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The resumed meeting of theparties to theCOP16 Global Biodiversity Conference ended in Rome on Thursday (Feb 27) following an agreement on outstanding issues. The negotiations demonstrated the global communitys strong support for the swift implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).Speaking on the occasion, Commissioner for the Environment, Water Resilience and a Competitive Circular Economy, Jessika Roswall, said:I welcome the positive outcome of the global biodiversity negotiations in Rome. An agreement has been reached on all outstanding issues. We have secured a global roadmap to support financing for biodiversity beyond 2030. This is proof that multilateralism works, despite a difficult international geopolitical context and multiple global challenges. Working closely together, all Parties agreed on a roadmap for the mobilisation of resources to close the biodiversity financing gap. Agreement was also reached on the monitoring framework and the procedures for the global review of implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework at the next COP17 Global Biodiversity Conference.The newly established Cali Fund was also launched. Now, companies benefiting from digital sequence information on genetic resources can share some of the proceeds with biodiverse countries of origin, with half of the fund allocated to Indigenous Peoples and local communities. These achievements show that despite a fragmented geopolitical landscape, the global community chose to come together to halt and reverse biodiversity loss. And we all did this with a spirit of compromise, openness and flexibility.You can read the Commissioners full statement here.Main decisionsParties adopted a Strategy for Resource Mobilisation that identifies a broad range of instruments, mechanisms and institutions that could be tapped to mobilise the funds needed to implement the GBF.Parties also enhanced the monitoring framework for the GBF, agreed upon at COP15. The monitoring framework is essential for implementing the Framework because it provides the common yardstick that Parties will use to measure progress against the 23 targets and 4 goals.At COP16, Parties agreed on the way that the indicators would be measured and used. This will ensure that all Parties track progress in a way that national policy makers can interpret and it will provide data that can be aggregated up to the global level to provide a worldwide picture of implementation.Parties also took important decisions on how progress in the implementation of the GBF will be reviewed at COP17 as part of the planned global stock take.The EU will continue to work with countries worldwide to find solutions and continue implementing this historic agreement until 2030 and beyond.BackgroundThe Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) agreed in 2022 provides clear goals and targets, and a roadmap to protect and restore biodiversity worldwide.Currently, 46 countries have submitted revised National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), and 124 countries have uploaded their national targets to the online reporting tool.The next Conference of the Parties will take place in 2026 in Yerevan, Armenia.More informationEU and global biodiversity webpageTwo years of landmark Global Biodiversity Framework show results, but work must continueEuronews Road to Green episode 13: Silencing guns, not birds - how the EU and Colombia are making peace with natureCOP16: EU delivers on global financing commitments to protect nature - European CommissionCan you give us a brief introduction to your organization?LIFE B4B is a project funded by the EU, involving 14 Belgian nature partners. We're leading a national awareness campaign for Natura 2000 Day and Biodiversity Week under the guidance of the Agency for Nature and Forests.How long have you been organizing Biodiversity Week?This is our second year. It's a unique cross-regional collaboration that's been really well-received by both organizations and participants.Any details on the turnoutnumber of visitors or observations? Have you noticed any changes over time?Last year, we had over 20,000 participants, which is amazing for a first-time event! In just one week, participants registered nearly 500,000 observations of 6,671 different species.What are some of the most remarkable species observed during Biodiversity Week?We spotted some captivating species:- Butterflies: red-underwing skipper (Spialia sertorius)- Beetles: Weaver beetle(Lamia textor)- Reptiles/Amphibians: common wall lizard (Podarcis muralis)- Birds: scops owl (Otus)- Plants: Germander broomrape (Orobanche teucria)- Mammals: Barbastelle bat (Barbastella barbastellus)Why is biodiversity so important?Put simply, without biodiversity, there's no life. Our campaign aims to raise awareness about this and amaze people with the incredible variety of life, even right in their own backyards.What does citizen science mean to you?Citizen science is incredibly valuable. By involving citizens directly in the campaign, we increase not just knowledge, but also appreciation and understanding for nature and biodiversity.Do you receive support from the European Union?Yes, the LIFE project is co-financed by the European Commission.Besides the bioblitz, what other activities do you organize?With various partners on board, everyone brings something different to the table. Some organize local bioblitzes, while others offer workshops or guided walks. There's even engagement with experience weeks or sports activities, so there's something for everyone. You can find all the details on www.weekvandebiodiversiteit.be. Preserving and restoring biodiversity is one of the EUs top