# EUSAIR Action Plan revision

# Thematic consultation questionnaire for Pillar 3 TSG

This document was developed by the EUSAIR Facility Point Lead Partner in cooperation with external experts as a starting point for thematic consultation on EUSAIR Action Plan revision in TSGs and with relevant policy owners in the EUSAIR countries. It is to be used with the Initial policy paper for thematic consultation and is intended to collect feedback from country policy owners.

The overall process and context in which these documents will be used is described in the Background document with Roadmap on the EUSAIR Action Plan revision v3 presented to the National Coordinators at the 18th Governing Board in Sarajevo.

This questionnaire shall be addressed to environmental/MSP structures. We propose for the TSG members to gather all relevant inputs from their country so that **only one questionnaire** is submitted from one country. The best way would be to organise a meeting or a workshop with relevant representatives of the sector to discuss and agree on the country’s input. Facility Point project partners shall technically support the process upon request from TSG members or National Coordinators.

As described in the Background document each country has the national consultation organised differently and involving different sectors and governance levels.

**The completed questionnaire shall be returned to Pillar 3 Coordinators, Pillar 3 thematic expert(s), EC representative and Facility Point Lead Partner with external experts by 16 December.**

The Pillar Coordinators, Pillar thematic experts, EC representative supported by Facility point LP with external experts will organise the gathered information and prepare proposals to be discussed by the National coordinators presumably in January 2023 and by respective TSG members at the next meeting planned for February or March. At this next meeting agreements on the content shall be made by the TSG members.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to structure and organise the gathering of country inputs using the same methodology for all 4 Pillars, however the respondents should not feel limited by the questionnaire. Any other information deemed important and not encompassed in the given questions is welcome as well.

Suggestion on how to use the questionnaire: the questionnaire is not meant to be circulated to the possible participants of the workshop or meeting organised to collect the country inputs. We propose to share the Initial policy paper with participants, while the questionnaire is to be used by the organiser to lead the discussion at the workshop/meeting using the prepared questions or their simplification. The questionnaire should be completed by the organiser at the end of the workshop/meeting to summarise the information provided and agreed by the participants.

Disclaimer: The gathered information will be used for further consultation on the level of TSGs and National Coordinators. The gathered elements from this questionnaire will be reflected in the final Action Plan. However, the decision regarding the inclusion of thematic elements in the revised Action Plan lies in the hands of the EUSAIR Governing Board.

## Topic 1: The marine environment

### Challenges

* + 1. Please **prioritise** **the challenges/opportunities** provided in the initial policy paper to reflect how relevant they are as regards the added value of being tackled by EUSAIR. *(1 being the most important, other follow in the numerical order).*

I*n the Adriatic Ionian Region it is noted:*

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|  | *Climate Change adaptation, with the* *Mediterranean identified as a hotspot by the IPCC* |
|  | *There is a lack of habitat maps covering the Adriatic and Ionian Seas.* |
|  | *Overfishing, habitat degradation and incidental catches pose serious threats to marine biodiversity. Monitoring and enforcement are insufficient.*  |
|  | *Aquaculture is a rapidly growing industry which is not regulated in all countries so as to ensure sustainability.*  |
|  | *Uncontrolled and illegal coastal development often leads to destruction of habitats.* |
|  | *Increasing number of invasive alien species from aquaculture and ballast water discharge threaten ecosystem functions.*  |
|  | *Coverage in terms of offshore Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) beyond 12 nautical miles is the lowest of all EU marine regions, while existing MPAs are often not adequately managed.* |

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|  | *Intense maritime transport activities and hydrocarbon exploration and exploitation result in oil spills, including large scale pollution events, and noise pollution.* |
|  | *Insufficient waste water treatment in several participant countries leads to pollution from rivers, exacerbated by use of nitrates on agricultural lands. Pollution is also caused by ecologically-unsound aquaculture practices and excessive use of chemical and pharmaceutical products.* |
|  | *Marine litter stemming both from land-based sources, lost and discarded fishing gear and recreational activities poses a serious problem.* |
|  | *Microplastic pollution in seawater threatens human health with unknown impacts* |
|  | *The recent trends for offshore wind turbines and solar farms (floating or fixed) will present a new challenge in terms of spatial planning and the marine environment.* |

* + 1. Are there any suggestions for reformulation/specification of the challenges provided in the initial policy paper with regard to your country’s involvement in Pillar 3/Topic 1 of EUSAIR?

