

BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY 2030

cepBackground to [cepPolicyBrief Biodiversity Strategy 2030](#)

FACTS ON MEMBER STATES

Enlarging Protected Areas

In the EU, the protected areas differ considerably in their size, character and management between Member States. There are two kinds of protected areas: “Natura 2000” is an EU-wide network of areas established for the protection of plant and animal species and their habitats under the Birds Directive [2009/147/EC] and the Fauna-Flora-Habitat (FFH) Directive [92/43/EEC]. “Natura 2000 protected areas” cover 18% of the EU territory. The “national protected areas” (NPA) designated by the Member States pursuant to their own “national protection scheme” can – but do not necessarily have to – be part of the Natura 2000 network. Consequently, in **Table 1** all overlapping NPAs have been accounted to the Natura 2000 network.

In some Member States – e.g. the Netherlands, Estonia and Finland – Natura 2000 protected areas and NPAs almost always overlap. In others – e.g. Germany, France or Belgium – the overlap is rather small. In nine Member States – Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Germany, Greece, Luxembourg, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia – over 30% of the national land area have already been designated as “protected areas”.

Table 1: Share of the Land Area of a Member State Designated as Protected Area

Member State	Natura 2000	National Protected Area	Sum
Austria	15.13%	12.95%	28.08%
Belgium	12.69%	12.17%	24.86%
Bulgaria	34.42%	6.08%	40.50%
Croatia	36.61%	1.15%	37.76%
Cyprus	17.87%	19.67%	37.54%
Czechia	14.14%	7.73%	21.87%
Denmark	8.32%	7.94%	16.26%
Estonia	17.86%	2.20%	20.06%
Finland	14.47%	0.56%	15.03%
France	11.06%	10.98%	22.04%
Germany	15.43%	22.24%	37.67%
Greece	27.22%	7.54%	34.76%
Hungary	21.45%	0.79%	22.24%
Ireland	13.19%	0.65%	13.84%
Italy	19.04%	2.30%	21.34%
Latvia	11.53%	6.61%	18.14%
Lithuania	12.46%	4.53%	16.99%
Luxembourg	27.03%	24.35%	51.38%
Malta	13.12%	15.09%	28.21%
Netherlands	14.75%	0.63%	15.38%
Poland	19.61%	20.16%	39.77%
Portugal	20.68%	1.57%	22.25%
Romania	22.74%	0.66%	23.40%
Slovakia	29.84%	7.59%	37.43%
Slovenia	37.83%	15.79%	53.62%
Spain	27.26%	0.68%	27.94%
Sweden	12.37%	1.46%	13.83%

Source: European Environmental Agency (2020), [Share of country designated as terrestrial protected area and the overlap between Natura 2000 or Emerald sites and national designations](#)

Restoring Land and Sea Ecosystems

The Commission wants 30% of the protected species that are currently not in a “favourable conservation status” to reach this status or to show a “strong positive trend” in its direction. The conservation status of a species is “favourable” when (1) the population of the species maintains itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its habitat, and (2) the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and (3) there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis [Art. 1 (i) FFH Directive].

EU-wide, 31.25% of all species are in a “favourable conservation status”, whereas 35.27% of all species are in a poor “unfavourable-inadequate conservation status” and 19.64% are in an even worse “unfavourable-bad conservation status”. **Table 2** shows these three categories of conservation status for all species in each Member State. The unknown status of species is reflected in the gap not adding up to 100%.

Table 2: Conservation Status of Species (2018)

Member State	Favourable Conservation Status	Unfavourable-inadequate Conservation Status	Unfavourable-bad Conservation Status
Austria	14.45%	48.38%	33.92%
Belgium	25.36%	31.16%	35.51%
Bulgaria	38.06%	31.08%	3.15%
Croatia	7.14%	23.81%	21.90%
Cyprus	63.64%	20.00%	3.64%
Czechia	30.34%	38.20%	25.84%
Denmark	19.67%	27.05%	33.61%
Estonia	56.25%	26.04%	10.42%
Finland	45.28%	33.96%	13.21%
France	28.06%	33.95%	24.96%
Germany	25.61%	30.19%	33.15%
Greece	35.02%	42.42%	12.46%
Hungary	34.91%	55.30%	11.79%
Ireland	55.67%	15.00%	15.00%
Italy	43.43%	36.08%	16.29%
Latvia	39.45%	38.53%	13.76%
Lithuania	36.73%	31.63%	13.27%
Luxembourg	15.00%	38.33%	45.00%
Malta	53.33%	15.56%	8.89%
Netherlands	26.25%	30.00%	38.75%
Poland	37.74%	32.24%	12.45%
Portugal	26.53%	31.29%	11.34%
Romania	45.73%	36.55%	8.53%
Slovakia	23.44%	53.75%	21.56%
Slovenia	29.22%	38.86%	14.16%
Spain	18.93%	39.64%	26.23%
Sweden	47.45%	16.42%	35.04%

Source: European Environment Agency (2019), [Conservation status and trends of habitats and species](#)