

# **Reporting under Article 12 of the Birds Directive**



## **Explanatory Notes and Guidelines for the period 2013–2018**

Final version – May 2017

These guidelines have been compiled by the N2K Group (under contract with the European Commission), the European Environment Agency (EEA) and its European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity (ETC/BD). They have been developed through a collaborative work of the Expert Group on Reporting under the Nature Directives, its ad-hoc groups, and the Expert Group on the Birds and the Habitats Directives (NADEG).

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## INTRODUCTION

Article 12 paragraph 1 of the Birds Directive states that 'Member States shall forward to the Commission every three years, starting from 7 April 1981, a report on the implementation of the national provisions taken under this Directive'. Article 12 paragraph 2 provides for the European Commission to prepare every three years a composite report based on the information referred to in paragraph 1. That part of the draft report covering the information supplied by a Member State shall be forwarded to the authorities of the Member State in question for verification. The final version of the report shall be forwarded to the Member States.

Such reporting should make possible an assessment of whether the requisite measures have been taken to maintain the population of bird species referred to in Article 1 of the Directive, i.e. all species of naturally occurring birds in the wild state in the Member States' European territory, 'at a level which corresponds in particular to ecological, scientific and cultural requirements, while taking account of economic and recreational requirements, or to adapt the population of these species to that level', in line with Article 2.

Until 2008, the reporting under Article 12 has primarily reflected the legal transposition and technical implementation on the national level. In early 2008, however, it was agreed to start exploring a new system of bird reporting within the Expert Group on Reporting under the Nature Directives, which would improve the quality of reporting and deliver data on the actual status and trends of bird populations, similar to the reporting under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive. This included also a change from a three-year to six-year reporting cycle, reasonably synchronised with the reporting under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive, so that information is available in policy-relevant cycles and can give strong input to the overall biodiversity debate.

Afterwards, the new report format under Article 12 was developed jointly by Member States, the Commission and contracted experts, to be used for a first reporting round under the new system by the end of 2013. This format included information on the size and trend of individual bird species' populations and distributions, sections for reporting on the main pressures and threats affecting species for which Special Protection Areas (SPAs) have been classified, as well as their coverage by the SPA network and conservation measures. Based on experience from the reporting for the period 2008–2012 the format has been revised within the Expert Group on Reporting under the Nature Directives, and the revised format for the period 2013–2018 is now available. The principal changes are related to reporting on distribution area and trends, main pressures and threats, and further information related to Annex II species.

**Box 1: How to use these explanatory notes & guidelines**

These guidelines are aimed primarily at those responsible for compiling the national Article 12 reports for the period 2013–2018, but may also be of interest to others who wish to use or to better understand the results.

The guidelines are organised in three parts: a short introduction, a practical step-by-step guidance on how to fill in the different fields of the reports, and a part describing the concepts and methods used in more detail.

The technical specifications for the data to be reported will be given in specific delivery manuals; code lists with codes for standardised entry of information in the Report formats will be available on the Reference Portal. These delivery manuals and code lists complement these explanatory notes and guidelines.

**Technical documents and reference lists**

The Reference Portal<sup>1</sup> contains documents and material related to the information provided in the Report formats under Article 12 of the Birds Directive.

It includes:

- the Report formats for the period 2013–2018;
- these Explanatory Notes & Guidelines;
- reference material, e.g. checklists for bird species, list of pressures and threats, list of conservation measures and the European grids (10x10 km ETRS) used for mapping the distribution;
- further examples illustrating the guidance provided in these Explanatory Notes & Guidelines;
- IT applications (reporting and range tools) for preparing and delivering the reporting dataset.

**Content of the Article 12 report**

The report under Article 12 of the Birds Directive mainly provides information on bird status and trends. It has two parts:

1. A general report format, where some general progress reporting is retained but in a simplified manner, including basic facts and web links to other sources for detailed information about, for example, legal transpositions and research or work done for the protection, management and use of bird populations. Textual reporting is kept to a minimum.
2. A format for reporting on the size and trend of individual bird species' populations and distributions, including sections for reporting on the main pressures and threats affecting species for which SPAs have been classified, as well as their coverage by the SPA network and conservation measures taken for them.

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<sup>1</sup>[http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds\\_art12](http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds_art12)

**Box 2: How is the information on bird status and trends used?**

Regular reporting is an obligation under Article 12 of the Birds Directive. It is essential that the reports from the Member States are harmonised, otherwise it is not possible to aggregate reports to produce a Composite Report for the EU as required by the Directive.

**EU assessment of bird status and trends**

The information on status and trends in the Member States' reports feed into EU-wide assessment of the bird population status.

**Evaluation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy**

The reports give an overview of the state of the EU's biodiversity and form an important component of evaluating EU policies, in particular in measuring progress towards the 2020 targets set under the EU Biodiversity Strategy. Results from the 2007–2012 reporting period are described in *State of nature in the EU* (EEA, 2015).

**Link with other biodiversity assessments**

The European Union (EU27) Red List assessments in the latest European Red List of Birds<sup>2</sup> were largely based on data reported by the Member States as a part of their Article 12 reports for the period 2008-2012. The Article 12 data were also used for broader assessments European Red List status, which is a part of the same publication.

Data reported under Article 12 were used to update many of the population size and trend estimates in the assessment of conservation status of AEWA species/populations. The status of AEWA species/populations is assessed regularly as part of the Conservation Status Report, presented to the Meeting of the Parties. The sixth edition of the report (*CSR6*<sup>3</sup>) was prepared for MOP6 in 2015.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.birdlife.org/sites/default/files/attachments/RedList%20-%20BirdLife%20publication%20WEB.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.unep-aewa.org/sites/default/files/document/mop6\\_14\\_csr6\\_including%20annexes.pdf](http://www.unep-aewa.org/sites/default/files/document/mop6_14_csr6_including%20annexes.pdf)

# PART 1. THE REPORT FORMAT FIELD-BY-FIELD GUIDANCE

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT FORMAT

The Report formats for the bird species contain data used to undertake the assessment of EU population status. Part 1 of these guidelines (The report format field-by-field guidance) provides practical step-by-step guidance on how to fill in the different fields of the Report format. This step-by-step guidance mainly consists of detailed descriptions of the information to be reported in each field and the basic requirements to be met by reported information (e.g. ‘short-term trends should ideally be reported over the last 12 years, but some flexibility is permitted’).

More detailed descriptions of concepts and methods for reported information are provided in Part 2 (Definitions and methods).

The Article 12 Report format consists of two distinct Annexes (A and B):

**Annex A – General report:** Gives an overview of information on the implementation and general measures taken under the Directive.

**Annex B – Species reports:** Bird species’ status and trends Report format.

The information reported in Annex B includes data used to undertake the assessment of population status at the EU level together with the information needed to evaluate the main drivers and impact of the Natura 2000 network on the species populations.



## ANNEX A – GENERAL REPORT FORMAT

### Field-by-field guidance

The general report is a brief structured format aimed at summarising the most important facts and figures on the general implementation of the Directive, including links to more detailed information sources. It is mainly targeted at the interested public, but also at informing the Commission.

Each Member State is expected to prepare one general report covering the entire European territory of the Member State<sup>4</sup>. It includes obligatory information about several provisions of the Birds Directive. In addition, the main achievements under the implementation of the Directive and the main measures taken to ensure coherence of the SPA network should be briefly described.

The report should include information of relevance for the period 2013–2018. The information given for some specific fields (e.g. number of management plans) should be the figures on 31 December 2018, i.e. at the end of the reporting cycle, unless otherwise stated.

Language – any EU official language can be used. The Report format tries to minimise the difficulties of using different languages by requesting numerical information wherever possible. The use of English is recommended for the free text fields.

All Internet addresses in the reporting fields should be given in full, including the initial 'http://' or 'https://', if applicable.

### 0 Member State

Select the two-digit code for your Member State from ISO 3166. For the United Kingdom, use 'UK' instead of 'GB', in accordance with the list to be found on the Reference Portal<sup>5</sup>. Do not submit separate general reports for subnational units.

### 1 Main achievements under the Birds Directive

This section aims to inform the interested public about the main achievements under the Birds Directive, including the SPA network, in the Member State during the reporting period. The information should primarily be given in the national language (field 1.1), with a translation into English if possible (optional field 1.2), as this information is likely also to be of interest to readers in other Member States.

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<sup>4</sup> Although a few Member States should provide a separate 'Annex B Bird species' status and trends report' for distinct subnational units, the general report should cover the entire territory of the Member State.

<sup>5</sup> [http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds\\_art12](http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds_art12)

### 1.1 Text in national language

Describe briefly the main achievements under the Birds Directive during the reporting period, with a special emphasis on the SPA network. This can include, for example:

- demonstrated benefits for different species;
- experiences with new or improved management techniques;
- positive changes in public acceptance of biodiversity protection;
- improved cooperation between authorities, nature conservationists and other interest groups;
- key enforcement cases;
- initiatives to combine establishment of Natura 2000 sites and the local economy;
- measures taken to minimise the impact of invasive species on native bird species, in line with EU Regulation 1143/2014 on invasive alien species<sup>6</sup>;
- information complementary to that given in Section 6 on research and work required as a basis for the protection, management and sustainable use of bird populations. This might include suggestions for urgent research that requires EU coordination (e.g. via LIFE funding).

The text should be kept to a maximum of two pages. If a Member State wishes to add further documentation to that requested, it should note these annexes and their filenames at the end of this field, and upload the relevant files to the EEA's Central Data Repository together with the rest of the report.

### 1.2 Translation into English (optional)

This is an optional field to translate the information provided in field 1.1 into English (where it was reported in another language).

## 2 General information sources on the implementation of the Birds Directive – links to information sources of the Member State

This section aims to direct the interested public towards information sources relating to the Birds Directive and the SPA network of the respective Member State. In general, only links to Internet addresses are required. However, free text can also be used where there is a need to explain how to access the information source, e.g. in the case of multiple sources of information. All of the following fields should be completed.

### 2.1 General information on the Birds Directive

Provide links to general information on the Birds Directive (e.g. portal presenting the EU Nature Directives).

### 2.2 Information on the Natura 2000 (SPA) network

Provide links to general information on the network of SPAs (e.g. online databases of Natura 2000 sites, publications presenting the network).

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<sup>6</sup>[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/invasivealien/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/invasivealien/index_en.htm)

### 2.3 Monitoring schemes (Article 4(1) and Article 10)

Provide links to general information on monitoring (e.g. portal presenting national monitoring scheme(s), monitoring guidelines).

### 2.4 Protection of species (Articles 5–8)

Provide links to general information on species protection.

### 2.5 Transposition of the Directive (legal texts)

Provide links to general information on transposition of the Directive.

## 3 Natura 2000 (SPAs) – site classification (Article 4)

Member States should provide information at the national level on the total number and surface area of SPAs for the Member State at the end of the reporting period.

### 3.1 All SPAs

Provide the total number and surface area of SPAs.

### 3.2 Terrestrial area of sites (excluding marine area)

Provide the terrestrial surface area of SPAs.

### 3.3 Marine sites

Provide the total number and marine surface area of marine SPAs.

**Marine sites** are any sites which include any area of sea (seaward side of the coastline).

**Marine area of sites** is the area on the seaward side of the coastline. The definition of the coastline used to define the marine boundary should follow international<sup>7</sup> or national<sup>8</sup> legislation. This approach is the same as that adopted for the Standard Data Forms (SDFs) for individual Natura 2000 sites. Thus, a site located on the coastline and stretching out into the sea should be counted as a 'marine site', although it might include a terrestrial component (to be included in the figure to be reported in field 3.2) as well as a marine component (to be included in the figure to be reported in field 3.3; see map in Figure 1).

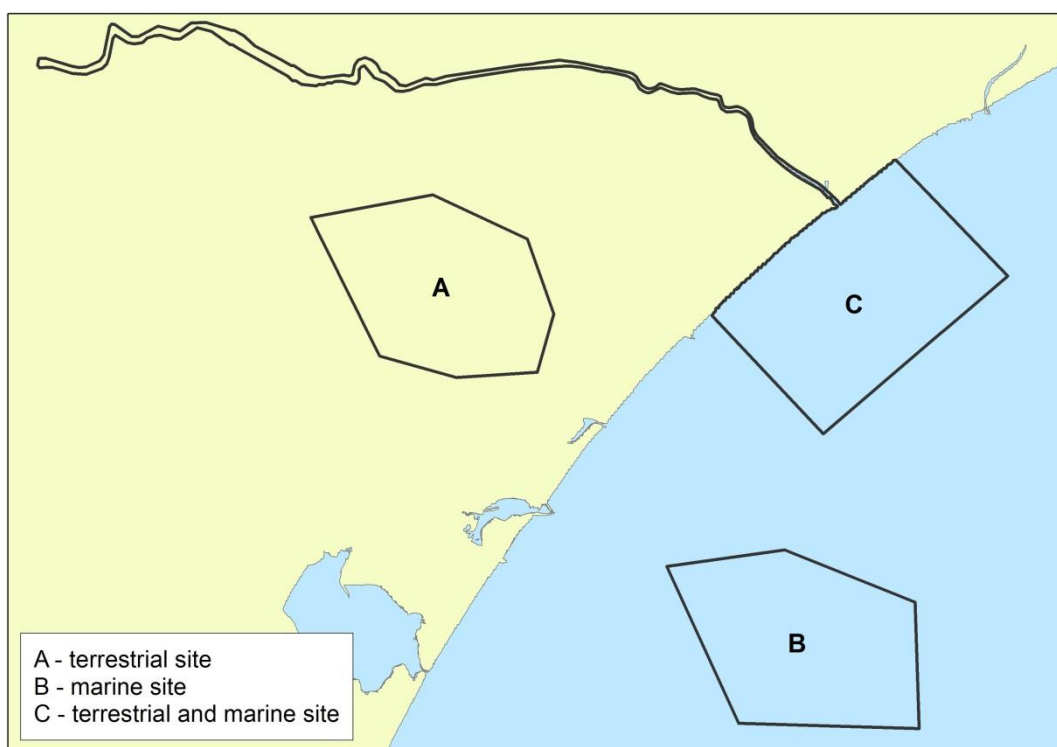
**Terrestrial area of sites** is any area of a site which is not marine (as defined above). In the Report format the terrestrial area of sites in km<sup>2</sup> (field 3.2) plus the area of marine sites in km<sup>2</sup> (field 3.3) together should give the total area of all sites (field 3.1).

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<sup>7</sup> UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

<sup>8</sup> See Natura 2000 Reference Portal, [http://bd.eionet.europa.eu/activities/Natura\\_2000/reference\\_portal](http://bd.eionet.europa.eu/activities/Natura_2000/reference_portal)

**Figure 1:** Examples of terrestrial and marine Natura 2000 sites. A is a terrestrial site (the site is located in the terrestrial domain only). B is a marine site and is located in the marine domain only. C is located in a coastal area, and should be counted as a marine site. This site consists of both terrestrial (yellow) and marine (blue) areas, to be reported in fields 3.2 and 3.3 respectively.



### 3.4 Date of database used

This is the date of the final database submitted (uploaded to the Central Data Repository) during the reporting period (2013–2018). The total number and total area of Natura 2000 sites (SPAs) correspond to numbers and areas provided in this database. However, it is understood that occasionally later versions of databases need to be used to fill in information under this section, e.g. to provide the number of SPAs if some of them were classified after the database submission.

## 4 Set of conservation measures and management plans for Natura 2000 sites (SPAs)

‘Conservation measures and management plans’ are considered to be operational instruments that outline practical measures to achieve the conservation objectives for the sites in the network.

Conservation measures within the network can fall under, but are not limited to, LIFE programmes, Rural Development Plans, Structural Funds or other domestic programmes. Ensure that all relevant management plans or instruments have been fully accounted for.

#### 4.1 Necessary conservation measures have been established and are applied

Give the number of sites and the proportion of the network area within the Member State for which necessary conservation measures have been established (i.e. for which there exists a statutory, administrative or contractual framework and for which the measures are being implemented).

Only sites where all necessary measures have been identified and are implemented should be included. Do not include sites where conservation measures do not target all of the species or where not all of the necessary measures have been implemented.

#### 4.2 Conservation measures have been set out in a comprehensive management plan or a similar instrument

Give the number of sites and the proportion of the network area for which a comprehensive management plan or a similar instrument is in place. Although the Standard Data Form (SDF) for individual sites includes information on management plans (i.e. 'Yes/no/in preparation'), it is also useful to have information about the overall number of comprehensive management plans or similar instruments. To put this number in context, the proportion of the network area that is covered by such plans is also requested.

