

Introduction to EU Biodiversity Policy



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Background

The EU is a signatory to the CBD (Convention on Biological Diversity) and has adopted the following target: “halt the loss of biodiversity by 2010”

The cornerstones of EU biodiversity policy are the **Birds and Habitats Directives**. They are the only examples of supranational legislation to implement the CBD.

Additionally, to meet its CBD commitments the EU adopted its **Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans** in 1998. And in May 2006, the EC produced the **Biodiversity Communication**.



The Birds Directive



Adopted in 1979

Created Special Protection Areas (**SPAs**) to ensure the long-term protection of wild bird species and their habitats



Includes other measures to protect wild birds e.g. by imposing limits on the trading and hunting of species

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The Habitats Directive



Adopted in 1992

Created Special Areas of Conservation (**SACs**) to conserve the most important habitats, plants and animals



Conserves habitats with a small range, those suffering from rapid loss and those which are particularly characteristic of Europe

Conserves species which are endangered, in decline or endemic e.g. by protecting breeding and resting places

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Results



Strong instruments in place to protect biodiversity in Europe

The two Directives aim to achieve and maintain Favourable Conservation Status for all habitats and species of Community Interest

Together the sites designated under the Birds and Habitats Directives are known as the Natura 2000 network

Designation as a Natura 2000 site doesn't mean an end to all socio-economic activities, but it ensures they are managed in a way that doesn't negatively impact on priority species and habitats



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Current Challenges facing Implementation



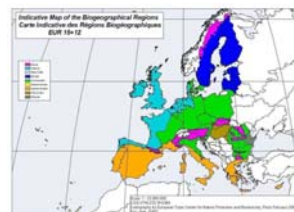
Communication - there is a need to increase the acceptance of Natura 2000 politically and amongst all stakeholders

Monitoring - Member States have to report in 2007 on the conservation status of all the habitats and species

Completion of the network - designation is still incomplete for marine sites and in new Member States as the EU enlarges

Financing - co-financing for managing sites is not yet guaranteed

Ecological connectivity - ensuring site connectivity is increasingly important in the light of climate change



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EU Biodiversity Strategy



The EU Biodiversity Strategy was adopted in 1998 and has a number of Action Plans for specific policy areas:

- Conservation of natural resources
- Fisheries
- Agriculture
- Economic and development cooperation



The biodiversity strategy aims to reduce the causes of biodiversity loss by integrating biodiversity objectives into other EU policy areas

A review of the strategy was begun in 2003, and was completed at a stakeholder conference in Malahide, Ireland in 2004

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EC Biodiversity Communication



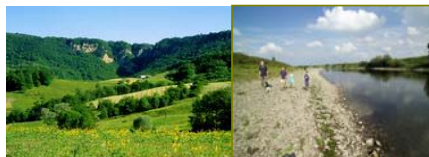
Building on this process, the EC adopted the Biodiversity Communication and annexed action plan in May 2006

Four main policy areas:

- Biodiversity in the EU
- EU and global biodiversity
- Biodiversity and climate change
- The knowledge base (research)

Four supporting measures:

- Financing
- Strengthening EU decision making
- Partnerships
- Public awareness and education



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EC Biodiversity Communication



The first policy area 'Biodiversity in the EU' covers the following:

Safeguarding the most important habitats and species (*biodiversity policy*)

Conserving and restoring biodiversity in the wider countryside (*CAP*)

Conserving and restoring biodiversity in the marine environment (*CFP and maritime policy*)

Reinforcing the compatibility of regional and territorial development (*regional policy*)

Reducing impact of invasive alien species (*new area of biodiversity policy*)



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Current Challenges facing Implementation

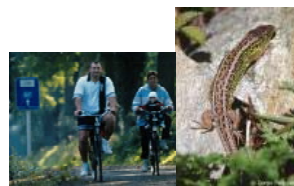


Still need **commitments from other sectors** (eg agriculture and industry)

Reporting and evaluation should involve all relevant Council formations and Parliamentary Committees (not just Environment)

Stronger mechanisms are needed to **communicate with other DG's** (eg AGRI, FISH, TRADE, RESEARCH, REGIO, TREN, DEV and BUDGET)

Environmental costs (including loss of natural capital and ecosystem services) need to be integrated into decision-making but there is no mechanism in place to achieve this



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IUCN ROfE and EU Policy



The EULO is working to influence EU policy by:

Keeping close contact with the European Commission, Parliament and Council and participating in relevant EC working groups

Providing the Secretariat of the European Habitats Forum (EHF) as a platform for NGO involvement

Sharing information with our members on EU policies via our website, newsletter and e-policy updates



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Thanks for listening...



To receive our e-policy bulletins, send a request to europe@iucn.org

For more information, visit our website at: www.iucneurope.org



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