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* + 1. Is there another challenge concerning the thematic field of *Topic 1:* *The marine environment*, for which you see an added value of being addressed at EUSAIR level? The challenge should be specific to the EUSAIR territory and scope.

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### Objectives

The **objectives** of the 2014 Action Plan were updated in the initial policy paper:

* *To ensure a good environmental and ecological status of the marine and coastal environment in line with post-2020 biodiversity targets, the relevant EU acquis, the ecosystem approach of the Barcelona Convention and looking towards the 2030 targets in line with 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (adopted at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit on 25 September 2015).*
* *To address threats to marine biodiversity and contribute to the aim of EU Biodiversity Strategy that Europe's biodiversity will be on the path to recovery by 2030 for the benefit of people, the planet, the climate and economy, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and with the objectives of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.*
* *To improve solid and water waste management to reduce waste flows to the sea and nutrient flows and other pollutants to the rivers and the sea.*
	+ 1. Are there any suggestions for reformulation/specification of the above objectives?

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* + 1. See proposed additional challenges under point 1.1.3. Additional objectives can be added accordingly.

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### Key stakeholders

* + 1. Which are the **most relevant national/regional** (e.g. national/regional institutions, agencies, others) **and international** (e.g. networks, associations, organisations, partnerships) **stakeholders** to be involved in order to reach most efficiently the objectives of the Topic 1. (objectives provided in point 1.2.1 and additional ones derived from challenges added under point 1.1.3, if relevant)? Indicative international key stakeholders are already listed in the initial policy paper.

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### Relevant policies

* + 1. The following **policies, regulations, directives, initiatives** etc. were identified as relevant for the *Topic 1:* *The marine environment*. Please also think about the funding opportunities related to these policies. Which are the most relevant?

*(Please tick the boxes before the selected policies)*

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|  | *United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)* |  | *Regulation (EU) 1143/2014 on invasive alien species (the IAS Regulation)* |
|  | *Paris Agreement on Climate Change* |  | *EU Regulation 1143/2014 on Invasive Alien Species* |
|  | *The Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its amendments* |  | *Common Fisheries Policy (CFP)* |
|  | *The Mediterranean Action Plan of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/MAP) and its MEDIUM-TERM STRATEGY 2022-2027* |  | *Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)* |
|  | *EU Green Deal* |  | *A Farm to Fork Strategy (COM/2020/381 final)* |
|  | *Green Agenda for the Western Balkans* |  | *EU Water Framework Directive (Directive 2000/60/EC)* |
|  | *Framework for Marine Strategy Framework Directive (Directive 2008/56/EC) and Commission Decision on Good Environmental Status ((EU) 2017/848)* |  | *Nitrates Directive (Council Directive 91/676/EEC)* |
|  | *Maritime Spatial Planning (Directive 2014/89/EU)* |  | *Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (91/271/EEC), its amendments and related Commission Decisions* |
|  | *EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030 (COM(2020) 380 final)* |  | *Waste Framework Directive (Directive 2008/98/EC) and its amendments by Commission Decisions*  |
|  | *Birds (Directive 2009/147/EC) and Habitats Directives (Council Directive 92/43/EEC)* |  | *EU Action Plan: Towards Zero Pollution for Air, Water and Soil (COM(2021) 400 final)* |
|  | *EU Strategy on Green Infrastructure* |  | *Directive on single use plastics (Directive (EU) 2019/904)*  |

* + 1. Is there another policy, or initiative, to be mentioned?