For this purpose, only conservation measures and management plans covering an entire Natura 2000 site (or sites) and fulfilling the following minimum requirements should be reported. They should:

- indicate the species and their localities for which conservation measures are planned;
- identify the actual status of the species and the desired status which should be reached through the conservation measures;
- define clear and achievable conservation objectives;
- identify the necessary measures together with the means and a time schedule which can contribute to meeting those objectives.

## 5 Measures taken in relation to approval of plans and projects (Article 6(4) and Article 7 of the Habitats Directive)

This section relates to projects and plans for which compensatory measures were necessary during the reporting period. Any sites affected in this way should be listed, and the following information is requested for each of them<sup>9</sup>. Repeat fields 5.1 to 5.6 as necessary for each combination of site and project/plan<sup>10</sup>.

### 5.1 Site code

Provide the site code of a site with project(s) or plan(s) in need of compensatory measures.

<sup>9</sup> For birds, there are no 'priority species' in the meaning of Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive. Thus, the obligation to ask for the Commission's opinion before the approval of a plan or project does not apply to SPAs, and there is no need for a field corresponding to 'Commission opinion requested' in the general Report format for Article 17 of the Habitats Directive.

<sup>10</sup> Further guidance on Article 6 of the Habitats Directive may be found at DG Environment's website (e.g. the document *Managing Natura 2000 sites: The provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC*, published by DG Environment in 12 EU languages):  
[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/guidance\\_en.htm#art6](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/guidance_en.htm#art6)

**5.2 Site name**

Provide the site name.

**5.3 Title of project/plan**

Provide the title of the project/plan.

**5.4 Year Commission was informed of compensatory measures**

Provide the year when the Commission was informed about compensatory measures.

**5.5 Year project/plan was started**

Provide the year when implementation of the project/plan started.

**5.6 Impact of projects requiring compensatory measures on relevant bird species (optional)**

Describe the impact of such projects/plans on the status of relevant bird species.

## 6 Research and work required as a basis for the protection, management and sustainable use of bird populations (Article 10)

This section relates to the obligation under Article 10(2) of the Birds Directive that Member States shall send the Commission any information required to enable it to take appropriate measures for the coordination of research and any work required as a basis for the protection, management and use of native bird populations. The information requested is limited to:

**6.1 National bird atlas**

Provide the title of the national bird atlas published during the reporting period (field 6.1.1) with information about the year of publication (field 6.1.2) and web link or bibliographic reference (field 6.1.3).

**6.2 National bird monitoring overview**

Provide the title or similar plus a short description of national bird monitoring overviews published during the reporting period, including species covered, main results, etc. (field 6.2.1), with a maximum of 500 characters. Provide information about the year of publication (field 6.2.2) and web link or bibliographic reference (field 6.2.3). Fields 6.2.1 to 6.2.3 should be repeated if more than one overview has been published.

**6.3 National bird red list**

Provide the title of the national bird red lists published during the reporting period (field 6.3.1), with information about the year of publication (field 6.3.2) and web link or bibliographic reference (field 6.3.3).

**6.4 Other publications of EU-wide interest (e.g. national overview of action for threatened species)**

Provide the title or similar plus a short description of other publications of EU-wide interest (e.g. national overview of action for threatened species) published during the reporting period, including

species covered, main results, etc. (field 6.4.1), with a maximum of 500 characters. Provide information about the year of publication (field 6.4.2) and web link or bibliographic reference (field 6.4.3). Fields 6.4.1 to 6.4.3 should be repeated if more than one overview has been published, and a maximum of 10 publications should be reported.

In cases where, for instance, a national bird atlas or national red list does exist but was not published during the reporting period, Member States are encouraged to provide details of the most recent publication anyway (for the benefit of the interested reader).

More general information about the implementation of Article 10 can be provided in a free-text field under 'Main achievements under the Birds Directive' in Section 1.

## 7 Non-native bird species (Article 11)

This section relates to the obligation following from Article 11 that 'Member States shall see that any introduction of species of bird which do not occur naturally in the wild state in the European territory of the Member States does not prejudice the local flora and fauna. In this connection they shall consult the Commission.'

(This section should not be filled in if no introductions pursuant to Article 11 have been consulted upon, decided upon or carried out during the reporting period.)

Each species should be reported, as follows:

### 7.1 Species scientific name

Provide the species scientific (Latin) name.

### 7.2 Subspecific unit

Where relevant, use the subspecific population description.

### 7.3 Main contents of legal decision for introduction

Provide the main contents of the legal decision for introduction (free text; maximum 250 characters), including information about justification, number of individuals and duration of any authorisation.

### 7.4 Consultation with the Commission

Provide the date of consultation with the Commission.

### 7.5 Additional information (optional)

Additional information relating to Section 7 can be provided in optional field 7.5.

## ANNEX B – BIRD SPECIES' STATUS AND TRENDS REPORT FORMAT (ARTICLE 12)

### Species to be reported

#### Taxonomy and nomenclature

The taxonomy and nomenclature used in the Article 12 species checklist (available from the Reference Portal<sup>11</sup>) mirror those used in the *List of birds of the European Union* (hereafter 'EU Bird List'<sup>12</sup>). The version of the EU Bird List published in August 2015 incorporated the taxonomical and nomenclatural changes proposed in del Hoyo & Collar (2014)<sup>13</sup>, and the relevant changes from del Hoyo & Collar (2016) will be reflected in the update to the EU Bird List foreseen for late 2017/early 2018<sup>14</sup>. An overview of the key species-level changes in taxonomy and nomenclature compared with the version of the Article 12 checklist used during the previous reporting round are available on the Reference Portal.

In general, reporting is primarily requested at the level of the species, as this is the taxonomical unit referred to throughout the text of the Directive, as well as the unit used for previous comprehensive status assessments of the EU's birds. However, in a minority of cases, reports are requested for 'subspecific units' – i.e. subspecies or distinct populations – whose status is of particular interest and/or policy relevance (e.g. in the context of subspecies-level listings in Annexes of the Directive). For full details of the rationale explaining which subspecific populations should be reported on separately, see Section '[Reporting on subspecific units](#)' (in 'Species to be reported' in 'Definitions and methods' part). For simplicity, the term 'species' is used in most instances below, even where it also refers to subspecific units.

#### Regularly occurring species

Member States should report on all 'regularly occurring' breeding species (even if their populations are small or considered 'marginal'), to allow an EU-wide picture of their population size and trend to be compiled. A species can be considered as regularly occurring if, for example, it bred in four or more of the six years covered by the reporting period (i.e. 2013–2018). Species occurring less regularly than this should also be reported if their national population in the years they do occur may represent a significant proportion (e.g. > 1 %) of the overall EU population, or if they formerly occurred more regularly (see also 'Extinct species' below). Similar criteria should be applied for relevant (see below) wintering and passage species.

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<sup>11</sup> [http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds\\_art12](http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds_art12)

<sup>12</sup> See [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/wildbirds/eu\\_species/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/wildbirds/eu_species/index_en.htm).

<sup>13</sup> del Hoyo, J. & Collar, N.J. (2014) *HBW and BirdLife International Illustrated Checklist of the Birds of the World. Volume 1: Non-passerines*. Lynx Edicions, Barcelona.

<sup>14</sup> Following consideration and approval at the NADEG meeting in autumn 2017.



## Bird species occurring during the winter season and on passage

### Key wintering species

In addition, Member States should report on certain key wintering species – especially migratory waterbirds, such as wildfowl (ducks, geese and swans) and waders (shorebirds) – which are significantly more abundant in the EU during the winter and/or whose population size and trend are better monitored in winter (when they congregate in large numbers at a relatively small number of sites). For these species, assessment of their EU population status may be based primarily (or indeed entirely in some cases) on data for their wintering populations, so winter reports are requested from all Member States where they winter regularly (see also ‘Regularly occurring species’ above). Further information on the rationale behind the subset of species for which winter reporting is obligatory is provided in Section ‘Key wintering species’ (in ‘Species to be reported’ in ‘Definitions and methods part’).

### SPA trigger (including Annex I species) and Annex II species occurring during winter season and on passage

In addition, winter reports are requested for a number of other wintering species that do not meet the above criteria, but which are listed in Annex I of the Directive or listed as triggering SPA classifications in winter. In all such cases, winter reports provide important information relating to national implementation of the Directive, even if the population size and trend data reported cannot always be used for an overall assessment of the EU wintering population.

In general, Member States are not required to report on the population size or trend of species on passage (i.e. while on migration to/from their breeding and wintering grounds), because national data on population size and trend are difficult to aggregate at the EU level without detailed supplementary information that would allow the interpretation needed to take into account any duplicative counting.

Nevertheless, passage season reports are still requested for certain key migratory species for which important information would otherwise not be reported. These include species listed in Annex I, plus other migratory species whose occurrence on passage triggers SPA classifications nationally<sup>15</sup> (as indicated in the species checklist on the Reference Portal<sup>16</sup>). In these cases, the (simplified) passage reports provide important information on, for example, national pressures and threats to key migratory species, which would not otherwise be captured elsewhere.

Simplified winter and passage reports are also expected for wintering and passage species listed in Annex II of the Directive, but only for those for which the Member State has not already completed a breeding report (or a winter report in the case of passage birds<sup>17</sup>).

More information on reporting for these particular groups of species can be found in Table 1:

Sections of the species Report format to be filled in for breeding, winter and passage season for different categories of bird species in Section ‘Field-by-field guidance for completing Bird species report’.

<sup>15</sup> Under Article 4(2).

<sup>16</sup> [http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds\\_art12](http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds_art12)

<sup>17</sup> E.g. not mandatory for sedentary/resident Annex II species.

## **Vagrant and occasional species**

Vagrant or ‘accidental’ birds are those that have strayed well outside their normal breeding, wintering or migratory range. Over 300 species appear in the Category A ‘vagrant’ section of the EU Bird List, and several others occur regularly in parts of the EU, but only as vagrants in other Member States. As the occurrence of vagrants is unpredictable and probably largely reflects extrinsic factors (climatic conditions during key migratory periods, trends outside the EU, etc.), their reporting in Article 12 reports is not required. The same applies to ‘occasional’ species, which may be closer to their normal range, but whose occurrence within the Member State and/or season in question is not regular or stable (cf. ‘Regularly occurring species’ above).

## **Newly arriving species**

In some instances, a species may not yet breed or winter regularly, but it is likely – e.g. based on more recent patterns of occurrence or similar trends in neighbouring countries – that it is in the process of colonising or becoming established as a regular visitor. In these cases, Member States are encouraged to report on the species in question, even if it is not possible to provide details for all the relevant sections and fields below. For species listed in the national checklist with occurrence ‘ARR’ – indicating that they have colonised the Member State during the short-term trend period (2007–2018) – ‘QA/QC’ checks will be relaxed for certain fields (e.g. field 3.2.1 ‘Long-term trend period’). If the species is not already included in the species checklist for the Member State, it can be added using the functionality in the reporting tool.

See also field 3.1.3 ‘Short-term trend magnitude’ for guidance on the specific issue of reporting trend magnitudes from a starting population size of zero.

## **Extinct species**

Species that went extinct nationally before 1980 (i.e. around the time the Birds Directive was adopted/entered into force) should not be reported on, unless there is a national reintroduction project underway. However, reports should be provided for all species that formerly occurred regularly, but have gone extinct nationally since 1980 (i.e. those listed with occurrence ‘EXBA’ in the national checklist). This includes species for which the last record (even if it was a single individual) was noted after the date when the Directive came into force in the Member State; these species previously had a permanent/regular occurrence within the Member State.

In the specific case of former breeding species that no longer breed regularly, but do still occur during the breeding season (e.g. as unpaired individuals), Member States should continue treating these as ‘regularly occurring’<sup>18</sup>, particularly when their status (e.g. Annex I listing and/or general rarity) means that the continued presence of a small number of individuals could still be of broader interest.

Species that have colonised in small numbers, but not become established and hence gone extinct again nationally, all since 1980, should be treated as occasional species, and need not be reported on.

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<sup>18</sup> Further details should also be provided, e.g. ‘Species not confirmed breeding since 2008, but one or two unpaired individuals still recorded regularly during the breeding season’ in field 2.7 ‘Additional information’

Although it will not always be possible to complete all of the relevant sections and fields for a species listed as 'EXBA', it is important to capture the year in which it went extinct nationally (or stopped occurring regularly, if this was not clear-cut<sup>19</sup>) and the approximate size of its national population (and breeding range, where relevant) in c.1980, so that the extent and rate of its decline can be taken into account (see also field 3.1.3 'Short-term trend magnitude' for more detailed guidance).

### Non-native populations

In addition to 'naturally occurring birds in the wild state', as specified in Article 1 of the Directive, reporting is also requested for all populations of three largely introduced species listed in Annex II of the Directive: *Branta canadensis*<sup>20</sup>, *Meleagris gallopavo* and *Phasianus colchicus*<sup>21</sup>. Reporting on other non-native species (including those listed in Category C of the EU Bird List<sup>22</sup>) is optional, but encouraged in cases where the Member State hosts a non-native population of a species that occurs naturally elsewhere within the EU (and hence is listed in Category A 'native' / 'regular' of the EU Bird List) or the species represents a threat to native populations/species.

## Field-by-field guidance for completing Bird species report

The Report format should be completed for each species and for each season falling under the criteria outlined in the chapter 'Species to be reported' (in 'Field-by-field part') above and in Table 1 below. These species are listed in the Article 12 checklist<sup>23</sup>.

For a few Member States, a separate Report format should be provided for distinct subnational units. This applies to the Azores (Portugal), Madeira (Portugal), the Canary Islands (Spain) and Gibraltar (UK). Previous EU-level assessments have shown that many Macaronesian bird populations have a very different status and trends to those in Iberia, so separate reporting for subnational territories has been put in place since the reporting period 2008–2012.

The bird species' status and trends Report format ('species report') comprises ten sections, as follows:

1. Species information
2. Population size
3. Population trend
4. Breeding distribution map and size
5. Breeding distribution trend

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<sup>19</sup> Many cases of national extinction will require some degree of expert judgement/interpretation, as it is often harder to confirm the absence of a species than its presence.

<sup>20</sup> Wild individuals of *Branta canadensis* (from Greenland or North America) can also occur as vagrants in the EU, but the focus above is on the introduced populations.

<sup>21</sup> Although some sources suggest that all populations of *Phasianus colchicus* west of the Caucasus are the result of introductions (some possibly as early as 1300 BC; Hagemeijer & Blair, 1997), others assert that the remnant population in Greece and former population in Bulgaria is/was truly native (e.g. Sokos & Birtsas, 2014).

<sup>22</sup> See [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/wildbirds/eu\\_species/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/wildbirds/eu_species/index_en.htm).

<sup>23</sup> A checklist of species thought to be present in each Member State for which a report is expected is available at [http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds\\_art12](http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds_art12)

6. Progress in work related to international Species Action Plans (SAPs), Management Plans (MPs) and Brief Management Statements (BMSs)
7. Main pressures and threats
8. Conservation measures
9. Natura 2000 (SPAs) coverage
10. Information related to Annex II species (Article 7).

An overview of the sections of the Report format to be filled in for each species, including separately Annex I and Annex II species and other migratory species triggering SPA classification (Article 4.2), is provided in Table 1.

**Table 1: Sections of the species Report format to be filled in for breeding, winter and passage season for different categories of bird species (including Annex I and Annex II species and for other migratory species triggering SPA classification)**

| Species category  | Sections of the species Report format that should be filled in  |
|---|---|
| All Annex I <sup>24</sup> breeding species (including sedentary) and other migratory breeding species triggering SPA classification | 'Breeding' season report including Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Section 6 if relevant, Sections 7, 8, 9, plus Section 10 if also listed in Annex II.   |
| All Annex I wintering species and other migratory wintering species triggering SPA classification                                   | 'Winter' season report including Sections 1, 2, 3, Section 6 if relevant, Sections 7, 8, 9, plus Section 10 if also listed in Annex II.   |
| All Annex I passage species and other migratory species triggering SPA classification on passage                                    | 'Passage' season report including Sections 1, 2, Section 6 if relevant, Sections 7, 8, 9, plus Section 10 if also listed in Annex II.   |
| All Annex II breeding species (including sedentary)   | 'Breeding' season report including Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Section 6 if relevant, Section 10, plus Sections 7, 8, 9 if also an Annex I or SPA trigger.<br>Although not mandatory, Member States are encouraged to provide information for Sections 7 and 8 for all Annex II species.  |
| Annex II wintering species (if not already reported in breeding season)   | 'Winter' season report including Section 1, Section 6 if relevant, Section 10, plus Sections 2, 7, 8, 9 if also an Annex I or SPA trigger.<br>Annex II key wintering species should be reported as stated below (Other key wintering species). Sections 2 and 3 must be provided.<br>Although not mandatory, Member States are encouraged to provide a separate 'winter' season report with information for Sections 1 and 2, Section 6 if relevant, Sections 7 and 8, and Section 10 for all Annex II wintering species (even though they are already reported for breeding season). |
| Annex II passage species (if not already reported in breeding or wintering season)  | 'Passage' season report including Section 1, Section 6 if relevant, Section 10, plus Sections 7, 8, 9 if also an Annex I or SPA trigger.<br>Although not mandatory, Member States are encouraged to provide a separate 'passage' season report with information for   |

<sup>24</sup> Regardless of whether they are listed as SPA trigger species nationally or not.

