

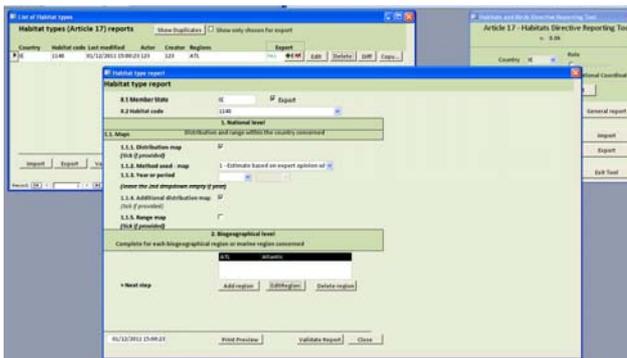
## NEWS

### • NATURA 2000 & THE TWO NATURE DIRECTIVES

Following the adoption, earlier this year, of the revised Standard Data Form used to describe Natura 2000 sites, a revised version of the Natura 2000 software is now available from the Natura 2000 Reference Portal at [http://bd.eionet.europa.eu/activities/Natura\\_2000/reference\\_portal](http://bd.eionet.europa.eu/activities/Natura_2000/reference_portal).

Reference portals have also been set up to assist with reporting for [birds](#) and for the [species and habitat types of the Habitats Directive](#). Checklists for species and habitat types for Article 17 reporting (Habitats Directive) are now available, showing national responsibilities for reporting. A similar checklist for birds will be available next year.

A Reporting Tool for reporting under both Directives is currently being tested by a small number of Member States and is expected to be available next year.



*A view of the Reporting Tool*

No biogeographical or marine seminars were held in 2011 but a bilateral meeting was held with Hungary in October. Such meetings give an opportunity to review progress in proposing Sites of Community Importance by Member States and several are planned for 2012.

Preparatory work towards the first of the new biogeographical seminars focused on site management continues (see last [ETC/BD newsletter](#) for details) and a preparatory workshop for the Boreal region will be held in Helsinki on 25 – 26 January .2012 to decide between MS, different stakeholders, experts and the Commission on specific topics for the first seminar for the Boreal region which will be held in June. The next biogeographical region will be the Atlantic with a preparatory workshop in June and the seminar in late November or early December 2012. A consortium led by ETC/BD partner [European Centre for Nature Conservation](#), and including the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, Aspen International (both UK), ARCADIS (Belgium) and the [Slovak Institute of Landscape Ecology](#) (Slovak Academy of Sciences, also an ETC/BD partner)

has been appointed as the contractor to help with the seminars.

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

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### • THE EMERALD NETWORK

A seminar was held at Bar, Montenegro, in November to assess the proposals for Areas of Special Conservation Interest (ASCI) from Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, FYR Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, there were also representatives from Kosovo under UNSCR 1244/99. The meeting was hosted by the [Environmental Protection Agency of Montenegro](#). As with Natura 2000 biogeographical seminars, the participants included the national authorities responsible for nature conservation, NGOs, staff from the Council of Europe and a small number of invited experts with technical support from the ETC/BD. The European Commission attended as an observer.

The meeting aimed to assess the coverage for each Berne Convention [Resolution 4 habitat types](#) and each [Resolution 6 species](#) although due to lack of time it was not possible to deal with all habitats and species. Overall 3 265 assessments were performed during this three days seminar



*Delegates enjoy the sun during a coffee break during the Emerald seminar*

An [EIONET workshop with representatives of West Balkan national environmental agencies](#) was also held in Bar on the 28 and 29 November where Dominique Richard (ETC/BD Manager) presented the ETC/BD's work with the Emerald network in the West Balkan countries.

Meetings were also held in Trondheim, Norway, and Basle, Switzerland, in September to discuss progress with Emerald in Norway and Switzerland. It is expected that the Swiss proposals for ASCI will be assessed in 2012 and the Norwegian proposals in 2013.



When first adopted in 1998, Annex I to Resolution 6 of the Berne Convention (the list of species for which Emerald sites should be proposed & designated) included all species then listed on Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive and Annex I of the EU Birds Directive. However, with EU enlargement in 2004 & 2007 the Emerald list no longer included all of the Natura 2000 species. Following work by the ETC/BD, a revised annex I to Resolution 6 was presented to the Berne Standing Committee at its annual meeting in Strasbourg (29 November - 2 December 2011) and adopted. The revised annex I of Resolution 6 is available from the [Berne Convention website](#). Further work is planned for 2012 to harmonise the habitat lists of Resolution 4 and Annex I of the Habitats Directive.

