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### INFORMATION NOTE

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From: General Secretariat of the Council  
To: Delegations

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Subject: 45th meeting of the Standing Committee of the Convention on the  
Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats  
(Bern Convention) (Strasbourg, France, 8 - 12 December 2025)  
– Statements by the EU and its Member States

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Delegations will find in the Annex, for information, a compilation of statements delivered on behalf of the European Union and its Member States at the abovementioned meeting.

**45th Standing Committee of the Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife  
and Natural Habitats (Strasbourg, France, 8-12 December 2024)**

**– Statements by the EU and its Member States –**

**Agenda Item 1 - Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda**

Mr Chair,

Madam Executive Secretary,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today, we reconvene for the 45<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention. One of the core aims of the Bern Convention is the conservation of wild flora and fauna and the habitats on which they depend across Europe. While the challenge of safeguarding biodiversity is ongoing and while some species and habitats continue to face pressure, others are showing encouraging recovery. The Bern Convention has played a pivotal role in fostering cross-border cooperation and strengthening collective conservation efforts throughout more than four decades.

Before turning to the topics on the agenda, the EU and its Member States would like to express their sincere appreciation for the dedication of the Secretariat and the Bureau in the intersessional period. We acknowledge that preparations to this meeting have not been easy. Although we regret the late circulation of some of the meeting documents, including the draft annotated agenda, we fully recognize the pressure the Secretariat has been under. Ultimately, we are all gathered here with the common goal of delivering on our commitments and implementing the work programme of the Bern Convention effectively.

This meeting agenda includes several items that will be crucial in defining the way forward for the Bern Convention. Work on the implementation of the Strategic Plan for the Bern Convention continues to advance, and we thank the dedicated Working Group for its commitment.

These are interesting times for us working with the Convention, but also for the species listed in its Appendices. In March of this year, the proposal to transfer the grey wolf from Appendix II to Appendix III entered into force. This development prompted discussions across Europe among Parties, stakeholders and NGOs. It has also encouraged reflections on the Appendices and on possible mechanisms to guide further amendments, which is why the Standing Committee at the 44<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee agreed to launch the preliminary work on exploring mechanisms to guide amendments to the Appendices. This remains essential to ensure a coherent approach to addressing conservation efforts for the listed species.

One of the drivers of this discussion was the recent modification of the protection status of the grey wolf. It remains crucial to continuously explore and develop approaches that promote coexistence between people and large carnivores, and we support the ongoing work in this area.

We wish to congratulate the Bern Convention on the 60th anniversary of the European Diploma for protected areas, which was celebrated this year in Spain. We acknowledge the Granada Declaration as a stepping stone for further work in this field.

Finally, we also want to express our appreciation of the work of exploring sustainable financing options for the Bern Convention, as a means to addressing the issue of the financial situation of the Convention, which has been a theme for some years.

The EU and its Member States will do their best to contribute to a successful and productive meeting.

We wish all delegates constructive discussions and positive outcomes.

Thank you, Chair.

## **Agenda item 2.1: Reykjavik process and the environment**

The EU and its Member States take note of the information about the follow-up given to the 4<sup>th</sup> Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe held on 16-17 May 2023 in Reykjavík, Iceland, in particular on the adoption of the Council of Europe Strategy on the Environment, elaborated by the Ad hoc Multidisciplinary Group on the Environment (GME), and the adoption of the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of the Environment through Criminal Law, open for signatures on 3 December 2025.

The EU and its Member States take note of the third implementation of the Reykjavik Declaration and the follow up decisions on the 134<sup>th</sup> session of the Committee of Ministers of 13-14 of May 2025, including the adoption of the Convention on the Protection of the Environment through Criminal Law.

We also take note of the adoption of the Council of Europe Strategy on the Environment and notes that the Committee of Ministers took note of the Action Plan, and entrusted its Deputies with ensuring the implementation, in the light of their decisions of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April 2025<sup>1</sup>.

The EU and its Member States take note of the Terms of Reference of the Ad hoc Multidisciplinary Group of the Environment (GME). We also take note of the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the GME, including the list of items discussed and decisions taken.

The EU and its Member States take note of the Terms of Reference of the Steering Committee on the Environment (CDENV).

