

# Final Report Ad hoc IG Streamlining monitoring and reporting obligations

## Summary

<b>Ad hoc IG Streamlining monitoring and reporting obligations</b>
<b>Final report Mai 2022</b>
<b>Active Members:</b> Austria, Czech Republic, France, Germany (Chair: A. Ssymank, BfN), Netherlands, Italy, Israel, Sweden, United Kingdom
<b>Objectives</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Overall aim: Harmonization of EU-reporting obligations in order to avoid discrepancies in results and reduce the work-load for Member State Authorities in the field of Nature and Biodiversity.</li><li>• Focus on the following reporting regulations: Habitats Directive (HD), Birds Directive (BD), Water Framework Directive (WFD), Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), Directive on the assessment and management of flood risks, Regulation on Invasive Alien Species</li><li>• Main Work steps: Analysis of reporting obligations, Development of recommendations on harmonization of reporting and Liaise with the EU activities on reporting (EGR, EU-Commission, EEA)</li></ul>
<b>Summary Conclusions</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For all major EU-reporting obligations where an overlap with Nature Directive reporting may occur and streamlining may be required worksheets were established which form the core of the report.</li><li>• Main concern from these findings is a need to streamline Habitats Directive and Bird Directive reporting with the MSFD marine reporting for the biological data at EU level. This process has started at EU-level and an additional parallel work of the IG was not considered necessary. Main points are timing of reporting and partially a double reporting in species data.</li><li>• No need was seen for harmonisation of reporting both for the WFD and for the Floods Directive at EU level, however the need for streamlining is seen at national or even regional level within Member States.</li><li>• IAS reporting is partially streamlined and a component of IAS reporting does become obligatory in the new HD reporting format for the cycle 2019-2025.</li></ul>
<b>Risks and challenges in future developments on reporting</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The streamlining of reporting between MSFD and the Nature Directives should be solved at EU-level quickly after adoption of the new reporting formats and guidelines of the HD and BD in 2022/2023. Still pending and related to this is also a decision at EU level, whether the 6-year reporting cycle of the HD and BD will in future be adapted to the EU-Biodiversity cycle (i.e. shortened to a 5-year cycle after the next reporting round in 2025).</li><li>• The planned changes in reporting of Habitats and Bird Directives so far do not change the situation in terms of the need for streamlining of reporting.</li><li>• Pledges and new biogeographical process: By the end of 2021 a new pledges process was launched by the EU-Commission requesting from EU-Member States to explicitly fill in forms on their planning how to reach EU Biodiversity strategy goals by 2030 both for protected areas and for conservation status. Here no new reporting obligation was introduced. The results of the pledges will be analysed directly based on 2025 HD and BD reports.</li><li>• Several times announced and delayed is a planned new EU-restoration law which aims to set legal timelines for reaching a good conservation status to complement the HD and the BD. At the same time a major focus will be put on necessary restoration and recreation of habitats and species populations. This new restoration law will also include new reporting obligations, where aspects of streamlining of reporting may play a role in future. The legal implementation of this new instrument will probably not happen before 2024 and is outside the scope of this IG reporting.</li></ul>
<b>Points for consideration by the plenary</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• As agreed during the 28th Plenary the task of the IG is finished.</li><li>• The InterestGroup should be formally closed and the Final Report officially adopted</li></ul>

## Inhalt

Objectives of the IG Reporting.....	2
Short account of the work done .....	2
Results -Worksheets including feedback of the IG Reporting members .....	3
Habitats Directive Reporting & Monitoring obligations .....	4
Birds Directive Reporting & Monitoring obligations.....	6
Water Framework Directive.....	7
Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD).....	9
Floods Directive.....	12
IAS-Regulation.....	13
General activities at EU level related to the topics of the IG Reporting.....	13
Conclusions .....	14

## Objectives of the IG Reporting

- Overall aim: Harmonization of EU-reporting obligations in order to avoid discrepancies in results and reduce the work-load for Member State Authorities in the field of Nature and Biodiversity.
- Focus on the following reporting regulations: Habitats Directive (HD), Birds Directive (BD), Water Framework Directive (WFD), Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), Directive on the assessment and management of flood risks, Regulation on Invasive Alien Species
- Main Work steps: Analysis of reporting obligations, Development of recommendations on harmonization of reporting and Liaise with the EU activities on reporting (EGR, EU-Commission, EEA)

## Short account of the work done

The IG reporting was launched in a vivid discussion in the 24<sup>th</sup> ENCA Plenary 7.-9. April 2019 in Vienna as there was a need to streamline reporting both to have consistent up-to-date facts with no contradictions in different reports as well as to avoid unnecessary double reporting and to generally reduce the reporting burden of member states.

