



# **River biodiversity and ecosystems**

**Multi-functionality of EU rivers in the context of the Biodiversity Strategy for 2030**

**Workshop EU environmental legislation requirements and inland waterway navigation projectsatform**

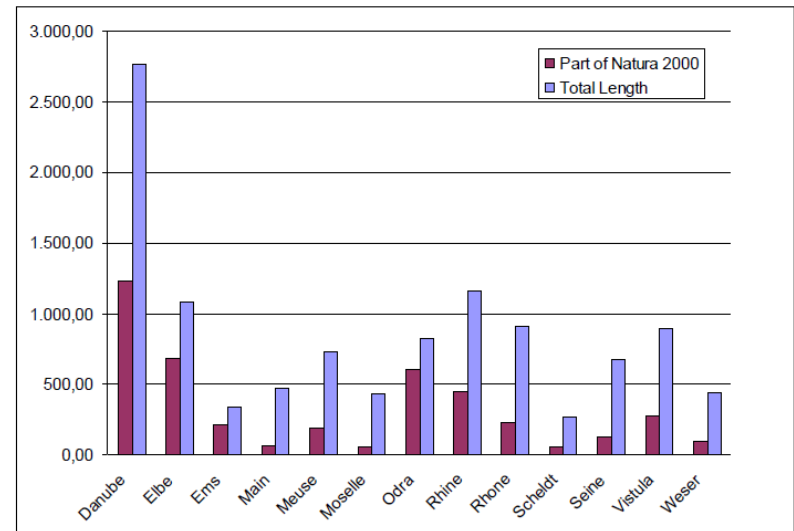
**16.03.2021**



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- EU: around 50 main rivers, 20 of which have catchment areas > 50,000 km<sup>2</sup>; 4% of Natura 2000

## EU rivers and Natura 2000



River	Number of Natura 2000 sites	Total Natura 2000 area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Total length (km)	Length covered by Natura 2000 (km)	% length covered by Natura 2000 (km)
Danube	230	5.033,99	2.770,36	1.234,08	44,55%
Elbe	174	1.708,89	1.087,29	681,07	62,64%
Ems	33	361,72	345,06	212,30	61,52%
Main	100	202,04	473,15	65,70	13,89%
Meuse	83	704,31	731,18	192,62	26,34%
Moselle	37	230,38	429,08	54,97	12,81%
Odra	71	1.627,69	823,75	605,13	73,46%
Rhine	199	1.423,09	1.159,96	448,62	38,68%
Rhone	52	591,89	910,62	233,40	25,63%
Scheldt	17	150,31	268,05	57,24	21,35%
Seine	31	490,89	673,65	121,03	17,97%
Vistula	53	990,10	895,68	276,41	30,86%
Weser	66	351,19	444,09	96,59	21,75%



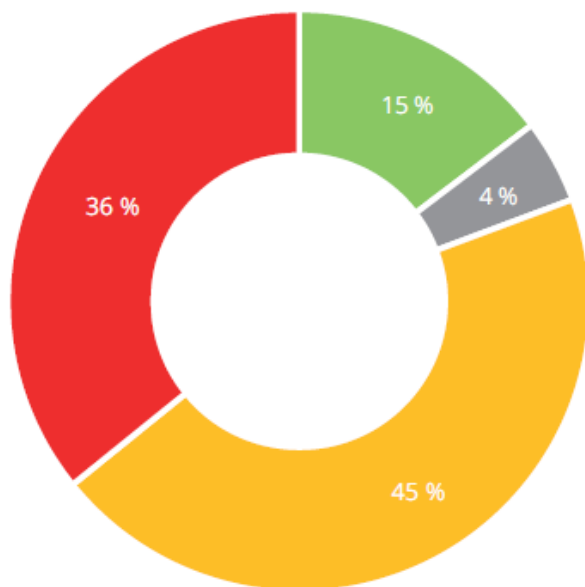
## Multi-functionality of EU rivers

- Serve multiple benefits:
  - Vital habitat
  - Source of fresh water
  - Hydropower
  - Transport
  - Important role in climate adaptation



