

NEWS

• STREAMLINING EUROPEAN 2010 BIODIVERSITY INDICATORS (SEBI 2010)

In January 2007, the [SEBI Coordination Team meeting](#) agreed on a selection of a limited number of indicators to be part of the first set of headline indicators, based on the discussions from the November workshop. Twenty five indicators were selected to answer to the 16 headlines indicators. The Co-ordination team aims at a final publication to be ready for the Convention on Biological Diversity's Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) meeting in July. The report will present the SEBI process, the first set of European Headlines indicators (target and storylines, links to other initiatives, gaps and weaknesses) and the documentation forms.

Prior to this publication a consultation process (EIONET and external) will take place from 20 April until 25 May. Access to the report and commenting will be made possible through a tool on the [Clearing House Mechanism](#) website. The report will be downloadable and it will be possible to enter comments on-line.

The next meeting of the 2010 SEBI Co-ordination team is scheduled for the 10 and 11 of May to discuss the next steps of the process.

• NATURA 2000 & THE TWO NATURE DIRECTIVES

When Bulgaria and Romania joined the EU in January 2007 13 new habitats were added to Annex I and 22 species to Annex II of the Habitats Directive, all of which are also listed on Annex IV. A consolidated edition of the annexes of both nature directives have been published in the [Official Journal of the European Union](#) and a summary of the changes can be found on the [ETC-BD website](#).

Bulgaria has classified 88 Special Protection Areas for birds and proposed 180 Sites of Community Importance for other fauna, flora and habitats; to date no proposals have been received from Romania.

A list of Sites of Community Importance for the Pannonian region has been prepared by the ETC/BD and has been circulated by the European Commission for approval by the Member States; updates for the Atlantic, Boreal & Continental regions are underway.

The IT Tool developed by the EEA for the Habitats Directive Article 17 reports was made available in February after a period of testing and refinement.

Further information about Natura 2000, including regularly updated statistics, are available on the [ETC/DB website](#).

• SEIS - SHARED ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION SYSTEM FOR EUROPE

Three times a year, EEA National Focal Points meet during the ['EIONET-NFP'](#) meeting. This is an opportunity for the representatives of the 32 EEA member countries (+ 6 Collaborative countries) to learn about and to share views on the development of the EEA work programme as well as on more strategic issues. It is also the place to discuss with the five European Topic Centres progress on priority data flows on the environmental indicators selected as part of the EEA Core set. During the meeting held on 21-22 February 2007 a large number of the presentations and discussions related to the project for a Shared Environmental Information System for Europe ([SEIS](#)).

Through a partnership between three Commission services - DG Environment, Eurostat, the Joint Research Centre -, and the EEA, SEIS aims at moving towards "a decentralised infrastructure of inter-connected data repositories and data bases with access and sharing. The general principle behind SEIS is that data should remain close to where it has been collected, information where it has been processed but by making data/information systems interoperable and mutually accessible, the data can then be used by a wide range of users, and combined with other data to make cross-thematic integrated analyses at European level".

The first SEIS component is already in place with the [Water Information System for Europe \(WISE\)](#). Biodiversity will be one of the next topics on the SEIS agenda. The European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity will then have a key supportive role to the EEA in defining the biodiversity themes and data relevant to SEIS.



Europe celebrates this year the 50th anniversary of the creation by the Treaty of Rome of the European Economic Community (EEC).

European Union environmental policy was formally founded through a European Council declaration made in Paris in October 1972; it took some 15 years after the foundation of the EEC to see the first five-year Environment Action Programme adopted.

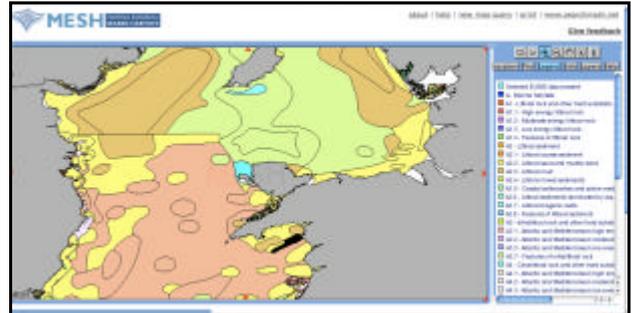
• **EUROPEAN FOREST BIODIVERSITY**

The ETC/BD (mainly [European Forestry Institute](#) and [MNHN](#)) is producing for the EEA a report on European forests – ecosystem condition and sustainable use. The main objective of the report is to provide an input to the next Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP-9), to be held in Bonn, Germany in May 2008. One of the main themes of the COP-9 is forests. Hence, the planned report will contribute to a European overview of [Expanded Programme of Work on Forest Biodiversity](#). The report will use and make synergies with the [MCPFE process](#) and its reporting. An advisory group has been set up by the EEA to support the development of the forest-biodiversity report. The first meeting of the group took place at the EEA last March.

The forest report will also contribute to the process of the ecosystem assessment for Europe, a EEA project under development aiming at assessing ecosystem conditions and services in Europe by 2012.

• **MAPPING EUROPEAN SEABED HABITATS**

[MESH](#), an international marine habitat mapping programme involving a consortium of 12 partners across the UK, Ireland, the Netherlands, Belgium and France including the [Joint Nature Conservation Committee](#) has held a successful end of project conference in Dublin. Results from the project will be incorporated into the [EUNIS biodiversity database](#).



A map of the Irish Sea using the EUNIS habitats classification produced by the MESH project

NEWS FROM THE PARTNERS

Farewell

* to Gabriela Augusto (MNHN) - *Obrigado, boa sorte e muitas felicidades!* - who leaves the ETC/BD core team after some 7 years dealing with GIS & related issues to return to her hometown of Lisbon.

Welcome

* to Brian MacSharry who joined the core team in Paris where he will take the lead on GIS related issues. Brian is Irish and joins us from Dublin after several years with both the National Monuments Section and the National Parks & Wildlife Service. We thank the Irish Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government for seconding Brian.

* to Iurie Maxim from Romania who will also join the core team (MNHN) in mid April to help with work relating to the Habitats Directive Article 17 reports. Iurie co-ordinated the [Romanian 'Natura 2000' project](#) which developed GIS tools for selecting and documenting potential Natura 2000 sites.

The [European Centre for Nature Conservation](#) newsletter 'ECNC Update' with news of recent developments and activities at the ECNC is published 6 times per year and is available [online](#).

REPORTS & PAPERS

• **EUROPEAN VEGETATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY**

The recently published proceedings of the conference held in Galway, Ireland in 2005 includes a paper on 'The habitats of the European Union Habitats Directive' by Doug Evans. They form a special issue of [Biology and Environment](#).

This newsletter is from the European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity. It aims at providing information on activities led by the Consortium in the framework of the multi-annual European Environment Agency's Strategy 2004-2008.

The newsletter is produced 3 times per year at regular intervals.

If you have any contributions for the next issue of this newsletter please forward them to Doug Evans (evans@mnhn.fr).

Visit our website at
<http://biodiversity.eionet.europa.eu/>