priorities. The Birds and Habitats Directives form the cornerstones of EU biodiversity policy. They provide a strong legislative framework for all EU countries to protect the most valuable and threatened biodiversity. Wild birds form an important part of this rich natural heritage. Around 500 bird species have made Europe their home. However, over a third are threatened or have a poor conservation status. Habitat loss and degradation are the most serious threats to their conservation. Urban sprawl and transport networks have fragmented and reduced the birds habitats. Intensive agriculture, forestry, and the use of pesticides have diminished their food supplies, resting places and nesting habitats. They are also heavily impacted by pollution, unsustainable hunting, inadequate building designs and illegal killing. The Birds Directive aims to protect all naturally occurring wild bird species present in the EU and their most important habitats. In addition to halting the decline or disappearance of bird species, the Directive aims to allow bird species to recover and thrive over the long-term. To achieve these aims, EU countries are required to take any necessary measures to maintain or restore bird populations. The Birds Directive (Directive 79/409/EEC) was adopted in 1979. It is one of the first pieces of environmental legislation to be adopted by the EU. It was amended in 2009 (Directive 2009/147/EC) - changes were made to Annex II part B due to the accession of new Member States. See a summary of the Birds Directive and related acts. The Birds Directive requires all Member States to protect all wild bird species and protect and restore their habitats. The Commission prepared a list of all regularly and naturally occurring wild bird species within the EU. Protecting all wild bird species, including their eggs and nests This is necessary both within and outside protected areas. In particular, Member States must prohibit all forms of deliberate capture or killing in the wild deliberate significant disturbance, particularly during breeding and rearing the destruction of, or damage to, nests or eggs, or removal of nests the use of any method for large-scale and non-selective capture or killing such as with nets, cages and glue the keeping, transport and sale of specimens taken from the wild. Protecting and restoring birds habitats For all wild bird species, Member States must preserve, maintain and re-establish birds habitats to ensure a sufficient diversity and area of habitats. For threatenedbird species, Member States must classify Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for 197 species and sub species listed in Annex I of the Birds Directive, as well as for other migratory birds, paying particular attention to the protection of wetlands of international importance. SPAs are protected areas that form an integral part of the Natura 2000 network which also includes Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive. Collectively these sites are often referred to as Natura 2000 sites and are now the largest coordinated network of protected areas anywhere in the world. Today, thanks to the Birds Directive, Member States have classified over 5400 SPAs across the EU. Combined, this covers more than 832,000 km2 of land and sea an area greater than Germany, Poland and Greece put together. In short, Member States must ensure that in all Natura 2000 sites: damaging activities are avoided that could significantly disturb the species or deteriorate the habitats for which the site is designated; and positive conservation measures are taken, where necessary, to maintain and restore the species present and their habitats, taking account of the economic, social and cultural requirements and regional and local characteristics of the area concerned. There is also an obligatory permitting procedure for any plans or projects that are likely to have a significant effect on one or more Natura 2000 sites, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects. The Birds Directive recognises the legitimacy of hunting wild birds as a form of sustainable use. It therefore allows the hunting of 84 huntable species listed in Annex II provided this is done in a sustainable manner that does not jeopardise their survival.Find out more about sustainable hunting under the Birds Directive.Illegal killing and trade in birdsDespite the prohibitions imposed by the Birds Directive, the illegal capture, killing or trade in wild birds in the EU is still a major problem. An estimated 25 million birds are killed every year around the Mediterranean Basin alone as they migrate between Europe and Africa.See how the Commission addresses illegal killing and trade in birds.Birds@Farmland Initiative: EU initiative to create 22 conservation schemes to save farmland birdsCommon farmland birds are declining far more rapidly than other European bird species. According toFarmland Bird Indexthere has been a 52% decline in farmland birds between 1980 and 2021.The European Commission launched theBirds@Farmlandinitiativein 2020, to develop tools to support farmland bird conservation in the EU. The project focussed on 10 Member States (Austria, Bulgaria, Czechia, Germany, Spain, Finland, France, Hungary, Italy, and Portugal), but its findings are highly relevant for all Member States. The initiative produced several factsheets and reports, in particular:The description of ten major agricultural systems that constitute suitable habitats for unsecure or declining populations of farmland bird species, which are significantly present in several EU Member StatesThe description of fifteen flagship farmland species that represent the threats and pressures on the ten agricultural systems and have an umbrella effect22 