



Conservation Efforts, achievements and latest developments towards securing favourable conservation status of globally threatened species in the EU



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Overview of presentation

- *EU Environmental and Biodiversity policy context*
- *EU focus on globally threatened species*
- *Strategic objectives for implementing Natura 2000*
- *EU funding investment possibilities for Natura & wider countryside*
- *Assessing the state of nature in the EU and determining if we are on track to meet objectives*
- *Some Concluding comments*



EU Environmental policy context – the 7th EAP : Living well, within the limits of our planet

- **2020** timeframe, **2050** vision, **9** priority objectives
- Commitment by EU and its **Member States**

THEMATIC OBJECTIVES:

- **Ecological resilience/natural capital**
- **Green & competitive growth – low-carbon, resource-efficient economy**
- **Health & environment, human well-being**

ENABLING FRAMEWORK:

- **Implementation**
- **Information, knowledge base**
- **Investment**
- **Integration, coherence**

SPATIAL DIMENSION:

- **Urban environment**
- **International**



EU biodiversity strategy to 2020

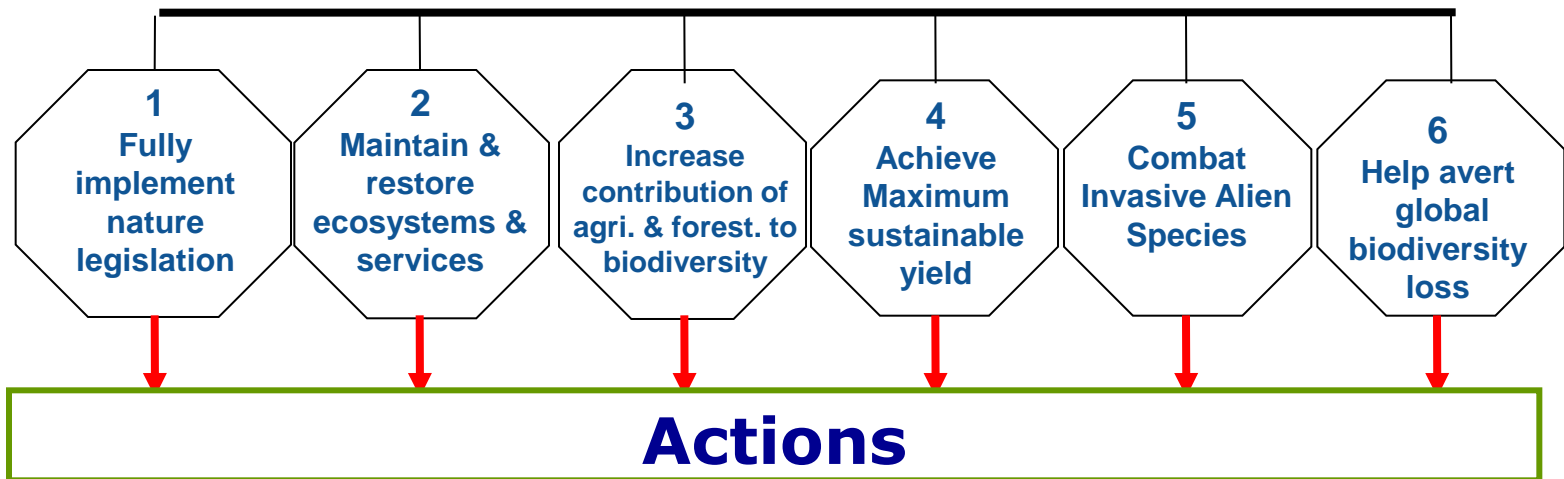
« Our life insurance, our natural capital »

A 2050 VISION

*European Union biodiversity and the ecosystem services it provides – its **natural capital** – are protected, valued and appropriately restored...*

A 2020 HEADLINE TARGET

Halt the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the EU and restore them insofar as feasible, and step up the EU's contribution to averting global biodiversity loss



Key EU Nature Legislation: Habitats & Birds Directives

- *Both directives built in a similar way - two pillars:*
 - **Species protection provisions – all territory / sea of MS**
 - **Site protection provisions – Natura 2000**
- *All wild bird species protected*
- *Over 220 habitat types & more than 1.000 species of EU concern*
- *Overall objective to maintain or restore a favourable conservation status*



