CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

6th NATIONAL REPORT OF GREECE

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SECTION I

Information on the targets being pursued at the national level

☒ My country has adopted national biodiversity targets or equivalent commitments in line with the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Targets

☐ My country has not adopted national biodiversity targets and is reporting progress using the Aichi Biodiversity Targets for reference. (Move to section II. In section III, the Aichi Biodiversity Targets should be used for the purpose of this report as the national targets and progress should be assessed towards their achievement in the national context.)

National Target 1

INCREASING KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE ASSESSMENT OF BIODIVERSITY STATUS

Rationale for the national target

The protection of biodiversity is directly related to scientific research. Therefore, it is necessary to increase and update relevant knowledge, so that, through scientific analysis and studies, the public may be appropriately informed and appreciate the status and trends of the natural environment, the functioning of natural systems and the interaction between biotic and abiotic parameters. This knowledge base is bound to enhance the design of targeted actions for the conservation of biodiversity. In particular, the support of applied research on the management of species and habitats will contribute to the more efficient planning of the necessary actions for the protection of biodiversity in Greece. At the same time, support for research and dissemination will fulfill the legal obligations of the country with regard to monitoring the conservation status of species and habitat types.

At present, there is a major gap in how the current knowledge of biodiversity is organised and how facilitate access to it can be facilitated. It is necessary to create a central repository where existing knowledge is collected and maintained and new knowledge is also deposited, so as to become available and accessible to all interested parties (the scientific community and the wider public). The creation of national databases that include basic information on Greek biodiversity will provide an essential tool in creating and maintaining an effective management and monitoring system.

General Target 1 includes Specific Targets 1.1 and 1.2:
1.1 Facilitate access to scientific knowledge (regarding Greek flora and fauna) and fill in the gaps in scientific data.
1.2 Facilitate access to information on actions for biodiversity conservation and monitoring, as well as for the implementation of the National Strategy.

Level of application (Please specify the level to which the target applies):

☐ Regional/multilateral
☒ National/federal
☐ Subnational

Relevance of the national targets to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets

Main related Aichi Biodiversity Targets

☒ 1 ☐ 6 ☐ 11 ☐ 16
☐ 2 ☐ 7 ☒ 12 ☐ 17
☐ 3 ☐ 8 ☒ 13 ☐ 18
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Other related Aichi Biodiversity Targets

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Other relevant information

The process of developing and adopting this national target follows the development of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP). The NBSAP is the outcome of a long process that started in 1999, when the Zoological Museum of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens submitted the first draft of the national biodiversity strategy and national action plan to the Ministry of Environment, Planning and Public Works (as it was known then, which is the today's Ministry of Environment & Energy). The next important step was taken when the Greek Biotope Wetland Centre and the Goulandris Natural History Museum, following the directions of the Natural Environment Management Unit of the Ministry of Environment, Planning and Public Works, submitted a new draft of the national biodiversity strategy. In 2009, this draft was subject to public consultation. The opinions and comments of the general public were evaluated by a group of experts and government representatives. Then, the text was thoroughly revised, enriched and updated by a working group from the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change and from various environmental NGOs (with representatives from: WWF Greece, Greenpeace, Arktouros, Hellenic Ornithological Society, Hellenic Society for the Environment and Cultural Heritage, Callisto, Mediterranean SOS Network and Archelon).

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Relevant websites, web links, and files

www.ypeka.gr/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=%2fnY1WSioQWk%3d&tabid=237&language=el-GR

National Target 2

CONSERVATION OF NATIONAL NATURAL CAPITAL AND ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION

Rationale for the national target

The implementation of national, European and international environmental legislation and the coordinated protection of the components of biodiversity require planning and prioritization that will determine the priorities of actions for the next years. The existing institutional arrangements governing protected species are old, and the list of protected species needs to be updated based on the latest scientific literature and new versions of the Red Book for plants and animals. As a first step, it is necessary to select species and habitats that require increased protection, management or restoration based on specific criteria. The criteria may include: (a) the species designated as protected or endangered, (b) their rarity (e.g. endemics), (c) their importance in the context of Greek biodiversity, (d) their conservation status, (e) their risk of genetic erosion, and (f) the severity or importance of the threats they face. Therefore, beyond the species and habitat types already included in the EU and international commitments, other species and habitat types may be listed and ultimately become designated as being of EU and international interest.

Prioritization for the conservation of species and habitat types will only be effective if accompanied by specific actions, which should not be ad hoc or fragmentary, but should be based on new, updated or existing action plans. Action plans define the management actions necessary for the protection and/or recovery of species or habitat types, and may be specified by either region or species.

Monitoring of the conservation status of species and habitat types is a national legal obligation that arises from European environmental legislation. At the same time, it is an important tool for the inventory and management of the state of biodiversity in Greece. Therefore, the development and application of scientific monitoring plans for species and habitat types of community importance are required. Among these, particular emphasis should be given on the monitoring and assessment of the conservation status of species and habitats listed in the annexes of Directives 92/43/EEC and 2009/147/EC, since the current status for the monitoring of these species is far from ideal. This issue was revealed by a recent assessment of the conservation status of species of Community interest, which was performed in the context of the second national six-year report in accordance with article 17 of Directive 92/43/EEC.

General Target 2 includes Specific Targets 2.1 and 2.2:
2.1 Conservation of species and habitat types in Greek terrestrial and marine ecosystems, to promote the goal of sustainability.
2.2 Restoration of important species and habitat types.

Level of application (Please specify the level to which the target applies):

☐ Regional/multilateral
☒ National/federal
☐ Subnational

Relevance of the national targets to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets

Main related Aichi Biodiversity Targets

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National Target 3

ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION OF A NATIONAL SYSTEM OF PROTECTED AREAS AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE BENEFITS FROM THEIR MANAGEMENT

Rationale for the national target

The institutional reinforcement of protected areas in Greece is a decisive step towards biodiversity conservation. Today, there are several areas where necessary designations are still pending, despite the fact that they meet all the necessary requirements specified in the relevant legislation. The incorporation of these areas in the national system of protected areas and the resolution of the organizational and operational issues are among the objectives of the NBSAP.

Regarding the Natura 2000 network, the selection and designation of more marine protected areas are deemed as a priority action that has been outlined in the NBSAP, and as a consequence, has recently seen important progress at national level. Sites of Community Importance that are already approved by the European Commission for the Mediterranean biogeographical zone are mostly classified as Special Areas of Conservation. The institutional fortification of these areas should be accompanied by the adoption of institutional, administrative and management measures to maintain or restore the species and habitat types that have justified the designation of these areas.

Habitat fragmentation is one of the major threats to biodiversity. Species need adequate space, within which they may move and feed, so that their populations can maintain good conservation status. The successful management of individual protected areas is not sufficient to achieve the conservation objectives of certain species (usually large predator species), unless there are ecological corridors that allow local populations to interact and persist. To delineate ecological corridors, it is necessary to identify species that have such needs, study their ecological requirements, and then map and identify areas, where specific conservation and management measures are needed. Ecological corridors serve several purposes at the same time. Such corridors are able to: (1) maintain an area of good ecological status, (2) offer the opportunity to continue to provide ecological functions, and (3) help species and habitat types to adapt to climate change.

General Target 3 includes Specific Targets 3.1 - 3.3:
3.1 Effective organization of the administration and management of protected areas and the implementation of preventive measures in protected areas.
3.2 Application of exemplary and innovative practices in the productive sectors and tourism based on the management plan of each area for biodiversity conservation and management.
3.3 Design, and possible integration, of ecological corridors of special designation status and their effective management.

Level of application (Please specify the level to which the target applies):

☐ Regional/multilateral
☒ National/federal
☐ Subnational

Relevance of the national targets to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets

Main related Aichi Biodiversity Targets

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Other related Aichi Biodiversity Targets

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Relevant websites, web links, and files

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National Target 4

CONSERVATION OF THE GENETIC RESOURCES OF GREECE – FACILITATING ACCESS TO GENETIC RESOURCES – FAIR AND EQUITABLE SHARING OF THE BENEFITS ARISING FROM THEIR UTILISATION

Rationale for the national target

The three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity include the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilisation of genetic resources. The three objectives of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture are related to conservation, the sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their use, in accordance with the Convention on Biological Diversity for sustainable agriculture and food security. Genetic diversity is a level of biodiversity; therefore, genetic resources are included in the objectives of both of these international agreements.

In Greece, the existing institutional framework includes provisions for the protection of the country's plant germplasm and the conservation and protection of indigenous breeds of livestock (PD* 80/1990 and PD* 434/1995). In the context of the National Biodiversity Strategy, priority is given to the continuing registration, characterization and evaluation, as well as the conservation of plant genetic resources, forest genetic resources and the genetic resources of livestock. In addition, priority is given to the conservation of genetic resources in situ (on the farm) or ex situ (in institutes, such as gene banks and botanical gardens), particularly for genetic resources of economic importance to the country. Special care should be taken to prevent the potential impacts of genetically modified organisms on biodiversity.

Genetic resources are part of the sovereignty of each state and, thus, institutional protection and regulation are required. This institutional framework should cover issues of access and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from their utilisation. Regarding these issues, an institutional framework is lacking, with the exception of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (in which access to and the distribution of the benefits are realised by the Standard Material Transfer Agreement), which should be addressed as soon as possible. This need is even more urgent today, by following the adoption of the Nagoya Protocol on access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from their utilisation. Moreover, the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol should take into account the impact it will have on the rights of breeders, farmers and local communities that have contributed to the conservation and utilisation of genetic resources.

General Target 4 includes Specific Targets 4.1 - 4.4:
4.1 Ensuring access to scientific records of genetic resources and filling in the gaps in scientific data.
4.2 In situ and/or ex situ conservation of Greek genetic resources.
4.3 Facilitating access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilisation of these resources.
4.4 The study, prevention and reduction of the impact of Genetically Modified Organisms on biodiversity.

*Presidential Decree

Level of application (Please specify the level to which the target applies):

☐ Regional/multilateral
☒ National/federal
☐ Subnational

Relevance of the national targets to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets
Main related Aichi Biodiversity Targets

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Other related Aichi Biodiversity Targets

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Relevant websites, web links, and files

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National Target 5

ENHANCING THE SYNERGIES AMONG THE MAIN SECTORAL POLICIES FOR THE CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY. ESTABLISHING INCENTIVES

Rationale for the national target

Biodiversity is an issue that transcends typical sectoral policies and demands a multi-layer approach. Thus, it is necessary to integrate nature conservation into all other sectoral policies.

Spatial and urban planning policies coordinate the location of all activities in space and, therefore, may decisively contribute to protecting natural habitats, in the proper demarcation of human activities, and avoiding habitat fragmentation. These policies contribute to conserving biodiversity both in rural and urban areas.

Planning Policy is based on the General Framework for Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development. The general framework is, by law, the reference basis for the coordination and harmonization of policies, programmes and developmental projects that have significant impact on national cohesion and economic development. There is a need to strengthen the connection of the developmental planning of sectoral policies with spatial planning. Therefore, the priorities and strategic directions of the General Framework for Spatial Planning and the Special Frameworks for Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development should improve the integration of the needs of biodiversity conservation and landscape protection (in accordance with the European Landscape Convention as ratified by Law No. 3827/2010), while taking into account the new circumstances and the significant consequences that climate change might have (e.g. fires, floods, erosion, drought, desertification, etc.) and trying to adapt existing plans to integrate these issues.

Despite their usefulness, the strategic directions of the above projects are not sufficient to prevent local pressures within the boundaries of protected areas and within the limits of human settlements. Therefore, it is necessary to produce or improve land-use plans at local level, which are presented through the local spatial plans of municipalities (General Urban Plans and/or the City Master Plans).

This target aims to integrate biodiversity conservation into various sectoral policies, such as infrastructure, residential and industrial development, tourism, the primary productive sector (agriculture, livestock, fisheries and forestry), the sector of energy production from renewable sources, mining and the collection of biological and other natural resources.

General Target 5 includes Specific Targets 5.1 - 5.8:
5.1 Effective integration of biodiversity conservation at all levels of spatial planning.
5.2 Minimising the impacts of large infrastructure projects.
5.3 Ensuring the compatibility of residential and industrial development activities (including conventional energy production) with biodiversity conservation.
5.4 Ensuring the compatibility of tourist activities with biodiversity conservation.
5.5 Ensuring the compatibility of agricultural, fishing and forestry activities with biodiversity conservation.
5.6 Ensuring the compatibility of energy production activities and infrastructure (including renewable energy) with biodiversity conservation.
5.7 Ensuring the compatibility of mining activities with biodiversity conservation.
5.8 Ensuring the compatibility of other activities (like hunting, the collection of plants and animals) with biodiversity conservation.

Level of application (Please specify the level to which the target applies):

☐ Regional/multilateral
☒ National/federal
☒ Subnational

Relevance of the national targets to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets

Main related Aichi Biodiversity Targets

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Relevant websites, web links, and files

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National Target 6

CONSERVATION OF LANDSCAPE DIVERSITY

Rationale for the national target

The number of types of natural and anthropogenic ecosystems, their spatial distribution and the area they occupy define the characteristics of landscapes. According to the European Landscape Convention, which Greece ratified by Law No. 3827/2010, landscape is defined as a natural area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or anthropogenic processes. It is a definition that conveys the modern perception of landscape, including its cultural, ecological and social dimensions. Therefore, the European Landscape Convention is an important step towards the sustainable management and protection of the landscape throughout Europe. The multidimensional nature of landscape highlights the need for a holistic approach to its study and effective management.

Due to its geomorphological and climatic heterogeneity and its rich biodiversity of species and ecosystems, Greece is characterised by a wide diversity of landscapes. The protection and preservation of many different types of landscapes depend on the protection and conservation of the ecosystems that compose them, and, thus, depend on the protection and conservation of their biological diversity.

Landscape composition includes not only natural features and ecosystems, but also elements that are the result of human presence and activities, such as agro-ecosystems, settlements, etc. Therefore, landscapes reflect the interaction of man and nature and contribute towards defining local identity through their specific features, becoming a key component of European natural and cultural heritage. Greece is a place where culture spans millennia and has coevolved with the surrounding landscape. This phenomenon signifies the importance of Greek landscapes as components of national and European cultural and natural heritage. Finally, landscape is an important part of the quality of people's lives and contributes to their well-being, both in urban and rural areas.

Human activities often exert pressures on landscapes, degrading their biological diversity, which ultimately results in their deterioration. Therefore, it is necessary to formulate Landscape policy, which should be based on an integrated approach and in accordance with the European Landscape Convention. According to the European Landscape Convention, landscape policy relies on competent authorities formulating general principles, strategies and guidelines for taking specific measures designed to protect and manage landscapes.