conservation schemes in ten Member States with a set of measures to maintain or restore suitable habitats for farmland bird species on one of the ten agricultural systems or for one of the fifteen flagship speciesA final conference on lessons learnt from the project and on effective ways to address farmland bird conservation held on 11 October 2022The 22 farmland bird conservation schemes (CSs) focus on important agricultural systems or particular flagship birds, that were selected on the basis of scientific criteria and practical experiences brought in by stakeholders. Examples of the conservation schemes include bird-friendly management of rice fields in Bulgaria, Portugal and Spain, the creation of grassy field margins in Italian arable land, the maintenance of Corncrake habitats in France and of Grey Partridge and Northern Lapwing habitats in Germany. They are designed for full, or at least partial integration in the national CAP Strategic Plans. So far, more than half of them have been fully or partially included. CSs that were not taken up are, nevertheless, available to be integrated at a later stage. The Member States might also consider testing the schemes as pilots through other funding instruments.Several EU funding instruments - includingLIFEandCAP offer a range ofopportunities to fund the conservation and recovery of farmland bird species.LinksDocuments from the stakeholder consultation workshopsCormorantsManaging conflicts between cormorants and human socio-economic interestsAs a result of conservation efforts, European populations of the great cormorant (Phalacrocorax carbo)have increased across most regions in recent years. This population expansion has led to increasing conflicts of cormorants with fishing activities, including aquaculture and recreational angling.To support stakeholders in the management of such conflicts, the Commission launched in 2010 the EU CorMan project. This projectaimed to inform stakeholders, in particular actors involved in fisheries and aquaculture, about the ecology of this bird, as well as provide good practices and measures that have been used successfully to manage such conflicts. CorMan built on previous EU-funded work, notably the REDCAFE Concerted Action and the INTERCAFE Cost Action.This information was extensively updated in May 2024. The following documents are available:European Bird Species Action PlansSince 1993, the EU has funded the development of European Bird Species Action Plans for over 60 of the most threatened species listed in Annex I of the Birds Directive. The plans are designed to help Member States fulfil their obligation to restore and maintain bird populations to good conservation status. The Commission developed two reviews of the implementation of the plans in 2010 and 2013.Each plan analyses and evaluates the specific threats faced by the species and its habitat and prescribes the most suitable conservation actions to be implemented in the EU, and beyond. The actions are compiled by qualified experts and consulted extensively with stakeholders and government authorities across Europe.Bird species considered priority for funding under LIFEUnlike the Habitats Directive, the Birds Directive does not distinguish between priority and non-priority species. However, the LIFE Regulation provides a possibility to adopt a list of bird species considered as priority for funding under the LIFE programme. LIFE projects that focus on practical conservation measures for any of the species or sub-species on the list can benefit from a higher EU co-funding rate, up to 75 %.The current version of the list, agreed by the Ornis Committee on 28 April 2021, takes into account the most recent available data on status and trends of bird populations in the EU (as reported by Member States to the Commission in 2019). For more details please check theLIFE website.European Red list of birdsEvery ten years, Birdlife International assesses the regional extinction risk of all 544 species of birds occurring regularly and naturally in Europe (54 countries). Evaluating the extinction risk of each species helps to inform decision making at national, EU and pan-European level.As part of the latest European Red list update in 2021, Birdlife International also assessed the population state of birds in the EU (27 Member States plus UK) based on the Member States reports under Article 12 of the Birds Directive. Visit the Birdlife International Data zone for individual factsheets on all bird species at European and EU level. Every six years, Member States must report on the population status of species protected under the Birds Directive that are present on their territory. The Commission compiles and assesses this data. This results in an EU status assessment of all European birds across their natural range within the EU, and not just in protected areas.The results are published, together with the results concerning habitats and species (from the Habitats Directive) in a State of Nature in the European Union report. The last report, published in 2020, presents the results of the 3rd reporting cycle for the period 20132018.The latest State of Nature report has concluded that almost half of all European wild bird species (47%) have a good population status, despite the immense pressures they continue to face. On the other hand, around 39% still have a poor or bad status.The next report, due in 2025, will cover the period 2019-2024. Materials for the competent reporting authorities are available on the Art.12 reporting reference portal of the European Environment Agency. Under specific conditions described in Article 9 of the Birds Directive, Member States may derogate (grant exceptions) from the provisions of species protection