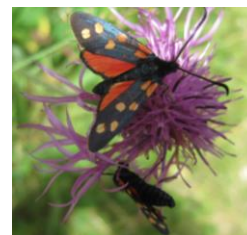




NEWSLETTER

July 2019



News from the consortium

A new consortium...

The current European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity (ETC/BD) is a partnership of 11 organisations led by the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle (MNHN) under a framework contract with the European Environment Agency (EEA) which runs from January 2019 until the end of 2021. This new consortium includes the following partners: Ecologic Institute ([ECOLOGIC](#), Germany), Institute of Landscape Ecology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences ([ILE-SAS](#), Slovakia), JNCC Support Co ([JNCC](#), United Kingdom), Naturalis Biodiversity Center ([NATURALIS](#), The Netherlands), Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic ([NCA-CR](#), Czech Republic), space4environment Sarl ([S4E](#), Luxembourg), Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences ([SLU](#), Sweden), Umweltbundesamt GmbH ([UBA](#), Austria), the Universidad Rey Juan Carlos de Madrid ([URJC](#), Spain) and Wageningen Environmental Research ([WENR](#), The Netherlands).

...and a new manager

Nirmala Séon-Massin is the new ETC/BD Manager. After a PhD in ecology and evolution, she has built her professional career around the science-policy interface and more particularly on biodiversity matters. Coming from the French Agency for Hunting and Wildlife (ONCFS), she is looking forward to working on similar issues at European level.

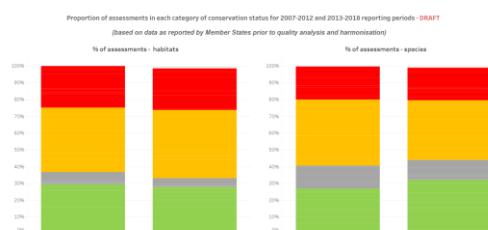


Nirmala Séon-Massin and former ETC/BD managers,
Dominique Richard & Carlos Romao
(Photo by Carlos Romao)

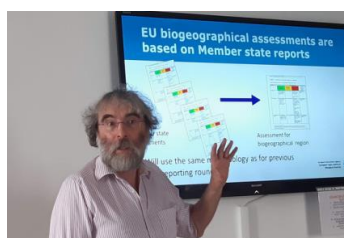
Nature Directives

Reporting under the Nature Directives

Ireland was first to deliver its Art 17 report on 18 April, eight countries delivered before the deadline and a further seven countries since the deadline. Further information on deliveries can be found on the [Article 17 delivery Score board](#).



A draft summary of results (which will be regularly updated) is available on the [Article 17 national summaries dashboard](#).



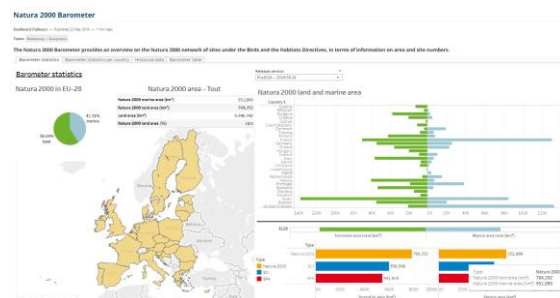
(Photo by Thomas Ellmayer)

Preparations for the EU biogeographical assessments are underway with a workshop for some of the team responsible held in Paris on the 12 June.

The deadline for reports under Article 12 of the Birds Directive is the end of July, with reports expected any day.



Natura 2000



The Natura 2000 barometer, previously included in the Commission's [Natura 2000 newsletter](#), is now [on line](#).

Information on sites can be found using the [Natura 2000 Network Viewer](#).

Habitat Action Plans

Action 7 of the EU's '[Action Plan for nature, people and the economy](#)' includes the preparation of two Habitat Action Plans and the European Commission has signed a contract with a consortium ([Institute for European Environmental Policy](#), N2K Group and ETC/BD partner [Ecologic](#)) for technical support. The action plan for '6210 Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia)' was presented to the spring 2019 meeting of the Expert Group on the Birds and Habitats Directive (NADEG).

A workshop to discuss the action for '4030 Dry heaths' was held on 26th April. It is planned to present the 2nd plan to the autumn NADEG 2019 meeting.

Natura 2000 Award

The annual Natura 2000 Award is designed to reward excellence in the management of Natura 2000 sites and showcase the added value of the network for local economies. It pays tribute to all those who work tirelessly to make Natura 2000 a success whilst drawing public attention to its substantial achievements.

Any organisation or individual can apply for an Award, so long as their work is directly linked to one or more Natura 2000 sites. Applicants must fill in a simple online application form and submit it before the deadline on 30 September 2019. For further information see the [award's website](#).