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### Actions

There are **Actions** foreseen in the initial policy paper under two sub-topics:

***Subtopic 1******Threat to coastal and marine biodiversity***

***Action 1.1.1 Coastal and marine biodiversity information network***

* *The use of European Environment Information and Observation Network (and focal points) to gather macro-regional information relevant for the implementation of Actions under subtopic 1.1 and subtopic 1.2.*
* *The use of Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast and Related Assessment Criteria (IMAP) to gather macro-regional information relevant for the implementation of Actions under subtopic 1.1 and subtopic 1.2.*

***Action 1.1.2 Enhancing the network of marine protected areas***

* *Support for designation of new areas in coordination with the processes of designation of Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance (UNEP MAP); of Fisheries Restricted Areas under the GFCM, by completing marine NATURA 2000 network and by designating further protected areas to form a coherent and representative network of MPAs according to the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.*
* *Establishment of AIR marine protected areas network*
* *Cooperation and harmonisation of protected areas management planning*
* *Exchange of best practices among managing authorities of Marine protected areas*

***Action 1.1.3 Promotion of sustainable growth of the AI region by implementing ICZM and MSP***

* *Support in drawing-up and implementation of coherent MSP/ICZM following the ecosystem approach, addressing land-sea interaction and adaptation to climate change as a tool to manage potential conflicts among various sectoral policies (preparation of guidelines on the application of ecosystem approach in transnationally coherent MSP for AIR, capacity building activities)*
* *Evaluation of implementation of ICZM and MSP on macro-regional level (application of ecosystem-based approach, identification of needs for better transboundary coherence, identification of areas needing transboundary harmonisation…)*
* *Share experiences in guiding sectoral development to minimize economic losses and the weakening of ecosystem services*
* *Exchange of best practice*

***Action 1.1.4 Cooperation in management of marine protected species***

* *Measures for monitoring and management of marine protected species*
* *Identification of hot spot marine biogenic formations that are excluded from Marine protected areas or are not adequately managed*
* *Improve data collection and sharing*
* *Evaluating the status of the selected marine protected species due to risks related to pollutants (e.g. marine litter, microplastics) and climate change*
* *Capacity building for relevant sectors*

***Action 1.1.5 AIR management of IAS***

* *Coordination of action plans to address the priority pathways in line with IAS Regulation*
* *List of IAS of transboundary concern*
* *Transboundary eradication plans*
* *Improve data collection and sharing*

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***Subtopic 2 Pollution of the sea***

***Action 1.2.1 AIR cooperation in marine litter management***

*Best practice sharing, capacity building and coordination*

* *Cooperation in assessment of the status, target setting, monitoring, reporting and implementation of measures related to marine litter and micro litter carried out in accordance with relevant MSFD provisions*
* *Cooperation in drawing up and implementation of Land-based Source (LBS) National Action Plans*
* *Definition of joint measures (e.g. clean-up programmes)*

***Action 1.2.2 Development and implementation of AI sub/regional oil spill contingency plan*** *(ASOCSoP)*

* *need of examination and extension of the contingency plan for Northern Adriatic to other AI countries,*
* *Risk assessment (possible risks and future events or circumstances that could damage the AI macro-region environment)*
* *Prevention measures*
* *Damage control measures*
* *Cross-cutting aspects: Capacity building in EUSAIR area, including communication to interested stakeholders and decision makers.*

***Action 1.2.3 AIR cooperation in reduction of nutrients, chemicals and pharmaceuticals from diffuse and point sources on land***

*Support for development of suitable measures, practical solutions and policy recommendations for reduction of chemical and pharmaceutical substances.*

* *Knowledge transfer and capacity building*
* *Testing of solutions and practical measures through cooperation in projects*
* *Policy recommendations from lessons learnt to relevant policy makers and other stakeholders.*

*Support to cross-sectoral activities and measures that reduce nutrient discharges to the Sea from diffused (agriculture) and point sources (urban areas, aquaculture):*

