



This is the first of a three-monthly newsletter handed out by the EuMon-consortium. It is meant to inform all subscribers about news concerning monitoring of species and habitats. We will inform you about the different working groups of the EuMon-project, but also about activities in monitoring policy, meetings and initiatives concerning monitoring. We are also open to spread information from monitoring organisations, which should be sent to monitoring@ufz.de. Please, also help EuMon distributing this newsletter and sent it to people likely interested in the topic.

From within EuMon

First of all, EuMon wants to thank the numerous monitoring coordinators, who have contributed to the databases on species and habitat monitoring schemes (DaEuMon; eumon.ckff.si/monitoring) and on the role of volunteers in monitoring organizations (PMN; eumon.ckff.si/wp1/). Up to now, EuMon received 469 filled questionnaires for DaEuMon, and 309 for PMNs. The return rate of questionnaires was ca. 8%. We hope that this newsletter will stimulate monitoring coordinators describing their schemes, thus increasing representativity of the EuMon surveys.

Currently, the monitoring schemes inputted to DaEuMon cover a wide range of species (Fig. 1) and habitats. The animal group monitored most frequently is birds followed by mammals.

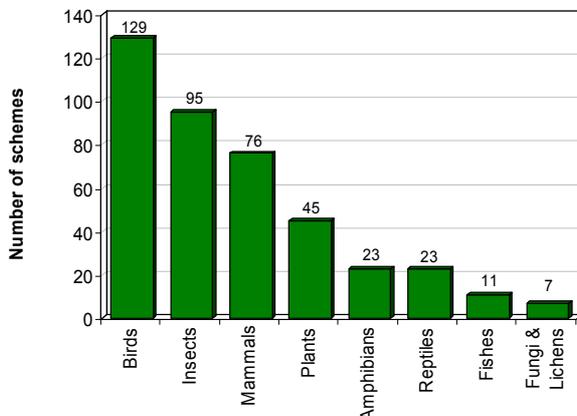


Fig. 1: Monitoring schemes per species group (October 2006).

In the participatory monitoring networks especially terrestrial habitats are monitored, while most of the others receive only little attention (Fig. 2). The analysis of the habitat schemes in DaEuMon has not yet started, but comparing the number of habitat (135) to species schemes inputted (334) shows that in general habitat monitoring receives much less attention.

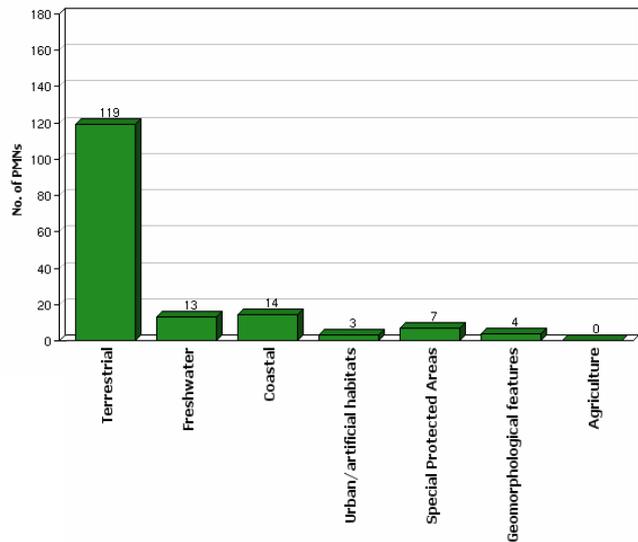


Fig. 2: Number of monitoring schemes per habitat group in PMNs (September 2006).

Interestingly, the site selection bases on expert knowledge in most of the cases, followed by exhaustive sampling (Fig. 3).

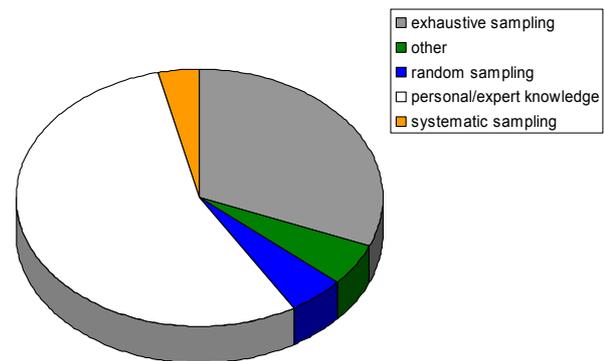


Fig. 3: Sampling method followed to identify sites to be monitored (September 2006).

Questionnaires of both databases remain open and still can be filled in. Our databases aim to be constant sources of information on European Monitoring and negotiations on their future maintenance are on the way. We further network with other European Projects, such as ALARM, ALTERNET and BioScore. Where possible the databases of the different projects will be interlinked so that one can ask e.g. where a certain indicator species is monitored.

Reports from the database

Users and contributors are soon to be able to create reports from the databases. This feature is currently under beta-testing. Further, we will soon implement a search feature to help connecting with monitoring organizations by allowing searching for what is monitored where for how long and by whom. Generally,

the reporting feature could be used as a supportive document for the Habitat Directive report, e.g. illustrating monitoring efforts undertaken in the different European Member States.

