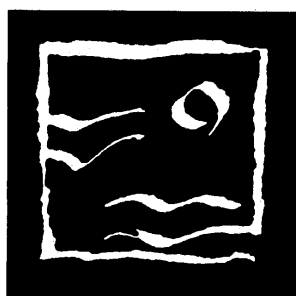


Report on the open public consultation of the 'fitness check' on the Birds and Habitats Directives

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Public consultation questionnaire

The European Commission carried out an open public consultation on the Birds and Habitats Directives between April and July 2015. The consultation was undertaken as part of the wider process to collect evidence and opinion to feed into an overall ‘Fitness Check’ on the two Directives, designed to assess whether the current regulatory framework is proportionate and fit for purpose, and how well the Directives are achieving their objectives.

The online consultation closed on the 26th July after 12 weeks. The questionnaire contained 32 questions and was divided into two parts. Participants had a choice of replying only to the first 14 general questions in Part I, or answering all 32 questions including 18 more detailed questions in Part II (which required a greater understanding of the Directives). All questions were multiple-choice. However, at the end, in a final free text question, participants were offered an opportunity to provide further remarks on any issues they wished to expand upon.

The objective of this consultation, which was reflected in the design of the questions, was to obtain opinions and qualitative insights relating to various aspects of the five key evaluation criteria of the fitness check - effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, relevance and EU added value. The consultation exercise will provide one part of the evidence base for the fitness check¹.

This report on the public consultation presents the analysis undertaken under contract to the European Commission and will feed into a final contractors' report, based on an analysis of all the evidence gathered to support the fitness check. This final report is due in December 2015. The Commission is however conducting further analysis of the public consultation responses, including further analysis of all the free text comments (see Chapter 6), and this will feed into the final conclusions of the fitness check, to be written by the services of the Commission.

An overview of the respondents

The consultation generated an unprecedented level of interest with participants responding from all 28 EU countries and beyond. In total, 552,472 replies were submitted. To date, this is the largest response received by the Commission to an on-line consultation. The greatest number of replies came from participants in Germany and the United Kingdom (each around 100,000 replies), followed by Italy (around 70,000), Spain, Belgium, the Netherlands and France (each around 40,000 replies).

97% of respondents answered only Part I of the questionnaire (535,657 replies). 3% went on also to complete Part II (16,815 replies). The vast majority of replies (547,516) came from individuals. 4,600 replies were received from organisations, of which over half (2,371 replies) came from businesses.

The interests of respondents varied significantly between those who answered Part I of the questionnaire only, and those who also filled in Part II. 93% of respondents to Part I (511,352) stated they were mainly interested or active in ‘nature’. Of the 16,815 respondents who replied to both Part I and Part II, the range of interests was more diverse: 21% stated ‘hunting’, 19% ‘nature’, 17% ‘forestry’, 15% ‘agriculture’ and 5% ‘science’ as their main interest.

At least twelve campaigns from different interest groups were organised to guide respondents through the questionnaire. It has not been possible to quantify their influence on the results in a precise manner

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/fitness_check/index_en.htm

since not all campaigns published a list of suggested replies, and some respondents may have been influenced by campaigns without following a prescribed set of responses. Others may have answered in the same way as the campaigns by coincidence.

The responses in Part I of the questionnaire reflect substantial support for the largest campaign: the Nature Alert campaign. It was organised by a consortium of environmental NGOs and supported a positive view of the Directives, albeit highlighting some issues of implementation. It guided respondents on how to reply to the questions in Part I of the questionnaire only. This campaign claims on its website to have generated 520,325 replies (94% of all replies). According to the results retrieved from the consultation, 505,548 respondents, or 92%², answered exactly as suggested by this campaign, which indicates the very significant extent to which overall responses to Part I reflect the views promoted through this campaign. Those who replied through the Nature Alert campaign indicated that they were individuals interested in 'nature'.

Another significant campaign that has been identified is the Aktionsbündnis Forum Natur AFN campaign which, according to their website represents agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishing interests. It supported a critical view of the Directives, and suggested answers to both Parts I and II of the questionnaire. Its website gives no indication of the number of replies that it generated. However, an analysis of the responses indicates that 6,243 respondents replied exactly as suggested by this campaign, which represents 1.1% of the replies to Part I and 38.2 % of the replies to Part II. 5,880 (94%) of those replies came from Germany, 329 (5%) from Austria and the remaining 34 from other countries. The main interests stated by these respondents were 'agriculture' (1,758), 'forestry' (1,821) and 'hunting' (1,793).

While a number of other campaigns are known to have operated, it has not been possible at this point to estimate the number of replies they generated.

Replies to Part I of the questionnaire

All respondents to the public consultation (552,472) responded to the 14 questions of Part I, which were mandatory. Of these replies, 547,516 were from individuals, 2,371 from businesses, 824 from NGOs and 817 from other organisations. Governments and research institutes submitted 356 and 232 comments each. The definition of these categories is given in the report.

Overall, it is evident that the results of Part I reflect, to a large extent, the responses proposed by the Nature Alert campaign. Nevertheless, the analysis offered in this report, which examines responses by different types of stakeholder (individual, business, NGO, etc.) and by different fields of interest (nature, hunting, forestry, etc.) allows an examination of how different interest groups varied in their opinions.

The vast majority of respondents to Part I stated that, in their view:

- The Birds and Habitats Directives are *important* or *very important* to nature conservation (98%)
- The strategic objectives and approach set out in the Directives are *appropriate* or *very appropriate* for protecting nature in the EU (94%)

² 505,874 respondents gave the same answers as suggested by the campaign; of these, 505,548 registered as individuals with their main field of interest being nature – since these two categories were also automatically filled in by the campaign's system, it can be deduced that the remaining 326 respondents either gave the same answers by chance, or that they independently answered the survey, but followed the suggestions of the campaign.

- The Directives are *effective* or *very effective* in protecting nature (93%)
- The benefits of implementing the Directives *far exceed* the costs (93%)
- Economic, social and cultural concerns, as well as regional and local characteristics are taken into account either very well or enough when implementing the Directives (around 93-94% in each case)
- The EU environmental policy is supportive of the two Nature Directives (94% agree)
- Agriculture and rural development (93%), energy (96%) and transport policies (97%) are not supportive
- Other policy³ areas could contribute more
- The Directives provide *significant* added value over and above that which could be achieved through national or regional legislation (93%)
- The Directives add significant value to the economy (93%)
- The Directives bring additional social benefits (95%)
- There is still a need for EU legislation to protect species and habitats (98%)

The views varied, however, according to the type of respondent. For instance, while most individuals thought the benefits far exceed the costs (94% of the replies submitted by individuals), three quarters (75%) of businesses stated that in their view the costs of implementation far exceed the benefits. This proportion rises to 85% in responses from businesses in the agriculture and forestry sectors.

Businesses also had a different view from individuals as regards economic aspects: 13% of businesses considered that economic concerns had been taken into account in the Directives' implementation, as compared with 94% of individuals who thought they had. As regards the relevance of the Directives, whereas most types of respondents answered they were still needed (98% of individuals, 89% of academic or research institutes, 82% of NGOs, 78% of governments or public authorities and 76% of other organisations), the majority of respondents from business (63%) believed there is no longer a need for EU legislation in this field.

Replies to Part II of the questionnaire

Replying to the 18 questions of Part II was optional and required a greater understanding of the Directives. Only 3% of all respondents (16,815 replies out of a total of 552,472 replies) replied to both Part I and Part II. Of these replies, 13,198 were from individuals, 1,785 from businesses, 660 from NGOs and 491 from other organisations. Governments and research institutes submitted 277 and 155 responses each. 249 replies were submitted by respondents who registered as 'other'.

A higher proportion (44%) of respondents from Germany and Austria stated that their fields of interest were agriculture and forestry, when compared with other countries (14%). This may reflect the impact of certain campaigns organised by these interest groups in the countries concerned, such as the Aktionsbündnis Forum Natur AFN campaign.

Part II of the questionnaire appears to give contrasting views to Part I as regards the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and coherence of the Directives. This may reflect the different composition of respondents between the two parts and the impact of different campaigns.

³ fisheries and maritime, cohesion, industry and enterprise, climate change, health, research and innovation

The majority of respondents to Part II shared the view that:

- The administrative costs associated with the implementation of the Directives are *major* (60%);
- There is *insufficient* funding for implementing the Directives (77%)
- This lack of sufficient funding is *significantly* restricting progress (74%)
- Proper enforcement, effective national coordination, international cooperation, public awareness and guidance have *some* impact on the success of the Directives (87-90%)
- The following elements are *significantly* limiting progress: insufficient stakeholder involvement (65%), ineffective local coordination (62%), gaps in scientific knowledge of species and habitats (61%), unclear wording of the Directives (54%), ineffective EU-level coordination (54%)
- Interactions with other EU laws and policies have caused inefficiencies to *some* extent (58%), or to a *large* extent (27%)

The replies to Part II expressed contrasting views according to the type of stakeholder, their field of interest and their country of origin:

- Most respondents from business (79%), individuals (59%) and government (56%) and half of other organisations or associations (50%) thought the two Directives are *somewhat* effective whereas the majority of NGOs (52%) and research institutes (53%) thought the Directives were *very* effective;
- The majority of respondents from agriculture and forestry (80%) as well as from fishing, angling and hunting (62%) thought that the Directives were *not very* important for safeguarding Europe's biodiversity whereas over half of respondents from industry (construction, extractive industry, transport) thought that they were important (54%). Respondents interested in nature and environment also generally believed that the Directives were *very important* (83%)
- While, in most countries, respondents considered the Directives to be *very* important to safeguarding Europe's biodiversity, 69% of respondents from Germany and 67% from Austria considered that the Directives were *not very important*. This was the answer recommended by the Aktionsbündnis Forum Natur AFN campaign.

Views expressed in the final open question

In total, 10,213 respondents (1.8% of the total of 552,472 replies received) submitted comments in the final open question. Of these, 8,103 were from individuals, 875 from businesses, 449 from NGOs, and 393 from other organisations. Governments and research institutes submitted 143 and 101 comments each. 149 responded as 'other'. A large proportion of comments (43%) came from those interested in nature and environment, followed closely by those interested or active in agriculture, forestry, fishing or hunting (together 37%).

A detailed analysis of these contributions was carried out using stratified random sampling of comments. This stratification was based on a combination of type of respondent and main field of interest, using samples of 10% of replies in each stratum. In total, 1,017 replies were analysed.

One of the most frequent issues raised by all types of respondents (individuals and organisations combined) in the comments sampled was that the Directives' objectives are poorly implemented or enforced. Comments varied from general statements about the lack of enforcement, control or monitoring to more specific comments about poor management of protected areas, lack of coordination or inadequacy of implemented measures. This type of comment featured in 23% of all responses in the sample. Another frequent comment was that the Directives are effective and have contributed to nature protection (17% of comments in the sample).

Among those interested or active in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, 20% commented that socio-economic aspects were not adequately taken into account and that land owners and users, as experts in the use or management of nature or natural resources, were not sufficiently involved in the implementation of the Directives (35%). Furthermore, they often stated (20% in the sample from these interests) that the Nature Directives carry a considerable cost in terms of their implementation, which they felt placed too high a burden on them. They also emphasised that the rules were sometimes too complicated to implement and were not understandable for them (32% of this sample).

Respondents in the field of nature and environment most often commented that the problems of implementation were linked to a lack of enforcement (35% of the sample of this group). There were also a number of comments stating that the Directives have been effective (31% in the sample of comments from these interests) and about the scarcity of financial and human resources (12%). Within this group, 30% of comments submitted made stressed that the Directives had an added value over and above national legislation, and that they should be maintained.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION

In April 2015, the European Commission carried out a public consultation on the EU Birds and Habitats Directives, and their implementation to date. The questionnaire was made available online⁴ in 23 EU languages. The consultation closed on 26 July 2015, after 12 weeks.

The public consultation, which was designed to gather views and opinions on the two Directives, forms part of an overall 'fitness check', that is currently being undertaken by the European Commission. The fitness check is an ex-post assessment of whether the current regulatory framework is proportionate and fit for purpose, and delivering as expected. Specifically, it sets out to assess the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and EU added value of the current legislation.

This report provides an analysis of more than half a million replies to the consultation from individuals and organisations across the EU and beyond. Its findings will be taken into account in the overall Fitness Check report, which is due to be published by the Commission in the first half of 2016.

1.2 THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire contained 32 questions in total and was divided into two parts. Participants had a choice of replying only to the first part or answering also to the second part. Part I (containing 14 questions) was designed for the general public and required only a general knowledge of the Directives. Part II (containing 18 questions) covered similar issues, but in more depth. This part called for a greater understanding of the Directives and their implementation. All questions were multiple choice. However, in a final free text question at the end, respondents were offered an opportunity to provide remarks on any issues they wished to expand upon.

In total, **552,472 replies** were received. All respondents were obliged to answer Part I but they then had a choice of whether or not to reply to the questions in Part II as well. In the end, the vast majority of respondents (535,657) replied to questions in Part I only, whereas 16,815 went on to complete both Part I and Part II.

1.3 THIS REPORT

This report summarises the results of the public consultation and is divided into six sections.

- **Section 1:** summarises the purpose of the public consultation;
- **Section 2:** explains the methodology used in the analysis of the replies;
- **Section 3:** provides an overview of the respondents to the consultation;
- **Section 4:** provides an overview of the replies to questions (1-14) in Part I of the questionnaire;
- **Section 5:** provides an overview of the replies to the more detailed questions (15–32) in Part II of the questionnaire;
- **Section 6:** summarises the analysis of a stratified sample of replies to the final open question.

In annex I, detailed tables are provided based on all the replies to each of the multiple choice questions. Annex II contains a detailed overview of the stratified sample of the comments that were assessed under the final open question.

⁴ Further information on the Fitness Check is available on the Commission's website
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/consultations/nature_fitness_check_en.htm

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 USE OF THE EU SURVEY TOOL

The public consultation on the Nature Directives was carried out using the [EU Survey](#). This is the Commission's online survey management tool, which is used to conduct multilingual online public consultations. It covers all steps of the public consultation process, from the initial design of the questions and the processing and delivery of data, to the publication of the results. The individual results of the consultation were downloaded in Excel format. Problems were encountered during the process, indicating that the EU Survey tool has certain limitations when it comes to dealing with such a large amount of data. These were eventually resolved so that the full data set could be analysed.

2.2 METHODOLOGY USED FOR THE ANALYSIS OF CLOSED QUESTIONS

The answers to the closed questions⁵ were first sorted according to the different multiple choice options available for each question. These were then further broken down and cross-referenced according to different types of respondents (businesses, NGOs, etc.), fields of interest (nature, agriculture, hunting, etc.) and, where appropriate, countries. This breakdown was deemed necessary for two reasons.

Firstly, a large proportion of the replies received to Part I of the questionnaire came from individuals interested in nature, most of whom are likely to have been heavily influenced by the 'Nature Alert' campaign which was run by a consortium of environmental NGOs. It was therefore considered important to present the results in a way that made the opinions of smaller groups visible as well.

Secondly, the objective of this consultation, which is reflected in the design of the questions, was to obtain qualitative insights into various aspects of the fitness check evaluation criteria rather than to simply stimulate a vote-like response. This meant analysing the replies from different types of respondents in order to determine whether certain patterns or trends appeared. The initial set of questions, which asked for some background information on each of the respondents, made this detailed analysis possible.

A detailed analysis could also in principle help to identify the potential influence of various campaigns that had been launched for the purpose of this consultation. However, since it was impossible to identify how many replies had been generated by each of the campaigns or, indeed, which replies came from which campaign in particular, this had limited success. Also, for the most part, it was not possible to know how the various campaigns had been run or to what extent the responses had been standardised, for instance through guidance on suggested answers or through automated tools. In the end, only the most obvious correlations could be identified.

Where a separate analysis of the closed questions was conducted according to the main field of interest or activity of the respondent, those fields were often grouped in order to facilitate the presentation and the interpretation of the results. For example, agriculture AND forestry, nature AND environment, angling AND fishing AND fish farming AND hunting were grouped together. This was done to maintain sample sizes and in order to develop a manageable number of broad groupings. However, it is recognised that this approach has certain limitations as it brings together different types of interest groups. For this reason, the detailed results, according to each individual field of interest or activity, are provided for most questions in the Annex.

⁵ Closed questions are those where people were asked to select from a multiple choice of answers.

The report presents the results mostly in the form of percentages (shares of totals within one group), because this best indicates which answer is the most/least favoured by different groups of respondents. Sometimes however, total numbers are also given in order to illustrate the overall magnitude of the replies from certain groups. Furthermore, row and column totals in absolute numbers were added to each table to show what the percentages refer to. Percentages were rounded up or down to the nearest whole number for ease of comparison. This explains why the row sums may deviate slightly from 100%.

Eight respondents who replied as ‘EU institutions’ were subsequently re-categorised as ‘others’ since, on closer examination, it was clear they did not represent EU institutions and it would have been misleading to present them as such.

Some respondents initially opted to reply to Part II, but finally decided not to complete this section after a few questions. While their replies to Part II were saved in the system they have not been taken into account in the analysis of Part II as their answers were incomplete.

2.3 ANALYSIS OF COMMENTS UNDER THE FINAL OPEN QUESTION

All respondents to the questionnaire had the opportunity to express further comments in the form of a written text in the final open question at the end of the questionnaire. In total, 10,213 respondents submitted comments.

Sampling

The methodology for the analysis of the open question is based on a 10% stratified sample of all answers to the open question. The methodology to draw up this sample required the application of the following steps. Firstly, strata were created as a combination of type of respondents and main fields of interest/activity. 63 strata were created in total.

Type of respondent		Main activities/interest
Business	X	Agriculture and forestry
NGO		Environment and nature
Research		Angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting
Government		Construction, transport and extractive industry
Other organisation/association		Culture and education
Individuals		Recreation and tourism
Others		Science
		Water management
		Energy

The answers in each of these strata were then counted in order to define the sample size and to enable a sample of 10% of comments to be drawn randomly from each (providing in total 1,017 samples). These were placed in a database to facilitate their analysis. The sample sizes can be found in section 6.

The methodology used for the analysis of the open question is based on the concept of qualitative content analysis developed by Philipp Mayring⁶, which is widely used in social research. It is a combination of inductive category development (developing categories by going through the comments) and deductive category application (assigning comments to categories).

⁶ Mayring, Philipp (2000) [‘Qualitative Content Analysis’](#) in: Forum Qualitative Social Research, Volume 1, No.2, Art.20

Thus, all 1,017 comments were analysed in detail (following translation into English) in order to identify common categories of replies for different types of respondents (organisations or individuals). Thereafter, each comment was allocated to one or more of these categories in order to identify the most common (see section 6). For the sake of completeness, a full overview of all comments by category is given in Annex II.

2.4 LIMITATIONS TO THE METHOD AND USE OF RESULTS

There are certain limitations that are inherent to the data collection method. The most relevant are listed below:

- Many replies to Parts I and II were guided by campaigns from different interest groups (see section 3.6) which will have had a major influence on the results. However, it was not possible to identify which individual responses came from each of these campaigns, or to find out how many answers were generated by each campaign. Only general trends could be estimated.
- The Nature Alert Campaign website⁷, for instance, states that they stimulated 520,315 replies out of the total of 552,427 replies to the online public consultation. However, it is impossible to be sure that they all replied as a direct result of the campaign as it is not possible to link individual replies to specific campaigns. Also there is no way of knowing whether the guidance given by the campaigns was actually followed by those who replied to the questionnaire. The same constraints apply to the other campaigns run by other interest groups.
- As with all surveys, the reliability of the results depends also on the honesty of respondent. This is especially important when it comes to questions that are used to identify the different types of respondents (business, individuals...) as well as their fields of interest or activity and their country of residence.
- In an analysis of this kind there is a limit to how far one can determine the reasons why certain respondents reply in a certain way. The study tries to analyse these reasons through linking responses with their interests or field of activity of the respondents and, in some cases, the countries of residence. This can help identify patterns and commonalities among the replies but, as with all multiple choice questions, the analysis can only go so far. The final open question offered respondents an opportunity to explain some of their answers. However, because this question was so broadly phrased, it was rarely used for this purpose.
- As in all public consultations that are conducted by internet, some population groups have a higher degree of access to the consultation than others (e.g., elderly people with no IT access, people not connected to the network). Also, the consultation did not pre-select those who could reply, unlike, for instance, the opinion polls conducted for the Eurobarometer. Instead, the consultation was made widely available to anyone with an interest in the subject and is therefore not statistically representative of the EU population as a whole or of individual Member States.

⁷ This number was published on the Nature Alert website <https://www.naturealert.eu>

3 AN OVERVIEW OF THE RESPONDENTS TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

3.1 THE NUMBER OF REPLIES RECEIVED

The public consultation generated an unprecedented level of interest from a wide range of individuals and organisations from across the EU and beyond. In total, **552,472** replies were received. This is the largest response the Commission has ever received to one of its on-line consultations.

All respondents were required to answer the questions in Part I of the questionnaire, but they then had a choice of whether to also complete Part II. In the end, an overwhelming majority (97%) of respondents answered **only** Part I of the questionnaire (535,657 replies). 3% went on to also answer Part II (16,815 replies).

Table 1, Numbers of replies to Part I and Part II

	Total N° of replies	...of which replied ONLY to Part I	...of which replied also to Part II
N° of replies	552,472	535,657	16,815
% of total	100%	97%	3%

The introduction to the online questionnaire explained that Part II required a greater level of understanding of the Nature Directives than Part I. This was clearly understood by respondents since 96% of those who only answered Part I indicated that they were slightly familiar with the Directives, whereas 88% of those who went on to answer Part II stated they were very familiar or quite familiar with the Directives, (see also [Table 8](#)).

Table 2, Respondents of Part II, familiarity with the Directives

Q2: How familiar are you with EU nature conservation measures?					
	not familiar	slightly familiar	quite familiar	very familiar	total
Birds Directive	2%	11%	26%	62%	16,815
Habitats Directive	1%	9%	25%	65%	16,815
Natura 2000	3%	10%	24%	64%	16,815
Average	2%	10%	25%	63%	16,815
Total (average)	294	1,695	5	10,658	16,815

3.2 DISTRIBUTION OF REPLIES BY COUNTRY

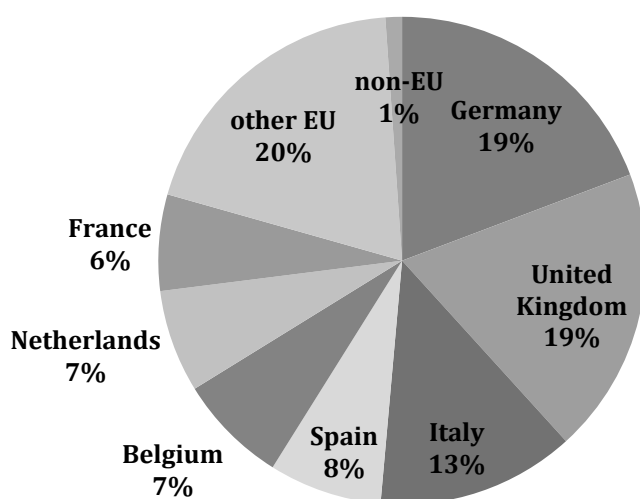
Respondents from all 28 EU countries participated in the consultation. The highest number of replies came from Germany and the UK (each around 100,000 replies), followed by Italy (around 70,000); Spain, Belgium, the Netherlands and France (each around 40,000 replies); Poland and Sweden (each around 10,000 replies). Less than 10,000 replies were received from each of the remaining countries.

Additionally, around 6.000 replies (1%) came from non-EU countries.

Table 3, Replies by country, EU-28 Member States and non-EU countries (in absolute numbers and % of total, by country)

What is your main country of residence or activity?				
Country	Number of replies	% of total	of which replies to Part II	% of total
Germany	106,357	19.3%	9,500	56.5%
United Kingdom	105,033	19.0%	1,800	10.7%
Italy	72,633	13.1%	304	1.8%
Spain	41,439	7.5%	305	1.8%
Belgium	40,262	7.3%	384	2.3%
Netherlands	37,613	6.8%	301	1.8%
France	35,235	6.4%	884	5.3%
Poland	10,569	1.9%	70	0.4%
Sweden	10,197	1.8%	1065	6.3%
Bulgaria	9,265	1.7%	39	0.2%
Czech Republic	8,895	1.6%	174	1.0%
Hungary	8,795	1.6%	90	0.5%
Ireland	7,782	1.4%	119	0.7%
Austria	7,429	1.3%	641	3.8%
Romania	7,102	1.3%	35	0.2%
Slovakia	6,765	1.2%	263	1.6%
Greece	6,387	1.2%	117	0.7%
Denmark	5,350	1.0%	44	0.3%
Portugal	5,294	1.0%	83	0.5%
Finland	3,755	0.7%	387	2.3%
Croatia	2,502	0.5%	15	0.1%
Estonia	1,677	0.3%	9	0.1%
Cyprus	1,571	0.3%	22	0.1%
Slovenia	1,373	0.2%	45	0.3%
Luxembourg	984	0.2%	30	0.2%
Malta	809	0.1%	19	0.1%
Lithuania	693	0.1%	5	0.0%
Latvia	647	0.1%	29	0.2%
total EU-28	546,413	98.9%	16,779	99.8%
non-EU country	6,059	1.1%	36	0.2%
Total	552,472	100.0%	16,815	100.0%

Figure 1, Replies by main country of residence or activity*, as % of total



**EU Member States in which replies were 2% or more of total are presented separately*

3.3 DISTRIBUTION BY TYPE OF RESPONDENT

Respondents were asked to identify themselves according to whether they were replying as an individual, a business, an NGO, an organisation/association other than an NGO, a government/public authority, a European institution or agency⁸, or an academic/research institute. Respondents also had the option to tick “other” if they did not think they fitted into any of the above groups⁹.

The vast majority of replies (547,516 or 99% out of 552,472) came from **individuals**. In total, 4,600 replies (>1% of all 552,472 replies received) were received from **organisations**, of which:

- 49% were from businesses (2,371 replies),
- 17% were from NGOs (824 replies),
- 16% from other organisations/associations (817 replies),
- 7% from governments/public authorities (356 replies),
- 5% from academic/research institutes (232 replies)

Additionally, 356 respondents replied as “other” (but these cannot be safely counted as organisations as they also include replies given in the name of individuals).

The participation rate of organisations compared to individuals was proportionally higher in Part II of the questionnaire than in Part I. Individuals made up over 99% of the replies to Part I (547,516 replies out of a total of 552,472), compared to 78% for Part II (13,198 replies out of a total of 16,815).

Organisations¹⁰, on the other hand, made up less than 1% of the replies to Part I (4,600 replies out of 552,472) compared with around 20% of the replies to Part II (3,368 replies out of 16,815). Respondents categorizing themselves as “other” made up less than 0.1% of the replies to Part I (356 replies) and 1.5% of replies to Part II (249 replies).

Table 4, Replies by main type of respondent (total)

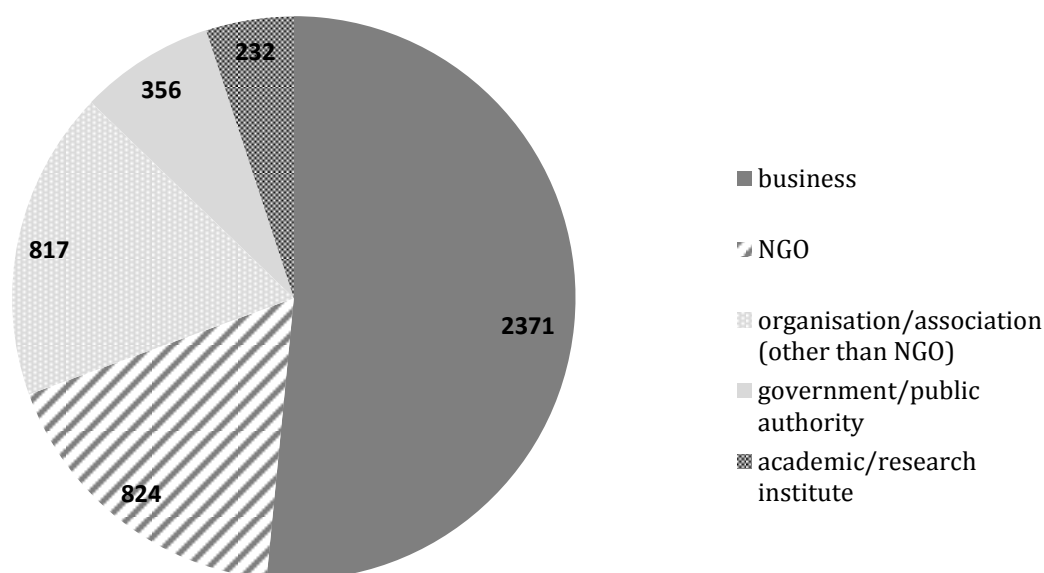
I am replying to this questionnaire as...						
Type of respondent	N° of total replies	% of total	N° respondents who replied ONLY to Part I	% of Part I only	N° respondents who replied to both Parts I and II	% of Part II
Individual	547,516	99.1%	534,318	99.8%	13,198	78.5%
Business	2,371	0.4%	586	0.1%	1,785	10.6%
NGO	824	0.1%	164	0.03%	660	3.9%
Organisation or association (other than NGO)	817	0.1%	326	0.1%	491	2.9%
Government or public authority	356	0.1%	79	0.01%	277	1.6%
Other	356	0.1%	107	0.02%	249	1.5%
Academic/research institute	232	0.04%	77	0.01%	155	0.9%
Total	552,472	100.00%	535,657	100.00%	16,815	100.0%

⁸ As mentioned above, there were only 8 respondents who classified themselves as EU institutions. They were, however, not EU, but national institutions, so they were re-categorized under “other”.

⁹ According to the results, the category “other” includes both respondents who replied under an individual's name and respondents who applied under the name of a group, association or organisation.

¹⁰ This includes businesses, NGOs, organisations/associations other than NGOs, government/public authorities and academic/research institutes

Figure 2, Replies from organisations, by type of organisation



Among those who replied on behalf of business, 66% (1,565 replies) indicated that theirs was a micro-enterprise with less than 10 employees. 18% said they came from a small enterprise with 10-50 employees (425 replies). The remainder was more or less equally divided between large companies (9%, 213 replies) with more than 250 employees and SMEs (8%, 190 replies) with 50-250 employees.

The majority of respondents from business, NGOs and public authorities, said that they operated at a regional (38%) or local level (28%), with a quarter (24%) operating at a national level and 10% at an EU or global level.

More than half of all 552,472 respondents (65%) agreed that their name or that of their organisation could be published.

3.4 DISTRIBUTION BY MAIN FIELD OF ACTIVITY OR INTEREST

Of all the respondents to the public consultation (552,472 replies in total), the large majority stated that their main field of activity or interest was **nature** (93% or 511,352) followed by those active or interested in **hunting** (4% or 23,928).