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
|                             | Sections 1 and 2, Section 6 if relevant, Sections 7 and 8, and Section 10 for all Annex II passage species (even though they are already reported for breeding and/or winter season). |
| Other breeding species      | ‘Breeding’ season report including Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, plus Section 6 if relevant.  |
| Other key wintering species | ‘Winter’ season report including Sections 1, 2, 3, plus Section 6 if relevant.  |

Notes:

‘Breeding’, ‘winter’, and ‘passage’ report in the table above correspond to the season selected in field 1.8.

For sedentary Annex I species only one report, based on breeding season data, is requested (breeding report), but pressures and threats and conservation measures (reported under Sections 7 and 8) should cover the whole year, not only pressures or measures specific to the breeding season.

For Annex I and other SPA trigger species with different breeding, wintering and/or passage populations within the Member State, there should be separate reports for breeding, wintering and/or passage season.

For sedentary Annex II species and for other Annex II breeding species, hunting bag statistics should be provided in the ‘breeding’ season report, even though these statistics refer to the non-breeding season.

Section 6 should be completed for species with international<sup>25</sup> SAPs, MPs or BMSs (as specified in the species checklist on the Reference Portal<sup>26</sup>).

Even though not all data used in the report will be collected during the reporting period, the report should give information of relevance for the period 2013–2018.

It is recommended that any free-text information provided is written in English, to facilitate its use during the EU analysis and to allow a wider readership.

## 1 Species information

### 1.1 Member State

Use the relevant country code from the list on the Reference Portal<sup>27</sup>. In most cases, this will simply be the two-letter ISO 3166 code for your Member State. For the United Kingdom, use ‘UK’ instead of ‘GB’. For a few Member States, separate reporting for subnational units applies (with reference to the status of particular species or populations in distinct geographical areas), and in these cases – the Azores (Portugal), Madeira (Portugal), the Canary Islands (Spain) and Gibraltar (UK) – the relevant three- or four-letter subnational code, as specified on the Reference Portal, should be used.

### 1.2 Species code

Use the species codes given in the species checklist (and code list) on the Reference Portal. New codes can be allocated if necessary. More information on the species code list and possible amendments can be found on the Reference Portal.

### 1.3 EURING code

<sup>25</sup> Or at least ‘multilateral’ (a few SAPs and BMSs relate to taxa that are endemic to a single country).

<sup>26</sup> [http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds\\_art12](http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds_art12)

<sup>27</sup> [http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds\\_art12](http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds_art12)

Use the EURING codes given in the species checklist (and code list) on the Reference Portal. Unique EURING codes have been allocated to nearly every bird species (and several subspecies) native to Europe, for the purposes of coordinating European bird ringing, and are widely used<sup>28</sup>.

#### 1.4 Species scientific name

Use the scientific names given in the species checklist on the Reference Portal, which has been updated to reflect the nomenclature and taxonomy adopted in latest version of the *List of birds of the European Union*<sup>29</sup>. In a small number of cases, the entry for scientific name includes the English phrase 'all others', to indicate that the taxonomical unit in question includes all of the remaining (native) subspecies not explicitly listed in the Annexes of the Directive (e.g. '*Accipiter gentilis* all others', cf. '*Accipiter gentilis arrigonii*' listed in Annex I).

#### 1.5 Subspecific population

Where relevant, use the subspecific population descriptions given in the species checklist on the Reference Portal. In many cases, the subspecific population names relate to the brief descriptions used to identify distinct flyway populations of AEWA species. In others, they clarify a taxonomical or nomenclatural treatment applied in the checklist, or help to distinguish introduced populations of species which are native elsewhere within the EU.

#### 1.6 Alternative species scientific name (optional)

If the scientific name given under field 1.4 differs from that in general national usage, Member States may enter an alternative here.

#### 1.7 Common name (optional)

If Member States wish to enter the common name of the species (or subspecies) used nationally, they may do so here. This could be useful if the draft report will be circulated for comments to people who may not be familiar with the scientific name, or when communicating the report with the public.

#### 1.8 Season

Select the season in which most of the data being reported were collected, with the options 'Breeding', 'Winter' and 'Passage'.

## 2 Population size

#### 2.1 Year or period

Enter the year or period during which the population size was last determined: YYYY (for year) and YYYY–YYYY (for period, year–year).

Many reports will involve periods, because the population size of many species is commonly estimated during national atlas projects, which usually involve several years of fieldwork. In many

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<sup>28</sup> Source file: <http://blx1.bto.org/euringcodes/species.jsp>

<sup>29</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/wildbirds/eu\\_species/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/wildbirds/eu_species/index_en.htm)

cases the fieldwork will extend outside the limits of the current reporting period (2013–2018). The year or period reported should cover the actual period during which the data were collected.

In some cases the population size will be estimated based on a complete species census or inventory that took place during the previous reporting period but which has been updated with the results of regular monitoring or using data from online-systems for collecting field data. The year or period reported should be that which the reported estimate of population size relates to.

## 2.2 Population size

Use the population units (field **2.2(a) 'Unit'**) specified for each species in the species checklist. To allow the overall EU population size of each species to be calculated, all Member States should report their national data using the same population unit. For the vast majority of breeding species, numbers should be reported in units of breeding pairs ('p'), acknowledging that the estimates for many species, including many common and widespread ones, are in practice often based on the number of occupied territories (e.g. singing males) during the breeding season. When the breeding population size is reported as breeding pairs, but the figures are derived from primary field data collected using another unit (e.g. apparently occupied nests for certain seabirds), this information can be provided in field 2.7 'Additional information'.

In a small minority of cases involving species with an unusual/complex breeding biology or cryptic behaviour, other units – such as breeding females ('bfemales') or calling males ('cmales')<sup>30</sup> – are more appropriate than pairs for reporting population size. Such species include certain harriers, crakes, bustards and grouse. The units for reporting the population size of such species are indicated in the species checklist on the Reference Portal<sup>31</sup>.

For 'winter' and 'passage' season reports, population size should be reported, as appropriate, using the unit individuals ('i').

Three fields are now available for the reporting of population size values: '**(b) Minimum**'; '**(c) Maximum**'; and '**(d) Best single value**'. The number of fields used will vary according to the nature of the population size information available for the species in question (see below), but should follow one of the following logical combinations: (b) and (c); just (d); or (b), (c) and (d).

If a precise estimate of population size does not exist, with estimates only available as a range (i.e. minimum–maximum), these two values should be reported in fields (b) and (c). Member States are encouraged to provide plausible minimum and maximum population sizes even for poorly-known species, to minimise the uncertainty carried over into the estimation of overall EU population size and trends (which involves 'weighting' by national population sizes), but where this is not possible, a lower limit can still be reported in field 2.2(d) (preferably with a complementary note in field 2.7, e.g. 'Maximum population size unlikely to exceed 100 000 pairs.'), with 'minimum' selected under field 2.3 'Type of estimate'.

If the population is very well monitored (and often, but not always, relatively small), a single precise value may be available, in which case this can be reported in field (d). In other cases, a range

<sup>30</sup> Note that the proposed unit 'lekking males' was subsumed within 'cmales', in order to keep the Article 12 population units consistent with those used in the Natura 2000 Standard Data Form (SDF).

<sup>31</sup> [http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds\\_art12](http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds_art12)

(minimum–maximum) and a mean or ‘most-likely’ value may be available, in which case these can all be provided, in fields (b), (c) and (d).

In a situation where only a minimum (or maximum) value of the population size is known (e.g. through expert opinion) this should be entered in the (d) ‘Best single value’ field and NOT the (b) ‘Minimum’ or (c) ‘Maximum’ fields.

Where raw data and/or precise estimates exist, these should be reported without rounding at Member State level; any such rounding will be done later at EU level, as necessary.

If the species has gone extinct nationally since 1980 (i.e. its occurrence is listed as ‘EXBA’ in the national checklist), ‘0’ should be entered in field (d), and some indication of the timing of the extinction (e.g. ‘*Last recorded breeding in 1998.*’) should ideally also be provided in field 2.7. If it is not clear whether the species has gone extinct nationally or still persists in very small numbers, values of ‘0’ and, for instance, ‘1’ can be entered in fields (b) and (c) respectively.

### 2.3 Type of estimate

Select the most appropriate description of the type of population size estimate reported under field 2.2. If values have been provided for all of fields 2.2(b), (c) and (d), choose the category that best describes the data (often ‘multi-year mean’ or ‘95 % confidence interval’). Further details of the options are provided below:

- best estimate – the best available single figure (including where only the maximum value of the population size is available) or interval, derived from, for example, a population census, a compilation of figures from localities, an estimate based on population densities and distribution data, or expert opinion, but for which 95 % confidence limits have not been calculated. Whether a best estimate comes from monitoring data, extrapolation or expert opinion can be indicated in field 2.4;
- multi-year mean – average value (and interval, i.e. worst and best years' estimates) where population size has been estimated for several years during the reporting period (as indicated by the entry in field 2.1);
- 95 % confidence interval – estimates derived from sample surveys or a model for which 95 % confidence limits (as reported in fields 2.2(b) and 2.2(c)) could be calculated for the best single value (reported in field 2.2(d));
- minimum – where insufficient data exist to provide even a loosely bounded estimate, but where a population size is known to be above a certain value, or where the reported interval estimates come from a sample survey or monitoring project which probably underestimate the real population size.

If both interval (fields 2.2(b) ‘Minimum’ and 2.2(c) ‘Maximum’) and single values (field 2.2(d) ‘Best single value’) are provided, field 2.3 ‘Type of estimate’ should correspond to the most accurate estimate. This should be noted in field 2.7 ‘Additional information’.



## 2.4 Method used

This field is used to detail the methodology used to estimate the population size in field 2.2. Select one of the following categories:

- a) complete survey or a statistically robust estimate (e.g. from sample surveys of the majority of the known distribution);
- b) based mainly on extrapolation from a limited amount of data (e.g. from sample surveys of a small proportion of the range, using models based on density/abundance and distribution data, or from an existing estimate updated using trend data);
- c) based mainly on expert opinion, with very limited data;
- d) insufficient or no data available.

If both interval (fields 2.2(b) 'Minimum' and 2.2(c) 'Maximum') and single values (field 2.2(d) 'Best single value') are provided, the Method used should correspond to the more accurate estimate. This should be noted in field 2.7 'Additional information'.

## 2.5 Sources

To create the necessary audit trail for the data reported in fields 2.1 to 2.4 above, enter the details of the key references or other sources of information used to complete these fields. Such sources may include, for example, published papers, unpublished data held in databases, websites and expert working groups. It is preferable to provide enough information so that anyone reviewing the report (or updating it in six or 12 years' time) will be able to understand the origin of the data reported.

## 2.6 Change and reason for change (since previous report)

This field is used to indicate if there has been any change since the previous reporting period (2008–2012) in the population size reported and, if so, to describe the nature of this change.

First answer the question: 'Is there a change between reporting periods' (i.e. is the population size different from the last reporting period)? YES/NO.

If the answer is 'Yes', indicate which of the following options apply (it is possible to reply 'Yes' to more than one of the options a–c, but at least one option 'Yes' must be selected for options a–d)<sup>32</sup>:

- a) yes, due to genuine change;
- b) yes, due to improved knowledge or more accurate data;
- c) yes, due to the use of a different method<sup>33</sup> (including taxonomical change);
- d) yes, but there is no information on the nature of the change.

<sup>32</sup> It is a common phenomenon for a rare species to attract increased attention. As a result, more people search for it and find it, causing the population size estimate to be revised, and often substantially increased. Nevertheless, it may still be clear that the species is actually declining, based on analyses of data from sites with reliable historical trends. In this case, the options for 'improved knowledge/more accurate data' above should be selected. Field 2.7 'Additional information' (below) allows a Member State to provide further details on why a population size estimate has increased, even though a population decline is reported in Section 3 below.

<sup>33</sup> Improved interpretation or the correction of errors in the interpretation of underlying data should be included under 'different method'.

Finally, it should be indicated whether any difference is mainly due to (select one option):

- genuine change;
- improved knowledge or more accurate data; or
- the use of a different method.

If a Member State wishes to give further information, this can be done in field 2.7 'Additional information'.

## **2.7 Additional information (optional)**

This optional field can be used to provide supplementary free-text information (maximum 500 characters) relevant to the data provided for the assessment of population size under fields 2.1 to 2.6, such as details of any conversion factors used to convert field estimates of population size to breeding pairs (see text for field 2.2). For example, if, because of a change in methods, a Member State reports the same population size as in the previous report even though there has been a genuine change, this can also be noted here.

# **3 Population trend**

## **3.1 Short-term trend (last 12 years)**

Fields 3.1.1 to 3.1.5 are used to provide information on the short-term trends in population, based on a 12-year period.

### **3.1.1 Short-term trend period**

The period for short-term trends is 12 years (corresponding approximately to two reporting cycles). For the 2013–2018 reports, this means the period is 2007–2018, or a period as close as possible to this. Some flexibility is permitted, so although trends would ideally be reported for 2007–2018, data from 2005–2016, for example, will be accepted if the best available data relate to surveys in those years, or if using an earlier end point means that the national Article 12 report can be delivered without delay. Nevertheless, note that – as national trends need to be combined to estimate the overall EU-level trend for 2007–2018 – any trends not reported for the 'ideal' trend period will be extrapolated or truncated, as appropriate (see Section '[Extrapolating to ideal trend periods](#)' (in '3 Population trend' in 'Definitions and methods part')). Indicate the period in this field.

### **3.1.2 Short-term trend direction**

Indicate if the population trend over the period reported in field 3.1.1 was:

stable / fluctuating / increasing / decreasing / uncertain / unknown.

Distinguishing 'stable' trends from slightly 'increasing' or 'decreasing' trends will depend on the nature of the trend information available for the species in question. Where statistically robust monitoring data are available, it should be possible to distinguish (and hence report) relatively slight – but statistically significant – increases or decreases (e.g. if the 95 % confidence intervals of the change do not overlap zero). On the other hand, if the allocation of trend direction category is based on less robust data (or expert opinion), a specified threshold (an overall change of 10 % over the trend period) should be used to distinguish 'stable' from 'increasing' or 'decreasing' trends. In both

cases, Member States are encouraged to provide relevant explanatory/supplementary information in field 3.3 'Additional information' (e.g. 'Short-term trend from national common bird monitoring scheme for the period 2007–2018 was -0.4 % (with 95 % CI: = -1.1 % & +0.4 % per year), so change for the whole period was -4 % (95 % CI: -11 % and +4 %); hence categorised as 'stable'.'). For further guidance see Section '[Distinguishing 'stable' trends from slightly 'increasing' or 'decreasing'](#)' (in '3 Population trend' in 'Definitions and methods part').

'Fluctuating' applies to species whose average population level did not change significantly over the trend period, but which are characterised by large interannual variations in abundance, sometimes of one or two orders of magnitude. Species that typically show such dynamics include Boreal and Arctic breeding species, such as certain owls and crossbills, whose abundance is closely linked to the availability of food that shows cyclical peaks and troughs but the category may also apply to species that are particularly affected by adverse or variable climatic conditions. Member States are requested to restrict use of this category to species that show interannual population increases/decreases of  $\geq 50$  %. This includes species that, overall, are adjudged to breed or winter 'regularly' (e.g. more often than not), but may still not occur every year.

The category 'uncertain' should be used in cases where some monitoring data are available, but these data are not sufficient to reliably determine trend direction (e.g. because sample sizes are small and/or the monitoring scheme was only established relatively recently). ). Further details, e.g. of the available data and/or expert opinion of the likely 'real' trend, can be provided in field 3.3. 'Additional information'. Trends from national common bird monitoring schemes categorised as 'uncertain' by TRIM<sup>34</sup>, for example, should be reported using this category (not 'fluctuating'). ). For further guidance see Section '["Fluctuating" and "uncertain" trends](#)' (in '3 Population trend' in 'Definitions and methods part').

