



Birds Directive

Policy Review



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Birds Directive

Policy Review
<p>Name/Type of the Legal Act or Policy</p> <p>DIRECTIVE 2009/147/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL, of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (replacing Council Directive 79/409/EEC of 2 April 1979). This Directive replaces Directive 79/409/EEC of 2 April 1979 (more commonly known as the Birds Directive), which was the oldest EU legislative text relating to nature. However, the modifications made are purely formal. The Birds Directive established for the first time a general system for the protection of all species of wild birds naturally occurring in the territory of the Union. It also recognises that wild birds, which include a large number of migratory species, are a shared heritage of the EU Member States and that their conservation, to be effective, requires cooperation on a global scale.</p> <p>Amending Act: Council Directive 2013/17/EU of 13 May 2013 adapting certain directives in the field of environment, by reason of the accession of the Republic of Croatia (entry into force 1.7.2013)</p>
<p>Entry into force</p> <p>Directive 79/409/EEC: 06.04.1979 Directive 2009/147/EC : 15.2.2010</p>
<p>Departments/Units in charge</p> <p>DG ENV, Dir. B Natural Capital, 3. Nature</p>
<p>Common Implementation strategy (CIS processes)</p> <p>At EU level, implementation of the Habitats and Birds Directive is supported by the Habitats Committee (under Art. 20 and 21 of the Habitat Directive) resp. by the Ornis Committee (under Art. 16 of the Birds Directive) which comprise representatives from all member states and the EU Commission. Decisions are made with a qualified majority (using weighted votes). In its capacity as a scientific and technical advisory committee, the Habitats Committee also includes the Habitats Scientific Working Group. The Habitats Committee assists the European Commission in the implementation of the Habitats Directive and is responsible for delivering an opinion on the draft list of LIFE–Nature projects to be financed every year. The Ornis Committee assists the Commission in the implementation of the Birds Directive.</p>
<p>Administrative body handling implementation in MS</p> <p><i>German Implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directive:</i> Ministry of Environment (BMUB) in Germany coordinates and designates N2000 areas in EEZ, States (Länder) designate in their respective areas of jurisdiction. Whether or not the drafting of management plans for N2000 sites is obligatory depends on the state regulation. The responsible administrative</p>

body for management plans for the EEZ is the BfN. The responsible administrative bodies for drafting the management plans for terrestrial N2000 areas are the environmental ministries or agencies of the states

Transposition to UK Legislation: In the UK, the provisions of the Birds Directive are implemented through the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), [the Conservation \(Natural Habitats, & c.\) Regulations 2010](#) (as amended); the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985; the Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (Northern Ireland) Order 1985; the [Conservation \(Natural Habitats, &c.\) \(Northern Ireland\) Regulations 1995](#) (as amended) the [Offshore Marine Conservation \(Natural Habitats & c.\) Regulations 2007](#) as well as other legislation related to the uses of land and sea.

Austria: Implementation of the Birds Directive is handled by the laws of the sub-national states (Die Vogelschutz-Richtlinie wird in Österreich in den jeweiligen Landesnaturschutzgesetzen umgesetzt).

Main Objective

To guarantee the conservation and govern the exploitation of wild birds naturally occurring in the European territory in order to maintain their population at a satisfactory level, or to adapt their population to that level.

Art. 1.1: This Directive relates to the conservation of all species of naturally occurring birds in the wild state in the European territory of the Member States to which the Treaty applies. It covers the protection, management and control of these species and lays down rules for their exploitation.

Art. 1.2: It shall apply to birds, their eggs, nests and habitats.

Art. 2: Member States shall take the requisite measures to maintain the population of the species referred to in Art. 1 at a level which corresponds in particular to ecological, scientific and cultural requirements, while taking account of economic and recreational requirements, or to adapt the population of these species to that level.