under Articles 12 to 15 of the Directive. Derogations are only allowed if there is no other satisfactory solution and the consequences of these derogations are not incompatible with the overall aims of the Directive. Member States must report all derogations to the Commission on a yearly basis. The Commission then assesses the reports to ensure full compliance with Article 9. If the Commission identifies issues, it communicates these to the Member State concerned. To facilitate the task of reporting derogations, the Commission has developed an online reporting tool, Habides+, which is supported by the European Environment Agency. The Commission also regularly produces composite derogation reports which provide a consolidated EU level analysis of the Member States annual reports. In the interests of transparency and to facilitate access to the information submitted by the Member States, the Commission has developed online derogations data viewers. The Commission has developed interactive data viewers which present detailed information on the derogations submitted by the Member States, as well as statistics on the completeness of these reports. For questions about EU environmental policy, please contactEurope Direct. Mobilizing public and private finance for biodiversity, including from the EU budget.Discover what our world would look like without pollinating insects with this virtual-reality experience.Information on the conservation of wild pollinator species in the EUA unique forum for dialogue and policy interface to discuss the links between business and biodiversity at EU level.The source of data and information on biodiversity in Europe.Mapping out, assessing, and accounting for ecosystems and their services to inform environmental policy.The science-policy interface on biodiversity and ecosystem services.Find a Natura 2000 site by Birds Directive Sites or Habitats Directive SitesA voluntary scheme to protect biodiversity and ecosystem services in the EU Outermost Regions and Overseas Countries and Territories.The EU Platform brings together a range of stakeholders to effectively address conflicts related to large carnivore conservation and management.The European Red List identifies species that are threatened with extinction at the European level so that appropriate conservation action can be taken to improve their status.Big changes often start small. #ForOurPlanet is a world-wide campaign encouraging everyone to act now, and showing how you can help protect our planet though local personal and local action.Pollinator species like bees, butterflies, bats and hummingbirds across the world are in decline, many of them threatened with extinction.Nature Credits are designed to reward nature-positive action and boost private finance.While socio-economically important, the multibillion-dollar trade in ornamental plants brings many risks, from biosecurity to water scarcity. A new study flags impacts and calls for better data and better production methods.Environmental flow schemes regulate hydropower operations to ensure sufficient power production while reducing harm to nature. New modelling of climate conditions to the year 2040 in northern Sweden suggests that such schemes could be effective.According to a major new report by the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), more than 3,500 out of the 37,000 alien species that have been introduced by many human activities to regions and biomes around the world pose major global threats to nature, economy, food security and human health. Invasive alien species (IAS) play a key role in 60% of global plant and animal extinctions, and cost humanity more than $400 billion a year an amount that has quadrupled every decade since 1970. With the increased movement of people and goods brought about by globalization, environmental degradation and climate change, the number of invasive alien species and their impacts are projected to increase in the future. Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries Virginijus Sinkeviius said: The IPBES report on Invasive Alien Species is a very timely and valuable tool for policymakers as we seek to implement our global commitments on biodiversity.It confirms that with the IAS Regulation the EU is on the right path to tackle this threat to biodiversity, also filling the research gaps through the work of Horizon Europe and the Joint Research Centre. Weve also committed to further actionthrough an ambitious IAS target in the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030. Invasive alien species are one of the five major direct drivers of biodiversity loss globally, alongside land and sea-use change, direct exploitation of organisms, climate change, and pollution. The report provides evidence, tools and options to help governments and stakeholders achieve ambitious new global goal on invasive alien species Target 6 of the recently adopted Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, which aims to reduce the introduction and establishment of invasive alien species by at least 50% by 2030. The IPBES experts point to the generally insufficient measures in place to tackle these challenges. While 80% of countries have targets related to managing invasive alien species in their national biodiversity plans, only 17% have national laws or regulations specifically addressing these issues. On the positive side, the report finds that for almost every context, there are management tools, governance options and targeted actions that work, such as prevention, eradication, containment and control. Invasive Alien Species in the EU In the EU 88 invasive alien species are strictly regulated, with 47 animal species of Union concern, and 41 plant species of Union