The trend category 'unknown' should be used only in cases where there is no information – quantitative or qualitative – available on the national trend of the species. However, even in these instances, national experts will often have a sense of more likely trend scenarios – or at least of the plausible 'limits' of any potential increase or decrease – and any indication of this<sup>35</sup> could still be very helpful when carrying out the EU-level population status assessments.

Further guidance related to population trends is given in Section '[3 Population trend](#)' (in 'Definitions and methods part').

### 3.1.3 Short-term trend magnitude

If 'increasing', 'decreasing' or 'uncertain' is reported in field 3.1.2, enter the overall percentage change in population size over the trend period specified in field 3.1.1. If available, the trend magnitude (in field 3.1.3) can also be reported for 'stable' and or 'fluctuating'<sup>36</sup> trends (e.g. the confidence interval of 'stable' trends). If this is only available as a range (e.g. 20–30 %), these two values should be reported in '(a) Minimum' and '(b) Maximum'. If a precise figure (e.g. 27 %) is

<sup>34</sup> TRends and Indices for Monitoring data [freeware program]: used by many common bird monitoring schemes to analyse national survey data (see <http://www.ebcc.info/trim.html>).

<sup>35</sup> For example, a note in field 3.3 'Additional information' along the lines of 'No reliable information available on short-term trend, but not believed to have decreased or increased by more than 30 % over the ideal trend period.'

<sup>36</sup> All such trends are treated as showing no net change overall when estimating the EU-level trend.

available, this should be entered in '(c) Best single value'. Where a mean or 'most-likely' trend is available, along with 95 % confidence limits these three values can all be reported, in (c), (a) and (b) respectively. In a situation where only a minimum (or maximum) value is known (e.g. through expert opinion) this should be entered in the 'Best single value' field and NOT the '(a) Minimum' or '(b) Maximum' fields.

In the specific case of species that have colonised or became established during the trend period (e.g. those listed as newly arriving ['ARR'] in the national species checklist), the magnitude of any population increase should be calculated based on the population size in the initial year<sup>37</sup>. For example, if a species first bred (one pair) in 2012, but the breeding population in 2018 is eight pairs, '2012–2018' should be entered in field 3.1.1, 'increasing' should be selected in field 3.1.2, and '700' (i.e. the percentage increase from one to eight) should be entered in field 3.1.3(c). Ideally, a complementary note confirming the year of colonisation and the initial population size (e.g. 'Species first bred (one pair) in 2012.') in field 3.3 'Additional information' should also be provided.

In contrast, for species that have gone extinct nationally during the trend period, simply reporting a decrease of 100 % does not provide all the information needed to assess the relative importance of the decline (declines to zero from starting population sizes of, for instance, one and 100 both represent decreases of 100 %). In the example of a species that had a breeding population of 10 pairs in 2007, but went extinct as a breeder in 2015, '2007–2015' should be entered in field 3.1.1, 'decreasing' should be selected in field 3.1.2, '100' should be entered in field 3.1.3(c), and a complementary note indicating the population size in 2007 (e.g. '*Species declined from 10 breeding pairs in 2007 to extinction as a breeding species in 2015.*') should be added in field 3.3 'Additional information'.

Although trend magnitudes are not mandatory for trends reported as 'stable' or 'fluctuating', any relevant explanatory/supplementary information – such as the confidence intervals of 'stable' trends or further details on fluctuations – can be provided under 3.1.3 'Short-term trend magnitude' or in field 3.3 'Additional information', as appropriate.

#### **3.1.4 Short-term trend – Method used**

Use one of the following categories:

- a) complete survey or a statistically robust estimate (e.g. comparison of two estimates of population size originating from complete censuses, or dedicated population monitoring with good statistical power);
- b) based mainly on extrapolation from a limited amount of data (e.g. trends derived from data collected only from a relatively small sample of the population, or based on insufficient sample size, or trends extrapolated from some other measurements);
- c) based mainly on expert opinion, with very limited data;
- d) insufficient or no data available.

Where data have been compiled from a variety of sources, use the category for the most important source of data.

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<sup>37</sup> To avoid the problem of calculating a percentage from a baseline of zero.

### 3.1.5 Sources

To create the necessary audit trail for the data reported in fields 3.1.1 to 3.1.4 above, enter the details of the key references or other sources of information used to complete these fields. Such sources may include, for example, published papers, unpublished data held in databases, websites and expert working groups. It is preferable to provide enough information so that anyone reviewing the report (or updating it in six or 12 years' time) will be able to understand the origin of the data reported.

## 3.2 Long-term trend (since c.1980)

### 3.2.1 Long-term trend period

The ideal period for reporting long-term trends is from c.1980 (when the Birds Directive was adopted/entered into force) until c.2018. However, there is some flexibility here, and hence if a Member State has conducted national censuses in (for example) 1980, 1995 and 2015, the trend between 1980 and 2015 should be reported. Indicate the period in this field.

Member States lacking population monitoring scheme data from before 2000 are encouraged to consult other potential sources of trend information, such as the two editions of *Birds in Europe*<sup>38</sup>, which present banded estimates of national population trend (plus supporting references) for most species for 1970–1990 and 1990–2000.

### 3.2.2 Long-term trend direction

See field 3.1.2 above.

If the allocation of trend direction category is based on less robust data (or expert opinion), a specified threshold (an overall change of 20 % over the long-term trend period) should be used to distinguish 'stable' from 'increasing' or 'decreasing' trends (the 10 % threshold is used for the short-term trend in field 3.1.2).

Further guidance related to population trends is given in Section '3 Population trend' (in 'Definitions and methods part')

### 3.2.3 Long-term trend magnitude

See field 3.1.3 above.

### 3.2.4 Long-term trend – Method used

See field 3.1.4 above.

### 3.2.5 Sources

See field 3.1.5 above.

<sup>38</sup> Tucker, G.M. & Heath, M.F. (1994) *Birds in Europe: their conservation status*. BirdLife International (BirdLife Conservation Series No. 3), Cambridge, UK.

BirdLife International (2004) *Birds in Europe: population estimates, trends and conservation status*. BirdLife International (BirdLife Conservation Series No. 12), Cambridge, UK.

### 3.3 Additional information (optional)

This section can be used to provide supplementary free-text information (maximum 500 characters) relevant to the data provided for the assessment of population trends under Sections 3.1 and 3.2 (see text for preceding fields for suggestions).

## 4 Breeding distribution map and size

Sections 4 and 5 apply only to those species for which ‘breeding’ season reports are requested, as listed in the species checklist on the Reference Portal<sup>39</sup>. National breeding bird atlases already exist for most EU Member States, and additional work for a new European Breeding Bird Atlas (‘EBBA2’) is being undertaken during 2013–2017<sup>40</sup>. In contrast, few countries have published national wintering bird atlases, and many bird species are much more mobile in winter anyway. Hence, no winter distribution data are requested.

### 4.1 Sensitive species

Some species are particularly vulnerable to persecution, illegal killing or collecting, and hence might face genuinely increased risks to their conservation or management if detailed information about their distribution were to be made publicly available. In a minority of cases, Member States may consider a species to be at risk if its distribution is made publicly available at the standard 10×10 km grid scale requested (see Section 4.3). Where information on distribution is reported according to the specifications in field 4.3 is considered ‘sensitive’, this can be indicated by entering ‘Yes’ in this field.

If a species is marked as ‘sensitive’, the Commission and EEA will not disclose its distribution to the public (for instance, by posting this information on a publicly available database or Internet-based site).

### 4.2 Year or period

Enter the year (e.g. 2015) or period (e.g. 2013–2017) when the breeding distribution was last determined. Many reports will involve periods, because the distribution of most species is commonly mapped during national atlas projects, which usually involve several years of fieldwork. The year or period reported should cover the actual period during which the data were collected.

Where no recent atlas information exists, Member States are encouraged to report a more up-to-date figure, by remapping the national distribution using other data, such as the results of annual monitoring schemes, data gathered from the Internet, and national or regional surveys. In such cases the distribution map will be elaborated based on data from the previous reporting period or using older distribution data that has been updated with the results of regular monitoring or using data from online-systems for collecting data. The year or period reported should be that which the reported distribution relates to.

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<sup>39</sup> [http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds\\_art12](http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds_art12)

<sup>40</sup> <http://www.ebba2.info/what-is-ebba2-and-why-ebba2/>

### 4.3 Breeding distribution map

Submit a distribution map, together with the relevant metadata (projection, datum, scale). The standard is 10×10 km ETRS89 grid, projection ETRS LAEA 5210. The distribution dataset will consist of the 10-km grid cells where the breeding is recorded or likely (see below guidance for mapping the species distribution); the use of attribute data to indicate the presence or absence of a species in a grid cell is not permitted. The period over which the distribution data were collected should be included in the metadata following the INSPIRE guidelines<sup>41</sup>. The technical specifications for distribution maps are given on the Reference Portal.

For small Member States (Luxembourg, Malta and Cyprus) or for other small territories such as the Canary, Madeira or the Azores islands maps using 5x5 km or 1x1 km grids are allowed. These will be aggregated to 10x10 km for visualisation at the European level.

The grids for individual Member States are available for download from the Reference portal.

The map should show the breeding occurrence (i.e. presence or absence) of the species in each grid cell. In general, only grid cells where breeding is 'confirmed' 'probable' or 'possible' should be included; for definitions of breeding categories and codes, refer to Table 2 in the 'Methodology' for the new European Breeding Bird Atlas<sup>42</sup>. However, in cases where survey coverage and data availability are known to be poor, cells considered likely to hold breeding populations (especially common species) may be included as well, using expert knowledge or modelling. In these cases further information related to data reliability can be provided in field 4.8 'Additional information'.

### 4.4 Breeding distribution surface area

Enter the total surface area of the current distribution in the Member State, in km<sup>2</sup>. In most cases this will be the number of occupied 10×10 km squares multiplied by 100. The surface area of distribution should be represented by grids (10x10 km) which occur entirely or partly within the Member States (i.e. grids intersected by the Member State boundaries should be counted entirely).

For localised species it is possible to report distribution surface area using finer resolution; for example, for species restricted to a single location, distribution area is the area of a locality where species occurs, which can be several hectares.

### 4.5 Method used

This field is used to detail the methodology used for calculating breeding distribution surface area in field 4.4. Select one of the following categories:

- a) complete survey or a statistically robust estimate;
- b) based mainly on extrapolation from a limited amount of data;
- c) based mainly on expert opinion, with very limited data;
- d) insufficient or no data available.

Where data have been compiled from a variety of sources, use the category for the most important source of data.

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<sup>41</sup> For the period 2013-2018 it is not obligatory or expected to provide the Article 12 spatial dataset compliant with INSPIRE requirements.

<sup>42</sup> [http://www.ebba2.info/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/EBBA2\\_methodology\\_final.pdf](http://www.ebba2.info/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/EBBA2_methodology_final.pdf)

The 'Method used' should be reported as '(d) Insufficient or no data available' if the distribution map on which the estimated surface area of distribution is based (obtained through comprehensive mapping, modelling or extrapolation, or, exceptionally, expert interpretation) covers less than 75 % of the presumed actual species distribution and no other data were used to fill in this gap in estimating the surface area of distribution (i.e. the resulting map is incomplete in relation to the presumed species distribution and so the surface area of distribution is underestimated).

#### **4.6 Additional maps (optional)**

This is for cases where a Member State wishes to submit an additional map different from the standard submission map under field 4.3. Note that this is an optional field and does not replace the need to provide a map under field 4.3.

Maps at a resolution other than 10×10 km or with grids other than the ETRS89 LAEA 5210 grid, close to 10×10 km, may be reported here.

#### **4.7 Sources**

To create the necessary audit trail for the data reported in fields 4.1 to 4.6 above, enter the details of the key references or other sources of information used to complete these fields. Such sources may include, for example, published papers, unpublished data held in databases, websites and expert working groups. It is preferable to provide enough information so that anyone reviewing the report (or updating it in six or 12 years' time) will be able to understand the origin of the data reported.

#### **4.8 Additional information (optional)**

This section can be used to provide supplementary free-text information (maximum 500 characters) relevant to the data provided for the assessment of breeding distribution under fields 4.1 to 4.7.

## **5 Breeding distribution trend**

### **5.1 Short-term trend (last 12 years)**

Fields 5.1.1 to 5.1.5 are used to provide information on the short-term trends in breeding distribution, based on a 12-year period.

#### **5.1.1 Short-term trend period**

The period for short-term trends is 12 years (two reporting cycles). For the 2013–2018 reports, this means the period is 2007–2018, or a period as close as possible to this. Some flexibility is permitted, so although trends would ideally be reported for 2007–2018, other data spanning a different but comparable time period (e.g. 2004–2017) will be accepted if the best available data relate to surveys in those years. Indicate the period used in this field.

#### **5.1.2 Short-term trend direction**

Indicate whether the distribution trend over the period reported in field 5.1.1 was:

stable / fluctuating / increasing / decreasing / uncertain / unknown.

See the text for field 3.1.2 for further guidance on the interpretation and use of these trend direction categories. The category 'fluctuating' will probably apply to fewer distribution trends than population



trends, but may still be appropriate, for example, in cases where the national distribution of a (regularly occurring) species is strongly influenced by seasonal conditions elsewhere (e.g. the drying-out of favoured wetland sites further south).

### **5.1.3 Short-term trend magnitude**

If 'increasing', 'decreasing' or 'uncertain' is reported in field 5.1.2, enter the overall percentage change in distribution size over the trend period specified in field 5.1.1. If available, the trend magnitude can also be reported for 'stable' or 'fluctuating' trends. If this is only available as an interval (e.g. 20–30 %), these two values should be reported in '(a) Minimum' and '(b) Maximum'. If a precise figure (e.g. 27 %) is available, this should be entered in '(c) Best single value'. If a mean or 'most-likely' trend is available, along with 95 % confidence limits, these three values can all be reported, in (c), (a) and (b) respectively. In a situation where only a minimum (or maximum) value is known (e.g. through expert opinion) this should be entered in the 'Best single value' field and NOT the '(a) Minimum' or '(b) Maximum' fields.

See the related text for field 3.1.3 for guidance on the specific cases of species that have either colonised or have gone extinct nationally during the trend period.

### **5.1.4 Short-term trend – Method used**

This field is used to detail the methodology used for calculating the short-term trend magnitude. Select one of the following categories:

- a) complete survey or a statistically robust estimate (e.g. comparing two distribution maps based on accurate distribution data, or dedicated monitoring of a species' distribution with good statistical power);
- b) based mainly on extrapolation from a limited amount of data (e.g. trends derived from occurrence data collected for other purposes, or from data collected from only a part of the geographical range of a habitat, or trends based on measuring some other predictors of habitat distribution, such as land-cover changes);
- c) based mainly on expert opinion, with very limited data;
- d) insufficient or no data available.

### **5.1.5 Sources**

To create the necessary audit trail for the data reported in fields 5.1.1 to 5.1.4 above, enter the details of the key references or other sources of information used to complete these fields. Such sources may include, for example, published papers, unpublished data held in databases, websites and expert working groups. It is preferable to provide enough information so that anyone reviewing the report (or updating it in six or 12 years' time) will be able to understand the origin of the data reported.

## **5.2 Long-term trend (since c.1980)**

### **5.2.1 Long-term trend period**

The ideal period for reporting long-term trends is from c.1980 (when the Birds Directive was adopted/entered into force) until c.2018. However, there is some flexibility here, and hence if a Member State has conducted national atlas surveys in (for example) 1980, 1995 and 2015, the trend between 1980 and 2015 should be reported. Indicate the period in this field.

Member States lacking distribution trend data from before 2000 could consult the EBCC Atlas<sup>43</sup> or *Birds in Europe*<sup>44</sup>, which presents banded estimates of national range trend for species between 1970 and 1990.

### 5.2.2 Long-term trend direction

See field 5.1.2 above.

### 5.2.3 Long-term trend magnitude

See field 5.1.3 above.

### 5.2.4 Long-term trend – Method used

See field 5.1.4 above.

### 5.2.5 Sources

See field 5.1.5 above.

## 5.3 Additional information (optional)

This section can be used to provide supplementary free-text information (maximum 500 characters) relevant to the data provided for the assessment of breeding distribution trend under Sections 5.1 and 5.2. For example, a Member State may wish to report information about geographical shifts in distribution (short-term or long-term), or fragmentation of the distribution, even though no changes in overall distribution size are reported.

## 6 Progress in work related to international Species Action Plans (SAPs), Management Plans (MPs) and Brief Management Statements (BMSs)

This section is designed to capture information about Member States' work on some of the EU's most threatened bird species, for which international (or multilateral<sup>45</sup>) Species Action Plans (SAPs) or Brief Management Statements (BMSs) have been developed, as well as a suite of huntable species considered to be in a poor condition in the EU and for which Management Plans (MPs) have been prepared<sup>46</sup>. The reporting also includes work done within the framework of plans adopted by other international organisations to which the EU is a signatory, such as the Bern Convention<sup>47</sup> and the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA)<sup>48</sup>.