BfN (Germany) offered to chair the new IG reporting for one year. The establishment of the IG reporting was planned until end of November 2019. For the initial group however only three ENCA members (AU, UK and Israel) besides the chair were willing to participate. The chair proposed and discussed a work program within the IG reporting. Germany presented this draft work program and first results on the 25<sup>th</sup> ENCA Plenary 11.-13. November 2019 in The Hague and it was agreed that more members should join the IG. After a new request to participate in the IG by the ENCA secretary finally a group of 9 ENCA-institutions agreed to work in this newly established Working Group; : Austria, Czech Republic, France, Germany (Chair), The Netherlands, Italy, Israel, Sweden, United Kingdom.

In 2020 first drafts for most of the Directives could be worked out, with the exception of the WFD. An Interim report for the 26<sup>th</sup> ENCA Plenary 18-19. November 2020 (virtual) was prepared and presented. Analysis of the different Directives and the work sheets proved to be difficult as due to Covid often colleagues responsible for the implementation of these Directives could not be reached or responses were delayed. Another interim report was prepared for the 27<sup>th</sup> ENCA meeting, to signalise that the work on the draft worksheets is completed and will be sent out to the Plenary after the session.

Finalized draft worksheets on reporting were sent out to all ENCA members on 6th July 2021 with a deadline 18th Sept. 2021 (One single reply came from AU, UBA). The secretariat sent out a kind reminder on 27th Sept. 2021 with

an extended deadline 15th Oct. 2021 (just 1 additional reply by Nature Scot confirming that no changes are needed). An Interim report was prepared and presented on the 28th ENCA Plenary on 16/17. November 2021.

The 28th Plenary considered the task finished and accepted the suggestion to close the InterestGroup once the Final Report is submitted and officially adopted

## Results -Worksheets including feedback of the IG Reporting members

Here the worksheets are presented for each of the Directives:

- Habitats Directive (HD)
- Bird Directive (BD)
- Water Framework Directive (WFD)
- Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD)
- Directive on the assessment and management of flood risks
- Regulation on Invasive Alien Species

All worksheets follow the same structure as agreed in the IG reporting.

## Habitats Directive Reporting & Monitoring obligations

**Streamlining with:** other relevant reporting obligations such as Birds Directive, IAS-Regulation, Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), Water Framework Directive.

**Reporting cycle:** 6 years

**Next report due:** 31 July 2025

**Time needed from field data/monitoring centers to national report:** Data collection in the field 6 years, data handling and national report preparation approx. 12 -15 months (DE: decentralized data from Länder; IT: decentralized data from Regions)

**Main contents of report** (reporting sections with detailed data):

ANNEX A: General report: Overview of information on the implementation and general measures taken under the Directive.

ANNEX B: Species reports: Range and short term trend, favourable reference range; population size and short term trend, favourable reference population; habitat for the species: sufficiency, quality and short term trend; main pressures and threats; future prospects and assessment of conservation status (for species of Annex II, IV and V); conservation measures (if needed, main purpose, location (within/outside/both Natura 2000), response time, code list of measures), population size and short term trend in pSCIs, SCIs and SACs (only for species of Annex II), overall assessment of conservation status, short term trend 12 years.

ANNEX D: Habitat reports: Range and short term trend, favourable reference range; area and short term trend, favourable reference area; Structures and Functions including typical species; area in good, not-good and unknown condition and short term trend; future prospects; Overall assessment of Conservation Status, short term Trends (12 years), in future possibly long term trends (24 years); main pressures and threats, conservation measures (if needed, main purpose, location (within/outside/both Natura 2000), response time, code list of measures.