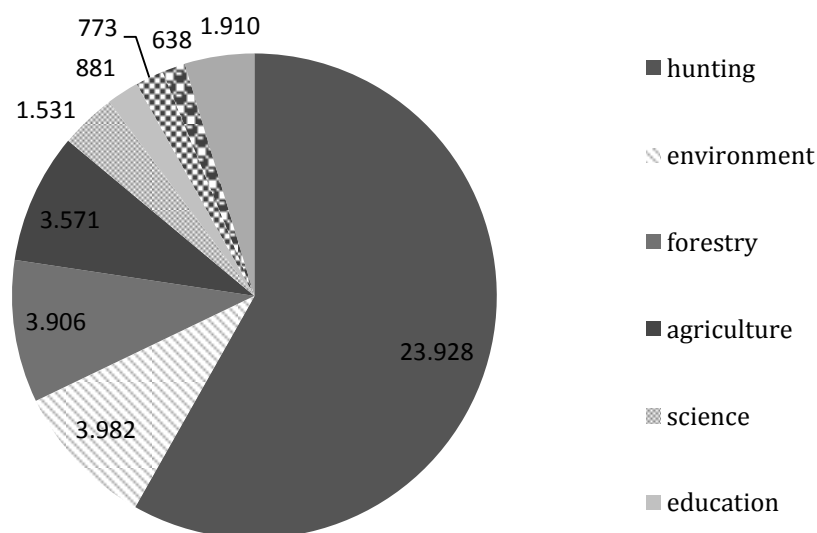
However, the interests of respondents varied greatly between those who answered Part I, and those who also filled in Part II:

- As regards the 552,472 respondents who replied to Part I of the questionnaire: 93% stated they were mainly interested or active in **nature**, while 4% said they were interested or active in **hunting**. Respondents interested in other fields made up less than 1% or less each.
- As regards the 16,815 respondents who also replied to Part II of the questionnaire, the fields of interests were more wide ranging with 21% stating **hunting** as their main interest or activity, 19% **nature**, 17% **forestry**, 15% **agriculture**, 11% **environment** and 5% **science** as their main interest. Each of the other fields of interest/activity made up 2% or less of the total (further details and analyses are given in section 5).

Table 5, Replies by main field of activity/interest of respondent

<i>Which of the following best describes your main field of activity or interest?</i>						
Field of activity/interest	N° of total replies	% of total	N° replies to Part I only	% of Part I only	N° replies to Part II	% of Part II
Nature	511,352	93%	508,137	95%	3,215	19%
Hunting	23,928	4%	20,414	4%	3,514	21%
Environment	3,982	1%	2,075	<0.5%	1,907	11%
Forestry	3,906	1%	1,018	<0.5%	2,888	17%
Agriculture	3,571	1%	1,051	<0.5%	2,520	15%
Science	1,531	<0.5%	771	<0.5%	760	5%
Education	881	<0.5%	617	<0.5%	264	2%
Recreation	773	<0.5%	446	<0.5%	327	2%
Construction & development	638	<0.5%	262	<0.5%	376	2%
Culture	355	<0.5%	250	<0.5%	105	1%
Tourism	281	<0.5%	133	<0.5%	148	1%
Angling	275	<0.5%	105	<0.5%	170	1%
Energy	250	<0.5%	138	<0.5%	112	1%
Extractive industry	239	<0.5%	45	<0.5%	194	1%
Transport	159	<0.5%	76	<0.5%	83	<0.5%
Water management	140	<0.5%	70	<0.5%	70	<0.5%
Fish farming/ associated activities	137	<0.5%	26	<0.5%	111	1%
Fishing (other than angling)	73	<0.5%	22	<0.5%	51	<0.5%
All respondents	552,472	100%	535,657	100%	16,815	100%

Figure 3, Distribution of replies across main field of activity/interest, other than nature* (all respondents)



3.5 COMPARISON BETWEEN TYPE OF RESPONDENT AND FIELD OF ACTIVITY OR INTEREST

As [Table 6](#) shows, the range of fields of interests and activity also varies between types of respondent:

- Those answering as **individuals** stated, for the most part, that they were interested or active in nature (93%, 510,568 replies). This largely reflects the influence of the Nature Alert! campaign which, according to their website, claims to have generated around 520,000 replies (see section 3.6 below). A further 4% (23,496 replies) stated they were active in hunting, 1% (3,390 replies) in environment and 1% (2,968 replies) in forestry.
- Respondents from **businesses** represented mainly the fields of interest or activity of agriculture (40%, 948 replies) and forestry (25%, 604 replies), followed by extractive industries (7%, 161 replies);
- Respondents from **NGOs** were mainly interested or active in nature (41%, 340 replies) and the environment (23%, 189 replies). A further 11% (90 replies) came from NGOs active or interested in hunting;
- Respondents from **organisations/associations other than NGOs** were mainly interested or active in hunting (28%, 232 replies), followed by nature (17%, 141 replies) and the environment (15%, 120 replies);
- Respondents from **government and public authorities** were mainly active in nature (30%, 106 replies), forestry (23%, 82 replies) and the environment (21%, 74 replies). 10% (34 replies) of respondents also stated they were active/interested in construction and development;
- The main areas of interest or activity among respondents from **academic and research institutes** were science (33%, 77 replies), the environment (22%, 51 replies) and nature (20%, 46 replies).
- Finally, respondents who felt they did not belong to any of the above-mentioned categories ("**other**") were mainly active or interested in forestry (26%, 91 replies), hunting (17%, 61 replies), environment (17%, 59 replies) and nature (14%, 49 replies);

Table 6., Distribution of types of respondents across main fields of activity/interest (considering all respondents)

<i>Types of respondent, by main field of activity/interest (as % of total in type of respondent)</i>								
	Individual	Business	NGO	Other organisation or association	Government or public authority	an academic / research institute	Other	Total
Nature	93%	4%	41%	17%	30%	20%	14%	511,352
Hunting	4%	2%	11%	28%	1%	2%	17%	23,928
Environment	1%	4%	23%	15%	21%	22%	17%	3,982
Forestry	1%	25%	8%	10%	23%	7%	26%	3,906
Agriculture	<0.5%	40%	6%	9%	4%	3%	8%	3,571
Science	<0.5%	1%	2%	1%	1%	33%	3%	1,531
Education	<0.5%	1%	2%	1%	<0.5%	8%	4%	882
Recreation	<0.5%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	2%	773
Construction & development	<0.5%	6%	1%	6%	10%	<0.5%	2%	638
Culture	<0.5%	<0.5%	1%	1%	1%	<0.5%	1%	355
Tourism	<0.5%	3%	<0.5%	1%	1%	1%	1%	281
Angling	<0.5%	<0.5%	1%	2%	<0.5%	<0.5%	3%	275
Energy	<0.5%	2%	2%	2%	<0.5%	1%	<0.5%	250
Extractive	<0.5%	7%	<0.5%	3%	1%	<0.5%	<0.5%	239

industry								
Transport	<0.5%	1%	<0.5%	1%	3%	<0.5%	<0.5%	159
Water management	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	2%	<0.5%	1%	140
Fish farming & associated activities	<0.5%	2%	<0.5%	1%	1%	<0.5%	1%	137
Fishing (other than angling)	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	2%	1%	1%	1%	73
All respondents	547,516	2,371	824	817	356	232	348	552,472

All percentages above 10% are marked in bold

3.6 ORGANISED CAMPAIGNS

As already stated above, an important number of replies were stimulated by targeted campaigns that had been prepared by different interest groups. At least twelve such campaigns were identified. It has not been possible to quantify their influence on the results in a precise manner since not all campaigns published a list of suggested replies, and some respondents may have been influenced by campaigns without following a prescribed set of responses. Others may have answered in the same way as the campaigns by coincidence. However, comparing the answer patterns of respondents and the answers in the automated questionnaires of the campaigns, gives an idea of the scale of influence of two campaigns.

The responses in Part I of the questionnaire reflect substantial support for the largest campaign: the Nature Alert campaign. It was organised by a consortium of environmental NGOs and supported a positive view of the Directives, albeit highlighting some issues of implementation. It guided respondents on how to reply to the questions in Part I of the questionnaire only. This campaign claims on its website to have generated 520,325 replies (94% of all replies). According to the results retrieved from the consultation, 505,548 respondents, or 92%¹¹, answered exactly as suggested by this campaign, which indicates the very significant extent to which overall responses to Part I reflect the views promoted through this campaign. Those who replied through the Nature Alert campaign indicated that they were individuals interested in 'nature'.

Another significant campaign that has been identified is the Aktionsbündnis Forum Natur AFN campaign which, according to their website represents agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishing interests. It supported a critical view of the Directives, and suggested answers to both Parts I and II of the questionnaire. Its website gives no indication of the number of replies that it generated. However, an analysis of the responses indicates that 6,243 respondents replied exactly as suggested by this campaign, which represents 1.1% of the replies to Part I and 38.2 % of the replies to Part II. 5,880 (94%) of those replies came from Germany, 329 (5%) from Austria and the remaining 34 from other countries. The main interests stated by these respondents were 'agriculture' (1,758), 'forestry' (1,821) and 'hunting' (1,793). In Part I, these replies made up around 37% of all businesses. In Part II they made up around half of all businesses.

During the period of consultation, the Commission was made aware that other campaigns had been organised by other interest groups as well. But, once again, it was not possible to link individual

¹¹ 505,874 respondents gave the same answers as suggested by the campaign; of these, 505,548 registered as individuals with their main field of interest being nature – since these two categories were also automatically filled in by the campaign's system, it can be deduced that the remaining 326 respondents either gave the same answers by chance, or that they independently answered the survey, but followed the suggestions of the campaign.

replies directly to these campaigns, which means that the extent of their influence remains unknown.

The following campaigns have been identified for this public consultation (in alphabetical order):

- **Aktionsbündnis Forum Natur AFN** – alliance of land owners and users (Germany) <http://natura2000.forum-natur.de/>
- **Boerenbond** - Farmer's association (Flanders, Belgium) <https://www.boerenbond.be/vooraf-gevulde-vragen>
- **Deutscher Bauernverband DBV** – German Farmers' Association (Germany) www.bauernverband.de/fitness-check-natura-2000
- **Elinkeinoelämän keskusliitto EK** – the Confederation of Finnish Industries (Finland)
- **Maa- ja metsätaloustuottajain Keskusliitto MTK** - The Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners (Finland)
- **Nature alert (EU)** <https://www.naturealert.eu/>: Birdlife Europe, the European Environmental Bureau, Friends of the Earth Europe and WWF (EU Member States).
- **Oficina Nacional de la Caza ONC** – National Office for Hunting (Spain) <http://sialacaza.com/>
- **The Woodland Trust** (UK) <http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/get-involved/campaign-with-us/our-campaigns/woods-need-eu/#survey>
- **The Humane Society International** (Europe) http://action.hsi.org/ea-campaign/action.retrievestaticpage.do?ea_static_page_id=4249&utm_source=hsieunews&utm_medium=em070615&utm_campaign=Wildlife15
- **Waldbesitzerverband e. V** - The Union of forest owners (Germany)
- **Waldbauernverband e.V** – the association of forest farmers (Germany): http://www.waldbauernverband.de/2010/cms/upload/pdf-dateien/16_FFH_Eignungscheck_150505.pdf
- **Wirtschaftskammer and Landwirtschaftskammer Österreich** - the Austrian Chamber of commerce and the Chamber of Agriculture (Austria)

4 OVERVIEW OF THE RESULTS TO PART I: GENERAL QUESTIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Part I of the online public consultation started with a series of introductory questions about the respondents. This was followed by 14 questions about the two EU nature Directives, which required only a general understanding of the legislation.

All questions in Part I were compulsory. As already stated above, 552,472 replies were submitted in total, over 99% (547,516 replies) came from individuals, and less than 1% (4,600 replies) came from organisations. The vast majority of individuals were interested or active in nature and appear to have been influenced by the Nature Alert campaign (see description in section 3.6).

This section presents the overall results per question, as well as a breakdown of replies according to type of respondent (i.e. individual, business, non-governmental organisation, organisation or association other than NGO, government or public authority, academic/research institute or other). This was done to render more visible the views of those participants (some 32,000 replies) who had not responded to the questionnaire as a result of the Nature Alert campaign.

At the request of the Commission, a number of replies given by businesses to questions in Part I have been broken down according to their main type of interest or activity to determine whether the replies differ between sectors.

Q1: How important is nature conservation to you?

The vast majority (98%, 540,958 replies) of respondents to this question stated that nature conservation was *very important* to them. 2% (11,122 replies) stated it was *important* whereas less 0.5% stated it was *not very important* (308 replies) or *not important* (88 replies).

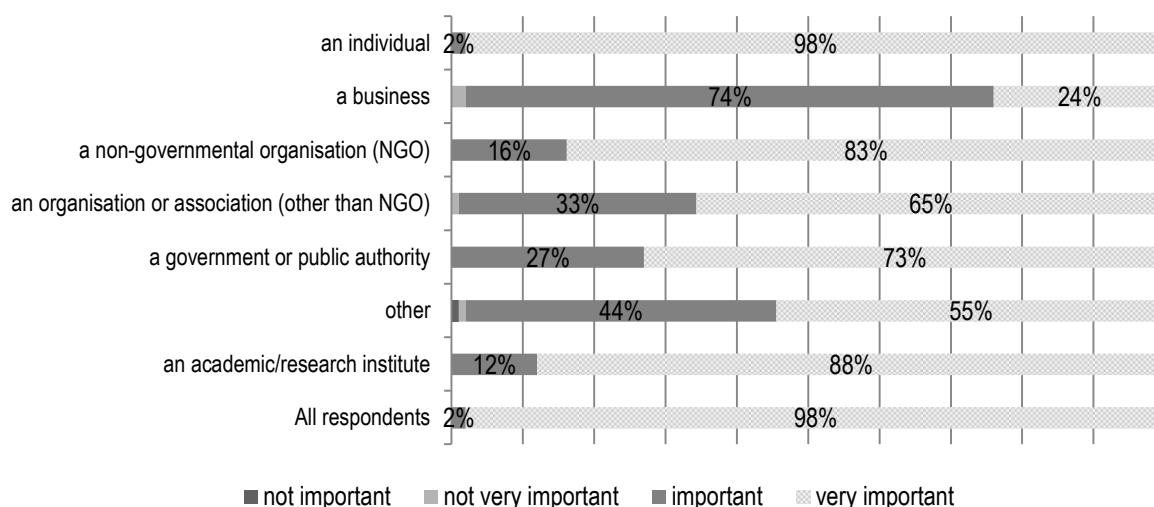
Looking at the replies across the different types of respondents it can be seen that the majority of respondents, except those from business, considered nature conservation to be *very important* to them. In the case of business, three quarters of respondents (74%) stated that nature conservation was *important* to them, rather than *very important* (24%). Nevertheless, less than 0.5% stated that nature conservation was *not important* to them.

Table 7, Q1 by type of respondent

Q1: How important is nature conservation to you?					
	Not important	Not very important	Important	Very important	Total
Individual	<0.5%	<0.5%	2%	98%	547,516
Business	<0.5%	2%	74%	24%	2,371
NGO	<0.5%	0%	16%	83%	824
Organisation or association (other than NGO)	<0.5%	1%	33%	65%	817
Government/ public authority	<0.5%	<0.5%	27%	73%	356
Other	1%	1%	44%	55%	356
Academic/research institute	<0.5%	<0.5%	12%	88%	232
All respondents	<0.5%	<0.5%	2%	98%	552,472
Total all respondents	88	304	11,122	540,958	552,472

Highest percentages are marked in bold

Figure 4, Q1 by type of respondent



Q2: How familiar are you with EU nature conservation measures?

When asked how familiar the respondents were with EU nature conservation measures, the replies were very similar for all three types of measures (Birds Directive, Habitats Directive, Natura 2000 network). They are therefore presented as an average across the three sub-questions in the table below (detailed replies per type of measure can be found in the annex).

Overall, 96% of all respondents stated they were *slightly familiar* with the nature conservation measures compared to 4% who stated they were either *quite familiar* (2%) or *very familiar* with these measures. The level of familiarity was, on the whole, higher among organisations: 65% of respondents from businesses, 62% from government or public authorities, 59% from NGOs, 58% from academic/research institutes and 41% from other organisations or associations stated that they were *very familiar* with the EU nature conservation measures, compared to 2% of individuals.

Table 8, Q2 by type of respondent

Q2: How familiar are you with EU nature conservation measures?					
Average (Birds & Habitats Directives, Natura 2000 Network)	not familiar	slightly familiar	quite familiar	very familiar	Total
Individual	<0.5%	97%	1%	2%	547,516
Business	2%	11%	22%	65%	2,371
NGO	<0.5%	8%	33%	59%	824
Organisation or association (other than NGO)	2%	16%	41%	41%	817
Government or public authority	1%	9%	28%	62%	356
Other	4%	15%	28%	52%	356
Academic/research institute	1%	9%	32%	58%	232
All respondents	<0.5%	96%	2%	2%	552,472
Total	1,494	529,822	8,864	12,292	552,472

Highest percentages are marked in bold

Q3: How important to nature conservation are the Birds and Habitats Directives?

The overwhelming majority of respondents (97%, 537,398 replies) stated that the Birds and Habitats Directives were *very important* to nature conservation. Almost none of the respondents (0.1%) considered the Directives *not* to be important.

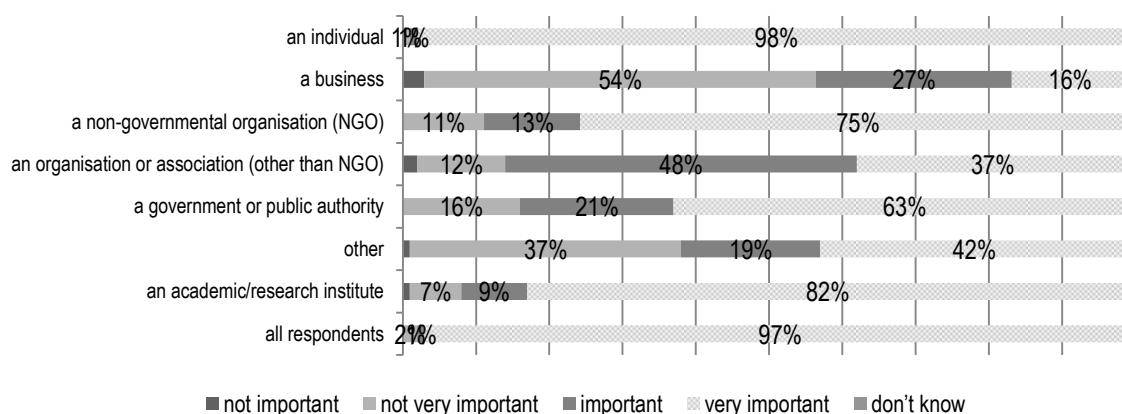
Looking at the replies across the different types of respondents, the majority of individuals (98%), as well as respondents from government or public authorities, NGOs and academic/research institutes (over 60% in each case) also believed the Directives to be *very important* to nature conservation. The percentage drops to 37% for respondents from organisations other than NGOs and to 42% for respondents from the ‘others’ category. In the case of the former, the largest proportion of respondents (48%) thought that the Directives were *important*, rather than *very important*, to nature conservation.

On the other hand, the majority (54%, 1,280 replies) of respondents from business believed the Directives were *not very important* to nature conservation, compared to 27% (640 replies) who considered them to be *important* and 16% (380 replies) who thought them to be *very important*. Only 3% of respondents (71 replies) from businesses and 2% of associations other than NGOs (16 replies) thought the Directives were *not important* to nature conservation.

Table 9, Q3 by type of respondent

Q3: How important to nature conservation are the Birds and Habitats Directives?						
	not important	not very important	important	very important	Don't know	Total
Individual	<0.5%	1%	1%	98%	<0.5%	547,516
Business	3%	54%	27%	16%	1%	2,371
NGO	<0.5%	11%	13%	75%	<0.5%	824
Organisation or association (other than NGO)	2%	12%	48%	37%	1%	817
Government or public authority	<0.5%	16%	21%	63%	<0.5%	356
Other	1%	37%	19%	42%	1%	356
Academic/research institute	1%	7%	9%	82%	1%	232
All respondents	<0.5%	2%	1%	97%	<0.5%	552,472
Total	576	8,508	5,469	537,398	521	552,472

Figure 5, Q3 by type of respondent



Q4&5: Are the Directives' strategic objectives - and the approach set out in the Directives - appropriate for protecting nature in the EU?

Since questions 4 and 5 had similar response rates, they were analysed together. Overall, the large majority of respondents (93%) considered the Directives' strategic objectives, and the approach taken, to be *very appropriate* for protecting nature in the EU, compared to 2% who thought they are *not appropriate*.

Looking at the replies across the different types of respondents, the majority of individuals (94%), academic/research institutes (83%), NGOs (75%), government or public authorities (70%) and other organisations (64%) also believed that the strategic objectives and the approach taken were *appropriate* or *very appropriate*. Of those who responded under the 'other' category, the views were fairly evenly divided between those who thought the strategic objectives were *somewhat appropriate* (47%) and those who thought they were *appropriate* or *very appropriate* (43%).

The majority of respondents from business (66%) considered the strategic objectives and approach taken to be *somewhat appropriate*. A further 11% said they thought the objectives were *not appropriate*. This varied across different business interests. 73% of respondents from business with an interest in agriculture and forestry (1,132 replies) thought the Directives are *somewhat appropriate*. This compares to 78% with an interest in heavy industries (219 replies) and 67% with an interest in fishing and hunting (38 replies). 15% of businesses with an interest in agriculture and forestry and 16% from fishing and hunting considered the Directives were *not appropriate*, compared to only 2% of those with an interest in heavy industries and 1% with an interest in environment and nature.

Table 10, Q4&5 by type of respondent/main field of interest or activity for businesses

Q4&5: Are the Directives' strategic objectives - and the approach set out in the Directives - appropriate for protecting nature in the EU?						
Average: Q 4 & Q 5 ¹²	not appropriate	somewhat appropriate	Appropriate	very appropriate	Don't know	Total
Individual	2%	3%	1%	94%	0%	547,516
Business	11%	66%	12%	10%	1%	2,371
agriculture & forestry	15%	73%	8%	3%		1,552
environment & nature	1%	16%	27%	56%		201
construction, extractive industry, transport	2%	78%	13%	7%		327
fisheries & hunting	16%	67%	12%	5%		99
others	7%	38%	29%	24%		192
NGO	3%	21%	17%	58%	0%	824
Organisation or association (other than NGO)	8%	28%	40%	24%	1%	817
Government or public authority	2%	28%	32%	38%	0%	356
Other	8%	47%	18%	25%	2%	356
Academic/research institute	5%	12%	29%	54%	0%	232
All respondents	2%	4%	1%	93%	0%	552,472
Total	11,493	19,918	5,329	515,203	530	552,472

¹² As figures calculated as averages include decimals, row sums of the figures without decimals may not exactly add up.

Q6: Have the Directives been effective in protecting nature?

Once again, the overwhelming majority of respondents (92%) stated that the Directives have been *very effective* in protecting nature, compared to 6% who thought they were *somewhat effective* and 3% who thought they were *not effective*.

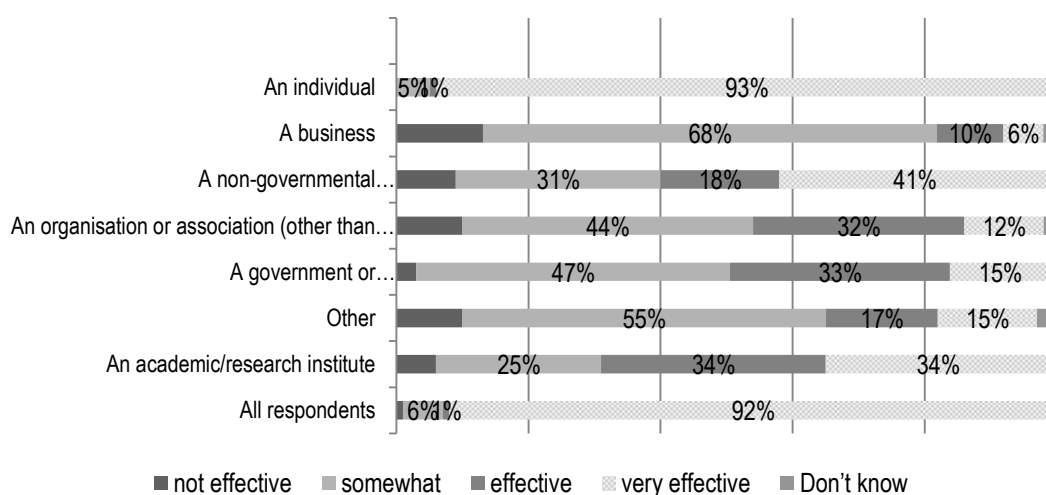
However, this view is reflected only by the majority of individuals (94%). The views of other types of respondents are more varied. For instance, the majority of respondents from government or public authorities and other organisations were equally divided between those who thought they were *effective* and those who thought they were *very effective* (34% each for governments, and 31-32% each for other organisations).

Respondents from NGOs were divided between those who thought they were *somewhat effective* (31%), and those that thought they were *very effective* (41%). The majority of respondents from businesses considered the Directives to be *somewhat effective* (68%), with a further 13% considering them to be *not effective*.

Table 11, Q6 by type of respondent

Q6: Have the Directives been effective in protecting nature?						
	not effective	somewhat effective	Effective	very effective	Don't know	Total
Individual	<0.5%	5%	1%	93%	<0.5%	547,516
Business	13%	68%	10%	6%	2%	2,371
NGO	9%	31%	18%	41%	1%	824
Organisation or association (other than NGO)	10%	44%	32%	12%	2%	817
Government or public authority	3%	47%	33%	15%	1%	356
Other	10%	55%	17%	15%	3%	356
Academic/research institute	6%	25%	34%	34%	1%	232
All respondents	1%	6%	1%	92%	<0.5%	552,472
Total	3,136	31,612	5,706	510,924	1,094	552,472

Figure 6, Q6 by type of respondent



Q6b: If you think the Directives have not been effective or have only been somewhat effective, is this mainly due to: (...)

34,748 respondents out of the total 552,472 replies (6%) stated in the previous question that they thought the Directives are *not effective* or *only somewhat effective*.

When asked why they thought this was the case, 80% (27,720 replies) considered that the lack of effectiveness of the Directives was mainly due to problems inherent in the legislation. A further 10% (3,334 replies) thought it was mainly due to problems with implementation and 3% (2,341 replies) thought it was due to problems with enforcement.

Looking at the replies according to different types of respondents, it can be seen that the majority of individuals (82% or 25,938 respondents) and businesses (70% or 1,350 respondents) who answered this question thought the lack of effectiveness was due to problems inherent in the legislation. On the other hand, the largest share of responses from NGOs (44%), other organisations (40%), government/public authorities (37%) and research institutes (37%) thought the main reason was due to problems with implementation.

Table 12, Q6b by type of respondent

Q6b: If you think the Directives have not been effective or have only been somewhat effective, is this mainly due to:						
	problems inherent in legislation	problems with implementation	problems with enforcement	none of the above	Don't know	Total
Individual	82%	8%	7%	3%	1%	31,552
Business	70%	18%	4%	8%	1%	1,937
Organisation or association (other than NGO)	28%	44%	12%	16%	1%	438
NGO	33%	40%	21%	5%		334
Other	53%	19%	15%	12%		234
Government or public authority	29%	37%	19%	15%		180
Academic/ research institute	32%	37%	29%	3%		73
All respondents	80%	10%	7%	3%	<0.5%	34,748
Total	27,720	3,334	2,341	1,123	230	34,748

Highest percentages are marked in bold

Q7: How important is the Natura 2000 network for protecting threatened species and habitats in the EU?

Respondents were asked how important the Natura 2000 network is in particular for protecting threatened species and habitats in the EU. Again, the vast majority of respondents (94%) considered the network to be *very important*. This is mirrored in the majority of replies from individuals (94%), academic and research institutes (87%), NGOs (81%) and government or public authorities (77%).

Other organisations or associations were more or less equally divided between those who thought it is *very important* (31%), *important* (37%) or *somewhat important* (25%). The majority of businesses (65%) believed it is *somewhat important*, compared to 13% who considered it either *important* or *very important*.

Overall, less than 0.5% of respondents believed the network is *not important* for protecting threatened species and habitats in the EU.

Again, there are differences among businesses according to their specific field of interest or activity (see under “business” in the table below). The detailed results for each business sector can be found in Table 58 in the Annex.

Table 13, Q7 by type of respondent

Q7: How important is the Natura 2000 network for protecting threatened species and habitats in the EU?						
	not important	somewhat important	important	very important	Don't know	Total
Individual	<0.5%	5%	1%	94%	<0.5%	547,516
Business	6%	65%	13%	13%	1%	2,371
agriculture & forestry	9%	73%	14%	3%	1%	1,552
environment & nature		9%	11%	79%		201
construction, extractive industry, transport	1%	80%	8%	11%	1%	327
fisheries & hunting	4%	67%	20%	6%	3%	99
others	5%	43%	16%	31%	5%	192
NGO	2%	17%	12%	69%	1%	824
Government or public authority	1%	21%	24%	53%	1%	356
Other	6%	40%	16%	37%	2%	356
Organisation or association (other than NGO)	6%	25%	37%	31%	1%	817
An academic/research institute	3%	11%	13%	74%	<0.5%	232
All respondents	<0.5%	5%	1%	94%	<0.5%	552,472
Total	1,352	27,704	4,791	517,687	938	552,472

Q8: How do the costs of implementing the Birds and Habitats Directives compare with the benefits from their implementation?

Overall, 93% of respondents thought that the *benefits far exceed the costs*. However, the views varied substantially between different types of respondent. 94% of individuals, 64% of research/academic institutes and 59% of NGOs thought the *benefits far exceed the costs*. The view of associations other than NGOs were more divided, 35% thought that the *costs far exceed the benefits* and 10% thought that the *costs somewhat exceed the benefits*; however, an almost equal share considered the *benefits somewhat* (20%) *or far* (19%) *exceed the costs*. Government or public authorities were also more or less equally divided with a slightly higher number (37%) believing the *benefits exceed the costs* rather than vice versa (28%).

By contrast, 75% of businesses considered that the *costs far exceed the benefits*. 12% of businesses nevertheless considered that the *benefits far exceed the cost* (10%) *or somewhat exceed the costs* (2%). Among respondents classified as ‘other’, the largest share (47%) thought that the *costs far exceed the benefits*, with 26% stating the contrary, that the *benefits far exceed the costs*.

Again, there are differences among businesses according to their specific field of interest or activity. 85% of respondents from agriculture and forestry businesses, 81% from industry¹³ and 70% from fishery and hunting businesses all believe the *costs far exceed the benefits*. On the other hand, the majority of respondents from nature and environment businesses (62%) believed that *benefits far exceed the costs*. (detailed results in [Table 59](#) in Annex).

