

Nature Conservation in Europe

Approaches and Lessons

European ecosystems and species remain under pressure from intensive agriculture and forestry, fishing, pollution, urban sprawl, invasive species and climate change. This book provides a detailed description and critical analysis of nature conservation responses, achievements and failures, motivated by the concerning state of nature and missed biodiversity targets. It summarises Europe's nature and the impact of human activities, and then gives an overview of relevant international biodiversity treaties and the EU nature conservation policy and legislative framework. The core of the book comprises chapters written by national experts, which cover the UK and 25 EU Member States, providing comparative case studies from which valuable lessons are drawn. Covering wide-ranging topics such as biodiversity pressures, legislation and governance, biodiversity strategies, species protection, protected areas, habitat management and funding, this book is of interest to a wide audience, including academics and professionals involved in nature conservation and related environmental fields.

Graham Tucker is an ecologist and a leading authority on European nature conservation policy, and has a particular interest in its achievements and failures. He has gained insights on these issues from 36 years of professional experience, including at Birdlife International and, more recently, at the Institute for European Environmental Policy, where he was Head of the Biodiversity Programme. This is his third book focusing on European nature conservation. He is now an independent consultant and proprietor of Nature Conservation Consulting.

Nature Conservation in Europe

Approaches and Lessons

Edited by
Graham Tucker



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS



Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India
103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment, a department of the University of Cambridge.

We share the University’s mission to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108721912
DOI: 10.1017/9781108654647

© Cambridge University Press & Assessment 2023

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press & Assessment.

First published 2023
First paperback edition 2025

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication data

Names: Tucker, G. M. (Graham M.), author.
Title: Nature conservation in Europe: approaches and lessons / edited by Graham Tucker.
Description: Cambridge, United Kingdom; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2023. | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2022040181 (print) | LCCN 2022040182 (ebook) | ISBN 9781108496742 (Hardback) | ISBN 9781108721912 (Paperback) | ISBN 9781108654647 (epub)
Subjects: LCSH: Nature conservation–Europe.
Classification: LCC QH77.E9 T83 2023 (print) | LCC QH77.E9 (ebook) | DDC 333.72094–dc23/eng/20220831
LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2022040181>
LC ebook record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2022040182>

ISBN 978-1-108-49674-2 Hardback
ISBN 978-1-108-72191-2 Paperback

Additional resources for this publication at www.cambridge.org/natureconservation.

Cambridge University Press & Assessment has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

To all those striving to conserve nature in their respective
ways – especially the unsung heroes.

Contents

<i>List of Contributors</i>	page ix
<i>Preface</i>	xi
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xiii
<i>Glossary, Abbreviations and Country Codes</i>	xiv
<hr/>	
1 Introduction: Aims, Scope, Structure and Key Information Sources	1
Graham Tucker	
2 Europe’s Nature and Conservation Needs	13
Graham Tucker	
3 The International Drivers of Nature Conservation, Their Objectives and Impacts on Nature Conservation Policies and Actions in Europe	41
David Stroud, Euan Dunn, Wyn Jones and Graham Tucker	
4 Nature Conservation Policy, Legislation and Funding in the EU	59
Graham Tucker, Kaley Hart, Andrew Farmer, Euan Dunn and David Baldock	
5 Conclusions, Lessons Learnt and Implications for the Future	106
Graham Tucker	
6 Austria	142
Wolfgang Suske and Kathrin Horvath	
7 Belgium	160
Els Martens and Jorge Ventocilla	
8 Republic of Bulgaria	181
Boris Barov	
9 Republic of Croatia	200
Jasminka Radović	
10 Cyprus	219
Clairie Papazoglou and Andreas Demetropoulos†	
11 The Czech Republic	237
Petr Roth	
12 Denmark	254
Anette Petersen and Jan Woollhead	
13 Estonia	273
Aleksei Lotman and Silvia Lotman	
14 Finland	291
Heikki Toivonen and Olli Ojala	
15 France	311
Pierre Commenville	
16 Germany	331
Eick von Ruschkowski	
17 Greece	353
Ioli Christopoulou	
18 Hungary	374
Katalin Sipos	
19 Ireland	393
Andrew Jackson and Anja Murray	
20 Italy	415
Elisa Cardarelli, Barbara Calaciura, Daniela Zaghi and Giuseppe Bogliani	
21 Latvia	434
Otars Opermanis, Ilona Mendzina, Ainars Aunins and Inga Racinska	
22 Lithuania	451
Rūta Baškytė and Žygimantas Obelevičius	
23 The Netherlands	468
Erik Gerritsen	
24 Poland	493
Paweł Pawlaczyk	
25 Portugal	514
Ana Guimarães Ferreira and Domingos Leitão	
26 Romania	534
Erika Stanciu, Ioan-Cristian Ioja, Mariana Tintarean and Mihai Pop	