* *develop innovative and nature-based solutions (nutrient trapping structures/methods)*
* *improve monitoring and the knowledge base of nutrient flows and load*
* *raise awareness among relevant stakeholders about best practices*
	+ 1. Please **prioritise all the below listed actions** provided in the initial policy paper to reflect how important you find them for your country's cooperation in EUSAIR (all proposed Topic 1 actions together). *(1 being the most important, 3 the least important).*

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|  | **Action title** |
|  | *Action 1.1.1 Coastal and marine biodiversity information network* |
|  | *Action 1.1.2 Enhancing the network of marine protected areas* |
|  | *Action 1.1.3 Promotion of sustainable growth of the AI region by implementing ICZM and MSP* |
|  | *Action 1.1.4 Cooperation in management of marine protected species* |
|  | *Action 1.1.5 AIR management of IAS* |
|  | *Action 1.2.1 AIR cooperation in marine litter management*  |
|  | *Action 1.2.2 Development and implementation of AI sub/regional oil spill contingency plan (ASOCSoP)* |
|  | *Action 1.2.3 AIR cooperation in reduction of nutrients, chemicals and pharmaceuticals from diffuse and point sources on land* |

* + 1. Are there any suggestions for reformulation/specification of the Actions provided in the initial policy paper?

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* + 1. Are there any additional ideas how the listed challenges could be addressed by the EUSAIR concerning the thematic field of Topic 1? Can you suggest e.g. any additional Actions? Please remain within the parameters of macro-regional relevance, EU policies compliance and EUSAIR territory and scope.

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## Topic 2: Transnational terrestrial habitats and biodiversity

### Challenges

* + 1. Please **prioritise the challenges/opportunities** provided in the initial policy paper to reflect how relevant they are as regards the added value of being tackled by EUSAIR. *(1 being the most important, other follow in the numerical order)*

*In the Adriatic-Ionian Region there is:*

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|  | *There is a strong need to counteract negative effects of human activities through integrated environmental management approaches in biodiversity conservation, recovery and management, as well as ensuring ecological connectivity* |
|  | *Long term viability of large carnivores’ populations is threatened by habitat fragmentation and destruction due to urbanization, farming and linear infrastructure.* |
|  | *The public image of LC and related poaching results from increasing conflicts between LC and humans (lack of natural pray, loss of habitats, disturbance, poor waste management, road kill etc)* |
|  | *Need to harmonise national and transnational policies on management and conservation of large carnivores.* |
|  | *There is a lack of scientific evidence and coordinated monitoring.* |
|  | *Increasing pressures and land-use intensification resulting in habitat loss for migratory bird species (agriculture, water management, hydropower exploitation, gravel and sand exploitation, infrastructure/tourism/residential development etc.)*  |
|  | *Although countries in the region all reaffirmed their zero-tolerance approach to illegal bird killing in 2020, the implementation is lacking.* |

* + 1. Are there any suggestions for reformulation/specification of the challenges provided in the initial policy paper with regard to your country’s involvement in Pillar 3/Topic 2 of EUSAIR??

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* + 1. Is there another challenge concerning the thematic field of *Topic 2: Transnational terrestrial habitats and biodiversity* for which you see an added value of being addressed at EUSAIR level? The challenge should be specific to the EUSAIR territory and scope.

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### Objectives

The **objectives** of the 2014 Action Plan were updated in the initial policy paper:

*To address threats to terrestrial biodiversity and contribute to the aim of EU Biodiversity Strategy that Europe's biodiversity will be on the path to recovery by 2030 for the benefit of people, the planet, the climate and economy, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and with the objectives of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.*

*To protect and enhance natural terrestrial habitats and ecosystems with particular attention to the ecological connectivity of blue and green corridors/infrastructure.*

* + 1. Are there any suggestions for the reformulation/specification of the above objectives?

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* + 1. See proposed additional challenges under point 2.1.3. Additional objectives can be added accordingly.