<sup>43</sup>Hagemeijer, E.J.M. & Blair, M., eds. (1997) *The EBCC Atlas of European Breeding Birds: their distribution and abundance*. T & A D Poyser, London.

<sup>44</sup>Tucker, G.M. & Heath, M.F. (1994) *Birds in Europe: their conservation status*. BirdLife International (BirdLife Conservation Series No. 3), Cambridge, UK.

<sup>45</sup>In a few cases, the SAP/BMS relates to a species or subspecies that is endemic to a single country.

<sup>46</sup>[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/wildbirds/action\\_plans/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/wildbirds/action_plans/index_en.htm) for Species Action Plans and Brief Management Statements, and [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/wildbirds/hunting/managt\\_plans\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/wildbirds/hunting/managt_plans_en.htm) for Management Plans.

<sup>47</sup>[https://wcd.coe.int/wcd/ViewDoc.jsp?Ref=Rec\(2006\)121&Language=lanEnglish&Ver=original&Site=DG4-Nature&BackColorInternet=DBDCF2&BackColorIntranet=FDC864&BackColorLogged=FDC864](https://wcd.coe.int/wcd/ViewDoc.jsp?Ref=Rec(2006)121&Language=lanEnglish&Ver=original&Site=DG4-Nature&BackColorInternet=DBDCF2&BackColorIntranet=FDC864&BackColorLogged=FDC864)

<sup>48</sup><http://www.unep-aewa.org/publications/ssap/index.htm>

Since the 1990s, significant EU resources have been spent on the conservation of many of these species (e.g. through LIFE projects), so Member States are requested to summarise what they have done at national level to implement these plans and to improve the status of the relevant species. The list of relevant species with an indication of a type of plan is given in Table 2. If the species is reported in more seasons this section should be filled in for the most relevant season(s).

**Table 2: The list of taxa with international or multilateral plans, plus the type of these plans (entry for 'Plan type' contains hyperlinks to completed plans or the most relevant resources for plans currently under development). A more detailed list including objectives to be considered in the assessments under fields 6.4 and 6.5 for each species (and any subsequent updates of this table) can be found on the Reference Portal<sup>49</sup>.**

| Taxon  | Plan type  |
|--|--|
| <i>Accipiter gentilis arrigonii</i>                            | <a href="#">BMS</a> – EU   |
| <i>Accipiter nisus granti</i>                                  | <a href="#">BMS</a> – EU   |
| <i>Acrocephalus paludicola</i>                                 | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International  |
| <i>Aegypius monachus</i>                                       | <a href="#">SAP</a> – European [1996]; <a href="#">SAP</a> – International [ <a href="#">in prep.</a> ]; MSAP – International (CMS) [ <a href="#">in prep.</a> ] |
| <i>Alauda arvensis</i>   | <a href="#">MP</a> – EU  |
| <i>Alectoris graeca whitakeri</i>                              | <a href="#">BMS</a> – EU   |
| <i>Anas acuta</i>  | <a href="#">MP</a> – EU  |
| <i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>                            | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International (AEWA)   |
| <i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i> [Svalbard/North-west Europe]       | <a href="#">MP</a> – European (AEWA)   |
| <i>Anser erythropus</i>  | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International (AEWA)   |
| <i>Anser fabalis fabalis</i>                                   | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International (AEWA)   |
| <i>Aquila adalberti</i>  | <a href="#">SAP</a> – EU   |
| <i>Aquila fasciata</i> [= <i>Hieraaetus fasciatus</i> ]        | <a href="#">SAP</a> – European   |
| <i>Aquila heliaca</i>  | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International [1996]; <a href="#">SAP</a> – International [ <a href="#">in prep.</a> ]   |
| <i>Aythya marila</i>   | <a href="#">MP</a> – EU  |
| <i>Aythya nyroca</i>   | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International (CMS/AEWA)   |
| <i>Botaurus stellaris</i>                                      | <a href="#">SAP</a> – EU   |
| <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i> [Canada & Greenland/Ireland]      | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International (AEWA)   |
| <i>Branta ruficollis</i>                                       | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International (AEWA)   |
| <i>Calidris alpina schinzii</i> [Baltic/SW Europe & NW Africa] | MSAP – International [ <a href="#">in prep.</a> ]  |
| <i>Calidris pugnax</i> [= <i>Philomachus pugnax</i> ]          | MSAP – International [ <a href="#">in prep.</a> ]  |
| <i>Chersophilus duponti</i>                                    | <a href="#">SAP</a> – EU   |
| <i>Chlamydotis undulata</i>                                    | <a href="#">SAP</a> – EU   |
| <i>Circus macrourus</i>  | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International (Bern)   |

<sup>49</sup> [http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds\\_art12](http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds_art12)

| Taxon  | Plan type  |
|--|--|
| <i>Clanga clanga</i> [=Aquila clanga]                    | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International  |
| <i>Clanga pomarina</i> [=Aquila pomarina]                | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International  |
| <i>Clangula hyemalis</i>                                 | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International (AEWA)   |
| <i>Columba bollii</i>                                    | <a href="#">SAP</a> – EU   |
| <i>Columba junoniae</i>                                  | <a href="#">SAP</a> – EU   |
| <i>Columba trocaz</i>                                    | <a href="#">SAP</a> – EU   |
| <i>Coracias garrulus</i>                                 | <a href="#">SAP</a> – European   |
| <i>Coturnix coturnix</i>                                 | <a href="#">MP</a> – EU  |
| <i>Crex crex</i>   | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International (CMS/AEWA)   |
| <i>Cursorius cursor</i>                                  | <a href="#">SAP</a> – EU   |
| <i>Cygnus columbianus bewickii</i>                       | <a href="#">SAP</a> – European (AEWA)  |
| <i>Dendrocopos major canariensis</i>                     | <a href="#">BMS</a> – EU   |
| <i>Dendrocopos major thanneri</i>                        | <a href="#">BMS</a> – EU   |
| <i>Emberiza cineracea</i>                                | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International (Bern)   |
| <i>Falco biarmicus</i>                                   | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International  |
| <i>Falco cherrug</i>                                     | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International (CMS)  |
| <i>Falco eleonora</i>                                    | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International  |
| <i>Falco naumanni</i>                                    | <a href="#">SAP</a> – European   |
| <i>Falco rusticolus</i>                                  | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International  |
| <i>Falco vespertinus</i>                                 | <a href="#">SAP</a> – European   |
| <i>Ficedula semitorquata</i>                             | <a href="#">SAP</a> – European   |
| <i>Fringilla polatzeki</i> [=Fringilla teydea polatzeki] | <a href="#">SAP</a> – EU   |
| <i>Fringilla teydea</i> [=Fringilla teydea teydea]       | <a href="#">SAP</a> – EU   |
| <i>Fulica cristata</i>                                   | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International  |
| <i>Gallinago gallinago</i>                               | MSAP – International [ <a href="#">in prep.</a> ]  |
| <i>Gallinago media</i>                                   | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International (AEWA)   |
| <i>Glareola nordmanni</i>                                | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International (AEWA)   |
| <i>Gypaetus barbatus</i>                                 | <a href="#">SAP</a> – European [1997]; <a href="#">SAP</a> – International [ <a href="#">in prep.</a> ]; MSAP – International (CMS) [ <a href="#">in prep.</a> ] |
| <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>                             | MSAP – International [ <a href="#">in prep.</a> ]  |
| <i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i> [Danube population only]     | <a href="#">SAP</a> – European (Bern)  |
| <i>Hydrobates montei</i> [=Oceanodroma montei]           | <a href="#">SAP</a> – EU [ <a href="#">in prep.</a> ]  |
| <i>Larus audouinii</i>                                   | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International  |
| <i>Larus canus</i>                                       | <a href="#">MP</a> – EU  |
| <i>Limosa limosa</i> [all subspecies / populations]      | <a href="#">MP</a> – EU; <a href="#">SAP</a> – International (AEWA); MSAP – International [ <a href="#">in prep.</a> ]   |

| Taxon  | Plan type   |
|--|---|
| <i>Loxia scotica</i>   | <a href="#">SAP</a> – EU  |
| <i>Marmaronetta angustirostris</i>   | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International   |
| <i>Melanitta fusca</i>   | <a href="#">MP</a> – EU; <a href="#">SAP</a> – International [ <a href="#">in prep.</a> ]                               |
| <i>Microcarbo pygmaeus</i> [=Phalacrocorax pygmeus]                        | <a href="#">SAP</a> – European  |
| <i>Milvus milvus</i>   | <a href="#">SAP</a> – European  |
| <i>Neophron percnopterus</i>   | <a href="#">SAP</a> – European; <a href="#">MSAP</a> – International (CMS) [ <a href="#">in prep.</a> ]                 |
| <i>Netta rufina</i>  | <a href="#">MP</a> – EU   |
| <i>Numenius arquata</i> [ <i>N. a. arquata</i> & <i>N. a. orientalis</i> ] | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International (AEWA); <a href="#">MSAP</a> – International [ <a href="#">in prep.</a> ]           |
| <i>Numenius tenuirostris</i>   | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International   |
| <i>Otis tarda</i>  | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International   |
| <i>Oxyura leucocephala</i>   | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International (CMS/AEWA) [2006]; <a href="#">SAP</a> – International [ <a href="#">in prep.</a> ] |
| <i>Pandion haliaetus</i>   | <a href="#">SAP</a> – European (Bern)   |
| <i>Pelecanus crispus</i>   | <a href="#">SAP</a> – European [1996]; <a href="#">SAP</a> – International [ <a href="#">in prep.</a> ]                 |
| <i>Perdix perdix italica</i>   | <a href="#">BMS</a> – EU  |
| <i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis desmarestii</i>                               | <a href="#">SAP</a> – EU  |
| <i>Platalea leucorodia</i>   | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International (AEWA)  |
| <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>   | <a href="#">MP</a> – EU   |
| <i>Polysticta stelleri</i>   | <a href="#">SAP</a> – European  |
| <i>Porphyrio porphyrio porphyrio</i>                                       | <a href="#">SAP</a> – EU  |
| <i>Pterodroma deserta</i> [=Pterodroma feae]                               | <a href="#">SAP</a> – EU  |
| <i>Pterodroma madeira</i>  | <a href="#">SAP</a> – EU  |
| <i>Puffinus mauretanicus</i>   | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International   |
| <i>Puffinus yelkouan</i>   | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International [ <a href="#">in prep.</a> ]  |
| <i>Pyrrhula murina</i>   | <a href="#">SAP</a> – EU  |
| <i>Saxicola dacotiae</i>   | <a href="#">SAP</a> – EU (Bern)   |
| <i>Sterna dougallii</i>  | <a href="#">SAP</a> – International   |
| <i>Streptopelia turtur</i>   | <a href="#">MP</a> – EU; <a href="#">SAP</a> – International [ <a href="#">in prep.</a> ]                               |
| <i>Tetrax tetrax</i>   | <a href="#">SAP</a> – EU  |
| <i>Tringa totanus</i>  | <a href="#">MP</a> – EU; <a href="#">MSAP</a> – International [ <a href="#">in prep.</a> ]                              |
| <i>Vanellus vanellus</i>   | <a href="#">MP</a> – EU; <a href="#">MSAP</a> – International [ <a href="#">in prep.</a> ]                              |

## Notes:

The scientific names in the 'Taxon' column reflect the taxon names used in the Article 12 checklist available on the Reference Portal (with an exception of *Numenius arquata* and *Limosa limosa* (where the Article 12 checklist lists the EU subspecies/subspecific population separately, but the plans are at the species-level). In cases where the Article 12 reporting unit in question refers to a distinct (flyway) population, this name (as it appears in the Article 12 checklist) is provided in square brackets after the scientific name.

In cases where the current scientific name does not match that used in the plan the old name/synonym has been given in square brackets (following a '=' sign);

Following acronyms were used for action/management plans: Species Action Plans (SAP), Management Plans (MP), Brief Management Statements (BMS) and Multispecies action plan (for multispecies vulture (CMS) and lowland-wader (EuroSAP) plans) (MSAP).

## 6.1 Type of international plan

Use the type of international plan (SAP, MP or BMS) specified in the species code list.

## 6.2 Has a national plan linked to the international SAP/MP/BMS been adopted?

Please select 'Yes' or 'No'. If 'Yes', please provide a web link to (and/or bibliographic reference for) the national plan in field 6.6 'Sources of further information' below.

## 6.3 If 'No', describe any measures and initiatives taken related to the international SAP/MP/BMS

Briefly outline what actions have been implemented for the species in your Member State, preferably using the code numbers<sup>50</sup> in the plans for recommended actions per Member State, where relevant (maximum of 250 characters).

## 6.4 Assessment of the effectiveness of SAPs for globally threatened species (Article 12, Species Action Plans)

This field is used to provide information on the species' national status (in terms of ~~numbers~~ population size and range/distribution) in relation to objectives outlined in the SAPs/BMSs. The list of species with SAPs and BMSs for which this field should be filled in is provided in Table 2<sup>51</sup> above. A more detailed list including objectives to be considered in the assessment for each species is provided on the Reference Portal.

Some plans list different short-term and long-term objectives. For example for *Aquila clanga* (*Clanga clanga*) the action plan lists the following objectives related to either distribution or population size; i) 'in the short-term, to halt the decline in the population and safeguard all existing breeding, roosting and wintering habitat'; ii) 'in the long term, to safeguard the distribution and numbers of the European population of the Greater Spotted Eagle, restoring the range to what it was in 1920'. If the short-term objective (e.g. stabilisation of population size) has been achieved or there has been progress towards the objective, option '(a) moving towards the plan's aim/objective(s)' should be selected.

Some plans include objectives that are not directly expressed as an increase/stabilisation of population or distribution, but for example a reduction in mortality caused by certain pressures or the protection/restoration of certain key sites. The effectiveness of a plan should be assessed taking into account the impact of those measures to population size/distribution. For example if several key sites for a species have been restored (a short-term objective has been achieved) with a long-term

<sup>50</sup> For most of the SAPs and BMSs, proposed actions have a numerical code.

<sup>51</sup> Table 2 lists taxa with international or multilateral plans (including BMSs). Some of the species listed (e.g. *Falco naumanni*) are currently assessed as not threatened globally, but at the time the plan was drafted were considered threatened or had conservation problems which required a coordinated action.

aim to stabilise the population of a species but the population size is still declining (with an unchanged rate) the option ‘(b) unchanged’ should be selected.

Please choose from one of the following options:

- a) moving towards the plan’s aim/objective(s);
- b) unchanged;
- c) further deteriorating away from the plan’s aim/objective(s).

## 6.5 Assessment of the effectiveness of MPs for huntable species in non-Secure status (Articles 3 and 7, Management Plans)

This field is specific to huntable species in non-Secure status. It is used to provide information on their status (in terms of population size and range/distribution) on a national level, in relation to objectives outlined in the MPs. The list of species with MPs for which this field should be filled in is provided in Table 2<sup>52</sup> above. A more detailed list including objectives to be considered in the assessment for each species is provided on the Reference Portal.

Please choose from one of the following options (Follow same guidance as for field 6.5):

- a) improving;
- b) unchanged;
- c) further deteriorating.

## 6.6. Sources of further information

In this field, Member States are requested to provide links to appropriate websites, web links and/or bibliographic references for relevant publications (e.g. a national plan), contact details of responsible organisations, etc.

# 7 Main pressures and threats

This section is designed to capture information about the principal factors responsible for causing individual species to decline, suppressing their numbers or restricting their ranges. It should be completed for regularly occurring Annex I species<sup>53</sup> and any other migratory species triggering SPA designations nationally (as indicated in the species checklist). Member States are encouraged to provide this information for Annex II species and, if available, also for remaining species.

More information related to season-specific reporting on breeding, winter or passage Annex I and other SPA trigger species can be found in [Table 1: Sections of the species Report format to be filled in for breeding, winter and passage season for different categories of bird species](#) in Section ‘Field-by-field guidance for completing Bird species report’.

<sup>52</sup> Some species listed in Table 2 have now ‘Secure’ status within EU (e.g. *Larus canus*), but in past they were considered non-Secure at the EU level or at the geographical scale of the plan (e.g. AEWa contracting parties) or had conservation problems which required a coordinated action.

<sup>53</sup> Regardless of whether they are listed as SPA trigger species nationally or not.