Contents

27	Slovakia	555	31	United Kingdom	634
	Viera Šefferová Stanová and Rastislav Rybanič			Graham Tucker, Wyn Jones, Susan Davies and Joan Edwards	
28	Slovenia	574			
	Peter Skoberne				
29	Spain	593			
	Concha Olmeda and Juan Carlos Blanco				
30	Sweden	612			
	Mats O. G. Eriksson and Mia Pantzar				

Appendix: Habitats Directive Annex I Habitat Types
Referred to in This Book 678
Index 682

Contributors

Ainars Aunins University of Latvia, Riga, Latvia	Euan Dunn Cambridge, UK
David Baldock Institute for European Environmental Policy UK	Joan Edwards Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts, Plymouth, UK
Boris Barov Brussels, Belgium	Mats O. G. Eriksson MK Natur- och Miljökonsult HB, Lindome, Sweden
Rūta Baškytė State Service of Protected Areas, Vilnius, Lithuania	Andrew Farmer Institute for European Environmental Policy, Brussels, Belgium
Juan Carlos Blanco Consultores en Biología de la Conservación S.L., Madrid, Spain	Ana Guimarães Ferreira Bragança, Portugal
Giuseppe Bogliani University of Pavia, Pavia, Italy	Erik Gerritsen Brussels, Belgium
Barbara Calaciura Comunità Ambiente, Roma, Italy	Kaley Hart Institute for European Environmental Policy UK
Elisa Cardarelli University of Pavia, Pavia, Italy	Kathrin Horvath Suske Consulting, Vienna, Austria
Ioli Christopoulou The Green Tank, Athens, Greece	Ioan-Cristian Iojă University of Bucharest, Bucharest, Romania
Pierre Commenville Les Ecrins National Park, Gap, France	Andrew Jackson University College Dublin, Ireland
Susan Davies Scottish Seabird Centre, North Berwick, UK	Wyn Jones Nantwich, Cheshire, UK
Andreas Demetropoulos† Nicosia, Cyprus	Domingos Leitão Sociedade Portuguesa para o Estudo das Aves, Lisbon, Portugal

List of Contributors

Aleksei Lotman
Estonian Fund for Nature, Pärnumaa, Estonia

Silvia Lotman
Estonian Fund for Nature, Pärnumaa, Estonia

Els Martens
Vilvoorde, Belgium

Ilona Mendzina
Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, Riga, Latvia

Anja Murray
Ireland

Žygimantas Obelevičius
State Service of Protected Areas, Vilnius, Lithuania

Olli Ojala
Lahti, Finland

Concha Olmeda
ATECMA, Asesores Técnicos de Medio Ambiente S.L., Madrid, Spain

Otars Opermanis
Biota, Riga, Latvia

Mia Pantzar
Göteborg, Sweden

Clairie Papazoglou
Nicosia, Cyprus

Paweł Pawlaczyk
Naturalists Club Poland, Świebodzin, Poland

Anette Petersen
GEON, Skovlunde, Denmark

Mihai Pop
Association for the Conservation of Biological Diversity, Covasna, Romania

Inga Racinska
Latvian Fund for Nature, Riga, Latvia

Jasminka Radović
Zagreb, Croatia

Petr Roth
Praha, Czech Republic

Eick von Ruschkowski
Laatzen, Germany

Rastislav Rybanič
Čífer, Slovakia

Katalin Sipos
WWF Hungary Foundation, Budapest, Hungary

Peter Skoberne
Ljubljana, Slovenia

Erika Stanciu
Propark Foundation for Protected Areas, Brasov, Romania

Viera Šefferová Stanová
DAPHNE – Institute of Applied Ecology, Bratislava, Slovakia