Other objectives/Key concepts/key elements of the legislation

Principles of *wise use and ecologically balanced control* of the species of birds (Art. 7)

Member States of the European Union (EU) shall take measures to guarantee the conservation and govern the exploitation of wild birds naturally occurring in the European territory in order to maintain their population at a satisfactory level, or to adapt their population to that level. Definition of wild bird: bird species naturally occurring in the wild state in the European Territory of the Member States to which the Treaty applies.

Protection of habitats: The disappearance or deterioration of habitats represents a threat to the conservation of wild birds. Their protection is therefore essential. To preserve, maintain or re-establish the biotopes and habitats of birds, Member States shall: designate protected areas; ensure the upkeep and management of habitats in accordance with ecological needs; and re-establish destroyed biotopes and create biotopes.

Special protection areas: Member States shall create special protection areas (SPAs) for threatened species of birds and for migratory birds (see Annex I). These areas are to be situated in the birds' natural area of distribution and may include wintering and nesting grounds or staging posts along migration routes. Member States shall pay particular attention to wetlands, which are in decline across Europe. They shall also create conditions favourable to the survival or reproduction of the species occurring in special protection areas. To this end, they shall take the necessary steps to avoid pollution or deterioration of habitats or any disturbances affecting the birds. They shall also assess the impact of projects likely to have a significant effect on the designated areas and take appropriate measures to avoid them. The special protection areas (SPAs), together with the [special areas of conservation \(SACs\) under the Habitats Directive](#) (92/43/EEC), form the Natura 2000 European network of protected ecological sites.

Protection of wild birds: This Directive establishes a general system of protection for all species of wild birds occurring in European territory. It prohibits in particular: deliberate destruction or capture of wild birds; destruction of, or damage to, nests; taking or keeping eggs even if empty; practices which deliberately disturb the birds and which jeopardise the conservation of the species; and trade in and the keeping of live or dead species the hunting and capture of which are not permitted (this prohibition also applies to any parts or derivatives of a bird). Under certain conditions, Member States may derogate from the provisions laid down for the protection of wild birds. However, the consequences of such derogations must not be incompatible with the conservation objectives specified in the Directive. Member States must promote research for the purposes of the management, protection and wise exploitation of the species of wild birds occurring in the European territory (see Annex V).

Hunting: Species whose numbers, distribution and reproductive rate allow may be hunted. However, the practice of hunting must comply with certain principles: the number of birds taken must not jeopardise the maintenance at a satisfactory level of the population of species which may be hunted; species are not to be hunted during periods of breeding or rearing; migratory species are not to be hunted during their return to their breeding grounds; and methods for the large-scale or non-selective killing of birds are prohibited (see Annex IV). The list of species which may be hunted is provided in Annex II (Part A gives the list of species which may be hunted throughout the EU, and Part B the list of species which may be hunted in certain countries only).

Terminology

Conservation status: the sum of the influences acting on a natural habitat and its typical species that may affect its long-term natural distribution, structure and functions as well as the long-term survival of its typical species within the territory referred to in Art. 2.

Site: geographically defined area whose extent is clearly delineated;

Special area of conservation: a site of Community importance designated by the Member States through a statutory, administrative and/or contractual act where the necessary conservation measures are applied for the maintenance or restoration, at a favourable

conservation status, of the natural habitats and/or the populations of the species for which the site is designated;

Favourable conservation status: The maintenance or restoration of “favourable conservation status” (FCS) is the overall objective for all habitat types and species of Community interest. Such species are listed in Annexes II, IV and V to the Directive. In simple terms, FCS could be described as a situation where a habitat type or species is doing sufficiently well in terms of quality and quantity and has good prospects of continuing to do so in future. The fact that a habitat or species is not threatened (i.e. not faced by any direct extinction risk) does not necessarily mean that it has favourable conservation status. The target of the Directive is defined in a positive way, as a ‘favourable’ situation to be reached and maintained, which needs to be defined based on the best available knowledge. Therefore, the obligation of a Member State FCS for species is defined in general terms in Art. 1(i) of the Habitats Directive.