Table 14, Q8 by type of respondent

Q8: How do the costs of implementing the Birds and Habitats Directives compare with the benefits from their implementation?							
	Benefits far exceed costs	Benefits are somewhat greater than costs	Costs are more or less equal to benefits	Costs are somewhat greater than benefits	Costs far exceed benefits	Don't know	Total
Individual	94%	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	5%	1%	547,516
Business	10%	2%	2%	6%	75%	6%	2,371
agriculture&forestry	3%	1%	1%	6%	85%	3%	1,552
environment&nature	62%	7%	3%	3%	13%	10%	201
construction, extractive industry, transport	7%	2%	1%	3%	81%	7%	327
fisheries&hunting	3%	1%	<0.5%	10%	70%	16%	99
others	24%	3%	3%	11%	48%	11%	192
NGO	59%	7%	2%	4%	19%	8%	824
Organisation or association (other than NGO)	19%	20%	4%	10%	35%	13%	817
Government or public authority	37%	7%	4%	9%	28%	15%	356
Other	26%	9%	2%	5%	47%	10%	356
Academic/research institute	64%	10%	3%	3%	12%	9%	232
All respondents	93%	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	5%	1%	552,472
Total	515,207	2,008	738	1,471	29,407	3,641	552,472

Q9: While the Directives are primarily focused on conserving nature, to what extent have other aspects been taken into account in implementing them?

The table below presents the share of respondents who believed that each of the aspects raised by this question (economic aspects, social concerns, cultural concerns, regional and local characteristics) have been taken into account during the implementation of the Directives, either *enough* or *very well*. Overall, the vast majority of respondents thought this was the case for all of the aspects mentioned.

Looking at the replies according to type of respondents, 94% of individuals, around two thirds of respondents from NGOs and around half of respondents from governments or public authorities also believed that all of these issues have been taken into account, either *enough* or *very well*, when implementing the Directives.

¹³ Construction, extractive industry, transport

On the other hand, around two thirds of organisations other than NGOs and around 80% of businesses believed that each of these aspects have *not been taken* into account, *at all* or *not enough*. Businesses were especially concerned about economic aspects: 64% of respondents considered that economic concerns have *not been taken* into account *at all* in the Directives' implementation compared to 13% who considered they *were taken* into account either *enough* or *very well* (see tables in annex for more detailed analysis).

Table 15, Q9 replies “enough/very well” by type of respondent

Q9: While the Directives are primarily focused on conserving nature, to what extent have the following been taken into account in implementing them?						
% of replies 'enough/very well'	Economic concerns	social concerns	cultural concerns	regional characteristics	Local characteristics	Total
Individual	94%	94%	94%	94%	94%	547,516
Business	13%	21%	21%	17%	15%	2,371
NGO	66%	64%	63%	64%	61%	824
Organisation or association (other than NGO)	29%	36%	36%	32%	27%	817
Government or public authority	51%	56%	54%	57%	50%	356
Other	35%	35%	34%	30%	28%	356
Academic/ research institute	72%	66%	65%	65%	62%	232
All respondents	94%	94%	94%	93%	93%	552,472
Total	517,589	517,435	517,398	516,440	515,782	552,472

Q10: Do the EU policies in the following areas generally support the objectives of the Birds and Habitats Directives?

The replies to this question varied considerably depending on the type of respondent and the policy concerned, and are therefore described individually below.

Overall, the vast majority of all types of respondents (94%) thought the EU environmental policy *was supportive* of the two nature Directives. However, the agriculture and rural development, energy and transport policies were generally considered to be *not supportive*. As for the other policies the majority thought they *could contribute more*.

Table 16, Q10, all respondents

Q10: Do the EU policies in the following areas generally support the objectives of the Birds and Habitats Directives?					
	No	Yes	Could contribute more	Don't know	Total
Agriculture and rural development	93%	2%	5%	<0.5%	552,472
Fisheries and maritime	1%	2%	97%	1%	552,472
Cohesion	4%	2%	93%	1%	552,472
Energy	96%	2%	1%	1%	552,472

Transport	97%	<0.5%	1%	1%	552,472
Environment	<0.5%	94%	5%	<0.5%	552,472
Industry/enterprise	1%	2%	96%	1%	552,472
Climate change	1%	2%	97%	1%	552,472
Health	1%	1%	96%	2%	552,472
Research and innovation	1%	1%	98%	1%	552,472

The overwhelming majority of **individuals** (over 90%) thought that the EU's policies for agriculture & rural development, energy and transport *do not support* the objectives of the two Directives. As for the EU's policies on fisheries and maritime, cohesion, industry & enterprise, climate change, health and research & innovation, over 90% believed that they *could contribute more*. Only the environment policy was thought by individuals to be *supportive* of the objectives of the two Directives.

Respondents from **businesses** held a different view. Overall, the majority considered that most EU policies are *supportive* of the Birds and Habitats Directives, except for transport, health and research & innovation. In particular 74% of respondents thought that the environment policy is *supportive* and 62% thought that the agriculture and rural development policy is *supportive*. A similar number of respondents considered that the climate change policy is *supportive*. On the other hand, 53% thought the transport policy is *not supportive*. In the case of research and innovation, 60% believed it *could contribute more* and, in the case of health, 56% said they *did not know*.

The views amongst **governments and public authorities** were more mixed. 45-48% considered that policies for agriculture and rural development, cohesion, climate change and research & innovation *could contribute more*. For energy, transport and industry/enterprise policies the views were more or less equally divided between those who considered they are *not supportive* and those who thought they *could contribute more*. For the health policy, 45% said they *did not know* whereas 32% said it *could contribute more* to support the Directives.

For **NGOs**, the majority believed that the EU's fisheries, maritime, cohesion, climate change, health and research & innovation policies *could contribute more* to support the two Directives. 47% also felt the industry /enterprise policy *could contribute more*. On the other hand, a large share (48%) believed the agriculture and rural development policy is *not supportive*, with 33% saying it could contribute more. 58% of NGOs also believed the transport policy did not support the Directives' objectives and 27% believed that this policy area could do more to support them. 52% thought the energy policy was not supportive and 28% thought this policy area could do more to support the Directives.

Finally, as regards **organisations other than NGOs**, again only the EU environment policy was considered by the majority to be *supportive* of the two Directives. 45-47% believed the EU's energy and transport policies were *not supportive* and 41-50% considered the EU's cohesion, industry/enterprise, climate change and research & innovation policies *could contribute more*. Regarding agriculture and rural development, 39% considered it was *not supportive*, compared to 27% who thought it *could do more*. As far as the health policy is concerned, 39% believed it *could contribute more* and 32% said they *did not know*.

Table 17, Q10 by type of respondents

Q10: Do the EU policies in the following areas generally support the objectives of the Birds and Habitats Directives?						
	INDIVIDUALS (547,516)			BUSINESS (2,371)		
	No	Yes	could do more	No	Yes	could do more
Agriculture and rural development	94%	1%	5%	14%	62%	14%
Fisheries and maritime	1%	1%	97%	8%	52%	13%
Cohesion	4%	1%	94%	8%	59%	20%
Energy	97%	1%	1%	17%	60%	12%
Transport	98%	<0.5%	1%	53%	19%	16%
Environment	<0.5%	95%	5%	6%	74%	16%
Industry/enterprise	1%	1%	97%	17%	60%	13%
Climate change	1%	1%	97%	13%	63%	15%
Health	1%	<0.5%	97%	10%	20%	14%
Research & innovation	<0.5%	<0.5%	98%	17%	10%	60%
	GOVERNMENT (356)			NGOS (824)		
	No	Yes	could do more	No	Yes	could do more
Agriculture and rural development	24%	26%	46%	48%	18%	33%
Fisheries and maritime	12%	17%	35%	11%	15%	58%
Cohesion	10%	21%	46%	10%	14%	63%
Energy	37%	14%	30%	52%	12%	28%
Transport	42%	5%	35%	58%	4%	27%
Environment	5%	52%	37%	5%	67%	27%
Industry/enterprise	32%	11%	34%	25%	12%	47%
Climate change	20%	22%	45%	12%	18%	65%
Health	15%	8%	32%	11%	7%	55%
Research & innovation	9%	17%	48%	7%	9%	70%

Q11: To what extent have the Directives provided more value than could have been achieved through national or regional laws in this area?

The large majority of respondents (93%) thought the two Directives provided *significant* added value. This was the case for the majority of replies from individuals (94%), as well as respondents from academic and research institutes (76%), NGOs (65%) and government or public authorities (51%).

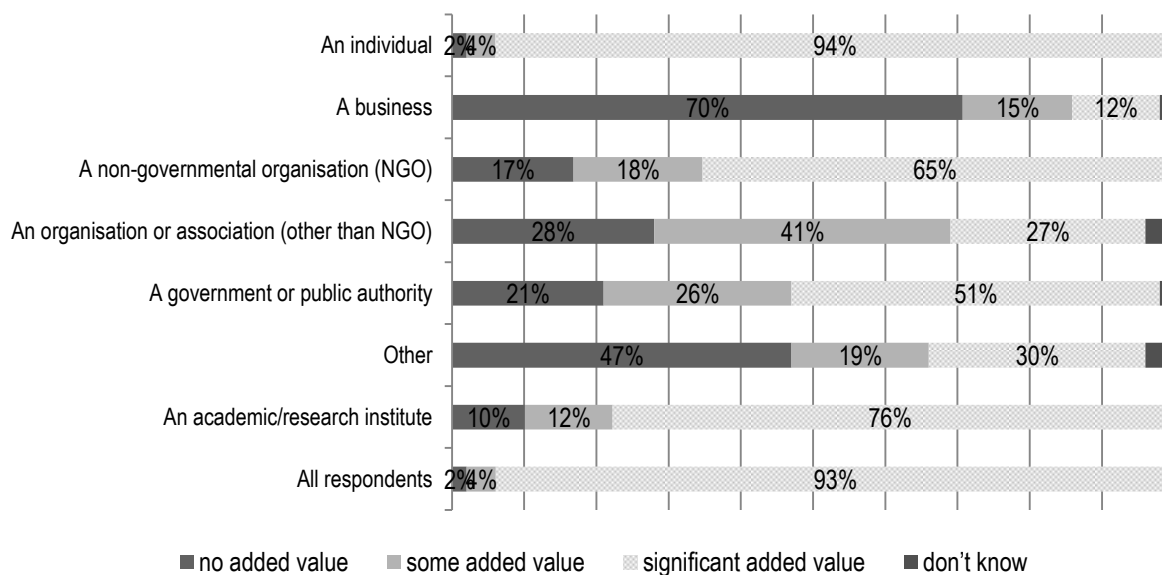
41% of the respondents from other organisations believed the Directives had *some* added value. 27% believed they had *significant* added value, but, at the same time, 28% thought they had *no* added value. By contrast, the large majority of businesses (70%) believed the two Directives had *no* added value. Again, there is a variation between business sectors as evidenced in previous questions.

When looking only at those respondents from businesses that said that the Directives had “no added value”, it can be seen that the majority (57%) have an interest in agriculture and forestry and are from Germany, a further 8% are have an interest in agriculture and are from Belgium, and 7% are from businesses, mainly involved in forestry in Austria (see detailed results in Table 60 in the Annex).

Table 18, Q11 by type of respondent

Q11: To what extent have the Directives provided more value than could have been achieved through national or regional laws in this area?					
	no added value	some added value	significant added value	Don't know	Total
Individual	2%	4%	94%	<0.5%	547,516
Business	70%	15%	12%	2%	2,371
Agriculture & forestry	82%	13%	2%	2%	1,552
Environment & nature	8%	14%	76%	1%	201
construction, extractive industry, transport	71%	17%	11%	1%	327
Fisheries & hunting	76%	17%	2%	5%	99
others	32%	33%	31%	4%	192
NGO	17%	18%	65%	1%	824
An organisation or association (other than NGO)	28%	41%	27%	4%	817
Government or public authority	21%	26%	51%	2%	356
Other	47%	19%	30%	4%	356
Academic/research institute	10%	12%	76%	1%	232
All respondents	2%	4%	93%	0%	552,472
Total	11,545	23,201	516,120	1,606	552,472

Figure 7, Q11 by type of respondent



Q12: To what extent have the Directives added value to the economy (e.g. job creation, business opportunities linked to Natura 2000)

Overall, 93% of respondents believed that the Directives have added *significant* value to the economy. However, this view is only reflected in the majority of the replies given by individuals (93%), and to a much lesser extent by NGOs (44%) and the academic institutes (41%).

The respondents from government or public authorities, and organisations other than NGOs, were more or less equally divided between those who thought there was *no* added value (37% and 42% respectively) and those who believed it had *some* added value (36% and 39% respectively). On the other hand, the large majority of respondents from business (79%) thought the Directives brought *no* added value to the economy. Similar differences between business sectors can be seen as for the previous questions.

Amongst respondents who believed the Directives have *no* added value to the economy (30,635 replies), the largest share were active or interested in hunting in Spain (17,908) followed by those active or interested in agriculture, forestry or hunting in Germany (6,503).

Table 19, Q12 by type of respondent

Q12: To what extent have the Directives added value to the economy (eg job creation, business opportunities linked to Natura 2000)					
	no added value	some added value	significant added value	Don't know	Total
Individual	5%	1%	93%	<0.5%	547,516
Business	79%	12%	6%	3%	2,371
agriculture&forestry	91%	6%	1%	3%	1,552
environment&nature	12%	41%	40%	7%	201
construction, extractive industry, transport	80%	15%	5%	<0.5%	327
Fisheries & hunting	88%	4%	<0.5%	8%	99
others	43%	31%	16%	10%	192
NGO	22%	27%	44%	7%	824
Organisation or association (other than NGO)	42%	39%	13%	6%	817
Government or public authority	37%	36%	19%	9%	356
Other	52%	19%	20%	9%	356
Academic/research institute	16%	38%	41%	5%	232
All respondents	6%	1%	93%	1%	552,472
Total	30,635	6,803	512,076	2,958	552,472

Q13: To what extent have the Directives brought additional social benefits (eg health, culture, recreation, education)?

On the whole, the respondents' views were more positive about the Directives' additional social benefits. 95% of all respondents considered that they brought either *some* or *significant* additional social benefits. This includes 94% of individuals who felt the Directives' added social value to be *significant*. The majority of academic and research institutes and NGOs also considered them to be either *significant* (58% and 53% respectively) or of *some* added value (29% and 34% respectively).

The majority of respondents from business (56%), and a sizeable number of respondents from governments and public authorities (46%) and associations other than NGOs (44%) also believed they had *some* added social value, even if a further third of businesses (33%) and 32% of other organisations or associations thought they brought *no* added value.

Table 20, Q13 by type of respondent

Q13: To what extent have the Directives brought additional social benefits (eg health, culture, recreation, education)?					
	no added value	some added value	significant added value	Don't know	Total
Individual	4%	2%	94%	<0.5%	547,516
Business	33%	56%	8%	3%	2,371
NGO	11%	34%	53%	2%	824
Organisation or association (other than NGO)	32%	44%	17%	7%	817
Government or public authority	19%	46%	28%	6%	356
Other	21%	51%	26%	3%	356
Academic/research institute	9%	29%	58%	3%	232
All respondents	4%	2%	93%	0%	552,472
Total	23,055	13,170	514,414	1,833	552,472

Q14: Is there still a need for EU legislation to protect species and habitats?

An overwhelming majority (98%) of respondents considered that there is still a need for EU legislation. This was reflected in the replies given by most types of respondents, including the large majority of individuals (98%), academic or research institutes (89%), NGOs (82%), governments or public authorities (78%) and other organisations or associations (76%).

Only respondents from businesses had a different view; the majority (63%) considered there is no longer a need for EU legislation to protect species and habitats. Nevertheless, around a third (35%) did believe there is still a need.

Among businesses, a large majority of respondents from agriculture and forestry, as well as from fisheries and hunting (84 and 72% respectively) thought that there is no need for EU legislation anymore. On the other hand, a large majority of respondents from the industry¹⁴ sector (87%) thought that there is still a need for EU legislation. 92% of businesses involved in nature and environment also thought that there is still a need for EU legislation.–For detailed results, see [Table 62](#) in the Annex.

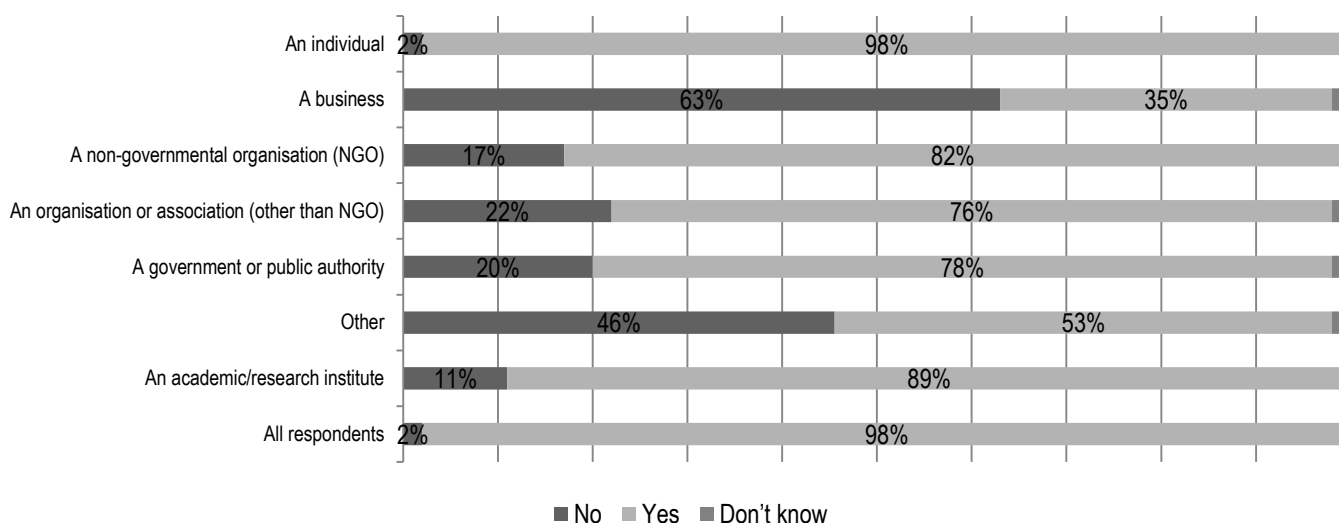
Table 21, Q14 by type of respondent

Q14: Is there still a need for EU legislation to protect species and habitats?				
	No	Yes	Don't know	Total
Individual	2%	98%	<0.5%	547,516
Business	63%	35%	2%	2,371
agriculture&forestry	84%	14%	2%	1,552
environment&nature	8%	92%	0%	201

¹⁴ Construction, extractive industry, transport

Q14: Is there still a need for EU legislation to protect species and habitats?				
	No	Yes	Don't know	Total
construction, extractive industry, transport	11%	87%	2%	327
fisheries&hunting	72%	24%	4%	99
others	35%	62%	3%	192
NGO	17%	82%	1%	824
Organisation or association (other than NGO)	22%	76%	2%	817
government or public authority	20%	78%	2%	356
Other	46%	53%	2%	356
Academic/research institute	11%	89%	<0.5%	232
All respondents	2%	98%	<0.5%	552,472
Total	11,803	540,129	540	552,472

Figure 8, Q14 by type of respondent



4.2 CONCLUSIONS

All questions in Part I were compulsory. 552,472 replies were received in total. Over 99% (547,516 replies) came from individuals, with less than 1% (4,600 replies) coming from organisations. Most individuals stated they were interested or active in nature and appear to have been influenced by the Nature Alert campaign.

The vast majority of respondents to Part I stated that, in their view:

- The Birds and Habitats Directives are *important* or *very important* to nature conservation (98%)
- The strategic objectives and approach set out in the Directives are *appropriate* or *very appropriate* for protecting nature in the EU (94%)
- The Directives are *effective* or *very effective* in protecting nature (93%)
- The benefits of implementing the Directives *far exceed* the costs (93%)
- Economic, social and cultural concerns, as well as regional and local characteristics are taken

into account either very well or enough when implementing the Directives (around 93-94% in each case)

- The EU environmental policy is supportive of the two nature Directives (94% agree)
- agriculture and rural development (93%), energy (96%) and transport policies (97%) are not supportive
- Other policy¹⁵ areas could contribute more
- The Directives provide *significant* added value over and above that which could be achieved through national or regional legislation (93%)
- The Directives add significant value to the economy (93%)
- The Directives bring additional social benefits (95%)
- There is still a need for EU legislation to protect species and habitats (98%)

The views varied, however, according to the type of respondent. For instance, while most individuals thought the benefits far exceed the costs (94% of the replies submitted by individuals), three quarters (75%) of businesses stated that in their view the costs of implementation far exceed the benefits. This proportion rises to 85% in responses from businesses in the agriculture and forestry sectors.

Businesses also had a different view from individuals as regards economic aspects: 13% of businesses considered that economic concerns had not been taken into account in the Directives' implementation, as compared with 94% of individuals who thought they had. As regards the relevance of the Directives, whereas most types of respondents answered they were still needed (98% of individuals, 89% of academic or research institutes, 82% of NGOs, 78% of governments or public authorities and 76% of other organisations), the majority of respondents from business (63%) believed there is no longer a need for EU legislation in this field.

Overall, it is evident that the results to Part I reflect, in general, the responses proposed by the Nature Alert Campaign. Nevertheless, the analysis offered in this report, which examines responses by different types of stakeholder (individual, business, NGO etc.) and by different field of interest (nature, hunting, forestry etc.) allows an examination of how different constituencies of interest varied in their opinions.

¹⁵ fisheries and maritime, cohesion, industry and enterprise, climate change, health, research and innovation

5 OVERVIEW OF THE RESULTS TO PART II: SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Part II of the public consultation contained 18 questions and required some understanding of the Directives and their implementation. It covered similar issues to Part I but in greater detail, focusing specifically on questions related to the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and EU added value of the two Directives.¹⁶

Replying to Part II was not compulsory, but they could only be completed by respondents who had already filled in Part I. Respondents did not however have the option of answering only Part II. As already stated above, 3% of respondents (16,815 replies out of 552,472) went on to complete Part II.

This section presents the overall results per question, as well as a breakdown of replies according to type of respondent and, where considered relevant, field of interest or country. As in Part I, the results in Part II are also likely to have been influenced by the various campaigns.

5.2 DISTRIBUTION OF REPLIES

5.2.1 Distribution of replies by country

Respondents from all 28 Member States participated in Part II. The majority came from Germany (9,500 replies, 56%) followed by UK (1,800 replies, 11%), Sweden (1,065 replies, 6%), France (884 replies, 5%) and Austria (641 replies, 4%) (see [Table 3](#)). Other countries provided less than 2% of the replies each.

Germany accounted for over half of the replies (56%) to Part II, compared to 19% in Part I. There are also proportionally fewer respondents from Italy Spain, Belgium and the Netherlands in Part II as compared to Part I. In the case of Italy the share went down from 13% in Part I to under 2% in Part II.

On the other hand, the share of respondents from Sweden and Austria increased notably in Part II. In the case of the former it went up from 2% in Part I to 6% in Part II, and in the case of the latter from just over 1% in Part I to almost 4% in Part II. Replies from Finland also increased noticeably (from 0.7% in Part I to 2.3% in Part II). The response rate for France remained more or less the same for both Part I and II. Finally, there was very little participation in Part II from non-EU countries (only 36 respondents or 0.2%).

Table 22, by country and type of respondent

	Business	Government or public authority	NGO	Academic/research institute	Individual	Organisation/association (other than NGO)	Other	Total
Germany	1,311	148	291	52	7,388	162	148	9,500
United Kingdom	71	18	58	11	1,588	46	8	1,800
Sweden	46	8	24	3	962	17	5	1,065
France	22	33	33	11	697	59	29	884
Austria	176	9	15	3	406	21	11	641

¹⁶ Regarding the summary tables provided in this section, it should be noted that the rows do not always necessarily add up to 100% since, in all cases, the percentages have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole number.

	Business	Government or public authority	NGO	Academic/research institute	Individual	Organisation/association (other than NGO)	Other	Total
Finland	15	1	26	8	318	18	1	387
Belgium	23	4	35	11	285	22	4	384
Spain	13	8	23	8	204	45	4	305
Italy	11	12	8	7	215	35	16	304
Netherlands	22	6	15	10	216	25	7	301
Slovakia	14		1		234	13	1	263
Czech Republic	6	6	20	5	131	4	2	174
Ireland	8	5	11	3	87	4	1	119
Greece	5	4	12	6	82	3	5	117
Hungary	4	3	14	3	64		2	90
Portugal	4	1	4	5	64	5		83
Poland	7	1	10	2	49	1		70
Slovenia	4	2	4	1	34			45
Denmark	2		5		32	5		44
Bulgaria	1		1	1	35		1	39
Other Country (Non-EU)	3	1	11	1	20			36
Romania	6	2	13	1	10	1	2	35
Luxembourg	1		5		22	1	1	30
Latvia	4	1	8	1	15			29
Cyprus	3	2	5	2	6	4		22
Malta			3		16			19
Croatia	2		3		10			15
Estonia	1	1	1		5		1	9
Lithuania		1	1		3			5
Total	1,785	277	660	155	13,198	491	249	16,815

5.2.2 Distribution of replies by type of respondents

In Part II, more than three quarters of the replies (78%) came from individuals, followed by businesses (11%), NGOs (4%), other organisations or associations (3%) and government or public authorities (2%). Academic/research institutes and those registering as “other” made up 1% or less of the replies.

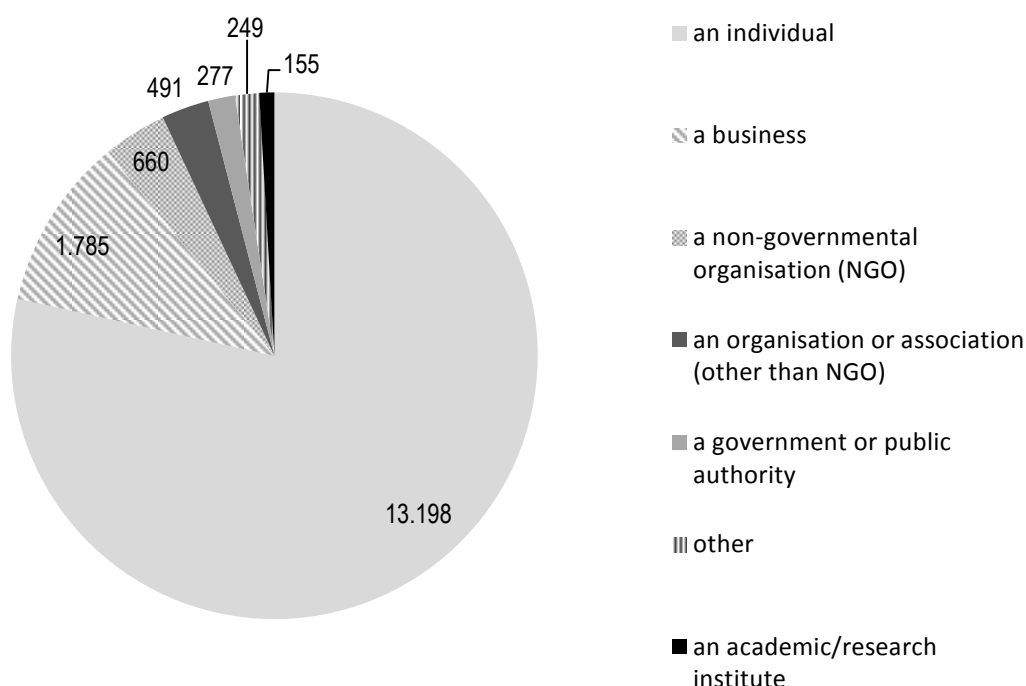
The participation rate of organisations compared to individuals was proportionally higher in Part II than in Part I. Individuals made up over 99% of the replies to Part I (547,516 replies out of a total of 552,472), compared to 78% for Part II (13,198 replies out of a total of 16,815). Organisations¹⁷, on the other hand, made up less than 1% of the replies to Part I (4,600 replies out of 552,472) compared around 20% of the replies to Part II (3,368 replies out of 16,815).

¹⁷ This includes businesses, NGOs, organisations/associations other than NGOs, government/public authorities and academic/research institutes

Table 23, Replies to Part II by type of respondent

Type of respondent to Part II	Total N° replies	% of total
An individual	13,198	78%
A business	1,785	11%
A non-governmental organisation (NGO)	660	4%
An organisation or association (other than NGO)	491	3%
A government or public authority	277	2%
Other	249	1%
An academic/research institute	155	1%
Total	16,815	100%

Figure 9, Replies to Part II, by type of respondent



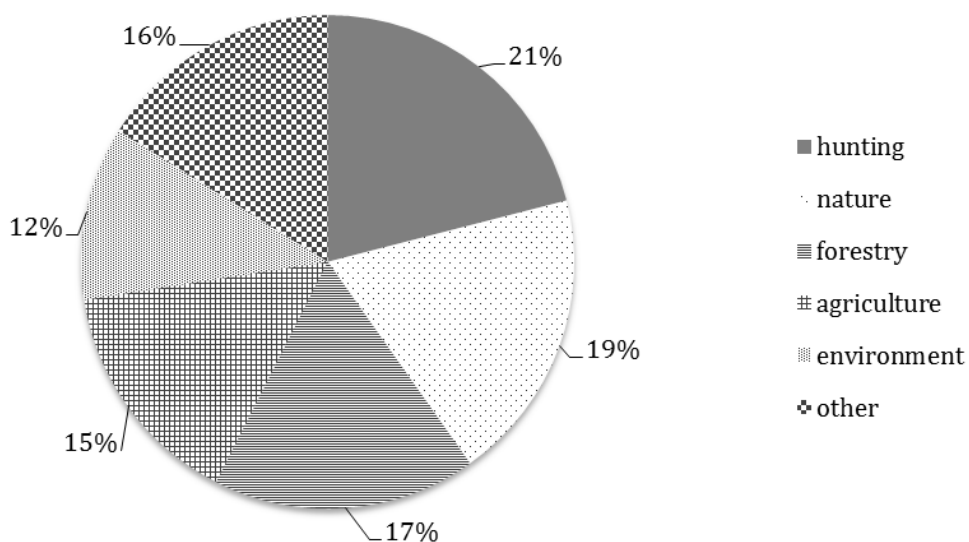
5.2.3 Distribution of replies by main fields of interest or activity

The fields of interest or activity were more diverse in Part II than in Part I: 21% (3,514 replies) stated hunting as their main interest or activity, compared to 19% (3,215 replies) for nature, 17% (2,888 replies) for forestry, 15% (2,520 replies) for agriculture, 11% (1,907 replies) for environment and 5% (760 replies) for science. Other fields of interest each made up 2% or less of the total.

Table 24, Replies by main field of activity/interest of respondent

Field of activity/interest	N° replies to Part II	% of Part II
Hunting	3,514	21%
Nature	3,215	19%
Forestry	2,888	17%
Agriculture	2,520	15%
Environment	1,907	11%
Science	760	5%
Education	264	2%
Recreation	327	2%
Construction & development	376	2%
Culture	105	1%
Tourism	148	1%
Angling	170	1%
Energy	112	1%
Extractive industry	194	1%
Transport	83	<0.5%
Water management	70	<0.5%
Fish farming/ associated activities	111	1%
Fishing (other than angling)	51	<0.5%
All respondents	16,815	100%

Figure 10, Replies to Part II, by main field of activity or interest



The fields of interests also varied between different types of respondents. The majority of businesses

for instance, said their main field of interest was agriculture or forestry (64%) followed by construction, development and extractive industry (15%). For NGOs on the other hand, the majority (64%) said their main interest was nature and environment, followed by agriculture and forestry (14%) and hunting (12%).

