



TEDEN SREDOZEMSKJE OBALE  
IN MAKROREGIONALNIH  
STRATEGIJ

Izola, Slovenija  
18. – 22. september 2023

MEDITERRANEAN COAST  
AND MACRO-REGIONAL  
STRATEGIES WEEK

Izola, Slovenia  
18 – 22 September 2023

# Biodiversity strategy for 2030

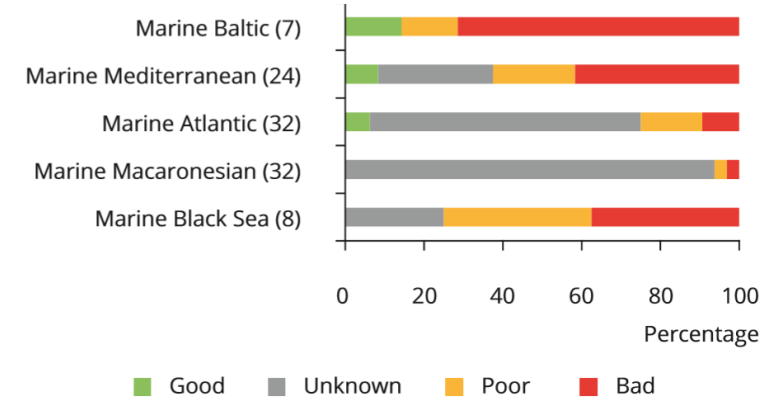
State of play with **protected area targets** and other initiatives

Dr Vedran Nikolić

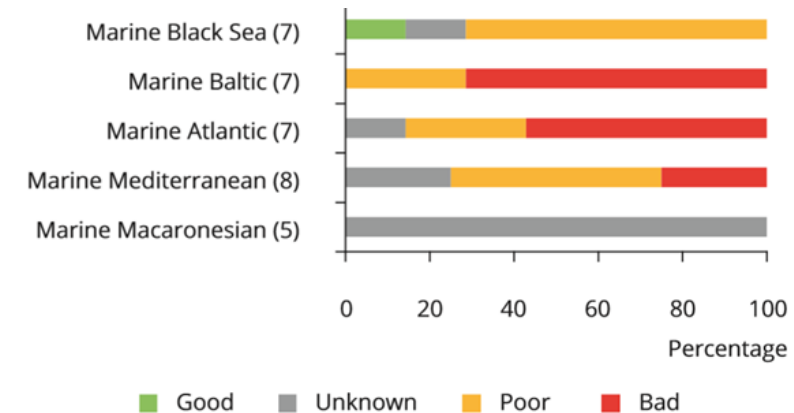
European Commission, DG Environment, Nature Conservation Unit

# State of EU marine biodiversity

- Conservation status of protected marine species



- Conservation status of protected marine habitats



Healthy seas?	Status: ecosystem characteristics	5-10 year outlook	Information availability and quality
Seabed habitats			
Water column habitats			
Marine invertebrates			
Marine fish			
Turtles			
Seabirds and waterbirds			
Marine mammals			
Ecosystem processes and functions			
Clean and undisturbed seas?	Status: pressure	5-10 year outlook	Information availability and quality
Physical disturbance of seafloor			
Extraction of fish and shellfish			
Non-indigenous species			
Eutrophication			
Contamination			
Marine litter			
Underwater noise and other forms of energy input			
Climate change			
Productive seas?	Direct dependency on healthy seas	Activity 5-10 year outlook	Information availability and quality
Land-based activities	X	-	
Extraction of living resources	✓	↗	
Production of living resources	✓	↗	
Extraction of non-living resources and disposal of waste	X	↗	
Transport and shipbuilding	X	↗	
Tourism and recreation	✓	↗	
Man-made structures	X	↗	
Energy production	X	↗	
Research and survey	X	↗	
Military	X	↘	



[https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/knowledge/pdf/Marine\\_EU\\_red\\_list\\_report.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/knowledge/pdf/Marine_EU_red_list_report.pdf)

<https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/state-of-europes-seas>

<https://www.eea.europa.eu/themes/biodiversity/state-of-nature-in-the-eu/state-of-nature-2020>

# EU policy context



- **Legal obligations: EU Birds and Habitats Directives** - designate and effectively manage Natura 2000 sites and protect species; the **MSFD** - achieve good environmental status
- **EU Biodiversity strategy for 2030:** legally and effectively protect **30%** of EU seas, strictly protect **10%**, EU nature restoration plan
- **Global biodiversity framework** (Kunming-Montreal) targets
- **Nature restoration law:** legally binding targets for restoration of marine ecosystems
- **Marine action plan:** conserve sensitive species and protect the seabed
- **Climate policy and climate law**

# Biodiversity strategy for 2030

Bringing nature back into our lives

# Protect and restore nature

## PROTECT NATURE

### Coherent trans-European nature network by 2030

- Legally protect **at least 30% of the European Union's sea area**.
- **Strictly protect at least a third** of the EU's marine protected areas.
- **Effectively manage all protected areas**, defining clear conservation objectives and measures, and monitoring them appropriately.
- **Fisheries management measures must be established in all MPAs** according to clearly defined conservation objectives and on the basis of the best available scientific advice.