Distribution maps of occurrences in the territory (10 x 10 km-Grid)

**Results horizontal fitness-check:** Main results and reference to report? (with identification of essential points for ENCA members) –

**Biological data components** (Data fields) which can be used for reporting in other Directives:

MFSD: marine habitat and species data including assessments

WFD: status and data of freshwater habitats of Annex I and all water-dependent Annex I habitats for example alluvial forests such as 91E0, 91F0

Status and data of aquatic species or water-dependent species of Annexes II, IV and V

IAS: potential link over threats and pressures, so far not obligatory to name the most important IAS species, but will be changed for the 2019-2025 report format

BD: potential use of habitat data for Bird species, which are closely linked to Annex I habitat types

**Monitoring systems in place /obligatory:**

Art. 11 Monitoring only partially installed in Member States yet (see Ellwanger et al 2018), but it is a useful and required additional data source for species and habitat assessments

Typical species are a shortcoming in most monitoring schemes, especially for invertebrates (insects).

**Monitoring adaptations suggested combining closely related data:**

Avoid double reporting of the same biological data (MFSD) and leave enough time for processing/ collecting primary data of the Habitats Directive.

Planned Pollinator monitoring could deliver additional data for Habitat assessments of Annex I habitats (typical species).

Adopting the same pressures/threats categories would support streamlining HD with other reporting obligations involving pressures/threats assessments.

**Data which are not necessary or too unreliable for reporting** (proposals to delete or reduce reporting obligations): -

#### **Litterature:**

Ellwanger, G., Runge, S., Wagner, M., Ackermann, W., Neukirchen, M., Frederking, W., Müller, C., Ssymank, A. & Sukopp, U. (2018): Current status of habitat monitoring in the European Union according to Article 17 of the Habitats Directive, with an emphasis on habitat structure and functions and on Germany. - Nature Conservation 29: 57-78. (<https://doi.org/10.3897/natureconservation.29.27273>).

## Birds Directive Reporting & Monitoring obligations

**Streamlining with:** Habitat Directive and other reporting obligations

**Reporting cycle:** 6 years

**Next report due:** 31 July 2025

**Time needed from field data/monitoring centers to national report:** Data collection 6 years, data handling and national report preparation approx. 3-6 months

**Main contents of report** (reporting sections with detailed data):

ANNEX A: General report: Overview of information on the implementation and general measures taken under the Directive.

ANNEX B: Species reports: Bird species' population size, population trends, main pressures and threats, conservation measures, and information related to Annex II species (hunting bag statistics).

**Results horizontal fitness-check:** Main results and reference to report? (with identification of essential points for ENCA members) –

**Biological data components** (Data fields) which can be used for reporting, based on same field data

Water dependent species data could be used as base for WFD reporting

Invasive alien species possibly usable for IAS regulation reporting

Marine sea bird monitoring can be used for MFSD reporting

**Monitoring systems in place /obligatory:**

(Different situation among member states, obligation not defined, optimal combination to fulfill the data needs: Population Monitoring of the Annex I species of the Birds Directive in SPA's, National breeding bird atlas, Breeding/wintering Bird Monitoring Programs)

**Monitoring adaptations suggested combining closely related data:**

Water dependent and IAS species data and results are possible indicators for particular reporting. Bird and Habitat Directive reporting probably primary source.

**Data which are not necessary or too unreliable for reporting** (proposals to delete or reduce reporting obligations): -

## Water Framework Directive (3<sup>rd</sup> cycle 2016 - 2021)

**Streamlining with:** Habitats Directive & Birds Directive Reporting & Monitoring obligations

**Reporting cycle:** 6 years      **Next report due:** 22<sup>nd</sup> Dec 2021: 3<sup>rd</sup> River Basin Management Plan (RMBP)

**Time needed from field data/monitoring centers to national report:**

DE: Reports are prepared by the 16 Federal States. Results are summarized by the Federal Environment Agency (UBA) and reported to the EC in a condensed and generalized form.