For individuals, the main interests were divided more or less equally between nature and environment (31%), and agriculture and forestry (29%), followed by hunting (25%). In the case of other organisations and associations, 38% said their interest was environment and nature, followed by agriculture and forestry (20%) and hunting (18%). Finally, the majority (52%) of government and public authorities stated nature and environment as their main interest, followed by agriculture and forestry (30%).

Table 25, Distribution of types of respondents across main fields of activity/interest in Part II

<i>Types of stakeholders, by main field of activity/interest (as % of total in type of stakeholder)</i>									
	Individual	Business	NGO)	Other organisation or association	Government or public authority	Other	Academic/ research institute	% of Total Part II	Total N°
hunting	25%	2%	12%	18%	2%	16%	1%	21%	3,514
Nature	20%	5%	43%	21%	33%	14%	23%	19%	3,215
Forestry	16%	28%	8%	11%	25%	32%	8%	17%	2,888
agriculture	13%	36%	6%	9%	5%	7%	2%	15%	2,520
environment	11%	4%	21%	17%	19%	16%	20%	11%	1,907
science	5%	1%	3%	<0.5%	<0.5%	3%	34%	5%	760
construction & development	1%	7%	1%	9%	6%	2%	1%	2%	376
recreation	2%	1%	1%	1%	<0.5%	2%	1%	2%	327
education	2%	<0.5%	1%	1%	<0.5%	2%	8%	2%	264
extractive industry	<0.5%	8%	<0.5%	3%	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	1%	194
angling	1%	<0.5%	1%	2%	<0.5%	3%	<0.5%	1%	170
Tourism	1%	3%	<0.5%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	148
Energy	0%	2%	1%	3%	<0.5%	<0.5%	1%	1%	112
fish farming & associated activities	<0.5%	2%	<0.5%	1%	1%	1%	<0.5%	1%	111
Culture	1%	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	1%	1%	<0.5%	1%	105
transport	<0.5%	1%	<0.5%	1%	4%	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	83
water management	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	1%	2%	1%	<0.5%	<0.5%	70
fishing (other than angling)	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	2%	<0.5%	1%	1%	<0.5%	51
Total	13,198	1,785	660	491	277	249	155	16,815	16,815

Highest percentages marked in bold

Looking at the fields of interests according to the five countries that generated the most replies in Part II, it can be seen that, compared to other countries, a higher proportion of respondents from Germany

and Austria (44%) stated their fields of interest were agriculture and forestry, when compared with other countries (14%).

This may reflect the impact of certain campaigns targeting these interest groups in the countries concerned, such as the Aktionsbündnis Forum Natur AFN campaign. As indicated in chapter 3.6 around 6,240 respondents replied exactly as suggested in this campaign, of which 5,880 (94%) were from Germany and 329 (5%) from Austria.

Of these 6,240 respondents, a significant number stated that their main interests were agriculture (1,758), forestry (1,821) and hunting (1,793). This largely correlates with the fields of interest expressed by respondents for Germany and Austria in Part II as illustrated below: that is agriculture (1,995 replies), forestry (2,185), and hunting (2,193) for Germany, and agriculture (160) and in forestry (192) for Austria.

On the other hand, for France and the UK a greater than average share of respondents stated their interest was environment or nature, which may indicate the influence of campaigns from conservation NGOs in these two countries. In the case of Sweden, more than 50% of respondents stated their main field of interest was hunting.

Table 26, Respondents to Part II, by main field of interest or activity for countries with most responses to Part II

	Germany	France	Austria	Sweden	UK	All countries
Agriculture	21%	9%	25%	7%	3%	15%
Angling	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Construction & development	2%	1%	2%	3%	2%	2%
Culture	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Education	1%	3%	1%	1%	3%	2%
Energy	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Environment	4%	33%	6%	2%	34%	11%
Extractive industry	2%	0%	4%	0%	0%	1%
Fish farming & associated activities	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%
Fishing (other than angling)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Forestry	23%	2%	30%	19%	1%	17%
Hunting	23%	18%	5%	51%	7%	21%
Nature	14%	23%	10%	9%	38%	19%
Recreation	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Science	3%	6%	5%	3%	5%	5%
Tourism	1%	1%	5%	1%	1%	1%
Transport	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%
Water management	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%
Total	9,500	884	641	1,065	1,800	100%

Shares above the average for all countries are marked in bold

5.3 EFFECTIVENESS QUESTIONS

Q15: How effective have the Birds and Habitats Directives been in the following fields?

Respondents were asked to rate the effectiveness of the two Directives in 11 key areas. The majority considered they had been *somewhat* effective in 7 of the 11 areas, namely protecting all bird species (67%), threatened birds (61%), other species (62%) and habitats (59%); establishing a system to protect these species (56%), establishing an EU-wide network of protected areas (53%) and managing and restoring sites in that network (61%).

A further 33% believed they were *very* effective in establishing an EU-wide network of protected areas, whilst around a quarter thought they were *very* effective in protecting threatened bird species (24%) and establishing a system to protect species (25%).

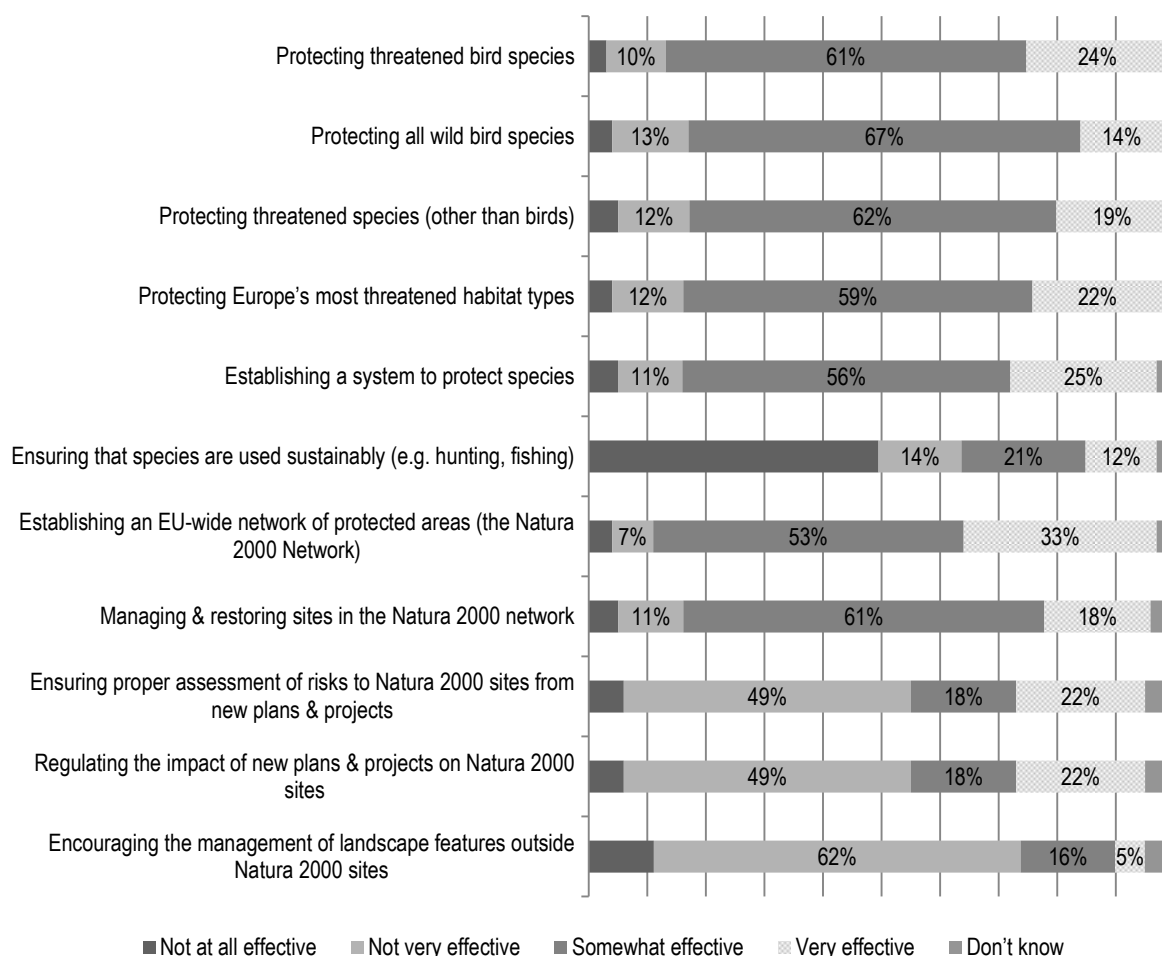
By contrast, 49% of respondents believed the Directives were *not at all* effective in ensuring that species are used sustainably (e.g. hunting, fishing). 49% also thought they were *not very* effective in ensuring a proper assessment of risks or regulating the impact of plans and projects. However, in the case of the latter, 22% did find them to be very effective in this regard.

73% of respondents also considered that the Directives have *not been very* effective (62%), or *at all* effective (11%) in encouraging the management of landscape features outside Natura 2000 sites.

Table 27, Q15

Q15: How effective have the Birds and Habitats Directives been in the following fields?						
	Not at all effective	Not very effective	Somewhat effective	Very effective	Don't know	Total
Protecting threatened bird species	3%	10%	61%	24%	1%	16,815
Protecting all wild bird species	4%	13%	67%	14%	2%	16,815
Protecting threatened species (other than birds)	5%	12%	62%	19%	1%	16,815
Protecting Europe's most threatened habitat types	4%	12%	59%	22%	2%	16,815
Establishing a system to protect species	5%	11%	56%	25%	3%	16,815
Ensuring that species are used sustainably (e.g. hunting, fishing)	49%	14%	21%	12%	3%	16,815
Establishing an EU-wide network of protected areas (the Natura 2000 Network)	4%	7%	53%	33%	3%	16,815
Managing & restoring sites in the Natura 2000 network	5%	11%	61%	18%	4%	16,815
Ensuring proper assessment of risks to Natura 2000 sites from new plans & projects	6%	49%	18%	22%	5%	16,815
Regulating the impact of new plans & projects on Natura 2000 sites	6%	49%	18%	22%	5%	16,815
Encouraging the management of landscape features outside Natura 2000 sites	11%	62%	16%	5%	5%	16,815

Figure 11, Q15



The views expressed according to different fields of interest or activity (for all types of respondents together), are presented in Table 63 in the annex.

According to these tables, the majority of respondents from all fields of interests stated that the Directives have been at least *somewhat* effective when it comes to protecting species and habitats, and establishing, managing and restoring the Natura 2000 network. Overall, less than 4% thought they are *not at all* effective. This share was slightly higher amongst respondents interested in angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting (7%-10%).

Respondents with an interest in nature and environment were generally more positive about the effectiveness of the Directives in these areas, being more or less equally divided between those who thought they are *somewhat* effective, and those who believe they are *very* effective. In the case of protecting threatened bird species and establishing the Natura 2000 network, the share that thought the Directives were *very* effective rose to over 50%. However, in the case of protecting all wild birds and managing Natura 2000 sites, the greatest share considered the Directives to be only *somewhat* effective.

As regards the effectiveness of the Directives in ensuring that species are used sustainably; 75% of respondents with an interest in agriculture, forestry, hunting, fishing considered that the Directives are *not at all* effective. But only 17% of respondents from heavy industries and 13% from nature/environment thought they are *not* effective. The majority thought they were *somewhat* or *very* effective.

As regards the effectiveness of the Directives in ensuring the proper assessment of risks to Natura 2000 sites from new plans and projects and in regulating the impacts of these new plans and projects on Natura 2000 sites, the views were again divided. While the majority of respondents with an interest in agriculture, forestry, hunting and fisheries thought the Directives are *not* effective in this respect, the majority of respondents from heavy industry (construction, extractive industries, transport) thought they were very effective (48%) or *somewhat* effective (17-18%).

Respondents with an interest in nature and environment held a very similar view: 47-49% thought the Directives were *very* effective in this regard, compared to 27% who thought they were *somewhat* effective.

Q16: To what extent do the Directives help meet the EU biodiversity Strategy objectives?

Respondents were asked to give their views on the extent to which the two nature Directives contribute to achieving the six wider objectives of the EU’s biodiversity strategy.

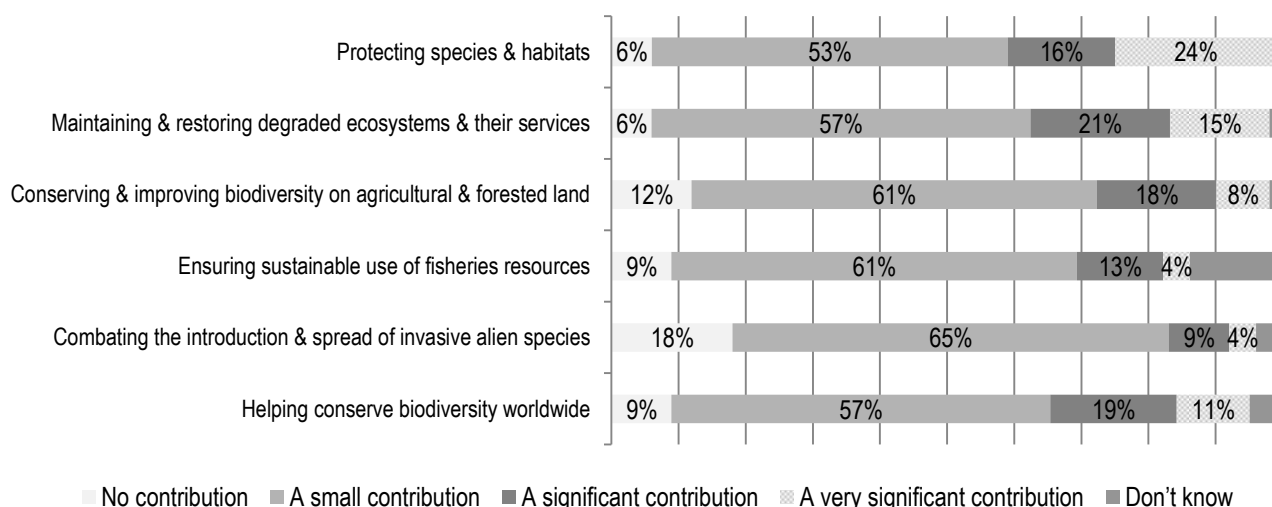
Overall, the majority (53-65%) believed that they make a *small* contribution to each of the six wider objectives. However, when it comes to protecting species and habitats (40%), maintaining and restoring degraded ecosystems and their services (36%) and helping to conserve biodiversity worldwide (30%) a sizeable minority thought they made *significant* or *very significant* contribution.

Concerning the objective of ‘combating the introduction and spread of invasive alien species’, almost one fifth (18%) found that the Directives make *no* contribution, compared to 13% who thought that they make a *significant* or a *very significant* contribution.

Table 28, Q16

Q16: To what extent do the Directives help meet the EU biodiversity Strategy objectives?						
	No contribution	A small contribution	A significant contribution	A very significant contribution	Don't know	Total
Protecting species & habitats	6%	53%	16%	24%	1%	16,815
Maintaining & restoring degraded ecosystems & their services	6%	57%	21%	15%	2%	16,815
Conserving & improving biodiversity on agricultural & forested land	12%	61%	18%	8%	2%	16,815
Ensuring sustainable use of fisheries resources	9%	61%	13%	4%	14%	16,815
Combating the introduction & spread of invasive alien species	18%	65%	9%	4%	4%	16,815
Helping conserve biodiversity worldwide	9%	57%	19%	11%	5%	16,815

Figure 12, Q 16



Q17: How effective overall have the Directives been so far?

The answers for each Directive were almost identical and are therefore presented together in the table below. Overall, the majority of respondents (82%) believed that the two Directives are *somewhat* effective (59%) or *very* effective (23%). On the other hand, 16% thought they are *not very* (10%) or *not at all* (6%) effective.

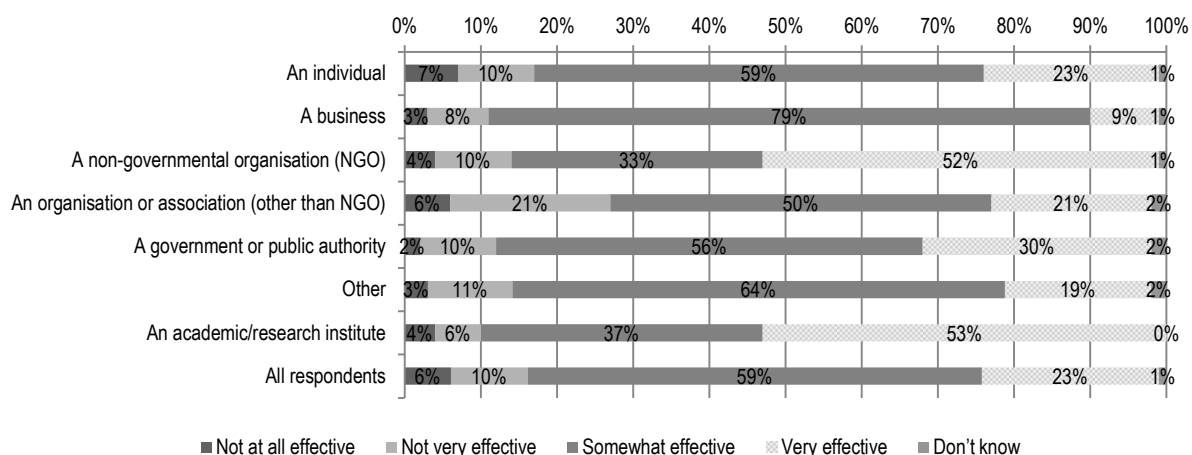
This view is somewhat less positive than the one under Q6 in Part I (have the Directives been effective in protecting nature?). In reply to Q6, 92% of respondents thought they are *very* effective, 6% thought they were *somewhat* effective and 3% thought they were *not* effective. The difference may be due to the fact that the respondents to Parts I and Part II have different fields of interests (most of respondents in Part I were individuals interested in nature) and have been influenced by different campaigns. The question was also phrased differently.

In response to Q17, most respondents from businesses (79%), individuals (59%), government (56%) and other organisations or associations (50%) thought they are *somewhat* effective. The majority of NGOs (52%) and research institutes thought the Directives were *very* effective. Across the board, relatively few thought the Directives are not at all effective (2 - 7%).

Table 29, Q17, by type of respondent

Q17: How effective have the Directives been so far?						
AVERAGE (Birds & Habitats Directive)	Not at all effective	Not very effective	Somewhat effective	Very effective	Don't know	Total
Individual	7%	10%	59%	23%	1%	13,198
Business	3%	8%	79%	9%	1%	1,785
NGO	4%	10%	33%	52%	1%	660
Organisation or association (other than NGO)	6%	21%	50%	21%	2%	491
Government or public authority	2%	10%	56%	30%	2%	277
Other	3%	11%	65%	19%	2%	249
Academic/research institute	4%	6%	37%	53%	0%	155
All respondents	6%	10%	59%	23%	1%	16,815
Total	1,033	1,728	9,981	3,885	189	16,815

Figure 13, Q17, by type of respondent



Looking at the results from the perspective of different Member States, it can be seen that the majority of respondents from the Czech Republic (82%), Malta (63%), UK (62%), Portugal (60%), Luxembourg (57%), Greece (56%), Croatia (53%) and the Netherlands (53%), considered the Directives to be *very* effective. The largest shares of respondents from Latvia (47%), Bulgaria (47%) and Romania (36%) also found the Directives to be *very* effective.

The majority of respondents from the following countries found the Directives to be only *somewhat* effective: Germany (78%), Austria (73%), Slovenia (58%), Estonia (56%), Denmark (52%), and Cyprus (50%). The largest share of respondents in France (42%) also found the Directives to be *somewhat* effective. Only in Sweden (81%), Slovakia (60%) and Finland (54%) did the majority consider the Directives *not at all* or *not very* effective. A sizeable number from Spain (40%) also thought this to be the case.

Table 30, Q17, by country

Q17: How effective overall have the Directives been so far?						
Member State	Not at all effective	Not very effective	Somewhat effective	Very effective	Don't know	Total
Germany	2%	6%	78%	14%	0%	9,500
United Kingdom	1%	4%	29%	62%	2%	1,800
Sweden	54%	27%	13%	3%	3%	1,065
France	9%	22%	42%	24%	3%	884
Austria	2%	11%	73%	13%	1%	641
Finland	18%	36%	25%	19%	2%	387
Belgium	4%	15%	40%	39%	2%	384
Spain	5%	35%	32%	27%	1%	305
Italy	2%	7%	47%	42%	1%	304
Netherlands	2%	7%	36%	53%	1%	301
Slovakia	12%	48%	31%	6%	2%	263
Czech Republic	<0.5%	4%	14%	82%	1%	174
Ireland	<0.5%	11%	43%	44%	1%	119

Greece	9%	12%	21%	56%	1%	117
Hungary	1%	7%	46%	46%	0%	90
Portugal	2%	5%	30%	60%	4%	83
Poland	6%	19%	44%	30%	0%	70
Slovenia	3%	10%	58%	27%	2%	45
Denmark	5%	16%	52%	24%	3%	44
Bulgaria	9%	12%	32%	47%	0%	39
Other Country (non-EU)	7%	4%	53%	36%	0%	36
Romania	3%	26%	33%	36%	3%	35
Luxembourg	<0.5%	7%	37%	57%	0%	30
Latvia	2%	3%	45%	47%	3%	29
Cyprus	5%	<0.5%	50%	41%	5%	22
Malta	3%	21%	13%	63%	0%	19
Croatia	<0.5%	20%	27%	53%	0%	15
Estonia	<0.5%	11%	56%	33%	0%	9
Lithuania	<0.5%	<0.5%	30%	50%	20%	5
All respondents	6%	10%	59%	23%	1%	16,815
Total	1,033	1,728	9,981	3,885	189	16,815

Highest percentages are marked in bold

Q18: Where the Directives have succeeded, to what extent have the following contributed?

The respondents were asked to identify which of the 15 aspects listed in the question contributed to making the Directives a success. The results show a wide range of views on this subject with no one element standing out in particular.

The majority of respondents (55-57%) agreed that ‘public awareness’ and the ‘good integration of nature conservation into other policies’ have both made a *moderate* contribution, with a further 17-18% believing they made a *major* contribution.

A high percentage of respondents (90%) also considered that effective enforcement has made a contribution (*minor, moderate or major*) to the success of the Directives, as did effective national coordination (89%), guidance (89%) and international cooperation (85%). Looking at these figures in more detail it can be seen that around half of the respondents believed that the contribution from each of these aspects was *minor*, with a further 37-39% believing these aspects made a *moderate to major* contribution.

Just under half of respondents (46-48%) thought the following had made *no* contribution to the success of the Directives: clear wording, effective coordination at EU, regional or local level; stakeholder involvement, dedicated funding; appropriate human resources; and appropriate management of protected areas. By comparison, a third of respondents (33%-39%) believed all these elements to have made a *moderate to major* contribution.

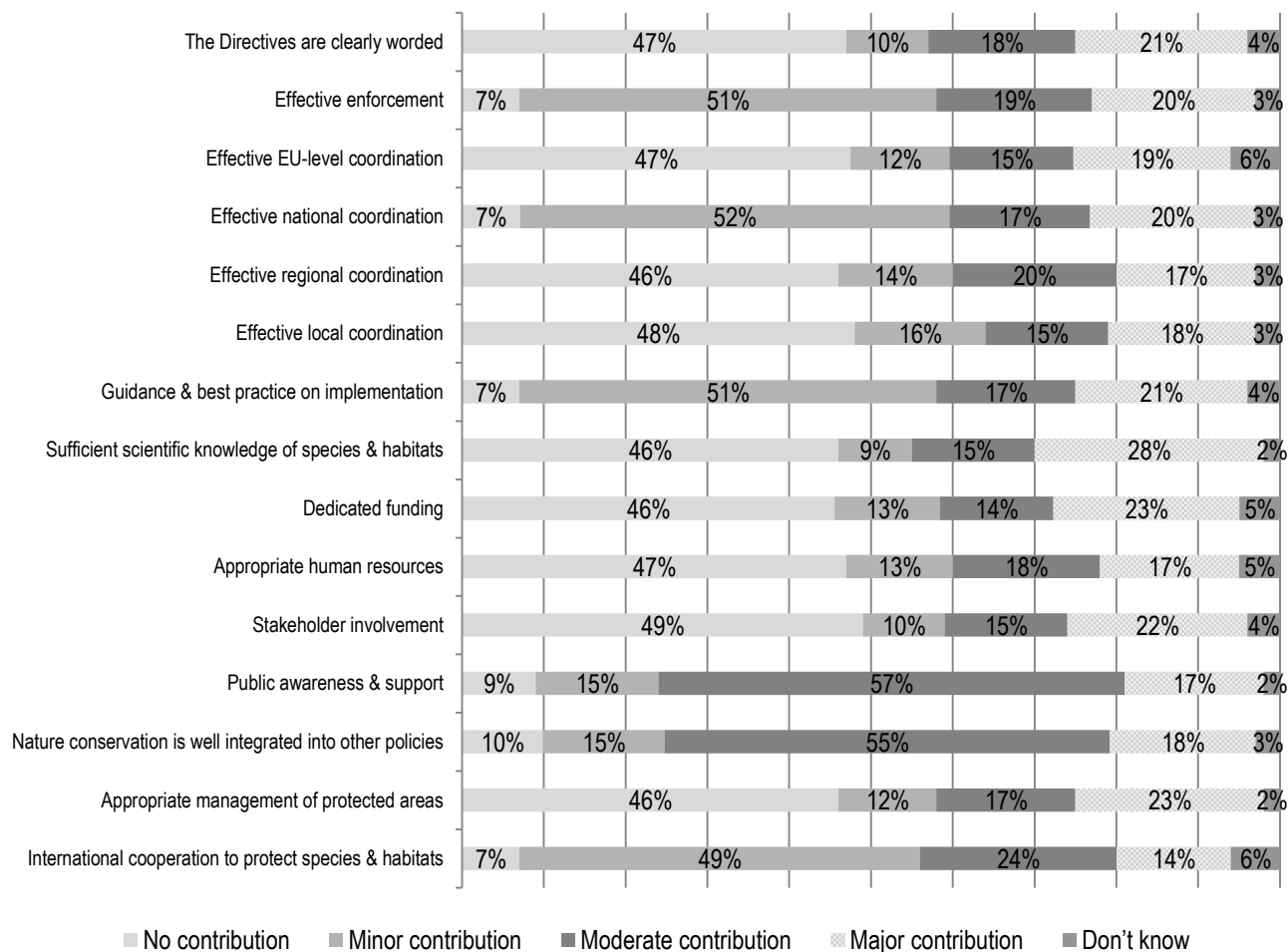
Finally, the respondents seemed equally divided on the contribution made by having ‘sufficient scientific knowledge of species and habitats’ with 46% saying this has made *no* contribution and 43% saying it has made a *moderate to major* contribution.

Table 31, Q18

Q18: Where the Directives have succeeded, to what extent have the following contributed?						
	No contribution	Minor contribution	Moderate contribution	Major contribution	Don't know	Total
The Directives are clearly worded	47%	10%	18%	21%	4%	16,815
Effective enforcement	7%	51%	19%	20%	3%	16,815
Effective EU-level coordination	47%	12%	15%	19%	6%	16,815
Effective national coordination	7%	52%	17%	20%	3%	16,815
Effective regional coordination	46%	14%	20%	17%	3%	16,815
Effective local coordination	48%	16%	15%	18%	3%	16,815
Guidance & best practice on implementation	7%	51%	17%	21%	4%	16,815
Sufficient scientific knowledge of species & habitats	46%	9%	15%	28%	2%	16,815
Dedicated funding	46%	13%	14%	23%	5%	16,815
Appropriate human resources	47%	13%	18%	17%	5%	16,815
Stakeholder involvement	49%	10%	15%	22%	4%	16,815
Public awareness & support	9%	15%	57%	17%	2%	16,815
Nature conservation is well integrated into other policies	10%	15%	55%	18%	3%	16,815
Appropriate management of protected areas	46%	12%	17%	23%	2%	16,815
International cooperation to protect species & habitats	7%	49%	24%	14%	6%	16,815

Highest percentages are marked in bold

Figure 14, Q18



Q19: To what extent are the following limiting progress towards the Directives' objectives?

This question focused on the same issues as in the previous one, but this time respondents were asked to give their view on the extent to which they are responsible for limiting progress towards meeting the two Directives' objectives.

Almost three quarters of respondents (74%) believed that insufficient funding is *significantly* restricting progress. The majority of respondents also considered that the following elements are *significantly* limiting progress: insufficient stakeholder involvement (65%), ineffective local coordination (62%), gaps in scientific knowledge of species and habitats (61%), unclear wording of the Directives (54%), ineffective EU-level coordination (54%).

The majority (around two thirds) of respondents believed the following *somewhat* restrict progress: lack of or limited international cooperation to protect species and habitats (68%), insufficient or unclear guidance & best practice on implementation (66%), ineffective national coordination (63%), low public awareness and support (63%), ineffective regional coordination

(62%) lack of appropriate management of protected areas (61%), ineffective enforcement (58%), insufficient human resources (55%).

Concerning the insufficient integration into other policies, respondents were equally divided between those who thought it did *not* restrict progress (48%) and those who thought it either *somewhat or significantly* restricted progress (48%).

The replies to Q19 are consistent with those given to Q6b in Part I where respondents were asked why they considered the Directives to be only *somewhat* effective or not effective. To this, the majority replied that it was due to problems inherent in the legislation or problems with implementation.

A detailed breakdown according to field of interest or activity is given in Table 64 in the Annex.