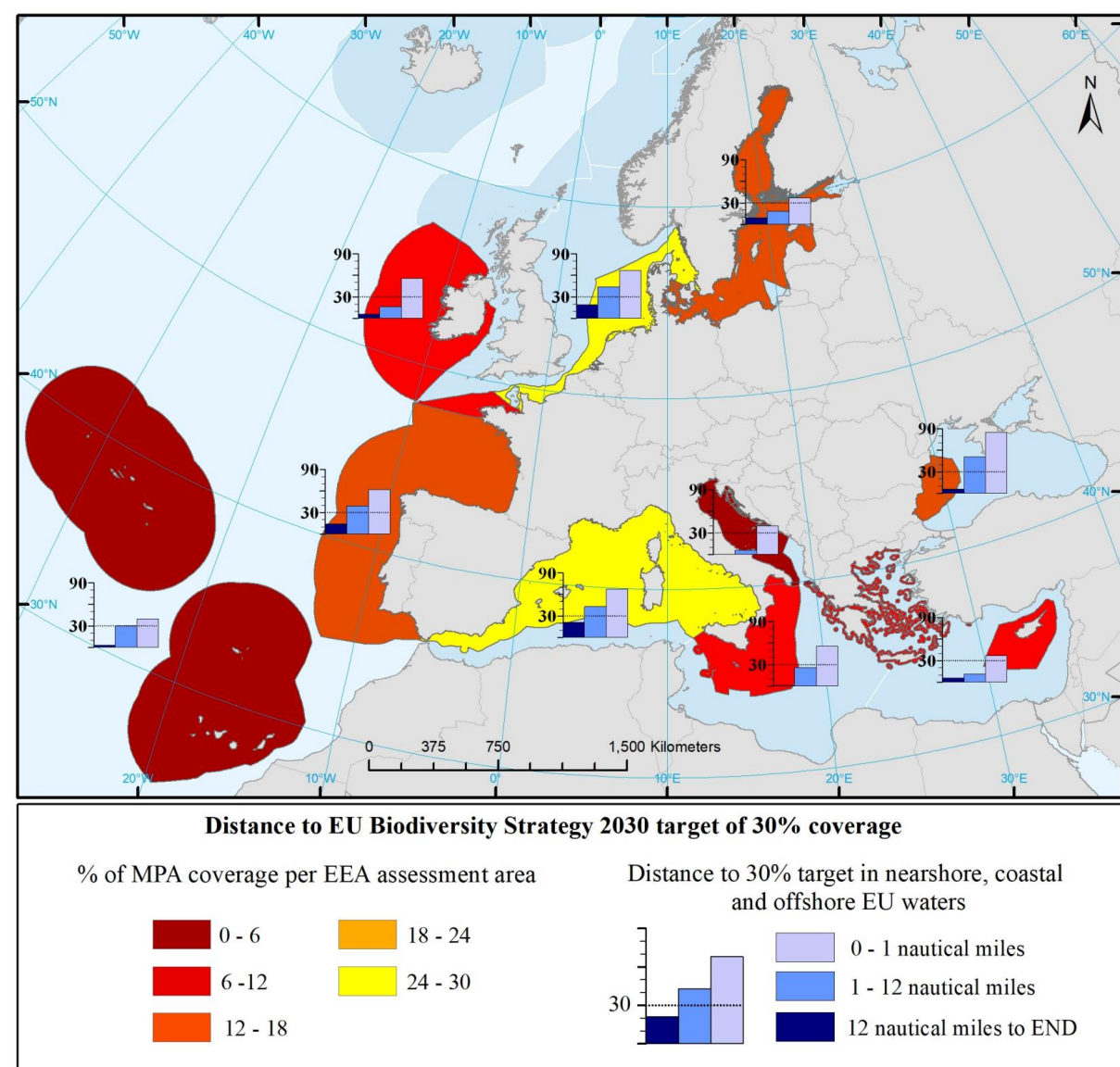
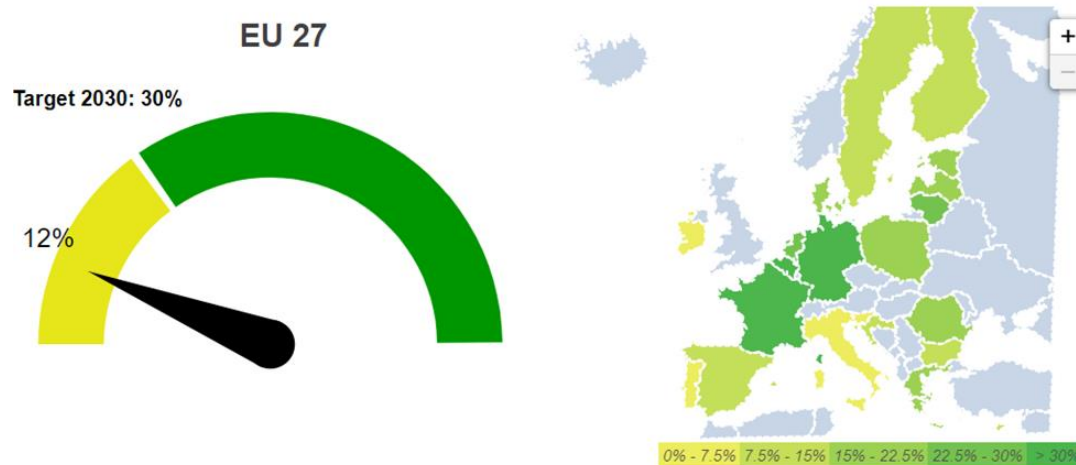
## RESTORE NATURE