Derogations

While the nature directives apply to the Spanish and Portuguese outermost regions (Canaries, Madeira, Azores), and are voluntarily applies by Spain to Ceuta and Melilla, they do not apply to the French outermost regions.

Types of management measures

EU Management plans for huntable bird species considered to be in unfavourable status: The "Birds Directive" allows for certain species to be hunted, which are listed in Annex II of the Directive. Since the adoption of the Directive in 1979, regular monitoring reports from BirdLife International are indicating that certain huntable species are considered to have an unfavourable conservation status. The Commission is therefore supporting the preparation of [management plans](#) for several species listed in Annex II. These draft framework plans have been extended to EU-25 and define clear management measures. It will be the Member States who will ultimately have responsibility for implementation the plans at national level but this will be made much more feasible with the support of the key stakeholders, including FACE and BirdLife. These plans will need to be regularly monitored and updated in the light of new scientific knowledge.

The European Commission has launched a new '[EU Cormorant Platform](#)' website as part of an EU project on the sustainable management of Cormorant Populations (Corman). This year (2015) the European Commission is carrying out a “Fitness Check” of the [Birds Directive](#) (2009/147/EC) and [Habitats Directive](#) (92/43/EEC) as part of its ongoing [Regulatory Fitness and Performance](#) (REFIT) initiative. The REFIT initiative focuses on reducing ‘regulatory burden’, so as to meet EU policy and regulatory goals at least cost and best achieve the benefits of EU regulation. “Fitness Checks” are comprehensive evidence-based policy evaluations that are intended to identify excessive administrative burdens, overlaps, gaps, and inconsistencies. The Fitness Check will include online consultations and interviews with stakeholders across the EU-28 planned for the first half of 2015. Initial findings will be presented at a stakeholder conference in September 2015, with a final report envisaged in early 2016.

Spatial coverage

This Directive relates to the conservation of all species of naturally occurring birds in the wild state in the European territory of the Member States to which the Treaty applies. It covers the protection, management and control of these species and lays down rules for their exploitation. It shall apply to birds, their eggs, nests and habitats.

Reporting units – what are the specific transposition requirements

1. Member States shall forward to the Commission every three years, starting from 7 April 1981, a report on the implementation of national provisions taken under this Directive.

2. The Commission shall prepare every three years a composite report based on the information referred to in paragraph 1. That part of the draft report covering the information supplied by a Member State shall be forwarded to the authorities of the Member State in question for verification. The final version of the report shall be forwarded to the Member States.

Art. 12 of the Birds Directive requires that Member States regularly prepare and submit reports on progress made in national implementation of the Birds Directive. In 2011, the Commission, in agreement with Member States, revised the reporting procedure and frequency in order to focus reporting obligations on the status and trends of bird populations, thereby streamlining reporting under Art. 12 of the Birds Directive with reporting on conservation status under Art. 17 of the Habitats Directive. Art. 12 reports prepared by Member States comprise two sections: (a) general information about the implementation of the Birds Directive, including main achievements, classification of SPAs, SPA management plans and details of any introductions of non-native bird species; and (b) reports on the size and trend of populations and distribution of individual bird taxa, including sections for reporting on the main threats and pressures affecting taxa for which SPAs have been classified (designated 'SPA trigger species'), as well as their coverage by the SPA network and relevant conservation measures taken. Checklists of the bird taxa covered by the Birds Directive and their occurrence per Member State were prepared in consultation with Member States, and are available on the [Art. 12 Reference Portal](#). Reporting was by subspecies or other subspecific units where subspecies are listed in Annex I of the Directive, for: subspecies for which international Species Action Plans (SAPs), Management Plans (MPs) or Brief Management Statements (BMSs) have been prepared (15); subspecies or distinct flyway populations listed in Column A of Table 1 of the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) 'Status of the Populations of Migratory Waterbirds (2009-2012) (16); subspecies or distinct populations of species classified as globally threatened or near threatened, according to the IUCN 2010 Red List. Member States also reported on the presence status of bird taxa (i.e. present, newly arriving and extinct). The statistics, figures and tables presented in this report are based on taxa that Member States reported as nationally 'present' or 'extinct after 1980', i.e. extinct after the Birds Directive came into force (17).