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<sup>1</sup>[https://search.coe.int/cm/eng#{%22CoEIdentifier%22:\[%220912594880264e4a%22\],%22sort%22:\[%22CoEValidationDate%20Descending%22\]}](https://search.coe.int/cm/eng#{%22CoEIdentifier%22:[%220912594880264e4a%22],%22sort%22:[%22CoEValidationDate%20Descending%22]})

### **Agenda item 3.1: Financing of the Bern Convention**

The EU and its Member States would like to underline the importance of securing a lasting mechanism for the long-term financing and subsequent functioning of the Bern Convention. The Bern Convention remains a cornerstone of Europe's commitment to nature conservation, and from an EU perspective its strategic importance cannot be overstated. This Convention has laid the foundations for key elements of EU nature legislation, inspiring both the Habitats Directive and the Birds Directive, and remains an important safeguard for this legislation, embedding it into a wider Pan-European context. The Convention also continues to play a vital role in supporting EU accession, helping candidate countries align with our environmental acquis and integrate them into a shared system of biodiversity protection. Above all, the Bern Convention creates a truly continental approach to safeguarding species and habitats, ensuring that conservation efforts transcend borders and contribute to a resilient, interconnected natural heritage for Europe and beyond.

We welcome the intensive efforts of all parties, and in particular of the **Working Group on exploring sustainable financing options for the Bern Convention**, noting however that contradicting legal requirements have so far prevented the achievement of a solution that would satisfy all parties. We would also like to thank the **Bern Convention Secretariat** for the note on Sustainable financing options, which provides a good overview of the current state of this difficult file.

We question the appropriateness of any financing approach that entails a distribution of financial contributions to several Environmental Conventions, noting in particular that while all EU Member States and the EU itself are parties to the Bern Convention, they are not all parties to these other conventions.

We also highlight the limitations of a system of voluntary contributions, noting in particular that several EU Member States cannot provide any voluntary contributions as they do not have, in their national systems, a legal basis for doing so.

We express doubts about the added value of a dedicated COP on the issue of financing, noting in particular its important resource implications.

For these reasons, our most favoured option remains a **Draft Protocol amending the Bern Convention** and we also express our full support for the working group to continue to work on this option in view of elaborating a finalised proposal, for consideration by the meeting of the Bureau of the Convention in September and the 46<sup>th</sup> Standing Committee meeting in December.

We also consider that we should call for a meeting of the European Commission, the Convention Secretariat and other relevant services of the Council of Europe **early next year**, with a view to reach further clarification on the available options as regards the remaining unresolved issues, in particular the European Union financial contribution and voting arrangements. There is a need to ensure that the Council of Europe Directorate of Legal Advice and Public International Law (DLAPIL) as well as the Rapporteur Group on Education, Culture, Sport, Youth and Environment (GR-C) are involved or duly informed about the process, to ensure that any possible challenges are addressed in a timely manner.

The outcome of this meeting will provide guidance for the finalisation of the amending protocol over 2026.

### **Agenda item 3.2: Working group on exploring mechanisms to guide amendments to the appendices of the Bern Convention**

The EU and its Member States welcome the constructive work of the Working Group and strongly support the balanced package of proposals that combines the amendment of Recommendation No. 56 (1997), ad-hoc expert advice, and the exploration of the establishment of a scientific advisory group. While we are fully supportive to an approach that would update Recommendation No. 56 and combine this with ad hoc expert advice, we see rather limited added value and also significant challenges in the idea of establishing a broader scientific advisory group.

First, we underline the importance of updating Recommendation No. 56. The current guidance is too short, incomplete and outdated. A revised Recommendation, to encompass both clear guidance and criteria for amendments is essential to ensure clarity, transparency and consistency across amendments to all three appendices.

We are also particularly supportive of the proposal for **ad-hoc expert advice**, which will allow rapid access to independent, species-specific expertise when necessary and help ensure that Standing Committee decisions are based on robust and objective evidence.

We also see some added value in exploring further the establishment of a **scientific advisory group**, consistent with mechanisms under other multilateral environmental agreements. Such a group could strengthen scientific oversight and improve coherence, in particular if a periodic review of the appendices is considered necessary. At the same time, we recognise that this option would have more substantial resource implications and risks to create redundancies with existing working groups, and therefore requires a very careful assessment.