Table 32, Q19

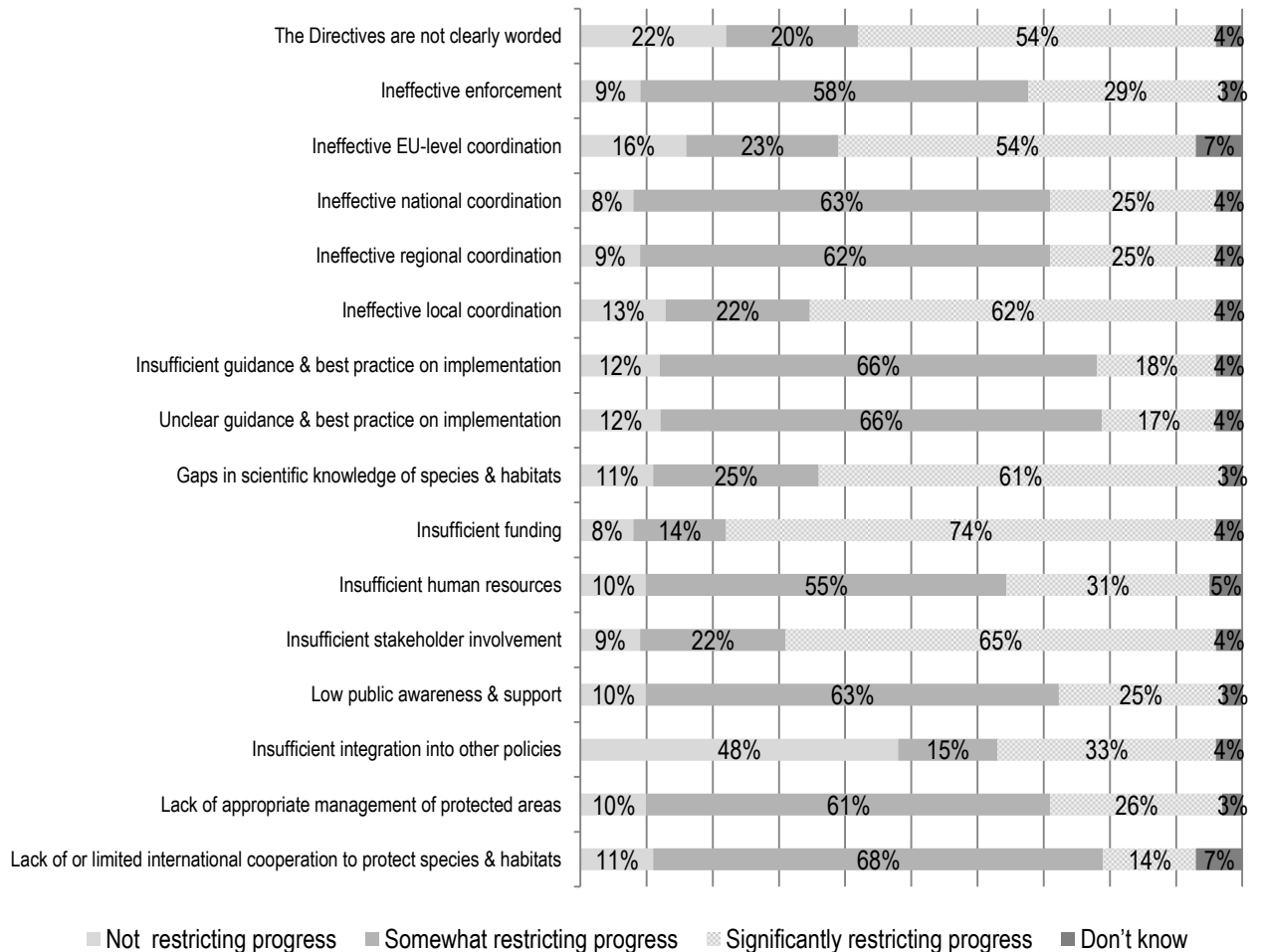
Q19: To what extent are the following limiting progress towards the Directives' objectives?					
	Not restricting progress	Somewhat restricting progress	Significantly restricting progress	Don't know	Total
The Directives are not clearly worded	22%	20%	54%	4%	16,815
Ineffective enforcement	9%	58%	29%	3%	16,815
Ineffective EU-level coordination	16%	23%	54%	7%	16,815
Ineffective national coordination	8%	63%	25%	4%	16,815
Ineffective regional coordination	9%	62%	25%	4%	16,815
Ineffective local coordination	13%	22%	62%	4%	16,815
Insufficient guidance & best practice on implementation	12%	66%	18%	4%	16,815
Unclear guidance & best practice on implementation	12%	66%	17%	4%	16,815
Gaps in scientific knowledge of species & habitats	11%	25%	61%	3%	16,815
Insufficient funding	8%	14%	74%	4%	16,815
Insufficient human resources	10%	55%	31%	5%	16,815
Insufficient stakeholder involvement	9%	22%	65%	4%	16,815
Low public awareness & support	10%	63%	25%	3%	16,815
Insufficient integration into other policies	48%	15%	33%	4%	16,815
Lack of appropriate management of protected areas	10%	61%	26%	3%	16,815

Q19: To what extent are the following limiting progress towards the Directives' objectives?

	Not restricting progress	Somewhat restricting progress	Significantly restricting progress	Don't know	Total
Lack of or limited international cooperation to protect species & habitats	11%	68%	14%	7%	16,815

Highest percentages are marked in bold

Figure 15, Q19



5.4 EFFICIENCY QUESTIONS

Q20: How significant are the benefits associated with the Directives?

In the case of environmental benefits, over 90% of respondents considered that the Directives provided benefits for the conservation of wild birds, as well as other species and habitats. Around half thought the benefits were *moderate to major* (45-47%) while the other half thought they were *minor* (46-47%). 91% of the respondents also believed the Directives brought other environmental benefits even if majority (52%) thought these were *minor* rather than *moderate or major* (39%).

This view is consistent with the answer to Q16 where more than 90% of the replies believed that the Directives contribute to some extent to the conservation of species and habitats, maintaining or restoring ecosystems and their services, and to the conservation of biodiversity worldwide.

In the case of benefits to society, the largest share of respondents (48%) thought them to be *minor* rather than *moderate to major* (36%). On the other hand, most respondents (54%) felt that the benefits associated with the Directives were *insignificant* related the economy, even if 34% considered those benefits to be *moderate or major*.

Table 33, Q20

Q20: How significant are the benefits associated with the Directives?						
	Insignificant benefits	Minor benefits	Moderate benefits	Major benefits	Don't know	Total
Benefits to wild bird conservation	6%	46%	14%	33%	1%	16,815
Benefits to species conservation (other than birds)	7%	47%	14%	31%	1%	16,815
Benefits to habitat conservation	5%	46%	14%	33%	1%	16,815
Other environmental benefits, e.g. soil, water & air quality	7%	52%	14%	25%	2%	16,815
Benefits to the economy (e.g. local jobs, tourism, research & innovation)	54%	10%	13%	21%	2%	16,815
Benefits to society (e.g. health, culture, recreation, education)	14%	48%	9%	27%	2%	16,815

Highest percentages are marked in bold

Q 21: How significant are the costs associated with the Directives?

Over half of the respondents believed that the costs associated with the Directives are *major*. In particular, 53-55% of respondents believed the costs associated with managing Natura 2000 sites and protecting species are *major*, as opposed to *moderate* (around 18%) or *minor* (14-15%).

An even greater proportion (60%) thought the administrative costs associated with the implementation of the Directives are *major*, while around 25% considered them to be *moderate* (14%) or *minor* (11%). Regarding opportunity costs, 55% also thought they are *major*, compared to 25% who believed them to be *minor to moderate*. 12% said they did not know, indicating that this term may not be clearly understood by some of the respondents.

Table 34, Q21

Q 21: How significant are the costs associated with the Directives?						
	Insignificant costs	Minor Costs	Moderate Costs	Major Costs	Don't know	Total
Natura 2000 site management costs	6%	14%	18%	55%	7%	16,815
Costs of protecting species of birds	7%	15%	18%	53%	7%	16,815
Costs of protecting species other than birds	7%	15%	17%	55%	6%	16,815
Administrative costs	7%	11%	14%	60%	8%	16,815
Opportunity costs	8%	13%	12%	55%	12%	16,815

Q22: Are these costs proportionate, given the benefits associated with the Directives?

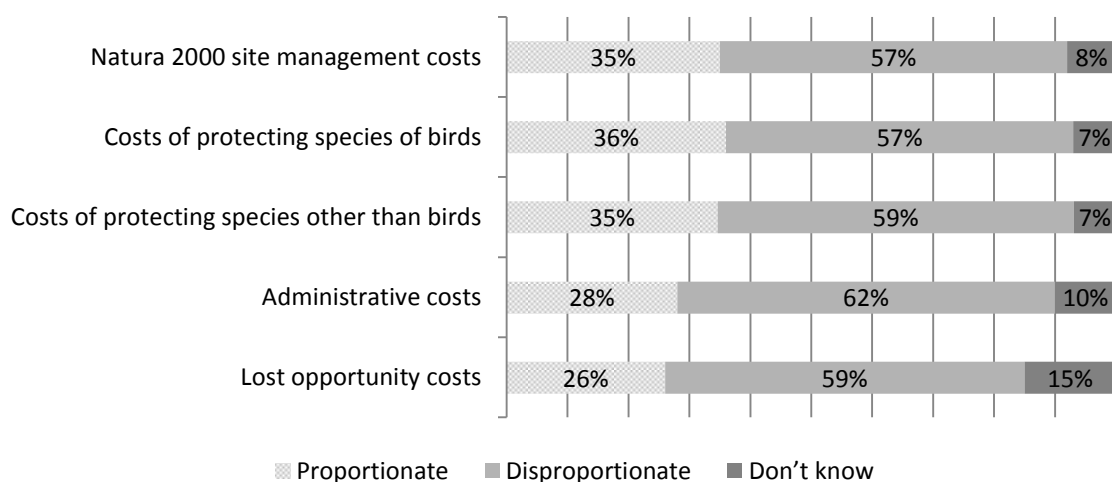
Overall, more than half of the respondents (57-62%) considered that the costs of implementing the Directives are *disproportionate* to the benefits associated with them. This was especially marked for administrative costs where 62% of respondents believed them to be *disproportionate*.

Around a third (35-36%) of respondents believed that the costs of managing Natura 2000 sites and protecting species are *proportionate*. This percentage dropped to 26-28% when it came to administrative costs or lost opportunity costs.

Table 35, Q22

Q22: Are these costs proportionate, given the benefits associated with the Directives?				
	Proportionate	Disproportionate	Don't know	Total
Natura 2000 site management costs	35%	57%	8%	16,815
Costs of protecting species of birds	36%	57%	7%	16,815
Costs of protecting species other than birds	35%	59%	7%	16,815
Administrative costs	28%	62%	10%	16,815
Lost opportunity costs	26%	59%	15%	16,815

Figure 16, Q22



This view seems to contrast sharply with the replies given to Q8 in Part I. This asked how the cost of implementing the two nature Directives compares with the benefits derived from their implementation. In reply to that question, the vast majority of respondents (94%) stated that they thought the benefits *far* exceeded the costs. By contrast, only 5% of respondents considered that the cost *far* exceeded the benefits. However, as mentioned before, this result reflects strong support for the Nature Alert campaign among individuals responding in Part I. Businesses, associations other than NGOs and governments were more critical about the cost-benefit equation (see detailed results in [Table 14](#)) as reflected in the answers to question 8.

Concerning question 22, results also varied according to the type of respondent ([Table 36](#)). The vast majority of businesses (84%) considered the costs *disproportionate*. On the other hand, the majority of NGOs (64%) and governments or public authorities (51%) believed the costs were *proportionate*. This is consistent with the results of Q8 where 75% of businesses considered that the costs of implementation far exceed the benefits whereas 59% of NGOs thought that the benefits far exceed the costs.

Table 36, Q22, by type of respondent

Q22: Are these costs proportionate, given the benefits associated with the Directives?				
Average of Q 22_1 to Q 22_5	Proportionate	Disproportionate	Don't know	Total
An individual	32%	58%	9%	13,198
A business	11%	84%	5%	1,785
A non-governmental organisation (NGO)	64%	27%	10%	660
an organisation or association (other than NGO)	34%	51%	14%	491
A government or public authority	51%	32%	17%	277
Other	30%	62%	9%	249
an academic/research institute	68%	22%	10%	155
All respondents	32%	59%	9%	16,815

The results by field of activity or interest also reflect these difference of views: the majority of respondents interested in agriculture and forestry, fisheries and hunting as well as those interested in industry considered that each of the listed costs is *disproportionate* to the benefits. However, a smaller percentage of respondents from industry said they thought the costs are *disproportionate* (around 60-70%, compared to 80-90% for the other business sectors (see detailed results in

Table 65 in the annex).

The majority of respondents interested in environment and nature, on the other hand, thought each of the costs mentioned is *proportionate*.

Q23: On the basis of experience to date, to what extent have the following caused any inefficiency?

The majority of respondents agree that inefficiencies have, to a *large* extent, been caused by the way the Directives have been implemented nationally (70%), regionally (67%) and/or locally (64%) and by the lack of enforcement (57%). A sizeable number (23-30%) considered that this has had an influence to *some* extent. On the other hand, most respondents considered interactions with other EU laws and policies to have caused inefficiencies only to *some* extent (58%), rather than to a *large* extent (27%).

On the question of whether the way in which the Directives have been written has caused inefficiencies, the majority of respondents (51%) believed this had influenced the inefficiency to a *large* extent, while the remainder were equally divided between those who thought it had *no* influence (22%) and those who thought it had *some* influence (22%). This corroborates the answers to Q19 where the majority of respondents considered that the wording of the Directives restricts progress towards the objectives of the Directives significantly.

When looking at detailed results according to the different fields of interest (see [Table 66](#) in Annex), one can see that the majority of agricultural and forestry, fisheries and hunting and industry¹⁸ respondents considered that all but the last aspect (interaction with other EU laws and policies) have caused inefficiencies to a *large* extent.

As regards respondents from the environmental and nature fields, the largest share also found that the way in which the Directives are implemented nationally and regionally has caused inefficiencies to a *large* extent (53% and 46%, respectively) as has the way in which the

¹⁸ Construction, extractive industry, transport

Directives have been enforced at EU level (53%). Also, 47% found that interaction with other EU laws and policies has caused inefficiencies to a *large* extent, whereas respondents from the other fields of activity of interest held the view that this has only cost *some* degree of inefficiency.

Table 37, Q23

Q23: On the basis of experience to date, to what extent have the following caused any inefficiency?					
	Not at all	To some extent	To a large extent	Don't know	Total
How the Directives are written	22%	22%	51%	5%	16,815
How compliance is enforced at EU level	8%	30%	57%	5%	16,815
How the Directives are implemented nationally	6%	21%	70%	4%	16,815
How the Directives are implemented regionally	7%	23%	67%	4%	16,815
How the Directives are implemented locally	8%	23%	64%	4%	16,815
Interaction with other EU laws and policies	7%	58%	27%	9%	16,815

Highest percentages are marked in bold

Q24: Have any of the following become more or less efficient over time?

Over half of respondents thought that the implementation of the Directives at national, regional or local level has become less efficient over time, compared to 20-21% thought it had become more efficient.

On the other hand, the management of the Directives at EU level, as well as their interaction with other laws and policies at both EU and national level, were considered by the majority of respondents (56-57%) to have stayed the same over time, although a notable proportion (11%-15%) also stated they did not know the answer.

Overall, only a modest proportion of respondents (18-21%) stated that any of those aspects had improved over time.

Table 38, Q24

Q24: Have any of the following become more or less efficient over time?					
	Less efficient	The same	More efficient	Don't know	Total
How the Directives are managed at EU level	10%	57%	18%	14%	16,815

Q24: Have any of the following become more or less efficient over time?

	Less efficient	The same	More efficient	Don't know	Total
How the Directives are implemented nationally	55%	16%	21%	8%	16,815
How the Directives are implemented regionally	54%	17%	21%	8%	16,815
How the Directives are implemented locally	54%	18%	20%	8%	16,815
Interaction with other EU law & policies	12%	57%	16%	15%	16,815
Interaction with other national law & policies	16%	56%	16%	11%	16,815

Q25: Overall, how well are funding needs for implementing the Directives being met?

Most respondents (77%) were in agreement that there was insufficient funding for implementing the Directives. Amongst these, 63% thought that the funds that were being made available were being used *efficiently* (63%) as opposed to those who believed that they were *inefficiently* used (14%). Only 2% thought there was sufficient funding which was being efficiently used.

On this aspect, the views did not deviate substantially between the different types of respondents.

Table 39, Q25, by type of respondent

Q25: Overall, how well are funding needs for implementing the Directives being met?						
	Insufficient funding, not efficiently used	Insufficient funding, efficiently used	Sufficient funding, not efficiently used	Sufficient funding, efficiently used	Don't know	Total
An individual	13%	65%	14%	2%	6%	13,198
A business	13%	57%	24%	1%	5%	1,785
A non-governmental organisation (NGO)	24%	62%	7%	3%	4%	660
An organisation or association (than NGO)	29%	29%	25%	3%	14%	491
A government or public authority	26%	53%	9%	5%	8%	277
Other	15%	62%	15%	2%	7%	249
An academic/research institute	20%	58%	12%	5%	5%	155
All respondents	14%	63%	15%	2%	6%	16,815
Total	2,354	10,593	2,522	336	1,009	16,815

Highest percentages are marked in bold

5.5 RELEVANCE QUESTIONS

Q26: How important are the Directives to safeguarding Europe's biodiversity?

The results are more or less identical for the Habitats and Birds Directives, so an average of the two is given in the table below. As can be seen, opinions seem to be divided between those who believed the Directives are not *very important* for safeguarding Europe's biodiversity (47%) and those who thought they are *important* (11%) or *very important* (37%).

Looking at the results according to types of respondent it can be seen that the majority of respondents from research institutes (82%), NGOs (72%) and government and public authorities (60%), thought the Directives were important for safeguarding biodiversity. 62% of businesses and 48% of individuals on the other hand considered they were *not very important*.

This contrasts with the replies given to Q3 in Part I, which asked how important the Birds and Habitats Directives are to nature conservation. In reply to Q3, the vast majority of respondents (97%) considered the Birds and Habitats Directives to be *very important* to nature conservation and almost none of the respondents (0.1%) considered the Directives *not* to be important.

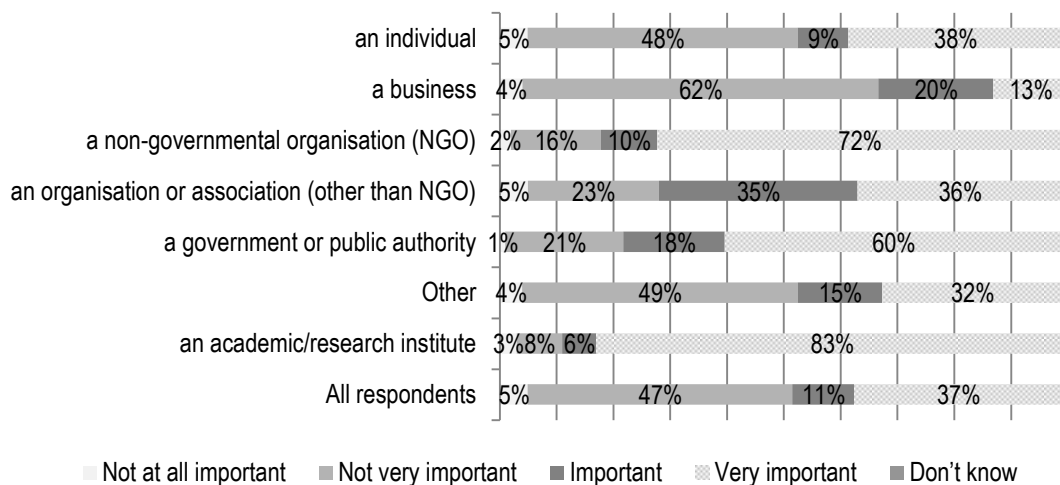
The most marked difference lies in responses from individuals: 99% considered the Directives *important* or *very important* for nature conservation under Q3 compared to 47% under Q26.

Table 40, Q26, by type of respondent

<i>Q26: How important are the Directives to safeguarding Europe's biodiversity?</i>						
Average (Birds Directive and Habitats Directive)	Not at all important	Not very important	Important	Very important	Don't know	Total
an individual	5%	48%	9%	38%	1%	13,198
a business	4%	62%	20%	13%	0%	1,785
a non-governmental organisation (NGO)	2%	16%	10%	72%	1%	660
an organisation or association (other than NGO)	5%	23%	35%	36%	1%	491
a government or public authority	1%	21%	18%	60%	1%	277
Other	4%	49%	15%	32%	1%	249
an academic/research institute	3%	8%	6%	83%	0%	155
All respondents	5%	47%	11%	37%	1%	16,815
Total	789	7,822	1,900	6,216	89	16,815

Highest percentages are marked in bold

Figure 17, by type of respondent



The replies to Q26 also vary between respondents from different Member States. Whilst in the majority of countries respondents considered that the Directives to be *very important* to safeguarding Europe’s biodiversity, respondents from Germany and Austria held a different view. 69% of respondents from Germany and 67% from Austria considered that the Directives were *not important*. The replies from these two countries account for 60% of the total share of replies received to Part II and may have been influenced by the Aktionsbündnis Forum Natur AFN campaign which recommended on its website that its supporters state that the Directives were *not very important* for this purpose.

Table 41, Q26, by country

Q26: How important are the Directives to safeguarding Europe's biodiversity? (Average Birds Directive and Habitats Directive)						
What is your main country of residence or activity?	Not at all important	Not very important	Important	Very important	Don't know	Total
Germany	2%	69%	8%	21%	0%	9,500
United Kingdom	1%	2%	7%	89%	1%	1,800
Sweden	34%	31%	23%	10%	1%	1,065
France	7%	12%	19%	62%	1%	884
Austria	4%	67%	11%	18%	0%	641
Finland	19%	33%	16%	31%	1%	387
Belgium	3%	11%	13%	72%	1%	384
Spain	1%	11%	13%	73%	1%	305
Italy	1%	3%	35%	61%	1%	304
Netherlands	2%	2%	9%	86%	1%	301
Slovakia	12%	30%	40%	17%	2%	263
Czech Republic	1%	3%	5%	91%	0%	174
Ireland	<0.5%	3%	7%	89%	1%	119

Q26: How important are the Directives to safeguarding Europe's biodiversity? (Average Birds Directive and Habitats Directive)						
What is your main country of residence or activity?	Not at all important	Not very important	Important	Very important	Don't know	Total
Greece	6%	6%	10%	78%	0%	117
Hungary	<0.5%	2%	4%	94%	0%	90
Portugal	<0.5%	1%	14%	83%	2%	83
Poland	4%	6%	19%	71%	0%	70
Slovenia	2%	1%	24%	72%	0%	45
Denmark	5%	7%	30%	52%	7%	44
Bulgaria	4%	9%	12%	76%	0%	39
Other Country (non-EU)	4%	42%	3%	51%	0%	36
Romania	4%	1%	16%	79%	0%	35
Luxembourg	3%	3%	17%	77%	0%	30
Latvia	<0.5%	3%	29%	64%	3%	29
Cyprus	<0.5%	<0.5%	45%	52%	2%	22
Malta	5%	<0.5%	5%	89%	0%	19
Croatia	<0.5%	7%	20%	73%	0%	15
Estonia	<0.5%	<0.5%	11%	89%	0%	9
Lithuania	<0.5%	<0.5%	20%	60%	20%	5
All respondents	5%	47%	11%	37%	1%	16,815
Total	789	7,822	1,900	6,216	89	16,815

Highest percentages are marked in bold

Looking at the results from the perspective of the different fields of interest, it appears that the majority of respondents active or interested in agriculture, angling, fishing and fish farming, forestry, hunting and recreation thought the Directives are *not important* for Europe's biodiversity.

On the other hand, the majority (56-83%) of those active or interested in education, environment, nature, science and water management, considered that the Directives are *very important* for safeguarding the EU's biodiversity. The majority of respondents from construction & development (77%), energy (64%), extractive industry (84%), transport (73%) also considered the directive to be *important* or *very important* for safeguarding Europe's biodiversity.

Table 42, Q26, by main field of activity/interest

Q26: How important are the Directives to safeguarding Europe's biodiversity? (Average Birds Directive and Habitats Directive)

Which of the following best describes your main field of activity or interest?	Not at all important	Not very important	Important	Very important	Don't know	Total
Hunting	11%	64%	15%	10%	1%	3,514
Nature	2%	10%	5%	83%	0%	3,215
Forestry	5%	79%	10%	7%	0%	2,888
Agriculture	5%	81%	6%	8%	0%	2,520
Environment	1%	8%	8%	83%	0%	1,907
Science	2%	13%	8%	78%	0%	760
Construction & development	4%	18%	42%	35%	0%	376
Recreation	4%	57%	9%	28%	1%	327
Education	3%	20%	12%	65%	1%	264
Extractive industry	1%	15%	79%	5%	0%	194
Angling	4%	59%	20%	17%	1%	170
Tourism	2%	46%	19%	32%	1%	148
Energy	5%	29%	29%	35%	1%	112
Fish farming & associated activities	5%	76%	13%	6%	0%	111
Culture	5%	37%	10%	46%	1%	105
Transport	2%	22%	33%	40%	3%	83
Water management	4%	14%	22%	56%	4%	70
Fishing (other than angling)	7%	64%	17%	11%	2%	51
All respondents	5%	47%	11%	37%	1%	16,815
Total	789	7,822	1,900	6,216	89	16,815

Highest percentages are marked in bold

Q27: How important are the Directives to protecting species and habitats from the following pressures and threats?

Around half of the respondents thought that the Directives were *not at all* important for protecting species and habitats from pollution (46%) or climate change (50%). Concerning the loss or fragmentation of habitats and the unsustainable use of species and habitats, respondents were more or less equally divided between those who believed the Directives were *not at all* important or *not very* important (50-54%) and those who believed they were *important* or *very* important (45-49%).

As regards the introduction and spread of non-native species, 59% thought they were *not at all* important or *not very* important compared to 38% believed they were *important* or *very* important.

Table 43, Q27

Q27: How important are the Directives to protecting species and habitats from the following pressures and threats?						
	Not at all important	Not very important	Important	Very important	Don't know	Total
Loss or fragmentation of habitats	4%	46%	13%	36%	1%	16,815
Unsustainable use of species & habitats	5%	49%	13%	32%	1%	16,815
Pollution	46%	10%	21%	21%	2%	16,815
Introduction & spread of non-native plants & animals	8%	51%	21%	17%	2%	16,815
Climate change	50%	12%	13%	23%	3%	16,815

Highest percentages are marked in bold

The views also varied according to the type of respondents with a higher proportion of respondents from NGOs and other associations as well as governments and public authorities believing the Directives are important to protecting species and habitats against these pressures. On the other hand, respondents from businesses and individuals considered them not to be important.

Q28: How well do the Directives cover the habitats and species that most need conservation in the EU?

The opinions were almost identical for both Directives and have therefore been combined to provide averages in the table below.

Overall, the majority of respondents considered the Directives to cover the habitats and species most in need of conservation in the EU *very well* (57%). A further 24% believed they were *sufficiently well* covered. Only 16% thought they were *not well* covered or *not very well* covered.

The views varied between different types of respondents. 76% of businesses, 57% of individuals and 49% of NGOs believed the Directives covered the habitats and species *very well*. On the other hand, 46% of respondents from governments or public authorities and 37% of other organisations considered they were only *sufficiently well* covered.

Table 44, Q28, by type of respondent

Q28: How well do the Directives cover the habitats and species that most need conservation in the EU?						
Average Birds Directive and Habitats Directive	Not well at all	Not very well	Sufficiently well	Very well	Don't know	Total
An individual	5%	11%	24%	57%	2%	13,198
A business	3%	7%	12%	76%	2%	1,785
A non-governmental organisation (NGO)	3%	11%	34%	49%	2%	660
An organisation or association (other than NGO)	4%	15%	37%	33%	11%	491

Q28: How well do the Directives cover the habitats and species that most need conservation in the EU?

Average Birds Directive and Habitats Directive	Not well at all	Not very well	Sufficiently well	Very well	Don't know	Total
A government or public authority	1%	11%	46%	36%	5%	277
Other	2%	10%	27%	56%	5%	249
An academic/research institute	4%	12%	47%	36%	1%	155
All respondents	5%	11%	24%	57%	3%	16,815
Total	822	1,802	4,079	9,662	452	16,815

Highest percentages are marked in bold

5.6 COHERENCE QUESTIONS

Q29: To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

Overall, the responses do not offer any clear-cut findings. Regarding the Directives being consistent with each other and mutually supportive, slightly more respondents disagreed (50%) with this statement than agreed (42%).

A large proportion of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed (44%) that the objectives of the Directives are consistent with those of the EU biodiversity strategy. However, a further 41% *mostly* agreed (20%) or *totally* agreed (21%) that this was the case. Finally, regarding the Directives being in line with international commitments 49% *totally* or *mostly* disagreed, compared to 48% who *mostly* or *totally* agreed.

Table 45, Q29

Q29: To what extent do you agree with the following statements?							
	Totally disagree	Mostly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly agree	Totally agree	Don't know	Total
The objectives and requirements of the Birds and Habitats Directives are consistent with each other and mutually supportive	5%	45%	5%	21%	21%	2%	16,815
The objectives and requirements of the Birds and Habitats Directives are consistent with those of the EU Biodiversity Strategy	5%	6%	44%	20%	21%	4%	16,815
The objectives and requirements of the Birds and Habitats Directives are in line with international commitments to protect nature	5%	44%	7%	18%	22%	6%	16,815

Highest percentages are marked in bold

The analysis by fields of interest reveals that the majority of respondents (74-77%) from agriculture and forestry, fisheries and hunting *mostly* or *totally* disagree with the statement that Directives are consistent with each other. On the other hand, the majority of respondents from environment and nature (81%) as well as from the industry (65%) *mostly* or *totally* agree with this statement.

Table 46, Q 29_1 by main field of activity/interest

Objectives and requirements of the Directives are consistent with each other							
	Totally disagree	Mostly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly agree	Totally agree	Don't know	Total
Agriculture & forestry	4%	73%	5%	12%	4%	2%	5,408
Environment & nature	3%	10%	4%	29%	52%	2%	5,122
Fisheries & hunting	11%	63%	7%	14%	2%	3%	3,846
Others	4%	27%	5%	28%	32%	3%	1,786
Construction, extractive industry, transport	5%	22%	5%	52%	13%	3%	653
All respondents	5%	45%	5%	21%	21%	2%	16,815
Total	879	7,542	903	3,480	3,593	418	16,815

Concerning the question of whether the Directives are consistent with those of the Biodiversity Strategy, the differences are not as pronounced. The majority of respondents interested or active in agriculture and forestry (72%), fisheries and hunting (61%) neither disagree nor agree with this statement, while most respondents from environment and nature (78%) as well as the industry (65%) mostly or totally agree.

Table 47, Q29_2, by main field of interest/activity

Objectives and requirements of the Directives are consistent with those of the Biodiversity Strategy							
	Totally disagree	Mostly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly agree	Totally agree	Don't know	Total
Agriculture & forestry	3%	6%	72%	13%	4%	2%	5,408
Environment & nature	3%	4%	10%	28%	50%	4%	5,122
Fisheries & hunting	11%	9%	61%	11%	5%	4%	3,846
Others	4%	5%	28%	27%	31%	5%	1,786
Construction, extractive industry, transport	5%	8%	17%	51%	14%	5%	653
All respondents	5%	6%	44%	20%	21%	4%	16,815
Total	877	973	7,394	3,327	3,613	631	16,815

As to the Directives being in line with international agreements, once again the majority of respondents interested in agriculture and forestry (76%) as well as those interested in fisheries and hunting (70%) mostly or totally disagreed with this statement, while most respondents from environment and nature (77%) mostly or totally agree with it. Concerning respondents interested/active in industry, a sizeable share (40%) said they didn't know.