Pressures have acted within the current reporting period and they have an impact on the long-term viability of the species or its habitat(s); threats are future/foreseeable impacts (within the next two reporting periods) that are likely to affect the long-term viability of the species and/or its habitat(s) (see Table 3). The threats should not cover theoretical threats, but rather those issues judged to be reasonably likely. This may include continuation of pressures.

**Table 3: Definition of a pressure and threat (in the context of Article 12 reporting)**

|          | Period of action/definition  | Time-frame  |
|----------|--|---|
| Pressure | Acting now and/or during (any part of or all of) the current reporting period. | Current 6-year reporting period.  |
| Threat   | Factors expected to act in the future after the current reporting period.      | Future two reporting periods, i.e. within 12 years following the end of the current reporting period. |

### 7.1 Characterisation of pressures/threats

Provide the list of pressures and/or threats and a ranking of their impact: list a maximum of 10 pressures and a maximum of 10 threats. Only pressures/threats of high ('H') and of medium importance ('M'), as defined in Table 4 below, should be reported.

**Table 4: Definition of ranked pressures/threats**

| Code | Meaning                  | Comment   |
|------|--------------------------|---|
| H    | High importance/impact   | Important direct or immediate influence and/or acting over large areas (a pressure is the major cause or one of the major causes, if acting in combination with other pressures, of—significant decline of species population, distribution area or deterioration of habitat quality; or pressure acting over large areas preventing the species population of depleted species to expand). |
| M    | Medium importance/impact | Medium direct or immediate influence, mainly indirect influence and/or acting over moderate part of the area/acting only regionally (other pressure not directly or immediately causing significant declines).  |

The impact of the pressure should reflect the influence of a pressure or threat on the status or trends of the species. Only pressures that have an important direct or immediate influence on either population size or species distribution at the Member State scale (causing significant decline or deterioration or preventing species from being restored, see Table 4) should be ranked as 'high'. However, it is likely that species with 'increasing' or 'stable' trends or where only very localised or slight declines were recorded will not have 'high importance' pressures (unless the pressures are counteracted with measures). The maximum number of 'high' ranked pressures and/or threats that can be reported is five, even if more could be considered. This, together with any other information related to pressures and threats, can be noted in field 7.3 'Additional information'.



For each bird species:

**a)** From the list of pressures/threats, select a maximum of 10 entries for each of pressures and threats using the code at the second level of the hierarchical list. The list of pressures and threats is available on the Reference Portal<sup>54</sup>.

**b) and d)** For each pressure and threat, indicate its ranking in fields (b) and (d), i.e. **'H'** for 'high', **'M'** for 'medium', under both 'Pressure' and 'Threat'. For example, if a factor selected from the list represents both a pressure and a threat, 'H' or 'M' should be reported under both headings as appropriate. If it represents a pressure but not a threat, 'H' or 'M' should be reported under the 'pressure' heading and 'threat' left blank. A maximum of five high-level pressures and five high-level threats should be noted. This will make it possible to identify the most important factors at a European scale.

**c) and e)** Enter the location of the pressure/threat in fields (c) and (e), i.e. where it is principally operating. Only one option should be selected. If a pressure or threat acts both inside the Member State, but also elsewhere choose the option corresponding to where the pressure is principally acting. For pressures acting within the Member State and outside the Member State and having approximately equal impact to national bird population report '4 = inside the Member State'.

The codes to choose from are:

- 4 = inside the Member State
- 3 = elsewhere in the EU
- 2 = outside the EU
- 1 = both inside and outside the EU
- x = unknown.

Table 5 provides an example of pressures and threats characterisation using a maximum of five pressures of high importance.

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<sup>54</sup> [http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds\\_art12](http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds_art12)

**Table 5: An example of pressures and threats characterisation.**

| Characterisation of pressures/threats   |            |             |            |             |
|---|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|
| <b>a) Pressure/threat</b><br><i>List a maximum of 10 pressures and a maximum of 10 threats using the code list provided on the Reference Portal</i> |            |             |            |             |
|   | Pressure   |             | Threat     |             |
|   | b) ranking | c) location | d) ranking | e) location |
| A14 Application of synthetic fertilisers  | H          | 4           | H          | 4           |
| A22 Active abstractions from groundwater, surface water or mixed water for agriculture  | M          | 4           | -          |             |
| B05 Clear-cutting, removal of all trees   | H          | 4           | M          | 4           |
| D01 Roads, paths railroads and related infrastructure (e.g. bridges, viaducts, tunnels)   | H          | 4           | H          | 4           |
| D05 Electricity and communication infrastructure (e.g. phone lines, masts and antennas)   | H          | 4           | M          | 4           |
| E01 Conversion from other land uses to housing and settlement areas (excl. drainage)  | M          | 4           | H          | 4           |
| I02 Problematic native plants and animals   | H          | 4           | H          | 4           |
| K04 Natural processes of eutrophication or acidification  | -          |             | M          | 4           |

Note that the example is only illustrative since it uses draft codes that may not be retained as such in the final list of pressures and threats.

If a Member State wishes to give more precise information on the nature of a certain pressure, this can be written in field 7.3 'Additional information'.

More detailed guidance on reporting pressure/threats is provided in Section '7 Main pressures and threats' (in 'Definitions and methods part') and in the notes in the list of pressures and threats available from the Reference Portal<sup>55</sup>.

## 7.2 Sources of information (optional)

To provide the necessary audit trail for the data reported in field 7.1(a) above, Member States can enter the details of the key references or other sources supporting evidence of pressures reported as 'high'. Such sources may include, for example, published papers, unpublished data held in databases, websites and expert working groups. If the expert opinion was used it can be categorised in this field (e.g. expert opinion with partial or limited data). It is preferable to list enough information so that anyone reviewing the report (or updating it in six or 12 years' time) will be able to understand the origin of the information reported.

<sup>55</sup> [http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds\\_art12](http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds_art12)

### 7.3 Additional information (optional)

If a Member State wishes to give additional information on certain pressure/threat (e.g. estimates of annual mortality caused by a particular pressure, for instance by illegal killing), this can be provided in this field.

## 8 Conservation measures

Member States are asked to describe the most important conservation measures taken for Annex I species<sup>56</sup> and any other migratory species triggering SPA designations nationally (as indicated in the species checklist) and to provide a simple assessment of the effectiveness of these measures. Member States are encouraged to provide this information for Annex II species and, if available, also for remaining species.

More information related to season-specific reporting on breeding, winter or passage Annex I and other SPA trigger species can be found in [Table 1: Sections of the species Report format to be filled in for breeding, winter and passage season for different categories of bird species](#) in Section 'Field-by-field guidance for completing Bird species report'.

### 8.1 Status of measures

Select whether measures are needed or not. If the answer is 'Yes, measures are needed', then proceed to answer the following three questions:

- a) measures identified but none yet taken? (YES/NO); or
- b) measures identified and taken? (YES/NO); or
- c) measures needed but cannot be identified? (YES/NO).

Measures may be implemented at different points in time. Choose option (a) if the majority of the most important measures identified have not yet been taken; choose option (b) if the majority of the most important measures have already been or are being implemented.

### 8.2 Main purpose of the measures taken

Indicate the main purpose of the measures taken. This part should only be filled in if the conservation measures have been taken (field 8.1(b) 'Measures identified and taken' is marked 'Yes'). Even if several purposes can be identified, please indicate only the main one in terms of implementing the measures:

- a) maintain the current distribution, population and/or habitat for the species;
- b) expand the current distribution of the species;
- c) increase the population size and/or improve population dynamics (improve reproduction success, reduce mortality, improve age/sex structure);
- d) restore the habitat of the species.

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<sup>56</sup> Regardless of whether they are listed as SPA trigger species nationally or not.

### 8.3 Location of the measures

Indicate where the measures are mostly being implemented. This part should only be filled in if the conservation measures have been taken (field 8.1(b) 'Measures identified and taken' is marked 'Yes').

- a) only inside Natura 2000;
- b) both inside and outside Natura 2000;
- c) only outside Natura 2000.

This field tries to capture where the main focus of the conservation action is taking place. Therefore, choose option (a) if all, or the vast majority, of the conservation measures are restricted to Natura 2000, option (b) if there is a proportional investment in the implementation of measures inside and outside Natura 2000, and option (c) if all, or the vast majority, of the measures are taken outside Natura 2000.

### 8.4 Response to the measures

Provide an estimate of when the measures taken start, or are expected to start, to neutralise the pressure and to produce positive effects (with regard to the main purpose of the measures indicated in field 8.2). Choose one option from:

- a) short-term results (within the current reporting period, 2013–2018);
- b) medium-term results (within the next two reporting periods, 2019–2030);
- c) long-term results (after 2030).

### 8.5 List of main conservation measures

List a maximum of 10 conservation measures using the code provided on the Reference Portal<sup>57</sup>.

More detailed guidance on the use of conservation measures is provided in Section '8 Conservation measures' (in 'Definitions and methods part') and in the notes in the list of conservation measures available from the Reference Portal.

### 8.6 Additional information (optional)

Additional information to help understand the information given on conservation measures can be reported here.

## 9 Natura 2000 (SPAs) coverage

This section is designed to capture information about the Natura 2000 (SPA) coverage for individual species. Under Article 4 of the Directive, Member States are obliged to classify the most suitable territories for certain species as SPAs. In order to assess the extent of coverage of the SPA network for each relevant species at EU level, Member States are requested to report the size (and short-term trend) of the population that occurs within their national SPA network.

The section should only be completed for Annex I species and other migratory species triggering SPA classifications nationally, as indicated in the species checklist on the Reference Portal<sup>58</sup>.

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<sup>57</sup> [http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds\\_art12](http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds_art12)

More information related to season-specific reporting on breeding, winter or passage Annex I and other SPA trigger species can be found in [Table 1: Sections of the species Report format to be filled in for breeding, winter and passage season for different categories of bird species](#) in Section 'Field-by-field guidance for completing Bird species report'.

See background information in Section '9 [Natura 2000 \(SPAs\) coverage](#)' (in 'Definitions and methods part').

### 9.1 Population size inside the Natura 2000 (SPA) network

Provide an estimate of the total population size included within the national SPA network during the same year or period as reported in field 2.1 (including SPAs where the species is known to occur, but is not classified as a qualifying interest or trigger species). See the text for field 2.2 above for details of how to complete fields (a), (b), (c) and/or (d).

In order to avoid overinflated figures, Member States may need to adjust the total population size inside the Natura 2000 network for some mobile wintering species downwards, to allow for significant movements of individuals between SPAs, as might apply, for instance, for various geese species wintering in north-western Europe.

### 9.2 Type of estimate

Select one of the following options:

- best estimate – the best available single figure (including where only the maximum value of the population size is available) or interval, derived from, for example, a population census, a compilation of figures from localities, an estimate based on population densities and distribution data, or expert opinion, but for which 95 % confidence limits have not been calculated. Whether a best estimate comes from monitoring data, extrapolation or expert opinion can be indicated in field 9.3;
- multi-year mean – average value (and interval) where population size has been estimated for several years during the reporting period;
- 95 % confidence interval – estimates derived from sample surveys or a model for which 95 % confidence limits could be calculated (as reported in fields 9.1(b) and 9.1(c));
- minimum – where insufficient data exist to provide even a loosely bounded population size estimate, but where a population size is known to be above certain value, or where the reported interval comes from a sample survey or monitoring project which probably underestimates the real population size.

Follow the same guidance as for field 2.3 'Type of estimate' for Population size.

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<sup>58</sup> [http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds\\_art12](http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds_art12)

### 9.3 Population size inside the network – Method used

Select one of the following options (analogous to field 2.4 'Method used'):

- a) complete survey or a statistically robust estimate;
- b) based mainly on extrapolation from a limited amount of data;
- c) based mainly on expert opinion with very limited data;
- d) insufficient or no data available.

Follow the same guidance as for field 2.4 'Method used' for Population size.

### 9.4 Short-term trend of population size within the network – Direction

As in field 3.1.2 'Short-term trend direction', indicate whether the population trend in the SPA network over the short-term trend period (as reported in field 3.1.1) was:

stable / fluctuating / increasing / decreasing / uncertain / unknown.

See the text for field 3.1.2 'Short-term trend direction' for further guidance on the interpretation and use of these trend direction categories.

### 9.5 Short-term trend of population size within the network – Method used

Select which of the following options best describes the method used to assess the short-term trend direction (as per field 3.1.4 'Short-term trend – Method used'):

- a) complete survey or a statistically robust estimate;
- b) based mainly on extrapolation from a limited amount of data;
- c) based mainly on expert opinion with very limited data;
- d) insufficient or no data available.

Follow the same guidance as for field 3.1.4 'Short-term trend - Method used'.

### 9.6 Additional information (optional)

This section can be used to provide supplementary free-text information (maximum 500 characters) relevant to the data provided in fields 9.1 to 9.5.

## 10 Information related to Annex II species (Article 7)

If the species is reported in more than one season (for example because it is also an SPA trigger species), this section should be filled in for the most relevant season.

More information related to season-specific reporting on breeding, winter or passage Annex II species can be found in [Table 1: Sections of the species Report format to be filled in for breeding, winter and passage season for different categories of bird species](#) in Section 'Field-by-field guidance for completing Bird species report'.

### 10.1 Is the species nationally hunted?

Not all species listed in Annex II are hunted in all (relevant) Member States. Indicate here whether the species in question is indeed hunted in your country<sup>59</sup>. If 'Yes', complete fields 10.2 to 10.4 below.

This field indicates if a species is nationally hunted in practice. For example, if a species is not classified as huntable by national/regional legislation (so it cannot be hunted) or if there is a permanent prohibition (for huntable species), the answer should be 'No'. More information can be provided in field 10.4 'Additional information'.

### 10.2 Hunting bag

Provide national hunting bag statistics (in individuals) per year/season over the six years of the reporting period (i.e. 2013–2018): provide the unit (individuals) in field 10.2(a), and proceed to fill in field 10.2(b) with information per hunting season or per year (where season is not used). Season 1 is 2012/2013 (starting in autumn 2012 and ending in spring 2013); Season 6 is 2017/2018. Where a precise value is known, please enter this into both the 'minimum' and 'maximum' fields. If only minimum or only maximum numbers are available, these should be reported in the respective fields 'Min.' and 'Max.'. An option of 'unknown' is also provided.

In cases where bag statistics are only available for a group of species, without a reliable breakdown per species the proportion (e.g. 0–5% for each minority species; 50–90% for a majority one) for each species should be estimated and reported as 'Min.' and 'Max.' values under 10.2. The appropriate explanation should be provided in field 10.4 'Additional information' (e.g. 'Bag statistics (min-max) were obtained for a group of species ([species 1],[ species 2], [ species x]), but probably >90% relate to the species in this report'). The method used (field 10.3) should reflect the fact that actual figures reported are an approximation and should be 'b' or 'c' respectively.

### 10.3 Hunting bag – Method used

Select which of the following options best describes the method used to provide hunting statistics:

- a) complete survey or a statistically robust estimate;
- b) based mainly on extrapolation from a limited amount of data;
- c) based mainly on expert opinion with very limited data;
- d) insufficient or no data available.

### 10.4 Additional information (optional)

Provide web links or bibliographic references for the key sources of information used to complete the fields in Section 10, including details of any national reports or online databases. . Also any other information related to hunting bag statistic can be provided here, for example information related to problems with species determination or information related to gathering and quality check of the hunting bags data

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<sup>59</sup> Or subnational unit, as appropriate.

## PART 2. DEFINITIONS AND METHODS

### Species to be reported

This section provides complementary information to the guidance provided in Section ‘Species to be reported’ (in ‘Field-by-field part’)

#### Reporting on subspecific units

In most cases, Annex B bird species' status and trends reports ('species reports') are requested at the level of the species, as this is the taxonomical unit referred to throughout the text of the Directive<sup>60</sup>, as well as that used for previous assessments of the EU population status of birds<sup>61</sup>. However, in a minority of cases, species reports are requested for 'subspecific units' – i.e. subspecies or distinct populations – whose status is of particular interest and/or policy relevance (e.g. in the context of subspecies-level listings in the Annexes of the Directive).

For the 2013–2018 reporting period, subspecific reporting is requested for the following taxa:

- subspecies identified in Annex I, II or III of the Directive (plus their non-Annex counterparts);
- subspecies or distinct populations for which multilateral Species Action Plans, Management Plans or Brief Management Statements have been, or are being, prepared (plus their counterparts);
- subspecies or distinct populations listed in Column A of Table 1 of AEWA Annex 3 – and their counterparts – which occur concurrently (within the same season) in one or more Member States, but are readily distinguishable (plus six additional taxa for which subspecific reporting was also recommended by the AEWA Secretariat<sup>62</sup>);
- introduced subspecies or widespread feral forms of species which also occur naturally within the EU (plus their native counterparts);
- geographically isolated and/or evolutionarily distinct subspecies where all relevant Member States proposed subspecific reporting.

