



An Action Plan to follow up the Fitness Check of the Nature Directives

**7th March 2017
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Nature Directives are fit for purpose but substantial improvement in their implementation is needed

- *Too many species/habitats continue to show negative trends*
- *Only 50% of sites properly managed*
- *Marine Natura 2000 network incomplete*
- *Funding shortage*
- *Cases of inflexible application & permitting delays by national & local authorities*
- *Insufficient knowledge, awareness, engagement & cooperation*
- *Nature Directives require action also outside Natura 2000*

Action Plan focused on improving implementation

The Conclusions of the Fitness Check show a need for action in the following areas:

*1. Developing and applying **smart implementation approaches** to support national, regional and local authorities and stakeholders and to avoid unnecessary costs and burdens*

*2. Improving **compliance** with the Nature Directives for their effective delivery, harnessing the full potential of healthy ecosystems*

*3. Strengthening **investment in Natura 2000** and **integration** with other policies, in particular EU funding*

*4. Improving **access to knowledge, promoting stakeholder and public engagement***

1) Smarter implementation

- *further develop our guidance documents, make them user-friendly and available on-line in all EU official languages*
- *develop support mechanisms (advice, training) for authorities on issues such as permitting procedures and species management*
- *further develop stakeholder platforms to promote dialogue and exchange of experiences and knowledge e.g. in relation to Large Carnivores*

2) Stepping up implementation

- *Strengthening compliance promotion and assurance (e.g. agreeing on implementation roadmaps in the framework of EIR & better sharing of best practice)*
- *Network completion & Site management plans/measures for all sites*
- *Develop/update Species/Habitats Action Plans*
- *Better incorporation of ecosystems and their services into decision making inside and outside Natura 2000 sites*

3) Better funding and integration

- *Work towards more efficient and effective use of available funding under different EU programmes – updating Prioritised Action Frameworks, promoting result based payment schemes, etc.*
- *Develop mechanisms to support Natura 2000 funding by the private sector*
- *Improve biodiversity tracking in EU expenditure*
- *Promote strategic investments in nature restoration and Green Infrastructure*

4) More knowledge, engagement and awareness

- *Strengthen communication (e.g. social media, apps etc., better use of existing platforms)*
- *Improve data availability (e.g. web sites of authorities, Natura 2000 viewer etc.)*
- *Promoting latest technologies, such as COPENICUS, for monitoring habitats, land use/land use change in Natura 2000 sites;*
- *Promote "Nature Advisory Services": local bodies to take care and advise on Natura 2000 site management*

Implementation of the Action Plan

Final set of actions will need to be clear, precise and practical: target date 2019!

Commission, MS, regional and local authorities, stakeholders, all of us should fully engage in delivering the actions!

Evaluation of the Plan will feed into the final review of the EU Biodiversity Strategy in 2020.



European
Commission

Your feedback