Emerald and Bern Convention



Training workshop

As partners of the ETC/BD consortium, partly with funding from the [ENI SEIS II East](#) project, [MNHN](#), [ILE-SAS](#) and [space4Environment](#) have supported the preparation and organisation of a series of workshops.

The [Third training workshop on reporting](#) on Bern Convention Resolution 4 habitats and Resolution 6 species was held in Paris on 23rd May, attended by representatives of the 6 Eastern and European countries involved in the ENI SEIS II East project but also of 4 other Contracting Parties to the Bern Convention.

Reports prepared by the countries before each of these workshops were discussed and recommendations for further work were provided by ETC/BD partner organisations.

Biogeographical seminars

The Second Emerald Network Biogeographical Seminar for Belarus, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine was held in Minsk on 18-19 June.

Following a training workshop on 11 April there was a seminar with Andorra on 6 June.

Further information about the Bern Convention and Emerald can be found on the [network's website](#), particularly on the Emerald Reference portals for [site designation](#) and for [reporting](#).

SEBI indicators

Following updates of some SEBI indicators, new evaluations are available: the coverage of ecosystem classes under the EU 'Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystems and their Services' (MAES) framework was affected by change processes between 2006 and 2012, with



urbanisation as the most dominant process both in the EU-28 and in the EEA-33 countries, predominantly at the expense of cropland and grassland. A very slight increase in coverage was observed in forest and woodland, while agricultural ecosystems, both cropland and grassland, continued to decrease. Vulnerable ecosystems such as heathland and sparsely vegetated land continued to disappear although the loss of wetlands seems to have levelled off for the first time over the same period. It should be borne in mind, however, that approximately two thirds of European wetlands were lost before the 1990s and their area has subsequently continued to decrease ([SEBI004](#)).

The total area of nationally designated protected areas in Europe has increased over time and amounted to 1.5 million km² across 39 European countries in 2017, covering almost 26 % of terrestrial territory and inland waters. With more than 100 000 sites, though often small and fragmented, Europe has more protected areas than any other region in the world ([SEBI007](#)). Related to agriculture and nitrogen balance, at EU level, there has been a decrease in the agricultural nitrogen balance between 2000 and 2015, mainly between 2000 and 2010. But the balance is still considered to be unacceptably high because of associated impacts on the environment in Western Europe and in some Mediterranean countries. These high nitrogen loadings are due to agricultural intensity, such as livestock density. Further efforts are therefore needed to reduce the balance ([SEBI019](#)).

Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystems and their Services ([MAES](#))

Last 17-18 June, a MAES Stakeholder Workshop was organised by DG ENV, JRC and EEA to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to engage in the first EU ecosystem assessment and emerging narratives. Several sessions gave the chance to present the work in progress on the thematic assessments for each ecosystem and on their services. As ETC/BD, Sophie Condé co-chaired the session on Heathlands and Sparsely Vegetated lands with Nicola Notaro (DG ENV D3). The policy discussions were particularly stimulating with constructive contributions from

the audience. The main messages will contribute to a technical MAES Team meeting in July. DG ENV asks to focus on the key policy issues that will help the post-2020 biodiversity framework make the biggest difference. These outcomes will be presented at the MAES Celebration Conference organised by the Finnish Presidency on 13 December in Helsinki.

EUNIS habitats classification

An EIONET based consultation was held in May and June on a proposed revision of the freshwater section of the EUNIS habitats classification which aligns the EUNIS classification with the Broad Types developed under the Water Framework Directive.

Following the consultation, a revision of this section will be delivered to the EEA later this year.

All other sections except for habitat complexes are finished although some minor changes may still be required following comments on the freshwater habitats and work underway to identify indicator species for mires and coastal habitats.

Invasive Alien Species (IAS)

In 2019 the Member States report for the first time under Article 24(1) of the IAS regulation (EU 1143/2014) which is to prevent and manage the introduction and spread of invasive alien species. The ETC/BD supported the reporting and participated in the 3rd meeting of the Invasive Alien Species Expert Group (IASEG). This was the occasion to present to the Member States and to the European Commission the first results based on the data received until then. A portal dedicated to the [IAS reporting](#) has been developed with the support of the ETC/BD, which will be populated with the results of data analysis in form of online dashboards.

Nationally designated areas (CDDA)

The European inventory of nationally designated protected areas holds information about designated areas and their designation types, which directly or indirectly create protected areas. [Version 17 with data reported until March 2019 has just been released.](#)



Joint meeting of Freshwater and Biodiversity NRCs

On June 3 and 4, representatives of National Reference Centres (NRCs) on Freshwater and on Biodiversity gathered at EEA premises in Copenhagen for a joint workshop to tackle knowledge and implementation issues of relevant policies (Water Framework Directive and associated legislation, Nature Directives, but also sectoral policies, eg agriculture, energy...). Both ETC Biological Diversity (MNHN and Wageningen Environmental Research) and ETC Inland, Coastal and Marine waters were involved in this common project.