**Main contents of report:**

Detailed reports are prepared by the Federal States. They contain the following main sections:

General description of River Basin Management Districts: Delineation and types of surface water and groundwater bodies, protected areas (general chapter for the Federal State and subchapters for all individual river basin districts).

Pressures affecting surface waters and groundwaters: Point sources, diffuse sources, hydromorphological degradation, water abstraction; effects of the stressors (general chapter for the Federal State and subchapters for all individual river basin districts).

Risk assessment for achieving the WFD targets for 2027: Methodology for assessment, prognosis for achieving the targets in surface water and groundwaters (general chapter for the Federal State and subchapters for all individual river basin districts).

Monitoring and assessment of water bodies and protected areas: Methodology and monitoring systems; overview of ecological and chemical status (surface waters) and of quantity and chemical status (groundwaters); overview of water management in protected areas, including Natura2000 areas (e.g. water abstraction). (General chapter for the Federal State and subchapters for all individual river basin districts).

Environmental targets and exemptions: Overall strategy; management targets and exemptions for surface waters and groundwaters.

Economic analyses of water uses.

Summary of the programme of measures: Status of measure implementation; general and additional measures.

List of detailed programs and management plans

Summary of public information and consultation measures and their result

**Results horizontal fitness-check:** Main results and reference to report? (with identification of essential points for ENCA members)

There is no ENCA-relevant field-data collected in the frame of the WFD implementation at the national and EU-level of reporting. From the section "Monitoring and assessment of water bodies and protected areas" information on water uses in Natura2000 areas can be extracted. From the original monitoring data of the

WFD information on the occurrences of aquatic species listed in the Annexes of Natura2000 can be extracted.

**Biological data components / Monitoring systems in place /obligatory:** Data on Biological Quality Elements (fish, benthic invertebrates, macrophytes) in all surface water bodies, sampled at least once in each River Basin Management cycle. WFD waterbodies are included in some Member States in HD monitoring when they are in relevant Natura 2000 areas.

**Monitoring adaptations suggested combining closely related data:** None.

Note: Despite the fact that no primary data on habitats or species are reported at EU-level for the WFD, there are important synergies at (sub) national level for example in practical monitoring on the ground with some overlap of monitoring points used for the Habitats Directive e.g. in data on fish species or quality of water body habitats. Also in practical management there are common aims to improve the situation which benefit the Annex I habitats. In Germany no common national database with the primary data for example on macrozoobenthos exists, which could be used for assessing typical species.

**Data which are not necessary or too unreliable for reporting** (proposals to delete or reduce reporting obligations): None.



## Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD)

**Streamlining with:** Habitats Directive & Birds Directive Reporting & Monitoring obligations

**Contributions/ draft:** SE, DE

**Reporting cycle:** 6 years

**Next report due:** Art. 11 MSFD (15 October 2020), 2024

**Time needed from field data/monitoring centers to national report:** [SE:] Approximately 2 years. The assessment report according to Article 8 of MSFD, where data from birds and habitats Directives as well as from water framework directive are needed, requires a public consultation. Furthermore, regional coordination within marine regions is necessary. Different Member States have various lengths of the public consultation period (from 1 to 6 months).

**Main contents of report** (reporting sections with detailed data):

From the directive:

*“Article 8*

### **Assessment**

1. In respect of each marine region or subregion, Member States shall make an initial assessment of their marine waters, taking account of existing data where available and comprising the following:

(a) an analysis of the essential features and characteristics, and current environmental status of those waters, based on the indicative lists of elements set out in Table 1 of Annex III, and covering the physical and chemical features, the habitat types, the biological features and the hydro-morphology;

(b) an analysis of the predominant pressures and impacts, including human activity, on the environmental status of those waters which:

(i) is based on the indicative lists of elements set out in Table 2 of Annex III, and covers the qualitative and quantitative mix of the various pressures, as well as discernible trends;

(ii) covers the main cumulative and synergetic effects; and (iii) takes account of the relevant assessments which have been made pursuant to existing Community legislation;”

Art. 9: Determination of good environmental status

Art. 10: Establishment of environmental targets

Art. 11: Monitoring programs

Art. 13: Programs of measures

Other information:

The features concerned are i.a. species of birds, mammals, reptiles, fish and cephalopods and benthic habitats. Benthic habitats includes the habitats in the Habitats Directive but covers in principle all habitats.