David Stroud
Peterborough, UK

Wolfgang Suske
Suske Consulting, Vienna, Austria

Mariana Tintarean
Romanian Wilderness Society, Brasov, Romania

Heikki Toivonen
Kangasala, Finland

Graham Tucker
Nature Conservation Consulting, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, UK

Jorge Ventocilla
Belgian Biodiversity Platform – RBINS, Brussels, Belgium

Jan Woollhead
Parks’nTrails, Sorø, Denmark

Daniela Zaghi
Comunità Ambiente, Roma, Italy

Preface

The biodiversity crisis is as bad as ever over much of Europe. This is despite over 40 years of nature conservation efforts following the ground-breaking Bern Convention, the Convention on Migratory Species and the EU¹ Birds Directive, all in 1979. Since then, there has been the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the EU Habitats Directive in 1992, followed by many EU supporting measures such as the Water Framework Directive and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, and numerous national strategies and actions.

So why is it that nature is so impoverished and still declining? It is not a lack of knowledge: we know the main things that need to be done. It is definitely not a lack of biodiversity conferences, declarations, targets and strategies. The problem is the gap between nature conservation aspirations and achievements. This book explores the reasons for this, primarily by examining nature conservation in different countries and comparing their varying problems, solutions and outcomes.

The idea for this book and the national comparisons came from various conversations I had with numerous nature conservation experts across Europe, with whom I have had the privilege to work during the last three decades. These discussions increasingly focussed on the plight of nature and the apparent ineffectiveness of many so-called nature conservation measures. Whilst there have been successes, as described in this book, they have been too few to stem the tide of biodiversity loss. At the same time, countries have taken varying approaches and some seem to be doing better than others (at least in reducing the rates of decline), whilst others (or their political leaders) do not appear to have cared much and have only done the bare minimum. Whilst there have been numerous CBD, European Commission, European Environment Agency (EEA) and other reports based on indicators, there has been a need for a deeper comparison of national actions and actual biodiversity impacts – to see what really happened,

what worked, what did not and why. About 10 years ago these conversations led to a blueprint for this book, with its main part consisting of national chapters written by national experts. The original intention was to cover all EU-28 countries plus a selection of other European countries for comparison.

Plans to commence writing were delayed in 2014 when the European Commission started a Fitness Check of the Nature Directives (i.e. the Birds Directive and Habitats Directive). As part of its regulatory reform programme, it set out to establish if they were effective, efficient, relevant, coherent with other EU policies and provided added EU value. This was concerning at the time, as there were clear political signals that some wanted the exercise to simplify and reduce the strength of the legislation. However, to some extent the Fitness Check was needed, and it carried out some of the analysis that was envisaged for this book, to draw lessons and ensure the directives were achieving their full potential. As many of us involved in the book were occupied in various ways in the Fitness Check, it was not an appropriate time to start writing. When the Fitness Check was over, the Commission concluded in 2016 that the Nature Directives were fit for purpose, and their key measures including the protection of sites and species worked well when implemented properly. However, the directives were not achieving their objectives because they were not being implemented sufficiently, primarily due to a lack of political will, and underfunding.

Although the reasons for the problems are explained in detail in the Fitness Check and supporting evaluation study, it was apparent that much more could be said, especially in terms of exploring the different national approaches and outcomes. This convinced me to go ahead with this book. Although it was ambitious, I knew that there were many excellent people willing to contribute. With the essential help of an assembled advisory group of leading nature conservation experts (see Acknowledgements) a detailed publication proposal was prepared and further potential chapter authors identified and invited to take part.

Following discussions, a consistent set of key topics was agreed for each country chapter including the natural characteristics of the country, the conservation status of habitats and

¹ Although the Birds Directive was adopted by the European Economic Community (EEC), for simplicity the European Union (EU) is sometimes used as the term to also represent what was the EEC, and then the European Community (EC), before the EU was formed in 1993.

Preface

species and main pressures affecting them, governance, policies and legislation, species protection, protected areas, spatial planning, habitat management, funding, monitoring and future developments. To avoid the chapters becoming too long it was decided that they should focus on the most important developments in the country, mainly over the last 40 years and particularly over the last decade and in relation to the EU’s and CBD’s biodiversity targets up to 2020. It was also agreed to add some introductory chapters, covering the principal nature conservation requirements and challenges in Europe, key international conventions, and the current EU nature policy and legislative framework. With these chapters, as well as a conclusion chapter to draw lessons, it was apparent that the book could be potentially huge and expensive. To prevent this, it now focusses on the EU and UK primarily and does not include additional comparative country chapters. Nevertheless, the book has attempted to cover Europe more widely where possible.

