



EU – PAME

Proposal for an EU methodology to assess management effectiveness of Natura 2000 sites and other protected areas

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Framework for assessment of effectiveness of biodiversity conservation measures in Estonia

Final international webinar, 29 May 2024, online

Policy context

- Global biodiversity framework, European Green Deal, **EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030**
- **EU protected area targets for 2030:**
 - **Legally protect at least 30% of EU land and sea and strictly protect at least 10% of EU land and sea:** coherent trans-European nature network which integrates ecological corridors
 - **Effectively manage all protected areas, defining clear conservation objectives and measures, and monitoring them appropriately**
- **Effective management** of protected areas is essential to stop biodiversity loss and to ensure protection and restoration of ecosystems. However, (little) available data points to low effectiveness of EU PAs. In fact, **we don't have reliable information.**
- **We are not interested in “paper parks”.** Only effectively managed PAs protect biodiversity and deliver substantial socio-economic benefits.

Proposal for an EU methodology to assess MPA management effectiveness

- Developed in **2021-22** under a contract 
- The main objective: **to develop and test an EU system to assess the management effectiveness** of marine Natura 2000 sites and other EU MPAs
- Focus on marine sites but methodology to be applicable also to terrestrial sites
 - **Task 1** – **Review of existing frameworks**, methodologies and initiatives for assessing management effectiveness of marine Natura 2000 and other EU MPAs.
 - **Task 2** – **Development of a methodology** to assess management effectiveness of marine Natura 2000 sites and other EU MPAs.
 - **Task 3** – **Testing and finalizing the methodology**; testing on 200 MPAs
- **Discussed** in two expert workshops and **tested on 74 EU MPAs**

Proposal for an EU methodology to assess MPA management effectiveness

The proposed EU methodology:

- builds on **experience** from methodologies developed and implemented to date
- is **applicable to large number and diversity of Natura 2000 sites** and other PAs
- is **cost-effective**, easy to use and **uses existing/reported information**
- **reflects Natura 2000 management regime and BS2030 targets** but flexible to other PA systems
- uses **effort-based** (e.g. management body, management planning, definition of conservation objectives and measures in relation to the pressures and threats, stakeholder involvement, regulatory regime, financial and staff resources, ...) and **outcome-based** (e.g. improvement of status and trends of protected species/habitats) criteria
- enables assessment at different scales (individual site to EU level) and provides valuable insights to authorities and stakeholders on how to **improve the management of sites**
- **integrates** the indicators for presentation and reporting of results

Draft methodology

- Corresponds to the WCPA **PAME evaluation framework**
- **Self-assessment/questionnaire** with a set of predetermined statements/answers/standardised lists covering the main PAME elements
- **Supporting guidance and glossary**
- **Benefits:** a systematic structure, clear framework for the answers, easier comparisons between sites, focuses on key elements, relatively rapid to complete, can be completed for PAs at different stages of their implementation



The methodology

- 6 sections – 11 main questions:
 - *Conservation objectives*
 - *Pressures*
 - *Conservation measures*
 - *Management*
 - *Monitoring*
 - *Conservation outcomes*
- **Scoring system** - visualisation of results
- **Guidance notes** and video tutorial

Version 5.4

Instructions

Area Input

1. Conservation Objectives

2. Pressures

3. Conservation Measures

4. Management

5. Monitoring

6. Conservation Outcomes

Configuration

Progress Assessment

Save & Exit

Site Name: TEST

Site Code: 2022

Site Location:

Site Designation (Category and Type):

Date of designation:

Overlapping site Designations:

Management body (if established):

Respondent / Institution:

Date:

Conservation objectives

Conservation objectives

- **Site-specific** for each habitat/species?
- Specify **condition** of habitats/species to be achieved and/or maintained?
- Specify relevant **attributes** (quality and quantity of habitat)?
- Specify **measurable targets** for those attributes with timeline?

CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES

1. Have conservation objectives (Cos) been set for the MPA?	YES (provide link to source material)
1.a. Are the COs site-specific (SSCOs) for the species/habitats for which the MPA has been designated?	PARTIALLY - for some of the relevant species/habitats and reflecting some of the importance of the site

1.b. Do the COs specify the condition of the habitats and species to be achieved and/or maintained within the MPA, the relevant attributes (e.g. quality and quantity of the habitat of the species/population of the species and area/condition of habitat types) and their target values (measurable targets) in accordance with their ecological requirements and the envisaged timescales to achieve them?