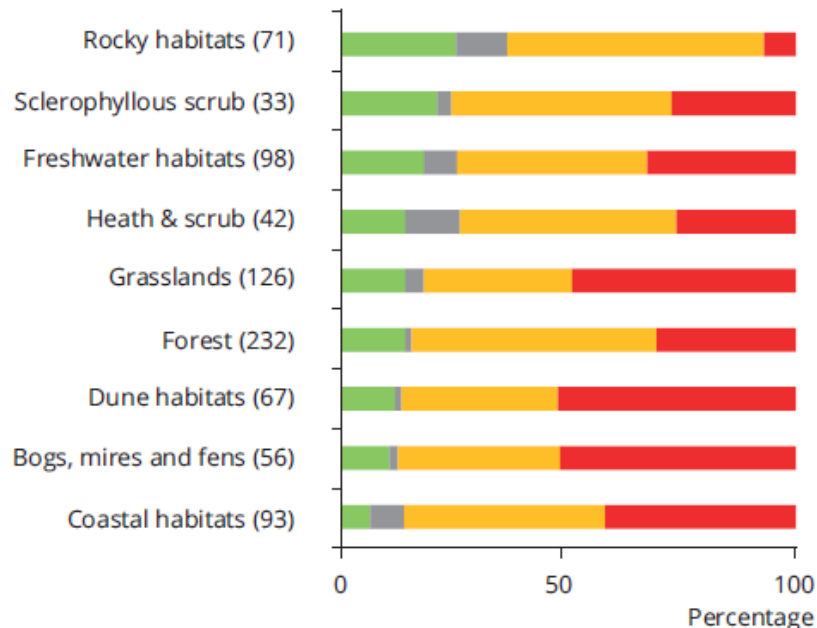
# State of nature in the EU - Results from reporting under the nature directives 2013-2018

**Figure 3.4** Conservation status of habitats at EU level



Good Unknown Poor Bad

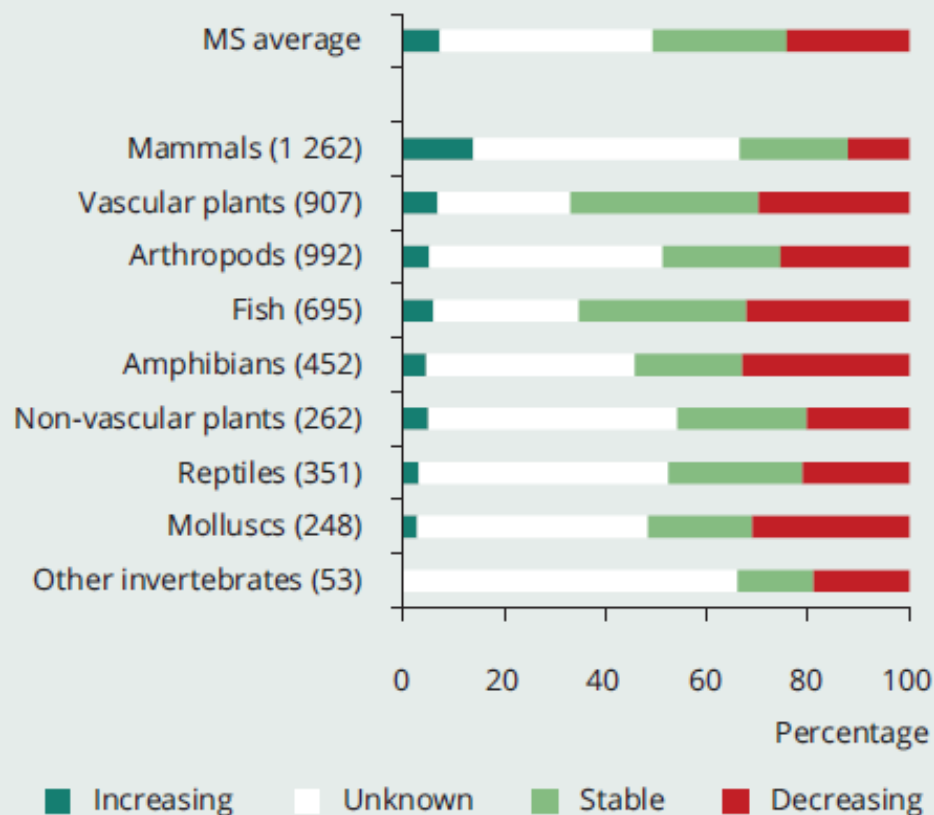
**Figure 3.5** Conservation status per habitat group at the EU level