### EU nature restoration plan

- **Nature Restoration Law** with **legally binding restoration targets**, including for the marine environment.
- Achieving good environmental status of marine ecosystems, including through strictly protected areas, must involve the **restoration of carbon-rich ecosystems** as well as important **fish spawning and nursery areas**.
- **Reduce bycatch** of sensitive species and the impact of bottom fishing **on the seabed**.

# Protected areas

- EU MPA network currently covers 12% of EU seas (Natura 2000 >9%)
- Less than 1% strictly protected
- Most MPAs not effectively managed

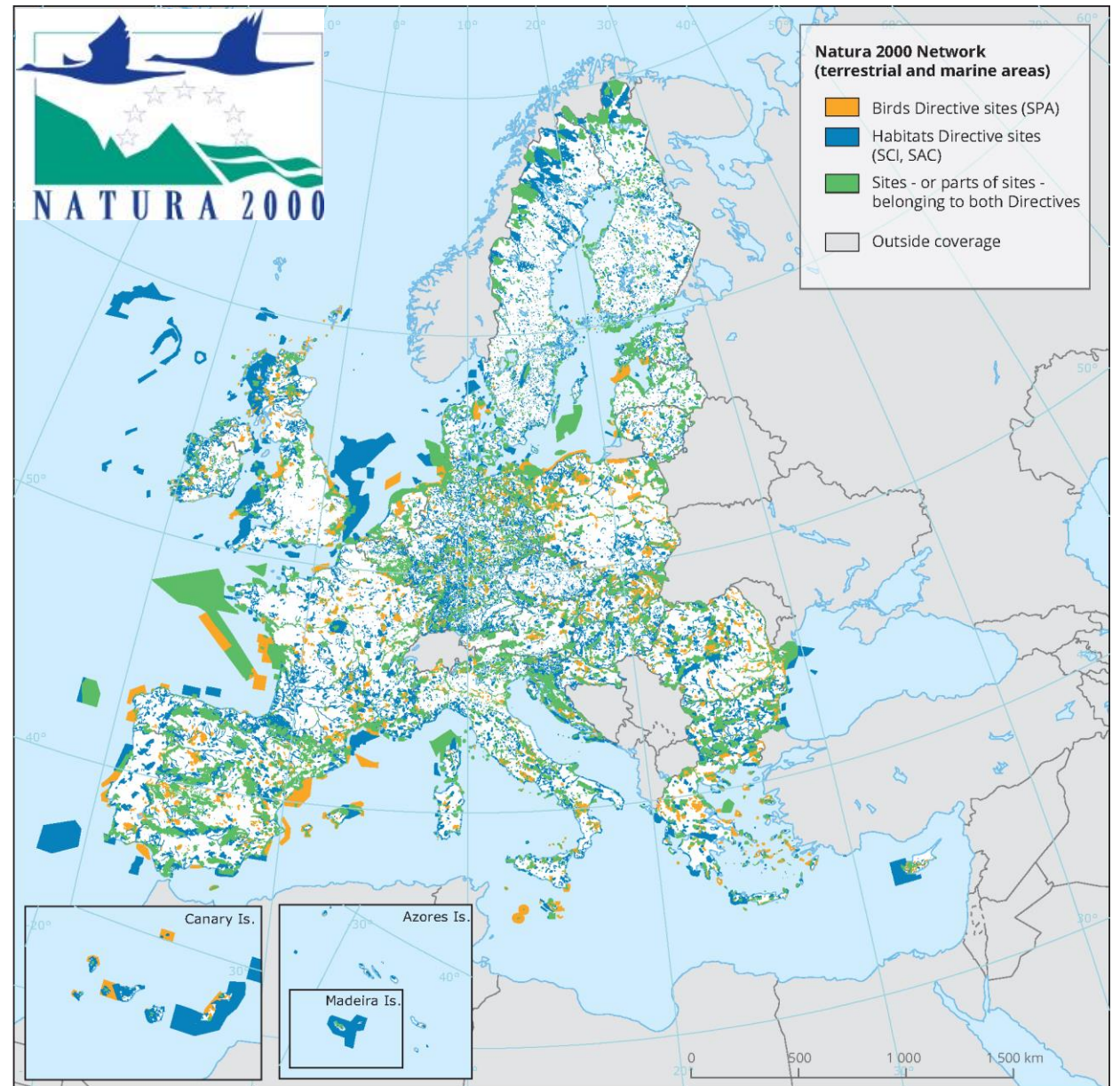


Source: [Spatial Analysis of Marine Protected Area Networks in Europe's Seas III](https://biodiversity.europa.eu/protected-areas)

More information: <https://biodiversity.europa.eu/protected-areas> and <https://biodiversity.europa.eu/countries>

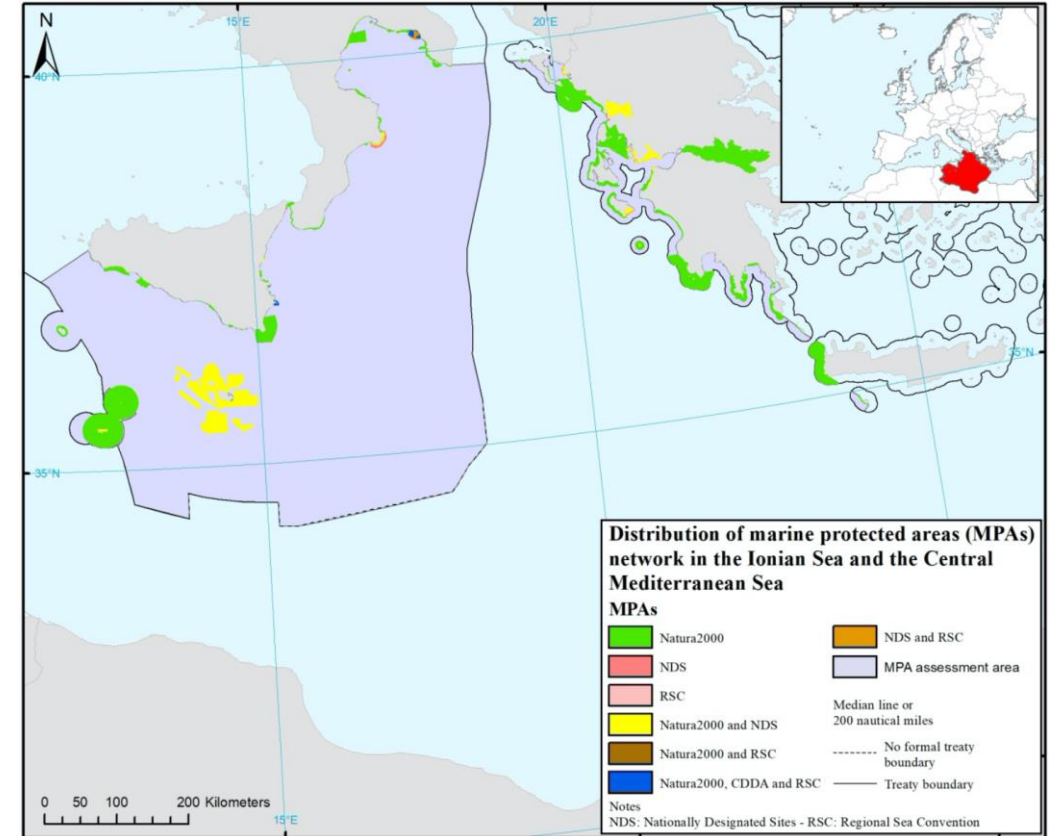
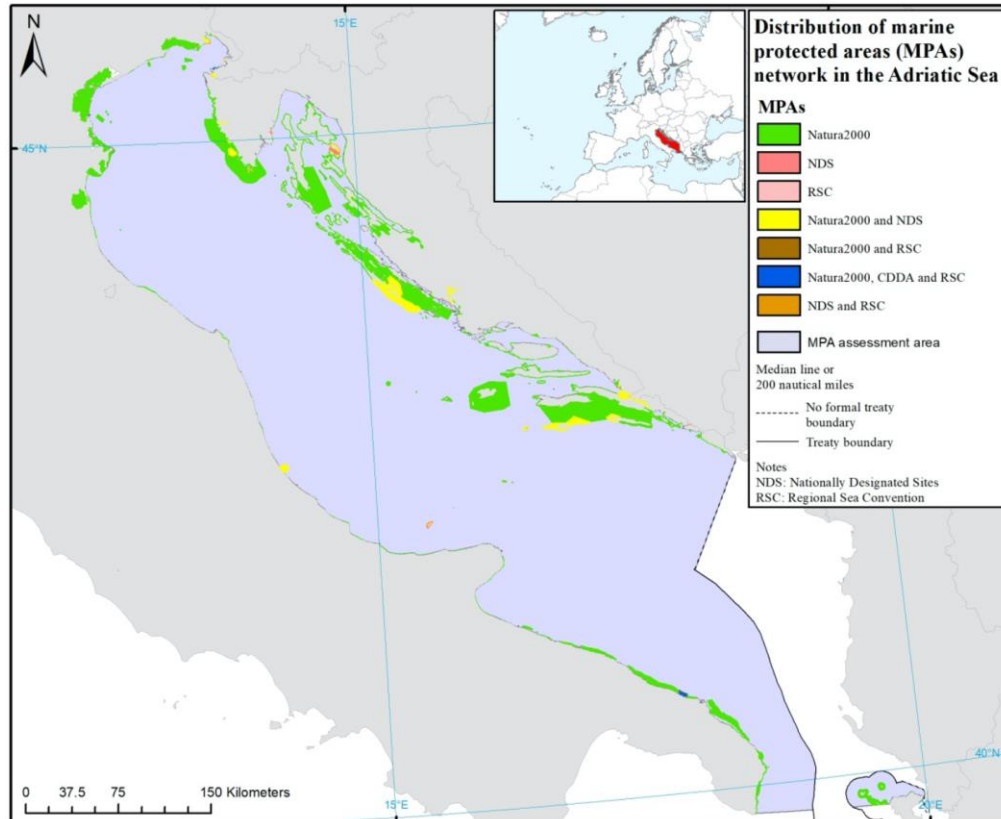
# Marine Natura 2000