Select relevant Species and/or Habitats

Species/habitat:	COs define the condition e.g. maintenance/recovery (YES/Partially/No)	Attributes. The objective covers some aspects regarding the population, its distribution or the habitat area/quality (Yes/Partially/No)	Targets. The objective includes quantitative targets e.g. population number/habitat area (Yes/Partially/No)	Envisaged timescales to achieve targets (S,M,L,NS)
1170 Reefs	Partially	Partially	No	NS (Not Specified)

FREE TEXT BOX: Successes and challenges on this theme e.g. relating to baseline data/knowledge of the relevant species/habitats, time period since designation, management structures, types and number of species/habitats to be covered, if conservation objectives are set only for some species (or covering several species).

Conservation measures

Conservation measures:

- Developed with a view of achieving COs?
- Detailed and quantifiable?
- Address known pressures?
- Actually implemented?
- Sufficient to reach COs?
- Inside and outside PA?

CONSERVATION MEASURES

3. Have conservation measures been established to achieve the conservation objectives of the MPA (NB. Applies to relevant measures inside and outside the MPA)?

PARTIALLY - For some relevant species and habitats

3.a. Have conservation measures been developed with a view to achieving the COs of species/habitats for which the MPA has been designated? Are the conservation measures detailed and/or quantifiable? Do they address known pressures to the protected species/habitats in the MPA? What is the status of the conservation measures?

Answer this in table below

Species / Habitat	Pressure (H&M only)	Conservation Measure	Number of Measures	Address Pressures?	Implemented?
Harbour porpoise	Litter - F07, F09	OTHER - Other (please specify)			
SEALS	Climate change - N01, N04, N05, N06, N07, N08				
1110 Sandbanks slightly covered with seawater	Modification/disturbance of the seabed - F08	*	1	No	No
Harbour porpoise	Noise - C09	*			
1110 Sandbanks slightly covered with seawater	Modification/disturbance of the seabed - C01, C03, C02	CC01, CC02 - Adapt/manage extraction of non-energ	4	Yes	Yes
1110 Sandbanks slightly covered with seawater	Modification/ disturbance of the seabed - G03	CG01 - Management of professional/commercial fish	2	Yes	Yes
	0	0 *	2	Yes	Yes
	0	0 *			

3.b. If any conservation measures are needed outside the MPA to address pressures on the MPA to help achieve the COs, please report on their status and the level of implementation.

Conservation measure (code)	Status of Measure
**	2

Add New Conservation Measure

4. How sufficient are conservation measures both within and outside the MPA to address the pressures and achieve the conservation objectives?

Conservation measures (inside and outside the MPA) (Code)	How sufficient are they to address the (H & M) pressures?	To what extent do they achieve the COs within the stated timescale?	Bases for assessment
*			
**			
CC01, CC02 - Adapt/manage extraction of non-energy and energy resources	4	2	1
CG01 - Management of professional/commercial fishing (including shellfish and seaweed harvesting)	4 n/a		n/a
OTHER - Other (please specify)	3	3	2

Conservation outcomes

CONSERVATION OUTCOMES

11. Has the condition of the species/habitats (at site level) for which the MPA been designated improved/remained stable/deteriorated since the establishment of the MPA?

11a. Have conservation objectives been achieved or are they on track to be achieved in the timescale specified in the relevant

Species/habitat	Change of condition since MPA establishment	Confidence level	If improved to CO	CO
Benthic fish	deteriorated	High		
Coastal Bottlenose dolphin	stable	M (Medium)		
Demersal fish	deteriorated	H (High)	No	No
Shags & cormorants	stable	L (Low)	Yes	Yes
1120 Posidonia beds	stable	H (High)	Yes	Yes
1160 Large shallow inlets and bays	deteriorated	L (Low)	Unknown	Unknown
1170 Reefs	stable	H (High)	Yes	Yes

11.b. For species/habitats PARTIALLY or NOT on target for achievement of Conservation Objectives, please indicate the reasons.

Species/Habitat	Reasons for limited progress in achieving conservation objectives
Benthic fish	persistence of pressures
Demersal fish	persistence of pressures
*	

Conservation outcomes

- Condition of species and habitats improved/stable/deteriorated?
- Conservation objectives **achieved or on track to be achieved** in specified timescale?
- The **link with conservation measures**?
- Reasons for not achieving COs or delay compared to specified timescale?