More details in Commission Decision (EU) 2017/848 (see part II on pages 66 to 73), where both birds and habitat directives are mentioned several times.

Details can also be found in the reporting guidance for articles 8, 9 and 10 in MSFD

([https://circabc.europa.eu/sd/a/5f09d0f2-6028-46f0-837b-b55eac5c5163/GD14\\_MSFD2018ReportingGuidance\\_Art8-9-10\\_rev20191015.pdf](https://circabc.europa.eu/sd/a/5f09d0f2-6028-46f0-837b-b55eac5c5163/GD14_MSFD2018ReportingGuidance_Art8-9-10_rev20191015.pdf)).

Within the Common Implementation Strategy (CIS) for MSFD, there is also an ongoing work with a guidance for assessment under article 8, which is expected to be finalised in 2021.

**Results horizontal fitness-check:** Main results and reference to report? (with identification of essential points for ENCA members)

*SWD(2017)230 final, Annex 6:*

- alignment of timing/frequency of reporting under Articles 8, 9 and 10 with Habitats Directive cycle

*Support to the Fitness Check of monitoring and reporting obligations arising from EU environmental legislation:*

Page 70: “The report notes that for marine habitats and species, which remain the least known with the greatest need for additional monitoring effort, greater coherence with the Marine Strategy Framework Directive could aid quality improvements.”

Table 10:

“Habitats Directive and Marine Strategy Framework Directive – Reporting on geographical scope, species and effort distribution: According to the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment, the need to submit reports under the Habitats Directive (Article 17) and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) (reports for marine species) creates inconsistencies in the geographical scope (management units vs. bioregions), in the species (targeted species vs. all marine species of the Habitat Directive), and in the effort distribution (in terms of monitoring programmes).

Nature Directives, MSFD and WFD - pressures Feedback (EEA, France) identifies that common ‘pressures’ are reported under these directives, and that there is sufficient overlap that harmonisation of reporting on pressures would be beneficial.”

**Biological data components** (Data fields) which can be used for the MSFD from more specific HD and Birds Directive reporting, based on same field data

Elements, features and characteristics which are listed in Annexes and COM Dec 2017/848

Data on species of birds, mammals, reptiles, fish and cephalopods and data on benthic habitats. Data about pressures and threats are used for the reporting of WFD, HD and MSFD. Alignment between directives is needed.

**Monitoring systems in place /obligatory:**

Monitored data is assessed for MSFD, HD, BD, OSPAR and HELCOM. The difficulty is in temporal mismatch between the MSFD and HD in assessment years / reporting period. There are no difficulties with scales or threshold values.

Monitoring system in place varies between Member States. An update of the monitoring program should be reported to the Commission at 15 October 2020 at the latest.

**Monitoring adaptations suggested combining closely related data:**

Harmonization on how pressures/threats are categorized is needed between WFD, HD and MSFD. If the same categories are used, same data collection for the three directives could be used.

[SE]: For species, reporting obligations are fairly the same between MSFD and HD, so to our knowledge no adjustment of monitoring is needed. Important is that population size is reported in the same way for both directives (population size = number of individuals) also in the future.

[DE]: The Birds Directive assessments are species-specific and the same species are used for the MSFD assessments, but the reporting times differ. However, even more importantly, the assessment areas differ as the Birds Directive requires one national assessment whereas the MSFD requires separate assessments for the North Sea and the Baltic Sea. This is visible in the assessment outcomes which are not comparable.

