



Future BirdScenarios: The impact of climate change on our bird conservation policies

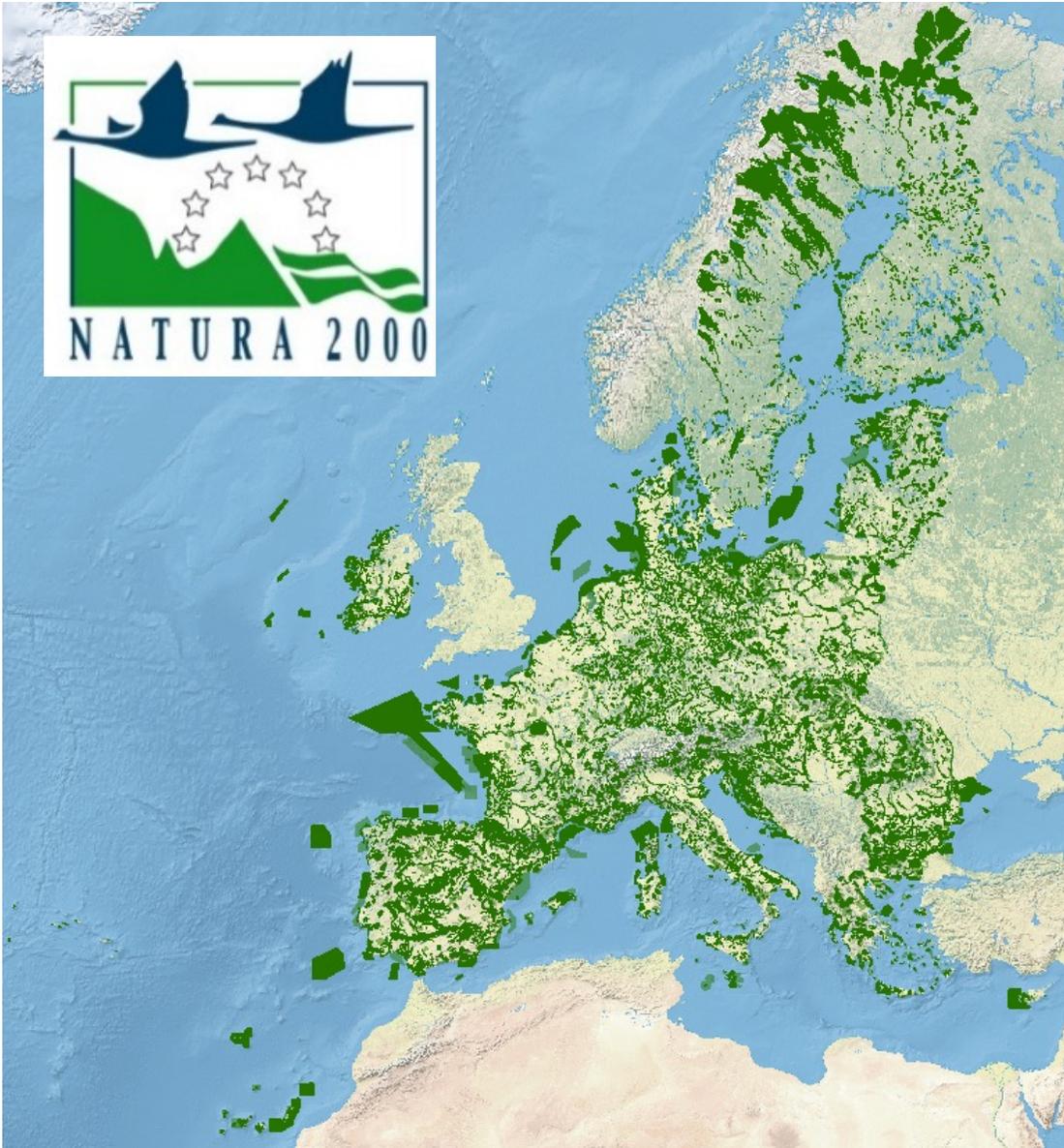


Luisa Samarelli
Deputy Head of Unit – Nature conservation
DG Environment, European Commission

The key pillars of the Birds Directive

- ❖ Objective: to restore and maintain birds populations to secure status
- ❖ SPAs
 - ❖ site selection exclusively on scientific criteria
 - ❖ site management based on clearly defined conservation objectives corresponding to the ecological requirements of the species
- ❖ Habitat protection/restoration also outside SPAs
- ❖ Species protection
- ❖ Sustainable hunting for Annex II species





27 countries

**9 Biogeographical
Regions**

~ 27 000 sites

~ 1 215 000 km²

18 % of EU land

~ 9 % of EU seas



Ensuring a fully functional, coherent and ecologically representative network of Natura 2000 sites is central to achieving the Nature Directives' objectives.

Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 'Bringing nature back into our lives'

- Headline ambition to ensure that by 2050 all of the world's ecosystems are restored, resilient, and adequately protected.
- As a milestone, the Strategy aims to ensure that Europe's biodiversity will be on the path to recovery by 2030 for the benefit of people, the planet, the climate and our economy.
 - A coherent network of protected areas
 - An EU Nature Restoration Plan: restoring ecosystems across land and sea

Biodiversity Strategy for 2030

- Key role of the Birds and Habitats Directives in achieving BDS objectives
 - Protected areas targets → increased importance in light of climate change
 - Restoration targets (including for birds' habitats)
- Opportunities for significant co-benefits with climate policy goals: nature restoration and conservation:
 - makes nature more resilient to climate change
 - delivers on climate change mitigation

Key questions in relation to the impact of climate change on our bird conservation policies

- Currently, the impacts of climate change are still marginal compared to other impacts (land use change, etc.) → **important to protect / manage sites and address pressures**
- The 2020 EEA report on ‘State of Nature in the EU’ states that global warming is already having noticeable impacts on species and ecosystems, and it qualifies climate change as an ‘emerging threat’ . **Without adaptation measures, it can be expected to further weaken the effectiveness of today’s network of protected areas** → the **unavoidable climate change impacts** need to be considered while developing and implementing biodiversity policies

Key research questions in this area

- What are the **additional areas** to be protected in view of species range shifts to secure healthy birds populations ? <-> 30% PA target (coverage of PA)
- Is there a need to adapt **sites' conservation objectives and measures** in view of the unavoidable impacts of climate change? Is yes, how? <-> 30% PA target (effective management).
- What are the areas to be prioritized in terms of **restoration** and how to restore habitats of birds (and other species) in view of unavoidable climate change impacts (change in temperature, extreme events, etc.) ? <-> BDS restoration targets

Key research questions in this area

- Are there **species more vulnerable** to climate change?
- How do we meet the ecological requirements of bird species in a very **uncertain and rapidly changing context** (including) due to climate change? How to address growing uncertainties?
- How do we ensure gathering of regular updates of **bird migration data** in view of their relevance for hunting decisions (e.g. migratory period/ breeding period/ population size, etc.) ?

What are we doing already?

- Supporting data collection (e.g. Eurobirdportal project)
- Updating the “Natura 2000 and climate change” guidance
- Funding a LIFE preparatory action grant for the production of high resolution bird population density maps based on citizen science
- Launched a call under Horizon aimed at generating evidence base for PA identification and the setting of ecological corridors

Conclusions

- Climate change and biodiversity loss are interdependent and need to be addressed in an **integrated** manner
- We need to step up efforts to mitigate climate change but also to adapt to unavoidable climate change impacts – **nature conservation is an ally on both!**
- We need **policy-related research and evidence-based policy!**

Thank you!

luisa.samarelli@ec.europa.eu