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#### • FOLLOW-UP OF THE 2020 TARGETS AND INDICATOR ACTIVITIES

As reported in the July newsletter, the European Commission adopted in May a [new strategy to halt the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the EU by 2020](#). This EU strategy includes 6 targets and 20 actions, consistent with the 20 [Aichi targets](#) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The European Commission is working at setting up a coherent framework – the so-called 'Common Implementation Framework (CIF) - for monitoring, assessing and reporting on progress towards reaching the EU targets and streamlining this work as far as possible with monitoring, assessment and reporting obligations under the CBD (notably the Aichi Targets).

Alignment of indicators with the Aichi targets was one of the main activities during 2011 at global, regional and national level. In Europe, the SEBI process has undertaken an initial mapping of [the 26 SEBI indicators](#) including indicators from sectorial activities such as agriculture, forestry and fisheries. All the SEBI indicators can contribute to measuring progress against the six new EU and the 20 new global targets but gaps have also been identified which need further consideration by thematic experts. These elements were presented to the [EIONET Biodiversity workshop \(24 - 25 November 2011\)](#) where discussion groups shared experience and ideas on how to assess progress towards the new targets. Results of a consultation with EEA member countries show how the SEBI process was helpful: out of 22 countries who responded 17 indicated that SEBI helped in developing their biodiversity indicators and 8 considered that SEBI helped in reinforcing data collection. In addition, countries estimate that priorities for the future of SEBI are to "refine the set in view of the new targets" (44%), "to reinforce the Ecosystem Services approach" (28%) and to "reinforce the sectoral approach" (40%).

Indicators were also one of the eight topics discussed during the [SBSTTA15](#) meeting in Montreal (7-11 November 2011) where the indicative list of indicators encompassing headline indicators and most relevant operational indicators according to each of the Aichi Targets proposed by the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) in June at High Wycombe, UK, was accepted as annex of the [recommendation on the framework of the Strategic Plan 2011-2012](#). Sophie Condé (ETC/BD Deputy Manager) attended both meetings.

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#### • EUROPEAN ECOSYSTEM ASSESSMENTS

The ETC/BD contributes to several advisory groups relating to both the concept, and the implementation, of Ecosystem Assessments in Europe. In the future Target 2 of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 will be a key driver of this work. It states that 'By 2020, ecosystems and their services are maintained and enhanced by establishing green infrastructure and restoring at least 15% of degraded ecosystems'. A [new website](#) on Ecosystem Assessments in Europe has been launched by the EEA.

With support from the ETC/BD, Charles University of Prague has continued into 2011 a survey on ecosystem services from grasslands in the Czech Republic, including livestock provision, carbon sequestration, regulation of soil erosion, water flow regulation, resistance to invasive alien species, recreation and nitrogen removal. The biophysical quantity and monetary value of each of these services were estimated for each Czech grassland type. A specific section of the report is dedicated to a review of literature concerning trade-offs between ecosystem services, specifically applied to grasslands. The Czech ETC/BD consortium partner [AOPK CR](#) coordinated the research with contributions from the [Umweltbundesamt \(Austria\)](#). The results were presented during the [4<sup>th</sup> Ecosystem Services Partnership \(ESP\) Conference](#) in Wageningen, The Netherlands, on 4 October 2011.

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#### • EU GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

The ETC/BD participated, in the European Commission's Working Group on Green Infrastructure, which has finalized recommendations for an EU Green Infrastructure initiative. Green Infrastructure shall support an optimized supply of ecosystem goods and services of healthy ecosystems based on a network of core protected areas in the EU (i.e. the Natura 2000 network) addressing 'Target 2: Maintain and restore ecosystems and their services' of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020. The EU Green Infrastructure Strategy will be finalised in 2012.

- **EUNIS HABITATS CLASSIFICATION**

The EUNIS habitats classification has been developed by the ETC/BD since 1996 to provide a common language on "habitats" across Europe. In order to give stability to the system, the classification has changed little in recent years but there are now growing needs to make amendments. An expert meeting was held on the 3 & 4 October in Copenhagen to discuss future development of this classification, including a governance structure.