Management unit

This Directive relates to the conservation of all species of naturally occurring birds in the wild state in the European territory of the Member States to which the Treaty applies.

Timelines

Reporting obligations under the Birds Directive, are set out in Art. 12, which requires reports on implementation of the Directive every three years. Until recently, the reporting cycles of the two nature Directives were not synchronised, making it difficult to get an overview of implementation in the broad sense. In 2011, Member States and the Commission agreed that the Art. 12 report for the Birds Directive should become more similar, in terms of format and timing, to the Art. 17 Report for the Habitats Directive. The 10th Art. 12 report (2008–2012) is the first in the new format and in the future will be repeated at six yearly intervals, allowing simultaneous analysis of the results of both Directives' reports at both national and EU levels.

Integration/coordination issues with other related pieces of legislation

Under the Birds Directive Member States select the most suitable sites and designate them directly as Special Protection Areas (SPAs). The special protection areas (SPAs), together with the special areas of conservation (SACs) under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), form the Natura 2000 European network of protected ecological sites.

Natura 2000 is the centrepiece of EU nature & biodiversity policy. It is an EU wide network of nature protection areas established under the 1992 Habitats Directive. The aim of the network is to assure the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats. It is comprised of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) designated by Member States under the Habitats Directive, and also incorporates Special Protection Areas (SPAs) which they designate under the 1979 Birds Directive. Natura 2000 is not a system of strict nature reserves where all human activities are excluded. Whereas the network will certainly include nature reserves most of the land is likely to continue to be privately owned and the emphasis will be on ensuring that future management is sustainable, both ecologically and economically. The establishment of this network of protected areas also fulfils a Community obligation under the UN Convention on Biological Diversity. Natura 2000 applies to Birds Sites and to Habitats Sites, which are divided into biogeographical regions. It also applies to the marine environment.

Coordination issues with the EU Biodiversity Strategy

The Birds Directive is directly linked to the EU Biodiversity Strategy – Target 2: Fully Implement the Habitat and Birds Directive. Together these two Directives form the cornerstone of the EU's biodiversity policy, enabling all 28 EU Member States to work together, within the same legal framework, to conserve Europe's most endangered and valuable species and habitats across their entire natural range within the EU. The Habitats and Birds Directives make a major contribution to the EU's biodiversity target. They contribute directly through the conservation of targeted habitats and species, which include a high proportion of semi-natural habitats and threatened species (especially amongst vertebrates). Many more species are protected indirectly, through the diverse and species-rich habitats in the Natura 2000 network. The Directives also support all the targets of the

EU's Biodiversity Strategy, especially the restoration of ecosystem services under Target 2. However, the Directives alone cannot deliver the EU 2020 goal of halting the loss of biodiversity without complementary action being taken, especially in other key policy sectors such as agriculture.

Relevance to ecosystems/habitats?

Ecosystems/habitats addressed explicitly by the legal act/policy: This Directive relates to the conservation of all species of naturally occurring birds in the wild state in the European territory of the Member States to which the Treaty applies. It covers the protection, management and control of these species and lays down rules for their exploitation. It shall apply to birds, their eggs, nests and habitats. The European Union has nine biogeographical regions (Alpine, Atlantic, Black Sea, Boreal, Continental, Macaronesian, Mediterranean, Pannonian, Steppic) , each with its own characteristic blend of vegetation, climate and geology. Under the [Birds Directive](#) Member States select the most suitable sites and designate them directly as Special Protection Areas (SPAs). These sites then automatically become part of the Natura 2000 network.

