision-making



## **Under Action 2 – addressing permitting requirements**

- support mechanisms for administrations dealing with the permitting requirements
- clarify perceived regulatory obstacles and apply innovative solutions that can support implementation

## **Under Action 3 – improving knowledge**

- further development and use of alternative information sources on conservation status
- further work on defining the concept of Favourable Reference Values
- update and improve the on-line Natura 2000 viewer

## **Under Action 4 - Completing the network and conservation measures**

- Strong stakeholder awareness and cooperation is being recognized as is a major factor for success in establishing conservation measures
- Encouraging Member States to actively involve all relevant stakeholders at an early stage

## Under Action 5 - the bilateral meetings

- focus on governance approaches and effectiveness of cooperation, e.g. between administration(s) and stakeholders, and on
- the need to actively engage landowners and other stakeholders, especially in management planning for the Natura 2000 sites
- There will be back to back meetings with private sector, NGOs and other stakeholders

## **Under Action 6 – cooperation between all actors at the biogeographical level**

- identification and promotion of best practices
- strengthened cooperation and sharing of experience
- thematic events in all biogeographical regions
- Natura 2000 Communication Platform (see: [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/platform/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/platform/index_en.htm))



## **Under Action 7 - Species & Habitats Action Plans and stakeholder platforms**

- Further support stakeholder platforms/fora to promote dialogue, including at biogeographical level, to exchange experience, knowledge and co-operate in addressing conflicts between people and protected species (e.g. large carnivores, Cormorants, geese)

## Under Action 8 - investments in nature

- Propose in 2017 to increase the Nature and Biodiversity envelope under the LIFE Regulation by 10%
- Support additional pilot projects, specifically targeted at landowners' organisations and their constituency, testing tools for private land conservation in Natura 2000 sites under the LIFE programme (2017-2019)

## **Under Action 9 - funding from the common agricultural policy**

- effective use of funds available for Natura 2000 sites under the European Agricultural Rural Development Fund (EARDF)
- Assess the use of financial allocations to compensate for additional costs and income foregone
- Support training & awareness raising for relevant stakeholders, e.g. forest owners, in particular through Farming Advisory Services

## **Under Action 14 - recognition of good management of Natura 2000 and awareness-raising**



- further developing the Natura 2000 Award
- developing and testing systems aimed at recognising positive management of Natura 2000 sites, including recognition of the multiple ecosystem services they provide (e.g. 'name&fame', twinning of sites)
- showcasing benefits and opportunities provided by Natura 2000 for further integration with other EU policies

## **Under Action 15 – involve young people**

- LIFE preparatory actions for young people under the European Solidarity Corps
- offer young Europeans cross-border volunteering opportunities or professional experience in the field of disaster prevention and nature conservation.

- **Ambitious work programme for the next two and a half years**
- **21 May: Natura 2000 Day (proclaimed on 15 May 2017)**
- **World Environment Day 05.06, 'Connecting people with Nature'**
- **Dedicated Conference on 6<sup>th</sup> June, hosted jointly with CoR and Maltese Presidency**
- **Council Conclusions on the Nature Action Plan: 19 June 2017**

**Thank you for your attention**