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### Key stakeholders

* + 1. Which are the most **relevant national/regional** (e.g. national/regional institutions, agencies, others) **and international** (e.g. networks, associations, organisations, partnerships) **stakeholders** to be involved in order to reach most efficiently the objectives of the Topic 2. (objectives provided in point 2.2.1 and additional ones derived from challenges added under point 2.1.3, if relevant)? Indicative international key stakeholders are already listed in the initial policy paper.

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### Relevant policies

## The following **policies, regulations, directives, initiatives etc.** were identified as relevant for *Topic 2: Transnational terrestrial habitats and biodiversity*. Please also think about the funding opportunities related to these policies. Which are the most relevant?

## *(Please tick the boxes before the selected policies)*

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|  | *United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)*  |
|  | *Paris Agreement on Climate Change* |
|  | *The Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its amendments*  |
|  | *Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention)* |
|  | *Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA)* |
|  | *EU Green Deal* |
|  | *Green Agenda for the Western Balkans* |
|  | *EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030 (COM(2020) 380 final)* |
|  | *Birds (Directive 2009/147/EC) and Habitats Directives (Council Directive 92/43/EEC)* |
|  | *EU Strategy on Green Infrastructure* |
|  | *Regulation (EU) 1143/2014 on invasive alien species (the IAS Regulation)* |
|  | *EU Regulation 1143/2014 on Invasive Alien Species* |
|  | *Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)* |
|  | *A Farm to Fork Strategy (COM/2020/381 final)* |

## Is there another policy, or initiative, to be mentioned?

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### Actions

There are two **Actions** foreseen in the initial policy paper:

**Action 2.1 Joint population management for large carnivores and awareness rising activities, protecting the habitats and working towards quality of life and coexistence**

* joint population management plans for LC. Coordinate and exchange information on management practices, policies and approaches across the region, including national and regional management plans, with the aim of achieving population-level objectives
* support for international networking and exchange of experience between key stakeholders and authorities
* capacity-building
* increased cross-border collaboration on monitoring such as standardised methods and protocols
* cross-sectoral cooperation (agriculture, spatial planning, hunting), stakeholder engagement and awareness raising for improvement of sectoral plans and practices and reduction of conflicts
* support to accession countries in aligning with EU Nature Aquis

**Action 2.4 Conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats** (Support for implementation and enforcement of AEWA)

* identify sites and habitats for migratory waterbirds occurring within their territory and encourage the protection, management, rehabilitation and restoration of these sites
* harmonization of research and monitoring methods
* improvement of the hunting legislation and its proper implementation
* capacity building
* Cross-sectoral cooperation (agriculture, hunting, spatial planning), stakeholder engagement and awareness raising for improvement of sectoral plans and practices
* Support to accession countries in aligning with EU Nature Aquis

## Please indicate the relevance of each Action to reflect how important it is for your country's cooperation in EUSAIR. *(Please tick the relevant box before each Action)*

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| * **Relevant**
 | **Fairly relevant** | **Not relevant** | **Action** |
|  |  |  | *Action 2.1 Joint population management for large carnivores and awareness rising activities, protecting the habitats and working towards quality of life and coexistence* |
|  |  |  | *Action 2.4 Conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats* |

## Are there any suggestions for reformulation/specification of the Actions provided in the initial policy paper?

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## Are there any additional ideas how the listed challenges could be addressed on the EUSAIR level concerning the thematic field of Topic 2? Can you suggest e.g. any additional Actions? Please remain within the parameters of macro-regional relevance, EU policies compliance and EUSAIR territory and scope.

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## Other Challenges and Actions

## Do you have any additional ideas for **Challenges or Actions** to be addressed by EUSAIR concerning the Pillar 3, not already included under the above mentioned Topics? Please remain within the parameters of macro-regional relevance, EU policies compliance and EUSAIR territory and scope.

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## EUSAIR governance

## Please comment on your experience of engaging with the TSG3 and EUSAIR in general in terms of its effectiveness.

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## Do you have something to suggest in terms of improving the functioning of the TSG3 and EUSAIR in general?"

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