- The **largest** coordinated network of protected areas in the world
- Covers **9% of EU seas**: main driver of MPA designation (**75%** of all EU MPAs)
- **Strong legal requirements**: every site must have **site-specific conservation objectives** and **conservation measures** must be effectively implemented
- Achieving coherent and effectively managed Natura 2000 network: **high policy priority**



# State of play with MPAs in the Adriatic/Ionian

- **Low coverage** (only **5.8% Adr**, **7.7% Ionian/Central Med**)
- Largest contribution by **Natura 2000 sites** (90%)
- Need to expand **5x** to reach the goal, offshore gap!



- Negligible area of **strictly protected areas-big efforts needed!**
- Big opportunities to protect **carbon sinks** (including soft sediments) and **fish stock nursery and spawning areas**

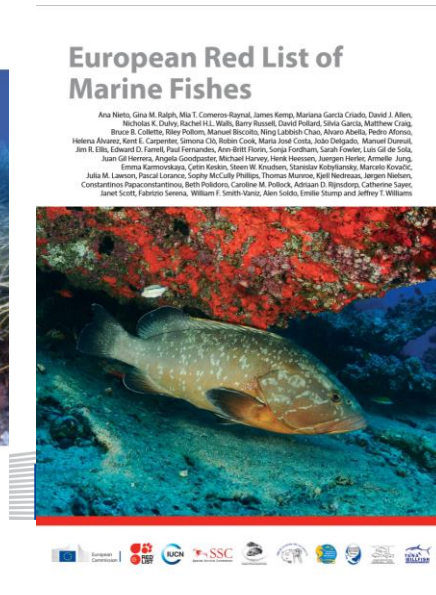
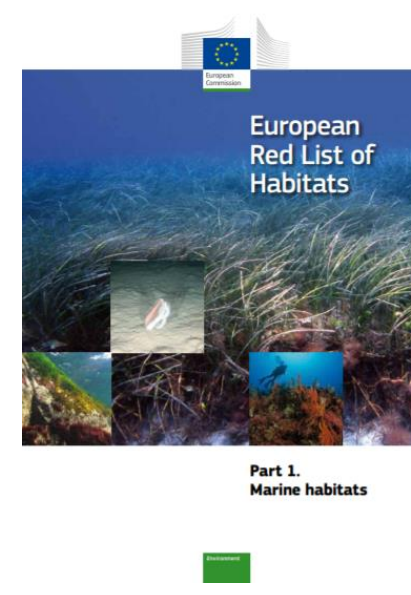
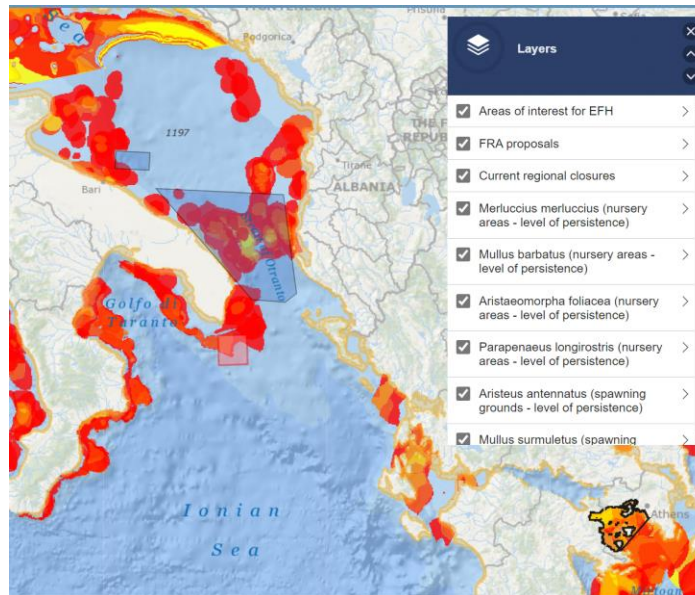


# Where to put new MPAs and OECMs?

- Current **MPA networks are not coherent and often do not cover whole ecosystems.**
- **MPAs are small/located in coastal areas** and not sufficiently covering the areas important for highly mobile species and certain habitats.
- Need for **scientific input** to identify additional areas (habitats which store carbon, areas important for fish stocks, etc.).
- Ongoing **Horizon Europe projects**: MPA Europe, MSP4BIO, MarinePlan.

# Where to put new MPAs and OECMs?

- **The role of** scientific identifications (EBSAs, IMMAs, essential fish habitats, red lists of habitats and species...) – **an online viewer in the making**
- Various types of MPAs can be designated depending on the **ecological needs** of species/habitats (e.g. requiring *strict protection*) or **results** to be achieved (*restoration*, conservation of fish stocks, spill-over effect,...)



# Effective management of all protected areas

**We are not interested in “paper parks”. They do not protect and restore biodiversity, and they do not provide socio-economic benefits.**

Establish and implement **appropriate conservation objectives and measures:**