Ecosystems affected by relevant policies: By relating to conservation in “all European territory” the directive implicitly includes all marine, terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems – forests, lagoons, wetlands, grasslands, rivers, etc.

Links to Aquatic Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services: Clear links to ecosystem services. The EU Birds and Habitats Directives represent the most ambitious and large-scale initiative ever undertaken to conserve Europe's natural heritage. [State of nature in the EU- Results from reporting under the nature directives 2007-2012 report](#) highlights the importance of Healthy ecosystems for providing society with a wealth of valuable ecosystem services, such as fresh water, carbon storage, pollinating insects etc., protection against floods, avalanches and coastal erosion, as well as ample opportunities for tourism and recreation. The benefits that flow from the Natura 2000 network alone are estimated to be worth in the order of €200 to €300billion/year.

Drivers

Definition of Drivers: The policy does not seem to distinguish between Pressures and Drivers – the ‘list of threats and pressures’ available on the reference portal (see 8.3) contains both human activities (i.e. agriculture or transportation) and direct environmental effects (i.e. pollution). See [list of Threats & Pressures used for reporting under Art. 12](#).

Drivers addressed in legal text: See 8.3. Urban sprawl and transport networks have fragmented and reduced bird habitats; intensive agriculture, forestry and fisheries and the use of pesticides have diminished food supplies; and there has been a need to regulate hunting to ensure that it does not damage populations. Factors which may affect the numbers of birds: repercussions of man's activities and in particular the destruction and pollution of their habitats, capture and killing by man and the trade resulting from such practices.

Pressures

Definition Pressures: The policy does not seem to distinguish between Pressures and Drivers – the ‘list of threats and pressures’ available on the reference portal (see 8.2) contains both human activities (i.e. agriculture or transportation) and direct environmental effects (i.e. pollution).

Pressures addressed: Agriculture; Forestry; Sylviculture; Mining, extraction of materials and energy production; Transportation and service corridors; Urbanisation; residential and commercial development; Biological resource use other than agriculture & forestry; Human intrusions and disturbances; pollution; Invasive, other problematic species and genes; Natural System modifications; Natural biotic and abiotic processes (without catastrophes), Geological events, natural catastrophes, Climate change, Threats and pressures from outside the EU territory (see 8.3 and [list of pressures and threats](#) used for the assessment – The same list is used for the Habitats and Birds Directive)

Indicators: Section on pressures and threats from Art. 12 reporting guidelines: Section 7. Main pressures and threats.

Code	Meaning	Comment
H	High importance/ impact	Important direct or immediate influence and/or acting over large areas.
M	Medium importance/ impact	Medium direct or immediate influence, mainly indirect influence and/or acting over moderate part of the area/acting only regionally.
L	Low importance/ impact	Low direct or immediate influence, indirect influence and/or acting over small part of the area/ acting only regionally.

Assessment of Environmental State

Difficult to distinguish between environmental state and status within the directive. Every six years, Member States are asked to report back to the European Commission on the conservation status of some 2,000 species and habitat types protected under the two EU Directives, in order to see how well they are faring across the EU. The results for the period 2007–2012 were published in May 2015 in the Commission’s ‘[The State of Nature](#)’ report.

Assessment of Status

Mid-Term Review of EU Biodiversity Strategy: The aim of the mid-term review is to take stock of progress in relation to the targets and actions under the EU biodiversity strategy to 2020. Identifying gaps in implementation is necessary in order to inform decision-makers of areas in which increased efforts are needed to ensure that the EU meets its biodiversity commitments by 2020. The 2015 mid-term review of the EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 consists of a Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on "[The Mid-Term Review of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020](#)" and the more detailed