As stated earlier, monitoring needs are defined by reporting obligations. Even if reporting obligations (i.e. parameter assessed as habitat loss, structure & function) are the same for habitats between MSFD and HD the challenge is to align the spatial scale of the monitoring between the directives. Habitats directive is assessing nature types, which are biotope complexes whereas MSFD is assessing habitat types within the EUNIS system. Therefore the assessment of, and consequently the monitoring in, the habitat directive is restricted to certain polygons of the EEZ whereas MSFD is assessing the whole sea bottom of the respective marine region/EEZ. Discussions within TG Seabed (a technical group within the Common Implementation Strategy (CIS) for MSFD) are underway how to include natural habitat types of HD in MSFD reporting. Monitoring needs have to be adjusted after the discussion is finished. Discussions about how to synchronize the monitoring between HD and MSFD at national level is ongoing in Sweden.

**Data which are not necessary or too unreliable for reporting** (proposals to delete or reduce reporting obligations): -

## Floods Directive (2<sup>nd</sup> cycle 2016 - 2021) obligations

**Streamlining with:** Habitats Directive & Birds Directive Reporting & Monitoring

<b>Reporting cycle:</b> 6 years	<b>Next report due:</b>	Dec 2018: preliminary risk assessment (PFRA) Dec 2019: Flood hazard and flood risk maps (FHRM) Dec 2021: flood risk management plans (FRMP)
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### Time needed from field data/monitoring centers to national report:

The federal offices have 6 months to complement the national draft and submit it back to the Ministry.  
Actual data collections might start earlier.

### Main contents of report (reporting sections with detailed data):

**PFRA:** Selection of areas with potentially significant flood risk; criteria: human health, environment, economy, cultural assets. WRT environment the following data are collected: flooded areas (low, medium, high probability events), N2000 areas, water protection and conservation areas, potential pollution sources (IPPC, contaminated sites, WWTP's). Data collections might differ among MS's.

**FHRM:** for the Areas of potentially significant flood risk, the flood hazard maps (FHM) show the flooded areas, water depths, and flow velocities. The flood risk maps (FRM) depict the protective goods (for AT qualitatively: land-use classes, N2000, nature protection and water protection and conservation areas, higher order roads and railways, special risk points (e.g. IPPC plants); might be quantitative for other MS: annual potential damage in EUR/area.

**FRMP:** Measures to reduce flood risk, their implementation plan and priority.  
Covered fields of action (AT): prevention, protection, preparedness, raising awareness, and recovery.  
Measures can be of different nature, e.g. natural (re-activation of cut-off meanders), structural (e.g. dams), or behavioural (e.g. early warning, emergency management plans).

**Results horizontal fitness-check:** Main results and reference to report? (with identification of essential points for ENCA members)

There is no ENCA-relevant field-data collected in the frame of the FD implementation. As basis for PFRA and FHM, only geodesic terrain survey / river bed survey might be undertaken in the field (additionally to LIDAR data), and data collected from hydrographic services.

**Biological data components** (Data fields) which can be used for the WFD reporting, based on same field data

It is the other way round: data from WFD is used in FD implementation (N2000 data).

**Monitoring systems in place /obligatory:** Data collections on past flood events

**Monitoring adaptations suggested combining closely related data:** None.

**Data which are not necessary or too unreliable for reporting** (proposals to delete or reduce reporting obligations):  
None.

**IAS-Regulation** (REGULATION (EU) No 1143/2014 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 22 October 2014 on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species)

Reporting obligations according to Article 24

(The IAS-Regulation foresees the establishment of a Surveillance system (in Article 14), which cannot be understood as a Monitoring obligation)

**Streamlining with:** Birds and Habitat Directive

**Reporting cycle:** 6 years      **Next report due:** 1 June 2025

**Time needed from field data/monitoring centers to national report:** N/A

**Main contents of report** (reporting sections with detailed data):

Section A: Information on the distribution, spread and reproductive patterns of the IAS of Union concern

Section B: Information on the distribution, spread and reproductive patterns of the IAS of Member State concern

Section C: A description of the surveillance system (Article 14), the official control system (Article 15), the action plans on pathways (Article 13(2)), eradication measures (Article 17), management measures (Article 19), number of permits and inspections (Article 8), measures to inform the public and information on the cost of action when available.