- **Enforcing existing EU legislation** to ensure non-deterioration, definition of clear and quantified conservation objectives and appropriate conservation measures to achieve them, monitoring/enforcement - crucial for effective protection.
- **Measuring management effectiveness:** EU PAME system under development
- **Providing support** (guidance) and **financing** (EU budget)

# Working together in EU marine regions

- The **protected area targets** are for the EU territory of the 27 Member States (incl. EU outermost regions and sea areas surrounding them)
- The targets should be achieved **in each EU (marine) biogeographical region.**
  - ➔ *“All Member States expected to contribute towards reaching the targets, to an extent proportionate to the natural values they host and the potential they have for restoration.”*
- Member States are currently submitting their **initial pledges** for the targets.
- **Pledges will be discussed in 2023/24 at the level of marine biogeographical regions with involvement of stakeholders.**

[More information: SWD\\_guidance\\_protected\\_areas.pdf \(europa.eu\)](#)

# The biogeographical seminars in 2023-2024

## **Pledge and review process** for the following targets in the Strategy:

- Establish, by 2030, a **coherent and well-managed** Trans-European Nature network of **protected areas covering 30% of EU seas** of which 1/3 should be **strictly protected** (“protected area target”)
- Halting deterioration and achieving an improvement for **at least 30% of habitats and species** protected under Nature Directives which are currently in **unfavourable/non-secure status** (“status improvement target”)
- Commission guidance documents and notes on the targets
- Technical format for sending pledges to the EEA
- Online repository of pledges:

PA: <https://reportnet.europa.eu/public/dataflow/703>

Improvement: <https://reportnet.europa.eu/public/dataflow/705>

# The biogeographical seminars in 2023-2024

## Deadline for submitting the pledges

- End February 2023; consultations ongoing in many MS

## Marine review seminars

- Atlantic and Macaronesian region. Dublin, 11-13 October 2023
- Baltic region. Riga, 8-11 November 2023
- **Mediterranean and Black sea. France, Spring 2024, tbd.**