Commission Staff Working Document "[EU assessment of progress in implementing the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 part 1, part 2, part 3](#)". Contributions from the Member States to the 2015 Mid-Term Review, based on their 5th national reports to the Convention on Biological Diversity, are compiled in a [separate document](#). For a summary of progress towards the 2020 biodiversity targets see the [leaflet](#). The latest report on the state of nature in the EU shows that the number of species and habitats in secure/favourable or improved conservation status has increased slightly since the 2010 baseline. However, many habitats and species that were already in unfavourable status remain so, and some are deteriorating further. While much has been achieved since 2011 in carrying out the actions under this target, the most important challenges remain the completion of the Natura 2000 marine network, ensuring the effective management of Natura 2000 sites, and securing the necessary finance to support the Natura 2000 network.

Fitness Check: This year (2015) the European Commission is carrying out a “Fitness Check” of the [Birds Directive](#) (2009/147/EC) and [Habitats Directive](#) (92/43/EEC) as part of its ongoing [Regulatory Fitness and Performance](#) (REFIT) initiative. The REFIT initiative focuses on reducing ‘regulatory burden’, so as to meet EU policy and regulatory goals at least cost and best achieve the benefits of EU regulation. “Fitness Checks” are comprehensive evidence-based policy evaluations that are intended to identify excessive administrative burdens, overlaps, gaps, and inconsistencies. The Fitness Check will include online consultations and interviews with stakeholders across the EU-28 planned for the first half of 2015. Initial findings will be presented at a stakeholder conference in September 2015, with a final report envisaged in early 2016.

Data

Art. 12 reports prepared by Member States comprise two sections: (a) general information about the implementation of the Birds Directive, including main achievements, classification of SPAs, SPA management plans and details of any introductions of non-native bird species; and (b) reports on the size and trend of populations and distribution of individual bird taxa, including sections for reporting on the main threats and pressures affecting taxa for which SPAs have been classified (designated 'SPA trigger species'), as well as their coverage by the SPA network and relevant conservation

Funding

LIFE Programme: For the purposes of LIFE funding, the Ornithological Committee has adopted a list of bird species listed in Annex I of the Directive which are considered as priority for funding under the LIFE programme. This list includes all globally threatened species that regularly occur in the European Union. Potential funding opportunities for Natura2000 in EU budget 2014–2020.

EAFRD: Direct opportunities include, for example, financing a range of Natura 2000 activities in the context of agri-environment-climate and forest-environmental schemes, compensation payments for additional costs and income foregone resulting related to managing agricultural and forest land within Natura 2000 sites, improving knowledge on rural biodiversity, and drawing up Natura 2000 management plans. Furthermore, a great

variety of more indirect opportunities are available, allowing the management of Natura 2000 to be linked with broader rural development efforts, such as promoting organic farming, improving risk management and enhancing business development. These indirect opportunities can provide, for example, support to carrying out certain activities identified in site-specific management plans such as supporting biodiversity-friendly organic farming and branding of local produce from Natura 2000 sites

EMFF: In general, the EMFF Regulation stipulates that where appropriate the specific needs of Natura 2000 areas and the contribution of the programme to the establishment of a coherent network of fish stock recovery areas should be integrated into the EMFF OPs (Art. 18(c) of the Regulation). According to the Regulation, dedicated support in accordance with PAFs is provided for the management, restoration and monitoring of coastal and marine Natura 2000 sites (Art. 40(e)). Support is also foreseen to be given to the preparation, including studies, drawing-up, monitoring and updating of protection and management plans for fishery-related activities relating to Natura 2000 sites (Art. 40(d)). In addition, support is also made available for the management, restoration and monitoring of other marine protected areas (MPAs) to support the implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) (Art. 40(f)). Such general support can also be used, for example, to contribute to maintaining and/or restoring the overall ecological connectivity of the Natura 2000 network. Finally, support is also provided for the uptake of aquaculture methods compatible with biodiversity conservation, including Natura 2000 management requirements (Art. 54). Furthermore, a variety of more indirect opportunities are available, allowing the management of Natura 2000 to be linked with the broader development of fisheries and/or viability of fishing communities. Such opportunities include, for example, the establishment of cooperation between scientists and fishermen, and the diversification of livelihoods in rural communities. While these indirect opportunities do not necessarily cater for all management measures relevant to a site, they can provide support for carrying out certain activities identified in site-specific management plans such as development of Natura 2000 monitoring in the context of broader schemes aimed at monitoring the marine environment.