Distribution maps of occurrences in the territory (10 x 10 km-Grid)

**Results horizontal fitness-check:** -

**Biological data components** Species which are listed as invasive, impacts of the species on nature

**Monitoring systems in place /obligatory:** No

**Monitoring adaptations suggested combining closely related data:** Distributional information from WFD-data, and possibly Bird and Habitat Directive-Monitoring could feed into the IAS-Regulation.

**Data which are not necessary or too unreliable for reporting** (proposals to delete or reduce reporting obligations): N/A

## General activities at EU level related to the topics of the IG Reporting

At EU level the “Review of Art.17 / 12 reporting” started in the EGR in March 2021, based on previously collected questionnaires from Member States and the findings of the EU, ETC/DB and EEA. Meanwhile the EU-Commission proposed new formats for HD (Habitat Directive) and BD (Bird Directive) reports 2025. In 2021 three separate meetings took place with the EGR (Expert Group on reporting) in order to adapt and develop a new version of the reporting format both for the HD and the BD. Both formats are technically and scientifically almost finalized and final decision will be taken in the coming NADEG/ Habitats Committee meeting on 30 Nov. 2021. For 2022 a guideline how to apply this format in detail will be elaborated by the ETC/BD and EEA with the help of the EGR.

Streamlining reporting with the MFSD: The current process at EU-level is in an advanced stage. The Commission had commissioned a detailed study “Coordinated assessments of marine species and habitats under the Birds and Habitats Directives and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive” carried out by a consortium of ICF

consulting services, University of Hull and MRAG. A workshop to present these results was held on 21st May 2021 with different expert groups and stakeholders. Member States and all participants were given the opportunity to send in written additional comments by 4th June 2021. From the IG Reporting Axel Ssymank and Mona Naeslund participated in this event. The EU Commission promised to set up a pilot with a data field analysis once the new HD and BD report formats are ready. After the current time-table this will happen probably in 2023 (after the guideline on reporting is available).

By the end of 2021 a new pledges process was launched by the EU-Commission requesting from EU-Member States to explicitly fill in forms on their planning how to reach EU Biodiversity strategy goals by 2030 both for protected areas and for conservation status. For these pledges Commission-notes and pledges forms were developed and first introductory EU seminars were held in December 2021 within the biogeographical process. Member State Initial Pledges shall be submitted by the end of 2022, and in 2023 a series of biogeographical seminars to discuss and possibly update the pledges is planned. For the pledges process no new reporting obligation was introduced. The results of the pledges will be analysed directly based on 2025 HD and BD reports and therefore no need is seen to analyse this process in terms of streamlining of reporting.

Several times announced and delayed is a planned new EU-restoration law which aims to set legal timelines for reaching a good conservation status to complement the HD and the BD. At the same time a major focus will be put on necessary restoration and recreation of habitats and species populations. This new restoration law will also include new reporting obligations, where aspects of streamlining of reporting may play a role in future. The legal implementation of this new instrument will probably not happen before 2024. There is a risk of possible overlap with existing reporting obligations and certainly an additional reporting burden, but this is outside the scope of this Working group.

## Conclusions

For all major EU-reporting obligations where an overlap with Nature Directive reporting may occur and streamlining may be required worksheets were established which form the core of the report.

Main concern from these findings is a need to streamline Habitats Directive and Bird Directive reporting with the MSFD marine reporting for the biological data at EU level. However, in parallel the EU Commission took first important steps to prepare this streamlining, presented the results of a study and discussed future work to be done in a meeting in June 2021 with members of the EGR and marine experts, where two ENCA IG reporting members could participate and give direct input. An additional parallel work of the IG was not considered necessary. Main points are timing of reporting and partially a double reporting in species data.

Obviously, no need was seen by the IG and ENCA members to address harmonisation of reporting both for the WFD and for the Floods Directive, as both Directives do not collect precise species or habitat data at EU level. Here the need for streamlining is at national or even regional level within Member States in coordination of data collection and monitoring. Recommendation is to permanently store any species-related data from WFD for monitoring purposes and use these for Habitat Directive monitoring as well (e.g. fish species).

IAS reporting is partially streamlined and a component of IAS reporting does become obligatory in the new HD reporting format for the cycle 2019-2025.