Finally, the EU and its Member States support mandating the Working Group to continue developing a comprehensive process, incorporating revised criteria, procedures and advisory mechanisms.

It is our view that, as part of that work, the group should consider the establishment of an administrative procedure for submitting proposals for amendments to the appendices, including a definition of the information that needs to be provided for the assessment of the proposal.

We propose a minor change to the draft Terms of Reference of the Working Group as proposed in document T-PVS/Inf(2025)41, specifically in Section III – Composition, to ensure continuity of work of the Group in case its Chair is unable to perform her/his duties. We propose to add the words “and one Vice-Chair”, so the second sentence in this section reads as follows: “The Working Group will select one Chair **and one Vice-Chair** from amongst its members.”

### **Agenda item 3.3: Vision and Strategic Plan for the Bern Convention for the period to 2030**

The EU and its Member States take note of the report. We appreciate the work of the Group during the first half of 2025 as well as the valuable support provided by the independent consultant to enhance the implementation of the Strategic Plan for the Bern Convention.

We note with regret that the second meeting of the Group had to be postponed until 2026 and therefore only limited progress can be reported to this Standing Committee meeting. The EU and its Member States are hopeful that the work will advance next year.

Finally, we note with appreciation the cooperation of this Group with the *Ad hoc* Working Group on Reporting, as this allows for improving synergies and better alignment of monitoring and reporting arrangements under the Bern Convention. We encourage both Groups to continue in this close cooperation.

### **Agenda item 3.4: Revision of the Rules of Procedures of the Bern Convention Standing Committee: State of Play**

The EU and its Member States welcome the work undertaken throughout 2025, which is expected to culminate with the finalisation of a proposal for a revision of the current RoP of the Standing Committee. We would like to request that, given the importance of the RoP and implications of any amendments proposed to these rules, the draft revised version is finalised and submitted for consideration to all Parties at the beginning of next calendar year, to ensure it can be appropriately assessed ahead of the 46<sup>th</sup> meeting of the SC.

### **Agenda item 3.5: Thematic Groups and Working Groups under the Bern Convention – State of Play and Ways Forward**

The EU and its Member States take note of the overview of the thematic Groups of Experts and Working Groups under the Bern Convention.

Further, the EU and its Member States recognize the examples on addressing challenges and strengthening cost efficiency as outlined in the note. We support further consideration of this issue, also in the context of the foreseen updates to the Rules of Procedure of the Standing Committee. Reviewing groups to explore if they should be phased out or merged could be a logical first step. However, it should be discussed on what basis the outphasing or merging of groups will be decided.

Before considering the replacement of thematic expert groups, the criteria for setting thematic priorities should be investigated further. This is in order to ensure clear relevance and added value to the work under the Bern Convention (i.e. avoiding duplication with similar activities under other conventions of platforms) and considering the urgency of the issues to be addressed. The process should remain flexible to respond to new and emerging priorities.

The EU and its Member States wish to emphasize that the creation of thematic and cross-cutting groups to replace or merge thematic expert groups and working groups presents a risk of losing the specificity and added value to the Convention's technical work, where dedicated experts contribute. Replacing these groups with more generalist ones raises the risk of less technical representation in these meetings and a decline in the quality of the work done.

Furthermore, a valuable step would be updating the terms of reference for the Thematic Group of Experts that should remain active and formulating clear expectations on deliverables for both Groups of Experts and Working Groups.

Finally, the EU and its Member States would like to recall the approach taken by the Standing Committee at its meeting last year. After having reviewed the ongoing activities as well as the resources available to the Secretariat, the Standing Committee revised the provisional meeting calendar and provided guidance to maximise efficiency and support the Secretariat with prioritisation. A similar approach could be considered on a regular basis.

## **Agenda item 5.1: Conservation of Birds & IKB**

The EU and its Member States take note of the report from the joint meeting of the CMS Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean (CMS/MIKT) and the Bern Convention and recognizes that 25 countries submitted replies to the Scoreboard 2023 and that the analysis of the replies shows a positive development. The EU and its Member States support the decision from the joint working group on a mid-term assessment to assess progress towards the goal of the Rome Strategic Plan. In regard to the joint working group we would like to take the opportunity to thank Croatia for their offer to host the next meeting of the working group in 2027.