This policy has been incorporated into regional spatial planning. However, it must be integrated into all sectoral policies and all levels of spatial planning. The landscape policy should also be in accordance with the principles, objectives and actions of the Biodiversity Strategy. To maintain the diversity of landscapes in terms of biodiversity, it is very important to maintain the history of biodiversity as evidenced in many historical landscapes.

General Target 6 includes Specific Targets 6.1 - 6.3:
6.1 Completion of the integration of conservation landscape diversity policy into all sectoral policies.
6.2 Maintaining the diversity of the landscape both inside and outside of protected areas.
6.3 Conservation of unique landscapes.

Level of application (Please specify the level to which the target applies):

☐ Regional/multilateral
☒ National/federal

☒ Subnational

Relevance of the national targets to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets

Main related Aichi Biodiversity Targets

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Relevant websites, web links, and files

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National Target 7

PREVENTION AND MINIMISATION OF THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON BIODIVERSITY

Rationale for the national target

Climate change is considered an additional threat to biodiversity both in terms of habitats and species survival. It is obvious that the ecosystems in Greece will be significantly affected due to the expected increase of average temperature, more frequent extreme weather events, precipitation changes as well as potential reduction of available water quantity. Therefore, it is important to take into consideration the impact of climate change, when drawing up biodiversity management plans in order to protect the species and habitats at risk and help them adapt to new environmental conditions. The consensus of relevant research is that it is possible for species and habitats to shift their geographical distributions in response to climate change. A proportion of species, that are of conservation interest, will be driven outside the boundaries of existing protected areas a potential result of this shift in the geographical range of species and habitats. Therefore, management measures should not only plan for the maintenance and restoration of healthy ecosystems, but also for enhancing the capacity of these ecosystems to withstand the pressure of climate change and thereby avoid biodiversity loss as a result of this phenomenon.

The actions and measures to conserve biodiversity promoted in this National Biodiversity Strategy may also contribute towards addressing climate change, because healthy ecosystems may perform functions related to the regulation of the climate. In particular, forests, seas and wetlands contribute to carbon sequestration and, thus, help to reduce concentrations of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

However, actions to address climate change may have an impact on biodiversity conservation. Therefore, a special attention should be payed to potential negative impacts of various climate adaptation projects and their related infrastructure avoid or reduce their negative impacts on biodiversity. This integration is most effective when achieved during the planning stage of projects, plans and programmes to address climate change, and in the process of environmental impact assessment of the projects. In that way these mitigation measures will be operational during implementation or construction and operation, as is the legal provision for all infrastructure that may have negative impacts on biodiversity.

General Target 7 includes Specific Targets 7.1 - 7.4:
7.1 Studying the effects of climate change on biodiversity and ecosystem functions.
7.2 Taking action so that the components of biodiversity will be able to adapt to climate change.
7.3 Reducing the impact of actions established to address climate change on biodiversity.
7.4 Enhancing the role of forests in mitigating the effects of climate change.

Level of application (Please specify the level to which the target applies):

☐ Regional/multilateral
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Main related Aichi Biodiversity Targets

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Other relevant information

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Relevant websites, web links, and files

www.ypeka.gr/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=%2fnY1WSioQWk%3d&tabid=237&language=el-GR

National Target 8

PROTECTION OF BIODIVERSITY FROM INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES

Rationale for the national target

Invasive species are alien species with the ability to spread in areas away from their typical distribution range, provided that they are dispersed in the new areas. Internationally, invasive alien species are considered as one of the major threats to biodiversity in terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems. In Greece, invasive species that have created problems to native species and biodiversity have already been documented. This fact requires the adoption of preventive measures, starting from the study and detection of invasive alien species already present in the country, as well as examining the way that they were introduced in order to take the necessary steps to prevent the further invasion and spread of these species. Their invasion can take place in the form of intentional or accidental introduction and escape in the terrestrial, freshwater or marine environment. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary to raise public awareness about the threat presented by alien species invasions.

Dealing with invasive species impacts on biodiversity requires early detection, continuous monitoring, measures to limit their consequences to biodiversity and the effective implementation of the CITES Convention. In cases where biodiversity has been affected by invasive species, action is required to restore the system. The first step towards an action plan depends on the identification and mapping of species invasions in Greece.

General Target 8 includes Specific Targets 8.1 - 8.2:
8.1 Prevention, early detection and control of the introduction and spread of invasive species.
8.2 Taking action to restore the impacts of invasive alien species on biodiversity.

Level of application (Please specify the level to which the target applies):

☐ Regional/multilateral
☒ National/federal
☐ Subnational

Relevance of the national targets to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets

Main related Aichi Biodiversity Targets

☐ 1	☒ 6	☐ 11	☐ 16
☐ 2	☐ 7	☐ 12	☐ 17
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☐ 4	☒ 9	☒ 14	☐ 19
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Other related Aichi Biodiversity Targets

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Other relevant information

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Relevant websites, web links, and files

www.ypeka.gr/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=%2fnY1WSioQWk%3d&tabid=237&language=el-GR

National Target 9

ENHANCING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

Rationale for the national target

The cooperation regarding biodiversity management at international, regional and transnational levels has often been proved to be effective for the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services. Promoting international cooperation on such issues should be an integral part of all bilateral relations of Greece and should be incorporated into development aid programmes between Greece and other countries.

The implementation of measures in the context of the international and regional environmental conventions that it has ratified, rely on effective international, regional and transnational cooperation between Greece and other countries. At the same time, through its participation in international forums and promoting the development and implementation of international environmental Law, Greece promotes synergy between international conventions related to biodiversity conservation, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

An additional way to promote international cooperation is the formulation and implementation of international programmes to expertise transfer.

In addition to enhancing existing transboundary cooperation, such as the Transboundary Park of Prespa, priority should be given to the designation of new transboundary natural parks. However, international cooperation is not only limited to the creation of transboundary protected areas or areas in which common management actions may be applied, but it also includes programmes for the conservation of species and habitats whose ranges (and corresponding threats) transcend national borders.

General Target 9 includes Specific Targets 9.1 - 9.2:
9.1 Substantially enhancing the effectiveness of international, regional and transnational cooperation for the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services.
9.2 Enhancing transboundary cooperation for biodiversity conservation.

Level of application (Please specify the level to which the target applies):

☒ Regional/multilateral
☒ National/federal
☐ Subnational

Relevance of the national targets to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets

Main related Aichi Biodiversity Targets

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Other related Aichi Biodiversity Targets

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Other relevant information

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Relevant websites, web links, and files

http://www.ypeka.gr/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=%2fnY1WSioQWk%3d&tabid=237&language=el-GR

National Target 10

UPGRADING THE QUALITY AND EFFICIENCY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION ON BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

Rationale for the national target

Today's progress in the implementation of the actions for biodiversity conservation, or lack of those actions, makes necessary the need to upgrade the quality and efficiency of public administration, both at an institutional (level) and at a scientific level. The complexity of relevant regulations, the need for the integration of biodiversity conservation into all public policies, and the requirement for implementation and enforcement of environmental law require modern, appropriately staffed, coordinated and effective administration.

To help public administration be effective and coordinate, formulate and implement policies and measures for biodiversity conservation, it is necessary to restructure institutional structures and ensure their support with appropriate infrastructure and the necessary human resources, both at central and regional level. Furthermore, it is essential to modernise and codify existing legislation and the establishment and enhancement of environmental control mechanisms to address the problems of non-compliance and the inadequate enforcement of environmental legislation,.

Biodiversity issues are mainly overseen by the Ministry of Environment and Energy; however, other Ministries and Agencies are also involved. The issues that need to be addressed include: lack of coordination of actions by the competent authorities, staffing with qualified scientific personnel and shortfalls in training and providing incentives. With the aim to integrate biodiversity considerations into all sectoral policies, the Ministry of Environment and Energy will take the initiative to coordinate other Ministries and Agencies for the implementation of this strategy and achievement of its goals.

Biodiversity conservation requires resources that represent society's investment, as they contribute to the country's natural capital. Until today, the protection of biodiversity has been largely financed by EU funds and some national funds. To achieve the objectives of this Strategy, the country must ensure the national resources necessary for maintaining biodiversity. National resources should be allocated for the stable, permanent and adequate funding for the full operation of the national system of protected areas through the Management Bodies of protected areas. Furthermore, EU funds should be mobilized to finance initiatives focused on protecting biodiversity.

General Target 10 includes Specific Targets 10.1 - 10.2:
10.1 Improving public administration in organizational issues, scientific issues and decision-making processes for the effective implementation of policies, measures and legislation on biodiversity.
10.2 Ensuring adequate funding for biodiversity conservation.

Level of application (Please specify the level to which the target applies):

☐ Regional/multilateral
☒ National/federal
☒ Subnational

Relevance of the national targets to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets

Main related Aichi Biodiversity Targets

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Other related Aichi Biodiversity Targets

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National Target 11

INTEGRATION OF BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION INTO THE VALUE SYSTEM OF SOCIETY

Rationale for the national target

Education and training are major factors that shape the values of society. For the integration of biodiversity conservation in society's value system, biodiversity should be integrated into all forms of formal and non-formal education. The value of biodiversity could be promoted by teaching biodiversity and ecosystem protection integrating the curricula of primary and secondary education, producing appropriate and attractive educational material, and by training teachers in this field. Since, the education of future generations is a priority for modern society, it is necessary to integrate the value of biodiversity conservation into education, training and lifelong-learning programmes. To achieve better and more effective integration of biodiversity conservation policies into all areas, it is essential to educate specific groups of the productive sector. Education, training and awareness of biodiversity require an interdisciplinary approach, since biodiversity is associated with all aspects of human life. Biodiversity is not only part of Biology, Physics and other related sciences; it is also part of History and Humanities.

An example of good practice, with a relevant educational programme for students of Primary and Secondary Education has been developed by the Environmental Education Centre of Kastoria since 1999. At the same time, since 2003, this organization, with the approval of the Ministry of Education, has coordinated the National Network of Schools (of both primary and secondary education) for Biodiversity under the title "Biodiversity Workshop Life".

If we wish to promote the conservation of the national capital, which is the natural environment of the country, systematic communication and public awareness about biodiversity issues has to be mandatory. It is crucial to design and implement relevant action plans on the communication strategy for biodiversity and use tools appropriate to the country's economic and social reality in order to ensure that the public becomes aware of the importance of conserving biodiversity and its benefits to the citizen from the ecosystem services provided by biodiversity,. There are many ways to communicate this message; however, in our digital era, the primary role will be played by a special web portal for biodiversity, which will be regularly enriched and updated. Moreover, the media and other news outputs could play an important role. At the same time, the role of volunteers in actions designed to protect biodiversity should be encouraged, since they can contribute to biodiversity protection, in addition to changing the value system of our society.

General Target 11 includes Specific Targets 11.1 - 11.2:
11.1 Integrating biodiversity issues into formal and non-formal education, and promoting the value of biodiversity.
11.2 Promoting environmental awareness of biodiversity conservation.

Level of application (Please specify the level to which the target applies):

☐ Regional/multilateral
☒ National/federal
☒ Subnational

Relevance of the national targets to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets

Main related Aichi Biodiversity Targets

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National Target 12

INSPIRING CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

Rationale for the national target

Biodiversity conservation is a multi-layered and multi-dimensional problem. Therefore, citizens' participation is a critical component towards the successful realisation of this Strategy and the achievement of its targets. In this context, it is necessary to institutionally establish the cooperation between citizens, social groups, scientists and public administration in the decision-making process and the monitoring of its implementation. Enhancing the implementation of laws arising from the Aarhus Convention and related EU directives, facilitates and safeguards citizens access to environmental information. Public consultation and participation in the decision making processes will contribute to social acceptance of measures and policies to protect biodiversity. Given the experience and the know-how of environmental non-governmental organizations, educational and research institutions, we should determine their role as social players that may greatly contribute to biodiversity conservation.

The business sector has an important role to play, since its activities may affect biodiversity conservation. The relationship between businesses and biodiversity is twofold. On one hand, firms may assist in promoting biodiversity conservation actions by developing and supporting Corporate Social Responsibility programmes, investing part of their profits in social projects that promote biodiversity conservation either within or outside the corporation concerned. On the other hand, equally important is their contribution through their investment choices and every day activities. Understanding that all actions have impacts, companies are encouraged to choose methods, practices and activities that have a beneficial impact on biodiversity and, simultaneously, mitigate their negative consequences. A key and decisive role in this decision is the integration of biodiversity into the design and appraisal of investment projects of enterprises.

General Target 12 includes Specific Targets 12.1 - 12.2:
12.1 Establishing cooperation among citizens, scientists and public administration in the decision making process and monitoring its implementation.
12.2 Promoting the accountability of companies in the context of biodiversity conservation.

Level of application (Please specify the level to which the target applies):

☒ Regional/multilateral
☒ National/federal
☐ Subnational

Relevance of the national targets to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets

Main related Aichi Biodiversity Targets

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Other related Aichi Biodiversity Targets

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Relevant websites, web links, and files

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National Target 13

GAINING APPRECIATION OF ECOSYSTEM SERVICES AND PROMOTING THE VALUE OF GREEK BIODIVERSITY

Rationale for the national target

The value of biodiversity is granted and so is the requirement for maintaining it. However, the value of biodiversity is more easily understood when it is described in terms of the vital functions of the planet and services that ecosystems provide to mankind.

The value of biodiversity and ecosystem services is not limited to valuation based on economic terms alone. An alternative approach is possible; an approach that is not limited to utilitarian valuation and recognises the multiple values of nature, such as its ecological, cultural, religious and aesthetic components. Economic value is only one aspect among many. Therefore, natural capital cannot be measured by a single criterion. Therefore, a multifactorial valuation of ecosystem services is needed.

The loss of biodiversity is largely due to the perception that the irrational use of natural resources has no impact or cost on nature. Therefore, information about socio-economic benefits enhances public awareness and highlights the challenge of biodiversity loss. In this context, a system of incentives will be organised and established to reward the maintenance and improvement or adoption of environmentally-friendly practices based on expected socioeconomic benefits.

Recently, and especially after the publication of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, the irreplaceable contribution of ecosystems to sustaining life on our planet became apparent, in addition to their importance for human well-being. In 2010 in Nagoya, the 10th Conference of the Parties of the CBD agreed that by 2020 biodiversity values will have been integrated into national accounting systems (Aichi target 2). This target is also adopted in the European Biodiversity Strategy, and the mapping of ecosystem services has already started to be into national and European accounting systems75. Greece is committed to applying these strategies, but it has not yet begun evaluating and mapping its ecosystem services.