concern. The impact and distribution of IAS in Europe have been described earlier this year in a specific report by the Joint Research Centre. The EU already addresses invasive alien species as a threat to biodiversity through the EU Regulation on prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species. It aims to prevent, minimise and mitigate the adverse impacts posed by these species on native biodiversity and ecosystem services. Rules also aim to limit social and economic damage. The core of the Regulation is the list of Invasive Alien Species of Union concern (Union List). The species included on this list are subject to specific restrictions and measures such as restrictions on keeping, importing, selling, breeding, growing and releasing into the environment. Member States are required to take preventive action, take measures for the early detection and rapid eradication of these species, as well as manage species that are already widely spread in their territory. In its EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, the EU wants to put Europes biodiversity on the path to recovery. The Strategy contains the commitment to manage established invasive alien species and decrease the number of Red List species they threaten by 50% by 2030. Background Often described as the IPCC for Biodiversity, IPBES is the global science-policy body tasked with providing the best-available evidence to decision-makers, for nature and people. The European Union is a major donor of IPBES, with a total budget of 9 million of direct contribution. The IAS report is the result of 4 years of analysis conducted by 86 scientists (from 49 countries and many different disciplines) supported by 200 contributing authors and drawing on more than 13,000 references. It is the very first global synthesis report gathering the best scientific knowledge on invasive alien species. It provides a scientifically-based overview of the issues at stake, look at current and future trends, and highlight possible response-management options for action with the aim of informing decision-makers. More information The EU and IPBES infographic New study on invasive alien species pinpoints patterns of invasion across European ecosystems Skip to main content Europe has a stunning diversity of wild animals, plants and habitats, many of which are not found anywhere else in the world. However, much of Europes natural heritage has been lost over the years due to urban sprawl, intensive agriculture, forestry and fisheries, pollution, and other human activities. This has led to the large-scale disappearance and degradation of many valuable natural areas and the species that live in them. Today, over a quarter of Europes animal species are at risk of extinction. Preserving and restoring Europes rich biodiversity is one of the EUs top priorities, as outlined in the EUbiodiversity strategy for 2030. Biodiversity is not only important in its own right; it is also essential for our economy and well-being. The Birds and Habitats Directives form the cornerstones of EU biodiversity policy. They provide a strong legislative framework for all EU countries to protect the most valuable and threatened biodiversity.Together, the two directives have also created the Natura 2000 network which is now the largest coordinated network of protected areas in the world. The Habitats Directive aims to protect over a thousand species, including mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish invertebrates, and plants, and 230 characteristic habitat types. The overall objective is to ensure that these species and habitat types are maintained, or restored, to a favourable conservation status within the EU. In addition to halting the further decline or disappearance of these species and habitats, the Directive aims to allow them to recover and thrive over the long-term. The Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) was adopted in 1992, thirteen years after the Birds Directive. Like the Birds Directive, the Habitats Directive requires all Member States to establish a strict protection regime for species listed in Annex IV, both inside and outside Natura 2000 sites.In particular, Member States must prohibitall forms of deliberate capture or killing in the wilddeliberate disturbance, e.g. during breeding, rearing, hibernation and migrationdeterioration or destruction of breeding sites or resting placesdeliberate destruction of nests or eggs, or the picking, collecting, cutting, uprooting or destruction of protected plants in the wildthe use of all indiscriminate means of capture or killing capable of causing local disappearance and serious disturbance to populations of such species, andthe keeping, transport and sale of specimens taken from the wildMember States must also take measures, where necessary, to ensure that the taking or exploitation of specimens of species listed in Annex V is compatible with their being maintained at a favourable conservation status.Member States must designate, protect and manage core areas for habitat types listed in Annex I and species listed in annex II of the Habitats Directive. Sites are selected on scientific grounds using the criteria laid down in the Directive (Annex III).Each Member State first proposes a national list of important sites to be protected for those species and habitats present on their territory.The Commission then selects, with the help of the Member States, the European Environment Agency and scientific experts, Sites of Community Importance (SCIs).The selected Sites of Community Importance become part of the Natura 2000 Network.Member States then have up to six years to designate them as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and to introduce the