

COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE AND NATURAL HABITATS



The Bern Convention

WHY IT MATTERS

Nature conservation provides vital ecological, economic, and social benefits, ensuring the survival of ecosystems and species while supporting human well-being for present and future generations.



WHAT IS THE CONVENTION ABOUT?

The **Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (ETS No. 104, Bern Convention)** is one of the

oldest environmental treaties still in force today. Established by the Council of Europe in 1979, it has been ratified by 49 European and African countries as well as by the European Union.



The Bern Convention Vision and Strategic Plan for the period to 2030 provides

a harmonised guiding framework to mobilise support, drive progress, and contributes to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.



MONITORING



- ▶ All Parties making exceptions to the Convention's provisions under **Article 9** must submit a **biennial report**.
- ▶ The **case-file system**, established in 1984, allows NGOs and private citizens to file complaints about potential breaches of the Convention by its Contracting Parties. A participatory approach, involving all stakeholders, is used to identify appropriate environmental governance measures that ensure sustainability and accountability.
- ▶ Every six years, Contracting Parties to the Bern Convention also report under **Resolution No. 8 (2012) on the conservation status of species and habitats**.



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Protecting European wildlife and natural habitats through law, monitoring and democratic participation



PROTECTED AREAS

- The **Emerald Network of Areas of Special Conservation Interest** is an ecological network of protected areas operational in 43 European countries. The network safeguards more than 1,250 species and 210 habitats of European importance, aiming to ensure their long-term survival and mitigate the impact of climate change.



- The **European Diploma for Protected Areas**, awarded since 1965 by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, honours natural and semi-natural areas of exceptional European importance for biodiversity, geology, and landscapes, managed in an exemplary way.



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STANDARD-SETTING

The Standing Committee of the Bern Convention sets standards and adopts innovative strategies and policy guidance based on the proposals of its thematic Groups of Experts on species and habitats.



OUR VISION: PROTECTING BIODIVERSITY IS INTRINSICALLY LINKED TO SAFEGUARDING HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRATIC VALUES

The Bern Convention is an essential Pan-European contribution to achieving a sustainable future for the planet and to ensuring that present and future generations can fully enjoy their human rights. By increasing transparency and sharing information on biodiversity and its potential loss, the Convention reinforces public oversight and empowers informed participation, key pillars of any democratic society.

The work of the Bern Convention contributes to the implementation of the **Council of Europe Strategy on the Environment and Action Plan** by addressing the triple planetary crisis of pollution, climate change and biodiversity loss through multilateral cooperation.



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