The EU and its Member States further take note of the report of the 8th meeting of the Group of Experts on the conservation of wild birds, including the priority topics proposed by the group for its future work. However, regarding the priority topic on invasive species we have concerns related to the proposed special attention on feral cats. Even though we recognize that feral cats may pose a risk to native bird species as well as a risk of hybridization with forest cats our concerns regard the fact that the definition of feral cat may differ between countries making a common approach difficult and secondly, we have concerns about the risk of confusing feral cats with the protected forest cat if initiatives against feral cats should be recommended. Therefore, great caution should be exercised when discussing and recommending actions. We would therefore ask to amend the point on invasive species in the list of priority topics that the standing committee is asked to take note of, to read:

- invasive species, with special attention to small carnivores. Further, special attention should be given to small islands with seabird breeding populations.

The proposal to prepare a recommendation addressing the effects of persistent environmental pollutants is supported since it will highlight and strengthen the need to reduce the negative impact on birds from persistent environmental pollutants such as lead by implementing efficient regulations across the Parties to the Bern Convention. But we would like to emphasize that special attention should be given to ongoing work under CMS (AEWA and working groups against poisoning, on migratory land birds and on Illegal Killing of Birds) and the EU REACH Regulation in order to avoid duplication of work.

Furthermore, EU and its Member States welcome the prepared guidance tool on good practices for bird conservation in the development of renewable energies. This important work highlights the challenges faced when the climate crisis calls for further development of renewable energies while at the same time this development may have critical impacts on biodiversity. The guidance provides recommendations to counteract these challenges, and the EU and its Members States encourage Parties to make use of the recommendations.

## **Agenda item 5.2: Conservation of Large Carnivores**

The EU and its Member States:

- Take note of the information provided by the Chair of the Group of Experts on Large Carnivores and the Secretariat
- Adopt the Terms of Reference of the Group of Experts on Large Carnivores, and consider endorsing the ToRs and using it as an example for developing similar ToRs for other thematic Groups of Experts.
- Take note of the Range-wide Strategy for the Rescue and Conservation of the Balkan Lynx (*Lynx lynx balcanicus*) 2026–2035 and encourage the range States to actively engage in its implementation.

The EU and its Member States also take note of the report regarding the best practices for management of brown bear and grey wolf in Europe with respect to lethal and non-lethal management measures. We appreciate the work that has been done by the Norwegian Institute for Nature Research in this regard. The document serves as a source of inspiration and a basis for further discussion in dealing with the sensitive issue of sustainable management of brown bear and grey wolf. We especially appreciate the recommendations on taking a holistic view on the management. We also appreciate the abundant examples of best practice in action. This can indeed be helpful as a source for consideration and perhaps even future collaborations in sustainable management.

The EU and its Member States take note of the “Note on wolf monitoring” and the proposal to focus on legal protection status and management measures in 2026.

### **Agenda item 5.3: Amphibians and Reptiles and Invasive Alien Species (IAS)**

The EU and its Member States take note of the reports from the meetings of the Groups of Experts on Amphibians and Reptiles and on IAS as well as from their joint session.

Regarding the topic of invasive alien species, the EU and its Member States note with appreciation the new momentum created this year thanks to the two meetings of the Group, and encourage the experts from all Contracting Parties to actively engage in further work. We also invite the group to elaborate further on the priority topics identified, taking into consideration the ongoing implementation of the EU Regulation on the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species as well as the work of relevant institutions and initiatives. In addition, we reiterate their invitation to the Group to consider the key messages of the summary for policymakers of the Thematic Assessment Report on Invasive Alien Species and Their Control of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services.

On amphibians and reptiles, the EU and its Member States highlight the need of continuous work on preventing and controlling the Bsal chytrid fungus. We note that the Bern Convention, through the implementation of its Recommendation No. 176 (2015), provides an important platform to address the ongoing spread of the disease and promotes cooperation among Contracting Parties in this regard. We also support further work on the proposal to develop Important Herpetofauna Areas and to plan identifying and developing IHAs at the European level and encouraging further activities at the national level.

