



ETC/BD Technical paper 3/2021: Protected area management in the EU - Supporting the advancement of the Trans-European Nature Network

ANNEX I: Detailed survey

Final questionnaire on protected area management in the European Union (Version: 30th April 2021)

Participating countries and executing entity (planned): Austria, Czechia, Slovakia, France, Spain, Netherlands, Sweden, Germany, Portugal, Denmark, Romania, Greece

Introduction

The new EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 entails ambitious goals to further advance the protection of Europe's nature. One of the central elements of the strategy targets the increase of protected area coverage on land and sea as well as the dedicated designation of strictly protected areas. Another focus lies on the connectivity between the natural European land- and seascape: until 2030, the European protected areas shall be part of a broader Trans European Nature Network (TEN-N), which also requires transboundary cooperation.

A wealth of information on European **terrestrial and marine protected areas** (e.g. size, status, location and biodiversity) is available, particularly through a great body of research and extensive monitoring and reporting activities. Still, many aspects – especially qualitative aspects regarding the practical implementation and management on national and sub-national level – as well as the underlying reasons for similarities and discrepancies among Member States are often still unknown.

This questionnaire intends to **explore the national realities for Member States, their individual approaches, challenges and successes** in the management of protected areas and focuses on six individual blocks to gather in-depth insights on current practices:

- (1) Designation procedures
- (2) Connectivity
- (3) Transboundary sites
- (4) Management effectiveness
- (5) Other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs)
- (6) EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030

The results of this survey shall foster the implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030. Moreover, the survey further aims to collect specific **needs of Member States or single regions to be addressed by the EU** to support a successful national implementation of the conservation targets of the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030. This work on protected areas complements other ongoing work of the European Commission, for example the ongoing process on the biogeographical seminars and retrieving national pledges.

In case of any technical questions you can contact Rebecca Noebel (rebecca.noebel@ecologic.eu).

GENERAL INFORMATION

In representation of which country are you taking part in this survey?

Which institution are you representing?

BLOCK 1: DESIGNATION PROCEDURES

The term 'protected area' covers a variety of designations given to parcels of land and bodies of water by national legislation. In Europe, more than 470 different types of designation (including Natura 2000 sites, UNESCO Biosphere Reserves, IUCN protected areas and many more) exist. Some of the best known designation categories identified by IUCN are: Strict Nature Reserve, national park, regional park, wilderness area, nature park, nature reserve or, natural monument. Additionally, there are many different reasons and priorities to designate protected areas.

This block aims to get a deeper understanding of country specific designations procedures as well as its practical effects on landscape level (e.g. on the size of protected areas) and underlying reasoning.

DESIGNATION APPROACHES

Please note: For information on existing CDDA statistics, please see [Eionet portal](#) and [dashboard statistics](#) stemming from the previous data collection period in 2020.

1. Which of the designation categories used in the country are most relevant for nature conservation?

e.g. IUCN categories such as Protected Landscape/Seascape, National Park, other national designation categories

Why are these the most relevant Protected area designation categories? Please specify as far as possible.

e.g. comparability, aligned with international targets, historically grown, degree of strictness

Do these most common national designation categories correspond to IUCN management categories? If yes, please specify.

Are there specific designation categories for forests and are these reported in CDDA?

2. What is the approach in your country for designating protected areas: to increase areas, are existing sites expanded or are new sites created and designated?

What are the underlying reasons behind this approach?

What are the effects of the most common designation practices on the size, number and connectedness of protected areas in the country?

e.g. practice to rather designate new site leads to many smaller protected areas that are often adjacent to other protected areas

3. What are the key differences between the designation approaches for nationally designated areas and Natura 2000?

4. What priorities have been identified for the future development of protected areas in your country, such as improved criteria for the quality of sites, etc.? Please specify.

<i>Quality criteria:</i> <i>as a possible example, please see information on priorities in Germany</i>
<i>Other standards:</i>

5. Do your nationally designated sites have consistently specific conservation objectives and related conservation measures in place? And if not, what is the main reason for this? Please specify.

PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES

6. What are purposes/objectives of your nationally designated protected areas? Multiple answers are eligible
- protection of habitats*
 - protection of species*
 - protection of habitats and species*
 - representativity*
 - uniqueness*
 - cultural heritage*
 - bio-cultural heritage (e.g. old pin vineyards, old orchards)*
 - mitigating climate change*
 - cross-border cooperation*
 - improve connectivity between sites*
 - protection of ecosystem services:*

- landscape value*
- recreational value*
- other:* _____
- sustainable management activities (e.g. agriculture)*
- other I:* _____
- other II:* _____
- other III:* _____

Which of the above identified purposes/objectives are the five most relevant?

7. Are you aware of any best **practice examples** on designation procedures from your country or other countries in-or outside the EU, e.g. from the Emerald Network? Please provide links if possible.

8. What additional guidance on designation procedures would you need/welcome from the EU?

Which formats would be most helpful for you?

e.g. online platform for exchange, guidance documents, training, workshops

BLOCK 2: CONNECTIVITY

Natural landscapes in Europe are scattered across the entire continent in disconnected fragments. However, connectivity between land- and seascapes is vital to maintain healthy species, communities and ecosystems as well as large-scale ecological and evolutionary processes (e.g. such as gene flow, migration and species shifts) rely on it (UNEP-WCMC et al., 2018). The importance of connected land- and seascapes becomes even more relevant with changing climate conditions. A change in climate can lead to a change in species mobility or changes in species abundances, distribution and composition, among other impacts (IPBES, 2019). One of the most important instruments to maintain or renew connectivity across a land- and seascape as well as across boundaries of European Member States are protected areas.

This block therefore seeks to gain insights in current country specific approaches on this subject and get an understanding of existing challenges, success factors and monitoring schemes.

1. How is connectivity of protected areas defined/understood in your country?

Terrestrial connectivity	Marine connectivity

2. How is connectivity between protected areas promoted and implemented at...
... national level?

... sub-national/regional level?

... local level?

Is connectivity a criterion in the designation process? If yes, how is it ensured?

e.g. via management objectives, integration into regional designation requirements

3. How are policies and other instruments currently contributing to increase connectivity among terrestrial and marine protected areas at
... national level?

Name and specify policies and instruments

... sub-national/regional level?

Name and specify policies and instruments

... local level?

Name and specify policies and instruments

... other?

Name and specify policies and instruments

4. Is a monitoring system in place to assess / identify connectivity and respective gaps in your country? If yes, please name existing datasets and responsible entities.

Name and specify policies and instruments

5. Which are the main **barriers** (e.g. by regulatory barriers or administrative entities/borders, lack of cooperation between sites and other actors (for instance from agriculture, fisheries or forestry)) to ensure connectivity between protected areas and beyond? And what are **solutions** to overcome these barriers?

Main barriers	Possible solutions

6. Which are the main success factors to ensure connectivity between protected areas and beyond?

Terrestrial connectivity	Marine connectivity
<i>e.g. local networks, specific cooperation schemes, dedicated funding options</i>	<i>e.g. local or regional networks, specific cooperation schemes, dedicated funding options</i>

7. Are you aware of any **best practice examples** on connectivity from your country or other countries in-or outside the EU, e.g. from the Emerald Network? Please provide links if possible.

8. What additional guidance on connectivity related issues would you need/welcome from the EU?

Which formats would be most helpful for you?

e.g. online platform for exchange, guidance documents, training, workshop

BLOCK 3: TRANSBOUNDARY SITES

Protected areas that are joint across national borders and Exclusive Economic Zones have a long tradition in Europe. The oldest protected areas joining borders go back until the early 20th century. Situated in the Alps, the Italian Parco nazionale dello Stelvio (130 734 km²) and the Swiss National Park (17 032 km²) form one of the biggest connected protected areas in Europe. In total, there are over 4 300 instances of adjacent protected areas across European borders, which implies an overall border coverage of around 50 % (EEA, 2020).

