

Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora

Definitions

Article 1

For the purpose of this Directive:

- (a) *conservation* means a series of measures required to maintain or restore the natural habitats and the populations of species of wild fauna and flora at a favourable status as defined in (e) and (i);
- (b) *natural habitats* means terrestrial or aquatic areas distinguished by geographic, abiotic and biotic features, whether entirely natural or semi-natural;
- (c) *natural habitat types of Community interest* means those which, within the territory referred to in Article 2:
 - (i) are in danger of disappearance in their natural range;
or
 - (ii) have a small natural range following their regression or by reason of their intrinsically restricted area;
or
 - (iii) [^{F1}present outstanding examples of typical characteristics of one or more of the nine following biogeographical regions: Alpine, Atlantic, Black Sea, Boreal, Continental, Macaronesian, Mediterranean, Pannonian and Steppic.]

Such habitat types are listed or may be listed in Annex I;

- (d) *priority natural habitat types* means natural habitat types in danger of disappearance, which are present on the territory referred to in Article 2 and for the conservation of which the Community has particular responsibility in view of the proportion of their natural range which falls within the territory referred to in Article 2; these priority natural habitat types are indicated by an asterisk (*) in Annex I;
- (e) *conservation status of a natural habitat* means the sum of the influences acting on a natural habitat and its typical species that may affect its long-term natural distribution, structure and functions as well as the long-term survival of its typical species within the territory referred to in Article 2.
[^{X1}The conservation status] of a natural habitat will be taken as ‘favourable’ when:
 - its natural range and areas it covers within that range are stable or increasing, and
 - the specific structure and functions which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and
 - the conservation status of its typical species is favourable as defined in (i);
- (f) *habitat of a species* means an environment defined by specific abiotic and biotic factors, in which the species lives at any stage of its biological cycle;

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- (g) *species of Community interest* means species which, within the territory referred to in Article 2, are:
- (i) endangered, except those species whose natural range is marginal in that territory and which are not endangered or vulnerable in the western palearctic region; or
 - (ii) vulnerable, i.e. believed likely to move into the endangered category in the near future if the causal factors continue operating; or
 - (iii) rare, i.e. with small populations that are not at present endangered or vulnerable, but are at risk. The species are located within restricted geographical areas or are thinly scattered over a more extensive range; or
 - (iv) endemic and requiring particular attention by reason of the specific nature of their habitat and/or the potential impact of their exploitation on their habitat and/or the potential impact of their exploitation on their conservation status.

Such species are listed or may be listed in Annex II and/or Annex IV or V;

- (h) *priority species* means species referred to in (g) (i) for the conservation of which the Community has particular responsibility in view of the proportion of their natural range which falls within the territory referred to in Article 2; these priority species are indicated by an asterisk (*) in Annex II;
- (i) *conservation status of a species* means the sum of the influences acting on the species concerned that may affect the long-term distribution and abundance of its populations within the territory referred to in Article 2;

The *conservation status* will be taken as 'favourable' when:

- population dynamics data on the species concerned indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long-term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats, and
- the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and
- there is, and will probably continue to be, a sufficiently large habitat to maintain its populations on a long-term basis;

- (j) *site* means a geographically defined area whose extent is clearly delineated;
- (k) *site of Community importance* means a site which, in the biogeographical region or regions to which ^{it} belongs, contributes significantly to the maintenance or restoration at a favourable conservation status of a natural habitat type in Annex I or of a species in Annex II and may also contribute significantly to the coherence of Natura 2000 referred to in Article 3, and/or contributes significantly to the maintenance of biological diversity within the biogeographic region or regions concerned.

For animal species ranging over wide areas, sites of Community importance shall correspond to the places within the natural range of such species which present the physical or biological factors essential to their life and reproduction;

- (l) *special area of conservation* means a site of Community importance designated by the Member States through a statutory, administrative and/or contractual act where the necessary conservation measures are applied for the maintenance or restoration, at a favourable conservation status, of the natural habitats and/or the populations of the species for which the site is designated;

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- (m) *specimen* means any animal or plant, whether alive or dead, of the species listed in Annex IV and Annex V, any part or derivative thereof, as well as any other goods which appear, from an accompanying document, the packaging or a mark or label, or from any other circumstances, to be parts or derivatives of animals or plants of those species;
- (n) *the committee* means the committee set up pursuant to Article 20.

Editorial Information

- X1** Substituted by [Corrigendum to Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora \(Official Journal of the European Communities No L 206 of 22 July 1992\)](#).

Textual Amendments

- F1** Substituted by [Council Directive 2006/105/EC of 20 November 2006 adapting Directives 73/239/EEC, 74/557/EEC and 2002/83/EC in the field of environment, by reason of the accession of Bulgaria and Romania](#).

Article 2

- 1 The aim of this Directive shall be to contribute towards ensuring bio-diversity through the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora in the European territory of the Member States to which the Treaty applies.
- 2 Measures taken pursuant to this Directive shall be designed to maintain or restore, at favourable conservation status, natural habitats and species of wild fauna and flora of Community interest.
- 3 Measures taken pursuant to this Directive shall take account of economic, social and cultural requirements and regional and local characteristics.