Finally, we welcome the first joint session of both groups as an important step towards their enhanced cooperation. The EU and its Member States support that joint work should focus on a small number of priority topics in order to be able to deliver tangible and practical outcomes and agree to prioritising the issue of invasive alien pathogens, with particular attention to Bsal, where guidance on pathways management and wildlife trade could be developed.

## **Agenda item 5.4: Action Plan for the Eradication of the Ruddy Duck**

The EU and its Member States recognize that good progress has been made in the eradication of the invasive alien species Ruddy Duck in Europe, despite indications that suggest that on a European scale, the problem persists in 2025. Therefore, we take note of the information presented and support the Bureau's proposal to extend the Action Plan for the Eradication of the Ruddy Duck to 2026. The EU and its Member States furthermore support the proposal to draft a new Action Plan in time for adoption at the 46th Standing Committee meeting in 2026, but underline that this should indeed be subject to the availability of financial and human resources.

### **Agenda item 5.5.1: Emerald Areas of Special Conservation Interest**

#### **on overall progress and strategic direction**

- The EU and Member States welcome the significant work undertaken by GoEPAEN in the last 12 months and acknowledge the progress made in several technical and strategic areas critical for meeting the Bern Convention's Vision and Strategic Plan 2030. We would also like to thank the authorities of Montenegro for having hosted the recent meeting of the GoEPAEN.
- We emphasise the strategic importance of consolidating and strengthening the Emerald Network as a key pillar of the pan-European conservation framework that also includes the Natura 2000 sites network established in the European Union.
- We value the achievements of the EU4Environment *programme* and reaffirm our support to non-EU Contracting Parties in developing and managing their Emerald sites.
- We welcome the proposal for a joint GoEPAEN–Strategic Plan Working Group meeting in 2026 to enhance coordination and ensure the best use of Emerald Network data.
- We reiterate our readiness to continue supporting the development of the Emerald Network and to work collaboratively towards a coherent, resilient, and scientifically robust pan-European ecological network.

**point a) Revision of the Emerald Network Standard Data Form (SDF) and inclusion in Resolution No.5 (1998)**

- The EU and Member States strongly support the adoption of the revised Emerald Network SDF, noting that full alignment with the Natura 2000 SDF will:
  - streamline reporting for countries engaged with both frameworks,
  - improve data interoperability, and
  - enhance the robustness of network-level assessments.
- Harmonisation of methodologies is a major step forward and demonstrates the maturity and progressive alignment of the two networks.

**point b) Criteria for assessing Changes in the Emerald network**

- The EU and Member States strongly support the mandate for the Secretariat to conduct a legal analysis regarding the assessment of negative changes and the potential applicability of legal concepts used under the EU Habitats Directive.
- We consider that legal clarity on these issues will strengthen the governance and resilience of the Emerald Network.

**point c) Criteria for screening, prior assessment and authorisation of potentially harmful projects**

- The EU and Member States welcome the inventory of relevant EIA procedures in protected areas. We encourage Contracting Parties to make full use of the existing body of guidance and best practices identified in this expert study, thereby avoiding duplication of effort and ensuring legal certainty when evaluating potentially harmful projects.
- We underline the need for effective early-stage screening of plans and projects that may affect Emerald sites. We note that early assessments, that take place prior to the detailed planning or authorisation stages, reduce risks, increase transparency, and support informed decision-making. We therefore encourage Contracting Parties to adopt robust screening procedures that allow for timely identification of risks and promote the avoidance of impacts at source.