A new EIONET portal



The [EIONET portal](#) has been upgraded and the ETC/BD website has also been revised and is now with a new [link](#).

News from EEA

The EEA turns 25



To celebrate its 25th anniversary, EEA gathered management board, scientific committee, national focal points (NFPs), ETC managers and EEA staff to a common seminar to work on “EEA and Eionet Strategy 2021-2030: Evolution and Innovation”, which was followed by a memorable party. The event was organized back to back with meetings of ETC managers and NFPs, with a strong focus on the new EEA and EIONET strategy.

As part of the celebrations the EEA has published [European Environment Agency 1994-2019](#) looking back at the achievements of the Agency and pointing to challenges ahead.



(Image © Ove Caspersen/EEA)

News from our partners

MNHN

Douglas Evans who has been part of the core team since 1999 on secondment from [Scottish Natural Heritage](#) retired on 30 June 2019. He originally came for one year and stayed for twenty! He worked on a variety of issues linked to the Habitats Directive, in particular reporting under Article 17, and on habitat classification. More recently he also worked with the Bern Convention on the implementation of the Emerald network.



Douglas Evans & former ETC/BD manager Dominique Richard
(Photo by Michelle Watson)

Pablo Bolanos joined the core team at the end of June to support the work on reporting under the Nature Directives.

Irene Castaneda-Gonzalez joined the core team at the beginning of July. Post-doc Natura2000 - Common birds, she is mainly located at the Muséum's [Cesco](#) lab. She will update an earlier analysis of the [impact of Natura 2000 on common birds](#) as a contribution to the State of Nature in the EU 2020 report.

Mikael Baudet, who has been the ETC/BD assistant database management and IT support since 2013, left the Muséum at the end of May.



NCA-CR

Two reports on the single planet

The [sixth Global Environment Outlook](#) produced by the [United Nations Environment](#) (formerly UNEP) provides a clear prognosis of what will happen if people continue with business as usual and a set of recommended actions to put things right. The theme, *Healthy Planet, Healthy People*, highlights the inextricable link between the environment and survival and progress of the human civilization.

The state of global biodiversity at all its three main levels (genes/species/ecosystems) is at its most perilous point in human history and the decline is accelerating. This is a main message from the report entitled [Global assessment on biodiversity and ecosystem services](#) and elaborated by the [Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services](#) (IPBES).

The Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic's staff contributed to elaboration of the both reports acting as coordinating lead author, reviewer or editor.

Publications

The following selected publications are from the EEA, ETC/BD and its partner organisations.

Mapping Europe's Ecosystems



The EEA has published a briefing on Mapping Europe's ecosystems which describes the work to produce maps of ecosystem types.

What can the birds tell us?



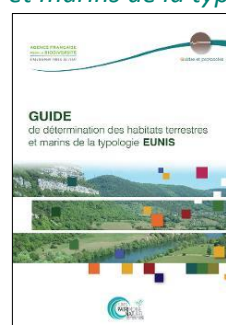
Grégoire Loïs from the MNHN's Cescio and formerly a member of the ETC/BD core team has recently published '[Ce que les oiseaux ont à nous dire](#)', a book which examines what birds can tell us about the environment based on a mix of science and personnel anecdotes (in French).

Attitudes of Europeans to biodiversity



A new [Eurobarometer](#) survey on the Attitudes of Europeans to biodiversity reveals that Europeans are increasingly concerned about the state of our natural world. Results are summarised in a [leaflet](#). The results will be used to update the SEBI indicator dedicated to Public awareness.

Guide de détermination des habitats terrestres et marins de la typologie EUNIS



The [French Biodiversity Agency](#) has just published a key with descriptions and photographs of the EUNIS habitats occurring in France. It can be downloaded from the [agency's website](#) (in French).



Drivers of conservation success in the EU



A new study by the [Institute for European Environmental Policy](#) and partners, including ETC/BD partner Ecologic, for the European Commission set out to identify the main success factors underpinning conservation success stories relating to the habitats and species that are the focus of the EU nature directives (i.e. Birds Directive and Habitats Directive). The study draws on Member State monitoring and reporting data and 53 in-depth case studies across the EU. The report can be downloaded from [DG Environment's website](#).

ETC/BD Technical Papers and Working papers

The ETC/BD and its predecessors have produced many reports over the past 20 years. A selection of these reports is now being made available on our website in the [ETC/BD Technical papers and Working papers](#) section.

This newsletter is produced twice a year.

If you have any contributions for the next issue of this newsletter, please forward them to Muriel Vincent (muriel.vincent@mnhn.fr)

Visit our website at:

<https://www.eionet.europa.eu/etcs/etc-bd>

We wish you a pleasant summer holiday!



Greece