Good Unknown Poor Bad

# Species condition in the EU

**Figure 3.17 Population size trends for species at Member State (MS) level**





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## EU response





# Elements of the EU Biodiversity Strategy



**Protect Nature**



**Enable  
Transformative  
Change**



**Restore  
Nature**



**EU For An  
Ambitious Global  
Agenda**

# | Protect Nature



## **Protect 30% of EU land and sea**

- Based on Natura 2000 and nationally designated areas
- EU wide target, take into account specific situation in MS
- Integrate ecological corridors to build coherent network



## **Strictly protect a third of these areas**

- Covering areas of very high biodiversity value & important for mitigation and adaptation to climate change, including all primary and old growth forest





## Restore Nature



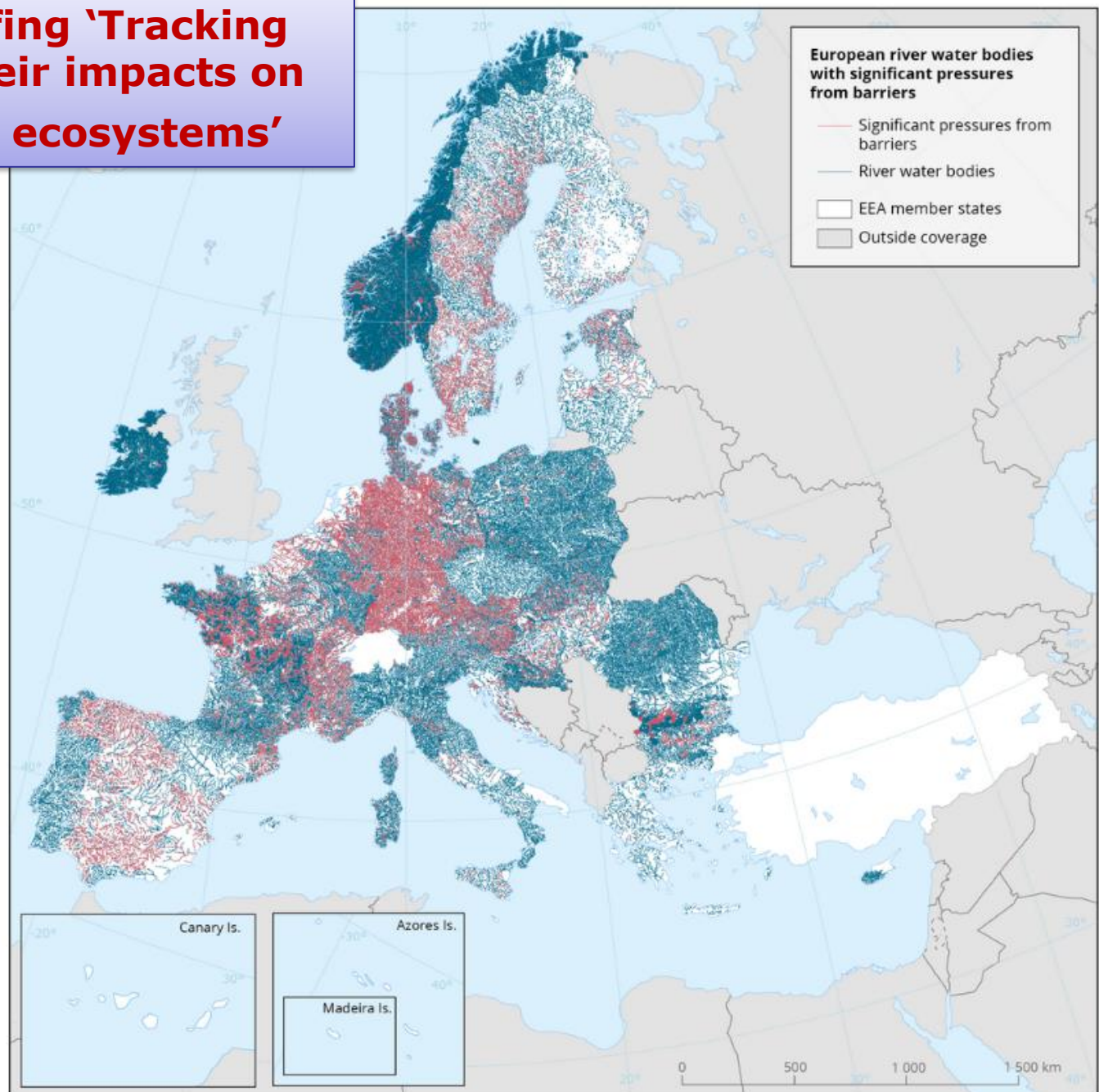
### EU Restoration Plan with 2030 commitments (1):