In this context, this block intends to gather information on the country specific approaches on transboundary cooperation as well as on challenges and successes.

1. How is transboundary protection considered in the design of terrestrial and marine protected areas (e.g. via strategic approaches during the designation process, or enlarging and connecting existing sites, etc.) at...

... national level?

... sub-national/regional level?

... local level?

2. Does an inventory of transboundary sites exist on national level? If this is the case, please specify.

3. How is the cooperation between the neighboring countries organised? Please specify as far as possible.

4. Does the cooperation differ between neighboring countries in general and specifically between EU Member State neighbors and non-EU Member States? And if yes, why?

e.g. administrative differences, different interests and priorities, generally country specific due to...

5. Which are the main barriers (*e.g. lack of cooperation/ interest of neighboring countries, different designation procedures, geographical hindrances*) that hinder transboundary connectivity between protected areas? And what are possible solutions to overcome these barriers?

Main barriers	Possible solutions

6. What is the most common approach on transboundary cooperation: (a) joining existing sites, (b) enlarging one existing border PA with area from the neighboring country or (c) jointly designate new transboundary protected areas? What is the underlying reason?

7. Are there significant differences between marine and terrestrial transboundary protection efforts? If yes, please specify.

e.g. other forms of cooperation, different level of entities involved, generally larger marine transboundary sites....

8. In your opinion, is it possible to achieve harmonisation with the Emerald Network countries, in particular in relation to transboundary issues? If yes, how? *(Please ignore this question if you do not border a non-EU country)*

9. Are you aware of any **best practice examples** on transboundary connectivity from your country or other countries/regions in-or outside the EU, e.g. from the Emerald Network? Please provide links if possible.

10. What additional guidance on transboundary related issues would you need/welcome from the EU?

Which formats would be most helpful for you?

e.g. online platform for exchange, guidance documents, training

BLOCK 4: EFFECTIVENESS OF PROTECTED AREAS

Based on the Protected Area Management Effectiveness (PAME) assessments and reports available, a range of methodologies are currently used by EU Member States to assess effectiveness. However, only a relatively small share of Natura 2000 sites have been assessed. By 2015 the EU and its Member States, as parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), committed to assessing management effectiveness of 60 % of the total area of protected areas (EEA 2020).

Therefore, this block seeks to gather insights into the implementation and current practices on assessing effectiveness of Protected area management.

1. What national / regional / local approaches and methods are in place to measure the effectiveness of terrestrial and marine protected areas? Please name and describe those briefly and include a link if available.

Terrestrial protected areas	Marine protected areas
<i>e.g. mandatory/voluntary; standardized or individual methods across regions; assessment steps and stages such as design/planning; adequacy, appropriateness and delivery etc.</i>	

2. To what extent are the approaches/method mentioned above are implemented in your country?

e.g. number of PA sites covered, type of PA covered etc.

3. Are there challenges in implementing these approaches/methods? If so, what are these challenges and what are (potential) solutions to overcome those?

Challenges	Solutions

4. What is the degree of awareness regarding the [IUCN WCPA framework and guidelines](#) for assessing protected area management effectiveness (PAME) at implementing level (low – medium – high)? Please explain why.

very low
 low
 medium
 high
 very high

5. From a personal perspective, what are the most important factors that either support or impede the effectiveness of protected area management in your country? Examples:

governance, financial/human resources, knowledge and capacity, data availability etc.
Please specify far as possible.

Impeding factors	Supporting factors

6. Are you aware of any **best practice examples** in-or outside the EU, e.g. from the Emerald Network? Please provide links if possible.