The value that biodiversity services provide for the functioning of society and the economy is critical and is directly linked to human well-being. The valuation of social and economic benefits provided by biodiversity in Greece and the costs of biodiversity loss and ecosystem processes will be an important tool for the protection of biodiversity and ecosystems. Beyond the ecological benefits, particularly important is the evaluation of socio-economic benefits provided by protected areas, e.g. as fisheries reserves in an otherwise overfished marine area. Such an assessment may contribute towards increasing public acceptance of and support for the national system of protected areas.

The concept of "natural green infrastructure" is a different approach of biodiversity conservation. This concept changes our perception of ecosystems, because it highlights the services they provide, which might be replaced by manmade means, but with greater financial cost compared to the cost of protecting ecosystems. Essentially, it is a network of natural agricultural, freshwater and marine areas, including national parks, forests and other areas, which, as a network, regulate the water cycle, have a role in temperature regulation, decrease the risks of flooding, improve air quality, etc. In many cases, the ecosystems that could provide such functions and services have been degraded or destroyed by human activities. To promote and preserve ecosystems and the functions they provide, a national system of incentives should be established, with particular emphasis given on the mapping and preservation of natural floodplains, an obligation arising from the relevant European Directive 2007/60/EC. Furthermore, given the ecological functions associated with the green infrastructure in urban overpopulated areas, creating and maintaining biodiversity islands within the urban fabric should be prioritized.

General Target 13 includes Specific Targets 13.1 - 13.3:
13.1 Valuation of ecosystem functions and services in social and economic terms.
13.2 Promotion of the value of biodiversity and the services provided by biodiversity and ecosystems.
13.3 Promotion, establishment and maintenance of natural green infrastructure.

Level of application (Please specify the level to which the target applies):

☐ Regional/multilateral
☒ National/federal
☐ Subnational

Relevance of the national targets to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets

Main related Aichi Biodiversity Targets

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Relevant websites, web links, and files www.ypeka.gr/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=%2fnY1WSioQWk%3d&tabid=237&language=el-GR

SECTION II

Implementation measures taken, assessment of their effectiveness, associated obstacles and scientific and technical needs to achieve national targets

Measure 1

PROJECT LIFE IP 4NATURA - INTEGRATED ACTIONS FOR THE CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF NATURA 2000 SITES, SPECIES, HABITATS AND ECOSYSTEMS IN GREECE

Measure description:

Background

The Greek Natura 2000 consists of 419 sites with a total combined coverage of almost 4,300,000 ha, corresponding to circa 27% of Greece's terrestrial area and 6% of its territorial waters. Within this network, the overall percentage of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) with no management plans amounts to 98%, while the corresponding percentage for Special Protection Areas (SPAs) is 99%. In addition, only a limited number of Action Plans for habitats and species have been drafted at national level and only three have been formally approved (lesser kestrel, lesser white-fronted goose, and the Egyptian vulture). There is a lack of management tools for the efficient conservation of nature, as well as the improvement of the conservation status and the assurance that habitats and species of Community interest will be properly protected, as required by the Birds and Habitats directives, but also by national environmental legislation.

Objectives

The main objectives of the LIFE-IP 4 NATURA project are to:

- Implement concrete conservation measures and apply legal instruments for habitats and species of Community interest that are threatened on a national and multiregional scale;
- Formulate, legally approve and implement at least 10 Action Plans for selected habitats and species;
- Implement at least 12 Management Plans in the four participating administrative regions, covering Natura 2000 network sites in marine and terrestrial areas;
- Enhance the effectiveness of all local, regional and national nature conservation authorities, and develop the necessary means and conditions that will improve their work and results;
- Study and acquire the necessary knowledge on ecosystem services and their provisions at national, regional and local level;
- Strengthen the coherence between Natura 2000 network sites and improve their connectivity;
- Provide a geospatially-oriented database system for the Natura 2000 network and a web-based GIS tool for ecosystem services for governmental, professional and public use;
- Improve capacity, knowledge and awareness of key stakeholders (organizations, authorities and the general public) with respect to the implementation of the Birds the Habitats directives, and the Natura 2000 network, as well as their responsibilities and involvement in its conservation; and
- Actively disseminate the results of the project and ensure their implementation, transfer and replication by other stakeholders, nationally and at EU level.

The complementary actions aim at developing (draft and legally adopt) a coherent national action-based plan

for the conservation of the whole Greek Natura 2000 network for five years, and to draft the application for measures foreseen in the Prioritized action Framework (PAF) for Natura 2000 under all seven priority categories.

Expected results:

- Improvement of the favourable conservation status of the habitats and species of Community interest listed in the Birds and Habitats directives;
- Fine-scale mapping and assessment of ecosystems and their services at national, regional and local level within the entire Greek Natura 2000 network;
- Strengthened coherence within the Natura 2000 network and enhanced connectivity with other external areas;
- Improvement of scientifically-sound and up-to-date management, licensing and authorisation by all local, regional and national competent authorities in Natura 2000 sites;
- Improved public awareness and knowledge of the Natura 2000 network, the habitats and species it supports, and the ecosystem services it provides;
- Mainstreaming of ecosystem service information into policy and governance, and ultimately, to contribute to ecosystem protection;
- Improvement of the capacity, knowledge, and competence of stakeholders, authorities and relevant bodies involved in Natura 2000 site management; and
- Achievement of a more effective, participatory, and jointly-supported conservation scheme for the Greek Natura 2000 network, on the marine and terrestrial levels.

The Project budget amounts to €17.000.000 and its duration is from 1st December 2017 to 30th November 2025. The Project Beneficiary is the Hellenic Ministry of Environment and Energy.

For the implementation measure, please indicate to which national or Aichi Biodiversity Target(s) it contributes.

Greek National Targets: 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 11, 12, 13

Aichi Targets: 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 19, 20

Assessment of the effectiveness of the implementation measure taken in achieving desired outcomes:

☐ Measure taken has been effective
☐ Measure taken has been partially effective
☐ Measure taken has been ineffective
☒ Unknown

Please explain the selection and where possible indicate the tools or methodology used for the assessment of effectiveness above

This major Project is recent, having run for its first year out of a total 8-year projected duration. The assessment of its effectiveness will be feasible in the later stages.

Relevant websites, web links and files

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/index.cfm?fuseaction=search.dspPage&n_proj_id=6520

Measure 2

EXPANSION OF THE NATURA 2000 NETWORK OF PROTECTED AREAS IN GREECE

Measure description:

Background

Natura 2000 is a network of core breeding and resting sites for rare and threatened species, and some rare natural habitat types which are protected in their own right. It stretches across all 28 EU countries, both on land and at sea. The aim of the network is to ensure the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats, listed under both the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive.

In Greece, the total coverage of the Natura 2000 network amounted to a sufficient coverage of its land mass (around 27%), in contrast to the coverage of its marine territory, which was only around 6% of the total.

Description of measure taken

In order to safeguard marine ecosystems, Greece expanded its marine protected areas, as the national part of the Natura 2000 network of protected areas, in its territorial waters from 6% to 19.6%, overshooting SDG target 14.5 by a safe double margin. The aim was to preserve important habitats, such as the *Posidonia oceanica* underwater meadows, as well as important fish species and sea birds. Alongside the marine areas, a smaller-scale expansion of the terrestrial part of the network also came into effect.

The expansion of the Natura 2000 network was the result of the previously implemented project «*Monitoring and assessment of the conservation status of species and habitat types of Community Interest in Greece*» during 2012-2015. The areas that were selected on the basis of scientific criteria were included in the network of protected areas with Joint Ministerial Decision 50743, published in the Government Gazette issue 4432/B on 15th December 2017.

For the implementation measure, please indicate to which national or Aichi Biodiversity Target(s) it contributes.

Greek National Targets: 2, 3

Aichi Targets: 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14

Assessment of the effectiveness of the implementation measure taken in achieving desired outcomes:

☐ Measure taken has been effective
☒ Measure taken has been partially effective
☐ Measure taken has been ineffective
☐ Unknown

Please explain the selection and where possible indicate the tools or methodology used for the assessment of effectiveness above

This measure was put into effect recently, with the required legislation being published in December of 2017. The demarcation of a protected area is the first step of a long process in effecting a desirable outcome in environmental conservation. With this first step being now completed, the demarcated areas are already

subject to the current environmental legislation affecting all Natura sites, and as a result, enjoy a given level of protection. The next step is the development of specific management plans, tailored to the unique circumstances and needs of each area, which is scheduled to come into effect over the next reporting period.

Relevant websites, web links and files

www.ypeka.gr/Default.aspx?tabid=432&language=el-GR
(in Greek language)

Measure 3

EXPANSION OF THE MANAGEMENT BODY SYSTEM FOR PROTECTED AREAS

Measure description:

After a long process of consultation and debate between the competent authorities, the environmental NGOs, the Ministry of Environment and Energy and citizens, the Greek Parliament passed Law No. 4519 (Government Gazette 25 A '/ 20.02.2018), which regulates all issues concerning the organization and operation of the Management Bodies of Protected Areas.

With the above-mentioned Law, the Management Bodies were increased in number, from 28 to 36, and the jurisdiction of the existing ones was expanded in order to cover almost all the Natura 2000 network of protected areas in Greece (in practice, 445 out of 446 Natura 2000 sites).

The Management Bodies are supervised by the Ministry of Environment and Energy aiming at managing the protected areas and focusing on the habitats and species protected by Directive 92/43/EEC and Directive 2009/147/EC. They also cooperate with competent government authorities and consult with local stakeholders.

The new legislation governs the expanded spatial responsibility of the Management Bodies, introduces smaller and more efficient governance schemes (seven-member Boards of Directors) and updates the responsibilities and jurisdiction of Boards so as to focus on local development and public consultation, alongside the stated aim of environmental protection and conservation. The new legislation also secures partial funding of the Management Bodies and streamlines organizational issues concerning members of staff.

For the implementation measure, please indicate to which national or Aichi Biodiversity Target(s) it contributes.

Greek National Target: 2, 3, 10, 11, 12

Aichi Target: 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 14, 20

Assessment of the effectiveness of the implementation measure taken in achieving desired outcomes:

☐ Measure taken has been effective
☐ Measure taken has been partially effective
☐ Measure taken has been ineffective
☒ Unknown

Please explain the selection and where possible indicate the tools or methodology used for the assessment of effectiveness above

This measure was put into effect recently, with the required legislation being published in February of 2018. The effectiveness of this particular measure is expected to be high, but its implementation cannot be adequately measured yet.

Measure 4

SPECIAL ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES FOR ALL NATURA 2000 SITES

Background:

The existing legislation on biodiversity in Greece (Law No. 3937/2011) sets out the requirements for the demarcation of protected areas and the definition of land uses as well as allowed activities within them. In order for the required Presidential Decree to be issued, for each protected area, it is necessary to produce a a Special Environmental Study for each protected site. The lack of appropriate Special Environmental Studies, to this day, for the vast majority of Natura 2000 sites, has prevented the issue of the required Presidential Decrees for most protected areas in Greece, and the development of the Management Plan for each site.

Measure description:

The Ministry of Environment and Energy is implementing the project: "Development of Special Environmental Studies and Management Plans for Natura 2000 sites" aiming at the institutional protection of all areas of the Natura 2000 network in the country.

The objective set by the Ministry of the Environment and Energy is to achieve effective protection and management of protected areas by 2020. In this framework, eleven studies will be carried out and produce the Special Environmental Studies, the Presidential Decrees and the Management Plans for all Natura 2000 sites in Greece. At the same time, a project is being implemented to coordinate the contractors of the above-mentioned studies. The project as a whole will be completed within 30 months after its contracting and the cost is estimated to reach 17.5 million euros.

The Special Environmental Studies and Management Plans to be produced will concern Natura 2000 sites that will be divided into twenty-three (23) sub-groups, defined by administrative boundaries (Region level) and total surface area.

This measure will achieve the following objectives:

· Protected areas of the country are demarcated and safeguarded.
· Areas of land use and activities within protected areas are defined.
· Obligations of the country against the European Directives on nature are fulfilled.
· Planning on the basis of sustainable development is facilitated.

For the implementation measure, please indicate to which national or Aichi Biodiversity Target(s) it contributes.

Greek National Targets: 2, 3

Aichi Targets: 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14

Assessment of the effectiveness of the implementation measure taken in achieving desired outcomes:

☐ Measure taken has been effective
☐ Measure taken has been partially effective
☐ Measure taken has been ineffective
☒ Unknown

Please explain the selection and where possible indicate the tools or methodology used for the

assessment of effectiveness above

The assessment of the effectiveness of this measure will be feasible after the submission of the Project deliverables.

Measure 5

NATIONAL ACTION PLANS FOR SELECTED SPECIES

Measure description:

Greece adopted the National Action Plans for *Neophron percnopterus* and *Anser erythropus* and the Regional Action Plan for *Falco naumanni*" with Joint Ministerial Decisions no. 43236/1053/2017 (B 3760), no. 43235/1053/2017 (B3762) and no. 43231/1054/2017 (B 3761) respectively.

As referred to in Article 4 of each of the three Joint Ministerial Decisions, the three Action Plans are implemented by the former Biodiversity and Protected Areas Department, today's Directorate of Natural Environment Management and Biodiversity. The same article also provides the establishment of working groups for the implementation and monitoring of the Action Plans. These three working groups (one for each species) were formed by three Decisions issued by the General Director of Environmental Policy in June of 2018. The working groups are obliged to convene at least once a year drawing up an annual action program.

The Directorate of Natural Environment Management and Biodiversity having ensured financing by the Green Fund is in the process of announcing a project titled "Implementation of the National Action Plans for *Neophron percnopterus* and *Anser erythropus* and the Regional Action Plan for *Falco naumanni*" with estimated value of € 804,031.06 (plus 24% VAT) for a five-year period. This specific project aims at preventing extinction, stabilizing the population and improving the conservation status of these species of avifauna.

For the implementation measure, please indicate to which national or Aichi Biodiversity Target(s) it contributes.

Greek National Target: 2

Aichi Target: 12

Assessment of the effectiveness of the implementation measure taken in achieving desired outcomes:

☐ Measure taken has been effective
☐ Measure taken has been partially effective
☐ Measure taken has been ineffective
☒ Unknown

Please explain the selection and where possible indicate the tools or methodology used for the assessment of effectiveness above

This measure is very recent; therefore the assessment of its effectiveness will be feasible in the later stages.