Thankfully, it was possible to find willing authors with the required knowledge to cover 26 countries (involving 50 contributors in total), despite the wide range of issues covered in each chapter and the considerable investment in time needed. Furthermore, as there has been no funding in the project, most of the chapters have been prepared by authors in their ‘spare time’. Unfortunately, although authors were initially found for Luxembourg and Malta, they were unable to prepare the chapter due to their vital nature conservation work commitments. To help partially fill this gap, key data on the countries are included in the book where they are available.

An important aim for each country chapter has been for it to represent a balanced range of views. Many of the chapters have therefore been written by multiple national experts from universities, consultancies or institutes, as well as some NGOs. Although few staff from governmental authorities have been able to take part directly, many have provided information or critical reviews. Very fortuitously, a few recently retired senior staff from nature authorities and other institutions have authored some of the chapters, providing invaluable insights based on decades of experience. To further help ensure the chapters provide balanced accounts, each has been reviewed by

a range of experts, including from authorities and NGOs, and others with differing backgrounds to the authors.

The actual writing of many chapters started in 2018, once a publication agreement had been made with Cambridge University Press. Good progress was being made until the COVID-19 pandemic struck at the beginning of 2020. Fortunately, it was no worse than disruptive for any of us. But over the last two years the inevitable changes in working practices and personal situations delayed the completion of many chapters. As a result, some of the first submitted chapters became out of date and had to be updated, which the authors took on with great patience and understanding. Whilst it has not been possible to fully catch up on all issues in all chapters, the key developments in the EU and in each country up to the finalisation of the chapters in 2022 have been included as far as possible.

Now, as this book goes to the publisher in June 2022, there are more encouraging signs for nature conservation in Europe, most notably within the EU through some aspects of the European Green Deal, Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and proposed Regulation on Nature Restoration. Whilst such grand strategies have been seen before, the proposals for legally binding restoration targets in the EU could lead to the step change in the scale of action that is needed. There are also potentially very positive developments in the UK, including legally binding targets for habitat restoration and species, the introduction of mandatory biodiversity net gain from developments, and the transition towards the use of all agricultural subsidies for public goods, including biodiversity. However, the nature conservation outcomes of all these EU and UK initiatives will very much depend on their ambitions, specific targets and actual implementation. Hopefully, some of the lessons from this book, especially the need for strong enforcement of regulation, adequate targeted funding and wider societal involvement in nature conservation will guide these coming initiatives. For the moment, it is imperative that the lessons help improve the implementation of the Nature Directives and other important existing measures – to fill the current gap between conservation aspirations and achievements.

Acknowledgements

There would be nothing to write about, or celebrate, if it were not for the countless number of people in Europe who are contributing to nature conservation in their own way. I therefore salute them all, and hope this book will go some way to showing the breadth of activities and dedication involved. In particular, I acknowledge the essential role of the often unsung heroes, including the legislators, policymakers, regulators and administrators (often rather dismissively referred to as bureaucrats), from EU to local level. Without their hard, unglamorous work, the relatively strong nature conservation legislation and comprehensive policy framework we have in Europe would remain unimplemented and unenforced; indeed, it would not exist in the first place. It is also apparent from this book that there are many outside the environmental sector who are making important contributions to nature conservation, including amongst hunters, farmers, foresters, fishers, water managers, various industries, many other sectors and wider society. All deserve appreciation and encouragement.

Obviously, I am completely indebted to the authors of the country chapters, as well as my co-authors of the other chapters. Without the depth and breadth of knowledge and insights that they have brought, together with their dedication and diligence, this book would never have been possible. They have given their time most generously, and I am especially grateful for their patience and perseverance, as this book has been more work and taken a couple of years longer than anticipated. Sadly, Andreas Demetropoulos, an author of the chapter on Cyprus, passed away before publication of this book. He was an inspiring conservationist, especially in relation to turtles and the marine environment, and it is an honour that he was able to contribute to this book. I also thank the many reviewers and other experts, as listed at the end of each chapter, who provided information and valuable comments and suggestions.