# Assessment and review of pledges

## Before the seminars:

- Dashboards (publication of pledges)
- Background documents

## During the seminar

- Presentation and discussion of MS pledges with participation of all stakeholders (Member States, economic sectors, civil society)

## After the seminar

- Seminar conclusions (incl. recommendations for reviewing pledges)

# Nature restoration law

Pioneering new legislation



# Proposal for a nature restoration law



## A key initiative of the European Green Deal and the Biodiversity Strategy for 2030:

- **Protection** needs to be strengthened but **is not enough**
- Need for **large scale restoration effort**
- Complement and **build on existing policy framework** (BHD, MSFD, WFD)
- Focus on the **synergies between climate and nature policy**

# Regulation on nature restoration: structure



**By 2030 restoration measures cover 20% of EU's land and sea**

**By 2050 – all ecosystems in need of restoration**

# Specific restoration targets

Protected  
Habitat Types  
(Annex I HD)



Habitats of  
protected  
species (BHD)



Marine  
Habitats  
(beyond HD)



Urban  
ecosystems



River  
connectivity



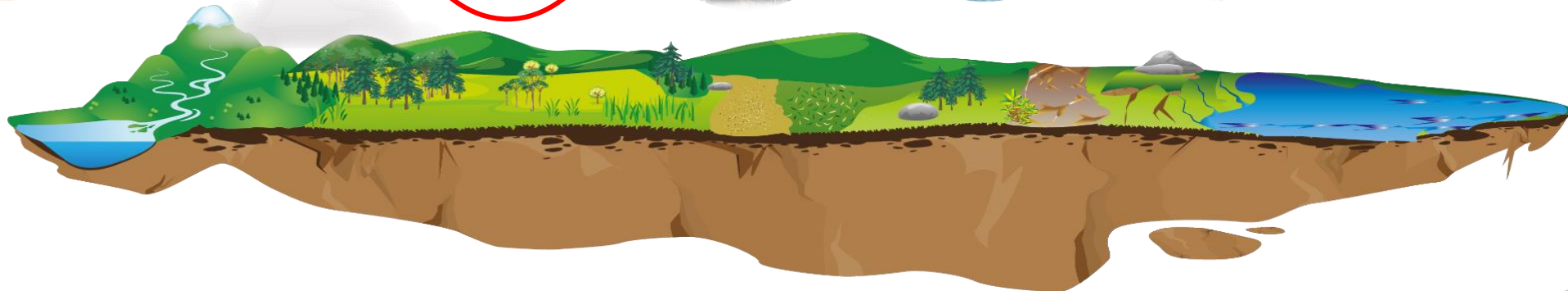
Pollinators



Agro-  
ecosystems



Forest  
ecosystems



# Marine restoration targets

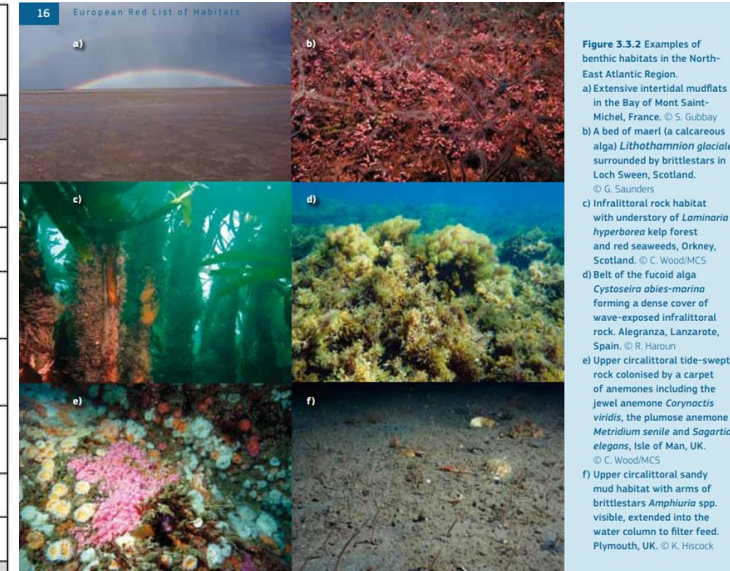
- Put in place the restoration measures necessary **to improve** to good condition areas of habitats in not-good condition
  - ✓ ...for **groups** of habitat types: on at least **30%** by 2030, **60%** by 2040, **90%** by 2050;
- Put in place the restoration measures necessary **to re-establish** the habitat to reach the favourable reference area
  - ✓ ...for **groups** of habitat types: on at least **30%** by 2030, **60%** by 2040, **100%** by 2050;
- Put in place the restoration measures necessary to **improve the quality and quantity** of habitats of species listed in Art. II, IV, V HD and wild birds + Annex III of regulation (including re-establishing them) and **enhance connectivity** until sufficient quality & quantity is achieved