7. What additional guidance on management effectiveness would you need/welcome from the EU?

Which formats would be most helpful for you?

e.g. online platform for exchange, guidance documents, training, workshop

BLOCK 5: OTHER EFFECTIVE AREA-BASED CONSERVATION MEASURES (OECMs)

Other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) are a new conservation approach, separate from recognised protected areas, where effective conservation is mainly achieved as a by-product of other management objectives. Deriving from Global Biodiversity Framework of the CBD 10th Conference of the Parties, OECMs were later defined as: 'A geographically defined area other than a Protected Area, which is governed and managed in ways that achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for the in-situ conservation of biodiversity, with associated ecosystem functions and services and where applicable, cultural, spiritual, socio-economic, and other locally relevant values' (CBD, 2018). For more background information on OECMs in Europe, please have a look at [BISE](#).

As OECMs also gained additional attention in the new EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, this block aims to gather insights into the status regarding OECMs in the EU.

1. Are OECMs already considered in conservation management? And if so, how? Please specify for ...

... national level

e.g. through separate/integrated management plans, existing guidelines, definitions

... regional level

e.g. through separate/integrated management plans, existing guidelines, definitions

... local level

e.g. through separate/integrated management plans, existing guidelines, definitions

2. Are there current assessments on identifying suitable OECMs at landscape level? If yes, which methodologies / guidelines are used?

3. How is the current knowledge-base / awareness on OECMs among decision makers, practitioners and land users in your country?

- very low*
- low*
- medium*
- high*
- very high*

How is knowledge distributed among practitioners or decision makers? If yes, which are the main channels or formats used?

e.g. workshop, brochure, training

4. From your perception, what could be fitting quality criteria for selecting OECMs in your country? Please specify as far as possible.

e.g. on clear justifications and conservation objectives and measures

5. What are or could be the main areas that potentially would be recognised as OECMs in your country?

e.g. river basin and flood management, military training areas, conservation corridors

6. What are or could be the main barriers and possible solutions of implementing OECMs in your country?

Main barriers	Possible solutions

Can potential conflicts of interest arise? And if it is the case, which could be the main conflict areas?

e.g. conflicts of management and objectives

7. Are you aware of any **best practice examples** from your country or other countries in-or outside the EU, e.g. from the Emerald Network? Please provide links if possible.

8. What additional guidance on OECMs issues would you need/welcome from the EU?

BLOCK 6: BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY FOR 2030

Concerning the establishment of protected areas, the new EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 raises the ambition to further increase the area and, for the first time as such, also the strictness of protected areas on land and sea. This requires new approaches and strategies as well as new monitoring schemes on national and EU level.

This block of questions therefore aims to get an overview of national perspectives on this task and also wishes to identify occurring or foreseen challenges and respective requirement to overcome them.

1. What are **main challenges** and **possible solutions** for reaching the following Biodiversity Strategy targets for 2030 regarding ...

- a. protecting 30 % of terrestrial area of the EU?

Challenge	Solution

- b. protecting 30 % of marine area of the EU?

Challenge	Solution

- c. strictly protecting 10 % of terrestrial area of the EU?

Challenge	Solution

- d. strictly protecting 10 % of marine area of the EU?

Challenge	Solution

e. contributing to the Trans European Nature Network?

Challenge	Solution

2. How is “strict protection” currently understood in your country?

Is this a concept that you use within your national system?

What is your current thinking on possible implementation options of the new target on strict protection in your country?

3. Does your county have additional instruments, guidelines, tools or concepts to address/support the targets of the new EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030? If yes, please specify.

4. Are you aware of any **best practice examples** from your country or other countries in-or outside the EU, e.g. from the Emerald Network? Please provide links if possible.

5. Do you have additional points you would like to raise?

BLOCK 7: ADDITIONAL CASE STUDIES AND BEST PRACTICES

Are there any good practices and case studies or protected areas and OECMS in your or other countries you would like to share with other EU countries?



References

CBD, 2018 COP Decision 14/8 on Protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures. Available at: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-14/cop-14-dec-08-en.pdf>

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