Table 48, Q29_3, by main field of activity/interest

Objectives and requirements of the Directives are in line with international commitments to protect nature							
	Totally disagree	Mostly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly agree	Totally agree	Don't know	total
Agriculture & forestry	4%	72%	6%	11%	4%	3%	5,408
Environment & nature	3%	10%	5%	25%	52%	5%	5,122
Fisheries & hunting	10%	60%	9%	14%	2%	4%	3,846
Others	4%	27%	8%	24%	32%	5%	1,786
construction, extractive industry, transport	5%	17%	6%	18%	15%	40%	653
All respondents	5%	44%	7%	18%	22%	6%	16,815
Total	868	7,327	1,107	2,949	3,638	926	16,815

Q30: Are there any significant gaps, overlaps or inconsistencies between the Birds and Habitats Directives and the following EU environmental legislation that limit the extent to which the Directives can be effectively implemented?

From the replies given, it is clear that the majority of respondents (64%) didn't know if there are any significant gaps, overlaps or inconsistencies between the two nature Directives and the other pieces of EU legislation listed in the question.

Slightly more respondents believed there were no inconsistencies between the Nature Directives and the EIA and SEA Directives or with the Water Framework Directive (25-29%) as compared with the other Directives listed (20-23%).

Table 49, Q30

Q30: Are there any significant gaps, overlaps or inconsistencies between the Birds and Habitats Directives and the following EU environmental legislation that limit the extent to which the Directives can be effectively implemented?				
	No	Yes	Don't know	Total
SEA Directive	25%	11%	63%	16,815
EIA Directive	29%	15%	56%	16,815
Water Framework Directive	29%	14%	56%	16,815
Marine Strategy Framework Directive	20%	9%	70%	16,815
Floods Directive	20%	15%	65%	16,815
National Emission Ceilings Directive	21%	11%	68%	16,815
Nitrates Directive	21%	14%	66%	16,815
Environmental Liability Directive	23%	13%	64%	16,815

Highest percentages are marked in bold

5.7 EU ADDED VALUE QUESTIONS

Q31: To what extent have the EU Birds and Habitats Directives helped improve the following, over and above what could have been achieved through national or regional legislation?

This question asked respondents to give their opinion on whether the two Directives helped improve the situation in 20 areas of nature conservation, over and above that which could have been achieved through national or regional legislation.

A large majority of respondents (85%) believed the two Directives made a *moderate* or *significant* contribution on the extent of protected areas. As regards the protection of wild birds, and threatened species and habitats, almost half thought the Directives had made a *minor* contribution (47-48%) compared to 30-32% who thought they made a *significant* contribution.

Around half of the respondents also felt that the Directives made a *minor* contribution to the following: restoration of degraded habitats (51%), research into & knowledge about species and habitats (51%), funding for nature conservation (49%), cross-border cooperation on nature conservation (48%), integration of nature conservation into other policies (51%), public awareness of nature conservation (51%), respondent participation & engagement in nature conservation (50%), meeting international nature conservation commitments (48%) and economic benefits linked to job creation, investment in tourism & recreation (50%). A further third (30-40%) of respondents thought the contributions made to the above were *moderate* or *significant*.

As regards the following: standards for nature protection, management of habitats, staff assigned to nature conservation, networking and exchange of best practices in nature conservation, and building partnerships & resolving conflicts around nature conservation, the respondents were more or less equally divided between those who considered the Directives made *no* contribution and those who thought they made at least *some* contribution (whether *minor*, *moderate* or *significant*).

Finally, as regards providing a level playing field for businesses and hunting, around half of the respondents believed the Directives made *no* contribution (54-55%) while a over a third (38-39%) thought they did make *some* contribution.

These findings are different from those given under Q11 in Part I where participants were asked to what extent the Directives provided more value than could have been achieved through national or regional laws. In answer to this question an overwhelming majority of respondents to Q11 (93%) thought the Directives provided *significant* added value, with only 2% considering they brought *no* added value.

Table 50, Q31

Q31: To what extent have the EU Birds and Habitats Directives helped improve the following, over and above what could have been achieved through national or regional legislation???						
	No contribution	Minor contribution	Moderate contribution	Significant Contribution	Don't know	Total
Standards for nature protection	50%	8%	10%	31%	1%	16,815
The extent of protected areas	7%	6%	48%	37%	1%	16,815
Protection of wild bird species	8%	47%	11%	32%	1%	16,815
Protection of threatened species (other than birds)	9%	47%	13%	30%	1%	16,815
Protection of threatened habitat types	8%	48%	11%	32%	1%	16,815
Management of habitats	49%	10%	15%	24%	2%	16,815
Restoration of degraded habitats	10%	51%	15%	22%	2%	16,815
Research into & knowledge about species & habitats	7%	51%	15%	24%	3%	16,815
Funding for nature conservation	8%	49%	14%	25%	4%	16,815
Staff assigned to nature conservation	46%	12%	14%	23%	4%	16,815
Cross-border cooperation on nature conservation	8%	48%	15%	22%	7%	16,815
Networking & exchange of best practice in nature conservation	46%	11%	15%	22%	6%	16,815
Integration of nature conservation into other policies	9%	51%	16%	21%	4%	16,815
Public awareness of nature conservation	10%	51%	17%	20%	2%	16,815
Stakeholders participation & engagement in	10%	50%	17%	20%	3%	16,815

Q31: To what extent have the EU Birds and Habitats Directives helped improve the following, over and above what could have been achieved through national or regional legislation??

	No contribution	Minor contribution	Moderate contribution	Significant Contribution	Don't know	Total
nature conservation						
Building partnerships & resolving conflicts around nature conservation	51%	14%	13%	19%	3%	16,815
Providing a level playing field for businesses	54%	11%	10%	17%	8%	16,815
Meeting international nature conservation commitments	7%	48%	15%	25%	5%	16,815
Regulating Hunting	55%	11%	11%	17%	6%	16,815
Economic benefits linked to job creation, investment in tourism & recreation	16%	50%	12%	18%	4%	16,815

Highest percentages are marked in bold

A separate analysis was made according to different fields of interest for those aspects where a sizeable proportion of respondents stated that the Directives made *no* contribution (see [Table 51](#) below): i.e. standards for nature protection, management of habitats, staff assigned to nature conservation and networking and exchange of best practices.

In all cases the majority (65%-82%) of respondents from agriculture and forestry as well as from fisheries and hunting thought the Directives made no contribution. On the other hand, a large number of respondents from nature and environment found that the Directives had made a *significant* contribution, although the shares varied from 47% (concerning staff assigned to nature conservation) to 73% (concerning standards for nature protection).

Once again, industry (construction, extractive industry, transport) held a slightly different view: around half agreed that the directives had made *no* contribution as regards standards for nature protection, and networking and exchange of best practice. On the other hand, around half also thought they made a *moderate* contribution to the management of habitats and 46% thought they made a *significant* contribution to the number of staff assigned to nature conservation.

Table 51, Q31_1,6,10,12 by main field of activity/interest

Q31: To what extent have the EU Birds and Habitats Directives helped improve the following, over and above what could have been achieved through national or regional legislation?						
Standards for nature protection						
	No contribution	Minor contribution	Moderate contribution	Significant contribution	Don't know	Total
Agriculture & forestry	81%	7%	6%	5%	1%	5,408
Environment & nature	9%	5%	12%	73%	1%	5,122
Fisheries & hunting	70%	11%	12%	4%	2%	3,846
Others	28%	9%	12%	49%	2%	1,786
construction, extractive industry, transport	51%	13%	8%	27%	2%	653
All respondents	50%	8%	10%	31%	1%	16,815
Total	8,339	1,363	1,660	5,229	224	16,815

Management of habitats						
	No contribution	Minor contribution	Moderate contribution	Significant contribution	Don't know	Total
Agriculture & forestry	82%	8%	5%	5%	1%	5,408
Environment & nature	9%	9%	23%	58%	1%	5,122
Fisheries & hunting	69%	14%	10%	3%	3%	3,846
Others	30%	10%	21%	35%	4%	1,786
construction, extractive industry, transport	23%	8%	49%	17%	3%	653
All respondents	49%	10%	15%	24%	2%	16,815
Total	8,267	1,651	2,522	4,070	305	16,815

Staff assigned to nature conservation						
	No contribution	Minor contribution	Moderate contribution	Significant contribution	Don't know	Total
Agriculture & forestry	75%	8%	6%	8%	3%	5,408
Environment & nature	10%	14%	24%	47%	4%	5,122
Fisheries & hunting	67%	12%	9%	6%	6%	3,846
Others	28%	14%	23%	28%	7%	1,786
construction, extractive industry, transport	17%	14%	18%	46%	5%	653
All respondents	46%	12%	14%	23%	4%	16,815
Total	7,798	1,974	2,437	3,859	747	16,815
Networking & exchange of best practice in nature conservation						

	No contribution	Minor contribution	Moderate contribution	Significant contribution	Don't know	Total
Agriculture & forestry	74%	9%	10%	4%	4%	5,408
Environment & nature	9%	11%	23%	53%	5%	5,122
Fisheries & hunting	67%	12%	11%	4%	7%	3,846
Others	27%	13%	19%	34%	7%	1,786
construction, extractive industry, transport	47%	10%	19%	12%	12%	653
All respondents	46%	11%	15%	22%	6%	16,815
Total	7,780	1,794	2,568	3,739	934	16,815

Q32: If the EU nature Directives did not exist, would the overall state of species and habitats in the EU be...

Overall, the opinions of respondents to this question are divided between those who believed the state of species and habitats in the EU would be *much* or *somewhat* worse without the nature Directives (44%) and those who thought that it would be the *same* (48%). A further 8% thought it would be *somewhat* or *much* better.

The views varied significantly between types of respondents. 84% of research institutes, 78% of government or public authorities and NGOs, and 65% of other organisations thought the situation would be *somewhat* or *much* worse. On the other hand, the majority of businesses (74%) believed the state of species and habitats would be the *same*. As for individuals, they are more or less equally divided between those who believe the situation would be the *same* (48%) and those who felt it would be *much* worse (43%).

Table 52, Q32, by type of respondent

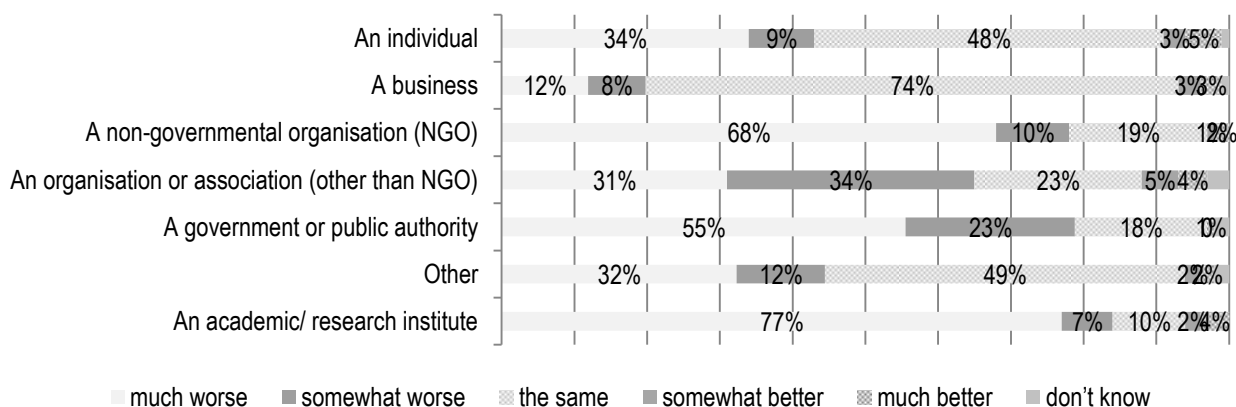
Q32: If the EU Nature Directives did not exist, would the overall state of species and habitats in the EU be...							
	much worse	somewhat worse	the same	somewhat better	much better	don't know	Total
An individual	34%	9%	48%	3%	5%	1%	13,198
A business	12%	8%	74%	3%	3%	1%	1,785
Agriculture & forestry	3%	5%	84%	3%	4%	1%	1,131
Environment & nature	83%	7%	9%	1%	<0.5%	<0.5%	152
Construction, extractive industry transport	8%	14%	74%	4%	<0.5%	1%	299
Fisheries & hunting	3%	9%	76%	7%	5%	<0.5%	74
others	26%	14%	55%	2%	2%	2%	129
A non-governmental	68%	10%	19%	1%	2%	<0.5%	660

Q32: If the EU Nature Directives did not exist, would the overall state of species and habitats in the EU be...

	much worse	somewhat worse	the same	somewhat better	much better	don't know	Total
organisation (NGO)							
An organisation or association (other than NGO)	31%	34%	23%	5%	4%	3%	491
A government or public authority	55%	23%	18%	<0.5%	1%	2%	277
Other	32%	12%	49%	2%	2%	2%	249
An academic/ research institute	77%	7%	10%	2%	4%	<0.5%	155
All respondents	34%	10%	48%	3%	5%	1%	16,815
Total	5,720	1,640	8,038	500	761	156	16,815

Highest percentages are marked in bold

Figure 18, Q32, by type of respondent



Looking at the replies from the perspective of different Member States, respondents in most countries thought that the overall state of species and habitats in the EU would be *much worse*. However, respondents from Germany, Austria, Slovenia, Finland and Sweden had a different view. The majority in these countries believed that the overall state of species and habitats would be the *same*.

The replies from the first two countries account for 60% of the total share of replies received to Part II and may have been influenced by the Aktionsbündnis Forum Natur AFN campaign which recommended on its website that its supporters state that the overall state of species and habitats would be the *same*. On the other hand, the Nature Alert campaign organised by nature organisations only proposed responses to Part I and therefore probably had little impact on Part II.

Table 53, Q 32 by country of residence or activity

Q32: If the EU Nature Directives did not exist, would the overall state of species and habitats in the EU be...

	Much worse	Somewhat worse	The same	Somewhat better	Much better	Don't know	Total
Germany	19%	6%	71%	2%	2%	<0.5%	9,500
United Kingdom	83%	9%	3%	2%	1%	2%	1,800
Sweden	8%	12%	27%	14%	38%	2%	1,065
France	59%	17%	10%	5%	6%	2%	884
Austria	18%	5%	74%	1%	2%	<0.5%	641
Finland	24%	18%	30%	13%	13%	2%	387
Belgium	70%	14%	11%	1%	3%	1%	384
Spain	50%	38%	5%	4%	2%	1%	305
Italy	55%	38%	5%	1%	2%	<0.5%	304
Netherlands	82%	10%	3%	3%	<0.5%	2%	301
Slovakia	13%	19%	46%	9%	11%	2%	263
Czech Republic	88%	10%	1%	<0.5%	1%	<0.5%	174
Ireland	81%	11%	5%	1%	1%	2%	119
Greece	75%	8%	8%	5%	2%	3%	117
Hungary	83%	12%	2%	1%	1%	<0.5%	90
Portugal	83%	8%	6%	<0.5%	1%	1%	83
Poland	61%	21%	11%	3%	<0.5%	3%	70
Slovenia	71%	22%	4%	<0.5%	2%	<0.5%	45
Denmark	57%	20%	11%	2%	5%	5%	44
Bulgaria	74%	13%	8%	5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	39
Other Country (non-EU)	53%	<0.5%	42%	<0.5%	6%	<0.5%	36
Romania	66%	20%	9%	<0.5%	6%	<0.5%	35
Luxembourg	70%	27%	3%	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	30
Latvia	62%	21%	14%	<0.5%	<0.5%	3%	29
Cyprus	55%	45%	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	22
Malta	84%	16%	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	19
Croatia	60%	27%	13%	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	15
Estonia	67%	22%	11%	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	9
Lithuania	80%	<0.5%	20%	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	5
All respondents	34%	10%	48%	3%	5%	1%	16,815
Total	5,72	1,64	8,038	500	761	156	16,815

5.8 CONCLUSIONS

3% of all respondents replied to Part II (16,815 replies out of a total of 552,472 replies). Respondents from Germany accounted for over half of the replies (56%). Looking at the fields of interests according to the five countries that generated the most replies in Part II, a higher proportion (44%) of respondents from Germany and Austria stated their fields of interest were agriculture and forestry, when compared with other countries (14%). This may also reflect the impact of certain campaigns targeting these interest groups in the countries concerned.

Part II of the questionnaire appears to give contrasting views to Part I as regards the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and coherence of the Directives. This may reflect the different composition of respondents between the two parts and the impact of different campaigns.

The majority of respondents to Part II shared the view that:

- The administrative costs associated with the implementation of the Directives are major (60%);
- There is insufficient funding for implementing the Directives (77%)
- This lack of sufficient funding is significantly restricting progress (74%)
- Proper enforcement, effective national coordination, international cooperation, public awareness and guidance have some impact on the success of the Directives (87-90%)
- The following elements are *significantly* limiting progress: insufficient stakeholder involvement (65%), ineffective local coordination (62%), gaps in scientific knowledge of species and habitats (61%), unclear wording of the Directives (54%), ineffective EU-level coordination (54%)
- Interactions with other EU laws and policies have caused inefficiencies to some extent (58%), or to a large extent (27%)

The replies to Part II expressed contrasting views according to the type of stakeholder, their field of interest and their country of origin:

- Most respondents from business (79%), individuals (59%) and government (56%) and half of other organisations or associations (50%) thought the two Directives are *somewhat* effective whereas the majority of NGOs (52%) and research institutes (53%) thought the Directives were *very* effective;
- The majority of respondents from agriculture and forestry (80%) as well as from fishing, angling and hunting (62%) thought that the Directives were *not very* important for safeguarding Europe's biodiversity whereas over half of respondents from industry (construction, extractive industry, transport) thought that they were important (54%). Respondents interested in nature and environment also generally believed that the Directives were *very important* (83%)

While, in most countries, respondents considered the Directives to be *very* important to safeguarding Europe's biodiversity, 69% of respondents from Germany and 67% from Austria considered that the Directives were *not very important*. This was the answer recommended by the Aktionsbündnis Forum Natur AFN campaign.

6 OVERVIEW OF THE RESULTS TO THE FINAL OPEN QUESTION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This section presents the analysis of a 10% sample of the comments received to the final open question at the end of the questionnaire. In total, 10,213 respondents (1.8%) submitted comments in the form of a written text. Of these, 8,103 were from individuals, 875 from businesses, 449 from NGOs and 393 from organisations and associations other than NGOs¹⁹. Governments and research institutes submitted 143 and 101 comments, respectively.

As regards the fields of interest or activity of the respondents who submitted comments, a large proportion (43% or 4,343 comments) came from those interested in nature and environment, followed closely by those interested or active in agriculture and forestry (21% or 2,185 comments), and fisheries or hunting (16% or 1,652 comments). Together, these three main groups of interests make up 80% of all comments submitted under the final open question.

The remaining 20% of the comments received were divided between respondents interested or active in science (6% or 574 comments), industry (5% or 479 comments), culture and education (5% or 485 comments), recreation and tourism (3% or 330 comments), energy and water management (1% each or 112 and 53 comments, respectively).

Table 54, Comments to the open question, by type of stakeholder and main field of activity/interest

	Individuals	Business	NGO	Other organisations associations	Government public authorities	Research	Other	TOTAL
Agriculture +forestry	1478	467	58	97	37	7	41	2185
Angling, fish farming, fishing, hunting	1444	42	53	80	9	1	22	1652
Construction, extractive industry, transport	193	201	6	47	29	0	3	479
Environment + nature	3661	83	294	138	61	44	62	4343
Energy	60	29	6	14	0	2	1	112
Recreation + tourism	279	30	4	9	2	3	3	330
Science	511	7	12	2	2	33	7	574
Water management	41	4	2	2	2	0	2	53
Culture + education	436	12	14	4	1	11	7	485
TOTAL	8103	875	449	393	143	101	149	10213

¹⁹ For example, associations of foresters or farmers, associations for animal support, industry associations

Table 55, Comments to the open question, by type of stakeholder and main field of activity/interest (% of each type of stakeholder)

	Individual	Business	NGO	Other organisation association	Government public authorities	Research	Other	TOTAL
Agriculture +forestry	18%	53%	13%	25%	26%	7%	27%	21%
Angling, fish farming, fishing, hunting	18%	5%	12%	20%	6%	1%	15%	16%
construct extractive industry, transport	2%	23%	1%	12%	20%	0%	2%	5%
Environmen t+ nature	45%	9%	65%	35%	43%	44%	42%	43%
Energy	1%	3%	1%	4%	0%	2%	1%	1%
Recreation + tourism	3%	3%	1%	2%	1%	3%	2%	3%
Science	6%	1%	3%	1%	1%	33%	5%	6%
Water mgmt.	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Culture + education	5%	1%	3%	1%	1%	11%	5%	5%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

The open question asked the respondents “Do you have any further comments?” As this was a very broad question, the range of replies received was also very wide ranging. Given the large number of comments received and the time constraints, a stratified sample of 10% was selected for an in-depth analysis according to a methodology agreed with the Commission. As indicated in section 2.2, this was created using a combination of type of stakeholders and main fields of interest/activity. This stratification meant that the same share (10%) of comments from each type of stakeholder according to type AND main interest/activity could be selected. In total, 1,017 were randomly drawn into the sample that way and subsequently analysed.

The analysis aimed at identifying the range of statements that different types of respondents (eg individuals or organisations) and interest groups have made. Categories of responses were developed by going through all the comments in the sample first in order to identify a range of key categories (inductive category development) and then assigning each comment to one or more of these categories (deductive category application). In this way it was possible to determine which statements appeared most frequently.

This method was considered more appropriate than, for instance, a simple key word based analysis, as it makes it possible to identify and analyse key messages and apply a certain level of interpretation.

The remainder of this section presents the main issues raised by different groups of respondents in the sample. This is designed to provide an indication of the key concerns raised but it cannot be assumed that they necessarily reflect the views of all respondents from that group.

Table 56, Samples of comments to the open question, by type of stakeholder and main field of interest/activity

	Individual	Business	NGO	Other organisation association	Gvmt, public authorities	Research	Other	TOTAL Sample size
Agriculture +forestry	148	47	6	10	4	1	4	220
Angling, fish farming, fishing, hunting	144	4	5	8	1	0	2	164
Construct, extractive industry, transport	19	20	1	5	3	0	0	48
Environ + nature	366	8	29	14	6	4	6	433
Energy	6	3	1	1	0	0	0	11
Recreation + tourism	28	3	0	1	0	0	0	32
Science	51	1	1	0	0	3	1	57
Water mgmt	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Culture + education	44	1	1	0	0	1	1	48
TOTAL sample size	810	87	44	39	14	9	14	1017

6.1.1 Organised campaigns

As with the closed questions, targeted campaigns appear to have had some influence on the comments in the final open question. For instance, a number of comments are repeated verbatim several times, often originating from the same interest group and/or country. However, only 6 such repeated comments were identified in the sample, all of which were repeated less than 20 times (in the sample). This would seem to indicate that the campaigns have not had a major impact on the results.

Examples of repeated comments:

“The species and habitats listed in the Directives are often not nationally the most relevant ones. Thus the directives lead to wrong prioritisations. Strictly defined habits have only a limited importance to biodiversity. The directives lead to bureaucracy, expensive undertakings and disproportionate restrictions of land use in private properties; they hardly admit that different interests can be balanced. Legislation that without compensation restricts land uses because of their influence on species is against the ownership rights and human rights. An unbalanced implementation without compromises leads in forestry to the increased use of products based on fossil fuels that accelerate climate change and are often produced outside EU. Birds and other species are best protected at the landscape level, not in a defined locality. The Swedish model for

sustainable forestry includes such protection through nature reserves, voluntary reserves, protection of less productive forests and environmental consideration in all undertakings. Despite some old forests being felled the landscape structures important for birds are increased.” (This comment (translated from Swedish) was made by individuals active in forestry from Sweden and repeated 18 times.)

“The Nature Directives are scientifically proven to aid the recovery of species and to be robust in the face of climate change. To be more effective, they should be properly implemented and funded by all EU member state governments, including the UK Government. · Uncertainty about the future of the Directives caused by any changes could be: o Bad for nature – threatening to weaken vital protection for species and habitats when what is needed is proper implementation of the laws o Bad for people – jeopardising the protection of biodiversity also jeopardises the wider health, well-being and ‘ecosystem services’ benefits that nature provides o Bad for business – threatening the stable regulatory framework for sustainable development that the Directives provide, leading to business uncertainty and investor risk. · Urgent reform of the EU’s sectoral policies, particularly the Common Agricultural Policy, is needed if the EU is to achieve its nature conservation objectives.” (This comment was made by individuals interested in Nature from the UK and was repeated 9 times.)

“As farmers we are twice confronted with the directives. By realising the objectives agriculture land has to be changed into nature. Furthermore we are also confronted with difficulties in the permitting procedure (appropriate assessment). The consequences of the application of the directives for intensive agriculture in a strongly populated and industrial region with limited open land are also very heavy. We are confronted with fragmented nature areas in a strong, historic relation between nature and agriculture which makes the results of the permitting procedure disproportionately heavy. The targets that are aimed for, are in a region like Flanders simply not realistic despite the efforts agriculture has made in the past years to lighten the pressure on the environment. Also, compensation measures for projects of great public importance are used in an irrelevant way. For infrastructure works (roads, harbors, ...) the fact that there is no alternative for projects of great public interest is invoked. These projects can be realised if a nature compensation is made. Agriculture is always paying the bill because nature compensation is always happening on agriculture land or lands in use for agriculture purposes.” (translated from Dutch; this comment was mentioned 7 times by respondents from agriculture from Belgium.)

Two verbatim repeated comments were only repeated 3 times and are not presented here. The last comment (repeated 9 times) concerned the questionnaire design.

6.1.2 Comments on the questionnaire design

In total, 43 comments (21 from individuals and 22 from organisations) out of the 1,017 in the sample criticised the questionnaire itself. A sizeable number (16) came from respondents from industry²⁰. Respondents from the extractive industry in Germany in particular repeated the following comment verbatim nine times:

“A. From the point of view of the extractive industry answering the questions is difficult, if not impossible. B. The formulation of the questions does not allow making positive and technical

²⁰ Construction, extractive industry and transport.

suggestions for improvement. C. The questionnaire only aims at obtaining confirmation or tightening of the legal requirements for nature protection of the Directive and neither allows for suggestions for improvement related to the content nor for taking into account economic interests. Suggestion: Businesses should describe problematic cases.”(translated from German; this comment was mentioned 9 times by respondents from the extractive industry in Germany)

The other comments on the questionnaire referred to similar issues: that the questionnaire was too difficult or was biased or did not allow for proposals for improvement.

6.2 MAIN ISSUES RAISED BY INDIVIDUALS

The 810 sampled comments from individuals were grouped according 41 categories of comments, reflecting the range of issues raised. These categories were linked to the overall evaluation criteria used for the REFIT exercise (effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, relevance, EU added value).

The ten most important issues raised by individuals in the sample are presented below (i.e., those issues raised by 10% or more of the individuals):

1. **The Directives’ objectives are poorly implemented or enforced** (200 comments). A quarter (25% =200 comments) of the 810 comments from individuals in the sample raised this issue. The majority came from individuals interested in nature and environment (127 comments) followed by those interested or active in agriculture or forestry (14 comments), fisheries or hunting (11 comments). It was also a relatively frequent comment amongst all other types of interest groups.

While some individuals made general statements highlighting that the Directives needed better EU enforcement or implementation or funding, others referred to the difficulties in transposition, the need for faster implementation of the provisions or/and better enforcement in their country or region.

“It is the Natura 2000 Directives that have allowed for the emergence of the environmental code in France. Their additions to the French law have been laborious. The politicians have even wanted to retreat. However, the erosion of biodiversity and the warming of the climate continue. Things are falling into place little by little but not fast enough and not in a sufficiently ambitious manner. I think it is very important to further develop the Natura 2000 network together with the 'trame verte et bleue' network.” (translated from French; individual interested in nature, France)

“These directives are very important as wildlife does not recognise borders. The major danger is weakening protection and not enforcing the laws as effectively in all countries.”(individual interested in environment, UK)

Others made more specific comments about various aspects of implementation, such as the need to improve the implementation of management plans, or ensure a stronger enforcement of the hunting provisions, or to ensure proper funding.

“In Germany and Baden-Württemberg there is a glaring transposition deficit of the two directives. The guidelines are an integral part of the German and Baden-Württemberg Nature Conservation Landscape. We urgently need action to Protect species, habitats and

reduce the loss of biodiversity. Urgently required management plans for the implementation of conservation measures within the NATURA 2000 network of protected areas do not exist yet for all Natura 2000 areas. Furthermore, a meaningful NATURA 2000 monitoring is needed at the level of federal states in order to measure the success of the Directive.” (translated from German; individual interested in environment, Germany)

2. **EU legislation is needed and has added value over and above national legislation** (176 comments). This was mentioned in 22% of all comments from individuals in the sample, the vast majority of which were interested in nature and environment, science or education and culture. On the other hand, very few individuals (10 comments) interested in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and hunting raised this point.

“These two Directives are absolutely indispensable, as well as the ensuring Natura 2000 network. In my opinion, the points that merit emphasis with regard to these directives are: European and cross-border cooperation, public awareness-raising, harmonising national legislation, whilst also adapting to the local context, integrating biodiversity within other European policies, and enforcing human and financial capacities.” (translated from French; France, individual, from nature)

3. **The Directives should be maintained as they are** (151 comments) This represents 19% of the comments received from individuals and includes those who said that they do not want to see the Directives abolished. Again, this is a very prominent request among individuals interested/active in nature and environment, but also in education and culture, recreation and tourism, energy and science. On the other hand, this issue was rarely raised by respondents from agriculture and forestry as well as fisheries and hunting and construction.

“It is vital that the EU nature Directives are maintained and that the public is well informed about the essential need to have such directives. Any changes would counteract the well-established rationale of the directives, and should be avoided. However, the implementation is sometimes influenced or restricted by other interest groups which is an issue that should be addressed at EU level. The unevenness of political support in the member states also needs to be taken into consideration when discussing any improvements. Finally, there is dire need for monitoring the conservation success of Natura2000 sites in order to improve management practices where needed.” (Individual interested in nature, Germany)

4. **The Directives are effective and have contributed to nature protection** (143 comments) This was raised in 18% of comments made by individuals in the sample. Some stated that the Directives made an important contribution to improving nature in the EU or in a particular region or for a specific species. Others made more general statements to the effect that the Directives work well. Again this issue was most common among respondents interested/active in nature and environment (114 comments) or in science (11 comments).

“Both directives play a key role in nature protection in the Czech Republic. They help to protect many types of habitats (forests, meadows ...) they are irreplaceable in protecting certain animal and plant species. Sadly, they are not well implemented...” (translated from Czech; Czech Republic, individual, nature)

5. **The Directives are important for biodiversity** (127 comments). This was raised in 16% of the comments from individuals in the sample).