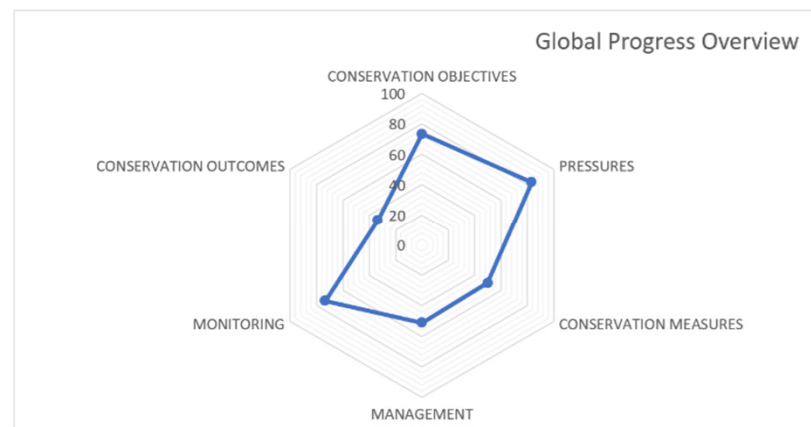
Presentation of results

PROGRESS ASSESSMENT

[Return Main Menu](#)

Site Identification:

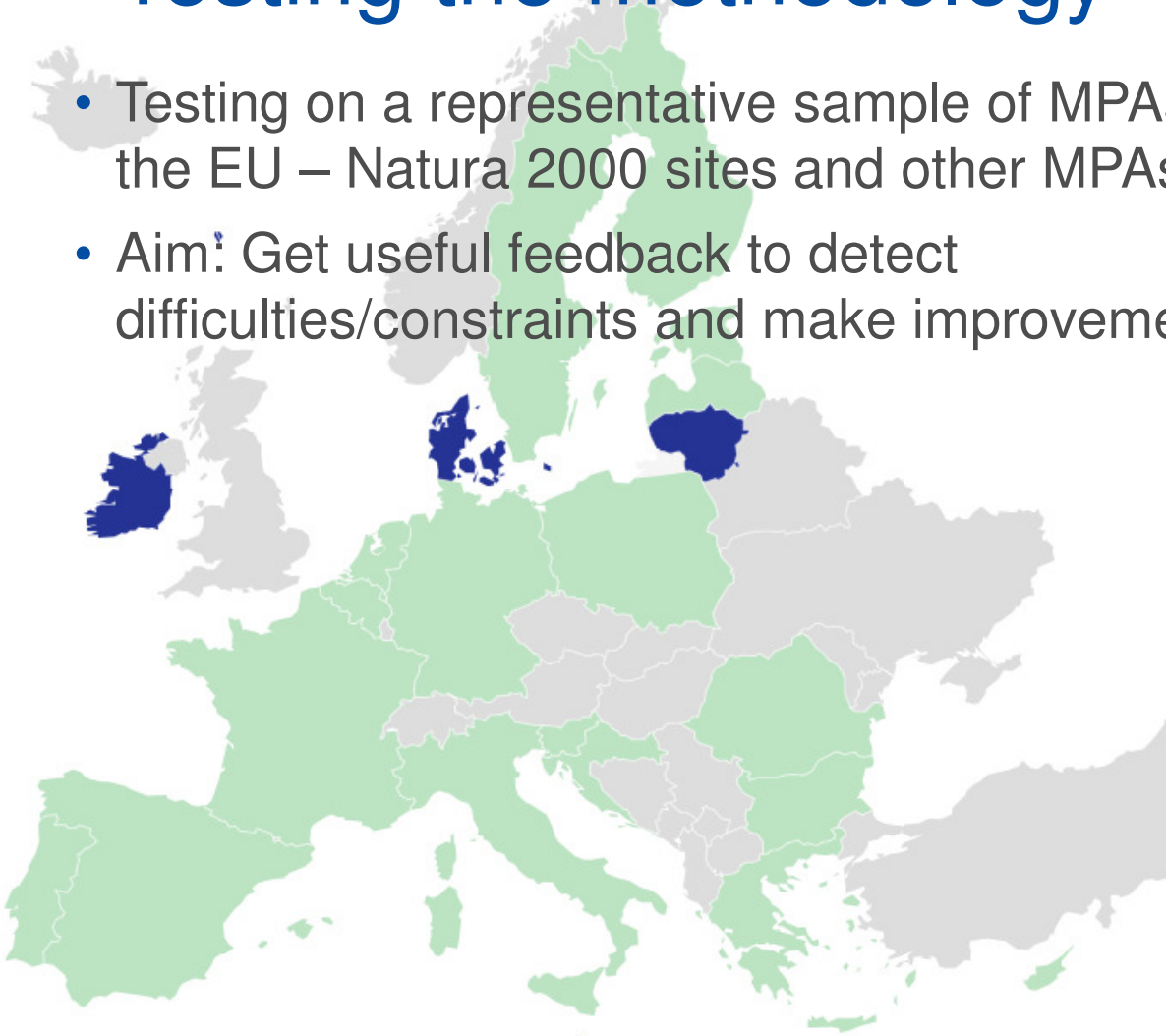
THEME		% of Total Score
1.	CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES	73
2.	PRESSURES	83
3.	CONSERVATION MEASURES	50
4.	MANAGEMENT	51
5.	MONITORING	73
6.	CONSERVATION OUTCOMES	33