# Marine habitat types (Annex II)

1. Seagrass beds
2. Macroalgal forests
3. Shellfish beds
4. Maerl beds
5. Sponge, coral and coralligenous beds
6. Vents and seeps
7. Soft sediments (above 1000 meters of depth)

## 2. GROUP 2: MACROALGAL FORESTS

EUNIS code	EUNIS habitat type name	Related Annex I (Habitats Directive) codes
<b>Atlantic</b>		
MA123	Seaweed communities on full salinity Atlantic littoral rock	1160; 1170; 1130
MA125	Fucoids on variable salinity Atlantic littoral rock	1170; 1130
MB121	Kelp and seaweed communities on Atlantic infralittoral rock	1170; 1160
MB123	Kelp and seaweed communities on sediment-affected or disturbed Atlantic infralittoral rock	1170; 1160
MB124	Kelp communities on variable salinity Atlantic infralittoral rock	1170; 1130; 1160
MB321	Kelp and seaweed communities on Atlantic infralittoral coarse sediment	1160
MB521	Kelp and seaweed communities on Atlantic infralittoral sand	1160
MB621	Vegetated communities on Atlantic infralittoral mud	1160
<b>Baltic Sea</b>		
MA131	Baltic hydrolittoral rock and boulders characterised by perennial algae	1160; 1170; 1130; 1610; 1620
MB131	Perennial algae on Baltic infralittoral rock and boulders	1170; 1160
MB232	Baltic infralittoral bottoms characterised by shell gravel	1160; 1110
MB333	Baltic infralittoral coarse sediment characterised by perennial algae	1110; 1160
MB433	Baltic infralittoral mixed sediment characterised by perennial algae	1110; 1130; 1160; 1170
<b>Black Sea</b>		
MB144	Mytilid-dominated Black Sea exposed upper infralittoral rock with fucales	1170; 1160







**Figure 3.3.2** Examples of benthic habitats in the North-East Atlantic Region.  
 a) Extensive intertidal mudflats in the Bay of Mont Saint-Michel, France. © S. Gubbay  
 b) A bed of maerl (a calcareous alga) *Lithothamnion glaciale* surrounded by brittlestars in Loch Sween, Scotland. © G. Saunders  
 c) Infralittoral rock habitat with understory of *Laminaria hyperborea* kelp forest and red seaweeds, Orkney, Scotland. © C. Wood/MCS  
 d) Belt of the fucoid alga *Cystoseira abies-marina* forming a dense cover of wave-exposed infralittoral rock. Alegranza, Lanzarote, Spain. © R. Haroun  
 e) Upper circalittoral tide-swept rock colonised by a carpet of anemones including the jewel anemone *Corynactis viridis*, the plumose anemone *Metridium senile* and *Sagartia elegans*, Isle of Man, UK. © C. Wood/MCS  
 f) Upper circalittoral sandy mud habitat with arms of brittlestars *Amphiprion* spp. visible, extended into the water column to filter feed. Plymouth, UK. © K. Hiscock

Source: [https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/knowledge/pdf/Marine\\_EU\\_red\\_list\\_report.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/knowledge/pdf/Marine_EU_red_list_report.pdf)

# Marine action plan

Bringing environment and fisheries worlds together

# EU Action plan: Protecting and restoring marine ecosystems for sustainable and resilient fisheries

- State of seas and sustainability of fisheries
- Bring “nature back into our lives”
- Bridge fisheries and environment worlds
- Builds on existing framework
- Improve gear selectivity & address bycatch of sensitive species 
- Protect the seabed 
- Transition & knowledge 
- Governance 

# Way forward

And how the EUSAIR can help



- **EU Member States have endorsed the EU Biodiversity strategy** and its targets – it is now time for **delivery of political ambitions**.
- Need for a **coherent approach across Member States** and with other countries in the sea basin - **EU accession countries are expected to align to EU ambition**. All available information should be used.
- Need for **close cooperation across all policies and sectors**. Important benefits for **climate and the economy** (fisheries, tourism). Targets to be reflected in **maritime spatial plans**.
- **EU MS** proposals for new MPAs will be discussed in each marine biogeographical region **in seminars in 2023. Technical discussions will happen there. We can work together.**

# Thank you



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