6. **There is a lack of participation of land owners/resource users and they should be better involved** (114 comments). 14% of comments from individuals in the sample expressed this view. They considered that land owners and resource users do not have enough say in the implementation of the Directives, especially when it comes to the definition of the conservation measures and management plans required for the areas that are included in Natura 2000 sites. Comments were also made on the need to involve them in the prioritisation of measures affecting different species or habitats.
7. **The Directives should be strengthened or be expanded in scope** (101 comments). These comments were made by 12 % of the individuals in the sample. On the whole, they mention only very generally that the Directives should be strengthened, due to their importance for nature protection; some comments say the economic crisis should not lead to a weakening of the Directives; other comments indicate that they should be expanded in scope, for example, to include urban areas in view of their potential to protect species. This is illustrated by the following comment:
- “Both the Birds and the Habitats Directive should be expanded in scope so that urban or populated areas are taken into account more. Here, there is still considerable potential especially since these areas do not have to be used for food production or other economic activities. (...)” (translated from German; Germany, individual, nature and environment)*
- Other comments ask for the Directives to be expanded into other areas of biodiversity and to allow more modern approaches according to latest scientific results and/or such that are recognised under international conservation agreements, for example an ecosystem based approach.
8. **Directives do not take account of regional and local circumstances and do not give enough focus on local solutions** (97 comments) 12% of the individuals in the sample considered that the Directives did not provide enough scope to take into account local farming or forestry practices, or hunting traditions which are in their view also beneficial to nature protection. The vast majority of these comments came from individuals interested or active in agriculture, forestry, angling and hunting.
- “If you really want to make efficient nature management, you simply have to accept a land owner's right and its supremacy over any EU directive or national law. As it is now, the landowner often take away rare habitats actively, in order to protect his or her land from being heavily restricted from proper rational production purpose due to nature conservation You simply have to involve the land owners from the start, and it must be totally voluntarily for the landowner to participate in it. A willing landowner simply is by far the cheapest way to create suitable habitats necessary for the rare species. An unwilling landowner that is forced however is a very expensive and ineffective way to create those habitats.” (Sweden, individual, forestry)*
9. **Socio-economic benefits of Natura 2000 should be better highlighted since Natura 2000 can and does generate economic benefits** (83 comments) 10% of individuals thought that the socio-economic benefits brought about by the Directives were not highlighted enough and that more examples of their value to society should be brought to the attention of the public and politicians.

“It is not the time for sacrificing nature for the benefit of some imaginary and temporal economic “recovery”. Some non-sustainable economic growth obtained by loosening environmental laws provides no solution for any crisis. On the contrary, protected areas create jobs in tourism and contiguous industries. So “checking” the Directives may not be a pretext to impair them but should look for possibilities to further complete their effects.”
(Belgium, Individual, recreation)

10. **The annexes to the Directives should be revised and updated** (80 comments) these comments were made by 10% of the individuals in the sample. Most suggested that some species should be removed from the Directives such as cormorants, seagulls, swans, wolves. Others thought that certain species should be added. For example, some individuals interested in nature suggested that more bird species such as the yellowhammer and the corn bunting should be protected.

“The Habitats Directive has perverse effects: in protecting the Canis lupus (wolf), the Directive has led to an exponential expansion of the wolf population at the expense of pastoral activities. I fear that one day we will have an attack on a human, and that is not acceptable! The species “Canis lupis” should be downgraded within the Habitats Directive to the space of simply protected, so that the wolf could be considered as a hunted animal and so that hunters would have the possibility of hunting wolves in the same way as other game.”
(translated from French, individual, agriculture)

6.3 MAIN ISSUES RAISED BY ORGANISATIONS

The 207 comments in the sample from organisations (businesses, NGOs, associations other than NGOs, governments and research/academic institutes) and respondents who registered as ‘other’ in the sample were also categorized according to 41 categories identified. There were **six** key issues raised by more than 10% of comments from organisations in the sample, five of them relating to the effectiveness of the Directives.

1. **The Directives are difficult to implement because the rules are too complicated and too restrictive** (47 comments). This issue was raised in 20% of all comments of organisations in the sample. Many said that they thought that there were too many rules and that some were too complex and incomprehensible for local people. They concerned in particular derogations for species hunting, complicated procedures of site designation and Article 6(3) appropriate assessment procedure or the ‘Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest’ (IROPI) test in Article 6(4) which generated high administrative burden. Furthermore a lack of integration with other land uses is also claimed.
2. **Directives are too costly to implement and/or the administrative burden is too heavy** (40 comments) 19% of respondents from organisations in the sample said that the Directives put a high economic and administrative burden on resource users and land owners and that this was often affecting the viability of their business. This issue was mainly raised by businesses (24 comments), but also by organisations/associations other than NGOs (12 comments).
3. **The Directives’ objectives are poorly implemented or enforced** (39 comments). This comment was made by 19% of organisations in the sample. It mirrors to a large extent the same comment made by individuals. The main problems raised refer to the lack of

coordination at national and local level, lack of proper enforcement (some mention influence of lobby groups), lack of financial resources and the lack of management plans/measures in the Natura 2000 sites.

4. **There is a lack of participation of land owners/resource users and they should be better involved** (36 comments) 17% of comments from organisations in the sample referred to the lack of participation of land owners and resource users, making the implementation unworkable in practice. They asked that they should be better involved in the whole process. Individuals in the sample had a similar reflection (see above).

„Nature protection is very important but if there were more Directives it would be more difficult for agriculture to conduct their business effectively. In this way the profession of a farmer will become less interesting to the following generations. As farmers we have a great interest in nature protection so that we can still cultivate our areas in 100 years.” (translated from German; agriculture and forestry business, Germany)

5. **The Directives were effective and have contributed to nature protection** (30 comments). This comment was made by 15% of respondents from organisations in the sample and in particular by NGOs (12 comments) and other organisations (9 comments). This issue was however not raised once amongst the sampled comments from businesses and was only raised by few (5 comments) government organisations or research institutes.

“As nature knows no borders, to be effective nature conservation action must be coordinated at international level, justifying an EU-level approach. There has been a step-change in nature conservation efforts in Europe thanks to the Directives”. (Environment NGO, United Kingdom)

6. **Socio-economic aspects were not sufficiently taken into account** (29 comments). 14 % of comments from organisations in the sample mentioned that more effort is needed to make the Directives more workable, for instance by involving land owners and users more in the implementation of the two Directives. This issue was raised in particular by businesses (10 comments) and other organisations (11 comments), and, to a lesser extent, by government authorities (4 comments) but only once by NGOs.

“The goals are good, only their implementation in the Netherlands for our 250 members is not motivating. Nature policy is imposed top-down without taking into account the economic, social, cultural and regional aspects” (translated from Dutch; Agriculture and Forestry Associations other than NGOs, The Netherlands)

Seven comments from organisations thought that the economic considerations often prevail over the environmental ones, for example in relation to the consideration of development projects as IROPI falling under Article 6(4) and in relation to the compensatory measures.

The following presents a sample of comments by organisations according to the **different types of organisation**.

Businesses (87 comments)

- **The Directives are difficult to implement because the rules are too complicated and too restrictive** (28 comments from businesses) The analysis reveals that an important proportion of the sampled comments from businesses thought the Directives were too difficult to implement, either because they were too restrictive, led to too much control over their day to day activities or were too complicated to understand and apply.

“As a forester, farmer and business consultant I note over and over again that the businesses operating in these areas are overwhelmed by the complicated rules and therefore oppose any new nature protection efforts despite their overall support for the issue,. This is because they fear a constant control through regulations that they can no longer follow.” (translated from German, Forestry business, Germany)

- **Directives are too costly to implement and/or the administrative burden is too heavy** (24 comments from businesses). Many stated that businesses were suffering economically as a result of the measures imposed on them by the Directives. They should not be the ones who are made to bear the cost of their implementation (see also above).

These were the two most prominent issues raised by businesses. Other issues (each indicated in around 10 comments) have already been mentioned above:

- Lack of participation of land users/owners (11 comments)
- Lack of socio-economic aspects being taken into account (10 comments)
- Poor implementation or enforcement of the Directives (10 comments)

Organisations/Associations other than NGOs (39 comments)

The comments from organisations and associations other than NGOs were similar to those made by business:

- There is a lack of participation of land owners/resource users and they should be better involved (13 comments)
- **Directives are too costly to implement and/or the administrative burden is too heavy** (12 comments). Several mentions that there was not enough, or indeed no, compensation for income lost or damage caused by the Nature Directives and that there was an urgent need for more compensatory schemes and incentives for land owners and users who suffered damages or a loss of income as a result of the Nature Directives.

“The directives create a situation in which private property can be overridden without compensation to the landowner. Legal security and compensation issues must be ensured in a revision of the Directives. Individual landowners should not bear the cost of the commitments made by society”. (Agriculture and Forestry NGO, Sweden)

- Socio-economic aspects are not sufficiently taken into account and there should be better balance/ reconciliation between economy and nature (11 comments)
- The Directives are difficult to implement because the rules are too complicated and too restrictive (11 comments)

These were the most prominent issues raised by other organisations. Further issues include:

- Directives were effective and have contributed to nature protection (9 comments)
- The Directives' objectives are poorly implemented or enforced (8 comments)
- EU legislation is needed and has added value over and beyond national legislation (7 comments)

NGOs (44 comments)

The most common statements made by NGOs are quite different from those made by businesses and other organisations/associations. They include the following

- Directives are effective and have contributed to nature protection (12 comments)
- The Directives' objectives are poorly implemented or enforced (11 comments)

Further significant issues include:

- There is a lack of coherence with other EU policies, legislation or funds (7 comments)
- Socio-economic benefits of Natura 2000 should be better highlighted since Natura 2000 can and does generate economic benefits (7 comments) Several NGOs mention that Natura 2000 can and does generate economic benefits – for instance through tourism and culture but some thought that more financial and human resources should be allocated.

“Thanks to nature directives there is an increasing number of protected areas in the CZ, we are looking after birds' nests better. In addition, we also take a more conceptual approach towards nature protection, thanks to more scientific data available. Directives helped to save many species from extinction and to increase the populations of endangered species. Directives are the core pillar of nature diversity in Europe and the result of long term work of scientists and politicians. After decades of hard work regarding the boundaries of Natura 2000, clarification of legal aspects and massive increase of knowledge of nature diversity the directives are still proving to be relevant and useful. The EU MS are in the process of their implementation and it is showing its results. It would be a mistake to start changing the rules in the middle of implementation process and go back to the start. The changes would have a negative impact on nature protection in the coming years. European nature needs increased enforcement of Nature Directives, not changing the rules. The Directives are also important economic opportunity, namely for villages and mountains areas - bring more tourists, employment and businesses. One example are the CZ national parks. Directives are also important for providing security to investing businesses. Single european market needs unified rules.” (translated from Czech; Environment NGO, Czech Republic)

Government and other authorities (14 comments)

There were comparatively few comments from governments. The main issues raised by governments and other authorities were:

- **There is a lack of financial resources to implement the Directives and a need for more financial and human resources** (7 comments) Respondents mentioned for instance that a specific fund for Natura 2000 should be created or the staff in public administrations should be increased.

“Both EU nature Directives do a great job in identifying important habitats and species for protection. But without the key elements, i.e funding, commitment, skilled staff and resources the decline of our biodiversity will continue”. (Nature and Environment Government and public authorities, United Kingdom)

Further key issues raised include:

- There is a lack of **participation** of land owners/resource users and they should be better involved (4 comments)
- **Socio-economic aspects** were not sufficiently taken into account (4 comments)
- **Annexes** need to be reviewed (4 comments)
- Directives do not address intensive agriculture, habitats fragmentation, species isolation and climate change which are threats to biodiversity (4 comments)

6.4 MAIN ISSUES RAISED BY DIFFERENT FIELDS OF ACTIVITY OR INTEREST

The previous sections looked at the sample of comments made by individuals and organisations respectively. Analysing the data from the point of view of the sector of interests shows that around 80% of the sampled comments were made by respondents interested or active in nature or environment (43%), or active in agriculture, forestry, angling or hunting (37%). This section therefore analyses the most frequent comments of these two main interest groups in further detail (taking the views of individuals and organisations together).

Key issues raised by resource users (agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and hunting)

The following were mentioned most frequently by resource users in the sampled comments:

- **There is a lack of participation of land owners/ users** (89 individuals and by 24 organisations). Several stated that they felt the nature policy was imposed on them by authorities, and that land owners and users are not sufficiently involved in the implementation of the Directives, particularly as regards the definition of management measures within Natura 2000 sites and the setting of hunting restrictions. Several expressed their frustration at having measures imposed on their land without prior consultation. They consider that the Directives can only work in practice if the land owners and users are fully involved in their implementation and are provided with a sufficient level of financial compensation for their efforts. Some pointed out that land owners and users have very good knowledge of nature protection and often they know best how to manage the land in a

sustainable nature-friendly way.

“It is necessary that forest owners are called to integrate the management structures so that they could actively participate in the decision-making process at national, regional and local level, in particular through their organizations. Hereby, the development of guidelines and management plans adapted to territorial, cultural, social and technical specificities, as well as a higher dynamic of the integrated space management may be promoted. This involvement will also lead to greater uniformity of the Directives’ interpretation, at decision-making levels, and, by this, to a proper implementation of the measures.” (translated from Portuguese, Portugal, forestry association)

- **The Directives have been difficult to implement** (65 individuals and 38 organisations): Several respondents from this sector stated that the rules are too complicated, too restrictive or there is too much control (on landowners/users). Many expressed the view that the provisions of the directives are too complex and not understandable for the ordinary citizen. They were also concerned by what they considered to be an excessive level of control and restrictions on their day to day activities which led to a lot of extra bureaucracy and costs that would end up affecting their economic viability. The difficulty of the Appropriate Assessment procedure for projects submitted by land owners was also raised.

- **Directives do not take account of regional and local circumstances – not enough focus on local solutions.** (80 individuals and 13 organisations) A recurring view was that the Directives should be more flexible and should be better adapted to national or local contexts. Some respondents specifically mentioned examples where protection of a certain species in a certain area was not needed, or where the intensity of land use was such that the Directives could not be properly applied in practice in that region. However, many just stated in a general way that more flexibility and adaptation to local specificities are needed.

“Protection decisions must happen at the local level, especially predator policy. We cannot have too many predators locally only because there are too few elsewhere.” (translated from Swedish, Sweden, individual, fisheries and hunting)

- **Socio-economic aspects are not (sufficiently) taken into account** (52 individuals and 13 organisations). An important number of comments from this main interest group stress that socio-economic aspects are not sufficiently taken into account in the implementation of the Directives and that socio-economic interests and nature conservation should be better reconciled and made more mutually supportive.

“The lack of coherence in agriculture, forestry and environmental policies contributes to habitat degradation. Without economic valorization there is no viability. It should be clear that costs should not fall on landowners. Funding is only granted to Dehesas through subsidies with too great an administrative burden. In Spain, private property is almost 70% of the territory and nevertheless biodiversity is preserved. Do they receive the same funding as public areas? Everything goes through heavy administration. This is not very efficient, using money belonging to all, for a common environment belonging to all. Protected habitats such as Dehesas have also to respond to production standards (CAP) that make incompatible preservation and conservation of wildlife and biodiversity. For instance cattle quota in protected areas under Habitats and Birds directives, damages the biodiversity generated by good management practices of these habitats. Dehesas are a unique multifunctional system in Europe and they are lacking recognition. Specific policies should be carried on for this type of habitats with technical and non-political criteria.” (translated from Spanish; Spain, individual respondent in the area agriculture and forestry).

- **The Directives are too costly to implement** (37 individuals and 28 organisations). Several comments in the sample mention that the Directives do not take account of the economic impacts on users, and are too costly for land owners/users. This argument is often mentioned in conjunction with the previous two. Resource users consider that they experience high burdens due to nature protection measures. Comments refer to different types of cost: the loss of profit due to restrictions on their economic activity or due to damage from species that are not allowed to be hunted (in particular, wolves, cormorants and crows were mentioned several times); others refer to costs that they have to incur for research or for preparing documents for permit procedures. Many felt there the lack of sufficient compensatory measures or incentive schemes to ensure the practical implementation of the Directives on the ground.

Some respondents – mainly from agriculture – also argue that agriculture always suffers as a result, and always takes the blame, even though other sectors, such as construction, transport and wind energy are also a threat to nature protection.

- **Annexes need to be reviewed / adapted / species deleted.** (47 individuals and 10 organisations) In addition to this general comment, some also mention that the annexes of the Directives should be made more flexible.

“When EU protection of a species is considered the status in all countries should be considered. e.g. close season for magpies. UK is inundated with them and they do not need any protection as they are increasing.” (UK, individual respondent, fisheries and hunting)

The prominence of these issues compared to the other issues identified in the sample of comments indicates that resource users are mainly concerned with the costs related to implementation, the fact that they are not sufficiently involved in the implementation process and that the implementation was too complicated and that the Directives are not properly implemented. These opinions are mirrored in the responses to the questions of Part II of the questionnaire made by these groups of interest or activity.

For instance, in Q19 a significant proportion of respondents involved in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting stated that insufficient stakeholder involvement (78-84%), insufficient funding (72-85%), ineffective local (80-76%) and EU level (74-77%) - coordination had significantly restricted progress, as had the unclear wording of the Directives (73-79%) (see Table 64 in annex).

In Q22, the large majority of respondents from agriculture and forestry, fisheries and hunting thought that the cost of managing Natura 2000 sites, protecting species of birds and other listed wildlife was disproportionate to the benefits associated with the Directives. Over 80% considered that the opportunity costs were also disproportionate.

In Q23 the majority of respondents from these areas of interest stated that efficiencies were caused by a wide range of issues, including the way the Directives have been implemented nationally or regionally and the lack of enforcement (see Table 66).

Finally, the results from Q 31 which show that the majority of respondents from these interest groups think that Directives had made no contribution (over and above national legislation) to standards for nature protection, management of habitats, staff assigned to nature conservation and networking and exchange of best practices.

Key issues raised by those interested or active in nature and environment

The following are the seven most frequent issues raised by respondents interested or active in field of nature and environment.

- **Directives have been poorly implemented/there has been lack of enforcement** (127 individuals and 23 organisations) – Directives need to be better implemented/enforced at national or regional level. Despite the widespread view that Directives have been effective, many comments also point to a lack of implementation or enforcement. Some comments mention as a reason that economic interests prevail or that specific interest groups have too much influence in a certain region. Further reasons mentioned include a lack of financial resources and a lack of coherence with other policies.

“(…) Over the past 50 years 60% of species in the UK have declined, mainly due to loss of or damage to their habitats. Intensive farming is a major pressure on UK wildlife. And now climate change is having an increasing impact. These pressures have combined to leave some nature sites in poor condition. To address this European and National policies influencing farming and tackling climate change need to be strengthened – the answer does not lie in changing the nature directives which have been shown to be helping nature where they are properly implemented.(…)” (UK, NGO, nature and environment)

Many comments in the sample referred explicitly to a particular Member State. Comments indicating a lack of implementation were made in respect of Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Malta, Spain, Sweden and the UK. Some of these comments indicate country-specific situations or reasons for problems. For example, most of the comments on Malta refer to the hunting of birds. Some comments on France mention that the contractual approach (as opposed to a regulatory approach) has limits to its efficiency. Comments from Sweden and Finland suggest that national environmental legislation has been weakened and that interests of hunters are too influential.

- **The Directives have been effective/ contributed to nature protection** (114 individuals and 22 organisations). Several comments provide examples of species and/or habitats that are protected under the Natura 2000 network. Others are of a more general nature, stating that the Directives have made a significant contribution to nature protection in Europe.

“Thanks to the Nature Directives, Malta now has a larger network of protected areas, Natura 2000, covering 14% of its land and 2% of its marine sites. In Malta, the Birds and Habitats Directives have been important in developing sustainable hunting practices and have led to changes in hunting conditions. (...)” (Malta, individual, nature and environment)

- **EU legislation is needed over and beyond national legislation.** (113 individuals and 15 organisations) Many comments point out the added value of the EU legislation, sometimes explicitly saying that national legislation would not be enough (see point 2).

“The EU Nature Directives have been the main catalyst for the protection of biodiversity in Cyprus over the last 10 years, when the country joined the EU and these directives were transposed into national legislation. Sufficient protection of biodiversity would definitely not have taken place in Cyprus if these Directives did not exist, and they have played a critical role in designating a protected status to areas important for their fauna and flora. Without them these important areas would be faced with even more threats than they are already facing, and would most definitely have been destroyed from construction, tourism, energy and other development. [...]” (Cyprus, individual, nature and environment)

- **Directives should be maintained and should not be weakened.** (109 individuals and 5 organisations) A large share of comments say that the Directives need to stay in place and that weakening them would pose a significant threat to biodiversity and nature protection.

“As a manager of a little tern colony that is in a Special Protection Area, I believe that changing the Directives would weaken them and that nature conservation would suffer. I am a firm believer that nature and business can thrive together so I see no benefit to business by changing the Directives. Indeed, it would weaken business as it would remove the regulatory framework that is provided by the Directives leading to uncertainty. Finally, we owe it to our human populations to keep this protector of biodiversity in place, to ensure rare species persist and that wild habitats remain biodiverse for our well-being and for the ecosystem services that many currently take for granted but would be stuck without.” (UK, individual, nature and environment)

- **Directives are important for biodiversity:** (75 individuals and 8 organisations) The Directives’ relevance for biodiversity is already mentioned under point 1 as it is strongly connected to the belief that the Directives have been effective in nature protection.
- **The Directives have socio-economic benefits and these need to be better highlighted:** (64 individuals and 9 organisations) Several respondents argue that the Directives have socio-economic benefits (often in relation to tourism). Some comments say that there needs to be better awareness of this among the public and stakeholders in order to increase the acceptance of the Directives.

“Dorset contains a number of Special Protection Areas which are of significant importance for the protection of biodiversity in the area. The sites cover inter-tidal, heathland and river valley habitats, amongst others; each has attendant populations of protected bird species. The sites are not only of value in protecting biodiversity resources but also play a part in the local economy by providing the resources for sustainable 'eco-tourism'. Many visitors to Dorset are drawn to the area by the unique habitats and their wild bird populations. Conservation organisations continue to manage the sites in such a way that people can enjoy nature without compromising the sites' biodiversity. The Dorset Bird Club believes that the EU Nature Directives are vital in maintaining the network of protected sites.” (NGO, env /nature, UK)

- **Lack of financial resources:** (41 individuals and 9 organisations) Several comments mention a lack of funding for Natura 2000 and some also mention the lack of human resources. This again is often related to the lack of proper implementation. Some comments also refer to suboptimal management of funds, such as the following from Spain:

“(…) Furthermore, better coordination with the implementation of other regulations and European budgets is key. Thus, much of European funds theoretically dedicated to the consolidation of the Natura 2000 network in Spain were managed by authorities who are not proficient in environment (such as agriculture). Greater control by the EU so that these funds are dedicated to the effective management of SCI / SPA / SAC and the achievement of its objectives is essential.” (translated from Spanish, Spain, individual, nature and environment)

These sampled comments reflect a number of the answers given by respondents from nature and environment to the closed questions in Parts I and II of the questionnaire. For example, under Q7 a majority (over 60%) thought that benefits of the Directives far exceed their costs; under Q11 a large majority (around 75%) said the Directives add significant value. Under Q26, a majority believed that lack of funding (around 70%) and insufficient human resources

(around 61%) were barriers to the effectiveness of the Directives. Furthermore, 83% found that the Directives were very important for safeguarding Europe's biodiversity.

Again, the responses to the open question may help to explain some of these results. Concerning EU added value of the Directives, comments highlight that national nature protection legislation was weak in some countries and was strengthened through the Directives. Furthermore, some comments mentioned that incoherence between nature and other policies (in particular, agricultural and renewable energy policies) on a national level would threaten the implementation of nature protection legislation and therefore, EU-level legislation was needed.

6.5 CONCLUSIONS

In total, 10,213 respondents (1.8%) submitted comments in the form of a written text. Of these, 8,103 were from individuals, 875 from businesses, 449 from NGOs and 393 from organisations and associations other than NGOs²¹. Governments and research institutes submitted 143 and 101 comments, respectively.

As regards the fields of interest or activity of the respondents who submitted comments, a large proportion (43% or 4,343 comments) came from those interested in nature and environment, followed by those interested or active in agriculture and forestry (21% or 2,185 comments), and fisheries or hunting (16% or 1,652 comments). Together, these three main groups of interests make up 80% of all comments submitted under the final open question.

The remaining 20% of the comments received were divided between respondents interested or active in science (6% or 574 comments), industry (5% or 479 comments), culture and education (5% or 485 comments), recreation and tourism (3% or 330 comments), energy and water management (1% each or 112 and 53 comments, respectively).

The open question asked the respondents "Do you have any further comments?" As this was a very broad question, the range of replies received was also very wide ranging. Given the large number of comments received and the time constraints, a stratified sample of 10% was selected for an in-depth analysis, resulting in 1,017 comments being analysed in-depth.

One of the most frequent issues raised by all types of respondents (individuals and organisations combined) in the comments sampled was that the Directives' objectives are poorly implemented or enforced. Comments varied from general statements about the lack of enforcement, control or monitoring to more specific comments about poor management of protected areas, lack of coordination or inadequacy of implemented measures. This type of comment featured in 23% of all responses in the sample. Another frequent comment was that the Directives are effective and have contributed to nature protection (17% of comments in the sample).

The prominence of issues raised varied slightly when comparing comments from individuals and from organisations. However, these differences seem to mirror the fact that among individuals, there were more comments from respondents interested in nature and environment and among organisations, there were more comments from resource users. Differences therefore largely

²¹ For example, associations of foresters or farmers, associations for animal support, industry associations

mirror the different views of these interest groups.

Those interested or active in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, 20% commented that socio-economic aspects were not adequately taken into account and that land owners and users, as experts in the use or management of nature or natural resources, were not sufficiently involved in the implementation of the Directives (35%). Furthermore, they often stated (20% in the sample from these interests) that the Nature Directives carry a considerable cost in terms of their implementation, which they felt placed too high a burden on them. They also emphasised that the rules were sometimes too complicated to implement and were not understandable for them (32% of this sample).

Respondents in the field of nature and environment most often commented that the problems of implementation were linked to a lack of enforcement (35% of the sample of this group). There were also a number of comments stating that the Directives have been effective (31% in the sample of comments from these interests) and about the scarcity of financial and human resources (12%). Within this group, 30% of comments submitted made stressed that the Directives had an added value over and above national legislation, and that they should be maintained.

The above comments largely reflect the views already expressed by these different fields of interest in the closed questions in Part I and II of the questionnaire.

ANNEX I: ADDITIONAL TABLES PART I AND PART II

Table 57, Types of respondent (all respondents), by main field of activity/interest (total numbers)

<i>Types of stakeholder, by main field of activity/interest (as % of total in type of stakeholder)</i>								
	a business	a government or public authority	a non-governmental organisation (NGO)	an academic/research institute	an individual	an organisation or association (other than NGO)	other	Total
nature	102	106	340	46	510,568	141	49	511,352
hunting	39	5	90	5	23,496	232	61	23,928
environment	99	74	189	51	3,390	120	59	3,982
forestry	604	82	64	17	2,968	80	91	3,906
agriculture	948	16	48	6	2,449	73	31	3,571
science	21	5	20	77	1,392	5	11	1,531
education	15		15	18	812	8	14	882
recreation	26	1	7	1	722	10	6	773
construction & development	144	34	7	1	397	47	8	638
culture	7	4	6	1	329	5	3	355
tourism	61	4	4	3	197	7	5	281
angling	2		10		235	17	11	275
energy	53		13	3	163	17	1	250
extractive industry	161	2	2		49	25		239
transport	22	11	1		117	8		159
water management	9	6	3	1	116	3	2	140
fish farming & associated activities	54	4	3		68	6	2	137
fishing (other than angling)	4	2	2	2	48	13	2	73
Total	2,371	356	824	232	547,516	817	356	552,472

Table 58, Q7, respondents from businesses, by main field of activity/interest

Q7: How important is the Natura 2000 network for protecting threatened species and habitats in the EU?						
	not important	somewhat important	important	very important	Don't know	Total
agriculture	10%	68%	17%	4%	1%	948
Forestry	7%	79%	9%	3%	1%	604
extractive industry	<0.5%	90%	7%	2%	1%	161
construction & development	1%	72%	8%	19%	<0.5%	144
nature	<0.5%	8%	8%	84%	<0.5%	102
environment	<0.5%	11%	15%	74%	<0.5%	99
tourism	2%	69%	8%	20%	2%	61
fish farming & associated activities	6%	74%	17%	4%	<0.5%	54
energy	8%	38%	19%	28%	8%	53
hunting	3%	56%	23%	10%	8%	39
recreation	8%	46%	23%	15%	8%	26
transport	<0.5%	55%	18%	23%	5%	22
science	<0.5%	14%	10%	71%	5%	21
education	<0.5%	<0.5%	33%	60%	7%	15
water management	11%	44%	11%	22%	11%	9
culture	29%	14%	29%	29%	<0.5%	7
fishing (other than angling)	<0.5%	100%	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	4
angling	<0.5%	<0.5%	100%	<0.5%	<0.5%	2
All respondents	6%	65%	13%	13%	1%	2,371
Total	152	1,553	319	313	34	2,371

Table 59, Q 8, respondents from businesses, by main field of activity/interest

Q8: How do the costs of implementing the Birds and Habitats Directives compare with the benefits from their implementation?