necessary management measures to maintain or restore the species and habitats present to a good condition.Today, thanks to the Habitats Directive, Member States have classified over 23 500 SCIs across the EU. Together, they cover almost 950 000 km2 of land and sea an area greater than Spain and Sweden put together. The Natura 2000 Network also includes Special Protection Areas (SPAs) classified under the Birds Directive. Collectively these sites are often referred to as Natura 2000 sites and are now the largest coordinated network of protected areas anywhere in the world.Fitness checkIn 2015, the Commission carried out a Fitness Check of the EU Nature Directives to see whether they are 'fit for purpose'. The overall conclusion of the findings, published in December 2016, is that, within the framework of broader EU biodiversity policy, the two nature directives remain highly relevant and are fit for purpose. However, there needs to be a substantial improvement in their implementation if they are to achieve their objectives.In response to the Fitness check, the Commission launched a new Action Plan in 2017 to rapidly improve the practical implementation of the Habitats and Birds Directives. The Action Plan also aims to accelerate progress towards the EU goal of halting and reversing the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services.Case lawThe Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) ensures the uniform application and interpretation of EU law. Over the years the Court of Justice has issued an important number of Rulings on the Birds and Habitats Directives. These provide an important source of jurisprudence as regards the interpretation of various legal provisions. The rulings can be consulted using the case law search tool. Articles 12 to 16 of the Habitats Directive require Member States to set up and implement a strict protection regime for species listed in Annex IV across the whole of the EU, both inside and outside protected areas.In October 2021, the Commission adopted aguidance documentproviding legal interpretation and clarifications on Articles 12 and 16 of the Directive. The document also includes information, advice and good practices to help national authorities address conflicts between strictly protected species and human activities.Large carnivoresThe European Union is home to five species of large carnivore: the brown bear, the wolf, the wolverine and two species of lynx. Human activities have led to a dramatic decline in numbers and distribution of these species in Europe.Find out more about the measures under the Habitats Directiveto support the recovery of large carnivores in the EU.On 7 March, the Commission proposed a targeted amendment to the Habitats Directive annexes.European Species Action PlansSince 2008, the Commission has supported the development of several Species Action Plans for selected species listed in the Habitats Directive. The plans provide information about the status, ecology, threats and current conservation measures for each species and list key actions to improve their conservation status in Europe. Each Plan is the result of an extensive process of consultation with individual experts in Europe.The following Action Plans are available:In November 2018, a Pan-European Action Plan for Sturgeons was adopted by the Standing Committee of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention) and recommended for implementation under the Habitats Directive in May 2019.The European Red List of Threatened SpeciesTheEuropean Red List of Speciesprovides a scientific review of the conservation status of around 11 000 European species.Developed by IUCN, with financial support from the EU, the European Red Lists identify those species that are threatened with extinction at the European level so that appropriate conservation action can be taken to improve their status.Please find herethe European Red List publications.Habitat protectionInterpretation manual of habitats listed under Annex IAn interpretation manual of European Union Habitats listed under Annex I of the Habitats Directive provides a common definition of each Habitat type across all Member States.European Habitat Action PlansThe Commission has developed EU action plans for two of the most threatened habitats under the Habitats DirectiveManagement models for protected Annex I habitat typesIn 2008, the Commission developed management models for 25 habitat types listed under the Habitats Directive which need active recurring management. These models are designed to help national authorities and site managers prepare their own site-specific management actions.Each of the 25 models provides a detailed overview of the distribution, ecological requirements, main trends and threats of the habitat type in question. It also provides a description of appropriate management prescriptions and techniques for their conservation. The findings are drawn from a comprehensive review of the best available information in different EU countries.European Red List of HabitatsThe first-ever European Red List of Habitats was published in 2016. It reviews the current status of all natural and semi-natural marine and terrestrial and freshwater habitats and highlights the pressures they face. Over 230 terrestrial and freshwater habitats were assessed. It uses a modified version of the IUCN Red List of Ecosystems categories and criteria. It covers the EU28, Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and the Balkan countries and their neighbouring seas.The Red List covers a much wider set of habitats than those legally protected under the Habitats Directive. It therefore complements the data collected on Annex I habitat types through Article 17 reporting.ReportingReporting