Neither would this book have materialised if it had not been for the wise guidance and positive support that I received from the following nature conservation experts who agreed to join an advisory group: David Baldock, Andreas Baumüller, Ariel Brunner, Wyn Jones, Petr Roth, Alberto Arroyo Schnell, Kerstin Sundseth and Agnes Zolyomi. The structure and contents of the book, and the guidance that was produced for the authors, benefited greatly from their wide-ranging experience and knowledge. The fact that excellent authors were found for 26 chapters is also largely due to their sharing of contacts and suggestions, and personal invitations in some cases. I especially thank Petr Roth for his support, as the idea for the book has much to do with conversations with him 10 years ago, and he has been an enthusiastic supporter and honest advisor ever since.

I am also grateful for the unwitting support for the book from my former colleagues at the Institute for European Environmental Policy, who taught me a huge amount and stimulated many ideas over the years. They have all had an important influence on the book. In particular I thank David Baldock, Andrew Farmer, Erik Gerritsen, Kaley Hart and Evelyn Underwood.

In addition, I thank Dominic Lewis of Cambridge University Press who initially took on the publication of the book, and subsequently Aleksandra Serocka for her advice and great patience and understanding over the protracted period of writing. Jenny van der Meijden at Cambridge University Press and Anne Rufina Raymond at Straive managed the book production, and Ruth Swan carried out meticulous copyediting.

Last, but not least, I thank my friends and family, and especially Claire Johnson, for putting up with my 'book obsession' over the last few years.

Glossary, Abbreviations and Country Codes

§ Section

- ABNJ** Area Beyond National Jurisdiction
AECM Agri-environment–climate measure
AES Agri-environment scheme
AGR Agricultural areas – CORINE land cover classes (see Table 1.1)
ALP Alpine biogeographical region
Art. Article
ART Artificial – CORINE land cover classes (see Table 1.1)
ASCI Area of Special Conservation Interest (under the Bern Convention)
ATL Atlantic biogeographical region
BAP Biodiversity Action Plan
BD Birds Directive (when referring to articles, annexes and species)
BD species Bird species covered by the Birds Directive (i.e. all wild bird species naturally occurring in the EU)
BHD Birds and Habitats Directives
BLS Black Sea biogeographical region
BOR Boreal biogeographical region
BP Before present
c. Approximately
CAP Common Agricultural Policy
CBD Convention on Biological Diversity
CDDA Common Database on Designated Areas (now the Nationally Designated Areas Inventory)
CFP Common Fisheries Policy
CITES Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CJEU Court of Justice of the European Union (also informally known as the European Court of Justice – ECJ)
CLC CORINE land cover
CMS Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Bonn Convention)
CON Continental biogeographical region
COP Conference of the Parties
CORINE Coordination of information on the environment (land cover data)
CR Critically Threatened (IUCN Red List threat status)
DG Directorate-General (of the European Commission)
EAFRD European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
EAGF European Agricultural and Guarantee Fund
EAP Environmental Action Programme
EC European Community
ECA European Court of Auditors
EEA European Environment Agency
EEA-39 The EU-28 and Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey, and the cooperating countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia. The UK has since left the EEA.
EEC European Economic Community
EEZ Exclusive Economic Zone
EIA Environmental impact assessment
Eionet European Environment Information and Observation Network
ELD Environmental Liability Directive
EMFF European Maritime and Fisheries Fund
EN Endangered (IUCN Red List threat status)
eNGO Environmental non-governmental organisation
ENRD European Network for Rural Development
ERDF European Regional Development Fund
ESIF European Structural and Investment Funds
ETC/BD European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity
EU European Union
EU-15 The EU Member States pre-enlargement in 2004
EU-25 The EU Member States as of 1 May 2004 and the accession of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia
EU-27 The EU Member States as of 1 January 2007 and the accession of Bulgaria and Romania, before the accession of Croatia. Not the EU after the departure of the UK.
EU-28 The EU Member States as of 1 January 2013, after the accession of Croatia, including the UK
EUNIS European Nature Information System
FOR Forests – CORINE land cover classes (see Table 1.1)
FTE Full-time equivalent
GAEC Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition, with respect to CAP payment conditions
GBIF Global Biodiversity Information Facility
GDP Gross Domestic Product
GEF Global Environment Facility
GIS Geographic Information System
HD Habitats Directive (when referring to articles, annexes and habitats and species)
HD habitats Habitats listed in HD Annex I
HD species Species listed in HD Annex II and/or Annex IV and V
HNV High Nature Value in relation to farmland or forestry
IAS Invasive Alien Species: animals and plants that are introduced accidentally or deliberately into a natural environment where they are not normally found, with serious negative consequences for their new environment
IBA Important Bird Area (as defined by BirdLife International)
ICES International Council for the Exploration of the Sea
IPBES Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
IUCN International Union for Conservation of Nature
JRC Joint Research Centre – part of the European Commission
KBA Key Biodiversity Area
LIFE Financial Instrument for the Environment
LPIS Land Parcel Identification System
MAC Macaronesian biogeographical region
MAES Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystems and their Services (EU initiative)
MARPOL International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships