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- **INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES IN THE EU**

The ETC/BD contributed to European Commission Working Groups on prevention of invasions by alien species and on an early warning and rapid response to invasive alien species (IAS) in 2011. The results will support an EU Strategy on IAS in 2012. In particular, the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 envisages a 'dedicated legislative instrument by 2012' for 'Target 5: Combat Invasive Alien Species' as well as strengthening the EU Plant and Animal Health Regimes. Reports and papers of all EU Working Groups on IAS are accessible on [CIRCA](#).

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- **ETC/BD MANAGEMENT MEETING**

The ETC/BD management meeting 10 & 11 October was hosted by the [European Centre Nature Conservation](#) and took place at their Tilburg office (day 1) and in the nearby National Park de Loonse en Drunense Duinen (day 2). The meeting was mostly concerned with planning the ETC/BD workplan for 2012.



*Lunchtime walk in the [Nationaal Park De Loonse en Drunense Duinen](#)*

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- **OTHER MEETINGS**

Doug Evans (ETC/BD core team) was invited to speak at a meeting on the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation organised by the Fédération Internationale de Phytosociologie held in Valencia, Spain, in September where he spoke on monitoring and reporting for the Habitats Directive. Abstracts of all presentations are available from the website of the [Società italiana di Scienza della Vegetazione](#).

Doug was also invited to speak at a meeting on 'Science for the environment - environment for society' held in Aarhus, Denmark in October where he gave a presentation on 'Science based nature conservation in Europe; Lessons from the Habitats Directive'. Further information, including many of the presentations, is available from the [conference website](#).

Brian Mac Sharry (ETC/BD core team) attended the ESRI User Conference held in San Diego, USA, in July. He gave a presentation on "Assessing the Conservation Status of Habitats and Species in EU" which was based on the work carried out during the Article 17 reporting process in 2007. EEA Executive Director, Prof Jacqueline McGlade, was a key note speaker at the same conference and presented the wide range of environmental data held by the EEA including a number of datasets related to biodiversity.

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- **RESEARCH PROJECTS**

Although the ETC/BD cannot be a partner in EU funded research projects, we are often asked to participate in workshops, advisory boards, etc and have been involved with many EU funded projects. The following are two projects with which the ETC/BD has been involved in recent months.

[Knowledge Network for European expertise on biodiversity and ecosystem services](#) (KNEU) is funded under FP7 as a coordination action. It aims to bring together institutions, projects and network to bring knowledge on biodiversity together, thus building potential hubs where decision makers and others can have easy access to information. The idea comes from the [European Platform for Biodiversity Research Strategy](#) (EPBRS). Sophie Condé attended a workshop organised by the project for potential users of a proposed model of a Network of Knowledge (28-29 November, Aix-en-Provence, FR).

[MS MONINA](#) aims to use [GMES](#) space and in-situ infrastructure and satellite -based analysis and modelling systems to support NATURA 2000 monitoring, management and reporting requirements at different levels.



In particular the project combines state-of-the-art EO data exploitation techniques to support EU agencies, national and federal agencies and local management authorities.

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## NEWS FROM THE PARTNERS

### • EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR NATURE CONSERVATION

The ECNC Group was invited to present the preliminary results of the 'Sectoral Experience with Natura 2000' project, which it is carrying out for the Netherlands Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation, to a meeting of the European Commission's Expert Group on the Management of Natura 2000 on 23 November.

Ben Delbaere, Head of Programme Development at ECNC, gave the presentation, in which he underlined that the preliminary results showed that combinations of many different factors led to special challenges for the three sectors included in the study: agriculture, tourism and forestry. Although some factors are shared by the five countries covered by the research (Denmark, Germany, France, the Netherlands and Poland), the ways in which the countries deal with them differ significantly. Factors such as geography, land-use intensity and land ownership play a role. However, the most constant aspects seem to be the awareness and application of regulations, and the information and involvement of stakeholders. Many attempts to develop sectoral activities within the margin allowed by the Birds and Habitats Directives and their transposition into national law seem to be frustrated not by the results of the appropriate assessment themselves, but rather by failure to apply Article 6 of the EC Habitats Directive and the appropriate assessment properly. The results of the research project are expected in April 2012. The meeting further discussed the different ways of developing management plans across Europe and the results of the two projects 'Natura 2000 and Climate Change' and 'Wilderness management in Natura 2000 areas'.