INDICATOR	QUESTION	YES	PARTIAL	NO
A	1	Have conservation objectives (COs) been set for de MPA?		
B	2	Have the pressures on species/ habitats protected in the site been identified and their impact assessed (indicate if pressures are inside/outside the MPA, and confidence level)?		
C	3	Have conservation measures been established to achieve the conservation objectives of the MPA (NB. Applies to relevant measures inside and outside the MPA)?		
D	7	Is there sufficient collaboration between authorities and bodies that are responsible or competent for managing activities that affect the protected species/habitats, including those outside of the MPA?		
E	9	Is there regular and systematic monitoring of the types and level of pressures acting on the MPA protected species/habitats?		
F	11a	Have conservation objectives been achieved or are they on track to be achieved in the timescale specified in the relevant conservation objective?		

Testing the methodology

- Testing on a representative sample of MPAs in the EU – Natura 2000 sites and other MPAs
- Aim: Get useful feedback to detect difficulties/constraints and make improvements



Mediterranean: 31,7%

Atlantic: 12.7%

Macaronesian: 71.4%

Black Sea: 33.3%

Baltic: 40.3% - including EE

Feedback: Strengths

- Useful tool for managers.
- It allows self-assessment, to identify management weaknesses and gaps in knowledge, useful for adaptive management.
- Can help reinforce objective setting, measures, monitoring and management.
- The questionnaire is well developed, comprehensive and goal oriented. The level of detail is high.
- The six main themes cover a comprehensive set of topics.
- The questions are clear and concise, the Guidance Notes and video tutorial are helpful.
- Free text boxes enable to give additional information or to explain answers given/chosen above on every page.

Feedback: Challenges

- Lack of information to compile all the questionnaire.
- Significant time required to complete all the questionnaire (at least for the first time).
- The questionnaire should be better tailored to different types of MPAs (other than Natura 2000).
- Need to further clarify some terms and concepts.
- Data should ideally be retrieved automatically from existing databases/reporting systems, where appropriate, to facilitate the exercise.

To keep in mind...

- We aim to develop an **EU wide methodology** that will give an overview of the management effectiveness at that level (**thousands of sites!**). Member States may wish to do more detailed assessments with different purposes and some initiatives are under development. We should look for **synergies**.
- This should not be viewed as additional burden. Such evaluation can provide **valuable insights for authorities and stakeholders** on how to improve the delivery of benefits from PAs for biodiversity and society. We aim to reduce the burden by **re-using existing information** where possible (eg from N2000 SDFs).
- This is **work in progress**. The methodology needs to be finalised and made operational (IT tools, guidance documents,...).

EU PAME and Estonian methodology

- **EU-PAME should work in synergy with national systems.** This will be ensured also through the implementation of **LIFE PLP project PAME Europe.**
- **PAME Europe (coordinated by EUROPARC)** will be implemented in cooperation with **Estonian KESKKONNAAMET (EEB)** and with other Member States agencies and partners working on PAME from **Germany, Spain, Finland, Czechia, the Netherlands and Italy.**
- Draft Estonian methodology **broadly corresponds** with EU PAME (in particular on COs and CMs). There is potential to ensure **integration of assessment and reporting.** EEB can bring the experience from the TSI project into the PAME Europe project.

Financing PAME assessments

- **EU funding instruments** are available to support the development and implementation of PAME frameworks, including capacity building.
- **Commission's guidance on financing Natura 2000:** <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2779/724345>
- **LIFE SNAPs** (Strategic NAture Projects) !
- **Technical Support Instrument** (TSI) for policy design and implementation, including in the field of biodiversity. The 2025 TSI cycle includes a dedicated Nature [Flagship](#) that can support policy reforms towards sustainable land, forest and water management, promote biodiversity and encourage public and private finance, in line with EU and global goals to protect environment and resources. **The deadline for authorities in the Member States to request support is 31 October 2024.**
- **Increasing the capacity of national authorities and management bodies remains essential.**

Way forward with EU PAME

- There is no “one best” methodology and Member States may develop different tools, but we need a common EU framework.
- Discussion in MEG (2022) and NADEG (2023)
- Further work to finalise the methodology and make it operational (COM, EEA, MS)
- **LIFE PLP project to finalise and implement EU-PAME (coordinated by EUROPARC)**
- Use Natura 2000 **data infrastructure** and existing reporting streams + **new IT tool (EEA)**
- Apply in **synergy** with other PAME systems (national and global)
- Regular **tracking of progress** to inform policy implementation and development
- Effectively managed PAs will make major contribution to reaching EU **nature protection and restoration targets**

Thank you



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