

Indicator (definition)	Sufficiency of Member States proposals for sites designated under the EU Habitats Directive: The indicator measures the extent to which Sites of Community Importance (SCIs) proposed by the Member States adequately cover the species and habitats listed in Annexes I and II to the habitats directive.
Eurostat Unit	Environment Statistics
Other Commission DGs	DG Environment
European Statistical System Working Group (WG)	Sustainable Development Indicators Working Group
Date	October 2010

1. Overall assessment of accuracy and comparability (Description of quality grades under the following link: http://circa.europa.eu/Public/irc/dsis/structind/library?l=/general_information/quality_profiles/annex_enpdf/EN_1.0_&a=d)

A
 B
 C
 Indicator to be Developed

Data is collected from reliable sources applying high standards with regard to the methodology and ensuring a high degree of comparability. Due to the nature of this indicator the analysis should be done with care.

2. Objective and relevance of the indicator:

The indicator measures the degree to which the EU Habitats Directive has been implemented in terms of areas covered and numbers of species under protection. A value of 100% indicates sufficiency of Member States' proposals for all habitats types and species occurring in its territory and listed in the Habitats Directive, in this way contributing to the conservation of EU biodiversity.

Conservation and management of natural resources is the focus of the Renewed EU Sustainable Development Strategy, which calls for the recognition of the value of ecosystem services. Halting the loss of biodiversity and contributing to a significant reduction in the worldwide rate of biodiversity loss by 2010 was set as a goal. Moreover, the Strategy urged the Member States to complete the Natura 2000 network, half of which is constituted by sites designated under the Habitats Directive. It should be mentioned that the Habitats Directive forms one of the two pillars of EU biodiversity legislation.

In its conclusions of 15 March, the Environment Council agreed a new long-term vision and mid-term headline target for biodiversity in Europe for the period beyond 2010, when the current target expires.

The new target is: To halt the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services in Europe by 2020, restore them in so far as feasible, while stepping up the EU contribution to averting global biodiversity loss.

Restriction of the indicator's relevance and other characteristics which may lead to restrictions in using it in monitoring and reporting

The indicator does not show the conservation status of habitats and species within the designated sites. Moreover it should be noted that when the 100% sufficiency level is achieved, the indicator will not be able to show further progress in halting the loss of biodiversity.

3. Data availability: details

(t_1 : earliest reference year available; t_2 : latest reference year available in October 2010)

	Member States	Candidate and Acceding Countries	US and Japan	EEA-EFTA ¹
t_1	2003: BE, DK, DE, IE, EL, ES, FR, IT, LU, NL, AT, PT, FI, SE, UK	-	-	-

¹ While a member of the EEA, Liechtenstein has complete or partial exemptions from several statistical requirements due to its size. Thus, Liechtenstein is excluded from this overview as most of the data are missing.

	2006: CZ, EE, CY, LV, LT, HU, MT, PL, SI, SK 2008: BG, RO			
t ₂	2008	-	-	-

4. Overall accuracy

High



Data are based on information provided by Member States under the Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 (Habitats Directive) on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. Particularly, the indicator is based only on areas proposed by countries to be designated for the protection of natural and semi-natural habitats, wild fauna and flora according to the Habitats Directive. Each country is required to fill in a standard data form where sites designated under the Directive are reported in detail, included the size of the site in km², the existing habitats and species and their percentage cover of the site. A thorough typology has been developed to support precise reporting. Data provided by the Member States to the Commission are consolidated at least yearly by the European Environment Agency / European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity (EEA ETC/BD).

The bio-geographical regions covered by the Directive are Alpine, Atlantic, Black Sea, Boreal, Continental, Macaronesian, Mediterranean, Pannonian and Steppic. For each biogeographical region, seminars are organised by the European Commission and the ETC/BD, bringing together Member States' regional representatives and scientific experts. The goal of the seminar is to assess if each habitat and each species of Annexes I and II occurring in the region are sufficiently represented in the pSCIs proposed by the Member States. The conclusions from the biogeographical seminars provide data for the development of this indicator. The submission of proposals for protected sites is a continuous process until all countries reach sufficiency.