Glossary, Abbreviations and Country Codes

MATL Marine Atlantic region
MBAL Marine Baltic region
MBLS Marine Black Sea region
MEA Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MED Mediterranean biogeographical region
MFF The Multiannual Financial Framework of the EU
MMAC Marine Macaronesian region
MMED Marine Mediterranean region
MPA Marine protected area
MS Member State
MSFD Marine Strategy Framework Directive
MSPD Maritime Strategy Planning Directive
N2k Natura 2000
Natura habitats and species Habitats and species for which a Natura 2000 site is designated.
Nature Directives The Birds and Habitats Directives
NBS/NBSAPs National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans
NEAFC North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission
NGO Non-governmental organisation
NSC North Sea Ministerial Conference
NT Near Threatened (IUCN Red List threat status)
OECD Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OECM Other effective area-based conservation measures (see Box 1.2)
OJ Official Journal of the European Union
OSN Other seminatural and natural areas – CORINE land cover classes (see Table 1.1)
OSPAR Convention The Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic
PAF Prioritised Action Framework
PAN Pannonian biogeographical region
PoM Programme of Measures
pSCI Proposed Site of Community Importance
RBMP River Basin Management Plan (under the WFD)
RDP Rural Development Programme
REFIT (European Commission) Regulatory Fitness Check and Performance
RSC Regional seas conventions
s./ss. Section/Sections
SAC Special Area of Conservation
SCI Site of Community Importance
SEA Strategic environmental assessment
SEBI Streamlining European Biodiversity Indicators (indicator set)
SPA Special Protection Area
SPA species Bird species that require the classification of SPAs (as per BD Article 4), so including species listed in BD Annex I, and other migratory species for which SPA designation is appropriate
SPAMI Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance, created under the Barcelona Convention Protocol for Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean
SPEC Species of European Conservation Concern (as defined by BirdLife International)
Spp. Species (plural)
STEP Steppic biogeographical region
UAA Utilised Agricultural Area
UCS Unfavourable Conservation Status, includes unfavourable–inadequate (i.e. poor) and unfavourable–bad (i.e. bad)
UNCLOS The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNDP The United Nations Development Programme

UNEP-WCMC UN Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre
UNESCO The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USAID United States Agency for International Development
UTM Universal Transverse Mercator
VU Vulnerable (IUCN Red List threat status)
WDPA World Database on Protected Areas
WET Wetlands and water bodies – CORINE land cover classes (see Table 1.1)
WFD Water Framework Directive

Country Codes (ISO 3166)

AD Andorra
AL Albania
AT Austria
BA Bosnia and Herzegovina
BE Belgium
BG Bulgaria
BY Belarus
CH Switzerland
CY Cyprus
CZ Czech Republic
DE Germany
DK Denmark
EE Estonia
ES Spain
FI Finland
FR France
GR Greece
HR Croatia
HU Hungary
IE Ireland
IS Iceland
IT Italy
LI Liechtenstein
LT Lithuania
LU Luxembourg
LV Latvia
MD Moldova
ME Montenegro
MK North Macedonia
MT Malta
NL Netherlands
NO Norway
PL Poland
PO Portugal
RO Romania
RS Serbia
SE Sweden
SI Slovenia
SK Slovakia
TR Turkey
UA Ukraine
UK United Kingdom
XK Kosovo