ERDF: The ERDF will provide several opportunities to fund Natura 2000 during the 2014–2020 period. Dedicated support is possible for the protection of biodiversity and ecosystem services, including Natura 2000. In addition, support is also made available for a range of activities supporting broader sustainable regional development, with possible indirect links to Natura 2000 management. Such indirect measures include, for example, supporting investment in the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change (e.g. nature-based solutions for carbon storage and sequestration, mitigating risks of climate change), protecting, promoting and developing cultural heritage (e.g. Natura 2000 sites) and integrating Natura 2000 related socio-economic opportunities into broader plans to regenerate deprived urban and rural communities.

ESF: The ESF could provide several opportunities to fund Natura 2000 during the 2014–2020 period. Most of the opportunities are not, however, Natura 2000 specific but rather support broader social and economic cohesion, with possible indirect links to Natura 2000 management. Such indirect opportunities include, for example, enhancing the competitiveness of SMEs dealing with Natura 2000 and enhancing Natura 2000 related institutional capacity and efficient public administration.

Horizon2020: Given the scope of Horizon 2020, all opportunities related to financing management activities on Natura 2000 sites need to take place in the research context. However, this allows for a wide range of Natura 2000 measures to be funded, mainly related to the development and testing of new management approaches and/or evaluation of the past Natura 2000 management regime.

Cohesion Fund: The Cohesion Fund will provide a number of opportunities to fund Natura 2000 during the 2014–2020 period. Dedicated support is provided for the protection of biodiversity and ecosystem services (e.g. in the context of green infrastructure). Support is also made available to a range of activities supporting investment in broader sustainable regional development, with possible links to Natura 2000 management. Such indirect measures include, for example, supporting investment in adaptation to climate change (e.g. nature-based solutions and integrating Natura 2000 related socio-economic opportunities into broader plans to regenerate deprived urban and rural communities).

About AQUACROSS

Knowledge, Assessment, and Management for AQUATIC Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services across EU policies (AQUACROSS) aims to support EU efforts to protect aquatic biodiversity and ensure the provision of aquatic ecosystem services. Funded by Europe's Horizon 2020 research programme, AQUACROSS seeks to advance knowledge and application of ecosystem-based management (EBM) for aquatic ecosystems to support the timely achievement of the EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy targets.

Aquatic ecosystems are rich in biodiversity and home to a diverse array of species and habitats, providing numerous economic and societal benefits to Europe. Many of these valuable ecosystems are at risk of being irreversibly damaged by human activities and pressures, including pollution, contamination, invasive species, overfishing and climate change. These pressures threaten the sustainability of these ecosystems, their provision of ecosystem services and ultimately human well-being.

AQUACROSS responds to pressing societal and economic needs, tackling policy challenges from an integrated perspective and adding value to the use of available knowledge. Through advancing science and knowledge; connecting science, policy and business; and supporting the achievement of EU and international biodiversity targets, AQUACROSS aims to improve ecosystem-based management of aquatic ecosystems across Europe.

The project consortium is made up of sixteen partners from across Europe and led by Ecologic Institute in Berlin, Germany.

AQUACROSS PARTNERS

Ecologic Institute (ECOLOGIC) | Germany

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Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (IOC-UNESCO) | France

Wageningen Marine Research (WMR) | Netherlands

University of Natural Resources & Life Sciences, Institute of Hydrobiology and Aquatic Ecosystem Management Austria

Fundación IMDEA Agua (IMDEA) | Spain

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