Measure 6

MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT OF THE CONSERVATION STATUS OF SPECIES AND HABITAT TYPES OF COMMUNITY INTEREST IN GREECE

Measure description:

The monitoring of the habitat types and species of Community interest in Greece (NATURA 2000 and national area) took place in response to the obligations arising from Directive 92/43/EEC and Directive 2009/147/EC.

The monitoring program was implemented on two main axes:

- In the areas of the NATURA 2000 network, outside the jurisdiction of existing Protected Area Management Bodies
- In the areas outside the NATURA 2000 network and outside the jurisdiction of existing Protected Area Management Bodies

Surveillance and conservation status assessment was implemented for species and types of habitats throughout the national area, as the preparation of the National Reports for the 2007-2012 period required supervision not only within, but also outside the Natura 2000 sites.

Since the obligations are different for Sites of Community Importance (SCI) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), it is noted that the objects of supervision are differentiated, as follows:

- For the Sites of Community Importance (SCIs) it is necessary to record, assess and monitor the conservation status of the habitat types and species of flora and fauna of Annexes II, IV and V of Directive 92/43.
- For Special Protection Areas (SPAs) it is necessary to record, assess the conservation status and monitor the conservation status of avian species protected under Directive 2009/147 / EC (all species of avifauna in Annex I to Directive 2009/147/EC, migratory species for the conservation of which an area can be designated as a SPA, as well as common species).

For sites outside the Natura 2000 network it is necessary to record, assess and monitor the conservation status of the habitat types and species of flora and fauna of Annexes II, IV and V of Directive 92/43 and of the species of avifauna.

The monitoring program had a budget of 11.7 million euros and delivered its outcomes in 2015. The deliverables served as the basis of the National Report of Greece on the implementation of Directive 92/43 (as outlined in article 17 of the Directive) for the reporting period 2007-2012. The outcomes of the monitoring program are currently being reviewed and updated as necessary to form the basis for the upcoming Report of Greece on the implementation of Directive 92/43, for the reporting period 2013-2018. For the following reporting period (2019-2024), a new cycle of the Program "Monitoring and Assessment of the Conservation Status of Species and Habitat Types of Community Interest in Greece" will be implemented, with a projected budget of 12 million euros.

For the implementation measure, please indicate to which national or Aichi Biodiversity Target(s) it contributes.

Greek National Target: 1, 2, 3

Aichi Target: 1, 5, 11, 12, 19

Assessment of the effectiveness of the implementation measure taken in achieving desired outcomes:

☒ Measure taken has been effective
☐ Measure taken has been partially effective
☐ Measure taken has been ineffective
☐ Unknown

Please explain the selection and where possible indicate the tools or methodology used for the assessment of effectiveness above

The percentage of habitat types and species of Community interest, whose conservation status in Greece was unknown, amounted to 47.1% of those assessed for the 2001-2006 period (2nd national report), while the assessment carried out under the 3rd national report (2007-2014), based on the knowledge gained from the implementation of this measure, shrinks this figure to 10.5%.

Relevant websites, web links and files (Please use this field to indicate any relevant websites, web links or documents where additional information can be found)

http://cdr.eionet.europa.eu/gr/eu/art17/envvkfa_q/index_html?&page=3
www.ypeka.gr/Default.aspx?tabid=889&language=el-GR
(in Greek)

SECTION III

Assessment of progress towards each national target

Target 1

INCREASING KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE ASSESSMENT OF BIODIVERSITY STATUS

Category of progress towards the implementation of the selected target

☐ On track to exceed target
☒ On track to achieve target
☐ Progress towards target but at an insufficient rate
☐ No significant change
☐ Moving away from target
☐ Unknown

Date the assessment was done

November 2018

Additional information

Progress towards National Target 1 has been achieved through projects and measures including:

- The projects for Monitoring and assessment of the conservation status of species and habitat types of Community Interest in Greece. See Section II, Measure 6 for more information.
- The upcoming project for producing Special Environmental Studies for all areas of the Natura 2000 Network. See Section II, Measure 4 for more information.
- The recently initiated LIFE IP 4 NATURA project. See Section II, Measure 1 for more information.
- Other ongoing research efforts, including work done by the Management Bodies for protected areas, or initiatives, such as the ACCOBAMS Survey Initiative of 2018
- In July 2018 the National Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development (EKPAA) published a report presenting the biodiversity status in Greece through the analysis of a set of 12 biodiversity indicators, which were linked to 6 out of 13 National Targets of the National Strategy for Biodiversity 2014-2029, 4 out of 17 SDGs, 8 out of 26 SEBI 2020 targets, 8 out of 20 Aichi Targets and 4 out of 6 targets of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020. The indicator set was presented based on the DPSIR system (Drivers, Pressures, State, Impact, Response) and the biodiversity status in Greece was compared to that of the EU

As a result, there have been great strides in recent years, towards achieving National Target 1, and there are great prospects of improving this work over the next reporting period. However, although vast amounts of scientific knowledge have been produced, and continue being produced, this information has not been successfully disseminated. The relevant government agencies are currently investigating the most suitable ways to achieve this goal.

Indicators used in this assessment

☐ No indicator used

Level of confidence of the above assessment

☐ Based on comprehensive evidence
☐ Based on partial evidence
☒ Based on limited evidence

Please provide an explanation for the level of confidence indicated above.

Assessment is based heavily on expert opinion rather than an established indicator.

Adequacy of monitoring information to support assessment

☐ Monitoring related to this target is adequate
☒ Monitoring related to this target is partial (e.g. only covering part of the area or issue)
☐ No monitoring system in place
☐ Monitoring is not needed

Target 2

CONSERVATION OF NATIONAL NATURAL CAPITAL AND ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION

Category of progress towards the implementation of the selected target

☐ On track to exceed target
☒ On track to achieve target
☐ Progress towards target but at an insufficient rate
☐ No significant change
☐ Moving away from target
☐ Unknown

Date the assessment was done

November 2018

Additional information

The Ministry of Environment and Energy is continuously monitoring the implementation of the conservation status and management of rare, threatened or endemic animal and plant species and of Sites of Community importance (SCI) in the areas of the National System of Protected Areas (as per Law No. 3937/2011). At the same time, it is operating a system for data production and collection on forests, species, flora and habitats, for the determination of biomarkers, the organization of databases and an online data acquisition system in line with the National Environmental Information Network.

The Ministry of Environment and Energy has been recently awarded a European Commission LIFE Integrated Project (LIFE IP) with a total budget of about EUR 17 million is running for the period 2018 – 2025. The main objectives of the project comprise the implementation of 10 Action Plans for habitats and species of Community interest listed in the Birds and Habitats EU Directives, the pilot implementation of Management Plans in Natura 2000 sites and the fine-scale mapping and assessment of ecosystems and their services at national level. The successful implementation of the project will result in a substantial improvement of the conservation status of both habitats and species in the country.

The protection of forest areas is a key obligation and priority of the State as is the organization and planning of the urban space that often clashes with forest protection. Thus, one of the highest priorities of Greece, currently, is the finalisation of the full digitalisation of the Greek territory in terms of land-use, protection status, type of industrial and other activities allowed etc.

In this direction, the elaboration and endorsement of Forest Maps has been a strenuous effort in the last years. Forest maps for the 37% of the country's territory have already been completed, whereas maps corresponding to the 32% of the national territory have already been ratified. Another 17% are about to be completed, while the remaining 46% is under way aiming to cover the entire country's territory as soon as possible. The actual delineation of forest areas, together with the on-going finalisation of the National Cadastre will facilitate the planning and authorisation of new investments across the country and ensuring the protection and management of forest areas in a more sustainable and effective way against urban sprawl, forest fires and in line with the national climate change mitigation objectives.

In addition, Ministerial Decision 170195/758 was published in the Government Gazette on the 28th of November 2018 introducing a National Forest Strategy, which defines the principles and guidelines of forest policy for the period 2018-2038, identifies specific objectives of this policy, and the necessary resources and means of implementation.

In line with the CITES Convention and the EU Wildlife Action Plan 2016-2020, Greece has introduced

additional implementing provisions for CITES including a licensing scheme to control international movements of threatened and endangered species and the General Police Directorate under the Ministry of Interior is cooperating with INTERPOL to tackle crime against wild life and forests. At the national level, every year a hunting regulatory order is issued and a forest protection programme together with an annual programme for the improvement and prevention of illegal timber logging are implemented.

Indicators used in this assessment

1. Number of action plans implemented for particular species or habitats.
2. Territory coverage of implemented forest maps.

Level of confidence of the above assessment

☐ Based on comprehensive evidence
☒ Based on partial evidence
☐ Based on limited evidence

Please provide an explanation for the level of confidence indicated above.

Some information and indicators exist for assessing progress towards the target but not all elements can be assessed or information limitations exist.

Adequacy of monitoring information to support assessment

☒ Monitoring related to this target is adequate
☐ Monitoring related to this target is partial (e.g. only covering part of the area or issue)
☐ No monitoring system in place
☐ Monitoring is not needed

Please describe how the target is monitored and indicate whether there is a monitoring system in place.

The Ministry of Environment and Energy is monitoring progress towards achieving National Target 2 through the Directorate of Natural Environment Management and Biodiversity and the General Directorate For Forestry and Forest Environment. See Section II, Measure 6 for more information.

Target 3

ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION OF A NATIONAL SYSTEM OF PROTECTED AREAS AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE BENEFITS FROM THEIR MANAGEMENT

Category of progress towards the implementation of the selected target

☐ On track to exceed target
☒ On track to achieve target
☐ Progress towards target but at an insufficient rate
☐ No significant change
☐ Moving away from target
☐ Unknown

Date the assessment was done

November 2018.

Additional information

The significant progress towards achieving National Target 3 can be attributed to:

- The expansion of the Natura 2000 Network of protected areas in Greece
- The expansion of the Management Body network for protected areas
- The initiation of the process for producing Special Environment Studies, Presidential Decrees and Management Plans for all Natura 2000 sites

Greece currently has 446 sites included in the EU's Natura 2000 network of protected areas that correspond to 27.59% (terrestrial sites) and 19.60% (marine sites). The official legal endorsement of all these sites has been recently completed and their total expanse is now fully covered by Management Bodies, with the expansion of the jurisdiction of the previously existing 28 Management Bodies in Greece and the creation of 8 new ones to, hence, cover the 100% of Natura 2000 sites in the country.

Additionally, the Ministry of Environment and Energy, has already launched the elaboration of Special Environmental Studies, Presidential Decrees and Management Plans with total budget of EUR 17.5 million that, once completed, will be approved and enforced for the whole Natura 2000 network to ensure adequate protection, regulate and define the conservation terms and to implement a judicial management of all Natura 2000 sites in Greece by 2022.

Moreover, the Ministry of Environment and Energy has been recently awarded a European Commission LIFE Integrated Project (LIFE IP) with a total budget of EUR 17 million running during the period 2018 – 2025. The main objectives of the project include the implementation of 10 Action Plans for habitats and species of Community interest listed in the Birds and Habitats EU Directives, the pilot implementation of Management Plans in Natura 2000 sites and the fine-scale mapping and assessment of ecosystems and their services at national level. The successful implementation of the project will result in a substantial improvement of the conservation status of both habitats and species in the country.

Indicators used in this assessment

1. Nationally designated protected areas - SEBI 07.
2. Sites designated under the EU Habitats and Birds Directives – SEBI 08.

3. Spatial coverage of the Natura 2000 network in Greece (total surface area, both terrestrial and marine).

Level of confidence of the above assessment

☒ Based on comprehensive evidence
☐ Based on partial evidence
☐ Based on limited evidence

Please provide an explanation for the level of confidence indicated above.

Sufficient, robust and readily available information, including indicators, exist to allow for all elements of the target to be assessed.

Adequacy of monitoring information to support assessment

☒ Monitoring related to this target is adequate
☐ Monitoring related to this target is partial (e.g. only covering part of the area or issue)
☐ No monitoring system in place
☐ Monitoring is not needed

Please describe how the target is monitored and indicate whether there is a monitoring system in place.

The projects for Monitoring and assessment of the conservation status of species and habitat types of Community Interest in Greece alongside with the 6-year reports on progress of the implementation of the EU Habitats Directive, ensure sufficient monitoring of National Target 3

Target 4

CONSERVATION OF THE GENETIC RESOURCES OF GREECE – FACILITATING ACCESS TO GENETIC RESOURCES – FAIR AND EQUITABLE SHARING OF THE BENEFITS ARISING FROM THEIR UTILISATION

☐ On track to exceed target
☐ On track to achieve target
☐ Progress towards target but at an insufficient rate
☒ No significant change
☐ Moving away from target
☐ Unknown

Date the assessment was done

November 2018

Additional information

Greece signed the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity, on 20th September 2011. Greece has not yet ratified the Nagoya Protocol.

The Regulation (EU) No 511/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council on *compliance measures for users from the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization in the Union* was issued on 16 April 2014 and became immediately enforceable as law in Greece.

Greece is currently in the process of issuing the necessary legal acts to implement the Nagoya Protocol and Regulation (EU) 511/2014.

To protect and prevent the extinction of species according to SDG 15.5, Greece is developing a National Bank of Forest Genetic Material. At the same time, the rich phytogenetic material of the country is preserved in specialised Gene Banks in Institutions, such as the Institute for Genetic Improvement of the Hellenic Agricultural Organization "Dimitra" and the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Chania (CIHEAM-MAIC) in Crete.

Greece has traditionally placed high political attention to biosafety, whereas the public opposes to imported and domestic foodstuffs containing genetically modified organisms (GMOs). It upholds a restriction on the cultivation of GMO maize MON810, under article 23 of EU Directive 2001/18, and is considered a GMO free-zone.

Indicators used in this assessment

☒ No indicator used

Level of confidence of the above assessment

☐ Based on comprehensive evidence
☐ Based on partial evidence
☒ Based on limited evidence

Please provide an explanation for the level of confidence indicated above.

There is limited information and indicators to assess progress towards the target and therefore the assessment draws heavily on expert opinion.

Adequacy of monitoring information to support assessment

☐ Monitoring related to this target is adequate
☐ Monitoring related to this target is partial (e.g. only covering part of the area or issue)
☒ No monitoring system in place
☐ Monitoring is not needed

Target 5

ENHANCING THE SYNERGIES AMONG THE MAIN SECTORAL POLICIES FOR THE CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY. ESTABLISHING INCENTIVES

☐ On track to exceed target
☒ On track to achieve target
☐ Progress towards target but at an insufficient rate
☐ No significant change
☐ Moving away from target
☐ Unknown

Date the assessment was done

November 2018

Additional information

Biodiversity conservation has been integrated into various sectoral policies, such as infrastructure, residential and industrial development, tourism, the primary productive sector (agriculture, livestock, fisheries and forestry), the sector of energy production from renewable sources, mining, and the collection of biological and other natural resources.