**Site protection and
management**

**Species protection &
management**

BIRDS DIRECTIVE

migratory
birds

Annex I
birds

All wild
birds

Exemptions
for species on
annex II & III

HABITATS DIRECTIVE

Annex I
Habitat types

Annex II
species

Annex IV
species

Annex V
species

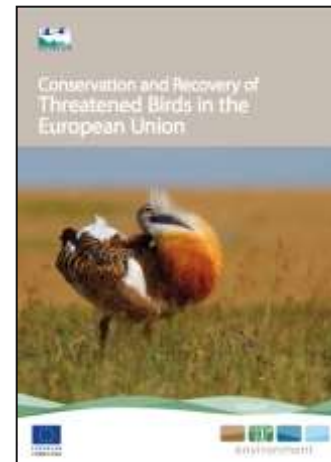
Species action plans for threatened birds

- COM/EU support since 1993
- Led by BirdLife International
- Focus on Annex I birds – priority for LIFE funding
- c.56 plans incl. all globally threatened birds
- EU / International Plans – unified format
- Status, ecology, threats & key actions
- not legally binding (beyond Birds Directive)
- serve as management/planning tool
- Help target limited resources & strategically assist LIFE projects



Evaluating implementation of SAPs

COM support for 2004 & 2010 reviews of SAPs by BirdLife

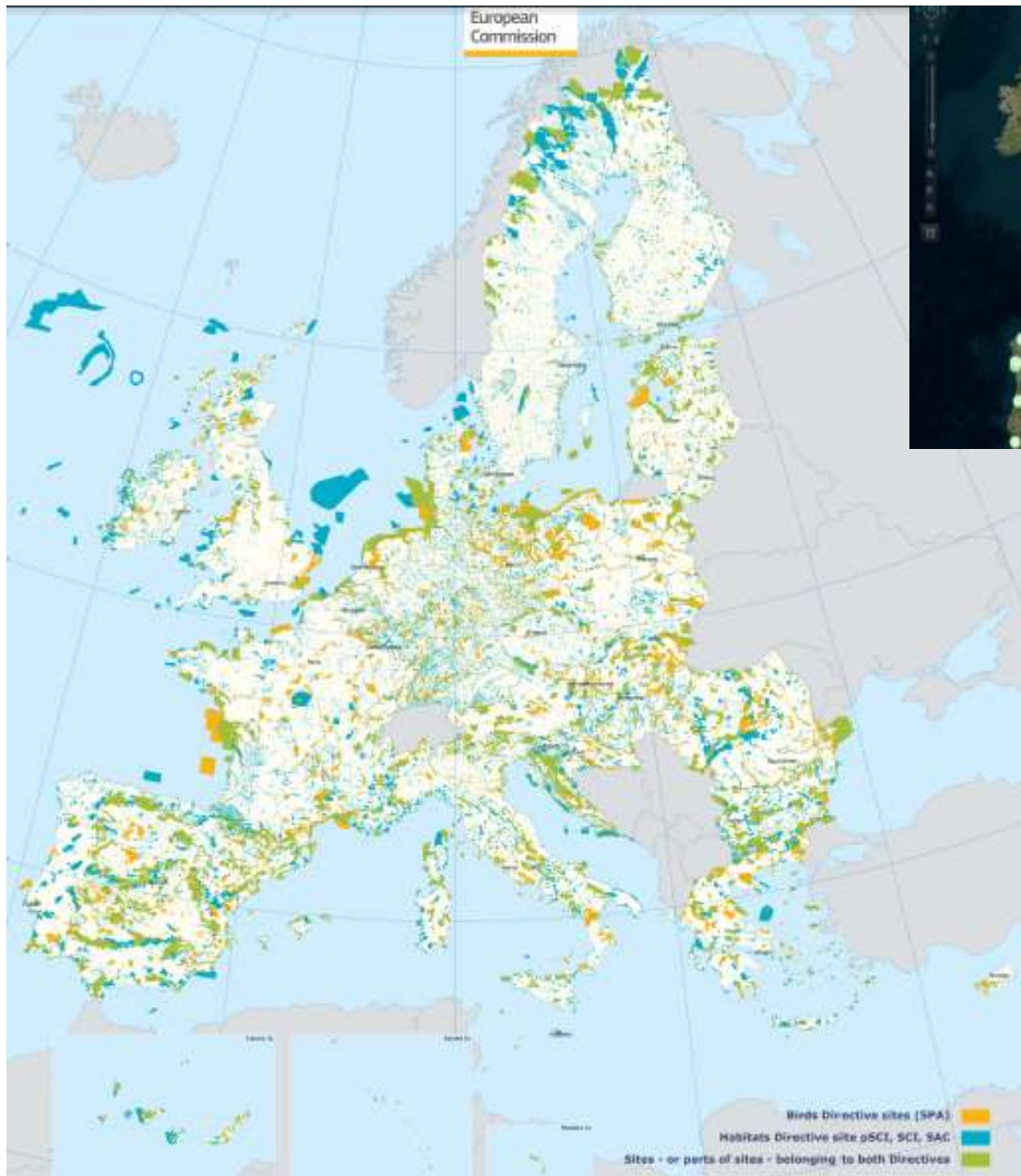


- Best implementation for spp. well covered by protected areas or localized in few places
- Weaker for dispersed spp. requiring tackling large-scale land- use pressures

Current trends	Increasing	Azores Bullfinch, EN Zino's Petrel, EN Eastern Imperial Eagle, VU Spanish Imperial Eagle, VU Lesser Kestrel, VU	Blue Chaffinch, NT Dalmatian Pelican, VU Bearded Vulture, LC	Cinereous Vulture, NT
	Stable	Aquatic Warbler, VU Marbled Teal, VU Bonelli's Eagle, LC Red-footed Falcon, NT	Eleonora's Falcon, LC Fea's Petrel, NT Lesser Spotted Eagle, LC Madeira Laurel Pigeon, NT Red Kite, NT	Audouin's Gull, NT
	Decreasing	Balearic Shearwater, CR European Roller, NT Dupont's Lark, NT Egyptian Vulture, EN	Little Bustard, VU	