- In this context, we are also pleased to inform the Standing Committee about an important new development for Emerald sites in the accession candidate countries: to facilitate the transition of these countries to the EU acquis in relation to their energy infrastructure, the European Commission has proposed to transpose certain elements of the Birds and Habitats Directives into the EU Energy Community Treaty. As a reminder, this treaty is an international agreement that extends the EU's energy acquis to non-EU countries, aiming to create a unified, competitive, and secure regional energy grid. The accession countries that are Contracting Parties to this treaty with the European Union are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, (Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244), Moldova, Montenegro, Northern Macedonia, Serbia and Ukraine.
- The Commission proposed to require that projects that can be defined as 'network energy projects', covering both projects for energy transmission and production, comply both with the EU species protection requirements under the Birds and Habitats Directives and, as far as protected areas are concerned, with the requirements of Article 6.2, 3 and 4 of the Habitats Directive. In the absence of a Natura 2000 network in accession countries, this latter requirement would cover those nationally protected areas that are reported through the EEA's NatDA database, Emerald sites and Ramsar Sites.
- This Commission proposal has recently been adopted by the Council and on the agenda for discussion at the meeting of the Ministerial Council of the Energy Ministers of the Contracting Parties on 18 December. The length of the transition period by which the new provision will enter into force is proposed to be five years, subject to the negotiations with the Contracting Parties.
- We consider that, once they enter into force, the new provisions under the EU Energy Community Treaty will provide an additional level of protection to certain species and habitats protected under the Bern Convention, in particular where these projects would take place in Emerald sites, Ramsar Sites, and other nationally designed protected areas: in the case of significant harm to those areas such projects could only be granted subject to the three following conditions all of which have to be complied with: (1) absence of less harmful alternatives, (2) subject to appropriate compensatory measures and (3) if the project must be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

**point d) Draft updated list of adopted Emerald Network sites and draft updated list of candidate Emerald Network sites**

- The EU and Member States express concern about the limited progress in new site designations and database updates. Meeting the 2030 targets will require renewed efforts and stronger engagement at national level.
- We encourage all Contracting Parties to address recurrent data errors, improve habitat coding, and ensure the consistency of site boundaries and management information.

**point e) Update on the support provided to contracting parties to ensure updated databases are submitted to the Bern Convention**

- The EU and Member States welcome the planned developments of the Reportnet3 portal for Emerald Network reporting and encourages all Contracting Parties to engage proactively in the testing phase.
- We consider that high-quality, up-to-date national databases are essential for sound sufficiency assessments and for ensuring accurate monitoring of progress towards the 2030 targets.

Finally, the EU and Member States would welcome any proposal from Contracting Parties to host the 2026 joint meeting of the GoEPAEN and the Working Group on overseeing the implementation of the Vision and Strategic Plan 2030.

**Agenda item 5.5.2: European Diploma for protected areas**

The EU and its Member States:

- Take note of the meeting report of the Group of Specialists, hereunder the list of areas which could benefit from an on-the spot appraisal in 2026;
- Take note of the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the European Diploma (Granada, 21 May 2025) and thank the Spanish authorities for hosting the event;

- Take note of the Granada Declaration adopted on the occasion of the Roundtable of the Managers of the Diploma holding areas (Granada, 21-22 May 2025);
- Welcome the award of the European Diploma to the Sierra Nevada National Park, Nature Park and Biosphere Reserve (Spain) and the renewal of the European Diploma of the Regional Park Gallipoli Cognato (Italy);
- Take note that no on-the-spot appraisal visits are to be carried out in 2025 and that 3 are foreseen in 2026;
- Take note of the need to have additional Specialists in the Group and to follow-up on the call.

The EU and its Member States are thankful to the Group of Specialists.

The EU and its Member States (EU+MS) fully support the Granada Declaration and

encourages all European countries with protected areas of exceptional

European interest to apply for joining the European Diploma.

The EU and its Member States encourage national focal points to appoint new appropriate specialists with expertise in protected area management.

#### **Agenda item 5.6: Reporting under Resolution No. 8 (2012) on the conservation status of species and habitats**

The EU and its Member States take note of the report from the 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the ad-hoc working group on reporting as well as the abridged meeting report of the webinar on Favourable Reference Values, Habitat Condition and Future Prospects. These are topics that are well known to be difficult to interpret, and we would like to thank the organizers, speakers and participants for their contributions to the webinar.

The EU and its Member States strongly invite all non-EU contracting parties to report under Resolution No. 8(2012) by 31 March 2026, using the reporting format and the checklists of habitats and species which have been endorsed in December 2024 by the 44<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee.

The EU and its Member States endorse the draft Terms of reference for the Working Group on Reporting, subject to the following clarification on the scope of this working group: “The Working Group on Reporting will provide a dedicated cooperation platform for preparing the scope, format, methodology, tools of the reporting **by non-EU parties** on the conservation status of species and habitats under Resolution No. 8 (2012).

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