The current Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedure is by Law No. 4014/2011 and has been modified when necessary. The EIA procedure incorporates an Appropriate Assessment complying with the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, in order to assess the impact of plans and projects on sites of the Natura 2000 network of protected areas. During the reporting period, between 642 and 1072 new licenses were issued yearly, as well as between 446 and 636 yearly renewals.

The promotion of an "Integrated Spatial Planning Strategy" in Greece constitutes the implementation of the principles of sustainable development in practice, based on three pillars, namely balance, protection and development. In detail, it comprises: (i) a general-overarching "National Spatial Planning Strategic Document" providing the overall vision and strategic objectives of the country's spatial planning; (ii) twelve "Regional Spatial Planning Frameworks" covering the totality of the Greek administrative and geographic regions, which are evaluated and currently under revision; (iii) "Specific Spatial Planning Frameworks": at this moment, there are four Sector specific Frameworks on Renewable energy, on Aquaculture, on Industry and on Tourism, setting out medium and long-term strategic objectives and guidelines. These Specific Spatial Planning Frameworks can also be established for certain critical and sensitive areas faced with environmental degradation, geographic exclusion and land-use conflicts on Mountainous, Coastal, Island and Inaccessible or degraded Areas; and (iv) Regulatory Plans for the Metropolitan Regions of Athens and Thessaloniki.

Regarding marine spatial planning policies, a National Maritime Spatial Planning Strategy (NMSPS) will have been elaborated and adopted by 2021 providing an organised framework for all activities taking place in the sea in Greece, setting priorities and giving strategic guidance for further more elaborated maritime spatial plans, while in the context of the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean, Greece liaises with other Contracting Parties to jointly explore ways and means to enhance national capacities to facilitate implementation of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Protocol to the Barcelona Convention.

Indicators used in this assessment

1. Environmental licenses (new and renewals) per year.
2. Number of environmental inspections carried out by the Environmental Inspectors.
3. Number of administrative acts that are required for the closure of the infringement cases.

Level of confidence of the above assessment

☐ Based on comprehensive evidence
☒ Based on partial evidence
☐ Based on limited evidence

Please provide an explanation for the level of confidence indicated above.

Some information and indicators exist for assessing progress towards the target but that not all elements can be assessed or that information limitations exist.

Adequacy of monitoring information to support assessment

☐ Monitoring related to this target is adequate
☒ Monitoring related to this target is partial (e.g. only covering part of the area or issue)
☐ No monitoring system in place
☐ Monitoring is not needed

Please describe how the target is monitored and indicate whether there is a monitoring system in place.

Monitoring of environmental licensing and relevant statistical presentation is handled by the relevant agencies of the Ministry of Environment and Energy.

Relevant websites, web links and files

http://aepo.ypeka.gr/

Target 6

CONSERVATION OF LANDSCAPE DIVERSITY

☐ On track to exceed target
☐ On track to achieve target
☐ Progress towards target but at an insufficient rate
☒ No significant change
☐ Moving away from target
☐ Unknown

Date the assessment was done

November 2018

Additional information

The existing biodiversity legislation (Law No. 3937/2011) outlines the requirements for the conservation of landscapes. Protected landscapes and seascapes are thereby defined as areas of great ecological, geological, aesthetic or cultural value and areas which are particularly amenable to public recreation or contribute to the protection of the natural environmental resources due to their particular natural or anthropogenic characteristics. Protected landscapes may be attributed to particular names, depending on their main features, such as aesthetic forests, geoparks, wildlife landscapes, rural landscapes, or urban landscapes. The protected components of the landscape may be parts that bear a particular ecological, aesthetic or cultural value, or that contribute to the protection of natural resources due to their particular natural or anthropogenic characteristics.

During this reporting period there has been no significant change in the existing framework for the protection of landscapes and no new sites have been designated as protected landscapes.

Indicators used in this assessment

Number of national sites designated as protected landscapes

Level of confidence of the above assessment

☐ Based on comprehensive evidence
☒ Based on partial evidence
☐ Based on limited evidence

Please provide an explanation for the level of confidence indicated above.

Some information and indicators exist for assessing progress towards the target but not all elements can be assessed.

Adequacy of monitoring information to support assessment

☐ Monitoring related to this target is adequate
☐ Monitoring related to this target is partial (e.g. only covering part of the area or issue)
☒ No monitoring system in place
☐ Monitoring is not needed

Target 7

PREVENTION AND MINIMISATION OF THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON BIODIVERSITY

Category of progress towards the implementation of the selected target

☐ On track to exceed target
☒ On track to achieve target
☐ Progress towards target but at an insufficient rate
☐ No significant change
☐ Moving away from target
☐ Unknown

Date the assessment was done

November 2018

Additional information

The most recent study on greenhouse gas emissions was published in 2015 reporting that 95.7 Mt of CO_2 eq were emitted, presenting a reduction rate of 7.1% compared to 1990 levels.

Greece has a very long coastline of some 16,300 km (equal to roughly one-third of the Earth's circumference), of which around 1,000 km are areas highly vulnerable to climate change. About 58% of the total coastline of the Aegean Sea consists of coasts of high vulnerability to the projected changes. Additionally, the impact on fir, beech and pine forests could be considerable, while fire-fighting costs are expected to shoot up on account of the increasing number and extent of forest fires.

As a response, Greece recently established the "National Adaptation Strategy to Climate Change" (NAS) (Law No. 4414/2016, Government Gazette, 149/A/9.8.2016) which sets out the general objectives, guiding principles and implementation tools of a modern, effective and growth-oriented adaptation strategy in line with EU directives and the international experience. The NAS provides an initial five-year horizon for building the capacity for adaptation and prioritising and implementing an initial set of actions.

Key objectives of the NAS are to:

1. improve the decision-making process, drawing on more thorough information and accurate scientific data on adaptation issues,
2. promote the development and implementation of regional/local action plans that are compatible with the present strategy,
3. initiate adaptation actions and policies across all sectors, with an emphasis on the most vulnerable ones,
4. create a mechanism for monitoring and evaluating adaptation actions and policies, and
5. raise public awareness and disseminate information.

The targets of the Greek policy regarding the "Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry" sector are the conservation and the protection of existing forest land, its gradual increase, as well as the improvement of the degraded forest lands.

In particular, for the period 2013-2020, the relevant measures being implemented primarily aim at protecting forest lands, their sustainable management, preserving and strengthening their multifunctional role, also

contributing to the mitigation of climate change and the development of forestry sector. These policies and measures, along with their funding commitments, can be perused in detail starting on page 153 of the 7th National Communication to the UNFCC.

http://unfccc.int/files/national_reports/annex_i_natcom_/application/pdf/48032915_greece-nc7-br3-1-nc7_greece.pdf

Indicators used in this assessment

1. GHG emissions in Greece, as equivalent CO_2 (CO_2 eq) emissions and % change from 1990.
2. Share of sectors in total (a) and energy-specific (b) GHG emissions for 2015.
3. GHG emissions by sector.
4. Percentage of national territory with completed forest maps.

Level of confidence of the above assessment

☒ Based on comprehensive evidence
☐ Based on partial evidence
☐ Based on limited evidence

Please provide an explanation for the level of confidence indicated above.

Sufficient, robust and readily available information, including indicators, exist to allow for all elements of the target to be assessed.

Adequacy of monitoring information to support assessment

☒ Monitoring related to this target is adequate
☐ Monitoring related to this target is partial (e.g. only covering part of the area or issue)
☐ No monitoring system in place
☐ Monitoring is not needed

Please describe how the target is monitored and indicate whether there is a monitoring system in place.

Sufficient monitoring is regularly conducted by the relevant directorates of the Hellenic Ministry of Environment and Energy, measuring appropriate time series of GHG emissions, and the implementation of the National Adaptation Strategy to Climate Change.

Relevant websites, web links and files

http://unfccc.int/files/national_reports/annex_i_natcom_/application/pdf/48032915_greece-nc7-br3-1-nc7_greece.pdf

Target 8

PROTECTION OF BIODIVERSITY FROM INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES

Category of progress towards the implementation of the selected target

☐ On track to exceed target
☐ On track to achieve target
☒ Progress towards target but at an insufficient rate
☐ No significant change
☐ Moving away from target
☐ Unknown

Date the assessment was done

November 2018

Additional information

The existing biodiversity legislation (Law No. 3937/2011) outlines the requirement for a National List of Invasive Alien Species, as well as the implementation of management plans for those species on the list that have been characterised as high risk species. The national list and the management plans have not been completed yet.

The Ministry of Environment and Energy, at the time of writing of this report, is expecting the tendering call for an already proposed and approved project with a budget of €150,000, that will kick off the national effort to address National Target 8. The main deliverables of the project will include the following:

a) Review of all up-to-date bibliographical information on the presence and distribution of IAS in Greece, including all Union list species as well as selected species of national interest.

b) Proposal for an ongoing monitoring program.

c) Risk assessment on important species.

d) Identification of pathways of introduction and management proposals.

In 2014, the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union issued Regulation 1143/2014 on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species. The regulation introduced a Union list of Invasive Alien Species which has been adopted by Greece. The requirements set out by the Regulation impose certain restrictions, adoption of emergency measures, implementation of action plans, establishment of a surveillance system, eradication and management measures, *inter alia*. These requirements of Regulation 1143/2014 have not been fully implemented yet by Greece. Progress on their implementation is expected to be made in line with the launch of the national project on managing Invasive Alien Species, as outlined above.

The Ministry of Environment and Energy, through the National Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development, is the lead partner of an INTERREG Project that launched in 2018, titled "INVALIS: Protecting European Biodiversity from Invasive Alien Species". INVALIS will enable the participating territorial authorities to address common challenges associated with biological invasions such as a) knowledge gaps in ecosystems' vulnerability to biological invasions and species' distribution, b) lack of awareness about IAS environmental and socioeconomic risks, c) low level of cooperation between public authorities and key stakeholders for the implementation of IAS management measures, and c) conflicts of

interests.

The International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments, which aims to prevent the spread of harmful aquatic organisms from one region to another and halt damage to the marine environment from ballast water discharge, by minimising the uptake and subsequent discharge of sediments and organisms was ratified by Greece on by Law No. 4470/2017.

Indicators used in this assessment

☒ No indicator used

Level of confidence of the above assessment

☐ Based on comprehensive evidence
☐ Based on partial evidence
☒ Based on limited evidence

Please provide an explanation for the level of confidence indicated above.

There is limited information and indicators to assess progress towards the target and as a consequence the assessment draws heavily on expert opinion.

Adequacy of monitoring information to support assessment

☐ Monitoring related to this target is adequate
☐ Monitoring related to this target is partial (e.g. only covering part of the area or issue)
☒ No monitoring system in place
☐ Monitoring is not needed

Target 9

ENHANCING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

Category of progress towards the implementation of the selected target

☐ On track to exceed target
☒ On track to achieve target
☐ Progress towards target but at an insufficient rate
☐ No significant change
☐ Moving away from target
☐ Unknown

Date the assessment was done

November 2018

Additional information

Greece has successfully implemented obligations in the context of the international and regional environmental conventions that it has signed and/or ratified.

As a member state of the European Union, Greece has upheld the Union's environmental legislation in parallel with the national provisions. During this reporting period, Greece has also worked closely with its partners within the frameworks of the following Conventions, Agreements, Treaties or Institutions:

- The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD):
    - The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
    - The Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing
- The Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, as well as its Regional Activity Centres
- The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
- The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
- The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
- The Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats
- The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
- The Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area (ACCOBAMS)
- The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance
- The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

Regarding transboundary cooperation for biodiversity conservation, Greece has not initiated the designation of any new transboundary protected areas during the reporting period, but experts have actively represented Greece throughout the ongoing discussions aiming to promote the appropriate implementation of the Ecologically or Biologically Significant areas within the framework of the CBD.

Greece, as a downstream country, fully implements the UNECE Helsinki Convention on transboundary watercourses and lakes (Law No. 2425/1996) and has a special interest and major challenge with respect to

cross-border water management, since four transboundary rivers from upstream countries provide approximately one-fourth of the total mean surface runoff of Greece's mainland rivers. Thus, one of the country's longstanding priorities is the achievement of the objectives of the EU Water Framework Directive at transboundary river basin level as well as of flood control and water quality issues, closely cooperating with all the riparian state through related MoUs and joint technical committees.

In the Eastern Mediterranean Region, two trilateral schemes of technical cooperation and partnership have been initiated, at a high political level, between Greece, Cyprus and Israel and between Greece, Cyprus and Egypt, in 2016 and in 2017 respectively. The ultimate objective of these cooperative schemes is to enhance peace and stability in the region and facilitate the sharing of experiences, knowledge and know-how in order to promote joint projects of mutual interest, find solutions to common concerns and promote interconnectivity and complementarity of actions. In the field of environmental protection, these trilateral cooperation frameworks, focus, *inter alia*, on the protection of marine and coastal environment with emphasis on the prevention of marine pollution and the preparedness and response to it (particularly pollution, which might stem from oil and gas exploration activities), the prevention of water pollution, water reuse and wastewater treatment with emphasis on wastewater from olive oil mills, and adaptation to climate change.

With regard to the latter thematic priority, this is led by Greece in both cooperation schemes, since the country has already advanced its related institutional framework. In particular, Greece is sharing its National Adaptation Observation & Monitoring Mechanism (NAOMM), which is currently in a process of being set up, with its Mediterranean partner countries, as a basis for the exchange of information, inter alia, on relative monitoring and observation mechanisms, on best practices and expertise including climate adaptation indicators and climate adaptation web applications and tools aiming to create a solid knowledge-base for adaptation approaches and specific tools/methods that can be compatible to all parts.

At the same time, Greece is building strong "beyond borders" partnerships with countries that face similar challenges and share common goals through bilateral and trilateral technical cooperation schemes, especially in its geographic neighbourhood, i.e. South-East Europe and South-East Mediterranean. In particular, at the Mediterranean level, Greece is a very active Contracting Party to the Barcelona Convention for the protection of the environment of the Mediterranean coastal zone and Sea: the Coordination Unit/Secretariat of the Convention is hosted in Athens since 1981 with the financial support of the Hellenic State. Moreover, Greece has hosted the 16th COP of the Convention in Athens in February 2016, it has been presiding the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the Convention in 2016 and 2017 and is chairing the "Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development" (MCSD) for 2017-2019. Finally, Greece is committed to fully implement of the "Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development" (MSSD, 2016-2025) which constitutes a well elaborated "translation" of the global 2030 Agenda to the regional Mediterranean context and priorities and a useful tool to guide national efforts to develop a compatible National Implementation Plan for the SDGs, at a later stage.