		Decreasing	Stable	Increasing
Trends before SAP				

Figure 6. Comparison of the population trends change, as an indicator of the Action Plan impact. It can be deduced that the status of species in the top and middle cells has improved, at least partly because of implementation of Action Plans. Species in blue font have only recently adopted SAPs whose implementation is still limited.

The Natura 2000 network



Aquatic Warbler Natura 2000 sites

- >27 000 sites
- > 1 000 000 km²
- 18 % EU land
- ~4 % EU seas
- Largest co-ordinated PA network
- Almost complete on land
- Some additional work for marine



European
Commission

Management/Restoration of Natura 2000

- *Objective is to ensure fully functional network of conservation areas*
- *Finalise site designation, define Conservation Objectives & establish Conservation Measures*
- *Management planning using best available science*
- *Engage landowners and users & provide guidance (eg agriculture & forestry)*
- *Promote sharing of experience and expertise on management/restoration*



Reconciling Natura 2000 & economic development

- ❖ *Sites have high level of legal protection*
- ❖ *Not nature reserves – management in collaboration with land owners & users*
- ❖ *Clear procedure for assessments & decisions*
- ❖ *COM sectoral specific guidelines + good practice*
- ❖ *Key messages*
 - need for strategic planning over a broad geographical area
 - Need good assessment procedures, tools and standards and streamlined action
 - Measure significance of effects in the context of conservation objectives of sites