	The benefits of implementation far exceed the costs	The benefits of implementation are somewhat greater than the costs	The implementation costs are more or less equal to the benefits	The implementation costs are somewhat greater than the benefits	The implementation costs far exceed the benefits	Don't know	Total
agriculture	2%	1%	2%	7%	84%	3%	948
forestry	3%	1%	1%	5%	86%	4%	604
extractive industry	1%	2%	<0.5%	2%	88%	6%	161
construction & development	13%	2%	2%	2%	75%	6%	144
nature	66%	7%	4%	5%	8%	11%	102
environment	59%	8%	3%	2%	19%	9%	99
tourism	21%	<0.5%	<0.5%	3%	74%	2%	61
fish farming & associated activities	4%	<0.5%	<0.5%	9%	80%	7%	54
energy	11%	<0.5%	4%	30%	36%	19%	53
hunting	3%	<0.5%	<0.5%	13%	54%	31%	39
recreation	15%	15%	<0.5%	8%	42%	19%	26
transport	9%	<0.5%	<0.5%	9%	64%	18%	22
science	52%	5%	10%	<0.5%	19%	14%	21
education	60%	<0.5%	7%	7%	20%	7%	15
water management	11%	<0.5%	<0.5%	11%	67%	11%	9
culture	29%	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	57%	14%	7
fishing (other than angling)	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	100%	<0.5%	4
angling	<0.5%	50%	<0.5%	<0.5%	50%	<0.5%	2
All respondents	10%	2%	2%	6%	75%	6%	2,371
Total	237	50	37	144	1769	134	2,371

Table 60, Q 11, respondents from businesses, by main field of interest/activity

Q11: To what extent have the Directives provided more value than could have been achieved through national or regional laws in this area?

	no added value	some added value	significant added value	I don't know	Total
agriculture	84%	12%	2%	2%	948
forestry	80%	16%	2%	2%	604
extractive industry	79%	17%	4%	1%	161
construction & development	68%	13%	18%	1%	144
nature	7%	14%	77%	2%	102
environment	10%	14%	75%	1%	99
tourism	36%	43%	21%	<0.5%	61
fish farming & associated activities	83%	13%	2%	2%	54
energy	26%	51%	19%	4%	53
hunting	67%	23%	3%	8%	39
recreation	42%	19%	27%	12%	26
transport	36%	41%	18%	5%	22
science	10%	19%	67%	5%	21
education	20%	<0.5%	73%	7%	15
water management	78%	<0.5%	22%	<0.5%	9
culture	43%	14%	29%	14%	7
fishing (other than angling)	100%	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	4
angling	<0.5%	50%	<0.5%	50%	2
All respondents	70%	15%	12%	2%	2,371
Total	1,665	367	282	57	2,371

Table 61, Q11: Shares from all business respondents who answered “no added value”, by field of activity/interest and main countries of residence (figures show share from Total of those from businesses who answered “no added value” = 1,665 respondents)

Q11: To what extent have the Directives provided more value than could have been achieved through national or regional laws in this area?...“no added value”

	BE	DE	AT	UK	Total (BE, DE, AT, UK)	Total (all countries)
agriculture	8%	35%	1%	1%	745	795
forestry	<0.5%	22%	4%	<0.5%	436	483
extractive industry	<0.5%	7%	<0.5%	<0.5%	124	127
construction & development	<0.5%	5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	93	98
fish farming & associated activities	<0.5%	2%	<0.5%	<0.5%	33	45
hunting	<0.5%	1%	<0.5%	<0.5%	19	26
tourism	<0.5%	1%	<0.5%	<0.5%	21	22
energy	<0.5%	1%	<0.5%	<0.5%	13	14
recreation	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	10	11
environment	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	8	10
transport	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	7	8

Q11: To what extent have the Directives provided more value than could have been achieved through national or regional laws in this area?... "no added value"						
	BE	DE	AT	UK	Total (BE, DE, AT, UK)	Total (all countries)
water management	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	6	7
nature	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	5	7
fishing (other than angling)	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	4	4
culture	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	3	3
education	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	1	3
science	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%	2	2
All respondents	8%	76%	7%	1%	1,530	1,665
Total	136	1263	109	22	1,530	1,530

Table 62, Q 14, respondents from businesses, by main field of interest/activity

Q14: Is there still a need for EU legislation to protect species and habitats?				
	No	Yes	I don't know	Total
agriculture	84%	14%	2%	948
forestry	84%	14%	2%	604
extractive industry	4%	94%	2%	161
construction & development	19%	79%	2%	144
nature	6%	94%	<0.5%	102
environment	10%	90%	<0.5%	99
tourism	39%	61%	<0.5%	61
fish farming & associated activities	69%	30%	2%	54
energy	32%	60%	8%	53
hunting	74%	18%	8%	39
recreation	50%	46%	4%	26
transport	18%	82%	<0.5%	22
science	10%	90%	<0.5%	21
education	20%	80%	<0.5%	15
water management	56%	33%	11%	9
culture	43%	57%	<0.5%	7
fishing (other than angling)	100%	<0.5%	<0.5%	4
Angling	50%	50%	<0.5%	2
All respondents	63%	35%	2%	2,371
Total	1,491	832	48	2,371

Table 63, Q 15 by main field of interest/activity (all types of respondents)

Q15: How effective had the Birds and Habitats Directives been in the following fields?				
protecting threatened bird species				
	Not at all effective	Not very effective	Somewhat effective	Very effective
agriculture and forestry	3%	9%	83%	5%
angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	7%	16%	69%	7%
nature, environment	2%	8%	36%	53%
construction, extractive industry, transport	2%	8%	72%	16%
others	3%	9%	50%	35%
protecting all wild bird species				
	Not at all effective	Not very effective	Somewhat effective	Very effective
agriculture and forestry	3%	9%	83%	3%
angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	8%	17%	67%	6%
nature and environment	3%	14%	51%	31%
construction, extractive industry and transport	3%	12%	70%	10%
others	4%	15%	57%	22%
protecting threatened species (other than birds)				
	Not at all effective	Not very effective	Somewhat effective	Very effective
agriculture and forestry	3%	10%	82%	4%
angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	10%	17%	67%	4%
nature and environment	3%	11%	40%	45%
construction, extractive industry and transport	4%	9%	72%	13%
others	3%	14%	54%	26%
protecting Europe's most threatened habitat types				
	Not at all effective	Not very effective	Somewhat effective	Very effective
agriculture and forestry	3%	12%	77%	5%
angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	8%	17%	68%	4%
nature and environment	3%	10%	34%	52%
construction, extractive industry and transport	4%	9%	67%	16%
Others	4%	12%	49%	32%
establishing a system to protect species				
	Not at all	Not very effective	Somewhat	Very effective
ensuring that species are used sustainably (e.g. hunting, fishing)				
	Not at all	Not very	Some what	Very effect

	effective		effective	ive
agriculture and forestry	4%	10%	77%	7%
angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	10%	14%	67%	5%
nature and environment	3%	9%	30%	56%
construction, extractive industry and transport	4%	8%	64%	20%
others	4%	11%	45%	36%

	effective	effective	effective	ive
agriculture and forestry	75%	10%	10%	3%
angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	74%	12%	8%	5%
nature and environment	13%	20%	37%	25%
construction, extractive industry and transport	17%	12%	58%	6%
Others	31%	18%	27%	18%

establishing an EU-wide network of protected areas (the Natura 2000 Network)				
	Not at all effective	Not very effective	Somewhat effective	Very effective
agriculture and forestry	3%	7%	77%	11%
angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	9%	11%	68%	7%
nature and environment	2%	5%	25%	67%
construction, extractive industry and transport	3%	9%	20%	65%
others	3%	7%	41%	46%

managing & restoring sites in the Natura 2000 network				
	Not at all effective	Not very effective	Somewhat effective	Very effective
agriculture and forestry	5%	10%	79%	4%
angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	9%	13%	68%	3%
nature and environment	3%	11%	45%	39%
construction, extractive industry and transport	4%	15%	31%	43%
Others	4%	12%	52%	26%

ensuring proper assessment of risks to Natura 2000 sites from new plans & projects				
	Not at all effective	Not very effective	Somewhat effective	Very effective
agriculture and forestry	6%	75%	11%	5%
angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	10%	67%	12%	3%
nature and environment	4%	17%	27%	49%
construction, extractive industry and transport	6%	21%	18%	48%
others	6%	34%	25%	29%

regulating the impact of new plans & projects on Natura 2000 sites				
	Not at all effective	Not very effective	Somewhat effective	Very effective
agriculture and forestry	5%	76%	10%	6%
angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	10%	64%	13%	3%
nature and environment	4%	18%	27%	47%
construction, extractive industry and transport	5%	22%	17%	48%
others	6%	34%	26%	27%

encouraging the management of landscape features outside Natura 2000 sites				
	Not at all effective	Not very effective	Somewhat effective	Very effective
agriculture and forestry	8%	81%	5%	2%
angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	13%	69%	8%	2%
nature and environment	12%	44%	29%	10%
construction, extractive industry and transport	10%	27%	47%	7%
others	12%	51%	20%	9%

Table 64, Q 19 by main field of activity/interest

Q19: To what extent are the following limiting progress towards the Directives' objectives?

The Directives are not clearly worded				Ineffective enforcement			
	Not restricting progress	Somewhat restricting progress	Significantly restricting progress		Not restricting progress	Somewhat restricting progress	Significantly restricting progress
agriculture and forestry	5%	13%	79%	agriculture and forestry	5%	83%	10%
angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	7%	17%	73%	angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	7%	71%	18%
nature and environment	49%	27%	17%	nature and environment	8%	32%	56%
construction, extractive industry and transport	11%	23%	62%	construction, extractive industry and transport	47%	30%	19%
others	31%	26%	35%	others	11%	45%	40%

Ineffective EU-level coordination				Ineffective national coordination			
	Not restricting progress	Somewhat restricting progress	Significantly restricting progress		Not restricting progress	Somewhat restricting progress	Significantly restricting progress
agriculture and forestry	5%	14%	77%	agriculture and forestry	5%	80%	12%
angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	6%	15%	74%	angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	6%	70%	20%
nature and environment	30%	37%	24%	nature and environment	12%	42%	41%
construction, extractive industry and transport	43%	20%	31%	construction, extractive industry and transport	7%	71%	18%
others	22%	28%	42%	others	11%	51%	32%

Ineffective regional coordination				Ineffective local coordination			
	Not restricting progress	Somewhat restricting progress	Significantly restricting progress		Not restricting progress	Somewhat restricting progress	Significantly restricting progress
agriculture and forestry	6%	81%	11%	agriculture and forestry	7%	12%	80%
angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	6%	69%	21%	angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	8%	13%	76%
nature and environment	13%	40%	41%	nature and environment	23%	32%	40%
construction, extractive industry and transport	8%	73%	15%	construction, extractive industry and transport	8%	64%	25%
others	12%	50%	32%	others	15%	26%	53%

Insufficient guidance & best practice on implementation				Unclear guidance & best practice on implementation			
	Not restricting progress	Somewhat restricting progress	Significantly restricting progress		Not restricting progress	Somewhat restricting progress	Significantly restricting progress
agriculture and forestry	8%	79%	10%	agriculture and forestry	8%	79%	11%
angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	8%	71%	16%	angling, fish farming, fishing and	8%	70%	18%

nature and environment	18%	50%	26%
construction, extractive industry and transport	11%	66%	20%
others	16%	57%	21%

hunting			
nature and environment	19%	56%	19%
construction, extractive industry and transport	11%	30%	55%
others	16%	59%	19%

Gaps in scientific knowledge of species & habitats				Insufficient funding			
	Not restricting progress	Somewhat restricting progress	Significantly restricting progress		Not restricting progress	Somewhat restricting progress	Significantly restricting progress
agriculture and forestry	8%	9%	81%	agriculture and forestry	5%	7%	85%
angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	7%	13%	78%	angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	10%	12%	72%
nature and environment	17%	51%	28%	nature and environment	6%	20%	70%
construction, extractive industry and transport	9%	16%	71%	construction, extractive industry and transport	42%	13%	39%
others	15%	32%	50%	others	6%	20%	68%

Insufficient human resources				Insufficient stakeholder involvement			
	Not restricting progress	Somewhat restricting progress	Significantly restricting progress		Not restricting progress	Somewhat restricting progress	Significantly restricting progress
agriculture and forestry	8%	79%	10%	agriculture and forestry	5%	10%	84%
angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	10%	68%	15%	angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	6%	12%	78%
nature and environment	8%	27%	61%	nature and environment	15%	41%	39%
construction, extractive industry and transport	39%	31%	24%	construction, extractive industry and transport	10%	23%	62%
others	8%	43%	43%	others	11%	26%	57%

Low public awareness & support				Insufficient integration into other policies			
	Not restricting progress	Somewhat restricting progress	Significantly restricting progress		Not restricting progress	Somewhat restricting progress	Significantly restricting progress
agriculture and forestry	6%	82%	11%	agriculture and forestry	77%	11%	10%
angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	7%	68%	22%	angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	63%	14%	19%
nature and environment	11%	45%	41%	nature and environment	12%	20%	65%
construction, extractive industry and transport	40%	40%	17%	construction, extractive industry and transport	54%	19%	23%
others	10%	54%	32%	others	30%	19%	46%

Lack of appropriate management of protected areas				Lack of or limited international cooperation to protect species & habitats			
	Not restricting progress	Somewhat restricting progress	Significantly restricting progress		Not restricting progress	Somewhat restricting progress	Significantly restricting progress
agriculture and forestry	6%	81%	11%	agriculture and forestry	6%	83%	6%
angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	8%	69%	19%	angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	9%	69%	14%
nature and environment	10%	42%	44%	nature and environment	12%	58%	21%
construction, extractive industry and transport	42%	30%	24%	construction, extractive industry and transport	42%	34%	13%
Others	11%	51%	34%	others	13%	60%	20%

Table 65, Q 22 by main field of activity/interest

Q22: Are these costs proportionate, given the benefits associated with the Directives?		
Natura 2000 site management costs		
	Disproportionate	Proportionate
agriculture and forestry	88%	9%
angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	80%	10%
nature and environment	14%	76%
construction, extractive industry and transport	63%	26%
Others	36%	53%
Costs of protecting species of birds		
	Disproportionate	Proportionate
agriculture and forestry	88%	8%
angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	81%	12%
nature and environment	14%	77%
construction, extractive industry and transport	64%	26%
Others	35%	55%
Costs of protecting species other than birds		
	Disproportionate	Proportionate
agriculture and forestry	89%	7%
angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	83%	11%
nature and environment	14%	76%
construction, extractive industry and transport	67%	24%
Others	37%	53%
Administrative costs		
	Disproportionate	Proportionate
agriculture and forestry	91%	5%
angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	85%	5%
nature and environment	20%	66%
construction, extractive industry and transport	71%	17%
Others	41%	44%
Lost opportunity costs		
	Disproportionate	Proportionate
agriculture and forestry	88%	5%
angling, fish farming, fishing and hunting	82%	4%
nature and environment	16%	61%
construction, extractive industry and transport	71%	15%
Others	39%	41%

Table 66, Q 23 by main field of activity/interest

How the Directives are written	I don't know	Not at all	To some extent	To a large extent
agriculture&forestry	3%	5%	16%	77%
environment&nature	8%	50%	29%	13%
construction, extractive industry, transport	4%	11%	25%	60%
fisheries&hunting	4%	5%	18%	73%
others	8%	30%	29%	33%
total	5%	22%	22%	51%
How compliance is enforced at EU level	I don't know	Not at all	To some extent	To a large extent
agriculture&forestry	3%	4%	12%	80%
environment&nature	8%	13%	52%	28%
construction, extractive industry, transport	5%	7%	59%	29%
fisheries&hunting	5%	5%	18%	72%
others	8%	11%	37%	44%
total	5%	8%	30%	57%
How the Directives are implemented nationally	I don't know	Not at all	To some extent	To a large extent
agriculture&forestry	3%	3%	9%	85%
environment&nature	5%	8%	34%	53%
construction, extractive industry, transport	2%	5%	19%	75%
fisheries&hunting	3%	5%	18%	74%
others	4%	8%	26%	62%
total	4%	6%	21%	70%
How the Directives are implemented regionally	I don't know	Not at all	To some extent	To a large extent
agriculture&forestry	2%	4%	10%	83%
environment&nature	5%	11%	38%	46%
construction, extractive industry, transport	2%	6%	22%	69%
fisheries&hunting	3%	7%	15%	75%
others	5%	9%	31%	55%
total	4%	7%	23%	67%
How the Directives are implemented locally	I don't know	Not at all	To some extent	To a large extent
agriculture&forestry	2%	5%	10%	82%
environment&nature	6%	12%	40%	42%
construction, extractive industry, transport	3%	6%	23%	68%
fisheries&hunting	5%	8%	14%	73%
others	6%	9%	30%	56%

total	4%	8%	23%	64%
Interaction with other EU laws and policies	I don't know	Not at all	To some extent	To a large extent
agriculture&forestry	6%	3%	80%	12%
environment&nature	12%	9%	32%	47%
construction, extractive industry, transport	9%	38%	35%	18%
fisheries&hunting	9%	4%	68%	19%
others	11%	6%	48%	34%
total	9%	7%	58%	27%

ANNEX II: COUNTS OF STATEMENTS MADE PER CATEGORY OF ISSUES FOR INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS

Table 67, Number of comments from individuals, total and by main activity/interest (according to grouping, see legend below), statements made bold indicate that they were found in over 10% of all comments sampled from individuals

Groups of main activities/interest: 1=agriculture& forestry; 2=angling, fisheries, fish farming & hunting, 3= construction, extractive industry& transport, 4= culture& education, 5=environment& nature, 6=recreation& tourism, 7=science, 8=energy, 9= water management

Number of Group (see legend below table)	TOTAL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Questionnaire										
1. Questionnaire is too difficult/broad/biased	21	8		1		7	3	1		1
Effectiveness										
2. Directives were effective and have contributed to nature protection	143	2	7	2	5	114	1	11	0	1
3. Directives are not effective	42	7	16	3	3	7	4	2	0	0
4. Directives are difficult to implement: Rules are too complicated, too restrictive, there is too much control (on landowners/users)	84	51	14	2	1	10	3	3	0	0
5. Directive objectives are poorly implemented /enforced – they need to better implemented/ enforced at national level	200	14	11	4	9	127	8	22	3	2
6. The Directives are too rigid and do not take into account changes in species populations or dynamic processes of nature	30	7	12	1	0	5	3	1	1	0
7. Directives do not take account of regional and local circumstances – not enough focus on local solutions	97	41	39	1	0	9	3	1	2	1
8. There are differences in implementation between Member States, regions and even at local level	7	1	3	0	1	2	0	0	0	0
9. There is a lack of participation of land owners/resource users and they should be better involved	114	54	35	3	1	17	3	2	0	0
10. Socio-economic aspects not (sufficiently) taken into account – not enough balance between social, economic and environmental aspects; there should be better balance/ reconciliation between economy and nature	71	25	27	2	0	11	2	3	1	0
11. Socio-economic aspects are (sufficiently) taken into account – they promote sustainable development (balance between social, economic and environmental aspects)	18	1	1	1	0	12	1	1	0	1
12. Economic interests prevail over nature protection	54	12	2	2	7	22	1	5	3	0
13. Need more public awareness raising of Natura 2000/ Directives	20	2	3	1	0	11	0	3	0	0
14. Hunting rules under the Directives are too prescriptive and not appropriate. Some species should be allowed to be hunted without interference from EU (wolf, woodcock, etc..)	40	3	30	1	0	4	0	1	0	0
15. Hunting rules have been strengthened in the EU due to the Directives. The hunting rules	12	0	5	1	0	3	0	0	1	0

Number of Group (see legend below table)	TOTAL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
should still be strengthened.										
Efficiency										
16. Directives are too costly to implement and/or there is too much administrative burden	46	36	1	0	1	5	2	2	0	0
17. Lack of financial resources to implement Directives – need more financial and human resources (a specific fund for Natura 2000, more staff in admins..)	68	7	7	3	2	41	2	5	0	2
18. Socio-economic benefits of Natura 2000 should be better highlighted. Natura 2000 can and does generate economic benefits	83	2	3	2	0	64	3	6	1	0
Relevance										
19. Directives are important for biodiversity	127	5	9	6	1	75	3	15	3	0
20. Directives do not have a positive effect on biodiversity	30	24	1	0	2	3	2	0	0	0
21. Directives do not address intensive agriculture, habitats fragmentation, species isolation and climate change which are threats to biodiversity	44	22	9	1	11	9	1	0	0	0
22. The Directives address climate change, intensive agriculture, habitats fragmentation, species isolation, ...	11	0	1	1	0	7	1	0	0	0
23. The Annexes to the Directives should be revised and updated	80	31	16	2	2	22	2	4	3	0
24. Nature protection is important for human health and well-being	69	3	0	2	7	51	2	3	0	1
Coherence										
25. Lack of coherence with other EU policies /legislation / funds	64	9	2	1	1	40	0	6	1	1
26. EU Nature Directives are coherent	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
27. EU Nature Directives are coherent with other EU policies /legislation / funds	1	0	0	0	4	1	0	0	0	0
28. Agriculture policy should better integrate nature objectives	54	6	0	3	0	35	2	6	0	1
29. Precautionary principle over-used when granting permits for activities	12	7	0	1	0	2	0	1	1	0
30. The Nature Directives provide a stable regulatory framework necessary for business and economy to operate	13	2	0	0	1	10	0	0	0	0
31. Subsidising practices that are damaging to nature should be stopped. EU funds not properly used for N2000 and causing damages	13	0	1	0	0	10	0	2	0	0
32. Impact assessment of activities or projects too complicated/strict and/or different to Environmental Impact Assessment	6	1	0	2	1	1	1	1	0	0
EU added value										
33. EU legislation is needed and has added value over and beyond national legislation	176	6	4	5	19	113	6	21	2	0
34. EU legislation is not needed (national legislation is sufficient)	34	8	21	0	0	4	1	0	0	0
35. Without the Directives and only with national legislation, more habitats and species would have been lost. Directives removal will have a devastating impact on EU's biodiversity / risks to nature. EU action is needed to ensure biodiversity conservation	43	0	0	2	5	31	1	2	2	0
36. The EU monitoring and enforcement is necessary to ensure implementation and therefore the EU should be more active	48	3	4	3	9	25	1	3	0	0

Number of Group (see legend below table)	TOTAL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
37. We should leave the EU	6	1	3	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Revision of Directives										
38. The Directives should be maintained as they are	151	7	4	1	11	109	4	13	2	0
39. Directives should be strengthened or expanded in scope	101	3	4	4	8	64	4	12	1	1
40. Directives should be abolished	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
41. Directives should be merged	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL number of sampled comments²² in interest group	810	148	144	19	44	366	28	51	6	4
.....cut-off number of 10%	81	15	14			37				

Groups of main activities/interest: 1=agriculture& forestry; 2=angling, fisheries, fish farming & hunting, 3= construction, extractive industry& transport, 4= culture& education, 5=environment& nature, 6=recreation& tourism, 7=science, 8=energy, 9= water management

Table 68, Number of statements by category from organisations, total and by type of stakeholder, statements made bold indicate that they were found in over 10% of all comments sampled from organisations

Type of stakeholder	TOTAL	business	NGO	other organisations	government	research	other
Questionnaire							
1. Questionnaire is too difficult/broad/biased	22	18		4	1		
Effectiveness							
2. Directives were effective and have contributed to nature protection	30	0	12	9	3	2	4
3. Directives are not effective	9	6	1		1		1
4. Directives difficult to implement: Rules are too complicated, too restrictive, there's too much control (on landowners/users)	47	28	4	11	1		3
5. Directive objectives are poorly implemented /enforced - need to better implemented/ enforced at national level	34	7	11	7	2	4	3
6. The Directives are too rigid and do not take into account changes in species populations or dynamic processes of nature	17	6	1	6	3		1
7. Directives don't to take account of regional and local circumstances – not enough focus on local solutions	16	6	3	4			3
8. There are differences in implementation between Member States, regions and even at local level	6	2	3	1			
9. There is a lack of participation of land owners/resource users and they	36	11	3	13	4	1	4

²² The numbers indicated in this row refer to the total number of comments made and NOT to the number of hits for one category (as presented above), as one comment could be assigned to more than one category.

Type of stakeholder	TOTAL	business	NGO	other organisations	government	research	other
should be better involved							
10. Socio-economic aspects not sufficiently taken into account – not enough balance between social, economic and environmental aspects. Should be better balance/ reconciliation between economy and nature	29	10	1	11	4	1	2
11. Socio-economic aspects are (sufficiently) taken into account – they promote sustainable development (balance between social, economic and environmental aspects)	6	3	1	1		1	
12. Economic interests prevail over nature protection	7	2	3	2			
13. Need more public awareness raising of Natura 2000/ Directives	4	1		1	1	1	
14. Hunting rules under the Directives are too prescriptive and not appropriate. Some species should be allowed to be hunted without interference from EU (wolf, woodcock, etc..)	1			1			
15. Hunting rules have been strengthened in the EU due to the Directives. The hunting rules should still be strengthened.	0						
Efficiency							
16. Directives are too costly to implement and/or there is too much administrative burden	40	24	3	12			1
17. Lack of financial resources to implement Directives – need more financial and human resources (a specific fund for Natura 2000, more staff in admins..)	16	1	4	3	7	1	
18. Socio-economic benefits of Natura 2000 should be better highlighted. Natura 2000 can and does generate economic benefits. Directives support tourism, culture – need more synergies between the different sectors with similar interests	13	3	7	3			
Relevance of Directives							
19. Directives are important for biodiversity	19	6	5	2	1	2	3
20. Directives do not have positive effect on biodiversity	5	2	2		1		
21. Directives do not address intensive agriculture, habitats fragmentation, species isolation and climate change which are threats to biodiversity	10	2	2	2	4		
22. The Directives address climate change, intensive agriculture, habitats fragmentation, species isolation, ...	0						
23. The Annexes to the Directives should be revised and updated	17	4	3	4	4	1	1
24. Nature protection is important for human health and well-being	2		1	1			
Coherence							
25. Lack of coherence with other EU policies /legislation / funds	15	2	7	3	1	1	1
26. EU Nature Directives are coherent	0						
27. EU Nature Directives are coherent with other EU policies /legislation / funds	0						

Type of stakeholder	TOTAL	business	NGO	other organisations	government	research	other
28. Agriculture policy should better integrate nature objectives	6						
29. Precautionary principle over-used when granting permits for activities	1	1					
30. The Nature Directives provide a stable regulatory framework necessary for business and economy to operate	1		1				
31. Subsidising practices that are damaging to nature should be stopped. EU funds not used properly for N2000	4		2		1	1	
32. Impact assessment of activities or projects too complicated/strict and/or different to Environmental Impact Assessment	1		1				
EU added value							
33. EU legislation is needed and has added value over and beyond national legislation	18	3	4	8		1	2
34. EU legislation is not needed (national legislation is sufficient)	10	7	1				2
35. Without the Directives and only with national legislation, more habitats and species would have been lost. Directives removal will have a devastating impact on EU's biodiversity / risks to nature. EU action is needed to ensure biodiversity conservation	2	1		1			
36. The EU monitoring and enforcement is necessary to ensure implementation and therefore the EU should be more active	4	1	2			1	
37. We should leave the EU	0						
Revision of Directives							
38. Directives should be maintained as they are – not changed	6	1		1		1	3
39. Directives should be strengthened or expanded in scope	3			3			
40. Directives should be abolished	2	1			1		
41. Directives should be merged	2	1	1				
TOTAL number of sampled comments²³ in stakeholder group	207	87	44	39	14	9	14
.....cut-off number of 10%	21	9	4	4	1	1	1

²³ The numbers indicated in this row refer to the total number of comments made and NOT to the number of hits for one category (as presented above), as one comment could be assigned to more than one category.

Table 69, Number of statements by category from organisations, total and by main activity/interest of respondents (according to grouping, see legend below), statements made bold indicate that they were found in over 10% of all comments sampled from organisations

Groups of main activities/interest: 1=agriculture& forestry; 2=angling, fisheries, fish farming & hunting, 3= construction, extractive industry& transport, 4=culture& education, 5=environment& nature, 6=recreation& tourism, 7=science, 8=energy

Number of Group (see legend below table)	TOTAL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Questionnaire									
1. Questionnaire is too difficult/broad/biased	22	4	1	16		1			
Effectiveness									
2. Directives were effective/have contributed to nature protection	30	3	1	1	1	22	1	1	
3. Directives are not effective	9	8	1						
4. Directives difficult to implement: Rules are too complicated and too restrictive	47	32	6	6				1	2
5. Directive objectives are poorly implemented /enforced - need to better implemented/enforced at national level	34	4	2	1	3	23		2	
6. The Directives are too rigid and do not take into account changes in species populations or dynamic processes of nature	17	7	2	7	1				
7. Directives don't take account of regional and local circumstances – not enough focus on local solutions	16	8	5			2		1	
8. There are differences in implementation between Member States, regions and even at local level	6	2		1		3			
9. Lack of participation of land owners/ users – there should be more involvement of landowners /users	36	19	5	4	1	4	1	1	1
10. Socio-economic aspects not (sufficiently) taken into account – not enough balance between social, economic and environmental aspects. Should be better balance/reconciliation between economy and nature	29	12	1	9	2	4			1
11. Socio-economic aspects are (sufficiently) taken into account – they promote sustainable development (balance between social, economic and environmental aspects)	6					5	1		
12. Economic interests prevail over nature protection	7			2		5			
13. Need more public awareness raising of Natura 2000/ Directives	4	1				3			
14. Hunting rules under the Directives are too prescriptive and not appropriate. Some species should be allowed to be hunted without interference from EU (wolf, woodcock, etc..)	1		1						
15. Hunting rules have been strengthened in the EU due to the Directives. The hunting rules should still be strengthened.	0								
Efficiency									
16. Directives are too costly to implement and/or there is too much administrative burden	40	23	5	4	1	4			3

Number of Group (see legend below table)	TOTAL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
17. Lack of financial resources to implement Directives – need more financial and human resources (a specific fund for Natura 2000, more staff in admins..)	16	3	1	4		8			
18. Socio-economic benefits of Natura 2000 should be better highlighted. Natura 2000 can and does generate economic benefits. Directives support tourism, culture – need more synergies between the different sectors with similar interests	13	1			1	9	2		
Relevance of Directives									
19. Directives are important for biodiversity	19	1		1	1	8	3	4	1
20. Directives do not have positive effect on biodiversity	5	4	1						
21. Directives do not address intensive agriculture, habitats fragmentation, species isolation and climate change which are threats to biodiversity	10	3	1	3		1			2
22. The Directives address climate change, intensive agriculture, habitats fragmentation, species isolation, ...	0								
23. The Annexes to the Directives should be revised and updated	17	8	2	4		1		1	1
24. Nature protection is important for human health and well-being	2					1	1		
Coherence									
25. Lack of coherence with other EU policies /legislation / funds	15	3	1			9		1	
26. EU Nature Directives are coherent	0								
27. EU Nature Directives are coherent with other EU policies /legislation / funds	0								
28. Agriculture policy should better integrate nature objectives	6	1				4		1	
29. Precautionary principle over-used when granting permits for activities	1	1							
30. The Nature Directives provide a stable regulatory framework necessary for business and economy to operate	1					1			
31. Subsidising practices that are damaging to nature should be stopped. EU funds not used properly for N2000	4					4			
32. Impact assessment of activities or projects too complicated/strict and/or different to Environmental Impact Assessment	1					1			
EU added value									
33. EU legislation is needed (over and beyond national legislation) – they have added value	18	1	1	1		15			
34. EU legislation is not needed (national legislation is sufficient)	10	9		1					
35. Without the Directives and only with national legislation, more habitats and species would have been lost. Directives removal will have a devastating impact on EU's biodiversity / risks to nature. EU action is needed to ensure biodiversity conservation	2	1				1			
36. The EU monitoring and enforcement is necessary to ensure implementation and therefore the EU should be more active	4					4			
37. We should leave the EU	0								

Number of Group (see legend below table)	TOTAL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Revision of Directives									
38. Directives should be maintained as they are – not changed	6	1				5			
39. Directives should be strengthened or expanded in scope	3	1				2			
40. Directives should be abolished	2	2							
41. Directives should be merged	2			1		1			
TOTAL number of sampled comments²⁴ in interest group	207	72	20	29	4	67	4	6	5
.....cut-off number of 10%	21	7	2			7			

Groups of main activities/interest: 1=agriculture& forestry; 2=angling, fisheries, fish farming & hunting, 3= construction, extractive industry& transport, 4= culture& education, 5=environment& nature, 6=recreation& tourism, 7=science, 8=energy

²⁴ The numbers indicated in this row refer to the total number of comments made and NOT to the number of hits for one category (as presented above), as one comment could be assigned to more than one category.