Indicators used in this assessment

☒ No indicator used

Level of confidence of the above assessment

☐ Based on comprehensive evidence
☐ Based on partial evidence
☒ Based on limited evidence

Please provide an explanation for the level of confidence indicated above.

The wide scope of this particular target makes it difficult to assess it by employing specific indicators and as a

consequence the assessment draws heavily on expert opinion.
Adequacy of monitoring information to support assessment ☐ Monitoring related to this target is adequate ☐ Monitoring related to this target is partial (e.g. only covering part of the area or issue) ☒ No monitoring system in place ☐ Monitoring is not needed

Target 10

UPGRADING THE QUALITY AND EFFICIENCY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION ON BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

Category of progress towards the implementation of the selected target

☐ On track to exceed target
☐ On track to achieve target
☒ Progress towards target but at an insufficient rate
☐ No significant change
☐ Moving away from target
☐ Unknown

Date the assessment was done

November 2018

Additional information

Greece achieved some progress towards achieving National Target 10, during this reporting period, while at the same time suffering a few setbacks to overall progress.

On the 30th of October 2017, Presidential Decree 132 was published restructuring the administration of the Ministry of Environment and Energy. As part of the restructuring, the Department of Biodiversity and Protected Areas was upgraded to a Directorate (named Directorate of Natural Environment Management and Biodiversity), housing two Departments: The Department of Protected Areas and the Department of Biodiversity. This change on one hand reflected the added significance attributed to Biodiversity and Conservation issues within the Ministry, but also laid the groundwork for a better actual organization and administration on these issues.

Another significant milestone for achieving National Target 10 was the new legislation governing the Management Bodies for the protected areas (Law No. 4519/2018), whereby the jurisdiction of the previously existing 28 Management Bodies in Greece were expanded, and 8 new ones were created, in order to cover the 100% of Natura 2000 sites in the country. A significant step forward with this new legislation also included a more effective approach to the funding of the Management Bodies through the national budget.

During this reporting period, the Ministry of Environment and Energy adopted an electronic system for producing, signing and circulating documents, in order to optimise efficiency and cut down on the cost of the bureaucracy.

Additionally, to the extent that the achievement of Biodiversity Conservation is interlinked to a number of SDGs, the overall effort benefitted by the decision in December 2016 (by the Law No. 4440/2016, art. 43), to assign the task of monitoring and coordinating the national implementation of the SDGs to one of the main entities belonging to the centre of government, the General Secretariat of the Government (GSG) and in particular its Office of Coordination, Institutional, International and European Affairs (OCIIEA). The work of the GSG/OCIIEA on coordinating the national implementation of the SDGs is substantially supported and facilitated by the Inter-ministerial Coordination Network for the SDGs established in December 2016.

At the same time, the harsh condition of the Greek economy during this reporting period, resulted in many key administrative sectors being understaffed, even within the Ministry of Environment and Energy itself,

compared to previous years. This created new challenges, due to a deficiency in both manpower and expertise.

Indicators used in this assessment

1. Percentage of protected area sites within jurisdiction of Management Bodies
2. National budget allocation towards the functioning of Management Bodies
3. Yearly number of personnel in relevant departments of the administration

Level of confidence of the above assessment

☐ Based on comprehensive evidence
☒ Based on partial evidence
☐ Based on limited evidence

Please provide an explanation for the level of confidence indicated above.

Some information and indicators exist for assessing progress towards the target but not all elements can be assessed.

Adequacy of monitoring information to support assessment

☐ Monitoring related to this target is adequate
☒ Monitoring related to this target is partial (e.g. only covering part of the area or issue)
☐ No monitoring system in place
☐ Monitoring is not needed

Please describe how the target is monitored and indicate whether there is a monitoring system in place.

The implementation of the management plans for the expanded system of Management Bodies for protected areas is being monitored by the Natura 2000 Committee. The new electronic system servicing the Ministry of Environment and Energy is monitored by the Directorate of Electronic Governance. The manpower of the Ministry of Environment and Energy is monitored by the Register of Human Resources for the public sector.

Target 11

INTEGRATION OF BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION INTO THE VALUE SYSTEM OF SOCIETY

Category of progress towards the implementation of the selected target

☐ On track to exceed target
☒ On track to achieve target
☐ Progress towards target but at an insufficient rate
☐ No significant change
☐ Moving away from target
☐ Unknown

Date the assessment was done

November 2018

Additional information

Greece has continued implementation of its environmental education program, during this reporting period. A core component to achieving National Target 11, is the continued operation of the Environmental Education Centres (EECs). The first EEC operated in 1993 and today there are 53 EECs operating across the country.

The main objective of the EECs aims to support environmental education in local, national and international level, increasing awareness among the students about important environmental issues. This is achieved through:

- Implementation of Environmental Education programs for all levels of education and support of the respective school programs, in collaboration with the Environmental Education officers of the Education Directorates
- The production of educational and support material
- Organization of events and actions for the environment
- Promoting research in the field of renewable energy

The topics of the actions implemented in the Environmental Education Centers are in direct connection with the unique characteristics of the natural environment of the areas in which the Centers are located and. The themes include Sustainable Development, Waste management, Management of natural resources, Management and protection of water resources, Recycling, Composting and Atmospheric pollution.

The EEC programs have a duration of one or more days and are implemented throughout the school year for Primary and Secondary Education groups.

In primary education, 10240 EEC programs were implemented across the 53 EECs around the country during the school year 2017-2018. 250187 primary school students attended these programs with 6981 participating schools. The number of secondary education students who benefited amounted to 75912 from 1637 participating schools.

The total budget for the reporting year 2016 was €817,800.

Public awareness of biodiversity issues is one of the aims of the Management Bodies for protected areas. Depending on the particular Management Body, awareness actions may include the operation of Environmental Information Centres, production of leaflets and books, organizing seminars, placing signs,

airing tv or web spots etc.

Indicators used in this assessment

1. Number of Environmental Education Centres
2. School visits per year to the EECs
3. Budget allocated to the EEC programs
4. Number of students benefiting

Level of confidence of the above assessment

☒ Based on comprehensive evidence
☐ Based on partial evidence
☐ Based on limited evidence

Please provide an explanation for the level of confidence indicated above.

Sufficient, robust and readily available information, including indicators, exist to allow for all elements of the target to be assessed.

Adequacy of monitoring information to support assessment

☒ Monitoring related to this target is adequate
☐ Monitoring related to this target is partial (e.g. only covering part of the area or issue)
☐ No monitoring system in place
☐ Monitoring is not needed

Please describe how the target is monitored and indicate whether there is a monitoring system in place.

The Environmental Education Centre initiative is being monitored by the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs, and by the Youth and Lifelong Learning Foundation (INEDIVIM).

Relevant websites, web links and files

https://www.inedivim.gr/en/programmes-actions/lifelong-learning-centres-environment-and-sustainability

Target 12

INSPIRING CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

Category of progress towards the implementation of the selected target

☐ On track to exceed target
☒ On track to achieve target
☐ Progress towards target but at an insufficient rate
☐ No significant change
☐ Moving away from target
☐ Unknown

Date the assessment was done

November 2018

Additional information

In Greece public consultation is mandatory, as part of national legislation, before the implementation of a significant decision, that will potentially affect the natural environment. During this reporting period, this requirement has been upheld in cases of demarcating sites as protected areas, legislating measures for specific protected sites, issuing environmental licensing for projects following an Environmental Impact Assessment etc. Public participation in decision making is ensured by the "opengov" site - the Greek Open Government Initiative. The site has been designed to serve the principles of transparency, deliberation, collaboration and accountability.

Participation of stakeholders is also achieved through the Natura 2000 Committee, which is designated by national legislation as the chief scientific advisory body for monitoring and assessing policies and measures to protecting biodiversity. The committee consists of representatives from the participating ministries, academic experts, and experts from non-governmental organizations that represent the civil society.

Likewise, the Law for the operation of the Management Bodies for the protected areas, requires that their Board of Directors comprises representatives from the Ministry of Environment and Energy, local government, academic experts as well as representatives from the civil society and the local business entities.

Additionally, the integrated implementation of Target 12 at national, regional and local level requires the existence of an inclusive, transparent and participatory consultation and engagement mechanism bringing together a wide range of stakeholders actively engaged in the field of Biodiversity Conservation (i.e. civil society and social partners, the private sector, regional and local authorities). This kind of mechanism contributes substantially, among others, to providing central government with sound advice and recommendations on related policies and promoting the shared responsibility of all social partners in implementing the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan. It is also instrumental in fostering cooperative actions among different societal sectors, identifying challenges and proposing durable solutions, and facilitating the sharing of experiences and best practices on achieving the targets of the NBSAP in a balanced and coherent manner.

The Economic and Social Committee of Greece (ESC), the constitutionally established Body responsible for conducting the social dialogue on the country's general policy and in particular on economic and social issues, plays an important role towards promoting the systematic and structured consultation and dialogue on the effective implementation of SDGs, including those linked to the implementation of the NBSAP, at different levels and sectors. The ESC works in the way of the European Economic and Social Committee

(EESC) on the basis of a tripartite structure representing the interests of three main groups involved, directly and indirectly, in achieving the SDGs at different levels: (i) one of employers-entrepreneurs; (ii) one of public and private sector employees; and (iii) one including other categories of interests groups such as farmers, self-employed people, professionals, consumers, environmental agencies, disabled people's confederation, gender equality, multi-child parents associations, and regional and local government.

Regarding the adoption of sustainable practices by large companies, Greece actively promotes the EU Eco-label for products and services that have a reduced environmental impact throughout their life-cycle. In late 2017, 12 paint and varnishes manufacturers with 274 products, 2 detergent producers with 21 products and 12 hotels were awarded the EU Eco-label in Greece. Moreover, the Ministry of Environment and Energy supports the application of Environmental Management Systems in business, and in particular of the EU Eco-Management and Audit Scheme – EMAS. At the moment, 35 organizations with 1,334 sites are registered in the national EMAS registry. Financial and licensing incentives are granted to businesses that operate under the EMAS principles.

Indicators used in this assessment

☒ No indicator used

Level of confidence of the above assessment

☐ Based on comprehensive evidence
☐ Based on partial evidence
☒ Based on limited evidence

Please provide an explanation for the level of confidence indicated above.

There is limited information and indicators to assess progress towards the target, therefore the assessment draws heavily on expert opinion.

Adequacy of monitoring information to support assessment

☐ Monitoring related to this target is adequate
☐ Monitoring related to this target is partial (e.g. only covering part of the area or issue)
☒ No monitoring system in place
☐ Monitoring is not needed

Target 13

GAINING APPRECIATION OF ECOSYSTEM SERVICES AND PROMOTING THE VALUE OF GREEK BIODIVERSITY

Category of progress towards the implementation of the selected target

☐ On track to exceed target
☐ On track to achieve target
☐ Progress towards target but at an insufficient rate
☒ No significant change
☐ Moving away from target
☐ Unknown

Date the assessment was done

November 2018

Additional information

National Target 13 stems from the requirements of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the European Union's Biodiversity Strategy 2020 regarding Ecosystem Services (ES). To this date there has not been significant progress towards achieving this National Target, and therefore it has now been incorporated into the recently launched LIFE IP 4NATURA project (see relevant Section II). The Project involves concurrent implementation of mapping and assessment of ecosystems and their services (MAES) in Greece. This will be achieved through: a) the establishment of the appropriate methodology to identify, map and assess ecosystem types' condition and their services in Greece at national level both within and outside of the NATURA 2000 network (to provide information for connectivity corridors among protected sites), and b) the creation of the appropriate baseline datasets and maps for the development of the relevant conservation actions.

Assessment of ES at national level: The definition and classification of ecosystem services - as agreed upon by the MAES Working Group of the DG ENV - is based on categories in the Common International Classification of Ecosystem Services catalogue (CICES); thus, CICES v.4.3 will be used and ecosystem services will be assessed nationally, at the CICES Class-level. To fulfil this task, a set of national indicators will be prepared for each class. Twelve scientific groups will be created to collect, elaborate and assess the ecosystem services flows, trends and demands, respectively to the level 2 MAES ecosystem type categories (e.g. woodland and forest ES group) and specify the appropriate indicators for each ecosystem type class with respect to its various regional differentiations. These indicators will be also selected to estimate the successful implementation of various conservation actions, regarding the National, as well as the European Biodiversity Strategy, acting also as a Priority Action Framework supporting tool. While indicators cannot completely represent the provided ecosystem services, they can indicate how important components and influencing factors develop over time; indicators will be also used to inform and consult the public, stakeholders and policy makers.

One of the most important objectives is to create an importance hierarchy regarding ES, i.e. to prioritize unique, rare ecosystem services, such as biodiversity reserves, which provide valuable genetic resources or traditional agriculture, which reflects the sustainable aspect of land use.

ES mapping on national scale: Mapping ecosystem services is a complex task with a need to gather quantitative, qualitative and spatial data for its completion. To compile the Ecosystem Service maps for each identified ecosystem service, the commonly used matrix-model approach will be used to assign the selected ES indicators to LULC /ecosystem type classes. This method is also considered appropriate to manage possible data gaps at the national-scale assessment, by utilizing experts' judgment in the matrix model and

provides an easy to update scheme when new data is available.

Indicators used in this assessment

☒ No indicator used

Level of confidence of the above assessment

☐ Based on comprehensive evidence
☐ Based on partial evidence
☒ Based on limited evidence

Please provide an explanation for the level of confidence indicated above.

There is limited information and indicators to assess current progress towards the target. The assessment draws heavily on expert opinion on the current progress towards achieving Target 13, but also on the expected progress after inclusion of Target 13 on the ongoing Life IP Project.

Adequacy of monitoring information to support assessment

☐ Monitoring related to this target is adequate
☒ Monitoring related to this target is partial (e.g. only covering part of the area or issue)
☐ No monitoring system in place
☐ Monitoring is not needed

Please describe how the target is monitored and indicate whether there is a monitoring system in place.

There is no monitoring system currently in place, but see the "Additional information" subsection above for more information about upcoming monitoring systems.