Investing in Natura 2000

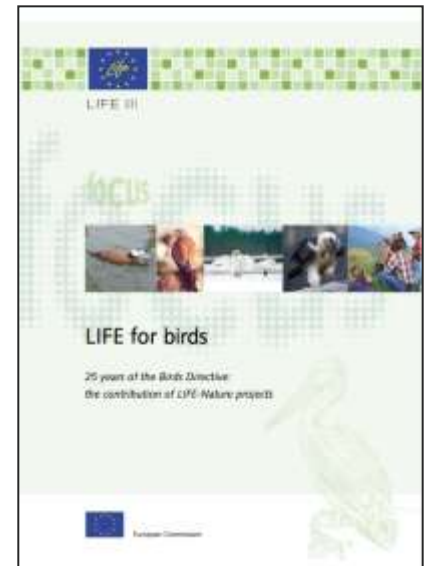
- *Strategy based on "strengthened integration" with main sectoral funds (CAP, Cohesion Funds, EMFF etc.)*
- *Prioritised Action Frameworks – a tool for:*
 - ✓ strategic planning;
 - ✓ identification of priorities;
 - ✓ identification of financing sources.
- *LIFE 'integrated projects'*
- *Significant climate finance available*
- *Consider other forms of funding, including innovative financing (EIB)*