The ECNC, in partnership with ARCADIS and Eftec, has also published a 'Tool on conservation measures' to guide appraisal of the economic impacts of conservation measures taken to manage Natura 2000 sites in the EU. It clearly demonstrates the numerous links between concrete conservation measures and the affected ecosystem services. In this way it builds further on the earlier '[Toolkit for Practitioners](#)'. Further information is available from the [ECNC website](#).

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### • AGENTURA OCHRANY PRIRODY A KRAJINY ČESKE REPUBLIKY

The [Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection of the Czech Republic](#) is a partner in the "Integrating biodiversity and land use data" (INBALUD) project funded by DGEnvironment aiming to bring together data on land use from EU surveys such as LUCAS and CORINE Land Cover with information on biodiversity. A presentation given to a project meeting in Brussels, 21 October is available on the [web](#). The EEA and ETC/BD are members of the project's steering committee and the final report is due early in 2012.

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### • MUSEUM NATIONAL D'HISTOIRE NATURELLE

The museum's [Service du Patrimoine Naturel](#) is one of the partners in an ambitious project to map the habitats of France using a phytosociological approach. As part of this project, the ETC/DB is involved in an overview of habitat mapping projects elsewhere in Europe and some of you may already have been contacted by Jean Ichter. It is planned to publish an overview of projects at national scale or large regions in 2012.

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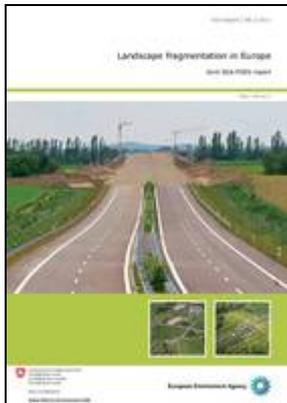
## PUBLICATIONS

### • EUROPE'S ENVIRONMENT — AN ASSESSMENT OF ASSESSMENTS



To support the 2011 'Environment for Europe' Ministerial Conference in Astana, Kazakhstan, the EEA has published '[Europe's environment — An Assessment of Assessments](#)'. This report provides a comprehensive overview of available sources of environmental information across the region which directly relate to the themes in focus at the Conference, water and related ecosystems, and green economy.

• **LANDSCAPE FRAGMENTATION IN EUROPE**



Fragmentation of habitats and landscapes is widely acknowledged to have significant impact on biodiversity. This report, produced jointly by the EEA and the [Swiss Federal Office for the Environment](#), is a study of landscape fragmentation at 3 scales for 28 European countries. ETC/BD partner, the [Slovak Institute of Landscape Ecology](#) contributed to the report which can be downloaded from the [EEA website](#).

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• **TWO EEA PAMPHLETS ON FORESTS**



The EEA has published two pamphlets on European forests - [Forests, health and climate change](#) and [Europe's forests at a glance — a breath of fresh air in a changing climate](#). Both were prepared by the [European Forest Institute](#) with support from the ETC/BD.

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• **AN EXPERIMENTAL FRAMEWORK FOR ECOSYSTEM CAPITAL ACCOUNTING IN EUROPE**



This EEA technical report presents an overall experimental framework for ecosystem capital accounting. The framework highlights accounting balances and relationships between accounting tables and systems as well as key indicators and aggregates that describe economy ecosystem interactions. Ecosystem accounts are being developed as part of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounts. The report can be downloaded from the [EEA website](#).

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• **MOUNTAIN FORESTS IN A CHANGING WORLD**



This report, jointly produced by the FAO-hosted Mountain Partnership Secretariat and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, was published in the lead up to the [UN International Mountain Day](#) on December 11. It is intended to raise awareness of the global importance and the need for sustainable management of these unique ecosystems. It includes a case study on Natura 2000 and the mountain forests of Europe by Brian MacSharry & Doug Evans and can be downloaded from [Mountain Partnership's website](#).

This newsletter produced twice a year 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 2009-2013.

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

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