SECTION IV

Description of the national contribution to the achievement of each global Aichi Biodiversity Target

Aichi Biodiversity Target 1: AWARENESS OF BIODIVERSITY INCREASED
Please see Section III, National Target 11

Aichi Biodiversity Target 2: BIODIVERSITY VALUES INTEGRATED
Policy and legislative frameworks developed at national and European level contribute to the protection of agricultural and forestry land and the preservation of natural resources from intensive agricultural activities. It is within this context that the Greek Government recently adopted relevant legislation (Law No. 4351/2015) on the development of Management Plans for all grazing lands of the country. This legislation will contribute substantially to the rational management, exploitation and distribution of grasslands, as well as to the support of livestock farming. In this connection, a National Geographic Information Database of the country's grasslands is planned to be established. In addition to the above-mentioned measures, which also serve to combat desertification, the key priorities for this issue include the updating of the national action plan against desertification in order to reflect new challenges and the revised strategic and operational objectives of the International Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), as well as strengthening partnerships and joint planning with other relevant international conventions, including the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Aichi Biodiversity Target 3: INCENTIVES REFORMED
Greece, as a member of the European Union, adheres to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), which implements a system of agricultural subsidies and other programmes. The 2013 CAP reform introduced the 'Greening' Initiative, which makes the direct payments system more environmentally friendly. Farmers who use farmland more sustainably and care for natural resources as part of their everyday work can take financial advantage. Green direct payments account for 30% of EU countries' direct payment budgets. Farmers receiving an area-based payment have to make use of various straightforward, non-contractual practices that benefit the environment and the climate. These require action each year. They include: • diversifying crops • maintaining permanent grassland • dedicating 5% of arable land to 'ecologically beneficial elements' ('ecological focus areas') Under the new rules, farmers receiving payments help conserve the environment and contribute to addressing greenhouse emissions by: • making soil & ecosystems more resilient by growing a greater variety of crops • conserving soil carbon & grassland habitats associated with permanent grassland • protecting water & habitats by establishing ecological focus areas

Aichi Biodiversity Target 4: SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION

The shift to sustainable consumption and production patterns (SDG 12) and to a circular economy constitutes a key priority for Greece and an integral part of the country's National Growth Strategy. The sustainable management and the efficient use of natural resources (SDG 12.2) is an objective that has been already horizontally embedded, as a cross-cutting priority, in the country's current strategic planning. The ongoing Partnership Agreement (PA) 2014-2020 has integrated the principles of sustainable development by focusing on environmental protection requirements, resource efficiency, climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity conservation, and disaster resilience, risk prevention and management. Apart from the overall PA, the specific Operational Programme for Transport Infrastructure, Environment and Sustainable Development 2014-2020 is structured around four thematic objectives: (i) support the shift towards a low carbon economy in all sectors; (ii) ensure adaptation to climate change, risk prevention and management; (iii) preserve and protect the natural environment, the ecosystem services and green infrastructure, and promote resource efficiency; and (iv) promote sustainable urban development, energy efficiency projects in public buildings and broader diffusion of teleheating.

A National Action Plan on Circular Economy, detailing short-term priority interventions for the long-term promotion of circular economy in the country, and responding to the measures included in the related EU Action Plan for the Circular Economy (December 2015), has been endorsed, in the beginning of 2018, by the Governmental Economic Policy Council (KYSOIP). In order to speed up delivery of concrete actions and improve the involvement of all related line ministries and stakeholders (local authorities, businesses, civil society), a dedicated Inter-ministerial Working Group has been set up to coordinate planning and implementation of the National Action Plan, steered by the Ministry of Environment and Energy and composed by representatives from the Ministries of Economy and Development, Interior, Finance, Infrastructure and Transport, Education, Research and Religious Affairs, Maritime and Insular Policy, and Rural Development and Food.

With a view to stimulating private investments and boosting regional and economic growth, the Greek government adopted a new Investment Law No. 4399/2016. The ultimate objective of this legislation is to promote the balanced and sustainable development of Greece with a particular emphasis on regional convergence, improving the competitiveness in high added value and knowledge-intensive sectors, promoting the industrial development of the country, fostering innovation and technological advances in businesses and attracting foreign direct investments. In this connection, the simplification of the licensing process for pursuing an economic activity is incorporating most economic sectors, including manufacturing, logistics, tourism, environmental industries.

In addition, at the beginning of 2018, the legislation on inspections was horizontally reformed setting common rules for all economic activities falling under its scope and therefore allowing, for the first time, better coordination of inspections per sector and economic activity and implementation of a common policy, as well as rationalisation of resources. In this connection, a concrete action plan has been put in place in order to ensure implementation of the new law on inspections in a timely and effective manner.

Moreover, the whole reform and business environment project will be supported by the Integrated Licensing and Inspections Management System, which will host electronically the licensing and inspections business profiles and will provide a mechanism for the prioritisation of controls using risk based criteria to render the whole system more rational and cost-effective. At the same time, the Greek government pursues measures and actions designed to ameliorate the legal framework on Business Parks and simplify and widen the range of services provided through one-stop-shops for businesses to cover the whole life-cycle of a business, also taking into account the principles of circular economy.

Regarding the tourism sector, Greece has put forward the Alternative Tourism Initiative (ATI), an act planned within the Operational Programme "Competitiveness, Entrepreneurship and Innovation" (2014-2020) under the Partnership Agreement (PA) 2014-2020. One objective of this initiative was to enhance the diversification and enrichment of Greek tourism product through the development of alternative forms of tourism and highlight the rich biodiversity of the country.

Please also see Section III, National Target 5.

Aichi Biodiversity Target 5: HABITAT LOSS HALVED OR REDUCED

Please see Section III, National Targets 2 and 5.

Aichi Biodiversity Target 6: SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF AQUATIC LIVING RESOURCES

Greece has a longstanding tradition in fisheries and aquaculture, owing to its geographic features (large coastal and island regions) and rich biodiversity of its marine areas and is the only EU member state with a Special Spatial Plan particularly for Aquaculture (both in fresh and marine waters) aiming at environment and biodiversity protection. This is especially important as, among the 16 major statistical areas studied, the Mediterranean Sea together with the Black Sea, according to FAO (2015) had the highest percentage (62.2%) of unsustainable stocks.

The basic priorities of the policies implemented in Greece, at the moment, focus on: (i) the sustainable management of fishery resources, though the implementation and monitoring of related management plans; (ii) the prevention, reduction and elimination of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing; (iii) the control of areas where banning measures have been taken; (iv) the implementation of a fishery data collection programme; and (v) the facilitation of fishermen in efficiently and commercially organising their activities. In this regard, the Operational Programme for Fisheries and the Sea 2014-2020 offering funding opportunities, provides a major development lever for the country. Its key aim is to promote an environmentally sustainable, resource-efficient, innovative, competitive and knowledge-based fishery sector, with a view to reducing the impact on the marine environment, protecting and restoring marine biodiversity and ecosystems.

Aichi Biodiversity Target 7: SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE, AQUACULTURE AND FORESTRY

With a view to achieving integrated development and sustainable competitiveness of rural areas, Greece has adopted the National Strategy for sustainable rural development which is implemented through the National Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2014-2020. The National Strategy for sustainable rural development seeks to fulfil three interdependent and complementary strategic objectives which contribute to mitigating the effects of the long-term recession due to current economic crisis and the country's overall commitments to fiscal consolidation and sustainable development.

The first strategic objective aims to create a strong, competitive and sustainable agri-food system, through entrepreneurship, innovation, the creation and maintenance of jobs, and the mitigation of structural problems. In particular, this objective is to be achieved through the implementation of measures designed to enhance the agri-food system competitiveness and the value of the agri-food chain, to upgrade human capital and to strengthen the entrepreneurial culture.

The second strategic objective seeks to promote sustainability of the agri-food system and rural areas, through the protection and integrated management of natural resources and the environment in rural areas, including the sustainable development and management of forestry systems and the mitigation to climate change. The third strategic objective aims at creating sustainable & multi-functional rural areas, by ensuring basic services and quality of life, through developing relevant infrastructure, diversifying rural economy with synergies between sectors and enhancing the social fabric in rural areas with actions promoting social inclusion and reducing poverty, such as job creation and provision of basic services, especially for vulnerable groups of the rural population.

Furthermore, the National Operational Programme for Fisheries and the Sea (OPFS) 2014-2020 is also an important development lever for the country. The main priority is to promote an environmentally sustainable, resource-efficient, innovative, competitive and knowledge-based fishery sector, with a view to reducing the impact on the marine environment, protecting and restoring marine biodiversity and ecosystems.

Finally, Greece adopted its National Forest Strategy in November 2018 (Decision No. 170195/758 issued by the Ministry of Environment and Energy) with 20-year duration (2018-2038) aiming at developing and adopting the Mediterranean forestry standard as well as ensuring sustainability and increase of forest contribution to the national economy through multifunctionality, adaptability, socio-economic role enhancement and taking into consideration climate change

Aichi Biodiversity Target 8: POLLUTION REDUCED

With regard to water pollution, which is of key importance for Greece, the elimination of dumping and the minimisation of release of chemicals into freshwaters is targeted through the appropriate environmental permitting and audits control system of industrial activities. Regarding nitrate pollution in agriculture, action plans have been put in place in all vulnerable areas and the use of agricultural inputs of nitrogenous fertilisers and pesticides has been drastically reduced over recent years.

In particular, in order to prevent and reduce marine pollution, and align with the requirements of Law No. 3983/2011 and the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive, an extensive framework of measures covering all aspects of marine pollution and degradation has been recently (January 2018) endorsed, to ensure maintaining the already good status of marine waters in Greece or its achievement, in cases of minor degradation where restoration action is required. These measures aim, *inter alia*, at: preserving the rich Greek marine biodiversity, protecting ecosystems from non-indigenous species introduced by

human activities, maintaining populations of all commercially exploited fish and shellfish within safe biological limits, maintaining marine food webs, minimising human-induced eutrophication, preserving sea-bed integrity, minimising contaminants in marine waters and fish & seafood below thresholds, reducing marine litter especially plastics, and containing underwater noise.

With a view to promoting sustainable agro-food chain of safe and high quality food, Greece adopted over the last years a set of specific measures aimed at protecting human health and the environment, fostering consumer awareness and establishing the reputation of local agricultural products. In particular, the Greek Government revised in 2015 the National Action Plan for Rational Use of Pesticides, in order to provide, among others, for integrated pest management, training, certification and public information.

Aichi Biodiversity Target 9: INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES PREVENTED AND CONTROLLED

Please see Section III, National Target 8

Aichi Biodiversity Target 10: ECOSYSTEMS VULNERABLE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Please see Section III, National Target 7.

Aichi Biodiversity Target 11: PROTECTED AREAS

Greece houses about 35% of Europe's biodiversity. It currently encompasses 446 sites included in the EU's Natura 2000 network of protected areas that correspond to 27.59% (terrestrial sites) and 19.60% (marine sites), overshooting SDG 14.5. The official legal endorsement of all these sites has been recently completed and their total expanse is now fully covered by Management Bodies, with the expansion of the jurisdiction of the previously existing 28 Management Bodies in Greece and the creation of 8 new ones to, hence, cover the 100% of Natura 2000 sites in the country. Additionally, the Ministry of Environment and Energy, has already launched the elaboration of Special Environmental Studies, of Presidential Decrees and of Management Plans, of a total budget of EUR 17.5 million that, once been completed, will be legally approved and enforced for the whole Natura 2000 network to ensure adequate protection, to regulate and define the conservation terms and to implement a judicial management of all Natura 2000 sites in Greece by 2022.

Please see Section II Measures 2, 3 and 4, and Section III, National Target 3 for more information.

Aichi Biodiversity Target 12: REDUCING RISK OF EXTINCTION

Please see Section III, National Target 2 and 5.

Aichi Biodiversity Target 13: SAFEGUARDING GENETIC DIVERSITY

Please see Section III, National Target 4.

Aichi Biodiversity Target 14: ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

Please see Section III, National Target 13

Aichi Biodiversity Target 15: ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION AND RESILIENCE

Please see Section III, National Target 7.

Aichi Biodiversity Target 16: NAGOYA PROTOCOL ON ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING

Please see Section III, National Target 4

Aichi Biodiversity Target 17: BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS

Regarding the protection and conservation of biodiversity, in general, the existing biodiversity legislation (Law No. 3937/2011) sets out the key procedures for biodiversity conservation in the country. The National Strategy for Biodiversity 2014-2029 and its accompanying 5-year Action Plan, which was approved in 2014 and due to be revised in 2020, are aligned with the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), set out the overall vision for the protection of biodiversity and of its ecosystem services, based on three pillars, namely halting biodiversity loss - promoting biodiversity as a national natural capital - intensifying the contribution of Greece to preventing the loss of global biodiversity", aiming to prevent all destructive changes caused by the loss of biodiversity by 2050.

Please see Sections I and III for more information.

Aichi Biodiversity Target 18: TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE

Not applicable for Greece.

Aichi Biodiversity Target 19: SHARING INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE

Please see Section III, National Targets 1, 11 and 12.

Aichi Biodiversity Target 20: MOBILIZING RESOURCES FROM ALL SOURCES

For the current reporting period of the Partnership Agreement (PA) 2014-2020 finances inter alia environmental projects.

Projects that have been approved include:

- Drafting Special Environmental Studies, Special Reports and Management Plans for Natura 2000 Sites - €17,359,979.58 - Projected end: 2022
- Specification for the creation and operation of birds' of prey feeding places - €49.674.28 - Projected end: 2019
- Combating the use of poisoned baits - €400,000.00 - Projected end: 2023
- Compilation of a list of invasive species and organization of a methodology for their risk assessment - €150,000.00 - Projected end: 2019

In addition, the projects proposed for implementation within PA 2014-2020 include:

- Monitoring the Conservation Status of Habitats and Species of Community Interest and drafting the 6-year National Report - €11,183,467.64 - Projected end: 2023
- Elaboration and implementation of Action Plans for habitat types and species of Community

interest - €2.000,000.00 - Projected end: 2020
- Mapping of Sensitivity Zones in terms of projects and activities that may cause a nuisance with significant impact on SPAs - €500,000,00 - Projected end: 2020
- Designation of standards and good practices for categories of compensation measures in major infrastructure projects in Natura 2000 areas - €30,000.00 - Projected end: 2020
- Forest Protection / Natural Environment Protection Actions (in cooperation with the Directorate of Forests and Forestry) - €1,000,000.00 - Projected end: 2022
- Management measures to reduce the impact of invasive species - €1,000,000.00 - Projected end: 2023
- Evaluation of existing environmental interpretation infrastructures and design of an integrated system. Drawing directions and guides - €40,000.00 - Projected end: 2021
- Habitat mapping for selected protected species - €120,000.00 - Projected end: 2022

Indicatively, actions that have been approved for funding by PA 2014-2020 with beneficiaries being the Management Bodies for Protected Areas include:
- Actions aimed at improving the conservation status of protected habitats and species (Directives 92/43 / EEC and 2007/147 / EC), whose current conservation status is deemed unsatisfactory or unknown - €20,000,000.00 - Projected end: 2023
- Actions for Ecosystem restoration due to human activity - €10,000,000.00 - Projected end: 2023
- Actions to protect species / habitats of national interest that are proven to be protected - €3,000,000.00 - Projected end: 2023
- Actions to support the local community in relation to restrictions imposed by the implementation of measures to protect areas, species and habitats (wolf or bears and livestock farming, product and service quality marking, rice management protocol, etc.) - €3,000,000.00 - Projected end: 2023
- Actions to identify and operate protected areas (landmark, accessibility setting) - €720,000.00 – Projected End: 2023
- Start-up of 8 new Managing Authorities - €7,000,000.00 - Projected end: 2023
- Public awareness actions - €360,000.00 - Projected end: 2023

The Green Fund has approved financing and signalled the implementation process of the project "Implementation of the National Action Plans for *Neophron percnopterus* and *Anser erythropus* and the Regional Action Plan for *Falco naumanni*" with estimated budget of €804,031.06 (plus 24% VAT) for a five-year period. This specific project aims at preventing extinction, stabilizing the population and improving the conservation status of these species of avifauna.