The 75 subspecific units meeting these revised criteria are listed in Table 6. The subspecific units are also available in the species checklist on the Reference Portal<sup>63</sup>.

<sup>60</sup> Including Article 2, for example.

<sup>61</sup> For example, BirdLife International (2004) *Birds in the European Union: a status assessment*. BirdLife International, Wageningen, the Netherlands, and the population status assessments produced in 2015, based on the Article 12 reports submitted for the previous reporting round.

<sup>62</sup> *Phalacrocorax carbo carbo*, *Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*, *Larus argentatus argentatus*, *Larus argentatus argenteus*, and two distinct flyway populations of *Ciconia ciconia*.

<sup>63</sup> [http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds\\_art12](http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds_art12)



**Table 6: Subspecific units for reporting for the period 2013–2018 (more detailed information and possible updates of this table can be found on the Reference Portal<sup>64</sup>)**

| Subspecific unit  |
|---|
| <i>Alectoris graeca whitakeri</i>                           |
| <i>Alectoris graeca</i> all others <sup>65</sup>            |
| <i>Fringilla monticola asiatica</i>                         |
| <i>Fringilla monticola fringilla</i>                        |
| <i>Perdix perdix italica</i>                                |
| <i>Perdix perdix hispaniensis</i>                           |
| <i>Perdix perdix</i> all others                             |
| <i>Lagopus lagopus lagopus</i>                              |
| <i>Lagopus lagopus hibernica</i>                            |
| <i>Lagopus lagopus scotica</i>                              |
| <i>Lagopus lagopus rossica</i>                              |
| <i>Lagopus muta pyrenaica</i>                               |
| <i>Lagopus muta helvetica</i>                               |
| <i>Lagopus muta</i> all others <sup>66</sup>                |
| <i>Tetrao urogallus aquitanicus</i>                         |
| <i>Tetrao urogallus cantabricus</i>                         |
| <i>Tetrao urogallus</i> all others                          |
| <i>Lyrurus tetrix tetrix</i>                                |
| <i>Lyrurus tetrix britannicus</i>                           |
| <i>Cygnus columbianus bewickii</i>                          |
| <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i> [Canada & Greenland/Ireland]   |
| <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i> [Svalbard/Denmark & UK]        |
| <i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i>                             |
| <i>Branta leucopsis</i> [Svalbard/South-west Scotland]      |
| <i>Branta leucopsis</i> [East Greenland/Scotland & Ireland] |
| <i>Branta leucopsis</i> [Russia/Germany & Netherlands]      |
| <i>Anser fabalis fabalis</i>                                |
| <i>Anser fabalis rossicus</i>                               |

<sup>64</sup> [http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds\\_art12](http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds_art12)

<sup>65</sup> Includes subspecies *graeca* and *saxatilis* (neither of which has a BMS or MP).

<sup>66</sup> Includes subspecies *muta* and *millaisi* (neither of which is listed in Annexes).

| Subspecific unit  |
|---|
| <i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i> [Svalbard/North-west Europe]                                  |
| <i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i> [East Greenland & Iceland/UK]                                 |
| <i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>   |
| <i>Anser albifrons albifrons</i>  |
| <i>Columba livia domestica</i>  |
| <i>Columba livia livia</i>  |
| <i>Columba palumbus azorica</i>   |
| <i>Columba palumbus palumbus</i>  |
| <i>Porphyrio porphyrio poliocephalus</i>  |
| <i>Porphyrio porphyrio porphyrio</i>  |
| <i>Ciconia ciconia</i> [Western Europe & North-west Africa/Sub-Saharan Africa]            |
| <i>Ciconia ciconia</i> [Central & Eastern Europe/Sub-Saharan Africa]                      |
| <i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis desmarestii</i>  |
| <i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis aristotelis</i>  |
| <i>Phalacrocorax carbo carbo</i>  |
| <i>Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis</i>   |
| <i>Numenius arquata arquata</i>   |
| <i>Numenius arquata orientalis</i>  |
| <i>Limosa limosa limosa</i> [Western Europe/North-west & West Africa]                     |
| <i>Limosa limosa limosa</i> [Eastern Europe/Central & Eastern Africa]                     |
| <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i>  |
| <i>Limosa limosa</i> [all non-breeding populations]                                       |
| <i>Calidris alpina schinzii</i> [Baltic/South-west Europe & North-west Africa]            |
| <i>Calidris alpina schinzii</i> [Britain & Ireland/South-west Europe & North-west Africa] |
| <i>Calidris alpina alpina</i>   |
| <i>Calidris alpina</i> [all non-breeding populations]                                     |
| <i>Larus fuscus fuscus</i>  |
| <i>Larus fuscus</i> all others <sup>67</sup>  |
| <i>Larus argentatus argentatus</i>  |

<sup>67</sup> Includes subspecies *graellsii* and *intermedius* (neither of which is listed in Column A of Table 1 of AEWA Annex 3), which were not distinguished by certain Member States during the 2008–2012 reporting round.

| Subspecific unit                                   |
|--|
| <i>Larus argentatus argenteus</i>                  |
| <i>Uria aalge ibericus</i>                         |
| <i>Uria aalge</i> all others <sup>68</sup>         |
| <i>Accipiter nisus granti</i>                      |
| <i>Accipiter nisus</i> all others <sup>69</sup>    |
| <i>Accipiter gentilis arrigonii</i>                |
| <i>Accipiter gentilis</i> all others <sup>70</sup> |
| <i>Dendrocopos major canariensis</i>               |
| <i>Dendrocopos major thanneri</i>                  |
| <i>Dendrocopos major</i> all others                |
| <i>Periparus ater cypristes</i> <sup>71</sup>      |
| <i>Periparus ater</i> all others <sup>72</sup>     |
| <i>Troglodytes troglodytes fridariensis</i>        |
| <i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i> all others          |
| <i>Certhia brachydactyla dorotheae</i>             |
| <i>Certhia brachydactyla</i> all others            |
| <i>Fringilla coelebs ombriosa</i>                  |
| <i>Fringilla coelebs</i> all others                |

<sup>68</sup> Includes subspecies *aalge* and *albionis* (neither of which is listed in Annexes).

<sup>69</sup> Changed from '*Accipiter nisus nisus*', as subspecies *wolterstorffi* also occurs within the EU (del Hoyo & Collar, 2014).

<sup>70</sup> Changed from '*Accipiter gentilis gentilis*', as subspecies *buteoides* and *marginatus* also occur within the EU (del Hoyo & Collar, 2014).

<sup>71</sup> Listed as '*Parus ater cypristes*' in Annex I

<sup>72</sup> Formerly '*Parus ater* all others'.

### **Box 3: Links between Article 12 reporting and the assessment of the conservation status under the AEWA Agreement**

The conservation status of AEWA species/populations within the Agreement area is assessed for each Meeting of the Parties (MOP) as part of the *Conservation Status Report*, the sixth edition of which (CSR6) was prepared for MOP6 by Wetlands International (under contract to the AEWA Secretariat)<sup>73</sup>. Although data reported under Article 12 were used to update many of the population size and trend estimates in CSR6<sup>74</sup>, other sources of information were also used. During the consultation of the Article 12 checklist, concerns were raised by Member States about the potential impact on the information required for reporting on and assessing the status of AEWA populations, particularly priority populations listed in Column A of Table 1 of Annex 3 of the Agreement (i.e. the AEWA Action Plan)<sup>75</sup>.

In practice, most national species-level data reported under Article 12 can be reliably allocated to a single AEWA population because: only one AEWA population (and/or subspecies) occurs regularly in the EU; the AEWA populations in the EU are geographically disjunct and easily separable by Member State; or the AEWA populations in the EU are contiguous (or slightly overlapping), but still separable by Member State within the relevant season. To minimise the reporting burden, remove redundancy and keep nomenclature simple<sup>76</sup>, while still facilitating the assessment of priority AEWA populations, the use of subspecific units has been limited to instances where two or more AEWA populations, including at least one listed in Column A of Table 1, occur – and are distinguishable – within the same Member State in the relevant season.

### **Hybrids**

In general, hybrids – i.e. the offspring resulting from interbreeding between species – should not be included in the population size estimates for either parent species (at least when they are clearly distinguishable from ‘pure’ individuals<sup>77</sup>). In most cases, their exclusion will have little impact on the overall population size reported for the species in question, but in instances where the total number of hybrid individuals is significant compared to the size of the pure-bred populations, Member States may wish to provide further details, in field 2.7 Additional information and/or Section 7 if hybridisation is believed to represent a threat to one or both species.

Pure-bred adults that pair/breed with individuals of another species should, however, be included in the population size estimate for the relevant species, as they could potentially still contribute to the reproductive success of the species if, for example, they re-pair with a conspecific in the future. In instances where these individuals represent a significant component of the national breeding population, they should be treated as half a pair for the purposes of reporting the overall breeding population size (e.g. five conspecific pairs plus two pure-bred individuals in mixed-species pairs could be reported as 5–6 pairs).

<sup>73</sup> See [http://www.unep-aewa.org/sites/default/files/document/mop6\\_14\\_csr6\\_including%20annexes.pdf](http://www.unep-aewa.org/sites/default/files/document/mop6_14_csr6_including%20annexes.pdf)

<sup>74</sup> Which relate to the entire Agreement area, not just the EU.

<sup>75</sup> See [http://www.unep-aewa.org/sites/default/files/document/aewa\\_mop6\\_res1\\_adoption\\_amend\\_en.pdf](http://www.unep-aewa.org/sites/default/files/document/aewa_mop6_res1_adoption_amend_en.pdf)

<sup>76</sup> At present, a non-expert user, unfamiliar with all AEWA populations and/or subspecies names, may not realise that certain ‘subspecific units’ in practice represent all individuals of the species occurring in their country or the EU as a whole.

<sup>77</sup> Some hybrids, particularly second- and subsequent generation individuals, may be undiagnosable in the field and distinguishable only in the hand or through DNA analysis, for example.

In the case of intergradation – i.e. interbreeding between subspecies – all resulting ‘intergrades’ should be included in the population size estimates for the relevant taxa, either at the species level (if neither subspecies is listed for subspecific reporting) or for one of the relevant subspecies (if subspecific-level reporting is requested).

### Key wintering species

Although species reports are requested for all regularly occurring breeding species, the reporting requirements for species occurring during the winter or on passage are slightly more complicated. In general, assessment of the EU population status of species is based primarily on breeding-season data, as most monitoring schemes involve fieldwork during the breeding season, when species can be at their most conspicuous (owing to song or other nuptial/territorial behaviours). For many largely resident species, monitoring data from other times of the year may not be as readily available, nor as comprehensive or robust, and hence – in terms of the EU-level population status assessments at least – provide little ‘added-value’ to the breeding-season data.

However, for migratory species that either do not breed in the EU or are significantly more abundant here during winter, and for species that congregate in large numbers at a relatively small number of sites<sup>78</sup> during the winter – e.g. many waterfowl (ducks, geese and swans) and waders (or ‘shorebirds’) – monitoring data from the winter are extremely valuable when it comes to assessing their EU population status. Nevertheless, as wintering populations are often more mobile and/or can fluctuate more (e.g. in response to weather conditions and food availability) than breeding populations, international coordination of surveys – as is done for the International Waterbird Census<sup>79</sup>, for example – can be particularly important during the winter, to ensure that national (and indeed finer-scale) monitoring data can be aggregated reliably.

In the context of the above, winter population size and trend data are requested from all relevant Member States for species (or subspecific units) that:

- do not breed (regularly) within the EU, but regularly winter in one or more Member State<sup>80</sup>;
- both breed and winter regularly in the EU, but are significantly more abundant in winter, with the winter population monitored across the EU in a coordinated manner<sup>81</sup>; or
- both breed and winter regularly in the EU, but – although the wintering population is broadly comparable in size to the breeding one – may be better (or as well) monitored during winter.

The species or subspecific units considered to meet these criteria are listed in Table 7 and should be listed for the winter season for all relevant Member States in the species checklist on the Reference Portal<sup>82</sup>.

<sup>78</sup> Many of which have been designated as SPAs.

<sup>79</sup> <https://www.wetlands.org/our-approach/healthy-wetland-nature/international-waterbird-census/#read-more>

<sup>80</sup> For these species, winter-season reports are the only source of quantitative data for assessment of their EU population status and, as such, the quality of these data is of secondary concern.

<sup>81</sup> Some migratory species (particularly certain passerines) that are more abundant in the EU during the winter either are not monitored in winter in all relevant Member States, or the monitoring is not coordinated between Member States, and so EU-level assessment of their wintering populations is not feasible.

<sup>82</sup> [http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds\\_art12](http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds_art12)

**Table 7: Species/subspecific units for comprehensive winter reporting in 2019 (more detailed information and possible updates of this table can be found on the Reference Portal<sup>83</sup>)**

| Species (or subspecific unit)  |
|--|
| <b>AEWA species with significant and well-monitored wintering population</b> |
| <i>Anas crecca</i>   |
| <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>  |
| <i>Anser anser</i>   |
| <i>Aythya ferina</i>   |
| <i>Aythya fuligula</i>   |
| <i>Bucephala clangula</i>  |
| <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>  |
| <i>Cygnus olor</i>   |
| <i>Fulica atra</i>   |
| <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>   |
| <i>Limosa limosa</i> [all non-breeding populations]                          |
| <i>Mareca strepera</i> <sup>84</sup>   |
| <i>Mergus merganser</i>  |
| <i>Mergus serrator</i>   |
| <i>Netta rufina</i>  |
| <i>Numenius arquata arquata</i>  |
| <i>Phalacrocorax carbo carbo</i>   |
| <i>Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis</i>  |
| <i>Podiceps cristatus</i>  |
| <i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>  |
| <i>Somateria mollissima</i>  |
| <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>  |
| <i>Tringa totanus</i>  |
| <i>Vanellus vanellus</i>   |

<sup>83</sup> [http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds\\_art12](http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds_art12)

<sup>84</sup> Formerly *Anas strepera*.

| <b>Annex I species with significant and well-monitored wintering population</b>                     |
|---|
| <i>Ardea alba</i> <sup>85</sup>   |
| <i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>  |
| <i>Clanga clanga</i> <sup>86</sup>  |
| <i>Egretta garzetta</i>   |
| <i>Fulica cristata</i>  |
| <i>Gavia arctica</i>  |
| <i>Grus grus</i>  |
| <i>Marmaronetta angustirostris</i>  |
| <i>Microcarbo pygmaeus</i> <sup>87</sup>  |
| <i>Pelecanus crispus</i>  |
| <i>Phoenicopterus roseus</i>  |
| <i>Platalea leucorodia</i>  |
| <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>  |
| <i>Podiceps auritus</i>   |
| <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>   |
| <i>Vanellus spinosus</i>  |
| <b>Species that does not breed (regularly) in the EU, but regularly occurs (occurred) in winter</b> |
| <i>Alle alle</i> *  |
| <i>Anser albifrons albifrons</i>  |
| <i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>   |
| <i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i> [East Greenland & Iceland/UK]   |
| <i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i> [Svalbard/North-west Europe]  |
| <i>Anser fabalis rossicus</i>   |
| <i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i>   |
| <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i> [Canada & Greenland/Ireland]   |
| <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i> [Svalbard/Denmark & UK]  |
| <i>Branta leucopsis</i> [East Greenland/Scotland & Ireland]   |
| <i>Branta leucopsis</i> [Svalbard/South-west Scotland]  |
| <i>Branta ruficollis</i>  |

<sup>85</sup> Formerly *Casmerodius albus*.

<sup>86</sup> Formerly *Aquila clanga*.

<sup>87</sup> Formerly *Phalacrocorax pygmeus*.

|   |
|---|
| <i>Calidris alba</i>  |
| <i>Calidris canutus</i>   |
| <i>Calidris ferruginea</i>  |
| <i>Calidris minuta</i>  |
| <i>Charadrius leschenaultii</i>   |
| <i>Cygnus columbianus bewickii</i>  |
| <i>Gavia immer</i>  |
| <i>Larus armenicus</i> *  |
| <i>Larus glaucoides</i> *   |
| <i>Larus hyperboreus</i> *  |
| <i>Numenius arquata orientalis</i>  |
| <i>Numenius tenuirostris</i>  |
| <i>Oenanthe finschii</i> *  |
| <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>   |
| <i>Polysticta stelleri</i>  |
| <b>Significantly more abundant in EU during winter than breeding season</b> |
| <i>Anas acuta</i>   |
| <i>Anser erythropus</i>   |
| <i>Anser fabalis fabalis</i>  |
| <i>Arenaria interpres</i>   |
| <i>Aythya marila</i>  |
| <i>Branta leucopsis</i> [Russia/Germany & Netherlands]                      |
| <i>Calidris alpina</i> [all non-breeding populations]                       |
| <i>Calidris maritima</i>  |
| <i>Clangula hyemalis</i>  |
| <i>Cygnus cygnus</i>  |
| <i>Gavia stellata</i>   |
| <i>Limosa lapponica</i>   |
| <i>Mareca penelope</i> <sup>88</sup>  |
| <i>Melanitta fusca</i>  |
| <i>Melanitta nigra</i>  |
| <i>Mergellus albellus</i>   |

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<sup>88</sup> Formerly *Anas penelope*.



|                                       |
|---------------------------------------|
| <i>Oxyura leucocephala</i>            |
| <i>Spatula clypeata</i> <sup>89</sup> |
| <i>Tadorna tadorna</i>                |

Note: '\*' is used for species not reported on/assessed during 2008–2012 reporting round.

