

# National responsibilities - Habitats

Valerija Babij  
Scientific Research Centre,  
Slovenian Academy of  
Sciences and Arts, Ljubljana



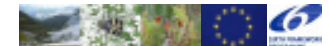
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Marek Sammul

Eduardas Budrys

Bianca Bauch  
Bernd Gruber  
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Klaus Henle

Szabolcs Lengyel  
Zoltan Varga

Valerija Babij



European countries are responsible for conservation of natural and semi-natural habitats.

**Resources** for habitat conservation remain **scarce** and **limited**.



Not all habitats can be conserved to the same extent.



Prioritization is needed :

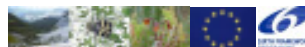
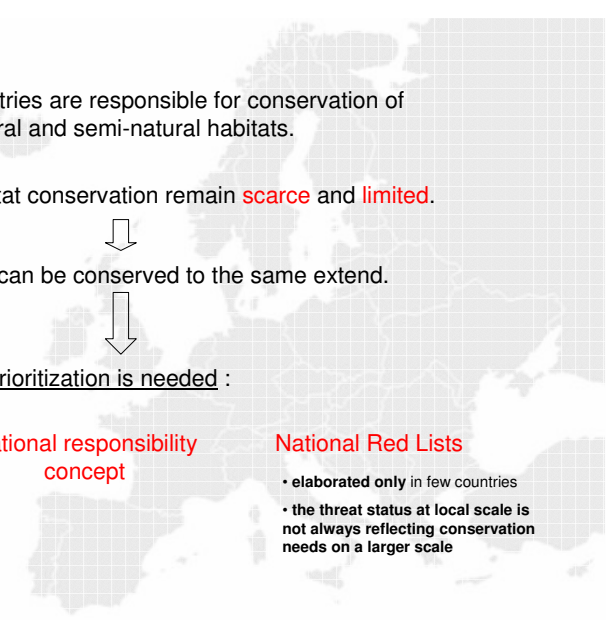
### Habitats Directive

- **uniform obligation to every MS** regardless the portion of habitat global distribution within the nation

### National responsibility concept

### National Red Lists

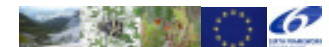
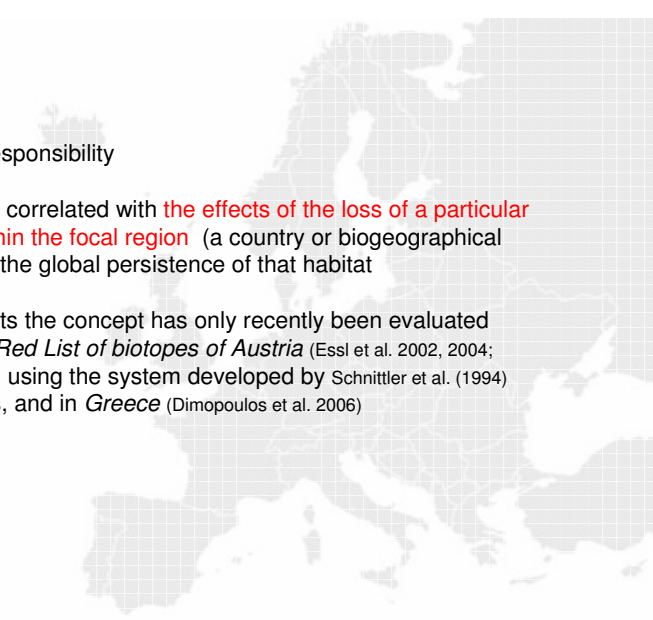
- **elaborated only** in few countries
- **the threat status at local scale is not always reflecting conservation needs on a larger scale**



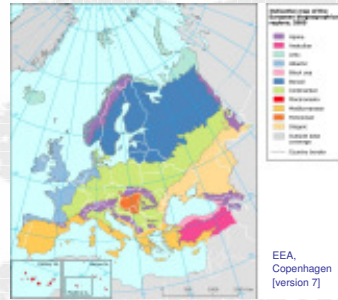
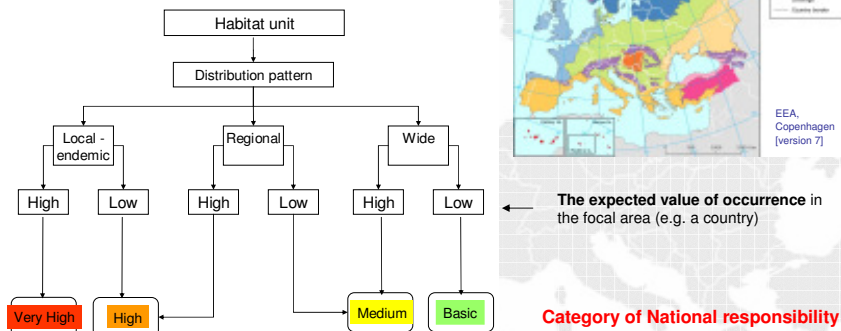
### National responsibility

- is directly correlated with **the effects of the loss of a particular habitat within the focal region** (a country or biogeographical region) on the global persistence of that habitat

- for habitats the concept has only recently been evaluated within the *Red List of biotopes of Austria* (Essl et al. 2002, 2004; Traxler 2005), using the system developed by Schnittler et al. (1994) for species, and in *Greece* (Dimopoulos et al. 2006)



## Determining national responsibilities for habitats



Main problems:

- **differences in denomination of habitats** in different countries and even within countries
- **distribution data availability**: scarce, usually hardly accessible, available on national or regional scales, the quality and scale of the data available

## Testing the National responsibilities method for habitats

EU Code	Habitat type	Distribution pattern	Expected value of occurrence					National responsibility					
			Germany	Lithuania	Estonia	Hungary	Slovenia	Germany	Lithuania	Estonia	Hungary	Slovenia	
6120*	Xeric sand calcareous grasslands	Wide	L	L				Basic	Basic				
6170	Alpine and subalpine calcareous grasslands	Regional	L				L	Medium					Medium
6210	Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) * important orchid sites	Wide	L	L	L	L	L	Basic	Basic	Basic	Basic	Basic	Basic
6240*	Sub-Pannonic steppic grasslands	Wide	L				H	Basic				Medium	
6260*	Pannonic sand steppes	Local					H					Very high	
6280*	Nordic alvar and precambrian calcareous fens	Local				H				Very high			
6530*	Fennoscandian wooded meadows	Regional		L	H			Medium	High				
62A0	Eastern sub-Mediterranean dry grasslands (Scorzoneratalia villosae)	Regional					H						High

## Conclusions

Presented method to determine national responsibilities for the conservation of habitats:

- is **highly comparable between countries** and **applicable to variable scales** (e.g. regions, countries)
- **applicable to different habitats**
- **allows the assessment of national responsibilities for any habitat, provided sufficient data availability**

Combining the **National responsibility categories** with **Annex I of the Habitats Directive** and/or **Red Lists** will allow to **improve the setting of conservation priorities** and the sharing of the limited resources for monitoring and conserving biodiversity.

The method is supposed to **support EU-policy and nature conservation** as it allows conservation decisions to be based not only on the conservation status of habitats but also on the responsibility of an administrative and/or (bio-)geographic entity for the persistence of the habitat.