on the conservation status of species and habitats under Article 17Every six years, Member States must report to the Commission on the conservation status of species and habitat types protected under the Habitats Directive that are present on their territory. Several scientific parameters are used to assess their status (good, poor, bad) across their natural range within the EU, and not just in protected areas.The results are published, together with the reporting on bird species under the Birds Directive in a State of Nature in the European Union report. The last report, published in 2020, presents the results of the 3rd reporting cycle for the period 20132018.According to the latest report, only a quarter (27%) of the species have a good conservation status at the EU level. This is an increase from 23% in 2015. Most species (63%) continue to have a poor or bad status. The situation is worse for habitats - just 15% have a good status. The vast majority (81%) are in a poor or bad status.The next report, due in 2025, will cover the period 2019-2024. Materials for the competent reporting authorities are available on the Art.17 reporting reference portal of the European Environment Agency. Under specific conditions described in Article 16 of the Habitats Directive, countries may derogate (grant exceptions) from the provisions of species protection under Articles 12 to 15 of the Directive. Derogations are only allowed if there is no other satisfactory solution and the consequences of these derogations are not incompatible with the overall aims of the Directive.Every two years, Member States must submit a derogation report to the Commission on the derogations they have granted to the strict species protection regime. The Commission then checks the reports to ensure that all the conditions of Article 16 have been fully respected. If the Commission identifies issues, it communicates these to the Member State concerned. To facilitate the task of reporting derogations, the Commission has developed an online reporting tool, Habides+, which is supported by the European Environment Agency.The Commission also regularly produces composite derogation reports, which provide a consolidated EU-level analysis of the Member States annual reports. In the interests of transparency and to facilitate access to the information submitted by the Member States, the Commission has developed an online derogations data viewer. The Commission has developed interactive data viewers which present detailed information on the derogations submitted by the Member States, as well as statistics on the completeness of these reports For questions about EU environmental policy, please contactEurope Direct. The Regulation aims to restore ecosystems, habitats and species across the EUs land and sea areas in order toenable the long-term and sustained recovery of biodiverse and resilient naturecontribute to achieving the EUs climate mitigation and climate adaptation objectivesmeet international commitments of habitats are in poor statusinvested into nature restoration adds 4 to 38 in benefitsbee and butterfly species are in decline The regulation combines an overarching restoration objective for the long-term recovery of nature in the EUs land and sea areas with binding restoration targets for specific habitats and species. These measures should cover at least 20% of the EUs land and sea areas by 2030, and ultimately all ecosystems in need of restoration by 2050.The regulation contains the following specific targets:targets based on existing legislation (for wetlands, forests, grasslands, river and lakes, heath & scrub, rocky habitats and dunes)- improving and re-establishing biodiverse habitats on a large scale, and bringing back species populations by improving and enlarging their habitatspollinating insects reversing the decline of pollinator populations by 2030, and achieving an increasing trend for pollinator populations, with a methodology for regular monitoring of pollinatorsforest ecosystems achieving an increasing trend for standing and lying deadwood, uneven aged forests, forest connectivity, abundance of common forest birds and stock of organic carbonurbanecosystems no net loss of green urban space and tree cover by 2030, and a steady increase in their total area from 2030agricultural ecosystems increasing grassland butterflies and farmland birds, the stock of organic carbon in cropland mineral soils, and the share of agricultural land with high-diversity landscape features; restoring drained peatlands under agricultural usemarine ecosystems restoring marine habitats such as seagrass beds or sediment bottoms that deliver significant benefits, including for climate change mitigation, and restoring the habitats of iconic marine species such as dolphins and porpoises, sharks and seabirds.river connectivity identifying and removing barriers that prevent the connectivity of surface waters, so that at least 25 000 km of rivers are restored to a free-flowing state by 2030 EU countries are expected to submit National Restoration Plans to the Commission within two years of the Regulation coming into force (so by mid 2026), showing how they will deliver on the targets. They will also be required to monitor and report on their progress. The European Environment Agency will draw up regular technical reports on progress towards the targets. The Commission, in turn, will report to the European Parliament and to the Council on the implementation of the Nature Restoration Regulation. Discover examples of successful nature restoration projects throughout Europe Previous and upcomingactions Nature Restoration Regulation enters into forceEuropean Parliament agrees final text for Nature Restoration RegulationCommission