LIFE-IP 4 NATURA "Integrated Actions for the Conservation and Management of Natura 2000 Sites of Species, Habitats and Ecosystems in Greece" is the first Life Integrated Project (LIFE IP) has been approved for Greece and, at the same time, the largest in time and funding nature program ever taken by the country. Its total budget amounts to about €17 million, co-funded by the European Commission and the Green Fund. Apart from the Ministry of Environment and Energy, other partners include the University of Patras, Democritus University of Thrace, WWF Hellas, Hellenic Ornithological Society, the Region of Crete, the Region of Macedonia and Thrace, the Region of Attica, the Decentralized Administration of Epirus - Macedonia and the Green Fund. The LIFE-IP 4 NATURA project aims to fully enhance the protection of the natural environment in Greece and the country's compliance with the European Law.

Based on the description of your country's contributions to the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, please describe how and to what extent these contributions support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Greece endorsed in 2017 at the highest political level and through a wide social dialogue, a set of eight (8) overarching National Priorities for the SDGs, which are also in line with the new National Growth Strategy adopted by the Greek government in 2018. The Strategy aims at reinvigorating the Greek economy, promoting social well-being and justice without exclusions, ensuring environmental protection and safeguarding the country's unique ecological wealth.

The eight Greek National Priorities for the SDGs encompass all 17 SDGs, and reflect, in a balanced and integrated manner, the three dimensions of sustainable development. They include:

1. Fostering a competitive, innovative and sustainable economic growth (linked to SDGs 9, 8)
2. Promoting full employment and decent work for all (linked to SDG 8)
3. Addressing poverty and social exclusion, and providing universal access to quality health care services (linked to SDGs 1, 2, 3)
4. Reducing social and regional inequalities and ensuring equal opportunities for all (linked to SDGs 5, 10)
5. Providing high-quality and inclusive education (linked to SDG 4)
6. Strengthening the protection and sustainable management of natural capital as a base for social prosperity and transition to a low-carbon economy (linked to SDGs 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15)
7. Building effective, accountable and transparent institutions (linked to SDGs 16, 17)
8. Enhancing open, participatory, democratic processes and promoting partnerships (linked to SDGs 16, 17)

The national contributions to the Aichi Targets, as outlined in this Section, together with reference to Sections II and III where appropriate, tie in to National Priority 6 as outlined above, and to a lesser extent, to Priorities 5, 7 and 8.

SECTION VII. Updated biodiversity country profiles

Biodiversity Facts

Status and trends of biodiversity, including benefits from biodiversity and ecosystem services and functions:

Greece is a Mediterranean country of exceptional biological wealth. It is a mountainous country (66%) with a pronounced island character (9,800 islands, 18,400 km shoreline). The geographical position of the country, its complex topography, its geological and soil diversity, its landscape heterogeneity, and the impressive co-existence of several micro-climatic conditions explain the high biodiversity value of the country and its high degree of endemism, in the context of its geological and evolutionary history. Greece still includes ecosystems of high naturalness as well as cultural landscapes that in combination host an outstanding biological diversity. For instance, Greek flora consists of 5,752 species (6,600 taxa) with 22% of them being endemic (1,278 species), whilst 503 algae and 750 bryophyte taxa have been recorded. Greek fauna is estimated to include 50,000 species, including over 24,731 invertebrate species and 1,273 vertebrate species (630 fish, 22 amphibian, 64 reptile, 442 bird and 115 mammal species) (Source: NCESD/EKPAA*).

In July 2018 the NCESD/EKPAA published a report presenting *inter alia* the biodiversity status in Greece through the analysis of a set of 12 biodiversity indicators which were linked to 6 out of 13 National Targets of the National Strategy for Biodiversity (2014-2029), 4 out of 17 SDGs, the SEBI 2020 indicator set, 8 out of 20 Aichi Targets and 4 out of 6 targets of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020. The indicator set was presented based on the DPSIR system (Drivers, Pressures, State, Impact, Response) and the biodiversity status in Greece was compared to that of the EU.

The report concluded that the biodiversity status in Greece appeared to be generally sufficient compared to that of the rest of Europe. In particular, 7 out of 13 parameters measured in the context of the above-mentioned indicators presented negative trends, as regards the “State” aspect of the DPSIR system. These negative trends were observed in the case of common, farmland and forest bird species, in population terms, as well as in the case of species of Directive 92/43/EEC with unfavourable-inadequate status and unfavourable-bad status. Habitats of Directive 92/43/EEC with unfavourable-bad status as well as the annual rate of land use change, also presented negative trends. On the other hand, the trends for species of Directive 92/43/EEC with favourable status and habitats of Directive

92/43/EEC with favourable status were positive. At the same time, the knowledge of species with unknown status also increased. The short-term population trend of birds of Directive 2009/147/EC did not change. No change was observed in the case of habitats of Directive 92/43/EEC with unfavourable-inadequate status. The knowledge of habitats with unknown status also remained the same over the years.

Moreover, the current Action Plan (2014-2019) of Greece's National Biodiversity Strategy (2014-2029) [NBSAP] comprises actions that may cover the existing gaps of knowledge of biodiversity. The assessment report of the current Action Plan (2014-2019) is due to be delivered in 2020 before the update of the five-year Action Plan by the Department of Biodiversity (Ministry of Environment & Energy).

At the same time, a major environmental Project entitled "LIFE-IP 4 Natura Project", which is in progress and is also co-financed by Greece and the EU, comprises actions of particular interest for ecosystem services (ES) and functions throughout the country. For instance, the 3.1.2. Action entitled "Mapping and assessment of the status of ecosystems and the services they provide", which is included in the current NBSAP, is carried out by this Project and particularly through the A.3. Action entitled "Mapping and assessment of Ecosystems Services (MAES)". The main objective of this Action is the development of the appropriate methodology in order to identify, map and assess the ES in Greece (primarily within, but also outside the Natura 2000 network for enhancing connectivity), and thus create the appropriate baseline datasets for applying site conservation measures that also target ES in real-life management. All available spatial and biodiversity data, Corine Land Cover datasets and various local and regional, production and financial data will be analyzed through a GIS environment, resulting in spatially explicit ES quantification and mapping. Such results constitute a key requirement for the implementation of the ES concept in decision making processes, predominantly nature conservation and management.

Finally, a framework for updating the ecosystem services and maps produced through the project will be introduced to ensure sustainability. Along with A3 Action, C6 Action entitled "Implementing Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystem Services (MAES) at pilot studies" will test and apply the MAES results in selected pilot Natura 2000 sites of four participating Administrative Regions of Greece, where the Management Plans will be implemented. It will thus provide a robust framework for multi-scale assessment of ES using different datasets in exquisitely important areas. These assessments will set conservation objectives, priorities and measures at the selected Natura 2000 site level through

dedicated guidelines. MAES will be used to guide regional and local plans for specific management interventions and capture services directly related to smaller scale ecosystem processes, cultural ecosystem services and values. Within the LIFE-IP 4 Natura Project framework the D4 Action entitled "Monitoring of the project's ecosystem functions" will begin at the end of the 1st phase of the Project.

* National Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development

Available links and websites

NCESD/EKPAA "Greece State of the Environment Report Summary 2018" (English Version) https://ekpaa.ypeka.gr/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Greece-State-of-the-Environment-Report-Summary-2018-English-Version_WEB.pdf

LIFE-IP 4 Project https://edozoume.gr/

Main pressures on and drivers of change to biodiversity (direct and indirect):

The above-mentioned report issued by NCESD/EKPAA in 2018 concluded that trends concerning pressures and threats on species and habitats of European interest as well as the fragmentation of natural and semi-natural ecosystems and areas are still unknown. On the other hand, pressures increased between 2006-2012 and 2015 regarding natural and semi-natural land take. Finally, the ecological footprint of Greece decreased between 2007-2013. This report did not present any indicators involving drivers. Some of these drivers, such as the impact of tourism on natural resources and infrastructure (water, effluent, waste, land, parking areas, etc.), are included in the current Action Plan (2014-2019) of the NBSAP.

Available links and websites

Greece State of the Environment Report Summary 2018 (English Version) https://ekpaa.ypeka.gr/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Greece-State-of-the-Environment-Report-Summary-2018-English-Version_WEB.pdf

National Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan (English Version) http://www.ypeka.gr/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=%2fnY1WSioQWk%3d&tabid=237&language=el-GR

Measures to enhance implementation of the Convention

Implementation of the NBSAP:

Adopted in 2014 by the Ministerial Decision No 40332/2014 of the Ministry of Environment, Energy & Climate Change, Greece's first NBSAP aims to halt biodiversity loss and the degradation of ecosystem services by 2026. The implementation of the Strategy covers the period 2014-2029. It consists of 13 general national targets, under which 39 specific targets have been respectively formulated, to address the following themes: (i) increasing scientific knowledge; (ii) preservation of national natural capital; (iii) national system of protected areas; (iv) conservation of genetic resources; (v) synergistic policies to conserve biodiversity; (vi) conservation of landscape diversity; (vii) biodiversity and climate change; (viii) biodiversity and invasive alien species; (ix) international and transnational conservation; (x) public administration and the protection of biodiversity; (xi) integrating biodiversity conservation in the value system of society; (xii) participation of society in biodiversity conservation; and (xiii) valuation of ecosystem services and promotion of the value of Greek biodiversity.

Greece's 13 General National Targets have been mapped to both Aichi Biodiversity Targets and EU Biodiversity Targets. The Strategy is enacted for 15 years and with the exception of the first Action Plan, which will be reviewed and amended in 2020, all Actions Plans are due to be reviewed and amended every five years. The Ministry of Environment & Energy is the main institution responsible for the implementation of the NBSAP.

Available link

National Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan (English Version)
http://www.ypeka.gr/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=%2fnY1WSioQWk%3d&tabid=237&language=el-GR

Overall actions taken to contribute to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020:

The current Greece's NBSAP (2014-2029) is fully linked to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. A comparative Table of Aichi Biodiversity Targets, EU Biodiversity Targets for 2020 and National Biodiversity Strategy Targets is provided in the Annex of the NBSAP (2014-2029).

Available link

National Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan (English Version)
http://www.ypeka.gr/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=%2fnY1WSioQWk%3d&tabid=237&language=el-GR

Support mechanisms for national implementation (legislation, funding, capacity-building, coordination, mainstreaming, etc.):

The Ministerial Decision No 40332/2014 issued by the –at the time- Ministry of Environment, Energy & Climate Change considered the latter competent for the implementation of the NBSAP, whereas a number of competent authorities were also designated for the implementation of the NBSAP. The Presidential Decree No 132/2017 clearly designates the Department of Biodiversity of the Ministry of Environment & Energy as the competent authority for the implementation and evaluation of the NBSAP.

The National Strategy for Sustainable and Fair Growth 2030 published in July 2018 by the Greek Government constitutes a support mechanism to this direction. The Strategy has incorporated the conclusions of a broad and open round of consultations implemented through the Regional Development Conferences held during 2017-2018. It adopts the holistic way of planning of the Sustainable Development Objectives (SDGs) and combines the three dimensions of growth (economic, social and environmental).

As far as funding is concerned, the Partnership Agreement 2014-2020, which is co-financed by the EU and Greece, supports biodiversity via three major components, namely the Transport Infrastructure, Environment and Sustainable Development Operational Programme, 13 Regional Operational Programmes (ROPs) covering all the country as well as the Rural Development Programme. There also some minor components of the Partnership Agreement 2014-2020, such as the Fisheries & Maritime Operational Programme and Territorial Cooperation Programmes which include biodiversity-oriented actions.

The currently available budget for biodiversity purposes within the Transport Infrastructure, Environment and Sustainable Development Operational Programme amounts to about €56 million. At the same time, the ROPs, which include a wide range of financed activities, provide about €46 million for biodiversity purposes. Finally, the Rural Development Programme contains actions related to biodiversity whose overall budget amounts to about €426 million.

Moreover, the LIFE programme is the EU's funding instrument for the environment and climate action created in 1992. The current funding period 2014-2020 has a budget of €3.4 billion. In Greece a lot of LIFE Projects are currently active, among which LIFE-IP 4 NATURA is the most important nature conservation project over the last decades. It constitutes the first centrally coordinated initiative to implement the Greek Prioritized Action Framework (PAF) on a national regional and local scale also aiming at capacity building. The project has duration of 8 years (2018-2025) with a total budget of €17 million. In addition, the Green Fund, a public body supervised by the Ministry of Environment & Energy, aims at supporting Greece's environmental policy and promoting development through environmental protection and restoration by financing relevant projects.

Available links and websites

Green Fund http://www.prasinotameio.gr/index.php/en/

LIFE Programme https://ec.europa.eu/easme/en/life

National Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan (English Version)
http://www.ypeka.gr/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=%2fnY1WSioQWk%3d&tabid=237&language=el-GR

National Strategy for Sustainable and Fair Growth 2030 (English Version)
https://www.nationalgrowthstrategy.gr/en/

Partnership Agreement 2014-2020 (English Version) https://www.espa.gr/en/Pages/default.aspx

Mechanisms for monitoring and reviewing implementation:

The current Action Plan (2014-2019) comprises some indicative performance indicators. However, a complete performance indicator set is needed to monitor the NBSAP. Such a set is intended to be included in the 2nd Action Plan (2020-2024). The performance of the current Action Plan will be

evaluated in a report to be issued by the Department of Biodiversity in 2020, which is the national competent authority for monitoring and reviewing the implementation of the NBSAP.