### 3 Population trend

This section provides complementary information to the guidance provided in Section '3 Population trend' (in 'Field-by-field part').

#### Extrapolating to ideal trend periods

The current method for assessing the EU population status of birds<sup>90</sup> requires estimation of the overall population change across all Member States over the 'ideal' short- and long-term trend periods, and comparison of these estimates with threshold values for the different status categories. Ideally, national population trend data, derived from statistically robust monitoring schemes, would be available and reported for the exact periods requested, and could then 'simply' be aggregated to estimate the overall EU-level population trend. In reality, of course, this is rarely the case. Where robust trend data are not available for the ideal trend periods, it is hence necessary to either extrapolate (in the case of shorter trend periods) or truncate (in the case of longer periods) reported trends in order to estimate the overall EU-level trend. In both cases, assumptions have to be made about the trend data reported, which may or may not reflect the true situation, for instance, that the rate of change over the reported trend period was constant (fixed annual or cumulative) and, in the case of extrapolations, that the equivalent annual rate of change also applied during the other years 'missing' from the ideal trend period.

In general, it is preferable for Member State experts to make any such assumptions – based on their knowledge and understanding of the situation nationally – and to extrapolate or truncate available trend data to the ideal trend periods prior to reporting. Where this is not feasible, any trends that cannot be provided for the ideal trend period should at least be reported using the most 'extrapolatable' data (e.g. average or smoothed trends). These are preferable to 'raw' trends based on differences in monitoring scheme indices in a specific start and end year, which can be disproportionately affected by factors such as 'atypical' years (e.g. for weather conditions and/or food availability), and random chance effects, particularly if sample sizes are small<sup>91</sup>.

In all of the scenarios above, Member States are encouraged to provide as much relevant supplementary information as possible (in field 3.3 'Additional information'). In cases where extrapolation of monitoring data has been carried out by national experts, the rationale behind this, and the original unextrapolated data, can be provided in field 3.3.

<sup>89</sup> Formerly *Anas clypeata*.

<sup>90</sup> See <https://circabc.europa.eu/sd/a/4b101339-6e13-4379-ada5-400e5d1ec8ac/Point%20%20-%20Background-Paper-%2021%20Nov%202013%20.pdf>

<sup>91</sup> See also pp. 5–6 of the discussion paper *Key issues related to the reporting and analysis of Article 12 population trends* for examples and further background (<https://circabc.europa.eu/sd/a/80570813-47ff-4b4d-9da2-7ccceb07e10a/Discussion%20paper%20on%20Art%2012%20population%20trends.pdf>).

In instances where trends have not been reported for all of the ideal trend period, any additional (e.g. qualitative) information that could help during the EU population status assessment should be provided: e.g. ‘No quantitative data available before 1990 (when monitoring scheme started), but trend during 1980–1990 believed to be broadly stable (e.g. Tucker & Heath, 1994), and population in early 1980s estimated as 200 000–300 000 pairs (Snow & Perrins, 1998)’.

#### **Box 4: Use of older sources of population trend information for estimating long-term trends**

The following example illustrates how older sources of population trend information might be used to complement recent monitoring data, in order to provide an informed estimate of the long-term direction and magnitude.

- Recent trend (from, e.g., national monitoring scheme): a 10 % increase during 2000–2018.
- Estimated trend during 1990–2000 (from ‘*Birds in Europe 2*’): a decline of 0–19 %.
- Estimated trend during 1970–1990 (from *Birds in Europe*<sup>92</sup>): a decline of 20–49 %.

Assuming that the decline reported for 1970–1990 was relatively constant; the decline between 1980 and 1990 may have been in the order of c.10–24 %, giving a population index in 1990 (from a starting index of 1 in 1980) of between 0.76 and 0.9. Multiplying the ‘best-case’ index (0.9) by the ‘best-case’ trend from ‘*Birds in Europe 2*’ (i.e. a 0 % change, or a factor of 1) and the ‘worst-case’ index (0.76) by the ‘worst-case’ trend (i.e. a 19 % decline, or factor of 0.81) suggests a population index in 2000 of between 0.62 and 0.9. Then ‘applying’ the recent trend, i.e. a 10 % increase (or factor of 1.1) during 2000–2018, results in an estimated population index in 2018 of between approximately 0.68 and 0.99. This represents an overall decline (i.e. both estimated lower than the starting index of 1), which might be reported (excluding the least-probable / more-extreme scenarios) as of between -5 % and -25 %, for example (taking the mid-point of the trend magnitudes reported in the two editions of *Birds in Europe* produces an estimated decline of approximately -15 %, i.e.  $0.855 \times 0.905 \times 1.1 = 0.851$ ).

### **Distinguishing ‘stable’ trends from slightly ‘increasing’ or ‘decreasing’**

The criteria used to decide whether a trend should be categorised as ‘stable’, ‘increasing’, or ‘decreasing’ will vary depending on the type of trend information available. For species covered by statistically robust monitoring schemes, precise estimates of trend magnitude (with associated confidence limits) are often available for the short-term trend period, in which case even slight increases or decreases should be identifiable (e.g. if the confidence limits do not overlap zero). For example, if national common bird monitoring scheme data suggest an overall trend of -7 % during 2007–2018, with the 95 % confidence limits (-2 % and -14 %) indicating a statistically significant change, the short-term trend direction should be reported as ‘decreasing’ (with the three values for

<sup>92</sup> Or from BirdLife International / European Bird Census Council (2000) *European bird populations: estimates and trends*. BirdLife International (BirdLife Conservation Series No. 10), Cambridge, UK, in the case of non-SPEC species not covered in detail in *Birds in Europe* (see footnote in section 3.2.1 for citation of latter).

trend magnitude provided in field 3.1.3)<sup>93</sup>, even though the most likely change is less than, for example, 10 % (see below).

However, if robust monitoring data are not available for the species and/or all of the trend period in question, trend direction categories should be allocated using a specified threshold (an overall change of 10 % over the short-term trend period) distinguishing likely increases or decreases from probable stability, with species that are believed to have changed overall by less than 10 % categorised as 'stable', and those that are adjudged to have increased or decreased by 10 % or more as 'increasing' or 'decreasing.'. In the case of species without statistically robust trend data, any estimate of trend magnitude is most likely to exist as an expert-derived range, e.g. a 10–20 % decrease. The trend direction should not be considered 'stable' if expert opinion and/or various sources of (qualitative) information suggest that the real trend probably exceeds 10 % (the 'min.') – e.g. the trend is most likely to fall between, for instance, 10 % and 20 %..

For long-term trends, a higher threshold (of 20 %) is more appropriate, given the longer period over which trends are being assessed and the greater uncertainty implicit in many older sources of trend information. A decline of 20 % or more over the long-term trend period is also the key criterion used to categorise species as 'Declining' or 'Depleted' under the method agreed for assessing the EU population status of birds<sup>94</sup>.

### **'Fluctuating' and 'uncertain' trends**

'Fluctuating' applies to species whose average population level did not change significantly over the trend period, but which are characterised by large interannual variations in abundance, sometimes of one or two orders of magnitude. Species that typically show such dynamics include Boreal and Arctic breeding species, such as certain owls and crossbills, whose abundance is closely linked to the availability of food that shows cyclical peaks and troughs. As such, 'fluctuating' is a very different trend category to 'stable'. Indeed, species with small populations and ranges and whose numbers fluctuate are considered to be at a much higher risk of extinction than those with stable populations (IUCN, 2012)<sup>95</sup>. Member States are hence requested to restrict use of this category to species that show interannual population increases/decreases of  $\geq 50$  %. This includes species that, overall, are adjudged to breed or winter 'regularly' (e.g. more often than not), but may still not occur every year.

As the trend category 'fluctuating' was reported during the last reporting round for several species for which there was no obvious ecological reason for interannual variations, a new category – 'uncertain' – has been added, in part to capture instances where apparent 'fluctuations' in monitoring indices are more likely a consequence of, for example, small sample sizes and stochastic effects, rather than a true reflection of variation in population levels. 'Uncertain' indicates that trend information does exist for the species in question, but monitoring data may currently be inconclusive. It hence differs from the existing category 'unknown', which implies that no trend

<sup>93</sup> In general, greater precision is encouraged for short-term trends, as this level of detail could prove important when it comes to deciding the species' final population status category (particularly in cases where this could be marginal).

<sup>94</sup> See <https://circabc.europa.eu/sd/a/4b101339-6e13-4379-ada5-400e5d1ec8ac/Point%20%20-%20Background-Paper-%2021%20Nov%202013%20.pdf>

<sup>95</sup> IUCN (2012) *IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria. Version 3.1*. <http://www.iucnredlist.org>

information, inconclusive or otherwise, currently exists for the species (and hence it may be a priority for further study).

## 7 Main pressures and threats

This section provides complementary information to the guidance provided in Section ‘7 Main pressures and threats’ (in ‘Field-by-field part’).

This section provides information on the main drivers related to the bird species’ status and trends. It can further help to identify actions required for restoration and is essential for communicating the results of the status and trends assessment to various stakeholders.

For Article 12 reporting, pressures are considered to be factors which have acted within the current reporting period, while threats are factors expected to be acting in the future (in the future two reporting periods, i.e. within 12 years following the end of the current reporting period). It is possible for the same impact to be both a pressure and a threat if it is having an impact now and this impact is likely to continue.

For the 2013–2018 reporting period a new principally causes (drivers) oriented system for pressures and threats was developed. The pressures are classified into 15 categories corresponding to the main sectoral driver (see Table 8) with an emphasis on reducing to a minimum pressures which can be attributed to several sectors (for example, pollution or hydrological modification of water bodies).

**Table 8: Pressure categories in the list of pressures and threats**

| Pressure code | Pressure category   | Note   |
|---------------|---|--|
| <b>A</b>      | <b>Agriculture</b>  | Includes pressures and threats caused by agricultural practice.  |
| <b>B</b>      | <b>Forestry</b>   | Includes pressures and threats caused by forestry activities, including thinning, wood harvesting, pest control in trees.  |
| <b>C</b>      | <b>Extraction of resources (minerals, peat, non-renewable energy resources)</b> | Includes pressures related to extraction of materials, such as mining or quarrying, pollution or waste disposal.   |
| <b>D</b>      | <b>Energy production processes and related infrastructure development</b>       | Includes pressures related to production of energy, e.g. the construction and operation of power plants, water use for energy production, waste from energy production, activities and infrastructure related to renewable energy. |
| <b>E</b>      | <b>Development and operation of transportation and service corridors</b>        | Includes pressures related to transportation of materials or energy, such as construction of infrastructure, pollution and disturbances or increased mortality due to traffic.   |

|          |  |   |
|----------|--|---|
| <b>F</b> | <b>Development, construction and use of residential, commercial, industrial and recreational infrastructure and areas.</b> | Includes pressures related to development, construction and use of residential, commercial, industrial and recreational infrastructure, e.g. infrastructural changes on existing built areas, expansion of built areas, land use and hydrological changes for urban or industrial development, disturbances or pollution due to residential, commercial, industrial, or recreational infrastructure. Includes also pressures related to sport, tourism and leisure activities and infrastructure. |
| <b>G</b> | <b>Extraction and cultivation of biological living resources (other than agriculture and forestry )</b>                    | Includes pressures linked to uses of biological resources other than agriculture and forestry.  |
| <b>H</b> | <b>Military action, public safety measures, and other human intrusions</b>   | Includes pressures related to public safety and other human intrusions.   |
| <b>I</b> | <b>Invasive and problematic species</b>  | Includes pressures related to problematic inter-specific relationships with non-native species which cannot be associated with other pressure categories. Includes also problematic relationships with native species, which came out of balance due to human activities.   |
| <b>J</b> | <b>Mixed source pollution</b>  | Includes pollution which cannot be associated with other pressure categories.   |
| <b>K</b> | <b>Human-induced changes in hydraulic conditions</b>   | Includes hydrological and physical modifications of water bodies, which cannot be associated with other pressures categories.   |
| <b>L</b> | <b>Natural processes (excluding catastrophes and processes induced by human activity or climate change)</b>                | Includes natural processes, such as natural succession, competition, trophic interaction, erosion.  |
| <b>M</b> | <b>Geological events, natural catastrophes</b>   | Includes pressures such as natural fires, storms, tsunamis.   |
| <b>N</b> | <b>Climate change</b>  | Includes pressures related to climate change.   |

Note that this table is only illustrative since it uses draft pressure categories that may not be retained as such in the final list of pressures and threats.

Further information on the list of pressures and practical guidance on how to use it for reporting on pressures and threats can be found on the Reference Portal<sup>96</sup>.

## 8 Conservation measures

This section provides complementary information to the guidance provided in Section '8 Conservation measures' (in 'Field-by-field part')

<sup>96</sup> [http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds\\_art12](http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds_art12)

The main purpose of the reporting on conservation measures is to obtain information allowing for a ‘broad-brush’ overview of the conservation measures: whether measures have been taken and if so which measures, their location (inside/outside the Natura 2000 network), and their impact on bird populations. The information on conservation measures feeds into the evaluation of the contribution of the Natura 2000 network to the status and trends of bird species (see also Section ‘9 [Natura 2000 \(SPAs\) coverage](#)’ (in ‘Definitions and methods part’)). This information can further help to understand any trends and changes in birds’ status globally and is important for communicating the results of the status and trends assessment to different stakeholders.

The conservation measures should be reported using the codified list of measures. The list of conservation measures mirrors the list of pressures and threats, and the conservation measures are principally understood as an action to mitigate the impact of past and present pressures. The measures are classified into 13 categories corresponding to the main pressure categories (see Table 9). The list of measures contains additional category for measures related to management of target and other native species.

**Table 9: Categories of conservation measures**

| <b>Categories of conservation measures</b>  |
|---|
| Measures related to agriculture and agriculture-related habitats  |
| Measures related to forestry and forest-related habitats  |
| Measures related to resources exploitation and energy production  |
| Measures related to development and operation of transport systems  |
| Measures related to residential, commercial, industrial and recreational infrastructures, operations and activities |
| Measures related to the effects of use and exploitation of species  |
| Measures related to military installations and activities and other specific human activities                       |
| Measures related to alien and problematic native species  |
| Measures related to natural processes, geological events and natural catastrophes                                   |
| Measures related to climate change  |
| Measures outside the Member State   |
| Measures related to mixed source pollution and human-induced changes in hydraulic conditions for several uses       |
| Measures related to management of species from the nature directives and other native species                       |

Note that this table is only illustrative since it uses draft measure categories that may not be retained as such in the final list of conservation measures.

Further information on the list of conservation measures and practical guidance on how to use it for reporting can be found on the Reference Portal<sup>97</sup>.

## 9 Natura 2000 (SPAs) coverage

This section provides complementary information to the guidance provided in Section '9 Natura 2000 (SPAs) coverage' (in 'Field-by-field part').

The evaluation of the contribution of the Natura 2000 network to the status of bird populations has three principal components:

1. evaluation of relevance of the network for different species (based on proportion of population within the network);
2. possible differences in trends (population trends) within the network compared to the general trend (overall species population trend including populations inside and outside the network);
3. understanding what type of conservation/management measures have been implemented (see Section '8 Conservation measures' (in 'Definitions and methods part')).

The contribution of the Natura 2000 network to the conservation status of species is likely to vary according to the dependence of the species on sites, the coverage by the network, and site management.

Another element to be taken into consideration when evaluating the contribution of the network is the possible difference in trends within the network and globally (mainly for species where a significant proportion of a species population occurs outside the network). For bird species, this should be expressed by comparing the overall population trend with the trend of the population size within the Natura 2000 network.

The information on conservation measures completes and helps to understand the potential differences between trends within the network and global trends.

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<sup>97</sup> [http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds\\_art12](http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/help/birds_art12)