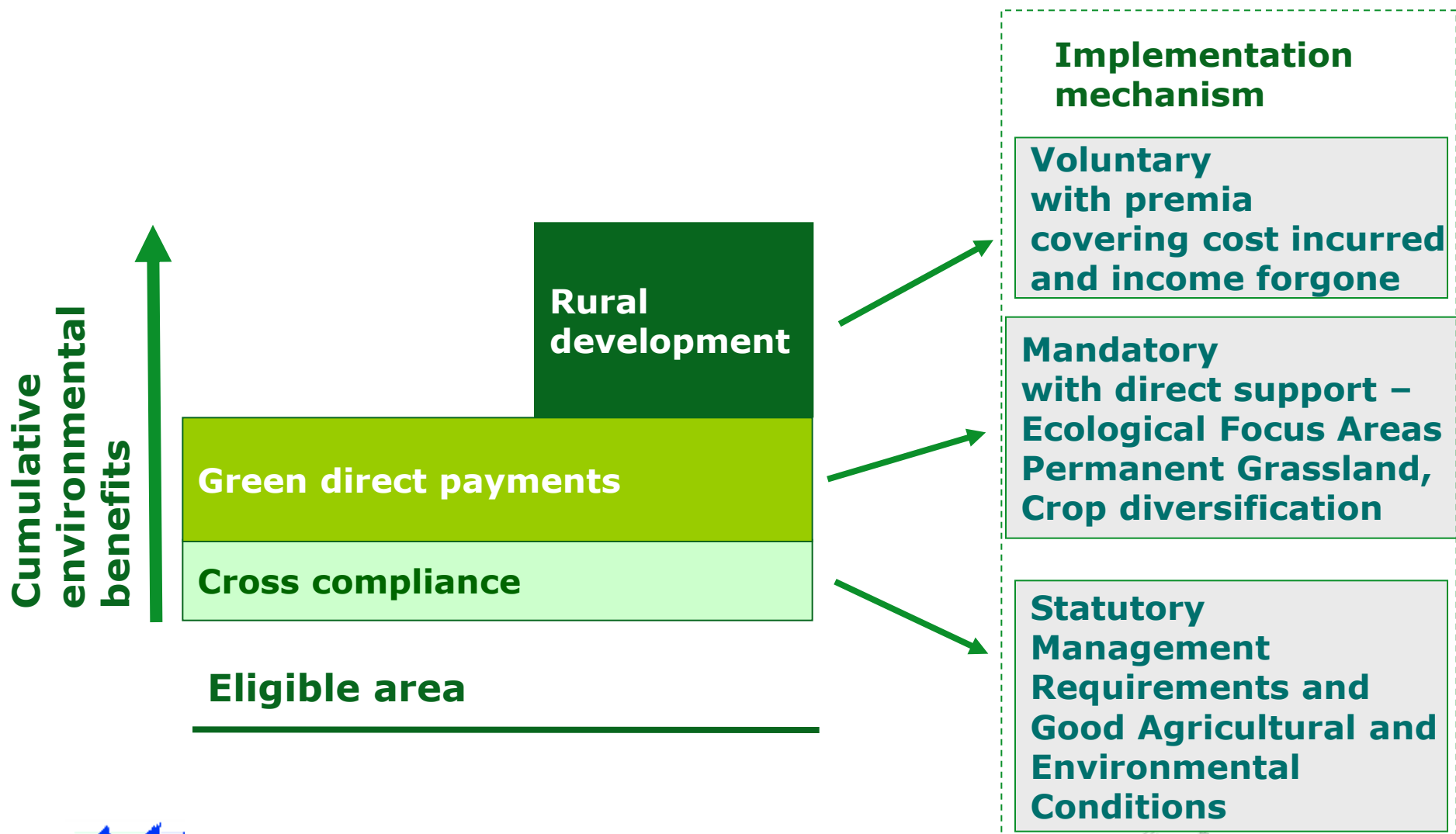
LIFE NATURE STRATEGICALLY VALUABLE FUND

“For many of Europe’s most endangered bird species, such as the aquatic warbler, without repeated human intervention (e.g. regular mowing and grazing) their preferred habitats would soon become over grown and uninhabitable. LIFE Nature & Biodiversity has repeatedly shown that it is possible to engage the support of farmers, land managers and landowners to implement farming methods that also benefit the habitats in which Europe’s threatened bird populations thrive”`

Angelo Salsi, Head of LIFE Nature Unit



The New Greening Architecture of the CAP




Monitoring & Reporting: assessing progress towards conservation targets

- “State of Nature in EU” report - 2007-2012
- Evaluates contribution of Natura 2000 for first time
- Sharper focus on threats and pressures
- Some improvements but overall situation unchanged
- Need significantly improved effort

Current selection: 2008-2012, *Acrocephalus paludicola*. Show all

Data from Member States reports

MS	Breeding Population								Breeding Range							
	Population			Trend					Surface			Trend				
	Size&Unit	i	% MS	Period	ST Trend	Period	LT Trend	i	Area	i	% MS	Period	ST Trend	Period	LT Trend	i
DE	0 - 10 cmales		0.2	1998-2009	-(46 - 88)	1985-2009	-(51 - 100)	#	146		2.1	1998-2009	-(11 - 30)	1985-2009	-(51 - 100)	
HU	0 - 0 cmales	#		2000-2012	-(100 - 100)	1980-2012	-(100 - 100)		300	#	4.4	2000-2012	-(100 - 100)	1980-2012	-(100 - 100)	
LT	60 - 90 cmales		2.2	2001-2012	-(60 - 80)	1980-2012	-(60 - 80)		1200		17.5	2001-2012	0	1980-2012	x	
Scientific name used in original MS report if different than recommended: "Acrocephalus paludicola"													x	1980-2004	0	
Breeding population presence: present													x		x	
Open Original Report 																

EU population status assessments

	Breeding Population				Breeding Range		
	Size & Unit	ST Trend	LT Trend		Area	ST Trend	LT Trend
EU27	3300 - 3400 cmales	-	x		6800	x	x



INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

- *Globally threatened species not limited to EU & under pressure*
- *Strengthen protection along flyways*
- *EC ratification of Bern, CMS and AEWA*
- *Co-operation on SAPs*
- *Build on commitments & share practical experience*



New LIFE Preparatory Project: 'Coordinated efforts for International Species Recovery'

BirdLife led project (2015-2018) foresees strong stakeholder engagement – includes partnership with AEWA

- To develop web-based collaborative platform to streamline SAP administration, planning, monitoring & communication ("SAP Tracking Tool")*
- Revise SAP for White-headed Duck, Velvet Scoter, Dalmatian Pelican, Cinereous Vulture, Bearded Vulture, European Turtle-dove*
- Develop new plan for Yelkouan Shearwater & Monteiro's Storm-petrel*
- Develop pilot Multi-species action plan for European lowland grassland waders*



Some Conclusions

- *Significant improvements in knowledge, expertise and experience to conserve threatened birds in EU*
- *Birds Directive a key instrument – especially Natura 2000 – challenge of management and restoration*
- *Wider countryside and integration with CAP – opportunities but major challenges*
- *LIFE Nature still a major catalyst & now supporting more strategic approach for SAPs*
- *Improvements when targeted action at sufficient scale*
- *Links to broader international conservation context*
- *Fitness check evaluation of EU Nature Directives a key step towards identifying future policy orientations*





For more information, please consult:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/index_en.htm

<http://ec.europa.eu/environment>