- ✓ Legally binding targets to be proposed in 2021
- ✓ No deterioration of any protected habitats and species by 2030: trend to be positive for at least 30%
- ✓ Agroecology: Organic farming >25%
- ✓ Biodiverse landscape features >10%
- ✓ Reduction of pollution from fertilisers by 50% and by 20% their use
- ✓ Plant 3 billion additional trees respecting ecological principles
- ✓ Reverse decline in pollinators
- ✓ **Restore 25,000km free flowing rivers**



## 2021 EEA briefing 'Tracking barriers and their impacts on European river ecosystems'

- over 1 million barriers
- significant pressures for about 20% of European surface water bodies



Reference data: ©ESRI



## EU rivers – protection, conflict resolution – examples of good practice - LIFE



### LIFE and freshwater fish



LIFE Nature

Environment



#### OVERCOMING RIVER BARRIERS

### LIFE provides **safe passage** **for migrating fish**

LIFE projects have constructed fish passes and by-passes to help fish navigate beyond barriers that prevent them reaching important habitat areas, such as spawning grounds.



Photo: LIFE/ONG/CA/DOOD/2012/2012





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## DANUBEPARKS – DANUBE RIVER NETWORK OF PROTECTED AREAS

**Name of the Interreg project:**

DANUBEPARKS STEP 1 and 2

**Type of Interreg Programme:**

European Territorial Cooperation in  
South East Europe (ETC-SEE)

**Period of implementation:**

March 2009–February 2012, October  
2012–September 2014

**Countries covered and beneficiaries:**

DANUBEPARKS projects consisted of 14  
project partners – Donau-Auen National  
Park as lead partner and 17 observers

**Project budget:**

Project 1 and 2: €2.7 million,  
€2.2 million



Danube east of Vienna.

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THE EU INTERREG  
PROGRAMME IN SUPPORT  
OF NATURA 2000  
AND BIODIVERSITY  
(2000-2020)



**ERDF/  
INTERREG**



# EU nature legislation and inland waterway transport – guidance documents



## Guidance on Inland waterway transport and Natura 2000

Sustainable inland waterway  
development and management  
in the context of the EU Birds  
and Habitats Directives

Environment



## Guidance document on Inland waterways transport and Natura 2000

A summary



Environment

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## For more information, please consult:

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/index_en.htm)

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