adopts proposal for a Nature Restoration LawDecember 2020 - September 2021Five stakeholder workshops took placeThese workshops discussed policy options and collect views from a broad range of stakeholders on:the options for restoration targets, how these targets should be implemented, and the potential social, economic and wider environmental impacts that need to be consideredthe preliminary findings of the impact assessment support study.11 January - 5 April 2021Online public consultation open for feedbackThis public consultationcollected stakeholder views, in particular on the main elements and approach to devising the Commission's proposal for binding restoration targets.4 November - 2 December 2020Public feedback on the Inception Impact AssessmentThis Inception Impact Assessment collected feedback from stakeholders and the public on the main elements of the initiative.Publication of the EU biodiversity strategy for 2030 According to two newreportsby the IPBES, immediate action to address the biodiversity crisis could unlock massive business and innovation opportunities, generating $10 trillion and supporting 395 million jobs worldwide by 2030.Conversely, delaying action on biodiversity goals by even a decade could double the cost of acting now and delaying action on climate change adds at least $500 billion per year in additional costs.The reports emphasise that without urgent and joint action to address interdependent global challenges such as biodiversity loss, water scarcity, food security, human health, and climate change, we will not achieve a just and sustainable world where all life can thrive.The EU has made several contributions to the IPBES 11th Plenary, including publishing a new report on transformative change for a sustainable future analysing the challenges and opportunities of over 300 groundbreaking projects.'Nexus' reportThe Nexus assessment report tackles the intertwined global crises of biodiversity loss, water and food insecurity, health risks and climate change, showing how these all interact, cascade and compound each other, making efforts to address them separately ineffective and counterproductive.It shows that scenarios that focus on addressing the challenges in just one sector such as food, biodiversity or climate change in isolation fix one problem while creating another one, seriously limiting the chances of meeting other Sustainable Development Goals.An integrated approach will therefore help the global community reach the goals of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Paris Agreement on climate change.The report presents more than 70 response options to address these interlinked issues. Examples include: restoring carbon-rich ecosystems, such as forests, soils, and mangroves; managing biodiversity to reduce the risk of diseases spreading from animals to humans; improving integrated landscape and seascape management; urban nature-based solutions; sustainable healthy diets; and supporting Indigenous food systems.Notably, the report finds that addressing all these crises together makes economic sense. More than half of global GDP over $50 trillion of annual economic activity around the world is dependent on nature. The unaccounted-for costs of current approaches to economic activity are at least $10-25 trillion per year.'Transformative Change' reportThe Transformative Change assessment report focuses on the underlying causes of the biodiversity crisis, the drivers of change and available options.The underlying causes of biodiversity loss identified by the report are the disconnection of people from nature and domination over nature and other people; the inequitable concentration of power and wealth; and the prioritisation of short-term individual and material gains.The report calls for a whole-of-society approach to addressing the biodiversity crisis, meaning that there is a role for every person and organisation to create transformative change at multiple levels.It rightfully recognises the vital role of Indigenous People and Local Communities in safeguarding nature. Whats more, the authors analysed hundreds of case studies from around the world and found that transformative initiatives can yield positive results in just a decade.BackgroundOften described as the IPCC for Biodiversity, the IPBES is the independent international body that provides decision-makers with the most comprehensive scientific information on nature-related issues. The European Union is a major donor to the IPBES, contributing 9 million to its Trust Fund (2019-2028) from the EUs research and innovation budget.In addition, through its research programmes, the EU funds impactful biodiversity research projects that deliver results relevant to IPBES. These include coordination actions that fill critical knowledge gaps and deliver policy-relevant outcomes to support the European Green Deal and the Global Biodiversity Framework.Additionally, recognising the importance of science cooperation for biodiversity, Horizon Europe will invest over 1 billion in this important research area. The results of this research will inform future IPBES assessments.TheEU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030and the landmarkNature Restoration Lawaim to restore Europes biodiversity, with research and innovation playing an important role in achieving this goal. Together with other EU legislation, they support the EUs international commitments underthe 2022 Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, where 196countries agreed to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030.More InformationEU contributions to IPBES 11th PlenaryThe Nexus reportThe Transformative Change report

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