The role of volunteers in PMNs

The involvement of volunteers in monitoring is the highest in birds and rather low in plant species (Fig. 4). This reflects the general acceptance and importance of species in the general public.

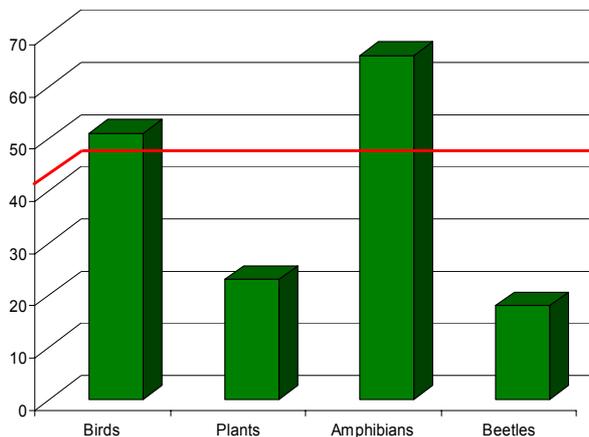


Fig. 4: The proportion of volunteers by species group. The red line indicates the overall average.

Most PMNs are founded rather recently (Fig. 5), likely as an effect from the European initiatives to halt the loss of biodiversity. Further, PMNs organizations note that the number and/or the expertise of volunteers is not sufficient for conducting the necessary work (Fig. 6).

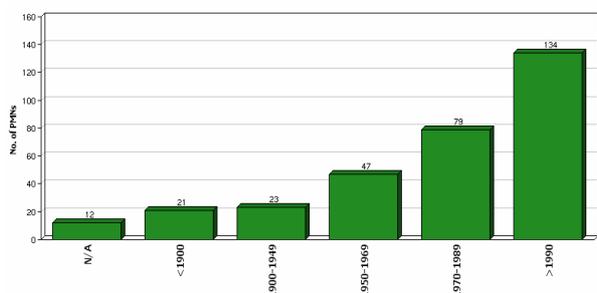


Fig. 5: Founding years of PMNs in Europe.

The success or failure of PMNs depends on a variety of social interactions that are themselves shaped by cultural and historical elements, which vary from region to region, or even from country to country. In order to fully comprehend those underlying factors that enable or disable PMNs to contribute to the efficiency of monitoring programs it is necessary to understand their inner workings. By comparing PMNs from different regions of Europe it will be possible to identify which common factors contribute to their success, or failure, and what factors might be considered culturally specific at a regional level.

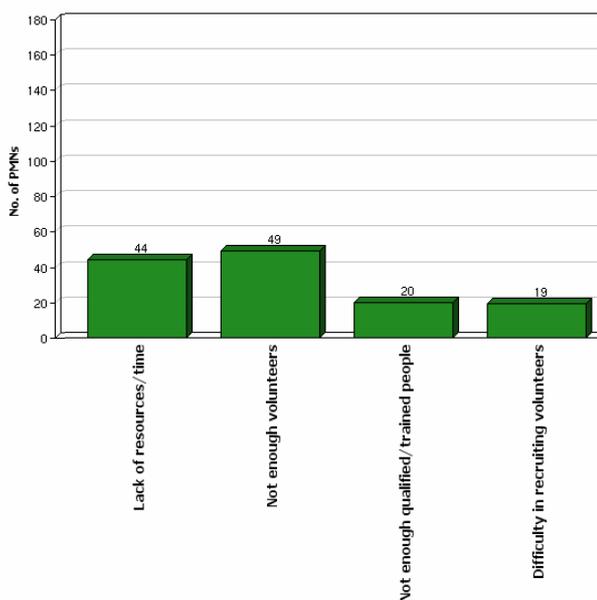


Fig. 6: Reasons, why there are not enough volunteers in PMNs.

Therefore, EuMon conducts ethnographic analyses, which started in December 2005 and will continue until November 2006. The detailed qualitative research is being carried out on four selected PMNs, and a quick assessment of another four PMNs will be undertaken in each of the four European regions. A range of organizations are participating in that part of our research such as BirdLife Slovenia, Tethys Research Institute (Italy), Northumberland and Tyneside Birdclub (U.K.), the U.K. Phenology Network, Akcja Carpatica, WOLF (both Poland), Lithuania Ornithological Society, and the Danish Ornithological Society.

Conferences and meetings

Monitoring the effectiveness of nature conservation programmes, Swiss Federal Research Institute WSL, Switzerland, 3rd -6th of September 2007.

Actions for the 2010 biodiversity target in Europe - how does research contribute to halting the biodiversity loss? EPBRS-meeting, Helsinki, 16th-19th of November 2006.

Workshop on the development of an EU Raptor Monitoring Network to be held in Sicily, Italy from 5th - 7th October 2006.

Some useful web pages

- <http://www.eurosite.org/>
- <http://www.countdown2010.net/>
- <http://www.strategyguide.org/ebmf.html>
- <http://www.unep-wcmc.org/>
- <http://www.biodiversityresearch.net/>
- http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/environment/index_en.htm

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