Finally, it should be mentioned that the weighting used for the calculation of the indicator for a Member State compensates for the relatively higher burden of a large biogeographical area in a country; it is harder to propose sufficient sites for a large biogeographical area than for a smaller biogeographical area in the same country.

Restricted

(sources, errors, methodology, etc.)



5. Comparability across countries

High



Comparability across countries is high. All Member States use the same methodology based on their legal framework for protected areas. In addition, thorough guidelines for data provision are followed by all MSs who are using a common reporting data form and the same typology.

Restricted



6. Comparability over time

High



Comparability over time is considered high, especially when the time series of a single country is concerned. Regarding the EU-aggregate, it should be taken into account that enlargements of the EU in 2004 and 2007 were the occasion of amendments to the directives as additions were made to their annexes, which list species and areas requiring particular attention. Until 2004, the covered bio-geographical regions, and subsequently habitats and species, corresponded to the territory of EU-15, during 2005-2006 corresponded to EU-25 territory and from 2007 onwards the Black Sea and the Steppic bio-geographical regions are also incorporated, as Romania and Bulgaria became Member States.

Moreover, some fluctuations of the indicator from one year to the next may be attributed to the difference existing between the list analysed in bio-geographical seminars in a particular year and the official list submitted the following year.

**7. Development perspective for improving the quality of this indicator (including as far as possible an indication of the burden on Member States and respondents.)**

Since the indicator will not be able to show further progress in halting the loss of biodiversity when the sufficiency level is achieved, further conceptual work on this issue has been carried out in the SEBI2010 (Streamlining European 2010 Biodiversity Indicators) project and should lead to the development of new indicators.

8. Contribution to the coherence of the set/potential to qualify for an integrated policy analysis

The indicator is essentially an input indicator on protection of habitats. By analysing it together with biodiversity indicators like the Common bird Index and the Red List Index of European species one can assess the impact of countries' proposals on biodiversity in Member States.

Relevant European legislation

- Council Directive 79/409/EEC of 2 April 1979 on the conservation of wild birds
- Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora
- Commission Decision of 18 December 1996 concerning a site information format for proposed Natura 2000 sites
- Commission Decision of 28 December 2001 adopting the list of sites of Community importance for the Macaronesian biogeographical region, pursuant to Council Directive 92/43/EEC (notified under document number C(2001) 3998)
- Commission Decision of 22 December 2003 adopting, pursuant to Council Directive 92/43/EEC, the list of sites of Community importance for the Alpine biogeographical region (notified under document number C(2003) 4957)
- Commission Decision of 7 December 2004 adopting, pursuant to Council Directive 92/43/EEC, the list of sites of Community importance for the Atlantic biogeographical region (notified under document number C(2004) 4032)
- Commission Decision of 7 December 2004 adopting, pursuant to Council Directive 92/43/EEC, the list of sites of Community importance for the Continental biogeographical region (notified under document number C(2004) 4031)
- Commission Decision of 13 January 2005 adopting, pursuant to Council Directive 92/43/EEC, the list of sites of Community importance for the Boreal biogeographical region (notified under document number C(2004) 5462)
- Commission Decision of 19 July 2006 adopting, pursuant to Council Directive 92/43/EEC, the list of sites of Community importance for the Mediterranean biogeographical region (notified under document number C(2006) 3261)
- Council Directive 2006/105/EC of 20 November 2006 adapting Directives 73/239/EEC, 74/557/EEC and 2002/83/EC in the field of environment, by reason of the accession of Bulgaria and Romania
- Commission Decision of 25 January 2008 adopting, pursuant to Council Directive 92/43/EEC, a first updated list of sites of Community importance for the Macaronesian biogeographical region (notified under document number C(2008) 286)